

# Kent Waste Disposal Strategy

2017-2035  
Strategy Document



**2** It is advised the accompanying Evidence Base document is read prior to this Strategy

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# Foreword

As the Waste Disposal Authority, Kent County Council ensures that waste collected by the district and borough councils is disposed of in line with key environmental legislation and regulations. This is a complex issue, with different levels of local government and private companies working together to deliver the overall service of managing Kent's household waste.

From rubbish collections to Household Waste Recycling Centres, the people of Kent rely on a functioning system where all responsible authorities work together to deliver the service in an effective and reliable manner. KCC is committed to working with all partners to ensure that each part of the waste disposal process is managed effectively.

KCC has made excellent progress toward meeting the key targets for household waste disposal ahead of schedule but Kent faces significant growth and change over the coming decades. It is therefore very important that KCC makes the most of its strong performance so far and has a long term strategy in place to respond to increased demand at a time of reduced resources. This will allow us to continue to deliver a high quality service.

This strategy sets out our current position, identifies the future pressures and outlines how we will maintain a sustainable waste management service. It was developed by the Waste Management Member Working Group in collaboration with KCC Officers, supported by public consultation and partner engagement.

By delivering these vital services, in partnership with the public and private sector, KCC is continuing to ensure that Kent remains a great place to live and work.



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***“Our Ambition is to deliver a high quality household waste disposal service, whilst remaining cost-effective for the people of Kent, with an emphasis on waste reduction, reuse, recycling and achieving zero landfill.”***

## **Introduction**

Kent County Council (KCC) Waste Management operates in a two-tier system - as a statutory Waste Disposal Authority (WDA) for the receipt (via a network of 8 Waste Transfer Stations (WTS)) and onward processing/ disposal of Kent’s household waste collected by the district and borough councils as the Waste Collection Authorities (WCAs). In addition, KCC has the statutory responsibility to provide a Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) service to residents, of which we currently have 18 in Kent. The HWRCs are for the disposal of household waste only and accept a wide range of materials. The HWRCs do not accept trade waste.

As the WDA, KCC is also responsible for the ongoing monitoring of a number of closed landfill sites around the county to ensure environmental compliance.

With a projected increase in waste, fluctuations in market value for recyclate, and limited local processors, coupled with sustained budget savings required across the public sector, it is important that we deliver even better services to the Kent taxpayer. Furthermore, with waste services currently influenced primarily by legislation and targets that are passed down from the European Union and transposed into national UK law, the potential challenges and opportunities regarding Brexit will be a significant consideration moving forwards.

A waste disposal strategy for KCC Waste Management is needed to protect service delivery in the future and will be achieved through;

- Identifying further saving efficiencies.
- Building greater flexibility to deal with and react to changes with regards to quantity, composition and quality of waste streams and in line with forecast economic and housing growth.
- Identifying risks to local supply chains and service provision.
- Making a significant contribution to the broader Outcomes Framework of the Council (Strategic Statement).
- Ensuring KCC meets its statutory environmental compliance and public protection functions.

- Helping future proof service delivery for customers including Waste Collection Authorities (WCAs - district/ borough councils)
- Provide equitable access to customer service for Kent residents and compliance with the Equality Act 2010.
- Equipping KCC to succeed in contributing to meeting local and national targets.
- Maximising collaboration between internal and external partners.

This can only be achieved by working in partnership with our residents, local businesses and all 12 district and borough councils.

As part of the Kent Resource Partnership (KRP<sup>1</sup>), KCC is committed to joint working, including commitment to the Kent Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (KJMWMS), which sets out how the KRP intends to manage household waste arisings across the County. As part of our commitment, we are investing in the development of this **new Waste Disposal Strategy for KCC**, focusing in more detail on the functions of KCC as the WDA and which will inform major parts of the delivery of the KJMWMS itself.

## Approach to Strategy Development

This Strategy presents the overall Ambition for Kent County Council as the Waste Disposal Authority up to 2035, and a series of priorities and supporting objectives that will help us to reach our ambition. This Strategy does not attempt to set out in detail how the ambition, priorities and objectives will be achieved, but an analytical and data led implementation plan and associated projects will do this, with needs assessment and further public consultation undertaken, as required. It should be noted that the strategy will be reviewed and updated every 5 years as a minimum in what is an ever changing waste industry.

