Basingstoke and Deane

Recycling and Waste Strategy 2026 to 2032

Recycling and Waste Strategy 2026 to 2032 (not accessible version) (PDF) [5 Mb]

Accessible version below:

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Ambitions at a glance

To help us measure progress and stay accountable, we have set a small number of clear, achievable and meaningful aims. These reflect our ambition to reduce waste, increase recycling and support a more circular economy across Basingstoke and Deane.

Government Waste and Resource Strategy targets

- Recycle 65% of household waste by 2035
- Reduce waste produced per capita per year to 287kg by 2042

Our interim aims:

By 2028

By 2028		
Increase the household recycling rate from 30% to 40%	Achieve 75% participation in weekly food waste collections	Reduce contamination in dry kerbside recycling to below 20%

By 2030	
Increase the household recycling rate to 47%	Reduce household waste per person from 535kg per household in 2025 to 426kg per household by 2030

By 2032		
Increase the household recycling rate to 55%	Reduce contamination in dry recycling to below 15%	Double the volume of items reused, repaired or redistributed through community partners from a 2028 baseline

These aims will guide our decisions, shape our services and help us track our progress as we work together to build a cleaner, greener and more resource efficient borough.

Introduction and scope

The Environment Act 2021 places a responsibility on all local authorities to reduce waste and increase recycling. For Basingstoke and Deane, this means rethinking how we design our services, how we communicate with residents and how we support people to make sustainable choices. At the heart of this strategy is the waste hierarchy, which encourages us to reduce waste first, reuse materials wherever possible and recycle only when those options have been exhausted.

Reduce

Using less material in design and manufacture. Keeping products for longer, reducing consumerism

Re-use

Checking, cleaning, repairing, refurbishing, repair, whole items or spare parts

Recover

Including anaerobic digestion incineration with energy recovery, gasification and pyrolysis

Recycle

Turning waste into a new substance or product including composting if it meets quality protocols

Landfill

Disposal in landfill, also incineration of waste without energy recovery

National targets are ambitious. Meeting these expectations will require a combination of service changes, behaviour change and long-term planning. It will also require a shared effort across the borough.

To guide this work, we have set a small number of clear, measurable targets that reflect both our ambition and our starting point. By 2030, we aim to reduce household waste per household from 535kg to 462kg per year. By 2028, we want to increase the household recycling rate to 40%, achieve 75% participation in weekly food waste collections and reduce contamination in dry recycling to below 20%. By 2032, we aim to increase the recycling rate to 55%, reduce contamination to below 15% and double the volume of items reused, repaired or redistributed through community partners.

These targets will help focus our communications, track our progress and demonstrate the impact of the changes we make together. They will also ensure that our work aligns with national reforms, our performance is on track to meet mandatory national targets and prepares us for the transition to the new North Hampshire unitary authority.

How we will measure progress

To make sure this strategy delivers real change, we will track our progress through a clear and transparent action plan. This plan sets out the practical steps we will take each year, who is responsible for delivering them and how they contribute to our wider goals. It will evolve over time as national policy develops, new opportunities emerge and we learn from what works.

Our measurable targets sit at the heart of this approach. They give us a shared direction and allow us to monitor the impact of our work in a way that is meaningful for residents, councillors and partners. Progress will be assessed through a combination of service data, resident feedback, participation rates and the outcomes delivered through our community and partnership programmes.

Each year, we will publish an update that shows how we are performing against our targets. This will include:

- household waste per person, measured using national reporting frameworks
- recycling rates, including the impact of food waste collections and the expansion of materials from 2028
- participation in food waste recycling, tracked through collection data and participation monitoring
- contamination levels, measured through sampling and Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) feedback

- reuse and repair activity, recorded through our community partners, local initiatives and reuse networks

This approach ensures that our strategy remains accountable, transparent and focused on the outcomes that matter most: reducing waste, increasing recycling and supporting a more circular and sustainable borough.

Drivers for change

National policy

The Government's Resources and Waste Strategy sets a clear direction for the country. It aims to reduce waste, increase recycling and move England toward a circular economy where materials are kept in use for as long as possible. Over the next few years, several major reforms will reshape how councils operate.

- Simpler Recycling will introduce a consistent set of materials collected from every household in England. This will reduce confusion and help residents recycle more confidently
- Extended Producer Responsibility will shift the cost of managing packaging waste away from councils and onto the companies that produce it, encouraging better design and reducing the burden on local taxpayers
- The Deposit Return Scheme will reward people for returning drinks containers, helping to reduce litter and increase recycling

These reforms create both challenges and opportunities. They require us to adapt our services, but they also give us the chance to modernise, improve efficiency and help residents recycle more effectively.

