

Waste Management Plan for Northern Ireland

2019

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Glossary

AD	Anaerobic Digestion
CEP	Circular Economy Package of Directives
CEP WFD (2018)	Circular Economy Package of Directives, Waste Framework Directive (2018/851)
C&I	Commercial and Industrial
CDE	Construction, Demolition and Excavation
DAERA	Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
DOE	Department of the Environment
EC	European Commission
EDOC	Electronic Duty of Care
ELVs	End-of-Life Vehicles
GES	Good Environmental Status
HMRC	Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs
LDPs	Local Development Plans
MCAA	Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009
NIEA	Northern Ireland Environment Agency
NISRA	Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
NED	Natural Environment Division (NIEA)
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's
OSPAR	Oil Spill Prevention, Administration and Response
PfG	Programme for Government
PPS	Planning Policy Statement
RDF	Refuse Derived Fuel
rWFD	revised Waste Framework Directive (2008/98)
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SPPS	Strategic Planning Policy Statement
The Order	The Waste and Contaminated Land (Northern Ireland) Order 1997
WEEE	Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment
WfH	Waste from Households
WMPNI	Waste Management Plan for Northern Ireland
WRAP	Waste and Resources Action Programme
UK	United Kingdom

Waste Management Plan for Northern Ireland

The production of waste is a natural result of economic and social activity by businesses and consumers. There are costs and benefits involved – the resources used in the production process and the benefits gained from consuming goods and services. The key is to ensure that the value extracted from resources is not exceeded by the costs of using them, and therefore that Northern Ireland does not produce excessive amounts of waste. It is also important to make sure that waste is optimally managed, so that the costs to society of dealing with waste, including the environmental costs, are minimised.

The way in which waste is managed has changed dramatically over the last twenty years in Northern Ireland, as have attitudes towards waste management. There has been a major decrease in waste being disposed of to landfill and an increase in recycling. The key aim of the Waste Management Plan for Northern Ireland is to set Northern Ireland's intentions to work towards a sustainable and circular economy. In particular, this means using the "waste hierarchy" (waste prevention, preparing for re-use, recycling, recovery and finally disposal as a last option) as a guide to sustainable waste management.

Northern Ireland is currently developing its Environment Strategy¹, which is a long term plan for environmental protection in Northern Ireland. Scotland too has been developing an Environment Strategy for Scotland². England and Wales have already published their environmental long term plans: England has the 25 Year Environment Plan³ and Wales has the Environment Strategy for Wales⁴. It will include key themes such as, climate change, environment quality (air, water, neighbourhood), resource efficiency, natural environment, marine and fisheries (inland, sea and aquaculture). It will be the overarching environment strategy, with more specific strategies pertaining to the environment stemming from it, such as Northern Ireland's "Delivering Resource Efficiency" - Northern Ireland Waste Management Strategy⁵. It is Northern Ireland's intention to revise "Delivering Resource Efficiency" to include fundamentals of the Circular Economy Package of Directives (CEP)⁶, in due course. This is without prejudice to the views of incoming Ministers.

Over the past few years, there has been significant progress with waste and resource management in Northern Ireland. Recycling and composting of household waste has increased to 48.1% in 2017/18, with waste from households rising to 47.1% in 2017/18. The waste from households recycling rate is an European Union Directive target, whilst the household waste recycling rate is also an indicator in the draft Programme for Government

¹ <https://consultations.nidirect.gov.uk/daera-neq/esni/>

² <https://www.gov.scot/publications/analysis-report-responses-online-discussion-developing-environment-strategy-scotland/pages/3/>

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/25-year-environment-plan>

⁴ <https://gweddill.gov.wales/docs/desh/publications/060517environmentstrategyen.pdf>

⁵ <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/delivering-resource-efficiency-northern-ireland-waste-management-strategy>

⁶ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:L:2018:150:FULL&from=EN>

(PfG) framework 2016-21⁷. Local councils, who cover all household waste and some commercial and industrial waste, have reduced the amount of waste they send to landfill by about 40% since 2010.

This progress has been driven by a range of policies, including Northern Ireland Landfill Allowance Scheme. The landfill tax escalator has created a strong incentive to divert waste from landfill. Additional funding for local councils, has led to the development of new collection infrastructure.

Three Northern Ireland waste management strategies have been published to date. Each strategy required extensive scoping and review to ensure that the waste management policies included in each strategy assisted Northern Ireland in progressing waste management and met all legislative requirements.

This Waste Management Plan for Northern Ireland (WMPNI) and associated documents (detailed on page 5), combined with equivalent plans being produced by the devolved administrations in England, Scotland, and Wales, and Gibraltar, together with local council waste management plans will fulfil the requirement in Article 28 of the revised Waste Framework Directive⁸ (rWFD). Article 28 requires that Member States ensure that they establish one or more waste management plans covering all of their territory.

The WMPNI is a high level document which is non-site specific. It provides an analysis of the current waste management situation in Northern Ireland, and evaluates how it will support implementation of the objectives and provisions of the rWFD. Northern Ireland's regional planning policies seek to enable local councils to put planning strategies in place which shape the type of waste facilities in their areas and where they should go. All of these measures are helping to drive waste to be managed further up the waste hierarchy.

The WMPNI is subject to review as required by Article 30 of the rWFD and Article 19 of the Waste and Contaminated Land (Northern Ireland) Order 1997⁹ (as amended).

⁷ <https://www.northernireland.gov.uk/consultations/draft-programme-government-framework-2016-21-and-questionnaire>

⁸ [OJ L 312, 22.11.2008, p. 3–30](#)

⁹ [1997 No. 2778 \(N.I. 19\)](#)

Objectives and Scope of the Plan

This WMPNI updates the previous waste management plan for Northern Ireland, which was a collection of a series of documents. It provides an overview of waste management in Northern Ireland and fulfils the requirements of Article 28 (mandatory requirements) of the rWFD, and other required content as set out in Schedule 3 to the Waste and Contaminated Land (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 (the Order).

The mandatory requirements of Article 28 of the rWFD specify that the WMPNI should be established in accordance with Articles 1 (Subject matter and scope), 4 (Waste hierarchy), 13 (Protection of human health and environment) and 16 (Principles of self-sufficiency and proximity) of the rWFD and should contain the following information:

- An analysis of the current waste management situation in the geographical entity concerned, as well as the measures to be taken to improve environmentally sound preparing for re-use, recycling, recovery and disposal of waste and an evaluation of how the plan will support the implementation of the objectives and provisions of this rWFD.
- As appropriate, take account the geographical level and coverage of the planning area:
 - the type, quantity and source of waste generated within the territory, the waste likely to be shipped from or to the national territory, and an evaluation of the development of waste streams in the future;
 - existing waste collection schemes and major disposal and recovery installations, including any special arrangements for waste oils, hazardous waste or waste streams addressed by specific Community legislation;
 - an assessment of the need for new collection schemes, the closure of existing waste installations, additional waste installation infrastructure in accordance with Article 16 (on the proximity principle), and, if necessary, the investments related thereto;
 - sufficient information on the location criteria for site identification and on the capacity of future disposal or major recovery installations, if necessary;
 - general waste management policies, including planned waste management technologies and methods, or policies for waste posing specific management problems.

In addition, Schedule 3 to the Order, as amended, sets out other obligations for the WMPNI which have been transposed from the rWFD. These other obligations include:

- a chapter on the management of packaging and packaging waste, including measures taken pursuant to Articles 4 and 5 of the Packaging Waste Directive;
- measures to promote high quality recycling including the setting up of separate collections of waste where technically, environmentally and economically practicable;
- measures to encourage the separate collection of bio-waste with a view to the composting and digestion of bio-waste;

- measures to be taken to promote the re-use of products and preparation for re-use activities, in particular—
 - measures to encourage the establishment and support of re-use and repair networks;
 - the use of economic instruments;
 - the use of procurement criteria; and
 - the setting of quantitative objectives.
- Policies in relation to preparing for re-use, recovery and recycling targets including—
 - measures to be taken to ensure that by 2020, at least 50% by weight of waste from households is prepared for re-use or recycled;
 - measures to be taken to ensure that by 2020, at least 70% by weight of construction and demolition waste excluding—
 - hazardous waste; and
 - [F²naturally occurring material falling within code 17 05 04 in the Annex to the List of Wastes,] is subjected to material recovery.

It is not the intention of the WMPNI to introduce any new policies or to change the landscape of how waste is managed in Northern Ireland. Its core aim is to comply with the requirements of the rWFD, bringing current policies under the umbrella of a WMPNI, with a forward look at policies being considered for future waste management in Northern Ireland. The WMPNI will therefore incorporate current waste policies, including those as detailed in the current Northern Ireland Strategy, “Delivering Resource Efficiency” - Northern Ireland Waste Management Strategy under the umbrella of one WMPNI.

The Waste Management Plan and the objectives of the Waste Framework Directive

There are waste management policies in Northern Ireland which taken together deliver the objectives of the rWFD: to protect the environment and human health by preventing or reducing the adverse impacts of the generation and management of waste and by reducing overall impacts of resource use and improving the efficiency of such use. It is not, therefore, the intention of the WMPNI to introduce new policies or to change the landscape of how waste is managed in Northern Ireland. Its core aim is to bring current waste management policies under the umbrella of one national plan.

