


Gloucestershire Resources and Waste Partnership Strategy Consultation



2023-2026



Reduce. Reuse. Recycle.

 Gloucestershire recycles

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Background

The Gloucestershire Resources and Waste Partnership (GRWP) is a partnership between the County and District Councils of Gloucestershire. These are Cheltenham Borough Council, Cotswold District Council, Forest of Dean District Council, Gloucester City Council, Gloucestershire County Council, Stroud District Council and Tewkesbury Borough Council.

The GRWP is an informal partnership that provides countywide leadership and a framework for joint working on resources and waste related matters. GRWP members work together to optimise waste management services across the county and are committed to the development and implementation of a Gloucestershire Resources and Waste Strategy. This draft strategy succeeds the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (JMWMS) developed and adopted by each authority in 2007.

Where are we now and where do we want to be

Since the adoption of the Gloucestershire Joint Municipal Waste Strategy in 2007, many changes and improvements to waste services have been made. This is discussed in detail in appendix 1.

All authorities now offer a wide range of recycling options and the public response to these service changes has been positive, with the current Gloucestershire recycling rate standing at over 50%.

Against a backdrop of ongoing population growth (an increase of 8.5% between 2008 and 2020), resourcing challenges and changes to waste composition (for example a significant increase in electronic items and a reduction in paper) waste services have continued to adapt.

Further adaptation will be required if we are to meet future challenges and respond effectively to the Climate Emergency. During the life of the current strategy the concept of 'waste' has changed to become one of 'resources'. The linear economy (take, make, dispose) must be replaced by a circular economy, where materials are not wasted, but remain within the economy and treated as resources. New policies and strategies are needed to respond to this across the wider economy, and the impacts of this on waste collection and disposal must be considered. Climate Change adaptation and

mitigation, increased cross-sector partnership working, legislative changes and financial pressures must also form part of our future thinking.

This document invites your thoughts on the direction that a revised Gloucestershire Resources and Waste Strategy should take, having regard to likely significant changes at a national level in the near future, which may include;

- Changes to the way that council waste services are funded as a result of the introduction of extended producer responsibility for packaging waste and the potential new burden of free garden waste collections. Extended producer responsibility is a means of ensuring that packaging producers will become responsible for funding the costs of collection and disposal/recycling of key household packaging waste.
- Changes to kerbside recycling services as a result of national consistency standards (eg possible new materials to be added for separate collection) and mandatory food waste collections from all households.
- Further development of policies which drive forward the circular economy, promoting waste prevention and reuse as a priority.
- An increased emphasis on materials quality as a result of the above, and greater consideration of reducing carbon impacts as a key outcome.

With this in mind, we are developing an interim strategy which incorporates the key immediate priorities up to 2026 but remains adaptable to further change in the longer term.

The Consultation

Why do we need to review the JMWMS?

The current JMWMS was published in 2007 with an intended lifespan up to 2020. Many of the objectives of this strategy have significantly progressed, but the legislative and policy landscape of waste management has also changed.

A new strategy will allow us to identify key priorities moving forward and incorporate objectives that will address the challenges that lie ahead, whether these relate to areas of continual improvement or step changes in policy and legislative changes.

In response to the declaration of a climate emergency, made by all partnership authorities in 2019, a new strategy must also strongly support the delivery of our net zero objectives. Waste itself forms one of the key themes of the Climate Leadership Gloucestershire strategy.

Who are we consulting?

Any individual or organisation may respond to this consultation. In addition to feedback from residents, the GRWP is specifically consulting with:

- Town & Parish Councils
- Ward Members
- Local Community Groups
- Representatives of supply chains (for example, local Traders Associations)
- Waste Management Companies and Reprocessors
- The Waste Planning Authority
- The Environment Agency and other government bodies.
- Climate Leadership Gloucestershire
- Gloucestershire Local Enterprise Partnership

Finding further information

Further information on the GRWP and details of services and related activities can be found on the Gloucestershire Recycles website at www.gloucestershirerecycles.com.

Further information on the governments Resources and Waste Strategy can be found on the defra website at www.gov.uk/government/publications/resources-and-waste-strategy-for-england

How to respond

To respond to this consultation please visit

<https://haveyoursaygloucestershire.uk.engagementhq.com/>

This consultation can be made available via post, please contact waste@gloucestershire.gov.uk to request an alternative format of this.

Draft 2022-25 Interim Gloucestershire Resources and Waste Strategy

The Gloucestershire Resources and Waste Partnership has reviewed the themes and outcomes achieved by the 2007-2020 JMWMS and have considered how these should be refreshed to better respond to future challenges, changing priorities and changing policy landscape.

