



Polio

# The Ups & Downs

We asked some leading lights of the waste and resources industry for their 2013 ups and downs, what they wanted to see happen in 2014 and, most difficult of all, to sum up the last 12 months in 10 words or less. Here's what they had to say...

Liz Goodwin – Chief Executive, WRAP

**Your highlight of 2013:** The massive reaction to WRAP's report with latest data on the scale of household food waste – it re-ignited public awareness of the sheer size of this global issue.

**Your lowlight of 2013:** Defra's root and branch review of its funding of WRAP looked as if it was going to hit morale and be a massive distraction – but in the end the positive feedback they got about WRAP's work from all sectors was a huge boost for us.

**The biggest impact in 2013:** It's the scores of unsung heroes in the resources (not waste) sector who are focused on getting maximum value out of resources. The biggest impact on me came from hearing Walter Stahel at the Scottish Resources Conference this Autumn.

**In 2014 I would like...** To see more real life examples emerging, which demonstrate why there is such a buzz about how new business models based on a circular economy could be transformational for our economy and environment.

**2013 in 10 words or less:** A year closer to a truly resource efficient economy.



Janez Potocnik – European Commissioner for the Environment

**Your highlight of 2013:** Being awarded the 2013 United Nations "Champion of the Earth". I see it as recognition for the excellent work of my whole team in the European Commission in putting resource efficiency and food waste on the European and global agendas.

**Your lowlight of 2013:** Seeing once again the devastation wrought by increasing climate-related extreme conditions; this time in the Philippines. And at the same time witnessing the inability of so many political leaders to grasp the need for action.

**The biggest impact in 2013:** Dame Ellen MacArthur has perhaps had the biggest impact in building the business case for circular economy and getting businesses on board. She has shown, with her great energy and commitment, that waste management begins in the design stage of our products.

**In 2014 I would like...** to see a high turnout in the European elections with a good debate to reveal that nationalists and populists do not have the answers to our shared interests and challenges.

**2013 in 10 words or less:** '13 was not so unlucky after all!

Craig Anderson – Chief Executive, Furniture Re-use Network

**Your highlight of 2013:** Personally, the overwhelming good response I've had to my speech on waste and poverty at the recent CIWM Presidential Dinner.

**Your lowlight of 2013:** Dealing with the exploitation of the charitable re-use sector and the unqualified rhetoric on the new agenda of re-use, while April's welfare changes have put extra pressure on our sector to support those in need, and all the time products are being wasted.

**The biggest impact in 2013:** Looking at this in terms of society and environment, it has to be the re-use sector practitioners.

**In 2014 I would like...** delivery of joined-up policy agendas across government departments and recognition of the savings to be made.

**2013 in 10 words or less:** Can't do it right? Don't do it at all!



Colin Church – Director, Resource & Sustainability, Defra

**Your highlight of 2013:** Winning the Judicial Review on separate collection, confirming what is technically, economically and environmentally practicable; and developing and publishing the Waste Prevention Programme for England.

**Your lowlight of 2013:** The sequence of waste site fires and the continued problem of waste crime.

**The biggest impact in 2013:** Lord de Mauley, especially his personal commitment to getting the MRF Regulations sorted and to tackling waste crime.

**In 2014 I would like...** to see the MRF regulations in place and a sensible and forward-looking debate on the EU Commission's proposals on resource management and the circular economy.

**2013 in 10 words or less:** Difficult, with some progress.



Steve Lee – Chief Executive, CIWM

**Your highlight of 2013:** I've said this before, but it was the CIWM New Member Network Conference. Great energy!

**Your lowlight of 2013:** Hmmm, probably the summer consultation on Defra's National Waste Prevention Programme. I know it wasn't on the Programme itself, but I was disappointed by the lack of proposed leadership and action by the Government.

**The biggest impact in 2013:** Quite possibly the commingled collections Judicial Review. But just like Zhou Enlai's thoughts on the French Revolution, "it is too early to say".

**In 2014 I would like...** to see "edoc" take off. We generate enormous mountains of data in this industry, but precious little information to base decisions upon. If we take the Duty of Care seriously and start to care about the data it demands/consumes, we can get a vital understanding of "resource" flows.

**2013 in 10 words or less:** Hard yards. Money tight. Uphill. But driving new ideas.



Dr Nina Skorupska – Chief Executive, Renewable Energy Assoc.

**Your highlight of 2013:** The WRAP "Organics Recycling Survey 2012", which revealed that there are now over 100 AD plants operational in the UK. Roll on 1000!

**Your lowlight of 2013:** The ongoing policy constraint on small-scale AD, which will cause disaster for industry in 2014 unless the situation is urgently resolved.

