

London Borough of Waltham Forest

Recycling Strategy 2024-2034

Consuming Less, Recycling More



Report For

London Borough of Waltham Forest

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Version Control

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V4.1	December 2022	Tom McKenzie-Brook	Updated Appendix 1

Foreword

We're taking bold action to tackle climate change in Waltham Forest, leading the way and making our local authority cleaner and greener for our residents. One of the ways we're doing this is by reviewing our recycling strategy, setting out our 10-year plan to be more sustainable and building on our strong climate change legacy. We know so much has changed over the last decade, so we're making sure our waste and recycling services are fit for purpose, sustainable and offer the highest quality of services to residents.



Our main aim is to make sure residents and businesses find it as easy as possible to consume less and recycle more and to understand how we could support them to do this we ran a recycling survey in October 2022. We heard directly from over 2,750 residents and their feedback has helped inform this new strategy. By understanding the barriers our residents and businesses face, we're now able to put the right services in place to empower residents to make a positive impact on their recycling rates which helps to tackle the climate crisis.

In this strategy, you can read more about the new measures we'll be putting in place to achieve our targets which include increasing recycling rates to 50% by 2030. New measures will also include a new waste and recycling collection cycle – by introducing separate food waste collections and moving to fortnightly residual waste collections, we will be able to make great strides towards our recycling and climate change goals.

We are the first generation to feel the effects of climate change and the last who can do something impactful to minimise it. We're proud to be looking to a more sustainable Waltham Forest for future generations.

Cllr Clyde Loakes

Deputy Leader of the Council

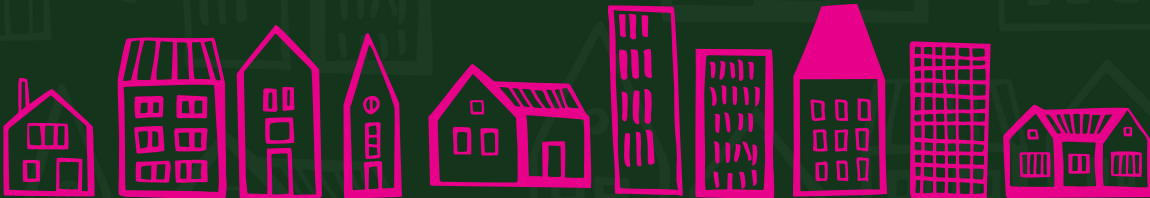
Cabinet Member for Climate and Air Quality

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1.0

Introduction: Recycling and the Climate Emergency



1.1 Introduction

This strategy covers the period 2022-2032 and explains the strategic direction that the London Borough of Waltham Forest Council (“the council”) will take in managing its waste and recycling services over the coming decade. The strategy covers:

- Purpose and development (1.0 Introduction: Recycling and the Climate Emergency, and A 2.0 Collection Options)
- How residents were involved in the development process (1.4 What You Think and A 1.0 Resident Survey)
- Where we want to get to (2.0 Vision and Targets)
- Where we are today (3.0 Local Context)
- The national policy changes that influence the strategy (4.0 National)
- How we will achieve our vision and targets (5.0 Key Themes and)

The development of this strategy has been informed through:

- Mathematical modelling of a range of different options for how we might collect waste from households in the borough in future, to understand their likely performance in terms of recycling, carbon and financial performance - further details are provided in Appendix A 2.0 Collection Options.
- A survey with residents, conducted primarily online and complemented by paper versions plus on-street discussion with residents to encourage participation. The survey ran between 23/09/22 and 21/10/22 and received 2,760 responses. Residents were asked whether they feel the council is taking the steps overall to increase recycling, which 63% agreed with. Further details are provided in in Section 1.4 and Appendix A 1.0 Resident Survey.
- Wider consultation with a range of stakeholders, including the the Deputy Leader for Climate & Air Quality, Council Leader, and Cabinet Members.
- Development of the borough’s Climate Action Plan.

1.2 Action on Climate Change

We are the first generation to feel the effects of climate change and the last who can do something to minimise its impact.

Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from human activities have increased dramatically over the last several decades. These emissions are accelerating climate change, and have increased climate risks in the UK, including in London

and Waltham Forest. We are already experiencing more extreme weather, such as heatwaves and heavy rain, which show us that climate change is happening now and happening locally.

Some of the sources that emit GHGs also contribute to high levels of air pollution that affect our residents' health, causing serious respiratory and cardiovascular illnesses.

Each of these effects is the result of our human choices: what we buy, what we eat, and how we dispose of the things we no longer want. Urgent action is needed across a wide range of issues. While waste and recycling may not be the first topic that springs to mind, it has an important contribution to make to reducing GHG emissions. A recent study found that implementing 'good practice' waste management and recycling solutions around the world could reduce GHG emissions by between 2.1 and 2.8 billion tonnes of CO₂ per year by 2030, around 5% of global GHG emissions.¹

National governments cannot tackle climate change alone, and local authorities have a vital role to play in the UK's action. Waltham Forest is home to over quarter of a million people, and together we can tackle the sources of our carbon emissions in a way that works for the local strengths and challenges of the borough. As a borough, we must work hard to both adapt to, and become more resilient to, the impacts of climate change, while reducing our emissions to avoid the worst of the impacts.

Taking action to tackle climate change also has real benefits, many of them local. Local climate actions have the potential improve the health and prosperity of Waltham Forest residents, enabling a better quality of life for all. From green jobs and growth of the local economy to more active and happy lives, plus cleaner air and water, climate actions have an immediate tangible impact on residents' lives.

For example:

- Health and wellbeing: Residents' health will benefit from better air quality. This would result in reduced respiratory and cardiovascular illnesses, therefore also reducing absenteeism and healthcare spending.
- Job creation: Green jobs - skilled, unskilled, and professional - could be created through the procurement of new services or deployment of technologies, including retrofitting hundreds of buildings, with the multiplier benefits of employees' spending in the wider economy.
- Local economy growth: The local economy would benefit through the creation of new revenue streams such as renewable energy generation and a circular approach to resources.
- Cost savings: By streamlining services, the council may be able to make cost savings, enabling reprioritisation of council funds towards where they can have the biggest impact.

Creating a net zero future will require a substantial change in many of the ways we live our lives and will require action by all. To reduce the disastrous consequences of climate change, we need action to be taken by all residents, central government, and businesses alike to radically reduce carbon emissions over the next decade.

1.2.1 Your Opinions

The council has undertaken research into residents' views on climate change. It found that²:

¹ Eunomia (2021) *Waste in the Net-Zero Century: How Better Waste Management Practices Can Contribute to Reducing Global Carbon Emissions* <https://www.eunomia.co.uk/reports-tools/waste-in-the-net-zero-century-how-better-waste-management-practices-can-contribute-to-reducing-global-carbon-emissions/>

² LB Waltham Forest (2020) *Climate Emergency Research Report* - February 2020.

- 9 in 10 residents are concerned about climate change.
- 7 in 10 think climate change is affecting their local area.
- Residents want the council to take significant and quick action, and to lead by example.

Climate change is also a concern for Waltham Forest's young people³:

- 7 in 10 are very or fairly concerned about climate change.
- 8 in 10 would like to take more action on climate change.

It is therefore clear that measures to combat climate change will be supported by the vast majority of Waltham Forest residents.

1.3 Consuming Less, Recycling More

Waltham Forest is proudly taking bold actions to tackle climate change, with a target of net zero carbon emissions by 2030. To help achieve this, the council has adopted a Climate Action Plan⁴ covering four key areas, one of which is *Consuming Less, Recycling More*.

2030 Vision: Waltham Forest is a zero-waste borough, following the “reduce, reuse, recycle” approach (in that order). Our residents make sustainable choices about what they buy, and businesses support repair and refurbishment. All residents have access to fresh healthy and sustainable food which is affordable.

Producing waste has a direct impact on the environment. Residual waste, that goes in residents' black bins, creates GHGs – whether it is incinerated, as most of the borough's residual waste now is, or landfilled, in which case organic material produces methane that is far more potent in its global warming effect than CO₂.

Furthermore, all things we use and consume generate carbon emissions throughout their production, transportation, use and disposal. Therefore, minimisation of waste is a key step that all of us, individually and collectively, can take to reduce carbon emissions.

Key ways that the council can minimise waste in Waltham Forest include measures to encourage reuse, and residual waste can be reduced by increasing recycling rates.

The council's key target is to **increase recycling rates to 50%**.

In order to achieve this, the Climate Action Plan commits the council to take the following actions:

- **Reduce food poverty and food waste.** We will redistribute surplus food to minimise avoidable food waste, via the Food Distribution Hub to community provisions such as food banks, social supermarkets, pantries, and community cafes. Reducing food waste is good for climate but it also helps households save money and face the cost-of-living crisis.
- **Survey residents on introducing separate food waste collection and increasing recycling through fortnightly residual waste collections.** Develop a new collection strategy based on the results of the survey on improving and expanding the recycling collection system. We will combine any changes with new communication campaigns and a strategy for flats, where it can often be hardest to recycle.

³ LB Waltham Forest (2020) *Report Waltham Forest Climate Emergency Youth Consultation - January 2020*

⁴ LB Waltham Forest (2022) *A Path to Net Zero by 2030: Waltham Forest Climate Action Plan - October 2022*

- **Increase and support access to reuse and repair initiatives.** To promote a culture of reuse and repair, we will help re-establish Repair Cafes by helping to find the skills that are in highest demand, like electricians. We will add to the network of water refill stations to cut the use of single use plastic bottles and add to the materials that can be accessed for reuse at our Household Waste & Recycling Centres.
- **A Library of Things in every neighbourhood.** We will build on the first Library of Things in the borough, and test and scale to ensure access for residents across the borough. The right model will differ by neighbourhood: they may be formal systems hosted in a physical location, like a Library, or less formal systems, for example organised through a resident WhatsApp group.

The council will also take action to reduce carbon emissions from the goods and food that it purchases and consumes. We will also work with local suppliers across Waltham Forest and help them to create new low carbon goods and services that others throughout the borough can access too. Actions the council itself will take include:

- **Place climate at the heart of everything that the council purchases.** Help to create a culture shift to acknowledge the importance of climate. We will develop criteria and social value measures to integrate climate and carbon considerations into our procurement processes, helping us to work with local suppliers to develop low carbon choices.
- **Eliminate single use packaging from all council operations.** We will work with suppliers to cut the use of single-use plastics across all council operations, including schools and other education settings, in favour of reusable options, especially in our events and catering.
- **Showcase sustainable choices across council-run events and destinations.** Through the range of events that take place across the borough, like the ones that take place in Fellowship Square, we can ensure that sustainable options are promoted, such as meat-free food options. Dedicated events can also be hosted to highlight the climate emergency to encourage all residents to engage with the climate.