A high level **Evidence Base** document has been developed to provide background information to support the development of this strategy which sets out in detail the current waste management position, drivers for change and some early forecasting models.

The Strategy makes reference to a number of technical waste terms and acronyms. A glossary is located on page 18, which should be referred to when reading this document.

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<sup>1</sup> The Kent Resource Partnership (KRP) is a partnership of the 13 local authorities in Kent. These are Kent County Council and the 12 District/Borough/City councils of: Ashford, Canterbury, Dartford, Dover, Gravesham, Maidstone, Sevenoaks, Shepway, Swale, Thanet, Tonbridge & Malling and Tunbridge Wells. As a group we look at how we can improve waste management in Kent.

# Key Drivers

There are a number of drivers which require KCC to look differently at how the service is provided. These are summarised below.

## Population and Housing

It is forecast that an average of 8,600 houses will be built every year in Kent until 2031. This will result in a population growth of 23% over 20 years (from 2011) and 17% growth from 2015<sup>2</sup>.

Waste tonnage produced per dwelling has been declining for some years but now appears to be more stable and may increase in the future as there is a strong link between economic growth and the amount of waste produced<sup>3</sup>.

The projected figures for the years 2021 and 2031 are shown in Table 1 below. These projections suggest an increase of 20% in household waste between 2016 and 2031.

**Table 1: Dwelling and population projections<sup>4</sup>**

	2016	2021	2031
<b>Dwellings</b>	656,700	701,400	785,800
<b>Population</b>	1,541,300	1,635,100	1,799,200
<b>Waste Tonnage</b>	726,000	775, 800	869,800

## Budget pressures

Councils are facing significant budget pressures resulting in the need to do things differently, whilst maintaining service levels. Delivery of this strategy has the potential to find efficiencies, deliver savings and derive income allowing the service to develop and evolve. However, it is also recognised that to reach our ambition, the cost to deliver the strategy could be high and in some instances require significant capital investment and/ or the accessing of key funding. It is unknown what this cost might be at present but is likely to be significant should the strategy and subsequent action plans be adopted.

<sup>2</sup> Source: KCC Housing Lead Population Forecast December 2016

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.wrap.org.uk/sites/files/wrap/Decoupling%20of%20Waste%20and%20Economic%20Indicators.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> The table above assumes that waste tonnage produced by household/dwelling remains that same between 2016 and 2031. There is a closer link between household numbers and waste arisings than population.

## Market provision

The waste collection and disposal market is becoming increasingly commercially volatile. In particular, suppliers are finding it challenging to meet contract requirements, whilst becoming increasingly reluctant to take up new opportunities in the current waste market. This will require KCC to identify these market risks to local supply chains and service provision to plan accordingly.

## Current performance

Table 2 below shows the countywide performance in between 2012/13 and 2015/16 for the management of household waste in Kent compared with previous years. The 2015/16 data for England has also been provided. Further data regarding top recycling and lowest waste to landfill local authorities can be found in the Evidence Base.

**Table 2**

	Kent				England
	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2015/16
% Waste Recycled or composted	41.9	44.2	48.4	44.1	45.2
% Waste sent to make energy	37.3	29.2	40.7	49.1	30.1
% Waste to landfill	20.8	26.6	11.0	6.8*	24.6

\*The percentage sent to landfill has decreased even further during 2016/17, on occasion achieving less than 2% in a given month as a result of a new contract for dealing with waste materials that would have previously been sent to landfill.

Furthermore, in 2015/16 we achieved a 69.4% recycling and composting rate across our HWRCs.

## Legislation and performance targets

Waste services are **currently** influenced primarily by legislation, targets and requirements that are passed down from the European Union and transposed into national law, policies and strategies. Details of key legislation can be found in the Evidence Base document.

The European Union's approach to waste management is based on the 'waste hierarchy'. The hierarchy ranks waste management options according to what is best for the environment. It gives top priority to preventing waste in the first place. When waste is created, it gives priority to preparing it for re-use, then recycling, then recovery, and last of all disposal (e.g. landfill).





