

2025 – 2040

Recycling and Waste Strategy for Colchester



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

WHAT IS A RECYCLING AND WASTE STRATEGY AND WHY DO WE NEED ONE?

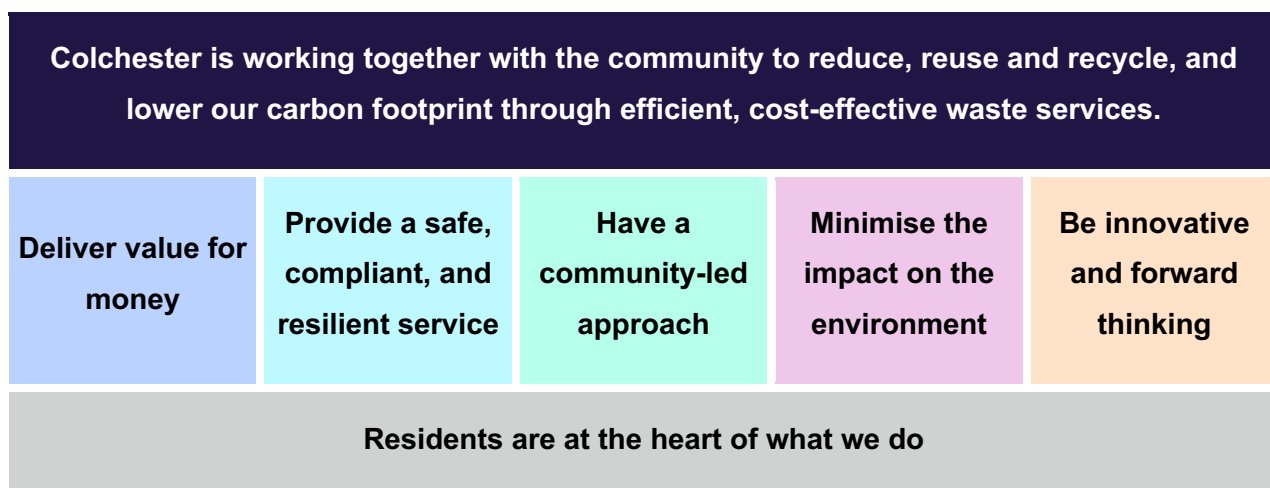
This Recycling and Waste Strategy outlines Colchester's plans to improve the way we manage waste over the next 15 years. It sets out the vision and aims of the Council in reducing waste, improving recycling and providing a simple-to-use service for our residents and businesses.

Our previous Waste Strategy was adopted in 2016, ahead of changes to our recycling and rubbish collections in 2017. Since then, a great deal has changed, and it is important that we update and review our operations to ensure we are on the right track to delivering the best outcomes for our community.

In the next few years, the UK Government plans to implement schemes that will reduce our impact on the environment and mitigate against climate change. More locally, the Council has declared a Climate Emergency and as waste arising and the collection of waste materials have an implication on emissions, the Council has set out plans within its strategic plan to reduce the impact. This includes changes to the way waste and recycling is currently managed. As a Council, we are also working towards targets that will reduce budget pressures, which includes designing a waste service that is financially sustainable. We must adapt our behaviours to support these changes, while also doing our bit for the environment.

OUR VISION

A collective vision for the Strategy has been agreed, underpinned by five fundamental principles:



The principles reflect Colchester's ambitions for the future waste service and will drive the change required to deliver the aims of this Strategy.

WHAT WILL WE ACHIEVE?

To successfully deliver the principles of this Strategy, a set of measurable aims have been developed.

Deliver value for money - We strive to provide high-quality waste management services that are economically efficient, ensuring that every penny spent brings value to our community.

Our aim:

- Explore opportunities for reducing the cost of waste service operations through the simplification of the operations to reduce core costs.
- Reduce the cost of our waste service operations by £1m by 2026/27, and to continue operating within the financial budget, without any additional financial burden on residents.

Provide a safe, compliant, and resilient service - Our commitment is to offer a service that adheres to all safety and regulatory standards, demonstrating resilience in the face of challenges and ensuring the well-being of our community.

Our aim:

- Reduce the risk of staff injuries through the simplification of service operations.
- Ensure that all Colchester residents have access to separate food waste collections by 2026.
- Ensure that all Essex residents have access to comprehensive recycling services for plastic, paper and card, metal, glass, and garden waste, by 2026

Have a community-led approach - We believe in harnessing the strengths, resources, and potential within our community. By involving local people and organisations in our strategy, we aim to foster a sense of ownership and collective responsibility towards our vision.

Our aim:

- Prioritise Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) principles in all that we do to deliver our recommendations.
- Reduce the barriers to recycling and reusing more
- Ensure diverse perspectives are captured when considering changes or initiatives

Minimise the impact on the Environment - We aim to minimise any negative environmental impact by promoting sustainable practices in waste management.

Our aim:

- Contribute to reducing the county's greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050.
- Support residents to ensure that they do not produce more than 110kg of residual waste per year by 2042.
- Aim to reduce residual waste by 10% by 2030.

Be innovative and forward thinking - We aspire to be pioneers, constantly seeking innovative solutions and approaches that can transform the way recycling and waste is managed in Colchester.

Our aim:

- As per national targets, we will reuse, recycle, or compost 65% of waste by 2035.
- To go above and beyond national targets through reuse, recycle or compost at least 70% of waste by 2030.

HOW WILL WE GET THERE?

We need to review the ways in which waste is currently managed in Colchester and identify the changes that need to be made to help us achieve our future goals.

This Strategy presents a proposed new collection service replacing the collection of separate recyclable materials in sacks and boxes, with one wheeled bin for plastics, metals, paper and card, and a recycling box for glass. We will also roll out food waste collections to all flat properties. This proposed change will provide many benefits for our residents, community and the Council, including:

- Making the process simpler for our residents, with the aim of improving recycling performance.
- Improving the health and wellbeing of our collection teams by reducing the number of boxes and sacks they need to lift and load onto collection vehicles.
- The new service provides a saving of 20% against the current service, reducing strain on Council budgets.
- The new service means that the vehicle fleet is streamlined, meaning less vehicles on the road and therefore lower carbon emissions.

In addition, there are many initiatives currently running in the local area that aim to educate and support our communities in adopting waste prevention, reuse and recycling behaviours.

Our success in reducing our environmental impact is through sharing our knowledge and collaborating our efforts.

NEXT STEPS

Prior to implementation, the Council will seek to garner the views of residents, local businesses and communities on waste and the environment and the strategic vision via a public consultation process.

We will carry out regular reviews and monitoring throughout the lifespan of this Strategy to measure progress and ensure CCC remains on track with achieving its goals.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 WHAT IS A RECYCLING AND WASTE STRATEGY?

This Recycling and Waste Strategy outlines Colchester's plans to improve the way we manage waste over the next 15 years. It sets out the vision and aims of the Council in reducing waste, improving recycling and providing a simple-to-use service for our residents and businesses.

Colchester City Council (CCC) is classed as a Waste Collection Authority (WCA) under section 45(1) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. All WCAs have a statutory duty to provide a range of waste collection services to residents and businesses within their administrative area. Our previous Waste Strategy was adopted in 2016, shortly followed by the implementation of a new recycling and rubbish collection in 2017.

