ZERO Waste Shropshire

Resources *Not* Waste

for a Transition to a Circular Economy

A Waste Prevention Strategy

For Shropshire

2024 – 2030

Foreword

Cllr Ian Nellins

Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Climate Change, Environment and Transport

Shropshire's residents can justifiably be proud of their continued efforts to recycle their household waste and Shropshire's combined recycling and composting performance has consistently been above 50% since 2015/16. Shropshire's recycling and composting performance compares well nationally, (England recycled or composted 41.7% in 2022/23) but this success tells only part of the story as Shropshire's households generate more waste per household than households in most other local authority areas.

Over a decade has passed since Shropshire Council's Waste Prevention Plan 2010-2015 was published. In the years that have followed, climate and environmental issues have risen in prominence, technological advances have occurred and the costs for collecting transporting and processing waste have risen. It is therefore timely to revisit the area of waste prevention and adopt a new strategy to reduce Shropshire's household waste for societal, economic and environmental reasons.

Shropshire's rurality and broader demographics influence the quantities of different waste types collected in the county. The council's waste management costs are increasing not just because of inflationary pressures, but also due to the increasing quantities of waste generated, mainly due to housing growth. To counter these combining pressures it is imperative to have a strategy to reduce household waste on a per household basis.

Prevention, reduction and minimising waste is at the top of the waste hierarchy in terms of being the most responsible approach for the environment, to safeguard our precious resources and help tackle climate change. Taking steps to reduce waste is the right approach economically and will mean more of council taxpayer's money can be used towards providing essential services. And this strategy comes at the right time for households too. Many more households are wanting to do the right thing for the environment and helping households to reduce their waste will also help many that are facing real cost of living pressures.

With a renewed focus on waste prevention, this strategy sets out our vision, principles and actions for the council that will also inform the way in which it can support residents to help them play their part too. This waste prevention strategy aligns with the council's current demand management approach and supports the healthy environment priority of the council's Shropshire Plan.

Executive Summary

This waste prevention strategy replaces Shropshire Council's waste prevention plan 2010 to 2015. The strategy has been developed in the first half of 2024 during a time in which the waste management service in Shropshire is undergoing significant change in response to the councils challenging financial position.

National waste policy is also changing at scale, reflecting new legislation introduced under the Environment Act 2021. Changes to the waste policy landscape are expected during the term of this strategy and reforms include simpler recycling, the introduction of separate weekly food waste collections, a deposit return scheme and extended producer responsibility. These reforms will serve to assist reduce the quantity of Shropshire's household waste.

Data up to 2023 was used to inform this strategy, often sourced from Defra's Waste Dataflow portal. The strategy draws on data from 2013 onwards as this was the mid-point of the last waste prevention plan and provides a decade's worth of data for comparison purposes. Extensive use has been made of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) near neighbour benchmarking group for Shropshire to enable comparison with local authorities with similar demographics.

Waste tonnage data and waste composition data has been analysed with the results informing the approach of the strategy, for instance identifying the organic waste stream including garden waste and food waste as a key area on which to focus.

The strategy sets out 10 action areas with the ambitious aim to reduce waste on a per household basis by 20% (compared to the baseline year of 2013) by the year 2030. Actual waste quantities will vary and will be influenced by housing and population changes during the term of the strategy, hence the quantity of waste on a per household basis will be used as the appropriate metric to give a clear indication of performance.

Based on Shropshire's current 149,940 households a 20% reduction of total waste equates to 26,689 Tonnes or 178Kg of waste per household in any given year. The strategy assumes the majority of waste reduction will be achieved from the organic waste stream (garden and food wastes) as particularly garden waste is much higher in Shropshire compared to its near neighbour benchmark group and the average for England.

The strategy assumes that 6,672Tonnes (25% of the total waste reduction) will be reduced from Shropshire's residual waste stream (black bin waste). Based on the saving of not having to treat 6,672Tonnes of residual waste at the council's energy recovery facility and then also selling that relinquished capacity to third parties may generate a combined saving and income figure in the region of £1M annually. It is noted that such a saving will likely be obscured by annual rises in the waste contract value due to indexation and increases due to housing growth.

A saving and income value in the region of £1M justifies treating the subject of waste prevention with due regard, aside from the economic benefit, waste prevention benefits the environment by helping to protect finite resources and brings social benefits through the potential for employment and training opportunities.

The strategy ends with case studies from Shropshire showcasing some of the great community work already taking place in the county that help to reduce waste. The case studies are included to highlight this activity, to provide inspiration and to evidence that scaling up such initiatives, or replicating the initiatives in other parts of the county will contribute towards savings council expenditure, reducing waste quantities to benefit the environment and provide social benefits.

Contents

1. Introduction and vision

Shropshire Council's waste prevention plan 2010 to 2015 (WPP 2010) is time expired and many changes in the realm of resource management have occurred since that document was produced. It is therefore appropriate and timely to create a new waste prevention strategy to reflect; current and emerging best practice, central government policy, changing public attitudes, economic forces, the council's corporate strategic document, the Shropshire Plan and current 'demand management' approach to service delivery.

Although WPP 2010 is time expired, many of the initiatives and actions it included remain relevant and continue to form part of the council's current waste prevention approach. For example, the council's waste management contractor Veolia, continue to deliver face to face activities within schools on the waste hierarchy of reduce, reuse and recycle and the Master Composter programme continues to actively support home composting. These measures, amongst many others, have helped reduce Shropshire's waste by around 70kg on a per household basis since 2013.

Waste prevention activity as mentioned above continues to be delivered and undoubtedly has held in check what might otherwise have been runaway growth in the quantity of waste generated. Since the era of the last waste prevention plan the county's recycling and composting performance has shown improvement, however in more recent times performance has plateaued and, in some years, reduced, following the national trend.

During the Covid-19 pandemic era, waste quantities at a national level, though more so in Shropshire, rose rapidly due to changed habits. Furloughed households took the opportunity to clear out lofts, sheds and garages creating additional waste and since that time there has been considerable growth in homeworking, meaning that more waste is generated at home. This waste growth is further compounded by the rise in popularity of home deliveries of groceries and goods leading to increased packaging; the so called 'Amazon effect'.

Waste quantities per Shropshire household have dropped since WPP 2010 from 1,118kg per household in 2012/13 to 1,048kg per household in 2022/23 a reduction of 6% or 70kg per household. Whilst a positive trend the waste reduction in Shropshire is lower compared to England's average. Despite this reduction in waste per household, Shropshire continues to be ranked near the bottom of all local authorities and second from bottom in its CIPFA near neighbour group when all waste types are included. There are some factors for this, Shropshire's rurality means low density housing with high proportions of private gardens and also that at the time of writing (February 2024) Shropshire continues to offer a free garden waste collection, whereas many local authorities are now charging separately for this service.

Since WPP 2010, public awareness has risen regarding waste, particularly around recycling with this activity now the social normal. Government intervention, for example, the levy charged on single use carrier bags and the banning of some single use plastic items has also had a positive effect in raising public awareness and has reduced the visible impacts of plastics-based litter, even if the effect on waste quantity is limited. Changes have also occurred in the packaging sector, for example

some food stuffs have switched from glass or metal-based packaging to cartons like the brand Tetra Pak and 'light weighting' of packaging has occurred, a typical glass jar weighs around a third less now compared to a decade ago.

Waste and particularly single use plastics, have received mainstream media coverage through TV shows such as the Blue Planet series. This mainstream media coverage has generally been beneficial and has helped raise public awareness, change attitudes and has mobilised communities into action; Whilst other waste types may be equally or even worse for the environment, single use plastics have created a strong hook with which to engage individuals and spur community groups into action. The profile that single use plastics has should be utilised positively as a gateway to engagement from which broader waste prevention and recycling messages can be launched and embedded.

In order to create the right conditions in which public behaviours around waste and recycling can be changed, it is appropriate for Shropshire Council to lead by positive example. There are measures that Shropshire Council can and should take to show a commitment to reducing waste wherever possible. An easy first step would be for the council to adopt a resolution to become accredited as a plastic free organisation and remove single use plastic items from council premises and encourage and support plastic free initiatives across the county. As part of the adoption process for this waste prevention strategy, a second recommendation will be made for the council to become accredited as plastic free.

A further example of a simple step the council can take to show leadership in this area is regarding the waste and recycling calendars distributed to every household twice a year. As these calendars are delivered by Veolia's waste collection crews, it is necessary for the calendars to be weatherproofed which requires that they are printed on laminated paper. This means that the calendars cannot be placed in the paper and card recycling collection system. Anyone with access to the internet can simply find their waste collection days from the council's website so there is significant scope to reduce waste by adopting a digital first approach and signposting households to the bin collection day finder on the council's website. https://bins.shropshire.gov.uk/ Paper calendars can still be made available for those that require one. Not only would this measure reduce waste it would also release financial resource to fund other waste prevention and recycling initiatives.

In its simplest form, Shropshire's current linear model of consumption is depicted in the model below, showing that in Shropshire approximately half of the quantity of waste collected is recycled or composted. The remaining half is used to recover energy in the form of electricity and heat (not currently utilised) at the council's energy recovery facility in Battlefield, Shrewsbury.

Diagram 1: Approx 50% recycled or composted and 50% sent for energy recovery

In moving towards a more circular economy in Shropshire, in the first instance, the quantity of waste would be reduced, more waste would be reused in its original form, more waste would be recycled and less waste would end its useful life at the council's energy recovery facility. Such a model will help reduce Shropshire's waste management costs, extract greater value from waste, reduce pressure on finite resources and has potential to improve Shropshire's economy through growth in the secondary resources sector.

There is a strong economic driver for adopting a circular economy approach in Shropshire to creates a win:win. Reducing the quantity of waste incinerated reduces Shropshire's waste treatment costs and also frees up capacity at the energy recovery facility to be sold to neighbouring councils and other third parties, generating an income for Shropshire. In its simplest form a typical circular economy model can be depicted as below,

Diagram 2: Typical circular economy model

More complex circular economy models can be depicted as per the below which shows the potential for reverse logistics, reverse manufacturing and a closed loop system in which materials are recycled continuously, often for the same purpose, or are 'upcycled' into higher value goods rather than 'downcycled' which can limit how many life cycles the material may have.

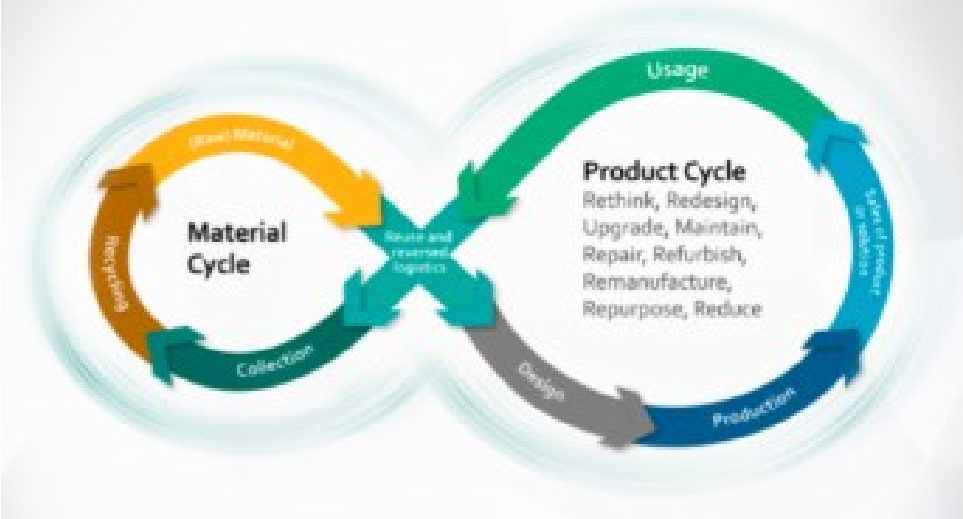


Diagram 3: Continuous circular economy with closed loop recycling

Diagram 4 below appears in Defra's waste prevention programme for England. The diagram displays graphically the change in waste management practice that has occurred in recent decades and the remaining ambition to be achieved by 2030. Taking the strata segments of the triangle to represent a quantum of waste, the diagram shows the inversion of the waste triangle over time since 1990. By 2030, Defra's expectation is that waste prevention will be the dominant approach to waste management, with waste disposal, by contrast, shrinking compared to its 1990 level. The shape depicted for 2020 is a reasonable representation of where Shropshire currently is on this journey except to say that waste disposed of (segment 5) in Shropshire declined significantly after 2014 and commissioning of the Battlefield Energy Recovery Facility. Therefore, in Shropshire's case the final segment of the triangle (segment 5) would be far smaller than is depicted below and that quantum of waste would instead appear in segment 4.

