

Recycling and Waste Strategy

2024-2030



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Action Plan

1. Purpose

The new Recycling and Waste Strategy presents Chorley Councils' vision for waste and recycling services from 2024 to 2030.

It outlines the actions that will enable us to increase recycling, reduce waste, and support the target of our Climate Change Strategy to achieve net zero carbon status by 2030. It also outlines how we will comply with new and emerging national waste legislation and policy.

For many years Chorley Council has worked to reduce waste going to landfill and we have established domestic recycling collection schemes including paper, cardboard, certain plastics and metals, glass, and garden waste. However, we recognise the importance of our role in striving to minimise waste and accept that strategic actions will be needed to reduce waste produced within the borough and to further increase its reuse, recycling, and composting.

Our new strategy is designed to follow the Resources and Waste Strategy for England (RAWS) published by the Government in 2018. The aims of the RAWS are to make the UK a world leader in resource efficiency and resource productivity, to increase competitiveness and move away from a linear economy towards a circular economy. The RAWS informs how councils will provide household waste collection and recycling services in the future, particularly the range of materials that should be collected for recycling and the ways in which services will be funded.

Our actions will ensure that we contribute to the ambitions laid out in the Resources and Waste Strategy of recycling at least 65% of municipal waste by 2035, with a maximum of 10% being landfilled, and eliminating all avoidable waste by 2050. Our Chorley Climate Change Strategy published in 2021 includes an objective to publish a recycling and waste strategy which will drive us towards the recycling target.

The municipal recycling rate for England in 2021/22 was 46%, so reaching 65% in the next 12 years will not happen without significant changes to how waste is collected and managed. To deliver these changes, our strategy includes an action plan designed to meet the objectives set out in the strategy.

There are many reasons why reducing and recycling waste is essential. Not only can it help reduce our carbon footprint, but it also helps reduce the need for harvesting new materials, saves energy, reduces greenhouse gases, and prevents pollution. As a nation we save 18 million tonnes of CO₂ a year by recycling, helping to tackle climate change.

Traditional consumer and shopping patterns are changing, and this will have a significant impact on future waste generation and management. There has been a significant and lasting rise in public consciousness when it comes to the need to tackle waste and recycle more.

We cannot deliver our vision and priorities alone and we need the support of our residents, businesses, partners, and visitors to help us to make our borough greener, cleaner, and a more sustainable place to live, work and visit.

2. Vision

Our vision is to reduce the amount of waste we produce, to recycle as much waste as possible, and reduce our carbon emissions. Residents, businesses, and visitors will be encouraged to play their part in achieving this aim.

Waste should be viewed as a resource to be valued and used and not simply thrown away with no thought of the consequences. We must recognise that we all have responsibility for our actions and for the waste we create.

The following aims outline how we will achieve our vision:

- Change the way people, businesses and organisations think about waste.
- Encourage a reduction in consumption and waste.
- Make service delivery changes and improvements to maximise the quality and quantity of reuse and recycling.
- Maximise recycling by increasing awareness of what and how to recycle and increasing participation in recycling collections.
- Work with partner organisations, residents, parish councils, schools, and community groups to deliver new initiatives and projects to reduce waste and recycle more.
- Re-using materials and recovering value from waste where possible.
- Work towards carbon-neutral waste services.
- Promote the principles of the circular economy.

Circular economy

A circular economy approach means preventing waste and keeping resources in circulation through repair, reuse, and recycling to realise their maximum resource value whilst minimising environmental impacts. It moves away from the more linear economy of 'take, make, use, throw' and prolongs the lives of materials and goods consumed, minimising waste, and promoting resource efficiency.

This means increasing the amount of material that is re-used or recycled, minimising waste, and reducing the reliance on new materials. It is essential that we embed policies and practices that drive a more circular economy, and work towards consistent and efficient waste services, food waste collections and improving recycling in homes and businesses.



3. Policy framework

Resources and Waste Strategy for England

The Government published its Resources and Waste Strategy for England in 2018. It outlines how the nation will work towards ambitions of doubling resource productivity and zero avoidable waste by 2050, maximise the value we extract from our resources, and minimise waste and the associated negative environmental impacts.

