

2020

OPRL Annual Report

An insight into our activities
over the past 12 months

A note from our Chair

2020 and beyond

Our 10th anniversary year has proved suitably momentous.

We launched our new Labelling Rules in January to wide acclaim, following 6 months research with consumers and industry experts from across the packaging value cycle, completely revisiting the evidence base and approach. UNEP have given us the highest rating available, confirming our world-leading status.

We've upgraded our online tools and services giving you more control of your account, radically improved our Labelling Tool and your ability to create the labels you need.

We've introduced webinars and FAQs to help you get the most from your membership. And we've set up a Technical Advisory Committee to oversee the evidence

underpinning the PREP tool, making it more responsive to innovations in packaging.

We've expanded the team (see p7), recruiting great talent to support you, and moved to new offices in Banbury to bring everyone together (Covid-19 permitting!).

Best of all, we've cracked the 500-member mark and been joined by new Board Directors and Guarantors. We can now truly claim to touch every part of the packaging cycle and every type of packaging.

Our ambition now? To achieve mandatory status to support you in supporting your customers to recycle better.



Jane Bevis | Chair

Our 2019 highlights

At a glance



Our new Labelling Rules

All change in 2019



In January we made significant changes to our Labelling Rules.

For the first time, our Labelling Rules take into account the whole of the recycling process, from collections, sorting at MRF's, reprocessing and end markets. We have also moved to a binary approach with *Recycle* or *Don't Recycle* labels applying wherever possible. The new labels were tested extensively with consumers so that the designs are most likely to engage them effectively in recycling.

Applying the new Rules and understanding which materials are changing recyclability status under the new assessment framework, this will help you prepare for Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) reforms, and could minimise your financial liabilities under the new statutory regime.

As part of the launch, we ran a number of webinars explaining the new Rules and what the changes would mean to your packaging. We have also

developed a new Labelling Tool, allowing you to enter the materials and components of your packaging to determine the correct label and provide the label artwork.

The main changes in recyclability designations are:

- If fewer than 50% of UK councils provide household recycling collections, the packaging will be labelled as *Don't Recycle*. This cut off is up from 20% in 2017
- PVC and PS packaging are now labelled as *Don't Recycle*
- A new specialist label is available for coffee cups
- Components continue to be only listed on multi-component packaging
- Calls to action are included on the labels to help overcome barriers to recycling

Making new connections

Our progress this year

As the only evidence-based recycling label in the UK, it's vital we're up-to-date on all the latest initiatives.

We can't do this alone, so here's what we've been doing this year to connect our hugely innovative sector.

Supplementing the broad expertise on our **Board**, we've brought together additional knowledge on the 2019 Rules Review Steering Group and the newly established PREP Technical Advisory Committee – researchers, NGOs, materials experts, Waste and Resource Managers, and experts throughout the packaging cycle. We invited witness contributions and commissioned new consumer insight research.

Two new **Guarantors**, Alupro and MPMA, have added to the range of materials recycling associations, local authority recycling officers and industry packaging experts.

We're deepening our **strategic partnership** with WRAP, working closely on citizen engagement and delivering the Plastics Pact. And we've established

closer ties with ZWS to build a similar close alliance in Scotland. We're building relationships with labelling schemes in Australasia, Singapore and North America to deliver global best practice.

We've worked closely with **UK Governments** to ensure mutual understanding of strategic and technical issues as they take forward their ambitions to improve the sustainability of packaging.

But above all we continue to work with our **members** to understand your ambitions, the fit with your sustainability commitments and operational requirements, and the opportunities and challenges innovative materials and designs bring. We have thousands of conversations with you each year.

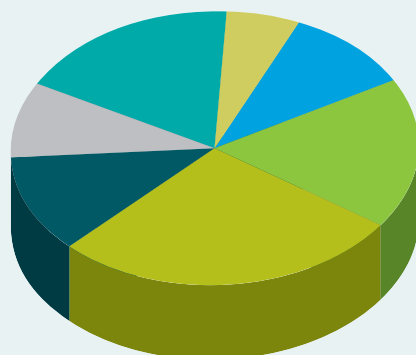
Through all these active connections, we aim to make packaging more sustainable and easier for consumers to recycle



Delivering for you

Member Support activities

2019/20 OPRL expenditure



- Member Support
- Online Tools
- Product & Rules Development
- Compliance Audits
- Policy & Lobbying
- Marketing & Insight
- Admin

Over the past 12 months, we have continued to support our members and provide you with guidance and tools to help you to help your consumers to recycle better, more often. In doing this we have delivered some major projects and created tools to improve our member experience and value we give to you.

Here's just some of the things we've been up to:

Member Support – to help you with your day-to-day queries and challenges, we have grown our Member Services team.

Online Tools – we have developed new tools to support members including the roll out of our Labelling Tool, allowing you to generate your own label artwork 24/7. We have also invested in our PREP Tool, supporting our members to design recyclable packaging.

Product & Rules Development – one of our major initiatives in last 12 months has been the launch of our new Labelling Rules involving consultation

across the industry. The new Rules are now available along with webinars to explain the changes to help you make the transition to the new labels.

