



7 November 2013

Statistics on waste managed by local authorities in England in 2012/13

Key points

- The household waste recycling rate reached 43.2% in England in 2012/13 with much variation across local authorities.
- Green waste sent for compost in January to March 2013 was over 27% lower than in January to March 2012 due to weather conditions.
- Household waste arisings have fallen 12% since 2006/07, down to 22.6 million tonnes amounting to 423kg of waste per person in 2012/13.
- Local Authority managed waste going for incineration with energy recovery rose 13% to 5.5 million tonnes in 2012/13 and has more than doubled in the last ten years.

Quarterly datasets for national and regional data, as well as data at Local Authority level, are available to [download](#).

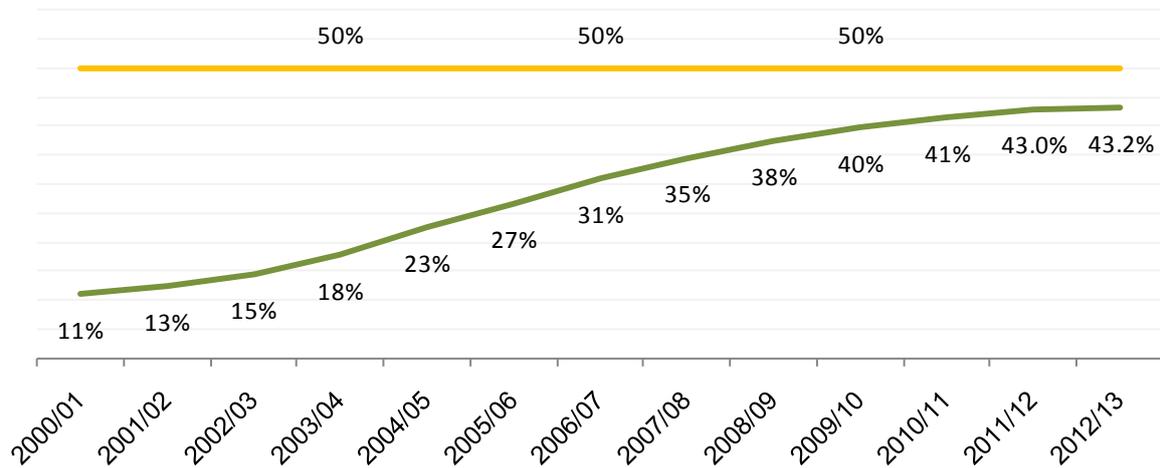
Usage of the Statistics

Data on waste management is collected to monitor policy effectiveness, particularly its commitments in the Waste Review and to support policy development. In particular it is used to monitor progress towards the EU target that 50% of household waste is recycled, prepared for reuse or composted by 2020. The underlying data held in WasteDataFlow is used extensively by local and central government, the waste industry and the public. It is reported by all local authorities, often from management information supplied by their waste management contractor.

Factors affecting household waste range from individual household behaviours, the advice and collection services provided by local authorities, the increasing cost of Landfill Tax, and to some extent wider issues like the state of the economy. Some quarterly waste data shows a clear seasonal fluctuation. This may be due to various factors, in particular for recycling a seasonal decrease in the amount of garden waste being generated in the autumn/winter months. For this reason comparisons should be made with the same quarter in previous years or using full 12 month periods.