The RAWs has set a national target for municipal (household-like) waste of:

65% to be recycled by 2035.

Resource efficiency and waste reduction is based on four key principles:

1. Extended producer responsibility (EPR)

Producer responsibility is where manufacturers of products that end up as waste (i.e., packaging) pay towards their collection and disposal. The Government has proposed to increase the items that need to be paid for and make sure that manufacturers pay the full cost. This legislation is due to be implemented in October 2025 and is designed to create more opportunities for the UK to make better use of recyclable material and encourage better design of packaging that prioritises waste prevention, reuse, and recycling rather than disposal. The sums that this scheme will collect will determine what funding is available to local authorities to support the collection of the packaging.

2. Consistency of waste and recycling collections

The Government is introducing legislation to standardise recycling and waste collections to make recycling easier and less confusing for households, and to improve recycling information on packaging to help customers make more informed choices when they buy packaged products.

3. Deposit Return Scheme (DRS)

To help reduce litter and improve on-the-go recycling, customers buying a drink could reclaim the deposit added to the cost of the drink by returning the bottle or can. A scheme is expected to commence in October 2025.

4. Plastic packaging tax

The Government has proposed a new tax on the production and import of plastic packaging with less than 30% recycled content. The Government may also propose a move away from measuring waste targets and recycling performance by weight to measuring in carbon and environmental footprints.

The Environment Act 2021

Through the new Environment Act, the Government is taking the powers necessary to deliver on many of the commitments in the RAWs, such as to reform the UK packaging producer responsibility system and to introduce greater consistency in recycling collections. It introduces new legally binding targets, many of which will come through secondary legislation. The Act is expected to be enforced within the next 2-5 years, and new requirements include:

- Consistent and frequent recycling collections across England; waste collection authorities must make arrangements to collect the following from households: glass, metal, plastic, paper and card, food waste, garden waste.
- Weekly food waste collections, preventing food waste from going to landfill or being incinerated.
- It allows the Government to introduce clearer labelling on certain products so consumers can easily identify whether or not products are recyclable.
- It also allows the Government to expand the use of charges on single use plastics, following the successful introduction of the carrier bag charge and will introduce a Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) on drinks containers, subject to consultation.
- There are powers to introduce new extended producer responsibility schemes which will make producers responsible for the full net costs of managing their products when they are thrown away.

All of these will have a bearing on what the 'optimum' waste and recycling collection services in Chorley might look like in future.

A **Climate Emergency** was declared by Chorley Council in 2019, with pledges to work towards becoming a net zero carbon borough by 2030. This is 20 years ahead of Government targets for the UK to be carbon neutral by 2050.

The Circular Economy Package (2018) sets legally binding targets for waste recycling and reduction of waste to landfill including:

- Recycling 65% of waste by 2035
- Reduce landfill to maximum of 10% of waste by 2035

Government's latest position

As part of the RAWS, Defra launched three consultations in February 2019 on Consistency in Household and Business Recycling Collections, Reforming the UK packaging producer responsibility system, and Introducing a Deposit Return Scheme for drinks containers (DRS).

There were a large number of responses to these consultations from stakeholders across the waste sector and local authorities which have informed policy decisions. Defra has stated it intends to introduce regulations and statutory guidance that will underpin the new consistency in recycling measures.

Local authorities and the wider waste industry have since been eagerly awaiting long overdue announcements, but ongoing delays have left councils without clarity on new legal requirements, statutory guidance, exemptions, implementation timelines, and the availability of funding.

In October 2023, Defra finally confirmed their Waste Reforms, entitled 'Simpler Recycling'. This provided certainty on the materials that must be included in each recyclable waste stream, and transition timelines for compliance, summarised as follows:

By 31 March 2026, local authorities will be required to collect paper and card, plastic, metal, glass, cartons, food waste and garden waste from all households in England. This includes a free, weekly food waste collection.

Local authorities will be required to collect garden waste, where requested, and can continue to choose to charge for this service.

As confirmed in the government consultation response to the consultation on Extended Producer Responsibility for packaging, the government will require the kerbside collection of plastic film packaging by 31 March 2027.