Carbon and climate change

Waste and resource management play a central role in Basingstoke and Deane's response to the climate emergency. The council committed to becoming a carbon neutral organisation by December 2025 and to working with communities and partners to achieve a net zero carbon borough by 2045. These commitments sit at the heart of the borough's Climate Change and Air Quality Strategy, which sets out how we will lead by example, enable change and inspire action across the community.

Reducing waste and increasing recycling directly support these goals. Every tonne of waste prevented avoids the emissions associated with extraction, manufacturing and transport. Every item reused keeps materials in circulation for longer. Every improvement in recycling reduces the carbon intensity of the products we use.

This strategy aligns with the Climate Change and Air Quality Strategy's six areas for action, particularly "Consumption and Waste", which emphasises the need to reduce waste, reuse more and support residents and businesses to make lower carbon choices. It also contributes to "Action by All", recognising that achieving net zero requires participation from every household, organisation and community group in the borough.

Our transition to a more circular economy will help reduce emissions across the entire lifecycle of materials. By designing services that make recycling easier, supporting community led repair and reuse and helping residents reduce waste at source, we will cut the borough's overall carbon footprint while

building resilience and reducing pressure on natural resources. These actions complement wider climate priorities, including decarbonising buildings, supporting zero carbon electricity and protecting the natural environment.

Local government reorganisation strengthens this opportunity. By working in partnership across the new North Hampshire authority, we can design a unified waste system that reduces emissions at scale, from fleet decarbonisation and route optimisation to shared reuse infrastructure and consistent recycling services. This collaborative approach will help ensure that waste and resource management make a meaningful contribution to the borough wide pathway to net zero by 2045.

As we deliver this strategy, we will continue to monitor the carbon impact of our services, work closely with the Climate Change Team and ensure that waste reduction, reuse and recycling remain central to the borough's climate response. By cutting waste, improving recycling and embracing circular economy principles, we are not only protecting our environment we are helping to secure a cleaner, greener and more climate resilient future for North Hampshire.

A circular economy approach

A circular economy is a different way of thinking about waste. Instead of seeing materials as disposable, it encourages us to keep them in use for as long as possible through repair, reuse, refurbishment and recycling. This approach reduces pressure on the environment, cuts carbon emissions and supports a more sustainable way of living.

For Basingstoke and Deane, embracing a circular economy means helping residents make choices that reduce waste at source. It means supporting community groups that repair and reuse items. It means working with businesses to reduce packaging and improve recycling. And it means designing services that make sustainable choices easy and accessible for everyone.

This strategy places the circular economy at its core. It recognises that large scale behaviour change is essential and that we must work together, residents, businesses, partners and the council to make it happen.

Waste and recycling services overview

Basingstoke and Deane provides a range of waste and recycling services, including collections of general waste, dry mixed recycling, glass, food waste (commenced October 2025) and garden waste. We also offer on request services for bulky household items and healthcare waste. Each service plays a role in helping residents to manage their waste responsibly and each will evolve as national reforms come into effect.

As the national system becomes more consistent, our services will become clearer and easier to use. The introduction of food waste collections, the expansion of recycling materials in 2028 and the shift to fortnightly general waste collections will all help residents reduce what they throw away and recycle more effectively.

Service	Containers	Collection frequency	Materials accepted	Materials not accepted

Service	Containers	Collection frequency	Materials accepted	Materials not accepted
Residual waste (general rubbish)	Grey wheeled bin (size/number based on household circumstances)	Weekly Fortnightly from October 2026	- Non-recyclable household waste - Bagged hygiene waste	- Batteries - Electricals - Hot ashes - DIY waste - Garden waste
Dry mixed recycling (DMR)	240L green wheeled bin	Fortnightly (opposite week to residual waste)	- Paper and cardboard - Plastic bottles - Metal cans, tins - Aerosols	- Plastic film - Polystyrene - Plastic pots/tubs/trays - Textiles - Batteries - Cartons
Notes: Materials must be clean, dry, loose. Contamination monitored via tagging and crew reporting				
Glass collections	Dark green 40L box	Fortnightly	- Glass bottles and jars	- All other waste
Notes: No sorting required				
Food waste collection	5L kitchen caddy 23L outdoor kerbside caddy (lockable)	Weekly	- All cooked/uncooked food - Meat and bones - Tea bags and coffee grounds	- Packaging - Liquids/oils - Compostable plastics
Notes: Supports national recycling targets				
Garden waste collection - optional subscription	Brown wheeled bin (size/number chosen by customer)	Fortnightly	- Grass - Leaves - Hedge trimmings - Small branches - Plants - Weeds	- Soil/turf - Stones - Food waste - Treated wood - Large branches
Material is composted				

Collection information 2025

Our wide range of services are delivered to 82,000 homes across the borough. Here are just some of the key facts, figures and successes.