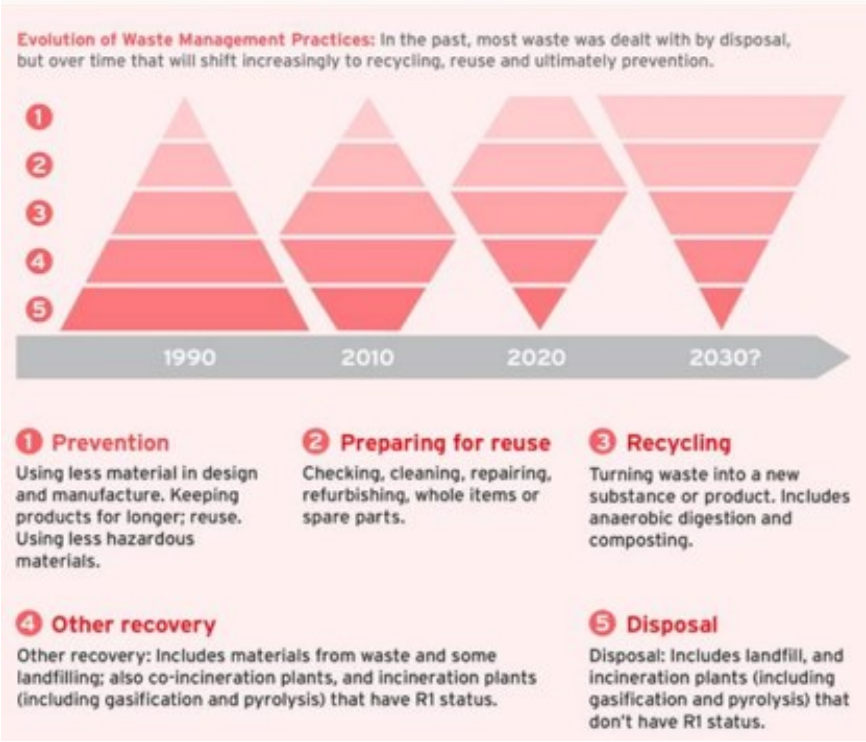


Diagram 4: Evolution of waste management practices

The vision for this strategy is:

''To reduce the weight of household waste on a per household basis by 20% to save on the cost of Shropshire's waste management and to improve the council's performance relative to other local authorities.''

2. Explanation of definitions

Definition and scope

Some of the terms related to waste prevention used in this document are defined below. Detail is given on what subject areas are in and out of the scope of this document.

Waste '**prevention**' is defined in the Waste Framework Directive as measures taken before a substance, material or product has become waste, that reduce:

(a) the quantity of waste, including through the **re-use** of products or the extension of the life span of products.

(b) the adverse impacts of the generated waste on the environment and human health.

(c) the content of harmful substances in materials and products.

This strategy principally focuses on the quantity of household waste, (area a above), though naturally by reducing the quantity of waste this acts positively to reduce the adverse impacts of waste on the environment and human health, (area b above). This document does not consider the content of substances in materials and products as Shropshire Council will have negligible influence in this area.

Re-use' means "any operation by which products or components that are not waste are used again for the same purpose for which they were conceived."

'**Preparing for re-use**' means checking, cleaning or repairing for recovery operations, by which products or components of products that have become waste are prepared so that they can be re-used without any other pre-processing.

In addition, 'preparing for reuse' is defined as checking, cleaning or repairing recovery operations, by which products or components of products that have become waste are prepared so that they can be reused without any other pre-processing. In practice, these definitions encompass a wide range of actions.

The following terms are used within this document to refer to these varied actions:

Avoidance – reducing process waste, the reintroduction of unprocessed material into manufacturing processes, buying fewer items

Reduction – designing products so they last longer and are used for longer (including upgradability and repairability and ease of disassembly), using less materials per unit and reducing the use of hazardous substances in materials and products, increasing the utilisation of products, e.g. through hiring, leasing and maintenance services

Reuse – buying and selling whole used items, possibly after washing or minor repair (other terms used, particularly in the construction sector, include reclaimed)

Remanufacturing – restoring a product to a like-new condition by reusing, reconditioning and replacing parts (other terms used include refurbishment)

Repair – repair and/or replacement of a component part in a used item.

Various terms exist to describe and categorise waste types and some common definitions used are detailed below.

Waste from Households – This is the official recycling measure that is used as the basis for reporting at a harmonised UK level.

Local authority collected waste – This is all waste within the remit of local authorities. It includes household waste plus other non-household waste collected by local authorities

Household waste – This is broader than 'waste from households', and includes waste from street bins, street sweepings, and parks and grounds. It does not include metals from incinerator bottom ash.

3. Background and call for evidence

A motion to create a new waste prevention strategy was unanimously supported at a meeting of Shropshire's full council in December 2023, this motion initiated the creation of this strategy document. Early in 2024 a briefing with the Portfolio Holder for Climate Change, Environment and Transport took place to obtain direction on the components for inclusion to the WPS. Email contact was made with elected members, colleagues from the waste management unit, the climate change team, green champions via the council's Viva platform and community sector organisations and individuals known to have stakeholder interest in the resources and waste management sector in Shropshire. Evidence, ideas and case studies have kindly been provided and shaped the content of this strategy.

As part of research for this strategy, a literature review was conducted looking for good examples of waste prevention strategies from elsewhere. Despite direct approaches to some councils, and approaches to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), Chartered Institute of Waste Management (CIWM), the Local Authority Recycling Advisory Committee (LARAC), Veolia and the Waste Resources Action Programme (WRAP) it was evident that limited published documents exist in the area of waste prevention. Defra advised that whilst it is good practice for local authorities to have a waste prevention plan there is no duty to publish one and Defra does not currently request or review such documents. Defra however signposted to the Household Waste

Prevention Hub | WRAP and Waste prevention programme for England: Maximising Resources, Minimising Waste - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) and Re-use | WRAP these were all sources of usual information and inspiration.

Public engagement has taken place and has helped inform this strategy. Late in 2023 a round table discussion took place with stakeholders interested in the topic of food waste. A LARAC webinar entitled 'Mastering Waste Minimisation' was attended in April 2024 and in May 2024, a panel debate and facilitated workshop on the resource economy took place as part of a Shropshire Climate Action event, these sessions have helped inform this strategy.

The council's Data and Business Intelligence unit obtained, analysed and compiled various data sets in order to assist the creation of this document. Data was sourced from https://www.wastedataflow.org/ this is the government's web-based portal for municipal waste data reporting by UK local authorities to government. At the time of writing this document, the most recent full year data that had been validated was for the year 2022/23. Whilst other data sources exist, waste data flow was used to aid consistency.

Data is compared in some sections nationally, regionally and in some cases using Shropshire's Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) group of 'nearest neighbours'. These are local authorities that although may be geographically distant to Shropshire they share characteristics of demographics and similar that mean they are statistically close to Shropshire for comparison purposes.

Shropshire's statistical nearest neighbour group includes the following local authorities.

Bath and North East Somerset,

Central Bedfordshire,

Cheshire East, Cheshire West & Chester,

Cornwall, East Riding of Yorkshire,

Herefordshire,

Ise of Wight,

North Somerset,

Northumberland,

Solihull,

South Gloucestershire,

Stockport,

Warrington and

Wiltshire.

4. Shropshire at a glance

Approx ***150,000*** *domestic households*

Approx ***158,000T*** *Tonnes of domestic waste*

Approx population 323,608 (Census 2021)

Approx ***1.048T*** *of waste* ***per household***

487Kg *of waste* ***per person***

11m *refuse and recycling collections every year*

Approx £40M annual gross cost to manage Shropshire's waste & recycling

Consistently above 50% recycling and composting

5. Understanding Shropshire's data and waste challenge

The case for change

Household waste arisings have marginally increased in Shropshire since 2012/13, broadly in line with, although encouragingly, at a lesser rate than the growth in the number of Shropshire's households. As can be seen in chart 1 below, the pandemic years of 2020/21 and 2021/22 gave rise to significantly higher quantities of household waste, and whilst the increase in Shropshire was similar to the national trend, it was more pronounced in Shropshire than in England as a whole.

With alternative options limited, lockdown and furlough periods gave households the time and opportunity to tidy gardens and clear out lofts, sheds and garages resulting in more waste being generated. Further, when the hospitality sector was in lockdown or compromised by social distancing restriction: meals and drinks that would normally be consumed away from the household were then consumed at home. This meant that more food and preparation waste and more packaging waste was produced. Finally, the Covid-19 era gave rise to a higher uptake of home deliveries which came with associated additional packaging.

Why the increase in waste during that era was more pronounced in Shropshire than nationally is not known. Large gardens that were tidied, an elderly and hence more Covid vulnerable population and perhaps greater distances to household waste sites in Shropshire may account for Shropshire's higher waste quantities in that era. Household waste quantity has deflated since the pandemic and is now marginally below the pre-pandemic level, despite the housing growth that occurred during that time.

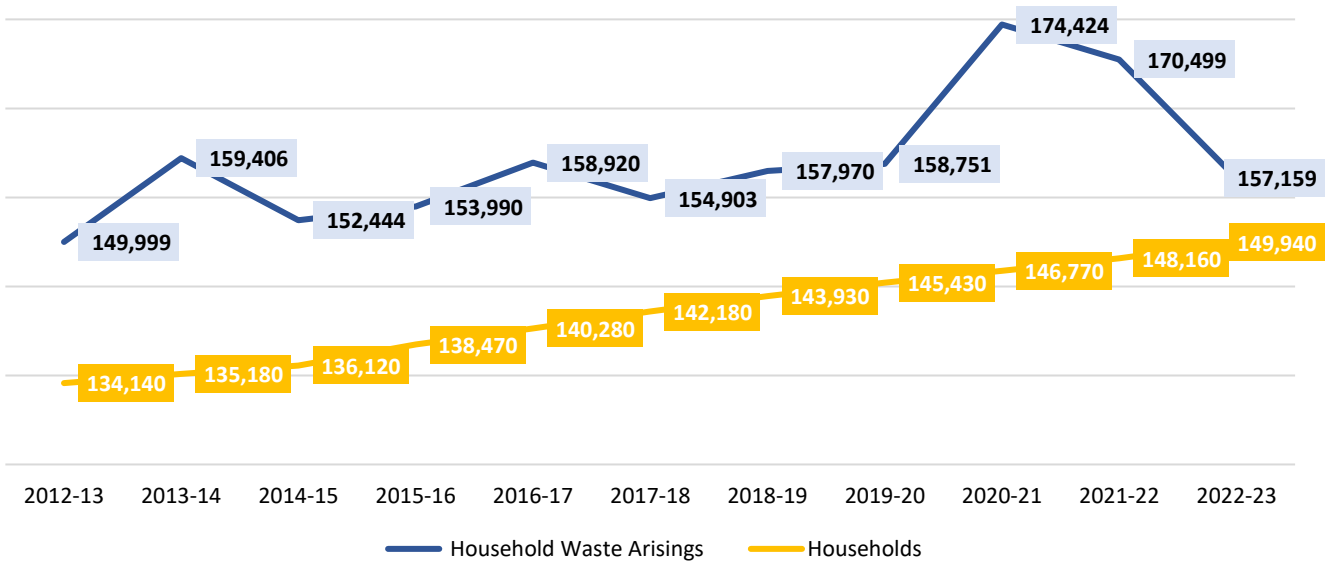


Chart 1: Shropshire Household Waste: 2012/13-2022/23

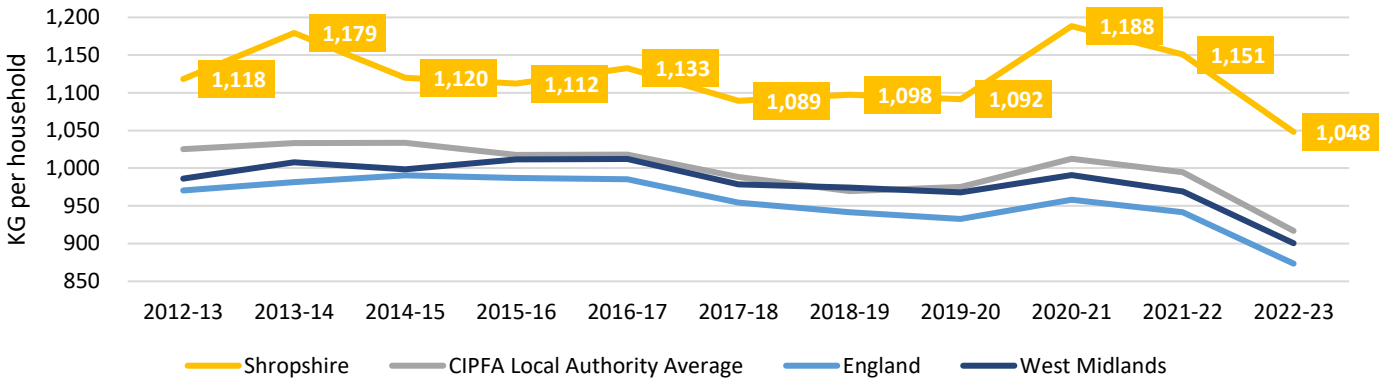


Chart 2: Household Waste per Household, 2012/13-2022/23 compared to West Midlands, England and CIPFA group averages

Shropshire's high waste quantity relative to other councils tells only part of the overall narrative, as it does help to support Shropshire's recycling rate being higher than the average for England. As an example, Chart 3 shows the quantity of household waste per household by type generated in Shropshire compared with England. The chart shows that while the proportion of recycled waste, and especially green (garden) waste, is much higher in Shropshire than in England, in fact 50% higher, Shropshire's residual waste quantity is slightly lower than England's average. (7kg lower, 502kg compared to 509kg).