[“Delivering Resource Efficiency” – Northern Ireland Waste Management Strategy](#) details the main policies which fall under the WMPNI umbrella. In addition, the following documents contain significant plans and policies that contribute to the WMPNI:-

- [arc21 Waste Management Plan](#)
- [North West Region Waste Management Plan](#)
- [Joint Waste Management Plan](#)
- [the UK Plan for Shipments of Wastes](#)

National waste planning policy is an important part of delivering the objectives of the rWFD. Current planning should be taken into account by local councils: in assessing the suitability of areas and sites for waste development within local development plans and in determining planning applications.

- [Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland \(SPPS\): Planning for Sustainable Development, September 2015](#)
- [Regional Development Strategy 2035](#)
- [PPS 11 Planning and Waste Management](#)
- [PPS 18 Renewable Energy](#)
- [DAERA Standing Advice - NED – Anaerobic Digestion](#)

In preparing the WMPNI Northern Ireland has also drawn on a number of other sources which are referenced in this document.

Within the WMPNI, the chapter on the “Current Waste Management Situation in Northern Ireland” summarises how the Waste Hierarchy is applied in Northern Ireland. This chapter also explains how waste management is regulated by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) to prevent harm to human health and the environment.

The chapter on “Waste Arisings” summarises information on the extent, nature and sources of waste which is necessary to underpin decisions on waste management. Subsequent chapters provide further detail on actions to deliver the objectives of the rWFD

by promoting better quality recycling and, where required, new collections and infrastructure. Finally the WMPNI considers the future development of waste streams in the light of current policies and those being considered.

The WMPNI recognises that the objectives of the rWFD cannot be delivered by Government alone. It requires action by businesses, consumers, householders and local councils. The policies summarised in the WMPNI provide a framework for action by such groups.

At the local council level, waste planning authorities are responsible for producing local waste management plans that cover the land use planning aspect of waste management for their areas. Waste planning authorities should have regard to detailed planning policy on waste in Planning Policy Statement 11 and other planning policy contained on the Planning Portal¹⁰ alongside this WMPNI - in drawing up, or revising, their existing local waste management plans.

Geographic scope of the plan

This WMPNI covers the region of Northern Ireland as far as the seaward boundary of the territorial sea¹¹.

Devolved Administrations

As waste is a devolved matter, devolved administrations and Gibraltar are responsible for producing a waste management plan for their areas. Together with the WMPNI those waste management plans will collectively cover the geographical territory of the United Kingdom (UK), meeting the requirements of the UK as a Member State under Article 28(1) of the rWFD.

Wastes covered by the Plan

The legal definition of waste is set out in the rWFD. It is defined as “any substance or object which the holder discards or intends or is required to discard”.

Within this definition, waste streams are employed to categorise particular types of waste which may be produced by individuals or organisations. Primarily these are:

1. Municipal waste – household waste and commercial waste similar to household waste
2. Industrial (including agricultural) and commercial waste
3. Construction and demolition waste

¹⁰ <https://www.planningni.gov.uk/index/policy.htm>

¹¹ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2009/23/section/322>

4. Hazardous waste

Article 2 of the rWFD details the exclusions from the scope of the directive. Article 2 also details the exclusions from the scope of the directive to the extent that they are covered by other Community legislation. For example, radioactive waste and waste waters, are outside the scope of the rWFD and are, therefore, not covered by this Plan.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

What is SEA?

Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2004¹² introduced a requirement for an SEA to be produced for a number of statutory plans and programmes.

SEA is a process which seeks to look at whether a plan or programme is likely to have significant effects on the environment, (positive and negative) and where these effects are negative, to try to identify ways by which these might be avoided or mitigated.

The Assessment of the need for a SEA for the WMPNI was carried out with reference to all relevant legislation and guidance, including using, A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive¹³, and with specific reference to the Provisions on screening and exemptions section.

The WMPNI does not include site specific information, nor does it include any new framework for future development consent for future sites. The WMPNI will not set strategic direction (e.g. introduce new policy measures), but rather provides a moment-in-time review of waste management in Northern Ireland, with a forward look at future policies being considered. The framework for future development consent has already been set under already published planning policies, Regional Development Strategy, council Local Development Plans and local council waste management plans, which have previously been subject to public consultation and/or SEA assessment.

Therefore, the assessment concluded that the WMPNI does not require a SEA.

¹² <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisr/2004/280/contents/made>

¹³ A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/strategic-environmental-assessment-directive-guidance>

Current Waste Management Situation

How citizens view and deal with their waste is important for society. There are environmental and economic benefits in reducing the amount of waste produced and ensuring that all material resources are fully valued both during their productive life and at 'end of life' as waste.

Current waste policies in Northern Ireland are set out in the "Delivering Resource Efficiency" – Northern Ireland Waste Management Strategy. However, it is Northern Ireland's intention to revise this strategy to include fundamentals of the CEP, in due course, when governance arrangements allow. A more circular economy will see us keeping resources in use for as long as possible. It will allow us to extract maximum value from them, then recover and regenerate products and materials at the end of their lifespan. Initial UK-wide consultations on Reforming the Packaging Producer Responsibility Scheme, introducing a Deposit Return Scheme and a Plastic Packaging Tax have already taken place.

Waste management is defined by the rWFD as "the collection, transport, recovery and disposal of waste, including the supervision of such operations and the after-care of disposal sites, and including actions taken as a dealer or broker". The way waste is managed in Northern Ireland (and the UK) is continually evolving with the move away from landfilling the majority of waste to a more circular economy where products and materials are recovered and regenerated, whenever possible.

At the turn of the century the vast majority of waste produced in the UK had been landfilled, at a minimal (financial) cost and recycling was in its relative infancy. For example only 5% of household waste was recycled in Northern Ireland in 2000. Since that time the rate of recycling of household waste has risen rapidly to 39.7% in 2012/13 and to just over 48% on the most recent figures (2017/18).

Northern Ireland has already met its landfill diversion target to reduce the tonnage of biodegradable municipal waste to landfill to no greater than 35% of the 1995 baseline by 2020 (429,000 tonnes). Statistics indicate that Northern Ireland has met this target year on year since 2012¹⁴.

This progress has been driven by a combination of regulatory, policy and financial measures such as recycling targets, Northern Ireland Landfill Allowance Scheme, landfill tax, and targeted financial support. In 2013 the UK, including Northern Ireland, had reached a comparable level of performance with many countries in the European Union and that performance has continued to improve. For example, in 2014 the UK had reached a municipal recycling and composting rate of 44%, the same as Denmark (44%), and more than Norway (42%) and France (39%)¹⁵. The most recent data on waste arisings are detailed below.

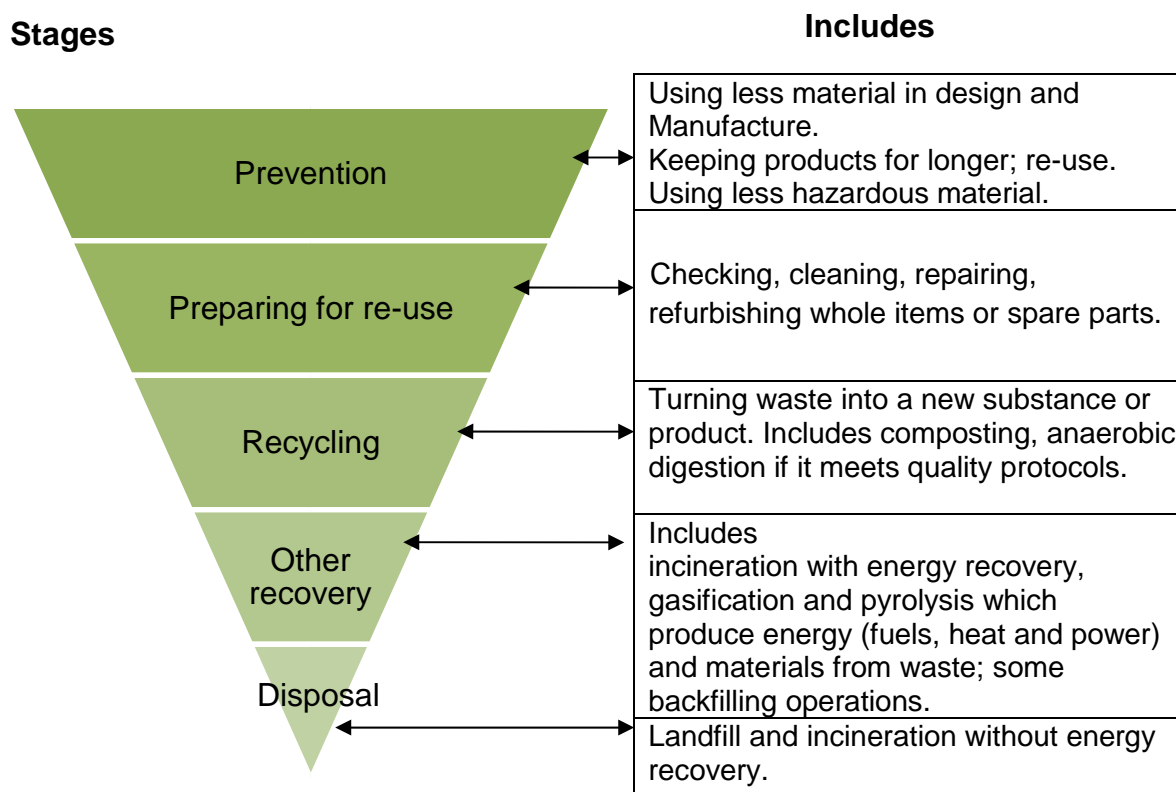
¹⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-waste-data>

¹⁵ <https://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/indicators/waste-recycling-1/assessment>

The Waste Hierarchy

In Northern Ireland, the waste hierarchy is both a guide to sustainable waste management and a legal requirement, enshrined in law through the Waste Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2011¹⁶. The hierarchy gives top priority to waste prevention, followed by preparing for reuse, then recycling, other types of recovery (including energy recovery), and last of all disposal (e.g. landfill). “Delivering Resource Efficiency” – Northern Ireland Waste Management Strategy includes a section on each of the stages of the hierarchy.