\*Other recovery includes the burning of waste under controlled conditions to produce steam that is used to generate electricity.

#### Waste Framework Directive:

The principal legislation affecting waste management to come out of Europe over the last few years is the revised Waste Framework Directive (Directive 2008/98/EC on waste). The Directive sets the basic concepts and definitions related to waste management, such as definitions of waste, recycling, recovery. The Directive includes two new recycling and recovery targets to be achieved by 2020:

- 50% preparing for re-use and recycling of certain waste materials from households and other origins similar to households; and,
- 70% preparing for re-use, recycling and other recovery of construction and demolition waste.

#### European Directive on the Landfill of Waste:

The European Directive 1999/31/EC on the Landfill of Waste (Landfill Directive) aims to reduce reliance on landfill as a disposal option. The Directive sets targets for the diversion of Biodegradable Municipal Waste (BMW);

- By 2020 reduce the biodegradable waste landfilled to 35% of that produced in 1995.

#### Future Legislation:

As with all EU driven UK legislation, the specifics of what will happen to waste legislation and the impact upon KCC's waste management services specifically post Brexit remains uncertain. Given the long-term outlook of this strategy, it will periodically be reviewed and updated, allowing

sufficient flexibility to respond to a wide array of changes to the waste management landscape, including a shift in the UK's relationship with the EU.

In the short term, the strategy recognises imminent EU legislation and outlines how these may impact on KCC. The main legislation currently in development phase is the EU Circular Economy Package which was adopted by the European Commission on 2 December 2015. The aim of the legislation is to help turn Europe into a circular economy, boost recycling, secure access to raw materials and create jobs and economic growth. The package consists of an EU Action Plan and a number of legislative proposals on waste, packaging waste, landfill and electrical and electronic waste. The Circular Economy Package has set ambitious targets and added key provisions on the instruments e.g. simplified and improved definitions and calculations, to achieve and to monitor them.

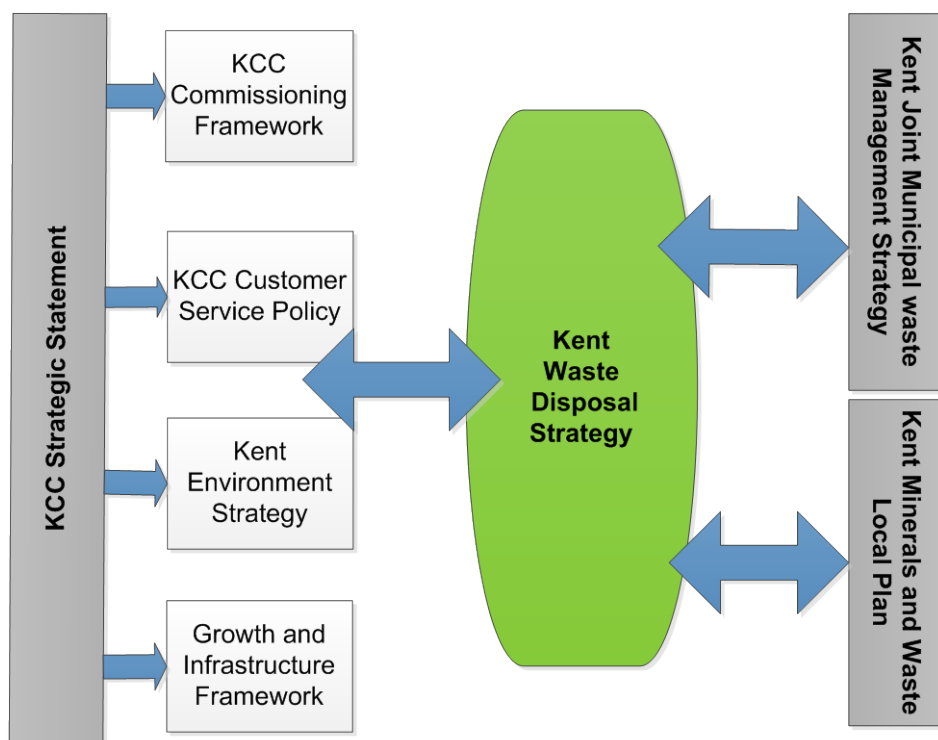
The key elements proposed as part of the Circular Economy Package Strategy are:

