



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs

# Implementing Simpler Recycling in England

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Recycling

## Simpler Recycling – Update on legislation

- The **Separation of Waste (England) Regulations 2025** were approved by Parliament week commencing 3 February.
- These regulations set exemptions from Simpler Recycling that were announced in November 2024, including the exemption to allow co-collection of certain recyclable waste streams in all circumstances, and the 2-year exemption for micro-firms (with fewer than 10 full-time equivalent staff).
- The regulations were signed by Minister Creagh on 10 February and will come into force on the 31 March 2025, in line with the first implementation date for Simpler Recycling.







# Simpler Recycling – Policy for workplaces

There is currently no legal requirement on businesses and non-domestic premises to separate dry recycling or food waste.

**With the introduction of Simpler Recycling, this will change.** Workplaces (businesses and relevant non-domestic premises) will need to separately present household-like waste in the following waste streams:

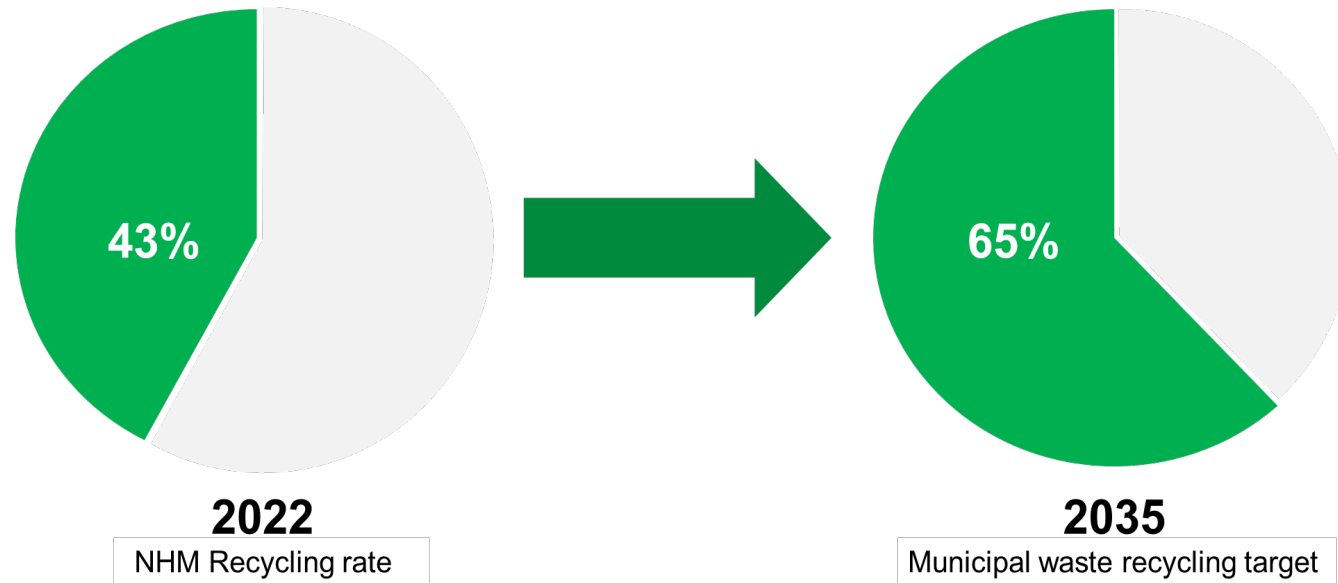
- **Paper and card**
- **Other dry recycling** – Plastic, metal, glass
- **Food waste** – including leftovers and waste from food preparation
- **Residual waste** – non-recyclable materials including absorbent hygiene products.

The workplace must present their waste in accordance with the arrangements agreed with their waste collector.

			
0 – 9	10 – 49	50 – 249	250 +
Micro	Small	Medium	Large



## Simpler Recycling – Why its important



We want to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill & incineration and therefore reduce associated carbon emissions, supporting our Net Zero targets.

