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# Reducing Disposable Nappy Waste

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Review of Waste Policies -  
Call to Evidence, October  
2010

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Rebecca Rapson and Jon Rolls,  
Go Real, The Real Nappy Information  
Service

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## Executive Summary

This Call to Evidence is to make the Board of the Waste Review aware of the size of the waste stream posed by single use, disposable nappies and has been put together by Go Real, The Real Nappy Information Service, on behalf of the Real Nappy sector.

Disposable nappies account for approximately **4% of all waste to landfill** equating to **3 billion nappies**, weighing **690,000 tonnes**. Disposable nappies are one of, if not **the**, biggest single identifiable products in the domestic waste stream today and cost Local Authorities **over £60 million<sup>1</sup> every year** in disposal. Despite this they are often overlooked in waste strategy yet achieving “zero waste” is an impossible task until they are taken into account.

Real, or washable, Nappies are a viable alternative to disposable nappies and offer a means to significantly reduce the disposable nappy waste stream whilst also benefitting parents through offering a cheaper alternative with proven carbon reduction qualities. Real Nappies are a serious waste prevention tool and given the government’s focus on a Zero Waste economy and maximizing the waste hierarchy, they should be duly supported.

There is a wealth of experience, research and knowledge within the Real Nappy sector which is available to be utilized in order to deliver innovative, cost neutral measures to help parents make the choice to adopt either part time or full time Real Nappy use. The Real Nappy sector is a perfect example of how the Big Society can be mobilized to positive effect.

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<sup>1</sup> Based on £88 per tonne landfill tax and collection costs, figure supplied by WRAP. This does not include the additional cost Local Authorities incur for ongoing management and decommissioning of existing landfill sites and will of course rise in line with increasing gate fees.

In this Call to Evidence we have outlined the infrastructure that currently exists, the barriers to increasing participation and have also suggested a number of innovative and proactive ways in which the Government can help Go Real to address disposable nappy waste.

A supported, coordinated approach to Real Nappies would have a significant impact on waste diversion nationally, would also compliment other waste minimisation programmes and would lead to increased pro-environmental behavior. Parents should have the opportunity to make an informed choice and where the market fails to provide that choice, Government should intervene.

Given the Waste Review's emphasis on the Waste Hierarchy, if Real Nappies were not supported through the Waste Review, it could signal the gradual death of Real Nappies, leading to hundreds of jobs being at risk and a significant waste diversion opportunity being missed.

## Introduction

### Who are Go Real?

Go Real, the Real Nappy Information Service is a social enterprise created out of the embers of the Government funded (WRAP) Real Nappy Campaign. Go Real wanted to continue the work of the Real Nappy Campaign to ensure that parents continued to receive good quality, independent advice and information and also to show that Real Nappies are a serious issue, a growing industry and a solution to government waste disposal problems. Unlike many community networks in the environmental sector, we are almost entirely self-funded. We have a strong business plan for future financing, but amidst government cuts, this is under severe pressure.

*Helping Government to meet its commitment to the Big Society – developing and delivering policy in a way that involves and engages voluntary organisations, social enterprises and community groups...*

Go Real is the first point of call for all Real Nappy needs, from questions and answers, to video guides, blogs, podcasts and product reviews. We provide an accessible and upbeat environment for parents to discuss problems, find solutions and get advice from experienced Real Nappy users. In addition we provide membership services to support Local Authorities, retailers, manufacturers, work at home mums and community groups.

Go Real is run on a not-for-profit basis and is completely independent. The services are supported by a team of parents who have children that have been brought up in Real Nappies. Previously a government run campaign, Go Real holds high awareness and trust amongst our key target audiences.

## Our Aims

- Establish Real Nappies as a viable choice for parents for part time or full time use.
- Increase the visibility of Real Nappies within the baby industry generally.
- Ensure all parents are aware of their choices and are able to access clear information.
- Improve promotional schemes across the UK to provide better access to information, incentives and trials.
- To continue to develop Real Nappy Week to an internationally recognised event.