- A common EU target for recycling 65% of municipal waste by 2030;
- A common EU target for recycling 75% of packaging waste by 2030;
- A binding landfill target to reduce landfill to maximum of 10% of all waste by 2030;

DEFRA has suggested that any obligations placed upon the UK at the time of exit will roll forward. This means that discussions on the circular economy must remain relevant to the UK as they could still be required to be implemented. If adopted, these new targets could have a significant impact upon KCC as the WDA; whilst the target amount sent to landfill is achievable (indeed, we have already met the 2030 target), the amount of waste we currently send for burning for energy recovery would need to be reduced substantially to 30% and more waste sent for recycling or composting. Specific targets are not included in this Waste Disposal Strategy but will be included as part of the refresh of the KJMWMS due to be undertaken in 2017.

## Interdependent Documents

The KCC WDA Strategy will link to a number of other documents which are discussed in more detail in the Evidence Base Document. These are illustrated below as follows;



*\*The Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan is a separate strategy document produced by KCC as the Waste Planning Authority. It provides an overarching strategy and planning policies for the management of all waste streams, not just household waste.*

## KCC's Strategic Statement

KCC wants to be an outcome-focussed organisation and as such has developed a strategic statement 'Increasing Opportunities, Improving Outcomes'. The strategic outcomes are;

- Children and young people in Kent get the best start in life.
- Kent communities feel the benefits of economic growth by being in-work, healthy and enjoying a good quality of life.
- Older and vulnerable residents are safe and supported with choices to live independently.

The key Supporting Outcome from the statement relevant to the provision of the Waste Management service in KCC is "Kent's physical and natural environment is protected, enhanced and enjoyed by residents and visitors". The WDA strategy should help to reach this corporate outcome.

# Important Considerations Regarding the Ambition and Priorities

- a) The Ambition and Objectives bring together work the service already does as well as plans for the future into one place. By stating an objective does not mean we are not working towards achieving it already.
- b) Whilst there is an appreciation that there are significant synergies with the household waste collection service provided by the district/ borough councils, it is important to reiterate that this is a Waste **Disposal** Strategy. It focuses very much on the services provided for the disposal of waste, and not to the detriment of the district and borough councils. The Waste Collection Authorities costs will be taken into account when delivering the Ambition and Priorities.
- c) An implementation plan, which includes a list of projects on how we deliver this strategy, forms a separate document. These specific projects will include the measures to deliver effectiveness. Any changes to service will be consulted upon again, as required and necessary. Where evidence is mentioned as part of the objective, a table has been provided at the end of the document to present the 'types' of evidence which will be considered in delivery phase.
- d) It should be noted that a significant percentage of waste is sent to burn for energy (i.e. 'recovery' as detailed in the waste hierarchy) and that a very small percentage of waste is sent to landfill. The remaining waste is recycled.

# Ambition

*“Our Ambition is to deliver a high quality household waste disposal service, whilst remaining cost-effective for the people of Kent, with an emphasis on waste reduction, reuse, recycling and achieving zero landfill”*

## Priorities and supporting objectives

**Priority 1** The Environment: We will deliver services which mitigate impacts on or from the environment and climate change.

**Objective A:**

Continue to support and contribute to the implementation of the Kent Environment Strategy through our waste disposal activities.

**Objective B:**

Maximise reuse and recycling and eliminate waste to landfill in accordance with the Waste Hierarchy.

**Objective C:**

Work as part of the KRP to support waste prevention initiatives including lobbying and working with manufacturers to minimise waste and packaging.

**Objective D:**

Ensure materials are segregated at our HWRCs in line with legislative requirements.

**Objective E:**

Take action to reduce the negative impacts that our service has on the environment and support approaches to reduce or enforce against environmental crime.

