

APSE Online Seminar – 23 February

Reducing Waste: Supporting a Circular Economy

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Content

- Recycling Consistency
- How can we limit waste production using producer responsibility?
- Ensuring recycling consistency through manufacturers & retailers
- Working across sectors to achieve change



Circular Economy

Circular Economy –
one that values resources, cuts carbon emissions & reduces waste” – Dr Adam Read, External Affairs Director, Suez & CIWM President (2021)



- 25 year Environment Plan



- Resources & Waste Strategy



Environment Act 2021

- Environment Act



- Statutory Guidance



Environment Act 2021

Environment Act (2021) sets out to “*transition to a more circular economy incentivising people to recycle more, encouraging businesses to create more sustainable packaging, making household recycling easier, and stopping the export of polluting plastic waste to developing countries*”

Waste & Recycling Key Provisions/Policies

- EPR to make producers pay for 100% of disposal of products, starting with plastic packaging
- A DRS for single use drinks containers
- Greater consistency in recycling collections (in England)
- Ban on certain single use plastics (eg balloon sticks and plates) and potential for introducing charges (ie carrier bag charge) to incentivise sustainable consumer behaviour (subject to consultation).
- Electronic waste tracking to monitor waste movements/tackle fly-tipping
- Address waste crime
- Introduce Resource Efficiency labels (ie energy efficiency) (subject to consultation).
- Introduce Legally Binding Targets for Resource Efficiency and Waste Minimisation, by October 2022 (subject to consultation).
- Regulate shipment of hazardous waste
- Ban/restrict export of waste to non-OECD countries



New Regulations

- **Environment Act 2021** gives the SoS the power to make Regulations concerning:
 - **EPR** – shifting the cost burden *towards* packaging producers, introduction of modulated fees and cover all packaging.
 - **DRS** – looks like “*on-the-go*” model most likely – aims to reduce littering of drinks containers/boost level *and quality* of recycling
 - **Collection Consistency** (England only) – the aim to improve the quantity *and quality* of recycling by householders/businesses. When this system comes in to effect separate collection services expected for glass, metal, plastic and paper/card.
 - There may be further consultations between March-May which will become apparent post Government response (expected – now?)
 - Implementation timetable ambitious and likely to have slipped due the delay in Government consultation response



