



Community First
Yorkshire

North Yorkshire Reuse Network

22nd October 2024

Helping you thrive

Focus on Textile Waste

Agenda

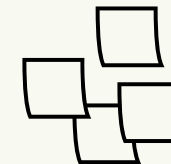
1. Welcome, aims and introductions
2. Textile Waste Presentation: Su Morgan, Community First Yorkshire
3. The Recycler's role: Wendy Yarney, Recycling Solutions
4. Example project to reduce waste: Louise Terzza, Time Together
5. Exploring the way forward: group discussion
6. Next meeting- provisionally Weds 29th Jan online





Welcome and Introductions

Things to consider before we begin





Starter Question:

How many items of clothing do you own in total?

What do you think is average in the UK?

- a) <120
- b) 120>220
- c) 220>320
- d) 320>

We'll come back to the answer soon

Textile Waste

Su Morgan, Community First Yorkshire



- **The current situation**
- **How did we get here?** A bit of fashion retail history
- **Why is this a problem?** The environmental impact
- **What's being done?** And by whom?
- **How can we have an impact?** The future



What's the current situation?

Our personal consumption

- The average person in the UK owns 118 items of clothing (including underwear, socks and hosiery) [1]
- Average spend on clothes per year in UK around £1k, 3% of salary spent on clothing (average salary £35k)
- In 1970 the average spend was around 10% of salary
- In 1970, the average person owned 25 garments [5]
- Just over a quarter (26%) of the contents of UK wardrobes have not been used in the past year, almost one third is never worn. [1]
- Across the country, more than two tonnes of clothing are bought every minute [2]



What's the current situation?

The effects of our consumption

- 150 billion garments are produced every year [11] (NB The world population is 8 billion, so that's about 19 each)
- Most go to the USA, UK and Europe
- Less than 20% of used clothing is recycled in the UK [2]
- About 30% of unwanted clothes (£140 million worth) end up in UK landfill sites [2]
- 300,000 tonnes of old clothes [2], 711,000 tonnes of post-consumer textiles (inc. furnishings etc) are discarded in the general waste annually in the UK [1]



A little Retail History

Before 2000s

- For centuries, the same person or family would spin yarn, weave cloth and sew bespoke garments which were passed on between generations.
- Industrial revolution meant mass produced, cheaper, good and consistent quality clothes from UK in factories sold in **shops** and **department stores**
- 1980-90s **Fast-fashion on the high street** e.g. Top shop, H&M, Zara, Primark. Greater competition so UK manufacturing moved to low wage economies overseas. Fast Fashion =15 days from design to store
- Late 1990s- 2000s **online shopping** reduced overheads. e.g. ASOS, Boohoo, Pretty Little Thing, Missguided. Design to web in 48hrs





A Little Retail History

The last few years

- In 2015 **Shien** was founded, using artificial intelligence, aggressive spam marketing and time-sensitive discounts, creating addiction and overconsumption. Airfreighted from China.
- Nov 2023 **H&M** launched 23,000 new products in US, **Zara** 40,000, **Shien** 1.5 million (in the previous 12 months)
- In December 2023 Shein was bigger than **H&M, Primark, ASOS, Boohoo and Forever 21** put together worth \$90billion
- In September 2022 **Temu** was founded, spending \$2billion gamifying the shopping experience using influencers and Social Media like TikTok and YouTube using their slogan “shop like a billionaire”
- 2024 Temu has 100 million users less than 2 years after founding. [18] and has overtaken Shien sales in US [7]





A little Fashion History

Our disposable society

- In 1500 a dress would cost around a month's pay to buy, in 1880 about 1 week's pay, in 1970 about a day's pay, and today as little as an hour's pay. [5]
- Fast fashion brands produce 50% more items today compared to the year 2000 [2]
- For damaged clothing, it's often cheaper and easier to replace rather than repair, which results in more waste. [2] It is cheaper to incinerate returned items than reprocess and resell them.
- The average lifespan of clothing is 3-4 years. An average clothing item should last between 100 and 200 wears, though most are thrown out before then.
- It's expensive to be poor - Terry Pratchett's boots analogy [8]



What's the Problem?

The Environmental Impact of Textile Production

- Textile production releases 2 billion tonnes of **greenhouse gases** into the atmosphere annually [2] which is 10% of global greenhouse gas emissions [1] and is on course to be 25% by 2050 [16]
- 93 billion cubic metres of **water** is used by the industry each year [1]
- Producing textiles creates 42 million tonnes of **plastic waste** each year [2] 10% of microplastics that enter the ocean every year are from textiles[2]
- Around 15% of fabric used to manufacture garments is wasted
- 30% of new clothes are never sold.{16]
- 3 minute video Feb 2022 [10]



[The fast fashion graveyard in Chile's Atacama Desert - BBC News](#)



What's the Problem?