The following draft strategy has been developed by the partnership and we welcome your views on this. Consultation questions are listed at the end of this section.

Vision

“We will work together to promote resource efficiency and provide sustainable, safe and cost effective waste management in order to respond to our climate emergency, to conserve natural resources and to protect our environment.”

Engagement and Partnership Working

Joint working between partnership authorities has been at the heart of our waste management strategy for many years. We recognise that waste collection and disposal authorities must co-ordinate decision making, service development, communication with residents and other stakeholders, and service delivery in order to achieve the most efficient services and the best outcomes for residents. The GRWP exists in order to maintain this partnership working approach, and the revised strategy aims to emphasise its continued importance.

Avoiding or mitigating environmental impacts has remained central to our decision making, and clear commitments to addressing climate change have now also been made by the GRWP member authorities. We commit to developing a new strategy which prioritises climate action and facilitates close working with Climate Leadership Gloucestershire in support of common objectives.

Appendix A outlines achievements to date in terms of Behaviour Change (previous objective 1) and Partnership Working (previous objective 7), with a reduction in overall household waste being demonstrated and a continual decline in the residual waste

per household since 2016. The exception to this trend was during the Covid pandemic, when household waste increased due to people staying at home. Despite these ongoing improvements there remains some way to go to meet our original 2020 recycling target of 60%. The latest published recycling rate in Gloucestershire, for 2020/21 stands at 50.8%. An analysis of waste composition in 2019 also showed a significant amount of recyclable material still being disposed of by residents as residual waste (see figure

What's in your waste?

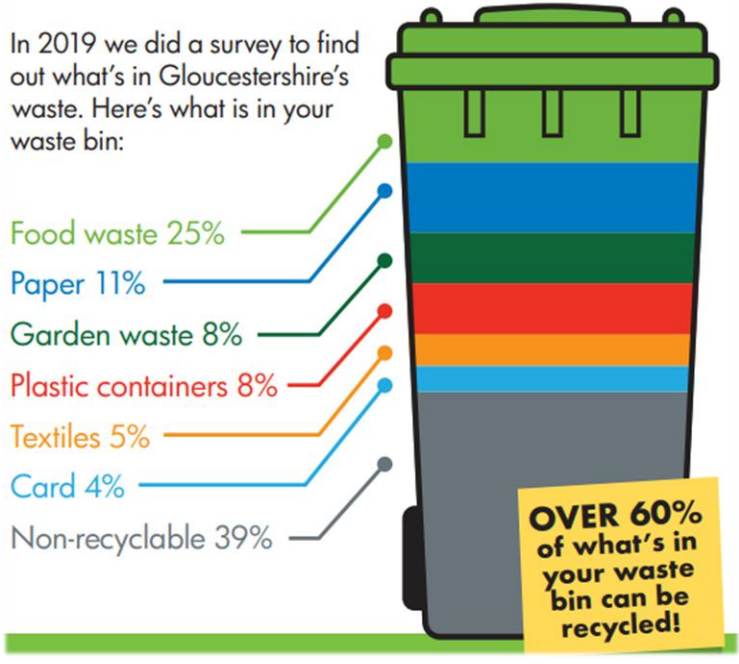


Figure 1 - Results of the 2019 residual waste composition analysis

1). For example, only around 40% of available food waste is recycled, and significant amounts of other easily recycled materials such as paper, cardboard, cans and glass remain in residual waste. It is clear that if all residents recycled as much as they could within the existing waste services the recycling rate would be in excess of 70%. The gap between current performance and potential performance indicates that more could be done to encourage and facilitate behaviour change.

As an interim strategy, our new objectives will deliver improvements in performance using the existing services prior to any major policy changes taking place at a national level as outlined earlier. Therefore, the GRWP will;

- Work in partnership to continuously improve waste management services within Gloucestershire.
- Consider and share plans for the development of future services with each other ahead of service changes.
- Identify opportunities to collaborate with community organisations across Gloucestershire and develop relationships which help achieve our vision.

- Help the residents of Gloucestershire to live more sustainably by providing information and advice that help reduce both carbon emissions and waste levels.
- Engage with government, supply chains and other industry bodies in order to stay abreast of, and influence, continual improvement in all aspects of waste management policy.