The purpose of this Recycling Strategy is to bring together all of the commitments that the council has made as part of the Climate Action Plan, plus other actions developed through consultation with residents and mathematical modelling of options.

In order to respond to the climate emergency, all of us, individually and collectively, will need to change many aspects of how we currently live our lives. Waste and recycling is no different, and to achieve the ambitious targets set out in the Climate Action Plan and this Recycling Strategy, we will need everyone in Waltham Forest to play their part.

1.4 What You Think

In developing this strategy, the council has consulted with Waltham Forest residents. The survey was conducted from 23/09/22 to 21/10/22, and a total of 2,760 responses were received.

The survey asked a number of questions seeking residents' opinions on the options that had been considered as part of the modelling, the council's preferred option and residents' wider thoughts on how to improve waste and recycling services in the borough.

Residents were asked whether they feel the council is taking the steps overall to increase recycling. **63% agreed that the council is taking the right approach.**

The survey outlined the council's favoured option for increasing recycling and reducing waste, which includes proposals to move to fortnightly collections of black bins and to introduce separate weekly food waste collections.

Residents were asked to what extent they agree or disagree with the council's proposal. A majority, **55%, agreed with the recycling collection option described.**

Residents were asked about what could facilitate them to recycle more, and as part of this Recycling Strategy, the council is planning a number of communications and behaviour change interventions which will work to address the issues highlighted - see Section 5.0.

A summary of the survey responses is provided in Appendix A 1.0

2.0

Vision and Targets



2.1 Vision

The council has adopted the following vision regarding the management of waste and recycling in Waltham Forest:

“To achieve high recycling and composting rates and contribute to a circular economy whilst reducing the borough’s carbon emissions, creating economic value for businesses and social value for residents by fostering a repair and re-use culture and waste minimisation alongside a sharing economy”

The vision for this Recycling Strategy is aligned with the 2030 vision from the council’s Climate Action Plan:

“Waltham Forest is a zero-waste borough, following the “reduce, reuse, recycle” approach (in that order). Our residents make sustainable choices about what they buy, and businesses support repair and refurbishment. All residents have access to fresh healthy and sustainable food which is affordable.”

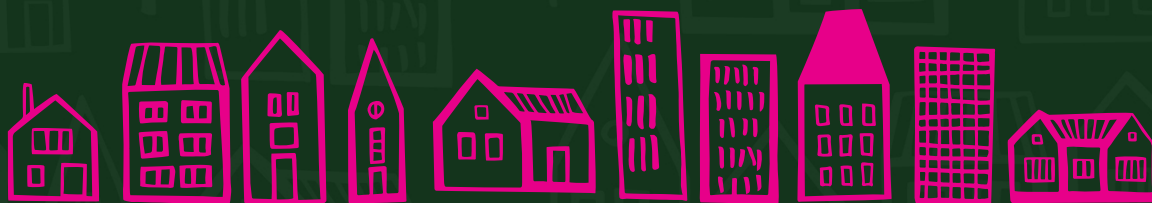
2.2 Targets

The council proposes to adopt the following targets to realise its vision:

- To increase recycling rates to 50% by 2030
- To reduce food waste by 50% per person by 2030
- To increase reuse by 2% by 2030
- To offer a separate food waste service to all properties in the borough by 2025
- To reduce residual waste to 606 kg/household/year by 2030
- To reduce the carbon intensity of Waltham Forest’s waste and recycling service to 40 kg CO₂ equivalent per person per year by 2030, contributing to the achievement of the council's wider net zero target

3.0

Local Context



3.1 Demographic Context

A wide range of indicators and measurements can be used to describe the characteristics of a given population. This strategy focuses on the demographic factors that significant influence on recycling behaviour: the type of housing that people live in, how long they live there, the extent of social deprivation and the diversity of the population.⁵

These indicators are measured by the Office of National Statistics 2011 Census for all areas of England. At the time of writing, only some high-level data from the 2021 Census has been released, and this 2021 data has been used where available.

This section provides a summary of demographic aspects of Waltham Forest that are likely to influence waste arising and therefore inform service design.

3.1.1 Population

Waltham Forest had an estimated population of 278,400 as of the 2021 census⁶. By 2026, the population is expected to reach 287,800, an increase of approximately 9,400 people (3.4%).

Waltham Forest is ranked as the 82nd most deprived borough nationally in the 2019 Index of Multiple Deprivation⁷. Deprivation in the borough is reducing compared to other local authorities: it ranked 35th in deprivation in 2015 edition, and 15th in 2010.

Waltham Forest is one of the most ethnically diverse boroughs in London. Within Waltham Forest, approximately 68% of the population are from ethnic minority backgrounds, which refers to all ethnic groups except the white British/Irish group. Table 1 shows the ethnicities with the largest representation in the borough's population.

Table 1. Top Four Represented Ethnic Groups in Waltham Forest

Ethnic group	Number of People	Percentage of the Population
White British/Irish	86,980	32%
Other White	56,450	20%
Pakistani	33,260	11.5%
Black African	22,550	7.8%

Source: GLA (2020), Ethnic Group Population Projections

According to the 2011 census approximately 26% of the population in Waltham Forest do not speak English as their main language⁸. This is above the national average for England and Wales which reported 8% of the population does not speak English as their main language. In addition, in the 2011 census, approximately 6% of the

⁵ See for example WRAP (2014) *Barriers to recycling: A review of evidence since 2008*, <https://wrap.org.uk/sites/default/files/2020-09/WRAP-Barriers%20Synthesis%20Full%20Report%20final%20121214%20PUBLISHED%20-%20PDF.pdf>

⁶ Office for National Statistics (2022), <https://www.ons.gov.uk/releases/initialfindingsfromthe2021censusinenglandandwales>

⁷ HM Government, *English Indices of Deprivation (2019)*, <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019>

⁸ Office for National Statistics (2011-13), <https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/2011census/2011censusdata>

borough's residents said that they do not speak English well or at all. This is also above the national average for England and Wales, which reported 2% of the population do not speak English well or at all.

The top five languages spoken in Waltham Forest, other than English, are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Top Five Languages Other Than English Spoken in Waltham Forest

Main language	Number of people	Percentage of population
Polish	8,030	3.1%
Urdu	8,020	3.1%
Romanian	4,030	1.6%
Turkish	3,870	1.5%
Lithuanian	3,170	1.2%

Source: ONS, 2011 Census

Each year, a large number of people move to, or away from, the borough. Table 3 shows that in 2018/19 approximately 25,000 people migrated into Waltham Forest. This means that, in any given year, almost 10% of total residents were new to the area and need to be educated about the waste and recycling collection services. The rate of population turnover in the borough is higher than most UK local authorities, and above the average for London.

Table 3. Waltham Forest Migration Flow (mid-2018 to mid-2019)

	Long-Term International Migration			Internal Migration (within the UK)		
	Inflow	Outflow	Change	Inflow	Outflow	Change
Number of people	5,450	3,322	(+2,128)	19,547	24,532	(-4,985)

Source: ONS

As shown in Table 3, the bulk of people that move into Waltham Forest are from within the UK (78%), with many coming from other parts of London, while 22% of those moving to the borough come from outside the UK. However, there is a net gain in international migrants. In common with many other London authorities, Waltham Forest has a net outflow of population, but these migration figures do not take account of other ways in which the population changes, through births and deaths. Despite the majority of the people moving into Waltham Forest being from the UK, on average more UK residents leave Waltham Forest each year than move in.

3.1.2 Properties

Waltham Forest currently has 102,900 households, as of the 2021 census. The Waltham Forest Housing Strategy notes that 78% of houses are privately owned, 11% are managed by Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) and 11%

are owned by the council. A large proportion of the housing stock (80%) is made up of smaller units such as flats and terraced houses.⁹

As the population increases, it is expected that the number of households is set to increase to between 104,500 and 108,500 by 2026. As stated in the Housing Strategy, it is likely that the majority of new households will be accommodated in flats.

3.1.3 Implications for the Recycling and Waste Service

The demographic composition of a local authority, including its population composition and the types of housing residents occupy, significantly affects the recycling and waste services that are needed and the results they can be expected to achieve. The predicted population increase and housing growth in Waltham Forest is likely to increase the amount of waste that needs to be managed, and therefore the amount of resources that the council needs to deploy to provide an effective waste and recycling service.

The composition of the population in Waltham Forest can make it difficult to engage with some populations. Waltham Forest has a large proportion of residents who have arrived in the borough relatively recently. These residents may be less aware of how to use the local recycling system correctly. This can lead to confusion, especially if they have not taken the relevant recycling information on board when they moved in or are unsure how to access this information independently. This issue can be exacerbated by language barriers, especially for the 6% of the population in Waltham Forest who do not speak English well or do not speak it at all.

Property type can also influence the design of the recycling and waste service on offer to residents. The proportion of smaller units in Waltham Forest is projected to increase further, past the current 80%, with flats accounting for the majority of the expected increase in the housing stock. Flats do not typically have individual bins, and hence require a different service whereby recycling and waste is collected via communal containers (for dedicated blocks) or sacks (for flats above shops).

Communal bins bring particular issues, largely arising from there being no one individual household responsible for them. This can result in a “tragedy of the commons” whereby individuals feel less personally accountable for recycling and how they treat the bin area, and thus whether they make full use of recycling facilities in line with local rules. Communal bins also make it difficult to apply policies, such as constraining residual waste capacity, that has proved successful in increasing recycling rates from kerbside properties.

The expected increase in the proportion of flats in the borough therefore adds to the challenge of increasing the local recycling rate, and will require innovative service design in order to maintain and improve performance.

3.2 Current Service

3.2.1 Current Recycling and Waste Service

The recycling and waste service provided to residents in Waltham Forest varies depending on whether residents live in a street-level property, a flat or a flat above a shop. All properties receive a ‘co-mingled’ recycling collection service, in which most different types of recyclable material are collected in a single container. For street-level

⁹ LB Waltham Forest (undated) *Housing Strategy (2008-2028)*, <https://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2021-10/ke45-wf-housing-strategy2008-2028.pdf>

properties and flats recycling residual waste is collected weekly, while due to storage restrictions flats above shops receive a more frequent recycling and waste service of three to six times a week. Through the co-mingled recycling service, residents can recycle:

- Plastic bottles, tubs and trays, and plastic carrier bags.
- Paper, card and cardboard.
- Metal tins, cans, aerosols, trays, and kitchen foil.
- Glass bottles and jars.