Drawing a conclusion from these figures points towards Shropshire's residents being committed recyclers; this is a positive foundation from which to develop a waste prevention approach. It is acknowledged that recycling and waste prevention are different behaviours and require different interventions and different engagement strategies to change those behaviours. With the largest difference in total waste quantity between Shropshire and England being caused by garden waste, Shropshire households clearly generate more garden waste per household than the national average.

Charging for garden waste collections, in line with the majority of councils, is likely to encourage some households to compost at home or reduce the scale of their gardening activity, either would cause a waste prevention benefit. Additionally, Shropshire's garden waste presents an opportunity for the county's horticultural and agricultural sectors for use as compost or soil improver as the sectors transition from peat based composts and synthetic fertiliser use due to its increasing cost and high carbon impacts. Measures to extract the maximum value from the resource of garden waste should be pursued with the council's waste management services provider.

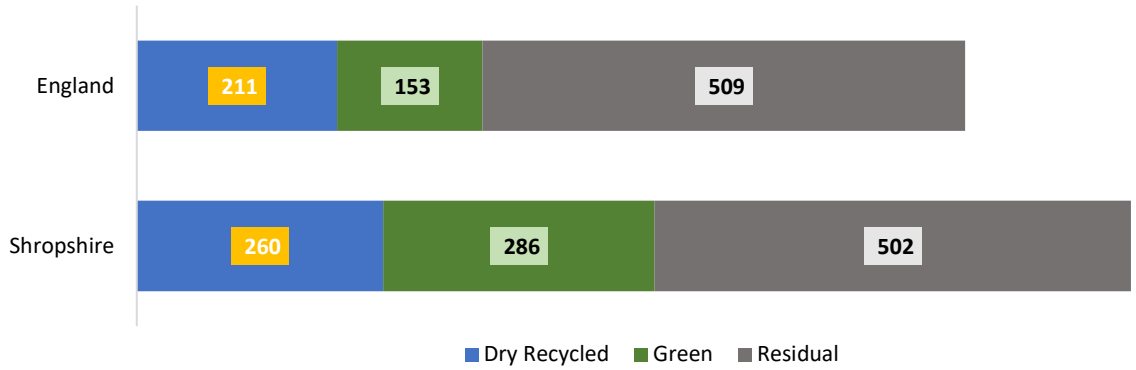


Chart 3: Breakdown of Household Waste by Household, 2022/23

The high quantity of garden waste is likely due to Shropshire's housing type as set out in chart 4 below. As can be seen, Shropshire has nearly double the percentage of detached dwellings (which likely have gardens) compared to England and has the second highest percentage in its CIPFA group. Shropshire's proportion of detached or semi-detached properties accounts for nearly three quarters (74.5%) of its housing stock, higher than any authority in its CIPFA Group, the regional and national averages. Shropshire also has a low proportion of terraced properties and the joint lowest proportion of flatted properties which seldom have gardens. Shropshire's housing composition, along with the fact that Shropshire does not at the time of writing, charge for garden waste collection, would seem to explain why Shropshire produces and collects a high quantity of garden waste.

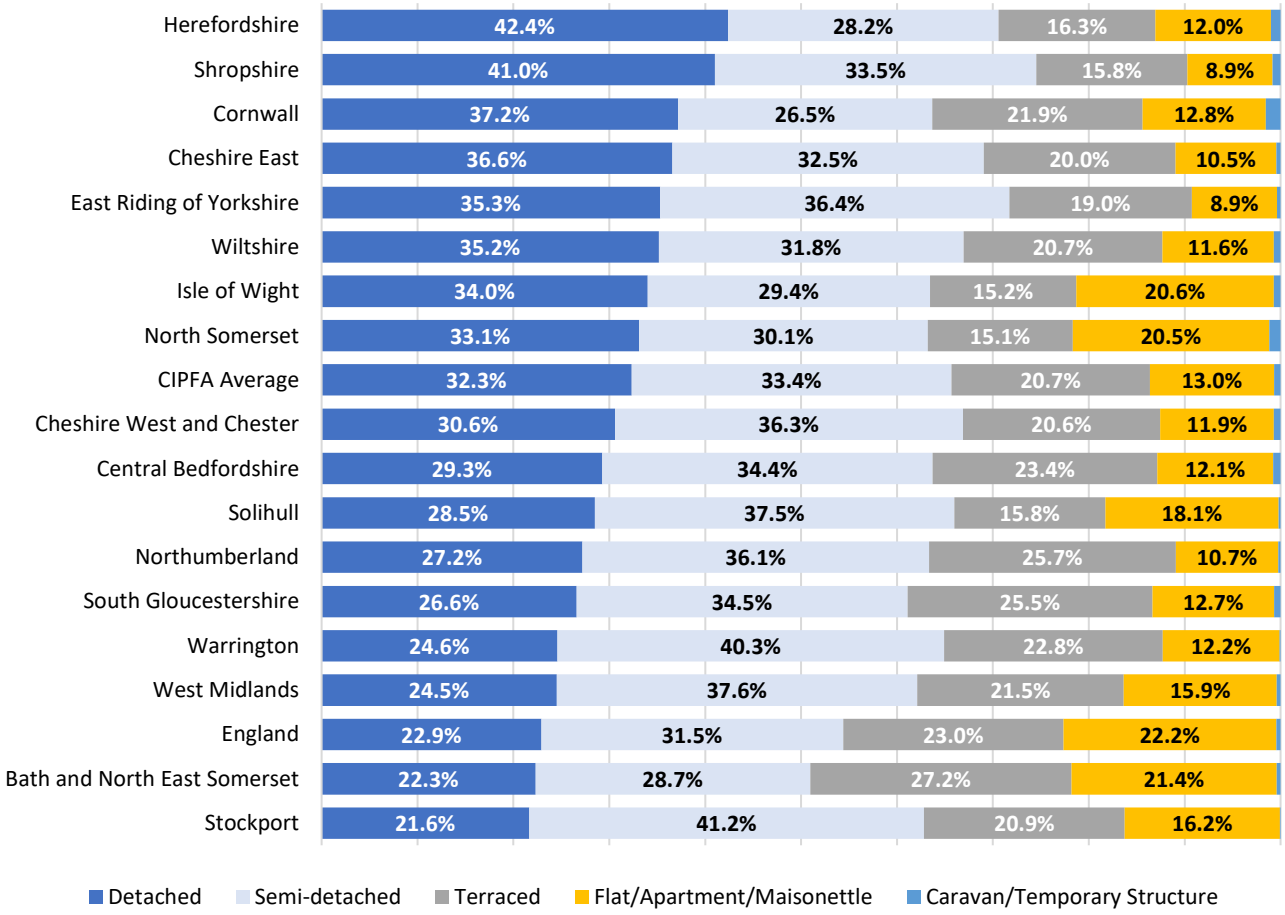


Chart 4: Breakdown of Houses by Type, 2021 *[source: census 2021]*

ACTION 1: Take action to reduce garden/green waste arisings

1. **A. Explore charging for the collection of garden waste**
1. **B. Promote home and community composting**
1. **C. Promote less intensive forms of garden care such as 'No mow May'**
1. **D. Explore the potential to realise greater value from the compost produced**

Despite green (garden) waste and deducting this waste fraction from overall waste quantities, Shropshire's waste quantity is still higher than the national average (762kg compared to 720kg) as 49kg per year per household of extra dry recycled waste is collected in Shropshire compared to England. The waste types collected from households in Shropshire's dry recycling system are; paper and cardboard, cans, glass, foil, rigid plastics (pots tubs and trays) and batteries.

It is hard to pinpoint why Shropshire residents might generate more dry recycled materials than the national average, of the materials collected from households via the kerbside service, the following quantities are collected; mixed cans, glass, plastics and batteries are collected as a single waste stream (from the purple lidded bin or boxes) and 16,630 Tonnes was collected in 2022/23. Paper and card are collected as a single stream from blue sacks and 9,141 Tonnes was collected in 2022/23

Possible suggestions as to why Shropshire residents produce more recyclates could include.

- A higher propensity to buy newspapers due to Shropshire's ageing population. (25.8% of the total population aged 65 and above in 2022 compared with 18.6% as an average across England [*source – ONS mid-year estimate 2022]*
- More alcoholic drinks consumed at home from bottles and cans due to Shropshire's rurality and distances from hospitality venues.
- More goods purchased via home delivery with its associated packaging, again due to Shropshire's rurality and distances from shops.

6. Waste composition analysis and where to focus

To identify the household waste types with the greatest potential for reduction requires an understanding of the composition of Shropshire's household waste. Various waste composition analysis studies have taken place in Shropshire over the years. These studies have used different methodologies, for instance different categories and some have analysed just the residual waste stream as opposed to total waste arisings, sample sizes have varied and samples have been gathered from different parts of Shropshire.

Results from these various studies are reproduced below. Chart 5 is from 2003/04 and is reproduced from WPP2010-15. At that time little was offered to households in terms of separate or alternate week collections for dry recyclables or garden waste and it is therefore assumed this was an analysis of the total waste stream. In this analysis, food waste and garden waste is categorised as 'organics' as one waste stream and accounts for 34% (over a third) of the total waste. The next largest category is paper at 19%, likely reflecting at that time high consumption of printed media such as daily newspapers.

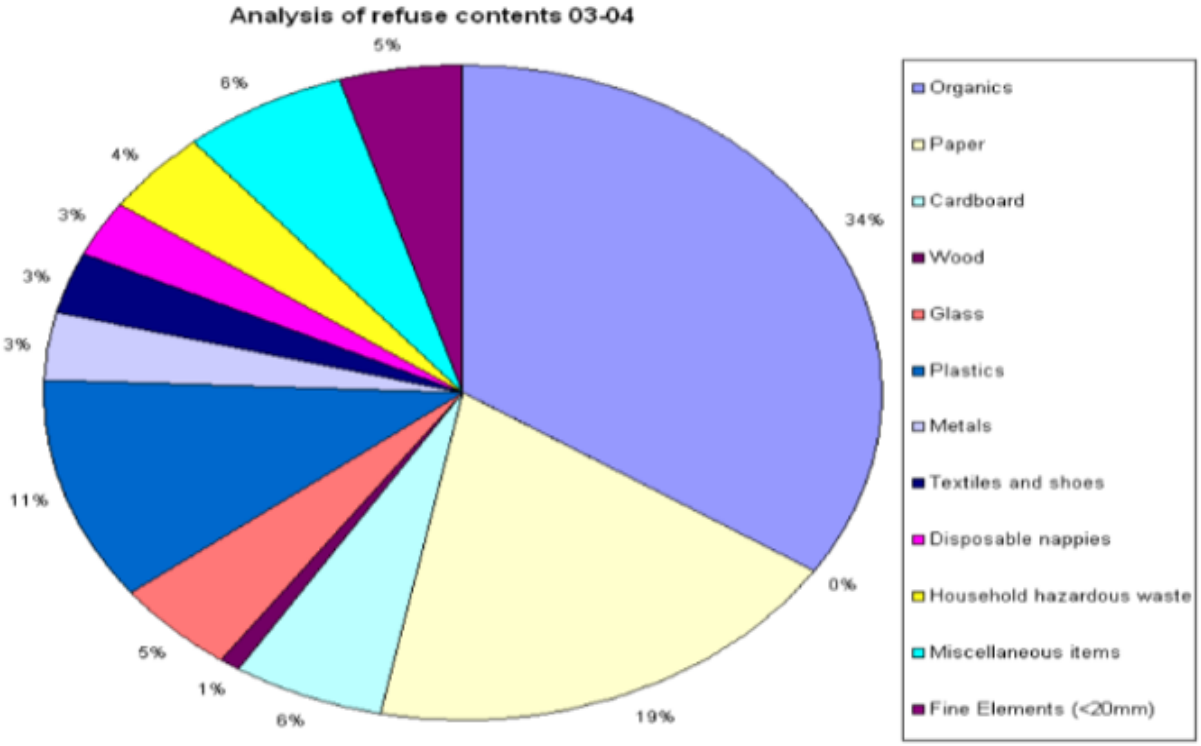


Chart 5: Waste composition from WPP 2010-2015

In 2010 a detailed waste composition analysis took place on a sample of waste from Bishop's Castle households for a specific, Defra funded zero waste pilot project; For this pilot, a sample of residual waste was collected on one day in February from 50 households. Though a relatively small sample size, the 50 households were chosen carefully to represent all ACORN demographic classifications and therefore the sample had statistical reliability. The results from that analysis are displayed in chart 6 below. It is noteworthy that the largest identified fraction (over 20%) from that sample, is

food waste, despite there being a food waste collection service offered as part of the garden waste collection system at that time.

