



Communities and Local Government Committee

Oral evidence: [Litter](#), HC 607
Tuesday 6 January 2015

Ordered by the House of Commons to be published on 6 January 2015.

Evidence from witnesses:

Panel 1 (Questions 96-166)

[McDonald's Restaurants Ltd](#)

[Tobacco Manufacturers Association](#)

David Sedaris

Panel 2 (Questions 167-231)

[Industry Council for Research on Packaging and the Environment \(INCPEN\)](#)

Environmental Services Association

[Foodservices Packaging Association](#)

The Wrigley Company Ltd

Watch the session

Members present: Mr Clive Betts (Chair); Bob Blackman; Simon Danczuk; Mrs Mary Glendon; David Heyes; Mark Pawsey; John Pugh; John Stevenson; and Chris Williamson.

Panel 1 Questions [96-166]

Witnesses: **Cherry Lewis-Taylor**, McDonald's Franchisee, McDonald's Restaurants Ltd, **Giles Roca**, Director General, Tobacco Manufacturers Association, and **David Sedaris**, Broadcaster, author and campaigner on litter, gave evidence.

Q96 Chair: Good afternoon and welcome to everyone. Happy New Year to everyone as well in our first meeting of the new year. This is our second evidence session into our inquiry into litter and fly-tipping. Before we begin, members of the Committee will want to put on record their interests they may have in this issue. I am vice president of the Local Government Association. Perhaps if we just go around the table.

Chris Williamson: Yes, I am Chris Williamson. I have two members of staff who are elected members on Derby City Council.

David Heyes: I also have two members of staff who are elected councillors.

Simon Danczuk: My wife is an elected councillor and some of my staff are councillors.

Bob Blackman: I am secretary of the All Party Parliamentary Group for Action on Smoking and Health.

Mrs Glindon: My husband is a councillor and I have a member of staff who is a councillor.

John Stevenson: I will put on record that I know Giles socially.

Chair: I have apologies for Mark Pawsey who will be joining us later. He had to go to another meeting in between. I will just get it right. Mark is the chair of the All Party Group on Packaging, which he—

Mrs Glindon: I am a member.

Q97 Chair: You are a member, but Mark is the chair of it and he would want it put on the record. Rather than intervene when he comes in, we will put on the record. He has already declared it in our previous session, so that is on the record as well.

Right, on to today. I will ask the members of the panel to say who they are and the organisation they represent, as a starter.

Giles Roca: I am Giles Roca. I am Director General of the Tobacco Manufacturers Association, which represents British American Tobacco, Imperial Tobacco and Japan Tobacco International.

David Sedaris: My name is David Sedaris and I am a writer and I spend between three and eight hours a day picking up rubbish on the side of the road.

Cherry Lewis-Taylor: My name is Cherry Lewis-Taylor. I am a franchisee, owner/operator, with McDonald's Restaurants. I have been a franchisee for just over 18 years and I have four restaurants in Essex, and I am representing myself.

Q98 Chair: Thank you all very much for coming. David Sedaris, to begin with I suppose I could ask you why you go around picking up litter for so long a day but also, more interestingly, why do people drop it in the first place. What is your take on the situation?

David Sedaris: That is who I wish was sitting here because I never see anybody doing it. I go by the side of the road and I have picked up tonnes and tonnes and tonnes of rubbish. I have never seen anybody throw anything out of a car window. I create a person from the things that I find. From the foodstuffs and the products that I find I try to imagine who this person might be, but I don't know. I wish that person was here because I have so many questions for that person.

Q99 Chair: Is it a cultural thing? When you go around cities in Japan there is a lot less litter. When you go to Switzerland it always looks quite a bit cleaner. You spend quite a lot of time in the US as well. Are there differences in approach in different countries, in your experience?

David Sedaris: It is funny how many people I have spoken to in the UK who say, "Well, it is like this everywhere". It is not. You have to go deep into Eastern Europe to find it this bad. I lived in France for a number of years. I have never seen anything like this anywhere in France. I lived in Japan for a while. I have never seen any rubbish whatsoever in Japan. It is obviously a cultural thing.

Q100 Chair: Can we affect people's culture in that way, too? Is that what we have to do? Can we do it? Is there a relative possibility of doing it?

David Sedaris: Where I live in West Sussex there is a school, we would call it a middle school, with junior high school students. I do not know, but they are probably from 12 to 15 years old. The amount of rubbish that comes from the school is staggering. My local councillor went to the head teacher of the school to talk about it and the head teacher said, "It is demeaning to make children pick up rubbish". If that is the lesson there is no hope. If throwing it down is fine but picking it up is disgraceful then there is a real problem. There are some that also have this idea that if it is hidden it is okay. You peek into any hedgerow and it is just a living trashcan. In London the idea is if you throw it in a tree then somehow it is okay. You will notice trees with bags of dog crap and cans and bottles as if someone said, "That is gone. I took care of that", as if being in the shade will somehow make it okay. I don't know what goes through people's minds.

Q101 Chair: I will come on to Ms Lewis-Taylor. McDonald's customers obviously drop an awful lot of litter if you have to clear it up three times a day, don't they? They are major offenders.

Cherry Lewis-Taylor: I think litter is dropped by a tiny minority of customers in proportion to the whole. McDonald's and my organisation takes litter very seriously. We do have litter patrols. McDonald's as a whole has had litter patrols since 1982, as the brief told you. These go out from every single restaurant for about 150 metres. We don't just pick up McDonald's rubbish. We do pick up every bit of rubbish we can within that range. There are 1,200 restaurants each doing a litter patrol like that every day. In my own restaurants I employ full-time members of staff. I have nine full-time members of staff and one of their primary roles is just to collect litter and, again, not just in my car parks but in the immediate area, 150 to 250 metres away. That is at quite a considerable cost obviously, but it is a community restaurant and we believe in that community and social responsibility.

Q102 Chair: Do you ever get the community or your customers involved in litter-picking activities?

Cherry Lewis-Taylor: McDonald's were a founding member as part of the Keep Britain Tidy, Love Where You Live event campaign, which started in 2011, and certainly the vast majority of restaurants run at least two Love Where You Live events every year. In my own group I ran 12 last year, so that was three Love Where You Live events. These are community events where I encourage and organise my members of staff, members of the public, councillors and the street wardens. We all get together and I would organise a Love Where You Live event providing the hi-vis vests, litter picks and things like that, organising the routes, and we have had some major successes.

Q103 Chair: Just concentrating on McDonald's, because what you have said is this has been their policy for a long time. I understand, but fast food of itself is a major contributor to litter, isn't it? It is one of the growth areas for litter. There are more fast food outlets and there is more litter as a consequence. What is it about fast food? Is it the packaging or is it the way it is presented that makes the consumers of that product more likely to go and litter than other people?

Cherry Lewis-Taylor: I do not know that that is necessarily true. I think—

Chair: It looks like it from looking around.

Cherry Lewis-Taylor: I would be interested to see what sort of litter you are collecting but, certainly from my own experience of collecting litter, I would say that fast food packaging is quite a minority. The

majority would be glass bottles, cans, crisp packets, cigarette packets, sweet packets and sweet wrappers. I think earlier on it was mentioned that less than 3% was fast food packaging. My own experience is that it is perhaps not quite as much as we think. It is very visible. That is part of the history.

Chair: That is it. It is very visible and often very concentrated, yes.

Cherry Lewis-Taylor: You know if you see a fry carton it has come from McDonald's, whereas a Coke can could have come from any number of distributors.

Q104 Chair: Also people tend to drop it when they have finished eating, which is a radius around.

Cherry Lewis-Taylor: Again, I think, considering the number of customers that come through a McDonald's restaurant, the amount of litter is very small in relation to the whole. The majority of customers—

Q105 Chair: Should the industry be doing more?

Cherry Lewis-Taylor: I think McDonald's as a whole is doing a lot. I have mentioned two things that we do: Love Where You Live events and we employ litter pickers. We also have in every restaurant—there are 1,450 now—trained planet champions. This is a programme that was launched a few years ago where one member of staff from each restaurant who has a particular interest in the environment and litter, whether it is recycling or utilities, is trained to work with the business manager to create various initiatives throughout the restaurant to effect a whole range of environmental things.

Q106 Chair: All right. We will probably come back to some of those points.

Mr Roca, I think you probably thought you were getting away with it for the time being, but if the litter from cigarette butts is not always the most visible it probably has the highest incidence of any sort of litter around. Again, what makes people consuming your products more likely to litter than other people?

Giles Roca: I do not represent smokers but the research shows that the vast majority of smokers want to do the right thing. I think there is a perception that cigarette litter is not the same as other litter because it effectively is alight and, therefore, people are concerned about where they put it; whether it will cause a fire if they put it in a bin that is not particularly adapted to the needs of putting it out. I am sure everyone

is familiar with the particular bins I am talking about with the ashtray on top.

Q107 Chair: But they often put it out by throwing it on the floor and putting their foot on it, don't they? That is the reality.

Giles Roca: Yes. That is the perception, but the research shows that people will want to do the right thing if the infrastructure is in close proximity to them.

Chair: We may come back to that point.

Q108 Simon Danczuk: David, I am fascinated by this place in which you live, Horsham. It sounds a great place to live. In fact, it is the second best place in United Kingdom, only just beaten by Winchester in terms of a place to live. According to the *Readers Digest* poll, "25th best place in mainland Britain to bring up a family." You must feel very privileged to be able to live there. Is litter the biggest problem facing Horsham?

David Sedaris: I live right outside of Pulborough. We moved there three years ago and I did not notice it when we went to look at the house. Then we bought the house and then I thought, "Well, what is going on?" I thought a parade had just moved down the road that I live on. I am sure there are bigger problems but they are not as visible to me or they don't affect me in the same way. I am sure people get sick and I am sure this is something I can do something about, so it is my problem.

Simon Danczuk: It is your problem?

Giles Roca: It is the problem I have adopted.

Q109 Simon Danczuk: Yes, fair enough. What would you say to people who said it was a middle class problem that particularly affects people like you who live in luxurious places like Horsham?

David Sedaris: I have no regard whatsoever for that argument. It is something that affects everybody. Why should everyone have to live in a teenager's bedroom? It is bad for your spirit. I don't care where you live, I don't care how much money you have. To have to walk through filth is no way to live. We have brought cases to court before. My council has brought cases to court with fly-tipping and stuff and judges have said, "Well, it is not rape". No, but there is something between rape and littering and those things are still important and it is disgraceful.

Q110 Simon Danczuk: Apparently the incidence of litter increases dramatically in deprived areas. Why do you think that is, David?

David Sedaris: Why do I think there is more litter in deprived areas? I don't know. To tell you the truth, there is a Waitrose not far from me. I found a wine Waitrose bag last year. There is a Tesco Metro, which I think of as a litter supply store, not far away and I find Tesco bags all the time. I don't find containers that nuts came in. It is fast food. It is crisps. It is candy bars.