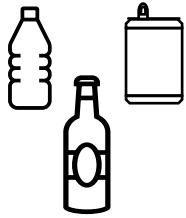
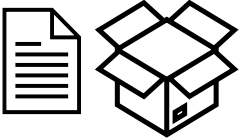

Reduced carbon emissions as a result of reduced production from virgin materials.

Support growth of UK recycling industry and create green jobs.

Underpin the transition to a circular economy, where we keep our resources in use for longer and waste is reduced.

# Workplaces - Presenting waste for collection

Workplaces can choose to procure a waste collector that provides a waste collection service that suits their needs. The below outlines the minimum collection service that a workplace should have, but they can opt for greater segregation. For example, a café may choose to have a separate glass collection where they produce high volumes of glass.

	<b>Container 1:</b> Dry mixed recycling	<b>Glass</b> - such as drinks bottles and rinsed empty food jars <b>Metal</b> - such as drinks cans and rinsed empty food tins, empty aerosols, aluminium foil, aluminium food trays and tubes <b>Plastic</b> - such as rinsed empty food containers and bottles	Can be co-collected where the waste collector has completed a co-collection assessment.
	<b>Container 2:</b> Paper and card	such as newspapers, envelopes, delivery boxes and packaging	
	<b>Container 3:</b> Food waste	Such as food leftovers and waste generated by preparing food.	
	<b>Container 4:</b> Residual waste	Such as non-recyclable materials, absorbent hygiene products such as nappies, and highly contaminated materials like food packaging that cannot be washed.	

## Food waste – Description

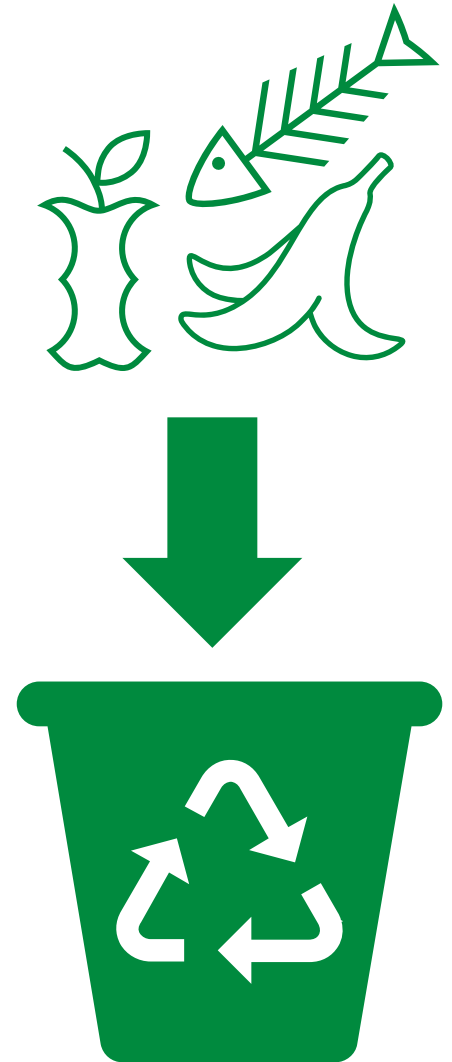
The food waste stream includes –

- all food intended for human or household pet consumption regardless of whether it has any nutritional value,
- biodegradable material resulting from the processing or preparation of food and drink including inedible food parts such as bones, eggshells, fruit and vegetable skins, tea bags and coffee grounds.

The food waste stream does not include -

- any plastic packaging or non-packaging items labelled as “compostable” or “biodegradable,” including coffee pods, should not be collected as part of this recyclable waste stream. Food waste caddy liners used to hold food waste can be collected.