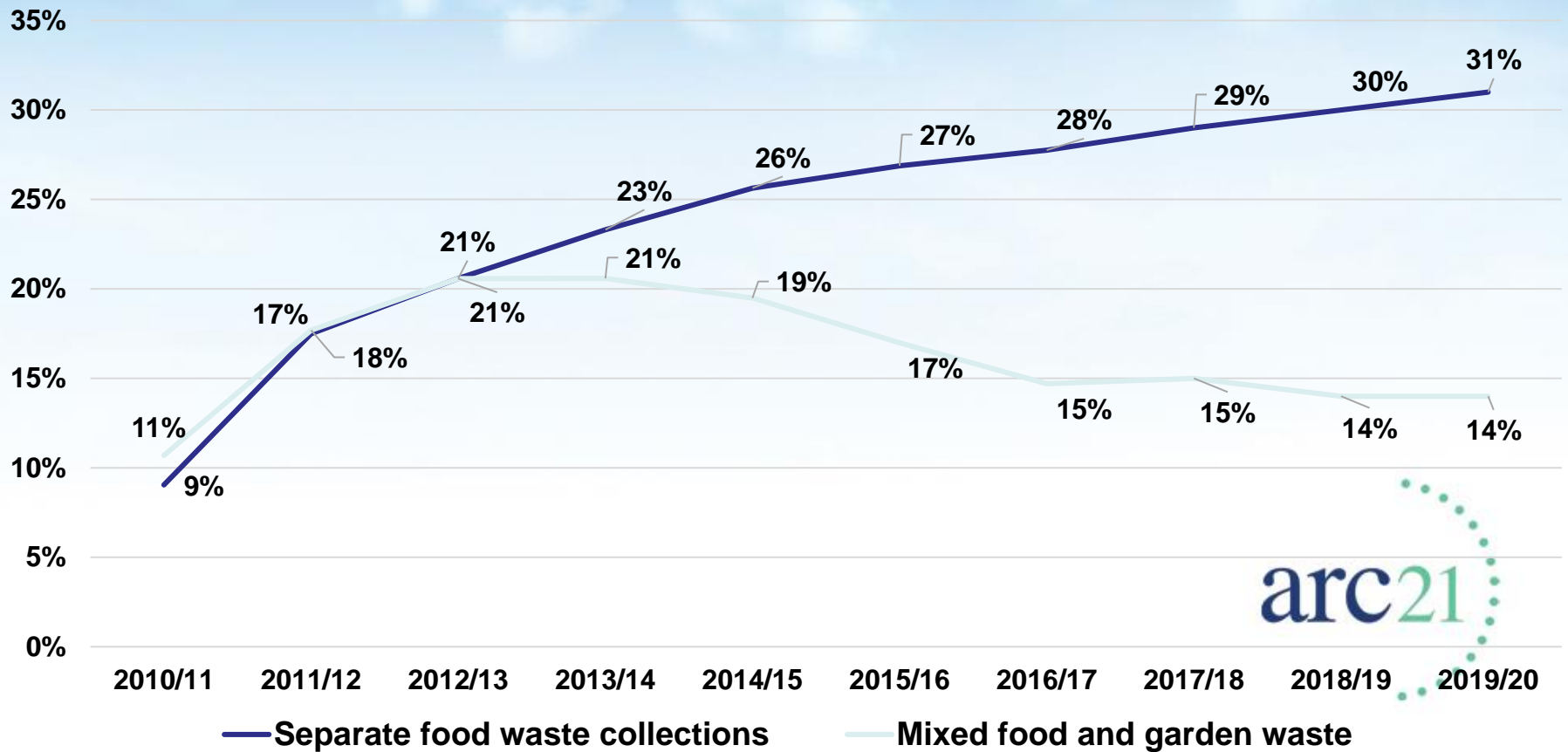
Collection Consistency

Section 57 Recycling:

- Government committed to increasing *quality and quantity* of materials. Act to make it easier to recycle by ensuring all councils collect the same recyclables.
- *What does this mean for councils?*
 - Act requires all councils to collect the same recyclables, *including food waste and garden waste*. This will require a TEEP assessment and a broader description will be set out in secondary legislation.
 - Councils should see a decrease in their waste disposal costs. Financial burdens will be assessed and net additional costs by capital funding of £295M to implement separate *weekly* food waste collections for *all households* from 2025.
 - Councils best placed to decide on the frequency of bin collections but there should be a comprehensive/frequent service. Statutory guidance on minimum service standards in 2021 consultation currently being analysed.
 - All councils will be affected
 - SoS may issue guidance (which could include additional materials) and this would be subject to consultation later this year.
 - WRP has developed workstreams to support implementation activity for consistency across households/non-household municipal sector in England. Further information, contact – naomi.fitzgibbons@defra.gov.uk or eleanor.kirbygreen@defra.gov.uk



Percentage of Households with food waste collection



Separate food waste collections by 2024/25



Support to Worcestershire authorities

Collected weekly



IMPACT OF RESIDUAL WASTE RESTRICTIONS

Change	Dry	Separate food	Residual	Overall reduction *
3 weekly residual	+10%	+20%	-19%	-18%
Fortnightly with restricted volume	+15%	+25%	-24%	-15%

* Overall reduction in household waste, including HWRC

Top ten UK residual yields

Residual yield Authority 2019/20	
Pembrokeshire	179
Monmouthshire	182
Bridgend	186
Carmarthenshire	207
Powys	208
Ceredigion	219
Vale of Glamorgan	221
Swansea	222
Cardiff	224
Stroud	226

ACP – Consistency

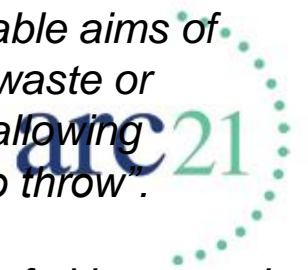
“believe local authority (LA) kerbside collection systems not only work well in general but they are also a great national asset.

Households... involved in these systems and have good awareness of when bins are collected and a growing concern about recycling and impact on the environment. These systems bring the state in contact with almost every household (and every business) roughly once a week at a reasonable cost and hold great potential, eg, in increasing environmental action awareness, collecting research information, and other positive outputs.