In the next few years, the UK Government plans to implement schemes which will change the way in which waste is currently managed, which could lead to significant changes for local authorities. This new Recycling and Waste Strategy will build upon the aims of the previous Strategy, while responding to upcoming legislative changes. This Strategy defines CCC's ambition for its waste collection services from 2025 to 2040 in the light of national and local policies and forthcoming legislation to reduce waste and maximise recycling.

1.2 BACKGROUND

Under the Waste and Emissions Trading (WET) Act 2003, authorities in two-tier areas are obliged to develop and maintain a joint strategy for the management of household and similar waste across the region. It sets the strategic direction for beneficial joint working between the WCA and Waste Disposal Authority (WDA), Essex County Council (ECC). If benefits are to be realised it is important that the waste disposal approaches of ECC are aligned with the waste collection approaches of CCC, and vice versa.

In late 2021 the Essex Waste Partnership (EWP), consisting of CCC, the other eleven Essex WCAs and Essex County Council, agreed to formally review the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (JMWMS) for Essex and develop a new Waste Strategy for Essex. The EWP undertook a consultation to seek the views of residents and stakeholders on a draft Waste Strategy for Essex between September and November 2023. The outcome of the consultation showed good level of agreement from all areas in Essex on the key proposals within the draft strategy, which included:

- Working together to minimise the impact that waste management has on the environment, whilst ensuring value for money to the taxpayer.
- Embracing the circular economy by reducing waste, recycling more and supporting the green sector.
- Lobbying government and business to reduce waste at source.
- Supporting residents by ensuring everyone has access to recycling services for paper, glass, plastic, metal, food and garden waste at home.
- Ceasing the use of landfill by 2030.
- Using energy from waste to manage waste that cannot be recycled or composted.
- Recycling or composting 65% of waste by 2035, with an ambition to achieve 70%.
- Halving the residual waste produced per person by 2042.

The development of a new strategy for Colchester provides the opportunity to explore ways we can work with our communities and residents to deliver more sustainable resources and waste services, whilst aligning our goals with the wider ambitions for Essex.

1.3 WHY DO WE NEED TO ACT?

This Strategy sets the strategic direction of CCC's resources and waste management over the next 15 years, from 2025 to 2040. Within this timeframe, the UK Government will implement a set of policies and targets for all local authorities to reduce waste and recycle as much as possible. As part of the EWP, CCC is aligned with the targets of the Waste Strategy for Essex to manage the waste that is produced by homes and businesses. In addition, the Council is committed to providing its residents and communities with a service that is customer-focused, affordable and resilient to future change.

The following section expands on the key drivers of the Recycling and Waste Strategy.

1.3.1 Upcoming Government policy changes

In the next few years, the UK Government plans to implement schemes which will change the way in which waste is currently managed, which could lead to significant changes for local authorities. CCC's ambitions for the future must also take into account the upcoming policy changes to ensure the service remains legislatively compliant.

1.3.1.1 The Resources and Waste Strategy 2018

The Resources and Waste Strategy was released in 2018 to outline the UK Government's plans for minimising waste, promoting resource efficiency and moving towards a circular economy.

Circular Economy

The circular economy is a system which involves sharing, reusing, repairing, refurbishing and recycling existing materials and products as long as possible extend their lifespan. By embracing the principles of the circular economy, we can transition away from a take-make-use-dispose system and towards more sustainable levels of consumption to conserve our natural resources.

The circular economy model: less raw material, less waste, fewer emissions



Source: European Parliament Research Service



The Strategy includes the following targets:

- recycling at least 65% of municipal waste by 2035;
- no more than 10% of municipal waste ending up in landfill;
- zero avoidable waste by 2050;
- zero plastic waste by 2042; and,
- zero food waste to landfill by 2030.

In order to help meet these goals, the Resources and Waste Strategy put forward the following initiatives which have been undergoing consultation:

- **Consistency in household and business waste collections (now “Simpler Recycling”):** a requirement for the separate collection of each of the major dry recycling materials (paper, card, glass, metal cans and plastics) and food waste.
- **Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for packaging:** manufacturers will pay the full costs of managing and recycling their packaging waste, with higher fees being levied if packaging is harder to reuse or recycle.
- **Deposit Return Scheme (DRS):** for plastic and metal drinks containers, where consumers will be financially incentivised to return their used containers for recycling.

The Environment Act 2021 passed into UK Law in November 2021 and mandates the measures set out in the Resources and Waste Strategy.

The implications of these policy proposals for CCC and the potential changes required to the current collection, management and disposal services for local authority collected waste (LACW) are set out below.

Simpler Recycling

The Environment Act 2021 sets out the materials that are required to be collected by all WCAs, including glass bottles and containers, paper and card, metal tins and cans and plastic bottles. The UK Government has proposed that some additional material streams already collected by CCC are included in the dry recyclable waste streams, such as plastic pots, tubs and trays and textiles, as well as other items not currently collected by the Council, such as food and drink cartons, batteries, plastic film and small waste electricals.

In November 2023, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) recognised that co-mingled collections (i.e. mixed recycling presented in one bin) are an acceptable collection methodology in line with the Environment Act (2021)’s legislative requirements.

Under the new requirements:

- Co-mingled collection of dry recyclables is allowed (households and businesses)
- By 31 March 2026, all local authorities in England must collect the same recyclable waste streams for recycling or composting from households. The recyclable waste streams include paper and card, plastic, glass, metal, food waste, and garden waste.
- All non-household municipal premises in England (such as businesses, schools and hospitals), must make arrangements to have the same set of recyclable materials (with the exception of garden waste) collected for recycling or composting.
- Weekly food waste collections must be in place by 31 March 2026 from all households.
- Weekly food waste collections from all appropriate businesses must be in place by 31 March 2025, although not necessarily collected by Council-run collection services.
- Recyclable plastic film to be collected from 2027 (households and businesses).
- Cartons for food, drink and other liquids to be collected by 31 March 2026 (households and businesses).
- Garden waste collections must be offered by all councils (by 31 March 2026) – but can still be charged for.

In May 2024, Defra announced that statutory requirements for minimum fortnightly residual waste collections will be introduced.

Extended Producer Responsibility

EPR is a policy approach through which producers are responsible for a product throughout its lifecycle, including its end-of-life stage. The current EPR proposals for packaging are designed to incentivise producers to design products which make it easier for them to be reused, repaired or recycled, moving waste up the hierarchy.

The introduction of EPR is expected to significantly impact the funding of local authorities. EPR will work on the ‘polluter pays’ principle, with packaging producers making payments to local authorities for the cost of

managing household packaging waste that is collected for recycling or disposed of in residual waste. EPR is set to be implemented from 1 January 2025. Producers are required to report the amount of packaging they place on the market, and this will be used to charge producer fees and pay local authorities (LA) for managing packaging waste.

In addition to financial compensation, local authorities are likely to begin to see a reduction in overall volumes of packaging waste as well as a change in formats of packaging that are easier to recycle, helping to boost participation from residents with recycling.

Deposit Return Scheme

The DRS proposal, set to be implemented in 2027, is a system designed to encourage the return and recycling of drinks containers, such as bottles and cans. The proposed scheme involves charging a small deposit fee on each container at the point of purchase, which is refunded to the consumer when they return the empty container to a designated collection point. The main objective of DRS is to reduce litter and increase recycling rates through creating a financial incentive for consumers to participate in recycling and ensure that containers are not discarded in the environment.

