

RESOURCES & WASTE POLICY UPDATE



MERSEYSIDE RECYCLING & WASTE AUTHORITY

MERSEYSIDE... A PLACE
WHERE NOTHING IS WASTED

JANUARY 2025

Policy Updates:

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

LIVERPOOL CITY REGION (LCR)

Zero Waste Strategic Framework

The Framework was approved in June 2023 by all 7 waste collection and disposal authorities in the LCR Strategic Waste Management 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. A draft LCR Zero Waste Strategy has been developed to deliver the Framework goals pending approval by partners.

[LCR Zero Waste 2040 Strategic Framework](#)

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 Strategic Framework goals to reduce all 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. The Taskforce of independent experts will enable co-design of England's first Circular Economy Strategy expected later in 2025. The Strategy will:

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

[Circular Economy Taskforce](#)

Simpler Recycling

Simpler Recycling will allow the same materials to be recycled across England from home, work, or school. DEFRA completed a Ministerial Review of Simpler Recycling on 29.11.24. The updated policy identifies 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 will be required to collect paper / card co-mingled with other materials. There are no changes to the previously announced implementation dates or materials, so Simpler Recycling comes into force from 31.03.25 for most businesses and non-domestic properties and from 31.03.26 for households.

[Simpler Recycling in England policy](#)

[Simpler recycling: workplace recycling in England](#)

[Commencement Regulations](#) - confirms main Simpler Recycling start dates.

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

[Draft Separation of Waste \(England\) Regulations 2025](#) - pending Parliamentary approval will confirm exemptions from separate collection and extension to 31.03.27 for micro-firms.

Packaging Extended Producer Responsibility (pEPR)

Producer responsibility means producers (e.g. brand owners, retailers, manufacturers) taking financial responsibility for the management of their products when they become waste. The pEPR scheme will ensure payments by Producers to LAs to support household packaging waste management costs from 2025/26 (Year 1), including packaging waste collection, sorting, treatment and communications campaigns costs.

On 28.11.24 DEFRA notified LAs of their estimated payments for Year 1 based on modelled costs. 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.

[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](#)

[Draft 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. The Welsh Government are reviewing their approach.

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. An industry led Deposit Management Organisation (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 return points, whilst transport hubs and other locations may also be encouraged to enable drinks container return.

[DEFRA DRS update 19.11.24](#)

[Draft Deposit Scheme for Drinks Containers \(England and Northern Ireland\) Regulations 2024](#)

New standards for Energy from Waste facilities

On 30.12.24 Government announced that proposals for new incinerators will be subject to tighter local and environmental conditions and new facilities must be carbon capture ready. The policy aims to support growth of the circular economy by avoiding the over-supply of residual waste treatment capacity.

[GOV.UK press release 30.12.24](#)

[Residual waste infrastructure capacity research](#)

DEFRA policy reviews

DEFRA launched several reviews following the change of Government in July 2024. A rapid review of the Environmental Improvement Plan 2023 was to be completed by the end of 2024. A new plan will follow, including delivery plans to meet the statutory Environment Act 2021 targets, e.g. reducing residual waste by 50% by 2042 from a 2019 baseline. DEFRA monitoring identifies the need for accelerated action to achieve these targets. An internal regulatory review is also expected aimed at ensuring DEFRA policies can enable economic growth as well as protecting the environment.

These reviews, alongside the Government Spending Review expected later in 2025, are likely to inform development of the Circular Economy Strategy for England and help identify which policies launched by the previous Government will be prioritised or replaced. Updates may follow on areas including:

- Maximising Resources, Minimising Waste Programme
- UK Carbon Emissions Trading Scheme expansion to waste (Government update expected mid – 2025)
- Waste electricals / Batteries EPR reforms
- Textiles and bulky waste / furniture EPR
- Mandatory digital waste tracking (currently due to commence April 2025, DEFRA update expected shortly).

[DEFRA EIP Review press release](#)

[Waste prevention programme for England: Maximising Resources, Minimising Waste](#)

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

[2023 Consultation on reforming the producer responsibility system for WEEE](#)

[Mandatory digital waste tracking](#)

Single Use Plastics (SUPs) ban

The 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.

[GOV.UK press release 14.01.23](#)

[SUP consultation outcome 2023](#)

[Plastic wet wipes consultation outcome 2024](#)

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 2022](#)

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](#)

Environment Act 2021

The Act aims to drive an expansion in recycling services alongside a stronger focus on resource efficiency. Key initiatives include:

- A Maximising Resources, Minimising Waste Programme
- Simpler recycling - comprehensive household and business waste recycling collections across England
- Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) schemes which require producers (e.g. manufacturers, brands and retailers) to pay for the costs of managing household waste
- Deposit return schemes, e.g. for used drinks containers.

Policies and regulations to implement the new powers are in development.

[Environment Act 2021](#)
[Resources and Waste Strategy for England 2018](#)

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

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 completed in South Korea on 01.12.24 without final agreement. Further discussions are expected in 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.

[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 person 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 person by 29% (to 333kg)</p> <p>Reduce residual municipal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • food waste produced per person by 50% (to 64kg) • plastic waste produced per person by 45% (to 42kg) • paper and card waste produced per person by 26% (to 74kg) • metal waste produced per person by 42% (to 10kg) • glass waste produced per person by 48% (to 7kg) 	Environmental Improvement Plan 2023 (DEFRA)
2030	Reduce carbon emissions by 68% of 1990 levels	UK agreed contribution to achieving UN climate goals (Paris Agreement)
2030	<p>50% reduction in food waste in the UK 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 Climate Change Act (to be amended)
2035	65% of municipal waste reused or recycled	EU target adopted in English law
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
2042	Halve residual waste produced per person 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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Glynn Stevenson
Strategy and Development Team
MRWA
glynn.stevenson@merseysidewda.gov.uk

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