

SEP 2027

A partnership approach to waste prevention and recycling



Contents

Executive summary	3
Background, policy, context and vision	5
Background	
Existing policy	
New and emerging policy	
Context	
Our vision	
Key priorities and targets	17
Drivers for change	
Key priorities	
Delivery of our priorities	15
Targets	
Strategic objectives and actions	
Monitoring, review and revision	
Appendix 1: Current performance and waste composition	24
Appendix 2: Programme of activity	38
Appendix 3: Legislation obligations	54

Executive Summary

The Surrey Environment Partnership (SEP) comprises 12 authorities in Surrey: the 11 Districts and Boroughs, and Surrey County Council (SCC). The Partnership continuously strives to improve Surrey's resource and waste services, collecting and disposing of material in an effective and efficient manner, with a focus on transitioning to a circular economy.

The Partnership are responsible for developing a Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (JMWMS), the most recent of which covers up to 2024-25. Due to the uncertainty within the waste industry, the JMWMS was not updated; instead, SEP 2025 was created to bridge the gap. SEP 2027 has been designed to navigate a period of significant change and complexity both within the waste sector and local government more widely, with the aim of improving Surrey's whole waste system and providing the basis on which the new unitary authorities can continue to build effective, efficient and high performing services to meet our environmental targets. The priorities and targets of SEP 2027 are:

Priority	Target to be achieved by end of 2027
Increase the proportion of material recycled	A 10% increase in food recycling tonnage collected.
Increase the quality of material sent for dry recycling	A reduction in dry recycling contamination to below 10% of total dry recycling tonnage across Surrey
Support higher participation in food waste recycling	Direct communications to 150,000 households in Surrey
Improve and target waste minimisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > A reduction of 2.5% in overall residual waste in areas trialling collection of new materials for recycling > Sending 0% residual waste to landfill
Promote and maximise reuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > An increase of 5% in Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) tonnage collected. > An increase of 5% in textile tonnage collected.
Explore new opportunities to divert material streams from residual waste	Conduct a trial to capture and divert 50% of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Tetra Pak / liquid cartons; > Plastic film; and > Flexible plastics currently in Surrey's residual stream.

To address these priorities and meet these ambitious but achievable targets, the SEP programme of work has been developed, focussing on projects and actions tailored to deliver our priorities. These actions will focus heavily on resident engagement, boosting participation in recycling schemes and preparing to collect a greater variety of material for recycling, minimising contamination and reducing overall residual 'black bag' waste arising through promotion of reuse and waste minimisation strategies. There will be significant emphasis on schools and community groups to amplify our key messages, with a renewed programme of training and engagement for Surrey's collection crews, building their skillsets to improve frontline recycling performance.



The SEP programme of work will focus heavily on resident engagement, boosting participation in recycling schemes and preparing to collect a greater variety of materials for recycling, minimising contamination and reducing overall residual 'black bag' waste.

Background

The responsibility for waste management in Surrey is currently split across two tiers, with the county holding different responsibilities to its 11 district and boroughs. As a group of authorities providing recycling and waste management services, we deliver our duties

and responsibilities in accordance with relevant key legislation. These are set out in Appendix 3, which has been the legislative framework that we have operated under during the last 30 years, and the most fundamental principle of this is 'the waste

hierarchy' (in the Waste Framework Directive 2008), which ranks waste management options according to what is best for the environment, prioritising preventing waste in the first instance.

The 11 district and boroughs in Surrey are the Waste Collection Authorities (WCAs), responsible for providing regular kerbside collections, emptying multiple containers presented for waste and recycling by nearly 500,000 households, and transporting this material to various handling and processing facilities. Surrey's ability to directly impact and improve its recycling and waste services starts with these key frontline operations, providing the initial interaction with material generated by residents and the first opportunity to implement measures to improve performance. These functions are delivered either directly by the authority themselves or by private sector operators.

