



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs

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# **Consultation on the Waste Prevention Programme for England**

**August 2013**

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# Executive Summary

The government will publish the first Waste Prevention Programme for England by December 2013. This is a requirement of the revised Waste Framework Directive (2008/98/EC) and takes forward a commitment in the Government Review of Waste Policy in England 2011. Drawing on the evidence presented in, and received in response to, the recently published Call for Evidence, this consultation sets out the proposed vision, priorities, metrics and role for different actors for inclusion within the Waste Prevention Programme for England.

Preventing excess waste from arising delivers environmental, economic and social benefits, and is key to moving towards a more sustainable economy. Hence, action to reduce waste arisings and increase resource efficiency should be a priority for all sectors of the economy. The term 'waste prevention' includes many different activities, from designing products so they last longer, are easily repaired and use fewer or less hazardous resources, to ensuring services are available so that unwanted items get a second life through reuse, or use of different business models which promote a new way to consume goods, like service-based or collaborative consumption models.

The global environment is changing and within decades we are likely to face significant pressures on energy, resources and the natural environment. Wasted resources result in costs to businesses through the inefficient use of materials and waste disposal costs. It can also cause the use and waste of other resources such as water, chemicals and natural materials, so creating wider impacts on the environment. Although around half of all waste in England is recovered for recycling, this still results in the loss of large quantities of valuable materials.

Despite waste generation gradually declining in England, there are still significant opportunities for further reductions. Evidence from 2009 shows that simple measures to produce less waste which pay back within a year, could save UK businesses around £17bn and avoid greenhouse gas emissions of 16 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (MtCO<sub>2</sub>e) annually. This represents around 3% of UK emissions and nearly 4% of gross UK business profits. These figures could be greater when longer term investments are considered. Additionally, a move towards more sustainable business models, and an emphasis on innovative design and production techniques are likely to result in further changes and opportunities.

Areas where action on waste prevention or reuse should be prioritised, identified in, and as a result of, the Call for Evidence are food, textiles, paper and card, plastics, electronic and electrical equipment and other items which can be reused. The built environment and chemical and healthcare sectors are also considered priority areas for action.

There are many good examples where action has already been taken by businesses, charities and social enterprises as well as consumers themselves, to reduce waste

arisings and increase reuse. Local and national government have also played a significant role in reducing levels of waste, often by working in partnership with the groups identified above. This consultation sets out the role for Government and other organisations over the short, medium and longer term which together will move us towards reducing waste.

This consultation will be open for seven weeks and will close on **23 September 2013**.

## Section One: Introduction

Preventing excess waste from occurring delivers the best environmental and economic outcome, and is key to moving towards a more sustainable economy. It can support growth and help householders, local authorities and businesses to save money. By reducing waste generated, it will also reduce damage to the environment; for example by helping reduce carbon dioxide emissions and conserve resources, such as rare earth or precious metals. Hence, action to reduce waste arisings and increase resource efficiency should be a priority for all sectors of the economy. The term 'waste prevention' includes many different activities, from the use of more sustainable business models, including service-based and collaborative consumption approaches, designing products so they last longer, are easily repaired and use fewer or less hazardous resources, to ensuring services are available so that unwanted items get a second life through reuse.

The Government will publish the first Waste Prevention Programme for England by the end of 2013, taking forward a commitment in the Government Review of Waste Policy in England 2011<sup>1</sup> and fulfilling a requirement of the revised Waste Framework Directive (2008/98/EC)<sup>2</sup>. Drawing on the evidence presented in the recently published Call for Evidence<sup>3</sup>, this consultation sets out the proposed level of ambition, priorities, metrics and actions for inclusion within the Waste Prevention Programme for England.

The revised Waste Framework Directive requires Member States to establish waste prevention programmes not later than 12 December 2013. The programme is required to:

- Set out the waste prevention objectives. The aim of objectives and measures is to break the link between economic growth and the environmental impacts associated with the generation of waste.
- Describe existing waste prevention measures and evaluate the usefulness of example of the measures in Annex IV of the directive (see Annex A) or other appropriate measures
- Determine appropriate specific qualitative or quantitative benchmarks for waste prevention measures adopted in order to monitor and assess the progress of the measures and may determine specific qualitative or quantitative targets and indicators.

In addition, Member States must:

- Ensure the waste prevention programme is evaluated at least every sixth year and revised as appropriate.
- Ensure relevant stakeholders and authorities and the general public have the opportunity to participate in the elaboration of the waste prevention programmes and have access to them once elaborated.

## **Purpose of this consultation**

The Government is seeking views on the proposed vision, priorities, metrics and roles presented prior to finalising the Waste Prevention Programme for England. The findings from this exercise will be used to inform the final Programme, which will be published along with a summary of evidence by the end of 2013.

