

WR1204

Household Waste Prevention Evidence Review: L2 m2 – Policy Context

A report for Defra's
Waste and Resources Evidence Programme

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L2 m2 Policy context

This paper provides an overview of the policy context which affects the household waste prevention landscape by looking at:

- The quantity and character of household waste;
- The context of *Waste Strategy for England 2007* and other policies;
- Waste prevention in the UK Devolved Administrations;
- The European Waste Framework Directive and EU policy; and
- Waste growth and trends.

A full bibliography is given in (L3 m8/2 (D)). Modules providing further insight or detail in relation to the policy context are listed below:

L1 m1 Executive Report	L2 m1 Technical Report L2 m5 Policy measures	L3 m5/1 (T) Future waste growth, modelling & decoupling L3 m5/2 (D) International review L3 m1(D) Approach and method of the review.
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(D) denotes a briefing paper providing more background detail; (T) indicates a short focused topic briefing

1.1 Quantity and character of household waste

Total waste arisings in England are around 272 million tonnes per annum; 9% of this originates from households according to *Waste Strategy 2007*. Recent WasteDataFlow figures (Quarter 1 2008/09¹) report that in the year to end June 2008:

- total municipal waste decreased by just over 0.2 million tonnes, from 28.5 million tonnes to 28.3 million tonnes, or by 0.7%;
- total household waste decreased from 25.3 to 25.2 million tonnes;
- less waste was sent to landfill, decreasing from 15.5 to 15.1 million tonnes; and
- the average residual household waste (which is the amount of household waste which is not recycled) decreased from 329kg per head between April 2007 and March 2008 to 321 kg per head between July 2007 and June 2008.

The figures reported above provide a snapshot in time of recent trends (over the last year) but it is important to acknowledge that it may not yet be appropriate to identify a definite downward trend in household waste arisings. For further discussion on future waste growth and trends see L3 m5/1 (T) *Future waste growth, modelling & decoupling*². Defra WREP is following up this modelling work with further research to understand the basis of medium/long term trends in waste arisings³.

The compositional make up of household waste is represented in figure 1 below, taken from *Waste Strategy 2007* (p. 74). It is worth noting that Resource Futures is currently undertaking a municipal waste composition study for Defra (WR0119) which will provide an up-date to the figures below⁴. WRAP is

¹ Defra, Statistical Release February 12th 2009, 'Municipal waste management statistics: Provisional Quarter 1 – 2008/09.'