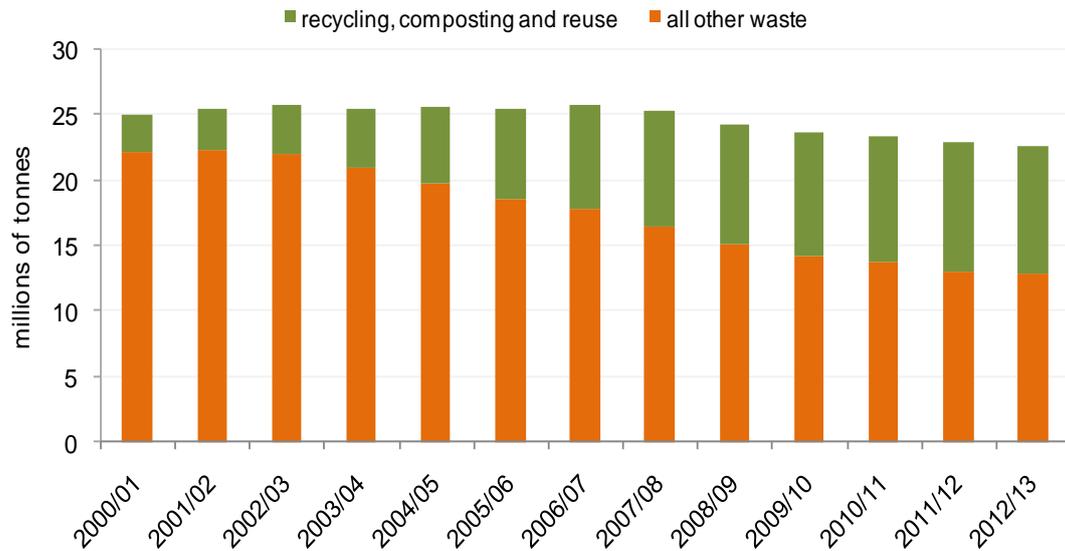
Over 90% of all waste managed by local authorities comes from households with the remainder coming from business and construction. Only a small part of waste from businesses and construction are covered in these statistics.

Figure 1: Household waste recycling rate in England



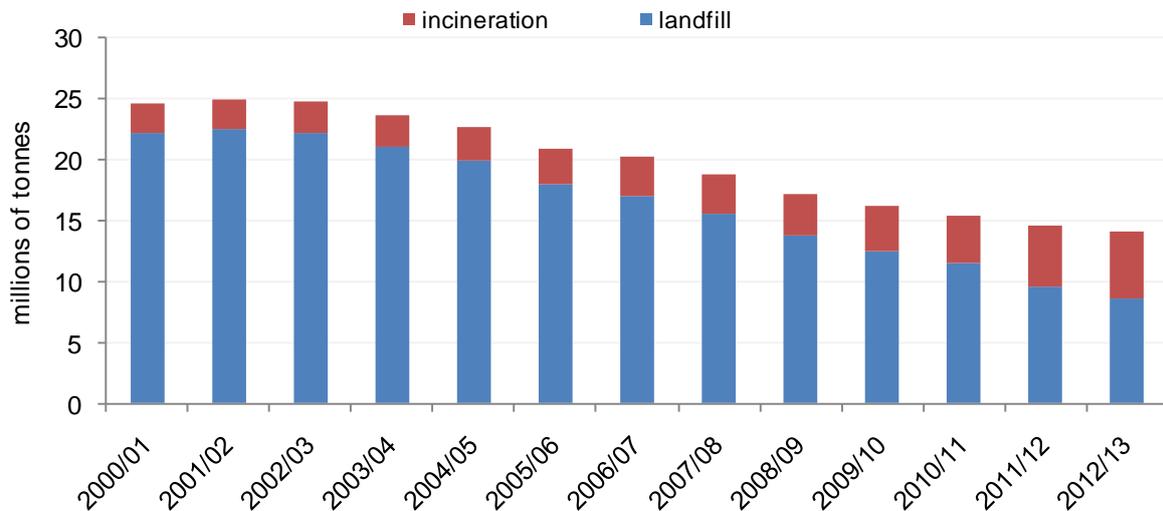
- The household waste recycling rate reached 43.2% in England in 2012/13 with much variation across local authorities. The rate of increase in the last year is insufficient to meet the 50% EU target by 2020.
- The recycling rate in January to March 2013 was lower than a year previously due to low collection of green waste for composting resulting from the freezing temperature and bad weather conditions that occurred in March 2013, recorded as the coldest in over 50 years. Green waste sent for compost in January to March 2013 was over 27% lower than in January to March 2012 and the lowest since January to March 2008.
- The household recycling rate was increasing rapidly until recent years. The rapid rise occurred while local authorities were introducing and expanding their recycling collection schemes.