Maximising Resource Value

Maximising the value of materials collected within the limitations of the collection system is important in ensuring the efficient delivery of services and minimising the whole life environmental impact of materials. High levels of resource value can be gained by driving down residual waste and increasing the levels of waste prevention, reuse and recycling. Appendix A outlines our performance in this respect since the previous strategy was adopted in 2008, detailing performance improvements in 'Reduction First' (previously objective 2), 'Segregation at Source' (previously objective 3) and 'Closing the Resource Loop' (previously objective 8).

Despite this performance we believe that more can be done to reduce waste by employing a mix of ongoing behaviour change activities and further service development. We recognise that many of the best performing authorities have adopted measures such as smaller residual waste containers or less frequent (eg 3-weekly) residual waste collections, both of which serve to limit the amount of residual waste disposal capacity available to residents and demonstrate a clear link between residual waste bin size and the amount of residual waste collected. It is recognised that investment in vehicles and other collection infrastructure is made for up to 7 years at a time (the typical life of vehicles) and therefore such investments should be made with future potential changes in mind.

Further examples to address this challenge could include;

- The addition of further separate materials collections for recycling, such as soft plastics (eg plastic films and bags), where viable. However, collection at the kerbside might not always be possible due to high cost and end market restrictions.

- The continued encouragement of higher levels of participation in waste reduction, reuse and recycling by residents using behaviour change engagement techniques. A particular challenge in this respect is increasing the amount of food waste captured for recycling, as currently more than half of the available food waste remains in the residual waste stream.
- Maintaining a focus on materials quality and adapting services to respond to changing market requirements. In addition, the development of a more circular economy may require certain target materials to be managed in different ways.

Maximising the resource potential of the remaining residual waste remains a long-term commitment through the avoidance of landfill and continued use of the Energy from Waste facility.

We recognise that future changes to national waste policy and the growth of the circular economy will continue to drive quality standards, and our revised strategy must ensure that we respond to this and adapt as necessary. Different methods of waste collection can impact material quality in different ways (for example, higher reject rates are common with co-mingled recycling collections) and this should be considered alongside affordability and practicability.

In response to the challenge of maximising resource value, the GRWP will;

- Treat all waste as a resource and ensure that it is managed in accordance with the waste hierarchy to maximise environmental, economic and social benefits.
- Continue to develop waste services that reduce residual waste per household.
- Support a circular economy, where waste is avoided and materials are kept in continual use.
- Develop waste collection services which balance obtaining the highest quality of materials and value for money service delivery.
- Seek to reduce the CO₂ emissions from our waste management services and contribute to the county's net zero commitment.

Service Investment & Value for Money

Effective service development and delivery which provides both value for money and high levels of performance has been at the centre of GRWPs strategy for many years.

During this time services have responded to a number of challenges in terms of adapting to market pressures, delivering continual improvement and operating under ever tighter financial constraints. It is recognised that these pressures will continue to exist, and potential new pressures arising from changes to national policy and service funding may emerge. The GRWP will continue to work closely together in order to maintain a strong collective position, and in particular will;

- Ensure waste management services are efficient, considering the overall service cost to Gloucestershire taxpayers.
- Continue to invest in waste management infrastructure to ensure that services can deliver continual improvement.
- Provide leadership and maintain close working relationships with the wider public sector, sharing intelligence and best practice in order to widen the scope of achievable benefits.
- Continue to seek external funding opportunities to support our key priority of sustainable waste management.

Adaptation to the Future

The GRWP recognise that significant challenges lay ahead in terms of increasing environmental pressures, and each partner authority is committed to taking action on reducing carbon emissions in response to the Climate Emergency that we face. Future waste management services will be developed and delivered with this consideration at the centre of decision making.

The national policy context, within which waste services are delivered, will continue to adapt to this pressure, and a number of changes are being considered which in turn will require further adaptation by the GRWP.

The government is currently developing new national policies, which are likely to see producers taking responsibility for the costs associated with the collection, recycling, treatment and disposal of certain materials, in particular food and beverage packaging. Consideration is being given to the introduction of 'Extended Producer Responsibility' (ensuring responsibility for collection costs sites with the producer) and a 'Deposit Return Scheme' for drinks containers.