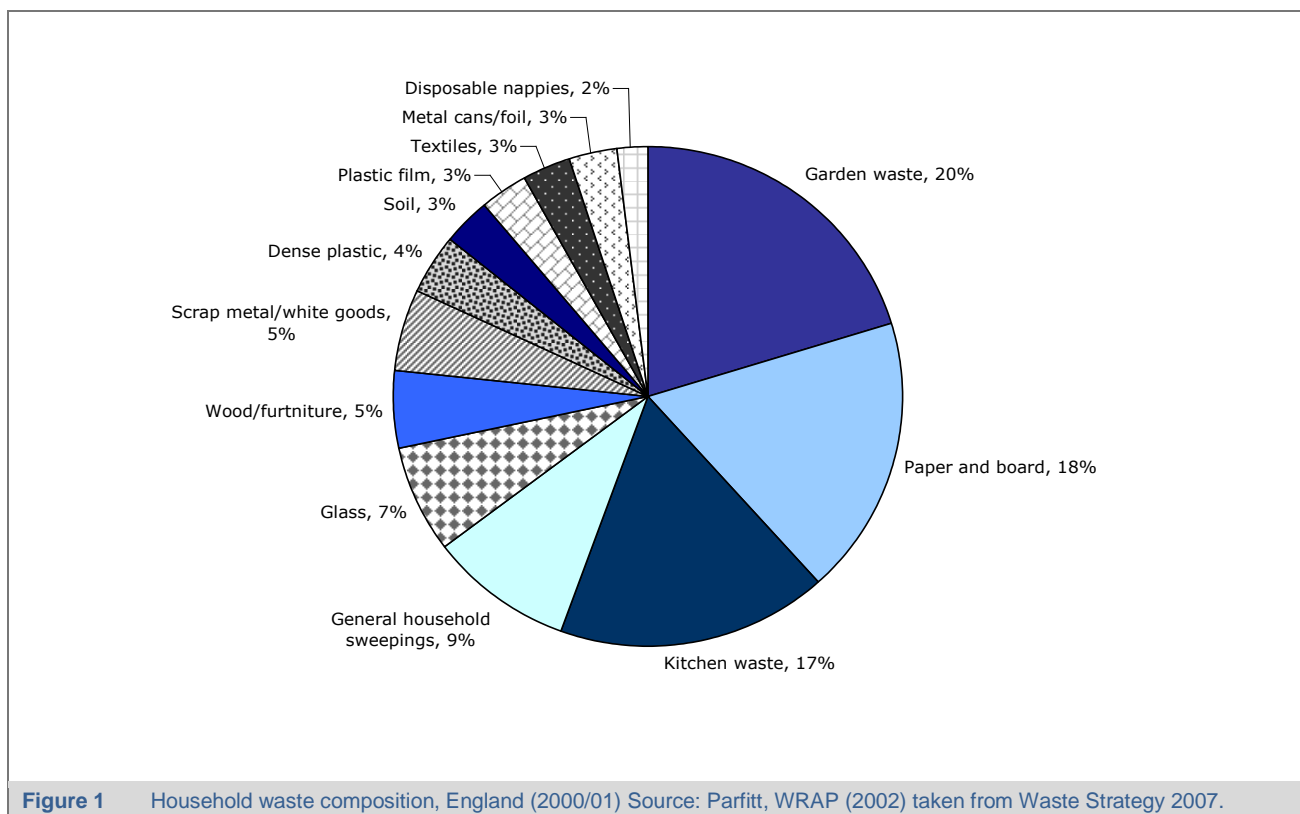
<http://www.defra.gov.uk/news/2009/090212a.htm> NB These data are provisional as returns to WasteDataFlow can be revised by local authorities during the scheme year and there are also seasonal effects on waste arisings and management. To minimise the effects of seasonal fluctuations, comparisons are made between the years.

² This work includes analysis of long term structural drivers of waste growth (for example, the impact of the growth of single-person households) – the detailed findings are reported are Brook Lyndhurst, 2007, WR0104; AEA et al., 2006, WR0107 and AEA Energy and Environment and the Future Foundation, 2007, WR0107.

³ Resource Futures for Defra (forthcoming) *Understanding Waste Growth at Local Authority Level*, WR012. Also, Resource Futures (forthcoming), *Municipal Waste Composition: A Review of Municipal Waste Component Analyses*.WR0119.

⁴ Resource Futures (forthcoming), *Municipal Waste Composition: A Review of Municipal Waste Component Analyses*.WR0119.

also currently carrying out two projects of relevance: *EVA098 Analysis of municipal waste composition in Scotland* and *EVA124 Wales waste composition analysis*⁵.



The three biggest components of household waste are garden waste, paper and board, and kitchen waste.

Priority materials

Waste Strategy 2007 identifies priority materials for action. To identify priority materials, Defra looked at waste volume/growth, cost, practicality and environmental impact both in terms of carbon and hazardousness. The priority waste materials (textiles, plastics, paper/card, glass, wood, aluminium and food⁶ and garden waste) were selected on the basis of evidence on potential reductions of greenhouse gas emissions resulting from diversion from landfill, and increased recycling and recovery⁷. (Aluminium, textiles, paper and card, and wood have the highest estimated carbon benefits of diverting to recycling per tonne of waste treated⁸.)

In its work on updating the NRWF toolkit, WRAP states that the identification of priority areas for household waste prevention will depend on local drivers. If the local driver is to reduce tonnages for disposal then food waste, home composting and bulky waste (including WEEE⁹) should be the priority areas. If other issues are important locally or local authorities want to undertake activities to help them engage with residents then promoting small actions around the home (e.g. reducing direct mail, carrier bags, packages etc.) are identified as priority areas.

⁵ For more information see http://www.wrapscotland.org.uk/learning_more_about.html and http://www.wrap.org.uk/nations_and_english_regions/wales/index.html

⁶ It is worth linking the priority materials and products with the total flow of these products in the UK economy. For example, WRAP's home composting and Love Food Hate Waste campaign deal with around a quarter of domestic food waste (WRAP, personal communication (email), April 9th 2009).

⁷ See Figure 4.1 in Defra (May 2007), Waste Strategy for England 2007, p. 53.