Q111 Simon Danczuk: Correct me if I am wrong, but you are saying that wealthier people who shop at Waitrose are less likely to drop litter compared to people who have less money who shop at Tescos. Is that right?

David Sedaris: If I am looking at the things that I find on the side of the road, I haven't found any opera tickets, you know. When I look at what I find if I go down a mile of road, and I take all of that rubbish and if I lay it out, that is the idea that I get.

Q112 Simon Danczuk: Starting with you, David, but we will broaden it out to the panel. These working people who are dropping this litter, David, what do you think we should do? We had a conversation at this Committee before Christmas. I had a conversation with the Secretary of State who was suggesting introducing flogging for people who leave their wheelie bins out at night. I do not think we are going down that route, but should there be stronger enforcement? You were talking about the judge earlier. What sort of punishment should we have for people that are littering then, do you think?

David Sedaris: If you took people who littered and you made them pick up litter, I honestly don't think that that would solve anything. I think people would throw litter because they would want to see their friends have to get out there and pick it up. I find, like this fellow here, if you wanted to fine people the easiest thing in the world is to follow a smoker. I smoked for 30 years. I never thought of putting a cigarette butt on the ground as littering. When you smoke, you don't think of it that way. If you wanted to bust people that is the easiest way to do it, but I don't know that those people are necessarily litterers so much as they are just smokers. They are not necessarily the people who are throwing their cigarette pack out the window, which I find a lot, and of all the cigarettes I find I find more Mayfair cigarettes than any other brand. Are Mayfair not the cheapest cigarettes that there are?

Giles Roca: There is a range of products on the market.

David Sedaris: I am not trying to sound like a snob but, if you walk down a mile of road and if you take everything that you find and you lay it out there, there is no denying the things that you have found.

Q113 Simon Danczuk: What you are saying is that poorer people are more likely to litter, isn't it? That is what you have said.

David Sedaris: I think so. I live outside of Pulborough and you are right, it is beautiful. That is one of the things that drive me so crazy. It is beautiful except for all this rubbish. Maybe people are thinking, "I don't get to live here", and so maybe they are throwing things out the window as a way of saying, "Screw you people who live here. I know this will upset you".

That said, let us say it is a certain kind of people that are throwing it out. There is another kind of person—there is a community West Chilmington near me that looks just as it sounds like. Do you know what I mean? It is huge houses and people have gardeners. Anyway, I went by there one day and there was this house. I thought it was abandoned. That is how much rubbish was in the front yard. I picked it up and then this woman came from behind a hedge and said, "What are you doing?" I said, "I'm picking up your rubbish". "Thank God", she said, "I was going to call the council". That is what I hear all the time, "I was going to call the council", to pick up rubbish in your own front yard. I said to the woman, "Well, I have it", and she said, "Well, you are not going to leave that bag here". I said, "I'm going to leave it overnight and the council will come and collect it tomorrow". "No, you can't leave that bag here. Leave it in front of their house." She was okay with me picking up all the trash in her front yard but she wouldn't even let me leave the bag. I see this all the time. People won't do anything to help. Their attitude is, "I didn't drop it. Why would I pick it up?"

Q114 Simon Danczuk: Let me briefly make an observation. I suspect there are very few people living in Horsham, according to the facts that I gave earlier, but if you could stop poorer people passing through Horsham there would be very little litter according to what you have said.

Cherry, this small minority of people who are littering that you referred to, what harsher penalties can we introduce to stop them from littering, do you think?

Cherry Lewis-Taylor: I would like to talk about the solution that we achieved in Braintree as something that could possibly be rolled out across the country with the Clean Essex campaign, if I may.

Simon Danczuk: You do not think there should be any harsher punishments?

Cherry Lewis-Taylor: I think it is a mixture of a campaign, whether it is education, getting everybody involved, getting communities involved.

Chris Williamson: We are going to go and vote.

Chair: If we stop you there, we are going to have to suspend the sitting now for 10 minutes while we go and vote.

Sitting suspended for a division in the House.

On resuming-

Q115 Chair: We can resume now. I think Ms Lewis-Taylor you were in the middle of answering the question when we had to break off.

Cherry Lewis-Taylor: Yes. I was about to talk about Braintree who have been quite innovative over many years. Several years ago they launched the Green Heart of Essex campaign with a view to trying to make Braintree district the cleanest district in the country. It had a lot of political support obviously, the council support, and they invited businesses to partner the Green Heart and McDonald's, myself, was one of the key partners for the Green Heart of Essex. Through a combined partnership approach from councillors, myself and businesses, we did achieve a lot in terms of litter reduction in the district.

That was a springboard for the Clean Essex campaign. The Clean Essex group is all the waste management from the 14 district councils and unitary councils of Essex that meet every month with a view to trying to share best practice, to look at new ideas and new innovations; to do more with less because we are all aware that money is tight. We came up with the concept of a joint partnership agreement between a number of businesses and all the county councils and borough councils of Essex. It is pretty much a unique collaboration and it had great success. It was a way of pooling and getting the same message across the county.

Braintree have a campaigns department and they created a series of adverts to educate as well as inform motorists and people going to bus stops and things like that about littering and the fact that it wasn't cool, it wasn't smart, it wasn't clever, and, equally, there could be a £75 fine if you were caught. It was across the entire county. The 35 McDonald's restaurants were involved. A number of other restaurant chains were

involved, as well as other retail outlets, and the councils themselves used it on bins, petrol pumps, ad vans and the backs of buses. The message was quite clear. Wherever you were in Essex there was this same consistent message across the entire county.

It was supported by Keep Britain Tidy and they in fact did train the monitoring people who did the monitoring before, during and after to see if there had been any reduction in litter during the course of the campaign. Over the course of the campaign at the end it was proved that there was a 41% reduction in fast food rubbish across the county and in Braintree District Council—and I have to say I still have my banners up; I still use the stickers on all my packaging and we are still very proactive within the campaign, even though it has finished—we had a 68% reduction in fast food rubbish.

Simon Danczuk: That sounds impressive and certainly an example of good practice. I think what you are saying, in response to my question about should there be harsher penalties, is that the penalties are there, the £75 fine, so make people aware of that but also educate people about the fact that culturally it is unacceptable.

Cherry Lewis-Taylor: Yes.

Q116 Simon Danczuk: Giles, smokers are already under the cosh in terms of taxes, red tape and bureaucracy and everything else. Should there be harsher penalties for people who drop their cigarette butts on pavements?

Giles Roca: I think there are already enforcement penalties out there that local authorities can use. They do use them. To me, I think we need to address what is the core of this, which is about why people drop litter, including cigarettes, and that is about long-term behaviour change. I think enforcement and penalties is one mechanism that can be used, and should be used, but I think a lot of money and effort goes into dealing with the effect of waste. If we are serious about addressing the issues of waste then we have to deal with the causation of this, and that is educating people, like we did with seatbelts in the 1970s and 1980s and like we did with dog mess, to make it clear that it is not acceptable. That is long-term cultural behaviour change.

In Japan people do not drop cigarettes. Why do they do it here? I think that is a very important point to get across, and that is not going to happen if we just—albeit it is very important to deal with the effects, we need to deal with the issue as core. So it is about education, changing behaviour, changing perceptions and changing culture.

Q117 Chris Williamson: I want to move on to the products that are regularly littered around the country. You may be aware that the Local Environmental Quality Survey England found that there has been an increase in litter over the last year. Interestingly, on those sites where a bin is provided there has been a significant rise in the amount of fast food litter found at those locations. Why do you think that is? Anybody? Why do you think there has been an increase and why, where there is a bin provided, is there more fast food litter there?

Cherry Lewis-Taylor: I can only comment on my own experience of this campaign and my own litter picking, which I do and like David does. Recently when I was doing a litter pick in Witham, which is 10 miles distance from my restaurant—and in fact it is featured on the “Don't Mess With Us” programme—we were doing a litter patrol between two bins. There was a bin and then there was a 200 metre stretch of pathway to another 200 metre bin and we collected six bags of rubbish between the two bins, despite the fact that it was literally a sandwich eat from one bin to the other. I don't know. I think that, however many bins you produce, people won't necessarily put it in the bin is the logic of that or the answer.

Q118 Chris Williamson: What do you think, David?

David Sedaris: There is a fitness centre not far from me and people throw rubbish near the bin. Sometimes I don't even know that they know that is what it is for. I can't understand it.

Q119 Chris Williamson: What more do you think the fast food industry can and should do then to address this problem, to stop their customers dropping this litter? Is there anything they can do?

Cherry Lewis-Taylor: I think we are doing a lot.

Chris Williamson: You think you are doing as much as you possibly can. There is nothing more the industry can or should do?

Cherry Lewis-Taylor: I think the solution is a partnership and an educational approach, as I have already said, because I think we have proved with Braintree that we have managed to reduce litter.

Q120 Chris Williamson: Who should pay for that educational programme?

Cherry Lewis-Taylor: I think you can do it with a whole range of things. What we have learnt in Braintree is that it does not need to cost a lot of money to do it. The banners and stickers and the will to collect litter and educate do not require a lot of money.

Q121 Chris Williamson: It has not really worked though, has it? We have had education campaigns. When I was a lad in the 1960s we had the Keep Britain Tidy. There were all sorts of campaigns. I have done litter picks myself. I have sponsored litter picks, and we still have a problem. In fact it seems to be getting worse in some areas. Education on its own is not enough, is it?

Cherry Lewis-Taylor: No, it needs to be with enforcement and the will.

Q122 Chris Williamson: Do you not think the industry should be doing more then, that it is the industry that is responsible? It is your products that are causing this.

Cherry Lewis-Taylor: Our products are only a minority and it is only a tiny minority of customers that are doing it.

Q123 Chris Williamson: In the wider fast food industry there is a significant problem, isn't there, or do you reject that? Do you not think there is a problem?

Cherry Lewis-Taylor: I think it has to be put into proportion. We said earlier that only 3% is fast food waste. A lot of it is, as I say, bottles, cans—

Q124 Chris Williamson: Do you think the industry is doing as much as it should do then?

Cherry Lewis-Taylor: I think it would be nice if more businesses took the same sort of approach as McDonald's does and joined us more and took our initiatives.

Q125 Chris Williamson: The fast food industry and the tobacco industry are incredibly profitable, aren't they? We are talking billions of pounds worth of profit and yet you are leaving it to the public sector to deal with the consequences of, albeit it may be a minority, your customers who are blighting communities. We have heard from David how his community, which is a relatively affluent community, is blighted by litter and detritus and it is even worse in other parts of the country, yet you seem to be saying, Cherry, that the industry has done as much as it can and should not be doing any more. What do you think, Giles?

Giles Roca: First of all, I think the tobacco industry understands there is a role to play. It wants to play a role. I think we are increasingly finding it very difficult to play a role because of something called Local

Government Declaration on Tobacco Control, which has effectively stopped local authorities doing business with us on matters such as litter. Keep Britain Tidy decided in December 2013 that it would no longer have any activity with the tobacco industry whatsoever. KBT will not deal with the tobacco industry. Local government will not deal with the tobacco industry on litter.

