

RESOURCES & WASTE POLICY UPDATE



MERSEYSIDE RECYCLING & WASTE AUTHORITY

MERSEYSIDE... A PLACE
WHERE NOTHING IS WASTED

MAY 2025

Policy Updates:

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

LIVERPOOL CITY REGION (LCR)

LCR Zero Waste Strategy

An LCR Zero Waste Strategic Framework was approved in June 2023 by all 7 waste collection and disposal authorities in the LCR Waste and Resources Partnership. It aims to achieve zero avoidable waste by 2040 and outlines how this will cut carbon emissions across the city region. The Framework has themes of people, planet and economy and promotes a system change towards a circular economy through reducing waste. An LCR Zero Waste Strategy has been developed to deliver the Framework goals pending approval by all 7 partners. Partners are also developing individual strategies demonstrating how they will contribute to the wider LCR zero waste goals.

[Zero Waste Strategy](#)

LCRCA 5 Year Climate Action Plan

The Plan, approved in July 2023, identifies LCR Combined Authority (LCRCA) climate actions across transport, buildings, industry, clean energy and the natural environment. It recognises the circular economy as a theme running through the Plan and aims to support

- Businesses become more circular by promoting increased resource efficiency, and
- Delivery of a Circular City Region Scan to understand material resource flows and waste generation across LCR.

The Plan identifies the need to reduce consumption and change behaviours across the city region. It aligns with the LCR Zero Waste Strategy goals to avoid waste.

[CA 5 Year Climate Action Plan 2023-28 pdf 64 pages](#)

NATIONAL

Circular Economy Strategy for England

Government established a Circular Economy Taskforce in November 2024 to support development of the Strategy which is expected in Autumn 2025. The Strategy will be delivered over a 25 year timescale and

- Support economic growth and delivery of the UK Plan for Change
- Create green jobs
- Promote efficient and productive use of resources
- Accelerate the transition to net zero emissions.

Initial focus areas for the taskforce include construction, transport, agrifood, textiles, chemicals and plastics.

[Circular Economy Taskforce](#)

[Environment Secretary Circular Economy speech 27.03.25](#)

Government Policy Reviews

Government launched several reviews following the General Election in July 2024. These will support development of the Circular Economy Strategy for England.

DESNZ are reviewing feedback from the **UK Carbon Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) expansion to waste** consultation held in 2024 and a further update is expected during summer 2025.

DEFRA are planning further consultation later in 2025 on **eliminating biodegradable waste to landfill** by 2028 and how this links to ETS and other waste policies. Separately, HM Treasury are consulting on **Landfill Tax reform** to promote the circular economy by removing the lower rate of tax by 2030 and reducing opportunities to avoid the tax.

A rapid review of the **Environmental Improvement Plan 2023** has been completed, and a new plan will follow during 2025. This may include updated delivery plans to meet the statutory Environment Act 2021 targets, including reducing residual waste by 50% by 2042.

An **independent review of DEFRA's regulatory approach** was published on 02.04.25 with 29 recommendations to deliver more effective environmental regulation and strategy development to boost economic growth alongside protecting nature. Government's response will follow.

Mandatory **digital waste tracking** was due to commence April 2025 but is now delayed until April 2026.

The **Single Use Plastics (SUPs) ban** was extended in October 2023 to include most plastic plates, bowls, trays, cutlery and polystyrene drinks and food packaging. Further restrictions may be announced pending DEFRA review.

[Landfill Tax reform consultation 28.04.25](#)

[Independent review of Defra's regulatory landscape 02.04.25](#)

[DEFRA press release on regulatory reform 02.04.25](#)

[Mandatory digital waste tracking 21.02.25](#)

[Near elimination of biodegradable waste to landfill consultation 2023 - updated 12.02.25](#)

[Interim statement on the EIP rapid review 30.01.25](#)

[DEFRA EIP Review press release 30.07.24](#)

[UK Emissions Trading Scheme scope expansion waste consultation 2024](#)

7th Carbon Budget proposals 2038-2042

The UK Climate Change Committee has a duty to recommend actions to maintain the UK pathway to net zero 2050. Proposals for the 7th Carbon Budget recognise that progress in decarbonising the waste sector has stalled in the last 10 years. Recommendations include:

- Increasing municipal waste recycling rates to 68% by 2035
- 39% reduction in total food waste per capita by 2030 (from 2021 levels)
- Increase food waste collected for anaerobic digestion to 90% by 2030
- No EfW plants without carbon capture by 2045 and an overall decrease in EfW capacity
- Strengthen the ETS to ensure it incentivises decarbonisation
- Provide clear information to households on their role in climate action.

Government must propose a 7th Carbon Budget to Parliament by June 2026.

[The Seventh Carbon Budget - Climate Change Committee](#)

Simpler Recycling

Simpler Recycling will allow an extended and consistent range of materials to be recycled across England from home, work and school. DEFRA completed a Ministerial Review of Simpler Recycling on 29.11.24 and final regulations and guidance were completed in March 2025. Recyclable materials to be collected from households include food and garden waste and a range of paper, card, plastic, glass, steel and aluminium items. Material specifications are detailed in the legislation.

