



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

Defra Latest Developments on Waste and Recycling,

Kent Resource Partnership 22 September 2017

Robert Vaughan

Household collection and recycling



Forestry Commission
England



Environment
Agency

Overview

- Michael Gove – WWF Key Note speech 21 July
 - 25 Year Environment Plan
 - Renewed Strategy on Waste and Resources
- EuExit and Circular Economy Package
- Priorities for recycling
 - Improving quantity and quality
 - Making it easier for householders to recycle
 - Having the right incentives
- Packaging and Producer Responsibility
- Litter Strategy

WWF Key Note Speech



25 Year Environment Plan

“I want to make sure our plan is as ambitious as possible.”

Waste and Resources

we will explore new methods of reducing the amount of plastic - in particular plastic bottles - entering our seas.

*I want to improve incentives for reducing waste and litter, and review the penalties available to deal with polluters - all part of **a renewed strategy on waste and resources** that looks ahead to opportunities outside the EU”*

“We can incentivise recycling according to the environmental impact and value of the material, rather than a crude weight-based target that currently focuses recycling on things that happen to be heavy”

What should be the priorities for a renewed strategy on waste and resources?

Some pointers from the Draft Industrial Strategy

“The Government will work with stakeholders to explore opportunities

to reduce raw material demand and waste in our energy and resource systems,

to promote well-functioning markets for secondary materials,

*This work will be supported by the Government’s 25 Year Environment Plan which will set out **a long term vision for delivering a more resource efficient and resilient economy**”*

EU EXIT – opportunities & challenges

Manifesto Commitment

- The Government is committed to ensuring we become **the first generation to leave the environment in a better state than we found it**

Secretary of state for Environment

- “The decision to leave the European Union creates new opportunities, and challenges and nowhere more so than in the area of environmental policy.”

The EU Withdrawal Bill

- Will provide continuity with a functioning body of domestic law on the day we leave the EU.
- Wherever practical and sensible, same rules and laws will apply on the day of exit as now
- All relevant Waste and other environmental legislation is being carried over to ensure stability and continuity
- Significant number of regulations for Defra to manage through process

EU Circular Economy Waste Package

Trilogue

Estonian Presidency has stated that the Circular Economy Waste Package is one of their top priorities and are aiming to finalise it during their term.

UK position

- Defra generally supportive but concerns about level of targets for municipal waste, which we consider are not achievable, pressed for more flexibility in minimum requirements for Extended Producer Responsibility.
- A vote on the overall package is not anticipated until after the trilogue discussions are complete. This could take several months.
- Defra supports the Council position on packaging targets and landfill targets.
- Once CEP is adopted, there will be a 2 year transposition deadline, which will run to the period when the UK has exited EU. It is too early to tell to what extent the UK would be required to implement the measures.

EU Council position on targets

- Recycling municipal waste to 60% by 2030
- Landfill of municipal waste to 10% by 2030
- Recycling of packaging waste to 70% by 2030

EU Parliament position on targets

- Recycling municipal waste to 70% by 2030
- Landfill of municipal waste to 5% by 2030
- Recycling of packaging waste to 80% by 2030
- 50% foodwaste reduction target by 2030

EU Exit and Circular Economy

Leaving the EU allows us potentially to rethink the delivery recycling priorities

