

# RESUME - GWEN HARPER, DipM

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I am a versatile, experienced project manager, marketer and communications professional with a passion for the waste industry. I specialise in delivering projects with multiple stakeholders and in creating, implementing and reporting on long- and short-term marketing strategies and communication campaigns.

Qualified as a Chartered Marketer (DipM MCIM) in 2002, my early career was spent in marketing research and advertising agencies – this laid the foundation for a customer-centric, research-driven focus while delivering tightly-budgeted campaigns. A relocation from the UK to the USA provided opportunities to apply my skills to environmental education and waste management; and I expanded into community-based social marketing and consultation when I returned to Australia in 2009.

Throughout my 30-year career I've worked with a wide range of community stakeholders and am very experienced in delivering projects and workshops that required meaningful and persuasive engagement. In 2021 I completed Monash University's 'Applying Behavioural Science to Create Change' credential, and graduated Curtin University's 'Sustainable Waste Management' course.

I am passionate about helping councils, industry and education institutions achieve their waste education and waste reduction targets through community engagement and waste stream insights. I've been recognised twice by the Local Government Professionals Association Australia for my kerbside FOGO roll-out projects and have a regular 'sustainability' segment on ABC morning radio; I've presented at a national Waste Expo plus participate in roundtables, workshops and community education sessions on food waste and other waste-related challenges.

## Work Record

### **Apr 21 – current: Senior Waste and Environmental Consultant, JustWaste Consulting**

Provide environmental and marketing expertise in the planning and delivering of waste and environmental projects, including communication strategies for local councils focused on community and school waste education and waste reduction. Role includes community engagement and events, interpreting primary and secondary market research data on waste stream analyses, advising and implementing sustainability criteria, media and community engagement and local council/client liaison.

### **July 19 – Apr 21: Waste Services Project Officer (FOGO), Glenorchy City Council**

Project-based role to introduce a universal, mandatory Food Organic Garden Organic kerbside collection service for the Glenorchy municipality (20k+ properties). Using the business case as a framework, I was responsible for all elements of project delivery – including engaging a wide range of internal and external stakeholder groups and coordinating council staff.

Project was delivered on time and under budget. Highlights included:

- **Won the Environmental Leadership and Sustainability Award 2020** (Local Government Professionals Australia-Tasmanian division). Also recognised as a Semi-Finalist for the Sustainability Award 2020 (Tasmanian Community Achievement Awards).

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- **Wrote & delivered the strategic marketing plan** – Developed and implemented a 4-stage marketing campaign using a combination of traditional media, social media, printed collateral, PR, direct mail and database marketing.
- **Logistics** – supervised, coordinated and provided input on all operational elements of the project to facilitate a smooth operational transition to a third waste stream, including asset purchases, contractor supervision, TechOne data integration and the creation of an equitable FOGO Exemption process.
- **Stakeholder & Community Engagement** – When my employment commenced, I had a vocal and negative cross-section of the community that had coordinated a 1200+ signature petition rejecting FOGO and two Council deputations. I developed a stakeholder register, an advocacy strategy, a community advisory committee and a 3-tiered community engagement campaign to enlist support through education institutions, community groups and local events.
- **Websites, social media and databases** – sole responsibility for WasteStartsWithU.com.au website including content writing and results tracking; contributing writer/editor to JacksonstLanfill.com.au and GCC websites. Wrote the brief, reviewed proposals and contracted an agency to manage online FOGO Exemption applications. Wrote regular 'waste education' updates and blog posts.
- **Tracking and reporting** – produced regular FOGO reports and recommendations based on key targets. FOGO volume in first three months from launch = high kerbside bin set-out rate with an independent score of 4/5 for quality (very low contamination). Results reflected high community awareness and participation.

### **Aug 16 – Apr 19: Communications Officer, Volunteering Tasmania (VT)**

Developed, implemented and tracked all marketing strategy and communications, website management, PR & media activities to promote Volunteering Tasmania as the state's peak body; plus ran key VT events and market research activities. Achievements included:

- **Strategic marketing campaigns** - developed and ran integrated marketing communications plan for the Tasmanian Volunteering Awards from 2016-2019, including bringing on sponsor Southern Cross Austereo for free TV advertising; state-wide poster advertising and social media campaigns.
- **Media & Influencer engagement** - developed and maintained a comprehensive media, political and municipal contact strategy and database to increase media coverage and local government support.
- **Communications** – created a social media marketing strategy that increased audience engagement over 3yrs by 30%. Increased monthly eNews opening rates by 10% (Campaign Monitor software). Wrote media and website articles from marketing research and reports.
- **Market Research** - increased stakeholder response to annual satisfaction survey by 350%.