The Environmental Impact of Textile Disposal and Decomposition

- Less than 1% of clothing waste is recycled into new clothes [2]
- 8% of old clothes are reused and only 10% are recycled worldwide[1]
- About 5% of landfill space is taken up by textile waste [2]
- Duvets and cushions are not recyclable. 72% of bedding ends up in landfill [2], see [3]
- 60% of new clothing is made from **synthetic fibres** (from oil) and takes > 200 years to decompose eg polyester, nylon, lycra, acrylic [2]
- **Man-made fibres** (from wood/bamboo pulp) can take from a few weeks to decompose under the right conditions e.g. Viscose, rayon [4]
- **Natural fibres** take from around few weeks to 2 years to decompose e.g cotton, linen, wool, silk [2]
- Video 3 mins [13]



- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/world-africa-58836618>

So, what's being done?

The big stuff

- **Downcycling**, which turns textiles into products with lower value, such as rags, insulation, or stuffing e.g. Salvation Army [12]
- **Upcycling**, which turns textiles into products with higher value than the original product
- **Textile-to-textile recycling**, which creates new textiles or garments from the fibres of old ones, using mechanical or chemical methods [19] , development of easier to remove dyes.
- **Legislation e.g.** Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) the producer pays for disposal [16] -e.g. California 2024
- **Increasing consumer awareness and demand. Rising regulatory pressure.** Governments are introducing policies and regulations to encourage textile recycling and discourage textile waste.
- **Growing industry collaboration.** Fashion brands, retailers, manufacturers, recyclers, NGOs and researchers working together to develop and scale textile recycling solutions. e.g H&M Loop [21]
- **Advancing technology development.** Textile recycling technologies are evolving rapidly and becoming more efficient, scalable, and versatile.[21]



Which company do you think has developed this strategy?

"...nine new commitments that will help us to become a more sustainable and circular business...."

Giving clothes a longer life

We will become a circular and more sustainable business

- Affordable clothes designed to last
- Clothes that can be recycled
- Clothes made from recycled fibres

We will strengthen the durability of our clothes

Our clothes will be recyclable by design

All our clothes will be made from recycled or more sustainably sourced materials

By 2025

By 2027

By 2030

Protecting life on the planet

We will nurture nature, halve carbon emissions and eliminate waste

- Halve our carbon footprint
- Eliminate non-clothing waste
- Restore biodiversity

We will halve carbon emissions across our value chain

We will eliminate single-use plastics and all our non-clothing waste

Our Primark Cotton Project will use more regenerative agricultural practices

By 2030

By 2027

By 2030

Improving people's lives

We will protect and improve the livelihoods and resilience of the people who make our clothes

- Create financial resilience
- Promote equal opportunities for women
- Improve health and wellbeing

We will pursue a living wage for workers in the supply chain and support with financial literacy training and access to social protection

We will strengthen the position of women through skills development and addressing barriers to progression

We will ensure access to effective grievance processes and widen access to help for mental and physical wellbeing

By 2030

By 2030

By 2030

Wendy Yarney

Recycling Solutions North West

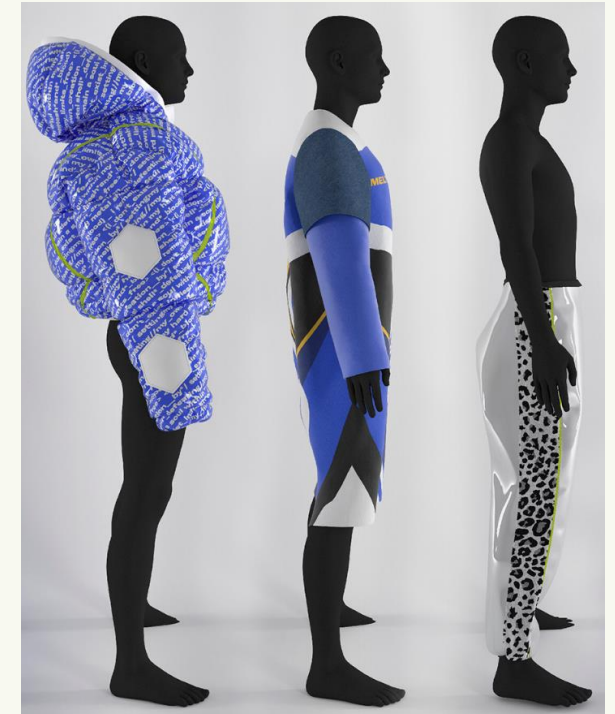
Recycling Solutions are a family run recycling company. Established in 2007, we now have our Head Office in Lancashire and hubs throughout the UK. We work with Charities and Local Authorities to collect unwanted clothing, shoes and textiles. Every month we divert at least 200,000kg from landfill and raise thousands of pounds for our partners.



The Future

Some of these are already happening, could they be of use to you?