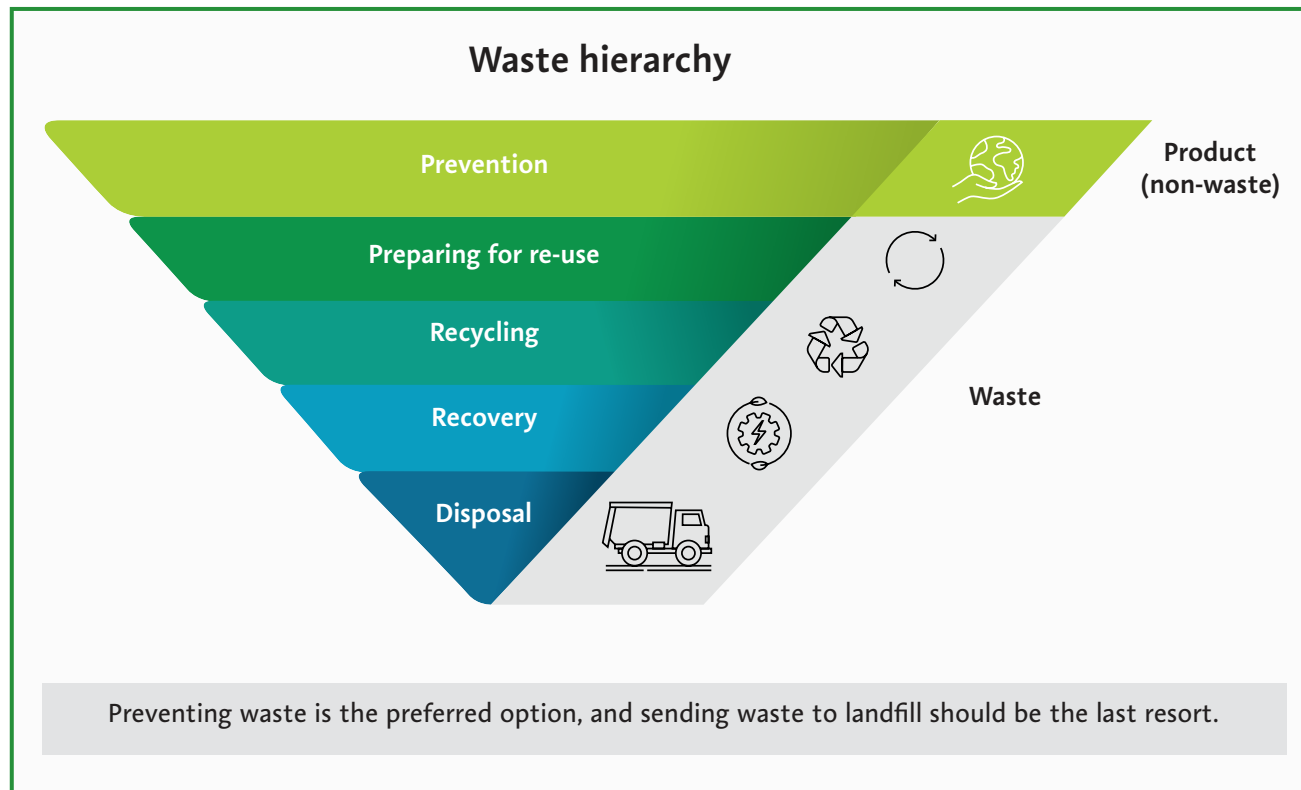


Figure 1: The Waste Hierarchy

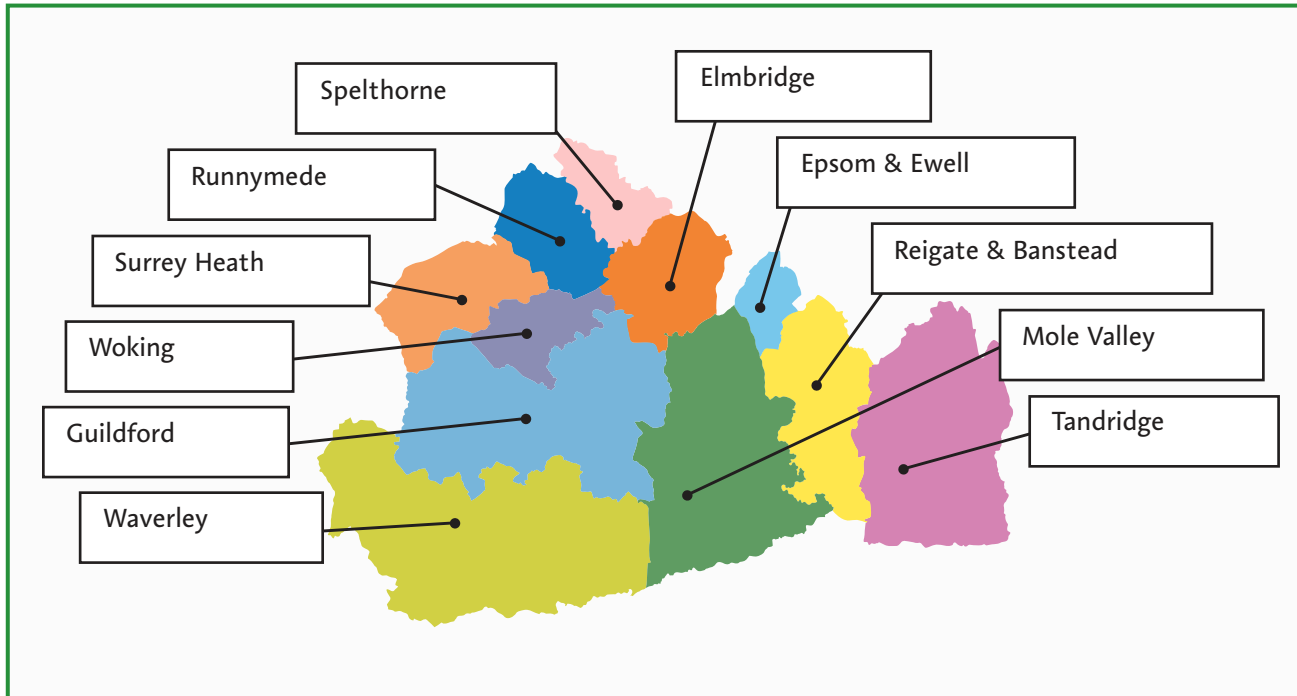


Figure 2: Surrey Districts & Boroughs

Surrey County Council (SCC) is the Waste Disposal Authority (WDA), responsible for the disposal and treatment of household waste generated in Surrey. This function is primarily delivered through an integrated waste services contract with a third party. This includes the operation of an anaerobic digester treating food waste and a gasifier treating residual 'black bag' waste, along with operating waste transfer stations, where recycling and waste is bulked for onward treatment and disposal, and community

recycling centres where residents can deposit material. There is also the management of multiple contracts to bulk, transport, treat and process waste and recycling.

These 12 authorities make up the Surrey Environment Partnership (SEP), which was created in 2009 to overcome the challenges of this two-tier service delivery and aims to manage Surrey's recycling and waste in the most efficient, effective, economical, and sustainable way possible.

The 12 authorities collectively invest significantly in these waste and recycling services. By reducing waste at its source and increasing recycling rates across Surrey, service costs can be lowered while delivering significant environmental benefits. This approach reduces the need for raw materials in products and packaging, cutting energy use and carbon emissions, and helping to protect natural resources for the future.