The dividends of applying the waste hierarchy will not just be environmental. Northern Ireland can save money by making products with fewer natural resources, and can reduce the costs of waste treatment and disposal.



The 2011 Regulations require everyone involved in waste management and waste producers in Northern Ireland to take, on the transfer of waste, all reasonable measures to apply the waste hierarchy except where, for specific waste streams, departing from the hierarchy is justified by lifecycle thinking on the overall effects of generating and managing the waste. Regulators, for example, under the Pollution Prevention and Control (Industrial Emissions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2013¹⁷ must exercise functions (such as granting environmental permits) for the purpose of ensuring that the waste hierarchy is applied to the generation of waste by a waste operation. To aid people to apply the waste hierarchy, DAERA has produced guidance on its application¹⁸.

¹⁶ [SR 2011 No. 127](#)

¹⁷ [SR 2013 No.160](#)

¹⁸ <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/waste-hierarchy-guidance>

Prevention

The current Waste Prevention Programme for Northern Ireland – The Road to Zero Waste¹⁹ is designed to have a favourable impact on the Northern Ireland economy, helping to promote and support ‘green jobs’, and for the protection of the environment and conservation of resources. The current Waste Prevention Programme is under review and will be revised in due course in line with the requirements of the CEP, specifically the European Union Directive on waste²⁰ which requires a much greater emphasis on prevention of waste. An interim Waste Prevention Programme – Stopping Waste in its Tracks fulfilling the requirements of the current rWFD has been drafted and will be published by end of 2019. In addition, the introduction of legislative interventions, such as the food waste regulations (discussed in later sections) and carrier bag levy²¹ support waste prevention.

Preparing for Re-use

The current Waste Prevention Programme includes re-use activity as one of the key areas for action. Action 11 – Reuse and Repair Network details, “The Department of the Environment will work with partners to develop a re-use and repair network throughout Northern Ireland, supporting re-use and preparing for re-use infrastructure”.

Recycling

The most recent statistics²² show that the rate of recycling for waste from households in Northern Ireland continues to increase, with the current policy measures, towards the European Union target of recycling 50% of household waste by 2020. DAERA keeps progress towards the targets under review by monitoring actual recycling rates and by modelling future recycling. In 2009/10 Northern Ireland met the 70% target for recovering construction and demolition waste²³. It is estimated that commercial and industrial waste reached a recycled reused or composted rate of 49.1% in 2009.

There is draft supplementary planning guidance for Anaerobic Digestion (AD). AD is a technology which is used to treat waste products, or with purpose grown crops to provide energy. It can play an important role in recycling organic waste, with energy recovery and producing nutrients. AD is not widely used in Northern Ireland for the recycling of waste. DAERA has produced Standing Advice on AD²⁴. This WMPNI sets out a number of other initiatives that are under way to boost recycling.

¹⁹ <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/waste-prevention-programme-northern-ireland-road-zero-waste>

²⁰ [Directive EU 2018/851](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32018L0851)

²¹ <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/carrier-bag-levy>

²² https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/daera/ni-environmental-statistics-report-2019_0.pdf

²³ <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/doe/waste-report-2009-2010-construction-demolition-excavation-waste-arisings-use-disposal-Northern-Ireland-2012.pdf>

²⁴ <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/daera/Standing%20Advice%20%20-%20Anaerobic%20Digestion%20-%20final.pdf>

Other Recovery

Efficient energy recovery from residual waste – of materials which cannot be reused or recycled - to deliver environmental benefits, reduce carbon impact and provide economic opportunities. The aim is to get the most energy out of waste, not to get the most waste into energy recovery. The Department of the Environment (DOE)²⁵ published a Planning Policy Statement, PPS 18 'Renewable Energy'²⁶ which sets out planning policy for development that generates energy from renewable resources and that requires the submission of a planning application.

It is for the NIEA to determine on a case by case basis whether an application for an environmental authorisation constitutes a waste recovery or a disposal operation. Inert waste can and should be recovered or recycled whenever possible. However, the disposal of inert waste in or on land i.e. landfill, remains a valid way of restoring quarries where this is a planning requirement.

Disposal

Landfill or incineration without energy recovery should usually be the last resort for waste, particularly biodegradable waste. (Incineration may be classed as recovery or disposal depending on the circumstances).

Northern Ireland Landfill Allowance Scheme, and the landfill tax is the key driver to divert waste from landfill to ensure that Northern Ireland meets European Union targets under the Landfill Directive²⁷. That does not mean that all wastes will be diverted from landfill by 2020. There are some wastes for which landfill remains the best or least worst option; these may include: some hazardous wastes – such as asbestos; certain process residues, such as pre-treated industrial wastes from which no further resources can be recovered; and waste for which the alternatives to landfill are not justified on cost or environmental and resource efficiency grounds.

Waste Regulation

Waste legislation exists to ensure that the environment and human health is protected. Effective regulation provides a level playing field in which legitimate businesses can operate and invest with confidence and thus help to create markets. However, waste regulation can impose significant burdens on business: it is therefore important that regulation is proportionate to the risk posed by waste management operations and targeted against those with poor standards of compliance or who cause a nuisance or harm, and those who deliberately flout the law.

²⁵ In 2016, the number of Departments in Northern Ireland was reduced from 12 to 9 and the strategic planning function of the Department of the Environment moved to the Department for Infrastructure.

²⁶

https://www.planningni.gov.uk/index/policy/planning_statements_and_supplementary_planning_guidance/planning_policy_statement_18_renewable_energy-2.htm

²⁷ OJ L 182, 16.7.1999, p. 1–19

NIEA is the main regulator of waste management in Northern Ireland. Among its responsibilities are the determination of applications for authorisations (permits, licences and exemptions) required under Articles 23 and 24 of the rWFD; and carrying out inspections and other compliance assessment activities.

Northern Ireland still operates a three tier system for authorisations including, environmental permitting, the waste management licensing system and exemptions from waste management licensing for smaller scale, lower risk waste treatment operations. The Environmental Better Regulation Act²⁸ was introduced in 2016, and set out a regulatory transformation programme which aims to provide a more streamlined and effective regulatory system for businesses and regulators. Since its introduction, Northern Ireland has been in the process of introducing an integrated system of environmental permitting. In a number of areas, the NIEA and other regulators have been able to reduce burdens on business by improving the clarity of application forms and guidance and by reducing the inspection of those who are already demonstrating that they are meeting standards.

Polluter pays principle

The waste producer and the waste holder should manage waste in a way that guarantees a high level of protection of the environment and human health. In accordance with the polluter-pays principle, the costs of waste management should be borne by the original waste producer or by the current or previous waste holders. The distributors of products potentially share these costs. The polluter-pays principle ensures that those responsible for producing and holding waste are incentivised to reduce and/or manage their waste in a way that reduces impacts on the environment and human health.

²⁸ [2016 c. 13](#)

Waste Arisings

Data on household waste and similar wastes managed by local councils is collected through [WasteDataFlow](#)²⁹. The most recent annual statistics on household waste and local council waste management are for 2017/18 (see below). Data on other types of waste (commercial and industrial waste and construction and demolition waste) are available from a variety of sources. The latest estimates of total arisings of waste in Northern Ireland from households, commercial and industrial businesses and the construction sector were 6.7 million in 2016. This figure is up from waste arisings estimated in 2009, which was 5.9 million tonnes.

Data on waste collected by local councils, which includes both household waste and waste from households, has greatly improved through the creation of WasteDataFlow. Following on from the UK developing the voluntary national electronic duty of care (EDOC) system³⁰, Northern Ireland is participating in the UK Waste Tracking Service project to transform waste tracking in the UK by overhauling the digital and paper systems for waste tracking, in order to meet regulatory requirements under the CEP, support wider industry innovation and a more circular resource efficient economy.

