

Garbology Report

Time Frame

The assemblage of items, contained within two Ceredigion country clear plastic recycling bags, from the addresses it can be assumed that the household is from Lampeter, from the contents of the bag a timescale can be estimated. According to the Ceredigion County Council website the Collection Day for the household's area in Lampeter is Thursday, where it is collected weekly along with food waste, general waste is collected on Thursdays every three weeks. Therefore, it is likely that this is a week's worth of waste.

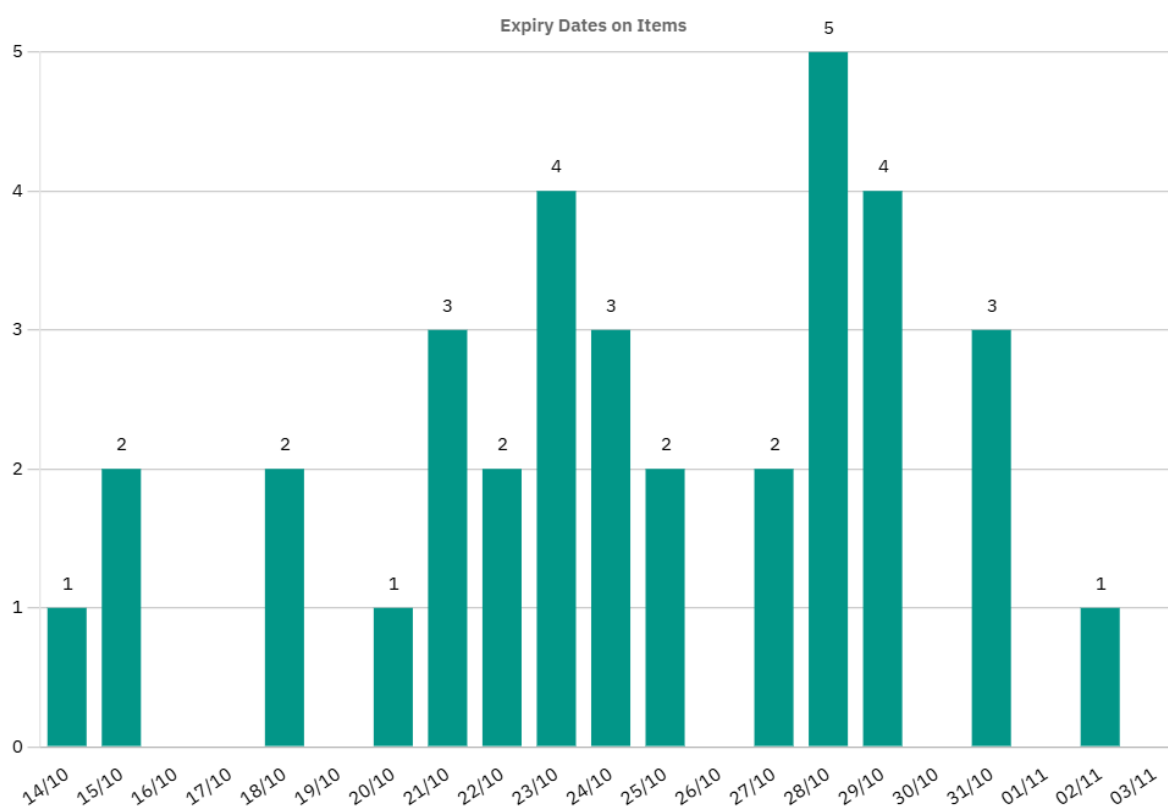


Figure 1

With the outlier of the 6th October removed, along with items with long shelf life such as the diet coke and flour, and the other use-by dates plotted onto a bar chart [Figure 1], it is likely that the items are from the dates of 15th to the 31st



Figure 2

However, the sweet corn package dating from 06/10 [figure 2] may suggest that the household keeps items well beyond expiry dates, if this is the case the dates of Thursday 23rd October to Thursday 30th October would also fit. Due to the presents of two recycling bags, it is also possible that this was two weeks' worth of recycling waste or the household producing an excess of recycling and due to the less frequent general waste collection suggest a motive for better sorting of recycling, there for producing more recycling waste.

Household Members

From the post two clearly distinct names can be seen suggesting that there are at least two household members, however there could be household member who didn't receive post in a week. However, from the food packages appears to be mostly in packs of two such as the beef stroganoff [figure 3], less other household members aren't eating together however it's more likely that there are just the two household members.