Street-level properties also received a fortnightly mixed organics (garden and food waste) collection service. Where practicable, Waltham Forest also collects textiles, waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE), batteries and coffee pods alongside the weekly kerbside recycling. Street-level properties receive weekly collections of residual waste, which is contained in either a standard 140 litre or large 240 litre wheelie bin.

Waltham Forest is also trialling a weekly separate collection of food waste from approximately 7,500 street level properties and has rolled-out food waste to flats with communal bins. The figures below show the current service for street-level properties (Figure 1), flats (Figure 2) and flats above shops (Figure 3).

Figure 1. Current Service – Street-Level

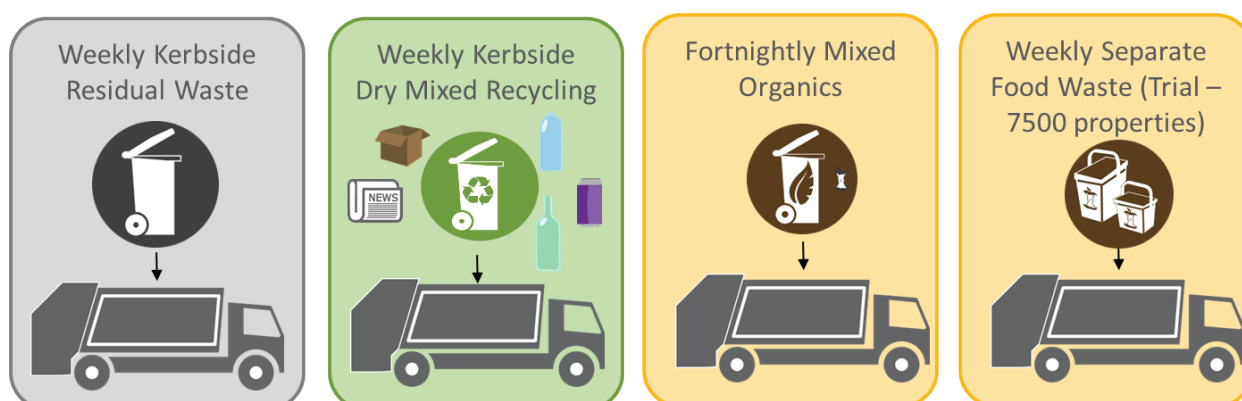


Figure 2. Current Service - Flats

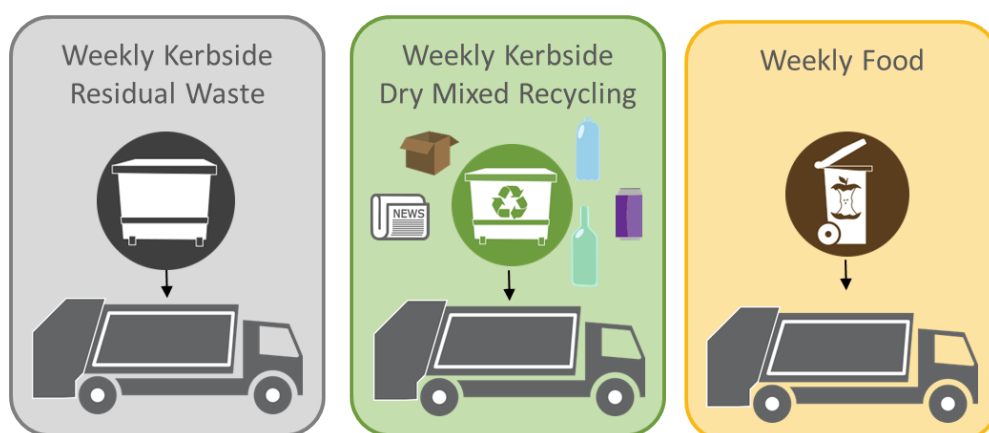
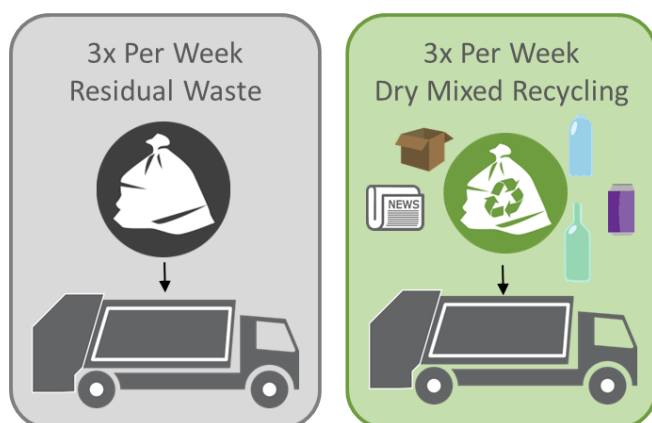


Figure 3. Current Service - Flats Above Shops

3.2.2 Recycling and Waste Treatment and Disposal

Most recycling and waste collected by the council is managed through the North London Waste Authority (NLWA). The exceptions are textiles, WEEE, batteries and coffee pods, for which the council has separate arrangements. Table 4 summarises what happens to the recycling and waste the council collects.

Table 4. Treatment and Disposal Routes for Waltham Forest's Waste and Recycling

How it is treated/ disposed of	
Co-mingled Recycling	Co-mingled recycling collected by the council is sent to Biffa's Material Recovery Facility (MRF) in Edmonton to be separated. It is sorted both mechanically and by hand before it is sent to manufacturers to be recycled into new materials. HDPE and PP mixed plastic is sent to Biffa's Polymer plant in Redcar, where plastic is turned into pellets for manufacturers to make new products.
Mixed organics (garden and food waste)	Mixed food waste and garden waste is sent to an 'in-vessel composting' facility at Envar in Cambridgeshire, where it is turned into compost.
Residual waste	Residual waste is sent to an Energy from Waste (EfW) facility in Edmonton where it is incinerated to produce energy. NLWA is currently preparing to build a new EfW facility to replace the existing one, which is reaching the end of its lifespan. The new facility can supply both heat and electricity and will continue to divert waste from landfill. ¹⁰
Separately collected food waste	Food waste collected on the separate food waste trial is sent to an anaerobic digestion facility at Baldock & Hoddesdon in Hertfordshire, where it is used to produce biogas (which can be used for energy) and digestate, which can be used as a soil improver.
Textiles	Traid manages the reuse of textiles in Waltham Forest. High quality and reusable items of clothing are sold in their charity shops.
WEEE and Batteries	WEEE and batteries are recycled by European Recycling Platform .
Coffee Pods	Coffee pods are collected by Podback and sent to specialist plastic and aluminium recyclers in the UK. Podback sends the coffee grounds for anaerobic digestion, which produces biogas and soil improver.

¹⁰ North London Waste Authority (2019). *Works begin in Edmonton to replace Energy from Waste facility*. <https://www.nlwa.gov.uk/news/works-begin-edmonton-replace-energy-waste-facility>

3.2.3 Waste Prevention and Reuse Initiatives

Waltham Forest runs and supports a number of waste prevention and reuse initiatives. These include the real nappy scheme, the collection of hard to recycle items through Recycling and Re-use Centres (RRCs), and campaigns run through the North London Waste Prevention Plan.

Real Nappy Scheme

In the first 30 months of a baby's life, they will typically need at least 4,000 nappy changes. Since single-use nappies should be disposed of as residual waste, they can be a big contributor to the waste produced by households with young children. This waste can be prevented if reusable nappies are used instead. To help reduce single-use nappy waste, Waltham Forest provides a 'real nappies' incentive in the form of a voucher worth £54.15, which can be used by parents living in Waltham Forest to buy real nappies. Parents can apply for a voucher [online](#).

The real nappy scheme is supported by the [Waltham Forest Cloth Nappy Library](#), which is a group that helps parents interested in using cloth nappies. They hold monthly, free demo sessions where parents can ask questions about the different types, how they work and how to get started using them.

Podback

The council is working with Podback to provide a coffee pod recycling service to residents. Since early 2022, residents living in street-level properties have been able to recycle their coffee pods every week alongside their kerbside recycling and waste collections. In order to use this service, residents need to obtain separate collection bags, which are provided by [Podback](#). The coffee pod, and the coffee grounds they contain, are recycled in the UK.

Recycling and Re-use Centres (RRCs)

Residents of Waltham Forest can make use of three local recycling and re-use centres (RRCs) that are run by NLWA. These are:

- Kings Road RRC;
- South Access Road RRC; and
- Gateway Road RRC.

Each RRC accepts items such as bicycles, furniture and paint, mattresses, polystyrene and a wide range of items for recycling.

North London Waste Prevention Plan

The council also works in partnership with NLWA and the seven other boroughs which are part of the partnership to deliver the North London Waste Prevention Plan (2018-2020).¹¹ The plan aims to reduce rubbish in North London by up to 80,000 tonnes through:

¹¹ North London Waste Authority. *Waste Prevention*. <https://www.nlwa.gov.uk/sites/default/files/inline-files/waste-prevention.pdf>

- Outreach events.
- Campaigns during awareness weeks such as 'Recycle Week' and the 'European Week for Waste Reduction'.
- Community projects such as 'Waste less, Lunch Free' and 'Save a Crust' and community exchanges, and a London Upcycling Show.
- Social media campaigns to reduce single-use plastic waste and encourage residents to opt for reusable alternatives.

3.2.4 Customer Satisfaction

The council carries out a quarterly 'Waltham Forest Resident Insight Survey' to explore and monitor the views, experiences and needs of local residents. The survey also monitors how the council is performing in the delivery of its services and priorities.

The Autumn 2021 'Waltham Forest Resident Insight Survey' was completed by 765 local residents. The survey results indicate that the overall satisfaction rate with Waltham Forest Council is 76%. This has increased by 9 percentage points since the Spring 2020 survey and is the highest level of satisfaction since the survey began. Respondents also reported an 80% satisfaction rate with the household waste and recycling service, this is an increase of four percentage points since the Spring 2020 survey.

3.3 Current performance

In 2020/21, the council disposed of approximately 64,000 tonnes of residual waste. This is 643.4kg per household, which is above the London average of 524kg per household and the England average of 513kg per household.

In 2021/22 Waltham Forest achieved a recycling rate of 32%, which is broadly in line with the London average recycling rate of 34%. The recycling rate has not changed significantly for a number of years, not least because the design of the recycling service has stayed the same for a long period.