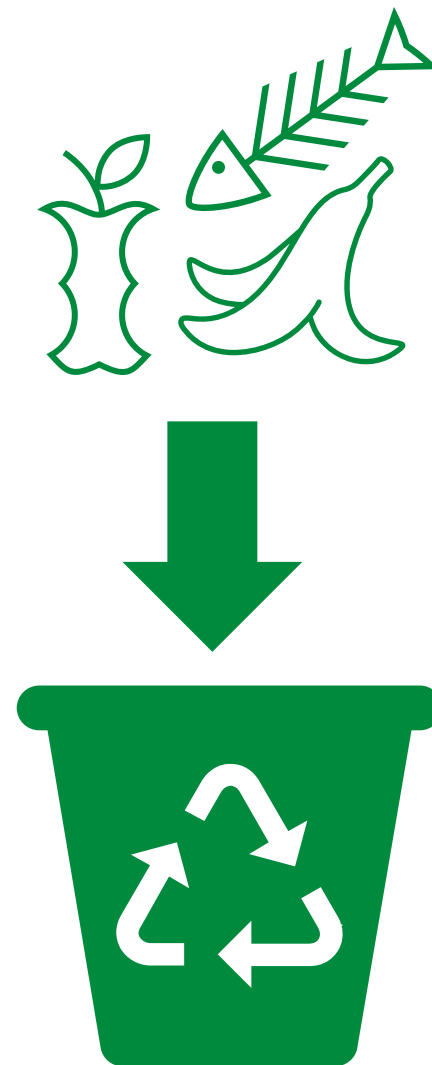
All food waste must be handled and treated in compliance with [animal by-product \(ABP\) regulations](#).



## Food waste – Requirements for workplaces

- 1.** All food waste generated on site will need to be separated for recycling by the business. Businesses cannot ask their staff to take food waste home with them.
- 2.** Food waste applies to all workplaces, regardless of whether catering services are provided to staff (e.g. offices without a canteen will be in scope).
- 3.** There will be no minimum weight threshold for food waste, however businesses can decide their own collection frequency according to the amount of food waste they generate.

Workplaces should continue to follow the food and drink waste hierarchy, to ensure food waste is prevented where possible, and that if surplus food does arise, priority is given to redistributing it for human consumption or sending it for animal feed over disposal through food waste recycling.

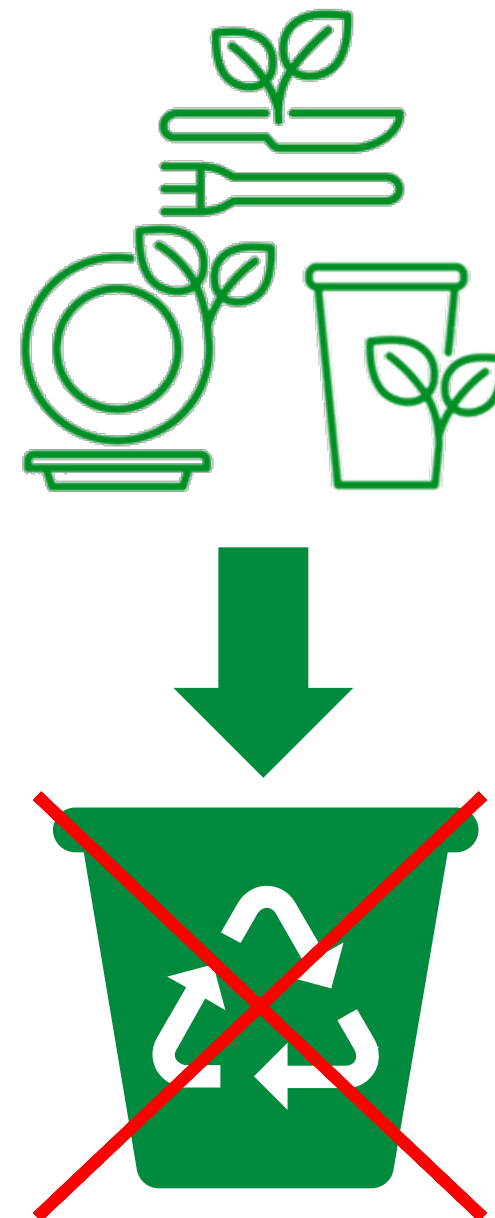


‘**Compostable packaging**’ is not in scope of Simpler Recycling and should not be collected within the food waste stream (or in the recycling waste stream). This should either be disposed of as residual waste, or through a separate collection agreed with your waste collector.