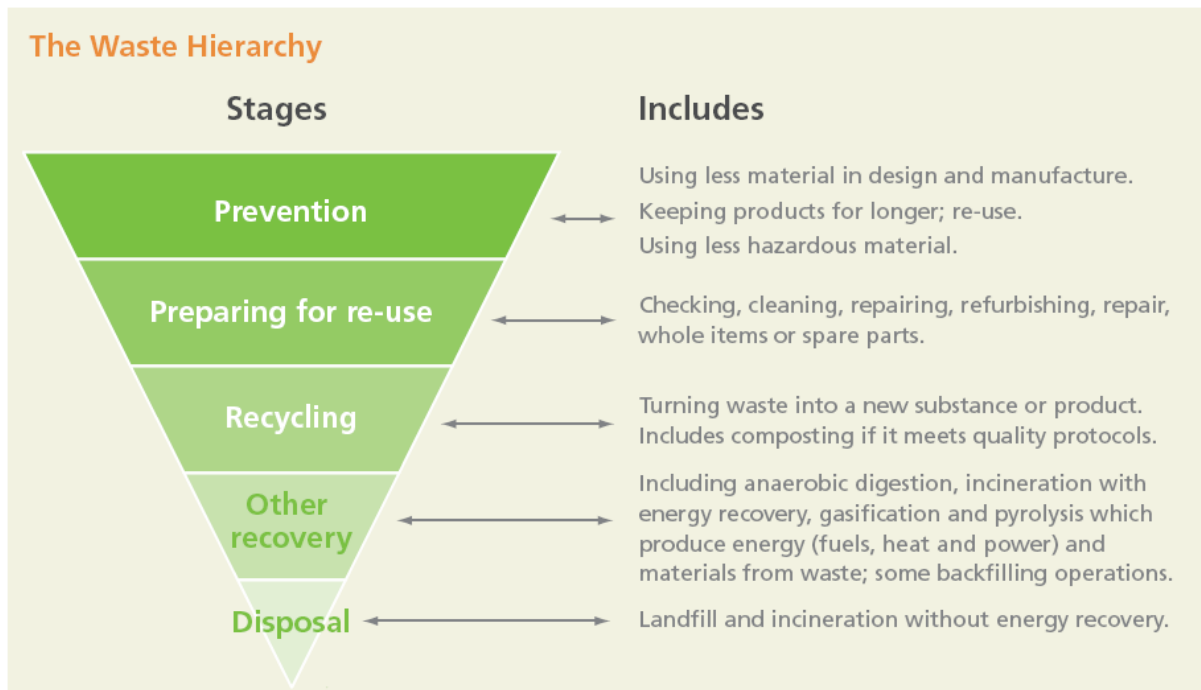
The scope of the Programme includes material waste produced within England. Waste prevention in England can also help to reduce wider impacts (carbon and water footprints or global impacts e.g. where products are manufactured overseas), but these benefits are not specific aims of the Programme. The Devolved Administrations are developing their own Waste Prevention Programmes which will be published separately.

Defra's Waste and Resources Evidence Programme has been carrying out primary research on waste prevention since 2005, and has published two reviews synthesising the international evidence base, first on household waste prevention (2010) and more recently on business waste prevention (2012). This work fed into the Call for Evidence, published in March, that set out our understanding of available data and other insights on the current situation, together with barriers to reducing waste arisings in England through waste prevention, repair and reuse activities. This information, along with the responses we received and other views provided to Defra, has been used to inform this consultation. Within this consultation, a range of potential actions are presented. These actions primarily aim to galvanise action by businesses, local authorities and others who can realise the benefits. Some are for delivery in the short to medium term whilst others will be for consideration over a longer time frame.

A number of questions which seek views on the proposed role of different actors or organisations are included. Please see Annex B for a full list of questions.

## **What is waste prevention?**

Waste prevention is at the top of the regular waste hierarchy, delivering environmental, economic and social benefits.



**Figure 1: The Waste Hierarchy**

The revised Waste Framework Directive defines waste prevention as measures taken before a substance, material or product has become waste, that reduce:

- (a) the quantity of waste, including through the reuse of products or the extension of the life span of products
- (b) the adverse impacts of the generated waste on the environment and human health, or
- (c) the content of harmful substances in materials and products.

In addition, 'preparing for reuse' is defined as checking, cleaning or repairing recovery operations, by which products or components of products *that have become waste* are prepared so that they can be reused without any other pre-processing.

In practice, these definitions encompass a wide range of actions. The following terms are used within this document to refer to these varied actions:

- *avoidance* - reducing process waste, the reintroduction of unprocessed material into manufacturing processes, buying fewer items
- *reduction* - designing products so they last longer and are used for longer (including upgradability and reparability and ease of disassembly), using less materials per unit and reducing the use of hazardous substances in materials and products, increasing the utilisation of products, e.g. through hiring, leasing and maintenance services
- *reuse* - buying and selling *whole* used items, possibly after washing or minor repair (other terms used, particularly in the construction sector, include reclaimed)



- *remanufacturing* – restoring a product to a *like-new* condition by reusing, reconditioning and replacing parts (other terms used include refurbishment)
- *repair* – repair and/or replacement of a component part in a used item.

For the purposes of the Waste Prevention Programme for England, we are including activities which fall under both ‘waste prevention’ and ‘preparation for reuse’ as, in practice, these actions can result from similar behaviours.

Waste prevention does not include waste management activities such as recycling. Defra does not consider home composting to be a strict waste prevention measure as the waste is still produced even though it reduces the amount of waste that needs to be collected, but we recognise that many local authorities will wish to promote this action within their local areas.

## Who has an interest

This consultation is addressed to individuals and organisations that have an interest in greater resource efficiency, reducing the amount of waste being produced across the economy and reusing waste when it arises. Interested parties range from consumer representatives, environmental organisations and local government through to industry representatives, trade associations and waste management organisations. Consultees may choose to contribute to and address only those questions that are most relevant to them and their activities.

## Section Two: Background

The global environment is changing, with increasing pressures on energy, resources and the natural environment. It is clear from the evidence presented in the recent Call for Evidence on Waste Prevention that the potential benefits from managing resources more effectively are significant.