## Who we Represent

Go Real currently has the following paid memberships:

- 60 Local Authorities
- 40 Commercial Real Nappy companies including manufacturers, distributors and retailers
- 12 Community networks

*Helping Government make the best use of the skills and knowledge of the private sector, civil society and local communities in delivering a zero waste economy...*

We also have up to 50 organisations accessing our members' website as a "free user" and nearly 400 organisations signing up to be listed on our "nappy finder" facility. In addition to this we provide regular sector updates to over 1,000 interested parties and public newsletters to nearly 1,500 members of the public. This Call to Evidence has been put together by Go Real on behalf of the Real Nappy sector and our contacts have been given the opportunity to feed into this document. It can therefore be accepted as representative of the Real Nappy sector as a whole.

## Background Information on Disposable Nappies

### A Major Waste Stream

Approximately **4% of all waste to landfill is disposable nappies**, which equates to **3 billion nappies**, weighing **690,000 tonnes**.

Disposable nappies are one of, if not **the**, biggest single identifiable products in the domestic waste stream today. Local Authorities spend **over £60 million<sup>2</sup> every year** disposing of nappies.

*Demonstrating which waste streams should be a priority for waste prevention...*

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<sup>2</sup> Based on £88 per tonne landfill tax and collection costs, figure supplied by WRAP. This does not include the additional cost Local Authorities incur for ongoing management and decommissioning of existing landfill sites and will of course rise in line with increasing gate fees.

Despite these facts little action has been taken to divert this significant waste stream. In fact, in the 2007 waste review, despite an emphasis on waste prevention the issue of disposable nappies was not addressed.

### ***A Hazardous Waste Stream?***

Human Excreta contains pathogens and so its safe disposal needs to be carefully considered. Clinical waste is defined in regulation 1(2) of The Controlled Waste Regulations 1992 (SI1992/588) as meaning:

*Helping Government reduce the hazardous or negative impacts of products when they become waste...*

(a) any waste which consists wholly or partly of human or animal tissue, blood, other body fluids, excretion, drugs or other pharmaceutical products, swabs or dressings, or syringes, needles or other sharp instruments, being waste which unless rendered safe may prove hazardous to any person coming into contact with it;

And the Environmental Protection Act 1991 sets out the Duty of Care for commercial organisations which dispose of clinical waste to ensure that all soiled dressings are disposed of correctly. Consequently dedicated services exist for the disposal of sanpro and nappies from commercial organisations.

However, nappies from households are considered as “healthy” and so can be disposed of through normal household waste disposal services, including landfill, as long as they are “adequately wrapped”. An additional wrapping adds to the materials being disposed of to landfill and depending on the materials of the wrapping will only increase the time taken to degrade.

### ***Market Share and Dominance***

A recent Mintel report<sup>3</sup> found that 5% of parents are choosing washable nappies. We believe that these figures reflect the dominance of multi-media marketing campaigns by leading manufacturers of disposable products and the common availability of disposable products in outlets such as supermarkets rather than a reflection of fully informed consumer choice. Currently 90% of consumers use Supermarkets but with the top five supermarkets failing to offer any shelf space to Real Nappies, the viable alternative to disposable products is just not visible to the majority of parents. Additionally there are no national media campaigns to advertise the modern products which now appear on the market and so product awareness and knowledge is very low.

*Helping Government understand and encourage or incentivise individuals, businesses and communities to produce less waste...*

<sup>3</sup> Mintel, Nappies and Baby Wipes UK, August 2010

Disposable nappy advertising and promotions are prominent on TV, through major Supermarkets, within baby and parenting magazines at the major baby shows and even through pregnancy packs, handed out to all parents by the NHS. Real Nappy promotions have been actively excluded from appearing in these pregnancy packs due to exclusivity deals with disposable companies. The NHS receives money to hand out these packs ensuring that only selective advertising and information reaches UK parents.

In areas where dedicated Real Nappy promotions and schemes have been put in place, usage figures have reached up to 25%; but as the market of new parents constantly changes it requires a consistent and sustained approach across the UK to affect a lasting behavioural change.

*Helping individuals to reduce waste...*

*Helping Government focus on waste prevention – stopping waste at source*

## Real Nappies as a Viable Alternative...triple bottom line benefits

Real, or washable, Nappies offer a viable alternative to disposables yet in the UK their promotion has been largely swept under the carpet and dismissed as 'eco evangelism' rather than as a serious, mainstream waste minimisation debate.

Real Nappy manufacturers have worked hard to bring about product developments that ensure that parents using Real Nappies enjoy similar convenience to using disposable products; and quick drying fabrics mean that even parents with limited space can successfully use Real Nappies. The UK manufacturers carry out consumer testing and research as well as working with industry experts to ensure that their products can be washed effectively and in the most environmental way. In this way the manufacturers continue to demonstrate a strong commitment to contributing to a low carbon economy.