There are concerns over suitability for recycling, as highlighted by the waste and recycling industry in our [call for evidence on bio-based, biodegradable, and compostable plastics](#).

Food waste should be **depackaged** wherever possible to maximise the quality of the waste stream. Where this is not possible, you should discuss the degree of packaging that is permissible with your waste collector.

It would not be compliant to dispose of packaged (or unpackaged) food waste as residual waste.





## Simpler Recycling – Household Guidance

Further guidance is being published today.

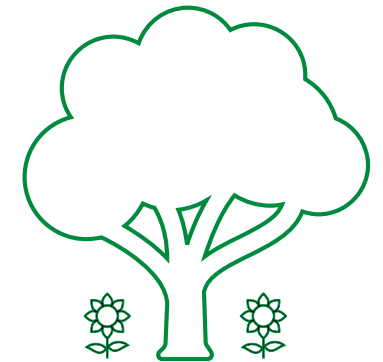
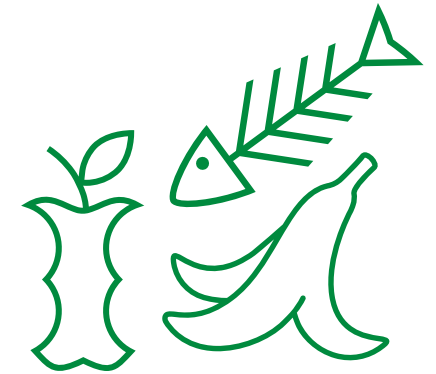
"Simpler Recycling: Household recycling in England" will support the implementation of Simpler Recycling providing details on:

- Materials not included in the recyclable workstreams
- Collecting recycling from households
- Collecting dry recyclable materials
- Collecting food and garden waste



## Food & garden waste – Requirements for households (from 31 March 2026)

- Food waste must be collected from all households at least weekly (unless a transitional arrangement is in place)
- There is no requirement for caddy liners to be provided to households, nor for them to be used for the collection of food waste.
- Where possible, we recommend that householders home compost food and garden waste
- Food and garden waste that is not home composted should be collected from households in the food and garden waste streams, for recycling or composting
- We recommend that garden waste collections are made from all households with gardens over a period of at least 36 weeks in any calendar year. This may vary depending on local circumstances
- Garden waste collected separately from food waste should be sent for composting
- Waste collectors can choose to use an exemption to collect food and garden waste together in one container, without the need to complete a written assessment.



## Food waste – Transitional arrangements

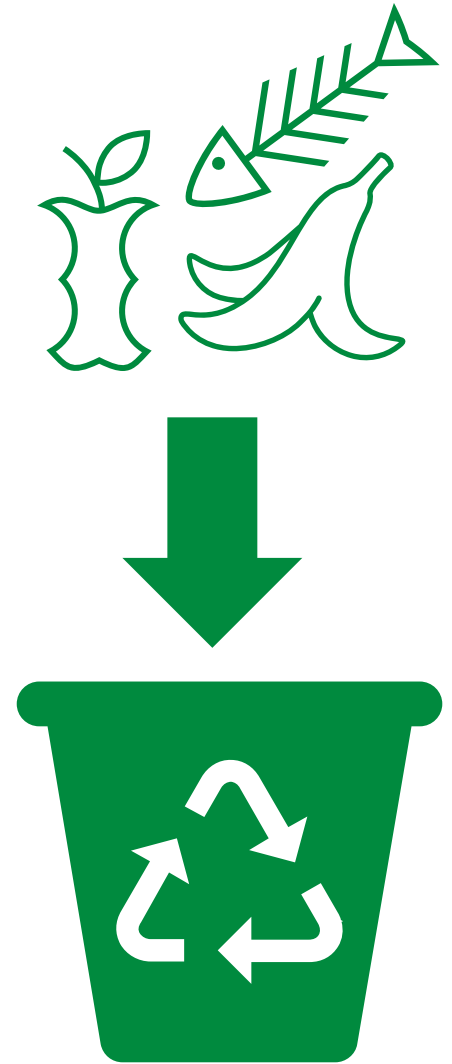
Local authorities subject to transitional arrangements are specified in The Environment Act 2021 (Commencement No. 9 and Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2024

