

JOIN THE CONVERSATION: GIVE VOICE TO REUSABLE NAPPIES

WRITE TO THEM
FACTSHEET



INTRODUCTION

We have created this factsheet for you, your local community and even your child/children to write to your local MP to activate them towards investing in waste prevention programmes that support reuse and the circular economy.

We believe that all families should have equal information and access to reusable nappies as well as access to incentives that can influence behavioural change for the better of our planet.

In London, 23 out of 32 London Boroughs and the City of London offer some form of reusable nappy incentive - a money-off voucher, cashback scheme or reusable nappy pack. This helps families to get started reducing waste and saving money. Eight out of the 23 participate with our voucher incentive scheme and have saved an average £11 in waste disposal for every £1 spent in administration costs.

We all need to actively nudge the remaining nine London Boroughs who are not currently doing anything, to take action towards reducing single-use nappy waste for the better of our environment. The time for change is now.

**YOU HAVE THE POWER TO
INSTIGATE CHANGE
WITHIN YOUR COMMUNITY
AND IT CAN ALL START
WITH A LETTER!**



LETTER TEMPLATE

Date: <<Insert date>>

Dear <<Insert MP's name>> [The letter has to be to your local MP and not anyone outside of your local council.]

Introduction:

I am writing to you today about my concern of the increasing waste that is produced by single-use disposable nappies. As a parent I am worried about the effect this may have on our environment, the cost of disposal and the future world my <<child/children>> will live in. As a constituent in your council, the [London Borough of _____], I would like you to show your support for reusable nappies and consider implementing a reusable nappy incentive scheme. Tip: You may like to include your field of work - i.e. are you a healthcare professional? Are you a member of your MP's political party?

The problem:

According to research published by The Nappy Alliance, the UK throws away 3 billion single-use disposable nappies per year, 90% of which will go through household waste streams costing Local Authorities £60 million per annum to dispose of. The end-of-life cycle of a disposable nappy is either incineration (energy-from-waste) or landfill where they can take 500 years to break down. Even if they do break down, disposable nappies may generate methane gas adding to global warming, which can damage our air quality. Tip: Choose any facts from our recommended list that you feel most strongly - is it waste/environment, health, cost?

Insert personalised statement:

I.e. ... <<I/we>> chose to use reusable nappies on <<my child/our children>> and have noticed the reduction to our household waste and budget spent on nappies... Tip: How many children do you have? Why did you choose reusables? Have you calculated any waste or cost savings?

What you want your council/MP to do:

Tip: is this to encourage a reusable nappy incentive? More support for nurseries to use reusable nappies? Supporting start-up business providing reusable nappies and/or washable nappy laundry services? Perhaps it may just be asking your MP to be talking more about an existing scheme successfully operating in their constituency.

I.e. ... To encourage the uptake of reusable nappy use, <<Insert Local Council>> can implement a reusable nappy incentive scheme which will help provide the vital information and support to help families get started. The Real Nappies for London voucher incentive scheme, operating since 2007, is a successful model that works in partnership with Local Authorities to promote reusable nappies. I would like to see my local council participate with such a scheme, or similar. Academic research, led by the University of Northampton, has found that councils who have provided reusable nappy incentives have saved an average of £11 in waste disposal for every £1 spent on incentive schemes. The report can be found at: www.realnappiesforlondon.org.uk/about-us/research/

I am aware that finances are tight at the moment for Local Authorities, as they are for all of us, but reusable nappies can help us not only save money for the council, it can save money for struggling families and can contribute to tackling climate change.

How they can learn more/follow up:

Tip: provide a personalised message. This could be an invitation to attend a local reusable nappy group or event, advice on where they can go to seek more information about reusable nappies. OR...

I would be very pleased to put you in touch with someone who can give you more information about the benefits to <<Local Council>> and to families in the area - please don't hesitate to contact me if you want to know more.

Kind regards,

Must include:

<<Insert your full name>>

<<Insert your address and postcode>> [so they know that you are a constituent of their council].