Amongst the authorities that form the NLWA, Waltham Forest has the highest recycling rate. However, Waltham Forest produces the second highest amount of residual waste per household amongst NLWA members. Figure 4 and Figure 6 show the comparison between Waltham Forest (in dark purple) with the other NLWA authorities (in light purple) and the remaining London Boroughs (in black) in terms of recycling rate and residual waste arisings respectively. Figure 5 shows Waltham Forest's household recycling rate compared to the London and England averages since 2010/11.

Note that data for England for 2021/22 is not yet available as of the time of writing, therefore comparisons in the figures below use 2020/21 data for England averages.

Figure 4. 2020/21 Recycling Rates in London

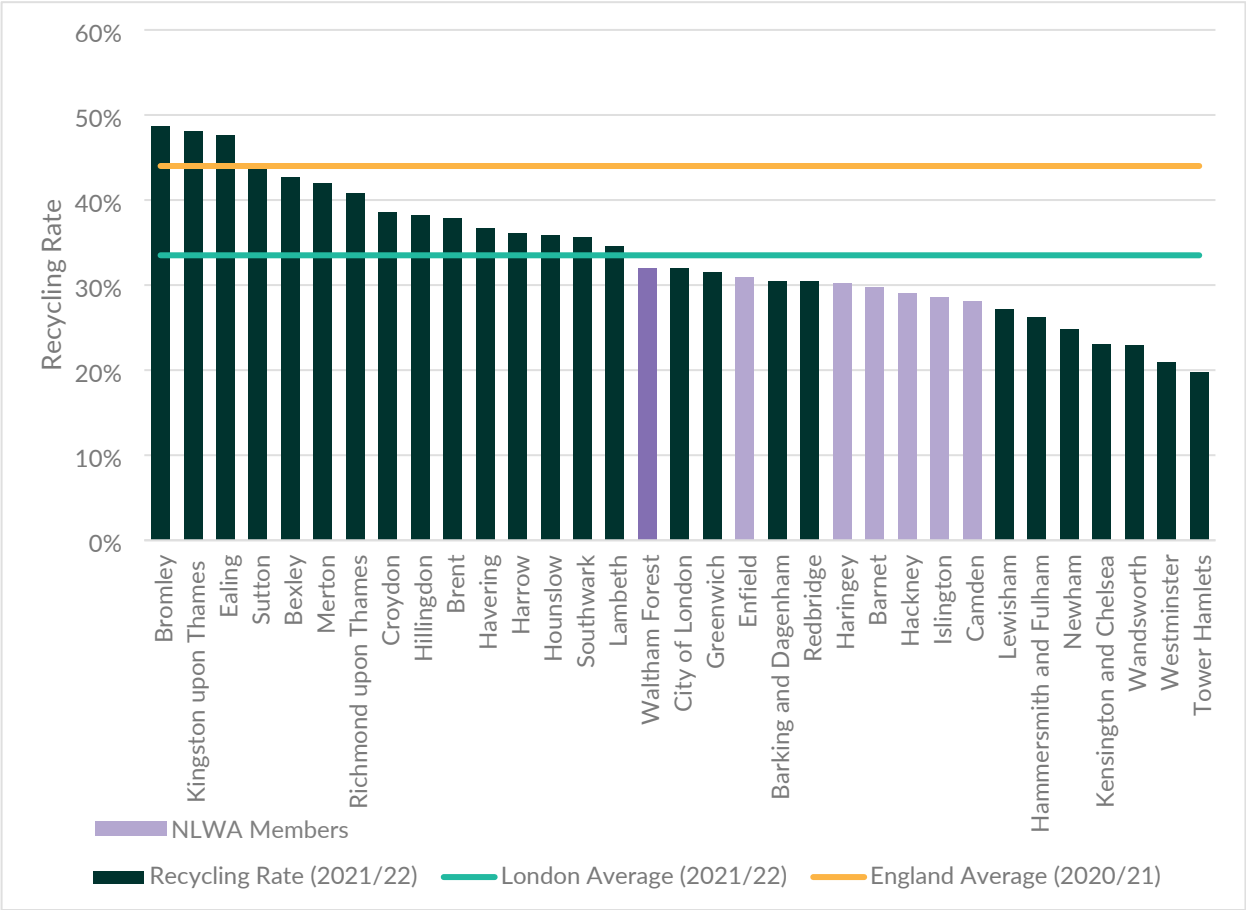


Figure 5. Household Recycling Rate in Waltham Forest compared to London and England

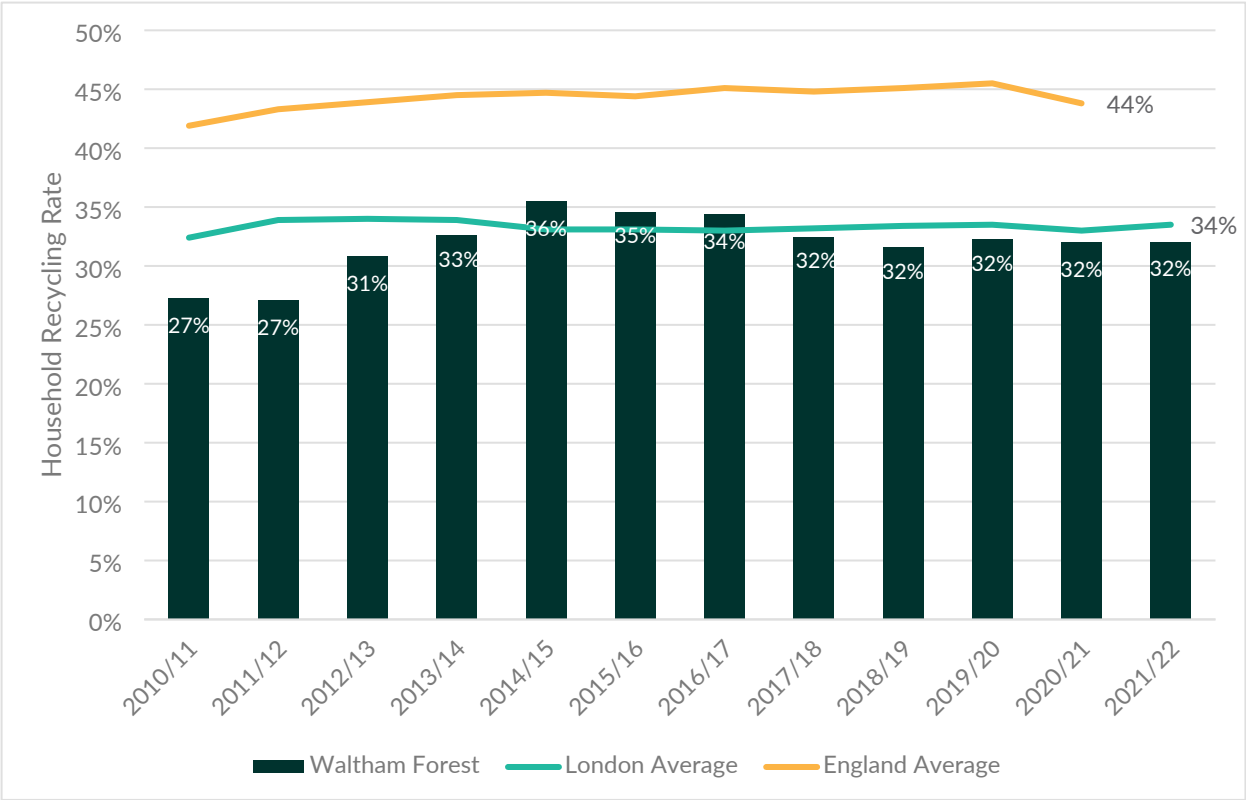
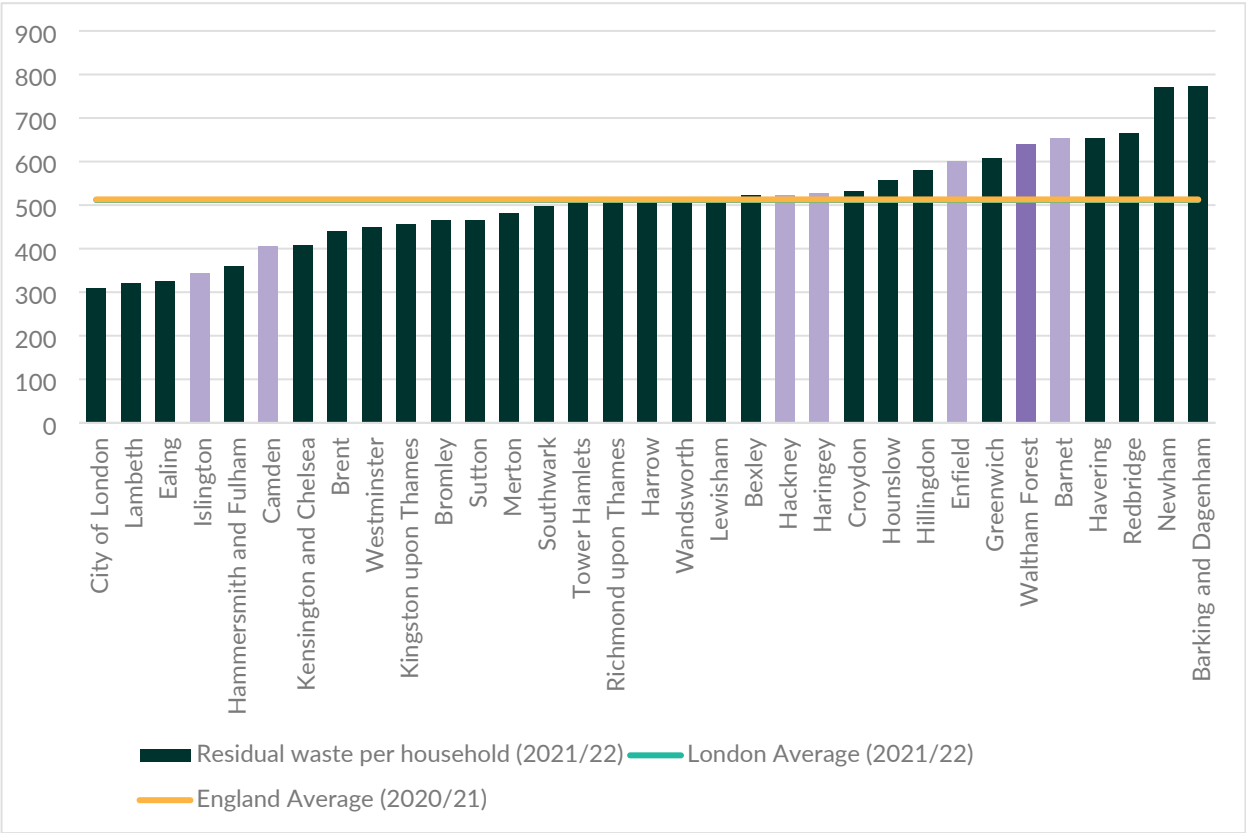


Figure 6. 2020/21 Residual Waste in London

Note: the London Average is 512 kg per household and the England average is 513 kg per household, so the London line on the graph is obscured by the England line.