We want to do more. We recognise we have a role to play. We want to be part of the solution, absolutely. We also recognise that we want to contribute expertise. We want to contribute knowledge to the problem, but there are barriers that are increasingly being put in our way because of political reasons around dealing with tobacco that is increasingly harming and hampering the activities that we want to do.

Q126 Chris Williamson: Do you think a hypothecated levy, a tax if you like, that was ring-fenced for local authorities to deal with the consequences of the litter that the tobacco industry and the fast food industry is responsible for and the packaging across the piece really—

Giles Roca: Let me give you an example. 80% of the cost of tobacco is tax. It goes straight to the Treasury. That is a—

Chris Williamson: I appreciate that. Do you think there is a case, though, for a specific levy, not just on tobacco but across the piece, on the principle that the polluter pays because local authorities are under financial stress at the moment with significant pressure on their budgets. This is an area that often suffers. Would it not make sense for there to be a hypothecated levy across the piece, over and above what—

Giles Roca: I think there are a couple of points on that. One, as I have said, I think this is not just about dealing with the effect, although I recognise completely the pressures that local authorities are under. We have to deal with the cause. The effect is very important but where we have to focus the attention is stopping people doing it, understanding why people are doing it in the first place.

The tobacco industry has a 2% escalator on it, plus inflation every year and will do in the next Parliament. A lot of money goes to the Treasury. I think that is a perfectly legitimate argument and discussion that central Government needs to have with local government. I think there is a danger that if you introduced a specific hypothecated ring-fenced tax to deal with the impact of litter, people will say, "You know what, there is a tax on this so I'm going to throw it away anyway". It gives you almost a green light to go off and cause more litter. I think we have to be very careful.

I recognise the pressure that local authorities are under. I used to work for Westminster City Council before I did this job. We cleaned up the West End. It cost a huge amount of money. It was effectively subsidised by the council taxpayer in Westminster, and yet it did not receive a single penny extra from central Government. I entirely accept that local government should have that debate. How central Government divides the pot up is entirely up to it.

Q127 Chris Williamson: Can I put something to you then, Cherry? There was an article in *The Independent* at the weekend, a comment piece by Claudia Pritchard, and she said, "A small building firm that does a job in a home has to pay to discard associated rubble, but Starbucks and allies simply leave the council to pick up the tab." That is true, isn't it?

Cherry Lewis-Taylor: I would disagree with that. I think McDonald's particularly has spent a lot of time and money and effort in the community trying to be part of the solution, and I genuinely think that the Essex campaign is something that could be replicated. Yes, there needs to be enforcement and there needs to be a will, but there needs to be partnership and I think businesses—

Q128 Chris Williamson: What do you think about a hypothecated levy? McDonald's, for example, has sales of hundreds of millions of pounds.

Cherry Lewis-Taylor: McDonald's is very much a—I own four. It is—

Chris Williamson: It is not just McDonald's. The fast food industry are hugely profitable organisations, aren't they?

Cherry Lewis-Taylor: We employ 97,000 people as well within it.

Q129 Chris Williamson: Indeed, but a small builder has to pay to dispose of any rubble that they cause. They are tax based. They are employing people in exactly the same way.

Cherry Lewis-Taylor: In the economic survey that was produced this year, bearing in mind this is the fortieth anniversary of McDonald's in the UK, it was established that every restaurant in the UK is contributing around £9,000, as I have said already, to litter and collecting it individually.

Q130 Chris Williamson: That doesn't go to the local authorities though, does it? That is an awareness of the part they do.

Cherry Lewis-Taylor: No, but we are doing our bit to collect litter and to educate within our own communities. I think if every business would—

Chris Williamson: It is not working, though, is it? We still have a major problem don't we, though?

Cherry Lewis-Taylor: It is not—

Giles Roca: If I may, I think the problem here is the system of local government finance is broken, as this Committee has looked at in the past. Anybody who understands anything to do with local government and how it is funded would recognise the system is completely broken. I completely understand the point you are driving at. I think that is a conversation that this Committee has played a role in in the past, but the LGA needs to have a conversation with the Treasury. Indeed, it is set out in the—

Q131 Chris Williamson: A final question then and I will ask David to comment on some of those points that I put to Giles and to Cherry. In relation to designer bins, for example and indeed packaging, do you think there is any scope there to redesign your packaging and maybe redesign bins and so on? I mentioned that the survey found that in sites where there is a bin there seems to be an increase in the amount of fast food litter. I don't know what that is saying, but do you think bin design and packaging design could be looked at?

Cherry Lewis-Taylor: We have certainly introduced in our car parks a bin where it has a baseball thing at the end and you can throw it in, and I would say that that has encouraged people to put the rubbish in the right place. Yes, I think there is something in bin design.

Q132 Chris Williamson: David, finally then, you have not had a lot to say in this series of questions in relation to whether the polluter pays and the various other points I have put to Giles and to Cherry. Do you have any comments about the points I have asked?

David Sedaris: If I look at things that I find, the nearest McDonald's is 15 miles from where I live. I pick up some McDonald's things but it is nothing compared to the Walkers' crisp packets and the Cadbury wrappers and, drink-wise, Red Bull, Lucozade, and then I went online and I looked at a Red Bull commercial, right, and it said, "Red Bull gives you wings", and it is a guy taking a sip of Red Bull, throwing the can over his shoulders and flying. He is littering right there in the commercial.

Q133 Chris Williamson: Do you think there could be a case then or is there a case for a levy on these food manufacturers: crisps, fast food and drinks manufacturers?

David Sedaris: I feel bad for this woman because it is not her fault that some lout buys a hamburger, do you know what I mean, and then throws the—

Q134 Chris Williamson: We can wring our hands though, David, can't we? We have heard all this: it is a problem; it is people's problem; the industry doesn't seem to want to take responsibility. It has been acknowledged the local authorities are under pressure financially. We have a massive problem. What do we do then? If I said to you now, "David, I want you to give me a couple of recommendations that we will guarantee that we will include in our report", what would they be in relation to how we tackle this?

David Sedaris: This sounds crazy. I have thought about it over and over. I would set up roadblocks and I would fine anyone with a clean car. They are the ones that—

Q135 Chair: Right, okay. Just before we move on, Ms Lewis-Taylor, McDonald's obviously champion the fact that they, as a company, go out three times a day round their outlets and clean up. I think the reality is that on the sites in the national survey around 35% have fast food litter on them and that has been growing. Around 45% of roadways have fast food litter on them. McDonald's do their bit. Should there be a requirement on all fast food outlets to do the same, not relying on goodwill but saying, "You either do it or you pay something extra for the cleanup"?

Cherry Lewis-Taylor: I think anything that would encourage other businesses to take the same sort of lead would be welcomed.

Q136 John Stevenson: As a business you have gone out and tidied up the area around your outlets and a further 150 to 200 yards away. Is there any merit that it should be the responsibility of shop fronts or commercial premises that they have to be responsible for the area in front of their premises, and it does not matter if it is somebody else's litter they have to take responsibility for that area? Does that have merit?

Cherry Lewis-Taylor: It may well have good merit. In Germany in fact I know that is the norm. Certainly your shop front is your responsibility, so that is something that could be considered.

Going back to the Essex campaign, it is a question of educating and repeating the message time and time and time again. Like seatbelts

and drink driving, people's perception over time does change. Radio Essex did take up our campaign as well, and I keep thinking that if every radio station kept talking about, "Let's keep our country tidy", even if it was just a strapline "Essex and proud. Keep it clean. Put your rubbish in the bin", and you heard that time after time after time after time, I think eventually—and again that would be free. It would not cost anything for local radio and local newspapers to talk about litter in a positive way: "Put it in the bin; put it in the bin".

Q137 Bob Blackman: Before I move on to my main questions, Ms Lewis-Taylor, just to clarify one or two things that I want to be clear on. Is it a condition of your franchise that you operate these clean-up operations or is it something you do out of the goodness of your heart? Can you just clarify the policy of McDonald's?

Cherry Lewis-Taylor: It is not a condition but it is certainly within my business plan and it is within McDonald's own "Plan to Win" for each year that we do do a lot towards our social responsibility.

Q138 Bob Blackman: One of the other problems associated with not only McDonald's restaurants but a number of other fast food outlets is the drive-through outlets. Clearly if people come to your restaurant and eat in the restaurant, they throw their rubbish in the bin. Even if they eat in the car park, they may throw it in the car park or in the bin. However, a 24-hour-a-day operation is not unusual for fast food outlets, and then people tend to drive round the corner, eat their food and dump the rubbish on the road, be it the packaging or the remains of their food, for someone else to deal with. How do you address that sort of problem in your type of restaurant?

Cherry Lewis-Taylor: Again, I have three drive-throughs, two of which are 24/7. Two of them are particularly busy. It is a tiny minority of people that litter and open their car window and throw it out in comparison to the number of customers that we serve. It really is.

Q139 Bob Blackman: But are you doing anything to combat, because those people frankly are the real irritating people that Mr Sedaris and company have to clean up after?

Cherry Lewis-Taylor: Yes.

Bob Blackman: What are you doing to combat that sort of problem?

Cherry Lewis-Taylor: Again, on my site we have banners. We have bins. We have special banners that say, "Keep Essex tidy". All our packaging is labelled to encourage customers to put their rubbish into a

bin or take it home and treat it responsibly. As I have already talked about, we do a lot with litter patrols and Love Where You Live events. I think if everybody was to do the same sort of thing we would have more traction, but it is the educational piece that I think is the key, in partnership with councils, and then the enforcement.

Q140 Bob Blackman: Mr Roca, the evidence presented to this Committee, and I think the generally-held view, is that cigarette butts are the most frequently littered item that there is. What is the TMA doing about discussion with local authorities and others to combat this menace?

Giles Roca: We are having very limited discussion with local authorities because of this guidance, which I mentioned earlier, called the Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control. I have written three times to the LGA. I have yet to receive an acknowledgement in regard to an offer to meet them to discuss that. That dates back over the last six months.

Q141 Bob Blackman: That is obviously the LGA, but what about individual local authorities, because not every local authority has signed up to the declaration in practice?

Giles Roca: First of all, as you would appreciate, it is difficult to deal with 400 councils across the country. This is why we would like to have one discussion. We would like to have a discussion that I think should be facilitated through the LGA, but we have had discussions with individuals and with individual local firms.

Q142 Bob Blackman: But the LGA is not relevant—

Giles Roca: No, it is the national body for local for local government in this country.

Bob Blackman: But it does not control local authorities, does it?

Giles Roca: No, of course it doesn't. For instance I have written to each member of the LGA executive, which is made up, as you know, of a cross party group of councillors, leaders of councils, inviting them to a meeting on 21 January. Not one of them has accepted that invitation to meet to discuss litter. I think, this is a fundamental problem. It is a schism in terms of the relationship between the tobacco industry and local government.