Whilst Extended Producer Responsibility will ensure that full collection and recycling costs will no longer be borne by the authorities, it may result in a demand for increased materials quality which in turn may influence the methods of collection. The Deposit Return Scheme is likely to result in the removal of some materials from kerbside waste streams. Both of these policies have the potential to change the way that waste is collected and handled in Gloucestershire, and it is prudent to ensure that a revised strategy is adaptable to be able to accommodate change once the effects of these policies are better understood in the years ahead. Therefore, the GRWP will;

- Recognise that further service changes may be needed to meet future challenges and a changing policy environment. To this end we will regularly review our strategy and priorities, with a first full review of this interim strategy in 2026.
- Actively respond to legislative and policy developments and will set appropriate targets with the ambition of strengthening our position in terms of overall waste reduction and recycling performance.
- Keep abreast of advances in digital technology, alternative fuels, waste processing and treatment to improve efficiency and reduce the environmental impact of services.

Performance Improvement

The GRWP will develop annual action plans to ensure that continual improvement in performance can be achieved. These action plans will detail the steps to be taken by each partner authority, both individually and collectively, which will contribute to an overall improvement in a number of key areas. As a minimum, our key performance measures will be;

- Recycling rate. The recycling rate (which also includes reuse, composting and anaerobic digestion) has steadily climbed over a number of years although has not yet reached the original strategy target of 60%. We will maintain a target of 60% recycling, but recognise that achievement of this will require further step changes in service delivery. In the meantime, the annual action plan will aim to deliver incremental improvement towards this target, with an interim target of 55% by 2026.

- Residual waste per household. This has been reduced significantly in recent years and, excluding 2020/21 when the effects of lockdown and home working skewed the tonnage data, continues on a downwards trend of between 10 and 20kg per household per year. Residual waste targets will therefore be set, reducing 10kg per household per year in line with this trend.

- Carbon emissions. Each partner authority monitors the carbon emissions associated with it's activities and we will continue to do this. We will also develop a robust mechanism whereby carbon emissions are targeted for reduction and are embedded as a core aspect in decision making, for example in contract procurements or in operational delivery.

Consultation questions

We welcome your views on this draft strategy with the following questions in mind.

1. How would you suggest the theme of Engagement & Partnership Working could be improved? In particular, highlight any specific actions that you would employ.
2. Looking ahead to the future, are there any elements of Engagement & Partnership Working that you would avoid?
3. Looking ahead to the future, are there any elements of waste reduction activity that you would emphasise or avoid?
4. What difficulties, if any, do you perceive may exist which could prevent all householders participating in the current recycling services?
5. What further improvements could be made to residual waste treatment?
6. The Gloucestershire Resources and Waste Partnership expect that financial considerations and leadership will continue to be key in developing and maintaining sustainable waste service in the future, and that this will be reflected in our future strategic objectives. What other aspects would you suggest should be considered as key to successful strategy delivery?
7. Are there any specific benefits or themes for partnership working which could be emphasised and prioritised in the future?
8. Given the increasing emphasis on the circular economy, how would you suggest that our strategy could be improved in this respect?
9. What, in your view, are the priority materials for which a greater level of closed loop recycling could be applied, and how could the revised strategy be improved in order to facilitate this?

10. We are proposing Key Performance Indicators which measure recycling rate, residual waste levels and carbon footprint. Please provide your views on these, and outline any changes or additions that you would wish to see to the following;

- A recycling target of 55%
- Residual waste per household reducing by 10kg per year.
- Monitoring, measuring and reducing carbon emissions.

Appendix 1 Review of the 2008-2020 Gloucestershire Waste Strategy

The JMWMS contains nine objectives to deliver a sustainable waste management service where waste generation is minimised and waste materials are seen as a resource. These are;

1. Changing Behaviour
2. Reduction First
3. Segregation at Source
4. Compost Hierarchy
5. Residual Waste as a Resource
6. Delivering the Strategy
7. Working in Partnership
8. Closing the Resource Loop
9. Depollution of the Waste Stream

These objectives are considered in more detail below along with an overview of our performance against them to date.

Objective 1: “Changing Behaviour”

“To further develop our service design, communications and our education programmes to promote waste minimisation and to maximise participation in sustainable waste management services. In the long term we aim to transform consumer behaviour and society’s attitude to consumption and disposal.”

Progress to date

Success in this area depends largely on the acceptance and willingness of local residents to positively engage with opportunities which enable them to reduce the impact of their habits and behaviours in relation to resources and waste. A number of factors influence this, which include;

- The provision of accessible and sustainable waste management services.
- The availability of improved choices regarding consumption. For example, buying groceries that are unpackaged or have easily recyclable packaging.

- The levels of awareness of the above and a subsequent shift in normalising their uptake throughout the community.