*Addressing the aim to extend product lifespan and encouraging reuse...*

*Contributing to the green economy*

### **Environment**

For every child using Real Nappies, 0.86<sup>4</sup>Kg is diverted from landfill and the Local Authority saves £76. Achieving just a 10% conversion rate across the UK would equate to Local Authority savings of at least **£5.4 million per annum**.

*Meeting Government commitment to maximize the economic potential of the waste management industry*

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<sup>4</sup> EA LCA figure

## Real Nappies and the Waste Hierarchy

Using Real Nappies is an action that can be placed at the very top of the waste hierarchy as it helps parents reduce the waste they are creating in the first place and also means that items are being used again and again. A baby in disposables will need about 4,000 nappy changes in total, that's 4,000 disposable nappies in a landfill site, or 24 Real Nappies which can be used again for subsequent children.

As long as we continue sending single use disposable products to landfill we will not reach a "zero waste economy"

## Carbon Impact

An Environment Agency Lifecycle Assessment report, published in 2008 also confirmed that Real Nappies, if used sensibly, were **up to 40% better from a global warming perspective** than their disposable counterparts. To achieve this carbon saving parents needed to wash at 60 degrees, in full loads and using A-rated appliances. They should also avoid tumble drying and use the nappies again for subsequent children.

*Encouraging whole life-cycle thinking and helping Government meet their commitments to addressing climate change and protecting the environment...*

*Maximising the contribution that waste management can make to UK energy and climate change goals...*

Recent research carried out with Real Nappy users by Go Real on behalf of WRAP has shown that parents are doing far better than this and their impact could be even lower on global warming. 46% were using nappies that had been used on previous children, 26% were using second hand nappies and 85% intended their nappies to be reused in the future. 84% were washing in full loads and 89.3% were washing at 60 degrees or less and only 6.9% were tumble drying all of their nappies with over 50% *never* using a tumble drier. The vast majority was also using A-rated appliances and many were adopting environmental behaviour not monitored by the LCA report such as using reusable liners and baby wipes, sustainable fabrics and detergent alternatives.

Despite advances in technology and design which has led to the light-weighting of disposable nappies; disposable manufacturers are limited in how they can improve the waste impact of their product because the majority of the weight of a disposed nappy is from the excreta and urine contained in the nappy. **Consumers are also unable to affect their carbon impact when choosing to use disposable nappies** because the carbon impact of a disposable is created in the manufacturing process rather than the use stage. Additionally the materials used in disposable nappies are mainly non-renewable and are estimated to take as much as **500 years to break down in landfill**.

## Resource Efficiency

Approximately 66% of the contents of a disposable nappy come from non renewable sources. The remaining 34% of the contents of a disposable nappy come from renewable sources which

could be sourced sustainably. Some of the non-renewable materials found in disposable nappies are made from materials which in other forms can be reused and recycled, extending their life, conserving non-renewable fossil fuels, reducing energy consumption and CO2. When used in single use items such as disposable nappies these materials are only used once before being discarded.

*Meeting Government commitments to protect the environment, conserve natural resources and address climate change.*

### **Financial**

The benefits of Real Nappies don't just stop at environmental and they are often overlooked. If a family uses Real Nappies they can potentially save **up to £500** over the lifetime of the child in nappies (2.5 yrs) and even more if used on a subsequent child (over £1,000). In these austere times these savings are vital for families, particularly disadvantaged families and could be used on many basic necessities such as healthy locally grown food. Disposable nappies at an average of 19p a nappy<sup>5</sup> will seem like an inexpensive way to use nappies at the direct point of purchase, but if more parents were made aware that this equates to an overall spend of £765 they may reconsider. To use Real Nappies parents must pay an upfront cost to benefit and so parents often find it hard to recognize the saving. This inequality needs to be addressed if we are to provide consumers with a real choice.

*Tackling the Fiscal Deficit – maximizing the economic potential of the waste management industry, the potential benefits of resource efficiency to businesses and households*

### **Social/Health**

There is a huge weight of parental and health professional experience which provides anecdotal evidence for health benefits too. Various commentators have supported theories that using Real Nappies helps with clicky hips, assists with earlier potty training and are also good for sensitive skin through reducing exposure to chemicals and by using breathable fabrics.