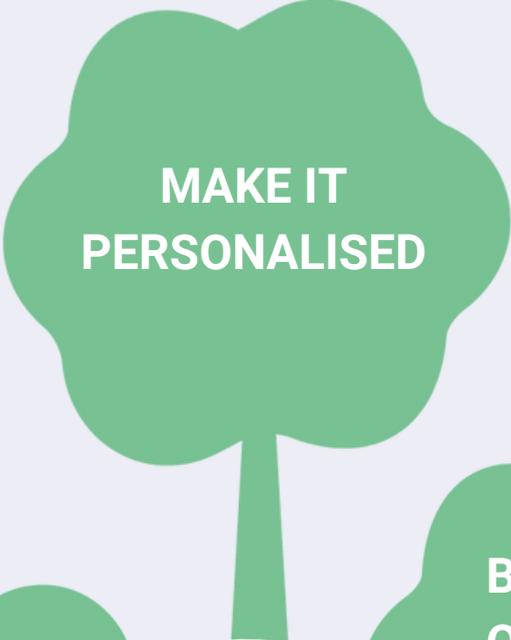


DOWNLOAD

We created this template to be used as a foundation for your own letter to your MP. The easiest way to send the letter is by email. Remember to delete any inserted suggestions.

FIND YOUR MP

TIPS TO REMEMBER...



**MAKE IT
PERSONALISED**



**GET
THEM
INVOLVED**



**BE CLEAR
ON WHAT
YOU'RE
ASKING**

WHY ARE

SINGLE-USE NAPPIES

AN ISSUE?



FACTS

- In the first **2.5 years** of a baby's life they will have needed at least **4,000 nappy changes**, creating nearly **one tonne of single-use nappy waste**.
- Over **3 billion** single-use nappies are thrown away in the UK **per year**, costing Local Authorities **£60 million**.
- Single-use nappy waste is currently sent either to **landfill** or **incineration (energy-from-waste)**.
- It could take a **single-use nappy** up to **500 years to decompose**. Landfill conditions may **emit methane gas**.
publications.parliament.uk
- **Landfill** and **Incineration (Energy-from-Waste)** are the least desirable forms of management in the waste hierarchy, which contributes to **greenhouse gas emissions**.
[London Assembly Environment Committee \(2018\)](#).

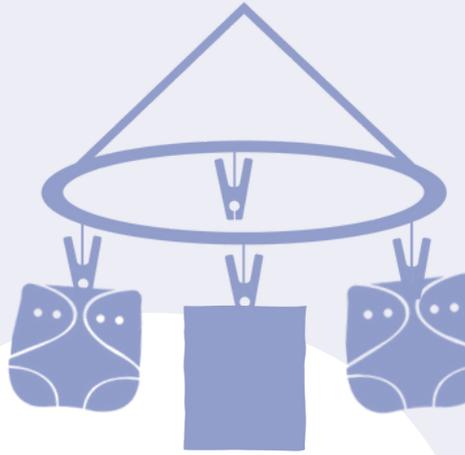
FACTS

- Single-use nappies are one of the **biggest contributors to single-use plastic waste**. They are made up of: **61% plastic**, 34% wood pulp, 5% 'other'. [The Nappy Alliance \(2021\)](#).
- The **average plastic consumption** of single-use nappies per child is equivalent to throwing away **17 plastic bags a day**. That's over **6,000 bags a year**.
- It takes over **1,500 litres of crude oil** to produce enough single-use nappies for a newborn baby until they become potty trained. [Zero Waste Europe \(2021\)](#).
- More than **90% of water and energy consumption and land use** occurs during the pre-use stage of the single-use nappy life cycle (softwood production, pulping and nappy industrial production). [Zero Waste Europe \(2021\)](#).
- **2.5 years of single-use nappy use** can result in producing approximately **550 kg of CO2** while increasing global warming and exacerbating climate change. [Zero Waste Europe \(2021\)](#).
- Single-use nappies have found to be the worst cause of **recycling contamination**. [NLWA \(2019\)](#).
- Single-use nappies are a **major expense for low-income households**: in the UK a family with two children in nappies could spend up to **46% of child benefit** just on single-use nappies. [APPG \(2019\)](#).