DEFRA have identified a four container default waste collection system for England, including a preference for collecting paper and card separately from other materials. Local flexibility allows variation from the default system, whilst a written assessment (TEEP) will be required to collect paper / card co-mingled with other materials.

Simpler Recycling came into force on 31.03.25 for most businesses and non-domestic properties, including offices. The Environment Agency are proposing a charge of £118/hour to cover the cost of regulatory activities where workplaces are not in compliance. Simpler Recycling collections from households are required by 31.03.26.

[DEFRA Simpler Recycling FAQs May 2025 pdf 52 pages](#)

[EA charge proposals for workplace simpler recycling 15.05.25](#)

[Simpler recycling: household recycling guidance 27.03.25](#)

[DEFRA workplace recycling press release 31.03.25](#)

[Simpler recycling: workplace recycling guidance 29.11.24](#)

[Simpler Recycling in England policy paper 29.11.24](#)

[WRAP eTEEP tool](#)

[The Separation of Waste \(England\) Regulations 2025](#) - confirms separate collection exemptions and extension to 31.03.27 for micro-firms.

[The Separation of Waste \(England\) Regulations 2024](#) - confirms materials and extension to 31.03.27 for plastic films.

[The Environment Act 2021 \(Commencement No. 9 and Transitional Provisions\) Regulations 2024](#) - confirms Simpler Recycling start dates.

Packaging Extended Producer Responsibility (pEPR)

Producer responsibility means producers (e.g. brand owners, retailers, manufacturers) taking financial responsibility for the waste management of their products when they become household waste. The pEPR scheme will ensure Producers make payments towards LA packaging waste management costs, including packaging waste collection, sorting, treatment and public communication costs.

On 28.11.24 DEFRA notified LAs of their estimated payments for Year 1 (2025/26) based on modelled costs. Updated estimates are expected in June 2025, with payments made from November 2025. Estimates for Year 2 (2026/27) are expected in October 2025. Payments for future

years will increasingly be based on actual costs and assessments of the efficiency and effectiveness of LA packaging waste management services. Similarly, producers will be financially incentivised to improve the environmental performance of packaging, initially through assessment of the recyclability of packaging placed on the market. pEPR development will be led by PackUK, the pEPR scheme administrator, which launched on 21.01.25.

[PackUK](#)

[Extended producer responsibility for packaging: who is affected and what to do](#)

[Extended producer responsibility for packaging: illustrative base fees \(December 2024\) for Producers](#)

[Extended producer responsibility for packaging: local authority payments](#)

[The Producer Responsibility Obligations \(Packaging and Packaging Waste\) Regulations 2024](#)

Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) for Drinks Containers

On 19.11.24 DEFRA confirmed their commitment to launch an English DRS from October 2027 aligned with schemes in Scotland and Northern Ireland. On 24.04.25 the UK Deposit Management Organisation (DMO) were appointed to develop and manage the DRS. The DRS aims to reduce littering and increase recycling of drinks containers by adding a deposit to the cost of purchases. The deposit is redeemed when a container is returned to a designated return point. In England, the scheme will include plastic PET drinks bottles and metal drinks cans up to 3 litres in volume. The UK DMO will manage DRS operations, set the deposit value and be responsible for meeting collection targets rising to 90% of in-scope containers by year 3 of operations. Retailers must provide drinks container return points, whilst transport hubs and other locations can also provide return facilities.

[UK DMO](#)

[DEFRA DRS policy statement 07.05.25](#)

[DEFRA DRS Guidance 27.01.25](#)

[GOV.UK press release 27.01.25](#)

[DEFRA DRS update 19.11.24](#)

[The Deposit Scheme for Drinks Containers \(England and Northern Ireland\) Regulations 2025](#)

Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)

International agreements require the destruction of waste products containing POPs above defined levels. The Environment Agency (EA) is taking action to reduce risks to the environment from waste items potentially containing high levels of POPs. Measures include a landfill ban on domestic upholstered seating from January 2023 and requirements to segregate POP's waste from other materials in bulky waste collections and at waste sites by 01.12.24. Restrictions may be extended to other wastes to remove organic pollutants from the environment.

[Environment Agency guidance](#)

Disposable Vapes / Nitrous Oxide Canisters

Government have introduced legislation to ban the sale of single use vapes from 1st June 2025.

[GOV.UK press release 24.10.24](#)

Legislation has been introduced to control the misuse of nitrous oxide. Nitrous oxide is now a Class C drug under the Misuse of Drugs Act, but legitimate uses remain.

[GOV.UK press release 08.11.23](#)

WRAP HWRC Guidance

WRAP published updated HWRC guidance on 24.03.25. The 121-page Guide highlights good practice across operations, performance, reuse and repair, communications, site design and booking systems.

[WRAP Household Waste Recycling Centre \(HWRC\) Guide](#)

Prioritising Waste Collection - Guidance

The Guidance covers all scenarios where waste collection resources may become limited, e.g., staff, vehicle or fuel shortages, industrial action, extreme weather and emergency situations.