The SEP team, in consultation with Partners, produce the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (JMWMS) as a legal requirement for two-tier authorities under the Waste and Emissions Trading Act 2003. The previous SEP 2025 will cease at the end of the year, and the Partnership has decided to extend this to 2027.

The decision for the two-year extension was due to the confirmation, in October 2025, that Surrey Authorities would be combined to create two new unitary authorities: East Surrey and West Surrey. This is as a result of Local Government Reform (LGR) in England, which aims to improve public services, drive economic growth, and enhance local accountability. It is currently unclear as to the implication this will have for waste collection and disposal services across Surrey, except for the fact the 12 authorities will cease to exist.

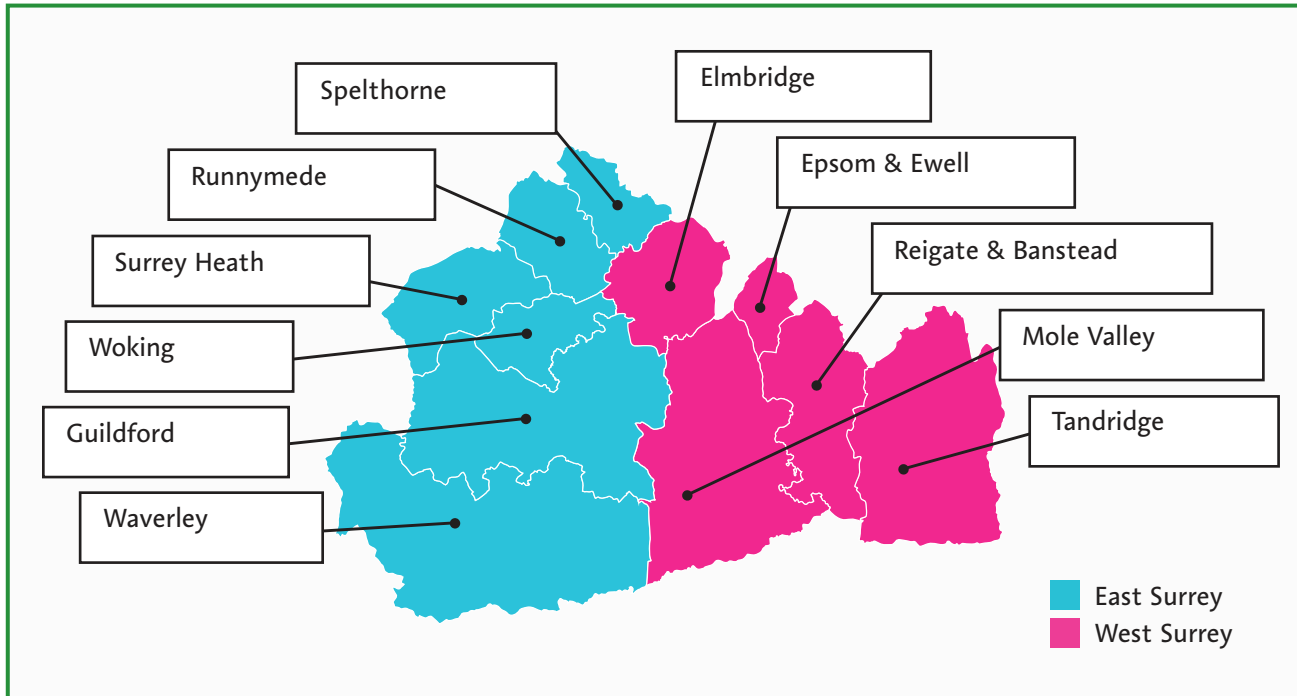


Figure 3: New Surrey Unitary Authorities

SEP 2027 aims to provide a robust basis on which to implement the changes required to meet our obligations in a strategic, measured and uniform way as we transition through the reorganisation of Surrey’s authorities over the next two years. This approach will align with and prepare for all relevant policy changes (Table 1) to provide a clear strategic direction