With high levels of participation for DRS, the amount of drinks cans and plastic bottles entering kerbside collections and street litter bins will fall significantly. Along with overall reduced volumes of packaging through EPR, this has the potential to impact on the volume of material required for collection and processing, which in turn may impact on fleet efficiency and contractual arrangements. It is therefore important to factor these potential changes into any future strategy.

1.3.1.2 Circular Economy Package 2020 Policy

In 2020, the UK approved its own Circular Economy Package (CEP) policy and legislative framework, implementing many of the measures adopted by the European Commission to deliver circular economy led improvement measures in waste management across the EU. The CEP re-commits the UK to mandatory recycling targets, transposed into law through the Waste Framework Directive. These include:

- 55% municipal re-use and recycling target by 2025;
- 60% municipal re-use and recycling target by 2030; and
- 65% municipal re-use and recycling by 2035

1.3.1.3 Environmental Improvement Plan 2023

In February 2023, the Environmental Improvement Plan was released to review the goals of the 2018 25-Year Environment Plan. The original plan set out the UK Government's goals for biodiversity, clear air, clean water, protecting wildlife, reducing Environmental Hazards, minimising waste and combatting climate change.

This update outlines a number of interim, non-statutory targets that underpin the waste reduction target to halve residual waste produced per person by 2042. This includes the following interim targets by 31 January 2028:

- Reducing total residual waste (excluding major mineral waste) to 437 kg/capita per year maximum
- Reducing municipal residual waste to 333 kg/capita per year maximum
- Reducing municipal food waste to 64 kg/capita per year maximum
- Reducing municipal plastic waste to 42 kg/capita per year maximum
- Reducing municipal paper and card waste to 74 kg/capita per year maximum
- Reducing municipal metal waste to 10 kg/capita per year maximum
- Reducing municipal glass waste to 7 kg/capita per year maximum

1.3.1.4 Carbon reduction targets

In 2019, the UK Government became the first major economy in the world to set a legally binding target to achieve Net Zero Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions from across the UK economy by 2050. Through the Climate Change Act, the UK Government is committed by law to reducing GHG emissions by at least 100% of 1990 levels (net zero) by 2050.

CCC has been committed to reducing our environmental impact since 2008, when we set a target to reduce our emissions by 40% by 2020 and this target was met. The Council then declared a climate emergency in 2019, committing to a carbon neutral target for Council operations by 2030.

1.3.2 Reducing our environmental impact

Our residents have growing concerns about climate change and our impact on the environment. As a community, we can make sustainable choices in the types of products we purchase and consume that minimise the waste we create and ultimately reduce the greenhouse gas emissions produced which contribute to global warming. In addition to individual actions and lifestyle changes, the public is keen to see businesses support these efforts by reducing the amount of single-use packaging on the market, minimising plastic pollution, and creating products which are designed to last.

This Strategy is aligned in accordance with the principles of the waste hierarchy. The waste hierarchy outlines the key steps, in priority order, for managing waste according to what is best for the environment. The priority is the prevention of waste which means avoiding the creation of waste through restricting what we buy and the materials we use. By avoiding as much waste as possible in the first place, we can reduce the pressure on our natural resources and limit our impact on the environment. This is followed by re-use and repair, then recycling, then recovery (such as producing energy from waste). Disposal is the last resort for waste.



Taking action to tackle our climate emergency is an absolute priority for CCC. Since declaring a climate emergency in 2019, the Council has taken action to understand how its operations contribute to greenhouse gas emissions and what steps can be taken to reduce this. The Council's Climate Emergency Action Plan¹ demonstrates the actions taken to by the Council to reduce its environmental impact and this is directly linked to the Strategic Plan. This Recycling and Waste Strategy will set out how the Council will reduce the impact by minimising waste and promoting re-use, repair and recycling actions.

1.3.3 Providing a service that is affordable

The scale of the financial challenge councils face is huge. The cost-of-living crisis, alongside the recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic and rising energy costs have placed significant pressure on our budgets and we simply cannot continue to operate as we are.

This Strategy will outline how recycling and waste is managed in Colchester for the next 15 years. During this time, population and housing growth will mean that more people will be producing waste and recycling, resulting in increased requirements for collections and processing. This will mean more vehicles and staff will be required to collect waste, resulting in additional costs for the waste service. It is therefore important that we ensure our service is financially sustainable and resilient to future changes, so that it does not burden the Council, impacts other services it provides, nor on the taxpayer.

¹ Colchester City Council, 2023, [Climate Emergency: Action Plan 2022-23](#)

The Council has a target to reduce our overall operating costs by 25% over the next 3 years. To achieve this, the Council have developed a 'Fit for the Future' transformation programme to close the budget gap identified and prepare us for the longer-term financial challenge that lies ahead. The transformation programme will seek to address the changing needs of our communities, identify opportunities for additional income and invest in technology and the skills of our workforce to enable efficiencies and modernise services.

The key to providing an affordable waste service is through the prevention of waste altogether. Without changing current operations or behaviours, the increase in households will lead to more waste produced in the future, which will continue to drive up costs. It is therefore imperative that the Council and our residents implement the principles of the waste hierarchy to reduce pressure on future council budgets and therefore our taxpayers.

2. WHERE ARE WE NOW?

2.1 LOCAL AREA AND DEMOGRAPHICS

The City of Colchester is situated in the north east of Essex and covers an area of approximately 125 square miles. The city is surrounded by many small towns and villages, with countryside areas mainly used for agriculture.

In 2021, the population of Colchester was estimated at 192,700. Colchester remains one of the fastest growing boroughs in England, and, with that growth has come change in the demographic profile of the Borough, which is evolving into a less ethnically homogenous location. The largest age group across the East of England is 50 to 54 years, however, the median age of the Colchester residents is 39, which is slightly younger than England's average median age of 40², Just over 70% of the working age population were in employment in 2020³.

The City remains roughly in the middle, nationally, in terms of deprivation, but this overall average hides stark differences within Colchester, with the most and least deprived areas often bordering one another. This is important for waste management because evidence shows that areas with higher deprivation are associated with lower recycling performance.

2.2 CURRENT SERVICES

The table below provides a summary of the household collection schemes for residual waste, dry recycling, food waste and garden waste in Colchester. Note that flat properties are on a weekly residual collection, with waste and recycling items collected in communal bins.

<p>Residual waste</p>  <p>Fortnightly collection</p> <p>Maximum 3 black bags</p>	<p>Dry recycling</p>  <p>Alternate weekly collection</p> <p>Green recycling boxes: glass / metals Clear recycling bags: plastics / paper & card Blue bags: Textiles</p>
<p>Food waste</p>  <p>Weekly collection</p> <p>Caddies</p>	<p>Garden waste</p>  <p>Fortnightly chargeable collection</p> <p>Wheeled bins</p>

² ONS, 2023, [How life has changed in Colchester: Census 2021](#)

³ Colchester City Council, 2022, [Key statistics for Colchester](#)

The treatment and disposal of residual waste, garden and food waste collected in Colchester is currently managed by ECC. Currently, residual waste is sent to landfill and garden waste is sent for composting. Food waste is sent for anaerobic digestion (AD), a process which creates renewable energy for homes and businesses, and fertiliser for agriculture.