Figure 3

Where the food has come from

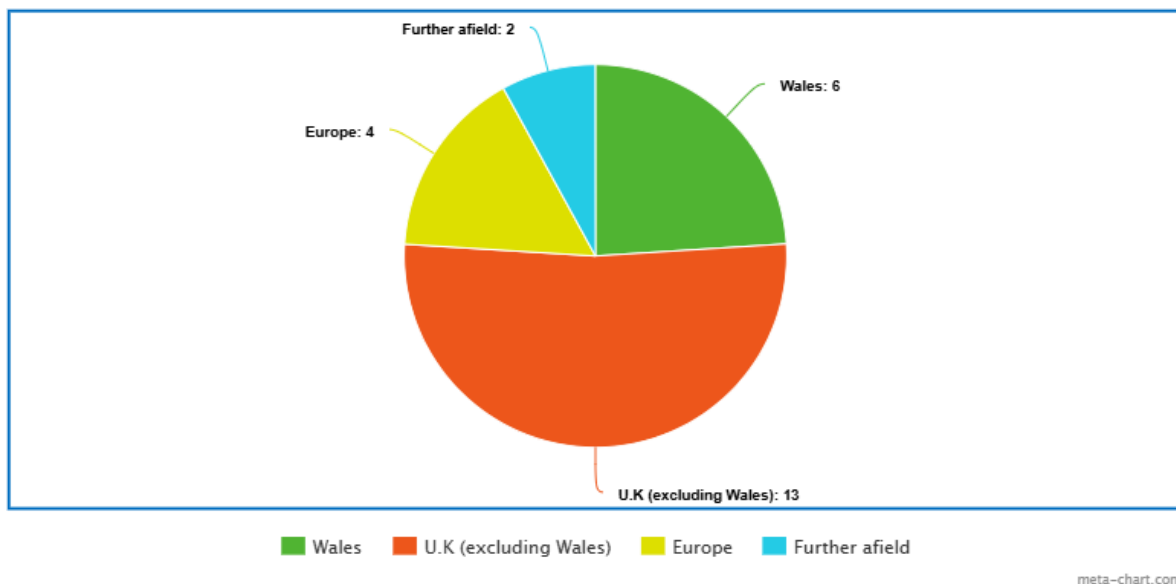


Figure 4

A majority of items are being produced within the UK (excluding Wales), with a slight pattern of a baked goods and dairy products (excluding milk, which is sourced from Wales specifically). However, with items such as the Vimto, although it was made in Lincolnshire, according to the Vimto website many ingredients are sourced

internationally such as the Grape concentrate, suggesting the household true international reliability for food products is much higher, however most manufacturers do not disclose the sources of every ingredient, so a true number is unknown,

Only about a quarter being producing locally, these items were Milk and Welsh cakes likely due to the shorter shelf lifespan of these items or significance to being producing in Wales (such as with the Welsh Cakes) and with the shop choice being Co-op which states on their website “We’re committed to supporting British farmers”, suggesting that this shop choice results in a larger quantity of locally sourced produces.

Materials

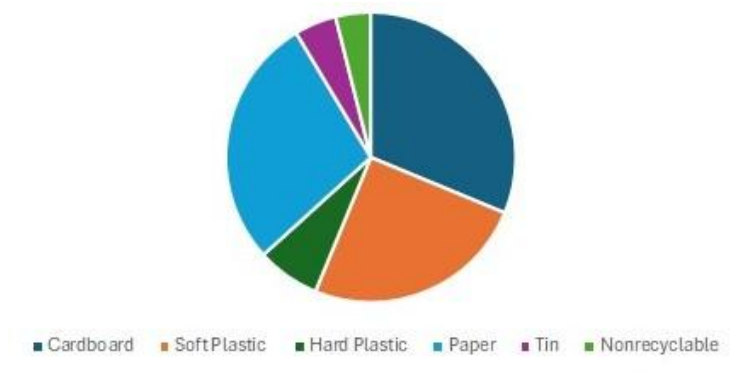


Figure 5: [Created by Drake, N]

The majority of the items being disposed of are cardboard and paper with about 60%, coming from a range sources including, food packing, postage envelopes and boxes and standard printer paper.

However, there is a number of non-recyclables such as two large Crisp packets and 30 Jakemans candy wrappers [figure 6], suggest the household might not be knowledgeable on what can and can't be recycled.

However, due to most items being very well washed suggesting that the non-recyclables are due to ignorance rather the household not wanting to recycle as the item which are not overtly clear as non-recyclable and clearly could be mistaken as recyclables.



Figure 6

Takeaway

By the takeaway contains, the household has likely had take away twice in the week from two different places, due to two different brands of takeaway containers, individually stacked. The ‘Sweet Chilli’ suggests possibly a Chinese take away, as there are two locally within Lampeter.

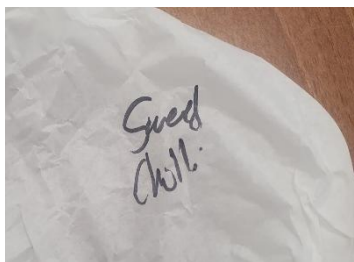


Figure 7



Figure 8

The appearance of the containers in the bin may suggest that takeaway is a common occurrence, also suggesting the household owns containers such as this as they are commonly reused. Meaning by them being thrown away the household likely has enough.

The household has a habit of washing the containers, stacking them (likely to maintain space within the bin) then immediately discarding them, this can be seen by the water collected in the bottom most pot but not in the ones closer to the top, suggesting they had not have the time or air to dry off properly, the water is fairly clean and without scent meaning from a washing process rather than left over liquid from the meal.