Targets were established for recycling and composting (the percentage recycling rate) in each of the years 2009/10, 2014/15 and 2019/20. These were set at 40%, 50% and 60% respectively. In order to achieve this, all waste collection services were improved to add more materials collected for recycling and composting and to reduce the capacity for residual waste to be generated through a change to fortnightly collections and strengthening of policies to discourage excess waste. These changes were made in all six districts between 2008 and 2016 and resulted in an overall increase in recycling rate from 36.2% in 2007/08 to 54.2% in 2017/18. (figure 2)

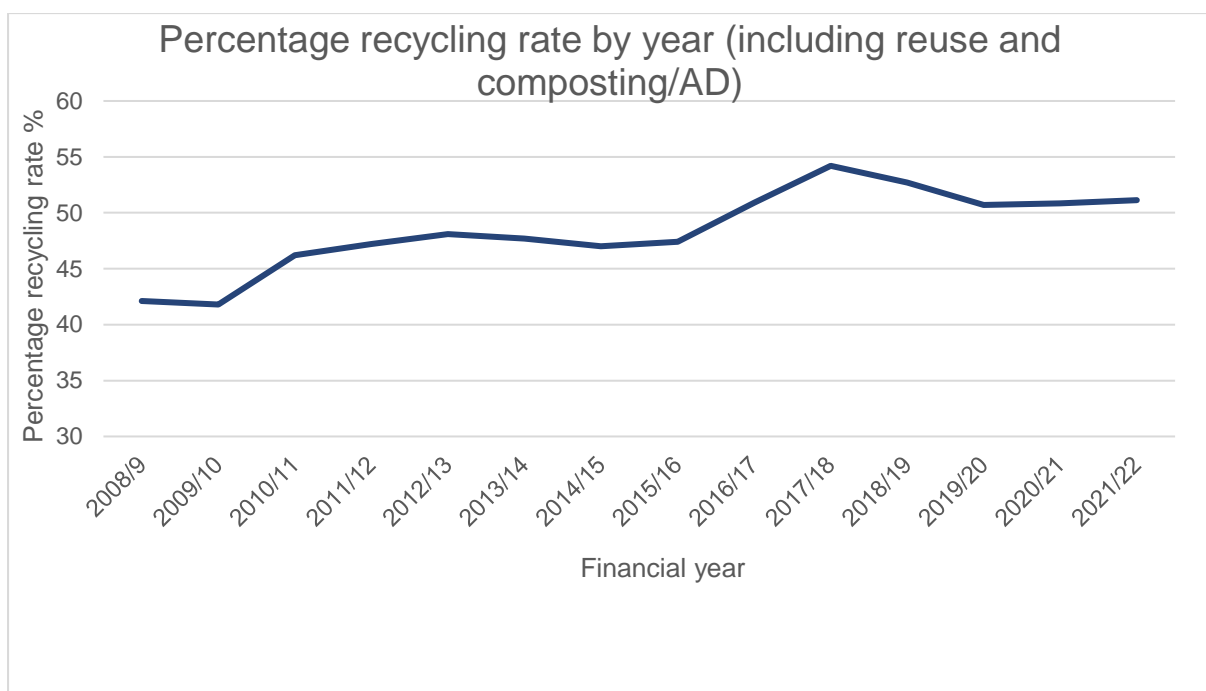


Figure 2 - Percentage recycling rate over time

In addition, the county's six Household Recycling Centres (HRC's) have maintained a comprehensive range of recycling options, and members of the public are encouraged to fully utilise these by segregating materials before they visit the site. (figure 3) Note that a change in the treatment of HRC wood waste in 2018/19 (switching from recycling to biomass recovery in response to the preferred market options at the time) resulted in a slight reduction in recycling rate.



Figure 3 - Hempsted HRC

Engagement with residents is key to ensuring that waste services are utilised efficiently and to their maximum level, with regular ‘calls to action’ being made. Through the ‘Recycle for Gloucestershire’ brand (now ‘Gloucestershire Recycles’) numerous engagement methods have been employed, including;

- Development and maintenance of online information relating to recycling, reuse and waste minimisation, lately supported by an increased use of social media.
- Specific targeted campaigns and projects, for example promotion of Real Nappies and provision of money-off vouchers.
- Broad campaigns based around key themes and specific materials. A regular focus has been placed on the reduction and recycling of food waste.
- Direct mailout of leaflets and campaign messages.
- Advertising in the media, including newspapers, radio and local magazines.
- The stickering of bins requesting ‘no food waste be put in residual waste containers’.
- Face to face activities, such as roadshows, presentations, doorstep discussions and school visits.