30% 2025 recycling rate

4,250,000 waste collections each year

4,250,000 food collections each year

537kg in 2025 per household

3,400 bulky collections each year

5,250 healthcare collections each year

17,400 garden waste subscribers

3,700 Christmas trees collected each year

62,600 tonnes of material processed in 2025

2,125,000 kerbside recycling collections each year

422,000 garden waste collections each year

How we compare with others

Basingstoke and Deane is a borough with strong environmental values, but our waste and recycling performance does not yet reflect the ambition of our communities. Today, we are one of the lowest performing authorities in the country for both recycling and waste reduction. Our recycling rate has

remained at around 30% for several years, placing us well below the regional and national averages. At the same time, households in the borough produce significantly more waste than many comparable areas.

These figures matter because they highlight the scale of the opportunity ahead. They show that we have room to improve and that with the right support and modernised services, we can make rapid progress. Other councils that now lead the country once faced similar challenges. They improved by making recycling simpler, by supporting residents to change their habits and by building a culture where waste reduction is part of everyday life.

We can do the same. Our ambition is to move from being one of the poorest performers to becoming one of the best. This will not happen overnight, but it is entirely achievable. By reducing waste at source, expanding the range of materials we collect, increasing participation in food waste recycling and supporting a culture of repair and reuse, we can transform our performance and build a more sustainable future for the borough.

This is not just about meeting targets. It is about protecting our environment, reducing carbon emissions, supporting future generations and delivering services that reflect the pride we have in our communities. Every household has a role to play and together we can turn one of our biggest challenges into one of our greatest successes.

Weight of household waste per household for 2024/25

Looking beyond our services, there are great examples of where other authorities are already achieving government targets or making positive steps. The boxes below show how much waste we are generating per household compared to some others locally and nationally.

256KG

East Devon District Council (Lowest in England)

414KG

Rushmoor Borough Council (Lowest in Hampshire)

500KG

South East Average

537KG

Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council

567KG

Southampton City Council (Highest in Hampshire)

Percentage of material recycled for 2024/25

Recycling rates are made up of all the material recycled in the borough. This includes all the kerbside services such as garden waste, glass, food waste and mixed recycling as well as bring banks where textiles and small electricals are taken.

In Basingstoke and Deane we want to inspire our residents to fully utilise the services we already offer.

The boxes below show some examples of where other collection authorities are demonstrating good practice and how much improvement needs to be made to meet the target of 65% by 2035.

64%

Stratford-upon-Avon (highest in England)

43%

Eastleigh Borough Council (highest in Hampshire)

42%

England average

30%

Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council

25%

Gosport Borough Council (lowest in Hampshire)

What we've collected each year

Understanding what we throw away and how much of each material we recycle is important, as it tells us where we can improve.

From waste analysis we know that a third of material that goes into the grey waste bin is food waste and there is still glass, paper, card, tins, cans plastic bottles and aerosols being put in the waste bin.

Household waste volumes have already started to decrease in 2025/26 from residents participating in the new food waste collection service that started in October 2025.

As we look to 2026/27, we will be working to divert all food waste and recyclables we collect from the grey bin to the other recycling containers. This will reduce the amount of waste we produce ahead of increasing the range of materials we can collect and sort across Hampshire from spring 2028.

Our strategy - 2026 to 2028

Our action plan translates the ambitions of this strategy into practical steps that can be delivered year by year. Each action is directly linked to one or more of our measurable targets, ensuring that every part of the plan contributes to the outcomes we want to achieve.

Reducing household waste per person from 535kg per household in 2025 to 462kg per household by 2030

Actions in the plan will focus on waste prevention, including behaviour change campaigns, support for community reuse and repair initiatives and clearer guidance to help residents make sustainable choices.

Increasing the household recycling rate to 40% by 2028 and 55% by 2032

Actions will include improvements to recycling communications, preparation for the expansion of materials in 2028 and work to reduce contamination.

Achieving 75% participation in weekly food waste collections by 2028

The plan will include targeted engagement, community partnerships, clear messaging and practical support to help households participate confidently.

Reducing contamination to below 20% by 2028 and below 15% by 2032

Actions will focus on education, feedback loops with collection crews, clearer guidance on what can be recycled and working with the new Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) to improve material quality.