Colchester currently operates a multi-stream dry recycling scheme, where materials are separated by householders into boxes and sacks to be separately loaded onto collection vehicles. These materials are then sent to their respective treatment sites for recycling.

Colchester also provides a [special collection service](#) for unwanted, large household items for a small fee. This includes white goods such as dishwashers, cookers, washing machines, and fridges, and other large household items such as beds, sofas or wardrobes, domestic garden furniture and toys.

Residents are also able to present [textiles](#) for collection in blue bags that are delivered to residents each year, and which they can place out for collection alongside their kerbside materials.

Those residents who may have a medical need and therefore produce [medical or clinical waste](#), can also book a free collection from their home on the Council's website.

In addition, bring banks are located at a variety of locations across the City, providing places for people to recycle glass, cans, textiles, cardboard and paper, cartons, and even Tassimo pods, pens and food wrappers.

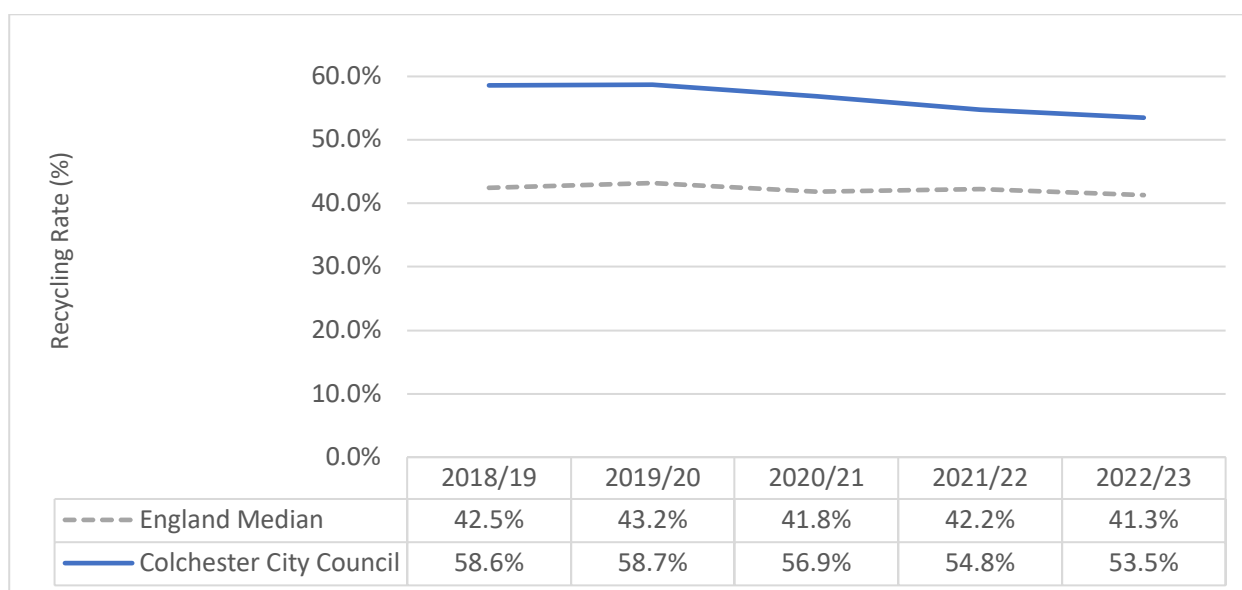
Further, the Council also provides a [Saturday household collection service](#) during the summer months at locations that have been assessed as having the lowest disposable income per household. Residents are encouraged to take any bulky items not normally collected at the kerbside to the refuse collection vehicle that is parked in a local area at the advertised time slot.

2.3 CURRENT PERFORMANCE

2.3.1 Benchmarking

In the financial year 2022/23, Colchester collected 59,076 tonnes of household waste, of which 31,623 tonnes (or 53.5%) was sent for re-use, recycling or composting⁴. The amount of residual waste produced per household is 346 kg per household, which is significantly lower than the median average of English local authorities at 501 kg per household.

In the past five years, Colchester's recycling rates have declined slightly in line with national and regional trends. In 2018/19, the median average recycling rate in England was 42.5%, though this has gradually fallen to 41.3%.



⁴ Household waste data derived from WasteDataFlow and Defra's statistical department for the period covering the financial year 2022/23.

When compared against authorities within Essex, Colchester has the third highest recycling rate for 2022/23. It should be noted that each district offers a slightly different service which can impact on performance.

Authority	Recycling rate
Rochford District Council	58.7%
Maldon District Council	56.7%
Colchester City Council	53.5%
Epping Forest Borough Council	51.7%
Chelmsford City Council	51.3%
Uttlesford District Council	48.1%
Castle Point Borough Council	46.5%
Braintree District Council	44.0%
Basildon District Council	43.1%
Harlow District Council	39.3%
Tendring District Council	38.6%
Brentwood Borough Council	37.4%

To provide a more direct comparison, Colchester has been benchmarked against the following authorities in England that are similar in characteristic, such as deprivation and geography, and that operate a similar waste collection service.

Local authorities	WRAP rurality ⁵	Residual waste collection	Dry Recycling Collection	Food waste collection
Broxbourne Borough Council	5: Mixed urban/rural, mid deprivation	Fortnightly	Fortnightly multi-stream	Weekly
Chelmsford City Council	6: Mixed urban/rural, low deprivation	Fortnightly	Fortnightly multi-stream	Weekly
Cheltenham Borough Council	3: Predominantly urban, low deprivation	Fortnightly	Fortnightly multi-stream	Weekly
Colchester City Council	6: Mixed urban/rural, low deprivation	Fortnightly	Fortnightly multi-stream	Weekly
Mid Devon District Council	8: Predominantly rural, mid deprivation	Fortnightly	Fortnightly multi-stream	Weekly
Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames	3: Predominantly urban, low deprivation	Fortnightly	Fortnightly multi-stream	Weekly
West Oxfordshire District Council	9: Predominantly rural, low deprivation	Fortnightly	Fortnightly multi-stream	Weekly

When compared against authorities with similar collection schemes, Colchester has the third highest recycling rate for 2022/23.

Authority	Recycling rate
West Oxfordshire District Council	56.8%
Mid Devon District Council	55.4%
Colchester City Council	53.5%
Chelmsford City Council	51.3%
Cheltenham Borough Council	49.5%
Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames	46.5%
Broxbourne Borough Council	42.7%

⁵ WRAP modelling is based on 10 types of rurality categories, based on levels of deprivation and geography.

2.3.2 What makes up our residual waste?

Understanding what is in your waste is critical in developing a future waste strategy. A waste composition study can identify what is in your waste and therefore what materials can be potentially reduced or recycled. Between 2011 and 2014 a waste composition analysis was carried out across the Essex boroughs, cities and districts. The analysis found that food waste comprises an average of 25% of bins across the region. Of the remaining items, approximately 30% comprised of items which could have been recycled either through the dry recycling and garden waste collection schemes from home. An update to the study is planned to take place in 2024/2025.