Local authorities will retain the flexibility to provide the most appropriate services for their communities, with exemptions to allow all councils in England the option to co-collect dry recyclable materials.

Local Strategies

This Recycling and Waste Strategy links to other local strategies and policies and is closely aligned to the priorities and commitments of both the Corporate Strategy and Climate Strategy, which includes:

- Work towards our commitment to become a net zero carbon borough by 2030.
- Support waste reduction, reuse, and recycling.
- Promote sustainable transport and infrastructure.
- Promote the green economy.

A key priority of the local Climate Strategy is to improve recycling rates and to collaborate with partners, residents, businesses, schools, community groups and internally to reduce the volume of waste produced in the borough.

The Waste Management Strategy for Lancashire, 'Rubbish to Resources' for 2008-2020 has now expired. Lancashire County Council are currently preparing a new strategy while waiting for emerging obligations of the Environment Act. Notably there is the opportunity to co-ordinate a regional approach to introduce food waste collections across Lancashire.

4. Current position

Chorley Council is a Waste Collection Authority (WCA) with a legal duty to collect waste and recycling from residential properties. 53,000 households in Chorley have regular wheeled bin collections.

General waste, recycling and garden waste collections are conducted using refuse collection vehicles (RCVs). There are smaller RCVs that collect from areas with restricted access. Residents can pay for the collection of garden waste bins from residential properties, with around 25,000 households subscribed to this service. Bulky waste collections and clinical waste collection services are also provided.

Once collected, waste is managed and disposed of by Lancashire County Council (LCC) as the Waste Disposal Authority (WDA). As a result, the way that Chorley Council can collect kerbside waste and recycling is constrained by the acceptance criteria of the WDA's facilities. LCC also has responsibility for waste collected at Household Waste Recycling Centres.

By introducing more opportunities for recycling, such as alternate weekly collections, the introduction of wheeled bins for recycling, and expanding the range of materials collected for recycling, we increased the rate of recycling from around 16% in 2002/03 to nearly 47% in 2021/22. In recent years, our recycling rate has remained fairly constant which reflects the national trend.

Chorley's reuse, recycling, and composting rate for 2021/22 was 46.7%. We collected 22,832 tonnes of residual (non-recyclable) waste, 12,302 tonnes of dry recycling, and 7,734 tonnes of garden waste. We also collected 2,603 tonnes of street cleansing waste. The amount of residual waste per household is currently 475kg per year.

There is currently no specific legal obligation nor binding target for the council in relation to our recycling rate. However, we are obliged to consider the interests and demands of our residents and to help protect and preserve our environment. As we focus more on our green agenda, we need to actively pursue ways to further reduce waste and recycle more.

The main objective of this strategy is to increase our recycling rate to 65%. This is an increase of nearly 20% from the current level and equates to 8,500 tonnes of waste being diverted from the residual waste stream and into recycling bins.

Chorley Council is committed to action to reduce carbon emissions. The Carbon Waste and Resources Metric (WARM) is a tool which evaluates the impacts of waste management in terms of its Greenhouse Gas emissions, measured as carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e). Carbon WARM can be used to show how increasing recycling of waste can contribute to reducing emissions when compared to landfill disposal.

Based on our performance in 2022, we are saving 16,100 tonnes CO₂e by recycling our household waste instead of sending it to landfill. If we can achieve our target of 65% recycling, there will be an estimated saving of 22,900 tonnes CO₂e. For every additional tonne of waste that we can recycle instead of sending to landfill, it is estimated that we can save 870kg of CO₂e.

5. Delivery

Set out below are the objectives that we will deliver through an Action Plan that will be kept under review. Our Action Plan is appended to this document.

The five key areas of focus have been identified to demonstrate what we aim to achieve and to provide a framework for our priorities for action.

Our strategic objectives

1. Communication and behaviour change

We will encourage everyone to be responsible for their waste and make full use of their recycling collection services. We will also ensure residents have access to all the information they need about reducing waste and recycling.

2. Engagement activities and partnerships

We will collaborate with partners, schools, businesses, and community groups to deliver projects and initiatives to reduce waste and recycle more.