The UK used approximately 470 million tonnes (Mt) material resources in 2010, with over 250Mt of resources becoming waste. In 2010, total waste generation in England was estimated at 177Mt, continuing a decrease in waste arisings from 325.3Mt in 2004. Commercial and industrial waste accounts for 27%, construction and demolition waste for 44% and household waste for 13% of waste generated in England by weight.<sup>4</sup> Whilst waste generation is gradually declining in England, the management of this waste, and the cost of lost resources, represents a significant cost to businesses, local authorities and therefore individuals. Although around half of this waste is recovered for recycling, this still results in the loss of large quantities of valuable materials.

The Call for Evidence also set out why businesses and consumers may not take action to maximise potential savings. These include the real costs of manufacturing, purchasing or disposal not being fully apparent, for example, from the physical cost of the loss of resource where material is purchased but not fully utilised, to a lack of understanding of

the full environmental damage of the disposal of an item. Other barriers include the need for initial investment for some waste prevention actions and constraints on the availability of resources, such as finance, staff capacity (including management) and time. A supportive corporate culture and leadership commitment to integrate waste prevention activities is also important.

In other situations, the beneficiaries of waste prevention actions may not be the same as those who incur the cost of those actions and there may therefore be little financial incentive to take preventative action. Consumers or businesses may not be aware of the different choices when buying goods (e.g. hiring a limited use item rather than purchasing the item, buying a second hand product in place of a new product) or disposing of unwanted items. Additionally, concerns over cost-effectiveness, reliability and purchasing rights reduce people’s willingness to repair items or purchase used goods.

Whilst we encourage action to reduce any type of waste, it is important to prioritise action to those wastes which will have the greatest impact. Priority areas for waste prevention or reuse activity have been identified from the Call for Evidence as:

Products/Waste streams	Sectors
Food	Built Environment (including Construction and Demolition and Facilities Management)
Textiles	Chemical and Healthcare
Paper and Card	
Plastics	
Electronic and Electrical Equipment	
Other items for reuse (furniture)	

These have been identified using a number of criteria including:

- tonnage of waste produced – most data on waste arisings is collected in this form, and waste arisings trends are observable
- carbon impact of the waste – carbon is used to provide a proxy for the environmental impact of the waste created
- the hazardous nature of the waste
- other impacts of the waste, e.g. impact on resource security, public perception

## Progress to date

It is important to recognise that progress has already been made to reduce the amount of waste produced across the economy. This includes actions which have been driven by Government such as landfill tax; the Courtauld Commitment which, in partnership with industry, has optimised grocery packaging so that around 1 million tonnes less packaging has been used and in conjunction with consumer campaigns like Love Food Hate Waste has contributed to reductions in food waste; as well as those taken forward by industry themselves. For example, the chemical industry has worked through a global initiative “Responsible Care” to improve their environmental performance which includes action to monitor their waste arisings. There are many more examples of where action has already been taken and the Waste Prevention Programme will set out existing waste prevention measures.

## Waste Prevention Objectives

The Waste Prevention Programme aims to protect the environment and human health by preventing or reducing the adverse impacts of the generation and management of waste, by reducing overall impacts of resource use and improving the efficiency of such use. It will:

- improve the environment in support of sustainable economic growth
- help businesses recognise and act upon potential savings through better resource efficiency and preventing waste, to contribute to a more sustainable economy
- help businesses recognise the opportunities for growth through offering new and improved products and services
- make it easier for people to find out how to reduce their waste, and how to repair broken items, and reuse items they no longer want
- support action by local and central government, businesses and civil society to capitalise on these opportunities.

By increasing the level of efficiency of material use, and thereby reducing waste arisings, this will contribute to breaking the link between waste arisings and the environmental impacts associated with the generation of waste, known as “decoupling”.

## Vision for Waste Prevention in England

The Government calls on all parts of the economy to consider actions they themselves can take to reduce their own waste, and how the way they operate will have an impact on waste arisings later within the supply chain in order to achieve a shared vision for waste prevention and resource use. Effective waste prevention relies on actions being taken throughout the life of a product or material including design, distribution and use.

*‘Over the longer-term, substantially less waste is created across the economy, delivering real financial, environmental and social benefits. Where possible, waste is reused in the first instance, and is then managed as a resource in accordance with the waste hierarchy. Businesses use fewer resources, look for opportunities to reduce waste in their own operations and incorporate sustainable business models, such as hiring and leasing. Products are designed with longer lifetime, repair and reuse in mind. Services to householders and businesses make reuse and repair easier. Food waste is avoided wherever possible and good quality surplus food is used to feed people. Government sets the conditions that allow the market, businesses, local authorities and individual people to make the changes that will propel us towards a world with less waste; a more circular economy.’*

## **Benchmarks, metrics and indicators**

In order to assess progress against the aim of this programme to breaking the link between waste arisings and the environmental impacts associated with the generation of waste, we propose to measure at a macro level:

For household waste - waste arisings (Mt) per unit household final consumption expenditure

For Commercial and Industrial, and Construction and Demolition waste – waste arisings (Mt) per unit Gross Value Added (GVA)

The use of these proposed measures allows for a comparison of waste produced against economic activity, and therefore is an assessment of decoupling. These metrics have the benefit of being “scaleable”. GVA data is available at sectoral level and can therefore be used by different sectors to assess their own actions on waste prevention. We recognise that these metrics do have some weaknesses, for example, the use of tonnage results in a bias towards action on heavier wastes. Additional metrics which allow measurement of for example, environmental or social impact, and levels of engagement will be considered in partnership with relevant organisations to give a suite of indicators. The Government proposes to use 2009 as a benchmark year against which to measure progress. This is the latest year for which complete data is available.