To improve performance in these areas, Waltham Forest will need to drive waste up the ‘waste hierarchy’ (Figure 7). The council’s priority will be first to prevent waste, then to increase the amount that is re-use or recycled, with disposal of residual waste being the last resort.

Figure 7. Waste Hierarchy



4.0

National Context



The UK Government has announced a number of major policy changes affecting how waste is managed in England, and how services are funded across the UK. These are planned to take effect during the lifetime of the strategy and will be a significant influence on how waste and recycling in Waltham Forest is managed. The major implications for services in Waltham Forest are summarised in Figure 8 and below.

4.1 Extended Producer Responsibility (2025)

Under the proposals, packaging producers will be responsible for the full net cost of managing the packaging they handle or place on the market. This includes the cost of collecting, transporting, sorting and disposal of packaging waste, whether from households or businesses. It also includes administration and communications costs. The scheme will cover packaging waste collected in the recycling and residual waste streams, as well as material that is placed in street litter bins.

Producers will be obligated to cover costs that are necessary to meet material-specific packaging recycling targets, which will entail improvements to the current collection, sorting and treatment system.

Local authorities will therefore receive funding/payments for operating 'efficient and effective' systems that manage household packaging waste. The considerations made to assess 'efficient and effective systems' and 'local authority performance' are not yet clear but expected to take into account local circumstances such as geography, rurality and deprivation.

4.2 Deposit Return Scheme (2025)

A Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) for England, Wales and Northern Ireland is proposed to be introduced in 2025, alongside Scotland's proposal for its own DRS. The scheme is likely to require residents to return targeted materials (plastic and metal beverage containers between 50 millilitres and 3 litres) to dedicated return sites. Following the government response to the DRS consultation published in March 2022, glass will be excluded from the list of materials targeted by the DRS in England and Northern Ireland. This is due to concerns over how glass would be collected under the scheme. Glass will instead fall within the scope of EPR, and will continue to be collected through the council's recycling services.¹²

The DRS is likely to lead to a significant improvement in recycling rates for the target containers and reduce street litter. However, it will remove plastic bottles and metal drinks cans from the kerbside residual and recycling into a new, separate system – unless the emerging proposal for 'digital DRS' is taken forward. A digital DRS scheme would mean residents can claim their deposit while returning their recycling through the kerbside recycling system. However, it is not yet clear whether this approach, which is not used elsewhere in the world where DRS has been implemented, will be applied in the UK. The government's response to the DRS consultation is expected during 2022.

¹² HM Government (2022) *Extended Producer Responsibility for Packaging: Summary of consultation responses and Government response*. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1063589/epr-consultation-government-response.pdf

4.3 Consistency of Collections (from April 2023, with some flexibility)

The UK Government wishes to achieve greater consistency in the materials that are collected for recycling by different English local authorities, and in the way their local services are designed. The Environment Act 2021 aims to increase the proportion of England's municipal waste that is recycled, helping to meet a new UK-wide municipal recycling target of 65% by 2035, and improve the quality of materials collected for recycling. This section explores the proposals on:

- A core set of materials;
- Separate recycling collections;
- Weekly food waste collections; and
- Garden waste collections.

Further details will be available in the government's response to the consistent collections consultation, which is expected to be published in 2022.

Core Set of Dry Materials

Under the current proposals, local authorities will be required to collect a set of core dry materials for recycling. These are expected to include glass, paper and card, plastic bottles, plastic pots tubs and trays, steel and aluminium cans and tins, and are also likely to include foil, aerosols and cartons. The council already collects all of the materials expected to be included in this initial core set of materials.

Plastic film is expected to become a core material by the end of 2026/27. This is likely to include all plastic film.

“Where local authorities have plastic film collections already in place, they would be required to comply by the date Extended Producer Responsibility commences [i.e. Oct 2023 [since amended to be 2025]], but where this is not the case, local authorities would be required to adopt collections of film by no later than the end of 2026/27”

The council already collects plastic carrier bags via the kerbside recycling service. The consistency of collections proposals may require the council to expand the collection service to collect and recycle other flexible plastic film materials by 2025. In order for the council to achieve this, it would be necessary for NLWA to be able to accept and process the material, which would depend on changes to the MRF to which NLWA sends the borough's recycling.

Depending on how the requirement is interpreted, it appears films will have to be collected at the kerbside by 2027.

Separate Collections

Local authorities may be required to collect the core set of materials separately from each other, except where this is not technically or economically practicable, or where there is no significant environmental benefit from the separate collection.

Where an authority wishes to mix glass, paper/card, metal or plastic, they will be required to justify this. The government will specify the form this assessment must take.

No justification is expected to be required where authorities mix:

- Plastic and metals
- Glass and metals

The criteria that must be applied in determining what is practicable, and what constitutes a significant environmental benefit has not yet been fully specified by the government.

Waltham Forest currently collects all of its dry recycling as a single stream. This would only be able to continue if the council determines that separating some materials would not be practicable, or that there would be no significant environmental benefit.

Food Waste Collections

Separate weekly food waste collections will be required by end of 2025. Similar to the separate collection of core materials, this will be subject to a test of practicability and environmental benefit. If separate collections are not practicable or environmentally beneficial, mixed food and garden services are allowed.

Waltham Forest currently provides a mixed food and garden service. This would only be compliant with the new requirements if separate collections are not found to be practicable or would have no significant environmental benefit.

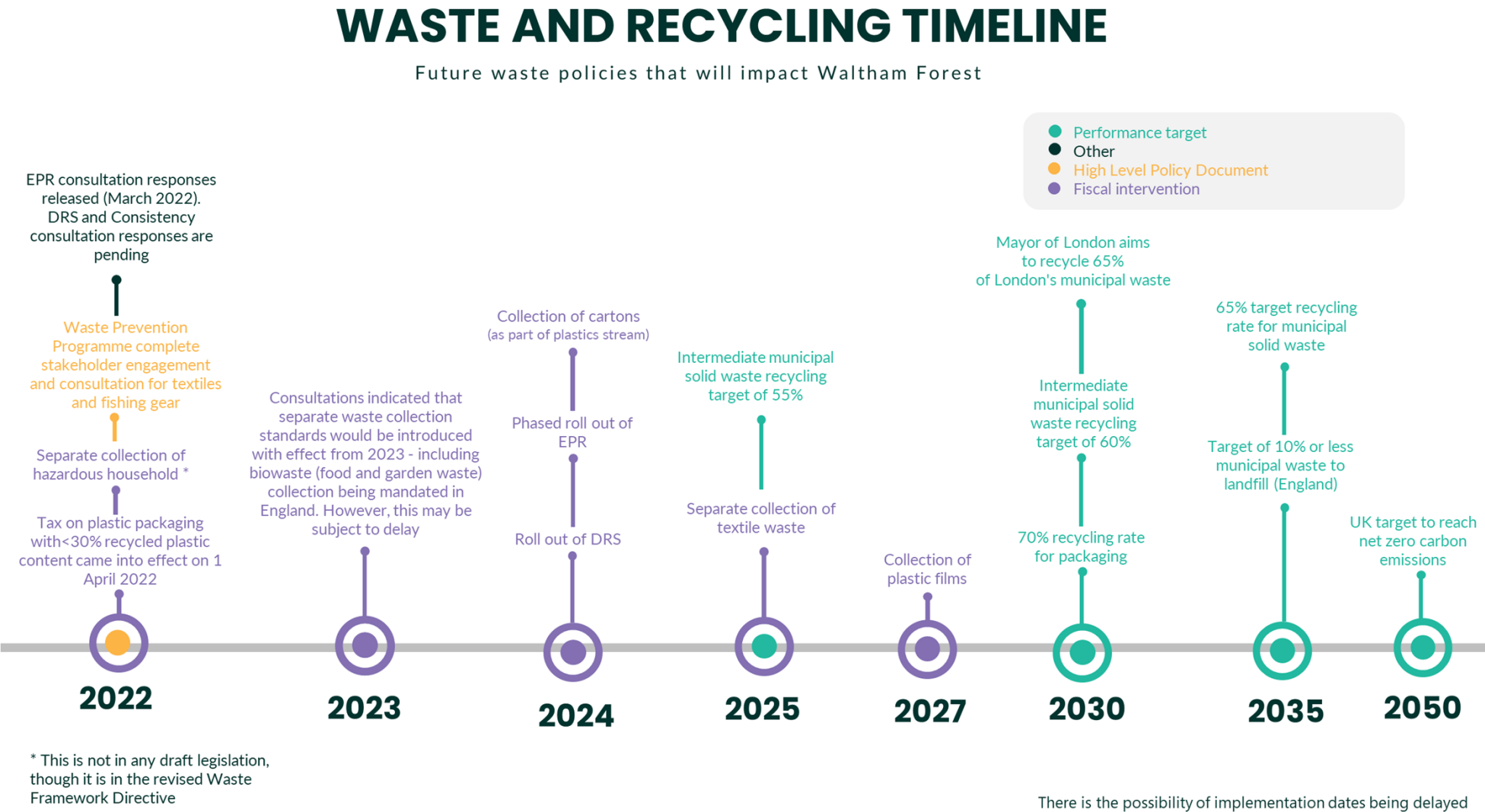
Garden Waste Collections

Under the current proposal, garden waste must be collected from 2025. Waltham Forest already provides this service, through its mixed food and garden waste service.

Many local authorities charge residents a subscription fee for their garden waste service. The government has consulted on requiring that free garden waste services are provided. Concerns were raised about whether this proposal represents good value for money and it is not yet clear what approach the government will ultimately take. As Waltham Forest already offers a free garden waste service this does not necessitate any change in the authority's approach, although it could limit the options available in future.

If garden and food waste were to continue to be co-collected, the service would need to be weekly to comply with the separate food waste collection requirements and would need to be free of charge.