*Helping to meet Government commitment to support Big Society – developing and delivering policy in a way that involves and engages voluntary organizations, social enterprises and community groups...*

*Helping Government make the use of skills and knowledge of civil society and local communities in delivering a zero waste economy*

There are also social benefits; the Real Nappy industry supports hundreds of parental groups and networks that meet to discuss Real Nappies and other environmental issues, to share

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<sup>5</sup> Based on non sale prices

experience and forge new friendships. These informal gatherings often lead to discussions around a range of environmental issues and **many parents through using Real Nappies are encouraged to think about other environmental issues**. Our research with Real Nappy users showed that using washable nappies made **61% of people more aware of waste reduction**, 36% more aware of recycling, 27.3% more aware of resource efficiency, 30% more aware of energy efficiency and 25% more aware of their carbon footprint. This '**Big Society**' network could be encouraged and developed further and provide vital on the ground 'green training' for families.

## Measuring Impact

As we have research to show how many nappies a baby will need until potty training we can very easily calculate how much waste is being diverted by Real Nappy use. That makes Real Nappy use unique amongst waste prevention activities which are generally very hard to monitor. With Real Nappies we can quantify the impact and attribute both carbon savings and costs savings to the action, enabling us to justify any investment made into promoting them. When we launched Go Real we estimated Real Nappy use to be at about 2% AHPMA (Absorbent Hygiene Products Manufacturers Association) claimed that over 95% of parents use disposables in preference to reusable nappies but WRAP research showed that between 91% and 93% of parents regularly use disposable nappies.

*Providing solutions to measuring waste minimisation activities*

However, in terms of sales we have found that approximately £500 million was being spent by UK parents each year buying disposable nappies<sup>6</sup> and according to the Ethical Consumerism Report 2007 by the Co-op, washable nappies experienced an increase in sales by value of 40% making the market potentially worth £7 million in sales per annum. Using these figures, washable nappies accounted for just 1.4% of the market place, by sales value.

As Mintel have just announced a measure of 5% of parents choosing washable nappies we have seen an approximate 3% rise in the lifetime of Go Real. 3% equates to 21,231 parents, 18,556 tonnes of waste diverted and a saving £1.6 million pounds, 1,772 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e would also have been diverted and parents saved £10.6 million.

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<sup>6</sup> Mintel; Nappies and Baby Wipes - UK – April 2006

## Current Action on Real Nappies

### *Manufacturers and Retailers*

The majority of the Real Nappy manufacturers and retailers in the UK have environmental aims at the heart of their business; they are committed to product developments that help consumers lower their carbon impact such as using sustainable fabrics, introducing quick drying elements and carrying out research to enable consumers to lower washing temperatures. They regularly introduce schemes to help parents maximize on financial savings and promote the use of Real Nappies through attending events, running PR and supporting Real Nappy Week.

However, these companies can't hope to compete against multi-national marketing budgets. They are often priced out of advertising opportunities or excluded due to market dominance of disposable companies. These businesses need support in getting independent research to back up their green claims, support to continue "greening" their products and supply chains and in ensuring that their businesses are equipped to operate within a low carbon economy. They would also benefit from robust market share data, by which they could measure their own company growth. But perhaps most importantly they need the backing of a national awareness scheme and strong, unified messages from national and local governments in support of Real Nappies. It is fitting for Government to bolster the Real Nappy market through supportive messaging and awareness activities as the increase in Real Nappy use stands to benefit wider society through the reduction of a large waste stream. This has been the case for products which encourage or enable composting, water efficiency, recycling and other pro-environmental activities.

### *Local Authorities*

Local Authorities across England promote Real Nappies to varying degrees and have introduced a variety of schemes to incentivise or promote Real Nappy use. Some Local Authorities have dedicated staff whereas others cover the remit through their waste minimisation schemes and staff. Although some schemes have been very successful and are monitored well there are other Local Authorities who lack the time and resources to introduce effective schemes or to monitor them sufficiently. Additionally members of the public state that they are looking for a uniform approach across the UK to ensure a fair opportunity for all parents.