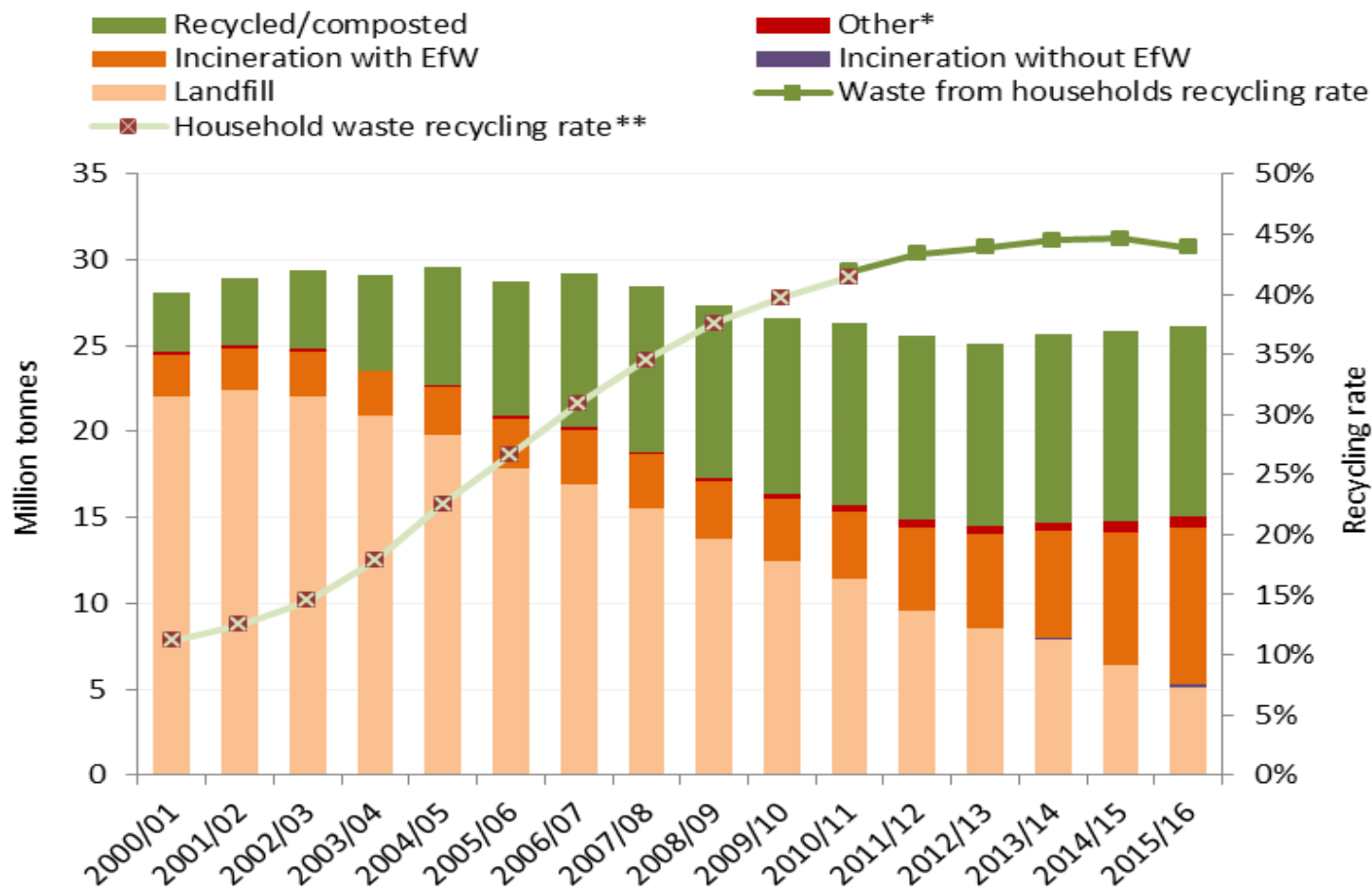
- what opportunities are there for local authorities from this?
- What changes could be made to increase recycling rates/value

Final CEP targets not yet agreed but will cover broader category of municipal waste.

- How might this affect local waste and recycling services?
- What opportunities are there for local authorities to provide commercial offers for collecting non-household municipal waste?
- What barriers might there be to expanding services outside household collection?

Performance on Recycling has increased 4 fold since 2001 But...

- *Since 2011 Household recycling rates have plateaued and in 2015 dropped for the first time*



Householders say they are confused over what can be recycled

Confusion over waste affecting recycling rates



Householders are increasingly confused over recycling, studies show. Picture: Jane Barlow

- Almost half (49%) of UK households dispose of one or more items in the residual bin that are collected for recycling in their area.
- Just over two-thirds (68%) of UK households add one or more items to their recycling collection that are not accepted locally.
- The majority of households (88%) have at least some room for improvement as only one in eight households (12%) do not put any items in the residual bin that could be recycled, nor do they put any items in the recycling that are not accepted.
- Two thirds of households (66%) express uncertainty about how to correctly dispose of one or more items

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Improving quantity and quality in recycling



A great deal of work is being done by some local authorities to improve their recycling facilities and collection, and I congratulate those that are doing well, but I challenge the view that recycling in densely packed urban areas is difficult, or that local authorities cannot do more to improve recycling rates.

- Many local authorities continue to improve performance
 - Richmondshire District Council with 14.7 percentage points improvement from 37.7% in 2014/15 to 52.4% in 2015/16.
 - East Riding of Yorkshire Council (8.6 percentage points increase)
 - Tameside MBC 7.8 percentage points increase.
 - Kent Resource Partnership improved from 39% in 2010/11 to 44.09% in 2015/16,
- But many still face challenges
- Minister has a strong interest in **recycling in urban areas** and wants to work with urban authorities to raise the bar on performance and to increase recycling levels in towns and cities.

Understanding and Improving local performance

Minister wrote to Local authorities with recycling rates at or below 30% to

- understand challenges authorities were facing locally
- hear where particular issues have been identified and plans to tackle these
- Ask about contractual status and timings of reviews.
- Learn about any plans/collaboration with other councils to extend recycling.

Responses have highlighted that

- Authorities want to improve performance – and actively investigating ways to do this
- challenges around changing contractual arrangements to expand recycling services
- Demographic issues inner cities with very high flatted populations and deprivation
- Challenges in engaging residents and helping them to do the right thing

Actions taken include

- Projects/schemes to work closely with residents on reducing contamination;
- Looking at opportunities to work in partnership with neighbouring authorities, harmonise/linking up contract renewal times;
- Plans to modify services to increase recycling rates

Improving performance on quality

Higher levels of contamination between materials or non recyclable waste reduces the value of recycled materials.