As a principle, the Government considers that targets can have unexpected and undesirable consequences. The European Commission is undertaking work to consider whether a target on waste prevention should be applied at an EU level and is expected to publish any such proposals in Spring 2014. We will work closely with the Commission, and other Member States, to ensure that there is a robust analysis of the costs and benefits as part of any consideration of targets for waste prevention.

## The Role of Government

Government has a key role to play in driving forward a reduction in waste arisings, however this needs to be focused on those aspects where only Government can act. Government expects business and other organisations to take action to realise the opportunities available. As businesses increasingly realise the economic and commercial opportunities that arise from resource efficiencies through waste prevention and tackling environmental challenges, the need for Government intervention is likely to continue to reduce.

### Leadership

Through the Waste Prevention Programme, Government will set a vision (proposed above) to encourage action by others. We will continue to take action to reduce our own waste arisings to demonstrate leadership, to explore the potential to reduce waste across the wider public sector delivering real financial and environmental benefits and to create certainty in the market.

The Greening Government Commitment aims, by 2015, to deliver a reduction in the amount of waste generated by 25% from a 2009/10 baseline and as part of that will ensure redundant Information and Communications Technology (ICT) equipment is reused (within government, the public sector or wider society) or responsibly recycled. On food waste, all central Government departments are supporters of the Hospitality and Food Services Voluntary Agreement<sup>5</sup>. As part of their support, government departments are producing implementation plans on how they will prevent food waste and how they will handle food waste produced.

Government itself procures significant quantities of products to deliver its services. A sustainable procurement approach by government, which involves taking into account environmental, social and economic considerations in procurement decisions, can be used to drive waste prevention, signalling market demand and driving innovation. Forward Commitment Procurement, which looks at assuring demand for new products that meet specified outcomes giving the market time to develop such products, provides the market pull for innovative, cost effective products and services. It helps unlock investment to develop such products and services.

Buying standards can support this approach, and Defra has developed Government Buying Standards<sup>6</sup> (GBS) for a number of commonly procured items including construction, furniture, ICT etc. The minimum standard within each GBS is mandatory for central Government and voluntary for the wider public sector. They include waste prevention measures relevant to the particular product group but also of wider relevance. These measures include: requiring use or purchase of existing assets from the government estate as the default option, limiting hazardousness of materials used, reducing quantities of materials used, especially virgin materials, and recognising the benefits of recyclability, upgradability and reparability. Supply chain monitoring and

management by government procurers can also help drive the benefits of waste prevention and good waste management throughout the supply chain providing a stimulus to SMEs as well as bigger businesses.

Government has also taken action to provide direction and clarity to consumers and businesses on activities which will support waste prevention. For example, in 2011, Government clarified date labelling guidance to make date labels clearer so that consumers are more confident about what they mean and how long food is safe to eat.

Government also funds the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) (£25.74m in 2013/14) to provide advice and technical and financial support on waste reduction and resource efficiency in England. It helps English businesses, industry, civil society organisations, local authorities and households become more efficient in the way they manage and use energy, water and materials. WRAP intervenes where there is a known market failure in the delivery of resource efficiency, such as those identified in the Call for Evidence.

## **Evidence, Metrics and Data**

To support the high level metrics and indicators set out above, other metrics will be considered to develop a suite which can be used by local authorities, businesses and others to assess the impact of their own actions. Government will work with local authorities and businesses to develop a suitable set of metrics, building on existing data. This will also serve to improve the current data on waste arisings, and to allow benchmarking of good practice within sectors.

Defra's Waste and Resources Evidence Programme was set up in 2003 to provide the evidence base to underpin future policy making. Waste prevention was identified as a priority in the first two 3-year research and evidence strategies, and a suite of primary and secondary research projects were commissioned to address, inter alia, the effectiveness of alternative approaches, measurement issues and behavioural aspects. This early work was subsequently synthesised, along with other evidence from the UK and internationally, in two major reviews of the evidence on Household Waste Prevention<sup>7</sup> and on Business Waste Prevention<sup>8</sup>.

One priority identified in Defra's recently published Waste and Resources Evidence Plan<sup>9</sup> is to fill data gaps and establish consistent baselines. Waste arisings collected by local authorities are well monitored, but data for Commercial and Industrial (C&I), Construction and Demolition (C&D) and mining wastes (which collectively amount to around 90% of the total arisings by weight) are more difficult to obtain. Our most significant and urgent evidence challenge is the generation of robust estimates on the prevention, flow and fate of different waste material streams across the economy.

We are also developing a tool drawing on multi-disciplinary evidence to calculate marginal abatement cost (MAC) curves for various aspects of waste prevention, together with a dataset to allow comparison of the effectiveness of a range of policy actions. Once

completed, this tool will be made publically available. In addition, research has been undertaken to develop a more reliable baseline for the amount of reuse occurring within England.