Compliance Audits – we continue to carry out audits to check labels are being used correctly. This is to help you to get the most out of the labels and provide you with any support you may need.

Policy & Lobbying – we've worked closely with UK Governments to ensure mutual understanding of strategic and technical issues as they take forward their ambitions to improve the sustainability of packaging.

Marketing & Insights – we have attended and sponsored the *Packaging Innovations* event, hosting our first stand at the NEC back in February. We were able to catch up with members and provide face-to-face support. We've also kept our members informed via our newsletters.

Meet the team

About us



Jane Bevis
Chair

Jane was a founding Director in 2009 and has led OPRL's expansion following a career in sustainability covering issues such as climate change, ethical sourcing, agricultural policy and trade reform, and environmentally sensitive crop production. She previously held senior roles in leading trade associations and Government.

jane@oprl.org.uk

Alice Harlock
Membership & Services Manager

Alice has worked for OPRL since 2014 and leads on membership support. Alice started her career at HDRA as part of the Sustainable Waste Team. She moved to WRAP in 2005 to continue work on consumer communications through the Home Composting Programme, Recycle Now and Recycle for London campaigns.

alice@oprl.org.uk

Emily Gardiner
Member Support Executive

Emily has been providing support to OPRL members since 2017. She officially joined the OPRL team in September 2019, having previously worked at WRAP for over 12 years. Emily is the first point of contact for providing support across our membership base.

emily@oprl.org.uk

Margaret Bates
Executive Director

Margaret joined OPRL in February 2020 from the University of Northampton. Margaret has spent over 30 years in the waste and resources sector and has travelled the world trying to improve standards of resource management globally.

margaret@oprl.org.uk

Fiona Clougherty
Marketing & Sales Manager

Fiona joined OPRL in October 2019 as Marketing and Sales Manager with over 20 years marketing experience across Financial Services, Telecoms and Not-for-Profit organisations. Her role is to promote OPRL and recruit new members to the scheme.

fiona@oprl.org.uk

Jane Skelton
Commercial Manager

Jane has over 20 years experience in packaging technology, print and design, predominantly in food retail, working at Sainsbury's as Head of Packaging, in addition to M&S, Iceland, Tesco, and Safeway. Jane joined OPRL in November 2019 as Commercial Manager.

jane.skelton@oprl.org.uk

Linda Fell
PA & Board Secretary

Linda has been working for OPRL since February 2019 as Board Secretary, and PA to the Chair and Executive Director. Linda previously worked at WRAP for 14 years as PA to Phillip Ward, and former CEO Liz Goodwin.

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Looking to the future

Our next steps

When I took on the role at OPRL I had no idea that I would be working in my spare room as we faced the impacts of a global pandemic.

In this time of uncertainty, I'd like to take this opportunity to reassure you that OPRL is here for its members and we will do what we can to help you.

You may have seen in our communications that we're already expanding the support we offer. Following on from the success of our webinar on the new Rules, we've run webinars on demystifying the audit process and how to use the online Labelling Tool. If you have any other suggestions, please get in touch.

The webinars and the expanding list of FAQs will help you to get the most out of your membership



A webinar on how to use the online Labelling Tool is now available

Behind the scenes we will continue working with DEFRA to keep mandatory labelling on the political agenda, making sure that our members who have already made this important step to increasing consumer communications about recycling are not disadvantaged by future legislation.

Our Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) have been working on our PREP Design Tool to ensure it's continually kept up to date, giving our members the information they need in the format they want.

PREP is exclusively available to members of OPRL.

Despite the current uncertainty, we're not sitting still and are working on ways to expand what we offer you and how we can support you.

I look forward to meeting more of you over the coming year, whether it's virtually, or face-to-face when it's feasible.


**Take care,
Margaret**



We continually review PREP to ensure that it's up to date and convenient to use

Our promise

OPRL purpose and values



To collaborate across
the packaging cycle
to drive circularity and
a transformation in
packaging resource
efficiency



Independent

In pursuing our purpose we collaborate across all material sectors and take views independent of all associations, customers, Government and non-governmental organisations. We are a stand-alone organisation but work in partnership with multiple stakeholders.



Pioneering

We seek to find new ways to reduce the quantity of resources used in packaging in the UK as well as to increase the ability of packaging created to be re-used and incorporated into the packaging supply cycle. We seek to find new ways to help the UK consumer recycle more effectively, more often.



Expert

We take all possible steps to ensure we understand issues across all material sectors. Our Guarantors represent almost all material sectors to ensure the various sectors have full representation in our thinking. Our staff and Board include technical and creative competencies to ensure we have expertise that can rapidly progress our goals.



Ethical

We consider our social, environmental as well as financial impact. We seek to incorporate diversity and equal opportunities in our recruitment and HR policies. We have a carbon strategy and seek to minimise our carbon creation in all our business activities. We seek to lead the way on recycling. Our staff have the opportunity to volunteer in key social and environmental impact sectors. We seek to influence the resource efficiency and carbon strategies of our suppliers, customers and other stakeholders.