### **July 15 – Jun 16: Project Manager – Jordan River Services (Gagebrook Neighbourhood House)**

Responsible for \$300k Primary Health Tasmania grant, four staff and 10+ volunteers called 'Waterbridge Food Co-op' - a community-based food production garden, two community cooking programs and an onsite shop selling grown produce and meals in a lower socio-economic area. Key outcomes were to increase health awareness, healthy eating and community cohesion. I was the 3rd person employed as the project manager on the challenging 2yr grant (previous incumbents resigned) – not only did I see it through to

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project completion but I also ran a fundraising campaign that ensured the program had funds to continue for the next 12 months. As of Jan 2023 the project is still running and self-funded.

**Aug 08- July 15: Career break/part-time work due to two small children.**

**May 06-Aug 08: Recycling Coordinator, Arlington Independent School District, Texas**

Project Manager responsible for creating synergistic, sustainable recycling programs across 74 campuses (63k students) and their communities. Initially contracted through a \$118k government grant to rejuvenate the paper recycling program; then wrote and won another \$197k grant to start a co-mingled recycling program titled "From Trash to Cash", which turned a number of waste disposal streams into a commercially viable income stream.

- **Results** - paper recycling program volumes doubled in the first year, in the second year the school district came 3<sup>rd</sup> in a USA-wide Abitibi (recycling vendor) paper recycling competition.
- **Community Liaison** - Recruited and coordinated a steering group committee and teacher-led 'green teams' in every school.
- **Stakeholder Reporting** - Created metrics to track recycling results and wrote accountability reports on recycling volumes vs. marketing activity spend.
- **Communications** - created an extensive, 2-year integrated communication campaign, including TV, internet, intranet, printed literature, competitions, posters, events and presentations.

**May 05-May 06: Environmental Education Coordinator; Texas Discovery Gardens (nfp)**

Responsible for marketing educational programs to schools, potential sponsors and volunteers. Role included recruiting, training and managing volunteers; developing, promoting and running teacher training workshops and public events, and leading student science education field trips (annual visitation 10k students/year).

**Roles prior to May 2005 listed on [LinkedIn](#) and include employment as a Marketing Research Executive, Advertising Executive, Account Manager for United Distillers and Marketing Account Manager for Public Relations firm Anderson Soames.**

### ***Education Qualifications***

2021	Sustainable Waste Management – Curtin University
2021	Applying Behavioural Science to Create Change – Monash University
1998 - 2002	Post-Grad Diploma + Chartered Marketer; Chartered Institute of Marketing (UK):
1987 - 1988	Higher School Certificate; Rosny College, Tasmania

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### **Relevant Training & Certifications**

- 2020-21 Webinar Training – various, including ‘101 Wastewater Management; Hazardous Waste in Australia; Outdoor Space Climate Change Readiness; Wasterminator; Circular Transformation Masterclass; Waste Behaviour Change 101; Council Forum – spotlight on campaign materials; various Tas UNSCG presentations
- 2020-21 Attendance at two Tasmanian Waste and Resource Recovery forums (1 day each)
- 2019 Code of Ethics for Local Government, Integrity Commission (1 day)
- 2019 Project Management Essentials, Leftfield Project Management Solutions (2 days)
- 2018 Project Management Masterclass, Institute of Project Management (5 days)
- 2018 Developing a Social Media Strategy, Kingthing Marketing workshop (1 day)
- 2018 Preventing a Social Media Trainwreck, Local Gvmt Assoc Tasmania webinar
- 2017 Organisation Review – Protecting Your Organisation’s Reputation, ProBono Aus webinar
- 2017 Social Enterprise Masterclass – Red Cross 2-day workshop
- 2016 ‘26/TEN Working with Low Literacy’ two-day workshop, LINC Tasmania
- 2016 Bridges out of Poverty – Primary Health Tasmania 2 day workshop
- 2015 Racial Inequality Awareness training - UTAS
- 2015 Mental Health First Aid Certificate - UTAS
- 2012-13 Collect Waste and Recyclables (Cert III); Implement Strategies to Minimalise Waste; Operate Waste Transfer, Collection Station or Landfill (both Cert IV), Tasmanian Polytechnic
- 2003 - 2004 MSc Marketing Research Degree; University of Glamorgan, Wales. Dissertation = Evaluating Communication Effectiveness in Increasing Recycling Behaviour
- 2001 Market Research Society’s Summer School graduate

### **Volunteer & Community Involvement**

- Scouts Tasmania Youth Leader, Board Member Recycling Committee (5yrs, ongoing)
- Member of Derwent Hockey team (8yrs)
- Brighton Lions, Committee Member, Treasurer (2yrs)
- Volunteer running early literacy programs at Bridgewater Library /tagari lia Community Centre (5yrs)
- Workshop author and presenter for LLN skill development for Bridgewater LINC (3 workshops)

### **Referees**

- Alex Woodward, Manager Infrastructure & Works, Glenorchy Council - 0400 521 242
- Evan Brown, Waste Services Manager, Glenorchy Council - 0419 303 341
- Veney Hiller, Deputy CEO Volunteering Tasmania - 0415 236 934
- Helen Manser OAM, Manager Jordan River Services - 6263 6097