Government is also supporting the work of the Environment Agency, in partnership with the Chartered Institution of Wastes Management (CIWM), Reconomy (UK) Ltd, Northern Ireland Environment Agency, WRAP and the Welsh Government to develop the Electronic Duty of Care (EDOC) system. This initiative, co-financed by the European Commission LIFE+ programme, aims to modernise the way waste data is collected in the UK. It will create a national web-based system to capture information each time waste changes hand from production to disposal. The new voluntary system will help businesses by moving from the current paper based system of waste transfer notes and make it easier for them to understand what waste they produce and how their waste is handled. Savings to businesses from using EDOC are estimated at £7.8-13.4 million per annum. The new system will start to be rolled out in 2014.

In an initiative devised to quantify aspects of waste prevention, ten UK local authorities, Defra and WRAP, in conjunction with CIWM and the Local Authority Recycling Advisory Committee (LARAC), have established a novel research consortium. The aim has been to draw together data and experiences on waste prevention into a software tool that will enable local authorities to estimate the costs and benefits of waste prevention initiatives before committing resources and budgets to delivering them<sup>10</sup>. Other work, for example the Community Impact Modelling tool (CIMT) developed by the Oxfordshire Community Action Group project (funded by Oxfordshire County Council) helps quantify the impact of community action in terms of carbon, waste, energy and cost reduction to consumers and local authorities<sup>11</sup>.

In the longer-term, work will include identifying new and innovative ways of deriving and keeping under review the amount and composition of waste, updating quantitative and qualitative information on waste prevention, reuse and recycling activities, and investigating key perceptions, attitudes and drivers of public and business behaviour on waste and resource efficiency issues.

## **Supporting others' action**

Government's role is to set the conditions that allow the market, businesses, local authorities and individual people to make the changes that will propel us towards preventing waste. To this end, we will support local authorities, businesses and others in taking action.

A key aspect of this role is to facilitate the sharing of best practice, and provide an opportunity to raise issues. The Defra Reuse Forum, set up in November 2011 has provided an opportunity for those involved in the reuse sector, covering reuse organisations, commercial businesses, local authorities and others to discuss the challenges in this sector together. We will also consider the potential for a regular forum

with local authorities to share best practice and explore the challenges and benefits of measuring and undertaking waste prevention actions.

Through WRAP, we are supporting others to make changes to their practices and services. For example, WRAP is currently undertaking work to demonstrate the benefits of different business models for leasing/hiring models, product trade in and reuse, by working with companies to pilot and evaluate real-life applications. This work will help overcome the situation where consumers or businesses are either not aware of the different choices when buying goods (e.g. hiring a limited use item rather than purchasing the item, buying a second hand product in place of a new product) or are unable to find someone to provide this service.

WRAP will further this work to understand and develop the opportunities for collective action in the electronic and electrical equipment sector to stimulate design for longer-life and ease of repair.

WRAP also delivers training on how to reduce food waste through their Local Partnership Advisors. The training is undertaken as part of their free of charge cascade training, whereby they essentially train the trainer who cascades the knowledge to all staff within the organisation.

One barrier identified, which limits the ability of organisations and individuals to act, is a lack of easily accessible, relevant and consistent information. Government has already undertaken work to overcome this, for example, the Household Waste Prevention toolkit. This is maintained by WRAP to help local authorities explore options for waste prevention action. It supports them in communicating with their local households, businesses and customers.

Government is also working with WRAP to consider how best to engage the public effectively and efficiently in waste prevention behaviours as we acquire, use and discard goods in our everyday lives. This will involve working with key partners/groups of partners who already have the right channels to 'talk' to consumers.

Government has also provided direct support which promotes real action as well as contributing to the evidence base, particularly on behaviour change. Defra's Reward & Recognition Scheme aims to explore innovative ways to reward or recognise people for adopting positive behaviours towards managing their waste.

## **A long term role**

Delivering the vision outlined earlier in this document will require long-term action. As such, the Government will review the Waste Prevention Programme at least every six years. The type and level of Government action needed will change over time as businesses and other organisations increasingly realise the economic and commercial opportunities that arise from resource efficiencies through waste prevention and tackling environmental challenges.



Government and industry will need to work together to devise the most effective methods of waste prevention, and Government will consider whether additional measures are required in order to drive change should insufficient progress be made. This could include, for example, quantitative targets, economic instruments or changes to producer responsibility schemes subject to cost/benefit analyses. Government will also continue to engage actively in Europe to ensure that proposals from the Commission align with our priorities.

**Q – Do you broadly agree with the proposed role for Government?**

## The Role of Business

### Making the case for waste prevention

The evidence presented in the Call for Evidence clearly demonstrated the opportunities for businesses to reduce costs through changes to business practices. Indeed there are a large number of case studies readily available which show real savings. Evidence from 2009<sup>12</sup> shows that simple measures to produce less waste which pay back within a year, could save UK businesses around £17bn and avoid greenhouse gas emissions of 16 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (MtCO<sub>2</sub>e) annually. This represents around 3% of UK emissions and nearly 4% of gross UK business profits. These figures could be greater when longer term investments are considered. At the same time, it can bring benefits through reductions in other resource use such as water, chemicals and natural materials, so reducing wider impacts on the environment.

The opportunities for businesses are not limited to resource efficiency savings through internal business practices. This could include a move towards more sustainable business models which support the development of products and services with environmental benefits, reduced resource use/waste, and which are economically viable. An emphasis on innovative design and production techniques are likely to result in further changes and opportunities.