⁸ Ibid., p. 54.

⁹ Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment

1.2 UK policy context and Waste Strategy 2007

Before describing provisions for household waste prevention in *Waste Strategy 2007*, it is worth noting the current parliamentary and Government policy backdrop to waste prevention.

Climate Change Act and Sustainable Consumption and Production agenda

The Climate Change Act¹⁰, which became law in autumn 2008, makes allowances for powers to introduce waste reduction schemes, and powers to require a minimum charge for single-use carrier bags in England¹¹.

The waste reduction provision allowed for the piloting of financial incentive schemes to encourage the production of less waste at source and encourage recycling. The government subsequently published guidance for local authorities that wished to submit proposals to be one of five pilot incentive areas. No local authority took up the opportunity by the deadline for proposals. There is mixed opinion in the sector about the role of such instruments in waste management (see L2 m7).

More broadly, waste prevention is a priority action in the Sustainable Consumption and Production agenda as set out in *Securing the Future: Delivering UK Sustainable Development Strategy*.¹² Taking forward commitments in the sustainable development strategy, Defra is undertaking extensive programmes of consumer and product research, including product roadmaps for priority products which take a life cycle approach. Some of that work is included in this review.

Further cross-sectoral moves towards realising the potential resource value of material before it becomes waste include, for example, the Waste Protocols Project. This is a joint Environment Agency and Waste & Resources Action Programme (WRAP) initiative set up in 2006 to help industry make better use of waste materials. This project has singled out, so far, 11 materials for which it makes environmental sense to turn them into new items rather than discard them (e.g. non-packaging plastics for old drainpipes and waste cooking oil for bio-diesel).

House of Lords inquiry and Government Responses

The House of Lords Science and Technology Committee published an inquiry into waste reduction¹³ to which the Government responded¹⁴. The response identifies two elements of the Committee's report as primary:

- the need to focus more on reducing industrial, commercial and construction waste and the impact of consumer choice in influencing these sectors; and
- the need for Government to send clear messages to industry, consumers and local authorities that waste reduction is a priority which requires a holistic and collaborative approach.

Furthermore, the House of Lords report noted:

¹⁰ UK Parliament (2008), Climate Change Act 2008 (Chapter 27). http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2008/ukpga_20080027_en_1 http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2008/pdf/ukpga_20080027_en.pdf for PDF version.

¹¹ The powers in the UK Climate Change Act for provisions of charges for single use carrier bags extend to Wales and Northern Ireland as well as England but not to Scotland.

¹² Defra (2005), *Securing the future: delivering the UK sustainable development strategy*.

http://www.defra.gov.uk/sustainable/government/publications/uk-strategy/documents/SecFut_complete.pdf

¹³ House of Lords Science and Technology Committee (2008), *Waste Reduction*.

http://www.parliament.uk/parliamentary_committees/lords_s_t_select/waste_reduction.cfm

¹⁴ Government (2008), *Waste Reduction: Government responses to House of Lords Science and Technology Committee report*.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200708/ldselect/ldsctech/203/203.pdf>

- the need for Government to take the lead in working with partners to embed designing for sustainability in production processes;
- that Government should restructure the waste targets and costs to allow local authorities to address commercial and industrial waste;
- the need for Government to clarify when materials cease to be waste with appropriate timescales; and
- an acknowledgement that extended producer responsibility regulations have encouraged greater *recycling* but that their impact on *waste reduction* is debatable.

The Government response to the suggestion of applying a reduced VAT rate to repairs of household items states that "*the Principal VAT Directive (2006/112/EC) does not currently permit the UK to apply a reduced VAT rate to repairs of household items. However, the European Commission proposed some changes to the Directive in July 2008, which, if agreed by Member States, could open up this possibility for Member States. If this proposed change is agreed, the Government will consider whether there is a policy case to introduce any new reduced rates in the UK. Where reduced VAT rates are currently available, the Government has, to date, only applied them where they provide the best-targeted and most cost-effective support for our social objectives when compared to other policy instruments.*"¹⁵

The European Commission is considering VAT cuts for solar panels, wind turbines and energy audits but it looks set to reject calls from the UK and French governments to reduce VAT on energy-efficient appliances and light bulbs; however it is not currently clear what status repairs of household items would have. The main reason for ruling out VAT reductions for energy-efficient products is concern about market distortion concerns¹⁶.