Household waste

There were 874,257 tonnes of household waste collected in Northern Ireland in 2017/18, a decrease of 0.2% on the amount collected in 2016/17 (875,965 tonnes), (see breakdown in Figure 1)³¹. It is estimated that the percentage of household waste that undergoes energy recovery is approximately 16.6%³². Since 2006/07, total household waste arisings in Northern Ireland have fallen by 6.9%. In 2017/18, 48.1%, of household waste generated was recycled, re-used or composted. This is an increase of 6.0% from 42% in 2014/15. Household waste per capita has fallen 11.3% since 2007/08, with 467 kilograms collected in 2017/18 of which approximately 220 kilograms was recycled, composted or re-used. The landfill rate for household waste has recorded a new low of 32.0% in 2017/18, a drop of 4.7 percentage points on the 2016/17 rate of 36.7% and a fall from a high of 72.3% in 2006/07.

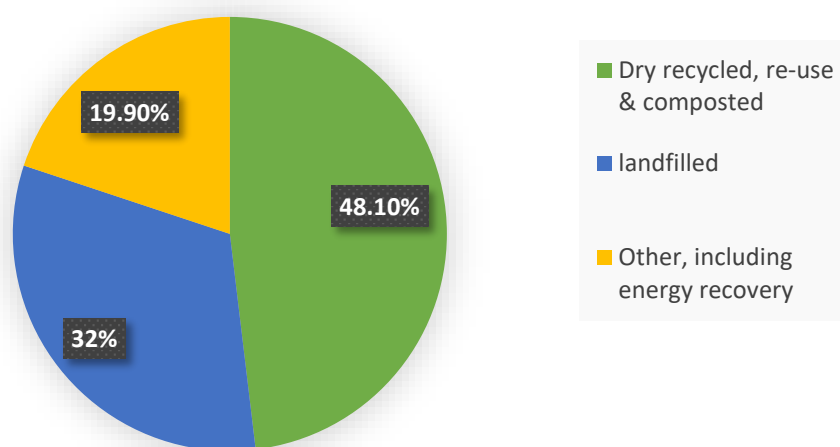
²⁹ <http://www.wastedataflow.org/>

³⁰ <https://www.edoconline.co.uk/>

³¹ https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/daera/ni-environmental-statistics-report-2019_0.pdf

³²Using the Data Tables: <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/northern-ireland-local-authority-collected-municipal-waste-management-statistics-2017>

Figure 1: Waste Management Method for Household Waste in Northern Ireland 2017/18 - proportion of tonnages



Based on just over 874,257 tonnes of total household waste arisings - 2017/18

UK data³³ shows that for Northern Ireland the waste from households recycling rate has steadily been increasing since 2012, except for the year 2015. The most recent published waste from households recycling figure was 47.1% in 2017/18.

Waste from households is a slightly different measure which, in Northern Ireland, gives a lower recycling rate when compared to that for household waste. Waste from households uses a different definition than household waste. This new waste from households (WfH) recycling rate was introduced for statistical purposes to provide a harmonised UK indicator with a comparable calculation in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland). The main differences are summarised in the following web link:

https://www.wastedataflow.org/documents/guidancenotes/NorthernIreland/OtherGuidanceNotes/WfHrecyclingguidanceNI_v3.pdf

The quarterly differences in the two measures can be seen from 2013/14 onwards in the following web linked data: <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/northern-ireland-local-authority-collected-municipal-waste-management-statistics-time-series-data>.

Commercial and Industrial Waste

In 2009, 1.3 million tonnes of waste were generated by businesses³⁴. The industrial sector accounted for 0.8 million tonnes and the commercial sector 0.5 million tonnes.

³³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-waste-data>

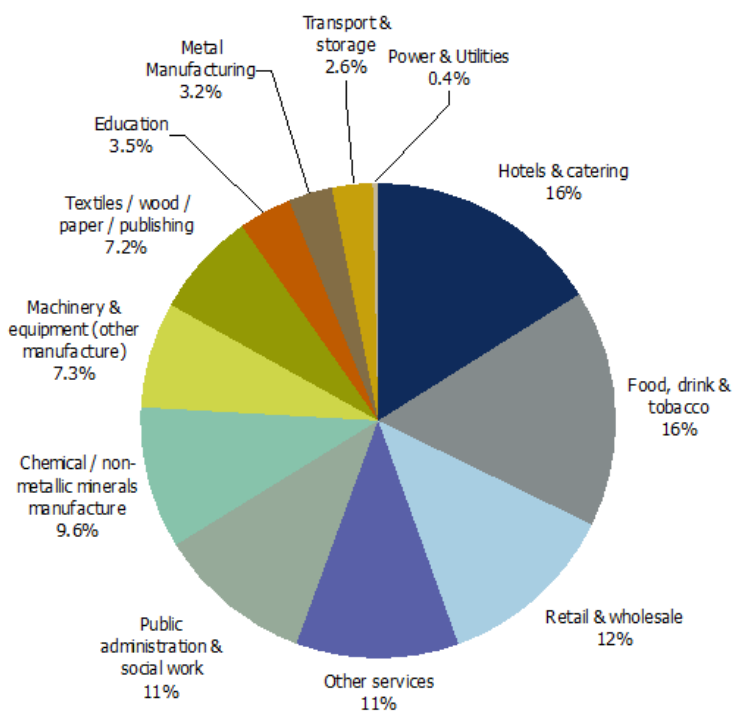
³⁴ http://www.wrapni.org.uk/sites/files/wrap/Northern_Ireland_CI_waste_estimates_2009_v4_1.4bb45bd7.11553%5B1%5D.pdf

The report estimated that 49.1% of commercial and industrial waste was recycled, reused or composted in 2009 and 23% was sent to landfill. The report also provided indicative figures of the percentage of landfilled waste that has the potential to be reused or recovered by sector (Figure 2). Larger enterprises, with more than 50 employees, produced 0.89 million tonnes of commercial and industrial waste in 2009, or 68.8% of total commercial and industrial waste.

Comparison with previous Northern Ireland commercial and industrial surveys to ascertain trends in waste arisings and waste management methods is problematic, due to the different methodologies used and the relatively large uncertainty around estimates. Therefore, no assertions on waste arising trends are included. However, more up to date data and trends can be seen at a UK level³⁵.

It is recognised that development of improved data collection is important to understand waste arisings and waste management methods, and trends. See the section – “Evaluation of the development of waste streams in the future”.

Figure 2: Landfilled Commercial and Industrial waste that is potentially reusable or recoverable by sector in 2009 (Indicative)



Source: WRAP

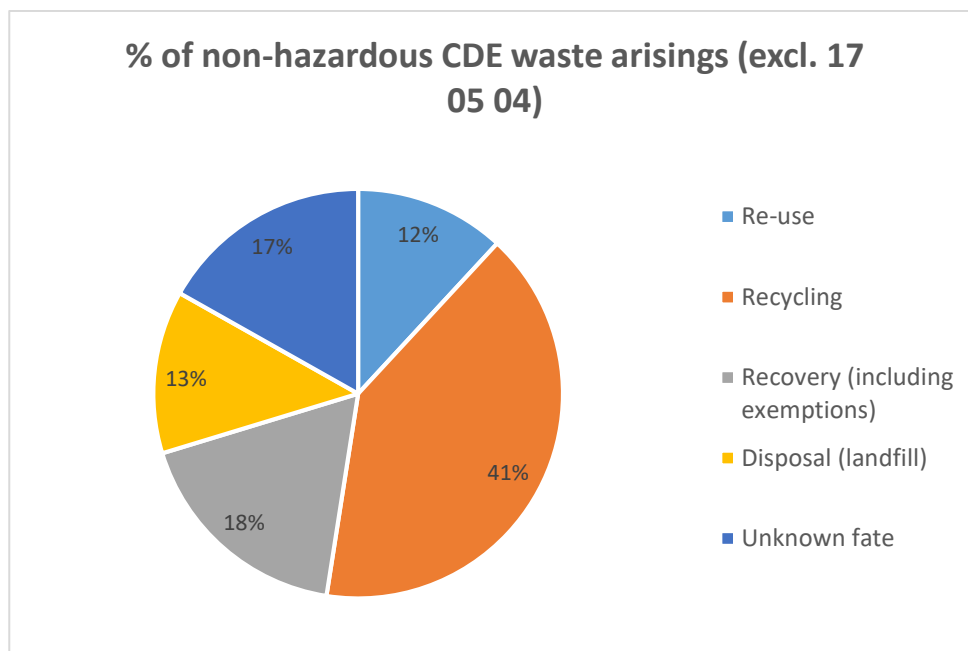
The latest estimates of combined C&I waste tonnages come from the Northern Ireland component of the 2016 Waste Statistics Regulations data (based on factors derived from the 2009 study) and amount to c 1.1 million tonnes.

³⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-waste-data>

Construction Waste

The construction, demolition and excavation (CDE) sector in Northern Ireland is the largest contributing sector to the total waste generation. It generated 3.55 million tonnes of waste in 2009/10³⁶. Figure 3 shows the percentage of non-hazardous CDE waste arisings (excl. 17 05 04) subject to the rWFD target by waste management method for 2009/10. The assessments indicate that Northern Ireland just met the rWFD target in 2009/10, recycling or recovering approximately 70% of non-hazardous construction and demolition waste (excluding soils and stones). Estimates for 2016 suggest that this figure increased to 79.4%. More up to date data and trends can be seen at a UK level³⁷. The UK recovery rate from non-hazardous C&D waste has remained at similar levels from 2010 to 2016 and has been comfortably above the minimum target of 70%, which the UK must meet in 2020.