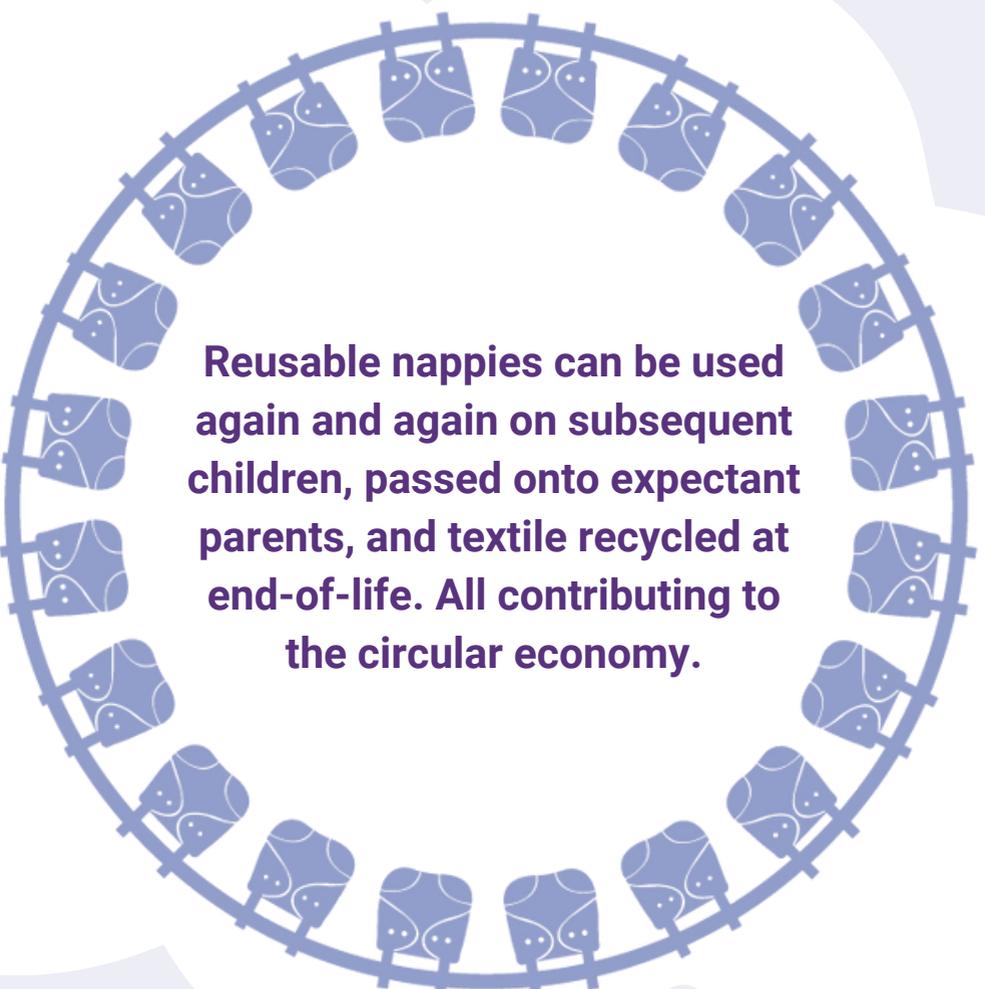
BENEFITS OF CHOOSING TO REUSE

FACTS



- Switching to **reusable nappies** will **save 203.6 million single-use nappies** being **thrown away every year** in **London** alone. That's the same weight as **3,778 London Buses**. [Real Nappies for London \(2020\)](#).
- **20 reusable nappies over 2.5 years** will use **1.34kg of plastic**, significantly less than **4,000 single-use nappies (38.2kg of plastic)**.
- Using **reusable nappies** can **reduce the carbon footprint** of nappy use **by 40%**, equivalent to some **200 kg of CO2, over 2.5 years**.
- **Families** could **save up to £1,000** by using reusable nappies.
- **Local Authorities save money** as they are no longer disposing of single-use nappy waste. [Real Nappies for London \(2018\)](#).
- There are **no added chemicals** in reusable nappies. Unlike some chemicals found in single-use nappies. [Anses \(2020\)](#).
- **Reusable nappies use less water**: it takes 1,550 litres of water to produce a weeks worth of single-use nappies. 250 litres is used to wash reusable nappies three times a week. [Tots Bots \(2021\)](#).

CIRCULAR ECONOMY



Reusable nappies can be used again and again on subsequent children, passed onto expectant parents, and textile recycled at end-of-life. All contributing to the circular economy.

LEARN MORE

CIRCULAR ECONOMY



The UK Government should support and incentivise washable nappy laundry services as a way of helping, low-income households and those with restricted or no access to washing & drying facilities at home, making reusable nappy use more accessible for all.

USEFUL LINKS

- [Real Nappies for London](#)
- [The Nappy Alliance](#)
- [Reusable Nappy Week](#)
- [Break Free From Plastic](#)
- [Zero Waste Europe](#)
- [London Assembly Environment Committee](#)
- [The UN Life Cycle Initiative](#)
- [Women's Environmental Network](#)
- [The Nappy Lady - Cloth vs Disposable Nappies](#)
- [Tots Bots - Why Cloth: The Environment](#)

NO RESPONSE?

If you do not receive a response within a few weeks of sending your letter, don't feel put off, just re-send it. You can also write to your local London Assembly Members and Councillors so that they can bring up the subject at their next council meeting.

Find your London Assembly Members and Councillors:

SEARCH HERE