The provision of a dedicated budget to support the ongoing engagement work with residents and community groups is central in ensuring and demonstrating our commitment to continual improvement in this area. Through the preparation and delivery of a joint annual engagement plan we will continue to develop innovative and creative programmes of work.

Objective 2: “Reduction First”

“To reduce Gloucestershire’s municipal waste by addressing waste generation at the household level and further up the supply chain.”

Progress to Date

This objective has many overlaps with Objective 1 but focuses specifically on reducing the amount of waste generated by Gloucestershire residents.

There are two common approaches to measuring amounts of waste, these being total tonnage of waste generated and waste per household.

Between 2007/08 and 2020/21, total household waste tonnage per year fell from 314,000 tonnes to 283,000 tonnes, a reduction of almost 10% despite a population increase of around 8.5%. This is in part due to the positive impacts of national and local policies and services along with the positive aspects of behaviour change.

The Gloucestershire Resources and Waste Partnership prefer to focus on the amount of waste generated per household as this negates the impacts of population growth, and we regularly monitor the amount of residual waste per household as an important performance metric. A target was set in the current strategy to achieve an annual maximum of 479 kg of residual waste per household by 2020/21. The actual performance achieved was 460 kg of residual waste per household, which is an improvement against our target of around 4%, and in 2021/22 dropped further to 442kg per household. (figure 4)



Figure 4 - Residual waste per household over time

Our involvement with efforts made further up the supply chain at a national level has included support of industry initiatives (for example as signatories to the Courtauld Commitment) and lobbying government on national waste policy development, and we would want to continue with this approach into the future. On the back of this we would require a new strategy which responds positively and proactively to future improvements such as circular economy improvements and national policy changes.

Objective 3: “Segregation at Source”

“To provide collection systems that enable all householders to segregate their waste, balancing optimised collection systems with a desire to maintain the quality and value of the materials collected for recycling and composting.”

Progress to date

Since adoption of the current strategy, all waste collection services have been transformed to enable the separate collection of materials at the kerbside and at the Household Recycling Centres.

All waste collections are now required by law to provide the separate collection of paper, plastics, metals and glass where this is technically, environmentally and economically practicable. Whilst there are variations between the authorities in how this is delivered, the configuration of all services fulfils this requirement.

At around 25% of total household waste, food contributes significantly to the amount of waste generated by a household. All areas of Gloucestershire now receive a weekly separate collection of food waste, which is taken to an Anaerobic digestion plant in the county to produce gas and fertiliser. Both of these outputs are used within Gloucestershire for heating, cooking and agriculture.

Four out of the six districts sort materials at the kerbside before being transported for recycling. One district collects them in a mixed container where they are then sent to a sorting facility before being reprocessed. One further district operates a hybrid system where plastics, metals and glass are mixed and paper is collected separately. All authorities include a range of additional materials for recycling in addition to these minimum requirements. These may include for example cardboard, textiles, small electricals and cartons. Recycling is collected on either a weekly or a fortnightly cycle.

All households are also offered an optional separate collection of garden waste, for which a charge is currently made. The collected material is taken to one of three local sites for composting before being returned for agricultural or horticultural use as a soil conditioner.

In order to maximise the participation in all these separate collections, residual waste is now collected once per fortnight.

Household Recycling Centres across Gloucestershire offer facilities for the separate collection of over 20 different types of material in addition to garden waste and residual waste.

Segregation of materials helps to ensure that the most appropriate end destinations and reprocessing markets can be accessed, and it is important that residents trust this. This information is publicly available on our GloucestershireRecycles website.

Segregation of materials is largely undertaken at the kerbside and at Household Recycling Centres. Other waste collected as litter is largely handled as mixed residual waste, although there are a small number of 'recycling-on-the-go' bins present in town centres. Whilst a Deposit Return Scheme may help to drive the recycling of some materials, we will continue to support 'recycling-on-the-go' where this is effective.

Objective 4: “Compost Hierarchy”

“To promote home and community composting where possible, and also provide facilities to compost biowaste that is collected at the kerbside and received at HRCs. We aim to produce high quality composts that can be used locally.”



Figure 5- Community composting activity

Progress to date

This objective focusses on two specific waste streams; garden waste and food waste. All kerbside collection services now offer the separate collection of each of these, with food waste being collected weekly and garden waste being an optional service for those residents who wish to subscribe and use it. The Household Recycling Centres continue to offer an additional disposal option for garden waste.