for the next two years and provide a robust basis on which the future administration of Surrey’s waste services can be built, focussing on core priorities to reduce waste, reuse items sent for disposal and improve the quality and quantity of material recycled. Its delivery is supported by the annual SEP work programme (Appendix 2).



Key Drivers and External Influences for SEP 2027

Surrey is at an important turning point. New policies are changing how waste and recycling are managed, and local government is going through a major restructure. Consequently, it is crucial that we create a robust basis on which to deliver interventions and mitigation for preventing waste arising in the first instance, maximising the recycling and reuse of the material entering the waste stream and supporting a circular economy.

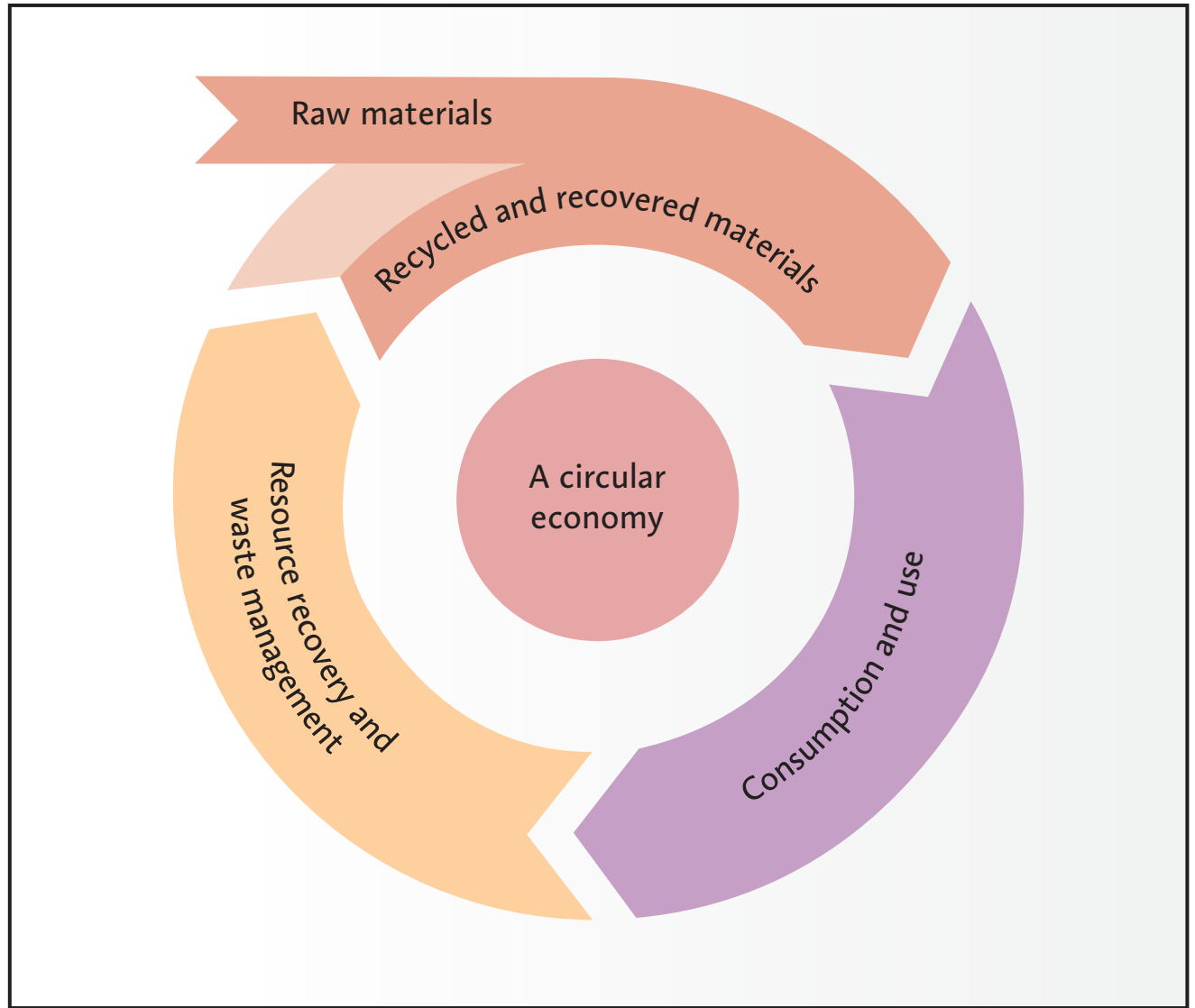


Figure 3: A Circular Economy

The key drivers and external factors for SEP 2027 are presented in Table 1:

Table 1: External Environment Influencing Recycling and Waste Services in Surrey

Driver / factor	Detail	Implications
Political	<p><i>Local Government Reform:</i> The consolidation of the 12 current authorities into two unitary authorities poses significant challenges in aligning both collection and disposal operations against the backdrop of the changes in national policy, combined with potentially different political makeup either across Surrey or between the two new authorities.</p> <p>Assessing how Surrey’s recycling and waste services need to change to facilitate continued improvement and decarbonisation along with meeting the requirements of the new government structures is key to mitigating the multiple challenges posed by this process.</p>	<p><i>Future Structure:</i> The governance structure of Surrey will shift from a two-tier arrangement between WDA and WCA, to two authorities each responsible for both collection and disposal of waste. This means that multiple discrete operations need to be harmonised and aligned. This will be challenging as there are different delivery models across Surrey, with operations that are run by private operators on different contract lengths.</p> <p>The situation is complicated further by an imbalance of infrastructure, with most of the capacity and key infrastructure located in West Surrey. A significant amount of work will be required to ensure that Surrey’s waste services are not disadvantaged through these disparities and potential competing political priorities.</p>
Environmental	<p><i>Decarbonisation and Net Zero</i> Since 2019, all Surrey authorities have committed to addressing climate change, and all have set a target for reaching net zero emissions as individual organisations, aligning with the UK Government’s target of net zero emissions by 2050. The expansion of the UK Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) to the waste sector means that decarbonising Surrey’s waste stream is paramount from both financial and environmental perspectives.</p>	<p><i>Fossil material diversion</i> Surrey sends 99.8% of its residual ‘black bag’ waste to Energy from Waste (EfW) facilities, where it is treated thermally and the energy from that process is recovered to be put back into the energy grid. The expansion of ETS to waste means that any fossil based (predominantly plastic) material treated at EfW will incur a charge due to the carbon released as part of the process.</p> <p>Understanding the materials in our waste is fundamental to diverting not only plastics, but all recyclable material from the residual ‘black bag’ stream to mitigate the impact of ETS, along with providing robust data which can be fed into the new unitary authorities’ wider net zero strategies from 2027 onwards.</p>

Driver / factor	Detail	Implications
<p>Social</p>	<p><i>Increasing population and number of households</i> Between 2018 and 2030, the population of Surrey is expected to rise by 70,000 people to an estimated 1,264,000, with approximately 38,000 new houses being constructed in the same period. ¹ This will result in more material being generated as waste, exerting greater pressure on Surrey’s recycling and waste services.</p> <p><i>Stalling performance</i> Since reaching a peak of 57.7% in 2016/17, Surrey’s recycling rates faced certain challenges posed by losing markets for certain materials and tighter regulations on quality at Material Recovery Facilities (MRFs). This resulted in a reduction in rates from 2017/18, and although there have been fluctuations, the rate has stayed relatively constant.</p> <p><i>Changing consumption habits</i> There have been significant shifts in consumption habits, with ever-increasing convenience driving a rise in online shopping, coupled with marked rise in home working post-COVID. This means that greater amounts of waste and recycling material is being generated in homes, impacting Surrey’s waste services and increasing resource pressures.</p>	<p><i>Higher amount of waste in Surrey</i> An additional 38,000 homes by 2030 could generate an extra 17,000 tonnes ² of residual ‘black bag’ waste alone. This will put significant pressure on Surrey’s infrastructure and collection services, with additional cost and resources required to handle and treat this material.</p> <p><i>Marginal gains in recycling improvement</i> The comprehensive level of services provided in Surrey means it is more challenging to make large improvements to recycling rates, particularly as although food waste collection from households will be mandatory from April 2026, Surrey has provided this service since 2013. Other authorities introducing food waste collections should see a significant improvement in their recycling rates, whereas Surrey needs to focus on more marginal gains, improving the quality and quantity of material recycled in an already high performing service.</p>

1 www.surreycc.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/finance-and-performance/vision-strategy-and-performance/our-organisation-strategy/community-vision-for-surrey-in-2030