Figure 3: Waste Management Method of non-hazardous waste subject to the rWFD target 2009/10



Based on total non hazardous CDE waste arisings (exc. 17 05 04) of 1,212,000 tonnes
Source: RPS Planning & Development

Hazardous waste

In Northern Ireland, hazardous waste controls have been put in place by way of the Hazardous Waste Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005³⁸ (as amended). The purpose of these regulations is to provide an effective system of control for hazardous wastes and to make sure that they are soundly managed from their point of production to their final destination for disposal or recovery. A standard coding system has been introduced

³⁶ <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/doe/waste-report-2009-2010-construction-demolition-excavation-waste-arisings-use-disposal-Northern-Ireland-2012.pdf>

³⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-waste-data>

³⁸ S.R. 2005 No. 300 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisr/2005/300/contents/made>

whereby a consignment note with a unique code must be used for a particular movement of hazardous waste. NIEA dispense, control and administer these notes. At present, Northern Ireland has very limited disposal facilities for hazardous waste but does have storage and treatment facilities. Due to economy of scale the majority of hazardous waste disposal and treatment does not take place in Northern Ireland. However, all movements of waste occur with a uniquely coded consignment note.

Waste: imports and exports

The UK imports around 167 million tonnes of goods and raw materials from abroad each year, including food, electrical items, clothing and a range of other products³⁹. This allows the UK to access goods which can be made more cheaply elsewhere or from materials not available in the UK.

In March 2019, Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) published a slide pack aimed at providing an overview of Northern Ireland trade, from various data sources (in monetary terms)⁴⁰. The NISRA website includes details of imports and exports at a Northern Ireland level, and other sources of data and information. It also includes an interactive trade in goods map developed to allow users to explore official trade in goods data by country and world region using data from HMRC's Regional Trade Statistics.

In turn, as well as importing and exporting goods, the UK imports nearly 930 thousand tonnes of waste materials and exports approximately 16.3 million tonnes of materials for recycling per year.

This ensures that much of the recyclable waste collected by local councils and waste management companies is ultimately recycled.

The materials that the UK exports for recovery include glass, paper, plastic and scrap metal which are all traded on the international market. The largest volume of materials exported for recovery is metals, followed by paper and cardboard. Plastics and glass are also exported for recovery in significant volumes. The UK's principal trading partners are the European Union and European Free Trade Association countries, but also include countries as diverse as Turkey, India, and China (which is the main export destination for paper recycling). However, restrictions on plastic exports have changed the markets the UK export to, with countries such as Malaysia and Turkey becoming more prominent.

Northern Ireland, also exports refuse derived fuel (RDF) mainly to continental Europe and Scandinavia for energy recovery. RDF is mixed solid waste that has been pre-treated so it consists largely of combustible components such as plastic and biodegradable waste which is unsuitable for recycling. As much as possible of any recyclable material has already been removed and sent to be recycled as part of pre-treatment. Exports of RDF from Northern Ireland have remained relatively stable for the years from 2014 to 2018, with 139 thousand tonnes in 2014; a peak of 155 thousand tonnes in 2017; and most

³⁹ 2017 HMRC trade data, all commodity codes

<https://www.uktradeinfo.com/statistics/BuildYourOwnTables/Pages/Home.aspx>

⁴⁰ <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics/eu-exit-analysis/eu-exit-trade-analysis>

recently 129 thousand tonnes in 2018⁴¹. Exports of wood/biomass for energy recovery are not included within the RDF data.

Waste shipment controls

There are strict controls on what waste can be exported and to which countries. These controls stem from the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their disposal. The Convention provides a global system for controlling the export of hazardous wastes and wastes collected from households. In addition, Council Decision C(2001)107 (as amended)⁴² established the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Control System for the control of movement of wastes destined for recovery operations⁴³. These requirements have been implemented in the UK law by the European Union Waste Shipment Regulations and the UK Transfrontier Shipment of Waste Regulations 2007⁴⁴. The legislation requires that those involved in the shipment of waste take all necessary steps to ensure waste is managed in an environmentally sound manner throughout its shipment and during its recycling and recovery. These controls prohibit any waste exports from the UK and European Union for disposal such as landfill or incineration and no hazardous waste may be exported from the UK and European Union to developing countries. They also require that waste should only be exported to developing countries for recovery when the country of destination has indicated that it wishes to accept it and when it will be treated in facilities that operate to a broadly equivalent standard to those in the UK and European Union.

These European Union controls are also supplemented by the UK Plan for Shipments of Waste⁴⁵, which generally prohibits the import to and export of waste from the UK destined for disposal. The UK Plan for Shipments of Waste implements principles of self-sufficiency in waste disposal, as defined by the Basel Convention and the objectives set out in the Waste Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2011⁴⁶.

Enforcement of waste shipments legislation

International Shipment of Waste is a reserved matter. The Environment Agency is the competent authority for transit in the UK, whilst NIEA is the competent authority for destination and despatch in Northern Ireland. Inspection of waste shipments will help to prevent and disrupt illegal shipment of waste. In taking this work forward, NIEA works closely with UK customs authorities and other environmental agencies, the shipping lines and overseas regulators.

Waste producers also have an important role to play in ensuring the waste they produce, or are responsible for collecting, is treated in a responsible manner throughout the chain of management and the risk of subsequent illegal export minimised.

⁴¹ <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/export-records-rdf-shipped-northern-ireland>

⁴² <http://www.oecd.org/env/waste/30654501.pdf>

⁴³ <https://www.oecd.org/env/waste/guidance-manual-control-transboundary-movements-recoverable-wastes.pdf>

⁴⁴ [SI 2007 No. 1711](#)

⁴⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-plan-for-shipments-of-waste>

⁴⁶ [SR 2011 No. 127](#)

Waste Services

Managing waste further up the waste hierarchy has required a change in Northern Ireland's waste management practices. As waste is increasingly treated as a resource it has led to more complex waste management services. Waste services, more specifically waste collection schemes and major disposal and recovery installations for municipal waste, are a matter for local councils to develop fit for purpose local solutions within the context of the Waste and Contaminated Land (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 and subsequent Regulations. Waste management services managed by local councils have a level of consistency across Northern Ireland. Waste services for business waste are largely provided by the private sector.

Measures to promote high quality recycling

From 1 January 2015⁴⁷, local councils have been required to collect waste paper, metal, plastic or glass by way of separate collection where this is necessary to ensure that waste undergoes recovery operations in accordance with Articles 4 and 13 of the rWFD and to facilitate or improve recovery; and where such separate collection is technically, environmentally and economically practicable. In addition, the Food Waste Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015⁴⁸, placed duties on obligated food businesses and collectors to separately collect food waste to improve recycling.

DAERA has been working with local councils to increase the frequency and quality of waste collections and make it easier to recycle. Between 2014 and 2018, DAERA (prior to 2016 the DOE) provided assistance to local councils through Rethink Waste Funding to improve recycling services. See "Need for additional infrastructure" and "Collection infrastructure" sections for more details.

Local council waste collection schemes have developed significantly since 2013. All local councils now operate a 3 bin/box kerbside waste collection scheme, with collection predominantly on a fortnightly basis. Although there are inconsistencies in bin colours across local councils, the majority use a brown bin for food waste and garden waste, a blue bin for mixed dry recyclables and a black/grey bin for residual waste. All local councils are required to collect waste paper, metal, plastic or glass and food waste, but most councils actually collect a wider selection of household wastes e.g. garden waste, cardboard, drinks cartons. In addition, to kerbside collections local councils offer additional recycling facilities at 97 recycling centres and in excess of 350 council operated bring banks⁴⁹ for the recycling of separate wastes such as glass, cans, textiles and clothing.

⁴⁷ [SR 2011 No. 127](#)

⁴⁸ [SR 2015 No. 14](#)

⁴⁹ <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/topics/waste/public-registers>

To enhance resource efficiency throughout Northern Ireland, DAERA funds work by the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP), which advises local councils and others, including on best practice in collections. WRAP's current programme includes:

- Support to local councils to assist in increasing recycling in low recycling rate areas, including urban areas and low performing schemes (including technical, and communications support and campaigns);
- Provision of recycling market information to the waste sector; and,
- Provision of developed options for potential future policy to meet municipal waste recycling targets from 2021, as specified in the CEP.

Separate collection of biowaste

Local council's commenced separate kerbside collection of biowaste from 2006 onwards⁵⁰. Following the introduction of separate biowaste collection, the Food Waste Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015⁵¹, were introduced, which, placed a duty:

- on food businesses, producing in excess of 5kg of food waste per week to present food waste for separate collection;
- on any person who produces food waste (other than a householder) to ensure that food waste is not deposited in a lateral drain or public sewer;
- on collectors of waste to ensure that separately collected food waste is not mixed with other waste to the extent that would hamper future recycling; and,
- on an operator of a landfill to not accept separately collected food waste.

