



Re: Legislative Council Subcommittee on Refuse Collection and Resource Recovery:
Meeting on 16 January 2016

The Wilsons

to:

sc_ea_rcrr, Mandy YM POON

05/01/2017 10:40

Cc:

Roz Keep

Hide Details

From: The Wilsons <livinglamma@yahoo.com>

To whom it may concern,

My name is Jo Wilson. In 2009, I started Living Lamma with other Lamma residents in order to report on, and hopefully stop, fly-tipping activities on private land on Lamma Island. From that point we moved on to lobbying for improved waste facilities and, in the process, learned much about the history of the problem and the issues surrounding it. Attached below are some of the papers relevant to your topic that we have submitted over the years.

When efforts to improve our waste management through government engagement and reporting proved frustrating, we also engaged in direct action to clean up our community, organise the waste management for community events, and collect glass for recycling. Our learning from experience - particularly on the issue of marine trash, community recycling, and talking to people at all levels and from very different backgrounds - informs our views.

Focusing on our city's refuse collection facilities is very important. On Lamma, these have not significantly changed in the 20 years I have lived here, and we see that bin facilities across Hong Kong share similar characteristics and habits of use. Similarly critical to progress is addressing land issues to facilitate better community waste management and create jobs in the place which they serve, so that people can be rewarded for simple, local initiatives to better organise and communicate waste management measures.

Summing up this experience for you is no easy task, particularly within the bounds of the Legco committee process. My time is now taken up in leading clean up activities and giving talks in schools, universities and businesses on our marine trash problem and habit change. This is not about blaming or telling people what to do, but about framing the problem in its historical context, demonstrating a good example, and empowering people to make different choices. The feedback so far has been wonderful, and despair has given way to hope for a cleaner, healthier, more caring environment.

I would like to understand whether, through this process, the Legco committee is looking for ideas that can inform the members in their capacity as citizens, to change their own habits and have an impact on those around them, or whether the focus is solely on legislative means for improving outcomes on waste. In our view, both are equally important.

This is a huge subject, and there is no shortage of good ideas and examples, both in Hong Kong and around the world, of how things could be improved. Understanding the value of small actions, and having the people who know the local community, who are skilled in problem solving, communication and organisation, and who can put good ideas into action, is the challenge, particularly where people might be stationed at a distance to the problem, might not be in the job long enough to affect change, might not have the necessary training and skills, or be empowered to provide an appropriate local solution.

When we started our journey to improve waste management, it was to rid our neighbourhood of eyesores caused by waste and to make ourselves feel better about the waste we produce by asking for better recycling. It soon became clear that we are but one part of a global problem which has led to the contamination of our oceans with plastic that now threatens livelihoods and health. As this provides the reason for urgent action to be taken on waste, I have included links to some of our relevant news articles and videos below also.

I look forward to meeting you on 16th January.

Best regards

Jo Wilson

Tel: [REDACTED]

SELECTED REPORTS ON WASTE MANAGEMENT FROM LIVING LAMMA

All reports have been previously submitted to government, Legco, or both, and are available on: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0B1Cm4B5sAtqiTlcxYzVCWGtfOEU>. Hard copies are available for viewing by appointment at Living Lamma's office. Call 90423241 or 29820920 to arrange a visit.

1995 Report on Community Recycling: 1995OnWaste_Excerpt.pdf

This report was made by a town planner living on Lamma at the time, and the suggestions made are all very relevant today.

2009 - April 29 - Submission to Legco on Combatting Fly-tipping: 2009APR29LegcoPaperOnDumping.pdf

Response to Legco enquiry. Sadly, the fly-tipping continues - it is normal practice for both government and local contractors. Our children grow up with it. Our tourists are appalled by it. This is one area where the on-site treatment of community refuse could be enhanced with a licensed community facility under contract to the government and operating under strict controls.