**The biggest impact in 2013:** Can I be biased and say the REA/AfOR merger?! This has strengthened our work in a number of key areas, especially digestate and certification.

**In 2014 I would like...** for our political leaders to unequivocally affirm that building a low carbon energy infrastructure is more important than who wins the 2015 election.

**2013 in 10 words or less:** In at the deep end! Hard work but exhilarating.



## Bary Dennis – Director General, ESA

**Your highlight of 2013:** The Judicial Review outcome at the beginning of the year – a victory for common sense.



**Your lowlight of 2013:** Yet another change in Defra with the Waste & Resources Minister – Dan Rogerson (pictured) is our 4th in as many years!

**The biggest impact in 2013:** That the circular economy idea is now common currency within the industry and is slowly integrating into other sectors.

**In 2014 I would like...** a better investment climate for new waste infrastructure, along with practical EU proposals to improve eco-design for recyclability to help drive the circular economy.

**2013 in 10 words or less:** A lot of economic and policy uncertainty over the last year.



## David Newman – President, ISWA

**Your highlight of 2013:** Addressing the 1 200+ participants at ISWA's October annual congress in Vienna with our vision and achievements in 2013 – a magnificent occasion and truly international with 84 countries represented. Also seeing modest, hard-working people in developing countries achieve great results with few resources... a lesson in humility.

**Your lowlight of 2013:** Seeing waste everywhere – on the streets, in rivers and canals of Jakarta... waste burning in fires, even in the city centres – and thinking about dioxins emissions and what needs to be done. While we in Europe discuss resource recovery, these people are literally living in waste. And Jakarta is not by any means the worst case; terribly sad.

**The biggest impact in 2013:** I come from an international perspective. I am impressed with the hands-on approach of the Climate and Clean Air Coalition for Short Lived Climate Pollutants to which ISWA belongs and was established in 2012 by Hilary Clinton and others; also the UNEP Global Partnership on Waste Management which we help lead – these entities are both making an impact in getting resources, capacity building and planning to cities in developing countries. It is too little, but it is admirable nonetheless.

**In 2014 I would like...** global waste projects in 2012 actually initiated amounted to around \$11bn; in 2013 to around \$22bn; I would love to see that figure double in 2014. It means real resources are going to where they are needed, building facilities to recycle, recover energy and landfill safely.

**2013 in 10 words or less:** Inspiring, tiring [he visited 20+ countries], humbling; extraordinary people from all walks of life.



## Mat Crocker – Head of Illegals & Waste, Environment Agency

**Your highlight of 2013:** Seeing the results of our intelligence led crime work – we shut down more than 1 200 illegal waste sites during 2012/13, more than we have ever done before in a single year.

**Your lowlight of 2013:** Some of the fires at waste sites were significant and had an impact on local communities and the environment, this is why we wrote to over 8 000 site operators to give them a checklist and simple advice to minimise fire risk, and have been targeting our inspections at the sites we believe pose the greatest risks.

**The biggest impact in 2013:** When we look back on 2013 I think we will see that our promise to reduce charges for businesses that comply with their permits (up to 70 percent less) will have been the start of a big impact in the waste industry.

**In 2014 I would like...** to continue to build on the links we have with the good part of the waste industry, to give us better intelligence about who is up to no good, so we can take action that is good for the environment, people and legitimate businesses. To continue to find successful ways to work with enforcement partners to efficiently and robustly tackle waste crime.

**2013 in 10 words or less:** More illegal waste sites shut, more prevention and intelligence gathering.



## Charlotte Morton – Chief Executive, ADBA

**Your highlight of 2013:** It has been excellent to see the continued growth in AD capacity this year – at the time of writing there are now 123 plants outside the water sector, up from 88 a year ago, showing the industry's determination to achieve its full potential.

**Your lowlight of 2013:** The confirmation of sub 500 kW FIT degression is this year's worst news. Through the Ecosystem Markets Task Force and On-Farm AD Fund the government has shown that it appreciates the benefits of on-farm AD, and the industry is just starting to build capacity at that scale, but the tariff degression risks putting the brakes on that progress.

**The biggest impact in 2013:** Definitely our members who have persevered and overcome market and policy challenges to keep building, and are delivering jobs, clean energy and more sustainable farming.

**In 2014 I would like...** to see resolution of the Feed-in-Tariff levels to support smaller scale AD, increased recognition of the many benefits of AD aside from energy generation – especially on-farm – and the waste policy framework reviewed to provide a clear strategy for the best use of our organic waste resources.