2 See Table 2

Driver / factor	Detail	Implications
Technological	<p><i>Infrastructure</i></p> <p>Surrey’s waste infrastructure network faces challenges from a lack of capacity and contingency, with reliance on third parties to handle and process its waste. A waste infrastructure strategy was developed by Surrey County Council and is currently in progress to deliver business cases for the construction of key infrastructure to build both resilience and capacity into the network, increasing the amount of Surrey’s material being processed within the county, along with maximising flexibility to adapt to the changing legislative requirements to collect additional materials and the associated shifts in material composition.</p>	<p><i>Futureproofing</i></p> <p>Whilst most of SCC’s waste disposal and treatment services are delivered under an integrated contract, this expires in 2029. In parallel with the construction of key waste infrastructure, a procurement strategy for recycling and waste services is in development, examining how to deliver operational services such as the bulking and haulage of waste material and the operation of Community Recycling Centres (CRC), along with ensuring appropriate contracts are in place to treat and process the waste material generated in Surrey, focussing on diverting materials for recycling and reuse.</p> <p>The core focus of these strategies is to maximise true value for the future Surrey authorities over the coming years, building in the flexibility and capacity needed to adapt to shifts in waste material flows and composition.</p>
Legal (Policy)	<p><i>The Waste Hierarchy</i></p> <p>The ‘waste hierarchy’ (set out in the Waste Framework Directive 2008 and see Figure 1) is the fundamental principle Surrey’s waste services operates under. Where waste is created, it gives priority to preparing it for: reuse, then recycling, then recovery, where all our residual (‘black bag’) waste goes in Surrey, and last of all disposal, e.g., landfill.</p>	<p><i>Surrey’s legislative obligations</i></p> <p>Surrey authorities have a legal obligation to provide waste services, with Surrey’s constituent Districts and Boroughs collecting waste and recycling material for disposal, and Surrey County Council making provision for waste disposal in line with the waste hierarchy. Although LGR means that there will be just two unitary authorities in Surrey rather than 12 from 2027, these obligations will remain.</p>

Driver / factor	Detail	Implications
<p>Technological</p>	<p><i>Resources and Waste Strategy</i></p> <p>Launched in December 2018, the Resources and Waste Strategy (RaWs) is the Government’s plan to preserve material resources by minimising waste, promoting resource efficiency and moving towards a circular economy. This will see products kept in use for as long as possible, in line with the circular economy (see Figure 3).</p> <p>The Government introduced the Environment Act 2021 to make the following legally binding national targets in November 2021 that makes provision for most of these targets and gives them the legislative power to introduce the measures above. The act has also amended existing legislation to enable consistency in collections.</p> <p>The measures in RaWS have legally binding targets and alongside other key plans have set out strategic ambitions to be achieved nationally over the next 25 years such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Increase the municipal recycling rate to 55% by 2025 and 65% by 2035. › Near elimination of biodegradable municipal waste to landfill from 2028. › Work towards eliminating food waste to landfill by 2030. › 76% recycling rate for packaging by 2030. › No more than 10% of municipal waste to landfill by 2035. › 50% reduction in per capita residual ‘black bag’ waste by 2042 from 2019 levels. 	<p><i>Changing composition and flows</i></p> <p>Surrey is in a strong position to adapt to changing legislation, collecting and processing a wide range of materials for recycling already. Coupled with our residual ‘black bag’ stream being sent for energy recovery, this means we are acting in accordance with the waste hierarchy, virtually eliminating material to landfill over the last three years.</p> <p>However, the Collection and Packaging Reforms in particular will place further obligations on Surrey and require additional resources to accommodate. There will be a greater range of materials requiring collection in the dry mixed recycling (DMR) such as plastic film and flexible plastic (e.g. squeeze toothpaste tubes). These materials previously have not been widely accepted for recycling, so there is a challenge both operationally for Surrey to collect and treat this material, with additional capacity and technology required.</p> <p>DRS and pEPR will further change the composition of DMR, with DRS removing higher value plastics from the recycling stream as consumers return drinks containers to redeem the deposits, reducing the income stream Surrey currently receives for this material. pEPR will improve the recyclability of many products’ packaging increasing pressure on capacity and processing capabilities across the UK.</p>

Driver / factor	Detail	Implications
Technological	<p>To deliver on the aims of RaWS, the key policies either in law or being implemented are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Simpler Recycling: Written into law through The Separation of Waste (England) Regulations 2024, local authorities in England have been mandated to collect a consistent range of dry materials from households across England to improve material segregation and create a consistent approach making recycling easier. › Deposit Return Scheme (DRS): From October 2027, a DRS will require consumers to pay a deposit and then return their drinks container to redeem their deposit. The financial incentive should increase the recycling of drinks containers directly back to the manufacturers, largely removing this material from the waste streams currently collected and processed by Surrey. › Extended Producer Responsibility for Packaging (pEPR): Written into law through The Producer Responsibility Obligations (Packaging and Packaging Waste) Regulations 2024, producers of packaging are required to reimburse local authorities for the cost of managing the packaging that they place on the market. The easier the packaging is to recycle, the lower the cost to the producer. › Circular Economy Strategy: At the time of writing, the Government is developing a new strategy focussing on reducing waste and reusing materials across key sectors in the UK. Due for publication by the end of 2025, this strategy will have a significant impact on Surrey’s resources and waste services and will be incorporated into the delivery of SEP’s priorities. <p>There have been several other policies introduced, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › A tax on plastic packaging manufactured in or imported into the UK that contains less than 30% recycled plastics came into effect on 1 April 2022. › Reducing the use of unnecessary single-use plastic (SUP) products including bans on items such as plastic straws, cotton buds, and drink stirrers, which were banned from 1 October 2020 and supply stopped from 3 July 2021. In April 2023, plastic plates and cups, balloon sticks, polystyrene cups, expanded polystyrene food boxes, trays and pots were also banned. 	<p>Whilst detail is currently unknown, the forthcoming Circular Economy Strategy is likely to focus on product design and manufacture to improve the environmental impact of consumer goods and industry waste, furthering the circular economy agenda.</p> <p>The overarching impact on Surrey is that these policies under RaWS will fundamentally change the way we manage our waste material, requiring investment in both capacity and technology as we move to a circular economy.</p>