2009 - November 18 - Case Study of the Yung Shue Long Valley: 2009NOV18YSLDumpingReport.pdf

How waste problems are seen by the public and how they are handled by the bureaucracy does not make for a happy outcome. It does not matter if we are talking about the Yung Shue Long Valley case, or many other incidences where trash is not where it is supposed to be. The culture of buck-passing is understandable where jobs are rotated, not located in the community which they serve, and often given to those who have no training or are not empowered to fix problems. That said, there are some remarkable people in government roles who are passionate and capable, and who could make a huge difference to waste management outcomes if they were given the scope to do so by

working with community, local businesses and other relevant departments. Our ability to change organisational culture is a strategic human resource management issue, and as such, the head of the Civil Service should be made fully aware of the importance of having the right person in a project management role stationed in the community.

2010 - February 23 - Stop the Mess Report: Reports labelled 2010FEBStoptheMess.pdf (numbered 1-13). Note: because of the photographs the file size in some of these documents might be too large to preview and may take time to download.

An audit of Lamma's waste problems containing some 250 photos, which was instrumental in our learning about how waste is viewed and handled. A walk around the same 10 villages of northern Lamma today would show that not much has changed in 7 years, though with the increasing awareness of the impact of marine plastic on our food chain, and other developments, it is hoped that change could happen very quickly.

2010 - March 30 - Submission to Legco on Fly-tipping: 2010MAR30LegcoPanelPaper.pdf
Response to Legco enquiry.

2010 - March 31 - Paper on Waste Charging: 2010MAR31WasteChargingConsultation.pdf
Response to a government consultation.

2010 - April 30 - Paper on Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment: 2010APR30WEEECConsultation.pdf
Response to a government consultation.

2010 - May 5 - Waste Transfer Station Visit Notes: ;2010MAY05LLWasteTransferStationVisit.pdf
Lamma residents from all walks of life want to do more to reduce and recycle their trash. Often times, the facilities do not exist, or they simply do not know what to do. With the exception of glass, which is now collected for recycling on Lamma, residents feel frustrated by the lack of easily available information and facilities that might help them make better choices. The lack of knowledge and facilities continues to be a source of frustration today. We took questions from residents to the WTS. Hong Kong government is able to operate at a macro level and provide waste statistics. They are also very good at responding to enquiries where the facilities already exist and the staff have knowledge of them. What is lacking is the ability to enquire on behalf of the public and return with a solution that makes practical sense for the community. Consequently, many of these questions still have no answer.

2010 - November 1 - Report on Composting: 2010NOV10CompostingReport.pdf
Written by community composting experts living on Lamma and submitted to government.

2011 - December 5 - Presentation to Legco on Waste: 2011DEC05WasteLegco.pdf
We need the infrastructure spending, we need to raise awareness, but we need to fix things at a local level. Every picture represents a problem to solve through better organisation and communication at ground level.

2011 - December 15 - Letters to Edward Yau: 2011DEC15LLOpenLetterstoEdwardYau.pdf
On the incinerator and Lamma's waste management problems.

2012 - April 9 - Paper on Waste Charging: 2012APR09WasteChargingConsultation.pdf
Response to a government consultation.

2012 - June 7 - Meeting Notes, EPD, On Waste: 2012JUN07EPDMtgReport.pdf
Reviewing the pilot scheme for glass and other items for recovery. The glass recycling experience highlighted the limits of government/contractor organisation and communication within the community, and what simple steps are needed to take glass recovery from well under 100 kgs/week to over 1 tonne.

2012 - October 17 - Joint Visit Notes, On Redesigning Waste**Facilities:** 2012OCT17JointVisitNotesWaste.pdf

Pre-visit notes. The morning of the visit, the waste facilities were emptied and scrubbed clean, giving the impression that the problems that we see every day did not exist. In preparing these notes, we created a folder of pictures to show to participants so they could have some idea of the problem. This is not the same as seeing the problem in situ, and the problem of positive reporting (and fear of criticism) remains a major issue.