Doubling the 2028 volume of items reused, repaired or redistributed by 2032

The plan will support local repair cafés, reuse groups, community fridges, sharing schemes and other circular economy initiatives that keep materials in use for longer.

What we're going to do

The next two years will be a period of significant change. Our short-term strategy focuses on helping residents reduce the amount they throw away, improving the quality of recycling and preparing for the national reforms that will reshape waste services across the country.

Our long-term vision is simple: we want to create a council where waste is minimised, where reuse is part of everyday life and where recycling is easy, accessible and widely understood. To achieve this, we will focus on behaviour change, community engagement and service design.

We will support residents to reduce their waste by introducing fortnightly collections of general waste, a change that has been shown elsewhere to encourage more recycling and less disposal. We will improve the clarity and consistency of our communications so that residents know exactly what can be recycled and how to do it. We will work closely with community groups, schools and the voluntary sector

to build a culture of repair and reuse. And we will prepare households for the national reforms that will expand the range of materials collected from 2028.

By 2028, we aim to have reduced the amount of waste produced in the borough, increased the amount we recycle and strengthened the understanding of why waste reduction matters. These changes will lay the foundations for the next phase of our strategy.

Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council's approach to waste prevention is built on a simple principle: the least impactful waste is the waste that never occurs. Our action plan focuses on empowering residents, schools, communities and businesses to reduce waste at source, make better use of resources and shift everyday habits towards a more circular way of living. The programme brings together behaviour change, community partnership, education and data-driven insight to create long-lasting change.

Our ambitions

The ambitions on the following page set out a new partnership led approach. Working with residents, community groups, charities, schools and local businesses we can build a more circular local economy. By keeping materials in use for longer and supporting practical community action, we will reduce waste, lower our environmental impact and strengthen the sustainability of our borough.

Waste prevention campaigns (short term 2026 to 2028 ambitions) (#)

- Deliver a behaviour change programme for food waste, textiles, plastics and reuse
- Run campaigns encouraging mindful consumption and longer-lasting purchases
- Offer waste reduction tools (meal plans, storage guides, repair videos)
- Promote the national recycling locator and improve online guidance

Food waste prevention and community redistribution (short term 2026 to 2028 ambitions) (#)

- Work with food redistribution charities to divert more edible surplus food
- Provide resources and small-scale funding for community fridges and pantries
- Raise awareness of digital tools that reduce food waste
- Work with households to track food waste and identify behaviour changes

Behaviour change through social norms and nudges (#)

- Apply behavioural science through prompts, bin stickers and defaults
- Incorporate positive social norm messaging in communications
- Provide tailored feedback such as contamination notices
- Improve signage and resident knowledge

Community led waste prevention programme (#)

- Create a directory of community groups, charities and repair cafés
- Promote small grant schemes for community projects
- Recruit and train local waste champions
- Produce toolkits for swap shops, repair events, borrowing schemes and reuse markets

Schools waste prevention and education programme (#)

- Promote and distribute Recycle Now and Love Food Hate Waste lesson packs
- Support schools to become accredited Eco schools
- Provide portioning guides and food waste tracking tools
- Run themed competitions (for example, Plastic Free Month)

Charitable waste prevention partnerships (#)

- Support charity shops with logistics for bulky reuse
- Support and publicise refill, reuse and packaging-free businesses
- Establish a circular economy knowledge network for businesses
- Deliver community repair skills training with charities

Textiles waste reduction programme (#)

- Collaborate with charities and schools to increase textile reuse
- Support community workshops delivering sewing and repair sessions
- Provide guidance and toolkits for clothing swaps
- Promote textile takeback an recycling schemes with retailers

Additional recycling opportunities (short term 2026 to 2028 ambitions) (#)

- Align bring banks with waste strategy objectives
- Research best practice to expand recyclable materials

Building the foundations for a modern North Hampshire service - 2028 to 2032

From 2028 onwards, Basingstoke and Deane will enter a period of major transformation. Local government reorganisation, national reforms, new infrastructure requirements and the end of our current waste collection contract in 2033 create a natural point to rethink how waste and recycling services should operate across the new North Hampshire unitary authority. As we move towards local government reorganisation, Basingstoke and Deane's recycling performance lags behind that of our future North Hampshire partners. Both Hart District Council and Rushmoor Borough Council have operated fortnightly residual waste collections for many years and are achieving significantly higher recycling rates, at 42% and 43% respectively.