*We recommend an approach of building on these systems based on capturing positives from each part of the UK and encouraging innovation locally for wider use. Thus, learning from **Wales** which has a much higher municipal collection rate could be an early feature.*

While increasing waste collection quantity and improving its quality are laudable aims of consistent collections, we are disappointed that the opportunity to minimise waste or increasing reuse is being missed. Residual waste, eg, could be reduced by allowing frequencies to be reduced or looking at more radical policies such as “Pay to throw”.

Linked to this is the regrettable lack of explicit contact with and involvement of citizens and households in taking this subject forward”



Collections Hierarchy?

Multi-stream



Two-stream



Comingled



EPR

Section 50 & 51 EPR:

- EPR is a policy measure that extends responsibility on producers for the costs of managing their products when waste (“*polluter-pays principle*”). Inteded to encourage better design to encourage less use of materials and improved management when discarded.
- *What do these sections mean for councils?*
 - EPR places responsibility on producers for the cost of collecting and managing their products once they reach end of life. In England, RAW Strategy will apply to packaging first.
 - Costs will vary for different products/waste streams. Powers in the Act require that proposals are consulted upon before regulations are made.
 - In terms of compensation for costs which councils have already incurred, this will vary for different products and waste streams but this will be overseen by the Scheme Administrator. Payments should reflect the delivery of efficient and effective systems, accommodate local circumstances and incentivise councils to enhance their recycling performance. The Costs will be reliant on packaging waste collected and compositional data from the packaging value chain, including from councils.
 - Second consultation on EPR in June 2021 and responses are currently being analysed responses following which the results will be published. Further information is available at – packaging@defra.gov.uk



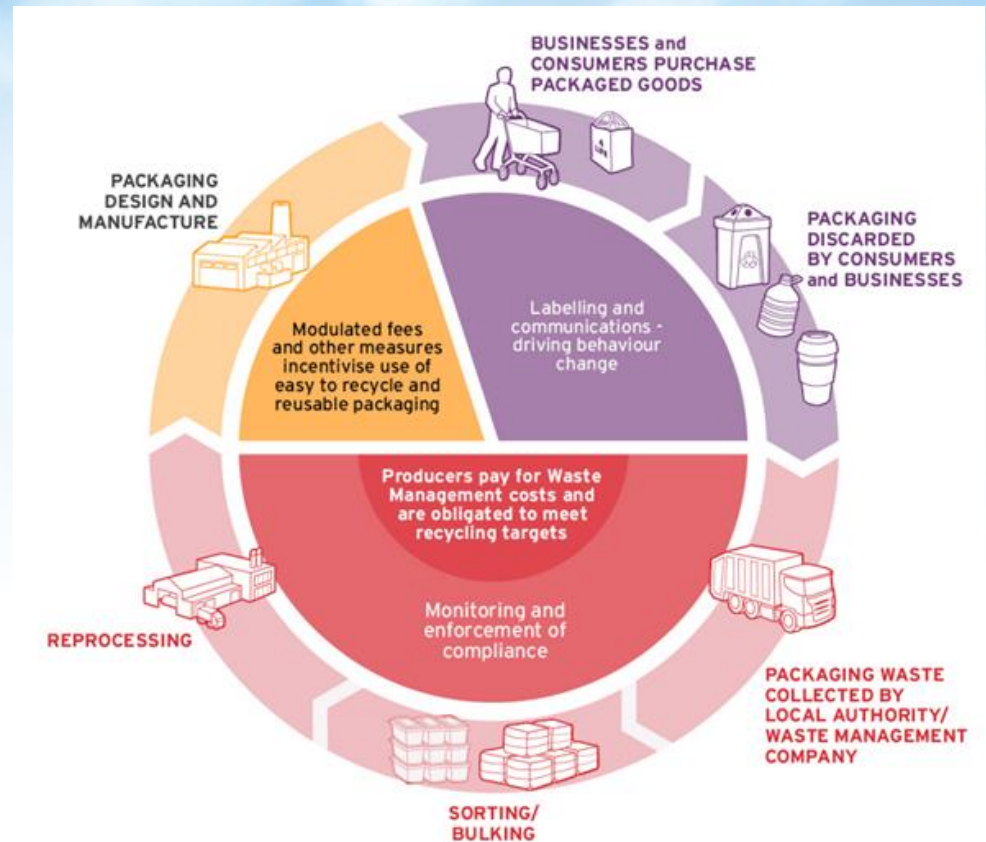
EPR – SCOPE



EPR – Shifting packaging waste costs from councils to producers

Section 50 (Producer Responsibility Obligations)