Figure 8. Waste and Recycling Policy Timeline for England



5.0

Key Themes and Policies



5.1 Introduction

This section looks at the key themes that will guide the London Borough of Waltham Forest Council's actions to achieve its vision and targets for this waste strategy. The council recognises that, in order to succeed in achieving its vision, it will need the support and participation of residents and businesses from across the borough, who will need to adapt to changes in the collection services offered and make full use of the recycling services available. The council recognises its role in encouraging and informing residents to help them reduce their waste and manage what remains in the most environmentally sustainable way.

5.2 Communications and Behaviour Change

Communication is an effective way of fostering behaviour change, which is fundamental in contributing to waste goals. Behaviour change is about getting people and communities to change their habits and behaviours for the long term. Behaviour change can be encouraged by making services more user-friendly, changing communication methods to achieve better engagement, education and awareness raising activities and support voluntary activities.

The method of communication, as well as the information conveyed, are both important in the effectiveness of guiding behaviour change. For example, changing the size of the recycling bin and reducing the regularity of collections has been proven to cause a behaviour change and increase recycling rates, and providing stickers on bins may help to reduce contamination and further improve the quality of the recycle. Communicating the availability and locations of Recycling and Reuse Centres (RRCs) may also inform individuals of their presence and increase their use. Providing information and statistics surrounding resource consumption and waste generation may also positively influence peoples' behaviours by making them aware of the impacts of their actions. Behaviour change can also be influenced by economic incentives, which steer customers towards choosing the desired option.

1. To dedicate funding to ongoing communication campaigns to increase recycling rate and reduce residual waste, targeting resources in areas of lower performance (e.g., estates).

The council will ensure funding is available for communications campaigns around recycling and waste prevention. Campaigns will target areas with low recycling performance. Ongoing communications are key to maintain recycling performance and positive behaviour changes. This is especially true in highly transient areas where new residents moving to the area may not understand the service fully.

2. To ensure residents always have access to information regarding Waltham Forest's waste and recycling service and how to recycle

The council will work to ensure that residents are using the services the council provides correctly. At present, this is particularly important because of the differences between recycling services offered around the country. Its importance may reduce once the Environment Act 2021 has brought about greater consistency in collections across England. However, the significant international migration into Waltham Forest, together with continued differences in the types of container that each authority uses, the types of material that are collected mixed together, and the additional materials the council collects beyond the government mandated core set, it will

remain necessary for the council to provide to new and current residents communications regarding the service that is offered to ensure they use it correctly.

3. To continue to deliver waste education programmes to schools in the borough and work with residents to reduce contamination and increase participation

The council will actively engage and work with residents, rather than just providing standard communication, to increase participation and quality of actions. It can also help the council to gain an improved understanding of why households may not be participating or why they may be finding it more difficult, allowing more tailored advice to be given, or for services to be improved.

Interacting with school age children is also important to foster good recycling knowledge and habits at an early age. It has also been proven effective in changing household recycling habits, as school children go home to their families and spread their newly acquired knowledge to their parents.

4. Introduce a formal compulsory recycling policy to allow council to work with residents who are not recycling

The council will introduce a formal “compulsory recycling” policy with the intention of increasing the borough’s recycling performance and reduce costs. It will reduce the amount of waste thrown into the residual bins and therefore that which is sent to landfill, reducing the borough’s costs and environmental impacts and adhering to the waste hierarchy. It will encourage residents to use the correct containers and to care about their recycling habits. Such policies are normally aimed at those that do not currently recycle as opposed to those that do already. The implementation of a formal policy will mean that the council’s officers will have the powers to, for example, investigate those households that are not using the recycling containers correctly. It may also allow them to issue warning notices and potentially issue penalties, provided that the required process is followed.

5. Formalise the existing kerbside contamination policy by creation of an official policy, enabling the council to enforce against contamination of recycling

It is imperative that recyclate is collected separately from non-recyclable materials and is of high quality. The presence of even a small amount of contamination can mean that an entire load of recycling is rejected further down the line, resulting in it being sent for incineration instead. This increases the council’s costs, reduces recycling performance and may prevent the council from reaching its targets. The council will therefore introduce a formal contamination policy which, similarly to the introduction of a formal recycling policy, will allow the council’s officers to carry out enforcement activities such as issuing warning notices and ultimately fixed penalties notices in the event of repeated non-compliance.

6. Formalise and enforce “No Side Waste” and “Closed Lid” policies for residual waste to ensure ambitions to recycle are not undermined

‘Side waste’ is waste that is left out for collection outside of (i.e., next to or on top of) the collection container due to it already being full. Similarly, a ‘closed lid’ policy refers to only collecting waste that fits within the wheeled bin when the lid is completely closed. The council will formalise its existing ‘No Side Waste’ and ‘Closed Lid’ policies, which will mean that any additional waste that exceeds the size of the designated container will not be collected on collection day, but will instead be put in the resident’s bin for the next collection day. These policies will restrict the amount of residual waste that is able to be placed out. They are often implemented alongside an arrangement whereby households can apply for a permit to set out additional waste.

Since most of the waste in residual waste bins is material that could have been recycled, adopting these policies will incentivise households both to reduce the amount of waste they produce and separate as much out as

possible for recycling, helping to achieve recycling, residual waste reduction and carbon emissions reduction targets.

7. Work with NLWA to ensure RRC policies are joined up

The introduction of formalised policies such as the contamination policy and 'No Side Waste' and 'Closed-Lid' policies could cause waste to be diverted from the kerbside residual bin to the RRCs. The council will work in partnership with NLWA, who manage the three RRCs in Waltham Forest, to ensure that complimentary policies are applied at the RRCs. These could include limiting the number of times a resident can access a RRC to prevent over-use, or introducing a bag splitting policy to check residual bags for recyclable materials to ensure they are disposed of correctly.

5.3 Waste Prevention

Waste prevention is the most preferred form of waste management in the waste hierarchy. It consists of practices that reduce the amount of waste produced at the source, prior to recycling, treatment, or disposal. Waste prevention is usually achieved through lifestyle changes, which can be facilitated through incentives that encourage behaviour change. The benefits of waste reduction include reduced energy consumption and resource use, and therefore reduced carbon emissions and pollution.

A lot of waste results from the convenience of single use items, and waste can be prevented by providing people with the opportunity and incentive to employ reusable alternatives – reusable carrier bags, food containers, cutlery, or water bottles. Opportunities can be provided by, for example, giving people access to water fountains to fill up reusable bottles, or to accessible, affordable and well-stocked zero waste stores that allow you to bring-your-own containers. Sometimes, waste prevention measures can be supported by incentives, a successful example being the use of a charge, and then a ban, to deter people from taking unnecessary carrier bags and encourage the uptake of reusable alternatives. There are also opportunities for businesses to reduce waste. For example, supermarkets and restaurants can arrange to give surplus food to organisations like food banks or homeless charities, thereby preventing food waste. The council will take the following actions to prevent waste.

1. Continue to support NLWA's waste prevention initiatives including 'Not a Minute to Waste'

NLWA's 'Not a Minute to Waste' campaign' is built on the idea that, if a large number of individuals each make small changes in behaviour, they can collectively help prevent large amounts of waste with almost no extra time or effort; the actions suggested should not even taken a minute. The council will continue to support such campaigns that aim to create awareness around the impacts that more conscious consumption can play. An awareness programme around the impact of using a reusable coffee cup is a successful example where small actions by numerous people have a larger combined effect on waste.

2. Prioritise waste prevention during any communication campaigns – for example, when rolling out food waste collections, highlight the role/benefits of prevention

In line with the waste hierarchy, when conducting communication campaigns regarding waste and recycling, the council will highlight waste prevention messages wherever possible and educate the public around specific actions that they can take to reduce waste. The council will provide statistics and figures regarding the savings in resource and energy consumption that come from waste reduction, which can be effective in helping the public understand the impacts of their actions.

3. Promote composting to community groups, estates, schools and faith groups

Promoting composting activities for larger groups is a beneficial way of introducing composting to the community where it may not be popular yet in households. It also provides an opportunity for households that don't have access to a garden and composting facilities to partake in composting activities as well. The council will provide guidance and information surrounding the benefits of composting and the types of containers and equipment required.

The larger groups are also likely to provide more food waste available for composting due to the nature of their activities e.g., bulk cooking, meaning that the composting facilities are viable as there will be a steady supply of food waste.

4. To continue to support Real Nappies for London

Real Nappies for London is a project run by the Women's Environmental Network charity. It provides reusable nappies for babies in place of the commonly-used disposable ones. Switching from disposable items to reusable alternatives has significant impacts on waste reduction and it is therefore important that the council supports the work of organisations like this that facilitate the switch. The council will continue to provide support in the form of vouchers to parents living in the borough and providing online support and chatrooms for people to utilise.

5. To continue to support and expand drinking fountains for London to reduce single use plastic bottles

The council will continue to invest in and increase awareness of drinking water fountains across the borough. The provision and accessibility of drinking water greatly influences the success of the roll out of reusable water bottles. Without access to drinking fountains, individuals will have to purchase water in single use plastic bottle regardless of whether they have made the conscious decision to carry a reusable bottle. The council could also work with campaigns such as [Refill](#) which extend this initiative to cover food and hot drinks places where you can bring your own containers, or they use minimal packaging.

6. Move to fortnightly collection of residual waste from most properties

At the moment, residents who have kerbside collections of their wheelie bins have their black residual waste bin collected every week. The purpose of the black wheelie bin is for any waste that is not recyclable, but analysis shows that many people still put waste in their black bin that could be recycled. Research and modelling suggest that keeping weekly black bin collections would not encourage an increase in the amount of recycling collected.

Therefore, the council is planning on reducing the frequency of black bin collections, from weekly to fortnightly. Modelling shows that most residents will still have ample space in their black bins for their non-recyclable waste, and that reducing the frequency of collections will encourage those who could recycle more to make better use of their recycling bins.

Larger bins will be provided to those households for whom fortnightly collections with their current bins would be insufficient, for example owing to medical need or a large family.

5.4 Circular Economy

The circular economy model is an alternative to the current linear economy, in which resources are disposed of at their end of life: take, make, use, dispose. In the circular economy, resources are kept in use for as long as possible and then recovered and recycled to create new products at their end of life, reducing the reliance on virgin materials and decoupling economic activities from the consumption of resources.

The movement towards a circular economy in Waltham Forest requires a number of measures. These could include both measures to improve the management of waste, to ensure it is reduced, re-used or recycled; and also changes in how new products are procured, with a conscious effort to choose those that maximise material lifespan, reuse and repairability. Increase demand for products with these characteristics can influence the design of new products to emphasise design for reuse and repair, to easily facilitate a second life.