Local Authorities need support to advise them on which schemes are the most successful, in

*Helping Government understand and encourage or incentivise individuals to produce less waste*

*The need for waste evidence...*

producing robust monitoring and in sharing best practice. They also need support from Real Nappy “experts” to ensure that the right information is getting out to parents. Furthermore Local Authorities need guidance on what waste minimisation messages to focus on and maintaining these messages in the face of increased incineration.

### **Community Groups, Networks and Work at Home Mums**

There are hundreds of community groups, volunteer networks and Work at Home Mums who promote Real Nappies in their local communities. These people have the knowledge, passion and experience to successfully promote Real Nappies and tirelessly attend events to help spread the message. This group represents the perfect “Big Society” approach to helping divert disposable nappy waste. However, they need support to develop ways to sustain themselves and to win contracts for delivery of promotional work on behalf of Local Authorities. They need

*Helping to meet Government commitment to support Big Society – developing and delivering policy in a way that involves and engages voluntary organizations, social enterprises and community groups...*

*Helping Government make the use of skills and knowledge of civil society and local communities in delivering a zero waste economy*

up to date research and shared resources to help reduce their own operational costs. Should Go Real receive adequate resources to support these networks we could ensure a high level of community engagement which is proven to increase participation rates dramatically. This network are also keen promoters of other pro-environmental behaviours and could be developed into a network of Green Family champions working in partnership with organisations such as the Energy Savings Trust to deliver information in a grass roots style.

### **Go Real**

Go Real is an established national awareness campaign which aims to work with the whole sector and provide the support that they need. We are well placed to provide consistent and robust support to the entire Real Nappy sector but we need support to successfully build up the infrastructure.

## **SWOT Analysis**

### **Strengths**

Strong community approach to help deliver services  
Lots of services already in place to build upon  
Easy to measure, waste, environmental and financial impacts  
Innovation, enthusiasm and passion in the sector  
Viable business plan with reducing level of state intervention needed

Already know what the sector needs in terms of support  
Cost neutral to members

### **Weaknesses**

Consistency in services and messages  
Lack of independent research to support messages  
No “spending power” to compete with disposable marketing  
Fragmented market  
Needs government endorsement to strengthen uptake

### **Opportunities**

If all Local Authorities were on board, Go Real could be sustainable  
Capitalise on Big Society approach  
Significant contribution to government/Local Authority waste and carbon targets  
Focus on waste prevention  
Can be enhanced to promote wider sustainability issues  
Build consistent service that supports a variety of stakeholders

### **Threats**

Cuts to Local Authority budgets will undermine our plans for sustainability unless support given.  
New so called ‘nappy recycling services’ could move emphasis from waste prevention and may not be most environmental method of dealing with nappy waste  
Green washing on disposable products confuses parents and stops them from making a more informed choice  
Increase in incineration could damage waste minimization messages

## **Priorities for the Waste Review**

Go Real would like the Waste Review to recognise the significance of disposable nappies as one of the biggest identifiable single products in the domestic waste stream which makes up approximately 4% of all waste to landfill.

*Addressing which waste streams should be a priority for waste prevention...*

But it is not only about the waste issues surrounding Real Nappies, parents should have a choice and at the moment, the vast majority of parents who buy their nappies in the supermarket, do not. From day one of a child’s life, disposable products are heavily promoted to the exclusion of alternative and more sustainable products.

We would therefore like to see the following outcomes resulting from the review:

1. **Support to help Go Real** develop an awareness scheme backed up by practical services which support the Real Nappy sector and Local Authorities in promoting Real Nappies.

Helping us to develop the infrastructure of schemes which the Real Nappy sector and Local Government will be happy to invest in to help sustain its future and ensure its independence from grant funding.

*Suggested roles for national and local government, businesses, voluntary organizations and individuals in order to prevent waste from arising*

For example:

### **Information provision**

To provide free information packs to 10% of the birth rate would cost approximately: £372,962 including monitoring the participation outcome from the distribution.

*Ensuring value for money in order to enable central and local government tackle the fiscal deficit*

To cover this cost we would need to achieve a conversion rate of: 4,907 parents **or just 6%** of those receiving information packs. If we could raise the initial money to cover the information packs: approximately £70,771, Local Authorities may be encouraged to cover the remaining admin costs.

### **Nappy Sample Distribution**

Parents have indicated this as an influential promotion in promoting Real Nappies and in New Zealand similar schemes have achieved a 95% take up. We would look to build a programme where distribution of nappy samples is supported by a Real Nappy parenting session delivered by local community groups or representatives.