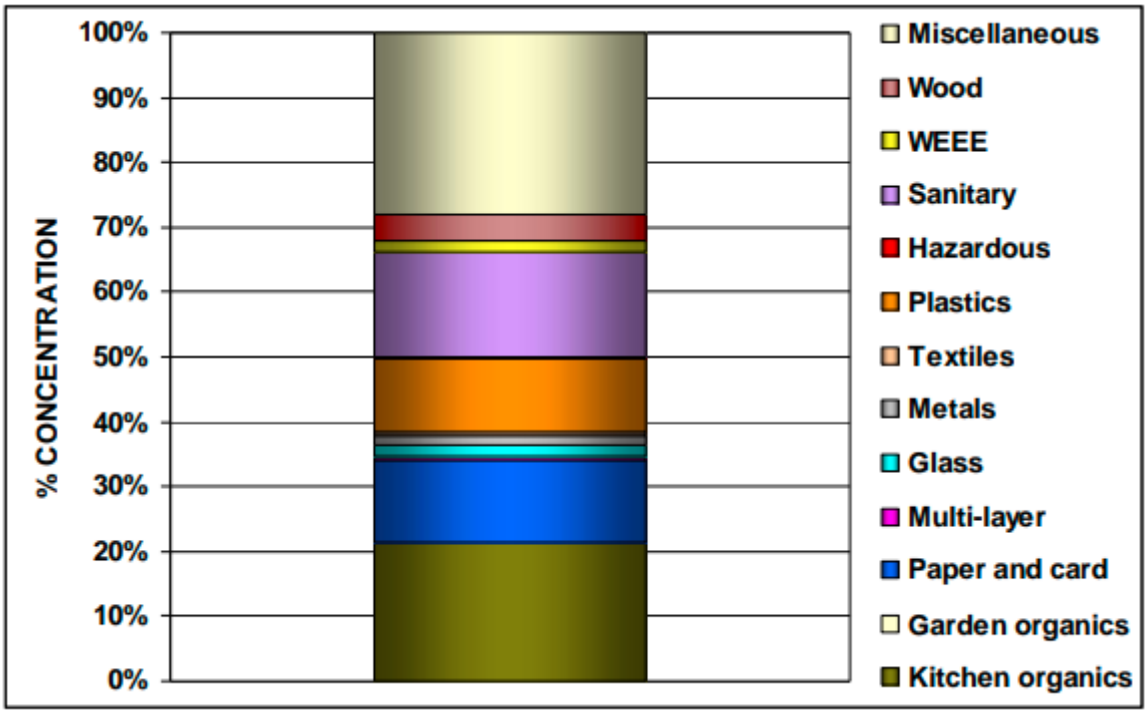


Chart 6: Residual waste composition analysis results from Bishop's Castle zero waste pilot.

Sometime shortly after 2010, Government issued local authorities with a moratorium on commissioning further waste analysis studies, consequently, there is a lack of local recent data to examine.

To compensate for the lack of local data, more recent waste composition data has been obtained from public sources including two from the government supported Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP). The first analysis, shown below in chart 7, details a national synthesised composition estimated by using a variety of data sources, this information was published in 2017. The data shows food waste as being the largest category at 18.1% closely followed by garden waste at 17.2%. It is interesting to note in this analysis the reduction in the paper fraction at 11% compared to 19% in Shropshire's 2003/04 study (Chart 5), this is likely due to the growth in digitally consumed media over paper alternatives.

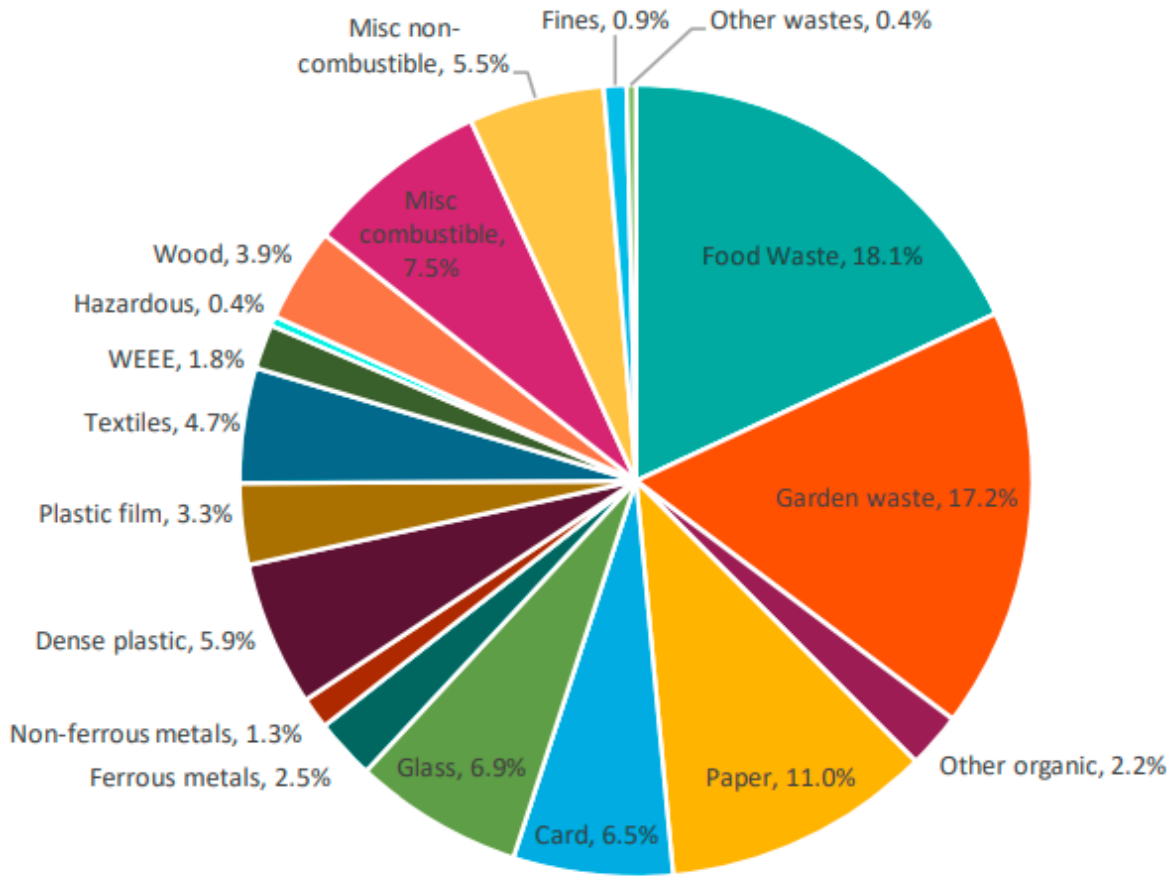


Chart 7: WRAP - national-household-waste-comparison-2017

Source: https://www.wrap.ngo/sites/default/files/2021-10/WRAP-national-household-waste-comparison-2017.pdf

A further and more recent waste composition study has been obtained from the website of WRAP Cymru. The analysis is of a large sample (410,000T) of residual waste and is since the peak of the Covid -19 pandemic era; these factors, and given the similarity of demographics between parts of Wales and Shropshire mean that the data from WRAP Cymru merits inclusion and consideration. The proportion of food waste, especially edible food waste is of note as it accounts for nearly 25% of the residual waste quantity.

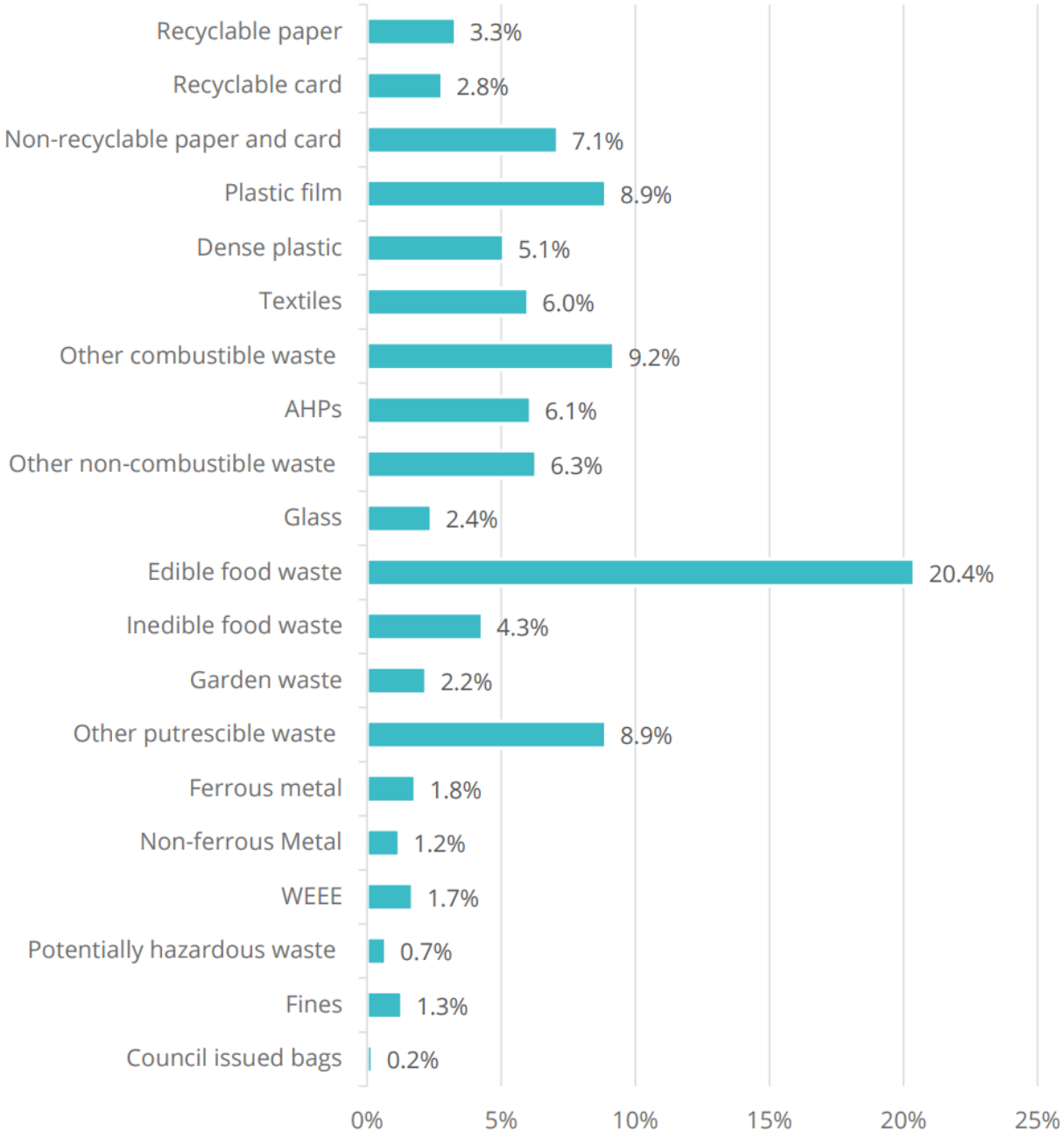


Chart 8: WRAP- kerbside collected residual waste in Wales in 2022 [410,000T sample size]
Source: https://wrapcymru.org.uk/sites/default/files/2023-07/WRAP-wales-msw-summary-report-english-20230720.pdf

Periodically, an analysis of a small sample of residual household waste is undertaken on behalf of Shropshire Council's waste management company Veolia. The latest of these took place in January 2024, when ten samples of approximately 50kg were extracted from selected vehicles on route to the Battlefield energy recovery facility (ERF), giving a total sample of 504.6kg. This sampling is to monitor waste inputs into the ERF to help calculate the calorific value of the waste to estimate the energy output and similar. In this sample, as in the others, the organics fraction (which likely includes food and garden waste) is the largest proportion at nearly 28%.