Waste Strategy for England 2007

Waste Strategy for England 2007 outlines the Government's key objectives with regards to household waste prevention which are to:

- decouple waste growth (in all sectors) from economic growth and put more emphasis on waste prevention and re-use; and
- meet and exceed the Landfill Directive diversion targets for biodegradable municipal waste in 2010, 2013 and 2020.

More specifically, a greater focus on waste prevention will be recognised through a new target to reduce the amount of household waste not reused, recycled or composted by 29% from over 22.2 million tonnes in 2000 to 15.8 million tonnes in 2010, with an aspiration to reduce it to 12.2 million tonnes in 2020 – a reduction of 45%. **This is equivalent to a fall of 50% per person (from 450 kg per person in 2000 to 225 kg in 2020)**¹⁷. The means of achieving the target include recycling and composting, as well as waste prevention.

Performance in 2007/08 for residual household waste (household waste after reuse, recycling and composting) was 17.2 million tonnes (or 340 kg per head) in year to end September 2007, a decrease of roughly 600,000 tonnes (3.4%) compared to 2006/07¹⁸.

¹⁵ Government (2008), Waste Reduction: Government responses to House of Lords Science and Technology Committee report, p. 17. <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200708/ldselect/ldscstech/203/203.pdf>

¹⁶ Commission set to reject VAT cuts for green goods (February 2009), ENDS Report 409: Policy Briefing.

¹⁷ Defra (May 2007), Waste Strategy for England 2007, p. 11.

¹⁸ Defra (July 2008), Waste Strategy Annual Progress Report 2007/08. <http://www.defra.gov.uk/ENVIRONMENT/waste/strategy/>

Furthermore, the Environment Agency (EA) report into the third year of the Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme (LATS) suggests that it has been effective in promoting changes in the management of municipal waste. One of the key drivers for local authorities for the promotion of re-use, waste reduction and waste prevention is to avoid fines of £150 per tonne for biodegradable municipal waste landfilled above their allowance. In 2007/08 waste disposal and unitary authorities in England landfilled 10.6 million tonnes of biodegradable municipal waste which takes England below the 11.2 million tonnes allowed in the Landfill Directive in the first target year 2009/10¹⁹.

New local waste performance indicators have been agreed within the new local government performance framework, including a specific reference to *reuse*.²⁰ Three annual waste indicators were announced in October 2007:

- NI 191 – household waste not reused, recycled or composted (kilograms per household);
- NI 192 – household waste reused, recycled and composted (per cent); and
- NI 193 – municipal waste landfilled (per cent)²¹.

Furthermore, research is being considered into the feasibility and development of a greenhouse gas emissions performance indicator for local authority performance on waste.

As allowed for in Waste Strategy 2007 the Zero Waste Places initiative run by the Local Government Association was launched in October 2008. Six places (London Borough of Brent, London Borough of Lewisham, Milton Keynes, Peterborough, West Midlands Region and Kings Lynn) were selected as zero waste place projects. These projects range from establishing green zones or green streets to targeting shopping areas, estates or market places to ensuring that zero waste is sent to landfill – at their core all these projects will go as far as possible to reduce waste in their area²².

1.3 Devolved Administrations

A potential lack of coherent strategy between Defra and devolved administrations with regard to waste prevention policy developments was highlighted in one of the studies reviewed (Eunomia et al, 2007, WR0103). The report emphasised the need for integration of policy as waste and product streams do not have national boundaries and different policies may make collaboration and implementation more challenging²³. This concern was also reported in responses to the Scottish Climate Change Bill consultation (see below). The following is a brief overview of what Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are doing with respect to waste prevention respectively.

Scottish Government

In Scotland the waste prevention agenda has a very holistic approach requiring involvement of various partners: Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP), Scottish Enterprise, Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA), Waste Aware Scotland²⁴, Convention of Scottish Local Authorities, Community Recycling Network for Scotland and Scottish Government. The 2007 *Household Waste Prevention – Action Plan* for Scotland highlights five key stakeholders (product designers and manufacturers, retailers, consumers, communities and local authorities) and sets out ambitious actions for partners to carry

¹⁹ Environment Agency (Nov. 2008), Report on the Landfill Allowances and Trading Scheme.