**2013 in 10 words or less:** AD has blossomed, let's make sure it's here to stay.



## Joy Blizzard – Chair, LARAC

**Your highlight of 2013:** It has to be Colin Kirkby's turn as host for the LARAC Awards and his recycling version of "Always look on the bright side of life". Seeing a room full of waste people all singing "when you're chewing on life's pickle, don't worry – give a whistle" will live long in the memory. A fitting end to his long LARAC career.

**Your lowlight of 2013:** That with reports on just how serious food waste is from the Institution of Mechanical Engineers, the UN and Tesco, to name but a few, there still seems no major lead from government to tackle the issue.

**The biggest impact in 2013:** The "Love Food Hate Waste" team at WRAP – its messages keep popping up all over the place, even when they get no credit for it.

**In 2014 I would like...** to see less wringing of hands, fewer platitudes, and a minster that is allowed to stay put long enough to put in some concrete plans.

**2013 in 10 words or less:** "Filth and dirt troubles the silver spring where England drinks." – Henry VI pt 2.



## Ray Georgeson – Chief Executive, Resource Association

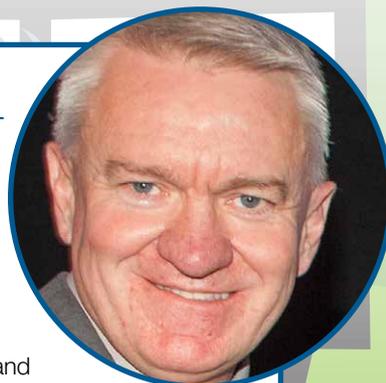
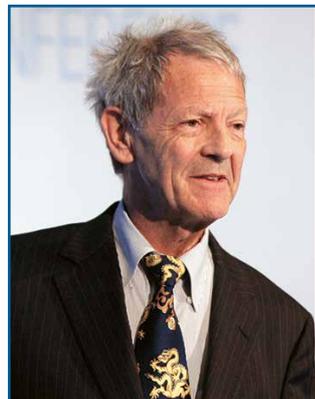
**Your highlight of 2013:** I had the opportunity to share a meal with and listen to Prof Walter Stahel (pictured) of the Product Life Institute Geneva when he spoke at the CIWM/Zero Waste Scotland Scottish Resources Conference in October. He is the real guru of the circular economy, articulated long before it was called that. His wisdom should be more widely shared.

**Your lowlight of 2013:** The disappearing leadership of Government in England combined with flat-lining recycling rates and policy delay, inconsistency and uncertainty – it's all very well saying that industry has to lead but there are areas in which only Government can take a lead and should do. Investment follows clear and consistent policy, regulation and direction from Government.

**The biggest impact in 2013:** It might well have been Mr Justice Hickinbottom in Cardiff in the spring when he pronounced on the Judicial Review on separate collections... but nobody really knows, yet...

**In 2014 I would like...** a European Parliament election with an intelligent and informed debate on the UK's relationship with the EU and recognition of our responsibility to Europe and importance within it as well as the value it has to the UK waste and resources industry – but I'm not holding my breath!

**2013 in 10 words or less:** Green fence, industry tense, Government loses its common sense [thanks for making it rhyme Ray!].





### Cllr Mike Jones – Chair, LGA Environment and Housing Board

**Your highlight of 2013:** The launch of the LGA's *Wealth from Waste* report and our pitch to focus on value – where there's muck there's brass – £1bn pounds worth, plus the potential for economic growth and up to 50 000 jobs.

**Your lowlight of 2013:** Having to talk more than any councillor should about the frequency and type of waste and recycling collection – let's recognise the local deal and leave it to councils!

**The biggest impact in 2013:** Local government for keeping at it and delivering big improvements in recycling and refuse collection and many other services despite challenging cuts, as recognised in the recent BBC poll.

**In 2014 I would like...** a better deal for tax payers, flat landfill tax and its reinvestment in infrastructure focused on quality and value for the UK.

**2013 in 10 words or less:** Moving in the right direction, let's keep it up.

### David Beadle – North London Waste Authority & President, CIWM

**Your highlight of 2013:** The increasing profile of food waste (pictured) in the media, and therefore in the public consciousness, as an urgent issue – good for waste reduction, good for the pocket.

**Your lowlight of 2013:** Lack of ambition from Government as evidenced by the Waste Prevention Programme consultation and the Waste Management Plan for England – settling for EU compliance but no more! Further reinforced by communications from Lord de Mauley and Dan Rogerson, unfortunately.



**The biggest impact in 2013:** The decision on the Judicial Review on commingling and subsequent mixed messages from various sources. More to follow in 2014 I'm sure...

**In 2014 I would like...** to see our industry and other stakeholders, including Government, come together to identify pragmatically what Government needs to lead on and what can reasonably be left to local authorities, their diminishing budgets and the market.