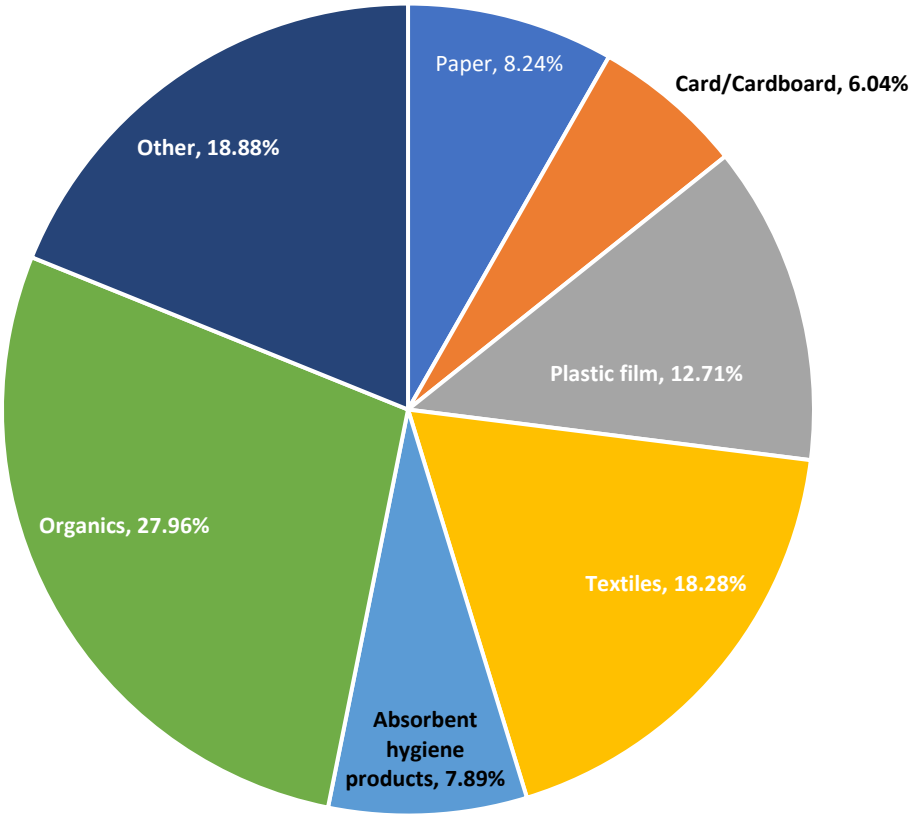


Chart 9: Shropshire household residual waste analysis of waste delivered to Battlefield ERF

The types and quantities of waste in Shropshire's household's bins will inevitably have changed since the last very detailed analysis in Shropshire. For comparison purposes and to give an indication of change over time, the data from the studies detailed above are tabulated side by side in table 1 below. The table helps inform conclusions and inform the priority waste streams upon which to focus waste prevention activities.

Study	Shropshire refuse sample*	Bishop's Castle residual sample	UK WRAP all waste streams	Wales residual sample	Delivered to Battlefield residual sample
Sample size	**Not known**	**50 houses**	**estimated**	**410KT**	**0.5T**
Year	**03/04**	**2010**	**2017**	**2022**	**2024**
Organics	34%	0	2.2%	8.9%	27.9%
Garden waste		0	17.2%	2.2%	
Food Waste		21.4%	18.1%	24.7%	
Paper	19%	6.3%	11%	6.8%	8.2%
Cardboard	6%	6.3%	6.5%	6.3%	6%
Wood	1%	4.1%	3.9%	0	0
Glass	5%	1.5%	6.9%	2.4%	0
Plastics	11%	11.3%	9.2%	14%	12.7%
Metal	3%	1.5%	3.8%	3%	0
Textiles & shoes	3%	0.5%	4.7%	6%	18.2%
Disposable nappies/sanitary (inc AHP**)	3%	16.3%	0	6.1%	7.8%
Household Hazardous Waste (inc WEEE)	4%	1.9%	2.2%	2.4%	0
Miscellaneous Items/Fines	11%	28%	14.3%	16.8%	18.8%

* Prior to implementation of significant recycling or garden waste collections

** AHP – Absorbent Hygiene Products, incontinence pads and similar

Table 1: Comparison of waste analysis data

[Note: some categories in the table above have been merged to facilitate comparison & some figures have been rounded]

At around a quarter to a third of total waste, it is clear that the organics fraction must be a priority waste stream to reduce in quantity in order to make any meaningful progress on improving Shropshire's performance. To reduce Shropshire's waste management costs, it will be necessary to reduce the residual waste stream. The 2022 data from Wales in which it is detailed that 20.4% of waste was edible food waste merits that this waste stream should be a high priority to address as part of tackling organic waste overall. Helping households to reduce their food waste will mitigate against the cost-of-living pressures many are facing and also reduce the carbon impact of food production.

From the very latest data from Shropshire, although from a very small sample size, Paper, is already reducing as a proportion of total waste, targeted campaigns may accelerate further reduction.

ACTION: 2. Address organic waste (garden and food wastes) to improve performance

2. A. Address the residual waste stream to reduce waste management costs
2. B. Address avoidable food waste to help households with cost-of-living pressures

7. Understanding why Shropshire has high waste arisings

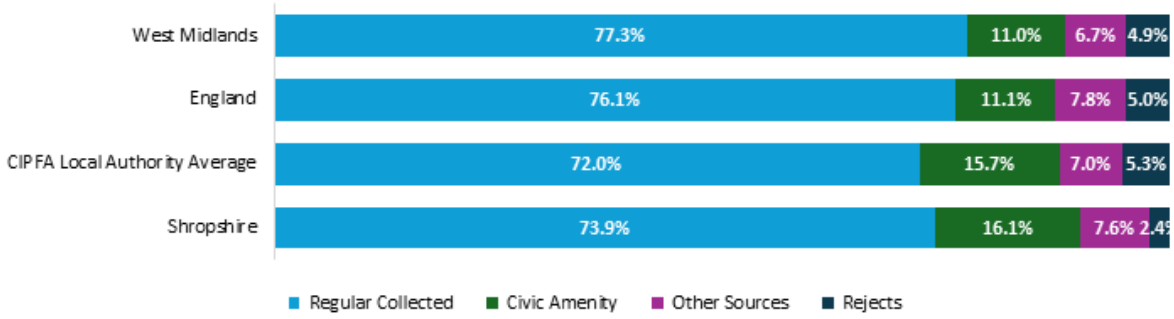


Chart 10: Shows waste proportions according to its source

In the chart above it details Shropshire's waste rejects at just 2.49% of the total waste, this is an indication that Shropshire households rarely contaminate their recycling collection with contra materials. This is a positive outturn, it shows that the recycling system is simple to follow, that the messaging is understood well and that Shropshire residents are compliant. At 16.1% the proportion of waste collected at the Civic Amenity sites is higher than Shropshire's near neighbours, the West Midlands region and England as a whole. This may be due to there being low controls on the access to Shropshire's Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs/Civic Amenity sites). For instance, with the exception of a permit scheme for large vans and large trailers, there is no booking system to access Shropshire's HWRC sites.

The council's waste services provider anecdotally advises that, reasonable quantities of commercial waste is deposited at the HWRC sites under the guise of it being domestic waste. Shropshire's workforce has a high % of the self-employed, 14.3% compared to 8.7% for the West Midlands or 9.3% for Great Britain overall. [source: ONS Annual Population Survey Jan to Dec 2023] This self-employed workforce is likely spread over a variety of sectors. Inevitably some sectors, for instance building trades will produce waste which can, due to the peripatetic nature of the work being carried out and the potentially small volume of waste being generated, mean it is difficult to dispose of lawfully.

The council's waste services provider also anecdotally advises that waste 'tourism' occurs whereby waste, both from domestic and commercial sources from out of the county is deposited at Shropshire's HWRC sites due to there being relatively low controls in place for accessing Shropshire's HWRC infrastructure. The factors of Shropshire's high proportion of the self-employed and their challenge of accessing legitimate waste services plus a low barrier to access Shropshire's HWRC network are likely contributing to why Shropshire has a high % of total waste being deposited at HWRC sites and therefore merits considering enhanced restrictions to reduce the quantity.

Currently there is limited reuse of the waste deposited at Shropshire's HWRC network. There is some 'totting' that occurs, this is a system where an individual or organisation bids for the right to extract items such as bikes deposited at the HWRC sites in order to extract resale value from them,

this system is somewhat opaque in terms of the value of materials extracted and the reduction in waste that this achieves.

The council pays for the provision of the HWRC network that provides opportunity for households to dispose of their waste. The council then pays for the fraction of waste not recycled to then be disposed of, generally via the energy recovery facility. Clearly there is inherent value in the waste, though how much value is untested and unknown.

Added value could be generated from wasted items deposited at HWRCs by processing or remanufacturing suitable waste types, for instance, saleable items could be made from the timber that is being disposed of or broken items such as bikes could be repaired from component parts gleaned and pooled from bikes beyond repair. Such items could be sold from the HWRC sites or a dedicated repair, reuse and resale premise. Not only would such activity reduce the quantity of waste disposed of and prolong the usefulness of that resource, but the income also generated would help defray the costs associated with providing the HWRC infrastructure. Creating a reuse system built around the council's HWRC network would also generate learning, training and meaningful employment opportunities, particularly providing routes into employment for the disadvantaged, thereby adding social value.

ACTION: 3. Take action to reduce and extract maximum value from HWRC waste arisings

3. A. Explore and potentially introduce HWRC access controls

3. B. Explore the opportunities and potential for repair, reuse and resale from HWRCs

3. C. Explore better options for the disposal of waste arising from small traders

8. Current waste policies and future policy development

Current policies to reduce waste

The council already has policies in place designed to reduce the quantity of household waste produced as detailed below.

Alternate week collections were introduced by former Shropshire district councils from the early 2000's and this is now the uniform level of service for over 99% of properties since around 2008/09.*

A no side waste and a closed bin lid policy is in place although is applied discretionally by some crews and there is some inconsistency across Shropshire.

Restriction on additional bin capacity, to qualify for additional residual bin capacity requires an application from residents, qualifying criteria may be having more than 5 people permanently resident at the household or there being a specific medical need that generates additional waste.

A permit system for vans and trailers at the council's HWRC sites, this system limits users to on application for 12 permits per 12-month period. This policy is designed to limit the use of vans and trailers to the disposal of domestic waste only.

* Less than 1% of properties, principally flats above shops in some town centre locations where space and access is restricted still receive a weekly collection.

Future national policies in development for implementation

New requirements for waste are being introduced via the Environment Act 2021 (Part 3).

Consistent collections – now badged as 'Simpler recycling' following reforms in October 2023 will require all local authorities to collect a consistent range of materials from households. Government hopes this will play an important role in reducing confusion for householders, increasing recycling rates and improving material quality.

Weekly Food Waste collection - Separate (from residual waste) weekly food waste collections will be provided to every household with a target date for implementation of April 2026. This will require an additional new collection service funded by government. Shropshire Council is awaiting confirmation of the value of additional revenue support for this service.

Deposit Return Scheme – Proposed for commencement in October 2027, will add a refundable surcharge to the UK's estimated 31 billion single use drinks containers across plastic, cans and glass which will be reimbursed if the item is returned for recycling. The aim is to increase upon the 70 to 75% capture rate for these items currently meaning higher levels of recycling and lower levels of litter. This will apply to containers between 150ml and 3 Litres.

Extended Producer Responsibility – will mean that those organisations that place packaging materials on to the market will be required to fund the full cost of their recovery. Local authorities are expected to receive their fair share of funding from EPR levies according to the quantity of materials they collect; this will be a new revenue stream for local councils and help offset current waste management costs.

Charges for new single use items - The Environment Act creates new powers for all nations of the UK to introduce new charges for new single use items, such as has been adopted for single use plastic carrier bags on which there is now a 10p levy.

Action 4. Review, align and introduce waste policies that compliment waste reduction

4. A. Keep existing policies under review to ensure they are aligned to reduce waste

4. B. Introduce new policies to reduce waste when opportunities arise

9. Scale of ambition and targets

Total waste quantities per household have fallen by 4.6% since 2013, although a positive direction of travel, this is below the national average which fell 10% over the corresponding period. Therefore, whilst Shropshire is reducing total waste it is doing so at a slower rate than the national average. Excluding the green/garden waste fraction, Shropshire's waste reduction compares more favourably at 9.2% compared to 10.3% nationally.

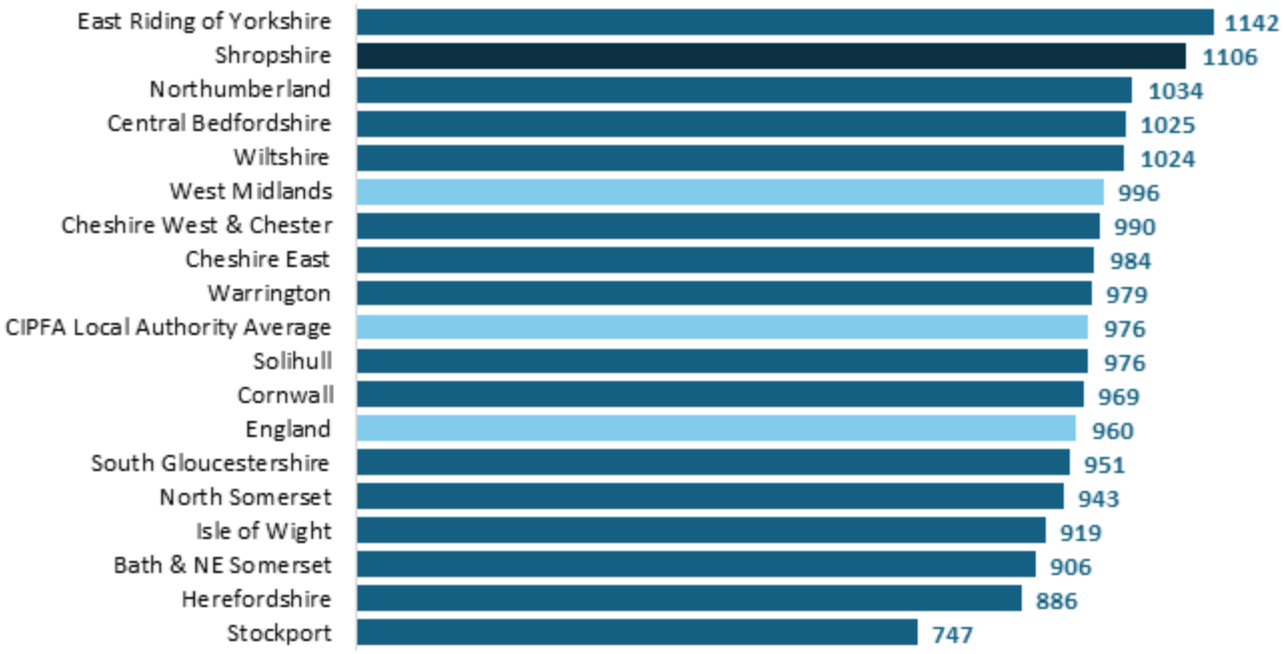


Chart 11: Total waste per household by CIPFA Local Authority 2022/23

As can be seen in chart 11, at 1,106Kg Shropshire ranks second to last in its CIPFA group and behind CIPFA, regional and national averages. However, Shropshire's residual waste at 502kg per household, compares well nationally and regionally and is closer to the CIPFA average (Chart 12).