I would point you to both the CLG's submission to this inquiry and also the response that the Local Government Minister gave on 16 December, which said local government should be working with the tobacco industry to come up with solutions. After all we are here to

come up with solutions. One of the things I would welcome this Committee to do is to look at the impact the local government declaration is having in terms of the relationship because it is not working at the moment. It is very difficult to engage with local authorities, and we do where we can.

Q143 Bob Blackman: Are you saying you oppose the local government declaration?

Giles Roca: No, not at all. It is entirely voluntary. If local authorities want to sign it, it is up to them. I am saying it is having a detrimental impact on the ability of the tobacco industry to play a role in helping to deal with the issue of litter from tobacco.

Q144 Bob Blackman: Okay, so you have four. What actions would the TMA take to combat their cigarette butts being littered all over the road and pavements and so on?

Giles Roca: First of all, we need leadership at a local level and at the national level. At the minute, as I said, Keep Britain Tidy will not talk to us. The board of Keep Britain Tidy passed a resolution in December 2013 that said it would not talk and not engage with the tobacco industry, which quite frankly is just preposterous. First of all, I think we need communication. We need to talk. We need to have a national litter forum or some mechanism that brings all the key players together so we can sit and talk and discuss: what is the problem, where are the issues and how can we address them?

Q145 Bob Blackman: The problem is quite clear. As the Chairman alluded to earlier, people smoke their cigarettes then, when they dispose of them, they throw them on the ground and put their foot on them. That is the problem.

Giles Roca: Yes.

Bob Blackman: What is your solution to that problem?

Giles Roca: That is why we need long-term behaviour insight programmes and projects. Two of my companies were founding members of the Love Where You Live campaign that we heard that KBT ran, but of course we were asked to leave that because of this decision that was taken. We have played a role and we believe there should be a mixture of long-term education programmes, behaviour change programmes, making sure that there is effective infrastructure, ashtrays, bins, and where this happens—

Q146 Bob Blackman: If I may be clear about ashtrays and bins, just while you are mentioning it.

Giles Roca: Portable ashtrays. My companies produce portable ashtrays. These are given out free, 100,000 each year at certain events. The idea is that you can put your cigarette butts in these. Again, they are used in other countries. It is the cultural thing. In Japan—

Q147 Bob Blackman: Why not give them away with every packet of cigarettes?

Giles Roca: We give them away free anyway.

Bob Blackman: No, but give them away at all points of—

Giles Roca: We can give them away if that is—

Bob Blackman: Well, why don't you?

Giles Roca: We worked with KBT to give them away. KBT didn't want to have anything to do with us. But that is just one mechanism.

Q148 Bob Blackman: But your association controls the retailing of your products.

Giles Roca: No, we don't. That is the retailers, Mr Blackman.

Q149 Bob Blackman: The fact is that retailers are selling your representatives' products and the TMA could say, "With every packet of 20 we will give out one of these". Why not?

Giles Roca: We are very happy to do that.

Bob Blackman: Well, why don't you?

Giles Roca: We are very happy to do that. We are very happy to put them into our retailers. That is one solution, but what we want to do is talk to local government who won't talk to us at the moment.

Bob Blackman: One of the issues—

Giles Roca: This is one solution that we are proactively doing through KBT. Let's look at what happens elsewhere. When we work in other countries across Europe in America, the Keep America Tidy works with the tobacco industry. It has no problem working with the tobacco industry and, where it does, it is very effective in terms of reducing cigarette-related litter. As you heard in the first evidence session from the CPRE, my companies have a scheme in Middlewich to provide bins,

which have been very successful in reducing the instances of litter. I think that something around 71%. The personal ashtrays is just one mechanism that we are able to use and offer, but we are very happy to work with retailers. We are very happy to work with employers. I am working with the BIDs currently. We are working with Keep Scotland Beautiful. We are working with whoever will work with us.

Q150 Bob Blackman: What about specific litterbins? I am not sure if you mentioned earlier that clearly one of the problems is that if you throw a lighted cigarette into a normal litterbin then there is a risk of fire and so on. What about special bins? Are you prepared to pay for those?

Giles Roca: Yes. This is exactly what we did in the pilot scheme in Middlesbrough. JTI worked with the CPRE to provide around 35 special adapted litterbins that had the ashtray on the top. I am sure everyone is familiar with them. It reduced the instances of smoking-related litter by 71% in Middlesbrough.

Q151 Bob Blackman: How do you react to the view that local authorities have two competing priorities? Their major priority in terms of public health is to reduce the number of people smoking and reduce the consumption of tobacco-related products. Therefore, by making it easier for people to smoke and dispose of their tobacco litter, that overrides the issue of reducing the number of people smoking and the amount they smoke. How do you react to that?

Giles Roca: As you know, Mr Blackman, this came from the WHO, article 5.3 FCTC, which states very clearly this is about undue influence on public health policies not on dealing with litter. Chair, if I may, I can also provide you with an independent legal opinion that we have taken on the local government declaration that says it is very clear there is no legal bar, whatsoever, that stops local authorities dealing and having partnership with the tobacco industry on issues such as litter.

Q152 Bob Blackman: Mr Sedaris, you have mentioned about picking up litter and so on and I guess cigarette butts must form a substantial amount of the litter you gather. Is that fair to say?

David Sedaris: I feel like they are the least of my problems. Like I said, if you wanted to kick at somebody follow a smoker and that is the easiest person, but I feel like a cigarette butt on the ground is nothing compared to cans and bottles and wrappers. It is still litter, but I think there is a lot to be said for giving people tickets. I think there is a lot to be said for setting up cameras at any intersection or any place where people are stopped in their car. They are thinking, "This is a good time for me to clean my car out", and they are throwing things out the

window. If you find those people and you ticket and fine them, maybe it would stick. Maybe they would start telling their friends. I think there is a lot to be said for that.

I was in Massachusetts a few months ago. It is a \$10,000 fine for littering. I don't know how often they are successful, but it makes you think twice if it is \$10,000. What is the most you can fine people here? £70 for littering I believe?

Bob Blackman: Yes.

David Sedaris: Another thing I think about, because I think about this all the time, is—I do. I am obsessed. I work in the morning. I am a writer, so if you write you have three hours in you and then I go pick up rubbish. I know what it is like for someone to effectively make fun of me. It stings and I think, "Wow, they nailed me", because we all like to think that we are so unique and it would be so hard to caricature us, but it is not that difficult at all. I would get some litterers and I would study them and I would learn who they listened to and I would learn what they watch and I would make relentless fun of them with commercials, but relentless fun and do a good job of it so that they would feel like, "Wow, that's me and that's me in a really bad light. That's what I do".

I have thought over and over what you could possibly do about this and that is something I think of, to get talented people to work on this. You can't take the gloves off and you can't say, "Well, we understand that you don't have that much money. Therefore, if you want to come through our neighbourhoods and throw bottles into our yard, that's okay. It's not a problem". But to nail people, I think that might be a start.

Q153 Chris Williamson: I think it is a great idea, but who should pay for it?

David Sedaris: I will chip in. I don't think it would hurt to walk a mile of road and then say, "Walkers, Cadbury". I don't think McDonald's would be on that list, but if you were to get the 10 products that you find on the side of the road and ask those people to chip in, that seems fair to me.

Chris Williamson: Ask them or require them?

David Sedaris: Again, it is not her fault that some jerk goes to McDonald's and throws it out the window. I bet if you asked them they would do it. How much would it cost? Like, a couple of million pounds? Doesn't Cadbury know the amount of rubbish that is out there that they are generating, or Walkers? It is the worst possible commercial for

them. I make it a point not to buy any of the products I find on the side of the road. They are like an anti-commercial.

Chair: It is a fairly good commercial today to put your point across.

Q154 John Stevenson: David, you are obviously a very enthusiastic individual for all things litter and up and down the country I suspect there are a lot of people like yourself in varying degrees, but that is individuals doing something or small groups of people doing something to do with litter. Do you think the time has come for some sort of strategic national plan in relation to litter?

David Sedaris: A national plan, like a national—

John Stevenson: Delivered by Government or in conjunction with local government, something along those lines.

David Sedaris: I remember reading that article in the paper a while ago. It was somewhere in England and a group of people decided that they were going to be volunteers for the council and they were going to go pick up rubbish, and then it was decided they hadn't been trained properly and so they were not allowed to go and pick up rubbish. There are a lot of things that I do that I can only do because I don't work for the council. For my council to clean a certain kind of road they have to have a certain kind of truck. They have to close a lane of traffic off. It costs them £1,700 a day. You are walking on the shoulder of the road and I don't see what the problem is.

Q155 John Stevenson: You do not think a national strategy would necessarily work?

David Sedaris: Often people come up to me and they say, "Why are you doing this?" I say, "Well, it got me here today. This is a big deal to me".

Q156 John Stevenson: Do you think it is down more to the individual rather than to councils or to Government?

David Sedaris: One day we were supposed to go out and there were these naughty boys. I absolutely love that term. I guess we would call them juvenile delinquents, but here the council call them "naughty boys" and they said, "Well, you're going to go out with a team of naughty boys". I am all excited and I get out there and then it turns out that the naughty boys don't have to come. They don't have to come if they don't feel like it. There was just one kid and he had a bad complexion, but I couldn't get anything out of him as to what he had done that was so naughty. This cab driver we had was walking in the

woods and this woman in front of her, her kids had potato chips and threw the potato chip bags on the ground. The cab driver said, "What are you doing? You need to pick those up", and the kids' mother said, "It gives somebody a job, doesn't it?" You hear that a lot, "It gives somebody a job". I think sometimes people think, "If it gives somebody a job, if there is somebody out there specifically who is going to pick it up", then they are more inclined to do it because they think, "Oh that guy is coming to clean it up".

Q157 John Stevenson: Okay, that is fine. Giles, you made the point earlier that we must deal with the causes of dropping litter as well as the effect. How do you go about motivating people not to drop litter?

Giles Roca: I think it is carrot and stick. The soft approach is to explain the dangers it is causing to the environment. If you can appeal to that side of things then so be it. Also, coming back to the finance point of view, if you can make the link between, "At the end of the day through your taxation, whether it is local or national tax or council tax, it is costing you money to drop that". You could do more to make that link I suppose, but I think there is a role for enforcement around penalties and making sure people know there is a deterrent factor in some of this. I do not think there is one approach. I think it is a mixture of what appeals most.

People don't like being hectored. They don't like being told what to do so I think, "What is the most effective way?" There are people who look at this, at behaviour change and they spend a lot of time doing this. I think it is a mixture of all those kind of things, but if I may just come back to you on the point about the national strategy. This is a classic example of an area of policy that sits between a number of departments both at the national level, DEFRA, CLG, a number of quangos, agencies, NGOs, charities, 400 councils and, as an industry, it is very difficult to deal with that.

Having worked in local government I am no fan of a quango or national strategies because I do not think they particularly work. What you need to have though is a mechanism to allow all the people to come together and have a place at the table to identify what the problem is, identify then what the strategy is and identify then what the resources are and where the resources are going to come into it, but then you are going to have to have a local solution to local variations. The west end of—

Q158 John Stevenson: Taking up your idea, who should lead that?