All local councils now collect food waste either on its own or with garden waste, usually on a fortnightly basis throughout the year, providing quality feedstocks for composting, with a small percentage going to anaerobic digestion.

⁵⁰ <https://www.wastedataflow.org/>

⁵¹ [SR 2015 No. 14](#)

Arrangements for Hazardous Waste

The Hazardous Waste Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005, as amended⁵² apply to those who produce, broker/deal, carry and receive hazardous waste to keep, treat or dispose of it. Hazardous wastes are those which are dangerous and difficult to handle. Hazardous waste, as defined in the rWFD, means waste which displays one or more of the hazardous properties listed in Annex III to the Directive e.g. corrosive, flammable, toxic etc. NIEA is the regulator of hazardous waste in Northern Ireland. The NIEA, together with the Environment Agency, Natural Resource Wales and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency produced a detailed technical guidance document called 'Technical Guidance WM3, Waste Classification - Guidance on the classification and assessment of waste'⁵³ to assist with the definition and classification of hazardous waste.

The purpose of the above regulations is to provide an effective system of control for hazardous wastes and to make sure that they are soundly managed from their point of production to their final destination for disposal or recovery. These regulations include restrictions on the mixing of wastes, revised requirements for record keeping, periodic inspections of waste producers' facilities by NIEA and fixed penalty notices for certain offences. A standard coding system has been introduced whereby a consignment note with a unique code must be used for a particular movement of hazardous waste. NIEA dispense, control and administer these notes. A guide to consigning hazardous waste has been produced by NIEA⁵⁴.

At present, Northern Ireland has very limited disposal facilities for hazardous waste but does have storage and treatment facilities. Due to economy of scale the majority of hazardous waste disposal and treatment does not take place in Northern Ireland. PPS11: Planning and Waste Management includes hazardous waste planning policy under section WM2. This includes the requirement for an Environmental Impact Assessment when a specific site for a hazardous waste facility is being sought.

Arrangements for Construction and Demolition Waste

The UK is committed to meeting its target under the rWFD of recovering at least 70% by weight, of non-hazardous construction and demolition waste⁵⁵ by 2020.

UK estimates for recovery rate from non-hazardous C&D waste have been calculated and reported in accordance with the rWFD. The methodology for England, which constitutes just over 90% of this type of waste generated in the UK, was originally devised in conjunction with industry, and although not identical, efforts have been made to

⁵² [SR 2005 No. 300](#)

⁵³ <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/hazardous-waste>

⁵⁴ <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/guide-consigning-hazardous-waste>

⁵⁵ This is construction and demolition waste, excluding hazardous waste and naturally occurring material falling within code 17 05 04 in the Schedule to the List of Wastes (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2005

[SR 2005 No. 301](#)

synchronise approaches and methodologies across the rest of the UK devolved administrations.

The UK has been comfortably meeting the 2020 target of recovering at least 70% of non-hazardous C&D waste throughout the calculated time series, with recovery rates of 90% and above since 2010. The latest data for 2016 indicates a recovery rate of 91.0% for the UK as a whole.

Table 1: Recovery rate from non-hazardous Construction and Demolition Waste, UK, 2010 - 2016⁵⁶

Year	Percentage
2010	89.7%
2011	91.4%
2012	91.1%
2013	91.2%
2014	91.5%
2015	91.1%
2016	91.0%

Source: Defra Statistics

Arrangements for Marine Waste

Marine waste can have environmental impacts through accidental pollution from ships in the course of navigation or lawful operations, pollution caused by unlawful operational discharges by ships, such as oil, waste or sewage, or physical damage caused by groundings or collisions.

Marine waste is regulated by both domestic law and international conventions to which the UK is a signatory. These are the OSPAR Convention 1992; the London Convention 1996; and the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (MCAA)⁵⁷, Marine Licensing legislation and guidance in Northern Ireland⁵⁸ plus the Merchant Shipping (Prevention of Pollution by Sewage and Garbage from Ships) Regulations 2008⁵⁹ which provides domestic regulation.

A Marine Plan for Northern Ireland shall set out general and sectoral policies for future sustainable development in the marine area, help marine users understand factors to ensure co-existence with other marine activities, and set out issues to be considered, including in relation to natural heritage, water quality and litter. Public authorities must take authorisation or enforcement decisions that might affect the UK marine area in accordance with the UK Marine Policy Statement⁶⁰ and relevant marine plans.

⁵⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-waste-data>

⁵⁷ [2009 c. 23](#)

⁵⁸ <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/marine-licensing>

⁵⁹ [SI 2008 No. 3257](#) & [SI 2010 No. 895](#)

⁶⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-marine-policy-statement>

Northern Ireland recently consulted on its draft marine plan. The draft Marine Plan is made up of two plans, one for the inshore region⁶¹ under the Marine Act (Northern Ireland) 2013⁶² and one for the offshore region⁶³ under the MCAA. The draft Marine Plan, therefore, combines the plans for both the inshore and offshore regions into one document and will be collectively known as the Marine Plan for Northern Ireland once adopted⁶⁴.

Since 1998, in compliance with international obligations, the UK Administrations have, with some minor exceptions, only licensed the disposal at sea of capital and maintenance dredging and small amounts of fish waste. Most marine dredging and disposal is for the purposes of navigation and existing and future port development, though other works can take place to facilitate the construction of pipelines, outfalls and tunnels.

Disposal of dredged material at sea is regulated by DAERA under the licensing provisions of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. The licensing provisions are applied so as to conform with the requirements of the rWFD. Those wishing to dispose of marine waste must demonstrate that appropriate consideration has been given to the internationally agreed hierarchy of waste management options for sea disposal. Waste is not accepted for disposal where appropriate opportunities exist to re-use, recycle or treat the waste without undue risks to either human health or the environment, or disproportionate costs.

Regulators undertake a detailed evaluation of the potential adverse effects of any dredging activity or deposit on the marine ecosystem and others using the sea. This has to take account of any accompanying environmental statement or additional data that may be requested in support of the application and international obligations under the OSPAR Convention and London Convention, as well as any other available guidance. DAERA considers the potential adverse effects on the marine environment, habitats and wildlife from dredging activity and helps meet statutory obligations in relation to European Sites.

Fish waste from processing of fish at sea may be disposed in the marine environment but this is subject to the marine licensing provisions of the Marine and Coastal Access Act.

Burial of waste at sea is generally discouraged but is allowed in some circumstances, subject to licensing. There are no designated sites where burials may take place in Northern Ireland.

Marine Litter Pollution

Marine litter is regulated through the above laws and conventions and also the Litter Order (Northern Ireland) 1994⁶⁵. Strategic direction is provided through the UK Marine Strategy⁶⁶,

⁶¹ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/nia/2013/10/section/2/enacted>

⁶² [2013 c.10](#)

⁶³ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2009/23/section/322>

⁶⁴ <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/consultations/consultation-proposed-marine-plan>

⁶⁵ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisi/1994/1896/contents/made>

⁶⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/marine-strategy-part-one-uk-initial-assessment-and-good-environmental-status>

the Marine Policy Statement⁶⁷, the Marine Plan when adopted and the Northern Ireland Marine Litter Strategy⁶⁸.

The UK Marine Strategy Part Three sets out the UK programme of measures that contribute to the achievement and maintenance of Good Environmental Status (GES) in UK seas by 2020. This fulfils the requirement in the Marine Strategy Framework Directive to identify the measures which need to be taken in order to achieve or maintain GES. In terms of marine litter GES is reached when the amount of litter and its degradation products on coastlines and in the marine environment is reducing and levels do not pose a significant risk to the environment and marine life.

The Northern Ireland Marine Litter Strategy has been in existence since 2013. It aims to address marine litter pollution by limiting the amount of litter entering the sea and by removing some of the litter already present.

Northern Ireland has monitored marine litter since 2012 by carrying out regular marine litter surveys on specific beaches these surveys suggest the vast majority of marine litter is plastics.

Business Waste

Business waste incorporates commercial waste and industrial waste. Generally, businesses are expected to make their own arrangements for the collection, treatment and disposal of their wastes. Waste from smaller shops and trading estates where local council waste collection agreements are in place will generally be treated as municipal waste (this is waste similar to household waste i.e. paper, card, etc).

All business, from the micro-business to the multi-nationals should have access to regular, efficient and affordable waste collection and recycling services, whether provided by the private sector or their local council.

Waste prevention sits at the top of the waste hierarchy as preventing waste has the best environmental outcome. It can save businesses and consumers money, and avoids costs to businesses and local councils of dealing with the waste that would otherwise be produced. Northern Ireland's interim Waste Prevention Programme – Stopping Waste in its Tracks provides details of waste prevention initiatives in the business sector, including measures to prevent food waste and water refill initiatives.

The Courtauld Commitment 2025⁶⁹ is a voluntary agreement with organisations across the food system to make food & drink production and consumption more sustainable. At its heart is a ten-year commitment to identify priorities, develop solutions and implement changes to cut the carbon, water and waste associated with food and drink by at least

⁶⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-marine-policy-statement>

⁶⁸ <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/northern-ireland-marine-litter-strategy>

⁶⁹ <http://www.wrap.org.uk/food-drink/business-food-waste/courtauld-2025>

one-fifth in 10 years. This agreement will help the UK deliver its part in Sustainable Development Goal 12.3, to halve food waste by 2030⁷⁰.