The dates they are required to introduce separate food waste collections are specified in the schedule

Transitional arrangements only apply to food waste collected under


- **Section 45A Environmental Protection Act 1990 (Household waste)**
- **Section 45AZA Environmental Protection Act 1990 (Non-domestic premises)** – this applies to all non-domestic premises in the area whether collected by the local authority or a private waste collector

Collection of commercial waste under Section 45AZB is **not** covered under transitional arrangements and must be collected in line with the implementation dates (31 March 2025 or 31 March 2027 for micro-firms)



# Support for waste collectors & workplaces

- We are utilising Defra social media channels and working closely with WRAP on their social media.
- We are running sector specific webinars and presenting at other relevant webinars/forums that we are invited to – so far we have engaged over 1,000 stakeholders through webinars – are there any other forums we should be using to raise awareness
- We have a toolkit available for waste collectors and local authorities with information to download
- How can we work effectively with you as delivery partners to raise awareness?



Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

146,944 followers

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The law on recycling is changing. Is your workplace ready?

Starting on 31 March 2025, many workplaces – including businesses and non-domestic premises – will have a legal obligation to separate recycling and food waste from their black bin waste.

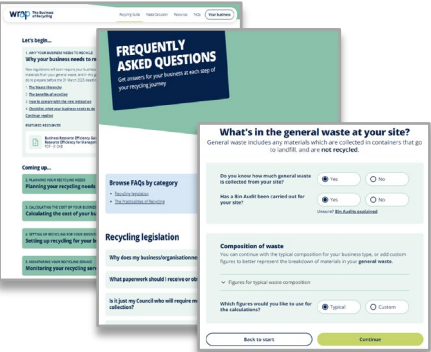
The materials collected will be the same across all workplaces, making it easier to prepare for the change.

Check what changes you'll need to make: <https://lnkd.in/gSgMDvXN>

#SimplerRecycling

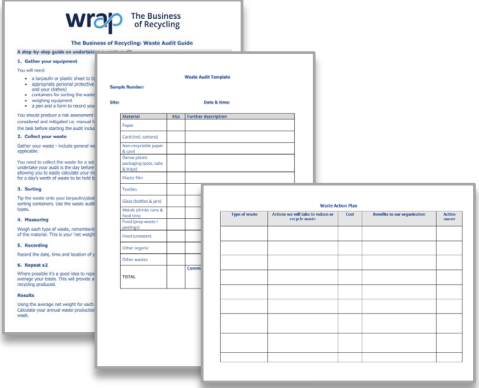


WRAP have developed the Business of Recycling website which hosts a range of guidance, tools and materials to support workplaces. The sector specific guidance continues to be refined and tested through advisory group workshops with key stakeholders.



Step by Step Guidance  
Frequently Asked Questions  
Business Waste Calculator

Material Specific posters  
“Getting started” poster



Waste Audit Template  
Waste Action Plan  
Template

# Circular Economy Newsletter

To keep up to date with news on Defra's Circular Economy reforms subscribe to the Circular Economy newsletter here;



<https://tinyurl.com/2zhyh4fn>

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