

RESOURCES & WASTE POLICY UPDATE



MERSEYSIDE RECYCLING & WASTE AUTHORITY

MERSEYSIDE... A PLACE
WHERE NOTHING IS WASTED

AUGUST 2025

Policy Updates:

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

LIVERPOOL CITY REGION (LCR)

LCR Zero Waste Strategy

The Strategy was approved by all partners in the LCR Waste and Resources Partnership during 2025. It sets out how we can become a more sustainable society by rethinking resource use and prioritising waste prevention, reuse, repair and recycling. The Strategy aims to reduce waste by keeping resources in use for as long as possible through growing a more circular LCR economy. Partners are also developing individual strategies to demonstrate how they will contribute to the 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. A consultation is expected in Autumn 2025 and a final Strategy in the first half of 2026. 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, electricals, chemicals and plastics.

[Circular Economy Taskforce](#)

[Environment Secretary Circular Economy speech 27.03.25](#)

Food Strategy for England – Towards a Good Food Cycle

The Strategy, published 15.07.25, addresses the whole food system. It encourages local food growing and development of local food partnerships towards creating a more sustainable food system, including prevention of food waste at source. The Strategy will link to the forthcoming Circular Strategy for England, with Councils and strategic authorities encouraged to work in partnership with local stakeholders to deliver change.

[Food Strategy for England](#)

[Gov.uk press release 15.07.25](#)

Simpler Recycling

Simpler Recycling requires an extended and consistent range of materials to be recycled across England from home, work and school. Following Ministerial review in November 2024, final regulations and guidance were completed in 2025.

In summary, materials to be collected for recycling include:

- Glass bottles and jars
- Metal tins, cans, aerosols and lids
- Aluminium foil, food trays, tubes and bottles
- Plastic bottles, pots, tubs, trays and tubes
- Plastic film (from 31.03.27)

- Cartons, including tetra-paks
- Paper and card
- Food waste
- Garden waste.

Schedule 1 of the Separation of Waste (England) Regulations 2024 provides a detailed specification of these materials. Simpler recycling guidance also provides advice on what must be collected.

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 collections from households are required by 31.03.26.

Simpler Recycling came into force on 31.03.25 for most businesses and non-domestic properties, including offices. Micro firms (less than 10 full time equivalent employees) have an extension to 31.03.27. The Environment Agency are proposing a charge of £118/hour to cover the cost of regulatory activities at non-compliant workplaces.

[Simpler recycling: household recycling guidance - updated 13.05.25](#)
[Simpler Recycling in England policy paper 29.11.24](#)
[WRAP eTEEP tool](#)

[Simpler recycling: workplace recycling guidance - updated 21.05.25](#)
[Report a Simpler Recycling non-compliance](#)
[EA charge proposals for workplace simpler recycling](#)

[The Separation of Waste \(England\) Regulations 2025](#) - separate collection exemptions and extension to 31.03.27 for micro-firms.
[The Separation of Waste \(England\) Regulations 2024](#) - 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.
[Environment Act 2021](#)

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 requires Producers to make payments towards

household packaging waste management costs, including waste collection, sorting, treatment and public communications costs. pEPR development is led by PackUK, the pEPR scheme administrator, which launched on 21.01.25.

On 10.07.25 PackUK notified LAs of the payments they should expect to receive for Year 1 (2025/26) of the pEPR scheme, based on modelled costs. Year 1 payments are expected from November 2025 along with estimates for Year 2 (2026/27) payments. From Year 3 onwards, payments may reflect assessments of the efficiency and effectiveness of LA packaging waste management services. Producers will be incentivised to improve the environmental performance of packaging, initially through assessment of the recyclability of packaging placed on the market. The requirement for producers to label packaging as recyclable / not recyclable is delayed, and a new date is to be confirmed.

[PackUK](#)

[Extended producer responsibility for packaging](#)

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

Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) for Drinks Containers

On 19.11.24 DEFRA committed 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 Guidance](#)

[DEFRA DRS policy statement](#)

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

UK Carbon Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) expansion to waste

On 21.07.25 DESNZ published a partial Government response to the 2024 consultation on expansion of the ETS to Energy from Waste (EfW) facilities. The response focussed on the 2 year fossil carbon emissions Monitoring, Reporting and Verification (MRV) only period from 01.01.26. EfW operators may participate in this phase on a voluntary basis prior to the proposed expansion of the full scheme to EfW sites from 2028. Details of how emissions costs will pass through to customers from 2028 have yet to be finalised. Updates may follow during 2026.

[Interim consultation response](#)

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](#)

Waste Policy Reviews

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

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 consulted on **Landfill Tax reform** during 2025 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.

Introduction of **digital waste tracking** has been delayed. The service will now be available from April 2026 and become mandatory for all permitted and licensed waste receiving sites from October 2026. Further expansion may follow from April 2027. Tracking does not apply to individual bin collections from householders or deliveries by residents to HWRCs.

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.

[Near elimination of biodegradable waste to landfill consultation](#)

[Landfill Tax reform consultation](#)

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

[EIP annual progress report 2024 to 2025](#)

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

[DEFRA regulatory reform press release 02.04.25](#)

[Mandatory digital waste tracking](#)

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

Legislation to ban the sale of single use vapes came into force on 01.06.25 and was followed on 02.06.25 by a Ministerial Direction requiring LAs to treat single use vapes as waste and ensure they are disposed of using the best disposal route. Updates to the WEEE regulations came into force on 12.08.25 to ensure vapes producers are more clearly accountable for the costs of collecting and treating waste vapes.

[Disposal of single use vapes: 2025 ministerial direction](#)

[Single use vapes ban: information for businesses](#)

[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. A consultation launched on 01.08.25 and the Act is expected by the end of 2026.

[European Commission news article 01.08.25](#)

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. Talks resumed in Switzerland during August 2025 but failed to reach agreement.

[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 2025 to demonstrate their contribution to reducing global emissions and avoiding dangerous temperature rise. COP 30 follows in Brazil 10-21st November 2025. [COP 30](#)

UN IPCC Climate Change 7th Assessment reports

The Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) periodically reports on the impacts of climate change and opportunities to mitigate and adapt to it. The 6th assessment report from 2023 emphasised the need for immediate action to limit carbon emissions. The 7th round of assessment is now underway with reports expected between 2027 – 2029.

[Seventh Assessment Report — IPCC](#)

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) • 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) 	Environmental Improvement Plan 2023 (DEFRA)
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)
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 LCR Zero Waste Strategy
2035	Landfill of municipal waste limited to 10%	EU target adopted in English law
2040	<p>Reducing the total amount of rubbish handled by the Partnership by a third</p> <p>Reducing our black bag rubbish by 50% of 2019 levels by 2040 – a maximum of 155kg/person</p>	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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