



Rt Hon David Miliband, MP,
House of Commons,
London, SW1 OAA

11 November, 2006

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Dear Mr Miliband,

UK Waste Policy – A Bridge Half Built

We are writing to you on behalf of many individuals and communities who support the concept of Zero Waste in the United Kingdom to forward you our policy recommendations contained in the annexed paper entitled ‘UK Waste Policy – A Bridge Half Built’.

Much progress has been made since the work of the Waste Strategy Unit was published, but there is dismay at suggestions that new policy may involve a greater use of incineration, including electricity and combined heat and power plants, pyrolysis and gasification and production of refuse derived fuel from the mechanical and biological treatment of mixed waste. We believe that what is required for health, reduction of pollution, preservation of the world’s resources and the battle against climate change is a shift of priorities to the minimisation of waste and recycling and composting from waste separated at the doorstep.

We need to move from waste disposal and recovery of energy from mixed and therefore contaminated wasted materials. Instead we need to ensure that nothing is produced that cannot safely be re-used or recycled and drive to fiscal and social policies and markets to achieve the target of Zero Waste.

Integrated waste contracts favour waste disposal methods at the expense of reduction, re-use and community recycling, promoting the wrong end of the waste hierarchy and techno fixes which “crowd out” the attempts to move us into a wholly different attitude to waste, now desperately needed to preserve the world’s resources and reverse the slide towards climate change.

Our policy recommendations are in the enclosed paper. They have been put together after widespread consultation and are supported not only by lay people and community groups, but by medical practitioners and by practical recycling businesses and organisations.

We would be pleased to have an opportunity to meet with you to discuss these ideas, but until then commend the attached paper for your consideration,

Yours truly,

Val Barton,
Director, Zero Waste Alliance UK