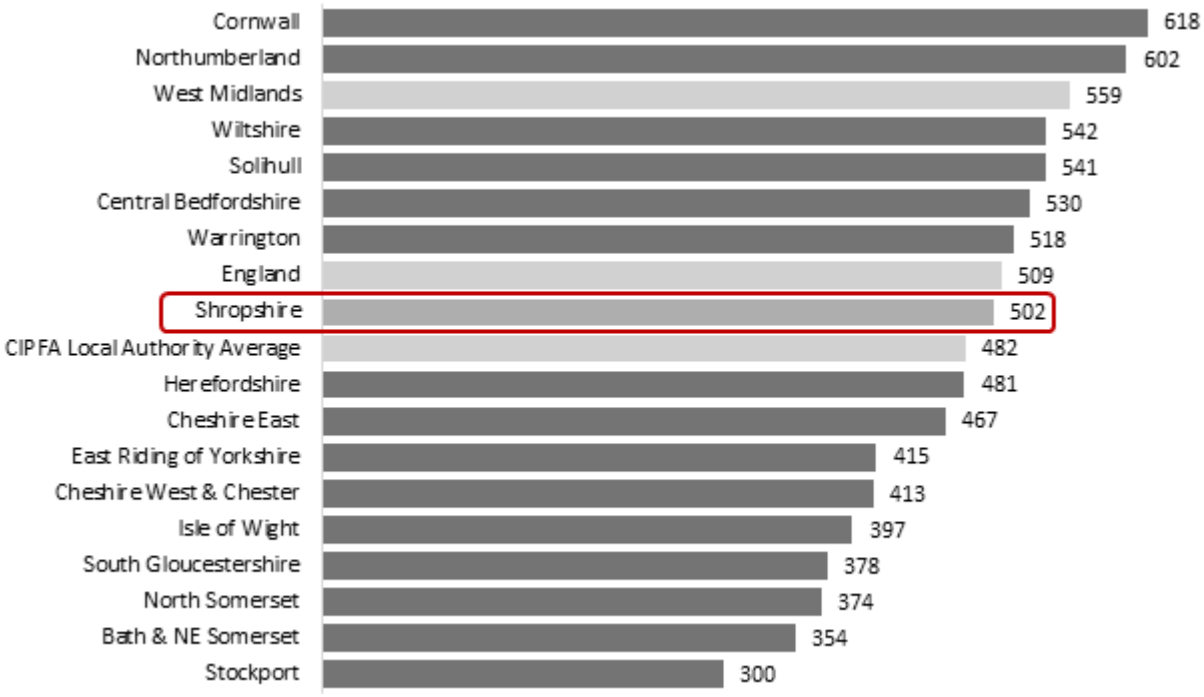


Chart 12: Residual Waste per Household by CIPFA Local Authority, 2022/23

Since 2012/13, Shropshire household's total waste quantity has fallen by 54kg per household from 1,160kg to 1,106kg, a reduction of approximately 4.6%. This historic trend helps inform what future targets should be aimed for with increased, targeted intervention and in what time scale. Within the Shropshire Plan 2022-2025, the aspiration was to reduce waste volumes by 10% by 2025, although it is not explicit what year was used as the base line year. To achieve a 10% reduction (by 2025) compared to the base line year of 2012/13, requires a reduction of a further 5.4% or 62kg per household, this figure is therefore included as the target; this will mean households on average will produce 1,044kg tonnes of total waste (includes HWRC waste).

A significant performance milestone for Shropshire would be to achieve an outturn of below 1,000kg (1 Tonne) of total waste per household, down from the current 1,106kg. This would require a reduction of approximately 10.6%, this is considered stretching but potentially achievable pending decisions on charging for garden waste and access controls to the HWRC network, the ambition is to achieve this reduction at pace by 2026. In subsequent years new national policy interventions (detailed in section 8 above) are anticipated to be enacted that will serve to increase the recycling and composting of waste and reduce the quantity of certain waste types.

With national interventions working to reduce waste quantities, an ambitious target of a 20% reduction of total waste on a per household basis compared to the base year of 2012/13 is proposed for 2030. To achieve that 2030 target requires a reduction of a further 15.4% compared to the current outturn of 1,106kg (2022/23) and would therefore mean Shropshire households would produce 928kg of total waste per household, a total reduction of 232kg per household compared to the 2012/13 base year. If all other authorities within Shropshire's CIPFA group continued at their same level of performance, 928Kg would position Shropshire within the top 5 of its CIPFA group and above the CIPFA, regional and national average performance.

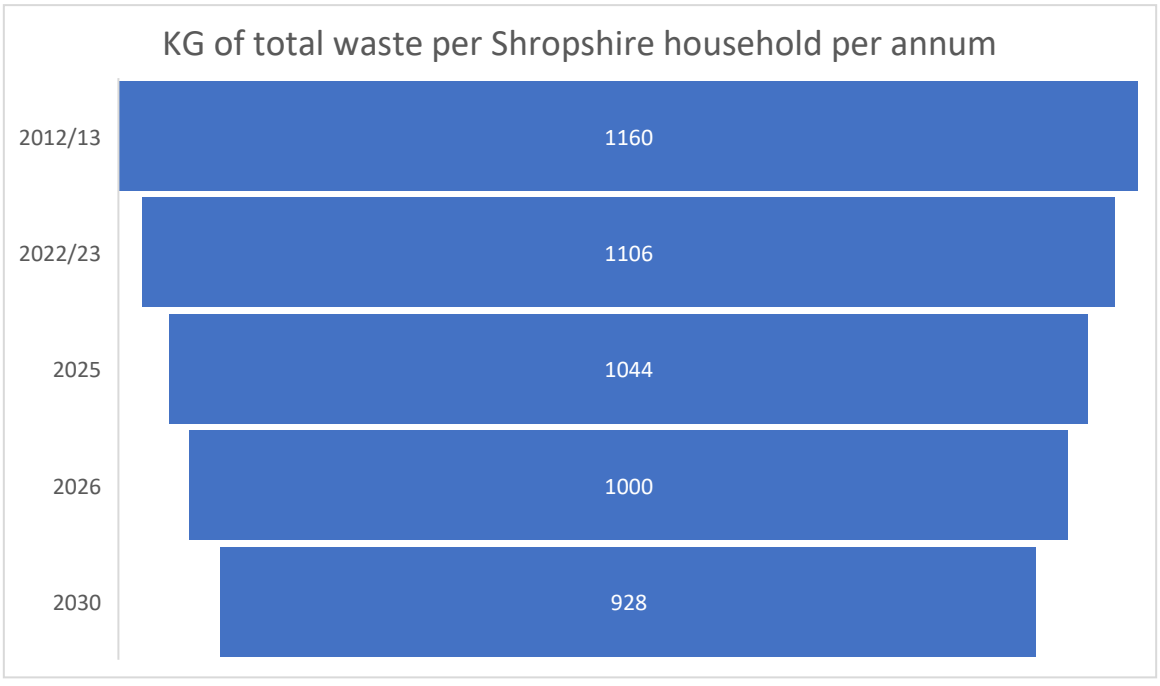


Chart 13: Total waste quantity in KG per household in target years compared to 2012/13 baseline

Based upon 149,940 households, a reduction of 178Kg (1,106-928Kg) per household would result in 26,689Tonnes less waste to be managed from Shropshire households. A large proportion of this reduction would come from the fraction of waste that is composted, some of the reduction would come from the recycling stream and the remainder would be reduced from the residual waste stream. Assuming that 25% of the overall reduction was from the residual waste stream would mean 6,672 Tonnes less waste being treated at Battlefield energy recovery facility annually.

Shropshire, through its waste PFI contract pays a contract gate fee for waste treated at the Battlefield energy recovery facility and benefits from royalty payments when capacity at the plant is sold to third parties. Treating 6,672 Tonnes less waste and potentially selling all of that relinquished capacity would generate a combined saving and income in the region of £1M to be invested in delivering essential council services. It is acknowledged that savings from waste prevention will be obscured by the rising cost of providing waste services due to indexation of the waste contract cost and also due to housing growth.

10. The tools to achieve further waste prevention

The tools with which Shropshire Council can influence the quantity of waste produced by households is somewhat limited and broadly fall within the categories detailed below.

Charge for waste collection - There is considerable scope in this area, at present charges are only levied for the collection of bulky household waste items and additional garden waste bins e.g. two or more. During 2024 the council consulted on introducing a £52 charge for the collection of garden waste, subsequently a charge of £56 will be introduced in October 2024, the increase from £52 to £56 will be used to support keeping HWRC sites open. Shropshire Council had resisted taking this approach for many years whereas the majority of council's now charge for this service. The introduction of a charge will likely encourage home composting and less intensive garden maintenance regimes.

Reduce waste capacity by reducing bin sizes – The standard sized wheelie bin issued to households is 240 Litres, many councils across the UK now issue 180 Litre bins, with these providing less capacity such bins do concentrate household behaviour to further sort out waste streams as efficiently as possible. It would be cost prohibitive to change existing bins, however this could be introduced as a policy for new build properties.

Enforcement of existing policies – Policies for closed bin lids and no side waste already exist, these serve to restrict the capacity for households. The rigour with which these policies are applied does depend upon the collection crew and collection depot area, hence consistent enforcement may yield changed behaviours.

HWRC booking system – As mentioned in section 7 above, introducing a booking system to access the HWRC system will serve to reduce the proportion of commercial waste being deposited under the guise of domestic waste at Shropshire's HWRC network and will prevent waste tourism. A booking system could be implemented for all vehicles, vans and trailers only or some other criteria.

Avoidance/prevention – In recent years refill shops have become an increasing feature. Even existing shops have relaxed controls to enable households to bring their own containers for refilling to avoid packaging. Many hospitality outlets now allow non purchasing customers into premises to refill water bottles helping to reduce the quantity of single use plastic bottles. Repair café's now operate in most of Shropshire's towns at which people can have items fixed at limited cost or for just

a small donation to prolong the life of items. Love food hate waste is a major part of the council's campaigns to reduce waste and previously reusable nappies have been promoted.

Diversion - Whilst diversion of waste does not prevent it, such activity can divert waste from council's collection system whereby the costs of dealing with that waste do not fall on council taxpayers. For example, donating usable items to charity shops or putting compostable waste into a home compost bin.

Cultural and behavioural change – Beyond policy change, in order to achieve the challenging aims set out in this waste prevention strategy will require significant cultural and behavioural change. The scale and nature of the challenge requires lots of individuals adopting new behaviours that are feasible for them, rather than a few individuals making large scale changes. Everyone in Shropshire has a part to play and can do their bit, which in itself provides an opportunity. In many respects external factors and environmental conditions have aligned to create the place and time opportunity to facilitate the required changes.

Reduce waste capacity by further reducing collection frequency – This has been an approach for some councils, especially in Wales where such policies have contributed to driving up recycling performance well in excess of that achieved in England.

11. Cultural and behavioural change

In addition to policy change, cultural and behavioural change is required to make impactful progress on reducing Shropshire's waste. At present activities such as considered purchasing and restraint, repair and reuse are behaviours somewhat confined mainly to the financially hard pressed or more committed environmentalists within Shropshire's community. A cultural mindset shift is required to transition positive waste reduction behaviours from the niche to the mainstream so that these patterns of behaviour become the accepted norm.