**Objective F:**

Continue to explore opportunities for alternative uses for those closed landfill sites that KCC has responsibility for, and continue to monitor them to ensure they are safe for the environment.

## **Priority 2 Working Together: We will work together with our key partners on projects to deliver our ambition.**

### **Objective A:**

Continue to work as part of the KRP and individually with district and borough councils where appropriate, to deliver high quality and cost effective services for Kent residents.

### **Objective B:**

Work with Kent Parish Councils, Town Councils and community groups to share information with residents, and gather their views and opinions in order to help improve the service.

### **Objective C:**

Work with the companies that manage our HWRCs and final waste disposal sites to deliver high quality, safe and fit for purpose services, embracing innovation and keeping the customer (including the district and borough councils) at the heart of the service.

### **Objective D:**

Work closely and share ideas with other Waste Disposal Authorities (WDAs) to understand where opportunities may exist to work together to improve services for everyone.

### **Objective E:**

Embrace opportunities to work with and learn from other organisations in the UK and beyond, where their innovative thinking could have a positive impact on our service.

## **Priority 3 Innovation and Change: The services we design and provide will be resilient through accommodating change and growth.**

### Waste Disposal Sites:

#### **Objective A:**

Ensure we have the capacity needed to deal with Kent's household waste, with final disposal points located where the evidence shows they need to be.

#### **Objective B:**

Household Waste Recycling Centres and Waste Transfer Stations will be located where the evidence shows they need to be.

#### **Objective C:**

Use technologies to ensure waste materials are recycled and reused in the most efficient and effective way, whilst ensuring minimal impacts on the environment.

### Trade Waste:

#### **Objective D:**

Take actions to stop trade waste from illegally entering our HWRCs.

#### **Objective E:**

Ensure a trade waste disposal service is provided for small businesses in Kent, where evidence shows there is the need and demand.

### Out of county HWRC use:

#### **Objective F:**

Investigate the use of our HWRCs by people who do not live in Kent, and where our residents are using HWRCs outside of the county (including Medway\*). This will help us to understand the impact on our service and opportunities for change.

\*Medway Council operates as a Unitary Authority and therefore does not sit within the KCC Area.

**Priority 4 HWRC Service Delivery: We will provide a cost effective service, which meets the needs of our customers.**

Material Acceptance:

**Objective A:**

Work as part of the KRP to encourage residents to use the most cost effective and environmentally sound means of disposal for different waste materials; whether it is through kerbside collections, HWRCs or other recycling or reuse services.

Access and availability:

**Objective B:**

HWRCs will be open when the evidence shows they need to be.

Charging:

**Objective C:**

Household Waste will be accepted free of charge\*. Charges may be made for non-household waste where lawful and appropriate to do so.

\*subject to current legislation (Environmental Protection Act 1990 and Controlled Waste Regulations 2012)

**Priority 5 Customer service: We will provide an accessible service whilst encouraging customers to reuse and recycle, and let people know what happens to their waste.**

Customer Service and Feedback:

**Objective A:**

Work with the companies that manage our HWRCs to ensure high levels of customer service and evaluate and monitor customer feedback.

Skills of workforce:

**Objective B:**

Ensure that the HWRC workforce is appropriately trained and skilled to do the best possible job.

Equalities and safety:

**Objective C:**

Ensure that all residents are able to safely access our HWRCs and receive a positive and consistent level of service.

Communicating with our customers:

**Objective D:**

Increase recycling rates and help public understanding by providing information to customers to explain what happens to their waste.

**Objective E:**

Ensure individuals understand the environmental and financial impacts and consequences of disposing of their waste incorrectly or illegally.

**Objective F:**

Ensure information about the HWRC service is communicated to residents across a variety of channels.

**Objective G:**

Work as part of the KRP to encourage waste prevention, reuse and recycling through targeted campaigns, understanding how people like to receive information.



**Priority 6 Commissioning: Our commissioning and contract management approach will provide a quality and value for money service.**

**Objective A:**

Continue to explore opportunities for the best models to deliver the household waste disposal service.

**Objective B:**

Commission, design and deliver services with our partners including the district and borough councils and the market to achieve the greatest savings, innovations and value for money for the Kent taxpayer.