To provide a sample kit and parenting session to 10% of the birth rate would cost approximately £3,050,230 including monitoring of resulting participation. To cover these costs 40,135 parents would need to convert or just 57% of those receiving a kit. This is entirely achievable with such as supportive promotion. Again with an initial investment to cover the capital outlay of: £2,830,840 Local Authorities could be encouraged to cover the remaining admin costs.

### **Trial Kits**

Trial Kits give parents the opportunity to use Real Nappies before they buy them, enabling them to make the best selection for them and thereby ensuring continued use. Existing trial kit schemes have resulted in take up rates as high as 80%. To offer a trail kit service to 10% of the birth rate would cost approximately: £3,651,783 including covering all monitoring costs and volunteer expenses. To cover this cost 48,050 parents would need to convert to Real Nappies, just 68% of the original sample. As the kits can be used in subsequent years the costs reduce and therefore the payback increase. To cover the capital outlay to enable us to offer Local Authorities access to an affordable scheme which they can maintain we would need: £83,674.91

2. **All Local Authorities encouraged to sign up as members of Go Real:** There are many savings to be made through economies of scale and sharing of resources. Go Real's unique placement in the baby and parenting market also helps Local Authorities reach their target market. If all Local Authorities became members of Go Real it would ensure the campaign is entirely self-financed through membership income and no additional grant funding would be necessary. LA's would need to achieve less than a 5% conversion rate in their area to payback the membership fee!

It is currently difficult for Social Enterprises to reach Local Authorities through marketing channels aimed at LA's because the cost, which is geared to high profit companies, is prohibitive to social enterprises and therefore a barrier to winning contracts.

3. **Disposable nappy tax** that recycles revenue in to a Real Nappy campaign or other environmental projects – a 1p contribution from disposable manufacturers per nappy, would produce £42 million revenue, which would cover half of the Local

*Voluntary Responsibility Deals with businesses playing a part in waste reduction and more efficient use of resources*

Authority disposal cost and fund a comparative Real Nappy marketing campaign, support local networks across the UK, a national trial kit scheme and a financial loan scheme! Alternatively and perhaps less draconian, a tax break for Real Nappy manufacturers and retailers could also generate savings which could be ring fenced for national promotions.

4. **Life Cycle Assessment** of all waste treatment methods. Many Local Authorities are considering investing in nappy recycling technology from a company called Knowaste. This unproven technology has had no rigorous independent evaluation and many of their claims are unsubstantiated (see enclosed report). Even the disposable industry is concerned.

*Delivery of the waste hierarchy whilst adhering to whole life cycle thinking...*

*The need for waste evidence, including the necessary data to consider likely waste volumes and characteristics of the future.*

Additionally, the 2008 Environment LCA report is becoming out of date as more Local Authorities turn to incineration as their main disposal method and changes are made to product designs and popularity of different products increases. Despite initial intentions to regularly update the nappy LCA, Defra have advised that they do not have plans to keep to this commitment. Local Authorities and planning agencies must have clear guidance if we are to make the right choices for future generations, LCA is critical to this and the Agency must be given the remit and funding to provide the necessary guidance for the industry.

5. Stricter enforcement of **green claims**. Many disposable products carry messages regarding bio-degradability which become questionable in a landfill scenario. Parents believe these messages and think they are making an environmentally better choice, often at a greater financial cost. Services which purport to support Knowaste nappy recycling facilities are also misleading consumers in to thinking that their nappies will be recycled, even though facilities do not yet exist and the technologies environmental credentials are also, as yet unproven. These services are currently in operation for which parents pay a charge. These issues also focus parents at the wrong end of the waste hierarchy.

6. Support to encourage a **Big Society approach** through enabling local community groups to deliver advice and Go Real services to parents on behalf of their Local Authority. Research shows that parents trust other parents and local nappy networks to advise them on Real Nappies over all other sources of information. 54% trusted other parents, 39% local nappy networks and only 7% Local Authority staff. These networks currently struggle to keep going through lack of support. Supporting Go Real would enable capacity building of these groups, but not in a way that requires endless grant funding, Go Real will find other innovative ways of supporting groups at a voluntary level to ensure they are sustainable.

