Digital Waste Tracking

@ Renewable Energy Association
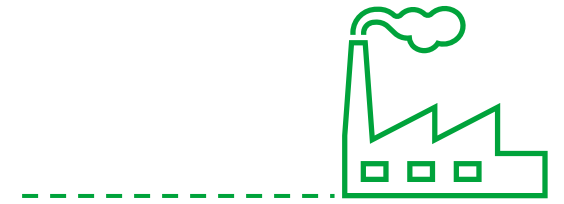Organics Meeting
4th November 2025

Tom Ellis
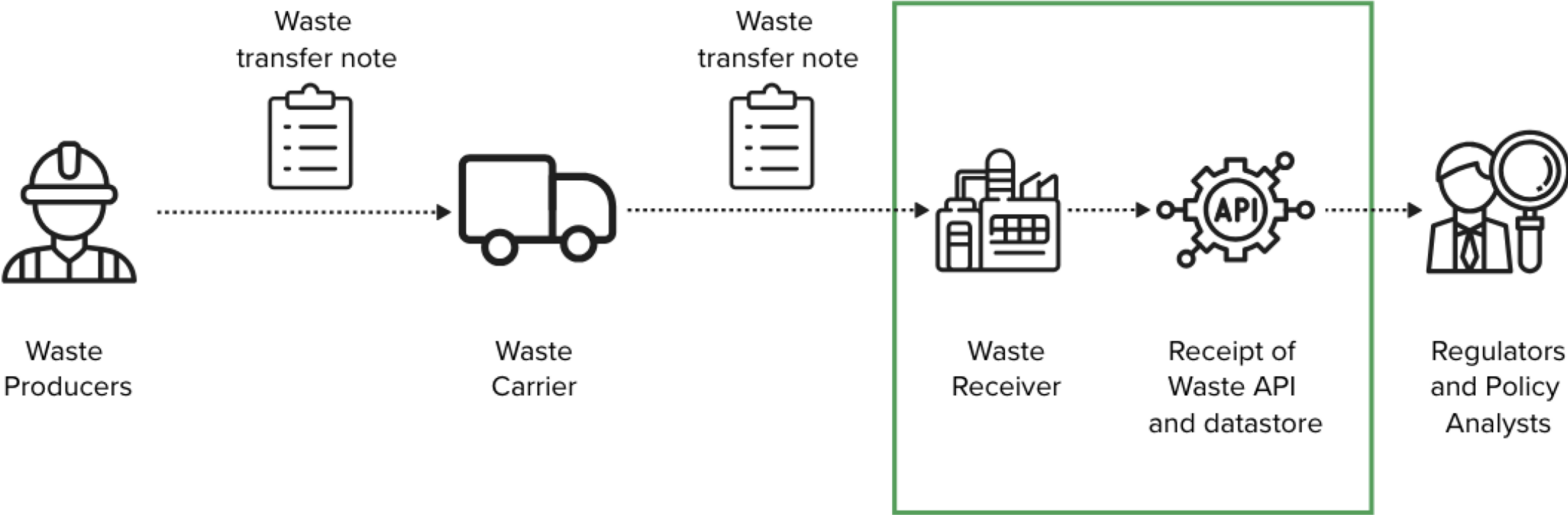Policy Lead

Environment
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Project Refresh

- July 2025 – Defra announced new phased approach to implementation:
  - Phase 1 will focus on permitted receiving sites entering information about waste being received. Mandatory from October 2026
  - Phase 2 (subject to funding) is planned to expand this to the rest of the waste movement chain and exempt sites from 2027
- Waste Transfer Notes, Consignment Notes, Waste Returns, and Consignee Returns will continue in Phase 1
- API focused approach - This means those with existing waste management software can still carry on using it, but an API will be integrated to send relevant information onto the digital waste tracking system. This limits the changes needed to business processes.
- A secondary option is being developed for those without commercial waste management software

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Waste Receivers Only – from October 2026

Waste transfer note

Waste transfer note

Waste Producers

Waste Carrier

Waste Receiver

Receipt of Waste API and datastore

Regulators and Policy Analysts

······▶ Hazardous waste consignment note ·······▶

·············▶ Waste Returns ·················▶

·············▶ Consignee Returns ··············▶

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Digital Waste Tracking is Defra-led in collaboration with four nations governments & regulators. After delaying implementation, we needed to:

1

Understanding industry needs and co-design solutions to work for all users

2

Focus on priorities (strategic alignment, risk, user impacts, & feasibility) & consider broader implications

3

Consolidate ways of working to increase transparency & collaboration

And here's what we did, with much more work ongoing:

- Started Co-Design Groups
- Outlined Phase 1 data fields, inc. Description & validation
- Large-scale comms and engagement to involve operators and gather feedback

- Vast amounts of User Research
- Phased approach to reduce risk, learn from users, & listen to industry readiness feedback
- Recruiting users to test an early version of the service

- Set up a Github Page for access to technical information
- 1-1 software vendor integration calls
- Sharing Co-Design Group meeting summaries with selected trade associations

Key Industry Engagement

Github Page

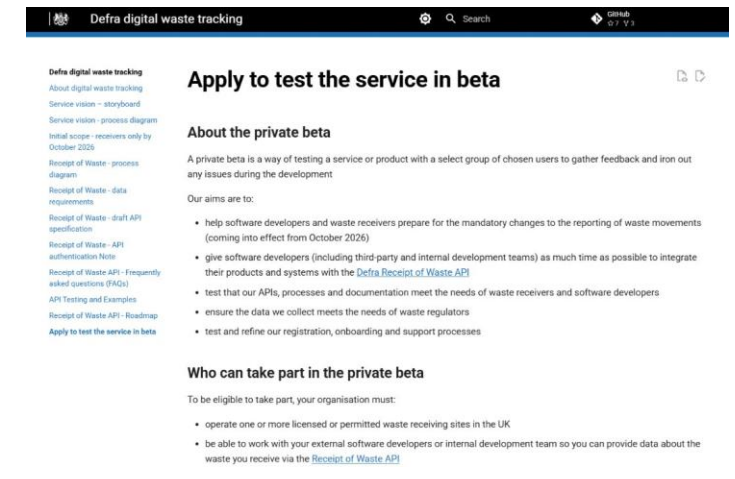GitHub is a web-based platform used for collaborative software development.
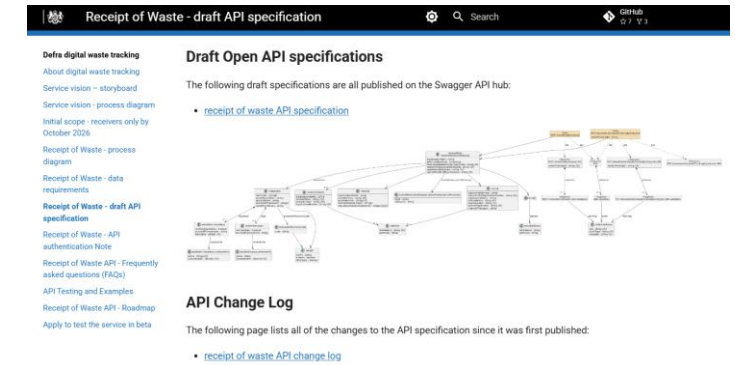
Here's a taste of what the GitHub page contains:

- Continually updated information on the project, with version control to keep track of all changes made
- Technical specs such as all Phase 1 data fields, API schemas, testing examples, process flows
- General info on scope, roadmaps, and user testing

Test the service

In November we will begin a 'Private Beta' phase which involves inviting a limited number of users to test an early version of the service to gather feedback and make improvements.

Private beta will begin this month and we are inviting waste receivers to apply. You could help test out APIs and processes to help shape the service. No information submitted during private beta will be used for regulation.

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Get Involved or Find Out More

Information Links

- Mandatory digital waste tracking - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

- Introduction of mandatory digital waste tracking - Defra - Citizen Space

- Consultation document Introduction of mandatory digital waste tracking.pdf (defra.gov.uk)

- Government response - GOV.UK

- Introduction to mandatory digital waste tracking: summary of proposals (defra.gov.uk)

Participation

- To get involved in testing, please complete our online application form: apply to voluntarily test the report receipt of waste service.

- Join the Waste Tracking User Panel to help shape the digital service

- To keep up to date with Digital waste tracking please subscribe to our full Newsletter using this link: Get the latest news and updates on the Circular Economy Reforms

- Enquiries: wastetracking@environment-agency.gov.uk

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