[DEFRA Guidance 2021](#)

INTERNATIONAL

UK-EU Emissions Trading Scheme linking

On 19.05.25 the UK-EU Summit agreed closer cooperation in areas including linking the UK and EU Emissions Trading Schemes. Further details are to be announced.

[UK-EU Summit](#)

EU Circular Economy Act

As part of developing a more circular and resilient economy, the EU Commission has committed to developing a Circular Economy Act to create market demand for secondary materials. The Act is expected by the end of 2026.

[European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform](#)

UN Plastics Treaty

The UN committed to develop a legally binding treaty by the end of 2024 with an aim to end plastic pollution by 2040. A 5th round of negotiations took place in South Korea in November 2024 but failed to reach agreement. Talks will resume in Switzerland during August 2025. [UNEP plastic pollution](#)

UN Climate Summits

COP 29 in Azerbaijan ended on 22.11.24 with agreement to increase climate finance for developing countries. All nations must develop actions by Spring 2025 to demonstrate their contribution to reducing global emissions and avoiding dangerous temperature rise. COP 30 follows in Brazil 10-21st November 2025. [COP 29](#)

UN IPCC Climate Change 6th Assessment reports

The Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) published a series of reports on the impacts of climate change and opportunities to mitigate and adapt to climate change. The final report from March 2023 emphasises that limiting global temperature rise to 1.5C is still possible but only if we act immediately to reach peak carbon emissions before 2025. A 7th set of reports is expected to follow by 2030. [Report](#)

Steps Towards Zero Waste:

Year	Target	Source
2025	Implement packaging Extended Producer Responsibility	Environmental Improvement Plan 2023 (DEFRA)
2025	20% reduction in UK food and drink waste and carbon emissions compared with 2015	UK Courtauld Commitment 2025

2025	All plastic packaging placed on the market being recyclable, reusable or compostable	Our Waste, Our Resources: A Strategy for England 2018 (DEFRA)
2025	70% of all plastics packaging waste effectively recycled or composted	UK Plastics Pact 2018
2025	Expanded kerbside recycling collections from non-domestic premises	Simpler Recycling 2023 (DEFRA)
2026	Expanded kerbside recycling collections from households	Simpler Recycling 2023 (DEFRA)
2027	Introduce a deposit return scheme for plastic / metal drinks containers	DRS Policy Statement 2024 (DEFRA)
2028	Extend the UK Emissions Trading Scheme to Energy from Waste	Developing the UK ETS 2023 (DESNZ)
2028	Near elimination of biodegradable municipal waste to landfill	Environmental Improvement Plan 2023 (DEFRA)
2028	<p>Reduce residual waste (excluding major mineral waste) produced per capita by 24% (to 437kg)</p> <p>Reduce residual waste (excluding major mineral waste) tonnage by 21% (to 25.5 million tonnes)</p> <p>Reduce municipal residual waste produced per capita by 29% (to 333kg)</p> <p>Reduce residual municipal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • food waste produced per capita by 50% (to 64kg) 	Environmental Improvement Plan 2023 (DEFRA)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • plastic waste produced per capita by 45% (to 42kg) • paper and card waste produced per capita by 26% (to 74kg) • metal waste produced per capita by 42% (to 10kg) • glass waste produced per capita by 48% (to 7kg) 	
2030	Reduce carbon emissions by 68% of 1990 levels	UK agreed contribution to achieving UN Convention on Climate Change goals (Paris Agreement)
2030	<p>50% reduction in UK food waste compared with 2007 (UN SDG 12.3)</p> <p>50% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions associated with food and drink consumed in the UK compared with 2015</p> <p>50% of fresh food sourced from areas with sustainable water management</p>	UK Courtauld Commitment 2030
2030	Eliminate landfilling of food waste	UK Clean Growth Strategy 2017 (BEIS)
2030	Reduce the amount of local authority collected municipal waste landfilled to 2%	Resources Merseyside 2011 - 2041
2030	Reduce total waste arisings from households by 8% based on 2011 levels	Resources Merseyside 2011 - 2041
2035	Reduce carbon emissions by 81% of 1990 levels	UK agreed contribution to achieving UN Convention on Climate Change goals (Paris Agreement)
2035	65% of municipal waste reused or recycled	EU target adopted in English law Draft LCR Zero Waste Strategy

2035	Landfill of municipal waste limited to 10%	EU target adopted in English law
2040	Zero avoidable waste in LCR	LCR Zero Waste 2040 Strategic Framework
2040	Reducing the total amount of rubbish handled by the Partnership by a third Reducing our black bag rubbish by 50% of 2019 levels by 2040 – a maximum of 155kg/person	Draft LCR Zero Waste Strategy
2042	Halve residual waste produced per capita from 2019 levels (excluding major mineral waste) to at least 287kg	Environmental Improvement Plan 2023 (DEFRA)
2042	Eliminate avoidable plastic waste	England 25 Year Environment Plan 2018 (DEFRA)
2050	Zero avoidable waste and a doubling of resource productivity	UK Clean Growth Strategy 2017 (BEIS)
2050	Reduce carbon emissions by 100% of 1990 levels	UK Climate Change Act 2008 (amended)

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