Category	Average composition across boroughs
Paper & card	7.6%
Dense plastic	6.2%
Plastic films	9.6%
Glass	3.2%
Metal	3.6%
Textiles	5.5%
Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE)	1.0%
Garden waste	4.7%
Food waste	23.0%
Other (residual) waste	35.6%

Based on the items presented by residents for recycling, we can determine how much recyclable material is captured in our recycling. The capture rate, presented below, represents how much of the recyclable material is put in the recycling sacks and boxes by residents and how much remains in the refuse.

Material	Captured in recycling (%)	Remaining in refuse (%)
Paper	82%	18%
Card & cardboard	68%	32%
Plastic bottles	78%	22%
Pots, tubs and trays	39%	61%
Glass	83%	17%
Steel	54%	46%
Aluminium	38%	62%
Garden waste	88%	12%
Food waste	49%	51%

Textiles are also collected as part of the regular household recycling collection, but residents are also encouraged to use a local Re-Use organisation or the Colchester Freegle group for items which can be reused.

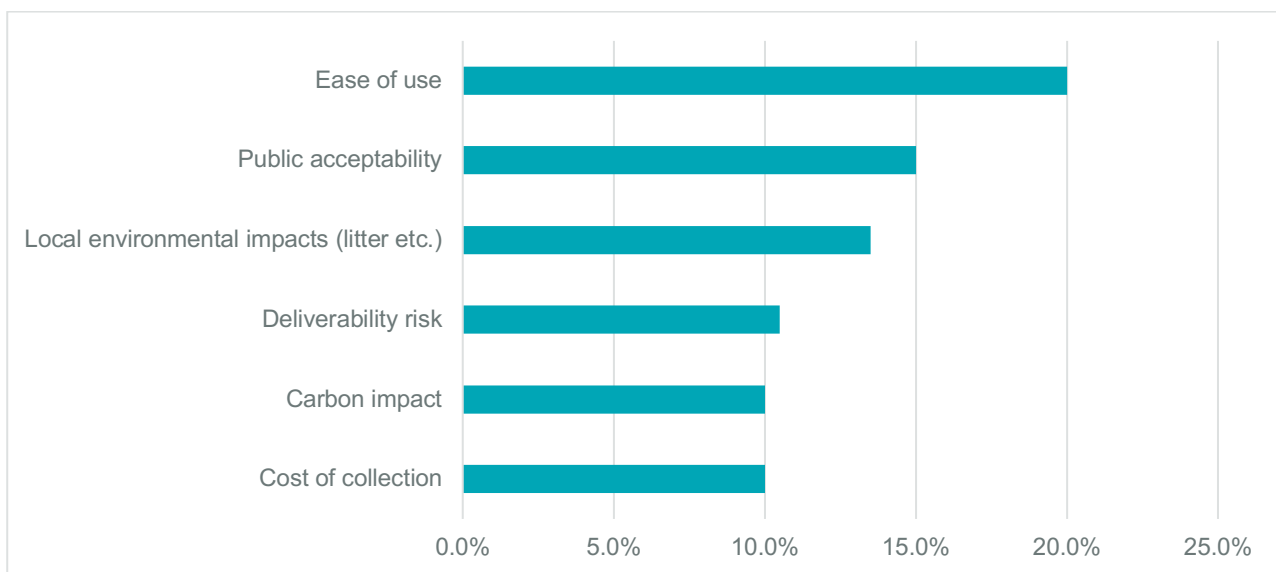
3. WHERE DO WE WANT TO BE?

3.1 VISION AND OBJECTIVES

Vision setting is a key step in the development of this Recycling & Waste Strategy as it sets the level of ambition and priorities of the Council to drive change while ensuring that these can be realistically achieved. Through a series of workshops key stakeholders, including Council Members, identified high-priority focus areas for this Strategy, including reliability, cost reduction, deliverability, decarbonization, and resilience to future changes.

Stakeholders were asked to vote on the key priorities for the future of the recycling and waste collection service, with the top priorities shown below. They were particularly keen on providing residents with a simple and easy-to-use service that is efficient and affordable, while driving waste minimisation and reducing environmental impact. Also important was engagement in a circular economy, alignment with upcoming legislative changes and establishing contracts with charities to support waste reduction.

Figure 1: Top priorities from the Vision Workshops, October 2023



Based on these workshops, the views have been combined to create the following proposed vision statement:

Colchester is working together with the community to reduce, reuse and recycle, and lower our carbon footprint through efficient, cost-effective waste services.



The vision is anchored by five fundamental principles:

- **Deliver value for money:** We strive to provide high-quality waste management services that are economically efficient, ensuring that every penny spent brings value to our community.
- **Provide a safe, compliant, and resilient service:** Our commitment is to offer a service that adheres to all safety and regulatory standards, demonstrating resilience in the face of challenges and ensuring the well-being of our community.
- **Have a community-led approach:** We believe in harnessing the strengths, resources, and potential within our community. By involving local assets in our strategy, we aim to foster a sense of ownership and collective responsibility towards our vision.
- **Minimise the Impact on the Environment:** We aim to minimise any negative environmental impact by promoting sustainable practices in waste management.
- **Be Innovative and forward thinking:** We aspire to be pioneers, constantly seeking innovative solutions and approaches that can transform the way recycling and waste is managed in Colchester.

A public consultation was launched in summer 2024 to garner views on the vision and principles. The purpose was to provide residents, businesses, and communities to have their say on the vision and principles proposed in the draft strategy, ensuring that they are the areas that our community wants us to focus on.

Overall, there was strong support (83%) for the proposed vision. Value for money, and providing a safe, compliant, and resilient service were key concerns, with around $\frac{2}{3}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ supporting the approaches. Minimising environmental impact, community-led initiatives, and being innovative and forward-thinking are widely regarded as important, but fewer respondents fully agree with the specific approaches to achieving these goals (feedback themes included concerns about possible increased costs to residents, the desire to recycle more materials at the kerbside, better education and communication, and concerns about how vulnerable groups can be enabled and supported).

The principles reflect Colchester's ambitions for the future waste service. These key areas will drive the change required to deliver the aims of this Strategy.

4. WHAT WILL WE ACHIEVE?

This Recycling and Waste Strategy sets out the framework for a long-term approach to managing resources and waste across Colchester. A clear set of aims and activities have been developed that deliver the vision and principles set out above, and that contribute to the national targets, the ambitions of the Waste Strategy for Essex and the Council's Strategic plan. This establishes a clear set of measures which can be monitored and reported on.

4.1 DELIVER VALUE FOR MONEY

We strive to provide a high-quality recycling and waste management system for our residents. It is of utmost importance that every penny of public money spent is through services that are delivered economically, efficiently and effectively, bringing value to our community.

Our aim:

- Explore opportunities for reducing the cost of waste service operations through the simplification of the operations to reduce core costs.
- Reduce the cost of our waste service operations by £1m by 2026/27, and to continue operating within the financial budget, without any additional financial burden on residents.

We will:

- Simplify the service for residents and the waste collection teams. This means that glass continues to be collected in a green box, food waste in a caddy, garden waste in brown wheeled bins, all other recycling material placed in a separate wheeled bin and non-recyclable in a black wheeled bin, where practicable.
- Ensure we maximise value from our collected materials to reduce costs and environmental impacts.

- Ensure future contractual arrangements are competitive and affordable across their lifespan.