Giles Roca: There is a gap in the market.

John Stevenson: Who should lead it?

Giles Roca: There is a possible role for the CLG. There is a role for DEFRA. There is a role for the LGA. There is a role for the industry.

Q159 John Stevenson: But at the end of the day somebody has to start.

Giles Roca: I think it could be a partnership a genuine partnership with the ability and the powers to do things, that has the cash and the resources behind it and the backing of all of those partners.

Q160 John Stevenson: But at the end of the day you still need somebody to start the initiative to take the lead. Should that be central government, local government, or industry? Who do you think it should be?

Giles Roca: If I am naming one person, I do not know. It should be at a very senior level. You could have a committee of national and local government that sits within the Prime Minister or the Deputy Prime Minister's office. These are my own personal thoughts. It has to be at that level. We know that part of the reason at the moment nothing happens is because there is confusion. It is very easy to pass the buck in terms of responsibility. Part of what this Committee could helpfully do is clarify what that infrastructure and that governance piece looks like and what everyone is willing to do.

Q161 John Stevenson: Cherry, you have employees go around clearing up in the local area. How do you motivate your customers to clear up instead?

Cherry Lewis-Taylor: All I can say is that when we run Love Where You Live events I encourage customers to come and take part. Some do. We have to be very careful with health and safety—

Q162 John Stevenson: But that is not the person who has bought the product and is walking down the street.

Cherry Lewis-Taylor: No.

John Stevenson: How do you motivate that person? It is very well saying, "Come and tidy up your locality".

Cherry Lewis-Taylor: It has to be a combination, as I have said before, and in fact, to quote from Phil Barton's thing, a combination of information, campaigns, street infrastructure such as the bins—and there is scope for redesigning of bins—and enforcement are the key to success. On the enforcement side, clearly, if you look from the previous

meetings, there is some discussion about making it easier for councils, making the law more comfortable with this, but generally it is a combination that needs to be done and consistently done. We have proved in Braintree and throughout Essex that that campaign worked.

Q163 John Stevenson: Do you think there is any merit in our national strategy and national campaign and, if so, who do you think should take the lead?

Cherry Lewis-Taylor: Again, I can only comment on what I have seen in Essex and from a collaborative approach with all the councils this is very unique, being involved—

Q164 John Stevenson: At your local level who took the lead in that? Was it the council or was it others?

Cherry Lewis-Taylor: No, it was the councils. I would say Braintree did take the lead because they have the experience of running campaigns and they had the campaign team that produced the six images that were used throughout the campaign and they gave that freely to Essex. We had to then persuade, and I did my part as well in persuading, all the councils that if we could get a collaborative approach. All the McDonald's restaurants were involved as well, which obviously—

Q165 John Stevenson: It became county-wide?

Cherry Lewis-Taylor: It was county-wide and it did make a difference.

Q166 Chairman: One final point. We talk about resources and, Mr Sedaris, you talked about ticketing people. I think that was the phrase you have used. Do you think there may be more capacity to do that and local authorities may be more willing to do that if, when they fine people, the money from those fines goes back to local authorities to enable them to carry on pursuing people who drop litter?

David Sedaris: Yes. Part of the problem with ticketing people for litter—I do not know what it is here, but in the United States you can ticket a driver because you have to have your driver's licence on you, but on foot people do not have to have their ID on them. They could throw down some rubbish and then you can write them a ticket and they could give you a different name.

No, I would have that money go into a fund. If you were out there and you were a cop and if you could fine somebody \$50 for littering you would make a fortune every day. You could raise a lot of money that

could then go into hiring more people. What you want is to create a system of abject paranoia where people would think they are not safe anywhere. Anyone around could turn them in or could be an undercover policeman. That is what you want.

Chairman: We may not use those words when we come to our final conclusions. It is an interesting point on which to leave this panel, so thank you very much to you all for coming to give evidence this afternoon.

Panel 2 Questions [167-231]

Witnesses: **Jane Bickerstaffe**, Director, Industry Council for Research on Packaging and the Environment, **Jacob Hayler**, Executive Director, Environmental Services Association, **Martin Kersh**, Executive Director, Foodservice Packaging Association, and **Alex West**, Senior Manager for Corporate Affairs, the Wrigley Company Limited, gave evidence.

Q167 Chairman: We move on to our second panel to give evidence to us. Could you say who you are and the organisation you represent, just going down the line, please?

Jacob Hayler: Jacob Hayler from the Environmental Services Association.

Martin Kersh: Martin Kersh, Foodservice Packaging Association. Our members are either manufacturers or distributors of packaging used for the takeaway food industry.

Alex West: Alex West, I work for the Wrigley Company.

Jane Bickerstaffe: I am Jane Bickerstaffe from INCPEN, which is an organisation set up in the 1970s by a group of manufacturers and retailers to do basic research on packaging, and litter control has always been one of our areas of interest.

Q168 Chairman: Could I just begin then with Jane Bickerstaffe with regard to the survey that you carry out? There is also an LEQSE survey as well. The difference is, as I understand it, that in your survey you look at the number of items littered and the LEQSE look at the percentage of sites affected by different types of litter. Is it not a bit confusing that you have two lots of methodology and also gives an opportunity for anyone who wants to twist the figures slightly that come

out of your surveys to say, "Of course it is not so bad", and point to the figures that show them in the best light?

Jane Bickerstaffe: Not really. What happened was in the 1970s we were aware of the LEQSE but what that told us is whether something was present or absent in a particular site. It did not tell us if there was one item or 50 of them. So we commissioned Keep Britain Tidy nationally at that time, because there were no devolved administrations, to do a subset of the LEQSE and, rather than just record presence or absence, they counted the number of items. We felt that complimented what they were doing and gave more useful information because it also reflects the number of acts of littering and we thought, because it is a behavioural thing, it was important to understand that as well.

Q169 Chairman: How accurate is it? How do you choose the sites, because you do not use the same sites every time you do the survey, do you?

Jane Bickerstaffe: Keep Britain Tidy have changed the methodology over the years. They used to have a selection of sites that reflected all the different areas in the country, so you would have rural, urban, a town centre or a shopping centre. That was the case until the mid-2000s and then they changed their way of selecting the sites. We have gone with whatever their methodology was because we did not want to do something different. We wanted to build on the information they had.

Q170 Chairman: Are you happy now with the way that the sites are chosen or can the way they are chosen give a false reading for what the situation is around the country?

Jane Bickerstaffe: It depends on the ability of the person who is doing the survey to say that that crumpled bit of paper there was originally a piece of packaging or a newspaper or something from a kids' homework book. That is not easy because I have been out on sites with them. You do have to have a value judgment that you make, but it is better than having no information. We think it is time to probably reassess how litter is measured. It is not easy because it is a—

Q171 Chairman: Tell me a bit more then, because you obviously have some idea there.

Jane Bickerstaffe: You look at it from different people's perspectives. From a council perspective they want to understand the cost of having to clear it up. They need to know something that is huge that they can easily pick up is not a problem for them, but they have problems with

chewing gum and cigarette ends, which are tiny and often stuck in cobbled streets and things like that. That is one lot of information you need.

You also need some assessment of how many people have gone littering. Is it CCTV cameras so that you can watch? As well as deliberate littering, you have accidental littering. If it is a very windy day and people have put their rubbish out badly then that gets moved. We do not know the answer of how it should be measured, but we think there should be lots of different measures to give us as much information as possible and then we want to tackle the problem properly.

Q172 Chairman: Very briefly, because we want to come on to you in more detail, the other witnesses: do you find the results of these surveys helpful? Do they change your behaviour in any way?

Martin Kersh: From the point of view of our association or individually?

Chairman: From the association, that is probably why we are here today rather than individual litterer, yes.

Martin Kersh: I would support what Jane says on that particular point. Knowing the proportion that your particular sector accounts for in terms of litter is a vital thing to know. The chances of your litter appearing in any one place within the Local Environment Quality Survey is going to be, as long as members of the public are there, relatively high. But it is the specific thing you need to know: what proportion of that litter is accounted by your sector. It is very useful. I tend to look at the count bit as like each piece of litter, which represents each piece of litter that is dropped, a littering occasion if you like, and it is a very good measurement of littering occasions. That is useful and, after all, that is what this is all about.

Alex West: I would agree. We definitely find information very useful and it also enables us to look at—obviously if we are addressing with the problem with the programmes that we are running what we would like to see, and I am sure all sectors would, would be a decrease in litter as a whole, but obviously each of those individual parts of the litter problem. It is very helpful to have that data and the statistics out there to provide it.

Jacob Hayler: It is a useful context certainly and it is useful to have something that provides some sort of consistency of measurement over time. It provides part of the picture and it is good to then link it to other types of evidence. The Keep Britain Tidy survey is now trying to

do that in terms of impacts or links, correlations with mental health, crime, and so on. There are also other studies that have been done that look at the indirect economic costs associated with littering and bringing all of those pieces of evidence together helps to provide a good overall picture.

Q173 David Heyes: It is clear in our inquiry so far that there is a need to get better data. There is a need for reassessing how litter is measured, as you have said, Jane. We had the McDonald's lady in our first session claiming that only 3% of litter was down to fast food. Other surveys showed multiples of that as being the correct figure. The latest LEQSE survey shows that litter levels, according to them, have maintained a fairly constant level in England in recent years, but it is the fast food litter content that has been increasing. Martin Kersh, you say that your organisations are unfairly targeted in relation to litter. What is your opinion?

Martin Kersh: We have been unfairly targeted.

David Heyes: I am targeting you.

Martin Kersh: You are targeting me?

David Heyes: Yes.

Martin Kersh: First of all, we have to look at our sector. The food service industry has expanded greatly over the years and, despite forecasts that with the recession it would all go backwards, it did not. It continues to grow and continues to develop because lots of new stores open. There are lots of new food ideas. We are seeing the growth in street food for instance, a phenomenon in London, which is becoming absolutely huge. We are saying there is a lot of it around.

That means when it comes to finding places, and if you take the study and you mentioned a survey there, the chances, given the market dynamic, of it being found somewhere, on the basis that people litter, and that there has been no change in the littering, that they continue to litter, then the chances are going to be high that it will come up on that figure. It will be found on the number of places you suggested that it will do.

I feel it is unfairly attacked because, first, the data says it is just under 3% of all litter. In other words, 97% of litter is not food service related. That suggests, if you look at it like that, that it is being unfairly targeted, but that is not to say we do not—

Q174 David Heyes: Those figures are based on some pretty dubious methodology.

Martin Kersh: You think it is a dubious methodology?

David Heyes: I am claiming that.

Martin Kersh: We are looking at research and it is rigorous. When you look at the way it is conducted and the number of sampling points, the number of land areas and so forth, I think you would have to—how inaccurate? Would you say it is wrong by a factor of what? Could it be 100% wrong?

Q175 David Heyes: Reliable data does not exist. That is the key point.