Sandwich bags

A cardboard box which would have contained sandwich bags was disposed of however only one plastic sandwich bag was disposed of, this being from a different brand of the box, suggesting that the majority of these bags are being disposed elsewhere, perhaps being placed in the general waste bin but more likely are being used to take food items for lunch to work or other occasion and using the bins there, which would explain their absence.

Finances

According to a study conducted by NimbleFins the Average UK food shop per person is £34 and the calculated cost of these items is roughly £234.56 which, although this is for likely two people, it is still significantly higher however this is not considering possible sales or the items purchased prior to the weeks beginning, nor the items that would have been disposed of elsewhere, like jars/tins or fresh vegetables. So, this weekly food cost could be much higher. This suggests that the household is financially comfortable.

The presence of several ready meals, alongside more ingredients such as the flour and the Boczec suggest both household members possibly do not have time to cook for most evenings rather than just a distaste for cooking. Furthermore, this suggests the household members are likely busy most days, suggesting they both work full time.

Tobacco

By the presence of the tobacco packet, 12 packets of Rizla and the filter pack makes it very likely that either one or both household members smoke frequently. By the traces of

tabaco left within the empty rizla packets it's likely that the papers are kept inside the tobacco packet, the user likely doesn't discard the papers the moment they are emptied due to the significant yellowing on certain packets suggesting they've been inside the packet for a while but were taken out for disposal.

However, the 12 packets of Rizla paper would contain enough papers to roll 600 cigarettes (each pack containing 50 papers). Even if both household members are smokers that would mean 42 cigarettes a day each, which seems unlikely and in addition to the singular packet of Tobacco and singular packet of 200 filter tips. Although this doesn't account for wastage of the papers.



Figure 9

It is possibly that multiple rizlas are being used per roll, or the tobacco its being bulked out with another agent. Another possibility is the rizla is being used for another purpose such as for small note keeping or for the popular party 'rizla' game.

Another possibility is smoking outside of the home and disposing fo the tabaco packet at a different bin. However, it becomes unclear why the rizla packets weren't disposed as well.

Another option is the idea of a clear out of sorts, this is also prominent by the presents of the 30 Jackmans wrappers, which are non-recyclable, and the lack of the jackmen packets. Therefor maybe the rizla was being kept in the door of a car, or a wastepaper bin or something of the like and at some point during the week. Which would allow the papers to build up over time.

Shops

Most items are seen coming for either Sainsburys or Co-op, (there are some outliers such as amazon or T.G Jones) these being those being the two main food shops within Lampeter, showing that the household are visiting the most convenient shop rather than in search for the highest quality or cheapest store. Supported by the household members likely working full time.

This is likely a habit the extends further then just this week, due to the household being members of both the Sainsbury and co-op loyalty program, on then co-op receipt and the Sainsbury's voucher, suggesting that there use these shops frequently enough for that to be worth while.



Figure 10

Sainsburys likely being used for a bigger weekly food shop due to its more variety, and co-op being used for more common smaller shops, possibly due to its later opening hours and its closer proximity to the residence.

The few coop bags also might suggest that frequent trips are more unplanned, there are no Sainsburys bags suggesting that they bring bags with them. Suggesting that the resident possibly buy more from co-op then planned when going in, suggesting the need to buy a bag, then why those bags are discarded rather than kept and reused, as they likely already own shopping bags as used in the Sainsburys shop. This can also be seen from the coop receipt from 18th of November which list 4 items brought from the coop at 6:48PM, which does not account for all the co-op items within the bin, proving they, most have gone at least twice.

Postage

One package had been delivered back in June, 4 months prior to the assumed date of disposal, the package is from an antique store in Portsmouth, one possible explanation for this is the item was delicate and was kept in the box until it was used or placed elsewhere, another possibility was that it was a gift and needed to be stored and hidden until a specific date.

A number of magazines for both residents had been delivered suggesting they are both frequent readers, however the only one magazine was disposed of, meaning the household likely keeps and stores most magazines. The magazine that was disposed of was the WI life, which was still in its original packaging unopened except for a small hole, enough to look what's inside, suggesting that they have no interest of reading the magazine,

The magazine in question is “WI Life” a free gift with subscription to the women’s institute, suggesting that one household member is both a member and did not join for the magazine but rather are using the subscription for its other purpose purposes, another option is that membership is for a year minimum so the household member could have joined and lost interest but is continuing to receive the magazine for the rest of the year due to the long subscription period.



Figure 11

The name of ‘Kathrine’ is accompanied by two different surnames one being Fewster and the other being Drew which matches the surname of the other household member, it is likely that Fewster is a maiden name, and has since been changed to Drew however by Fewster being used when the title of Dr is also included suggests that Fewster is being used

as a Professional name. Likely obtaining the doctorate prior to marriage.

The House

The house likely has a letter box on the front door, as postage items are dry despite the large amount of rain during the time frame, several magazines had been folded slightly, probably in order to fit through the letter box.

Conclusion

In conclusion a very large number of social patterns can be discovered and identified from a weeks’ worth of recycling waste. Including household members, where they shop, a look into schedule and patterns and habits, with more time and words much more can be discovered. There are a large number of topics that are unable to be covered within the timeframe of this investigation.

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