²⁰ Defra (July 2008), Waste Strategy Annual Progress Report 2007/08, p. 27.

²¹ For more information visit: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/localgovindicators/ni191-193.htm> and <http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/waste/localauth/perform-manage/index.htm>

²² For more information visit: <http://www.lga.gov.uk/lga/core/page.do?pageId=1212879>

²³ Eunomia Research and Consulting, The Environment Council, Öko-Institut, TNO and Atlantic Consulting (2007), Household Waste Prevention Policy Side Research Programme. WR0103.

²⁴ Waste Aware Scotland has been very active on their waste prevention campaign see chapter 5 and annex 10.4 for more details.

forward under each stakeholder type; there are a total of 20 action points²⁵. Over the course of four years from 2006 to 2010 the action plan estimated that 260,500 tonnes of household waste would be prevented from implementing these 20 actions. Scotland is undergoing a review of their National Waste Plan as well²⁶.

More recently, plans for a Zero Waste Scotland include targets of only 5% of municipal waste going to landfill by 2025 and stopping growth in municipal waste by 2010. In order to achieve these targets and others the Scottish Government has retained a significant Zero Waste Fund and set up a Zero Waste Think Tank to draw from leading experts in the field²⁷.

The remit of the Think Tank is to advise Scottish Ministers with regards to the revision of the National Waste Plan and policies that assist in moving towards a zero waste Scotland. The Think Tank also needs to consider the environmental, social and economic implications of these policies and the work that needs to be done to implement these policies²⁸.

A consultation in 2008 on the potential of legislative measures to implement zero waste in Scotland asked stakeholders their views on seven specific proposals²⁹. The two proposals which received overall favorable responses were:

- giving powers to the Scottish Government to place a duty on public bodies and businesses to have waste prevention plans; and
- setting up mandatory waste data returns to SEPA from businesses.

The proposal relating to legislation which would allow charging for single-use carrier bags received an overall unfavourable response.

The consultation also revealed:

- Concern for negative impacts on existing structures (e.g. local authority recycling schemes);
- Concern in how to address enforcement of legislation (e.g. appropriateness of sanctions and penalties for non-compliance);
- An interest in fiscal measures which differentiated between high and low waste products;
- Concern of effects on imposing legislative requirements in Scotland, when the nature of business and local-economies may be cross-border; and
- Desire to see full environmental impacts being accounted for over and above the reduction of waste arisings³⁰.

The Scottish Climate Change Bill³¹ is currently being considered in Parliament. The above consultation stems from provisions in chapter 4 of the Bill, of particular relevance to waste prevention are the following sections:

²⁵ Scottish Executive and Scottish Environment Protection Agency (February 2007), Household waste prevention – action plan (Scotland).

²⁶ The new Waste Management Plan for Scotland will include the Waste Prevention Programme (covering all wastes) required by the revised Waste Framework Directive. (Personal communication (email) with Simon Stockwell, April 3th 2009).

²⁷ Scottish Government (24.01.2008), *New Vision for Waste*, Press release.

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/News/Releases/2008/01/24145725>

²⁸ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Government/Consultative-Groups/groupslist> Accessed online 10.03.2009.

²⁹ Scottish Government (no date), Consultation Paper on Potential Legislative Measures to Implement Zero Waste.

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/1056/0063943.pdf>

³⁰ Scottish Government Social Research (2008), Consultation on Potential Legislative Measures to Implement Zero Waste: Analysis of Responses. <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/255500/0075741.pdf>

- (52) Waste prevention and management plans;
- (53) Information on waste;
- (56) Procurement of recycle; and
- (57) Targets for reduction of packaging; and
- (59) Charges for supply of carrier bags.

If voluntary agreements such as Courtauld³² do not produce the expected results in reducing packaging waste then there is room in the Bill to introduce statutory measures and reduction targets.

Welsh Assembly Government

Waste strategy in Wales is guided by the 2002 National Waste Strategy³³ which is currently being reviewed; a new draft strategy was published in April 2009³⁴. In the 2002 strategy the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) placed significant emphasis on education especially through the production of information packs and guidance on waste minimisation. An example included joint working with the Welsh Local Government Association to establish exemplar local authorities to develop good practice in managing municipal waste³⁵.