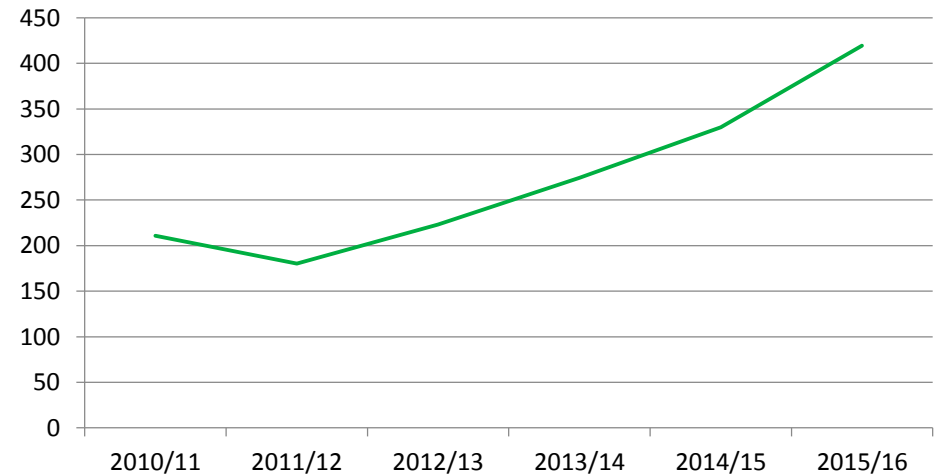
Total levels of rejects from recycling remain low but have increased in recent years

The Government has introduced requirements for MRFs to sample and report levels of contamination in comingled household waste quarterly

Need to reinforce messaging about

- Costs of contamination
- why quality is important
- how recycled materials are reprocessed back into the economy.

Total household recycling rejects ,000 tonnes



recyclable



NOT recyclable

Making it easier to recycle

A framework for

greater consistency in household recycling in England



- 2016 - WRAP and an industry advisory group published **framework for greater consistency** in recycling:
 - common set of dry recyclables and food waste collected in 1 of 3 three ways.
 - identify opportunities to rationalise packaging (recyclable and steady market)
 - Improve range and quality of materials collected for recycling.
- **£1m consistency fund to support the work**. Interested local authorities are working with WRAP to demonstrate the business case locally for them plus actions they have taken and lessons learnt.
- Consistency work is also looking at
 - **end markets for recycled materials,**
 - **Consistency in communications**
 - **policy barriers**

Having the right drivers in place

- Fiscal : Landfill Tax has provided a driver to divert waste from Landfill
 - Historic reductions in waste to landfill
 - Contributed to higher levels of recycling and recovery
 - Can it still make a difference?
- Recycling Credits
 - Historically effective in rewarding collection of recyclable materials
 - Does it still provide incentives
 - Alternative systems are in operation – can we learn from these?
 - Is it still fit for purpose? Can it be improved?
- Secondary Material Markets
 - Operate well for glass, metals paper – supporting case for collection
 - Plastics more vulnerable to fluctuations – uncertainty and export bans
 - quality affects value and recyclability

Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)

- *Current System obligates packaging producers and others to ensure a proportion of what they produce is recycled – through Producer Responsibility Schemes*
- There is an identified need to review quality, outcomes and scope of existing schemes, which vary immensely across Europe.
- ‘Extended’ Producer Responsibility (EPR) is often proposed as a solution to a range of challenges affecting existing schemes;
 - reducing high LA waste management and litter clear-up costs,
 - strengthening incentives design for recycling and increase the use of recycled content.
- Circular Economy Package proposes to introduce minimum operating conditions
The UK is actively involved in negotiations.
- In the context of EU exit, we have a key opportunity to re-examine our long-term strategy on producer responsibility.
- *Currently scoping out issues and will be engaging stakeholders in coming months.*

Other developments: Litter Strategy April 2017

Range of recommendations but only two picked out here

Household Waste Recycling Centres

- Defra has asked WRAP to
 - Review of guidance on HWRCs, to clarify advice on charging arrangements for household/non-household wastes (in particular DIY).
 - Explore ways of expanding access to small businesses, Tradesmen etc (at reasonable cost)
- WRAP is gathering evidence on current arrangements.
- Aim for guidance to be reviewed by the end of 2017.

Packaging and recycling incentive schemes

- Defra has established a working group to look at different incentives to improve recycling and reuse of packaging, and to reduce the incidence of commonly littered items. Working group will consider
 - voluntary incentives and regulatory options and measures to target particular types of item or product,
 - costs impacts and benefits of different types of deposit and reward and return schemes for drink containers.
 - Working group will consult widely in developing its evidence base and analysis.
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Summary

- Renewed approach and commitments on resource efficiency 25 Year Environment Plan as well as litter, packaging and recycling
- EU Exit is the priority; Significant amount of work to keep continuity and ensure this is a success. Also opportunities to deliver better environmental outcomes
- Minister is keen to work with authorities to improve performance especially in dense urban areas.
- Consistency provides framework for work to improve quality and quantity of recycling and to make it easier for householders to recycle.
- Initiatives will develop over coming months

Thank you and don't forget

Recycle Week 25 September

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