Driver / factor	Detail	Implications
<p>Technological</p>	<p><i>Budget pressures</i></p> <p>Local government, including Surrey’s authorities, is facing unprecedented challenges because of reduced financial support from the Government combined with an increasing population and greater demand for our services. Surrey is facing financial challenges with significant debt seen across individual authorities, meaning the new unitary authorities risk inheriting the combined debt of constituent authorities at the cost of reducing their ability to effectively deliver services.</p> <p>There have been two major policy announcements that have and will continue to impact local authority waste budgets in England:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extended Producer Responsibility for Packaging (pEPR) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Written into law through The Producer Responsibility Obligations (Packaging and Packaging Waste) Regulations 2024, producers of packaging are required to reimburse local authorities for the cost of managing the packaging that they place on the market. The easier the packaging is to recycle, the lower the cost to the producer. › Local authorities will be required to prove that they are delivering waste services ‘effectively’ and ‘efficiently’ to ensure they retain the full payments made under the scheme. 	<p><i>More effective and efficient</i></p> <p>Surrey authorities are increasingly having to deliver more with less, with enhanced obligations and requirements to recycle more materials under increasingly tighter budgets, however the flow of money through local authority budgets is changing.</p> <p>The pEPR has resulted in ~£1.2 billion of fees from the packaging industry collected and redistributed to local authorities to contribute to the costs of processing this material. These fees will increase according to the recyclability of the packaging, with the intention of stimulating the market to produce easier to recycle packaging. Local authorities will be expected to prove their services are effective and efficient to continue receiving the full amount allocated to them.</p> <p>The ETS scheme expanded to waste being treated through incineration and energy recovery means that a cost will be incurred for each tonne of fossil-fuel based (plastic) carbon emitted. Because Surrey treats almost all its residual waste this way, there is a risk of significant financial liabilities when this scheme is fully introduced in 2028. Diverting as much plastic to recycling will reduce this liability.</p>

Driver / factor	Detail	Implications
Technological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › The UK ETS is a carbon trading system that currently functions to reduce the amount of carbon released by operations such as power generation and aviation by financially incentivising industries to reduce their carbon emissions. › In 2023, the UK Government announced that ETS is to be expanded to cover all incineration of waste, including energy-from-waste (EfW) facilities. This means that any fossil-based carbon released through EfW treatment will incur a cost. › This expansion of the scheme will have a significant impact on the waste industry and the cost to dispose of Surrey’s residual ‘black bag’ waste. The expanded scheme will come into full effect from 2028, with implementation beginning in 2026. › Diverting all recyclable material, especially plastics, from the residual waste stream is a priority to mitigate costs and decarbonise Surrey’s waste services. 	<p>It is of paramount importance that Surrey’s recycling and waste services are optimised to be as efficient and effective as possible to mitigate the financial pressures the county faces over the coming years, maximising funds received through producer responsibility schemes and minimising carbon costs.</p>

Our vision

With the multiple pressures Surrey faces in mind, we have developed the following vision statement for SEP 2027:

Our vision is to eliminate avoidable waste by facilitating effective recycling, treatment and recovery of material, whilst supporting a circular economy and decarbonisation through increasing reuse and encouraging waste minimisation. Surrey's councils will continue to work in partnership to ensure our residents receive the highest quality of collection and disposal services possible and encourage our residents to reduce their household waste and their impact on the natural environment.