*Helping Government to meet its commitment to the Big Society – developing and delivering policy in a way that involves and engage voluntary organizations, social enterprises and community groups...*

7. Greater **integration of Real Nappy awareness within the NHS** (another highly trusted source of information for parents), the NHS should be advocates of choice and to ensure that this happens relevant training should be introduced to midwifery courses, Real Nappies should be customarily included as an element of antenatal training and hospitals should be given support to use Real Nappies in order to reduce their own waste to landfill.

8. **Abolish Bounty contracts** and other advertising contracts in NHS. Expectant and new parents are given welcome packs from 'Bounty' through NHS appointments or on the ward. These packs are full of 'paid for' advertisements for global brands. These packs are prohibitively expensive for most businesses to advertise in and are therefore reserved for the giant brand leaders. In many cases, environmental alternative products have been refused entry into the pack due to exclusivity deals. Offering an alternative is impossible because the NHS hospitals also sign an exclusivity deal in return for a payment.

9. Greater support for **nurseries to use Real Nappies**. By encouraging public and private nurseries to use Real Nappies we would be reducing a significant contribution to nappy waste, helping

*Focusing on waste prevention – stopping waste at source*

nurseries reduce their own waste costs and become more environmentally friendly.

10. **Further research** in to the impact of disposable products on the environment and on baby – anecdotal feedback suggests many health benefits from Real Nappies. We are doing a disservice to our children if we do not conduct robust research in to the pro's and cons.

11. **Voluntary Responsibility Deal** for the whole nappy industry – for example carbon reporting or green claims, the sector should sign up to a voluntary deal to ensure that both sides of the industry are working to shared social, environmental and financial goals.

*Encouraging businesses to design and manufacture products which produce less waste, last longer or can be upgraded.*

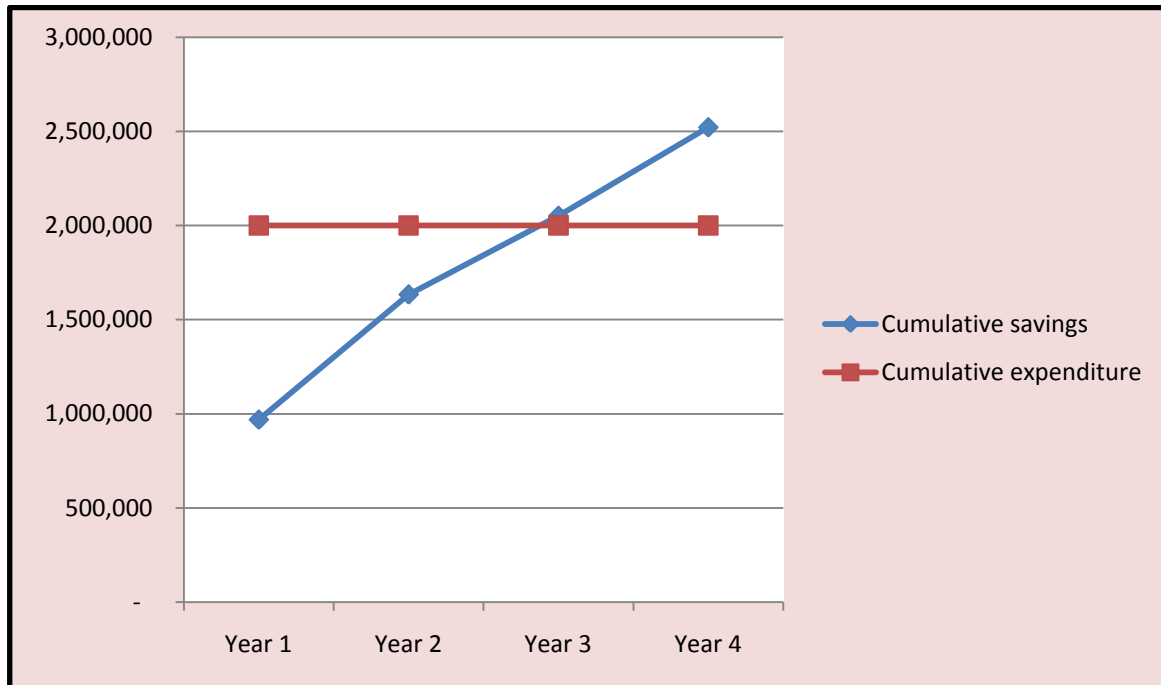
12. Support **lobbying of supermarkets** to force shelf space for Real Nappies – parental choice is great if you have access to the internet, or higher disposable income, but not if you are a low income parent in a major supermarket. Real Nappies don't feature in the mainstream supermarkets and this is all down to profit per inch. The consumer is the only one that suffers because they don't have a choice.

