

Consumers

National Waste Strategy

The Environmental Protection Act 1990 commits the Government to produce a National Waste Strategy setting out its policies on waste management and recycling. Each devolved administration has its own plan. They can be found here:

- Waste strategy for England
- Managing Waste – Scottish Government
- Towards Zero Waste – Wales

What can you do as a consumer?

Producers (i.e. those companies who place packaging on to the UK market) have legal responsibilities to recycle and recover packaging. However, consumers also have a vital role to play in ensuring that the UK meets its recycling and recovery targets.

Why recycle?

Each year the average person in the UK throws away around half a tonne of waste, most of which ends up in landfill sites. Recycling can help by:

- Conserving natural resources

Many products (metals, glass, plastics) are made from finite natural resources. By recycling products made from these materials we can reduce the need to extract raw materials from the earth.

- Reducing the amount of waste going to landfill

Most waste in the UK is disposed of in large landfill sites. The amount of landfill space available in the UK is reducing, and there is a real scarcity of suitable land for new sites available. The UK must reduce the amount it sends to landfill, and increased recycling is one of the ways in which we can do this.

- **Reduce environmental impacts**

The land filling of biodegradable wastes produces greenhouse gases. Recycling of waste reduces this, and in addition, recycling materials often requires less energy than manufacturing from raw materials.

What can I recycle?

Glass

Glass can be recycled indefinitely with no loss in quality. Glass packaging has been recycled in the UK for many years, and banks are found in supermarket car parks and other recycling sites. Glass jars and bottles are usually colour segregated (green, brown, clear) and are recycled back into packaging. Glass can also be collected mixed, in which case it is often recycled into aggregate.

Paper

Most local authorities collect newspapers and magazines. Cardboard can usually be recycled at local authority civic amenity sites. Some authorities provide facilities for Tetrapak type packaging.

Steel and aluminium packaging

Steel and aluminium drinks and food cans can usually be recycled at recycling sites, frequently situated in supermarket car parks. Some local authorities provide kerbside collections for food and drinks cans.

Plastic packaging

An increasing number of authorities collect and recycle plastic bottles. Contact your local authority for further information.

Other materials

Other packaging materials (wood, other metal packaging) can often be recycled at your local authority civic amenity site. Contact your local authority recycling officer for further information.

Where can I recycle?

Many local authorities now provide kerbside collections of recyclables. The materials that are collected will vary from one local authority to another. Contact your local authority for more information. Your local authority recycling or waste officer can be found by following this link:

- www.letsrecycle.com

Find your nearest recycling facility by using the following Bank Locator, provided by Recyclenow.com

- www.recyclenow.com

Recycling officers provide an invaluable service to local communities and carry out a range of tasks related to recycling and sustainable waste management.

- <http://www.letsrecycle.com/councils/recycling-officers>