To support education and awareness raising, Waste Awareness Wales was established, working in partnership with Welsh Local Government Association, Keep Wales Tidy and the National Waste Awareness Initiative. Waste Awareness Wales' role is to provide official information to households about managing materials more sustainably (through recycling and reusing) and reducing waste³⁶.

A public sector waste minimisation campaign also encourages sustainable use of resources and cost savings through education. The aim of the campaign is to produce practical guidance on waste minimisation for the whole of the Welsh public sector³⁷. This was accompanied by waste minimisation targets for the public sector and business in the strategy.

The Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) recently announced it will begin work on legislation to ban free single-use carrier bags, mirroring Ireland's apparently successful bag tax which aimed to reduce carrier bag litter. Currently there is a voluntary agreement where certain retailers have agreed to meet a 50% reduction target by May 2009³⁸.

As a lead into the revision of the National Waste Strategy for Wales, a consultation was run in late 2007 with local government entitled '*Future Directions for Municipal Waste Management in Wales*'.³⁹ Proposed targets in that document have been carried forward and revised in new '*Future Directions*' which sets out targets to be consulted upon in the new draft strategy (*Towards Zero Waste One Wales: One Planet*⁴⁰,

³¹ Scottish Parliament (2008), Scottish Climate Change Executive Bill (SP Bill 17).

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/bills/17-ClimateChange/b17s3-introd.pdf>

³² Voluntary agreements like the Courtauld Commitment are reviewed in chapter 5 of L2 m1 Technical Report.

³³ Welsh Assembly Government (June 2002), The National Waste Strategy for Wales.

<http://wales.gov.uk/about/strategy/publications/environmentcountryside/2096132/?lang=en>

³⁴ http://www.letsrecycle.com/do/ecco.py/view_item?listid=37&listcatid=217&listitemid=11037

³⁵ Welsh Assembly Government and Welsh Local Government Association (2002), Guidance on Municipal Waste Management Strategies in Wales.

³⁶ <http://www.wasteawarenesswales.org.uk/index.html> Accessed online 09.03.2009.

³⁷ Welsh Assembly Government (June 2002), The National Waste Strategy for Wales.

<http://wales.gov.uk/about/strategy/publications/environmentcountryside/2096132/?lang=en>

³⁸ Wales Plans Bag Tax (12.02.09), Edie Newsroom. http://www.edie.net/news/news_story.asp?src=nl&id=15996

³⁹ Welsh Assembly Government (2009), Future Directions for Municipal Waste Management in Wales – Proposed targets and actions 12.03.2009.

⁴⁰ Welsh Assembly Government (April 2009), Towards Zero Waste One Wales: One Planet – A consultation on a New Waste Strategy for Wales. <http://wales.gov.uk/docs/desh/consultation/090429wasteconsultationen.pdf> Accessed online 06.05.2009

WAG, April 2009). The proposed targets in the document relate specifically to recycling, anaerobic digestion/composting of food waste, residual (non recyclable) waste production per person, landfill and energy from waste. Key proposed targets that are relevant to waste reduction (and should also encourage attention to be paid to prevention) are:

- a maximum municipal waste landfill limit of 10% of total municipal waste in 2019-2020 and 5% of total municipal waste in 2024-25.
- a proposed maximum level of residual household waste per inhabitant per annum of 150kg by 2024-25⁴¹.

In addition to the residual waste target, the strategy also proposes a 70% recycling target. The strategy proposes targeting reduction for the following municipal waste streams: food waste, plastic and paper. Where waste is produced, the strategy states that action would be concentrated on:

- Diverting food waste from landfill to anaerobic digestion plants;
- Diverting paper and card from landfill to recycling; and
- Diverting metal from landfill to recycling.

It should also be noted that the Welsh Assembly Government has a legal duty to promote sustainable development. This is reflected in a holistic approach to waste in the new strategy, reflected in the proposed use of ecological and carbon footprint approaches to measuring impacts, rather than just focusing on tonnage diverted as an indicator⁴². In this manner it hopes to not only tackle waste production but also consumption more broadly. The strategy contains a proposition to reduce the ecological footprint of waste by 52% by 2050 (which would mean an avoidance of 1,467,259 tonnes of municipal waste by 2050).

A scoping of possible enhanced producer responsibility powers to ensure that less waste is produced and that what is produced is recyclable will also be part of the consultation. The Welsh Assembly Government is looking to build on and expand the Courtauld Commitment to take this agenda further in terms of reducing packaging and food waste and ensuring that packaging is more recyclable. WAG is also considering the potential of re-use targets for municipal waste (mainly furniture)⁴³.