1. Waste will be managed in a way that reflects the waste hierarchy – prioritising waste prevention and re-use, then maximising recycling and composting with energy recovery and disposal as a last resort.

The waste hierarchy is written into English law and sets out the priority order for waste management and treatment. Through the policies it is adopting, the council will improve its adherence to the waste hierarchy by promoting reuse and recycling and reducing the amount of waste that is sent for energy recovery or disposal.

2. Procurements undertaken by Waltham Forest will include criteria around contributing to Circular Economy as part of a Responsible Procurement Policy.

The council purchases a large amount of goods and services each year. Its procurement policy therefore has scope to deliver a significant contribution to the council's waste management objectives. The council will adopt a responsible procurement policy to ensure that circular economy principles, the waste hierarchy and carbon impacts are taken into account in its purchasing decisions.

5.5 Reuse

Reuse is the most desirable end market for waste that cannot be prevented and therefore comes second in the waste hierarchy. It is best facilitated when products are designed for re-use (circular economy) and the stigma around buying and owning second-hand items is removed (communication and behaviour change). Re-use can be encouraged through the setting up of, and communicating about, community reuse and repair facilities.

Composting is the recycling of organic matter (predominantly food and garden waste) into nutrient-rich fertiliser that can enrich soils. The council collects organic waste for composting in industrial composting facilities, but there is greater local benefit and less cost for the council if more people make use of home-composting.

1. Deliver the Climate Action Plan goals to increase and support reuse and repair initiatives.

Specifically, the council will: help re-establish Repair Cafes by helping to find the skills that are in highest demand, like electricians; add to the network of water refill stations to cut the use of single use plastic bottles; add to the materials that can be accessed for reuse at our Household RRCs; work towards a Library of Things in every neighbourhood, building on the first Library of Things in the borough. The right Library of Things model will differ by neighbourhood: they may be formal systems hosted in a physical location, like a Library, or less formal systems, for example organised through a resident WhatsApp group.

2. Support NLWA to support residents to repair and re-use items through the RRCs, including furniture and paint

The council will continue to support NLWA in its provision of RRCs in its borough that provide residents with a places to dispose of their household waste and recyclable materials for free, including by making them accessible to cyclists and pedestrians and expanding the range of materials accepted e.g. wood and large appliances.

3. Continue to promote the council's preloved collection service to divert furniture to re-use

The council will continue to communicate and advertise its service that allows residents to have their unwanted bulky items, such as furniture, collected, enabling them to dispose of their preloved furniture in an accessible and appropriate way. Promoting this service is key to increasing uptake.

4. Continue to support textile and WEEE re-use through kerbside collection and on-street banks

Textiles and WEEE are some of the fastest growing waste streams and are not easily, or commonly at the moment, closed-loop recycled¹³. Therefore, the council will continue to communicate and advertise the availability of its textiles and WEEE kerbside collection services and the locations of bring sites, encouraging households to dispose of their textiles in an appropriate manner, rather than combining them with their residual waste.

5. Facilitate the expansion of re-use, share and repair activities and infrastructure by supporting local community groups to develop these economies

The council will support local groups that facilitate and encourage reuse and repair activities by providing support to establish the required infrastructure to make such activities possible. This support might include things like setting up textiles bring banks and creating and spreading communication materials.

5.6 Leading The Way

Waltham Forest wants to lead by example, going above and beyond the minimum it is legally required to do as regards waste management. It will do this through its support for waste prevention schemes and initiatives, through work with local environmental and community groups on issues such as reuse, and through entering into arrangements to collect additional streams of recycling, as it has done with its participation in the Podback scheme. However, there are also actions that the council can take within its own internal systems and its wider policies to enable it to lead the way.

In order to measure its progress, the council will need to collect data, over and above what is required by law. This will enable tracking of the success of the implementation of new measures as well as identifying areas for improvement and stagnation that may require a change.

1. For council buildings and at council events, apply the waste hierarchy principles to lead by example:

- a. Reducing use of/banning single use items**
- b. Requiring separate collection of recycling**
- c. Setting and reporting on recycling targets**
- d. Redistribution of surplus food from council-run canteens**

The council will implement measures, such as those listed above, to demonstrate their commitment to improving waste management, and in changing local expectations about what is “normal”, or indeed possible. Seemingly small measures such as these can actually be effective in driving behaviour change and raising awareness around common environmental issues.

The reduction/banning of single use items can reduce resource consumption and encourage a reuse culture, thereby reducing associated carbon emissions. The separate collection of recycling will contribute to national

¹³ “Closed-loop” recycling refers to the collection and recycling of waste to produce a new version of the same, or similar, product. For instance, closed-loop recycling for clothing textiles would mean recycling them into new clothes.

recycling targets and promotes the shift towards a circular economy. Setting and reporting recycling targets is important to ensure continuous improvement and is the only way to assess the impacts of any new measures. Finally, the distribution of surplus food prevents food waste as well as helping out those in need of more accessible food.

2. Make the council's current Guidance for Developers on waste a formal Planning Policy, so it must be considered in the design of new residential buildings

The council's current guidance sets minimum standards for the provision of facilities to allow proper waste management in new housing and commercial developments, and advice on how these requirements can be met. Changing the status of the requirements from guidance to a formal policy will make compliance compulsory for developers. This will help contribute to meeting the council's targets by embedding the capacity for recycling in the design of new buildings, helping ensure that in future, the waste services provided to new properties can be recycling-led.

3. Work with HMO licensing to improve waste management at HMOs

Houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) currently tend to produce more waste, have lower recycling rates and higher levels of recycling contamination than single family houses. Reasons for this include limited communication about waste between the individual households within HMOs and a lack of engagement from landlords to encourage correct waste separation. Furthermore, HMO tenants often stay in a property for a relatively short time, giving them less opportunity to receive information about how to manage the waste they produce. The council will work through its HMO licencing function to investigate where the main waste management issues lie in HMOs within the borough, and take steps to improve recycling performance.

4. Embed the waste hierarchy within the council's procurement policy

Embedding the waste hierarchy into procurement policy is one aspect of adopting a responsible or sustainable procurement approach. The council will focus on maximising the embedded value in products by seeking to extend the lifetime of products through reuse. The council will seek opportunities to procure items that are reused, or that have high potential for repair or reuse. By implementing the waste hierarchy into procurement policy, the council can help to increase demand for different types of products, thereby helping to change market demand, supporting innovation and investment into new business models.

5.7 Collection Service

At present, the waste collection services offered by different local authorities across England vary, both in their design and in the materials they accept for recycling. These discrepancies between areas contribute to confusion among the public and to differences in recycling rates. The Environment Act, passed in 2021, aims to change this by requiring greater consistency in services. Measures includes the mandatory separate collection of food waste from all properties, a minimum set of dry recyclable materials that must be collected, and a requirement to collect dry recycling in separate streams where practicable. It remains important for each local authority to analyse the service it offers to ensure that it is effective in the local context.

1. Commit to collecting food waste from all properties (as required by Environment Act 2021)

The Environment Act 2021 requires local authorities to separately collect food waste from all properties by April 2025. This measure will increase recycling rates and allow more food waste to be used beneficially, to produce renewable energy and compost. Separately collecting food waste will also reduce the weight of residual waste and reduce transportation costs and gate fees for disposal.

2. Continue to collect core dry recycling materials increasing captures of existing materials and look to expand the materials collected as NLWA allows, including plastic film

The measures described elsewhere in the strategy to restrict residual waste and encourage recycling are expected to result in increased captures of the materials that are already able to be recycled.

However, there are a number of potentially recyclable materials that are not commonly collected in kerbside recycling. A key example is plastic film, which will become mandatory for local authorities to collect from 2027. At present, the council collects plastic carrier bags for recycling, but cannot accept other forms of plastic film due to constraints on what can be accepted in the facility where mixed recycling is sent for separation. The council will work with NLWA to expand the range of plastic film that can be accepted, and will communicate any changes to residents to help increase recycling performance.

3. Deliver a cost efficient and effective service

The council will invest in the design and delivery of the waste collection service to ensure that it continues to represent good value for money for local residents. The council's approach will take account of the cost of the service, including the cost of disposing of waste, and the performance it achieves, both in terms of environmental outcomes and customer satisfaction.

4. Continue to collect additional materials (WEEE, textiles and coffee pods) both on kerbside and through bring systems (with partners) and look to increase both participation and the range of materials

In order to maximise recycling performance, the council will examine how to increase yields of material that is not mandatory to collect for recycling. In some cases, as with coffee pods, the council may be able to offer kerbside collections. In other cases, the council will promote the use of RRCs and bring banks to allow non-kerbside collected materials such as textiles and WEEE to be recycled. These materials contain valuable resources and have the potential to be either reused or recycled.

5. Maintain high levels of resident satisfaction with the waste and recycling service

The council will continue to use surveys to monitor resident satisfaction with the recycling service, as we recognise that a service that meets residents' needs will be one they are happy to use correctly. The council will seek to understand the causes of dissatisfaction, and will undertake communication or – where necessary – consider service changes in order to ensure that residents understand the service and how best to use it to meet their needs.

6. Maintain a free garden waste service for eligible properties

While all services remain subject to review in order to ensure that they offer good value for money, the council has no plans to alter its current free garden waste service once food waste is collected separately.

7. Provide the same level of core service across all property types

The council will seek to ensure that, so far as possible, the same recycling services will be available to all properties in Waltham Forest. Providing a consistent service will help to increase the recycling rate and contribute towards meeting the council's targets.

5.8 End Markets

Once collected, waste and recycling must undergo treatment for value to be extracted from it. Treatment may involve sorting facilities, recycling facilities, composting facilities or energy-from-waste. The location of these treatment points is important and can have an impact of the council's costs and carbon footprint. Different end treatments have different costs, with recycling generally being cheaper than the alternatives. Increasing recycling and reducing residual weight will therefore help to reduce costs as well as improving environmental outcomes.

1. Continue to support NLWA to send material to facilities in North London and, where possible, ensure they are treated in the UK, reducing onwards transport

The end destinations for the waste the council collects are determined by NLWA. The council will support NLWA in choosing domestic, and (where possible) local treatment facilities, so as to minimise transport costs and associated negative environmental impacts.

