



REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: WASTE RECYCLING DATA

Thank you for your request for information, which we received on 27 November 2015, about various information on recycling statistics, including data at a local authority level. As you know, we have handled your request under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIRs).

The EIRs apply to requests for environmental information, which is a broad category of information defined in regulation 2 of the EIRs. Public authorities are required to handle requests for environmental information under the EIRs. They give similar access rights to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

Most of the information you have requested is available and published on the .gov.uk website. Information relating to Question 1 (b) on the tonnage sent for recycling from household waste is available in the dataset in Table 1a, row 11 with further information in Table 3b from the [website](#). The data in Table 1a shows the amount of household waste sent for recycling including composting and reuse from 2000/01 to 2014/15. It excludes recycling rejects from material recycling centres (MRFs) as well as tonnage rejected at the gate of re-processors. We have not specifically published information on recycling rejects from local authority collected waste at a national level but figures can be derived from the information published at a local authority level. Figures for England are summarised in the Table below.

	Total recyclate rejected (tonnes)
2014/15	338,077
2013/14	279,626
2012/13	227,155
2011/12	184,028
2010/11	214,421

The second question in your request specifically asked for 2014/15 financial year data for each local authority showing (a) the tonnage of total waste collected from households, (b) the tonnage of recycling waste collected from households, (c) how much of this recycled

waste was actually recycled. These data are also available in the same dataset (link as above). Table 1 columns G to J show the tonnage of household waste collected and sent for recycling; these data show the tonnage that was actually accepted for recycling so it excludes any rejects. Details on the amount rejected from material recycling centres (MRFs) and at the gate of re-processors can be found in column O of Table 1 for 2014/15. The breakdown for each authority relating to previous years is available on the [website](#).

However, the information requested relating to final destination in (1a) is not available on WasteDataFlow and is not held by Defra. Table 2a of the previously mentioned dataset shows the tonnage of total local authority collected waste sent to landfill, incineration with and without energy recovery and the tonnage recycled or composted in England. This is the extent of the information that we hold on final treatment.

This information on final destination is therefore exempt under regulation 12(4)(a) of the EIRs, which relates to information which is not held at the time when an applicant's request is received. Regulation 12(4)(a) is a qualified exception, which usually means that a public authority is required to conduct a public interest test to determine whether or not information should be disclosed or withheld. However, the Information Commissioner, who is the independent regulator for requests made under the EIRs, takes the view that a public interest test in cases where the information is not held would serve no useful purpose. Therefore, in line with the Information Commissioner's view, Defra has not conducted a public interest test in this case.

However, under our duty to advise and assist applicants in pursuance of regulation 9, I can confirm that to the best of our knowledge the information is not held by another public authority.

I attach an annex giving contact details should you be unhappy with the service you have received.

If you have any queries about this letter please contact the address below.

Yours sincerely,

Area 4C, Nobel House, 17 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3JR

Information Rights Team

InformationRequests@defra.gsi.gov.uk

Annex A

Copyright

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Annex B

Complaints

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request you may make a complaint or appeal against our decision under section 17(7) of the FOIA or under regulation 18 of the EIRs, as applicable, within 40 working days of the date of this letter. Please write to Nick Teall, Head of Information Rights, Area 4C, Nobel House, 17 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3JR (email: InformationRequests@defra.gsi.gov.uk) and he will arrange for an internal review of your case. Details of Defra's complaints procedure are on our [website](#).

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, section 50 of the FOIA and regulation 18 of the EIRs gives you the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Please note that generally the Information Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have first exhausted Defra's own complaints procedure. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF