

# Simpler Recycling: Accommodating The Material Changes

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# Accommodating The Material Changes



2.6 million population  
Lowest median pop age in E&W (30.4yrs)  
Most densely populated in N England

1+ million households  
50% Detached/Semi  
17% Flats  
33% Terraced properties

Nine Collection Authorities

Main contracts:

- Suez for facility and operational management
- TPSCo for 325ktpa residual waste recovery
- Biowaste treatment contracts



1.01 million tonnes p.a. of municipal waste  
4% of UK's MSW

50.1% recycled  
<0.5% landfilled

20 HWRCs (60+% recycling)  
4 x MTRs with railheads  
1 x TRF  
4 x Bio TLS  
8 x TLS  
3 Renew shops & Hub  
Closed landfills  
Solar farm

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## We are the Waste Disposal Authority

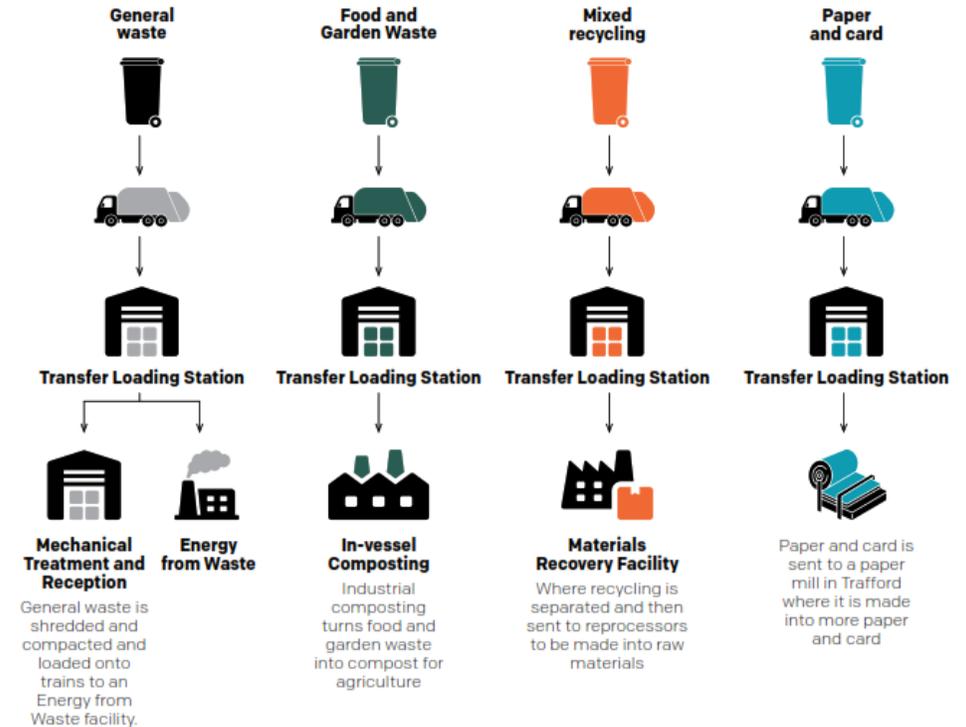
- We provide places for
  - Waste Collection Authorities to drop off their kerbside collected waste
  - residents to take waste
- For WCAs to be able to comply with Simpler Recycling we need to give them compliant facilities – a bit chicken and egg but...
- In GM we've been working closely for years so disposal and collection/collection and disposal are strongly aligned

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## Pre-Simpler Recycling position

- Twin stream recycling system
  - Plastic bottles only – no PTTs or films
  - Cartons mixed with fibres stream
- Food waste
  - collected co-mingled with garden waste – either weekly or fortnightly to homes with gardens
  - street level homes without gardens – food waste collected on its own
  - flats – on a case-by-case basis but limited coverage
- Residual waste
  - mix of frequencies (four 3-weekly, rest fortnightly)
  - mix of bin sizes



Residual

Biowaste stream

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## Pre-Simpler Recycling position – our gaps

- PTTs – not collected because...
- Food waste – not 100% coverage and not necessarily weekly everywhere
- Plastic tubes – not collected
- Films – not collected
- Cartons - in the wrong bin
- ***Our big decisions revolved around these***



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## PTTs

- Operate our own MRF
  - old, space constrained, under pressure
  - significant proportion of our contamination were PTTs
- Retrofitted to capture PTTs recognising this solution is not the ideal solution
- Guaranteed the capture of 40% of PTTs that came through
- Front end sampling PTTs = 3.5-4.0% of materials and capturing around 60%

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## Food waste

- Applied for a Transitional Arrangement to 2034 – why?
  - impact on our residual waste contract with Runcorn EfW
  - not just tonnage impacts - compounding impact of SR, DRS, residual waste reduction targets and ETS on that contract
- Six districts have the exemption to continue as they are
- Other three believe they already had compliant services in place so no additional impact

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## Plastic tubes

- Frustrating...WRAP may say toothpaste tubes 100% recyclable, but market not so certain!
- What about the other tubes (of which there are far more)?
- We accept toothpaste tubes quietly



NEWS

### All toothpaste tubes sold in UK now 100% recyclable, says Wrap

By Daniel Selwood | 18 September 2025 | 2 min read



MOST POPU

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## Cartons

- We accept them in the fibre mix – have done for years
- Saica capture them for recycling - ACE have given us data
- Do we need an eTEEP assessment to leave cartons with fibres?
  - A carton is at least 70-80% fibre BUT the Regs ascribe them to the plastic waste stream
  - eTEEP tool doesn't seem to allow an assessment for one single material
  - Makes no sense to force a change from fibre to co-mingled bin – cost in comms and chances of success?

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## Films

- Our MRF will fall over if we tried to add films so –
  - Investing £20m+ on a new MRF, new location
  - Fully SR-capable with future proofing
  - Perhaps utilising robotics and AI in the processes
  - Open later 2027
  - Planning permission in process
  - Procuring design and build contractor



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## The SR implementation challenges

- Impacts on contracts – direct and indirect
  - Suez operating contracts – Deed of Variation for new MRF, addition of materials – changes to paymech, new infrastructure
  - Biowaste contracts – potential increase in tonnages BUT introduction of garden waste collection charges more than offset these???
  - Residual waste contract – change in tonnages, calorific value
- Money
  - MRF funded from internal capital resources
  - Marginal cost increases for addition of new materials – both collection and disposal
  - Coverage of *p*EPR money, Emissions Trading Scheme, new burdens funding

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## We've introduced the changes – then what?

- So, you're operating good quality, reliable, consistent services
- You just need the public to use them reliably and consistently to produce good quality materials
- Only tool you have is communication – local, regional, national



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## A word on household-like waste

- Some districts collect trade – seen little enthusiasm to actively market SR-compliant trade services
- Seen coverage of schools, council premises etc.
- Active market in GM – a lot of competition
- Potential future commercial opportunities – tie in with EPR/DRS bodies to bulk/sort materials?

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## If we were to have a SR wishlist for the future



- Expand scope for SR so clear links for at home, at work, at play recycling behaviours
- Draw in drop off messages more eg batteries, small WEEE
- EPR for AHPs, batteries, small WEEE, textiles, carpets, mattresses
- Nationally developed comms funded by the sectors