- Use and re use recyclable packaging.
- Consider your production carbon footprint, and product disposal
- Improve inventory management
- Buy/produce quality over quantity
- Buy/use sustainable materials
- Accreditation- B Corp, Woolmark.
- Create digital product passports (DPPs) on products using e.g. QR codes with info on material used in product
- De-influencers: de-bunking myths.
- Digital fashion





Louise Terzza

Time Together



The Future

Influence of the VCSE sector- demonstrating and developing good habits

- Consumer awareness- discourage over consumption
- Donate/recycle unwanted items, buy/sell second hand
- Repair and repurpose / Provide refurbishing services – repair cafe,
- Education: improve repair skills, visible mending, e.g. Sashiko
- Rent/hire clothes and other items instead of buying them
- Clothes swap, clothing banks
- Charity department stores- collaboration
- Encourage people to shop locally
- More suggestions...?
- NB. eBay's Circular Fashion Fund Open for 2024 (UK) deadline 15/11





Summary

What are the key drivers of change?

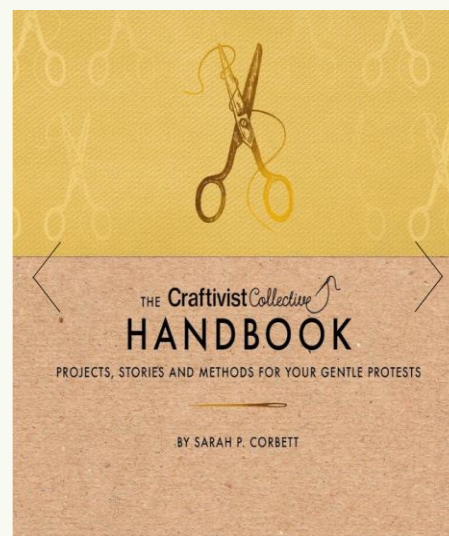
- **Consumer behaviour and demand:** e.g. education, awareness, incentives, preferences, trends, and social values.
- **Technological innovation and development:** e.g. new products, applications, research, investment, collaboration, and regulation.
- **Regulation and policies:** e.g. subsidies, incentives, funding, setting targets, standards, facilitating cooperation, environmental and social impacts, fraud and greenwashing, trade barriers, political will, public opinion, and international cooperation.



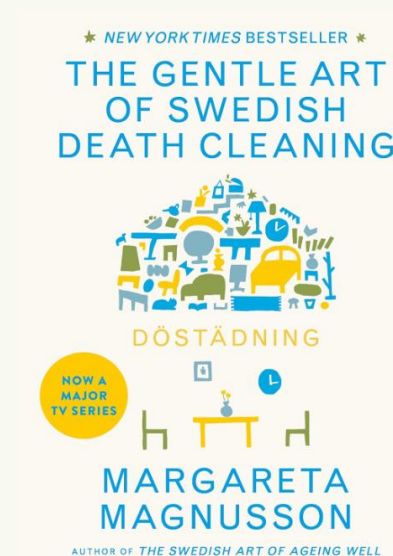


Further Reading

Something to ask Father Christmas for?



[20]



References (1/2)

1. [WRAP Citizen Insights: Clothing Longevity and Circular Business Models Receptivity in the UK | WRAP](#)
2. [Fashion Waste Statistics & Facts | Textile & Clothing Waste Facts \(businesswaste.co.uk\)](#)
3. [Textile Take Back Scheme - Help Reduce Waste | Dunelm take back duvets](#)
4. [How Long Does It Take for Different Textiles to Decompose? | reDONATE.uk](#)
5. [Less By Patrick Grant | New | 9780008664008 | World of Books \(wob.com\)](#)
6. [How Temu is shaking up the world of online shopping - BBC News](#)
7. [Shein vs Temu: A Fast Fashion Social Listening Analysis \(digimind.com\)](#)
8. [Sam Vimes 'Boots' Theory of Socio-Economic Unfairness | Terry Pratchett](#)
9. <https://www.mrw.co.uk/news/charities-relationship-with-textile-merchants-unsustainable-28-05-2024/>
10. [The fast fashion graveyard in Chile's Atacama Desert - BBC News \(3 minute video- Chile\)](#)
11. [No One Knows How Many Clothes Are Made. Why Won't Brands Tell Us? - Good On You](#)
12. [Sustainability - Salvation Army \(salvationarmytrading.org.uk\)](#)
13. [Fast fashion: The dumping ground for unwanted clothes - BBC News \(3 minute video - Ghana\)](#)
14. [Sustainability Report | Primark Cares \(UK\)](#)
15. [Our Commitments | Primark Cares \(UK\)](#)

References (2/2)

16. [Blog: The Biggest Issue in Fashion is Overproduction – This is Unfolded](#)
17. [California Set to Mandate Clothing Recycling as Wardrobe Waste Grows | BoF \(businessoffashion.com\)](#)
18. [29 Temu Statistics for Small Businesses to Know in 2024 \(fitsmallbusiness.com\)](#)
19. [Textile Recycling: Latest Trends, Challenges and Opportunities \(thetextilethinktank.org\)](#)
20. [Craftivist Collective \(craftivist-collective.com\)](#)
21. [Textile Recycling: Latest Trends, Challenges and Opportunities \(thetextilethinktank.org\)](#)

Conclusion

What are your take-aways?

What's the most alarming fact you have learned today?

What do you think you might do as a result of this session? Personally, or in your organisation?

Any Questions?

What important news would you like to share?

Next meeting- provisionally Weds 29th Jan online