Jane Bickerstaffe: May I comment on that? The strong message we took from the research that we have done over these years is that litter changes as people's habits change and it is a behavioural thing. There was an article in *The Times* I think just before Christmas about Victorian England and somebody had collected what had gathered on the bottom of a lady's skirt walking down the Strand in 1982 and it reflected things that were happening at the time. It was hairpins, cigar ends, and a plug of unchewed tobacco. Today you will find different things because we live our lives differently. We eat on the go.

To us the thing that is important is that litter breeds litter. It does not matter what it is. If you let it accumulate more will join it, so we have to tackle it at source. Whatever it is, whether it is an ATM receipt, a piece of packaging, fast food, anything, we have to have a holistic approach. In the past we have had lots of good campaigns and good initiatives but they have tended to be piecemeal. They have either gone just for bits of litter and left the rest and then that just breeds more again, or it has concentrated on various sectors and not involved everybody.

Q176 David Heyes: There is little to disagree with there, but I have not finished targeting Martin Kersh on this. The existence of your organisation is an acknowledgement that there is a problem and you have a will to do something about it. What I am interested in is what action you are taking as an organisation, the members of your organisation. What things are you doing to help reduce the amount of packaging, particularly food packaging, which becomes litter?

Martin Kersh: First of all, it is our packaging specifically for the takeaway sector, so I cannot speak for the rest of grocery food packaging.

We held a summit earlier in 2014, which was very well attended, and I think it was probably the first time that a specific packaging organisation have done that. That drew together not just members of our industry but a very wide spectrum of people. Coming out of that, what we felt we needed to do was try to draw our supply chain together, including the food service operators and the waste management organisations, to see whether we can make any progress by pulling together as one with unified actions rather than different organisations doing different actions, because I think that is probably at the nub of all of this. There are a lot of good things that are going on, but it is very much diluted.

Q177 David Heyes: Did you achieve agreement on that?

Martin Kersh: That certainly is one of the things we would like to do.

David Heyes: It is work in progress?

Martin Kersh: It is work in progress. I have been speaking to the individual food service operators but one thing you do have to bear in mind, which has come out listening to what has been said before and also in articles that have been in the press, especially that one on Sunday, is that it is very much considered that the food service industry is just the branded food service industry. As far as a lot of people are saying, that is the takeaway food service industry in this country, the major brand names you see on the high street, the very well-marketed ones, but they probably represent—and it is hard to prove this—but certainly no more than 40% of it. In fact, probably less. People buy takeaway food from a vast array of organisations. There are first of all independents and there are a lot of independent operators: fish and chip shops, kebab shops and so on, operating throughout the country, not just in towns but some in villages.

Q178 David Heyes: They each buy their packaging from your—

Martin Kersh: They do. On the question on the packaging part of it, over time what has happened through product innovation technology is that the packaging has reduced in volume, but not at the sacrifice of product performance, especially with respect to food on the go. It is absolutely important that packaging does not leak and it is also important that packaging keeps the food in the way which food is intended. That means people can enjoy the food in the way it is meant to be, whether it keeps the food hot, cold, soft, crisp or whatever it happens to be, so that food is consumed because one of the other aspects on our agenda, of course, is food waste. One of the things we wish to ensure is that the packaging helps in the fight against food waste, and it has been proven to do so. In answer to your question

about the amount of packaging, the volume of packaging, if one can compute an average per fast food serving, it has probably declined over the years.

Q179 David Heyes: I have one more question that any members of the panel can answer. We the Government are introducing a fairly limited range of plastic products for a charge. Plastic bags are going to be charged from later this year but only in certain circumstances. Is there an argument here for much more addition of cost to the packaging, taxation on the packaging in effect?

Martin Kersh: Of other packaging other than bags?

David Heyes: Why should not all bags carry a charge? They all potentially are going to finish up as rubbish—

Martin Kersh: In the name of?

David Heyes:—not just carrier bags.

Martin Kersh: In the name of reducing their use say or the name of reducing litter you are saying?

David Heyes: Taxation on all packaging.

Martin Kersh: To reduce the amount of litter? The argument would be that what would happen is that the charge would inevitably be passed on to the consumer.

Q180 David Heyes: I will stop targeting you and apologise for doing that, but there are other people who want to contribute.

Jacob Hayler: The first thing on packaging in terms of the broader context is that it is subject to a lot of legislation and producer responsibility does apply to packaging: manufacturers, retailers, distributors and so on, but the focus of a lot of that effort is on recycling and raising recycling rates of packaging. As yet there has not been much of a focus on the littering aspect, although, when you mentioned plastic bag levies, littering was the original reasoning behind introducing those in Ireland, for example.

Certainly ESA as an organisation has always supported, in principle, plastic bag charges. Plastic bags tend to get caught in machinery at recycling plants and tend to be a bit of a nuisance in that regard. A levy that would help to reduce their use is something that we have certainly supported in principle although, as with all these things, the devil is in the detail and it depends how they are practically implemented in terms of certain types of exemptions for different types of bags and so on.

Certainly we would prefer a simpler approach that did not have so many exemptions.

In terms of a broader tax on packaging, it is difficult and I would not like to add cost burdens on to other sectors.

Q181 David Heyes: Should we be taxing all packaging?

Jane Bickerstaffe: I would love to comment on that because I think it would not do anything for the litter problem unless you could apply the levy to everything that gets littered, so the banks' ATM receipts and banana skins. There is a host of stuff out there and if we do a piecemeal thing it is only going to address a bit of it. We need something that is all encompassing, addresses all types of litter and involves everybody in society. In the previous session you had a number of people saying what we need is a partnership approach and that is something that INCPEN is moving on to in the work that we have done on littering, because we have done lots of things. We have materials for schools with a strong anti-littering message, which we think is good at focusing at that age, but we need something that is national and everybody gets behind; ideally led by central government because we need strong support from them. There is a strategic approach. We have the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005. There is a framework there. What we need to do is just put all the pieces in place and get everybody involved in addressing it.

Alex West: I would agree. I do not think a tax would deal with the root cause of the issue, which is that we need to educate people to do the right thing and put their litter in the bin in the first place. The plastic bag tax is quite different in that it incentivises good behaviour, so if you re-use your plastic bag you are a good citizen and then obviously you do not pay the charge. The problem with a tax on all other forms of packaging is that it is a minority of people that do litter, so the majority of people who are acting responsibly would potentially suffer as a result. I am not convinced that that would be the right way to address the issue at all.

Q182 John Stevenson: Just a comment you made there, Jane. Do you think there is any benefit in commercial organisations having to have responsibility for the areas in front of their outlets; that they have to make sure that they are kept tidy regardless of whose litter it is?

Jane Bickerstaffe: I think they do.

Martin Kersh: They do.

Q183 John Stevenson: Is that a legal obligation?

Martin Kersh: There is the Street Litter Control Notices Order 1991. It says, "Local authorities can serve Street Litter Control Notices requiring business to clear up litter around their premises. It is an offence not to comply". That legislation exists.

Q184 John Stevenson: Therefore, the follow on is that local authorities, if they take a proactive response certainly with regard to commercial property, it should not necessarily be a problem?

Martin Kersh: It is enforcement.

Q185 Chairman: Is that an order that it has to be served on each individual occasion there is a problem?

Martin Kersh: I would imagine so, yes, because it would have to be by example, would it not?

Q186 John Stevenson: Following on then would you support an ongoing obligation rather than a specific obligation?

Jane Bickerstaffe: Definitely, yes.

Martin Kersh: Also, just to add to that, no vendor likes their store surrounded by litter. It is not the best advertisement for it, so they do have an interest in keeping it tidy.

Q187 Chairman: Just one point, Mr Kersh. When I went to Berlin on holiday recently I went to a football match, Hertha Berlin, and I was amazed there. They had great skips where people were putting their glass bottles in, having drunk their soft drinks or beer or whatever. It was outside the ground and clearly you get a refund if you take your bottle back to the manufacturer. For each individual they are probably not going to do it, but what they did was put it in a skip then somebody came along and ran their own business to take the skip away and collect the refunds and it meant the products were recycled and not littered. Do you think the industry could do a lot more to think about this? We are almost going back to the 1950s, aren't we, when we all remember taking our bottles back, or some of us do anyway, to the local shop.

Martin Kersh: There are two strands there, one of which of course is the bin itself. Obviously this bin, however it was designed, made it more appealing for people to put their—

Chairman: It was just a big skip.

Martin Kersh: A big skip, okay. But one of the things we are arguing for is there is some great technology out there. There is a bin. I know

you had a submission from—I cannot remember the number of it, forgive me, but—

Q188 Chairman: But this idea about the refundable—

Martin Kersh: It is a difficult one this on the refundable one. Part of the problem is there is a cost involved in managing that whole process and that, at the end of the day, is a cost to industry. If you are talking about a deposit scheme—not a deposit scheme, just simply refunding? Interesting enough at a music festival, I think it was the Reading festival, they said, “If you bring back your cups we will give you so much money”, and, typical 14 and 15 year-olds ran out of money at festivals after about 10 minutes, it worked.

Q189 Chairman: The plastic cups inside the ground you did pay a deposit and got it back when you returned them, which is interesting.

Martin Kersh: But in a closed community these things obviously can work.

Q190 Chris Williamson: I just want to move on to dealing with chewing gum litter and how we prevent chewing gum litter but, just before I do, just to target you, Martin, perhaps. You made the point that 40%, you estimated, of the fast food market is from well-known branded organisations; the likes of McDonald’s and others. Would it not make sense then perhaps for a levy to be imposed on the packaging industry, which was then redistributed to local authorities? The point has been made that penalises people with the charges, but people are penalised anyway by the costs they have to pay for their council tax and indeed the impact on the visual amenity of this dreadful litter they find everywhere in some areas. Would it not make sense to—

Martin Kersh: If it is an additional cost, it would undoubtedly be passed down the line, unless you are expecting the manufacturing industry to absorb that and—no.

Q191 Chris Williamson: I am not necessarily saying that but if it was hypothecated and then distributed to local authorities that could be a social good, could it not?

Martin Kersh: It certainly is an argument but it is one that—

Chris Williamson: Not one that you would rule out?

Martin Kersh: It is one I personally could not give my support to because it is yet an extra layer of bureaucracy. It is adding to red tape

and I am not even too sure whether it still results in less litter at the end of the day, which is, after all, your objective.

Q192 Chris Williamson: It would give local authorities the resources to deal with it though, would it not?

Martin Kersh: They would have resources to do it and what it does take away from is the basic thing, which is that people are littering. So what we are not doing is we are not addressing the individual dropping litter on the ground.

Q193 Chris Williamson: But that levy would not only help the local authorities to deal with it by having more street cleaning crews, it could help to fund education campaigns and other activities, could it not?

Martin Kersh: Possibly it could but I do not think it necessarily would in practice and you would probably agree as well.

Q194 Chris Williamson: Anyway, if I could move on then to the issue in relation to chewing gum and the problems associated with that. I wonder if you could you all comment on where you see chewing gum in the hierarchy of litter problems as compared to more visible and hazardous litter. If we could go down the table; Jacob, can we start with you? Where do you see chewing gum in that hierarchy?