Gloucestershire authorities encourage and support home composting as a preferred option with the promotion of discounted compost bins and accessories, with an estimated 10,000 being sold during the period of this strategy. In addition a number of volunteer ‘Master Composters’ have been trained to work across the county with residents, schools and other organisations to further support home composting (figure 5). Some residents have established community composting facilities in their local areas and during the life of the current strategy the County Council has assisted in setting these up and providing financial support. Start-up funding has been made available and an ongoing payment of recycling credits is made to all groups. Whilst the current number of community composting schemes in Gloucestershire is relatively low we will continue to support any new schemes that are proposed and are viable.

Garden waste collected by authorities either at kerbside or at Household Recycling Centres is composted locally at windrow composting facilities. The resulting compost is used by the agricultural and horticultural sectors and a small amount is also bagged and sold to the public, demonstrating a closed loop approach.

Since 2014, food waste has been treated in a local anaerobic digestion (AD) process (figure 6). Prior to 2014 all food waste was composted at an In-Vessel-Composting (IVC) facility. The benefit of using AD instead of IVC is that energy is produced in the form of gas which is distributed for domestic use via the gas grid and offsets the dependence on fossil fuel. In contrast IVC is a net consumer of energy. Both processes produce organic fertilisers which is used on local farmland. However, as stated earlier, household participation in food waste recycling services remains below 50% and it is clear that there is a significant amount of food waste remaining in the residual waste stream.



Figure 6 - Andigestion food waste recycling centre

Objective 5: “Residual Waste as a Resource”

“To provide residual waste treatment capacity to divert waste from landfill, and find or develop markets for recovered materials. Our preferred treatment processes will optimise recovery of recyclables and gain further value from residual waste before disposal.”

Progress to date

Diversion of waste from landfill has been at the heart of all service developments during the life of the current strategy. A significant contribution to this has been achieved by the development of recycling services across the county.

Residual waste now represents less than half of all waste collected. However, it still contains quantities of materials that could be recycled if segregated by householders and efforts will continue to be made to encourage residents to recycle as much of this as possible.

Work has been ongoing over the life of the current strategy to establish an alternative to landfill for residual waste. This resulted in the building of a new Energy from Waste facility at Javelin Park near Gloucester. This facility became operational in 2019 and has successfully replaced landfill as the primary destination for the vast majority of household residual waste collected within Gloucestershire.

Maximising the resource value of waste through this process is achieved through energy generation. The facility generates 130,000 MWh of electricity, enough to power 25,000 homes. The recovery of heat from the process remains a challenge, and while there are currently no viable offtakers for heat within the area, work is ongoing to identify viable opportunities for this.

Outputs from the process also include the recovery and recycling of metals and the recycling of ash as an aggregate material for use in construction of roads and other structures. In 2021/22, this amounted to around 35,000 tonnes.

Objective 6: “Delivering the Strategy”

“To implement this strategy through clear leadership, accountable decision making, timely investment and resourcing. We will look to secure sustainable funding to continuously improve Gloucestershires waste management service.”

Progress to date

Waste management is a high profile service at all authorities, requiring significant expenditure. Decisions relating to the service changes and investments are subject to strong governance processes and scrutiny. The current strategy has provided the blueprint for guiding decision making since 2007, and whilst the landscape has changed during this time the focus on delivering against these objectives has remained.

One significant observable change during this time has been the increase in pressure on Local Government finances. Developing and maintaining value-for-money services

has required an ongoing commitment by all authorities to adapt to these pressures, and to work together to share learning and resources. The establishment of a local authority owned company, Ubico is one such example of this. Ubico now operate waste services in all areas of the county, and while waste services remain independent of each other, it provides shared resources for the benefit of all.

Ubico continues to grow as a service provider in Gloucestershire. The most recent statistics from Ubico show that, in 2021/22;

- They served 256,497 properties.
 - Collection accuracy was 99.92%.
 - 35,911,120 separate collections were made.
 - 5,584 hours of training was delivered to employees.
 - The number accidents reduced by 18% compared to the previous year.
-

Funding of services comes from a number of sources. Primary funding is provided through internal budgets generated largely from Council Tax receipts with additional contributions from non-domestic rates. Further funding is gained from the sale of recyclables and more recently, from the sale of electricity. Additional funding is gained from garden waste subscriptions, the sale of compost and the sale of bric-a-brac at Household Recycling Centres.

There is risk associated with all these funding streams, and the government recognises this within their emerging national policies. With the possible introduction of Extended Producer Responsibility, Deposit Return Scheme and New Burdens the funding landscape is likely to see significant change. It will be implicit in any future Gloucestershire Resources and Waste Strategy that affordability and value-for-money must be maintained, and the strategy should also explicitly acknowledge the potential for funding streams to change (for example through an extended producer responsibility scheme) and be able to adapt accordingly.