2012 - October 24 - Joint Visit Report, On Redesigning Waste Facilities (with pictures): 2012OCT24LL_JointVisitReportWaste.pdf

Following the visit and a subsequent meeting. We wanted to see Lamma's bin areas transformed to make them attractive and fit for purpose - billboards for good practice with regards to waste and practical so as to serve the needs of the community (so that every child could learn to put their waste IN the bin and their recoiling in the correct place, and that the bins would be protected from dogs and pigs that regularly get into them and cause so much mess). We found out that different departments are responsible for different types of waste and no-one is responsible for bin design. The Lands Department needs to be engaged so that they can raise the standards on how they treat land under their jurisdiction to serve as a good example to others and to assist other departments and the community better in the upgrading of waste facilities.

2013 - April 22 - Legco Speaking Notes: PRS for Glass: 2013APR_LegcoSpeakingNotes.pdf

Response to Legco enquiry.

2013 - May 6 - Paper on PRS for Glass: 2013MAYGlassRecyclingPRS.pdf

Response to Government consultation.

2013 - July 7 - District Action Plan for Better Waste**Management:** 2013JUL_DistrictPlanforBetterWasteMgt.pdf

A paper submitted to KS Wong on Hong Kong's track record on waste strategy (which is excellent) and the implementation of strategy (which suffers from historical organisational culture, and structural issues). This paper focuses on practical action points for: waste reduction, carbon reduction, heritage and ecological conservation and education, job creation and community benefits. It is written about Lamma, but it is intended for each district in Hong Kong to adopt this approach.

In the Press

<https://www.hongkongfp.com/2016/02/02/plastic-paradise-hong-kongs-packaging-problem/>

This article appeared around the globe on Yahoo news, the UK's Daily Mail, in the Japan Times, and even in South America! The little girl is my daughter, Kate, who has not experienced a trash free beach in Hong Kong in her 7 years on the planet. Like other kids who are being educated about micro plastics, she is trained to see tiny pieces of plastic even on beaches that are regularly cleaned. She has witnessed overwhelming tides of trash that turn our beaches into landfill sites again and again, and seen the plastic and polystyrene inside fish bellies and mouths when we cut up the dead ones we find on the beach.

http://www.chinadailyasia.com/focus/2015-06/24/content_15281074.html

On marine trash and the fishing industry.

<http://www.ecozine.com/article/marine-debris>

Taking a trip to Lap Sap Wan on Hong Kong Island.

<https://radicalhk.com/2016/12/10/lapsap/>

An interview with the "lap sap gweipo" at Fish for Trash in Aberdeen harbour.

<http://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/health-environment/article/1990213/hong-kong-destroying-itself-residents-urged-clean>

Taking on a challenge to face your plastic footprint is a great way to start to think about things differently. Last year, we repeated the exercise with 120 students from Hong Kong University. The students were assessed on their ability to change their habits. Failure and creativity were encouraged and the result was fantastic, with the students learning not only how to change their own habits, but also to affect habit change in others.

<http://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/article/2058242/hong-kongs-everyday-heroes-2016>

It was a lovely surprise to be included as an everyday hero for 2016. The great thing is that those of us who spend our time to clean up and understand our marine trash issue are growing in number. Anyone can be a hero in this respect.

Videos

On management of construction waste: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wkv-tCU5kd4&t=186s>

On marine trash:

16th December 2012 - Brand on the Beach: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ICUSZyZdZxY>

12th January 2014 - Brand on the Beach clean up: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2f3110Pt-9k>

17th February 2014 - Pearl Report: Plastic Plague - Part 1: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-6xCCSyb960> and Part 2: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NBQM7NemUn4>

18th May 2015 - Joint Living Lamma/EPD clean up: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jcnVAMEvlgw>

26th June 2016 - Fish for Trash in Aberdeen harbour: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Bw4BOtAQ0>

Submission ends 5th January 2017