A supportive corporate culture and leadership commitment to integrate waste prevention activities is important to driving action, as well as engagement across the whole supply chain to fully achieve the benefits. Businesses are encouraged to consider how they can work with their supply chain to make the most of these opportunities. One particular challenge here is with understanding whether the beneficiaries of waste prevention actions are the same as those who incur the cost of those actions and therefore demonstrating the financial incentive to take preventative action is more challenging. Government will continue to develop understanding of these issues and will consider if further action is needed to overcome this.

## **Business practices**

The first step in being able to reduce waste requires an understanding of both the amount and type of waste produced by an individual organisation. Lack of trusted information and the time or ability to apply it to their business was identified as a barrier limiting action. Businesses should undertake work to assess their own practices, and the practical steps they can take to make those practices more efficient. Support already exists to help businesses undertake waste audits, for example, WRAP's business resource efficiency hub<sup>13</sup>, case studies which demonstrate that small changes can deliver real financial savings and environmental management systems. Tools like Building Information Modelling support resource efficient design and construction, and alongside effective management resources on site, allow the construction sector to benefit. Businesses are strongly encouraged to take advantage of these tools, and sector organisations are encouraged to support their members with this. There is an opportunity here for waste management companies to provide their customers with advice on how to reduce waste. Government will review the existing support available and consider whether more is needed, and who is best placed to provide it.

Government is also supporting other action. Through WRAP, we are developing a standard for Facilities Management services, which includes guidance on mobile asset management to make the most efficient use of assets, and are piloting model procurement specifications for resource-efficient service provision. Other actions include influencing the update of the ISO14001 standard to include specific waste prevention and management practices, and continuing to influence in Europe on matters such as eco-design and producer responsibility.

## **Products**

Business has a critical role in reducing the impact of products, and this requires actions across the supply chain. There is a significant body of work being supported by Government to further business resource efficiency and understand the impact of products, for example, the Great Recovery Project and Technology Strategy Board, the Product Sustainability Forum and other work undertaken by WRAP.

There is a role for businesses to explore sustainable business models and product design themselves, and some are already doing so. Initiatives like the Ellen MacArthur Foundation and the Green Alliance's work through the Circular Economy Task Force and the Designing Out Waste Consortium are significant steps forward, along with businesses like ZipCar which are utilising the concept of collaborative consumption to make effective use of resources. We recognise that application of these concepts is challenging, and businesses are encouraged to consider how they could be applied in their own work.

Business also has a key role to play in supporting consumer confidence and providing information to aid decision making. Concerns over cost-effectiveness, reliability and purchasing rights were identified as reducing peoples' willingness to repair items or purchase reused goods. There is also a lack of information available on the expected

lifetime of a particular product limiting consumers', or other businesses', opportunities to make decisions on the basis of value over product lifetime.

Retailers for example are experts in influencing shopping habits, and therefore have a key role in providing this information to their customers. The potential opportunities presented by increased consumer confidence from information on expected product lifetime and from longer guarantees linked to greater product durability is one area Government encourages action. An interesting example of this is in the car market where one manufacturer offers a considerably longer guarantee than their competitors.

On textiles, through the Sustainable Clothing Action Plan's new 2020 Commitment, the clothing sector is working together to extend the useful life of clothes, reduce the environmental impact of clothing in production and use through product design and services and providing consumer information. It also aims to increase reuse and recycling to recover maximum value from used clothing (and related household textiles).

Businesses, jointly with WRAP have had a significant role in reducing the amount of food waste produced by householders. The impact of campaigns like Love Food Hate Waste, which provided practical information on shopping habits, storage and use of leftover food has been considerable. Consumers have also benefitted from innovations such as re-sealable bags, individually packaged meat or fish fillets within a larger bag and vacuum packed meat. There is further work to be done however. The signatories to the Courtauld Commitment, which has over 90% coverage of the UK grocery market are committed to tackling food and packaging waste in their supply chain and the Hospitality and Food Service Agreement, covering businesses from cafés to hotels and hospitals aims to reduce food and associated packaging waste arising by 5% by the end of 2015.

In other areas, for example consumer packaging, there are now limited opportunities for more substantial reductions in packaging without risking increases in waste through product damage or wastage. There have already been significant changes in packaging design which have resulted in reduced amounts of glass being used, replaced with plastic which will influence the composition of waste being seen by householders. Now, the focus should be to optimise packaging to reduce food waste and improve recyclability to help consumers and local authorities.

**Q – Do you broadly agree with the proposed role for Business?**

## **The Role of Local Authorities**

### **Making the case for waste prevention**

Local authorities can play a key role in reducing waste in their local area, by providing leadership through their own business practices as well in the information and services they provide to their customers.

Local authorities are strongly encouraged to develop local waste prevention plans. These will allow action to be taken, perhaps focused on particular waste streams, which takes account of local factors.

One barrier identified by local authorities is the difficulty making the case for waste prevention to prioritise spending because of a lack of data. Defra has supported the development of a Waste Prevention and Carbon Tool for local authorities which helps to demonstrate the overarching financial and environmental case for action by estimating the costs and benefits of waste prevention initiatives. The Oxfordshire Community Action Group project (funded by Oxfordshire County Council) has also developed a Community Impact Modelling tool (CIMT) to help quantify the impact of community action in terms of carbon, waste, energy and cost reduction to consumers and local authorities.

Many local authorities have undertaken work themselves to reduce the amount of waste produced in their local areas, yet the learning from these activities are not always shared. Defra can have a role in facilitating sharing of this experience. We will also consider the appetite for a regular forum with local authorities to share best practice and explore the challenges and benefits of measuring and undertaking waste prevention actions.