Clear signs within wider society suggest that environmental and climate messaging is raising awareness and to a degree changing behaviours. Hence it is likely that Shropshire's population will be receptive to future waste reduction messaging to a larger extent than it has previously. TV shows such as The Repair Shop, community action around single use plastic and increasing concern around fast fashion mean that the environment and time is right to make concerted effort to leverage onto what is happening within society at a national level by utilising local waste reduction messaging.

The challenge for the council is how to enable and facilitate the desired cultural and behavioural change at pace in an era in which the council's resources are constrained. The first step is to review the council's mode of delivering waste reduction to identify ways of delivering this programme of work in smarter ways aligned to the adopted strategic approach. The council also needs to better utilise the resources that its waste services contractor (Veolia) provides and structurally align these so that waste reduction is delivered in a coherent way to maximise the outputs and outcomes.

In addition to what the council and Veolia will do with a refreshed waste reduction programme, it is evident that Shropshire's community sector is already engaged in the waste reduction space via food redistribution, repair café's, furniture reuse and similar. There appears to be an appetite within

Shropshire's community sector to engage more deeply and broadly with waste reduction, evidenced by the attendance at a recent 'Accelerating Change' climate event held in Shrewsbury.

The council needs to foster current community sector engagement by developing meaningful relationships and extend these where possible with new groups, new sectors or new waste streams. Working with and alongside the right community partners will accelerate the integration of waste reduction messaging, activities and initiatives into existing spaces where established audiences and followership already exist. Supporting the community sector to enable it to influence others will reach audiences that the council finds it difficult to engage with directly.

From at least the early 2000's there has been a community sector recycling and reuse forum within Shropshire, in previous iterations this has been the Shropshire Community Recycling Network (SCRN) and then Shropshire Community Recycling Ltd (SCRL). Member organisations received recycling and reuse credits from the council based around the quantity of waste avoided or diverted from requiring treatment. This core funding enabled member organisations to operate from a sustainable foundation with a transparent system in place to access funding based on performance. In addition to credit monies from the council, the umbrella organisation was able to bid for grant monies which it would redistribute to members for specific initiatives.

As the council's finances became more constrained it ceased paying recycling/reuse credits to the community sector around the early 2010's. Those community sector organisations that have remained active in the area of waste management have done so in the absence of that direct funding. As the council's finances have become further constrained it now requires community sector support to a greater extent than ever. There is a disconnect between the rhythm of when the council has the funds to provide the community sector with support and then when in turn it requires support from the community sector to deliver upon shared aims. In more recent years Veolia has supported the community sector and micro-organisations with its Envirogrant scheme.

There is a vibrant community sector across Shropshire and most sizeable towns have groups active in the space of the environment and or climate care and there is a desire and in some cases capacity to do more. The council should embrace this enthusiasm and utilise the credible voice the community sector has to help deliver the necessary cultural and behavioural change around waste reduction. This refresh of the waste prevention strategy provides an opportunity to explore options for new structured finance based on the contribution made toward the council's aim to reduce waste quantities, this can happen within an invest to save framework.

ACTION 5: Develop opportunities for community delivery

5. A. Engage with the community sector in a meaningful way and re-establish a community recycling and reuse forum within Shropshire

5. B. Map out where the community sector groups are, their focus and key contacts

5. C. Explore options for how such a forum can be supported generally and financially

12. Smarter use of existing resources

A new ethos for the waste management unit

Consistently for almost a decade, the council's recycling performance has exceeded 50%, it would therefore seem appropriate to reflect this fact within the name of the unit. Rebranding the waste management unit, job titles and roles to reflect a new focus on resources or a similar descriptor would serve to better reflect what is being achieved and would show future intent and ambition. The recent sharing of management responsibility across the waste management unit and the climate change team provides opportunity for a rebrand and refresh, further scope exists to explore new combinations of service areas and roles pending the council's restructuring program.

The waste management unit, or its successor if rebranded, needs to make best use locally of national campaigns like Love Food Hate Waste, Food Waste Action Week and Recycle Now Week. Such campaigns were initially developed by WRAP and or Defra who continue to support their delivery by developing new communications materials, procuring media coverage at a national level and recruiting media personalities as ambassadors to be the face of the campaigns. By supporting these campaigns, Shropshire benefits from the use of the resources that have been developed and tested and the national coverage serves to amplify local messaging within Shropshire.

ACTION 6: Consult with the waste management unit and seek views and approval for a new name that better reflects the aims of the department

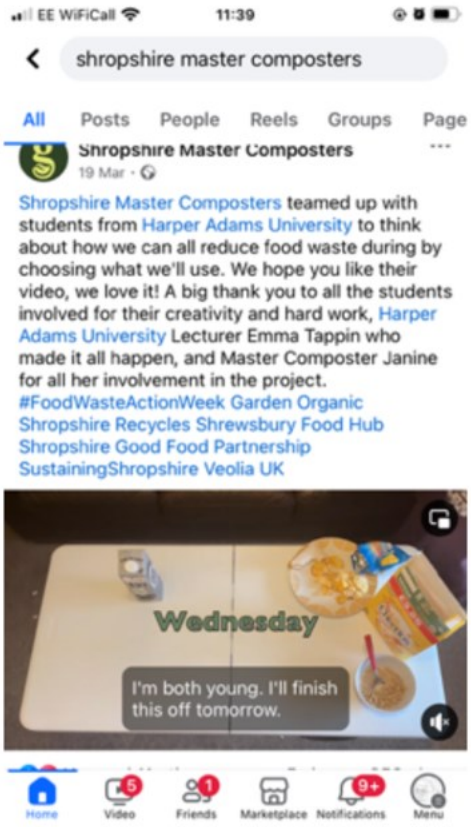
Improving communications through better collaboration with partners

National food waste action week took place in March 2024, the theme this year was 'Choose what you'll use' the campaign is led by the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP). This year there was significant collaboration with stakeholder partners including, Shrewsbury Food Hub, Shropshire Master Composters, Shropshire Good Food Partnership, Harper Adams University and Veolia. This alliance has formed around preventing the waste of edible food and during the week of action significant sharing and re-posting of social media content took place to extend the audience that would receive messaging. By taking this approach over 16,000 unique social media followers were reached.

Post campaign monitoring identified that the Shrewsbury Food Hub has nearly double the number of social media followers than Shropshire Recycles (the council's channel) and serves to evidence the benefit of collaboration. Monitoring the campaign has identified the following key points.

- Collaboration increases reach, together the alliance had 16,300 followers
- "Unofficial" posts had more reach and interaction than the official campaign materials from WRAP and followers responded more to people and story-based content than animations.
- The third sector organisations had more reach and interaction than official/corporate channels.

Below are recent popular posts from Food Waste Action Week.



ACTION 7: Review and refresh the existing communication approach and seek enhanced collaboration with suitable partners

7. A. Test new communications and engagement messaging with appropriate stakeholders

A review and refresh of Veolia's engagement and communication role

Since commencement of the waste PFI contract Veolia has been obliged via the mechanism of the contract to undertake action to communicate and facilitate recycling and waste prevention. To achieve this Veolia employs an Area Communications Manager (who works across a number of regional Veolia contracts) and a PR Communications Officer (0.8FTE) principally dedicated to delivering messaging to schools within Shropshire. These posts combined contribute resource of approximately 1.3 FTE and part of the output from this team is producing the twice-yearly collection calendar leaflets delivered to every household and general communications.

Veolia financially support Shropshire's Master Composter programme, funding the role of Shropshire's co-ordinator and training and travel expenses for the master composter volunteers. Given that this strategy has identified organic waste (garden and food) as key material streams to reduce it seems appropriate to continue with the master composter program.

Further key strands to Veolia's engagement and communications approach includes its programme of school talks, attendance at 'Crucial Crew' events for schools and talks to community groups such as the WI and Rotary and hosting visits to the energy recovery facility at Battlefield. Veolia has also

provided grant funding in the region of £15k in the last number of years for its Envirogrant scheme which provides a challenge fund for small organisations and charities within Shropshire to bid for.

Whilst the programme of work aimed at school children helps get messaging back to parents and will likely reap benefits long term, the scale of change required between now and 2030 to assist deliver on the target of this strategy and for the council's financial survivability calls for a more urgent and focussed approach with a greater focus on waste prevention.

ACTION 8: In partnership with Veolia, review its education, communication and outreach (ECO) approach to give greater focus to waste prevention aimed at achieving quick results

More broadly across the waste management unit's communications approach the unit will.

1. Use existing social media channels and newer platforms to reach new audiences as well as static displays and digital media such as the waste e-zine to subscribers.
2. Network, link and signpost public and the community sector where possible.
3. Keep up to date with national communication trends, new initiatives and research.
4. Focus on all Shropshire households making small changes rather than a few households doing lots.
5. Improve the content and offer of the web page, utilise the list of email subscribers following the purple lidded bin roll out to engage the audience in waste prevention.

13. Action on the ground with new initiatives

To make timely progress towards achieving waste prevention will require visible and tangible actions delivered within a short time frame. Initiatives such as.

- New sites at which community composting occurs
- An increase in the number of repair cafes in Shropshire
- New initiatives such as 'libraries of things' and sharing economy
- Community reuse for a broader range of material such as paint and timber
- Resale of items from those deposited at the council's HWRC network
- Increased visible activity on food waste prevention such as community fridges and storing/cooking demonstrations
- The establishment of a reuse and repair forum within Shropshire encompassing new areas such as fast fashion
- Charging for garden waste collections
- HWRC booking system and further restrictions
- Pledging to become a 'Single use plastic free' organisation and similar to show leadership

These initiatives do not need to occur all at once and the majority cannot be delivered by the council alone and require community, stakeholder and partner approaches to implement. However, without some of the above being delivered it is difficult to foresee considerable progress being made to reduce the quantity of waste in Shropshire.

ACTION 9: Deliver visible initiatives to reduce waste, save costs and raise awareness

9. A. Obtain buy in from key senior staff and elected members to enable the necessary change

9. B. Obtain buy in from key community/partner stakeholders

14. A case for dedicated staff and budget resource

The Waste Management Unit client team comprises a small (advised by Defra, for the size of county and scale of contract) compliment of 3.9 full time equivalent staff members (the smallest the client team has been since commencement of the waste PFI contract). Due to budget constraint within the council, financial resource to fund dedicated waste prevention campaigns and staff to deliver such is restricted, whereas previously a role was dedicated to this function. Complimenting the council's client team, the council's waste contractor Veolia employs approximately 1.3 FTE staff in the area of communications and engagement as detailed in the previous section.

Given the council's financial challenge, the point in time of the waste PFI contract term and broader environmental concern within society, it is timely to review the waste client team and Veolia's engagement and communications approach. There is a need to utilise existing resources as effectively as possible, potentially making structural change within the framework of the waste PFI contract to focus resources. Where possible it makes sense to leverage support from the not for profit, community and voluntary sector, seek opportunities for collaborative alliances and partnership working and explore external grant, research and sponsorship funding opportunities.

Implemented and delivered correctly waste prevention has the potential to realise significant savings for the council through avoided waste treatment costs and also significant income from the sale to third parties of the relinquished capacity at the energy recovery facility. The combination of saving and income could feasibly in the region of £1M. Given how waste prevention can assist families with the cost-of-living challenge, (particularly around preventing avoidable food waste) and how waste prevention would contribute towards the council's healthy environment pillar within the Shropshire plan; Due consideration should be given to having a dedicated staff resource to deliver the interventions, actions and approach of this waste prevention strategy in a timely way to achieve the desired results.

Whilst some progress to reduce waste can be achieved by policy changes alone, such as charging or booking systems, It is difficult to foresee how considerable waste reduction can be achieved without an officer with an appropriate budget to drive forward with implementing the necessary initiatives and actions to enable the desired change.

Unlike messaging to promote recycling, where the message benefits from being tailored to how recycling services are provided, waste prevention messaging can utilise a common approach and therefore has the potential to be delivered across council boundaries. Scope potentially exists for waste prevention to be delivered in a collaborative partnership approach, for instance with

neighbouring authorities or in conjunction with the councils of the Marches Forward Partnership in order to share resourcing costs. Cross boundary working may also enable access to different grant funding opportunities and following receipt of initial catalyst funding, it may be possible for any post holder to seek funding to help sustain the position.

ACTION 10: Explore the case and seek approval for appointing a staff resource dedicated to waste prevention within the spend to save transformation framework

15. Principles guiding delivery of the strategy

Key principles will guide the delivery of this strategy. The focus is to reduce waste to save the council's waste management costs, though secondary aims include helping Shropshire residents with the cost-of-living challenge, protecting precious and finite resources and aligning with the council's Shropshire Plan and climate objectives. It is noted that waste prevention will not only enhance Shropshire's environmental performance but also has potential to enhance Shropshire's economy by creating training and employment opportunities within the repair and reuse sectors.

Guiding principles include.

1: Review our current approach to waste minimisation and make the necessary amendments so that our new approach makes the best possible use of available resources.

2: Make appropriate structural changes where necessary and possible to ensure existing resources such as staff, budgets, communications and performance measures are aligned to achieve waste minimisation.