During this phase, our focus will be on preparing the organisation, the service and the infrastructure for the decade ahead. Working with our new partners, we will jointly set a clear suite of medium-term objectives covering recycling performance, residual waste reduction, contamination, carbon emissions, service reliability and resident engagement. These targets will be supported by a simple, transparent monitoring framework so that progress can be tracked and reported openly, giving residents confidence that their efforts are making a difference.

Once local government reorganisation is implemented, aligning services across the new unitary area will be essential. This will include harmonising contracts, rebalancing collection rounds to reflect new boundaries and housing growth and standardising service levels so every household receives the same offer. We will also explore opportunities to improve efficiency through shared depots, joint procurement and consistent policies, supported by clearer, more accessible communications that help residents understand how to use the service.

The end of our current waste collection contract in 2033 provides a rare opportunity to redesign how services are delivered. Between 2028 and 2032, we will carry out a full review of delivery models from in-house provision and Local Authority Trading Company (LATCo) options to outsourced, shared or hybrid arrangements, assessing each against cost, service quality, carbon impact, resilience and adaptability to future reforms. This work will culminate in a preferred model and a detailed business case.

Alongside this, we will prepare a new waste infrastructure plan that sets out the depots, fleet, containers, digital systems and reuse facilities required to support future delivery. This will ensure that, by 2032, the new authority is ready to operate one of the best waste and recycling services in the country, with the right physical and digital foundations in place.

Beyond 2032: becoming a top 10 authority

From 2032 onwards, the emphasis shifts from planning to delivery. This is the phase where the new North Hampshire authority will embed high performance, modernise operations and position itself as a top 10 performing area for waste reduction and recycling.

Once the preferred delivery model is agreed, we will mobilise the new arrangements, introduce modern performance standards and strengthen reporting systems so that service quality is visible and accountable. Improving the resident experience will be central to this work, with clearer communication, more efficient collections and a service that is financially and environmentally sustainable over the long term.

The waste infrastructure plan developed in the previous phase will move into delivery. This may involve building or upgrading depots, rolling out a modern low-carbon fleet, deploying new digital tools for crews and residents and expanding reuse and repair facilities that reduce waste while supporting local communities. These investments will create a modern, efficient and future-proof service that can adapt to changing needs.

Working with our unitary partners, we will also develop a shared long-term approach to waste and resource management. This will include a joint vision for becoming a zero-waste unitary, a stronger focus on waste prevention and high-quality recycling, shared infrastructure planning and procurement and regional behaviour-change programmes that support both residents and businesses. We will also explore circular economy opportunities that bring environmental and economic benefits to the local area.

Summary

Basingstoke and Deane is stepping into a new era with confidence. Reaching our 2028 targets will align our performance with our future Local government reorganisation partners and paves the way to building a modern, resilient and forward-looking North Hampshire that leads the way in waste reduction, recycling and circular economy innovation. By working in partnership across the new authority, we can design services that are smarter, greener and more ambitious.

This strategy marks the beginning of that journey. It sets out not only how we will improve our own performance, but how we will help lay the foundations for a unified, high performing waste system that serves every community across North Hampshire. Together with our partners, we will champion new ideas, invest in modern infrastructure and build a culture where resources are valued and waste is minimised.

Our ambition is clear: with the right investment, strong partnerships and sustained support for residents, North Hampshire can become one of the top-performing areas in the country for waste reduction and recycling, a place where modern services, community participation and environmental responsibility work hand in hand.

Glossary

Bulky waste – large household items that cannot be disposed of in normal waste collections, such as furniture or appliances.

Circular economy – an economic model that aims to keep materials in use for as long as possible through reuse, repair, refurbishment and recycling.

Contamination – when non-recyclable items are placed in recycling bins, reducing the quality of materials collected.

Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) – a system where consumers pay a small deposit on drinks containers, which is refunded when the container is returned for recycling.

Dry mixed recycling (DMR) – recyclable materials such as paper, card, plastic bottles, cans and cartons collected together.

Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) – a policy that makes producers responsible for the full cost of managing the packaging they place on the market.

Food waste recycling – the collection and processing of food scraps to create energy or compost.

Fortnightly collections – waste collections that take place every two weeks instead of weekly.

Local Authority Trading Company (LATCo) – is a type of company set up by local councils to provide services and generate income while retaining control of the operations.

Local government reorganisation (LGR) – the process of restructuring local authorities, resulting in the creation of a new North Hampshire unitary authority.

Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) – a facility where recyclable materials are sorted and processed.

Reuse – using items again for the same or a new purpose without significant processing.

Repair cafés – community events where volunteers help people repair household items.

Simpler Recycling – a national policy requiring all councils in England to collect the same core set of recyclable materials.

Unitary authority – a single local authority responsible for all local government functions in its area.

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