- confers powers on the relevant national authority (Scheme Administrator) to regulate about producer responsibility obligations
- confers power on the relevant national authority (Scheme Administrator) to regulate about enforcement



EPR – Key principles

- Many of the details of the EPR system are yet to be finalised, including the approach to payments. However, based on the most recent Defra consultation document:
 - Payments are likely to be based on modelling of efficient and effective systems, but vary to accommodate different geographies/demographics (housing stock and population density can cause variations in waste collection costs between councils).



Producer payments
to LAs



Modelled net costs



Efficient & effective
collections

How can we limit waste production using EPR?

- Question is whether EPR (and “*polluter pays*”) will be an effective mechanism to drive not only recycling but also resource efficiency in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- Presently, EPR focuses on recyclability. If more plastic packaging is redesigned for ease of recycling, EPR will have done its job.
- But potential for EPR to lead to low carbon plastic packaging being replaced with higher carbon alternative materials (easier recycled?), will that help the UK deliver Net Zero?
- Also, for plastic, if EPR only encourages the specification of materials that can be recycled back into the same application (a closed loop system) rather than recognising the value, where feasible, of replacing virgin material in other applications, this will be a significantly missed opportunity.



ACP – EPR

*“EPR reforms could have a more direct and beneficial impact on collections if **payments to local authorities are linked to quantity and quality of collections so that there is a positive incentive.** Within that there should be scope left for local authorities to innovate and not be bound by relatively micro measures such as bin colour or caddy liner. Bin colours become relevant if households moved every two years and time to understand local bin colours was prohibitively long; caddy liners aid collection but the marginal benefit-cost ratio may be suspect.*

Costs on local authorities including capital investment should be put on in a staged manner, ie, each local authority should have the opportunity to get to the optimum...

We recommend that waste regulation be concentrated in a new specialist regulator. Results are likely to be greatly boosted at limited marginal cost given the specific attention to subjects like litter, fly-tipping, contamination and export.”



Ensuring Recycling Consistency through Manufacturers & Retailers

Section 54 DRS:

- DRS can be set up to sustain, promote, &c an increase in recycling of materials, or reduce littering or fly-tipping.
- DRS will ensure *higher quality material* is collected by separate recycling streams.
- Government reviewing consultation response with a view to publishing results early this year.
- *What does this mean for councils?*
 - Some recyclables currently collected will divert to a DRS
 - Consideration is being given to determine how a DRS will work alongside EPR and other recycling measures
 - Government will introduce secondary legislation will specify a core set of materials.
 - The Deposit Management Organisation (DMO) be composed of representatives of, and trusted by, industry. Further information is available at –



Environment Act

When do the provisions come into force?

Act now received Royal Assent but the only provisions which have come into force are procedural and relate to the OEP, its objectives, and the development and publication of its strategy. They came into force on 17 November 2021.

Consultations on provisions for electronic waste tracking out until April 2022.

The other provisions referred will become law on the day the SoS approves them and remain law unless challenged within 40 days by either House raising a motion. The government have stated in their [waste and resource efficiency fact sheet](#) that they will “*allow local authorities sufficient time to adapt to their new duties and to communicate changes with householders.*”



Working Across Sectors to Achieve Change

- The **Net Zero Strategy** is about decarbonising transport, buildings and heating, and energy supply – but also **waste**.
- There are two commitments in this section relevant to our sector:
 - The “*near*” elimination of landfilling bio-degradable waste by 2028 and
 - The “*promise*” of £298M in Capital Funding to allow councils to roll-out food waste collections from 2025.
- Government announcement at **COP26** that more than 100 countries had signed up to a promise to cut methane gas emissions by 30% in less than ten years.
- WRAP working with Government and councils to address specific wastes (eg The total carbon footprint of food consumed in the UK is **150 Mt carbon dioxide equivalents** – equivalent to 30% of the UK’s territorial GHG emissions.)
- EPR (and DRS) are going to require working across the supply/value chain – alongside new bodies such as the Scheme Administrator and Deposit Management Organisation
- Introducing a Circular Economy in councils will require establishing new relationships/understanding within and between Departments (eg housing, procurement, education, economic development)