The proposed Welsh strategy also highlights the need for significant public behaviour change with respect to waste production. The proposed Welsh strategy mentions the potential use of fortnightly residual collections and pay as you throw as measures to encourage the needed behavioural shift. The Welsh Assembly Government made use of a wide evidence base⁴⁴ to inform the proposed Strategy. This included an examination of the implications of the introduction of direct and variable charging for residual waste from householders in Wales looking at a range of issues from national legislative requirements to achieving recycling levels of 70% by 2025⁴⁵. This scoping exercise will form part of the evidence base for the consultation on the Wales Waste Strategy.

Northern Ireland Assembly

Northern Ireland published its Waste Prevention Framework in September 2005⁴⁶. This Framework was developed by the Department of the Environment, Environment & Heritage Service and collates the

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Welsh Assembly Government (2006), Environment Strategy for Wales First Action Plan.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ For a full list of the evidence base used see:

http://wales.gov.uk/topics/environmentcountryside/epq/waste_recycling/zerowastebackground/evidence/?lang=en Accessed online 06.05.2009.

⁴⁵ Fehily Timoney & Company for Welsh Assembly Government (2008), Direct and variable charging for residual waste from households. <http://wales.gov.uk/docs/desh/consultation/090429wastechargingen.pdf> Accessed online 06.05.2009.

⁴⁶ Department of Environment, Environment and Heritage Service Northern Ireland et al. (2005), Framework for Waste Prevention in Northern Ireland. <http://www.ni-environment.gov.uk/wasteprevention.pdf>

findings of the stakeholder engagement/ consultation process on waste prevention carried out. A total of 600 key stakeholders were invited to take part, representing all sectors in Northern Ireland.

Four key messages emerged strongly throughout the process and are reflected in the Framework:

- Provide a wide range of tools (carrot and stick);
- Increase understanding through enhanced communication;
- Build and extend existing initiatives e.g. Envirowise, WRAP, InvestNI and Arena Network; and
- Make waste prevention a responsibility of all sectors.

The Framework uses the 4Es behaviour change model outlined in the *UK's Sustainable Development Strategy* (p. 26)⁴⁷ to identify a range of proposed waste prevention activities for Northern Ireland to focus on (including the establishment of a Waste Prevention Forum⁴⁸). The three main stakeholders identified were the general public, business and public sector.

Northern Ireland went on to produce a Waste Management Strategy 2006-2020 entitled *Towards Resource Management*⁴⁹. The Strategy covers six strands, the first of which is waste prevention⁵⁰. Under waste prevention, the following areas are assessed:

- government leadership in waste prevention;
- new developments to include a Site Waste Management Plan;
- providing a financial incentive to reduce waste;
- preventing waste in the business sector;
- preventing waste in the home; and
- setting targets for waste prevention.

For the purpose of this review the final two headings are of most importance. For preventing waste in the home the following actions and tools were identified:

- Concerted action and implementation on awareness campaigns and initiatives from Government, district councils, the business sector and community.
- From 2005 until 2008, Government will provide £3 million funding for a Community Waste Innovation Fund as support for the community sector to encourage the delivery of waste prevention and other initiatives within local communities⁵¹.
- Establish recognition awards for waste prevention good practice which would empower and encourage everyone to get involved, motivating action at all levels.
- District Councils to investigate the opportunities and develop financial incentive schemes to reduce waste.

⁴⁷ Defra (2005), *Securing the future: delivering the UK sustainable development strategy*.

http://www.defra.gov.uk/sustainable/government/publications/uk-strategy/documents/SecFut_complete.pdf

⁴⁸ Waste Prevention Forum has been relatively dormant since 2006. The Department of Environment in Northern Ireland has appointed an officer to lead on waste prevention and has indicated that it will reconvene this group in the near future with the intention of developing an action plan for waste prevention including targets.. (Personal Communication (email), WRAP: WRAP Northern Ireland Manager and ROTATE Advisor – Northern Ireland, 06.05.2009)

⁴⁹ Department of the Environment, Northern Ireland (2006) *Towards Resource Management: The Northern Ireland Waste Management Strategy 2006 – 2020*. <http://www.ni-environment.gov.uk/wms.17.pdf>

⁵⁰ The remaining five strands are recycling and recovery, waste planning, data research, legislation and enforcement and learning and communication.