5.9 Carbon and Air Quality

Like most UK local authorities, the council has set goals to reduce carbon emissions. The council is adopting a range of actions to reduce its carbon footprint, looking both at the way it delivers its services and across its wider supply chain. Some of these actions may also contribute to the improvement of local air quality by reducing other pollutants in addition to carbon.

1. Reduce residual waste and increase recycling (with actions to do so detailed in other policies), thereby reducing the carbon associated with Waltham Forest's waste management operations.

By moving up the waste hierarchy from disposal to recycling, the council will be helping to utilise the resources that are already available and reducing the consumption of raw materials. This will help to reduce the carbon emissions associated with the production and consumption of new products.

2. Expand use of alternative fuels for collection vehicles and waste transportation to reduce carbon emissions and improve air quality.

The UK is rapidly moving away from fossil fuels as the energy source for vehicles. However, the progress in decarbonising HGVs is proving slower than for smaller vehicles like cars, due to the high demands their work places upon them. A number of alternative fuels are being trialled, but battery electric drivetrains appear to be the most advanced at present. This technology completely eradicates exhaust emissions from the vehicle, which reduces CO₂, improves air quality and reduces noise, which is beneficial both for residents and collection crew. In 2021, the council introduced its first battery electric refuse collection vehicle, alongside a number of other smaller vehicles. It will continue to evaluate the performance of this vehicle and, if feasible, expand its electric refuse collection vehicle fleet in future.

3. Target increased collection and recycling of carbon-intensive materials such as WEEE and textiles to reduce the carbon associated with Waltham Forest's waste and recycling operations

Material such as WEEE and textiles are extremely carbon intensive to produce. WEEE contains a large amount of valuable materials such as rare metals, and many textiles have high potential for reuse. However, recycling rates are low compared with other recyclable materials. The council has systems in place to target the collection of these materials through local RRCs, and will promote the use of these services. Increasing the collection of WEEE and textiles and encouraging their refurbishment/repair and resale will help reduce carbon emissions.

5.10 Social Value

The council aims to produce local social value through its waste and recycling services. Social value can be demonstrated through employment and jobs created, community support, contribution to the economy and investment and donations for good causes. Contributing to social value can add immediate and long-term impacts and can be most effective when the council works in partnership with trusted suppliers and customers to help deliver these goals.

1. Continue to pay the London Living Wage to staff employed on the waste and street cleansing contract

By providing fair pay to all staff, the council will contribute to the economy and improve the livelihoods of residents.

2. Require Social Value to be embedded within any waste and recycling contracts let

In the context of procurement, Social Value is considered as the wider benefit gained by a local community from the delivery of public contracts. This can be the community as a whole, disadvantaged individuals, minorities, businesses, voluntary, community or social enterprises, as well as the environment. Social Value in procurement is often split into three areas:

Table 5 - Areas of Social Value in Procurement

Area	Social	Economic	Environmental
Examples	Volunteering in the community.	Hosting work placements or creating apprenticeships and jobs.	Reducing energy or waste use and carbon emissions.
	Hosting community events.	Employing local peoples and using local suppliers.	Supporting improvements to public spaces and parks.

By ensuring that Social Value is included as a criterion in all procurement processes, the council will secure better outcomes and opportunities for the local community.

3. Continue to work with charities and social enterprises on re-use initiatives (supported by NLWA)

The council will work with charities and enterprises that enable reuse activities, which is important in integrating reuse into the community and making reuse and resale accessible. It will also work to raise awareness of the benefits of reuse and buying second hand, as this is important in overcoming any stigma regarding the decision to use second hand items.

4. Help local groups to set up their own repair cafes and library of things and support existing community-led reuse/sharing platforms both physical and digital. Recognising the social benefits of giving residents easy access to items at low/no cost

By supporting services and platforms that are encouraging repair and reuse, the council will support the application of the waste hierarchy, and the idea that unwanted items can be seen as a resource and not as waste, particularly for those in the community for whom buying new may not always be an option.

5.11 Supporting Local Businesses

The council will take steps to support local businesses to be more responsible in managing their waste. This support may include workshops and consultation to understand local business needs; providing information resources or advice on how to prevent and recycle waste; or targeted funding. It may also include reviewing policies and initiatives that potentially work against local businesses being able to manage and reduce their waste correctly and easily.

1. Implement a recycling-led commercial waste service, including food waste to contribute to the local authority collected recycling rate

In addition to improving its household waste collections, the council will also seek to provide collection services to businesses to help ensure that they have access to services that meet the new obligations that the Environment Act 2021 places upon them. The council will focus on offering services that maximise recycling, and supporting businesses to use the service in a way that minimises their costs while maximising environmental benefits. This will contribute towards meeting national recycling rate targets, which in future will cover both household and commercial waste.

2. Continue to keep track of businesses without a collection contract in place or that are not applying the waste hierarchy

The council will work with businesses to ensure they have a waste collection contract in place with a [registered waste carrier](#) in line with each business' legal obligations. The council will ensure that commercial waste is dealt with correctly and does not result in fly-tipping, or other forms of illegal disposal that cause environmental damage. Businesses are also required to apply the waste hierarchy, and show that they have prioritised waste prevention, reuse and recycling over disposal. The council will explore whether its approach to enforcement can do more to ensure businesses are dealing with their commercial waste in an environmentally responsible way.

3. Offer a service of separate collection of recyclables (and food waste) for non-domestic premises currently being served.

Expanding the waste and recycling collection service offered at the non-domestic premises that the council already collects from will maximise the amount of recyclable material that is collected, thereby minimising residual waste and its associated costs and environmental impacts. Currently, the council provides services to schools (recycling only) and places of worship (waste and recycling).

4. Where offering business support, the council will look to embed the principles of this waste strategy

Where the council offers support and advice to businesses, it is an opportunity to ensure the practices described in this waste strategy are being taken on board and implemented.

5. Fund circular economy research/support for local business

Sometimes the obstacle to improving waste management may not be a lack of desire, but a lack of knowledge or resources. The council will explore whether there may be beneficial research that it can fund that would support local businesses to determine what improvements they may be able to make; and will explore the potential for other forms of support that may enable business to accelerate the implementation of changes that would positively impact their waste management.

A1.0

Resident Survey Summary



A survey was conducted from 23/09/22 to 21/10/22, and a total of 2,760 responses were received.

The survey asked a number of questions seeking residents' opinions on the options that had been considered as part of mathematical modelling undertaken in support of the Recycling Strategy's development. The survey also sought residents' opinions on the council's preferred option and their wider thoughts on how to improve waste and recycling services in the borough.

The survey incorporated a number of multiple-choice questions covering a range of topics, plus three open text questions which gave residents the opportunity to express their opinions about the council's proposals, their approach to increasing recycling.

The survey outlined the council's favoured option ("Option 2") for increasing recycling and reducing waste, which includes proposals to move to fortnightly collections of black residual waste bins and to introduce separate weekly food waste collections. Residents were asked to what extent they agree or disagree with the council's proposal. A majority, 55%, agreed with the option described.

In comments about the council's proposal, the majority of comments favoured Option 2. Residents were given the opportunity to provide information on what could help them to recycle more, and to suggest any other ways that the council could improve recycling.

Residents were also asked if there is anything the council should consider when collecting additional items such as batteries, small electricals and clothes. Residents gave many suggestions on additional materials that could be collected.

Residents were also asked whether they felt the council was taking the right steps overall to increase recycling. 63% agree that the council is taking the right approach, and only 26% of people thought that the council wasn't taking enough action.

The council also sought feedback on proposals to increase recycling at properties with shared bins. Half agreed that the council is doing the right sorts of things in this area.

Finally, residents were asked to give any further comments on the council's proposals and any suggestions as to how the council could help increase recycling rates in properties with communal bins. Residents gave many suggestions on measures that could be implemented.

Overall, the survey results indicate that there is public support for the council's efforts to increase recycling in the borough, including for its proposal to introduce separate food waste collections and reduce residual waste collections to fortnightly.

A2.0

Collection Options Summary



On behalf of the council, Eunomia Research & Consulting undertook mathematical modelling of a range of different options for how we might collect waste from households in the borough in future, to understand their likely performance in terms of recycling, carbon and financials. This appendix provides a brief summary of the modelling work.

The modelling undertaken followed established practice for this type of work, and examined the costs and benefits of various collections options. The work also took account of the impacts and requirements of national and local policies (see Sections 3.0 and 4.0).

The options modelled for street-level properties are depicted in Figure 9, with similar options used for communal properties and flats above shops. The options were chosen to explore approaches which were deemed viable for the council, that would be compliant with future legal requirements (Section 4.0), that would drive up recycling, and that would reduce carbon emissions.

Figure 10. Modelling options chosen (street level properties - other properties had similar options)

	Baseline	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
Dry Recycling		Weekly Co-mingled 		Fortnightly Co-mingled 	Weekly Multit-Stream 
Food Waste	With Garden 	Separate Weekly 			
Garden Waste	Fortnightly Free 				
Residual Waste	Weekly Mainly 240-litre 	Fortnightly Mainly 240-litre 		Fortnightly 140-litre 	
	Baseline	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4

The modelling results compared the anticipated recycling performance of the different options in Waltham Forest, based on benchmarking against the performance of other similar authorities with similar collection systems.

The results also considered operational factors, such as the number of vehicles required to deliver the service and the number of crews/crew members required. Using this information, plus data around monetary factors such as fuel costs, bins/sacks costs, disposal costs and income from materials, the modelling analysed the marginal costs of each option compared to the baseline - that of Waltham Forest's current collection system.

Furthermore, the modelling examined the anticipated change in carbon emissions, compared to the baseline, of each option. This incorporated emissions from collection vehicles and the waste management system as a whole (e.g., increased recycling reducing the need for virgin materials).

A scoring criteria was established, with weightings given as appropriate to reflect the council's priorities. This assessment incorporated the use of both quantitative data from the modelling, plus qualitative evaluation on subjects such as acceptability to residents and ease of implementation.

Following the scoring process, it was agreed that Option 2 presents the most optimal solution for Waltham Forest. This option involves moving to separate weekly food waste collections, with fortnightly residual waste collections using the current bins. Option 2 has been taken forward for discussion with residents, and has been included in this Recycling Strategy.

Introducing separate food waste collections and restricting residual collection frequency is expected to lead to improvements in recycling performance. Whilst introducing a separate food waste collection service will increase costs, these will be offset through reducing the residual collection frequency, and possibly through financial support offered by the Government (Section 4.0). Both introduction of separate food waste collections and reducing the frequency of residual waste collections to fortnightly will bring about reductions in carbon emissions.



Waltham Forest