4.2 PROVIDE A SAFE, COMPLIANT, AND RESILIENT SERVICE

We are committed to offering a service that adheres to all safety and regulatory standards, ensuring the wellbeing of our collection teams and the community we serve. We recognise that our service will need to adapt to remain compliant with future Government legislation and we are committed to aligning with these changes. We want to ensure our service is resilient and futureproofed.

Our aim:

- Reduce the risk of staff injuries through the simplification of service operations.
- Ensure that all Colchester residents have access to separate food waste collections by 2026.
- Ensure that all residents have access to comprehensive recycling services for plastic, paper and card, metal, glass, and garden waste, by 2026.

We will:

- Ensure uniformity of service across our communities where practicable. This will include the roll-out of a food waste and recycling collection service to properties that currently don't have it, and the issuing of wheeled bins to those residents who do not currently have them for residual waste, where practicable.
- Explore opportunities to collect items such as small electrical items, batteries, cartons and flexible plastics as part of the regular kerbside recycling collection service
- Prepare the framework for the collection and reprocessing of recyclable plastic film, to be implemented by 31 March 2027.
- Simplify the current fleet to ensure collection efficiency improve operational continuity of service, and contingency planning.

4.3 HAVE A COMMUNITY-LED APPROACH

We believe in harnessing the strengths, resources, and potential within our community. Through knowledge sharing, participation and collaboration, we can drive change and find solutions to managing our waste more effectively. By involving local people and organisations (i.e. dedicated volunteers, community and resident groups, parish and town councils, and online resources) in our strategy, we aim to foster a sense of ownership and collective responsibility towards our vision.

Our aim:

- Prioritise Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) principles in all that we do to deliver our recommendations.
- Reduce the barriers to recycling and reusing more
- Ensure diverse perspectives are captured when considering changes or initiatives

We will:

- Adopt further resource in education and outreach to help signpost to waste prevention activities.
- Support residents in reducing their waste through education programmes and outreach work in schools and in communities.
- Promote reuse for items in good cosmetic condition through charitable organisations and such schemes as the Lighthouse Furniture Project.
- Attend the Resident's Panel, the Parish and Town Clerk and other forums, meet local organisations representing specific groups and resident associations to undertake surveys, focus groups or workshops to garner feedback and provide updates on changes or initiatives
- Regularly review communication (online and otherwise) to ensure it is clear, educational and accessible

- Maximise social value benefits through waste and resource management, by encouraging upskilling and the creation of new job opportunities within the sector.

4.4 MINIMISE THE IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT

The reduction of carbon emissions is crucial to mitigating the impact of global warming. Preventing waste as much as possible in the first place, provides the greatest environmental benefit when it comes to reducing the emissions associated with waste. We must aim to reuse or repair the items we buy where possible and recycle those materials that are beyond use. Disposal must always be the last resort for waste.

Our aim:

- Contribute to reducing the county's greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050.
- Support residents to ensure that they do not produce more than 110kg of residual waste per year by 2042.
- Aim to reduce residual waste by 10% by 2030.

We will:

- Work with and educate residents and communities to reduce the waste they produce, taking enforcement action when or where needed.
- Provide an easy-to-use and clearly defined service which encourages residents to recycle as much as possible, with only items which cannot be re-used, recycled, or composted remaining in residual waste. Support the creation of more recycling points in communities.
- Demonstrate to residents and businesses the economic value and environmental impact in preventing/minimising waste, repairing items and buying reused through signposting to local resources.
- Implement the Council's Fleet Transition Strategy which sets out a pathway for transition to a zero-tailpipe emission fleet by 2030.
- Explore options to decarbonise our depot. This will include assessing the ways to reduce emissions on site and reducing energy demand.

4.5 BE INNOVATIVE AND FORWARD THINKING

In order to drive change, we need to adapt the way we think about what we consume and the waste we create. Waste prevention, reuse, repair and recycling all form part of the circular economy, with reducing the amount of waste produced providing the greatest environmental and cost benefits. We aspire to be pioneers, constantly seeking innovative solutions and approaches that can transform the way recycling and waste is managed in Colchester.

Our aim:

- As per national targets, we will reuse, recycle, or compost 65% of waste by 2035.
- To go above and beyond national targets through reuse, recycle or compost at least 70% of waste by 2030

We will:

- Provide a service which is continually evolving and responsive to external factors while meeting the needs of our community.
- Keep residents informed of our recycling performance
- Publish information about how waste and recycling is treated and processed.
- Explore and promote opportunities to enable residents to repair items through charitable organisations
- Design a service that puts waste prevention first, reducing the pressure on our natural resources, followed by reuse, repair and then recycling.

- Expand household collection services to allow residents to recycle a wider range of packaging and containers where relevant markets exist.
- Identify opportunities to extract more recyclable material from bulky waste, street cleansing waste and fly tipped materials.

5. HOW DO WE GET THERE?

5.1 WASTE COLLECTION AND MANAGEMENT

We need to review the ways in which waste is currently managed in Colchester and identify the changes that need to be made to help us achieve our future goals. An analysis of different approaches has been undertaken to help inform future decision making. This includes comparing different ways of delivering our recycling service, building on our current initiatives to prevent waste and looking at the experiences of others to understand where improvements can be made.

We have undertaken modelling of potential improvements to the waste collection system. Each outcome was evaluated in terms of cost, environmental impact and benefit for our residents, with the highest performing option chosen as the preferred direction for the Council.

The proposed new collection service replaces the collection of separate materials streams in sacks and boxes, with one wheeled bin for plastics, metals, paper and card, and a recycling box for glass. Refuse waste collections will be made from one wheeled bin and will remain fortnightly. The new service will include the roll out of food waste collections to flats.

<p>Residual waste</p>  <p>Fortnightly collection</p> <p>Wheeled bin</p>	<p>Dry recycling</p>  <p>Fortnightly collection – two-stream</p> <p>Wheeled bin: Metals, plastics, paper & card Green recycling box: glass Blue bags: Textiles</p>
<p>Food waste</p>  <p>Weekly collection</p> <p>Caddies</p>	<p>Garden waste</p>  <p>Fortnightly chargeable collection</p> <p>Wheeled bins</p>

This proposed change will provide many benefits for our residents, community and the Council:

- **A simplified service:** Residents will no longer be required to separately sort items into sacks and boxes. Glass will be collected in a box while other recyclable items will be collected in a wheeled bin, making the process much easier for our residents.
- **Compliant with legislative change:** The new collection service is compliant with future proposals by the Government for Simpler Recycling, including the roll-out of food waste collections to flats and by retaining a fortnightly refuse collection.

- **Regulatory compliance:** Our collection teams work extremely hard to deliver an efficient and reliable waste collection service. Workforce wellbeing is therefore of utmost importance to ensure we continue to deliver a high performing and effective service while limiting factors that lead to workplace ill-health or sickness. Our new collection service is designed to reduce the risk of injury in our waste operations by streamlining collections and limit musculoskeletal disorders by replacing the use of sacks and boxes for dry recycling with wheeled bins.
- **Financial savings:** The new service provides a saving of around 20% against the current service, reducing strain on Council budgets. The separate glass collection service also allows us to retain our income stream as the glass is sold on for reprocessing.
- **Performance:** The new system is expected to boost recycling rates by 7%. By simplifying our service, we hope that more of our residents will engage in recycling. Meanwhile, promotion of the new food waste service in flats will help us to tackle lower performance typically seen in these types of households.
- **Environmental benefits:** By reducing our waste and diverting more materials which could be recycled or composted from the refuse bin, we are lessening our impact on the environment. The new service could mean that the vehicle fleet is reduced by around 20%, meaning less vehicles on the road. Combined, these benefits are predicted to have the effect of reducing our carbon emissions by 7%.