**2013 in 10 words or less:** When England really started to fall behind on resource aspiration.



### Alun Davies – Minister for Natural Resources and Food, Wales

**Your highlight of 2013:** Progress towards zero waste in Wales; we exceeded our 52 percent recycling target and are leading the way in the UK, thanks to hard work from householders and local authorities. In Gwynedd, Prosiect GwyrAD came on-line, an AD facility able to generate enough electricity to power around 700 homes.

**Your lowlight of 2013:** Despite good progress, a recent WRAP report estimates around 210 000 tonnes of food that could have been eaten is wasted in Wales each year.

**The biggest impact in 2013:** Frank O'Connor, who is stepping down as Director of Ecodesign Centre Wales. He founded the centre, which won the 2013 World Green Design Contribution award.



Ecodesign  
Centre Wales  
Canolfan  
Ecodydylunio  
Cymru

**In 2014 I would like...** lots of progress. I want to see Wales approach a 60 percent recyclables recovery rate, more green jobs created, and for Welsh businesses to reap the benefits of becoming more resource efficient. I also want to shift people's thinking towards waste prevention and re-use. Our Waste Prevention Programme and the draft Environment Bill set out how we will achieve our ambitions.

**2013 in 10 words or less:** Rethinking resource use to improve lives in Wales.

Enda Kiernan – Cork County Council & Chair CIWM ROI Centre

**Your highlight of 2013:** The establishment of three new waste management regional planning groups (reducing from 10 previous plans) and being nominated onto the Technical Operations Working Group for the Southern Regional Waste Management Plan.

**Your lowlight of 2013:** The cessation of a project known as RX3 – a group set up to look at the feasibility of the development of opportunities and employment by using recyclates on the Island rather than exporting them to the Far East/Asia.

**The biggest impact in 2013:** The Troika!!

**In 2014 I would like...** to see economic growth, which would provide some encouragement to the industry and the potential for further investment in the development of infrastructure.

**2013 in 10 words or less:** Challenging year, the ship's righted – hopefully not pointed towards shore!



John Quinn – Chief Executive, Arc 21 & Chair, CIWM NI Centre

**Your highlight of 2013:** Publication of the New Northern Ireland Waste Management Strategy (warts and all) as it provides more clarity to the sector in planning for the future.

**Your lowlight of 2013:** The investigation into significant (allegedly) illegal waste activities in Northern Ireland, and the continued lack of clarity on separate collection.

**The biggest impact in 2013:** I suspect the outworking of the Mills Report on the above alleged illegal activity, recently submitted to DOE NI, will have a material effect on the sector, and Lord de Mauley's swansong letter to councils on separate collection.

**In 2014 I would like...** a more holistic and cohesive approach to capacity planning for waste infrastructure regionally and nationally.

**2013 in 10 words or less:** Three steps forward, two steps back, but still making progress.



Ian McAulay – Chief Executive, Viridor

**Your highlight of 2013:** Personally, joining Viridor as the new CEO; for Viridor, the new customers, colleagues, services and partnerships and the steady progress in recycling and strong delivery in our EfW projects and contracts; for the sector, cautious optimism regarding the economy and our industry's contribution to material and economic recovery.

**Your lowlight of 2013:** Unhelpful polarity/lack of cohesion over recycling systems and waste capacity – risking undermining essential services and progress.

**The biggest impact in 2013:** The continued real investment by Viridor, and others, in essential capacity and infrastructure.

**In 2014 I would like...** to see quality in recycling recognised as imperative and the role of energy from waste in delivering base-load security acknowledged, with both contributing still more to a confident and vibrant UK economy.

**2013 in 10 words or less:** Investing in the challenge for change.



Iain Gulland – Director, Zero Waste Scotland

**Your highlight of 2013:** The Scottish Resources Conference – we dropped the word "waste" and witnessed a mesmerising presentation by circular economy pioneer Walter Stahel. This is now the event to be at for forward-thinking people in the resources industry.

**Your lowlight of 2013:** Finding out that we spend £53m of public money just clearing up litter. That's a wasted resource on many levels. I'm glad that we're at the forefront of new ideas to tackle litter in Scotland.

**The biggest impact in 2013:** Two words: circular economy. It's not just about changing the language; it's about changing who's having the conversation. As an economic issue we can expect the pace of change to accelerate; folk had better move fast to keep up.

**In 2014 I would like...** more signatories to Scotland's Resource Sector Commitment. It's our vehicle for resource managers who are committed to change and being in the vanguard of a better resource economy – come on guys, let's see you all!

**2013 in 10 words or less:** The year the tide turned.