3. Changes and improvements to collection systems

We will enable residents to recycle more of the waste they generate by offering easy-to-use services and opportunities to recycle a wider range of materials.

4. Leading by example

We will lead by example by ensuring waste minimisation, recycling and net-zero carbon principles and best practice across council services and facilities.

5. Other waste reduction and recycling initiatives

We will support reuse, refill, repair schemes and explore opportunities for materials that are harder to recycle.

6. Timescale

This strategy covers the period 2024-2030 to deliver the councils' objectives. The accompanying action plan contains short, medium, and long-term actions, with an indication of delivery start dates.

The delivery of tasks within the action plan will be monitored and reviewed annually to ensure we can deliver the targets set through this strategy and any other future requirements. Where significant changes occur, the action plan will be updated accordingly. Timescales for specific actions are indicated in our action plan.

7. Key performance measures

The success of the strategy will be monitored and measured through corporate and service level indicators, which aim to reflect the improvements to the service.

Key measures:

No.	Description	Target
1	% of household waste sent for reuse, recycling, or composting	65% by 2035
2	Residual waste per household per year	<400 kg/hh/yr
3	% households participating in kerbside recycling	A 10% increase from baseline
4	% of primary schools with recycling facilities and engaged with education events	80%
5	% of council facilities with access to recycling points/collections for a range of materials, including council events	100%

We recognise that new measures and targets may need to be developed as future approaches to waste and legislation changes.

8. Financing

Costs for the delivery of the new strategy will be contained within existing budgets where possible. Some additional investment will be required for several of the proposed actions, with some cost estimates provided in the action plan. The costs identified for any major service changes will be significant and subject to an appropriate report which will be submitted where the need for additional budget allocation becomes clear. Some headline figures are indicated in our action plan.

Some funding to support the implementation of the strategy is required. In the short to medium term, there are a range of actions which will require estimated budgets of between £5,000 to £25,000. Additional officer resources will also be required to deliver strategic objectives alongside business as usual activity. This will provide sufficient resources to work on new projects and proactively drive us towards our objectives. Other proposed actions have not yet been fully costed and will require further reviews to calculate additional costs and feasibility.

In terms of external sources of funding, the Government has committed to providing capital funds to cover any net new burdens associated with implementing the measures in the Environment Act under 'New Burdens' funding. Notably the Government's Net Zero Strategy confirmed £295 million in capital funding for new food waste collection services, however it is still unclear when Government funding will be provided to local authorities and the amount allocated.

Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for packaging will see producers covering the full net cost of managing their packaging waste. Councils should therefore expect to receive money from producers to fund recycling services and to manage household packaging waste that ends up in household waste and street litter bins. These reforms will be implemented from 2025/26.

The payments under EPR are expected to be linked to the quality and quantity of recyclable material collected, and that councils will need to demonstrate they operate 'cost effective' and 'efficient' services. The details of how this will be assessed, the level of funding, and the allocation of funding have yet to be confirmed.

We will continue to actively seek any funding from the Government or opportunities for other sources, which could help us to undertake work towards the objectives identified in this strategy.

Since household waste collected is transferred to Lancashire County Council for processing and disposal, there is no direct financial incentive for Chorley Council to increase recycling. However, our residents would benefit from more household waste being recycled since this would reduce the amount of waste sent for disposal. As a county we could save £4 million by putting the right things in the right recycling bin, money which could be spent on other services across Lancashire.

9. Review

This strategy will be reviewed regularly to make sure that our ambitions and objectives remain appropriate, and to change them if necessary. This will be particularly important in the light of any changes to the landscape in which we find ourselves, including:

- The national Resources and Waste Strategy, which includes further proposals that may come into force from 2025/26.
- Emerging waste legislation, statutory guidance and policy which arise from that; and
- The level of funding provided to local authorities by the Government and any other new sources of funding such as EPR payments.

Review periods are intended for November 2024, 2025, and 2027. The strategy action plan will also be refreshed annually through our business planning process and will allow for regular monitoring and evaluation of service delivery against the strategy objectives.