

Scale of the challenge...

To reduce the carbon impact from our waste activities, Dorset must work towards creating a more sustainable and efficient circular economy. This means reducing the amount of waste we produce by keeping resources in use for as long as possible and recovering and reusing products and materials wherever we can.

At present, Dorset (including Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole) generates **1.6 million tonnes of waste each year**. Estimated trajectories in the Dorset Waste Plan predict this figure will continue to grow.

Nearly half of Dorset's waste is categorised as either construction, demolition, excavation or hazardous. And the remaining 52% (around 840,000 tonnes) is split between household waste and commercial & industrial waste.







As Dorset Council has key statutory functions for household waste we have an opportunity to further drive the development of a circular economy here. And encourage and support the reduction, reuse and recycling of waste across the county. The Council has made good progress by harmonising collection services, increasing the recycling rate year on year and curbing waste growth through waste-reduction initiatives, but the scale of this challenge remains significant. Last year Dorset households produced 174,002 tonnes of waste resulting in the emission of 18,768 tonnes of CO₂e.

Commercial & industrial waste figures are harder to estimate as most of this waste is collected and managed by private companies, making access to accurate data more difficult. But it is estimated that it accounts for around half of all waste produced in Dorset.

As a newly formed Council we are currently gathering data on our own waste and associated emissions. But to get an idea of scale, in 2019 the county council alone generated 1,201 tonnes of waste. We need to reduce this amount as much as possible, and implement a robust and consistent approach to managing and monitoring waste across all of our operations and sites, recycling and reusing as much as possible.

Find out more about Dorset Council's current approach to waste in our [Joint Municipal Waste Strategy 2008-2033](#) (last [reviewed in 2017](#)) and our [Local Waste Plan](#).

Dorset's progress so far...

-  The recycling rate in Dorset is 59.6%, putting Dorset in the top 3 comparable authorities in England
-  70% reduction in household waste sent to landfill in last 10 years, saving around £3.3m each year
-  Top performing Council in England, Wales & Northern Ireland for Eunomia's Local Authority Recycling Carbon Index
-  Targeted campaigns delivered by Dorset Waste Service to help households reduce their waste
-  Incentives placed in waste disposal contracts to encourage waste to be treated rather than landfilled
-  All of Dorset's household organic waste is now treated within the county using anaerobic digestion



Hear more about the challenge we are facing, and our current activities from our [Head of Commercial Waste & Strategy...](#)



Key Issues...

Nationally

-  **National schemes are still emerging** to support the new UK waste strategy and a transition to a circular economy
-  **Lack of economic drivers** for the commercial and industrial sectors to recycle and reuse waste
-  **Lack of effective tools** to stop littering and create sustained behavioural change
-  **Life span of products getting shorter**—despite advances in technology the average life span of many products we buy and use in daily life is lower than 20 years ago
-  **An estimated 10 million tonnes of food & drink wasted** post-farm gate every year

In Dorset

-  **Dorset Council was only formed in 2019**, meaning we are currently compiling a full picture of waste streams & associated emissions, and we do not currently have a consistent approach to managing waste from our business activities
-  **Limited oversight and influence over Commercial & Industrial waste** due to a competitive market and commercially sensitive data
-  **Significant level of investment required** for new local waste facilities
-  **Maximising the use of the Recycle for Dorset service** for residents and continuing to influence behavioural change to reduce waste further

Key Opportunities...






-  **Opportunity as a new unitary council** to review our internal waste management practices and implement one robust scheme across all of our operations to reduce waste, reuse, recycle & recover as much as possible
-  **Opportunities for change in shorter time frame** as a result of collection service undertaken in-house & shorter waste contracts in place (7 years compared to typical Local Authority waste contract of 20-25 years)
-  **Substantial cost savings could be achieved** if fly-tipping incidents reduced
-  **Dorset Waste Plan provides the framework for bringing forward new sites** to address the need for new local facilities
-  **Opportunity to influence and implement the resources and waste strategy for England** through extended producer responsibility, consistency in recycling collections and the deposit return scheme









Figure 30

Areas for Action...

Dorset Council aims to reduce the amount of waste that is generated in Dorset as much as possible and move to a circular economy model. There are direct, indirect, and influential initiatives that we can establish, that will help us to facilitate this change.

Direct

-  Carry out internal waste audits across our operations & create waste reduction plan supported by targeted campaigns
-  Continue to work towards our commitment to become single-use plastic-free & eliminate the use of all single life products
-  Ensure waste is minimised through procurement e.g. DC suppliers to take back packaging or use reusable packaging systems
-  Develop business plan to tackle food waste within Council premises, with a particular focus on schools & adult services
-  Ensure sufficient contracts are in place to reuse, recycle & recover as much Council waste as possible
-  Work with Waste manager to reduce emissions from waste collection vehicles

Indirect (through services)

-  Establish appropriate infrastructure to support circular economy as part of [Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Dorset 2008 – 33](#).
-  Develop targeted campaigns to reduce amount of waste produced and increase reuse & recycling
-  Trial a 'not sure' box and use results to inform residents what can or cannot be recycled
-  Trial provision of free/subsidised food-waste caddy liners in specific areas
-  Explore opportunity for increased commercial waste services
-  Develop a contract & infrastructure strategy to enable the most efficient and cost-effective solution for Dorset

Influence & Partnership

-  Respond to second round of consultations relating to the resources & waste strategy for England
-  Investigate how Dorset Waste Services can work with partners to facilitate reduction of commercial and industrial waste
-  Continue to engage with public, communities, schools & businesses to increase understanding of waste issues & best practices
-  Develop further campaigns to reduce the amount of waste generated & stimulate further reuse, recycling & composting
-  Introduce a pilot project in partnership with Keep Britain Tidy to reduce food waste
-  Continue to work with the Police, EA & community groups to reduce littering & fly tipping

Case Study: Recycling Team Award

Dorset Council's Recycling Team works tirelessly to help the public reduce, reuse and recycle their waste correctly. And recently won 'Team of the Year' at the Local Authority Recycling Advisory Committee Awards.



Through good team working, excellent internal and external partnerships, great communications, focus on schools, proven

projects and campaigns, the kerbside recycling rate has continued to increase to one of the highest in the country at 59%, generating estimated savings of over £90k in the last year.

Each Recycling Officer is linked with an operations depot and identifies areas requiring improvement, using limited resources to produce significant benefits to the environment, council budgets.

Successful campaigns and activities have included 'Right Stuff Right Bin', 'Love Food Hate Waste', 'Slim Your Bin' communal container improvements, recycling hangers on wheelie bins and food waste stickering and tagging.

Case Study: Using Recycled Materials for Highways

Highways waste is the largest of our waste streams with high embedded carbon. In order to reduce these emissions, our **Highways team** is working on an exciting project with supply chain partner, Allasso Recycling, based at Corfe Mullen.

Allasso re-process our asphalt waste into sustainable surfacing and recycled materials, which are fed back as a raw material into our resurfacing schemes and sold to the community for use in local projects. This cuts down on the use of raw materials, and their associated emissions, and by making the surfacing locally we reduce emissions from transport.

The sustainable surfacing has the same performance as conventional material and is a lower cost. So this partnership will significantly reduce the cost and emissions from the large improvement schemes planned for this year.