## **Organisational practices**

Exemplifying good practice in their own policies and processes, utilising the principles and standards of a sustainable procurement approach, waste audits and effective mobile asset management (reuse within organisations etc), could help local authorities reduce their own waste arisings and encourage action by others. We encourage local authorities to assess how waste prevention can be built into their own sustainable procurement practices to deliver financial, environmental, and social benefits. We will also consider how best to help local authorities implement the hierarchy through their contracts with service suppliers.

We recognise that there are barriers to action by local authorities. For example, local government structures may mean that one local authority reaps the financial benefits of waste prevention but another local authority meets the costs of taking action to achieve these benefits. The benefits from waste prevention could be maximised where Waste Collection Authorities and Waste Disposal Authorities work in partnership.

Developing local partnerships whether with other local authorities, local businesses or others will be important in these difficult financial times. Working in partnership can not only achieve efficiencies, but can also promote the sharing of best practice. There are many examples where local authorities have developed solutions that suit their local circumstances. These include single authority type arrangements and councils that share staff. For example, Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire Councils have carried out joint contracting with the same service being provided across the partnership area. Cotswold and Cheltenham have established a local authority controlled company (UBICO Ltd.) that is now delivering collection services for both councils. Surrey County Council has

developed the Surrey Reuse Network with local reuse organisations to increase the level of reuse in their area.

## **Local action**

Local authorities are often the first point of call by individuals and a trusted route for information on local services. If they do not already work in this way, local authorities are encouraged to work in partnership with local organisations and businesses to provide services in a way which supports action to reduce waste and to increase awareness and introduce clear messages on waste prevention and reuse. This could include linking information on reuse services to key life events like moving home for example. We would also welcome moves to promote waste prevention amongst businesses in an authority's local area.

Another option would be for local authorities to work with their local schools and higher education colleges to encourage training on e.g. repair skills, and raise awareness of the importance of waste prevention from an early age. An additional benefit could be that these messages are taken home and influence the behaviour of others.

Local authorities already provide services to householders which collect goods which could be reused. Work undertaken by WRAP and outlined in the Call for Evidence demonstrates the opportunities from goods which currently end up at Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) and disposed of via Bulky Waste Collections and could be reused. The level of reuse could be increased by working in partnership with waste management contractors, local reuse organisations and others to ensure these goods are collected (whether at kerbside or at an HWRC) in a way which preserves their value and they are passed onto those who can assess, repair and resell them.

Legislation and policies like the Public Services (Social Value) Act (2012) and the Welfare Reform Act (2012) can also be used to increase levels of reuse as well as providing social benefit to local residents, for example Surrey County Council's Reuse Network is commissioned to provide vulnerable families with reused white goods and furniture to successful applicants for social funding.

Local authorities are also encouraged to consider how to facilitate local action on waste prevention and reuse and promote sustainable behaviours. For example, local authorities could consider whether local events or services would be appropriate, and whether these could be achieved in partnership with others. These could include food waste prevention events, repair/reuse events, swap shops, local reuse or waste prevention champions, waste prevention/zero waste areas or other schemes which would drive behaviour change.

**Q – Do you broadly agree with the proposed role for Local Authorities?**

## The Role of Other Organisations and Individuals

There is clearly a role for other organisations, such as reuse organisations, social enterprises and charities to participate in actions to drive behaviour change and promote waste prevention. There are many examples where voluntary action is achieving real benefits in terms of encouraging local waste prevention and increasing levels of reuse, and delivering real social benefits. These organisations are encouraged to develop partnerships with others in their local areas, and more widely, which is likely to result in increased access to goods for reuse. They are also encouraged to consider whether changes to their own services would encourage change. For example, would offering timed collections of bulky goods from households, or providing a simple fault identification service locally, increase the amount of reuse and repair in their local area.

Most importantly, these organisations are encouraged to consider how they can make their operations self-sustaining, potentially by entering into contracts with businesses or local authorities, or by charging for aspects of the services they provide.

Consumers are encouraged to consider their own buying habits to identify where they could make savings, for example, wasted food. There are several simple practices which all contribute to reducing the amount of waste produced; from reusing shopping bags, repairing items instead of automatically replacing them, passing on items no longer needed or selling them, e.g. through online auction sites and purchasing reused goods.

**Q – Do you broadly agree with the proposed role for Other Organisations and Individuals?**

## Next Steps

Defra will consider the responses to this consultation and will use them to inform the final version of the Waste Prevention Programme for England.

## How to respond

The Consultation will close on **23 September 2013**. Ideally, responses to this Consultation should be completed online at [https://consult.defra.gov.uk/waste/waste\\_prevention](https://consult.defra.gov.uk/waste/waste_prevention). We will also accept responses by e-mail to [wasteprevention@defra.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:wasteprevention@defra.gsi.gov.uk) or by post to the following address by **23 September 2013**.

The Waste Prevention Team

Defra

Area 2B

Nobel House

17 Smith Square

London SW1P 3JR

Any queries should be addressed to the Waste Prevention team as above.

Respondents are requested to explain who they are and, in the case of representative groups, to give a summary of the people and/or organisations they represent.

We may not be able to consider your response if it arrives after the deadline. Please contact the Waste Prevention team to discuss an extension if you think your response will be late.

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal information, may be published or disclosed in accordance with the access to information regimes. These are primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that, under the FOIA, there is a statutory Code of Practice with which public authorities must comply and which deals with, among other things, obligations of confidence. In view of this, it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding.