Jacob Hayler: The starting point would be to consider it on a purely cost basis. The LGA has estimated it costs just over £50 million to clean up chewing gum nationwide across England, which is about 8%, to put it in context, of the street cleansing budget of local authorities in England. It is a significant but minor proportion of that expenditure.

Chris Williamson: Martin, where would you see it? Do you have a comment?

Martin Kersh: I do not.

Chris Williamson: Alex, I am sure you have a comment on it.

Alex West: I absolutely recognise it is a problem. Yes, it is out on the streets. We would prefer not to see it out there, absolutely, which is why we do take our responsibility as a company very seriously and invest in campaigns to help educate people not to drop their litter in the first place.

Q195 Chris Williamson: Do you agree with the LGA spokesman? I think he described it as a plague on our streets.

Alex West: As I say, it is a problem. I absolutely am not stepping away from that.

Chris Williamson: It is a problem but not a plague?

Alex West: What is a plague? It is out there. I am sure we can all step outside and see it and that is unfortunate. We do not want to see that as much as anyone else does not want to see that.

Jane Bickerstaffe: That is a good example of why we need to step up what we are doing on behaviour change. That is something that we are doing with a new start-up charity called Hubbub where we want to take a completely different approach, build a community of everybody in an area, try to give everybody a sense of civic pride and try to make it fun. Bring some humour into it. There are some wonderfully designed bins that will make people laugh because they will make silly noises and things like that. There are lots of things like that we can do.

With Hubbub we are going to be doing a nine-month trial just up the road from here where we are getting everybody who operates on the road, so it is people with packaging interest, chewing gum, the people who smoke, the newspaper people; get everybody together and do a test community there and hopefully in nine months demonstrate and trial a lot of things that we will then make freely available to anybody anywhere. If Government can get behind a national campaign that involves everyone, all the anti-litter campaign organisations and all the different sectors, and does not just do piecemeal things.

Q196 Chris Williamson: We are talking of behaviour change then and I am going to be interested if anybody else has views on this. How effective do you think the campaigns have been so far in effecting behaviour change?

Jane Bickerstaffe: It is a combination of things. Some of the campaigns where they are more holistic in their approach are effective. Braintree you have heard about earlier. You need three things to happen at once. You need the infrastructure and the cleaning programmes in place, and most local authorities do an excellent job of cleaning up. You also need to enforce the laws that exist already. That is challenging.

Q197 Chris Williamson: Do you think the campaigns have been effective then?

Jane Bickerstaffe: If they do all three and the behaviour change at the same time and if you get all three in parallel, we have had some successes. We have had nothing that has been successful—

Chris Williamson: But it is in pockets. It is specific areas.

Jane Bickerstaffe: Exactly.

Q198 Chris Williamson: There is not a holistic campaign across the place. What do you think about that?

Jane Bickerstaffe: Exactly and addressing just specifics—

Chris Williamson: How effective do you think the campaign has been?

Alex West: Obviously the campaigns that we have supported for the last 10 years do a lot in the area of education. The critical thing to say is that it is about having a suite of activities to make sure we are targeting all of the people that do litter. It is both education campaigns that we run through schools, again very focused—

Q199 Chris Williamson: Are they being effective though, do you think?

Alex West: Yes, I do believe that. Certainly, in terms of chewing gum, we have the Chewing Gum Action Group that has run campaigns for the last 10 years, and in the LEQSE survey chewing gum is something that we do see decreasing.

Q200 Chris Williamson: Jacob, do you think the campaigns have been effective?

Jacob Hayler: People respond to incentives. On the one hand you need to make it easier for people to do the right thing through the provision of facilities. On the other hand you need to have penalties in place for poor behaviour and sufficient enforcement of those penalties. I cannot comment on the effectiveness of broader education campaigns in that area, although they are effective in recycling.

Q201 Chris Williamson: Would you support a tax on a packet of chewing gum? This is something that the vast majority of the British public would support. I think the survey suggested 82% would favour a levy on a packet of chewing gum if that could generate resources, coming back to the point I have been making previously about generating resources, to pay for the clean-up and the education campaigns.

Alex West: It comes back to addressing the root cause of the problem and that would not address the root cause of the problem.

Q202 Chris Williamson: It might help, would it not, though? If local authorities, or whoever it was that led the campaign, not just for

cleaning up but to raise awareness, education campaigns, there would be a resource there to pay for that if there was a levy on the packaging?

Alex West: We are already contributing quite significantly to education campaigns in a suite of different areas, recognising that lots of different people litter and it is important that we spread that message broadly.

Q203 Chris Williamson: What is the objection there to a small levy? People would hardly notice it and it would make a huge difference, would it not, in terms of resources for local authorities responsible for dealing with it and indeed provide the necessary wherewithal to run the education campaigns? Everybody is saying it is a great idea and there should be better co-ordination, but nobody is coming forward with any way, it seems to me, other than in pockets, where you can have a co-ordinated concerted campaign across the country to deal with this plague on our pavements, as the LGA has described it.

Alex West: In terms of a national campaign, I completely agree with Jane. It is an interesting idea. There is an organisation out there called Clean Up Britain, who I believe submitted written evidence to this Committee's inquiry, who have some very interesting ideas in that area and the Wrigley Company and I believe McDonald's and Coca-Cola are in conversations and have provided some initial funding to look at how that campaign could run and what it might look like. That is a very interesting idea. What we would like to see is more companies come on board. Again, as Jane said, we should look at tackling the whole issue of litter if we want to have effect.

Q204 Chris Williamson: If there was a levy then on all fast food and chewing gum manufacturers do you support that if it was a partnership?

Alex West: No. Again for reasons that I have said, it does not address the root cause of the problem. It unfairly impacts those who do the right thing, which is the majority of people.

Q205 Chris Williamson: I do not know whether it was you or somebody from Wrigley who said it would increase litter. It would encourage people to throw their chewing gum.

Alex West: Yes, because you think the clean-up is being paid for. I do believe, and as we have heard from other witnesses, litter breeds litter. If you see it perhaps that incentivises people further to drop it because they think it is okay to do that. Obviously we need to address that but—

Q206 Chris Williamson: Do you have any evidence to suggest that a levy would encourage people or is it just an assumption?

Alex West: I believe that there are some statistics that demonstrate that people would feel that they had paid for their clean up, but not just in the area of chewing gum.

Q207 Chris Williamson: Is that a survey? Is that a study that has been done?

Alex West: Let me come back to you on that, if I may.

Q208 Chairman: You do not believe that, do you?

Alex West: Yes, I do believe that if you went out and said there was an extra contribution that was out there, that was going towards clean up, people would think the clean-up is being paid for and would therefore drop their litter more readily. It is an interesting road to explore.

Q209 Chris Williamson: What do the other witnesses think about that? What do you think, Jacob? If you had to pay an extra 5p for your packet of Wrigley's Juicy Fruit chewing gum would you be more inclined to spit it on the pavement?

Jacob Hayler: Of course I would not litter under any circumstances, so I couldn't possibly comment.

Q210 Chris Williamson: No, but would you be more inclined because you paid a bit more? Do you think that would be something people think—

Jacob Hayler: I do not know. I am not aware—

Chris Williamson: Somebody who would not normally litter.

Jacob Hayler: I am not aware of any evidence either way, so some further work would need to be done in that area.

Coming back to your original question about a tax/levy, from our perspective our members contract on behalf of local authorities to provide street cleansing services. We know that local authorities' resources are extremely stretched and are going to get even more stretched going forward, particularly as other areas of waste management costs are facing upward pressure. Any source of funding that could help local authorities would be welcomed.

Chris Williamson: You would support it?

Jacob Hayler: We would support additional sources of funding for local authorities.

Q211 Chris Williamson: You are moving towards supporting it. What about you, Jane? Would you nail your colours to the mast or are you going to—

Jane Bickerstaffe: Definitely would not support it because I do not think it will—

Chris Williamson: You would not support it?

Jane Bickerstaffe: No, because you could put a levy on everything that gets littered out there and you still would not be able to persuade some drunk on a Saturday night that they should not drop it because they are going to do it.

Q212 Chris Williamson: Nobody seems to think that there should be a levy. There should be this greater co-ordination and more should be done, but nobody has come up with a suggestion as to how that should be paid for. Everybody acknowledges that local authority budgets are being squeezed. Everybody acknowledges that the local communities are suffering the consequences in terms of visual amenities, and so on. What do we do then?

Jane Bickerstaffe: We prevent it happening in the first place.

Chris Williamson: But how?

Jane Bickerstaffe: By behaviour change, by giving people a sense of—

Chris Williamson: But how do you get the behaviour change?

Jane Bickerstaffe: We are going to do that in the next nine months.

Chris Williamson: How?

Jane Bickerstaffe: By giving people a sense of civic pride, making them proud of their environment. It happens in some areas.

Q213 Chris Williamson: But that just does not happen, does it? That has to be led. That has to be funded in some way.

Jane Bickerstaffe: Precisely, and that is what we want to trial.

Q214 Chris Williamson: Where are the resources going to come from?

Jane Bickerstaffe: We are funding the trial. Then we are hoping that if that is successful and we can share with everybody what we do then we will be able to roll it out and people looking for—

Q215 Chris Williamson: Can I ask a specific question then? What is the most effective way, do you think, to remove chewing gum without leaving a stain behind and what are the related costs?

Jacob Hayler: I could not possibly comment.

Q216 Chris Williamson: Does anybody have an idea? Alex, how do you remove the chewing gum? The most effective way of removing it, because I used to be the leader of the council at Derby and we had a gum-busting kit bought in. You see them on a regular basis. It took each piece of chewing gum around a minute or a minute and a half to remove, and then it left a white stain there.

Alex West: I believe the best way is through the use of high pressure hoses, I agree, but, as I say—

Q217 Chris Williamson: They are expensive, though, aren't they?

Alex West: —let us focus on it not being there in the first place rather than dealing with the consequences.

Q218 Chris Williamson: Do you think the cost of removal justifies the benefit from it, anybody, or do you think we should just leave it? Some witnesses previously have said, "Just leave it. It is not worth it".

Jane Bickerstaffe: I think there are health implications of just leaving something.

Chris Williamson: Say again, sorry.

Jane Bickerstaffe: I think there are health implications of just leaving it. I do not think we should encourage any irresponsible behaviour like that because it is in everybody's interest to have a clean environment. Everybody will feel better. The last KBT survey looked at the implications of littering on crime and there seemed to be a clear correlation there. For all sorts of other reasons in society, we need to stop it happening.

Q219 Mrs Glindon: Mr Hayler, I want to ask you some questions about bin collection. What are the main challenges your members face when carrying out bin collection activities on behalf of councils?

Jacob Hayler: I think you are referring specifically to public bins and facilities because obviously our members provide household collection

services as well. In terms of street cleansing services, the key challenge is looking at an overall cost implication to local authorities with their severely stretched budgets. The largest cost element would tend to come from the provision of people rather than containers, and you need people to empty the bins. It is about what sort of frequency you can do that on and what sort of density of bin infrastructure you can put in place that people can then collect from. It is having other response teams in place who can respond to incidents, fly-tipping incidents for example, doing that and performing at the service level that is expected of our local authority customers and their residents, and trying to do that at reasonable cost.

