**Be Battery Aware – campaign toolkit**

**Background Summary**

The number of fires at recycling centres across Greater Manchester is on the rise. This is in part caused by residents disposing of batteries, and items containing batteries, in their household bins while unaware of the consequences. Each incident affects the operation of waste disposal sites and the safety of on-site staff and those who live nearby. From April 1 to June 30 2023, GMCA’s waste management contractor; SUEZ reported 37 fire-related incidents due to lithium batteries alone.

Batteries and items containing batteries should not go in any of your bins at home. Old batteries may seem ‘dead’ but they can still cause fires during the bin collection or waste sorting process.

Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service (GMFRS) is working with Recycle for Greater Manchester (R4GM) on the ‘Be Battery Aware’ campaign to reduce the number of battery-related fires across Greater Manchester. The campaign aims to do this by highlighting the fire risks associated with improper disposal and sharing information on how and where residents can dispose of old batteries, and items containing batteries, safely.

With the rising e-waste streams, hidden batteries are found in many items in daily life including laptops, mobile phones, electric toys, Bluetooth devices, shavers, electric toothbrushes, power bank chargers, vapes and more. The campaign will also raise awareness about hidden batteries so that residents can dispose of them safely as well.

**Key messages**

* Be battery aware when recycling – everything with a battery, plug or cable has to be disposed of safely at a recycling point.
* Never put old batteries or electrical items in any of your bins at home. They can cause fires if crushed during bin collection or waste sorting.
* Take old batteries and items containing batteries to a household recycling centre (HWRC) or look for recycling points such as local supermarkets, shops, or your workplace.
* Check items for hidden batteries before recycling.
* Return vapes to where you bought them as retailers are obligated to provide a take-back scheme.

**Target audience**

The campaign is relevant to all Greater Manchester residents but there will be a focus on younger people and residents without a car.

Many young people are unaware of the consequences of disposing of batteries in household bins and do not know how and where to discard them safely, while residents without a car may feel less motivated to dispose of batteries properly as they are unable to access their local recycling centres easily. To address this, we will communicate alternative recycling points that residents without a car could access locally such as supermarkets, electrical stores or even workplaces.

**Social media content**

You will find suggested social media content in the table below. Please use the hashtag **#BeBatteryAware** on all social posts.

Assets can be downloaded [on our website](https://www.manchesterfire.gov.uk/your-safety/campaigns). Assets from Recycle Your Electricals will also be used to support the ‘Be Battery Aware’ campaign.