The CEP Waste Framework Directive (WFD 2018)⁷¹ introduced a municipal rather than solely household focus to include waste similar in nature to household waste and, also introduced challenging municipal waste recycling targets from 2025 onwards. The municipal waste definition now includes waste similar to household waste from businesses, such as: the education, hospitality, food manufacturing, retail and wholesale, healthcare and transport sectors, and offices.

DAERA recently commissioned WRAP to review current collections and recycling figures in Northern Ireland and to make recommendations as to how Northern Ireland can meet these future municipal recycling targets. This review will help to inform future decisions on collection schemes that are needed to help Northern Ireland meet its obligations under the CEP WFD 2018 to recycle 65% of municipal waste by 2035. Other policies will be considered for business waste as necessary. This is without prejudice to the views of incoming Ministers.

Packaging and Producer Responsibility

Packaging fulfils an important role. It protects food and other goods on the journey from where they are made to where they are used. Its key role is to avoid spoilage and damage, which create waste, in the supply system and in the home. However, reducing packaging, without harming functionality, as well as using refillable and reusable packaging, can save businesses money, reduce waste for them and deliver environmental benefits.

The UK, including Northern Ireland transposed the requirements of the Packaging and Packaging Waste (94/62/EC, amended by EC Directives 1882/2003, 2004/12, and 2005/20, and EC Regulation 219/2009/EC) through the Packaging (Essential Requirements) Regulations 2003⁷² (as amended) which implements the single market and optimisation aspects of the Packaging Directive and the Producer Responsibility Obligations (Packaging Waste) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007⁷³ (as amended), (using the enabling powers of the Producer Responsibility Obligations (Northern Ireland) Order 1998⁷⁴) which establishes a 'producer responsibility' regime and set targets for the recycling and recovery of packaging waste.

The Producer Responsibility Regulations make producers (i.e. businesses that manufacture, import and sell certain products) responsible for ensuring a proportion of their products are recycled and recovered once they have reached the end of their life.

⁷⁰ <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>

⁷¹ [OJ L 150, 14.6.2018, p. 109–140](#)

⁷² [SI 2003 No. 1941](#)

⁷³ [SR 2007 No. 198](#)

⁷⁴ [1998 No. 1762 \(N.I. 16\)](#)

Targets are in place until 2020, which will mean an increase in recycling for plastics, aluminium and split targets for glass based on the end use (i.e. remelt or aggregate). The targets will deliver environmental and economic benefits as well as ensure the UK continues to meet the rWFD targets.

Northern Ireland has recently joined with other devolved administrations in consulting on extending producer responsibility for packaging. This would extend producer responsibility for a product to the post-use stage. This incentivises producers to design their products to make it easier for them to be re-used, dismantled and/or recycled at end of life. In addition, Northern Ireland has also jointly consulted on the introduction of a Deposit Return Scheme, to help reduce litter and increase recycling. Further consultations on these policy changes are expected, and Northern Ireland will decide how to take these measures forward in due course. This is without prejudice to the views of incoming Ministers.

Waste electrical and electronic equipment, batteries and vehicles

Statutory producer responsibility regimes in the UK also cover waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE), batteries and end-of-life vehicles (ELVs). These regimes all provide for producers to bear the financial costs of collecting, treating and recycling / recovering a proportion of their waste products/packaging to meet legal targets and minimum standards. For batteries there is a 45% collection requirement for portable batteries, with a landfill disposal and incineration ban in place for industrial and automotive batteries. For ELVs, there is a 95% reuse, recycling and recovery requirement. From 2019, the collection rate for WEEE is 65%. The regimes achieve this in a number of ways, but typically through administrative processes such as producer registration, approvals of compliance schemes and the authorisation of treatment facilities. Northern Ireland will review these three schemes along with the rest of the UK during 2020 -2021. This is without prejudice to the views of incoming Ministers.

Assessment of need for new collection schemes and infrastructure/closure of waste infrastructure

Infrastructure

DAERA recognises the importance of supporting the right waste management infrastructure at the right time and in the right location. Northern Ireland aims to have the appropriate waste reprocessing and treatment infrastructure constructed and operated effectively at all levels of the waste hierarchy to enable the most efficient treatment of Northern Ireland's waste and resources.

NIEA regulates the closure of authorised waste operations through a surrender process (except exemptions from waste management⁷⁵). Operators of regulated facilities must make an application to the regulator as required under regulations 22 and 23 of the Pollution Prevention and Control (Industrial Emissions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2013⁷⁶ for an environmental permit or Article 13 of the Order for a waste management licence. It is also possible to surrender part of an Environmental Permit, for example, if the operator is reducing the extent of a permitted site. Where there is a partial surrender, the regulator may need to vary the permit conditions to reflect this. Specific provisions apply to the closure of landfill sites when an operator ceases accepting waste for disposal and their site enters the aftercare phase. Closed landfill sites fall into three categories:

- (i) sites that closed after 16 July 2001 and are regulated in accordance with the requirements of the Landfill Directive,
- (ii) sites that are permitted but closed before 16 July 2001; and
- (iii) historic closed landfills.

When the waste in the landfill has stabilised physically and chemically, the operator may apply to the regulator to surrender their permit.⁷⁷

Proximity principle

The rWFD establishes the principle of 'proximity'. This is within the context of the requirement on Member States to establish an integrated and adequate network of waste disposal installations for recovery of mixed municipal waste collected from private households. The requirement includes where such collection also covers waste from other producers.

⁷⁵ [SR 2003 No. 493](#)

⁷⁶ [SR 2013 No.160](#)

⁷⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/landfill-epr-502-and-other-permanent-deposits-of-waste-how-to-surrender-your-environmental-permit>

The network must enable waste to be disposed of, or be recovered, in one of the nearest appropriate installations, by means of the most appropriate methods and technologies, in order to ensure a high level of protection for the environment and public health.

The rWFD also requires that the network shall be designed in such a way as to enable Member States to move towards the aim of self-sufficiency in waste disposal and the recovery of waste. However, Member States must take into account geographical circumstances or the need for specialised installations for certain types of waste and the rWFD makes it clear that each Member State does not have to possess the full range of final recovery facilities.

This principle must be applied when decisions are taken on the location of appropriate waste facilities.

Waste Planning

The planning system in Northern Ireland was reformed and restructured in 2015 from a unitary system where all planning powers rested with, the Department of the Environment (DOE), to a new two-tier model of delivery whereby local councils have primary responsibility for the implementation of the following key planning functions:

- local plan-making;
- development management (excluding regionally significant applications); and
- planning enforcement.

The Department for Infrastructure retained responsibility for regional planning policy, the determination of regionally significant and called-in applications, and planning legislation. It also provides oversight, guidance for local councils, governance and performance management functions.

The [Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland \(SPPS\): Planning for Sustainable Development, September 2015](#)⁷⁸ is a statement of policy on important planning matters that should be addressed across Northern Ireland. It has a statutory basis under Part 1 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011. The provisions of the SPPS apply to the whole of Northern Ireland and they must be taken into account in the preparation of a Local Development Plan (LDP) by local councils e.g. Belfast City Council LDP⁷⁹. Supplementing the SPPS are a number of Planning Policy Statements (PPSs) which set out the policies on particular aspects of land-use planning and apply to the whole of Northern Ireland. Their contents must be taken into account in preparing development plans and are also material to individual planning applications and appeals.

⁷⁸ https://www.planningni.gov.uk/index/policy/spps_28_september_2015-3.pdf

⁷⁹ <https://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/buildingcontrol-environment/Planning/ldp-plan-strategy.aspx#ldp>

PPS 11 Planning and Waste Management⁸⁰ sets out planning policies for the development of waste management facilities.

The provision of waste facilities and infrastructure can make a valuable contribution towards sustainable development. The aim of the SPPS in relation to waste management is to support wider government policy focused on the sustainable management of waste, and a move towards resource efficiency.

The SPPS has been agreed by the Northern Ireland Executive and it is judged to be in general conformity with the Regional Development Strategy 2035⁸¹ which sets out strategic guidance which is used in the preparation of development plans, planning policy statements and urban regeneration initiatives. It, like the SPPS, includes requirements for managing waste sustainably, including application of the Waste Hierarchy principles and Proximity Principle.

Councils should set out policies and proposals in their LDPs that support the SPPS Waste Management Regional Strategic Objectives and Policy, tailored to the local circumstances of the plan area. Local councils must assess the likely extent of future waste management facilities for the plan area. Specific sites for the development of waste management facilities should be identified in the LDP together with key site requirements. In deciding which sites and areas to identify for such facilities, councils should assess their suitability against the criteria set out in the policy. This includes the physical and environmental constraints on development, existing and proposed neighbouring land uses, and any significant adverse impacts on the quality of the local environment.

Local councils remain responsible for developing local council waste management plans as part of their wider strategic planning responsibilities, in support of the WMPNI.

Location

Key statistics on waste management infrastructure (numbers, locations and capacities of operational waste management sites including major disposal and recovery installations) are held on the NIEA's public registers⁸².