5.2 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

We want to engage our residents, community groups, and local businesses in activities that reduce waste and maximise recycling. There are many initiatives currently running in the local area that aim to educate and support our communities in delivering these goals. Our success in reducing our environmental impact is through sharing our knowledge and collaborating our efforts.

Some examples of current initiatives to prevent waste delivered by CCC and other councils in the Essex Waste Partnership through the Love Essex brand include:

- [Home composting schemes](#) – Composting at home is a quick, easy and cost-effective method of clearing away garden waste and making a free supply of compost to use in your garden for the spring. To promote waste reduction, Essex County Council subsidises the cost of home composting bins for residents and provides information and education.
- [Real nappies schemes](#) – Cloth nappies provide a great alternative to disposable nappies and can offer great cost, health and environmental benefits. Essex County Council are providing cash refunds on new or pre-loved cloth nappies to promote the use of reusable nappies as opposed to disposable alternatives. <https://www.loveessex.org/news-and-ideas/cloth-nappies/>
- Library of Things – A place where you can borrow useful household items for DIY, such as tools, cleaning equipment, gardening implements, events equipment, entertainment and more for a small hire fee per day. Through [Essex County Council Libraries](#), residents can currently borrow, for free, a range of sports and games equipment.
- [Christmas Tree-Cycle](#) – Sponsored by the Tree & Lawn Company, residents can register their real Christmas tree to be collected in January and recycled in exchange for a donation to St Helena Hospice.
- [Donate electrical items for repair and reuse](#) - Residents can donate larger electrical appliances such as dishwasher, freezers, fridges, ovens and washing machine for repair, reuse and redistribution to individuals and families in need through the Lighthouse Furniture Project. Drop-off points are located in Essex County Council recycling centres, including Colchester Recycling Centre.
- [Freegle](#) - An online platform which allows you to give and get items for free in your local community, saving pre-loved items from going to landfill.
- [Love Essex Fund](#) - supports local organisations, individuals and schools with projects that create or inspire a reduction in household waste. This funding is provided by Essex County Council through micro-grants of up to £500.
- [Eco-Schools programme](#) - provides a framework for learning about sustainable development issues and embedding sustainable practices into everyday school life. Some of the initiatives include Let's Talk Trash Festival, Climate Action Platform and Planet Earth Games, with information available on the ECC Education webpage.

5.3 REDUCING OUR EMISSIONS

Taking action to tackle our climate emergency is a priority for CCC. Since declaring a climate emergency in 2019, the Council has taken action to understand its baseline emissions and understand what assets contribute to these. The Council's Climate Emergency Action Plan demonstrates the actions taken by the Council to reduce its environmental impact, with progress reviewed on a yearly basis.

The Climate Emergency Action Plan identifies the Council's fleet as accounting for approximately 25% of its total emissions. As the grid continues to decarbonise and purchased electricity becomes 'greener', emissions from the Council's fleet will become an increasingly larger portion of the overall footprint. An action from the Plan is to take a phased approach to renewal of the fleet as new technologies and associated infrastructure become available.

Earlier this year, the Council set out its Fleet Transition Strategy which sets out a pathway for transition to a zero-tailpipe emission fleet by 2030. During this programme, diesel and petrol vehicles will be replaced, where practicable, with electric vehicles (EV), but other options may be considered such as hydrogen and low emission alternative fuels including hybrid vehicles. Less tailpipe emissions from the Council's fleet will lead to better air quality, which will have health benefits not only for staff but for people working and living where these vehicles will operate.

5.4 INNOVATION AND TRANSFORMATION

We recognise that Colchester currently perform well when compared to its peers. However, we recognise that there is still more to do to ensure we are maximising every opportunity to reuse, repair and recycle valuable materials instead of throwing them away. We want to be leaders for sustainable change and will continue to look for innovative solutions in managing how we use resources and treat our waste.

Some examples of our work to date include:

- The materials we recycle get made into a wide variety of products for future use. Some examples are listed below:
 - Yoghurt cups or similar are remanufactured into food trays.
 - Milk bottles, laundry detergent bottles and similar items are remanufactured into similar products.
 - Drinks bottles are remanufactured into clothing.
 - Black plastics are remanufactured into items such as garden hoses, guttering, and garden furniture.
 - Newspaper turns into tissue paper.
 - Mixed cardboard and paper become packing materials like cereal boxes.
 - Aluminium cans are recycled into new cans.
 - Glass bottles are used to make bottles, mainly in the UK, but also across Europe.
- The new collection service will make use of sorting technologies at a Materials Recycling Facility (MRF). A MRF is a processing plant for recyclable material which use a combination of mechanical and technical equipment to separate recyclable materials into their individual streams. Mechanical separation equipment usually extracts items like paper and card, while special optical sorters and magnets separate the remaining plastics, aluminium and cans. Although residents will now be able to place metals, plastics, paper and card in one bin for the MRF to sort, it is still important that only the correct items are put in the bin. This is to make sure there is no contamination that will prevent the machinery from working correctly or reduce the quality of material we collect. It is therefore important that recycling placed in bins is clean and free from food, and that glass is kept separately from other items and placed in a recycling box.
- The more waste residents recycle, the more food items will be donated to support those most in need - The Council's current contract is with Plan B Management Solutions for the reselling of recyclables collected by the kerbside recycling service. Plan B Management Solutions are committed to donating 100 items to Colchester's foodbank each year for every percentage of recycling rate achieved – so 54% recycling rate equates to 5,400 donated items.
- The Council currently has a network of community outlets that provide places for residents to pick up boxes and bags to help them recycle at home. These community outlets include food banks, parish

councils and some local businesses. Whilst this enables easy access for residents to pick up additional recycling boxes and bags, many locations have seen an uptick in footfall, meaning greater engagement with their businesses or organisations, and for our food banks, they have reported more donations.

- At locations in Deham and Mersea, the Council have undertaken a proactive programme of creating a more effective collection method for litter bin waste through technology, by introducing smart compactor bins. The bins have a solar powered compacting feature to help fit five times more rubbish into them compared to the average bin. The bins are also programmed to close when they are full to prevent overflow and will notify collection teams when the bins are nearing full capacity so they can be emptied. They can also talk and engage with residents. At the location in Mersea alone, 31 litter bins have been removed and replaced with 6 compactor bins, eradicating significant manual handling challenges faced by the collection teams and a much improved public realm.
- [Litter Warriors](#) – The Council currently has a record of circa 700 active volunteers collecting litter across the City. The Council is currently expanding its provision of litter-picking hubs containing all the equipment needed to do a litter pick, enabling residents to pick up litter on-the-go, and 'Branching Out', a new initiative where the Council loans out brown bins to volunteer team leaders to clear overhanging vegetation, detritus and litter. The team are keen to work on behaviour change in the community to reduce the root cause of littering, beginning the process by starting to work with local schools on education and engagement programmes.