**Accessibility**

Please make sure all images posted on social media make use of the ‘alt text’ function. Any words that appear in a graphic should be duplicated in the ‘alt text’. This will allow those using screen readers to access the content. The imagery in the graphic should also be described. You will find suggested alt text in the table below.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Suggested copy** | **Asset and alt text** |
| **Facebook** | **Instagram** | **Twitter** |
| ❌ Don’t put batteries in any of your bins at home. 🔥 Batteries can cause fires when crushed in bin lorries or recycling centres during the sorting process.✅ Dispose of them safely at your local supermarket, retailers or other recycling points.Find a recycling point near you👉 <https://www.recycleyourelectricals.org.uk/how-to-recycle-electronics/what-electronics-can-be-recycled/recycling-batteries-2/> #BeBatteryAware | ❌ Don’t put batteries in any of your bins at home.Batteries can cause fires when crushed in bin lorries or recycling centres during the sorting process.✅ Dispose of them safely at your local supermarket, retailers or other recycling points.#BeBatteryAware | 🔥 Batteries can cause fires in bin lorries and recycling centres.To dispose of them correctly and safely, find a recycling point near you 👉 <https://www.recycleyourelectricals.org.uk/how-to-recycle-electronics/what-electronics-can-be-recycled/recycling-batteries-2/> #BeBatteryAware | Battery graphic**Alt text:** Blue and orange background with image of a battery, and logos of Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service and Recycle for Greater Manchester. Graphic text reads, ‘ Don’t put batteries in bins – they can cause fires. #BeBatteryAware.’  |
| 🤔 Wondering what to do with your used vapes? Don’t bin them at home as their batteries can start fires when crushed.♻️ Take them to a recycling centre near you or a local retailer who offers a take back scheme 👉 <https://www.recycleyourelectricals.org.uk/how-to-recycle-electronics/what-electronics-can-be-recycled/recycling-batteries-2/> #BeBatteryAware | 🤔 What to do with your used vapes? Don’t bin them at home! Their batteries can start fires when crushed, instead take them to a recycling centre near you or a local retailer who offers a take back scheme ♻️#BeBatteryAware | 🤔 Wondering what to do with your used vapes? Don’t bin them at home as their batteries can start fires when crushed.♻️ Take them to a recycling centre near you or a local retailer who offers a take back scheme 👉 <https://www.recycleyourelectricals.org.uk/how-to-recycle-electronics/what-electronics-can-be-recycled/recycling-batteries-2/> #BeBatteryAware | Vape graphic**Alt text:** Blue and orange background with image of a disposable vape and logos of Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service and Recycle for Greater Manchester. Graphic text reads, ‘Don’t put vapes in bins – they can cause fires. #BeBatteryAware.’  |
| 👉 Think twice before you put old batteries or electricals in any of your bins at home.😢Last year in Aberdeen, more than 100 firefighters spent a whole weekend trying to bring a recycling centre fire under control.The fire is suspected to be caused by crushed batteries in the mixed recycling. Help keep your local recycling centres and firefighters safe – please dispose of batteries properly.Look for a recycling point near you ➡️<https://recycleforgreatermanchester.com/wheres-my-nearest-recycling-centre/> #BeBatteryAware | 👉 Think twice before you put old batteries or electricals in any of your bins at home😢Last year in Aberdeen, more than 100 firefighters spent a whole weekend trying to bring a devastating recycling centre fire under control.The fire is suspected to be caused by crushed batteries in the mixed recycling. Help keep your local recycling centres and firefighters safe – please dispose of batteries properly at your local recycling points including supermarkets, retailers or recycling centres.#BeBatteryAware | 👉 Think twice before you put old batteries or electricals in any bins at home😢Last year in Aberdeen, more than 100 firefighters spent a whole weekend trying to bring a devastating recycling centre fire under control.The fire is suspected to be caused by crushed batteries in the mixed recycling. Help keep your local recycling centres and firefighters safe – please dispose of batteries properly at a recycling point near you ➡️ <https://recycleforgreatermanchester.com/wheres-my-nearest-recycling-centre/> #BeBatteryAware | Aberdeen fire clip (MP4 file) |
| 🎮Broken electrical items like electric toothbrushes, game consoles or chargers can be recycled, but not at home as they all contain hidden batteries that can cause fires when crushed.You can dispose of them safely at your local retailers or recycling centres.Always check online if you’re unsure whether your item has batteries👉 <https://www.recycleyourelectricals.org.uk/how-to-recycle-electronics/what-electronics-can-be-recycled/recycling-batteries-2/> #BeBatteryAware | 🎮Broken electrical items like electric toothbrushes, game consoles or chargers can be recycled, but not at home as they contain hidden batteries that can cause fires when crushed.👉 Dispose of them safely at your local retailers or recycling centres.Always check online if you’re unsure whether your item has batteries.#BeBatteryAware | 🎮 Electrical items like electric toothbrushes, game consoles or chargers shouldn't be recycled in household bins.👉 Dispose of them safely at local recycling points.Check online if you’re unsure whether your item has batteries👉 https://www.recycleyourelectricals.org.uk/how-to-recycle-electronics/what-electronics-can-be-recycled/recycling-batteries-2/#BeBatteryAware | All items graphic**Alt text:** Blue and orange background with image of vape, electric toothbrush, battery and logos of Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service and Recycle for Greater Manchester. Graphic text reads, ‘ Don’t put any items with batteries in bins – they can cause fires. #BeBatteryAware.’  |
| Thinking about binning old batteries at home? Don’t ❌Batteries in bins can start fires when they’re punctured or crushed during the household collection and recycling process.Find out everything you need to know about recycling batteries 👉 <https://recycleforgreatermanchester.com/blog/batteries-and-electricals/>#BeBatteryAware | Thinking about binning old batteries at home? Don’t ❌Batteries in bins can start fires when they’re punctured or crushed during the household collection and recycling process.Check out @recycle4gm for more tips on recycling batteries.#BeBatteryAware | Thinking about binning old batteries at home? Don’t ❌Batteries can cause fires in bin lorries and recycling centres.Find out everything you need to know about recycling batteries 👉 <https://recycleforgreatermanchester.com/blog/batteries-and-electricals/>#BeBatteryAware | Battery graphic**Alt text:** Blue and orange background with image of a battery, and logos of Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service and Recycle for Greater Manchester. Graphic text reads, ‘Don’t put batteries in bins – they can cause fires. #BeBatteryAware.’  |
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| 🔋Did you know common items like electric toothbrushes, shavers, electric toys and Bluetooth devices contain hidden batteries? These hidden batteries can cause fires when punctured or crushed.✅Always be aware and dispose of them safely at local retailers or recycling centres.Check online if you’re unsure whether your item has batteries👉 <https://www.recycleyourelectricals.org.uk/how-to-recycle-electronics/what-electronics-can-be-recycled/recycling-batteries-2/> #BeBatteryAware | 🔋Did you know common items like electric toothbrushes, shavers, electric toys and Bluetooth devices contain hidden batteries? These hidden batteries can cause fires when punctured or crushed.✅Always be aware and dispose of them safely at local retailers or recycling centres.#BeBatteryAware | 🔋Did you know common items like electric toothbrushes, shavers, electric toys and Bluetooth devices contain hidden batteries? These hidden batteries can cause fires when punctured or crushed.✅Always be aware and dispose of them safely at your local retailers or recycling centres.#BeBatteryAware | All items graphic**Alt text:** Blue and orange background with image of vape, electric toothbrush, battery and logos of Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service and Recycle for Greater Manchester. Graphic text reads, ‘ Don’t put any items with batteries in bins – they can cause fires. #BeBatteryAware.’ |