*Identifying roles for national government and businesses to prevent waste from arising*

13. **Government backed national loan scheme**, through the Big Society bank – one of the biggest barriers to adopting Real nappies is the up-front cost. While it costs less over the life time of use, considerably less, the upfront costs put many off. Go Real has run small scale, interest free loan schemes which have been highly successful in converting parents to Real Nappies. The upfront costs are paid for out of the loan pot and payments back are manageable. Real nappy loan schemes can be cost neutral with the savings made from landfill diversion. A Government backed national scheme would see take up lift off and Real Nappies become a serious option for every parent.

*Introducing valuable bottom-line savings to hard-pressed businesses and households*

A £2million investment in a nappy loan scheme would enable us to offer loans of £200 to 3.8% of the birth rate over three years, equating to landfill savings of £2,051,679 and a return of capital in year four of: £470,322.



## Conclusion

- Real Nappies are a serious waste prevention tool and given the government's focus on a Zero Waste economy and maximizing the waste hierarchy, they should be duly supported as a tool to minimise waste
- Real Nappies have proven environmental benefits over disposables, given appropriate advice and support is provided by an independent campaign, supported by EA studies
- Real Nappies offer not just environmental benefits but significant cost savings for families compared to cost of disposables, a significant benefit in austere times.
- A supported, coordinated approach to Real Nappies would have a significant impact on waste diversion nationally, would also compliment other waste minimization programmes and would lead to increased pro-environmental behavior.
- Parents should have the opportunity to make an informed choice and where the market fails to provide that choice, Government should intervene.
- Given the Waste Review's emphasis on the Waste Hierarchy, if Real Nappies were not supported as a waste minimization tool through the Waste Review, it could signal the gradual death of Real Nappies, leading to hundreds of jobs being at risk and a significant waste diversion opportunity being missed.

- Go Real has a track record of delivery, and can provide significant return for minimal investment,

“The design team at Go Real provided a friendly and professional service, they created suite of publications for the Real Nappies for Lancashire campaign which satisfied all our partners. The new campaign materials are fresh, clean and funky and will help us build on the success of the scheme to date”.

**Debbie Cheetham, Global Renewables, on behalf of Lancashire Waste Partnership**

“Go Real are an invaluable source of advice and support for us, providing publication templates, data, and masses of Real Nappy enthusiasm!”

**Laura Kay, Isle of Wight Council**

“The [Go Real] DVD has been a great success for us in Jersey! The DVD allows us to provide a lot of information which wouldn't be possible in a leaflet or poster. People have so many questions when considering Real Nappies and the DVD is a resource that people can keep referring to, for example to understand the different types and to remind themselves of the top tips from Real Nappy users.”

**Emma Richardson, Jersey Council**

“Our nappy guides were professional, well put together and easy to understand. The information & assistance provided by the team at Go Real has been a key factor in the success of South-Ayrshire Council's Real Nappy Campaign.”

**Fiona McConnell, South-Ayrshire Council**

“Go Real has helped us promote Real Nappies by providing the expert advice and administrative resources that we couldn't provide. We have been able to set up a freephone helpline, website and email facilities which enables customers to easily access up to date information and advice from knowledgeable staff. Using the services Go Real has to offer is ideal for any Local Authority who lack the admin resources needed to promote Real Nappies.”

**Nicky McInnes, Waste Management Officer, Devon County Council**

“WRAP is pleased that Go Real is continuing and developing the work which WRAP, the Women's Environmental Network and many Local Authorities and groups have contributed to. Enabling the sharing of experience, services and research is a very cost effective way of building local waste prevention programmes”.

**Melanie Chilton, Local Communications Adviser, WRAP**

“Go Real have developed a Trial Kit scheme with us. Using their experience and expertise they were able to source a wide range of nappies for the Trial Kits allowing parents in the county to try Real Nappies for themselves. Go Real have been successful

engaging with and providing training for children's centres who are hosting the kits. We are now looking forward to working with Go Real to monitor the success of our scheme."

**Matt Smyth, Waste Reduction Manager, Surrey County Council on behalf of Surrey Waste Partnership**