Figure 2: Household waste arisings in England



- Household waste arisings have fallen 12% since 2006/07 down to 22.6 million tonnes in 2012/13. This amounts to 423kg per person per year.
- Residual waste has been falling since 2002/03. It has fallen over 40% since 2002/03 down to 12.9 million tonnes in 2012/13.
- The amount of household waste recycled, composted and reused rose rapidly between 2000 and 2010 with nearly 3.5 times as much in 2010/11. The amount has been stable in the last two years with 9.8 million tonnes in 2012/13.
- About 40% of waste collected for recycling, compost and reuse in 2012/13 was green waste for compost.
- Dry recycling increased slightly in 2012/13 to 5.9 million tonnes with a 7% increase in co-mingled collection for recycling.
- Separate collection of glass and cans from the kerbside dropped by 10% and separate collection of paper and card from the kerbside dropped by 6%. This may be due to various factors including more use of co-mingled collections or change in consumer behaviour to minimise waste.

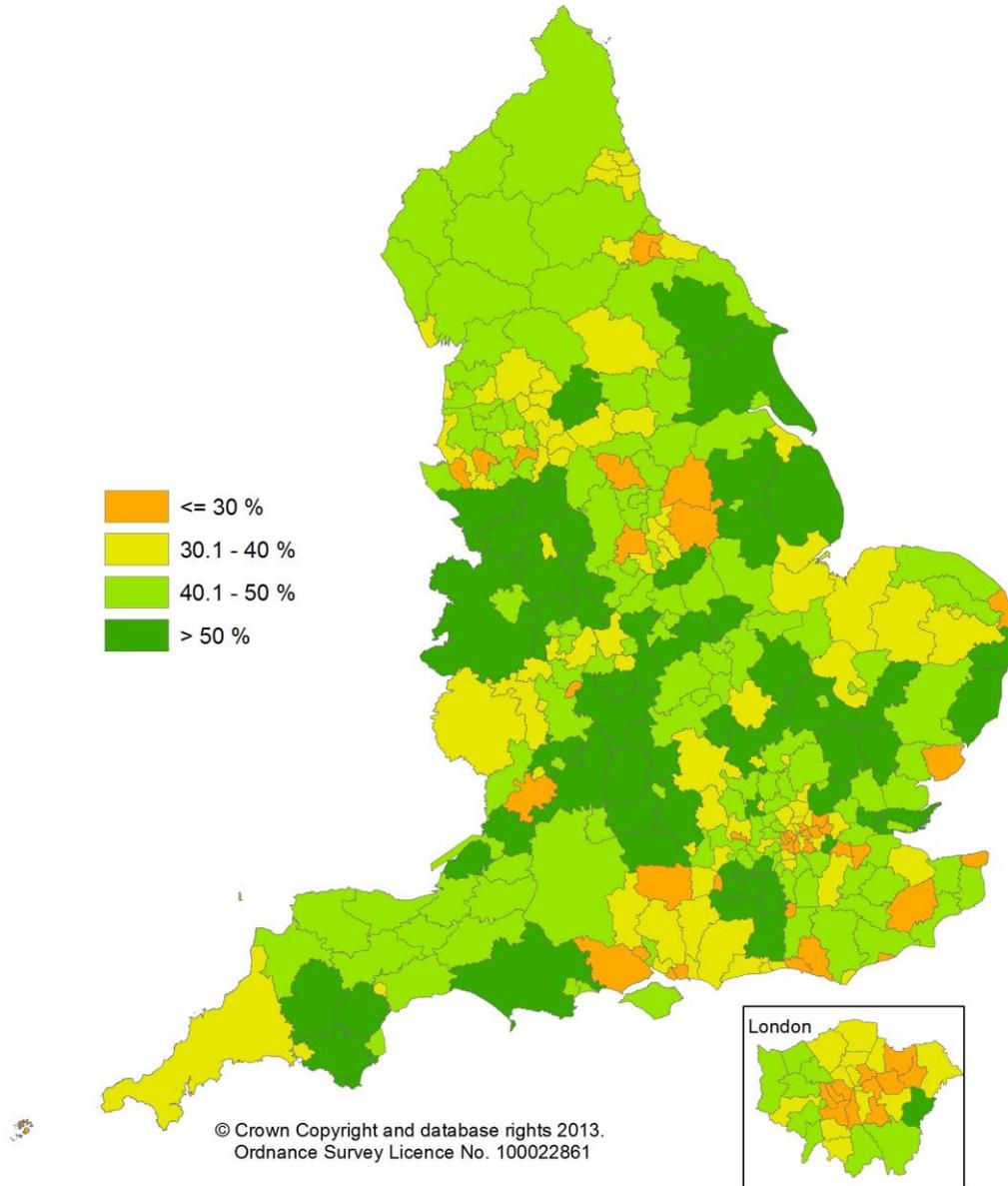
Figure 3: Local authority managed waste going to landfill and incineration in England



