



**Nicki Souter**  
ASSOCIATES

# Food Recycling Householder Survey and Engagement

February - March 2016



**ABERDEEN**  
CITY COUNCIL

## Aim

Provide support to Aberdeen City Council (ACC) by carrying out face-to-face survey and engagement with householders following the implementation of the Council's food recycling service. The survey was carried out to understand attitudes and behaviours towards food waste recycling and engage with and encourage householders to use their food recycling service. It also explored how well food recycling was carried out by householders using the mixed food and garden waste service, and barriers to participation.

## NSA Team

**Director:** Nicki Souter  
**Project Manager and Data Analyst:** Hamish Martin  
**Survey Officers:** NSA Engagement Team



Nicki Souter



Hamish Martin

## Method

Surveys were developed for householders with communal food collections and mixed food and garden waste collections. Surveys included specific questions for both recycler and non-recyclers and overall these assessed:

- Participation levels
- Barriers and facilitators to participation
- Levels of satisfaction with the service
- Preferences for methods of communication and engagement
- Other comments

Engagement with non-food recyclers was used to:

- Remind householders of the key contaminants
- Address barriers to food recycling
- Explain the benefits of recycling food
- Encourage users to recycle their food

Engagement with food recyclers was used to:

- Remind householders of the key contaminants
- Reaffirm the benefits of food recycling
- Clarify where free bio-liners could be collected
- Emphasise that all kinds of food could be recycled

The surveys and engagement scripts were developed in conjunction with Aberdeen City Council and once approved a team of four trained experienced surveyors carried out the survey and engagement exercise. The team also delivered information booklets and recorded caddy and bin requests. The communal and kerbside data was analysed separately and two reports were produced.

## Added Value

Having delivered food waste surveys, engagement and focus groups across the city for Aberdeen City Council for the last three years NSA had valuable experience and knowledge of the issues surrounding food recycling in Aberdeen to apply when planning and delivering this support.



## Outcomes

The project increased the capture and quality of food recycled by an average of 60% compared to the same three months in the previous year:

	2015	2016
<b>February</b>	0.27 kg/hh	0.55 kg/hh
<b>March</b>	0.38 kg/hh	0.58 kg/hh
<b>April</b>	0.44 kg/hh	0.55 kg/hh

It also provided valuable insight into food recycling behaviours; including the attitudes and behaviours of the food and non-food recyclers. Aberdeen City Council has used the information to make changes to the existing food recycling service and plan for future services and to support communication and engagement activities.