Following local government reform in Northern Ireland in 2015 the revised local council groups reviewed their waste management plans:

arc21 Waste Management Plan comprises of 6 councils: Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council; Ards and North Down Borough Council; Belfast City Council; Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council; Mid and East Antrim Borough Council (formerly: Ballymena Borough Council, Carrickfergus Borough Council and, Larne Borough Council); and, Newry, Mourne and Down District Council.

⁸⁰ https://www.planningni.gov.uk/index/policy/planning_statements_and_supplementary_planning_guidance/pps11.htm

⁸¹ <https://www.planningni.gov.uk/index/policy/rds2035.pdf>

⁸² <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/topics/waste/public-registers>

North West Region Waste Management Plan comprises of 2 councils: Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council (formerly: Ballymoney Borough Council, Coleraine Borough Council, Limavady Borough Council, and Moyle District Council); and, Derry City and Strabane District Council.

Joint Waste Management Plan, comprises 3 councils: Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council; Fermanagh and Omagh District Council; and, Mid Ulster District Council (formerly: Cookstown District Council, Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough Council and Magherafelt District Council).

Each of the three local council waste management plans provide key details regarding waste management infrastructure in their geographical area, including major disposal and recovery installations. They also cover the types and quantities of waste (household, commercial and industrial, including construction and demolition, hazardous, packaging etc.) managed in the area. The three local council waste management plans can be viewed at the links on page 5.

Need for additional infrastructure

Planning framework (as detailed in “Waste Planning” section) is in place to enable district councils to put forward, through their local council LDP and waste management plan, strategies that identify sites and areas suitable for new or enhanced facilities to meet the waste management needs of their areas.

DAERA (and formerly the DOE), has supported local councils to facilitate the provision of necessary waste infrastructure. Since 2010, DAERA has and will invest £40 million into council recycling services and infrastructure and helped increase the recycling rates by 35% equating to over 100,000 additional tonnes of recycling per year from Northern Ireland households⁸³. Between 2014 and 2018, this investment included Rethink Waste Funding which supported 95 projects by local council and third sector organisations. DAERA has recently set aside £23 million capital programme through the Household Waste Recycling Collaborative Change Programme. This funding covers the period of 2019/20 to 2021/22 and will provide financial assistance to local councils to improve recycling services and infrastructure, including making recycling easier and improving the quality and quantity of material being recycled.

DAERA recently commissioned WRAP to review current collections and recycling figures in Northern Ireland and to make recommendations as to how Northern Ireland can meet the future municipal waste recycling targets. This review will help to inform future decisions on infrastructure that is necessary.

Further information on waste infrastructure, including installations can be found in the three local council waste management plans, which can be viewed at the links on page 5.

⁸³ <https://www.northernireland.gov.uk/node/35526>

As part of monitoring progress towards meeting Landfill Directive targets – it is estimated that Northern Ireland will have sufficient residual waste treatment infrastructure, on reasonable assumptions, to meet the Landfill Directive obligations. However, DAERA is considering policy development for landfill diversion in order to meet the CEP requirements. This is without prejudice to the views of incoming Ministers.

Collection infrastructure

Local councils in Northern Ireland are under a legal obligation under the Waste and Contaminated Land (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 to provide waste collections to households. From 1 January 2015⁸⁴, local councils are required to collect waste paper, metal, plastic or glass by way of separate collection where this is necessary to ensure that waste undergoes recovery operations in accordance with Articles 4 and 13 of the rWFD and to facilitate or improve recovery; and where such separate collection is technically, environmentally and economically practicable. In addition, the Food Waste Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015⁸⁵, require obligated food businesses and collectors to separately collect food waste to improve recycling. These regulations prevented the landfill of food waste.

Central and local Government have worked in collaboration through Strategic Waste Partnership Meetings and the Government Waste Working Group. The focus of collaboration has been on increasing recycling, improving waste management services and developing infrastructure. Actions include looking at consistency in collection systems and common messaging on, for example, separate food waste collection.

Local council waste collection schemes have developed significantly since 2013. In general, there is a level of collection consistency already in place across Northern Ireland councils. As noted in the section on “Measures to promote high quality recycling” and the section on “Additional infrastructure”, DAERA, through funding in the Household Waste Recycling Collaborative Change Programme is supporting local council projects to make recycling easier and improve the quality and quantity of material being recycled.

Within Northern Ireland, local councils assess the need for any changes to collection arrangements that best fit their local circumstances and meet the legal obligations to collect waste set out above. The WRAP review (see the section on “Need for additional infrastructure”) of current collections and recycling figures in Northern Ireland will assist local councils make future collection and infrastructure decisions.

⁸⁴ [SR 2011 No. 127](#)

⁸⁵ [SR 2015 No. 14](#)

Technologies for managing residual waste

Efficient energy recovery from residual waste can deliver environmental benefits, reduce carbon impacts and provide economic opportunities. Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 18⁸⁶ sets out the planning policy for development that generates energy from renewable resources, including biodegradable waste. The PPS aims to facilitate the siting of renewable energy generating facilities in appropriate locations within the built and natural environments.

⁸⁶https://www.planningni.gov.uk/index/policy/planning_statements_and_supplementary_planning_guidance/planning_policy_statement_18_renewable_energy.pdf

Evaluation of the development of waste streams in the future

The policies that are summarised in this document are designed to achieve the aims of the rWFD, which is to protect the environment and human health by preventing or reducing the adverse impacts of the generation and management of waste and by reducing overall impacts of resource use and improving the efficiency of such use.

Northern Ireland is committed to taking a more sustainable approach to the use of materials, delivering environmental benefits and supporting economic growth. The aim is to achieve this through prioritising efforts to manage waste in line with the waste hierarchy and reduce the carbon impact of waste, whilst also developing a range of measures to encourage waste prevention and reuse, supporting greater resource efficiency. The introduction of resource efficiency requirements, and labelling and information for products could support greater resource efficiency, including increased recycling of products.

The policies directly affect the extent, nature and treatment of waste streams in the future. It is expected that this will include a continuing reduction in the amount of waste sent to landfill and an increase in the products and material that are reused, recycled or recovered. If the last 20 years have been about waste management and diverting waste from landfill then the next 20 years will be about the circular economy and supplying materials to the economy.

Looking ahead, DAERA has commissioned the Strategic Investment Board to carry out an analysis and forecast of the anticipated annual tonnages of residual waste in Northern Ireland from 2020 and to consider the factors that may need to be taken into account when determining how to manage the treatment or disposal of residual waste in the period 2020 to 2035.

A recent Waste Composition study of kerbside collected waste⁸⁷, commissioned by DAERA would suggest that although there is separate kerbside food waste collection, just under 25% of the residual waste bin is food waste. Indeed, 55% of the residual bin waste is potentially recyclable material e.g. just over 15% is paper and cardboard and 7% is glass. Therefore, this potentially provides an opportunity to further reduce waste to landfill and increase recycling in Northern Ireland.

DAERA recently commissioned WRAP to carry out an analysis on how Northern Ireland could achieve the CEP 65% municipal recycling rate target by 2035. It includes an analysis of the projected waste arisings from households and from the business sectors, that are now included in the revised municipal waste definition, and how to achieve a

⁸⁷ <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/northern-ireland-kerbside-waste-composition-2017-summary-report-volume-1>
& <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/northern-ireland-kerbside-waste-composition-2017-volume-2-local-authority-waste-composition-analysis>

balance (contribution, performance and cost burden) between recycling in the household and non-household sectors.

The above studies will assist in shaping the strategic direction of travel with regards to policies, collection, and infrastructure in the future. It is Northern Ireland's intention to revise, in due course, the current Northern Ireland Strategy, "Delivering Resource Efficiency" - Northern Ireland Waste Management Strategy to include fundamentals of the CEP. The intention is the revised strategy would include Northern Ireland's intentions on: meeting the revised municipal waste targets for recycling and landfill, extended producer responsibility arrangements, potential introduction of a Deposit Return Scheme, meeting packaging recycling targets and measures in relation to all forms of littering. Indeed, initial UK wide consultations on Reforming the Packaging Producer Responsibility Scheme, and introducing a Deposit Return Scheme and a Single Use Plastic Packaging Tax have already taken place.

Currently Northern Ireland, like the rest of the UK has no single or comprehensive way of tracking waste. Multiple IT systems collect elements of waste tracking data, there are significant gaps as well as duplications of data. Work on electronic waste tracking is being taken forward in a collaborative approach across the four devolved administrations. This presents the opportunity to integrate and simplify the recording of all waste movements, improve the quality and accuracy of data on waste movements and realise efficiencies and resource savings and remove risks associated with existing paper based systems which can make it difficult to see which organisations are failing to keep the appropriate records.

All of the actions outlined above will affect future waste streams. It is anticipated that waste prevention measures will ensure that the progress that has been made in decoupling growth and waste arisings will continue. The landfill tax will continue to be the main driver for diversion of wastes from landfill, with the last Northern Ireland Landfill Allowance Scheme year being 2020. It is anticipated that the measures outlined in this plan will achieve continued growth in recycling of key materials such as glass, metals, plastics and paper.