Q220 Mrs Glindon: Has there been any impact because of the Government's policy on weekly refuse collection?

Jacob Hayler: That is a policy that obviously affects household collection services rather than looking at public bin collections. It is important to see the context of fortnightly versus weekly collections, which is that local authorities are faced with three conflicting objectives when it comes to their waste management services. One is to improve the level of environmental performance and that includes meeting much higher recycling targets. The second one is maintaining certain service level provision that is expected of their residents. The third one is doing all that, which all leads to higher cost but trying to do it on a smaller budget. That is very difficult for local authorities to achieve. There is evidence to suggest that less frequent collections of refuse do incentivise people to put out more waste for recycling, so in that respect it is a good thing.

The views of us as an association are that it is appropriate for individual local authorities to choose the type of service that fits how they want to balance those conflicting objectives themselves.

Q221 Mrs Glindon: You talked about local authorities and obviously budgets are tight. Do local authorities monitor the quality of work once a contract has begun? Do they have the resources to do that?

Jacob Hayler: Obviously contract management is important and does take place. It is important that our members like to work in partnership with their local authorities, they like to ensure that contracts are managed appropriately and in accordance with all due reasonableness.

Q222 Mrs Glindon: Do the collection contracts also exclude certain items, say broken glass or chewing gum? Are there things they will not collect?

Jacob Hayler: It depends. Certainly, in terms of household collections, anything that is put out for recycling or in refuse if it is put out in an appropriate manner would be collected in accordance with that contract. There may be different contracts for different things like bulky waste collections, for example. Obviously things like broken glass do provide health and safety concerns, but appropriate health and safety measures are usually put in place in order for that to be dealt with appropriately.

Q223 Mrs Glindon: Things would be collected one way or another to clean up?

Jacob Hayler: If it is put out appropriately it will be collected as part of the services. If not, then other arrangements would have to be made.

Q224 Mrs Glindon: It is about 14 months since DEFRA announced it would be stepping back from areas where businesses would be better placed, they said, to act in relation to waste management. Has this had any effect on refuse and the contracts?

Jacob Hayler: It does not send a very positive signal to the industry at a time when we, for example, in England are struggling to meet our EU recycling targets for 2020, with a prospect of higher targets possibly coming in subsequently going out to 2030. I think there are examples where DEFRA have removed previously committed PFI credits from projects to build and develop waste treatment facilities. Issues like that have caused greater concern than the letter but certainly the sentiment contained within that letter does not send a very good signal.

Q225 Mrs Glindon: Finally, could I just ask everyone: do you think councils should invest more in public rubbish bins and recycling facilities and things like you have talked about: the bins that make noises and more attractive bins, if that is the right thing to say?

Jacob Hayler: Again, it comes down to resources and how they can pay for them. More recycling on the go is something that certainly we would support greater provision for, although some local authorities do have concerns that it can lead to high levels of contamination in terms of people putting the wrong things in the bins and that can add to their costs. It is a mixed picture and it needs to be done appropriately and on a case-by-case basis.

Martin Kersh: It was mentioned in the previous session why there is so much litter surrounding bins, not in the bin. I remember attending a seminar given by Keep Britain Tidy at their annual general conference. A researcher from Switzerland proved that genuinely is the case and

that is because the bins fill up and the people still will go forward, drop the thing on top and then, of course, that items falls on to the ground because there is not any capacity left in the bins.

Can local authorities afford to keep emptying these bins more often? The answer is probably not because it is a resource obviously involved and it is very expensive to do so. One of the things we mentioned in our submission is the existence of some very good technology that is around there, one of which is this bin called "The Big Belly" that we had demonstrated to our members. It is eight times the capacity of a regular bin but it also compresses what is inside it. Therefore, it can take more than eight times the capacity. In addition to that, it sends a warning signal to the waste management company to say, "This bin is ready to be emptied".

I spoke to the company yesterday in anticipation of this session just to find out what was happening. 60 local authorities are using it. Nottingham has 175 of them. They are saying very clearly—they would do, would they not, they are selling them—there is evidence to show that it has had a great effect on litter and litter within the surrounding area of the bins. They are also saying that they are offering free trials for local authorities and often leaders of local authorities get it, but it is those in the back office who are tending to resist it a little bit and be thinking, "This may well cost jobs", which it obviously would not do because it would free up people to do other things like educate consumers and so forth. I would hope that that is one aspect that will come through in your final deliberations. That is not the only technology, I am not a salesman for them, believe me. There is other technology around like clear-sided bins and so forth.

The only other thing I would add is we are in favour of obviously more recycling on the go. We do not necessarily think that will convert someone who would normally litter into not littering. I do not think that necessarily will make any difference.

Alex West: I would say we fully recognise that local authorities are doing a lot already and, as we have all said, they are incredibly stretched in their resources, but we have found when we have been able to work collaboratively with local authorities that we have managed to look at some quite innovative things to do and to address the issue and had some real success in those areas. We would certainly like to do more of that.

Earlier on we were talking about incentivising. We did a project this year with Rochford District Council looking at incentivising people to use the litter bins that are there. It was based on the more waste that went into the bins money was given to very localised charities and it

was incredibly successful, one of the most successful campaigns that Keep Britain Tidy have been involved with. It saw a 41% reduction during that period, which is fantastic, and we are excited about innovative ways like that where we can get in and work with councils and figure out how we can address this long-term sustainable behaviour change. We would certainly like to collaborate more with local authorities in that sense.

Jane Bickerstaffe: I can only just add that it is businesses as well as local authorities that can be encouraged to provide more bins where that is appropriate, but I agree with what everyone else has said.

Q226 Chairman: Very briefly, I asked the previous witnesses: would it be a good idea for local authorities to keep the fines that they get when they put notes on people for dropping litter so they can use that money to employ more staff, do more education programmes or whatever? Very briefly.

Martin Kersh: Very briefly, I believe in 1991 the fine was set between £50 to £85. With inflation, even the low levels we have had recently, perhaps that fine could be increased because it is to what should be the current value. The other thing about fines is that it has to be enforced and not only do local authorities have to enforce it, they have to have sufficient people on the grounds enforcing it. Looking through the legislation, I believe that more people can be appointed to enforce those fines and issue tickets than probably a lot of local authorities. I am a parish councillor and I am reading—

Chairman: But if they keep all their money then they can—

Martin Kersh: The best example I have come across is probably Maidstone Borough Council and they do issue fines, but they work it on the basis that it will break even because obviously there is a cost in collecting them. If what came out of it was that those fines were just used to provide the funding for people to go around and collect them, it would make a greater impact. It may produce a profit but that would be enough.

Q227 Bob Blackman: Very briefly, the problem of litter is not going away. We have 500 or so local authorities in the country. We have a plethora of voluntary organisations. We have the various different industry-led organisations. Does there need to be some sort of national plan or strategy for solving it and—Jane, you are nodding vigorously so I am coming to you first—if so, what does it look like?

Jane Bickerstaffe: We have a five-point manifesto that I brought you a copy of, but it starts at the top. Central government has to give

strong leadership on this, put it up at a high level. It is great that you guys are looking at it, but it is seldom mentioned at a high level in Government. The broken window syndrome exists. It may seem trivial to do something about litter to some of them, but if they will do that the knock-on effect of reducing crime, making people feel happier, less fear, all these other bigger issues will begin to fall into place as well. There is a strong obligation, and I think there should be, on central government to take a lead.

Q228 Bob Blackman: I recognise what you say. How do you contrast that with the feeling of local authorities saying, "Look, we know what works for us locally; that is better for us locally", rather than central government dictating, "This is what you should do"? How do you square the circle?

Jane Bickerstaffe: Central government will not give chapter and verse on how it should happen because I am sure they appreciate that an urban and a rural area, for example, let alone other changes in different types of varieties of councils, all are different, but what they can say is, "Litter is important and we think you should do something about. You should work together with all these other bodies who are all willing". You have heard from a lot of people already. Nobody is saying, "Do not tackle litter". They all want to do it but there seems no pulling force to pull it all together. The anti-litter abatement agencies all individually do different things but they are often not talking to each other even. It seems central government needs to give a lead.

Alex West: A national campaign is a very interesting idea and, as I mentioned, the ideas that Clean Up Britain have—they seem to be driving that—are very exciting and they are doing that in the right way. I know they have had conversations with DEFRA and with DCLG about how they can support it with local authorities. Obviously they are having those conversations with industry. We all have a responsibility and we all have a role to play in tackling the problem. It is great to see an organisation like that who are stepping in and looking to get everyone who needs to be on board on board to try to drive forward a national campaign.

Martin Kersh: Industry and businesses are more than capable of working together and there probably is a desire to do something. We all hate litter. The whole process needs a catalyst and that catalyst has to come from Government. It has to have some leadership.

Jacob Hayler: I would agree with everything that is said. The difficulty is that, when you look at waste management more broadly, there are so many other priority issues, in terms of needing to get recycling rates up, needing to build lots more treatment infrastructure and dealing with

a lot of those issues, that litter just frankly tends to get pushed down the agenda. If there was stronger legislative framework from somewhere else, so for example the threat of infraction fines from Brussels helps to focus the minds when it is coming to missing our recycling targets in 2020, but there is not the same sort of incentive on central government to take action on litter. Central government would have to find the additional resource to implement a new plan.

Q229 Bob Blackman: Finally, Jane, you mentioned restoring civic pride. Should we have a national clean-up day that everyone participates in to promote new civic pride and new concepts of everyone rolling their sleeves up and getting their hands dirty and clearing the place up across the country and would organisations participate in that?

Jane Bickerstaffe: If we can have it for all 365 days of the year, yes, I totally agree.

Q230 Bob Blackman: But you have to start from somewhere, don't you?

Jane Bickerstaffe: Yes. We are hoping that the test community we are going to put together will develop all sorts of things and we hope that organisations like Club, all the Keep Britain Tidy and the regional levels as well, will all pick up on things. Everybody is doing lots of good things but we are not pulling it all together somehow.

Q231 Bob Blackman: Any other reactions, the Clean-Up England Day or something?

Alex West: It would be very good to see what the reason would be not to have something like that. My only caution is that, as Jane says, it cannot just be about one day of national pride and it is about those other activities and campaigns that help drive that long-term behavioural change, but I cannot see why there would be a reason against such an event.

Martin Kersh: I think it is in Estonia where this has happened and it does provide a spark. I dare say the people who would be involved in it would be the people who are already converted to not wanting to litter, so you are preaching to the church by doing it, but at least the publicity is what would be most important. The effect would be good but the publicity that would be created by that would be something that would be headline news and would focus attention.

Jacob Hayler: Nice idea. I agree.

Chairman: Thank you all for coming to give evidence to us this afternoon. That brings us to an end of the public proceedings today.