- Disposal of local authority managed waste into landfill and incineration has fallen 44% since 2001/02, down to 14.0 million tonnes in 2012/13.
- The total amount of waste managed by Local Authorities fell by 1.4% in 2012/13, to 25.3 million tonnes.
- Local Authority managed waste going to landfill fell by 11% to 8.5 million tonnes in 2012/13 and has fallen over 60% in the last ten years.
- Local Authority managed waste going for incineration with energy recovery rose 13% to 5.5 million tonnes in 2012/13 and has more than doubled in the last ten years.
- Landfill Tax continues to be the main driver for local authorities to reduce waste to landfill. Generating energy from waste by incineration is preferable to landfill, although recycling and reuse are preferable to both.
- 34% of local authority managed waste went to landfill in 2012/13 and 22% went for incineration with energy recovery. Landfill Tax continues to be the main driver for authorities to reduce waste to landfill.

Figure 4: Recycling rates across local authorities in England

Percentage of household waste sent for reuse,
recycling or composting,
2012/13



- There is a tendency for recycling rates to be similar in adjacent areas although high and low recycling rates are spread across England.
- Ashford Borough Council, where there is no green recycling, had the lowest recycling rate at 12%.
- Rochford District Council had the highest recycling rate at 67%, with over 56% of their recycling comprising green waste.
- 73 out of 352 local authorities in England achieved a 50% or more recycling rate, based on amounts sent for recycling.

Revisions

There have been only very minor changes to the quarterly provisional estimates already published for 2012/13.

Future Developments

Defra intends to stop producing quarterly regional estimates of waste but will continue to produce annual statistics by region and by Local Authority. This is planned to take effect in the February publication covering April to June 2013.

Defra intends to show annual estimates for calendar years rather than financial years. This is planned for August 2014 when we intend to publish calendar year estimates of waste up to and including 2013.

Notes

1. Data comes from a snapshot of the WasteDataFlow database taken in October 2013. WasteDataFlow is a UK wide system managed by Defra in collaboration with Devolved Administration partners. WasteDataFlow produced its first results for 2004/05. Earlier estimates of waste are available from the Municipal Waste Management Surveys.
2. Household waste includes household collection rounds ('bin' waste), other household collections such as bulky waste collections, waste from services such as litter collections, waste from civic amenity sites and wastes separately collected for recycling or composting through bring/drop off schemes, kerbside schemes and at civic amenity sites.
3. Local authority collected waste is that which comes under the possession or control of the Local Authority and includes household waste and other wastes collected by a waste collection authority or its agents, such as municipal parks and gardens waste, beach cleansing waste, commercial or industrial waste, and waste resulting from the clearance of fly-tipped materials.
4. The amount of waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting is that which is accepted by the reprocessor. As such it excludes any recycling rejects that occur during collection, sorting or further treatment. Waste diverted for recycling from the residual (or 'black bag waste') stream by further processing is included in the recycling tonnages.

5. The next statistics release will be in February 2014 and cover April to June 2013.

Scotland	http://www.environment.scotland.gov.uk/System_Pages/Spotfire/Household_Waste.aspx
Wales	http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/theme/environment/wasterecycle/?lang=en
Northern Ireland	http://www.doeni.gov.uk/index/information/asb/statistics.htm#environmentalstatistics
Eurostat	http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/waste/introduction/

A National Statistics publication

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Website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-environment-food-rural-affairs>

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