We will process your personal data in accordance with the DPA and in the majority of circumstances this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties.

## **Publication of responses**

If you do not consent to this, you must clearly state that you wish your response to be treated confidentially. Any confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system in email responses will not be treated as such a request. Please be aware that there may be circumstances in which Defra will be required to communicate information to third parties on request, as set out above.

## **Annex A – Revised Waste Framework Directive Annex IV**

### **EXAMPLES OF WASTE PREVENTION MEASURES REFERRED TO IN ARTICLE 29**

Measures that can affect the framework conditions related to the generation of waste

1. The use of planning measures, or other economic instruments promoting the efficient use of resources.
2. The promotion of research and development into the area of achieving cleaner and less wasteful products and technologies and the dissemination and use of the results of such research and development.
3. The development of effective and meaningful indicators of the environmental pressures associated with the generation of waste aimed at contributing to the prevention of waste generation at all levels, from product comparisons at Community level through action by local authorities to national measures.

#### Measures that can affect the design and production and distribution phase

4. The promotion of eco-design (the systematic integration of environmental aspects into product design with the aim to improve the environmental performance of the product throughout its whole life cycle).
5. The provision of information on waste prevention techniques with a view to facilitating the implementation of best available techniques by industry.
6. Organise training of competent authorities as regards the insertion of waste prevention requirements in permits under this Directive and Directive 96/61/EC.
7. The inclusion of measures to prevent waste production at installations not falling under Directive 96/61/EC. Where appropriate, such measures could include waste prevention assessments or plans.
8. The use of awareness campaigns or the provision of financial, decision making or other support to businesses. Such measures are likely to be particularly effective where they are aimed at, and adapted to, small and medium sized enterprises and work through established business networks.
9. The use of voluntary agreements, consumer/producer panels or sectoral negotiations in order that the relevant businesses or industrial sectors set their own waste prevention plans or objectives or correct wasteful products or packaging.
10. The promotion of credible environmental management systems, including EMAS and ISO 14001.

#### Measures that can affect the consumption and use phase

11. Economic instruments such as incentives for clean purchases or the institution of an obligatory payment by consumers for a given article or element of packaging that would otherwise be provided free of charge.
12. The use of awareness campaigns and information provision directed at the general public or a specific set of consumers.



13. The promotion of credible eco-labels.

14. Agreements with industry, such as the use of product panels such as those being carried out within the framework of Integrated Product Policies or with retailers on the availability of waste prevention information and products with a lower environmental impact.

15. In the context of public and corporate procurement, the integration of environmental and waste prevention criteria into calls for tenders and contracts, in line with the Handbook on environmental public procurement published by the Commission on 29 October 2004.

16. The promotion of the reuse and/or repair of appropriate discarded products or of their components, notably through the use of educational, economic, logistic or other measures such as support to or establishment of accredited repair and reuse-centres and networks especially in densely populated regions.

## Annex B – List of Questions

Q – Do you broadly agree with the proposed role for Government?

Q – Do you broadly agree with the proposed role for Business?

Q – Do you broadly agree with the proposed role for Local Authorities?

Q – Do you broadly agree with the proposed role for Other Organisations and Individuals?

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<sup>1</sup> Government Review of Waste Policy in England 2011 [www.defra.gov.uk/publications/files/pb13540-waste-policy-review110614.pdf](http://www.defra.gov.uk/publications/files/pb13540-waste-policy-review110614.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Waste Framework Directive <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/framework/index.htm>

<sup>3</sup> Waste Prevention Call for Evidence [www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/181992/wpp-consult-doc-20130311.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/181992/wpp-consult-doc-20130311.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Defra waste statistics [www.defra.gov.uk/statistics/environment/waste/](http://www.defra.gov.uk/statistics/environment/waste/)

<sup>5</sup> Hospitality and Food Service Agreement [www.wrap.org.uk/content/hospitality-and-food-service-agreement-3](http://www.wrap.org.uk/content/hospitality-and-food-service-agreement-3)

<sup>6</sup> Government Buying Standards [www.defra.gov.uk/sustainable/government/advice/public/buying/index.htm](http://www.defra.gov.uk/sustainable/government/advice/public/buying/index.htm)

<sup>7</sup> Cox, J *et al* (2010) *Waste Management & Research*, **28**, 193 – 219 (Full Defra report accessed at <http://randd.defra.gov.uk/> (Click on 'search' and enter project code WR1204 as the 'keyword')

<sup>8</sup> <sup>8</sup> Wilson, D.C. *et al* (2012) *Waste Management & Research*, **30(9)** Supplement, 17 – 28 (Full Defra report accessed at <http://randd.defra.gov.uk/> (Click on 'search' and enter project code WR1403 as the 'keyword')

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/evidence-plans>

<sup>10</sup> Thomas, B., Beeby, H., and van Santen, A. (2011) Prevention Possibilities *CIWM Journal (September)*, 72 - 74

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.cagoxfordshire.org.uk/impact-model>

<sup>12</sup> Further benefits of Resource Efficiency 2011 [http://randd.defra.gov.uk/Document.aspx?Document=EV0441\\_10072\\_FRP.pdf](http://randd.defra.gov.uk/Document.aspx?Document=EV0441_10072_FRP.pdf)

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<sup>13</sup> WRAP Business Resource Efficiency Hub [www.wrap.org.uk/brehub](http://www.wrap.org.uk/brehub)