Objective 7: “Working in Partnership”

“To develop an effective partnership between the seven Gloucestershire authorities and investigate the formation of a suitable organisational framework, including financial and operational interests, for delivering this strategy. We plan to develop strong partnerships with the Waste Planning Authority, businesses, community groups

and other organisations to ensure effective management of the municipal waste stream.”

Progress to date

A commitment for all authorities to work in partnership with each other has been maintained throughout the life of the current strategy, which was originally adopted by each authority on behalf of the Gloucestershire Waste Partnership. This was a voluntary partnership with membership from all seven authorities. The Gloucestershire Waste Partnership recognised the benefits of close partnership working, and with help from government funding and support was able to formalise these arrangements. In 2013 a Joint Waste Committee was formed to replace the Gloucestershire Waste Partnership. This committee operated under formal terms of reference within an established local authority governance structure, but each partner retained financial independence and decision-making powers.

In 2018 the Joint Waste Committee reverted to a voluntary structure and, in recognition of the growing importance of waste as a resource, adopted the name Gloucestershire Resources and Waste Partnership. The new partnership maintains the same membership, values and objectives of the preceding partnerships and is now leading on this strategy review on behalf of its members.

Delivery of strategy objectives would not be possible without partnership working. For example, service developments undertaken by the waste collection authorities have required significant investment, and additional ongoing financial support has been provided by the County Council to assist in this. All partners contribute to joint communications and public engagement under a single brand ‘GloucestershireRecycles’ and meet regularly to plan campaigns.

It is also recognised that partnership working with external organisations can create additional opportunities and benefits, and relationships have been built with several organisations over a number of years, for example community groups with whom we share common objectives. We have worked to support local organisations involved in community level recycling and reuse/repair activities, and this in turn has provided additional breadth to our public engagement and communications activities.

Objective 8: “Closing the Resource Loop”

“To reprocess waste materials at the most appropriate location, recycling locally wherever practical by supporting reprocessors within Gloucestershire. We will seek to ensure that our waste materials are recycled into high quality products, helping to generate jobs, create wealth, and mitigate the impacts of climate change.”

Progress to date

Since adoption of the current strategy, materials recycling opportunities have expanded for all residents and a wide range of materials are now collected for recycling. We have established recycling services which treat these materials as a resource, and as such we aim to maintain their quality in order for them to be efficiently reused or recycled.

Gloucestershire is not an industrial county, and with the exception of food and garden waste it is inevitable that a significant tonnage of materials will enter markets for recycling elsewhere in the UK or further abroad. However, the consideration of local social value is built into our procurement processes and we will continue to seek local reprocessing opportunities where these exist.

For the past five years Gloucestershire County Council has owned and traded all materials collected at the Household Recycling Centres, and this has enabled us to directly seek out local reprocessing options. As a result 50% of our materials reprocessing contracts are let to companies operating in Gloucestershire.

Objective 9: “Depollution of the Waste Stream”

“To encourage the reduction of hazardous waste arisings, and to segregate and safely treat or dispose of hazardous materials from the municipal waste stream.”

Progress to date

Pollutants arise in many household waste streams, and much progress has been made in legislation to eliminate or limit the use of the most harmful substances. However, pollutants can still be found in everyday items and a number of separate

collection systems have been established to ensure that they are treated in the safest and most appropriate way. These include separate collections either at kerbside or at Household Recycling Centres for batteries, electrical items, chemicals & paint and asbestos. The partnership is supportive of government and manufacturers in continuing to eliminate the use of hazardous substances in household items.

Not all potentially polluting items are recognised as being hazardous, but nevertheless all treatment and disposal facilities are regulated to ensure that hazards are understood and pollution risks are managed. The EfW facility is regulated by the Environment Agency under an Environmental Permit setting strict emissions limits. Continuous monitoring systems record performance, which is summarised monthly on the contractors website. Unacceptable wastes are collected and disposed of separately.

Further links

Find more information about recycling and waste minimisation across Gloucestershire on our website <https://www.gloucestershirerecycles.com/>

For further enquiries about this consultation paper please contact Waste@gloucestershire.gov.uk with the subject line 'Consultation 2022' or call Gloucestershire County Council on 01452 425 000.

Partnership contact details

The Gloucestershire Resources and Waste Partnership is made up of the following local authorities:

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Cotswold District Council

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