**Objective C:**

Use high quality data from within KCC, the district and borough councils and from our providers to inform our approach to commissioning and procurement. We will tell potential providers what our end goal is, allowing them to suggest how we reach it.

**Objective D:**

When required, improve the quality and range of bids submitted by working with our KCC procurement team to provide support to organisations to help them to understand how our procurement processes work.

**Objective E:**

Engage with waste companies at the earliest opportunity to understand views, challenges, innovation and key market drivers to provide us with the information we need to make the best decisions about how to deliver our services.

**Objective F:**

Ensure that where possible, the services we commission provide wider benefit to the local community.

**Objective G:**

To ensure a sustainable household waste disposal service, share commercial risks and benefits with our providers and district and borough councils where appropriate.

**Objective H:**

Ensure the contracts or agreements we have in place deliver what they set out to do, through ongoing monitoring and evaluation, excellent contract management and positive relationship building.

## Evidence to measure objectives

Priority and Objective	Types of Evidence
Priority 2, Objective A Priority 2, Objective B	For both types of customer (residents as HWRC customers and district and borough councils): distance travelled, waste tonnage movements/displacement, operating costs, accessibility, environmental impact For residents as HWRC customers only : HWRC visitor numbers, population served
Priority 2, Objective E	Market viability and demand, operating costs, impact upon recycling targets
Priority 3, Objective B	Trailing changing opening hours – customer usage, customer feedback (via satisfaction surveys and direct comments), operating costs

## Glossary of terms for the purpose of this strategy

Term	Definition
Circular Economy	A circular economy is an alternative to a traditional linear economy (make, use, dispose) in which we keep resources in use for as long as possible, extract the maximum value from them whilst in use, then recover and regenerate products and materials at the end of each service life'. Definition from WRAP (Waste Resources Action Programme).
Commissioning	The process of planning how services are to be delivered, and the day-to-day management of these services
Customer	Users of KCC services to include residents, businesses, stakeholders and partners.
Environmental Crime	The crime of flytipping and illegal deposit of trade waste at HWRCs.
Evidence Base	A document to be read in conjunction with this strategy, it describes the current position of KCC Waste Management as well as the challenges and opportunities we face now and into the future.
Final disposal point	A building or site for the treatment and processing of waste for recycling, recovery or disposal.
Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC)	A building or site where household waste can be deposited by residents for recycling or disposal.
Kent Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (KJMWMS)	The strategy for the Kent Resource Partnership.
Kent Resource Partnership (KRP)	A Partnership between KCC and the 12 District/Borough/City Councils of Kent. The Partnership looks at how waste management services can be improved in Kent.
Kerbside	The regular collection of waste from households by WCAs in wheelie bins/ sacks or containers.

Municipal Waste	Municipal Waste is defined as mixed waste and separately collected waste from households, mixed waste and separately collected waste from other sources that is comparable to household waste in nature, composition and quantity and market cleansing waste and waste from street cleaning services, including street sweepings, the content of litter containers, waste from park and garden maintenance
Procurement	The process of buying or obtaining goods or services.
Recyclate	Any material that is able to be recycled.
Recycling	Turning waste into a new product or substance, including composting.
Re-use	Checking, cleaning, repairing, refurbishing whole items or spare parts so that they can be used again.
Trade Waste	Waste produced by businesses or commercial activities.
Unitary Authority	A council established in place of, or as an alternative to, a two-tier system of local councils e.g. Medway Council will act as the WCA and WDA.
Waste Collection Authority (WCA)	District, Borough and City Councils responsible for the collection of household waste from the kerbside and delivery to a nominated delivery point.
Waste Disposal Authority (WDA)	The County Council, responsible for the receipt and onward processing/ disposal of household waste, providing a Household Waste Recycling Centre Service and monitoring closed landfills.
Waste Prevention	Using less material in design and manufacture and keeping products for longer.
Waste Recovery	Includes burning waste to produce energy.
Waste Transfer Station (WTS)	A building or site for the temporary holding of waste, where district/ borough councils will deposit waste prior to loading on to larger vehicles for transfer to final disposal point.

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