5.5 RISKS AND LIMITATIONS

This Recycling and Waste Strategy builds upon the good work already undertaken by our residents and communities to reduce waste and reuse and recycle as much as possible. However, as has been set out in this document there are many factors that are driving change. Some of the challenges and factors are external to our influence and therefore we need to be able to respond and adapt in order to ensure we continue to meet our statutory obligations and ensure our residents are supported.

The Council and the communities it serves are facing unprecedented financial challenges. As a Council, we must manage budgetary pressures, and ensure we respond robustly to decreasing budgets, and increasing costs to ensure that it can deliver services that meet the needs of our residents. The core costs of delivering a recycling and waste service is that of our fleet, people and materials.

As time moves on, the marketable value of our recyclable material may change, and could reduce. This can be out of our control and be influenced by national and international events. We therefore need to ensure our service will be resilient to these changes and ensure we collect the highest quality recyclable materials. We will need the support of residents and businesses in using the correct containers to present their recyclable material, while ensuring items are clean and free from food.

The Government have put in place ambitious targets for material management in the future, and we all need to do our part in helping us to reach these goals. This means maximising every opportunity to lessen our rate of consumption, choose good quality and reusable goods and make full use of recycling facilities and collection services.

Together, we can achieve the ambitions of this Recycling and Waste Strategy.

6. THE PLAN

The following table outlines the timeline of key policy actions, targets and implementation dates across the lifespan of the Recycling and Waste Strategy.

Date	Action	Type
2024	Colchester Draft Recycling and Waste Strategy released	CCC action

2025	Non-household municipal premises (except micro-firms) to recycle all waste streams except garden waste and plastic films	National implementation date
2026	All households to have access to recycle services for all waste streams excluding plastic films	National implementation date
	Reduce cost of waste service operations by £1M	CCC aim
2027	Plastic films and flexibles collections from households and non-household municipal premises	National implementation date
	DRS introduced in England	National implementation date
2028	Residual waste reduction targets from Environment Improvement Plan	Defra-led target
	Near elimination of biodegradable waste to landfill	Defra-led target
2029		
2030	Reduce residual waste by 10%	CCC aim
	Re-use, recycle or compost at least 70% waste	CCC aim
	Zero food waste to landfill	Defra-led target
	Food waste (kg per capita) 50% 2007 levels	Defra-led target
2031		
2032		
2033		
2034		
2035	Re-use, recycle or compost at least 65% waste	Defra-led target and CCC aim
	Municipal waste to landfill 10% or less (from 2028)	Defra-led target
2036		
2037		
2038		
2039		
2040		
Beyond 2040	Residual waste (kg per capita) 50% 2019 levels by 2042	Defra-led target and CCC aim
	Zero avoidable plastic waste by 2042	Defra-led target
	Eliminate avoidable waste by 2050	Defra-led target
	Reduce greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050	ECC target

7. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

7.1 REGULAR STRATEGY REVIEW

The Waste Strategy will provide a framework for the strategic management of resources and waste in Colchester forming a 15-year period from 2025 to 2040. The Strategy will require regular reviewing and updating to ensure that continues to reflect changes in the waste and recycling services and remains appropriate to evolving national and policy.

CCC commit to reviewing the Strategy every 3 years, or where a substantial change in legislation or circumstance merits further review, but regularly assessing performance against this strategy through Key Performance Indicator reporting.

8. NEXT STEPS

For an update, please go to the website: www.colchester.gov.uk/recycling-and-rubbish

GLOSSARY

Term	Acronym	Description
Anaerobic digestion	AD	The process by which organic matter is broken down, in the absence of oxygen. The biogas created by the process can be used as a fuel to generate renewable energy i.e. electricity and heat, and as a bio-fertiliser for farmland. Anaerobic digestion is recognised by the Government as one of the best methods for food waste recycling.
Carbon emissions		Carbon dioxide (CO ₂) is the principal greenhouse gas related to climate change. It is common for the measurement of different greenhouse gas emissions to be standardised into 'carbon equivalent' emissions, allowing for easier comparisons of the many types of activity that produce these emissions.
Circular economy	CE	A system where resources are maximised and kept in the system as long as possible through processes such as reuse, repair, recovery and recycling.
Climate emergency		A declaration of climate emergency made by governments and local authorities, urging action to reduce or halt climate change and avoid irreversible environmental damage resulting from it.
Decarbonisation		Decarbonisation is the term used for removal or reduction of carbon dioxide (CO ₂) output into the atmosphere. Decarbonisation is achieved by switching to low carbon energy sources derived from fossil fuels.
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	Defra	The government department responsible for the environment, food and rural affairs. Defra's remit within the environment includes waste management.
Deposit return scheme	DRS	A recycling scheme in which consumers pay a small deposit upon purchase of drinks containers, which is refunded upon receipt of the empty container at designated return points.
Electric vehicle	EV	Electric vehicles are only one of several ultra-low emission vehicle (ULEV) technologies within the transport marketplace but are one of the most advanced and readily available. Replacing existing petrol or diesel vehicles with EVs brings the environmental benefits of lowering carbon emissions and reducing local air pollution.
Energy from Waste	EfW	Energy from waste facilities generate renewable energy in the form of electricity or heat through incineration of residual waste.
Extended producer responsibility	EPR	A policy in which producers are responsible for the products they create throughout its lifecycle. The scheme aims to create a more circular economy and increase recycling by making individual businesses responsible for the full net cost of managing packaging waste, with higher modulated fees applied to items which are harder to recycle.
Greenhouse Gas	GHG	Greenhouse gases (such as carbon dioxide and methane) absorb solar radiation and trap heat in the atmosphere, creating a 'greenhouse effect' which results in global warming. It is common for the measurement of different greenhouse gas emissions to be standardised into 'carbon equivalent' emissions, allowing for easier comparisons of the many types of activity that produce these emissions.
Household Waste and Recycling Centre	HWRC	A facility where the public can dispose of household waste and recycling, including garden waste, electrical, textiles and bulky waste.
Landfill		Land in which waste is deposited, often disused quarries.

Local Authority Collected Waste	LACW	All waste collected by the local authority, including household waste and household-like waste from businesses and non-municipal fractions such as construction and demolition waste.
Municipal waste	MSW	Household waste and waste similar in nature produced by businesses and composition to household waste which is managed by a waste collection or waste disposal authority. Sometimes also referred to as Municipal Solid Waste.
Recycling		The reprocessing of waste materials into the same products or different ones.
Residual waste		Waste that is not reused, recycled, composted or anaerobically digested, presented by residents in Colchester in black sacks or bins.
Reuse		Using products designed to be used many times, like refillable containers or a Bag for Life. This contributes to sustainable development and can save raw materials, energy and transport costs.
Waste Collection Authority	WCA	A local authority responsible for collecting waste from households and certain commercial premises where required (e.g. Colchester City Council).
Waste Disposal Authority	WDA	A local authority responsible for the treatment and disposal of waste collected by Waste Collection Authorities (e.g. Essex County Council).

2025 – 2040

Recycling and Waste Strategy for Colchester

Keep up to date on the Recycling and Waste Strategy for Colchester and the council's other recycling and rubbish services here:

www.colchester.gov.uk/recycling-and-rubbish