⁵¹ It is worth noting that this fund has now closed and the programme is currently undergoing an evaluation, no 'new' fund has replaced it. (Personal Communication (email), WRAP: WRAP Northern Ireland Manager and ROTATE Advisor – Northern Ireland, 06.05.2009)

With regards to setting targets for waste prevention:

- The Waste Prevention Forum (drawn from stakeholders across public, private, and community sectors and formed in part from the consultation process) will set targets for waste prevention for all waste streams by 2010.
- Improved data collection systems and the delivery of research and demonstration projects in waste prevention will assist in the development of SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Timebound) targets.

Another policy tool which is mentioned for household waste is to encourage the use of Environmental Product Labelling, which is a current initiative based on a voluntary approach initially.

1.4 EU policies and Waste Framework Directive

One of the key objectives of the European Union (EU) is to integrate environmental sustainability with economic growth and welfare by decoupling environmental degradation and waste growth from economic growth. The EU's Sustainable Development Strategy⁵² at its core looks at sustainable consumption and production based on the following building blocks:

- Retail Forum to drive more sustainable consumption patterns;
- Integrated Product Policy;
- Thematic Strategy on the Sustainable Use of Natural Resources;
- Thematic Strategy on Waste Prevention and Recycling;
- Ecolabel Scheme;
- Green Public Procurement; and
- Eco-design of Energy Using Products Directive⁵³.

Many of these blocks are predicated on the need for waste prevention and reduction across all stakeholder groups, including consumers/householders. See **L3 m5/2 (D)** International Review for further details.

The Waste Framework Directive (WFD – Directive 2008/98/EC)⁵⁴ aims to streamline EU waste legislation, replacing three existing directives (the preceding Waste Framework Directive, the Hazardous Waste Directive and the Waste Oils Directive). It attempts to refine complex notions, such as waste and recovery, as well as disposal to ensure a consistent approach across the EU. It lays down the five-step hierarchy of waste management options, with waste prevention as the preferred option, and then reuse, recycling, recovery (including energy recovery) and safe disposal, in descending order.

It places greater emphasis on waste prevention and encourages re-use and recovery of waste. Perhaps of most significance, it outlines **a new obligation for member states to design and introduce comprehensive waste prevention programmes within the two-year implementation phase**, and the Commission is set to report periodically on progress concerning waste prevention. More specifically the Waste Framework Directive looks at:

⁵² Council of the European Union (June 26 2006) Review of the EU Sustainable Development Strategy (EU SDS) – Renewed Strategy. <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/06/st10/st10917.en06.pdf>

⁵³ For more information visit http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eussd/escp_en.htm Accessed online 10.03.2009.

⁵⁴ Directive 2008/98/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 November 2008 on waste and repealing certain Directives, Official Journal of the European Union 22.11.2008, L 312/3. <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2008:312:0003:0030:en:PDF> For more discussion of the WFD see the **International Review L3 m5/2 (D)**. For a discussion definitions of waste prevention see chapter 1 in **L2 m1 Technical Report** and **L3 m1(D) Approach and method of the review**.

- *End of waste and by-products* – it provides clarification on when waste ceases to be a waste as long as there is a market or demand for the resource or that the resource fulfils technical requirements.
- *Bio-waste* – member states are to take measures to encourage the separate collection of bio-waste with a view to its composting and digestion.
- *Extended producer responsibility* – the aim is to use this concept to support the design and production of all goods that take into account efficient use of resources (during the whole life cycle, including repair, re-use, recycling and disposal).

In addition to the new WFD, existing packaging regulations and the WEEE Directive can exert an influence on household waste prevention but do not always do so effectively, as the House of Lords inquiry noted. As reported in L2 m4/1 and in chapter 4 in L2 m1, upward revisions to targets in the WEEE directive (currently in draft)⁵⁵ are expected to be positive for the reuse sector.

⁵⁵ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/weee/index_en.html

Basis of this report

The material in this paper is derived from a large scale evidence review of household waste prevention conducted by Brook Lyndhurst, the Social Marketing Practice and the Resource Recovery Forum for Defra's Waste and Resources Evidence Programme.