Litter & Waste Crime

Section 68 Litter & Sections 64, 66, 69, 70 Waste Crime:

- The Litter Strategy for England (2017) set out best practice in education, enforcement, and infrastructure. New litter measures in the Act concern enforcement.
- *What does this mean for councils?*
 - The measures will seek to improve in-house/contracted professionalism and place the enforcement guidance on a statutory footing.
 - This is likely to require additional training (potentially, a qualification). This will be consulted upon later.
 - Council enforcement action can deter littering and therefore, effective operations may reduce litter and the associated costs of complaints and fpn disputes. This will need secondary legislation and new guidance, which will be consulted on in due course.
 - In terms of “*new burdens*” new guidance is expected to be similar to the current guidance under the Code of Practice for Litter & Refuse but further engagement/consultation is likely. Further details are available from – litter@defra.gov.uk

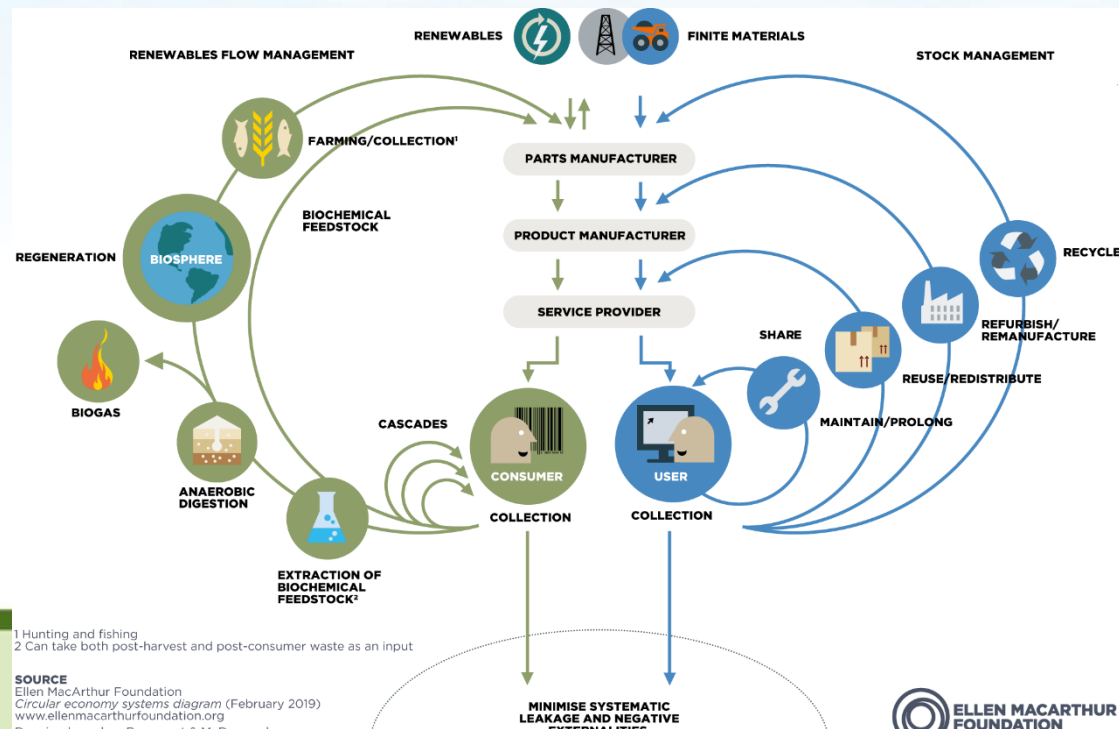
Waste crime has significant impact and the Act introduced measures to improve the regulators’ effectiveness in tackling waste crime and inappropriate waste management activities.



Circular Economy

*COP26 – Creating a circular economy and a world beyond waste – where **resource efficiency is maximised, the waste hierarchy adhered to, and our materials put back to use** – could reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 39%.*

Reducing waste – somewhere in this emerging discussion we're going to have to be brave and raise the issue of consumption – currently sitting at circa 14T per capita (Circle Economics)...





Q&A