3: Raise awareness across Shropshire residents of waste prevention as a demand management approach to reduce costs borne by Shropshire households for the management of waste whilst improving climate and environmental performance.

4: Provide information, tools, know how, support and guidance to residents and community settings and partners on how they can reduce their waste and contribute to the council's aim.

5: Share and be receptive to good and best practice, sharing information with relevant staff, partners and stakeholders.

6: incentivise and enable action within the council and more widely across Shropshire's community.

7: Monitor and measure performance, to recognise and reward success, monitoring against the 2013 baseline to track progress made, recognise those individuals, partners and organisations that contribute to achieving the desired results.

16. Case studies

The author of this strategy has been active in the resource and waste management sector in Shropshire for numerous years and through the course of his work has established numerous contacts within Shropshire's community sector, a number of partners involved have kindly contributed case studies to illustrate some of the positive work taking place within the county and to showcase the positive initiatives already taking place in Shropshire and to inspire others, a selection of case studies follows below.

The Street Allotment Project (Shrewsbury)

Photo credit: Street Allotment Project

From its beginnings as one tiny plot in Shrewsbury, the Street Allotment Project has used social media and the grapevine to send out requests to the community for its gardening needs. In the course of just a few years, through the kindness of the community we've been able to reuse and repurpose numerous gardening and related items. Not only has this saved the project a huge amount of money it has also prevented lots of stuff from going to the tip.

A big part of our recycling is in the composting we do, not only of what we generate from our street allotment sites but also from community minded donors who want to assist or haven't the space to compost for themselves. The compost we have made has improved our plants and yields significantly, is healthier than shop-bought compost, and of course, free. We're always happy to help people get their compost into good shape.

The main purpose of our project is, of course, to grow great, fresh food without chemical inputs, right on people's doorsteps to enjoy for free. We also aim to inspire people to grow their own as this avoids food packaging and helps to reduce food waste.

We'd love to welcome more growers to our plots around Shrewsbury or assist you start your own project, for more information visit https://www.streetallotmentproject.org/home or our Facebook and Instagram pages.

Repair Cafes (Across Shropshire)

Photo Credit: Ludlow Repair cafe

Ludlow Repair Café Co-ordinator – Diane Lyle

My move to Shropshire brought me a huge range of volunteering opportunities and Ludlow positively welcomed my involvement in a variety of activities from the arts to U3A to climate-related groups. The climate-related groups were well established with experts on sustainable transport, sustainable energy, sustainable food but there was a niche for something far less 'sexy' but equally as meaningful – repair versus buying new.

I looked at what other towns and cities were doing and found the Repair Café network; I also discovered such things as toy libraries and various ‘swap’ or ‘share’ ideas. I visited the Shrewsbury Repair Café and received a lot of support from the organisers there and tentatively explored how to set one up in Ludlow. I also visited the Shrewsbury Toy Library, again receiving useful help and advice.

There was nothing like this happening in Ludlow, however, during 2016, I floated the idea of a Repair Café with friends and acquaintances, receiving enough positive support to organise a pilot event which generated six repairers and enough customers to encourage us all to stage a second event. From then on Ludlow’s repair café has grown in terms of repairers, areas of repair expertise and customers.

We regularly receive general domestic items for repair such as vacuum cleaners, toasters, lamps, hedge trimmers, lawn mowers, humidifiers, food mixers and so on. In addition, and what keeps it interesting and challenging for our team of repairers, we have received such items as a 3ft Dalek, a gemstone polishing machine, a statuette of Red Rum with broken legs, a cement garden dragon, and an Edwardian parasol, each repair event presents us with something new.

Our most recent recruit is a sewing specialist which will broaden the range of items we can repair to help people wishing to move away from disposable fast fashion. An admin team supports our repairers with fielding paperwork and front-of-house duties to ensure a smooth flow of items, during lockdown we set up our ‘Repair At-Home’ service which continues to operate between the regular quarterly face to face events.

Looking to the future; I would like to try and establish a Toy Library – which may, perhaps, expand into a ‘Library of Things’ and swap shop events for clothes and other items. Whatever happens, the Repair Café is now firmly established and during this, our seventh year, I will be providing an annual calculation of waste, CO_2 and financial savings. https://www.facebook.com/ludlowrepaircafe/

Shropshire Master Composters (Across Shropshire)

Photo credit: Garden Organic/Shropshire Master Composters

The Shropshire Master Composters volunteer programme was established in 2006 with funding from Shropshire Council via its waste contractor Veolia to promote home composting across Shropshire. In 2019, a dedicated project coordinator was appointed by Garden Organic to oversee and develop the programme, and there is now an active team of over 50 volunteers, who encourage composting in their local communities by attending events as diverse as music festivals, school assemblies, farmers markets, flower shows, green days, repair cafes, village fetes and food festivals. The volunteers have access to resource kits housed across the county, including gazebos, promotional display items such as banners and leaflets, interactive games, wormeries and microscopes.

The Master Composters have a strong online presence, with an active Facebook page providing regular composting, food waste reduction, recycling and gardening tips, along with promoting their attendance at events. We have reached over 5000 views with various posts.

In addition to delivering in-person composting talks to interest groups, there are also regular public webinars covering topics such as an Introduction to Composting, Choosing your Compost Bin, Managing Food Waste and Wormeries.

Our Online Composting course, an interactive course with video and written content, is available to all Shropshire residents, and has been accessed by nearly 300 people.

Our Master Composters volunteers come from all over the county and are well connected within their communities. Many are members of other environmental groups or projects and use their network to reach a wider audience. We have volunteers who manage community gardens, work in care settings, support growing and composting in schools and who organise talks and events across Shropshire. Over the past year we have grown area hubs of volunteers who work together in specific locations and who have access to local composting promotion resources to minimise their need to travel.

Photo credit: Shropshire Master Composters/OsNosh

We work in partnership with organisations, groups and projects such as Shropshire Good Food Partnership, OsNosh, LovelyLand, Street Allotment, Bridgnorth Community Gardeners, WACA (Wem Area Climate Action), Shropshire Wildlife Trust, Shropshire Organic Gardeners, and many more.

The Shrewsbury Furniture Scheme/Home Essentials – Shrewsbury

Photo credit: Shrewsbury Furniture Scheme

The Shrewsbury Furniture Scheme (SFS) is a registered charity established to provide direct assistance to those in need through the provision of household goods at very affordable prices. Items are sourced from generous donors within the community.

The charity has expanded its operation with a shop in Shrewsbury and now serves much of Shropshire from a large warehouse and trades as Home Essentials to reflect the fact that the charity provides much more than just furniture. Indeed, everything needed to make a house a home is available to those in need at affordable prices at our warehouse, income from our shop sales supports our charitable objectives. T

The Charity is managed by a Board of Trustees who provide their services on a voluntary basis, & its services are delivered by a small team of employees & a dedicated group of volunteers.

SFS works closely with Shropshire Council in supporting their Local Support and Prevention Fund (LSPF) clients through the provision of household goods to help families and individuals under exceptional pressure. The LSPF is used to help keep families together, help people to settle or remain in the community and help vulnerable people who struggle to meet their essential living costs or who have an unexpected crisis.

Over the years the SFS has helped thousands of individuals & families furnish their homes at minimal cost whilst saving well over 1,500 tonnes of household goods from going to landfill.

We are very proud of what we have been able to achieve so far but believe our role is still as relevant today as it was when we first started. However, none of those achievements would have been possible without the generous contributions made by members of the local community in donating both quality household goods & their time, in volunteering to deliver the service, for which we are very grateful & long may that generosity continue.

Zero Wasters case study - Angela Vnoucek – Shrewsbury

Photo credit: BBC Shropshire

During the pandemic in 2020 I was asked at work to write an article for Climate Change Week. I chose to highlight that I do not put anything into my general waste bin. On researching I found out I was not alone. The activity even had a name - Zero Wasting.

I had always been someone who recycled and reused, making ends meet by re-purposing items and giving them a second, third and even fourth lease of life before their natural end.

For well over a decade, I had been reducing the amount of waste that went into my general bin - namely because I hated putting my bins out. Very soon I was finding I never had occasion to put my bin out every fortnight, that soon became every month and then once a year. I would look in my bin after a year and find that I could still see the bottom. In fact, there were more spiders at home there than there was rubbish. Finally, I ended up not putting my bin out at all. Without even knowing it I had managed to not generate any waste material which needed to be collected through the fortnightly kerbside collection.

Of course, there were some products which posed some more thinking – e.g. toothpaste tubes. I then came across Boots' Scan 2Recycle scheme. I believe everything can be found an alternative to putting it in the general bin. People just need to do a little research or even ask the supplier.

In 2022, again at work, I was asked to do a presentation on being a Zero Waster and chose 'So, What Do You Do With Your Hoover Fluff?' This resulted in 40 people going away and committing to move their hoover fluff from their general waste bin to their compost bins once they had checked it for Lego bricks. I was finding that if you highlighted a particular item - common to all - people were unaware that there was an alternative to placing it in the general waste bin. I went on to add that

once you have moved an item, review, pick another and find out what alternatives exist to just binning it. Soon your bin will be empty.

For me I do not have a concept of rubbish and think of it a challenge to find somewhere else for it to go. I do like the concept of reuse, reduce, recycle, repair, rot and even refuse.

I also do a recycle car boot – selling items which others may discard but some might find useful. One man's rubbish is another man's treasure.

I would like to see Shrewsbury become a ZeroWaste town and believe the way to do this is to find like-minded individuals who either are zerowasters already or who wish to become zerowasters and be willing to spread the word. Using Bagley Ward Face Book pages – Heath Farm, Herongate & Greenfields to start off with.

17. Summary of actions

No.	Action item	Pg
1	Take action to reduce garden/green waste arisings	17
2	Address organic waste (garden and food wastes) to improve performance	23
3	Take action to reduce and extract maximum value from HWRC waste arisings	25
4	Review, align and introduce waste policies that compliment waste reduction	26
5	Develop opportunities for community delivery	31
6	Consult with the waste management unit and seek views and approval for a new name that better reflects the aims of the department	32
7	Review and refresh the existing communication approach and seek enhanced collaboration with suitable partners	33
8	In partnership with Veolia, review its education, communication and outreach (ECO) approach to give greater focus to waste prevention aimed at achieving quick results	34
9	Deliver visible initiatives to reduce waste, save costs and raise awareness	35
10	Explore the case and seek approval for appointing a staff resource dedicated to waste prevention within the spend to save transformation framework	36

Table 2: Summary of actions and where in the document they appear

18. Monitoring and reviewing progress

Progress against the aim of the strategy needs to be monitored periodically, this process will be undertaken following receipt of Veolia's annual report as this document contains validated tonnage and household number data, this document is issued shortly after the end of the preceding financial year. Performance can easily be measured using Kg of household waste per household and compared to the target figures for the years of 2025, 2026 and 2030.

It is appropriate to review progress on the 10 action item areas of this strategy at regular intervals. As an example it has recently been announced by the council that a new annual charge of £56 will be levied for the collection of garden waste. Implementing a new subscription approach aligns with action item 1 and following implementation of the charge in October 2024, it will be possible to compare the tonnage data of collected garden waste with outturns from previous years.

In many cases other action areas will have their own metric that can be measured, for instance for action 9 it will be possible to quantify and track progress on the number of new repair cafes established in Shropshire. Data can also be gleaned from events such as repair cafes as to the number of visitors, number and estimated weight of items repaired. Analysis of the data will inform reviews of progress towards achieving the aim of the strategy and what approaches are working well or need to be revised.

19. Acknowledgements

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Street Allotment Project

Veolia (Tim Walters)

20. Glossary

By-products: an inevitable result of certain types of material processing. In a circular economy, by-products are a feedstock for another production process.

Circular economy: An approach to managing resources which involves products and materials being kept in use for as long as possible, extracting maximum value from them. It means products and materials are reused, repaired, remanufactured, recycled or regenerated whenever possible and appropriate.

Defra: Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR): a powerful environmental policy approach through which a producer's responsibility for a product is extended to the post-use stage. This incentivises producers to design their products to make it easier for them to be reused, dismantled and/or recycled at end of life.

Recycling: turning products at end of life back into materials which can be reused.

Refurbish(ment): modification of an object that is waste or a product to increase or restore its performance and/or functionality or to meet applicable technical standards or regulatory requirements, with the result of making a fully functional product to be used for a similar purpose to the one that it was originally intended.

Remanufacture: an industrial process that takes place within industrial or factory settings, in which cores are restored to original as-new condition and performance or better. The remanufacturing process is in line with specific technical specifications, including engineering, quality, and testing standards, and typically yields fully warranted products.

Repair: fixing a specified fault in an object that is a waste or a product and/or replacing defective components, in order to make the waste or product a fully functional product to be used for its originally intended purpose.

Reuse: using a product or material again for its original purpose, without any reprocessing taking place.

The Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP): a climate action NGO, working with governments, companies and citizens globally, to tackle the causes of climate change and give the planet a sustainable future.

END

A Waste Prevention Strategy For Shropshire 2024 - 2030

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