Key Priorities and Targets

The challenges set out in Table 1 mean that the current situation is unsustainable. We need to reduce costs and maximise funding opportunities where possible, whilst increasing performance and still providing a high-quality service to Surrey residents. We believe our key priorities should be to:

Table 2: Priorities and Targets

Priority	Summary	Target to be achieved by end of 2027
Increase the proportion of material recycled	The 2021 composition analysis estimated that there are around 95,000 tonnes of recyclable material remaining in Surrey's residual 'black bag' waste stream. Increasing the amount of recyclable material captured in Surrey's waste stream will facilitate reaching the required recycling rate of 65% by 2030 as well as reducing Surrey's costs and carbon impact.	A 10% increase in food recycling tonnage collected.
Increase the quality of material sent for dry recycling	In 2024 / 25, approximately 6,000 tonnes of recycling contamination was sent for disposal as residual 'black bag' waste due to poor quality following processing, with 250 tonnes of recycling rejected outright prior to processing. Improving the quality of material sent for dry recycling will reduce Surrey's costs and carbon emissions through the double-handling of material. If non-recyclable material is sent for recycling, it costs to be processed as recycling and then incurs further costs to be disposed of once it is sorted. A higher quality of material means Surrey receives greater income from the material reprocessors.	A reduction in dry recycling contamination to below 10% of total dry recycling tonnage across Surrey.
Support higher participation in food waste recycling	It is significantly cheaper and less carbon impactful to recycle food waste than it is to dispose of it as residual 'black bag' waste. Our capture rate for food waste recycling in Surrey in 2024-25 was 43%, and as the 2021 composition analysis highlighted, there is still an estimated 49,000 tonnes of food waste in residual bins that could be recycled. As well as trying to reduce food waste from arising at all, increasing participation in food waste recycling will continue to be a priority to reduce both costs and carbon impact.	Direct communications to 150,000 households in Surrey.

Priority	Summary	Target to be achieved by end of 2027
Improve and target waste minimisation	<p>In an ever-consumer driven society, SEP aims to provide a voice encouraging sustainable practices and an alternative narrative to overconsumption. A Waste Minimisation and Refuse Diversion Plan (WMRDP) has been developed, setting out our approach to reducing residual 'black bag' waste and increasing recycling, helping prepare for and mitigate the impacts of the policies listed in Table 1. The WMRDP provides a framework for achieving better value for money, improved environmental performance, supporting the reduction of carbon, and associated net-zero goals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › A reduction of 2.5% in overall residual waste in areas trialling collection of new materials for recycling. › Sending 0% residual waste to landfill
Promote and maximise reuse	<p>Reuse initiatives have been gaining momentum at Surrey's Community Recycling Centres (CRC) to maximise reuse capacity. This has seen many benefits over recent years, both reusing items and increasing social value within Surrey's communities. SEP's ambition is to continue this trend, building on recent successes to increase items diverted from waste streams into reuse outlets, including the onsite shops, and through arrangements with external organisations for the reuse of medical equipment, bikes, musical instruments and furniture. SEP will examine new opportunities to reuse more types of items, expanding the opportunity for customers for the end products and increasing the capacity of our reuse shops.</p> <p>This is brought together as part of SEP's plan to create reuse and repair spaces, knowledge and social norming that encourages circular economy values, to add value to local communities whilst improving environmental performance and contributing to Surrey's recycling rates.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › An increase of 5% in Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) tonnage collected. › An increase of 5% in textile tonnage collected.

Priority	Summary	Target to be achieved by end of 2027
<p>Explore new opportunities to divert material streams from residual waste</p>	<p>Where existing recycling streams exist, diversion of these materials from residual waste to recycling will increase recycling rates and reduce the costs associated with disposal as refuse. Materials are to be targeted, rather than using a broad approach, as the disposal routes and challenges to overcome differ. It is key to SEP's strategic aims of decarbonising and reducing costs to expand, wherever possible, the recycling services available for Surrey's material. This includes ensuring all residents have access to services at the kerbside (in line with Simpler Recycling legislation). In addition to kerbside collections, expanding the provision for recycling material streams at CRCs is to be reviewed regularly to ensure that emerging markets and outlets for hard to recycle materials are utilised when they become available.</p>	<p>Conduct a trial to capture for recycling 50% of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Tetra Pak / liquid cartons; > Plastic film; and flexible plastics > Currently in Surrey's material stream.



Delivery of our Priorities

To deliver on the priorities listed in Table 2, the SEP programme has been developed with a focus on the following six key objectives and actions:

Table 3: Objectives and Actions

Key Objectives	Actions
<p>Improve the quality and quantity of dry recycling across Surrey by supporting residents to recycle more and reduce contamination.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Design and delivery of a multi-channel DMR contamination campaign tailored to each authority's needs and countywide printed communication to all households that informs residents of the Simpler Recycling changes, instilling positive recycling behaviours. › A new residual 'black bag' stream analysis will provide up-to-date evidence to identify opportunities to improve recycling material capture and reduce disposal costs.
<p>Boost food waste participation by encouraging more households to recycle food waste and reduce the amount sent to residual bins.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Roll out of 'No Food Waste' stickering on residual 'black bag' bins and leaflet interventions will be carried out in targeted areas including follow-up engagement to properties that have had bin stickering from 2020.
<p>Engage schools and communities by expanding participation in SEP projects among schools and community groups across Surrey.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Implement a school grants programme to fund and support projects in Surrey primary schools to encourage children and families to engage in recycling and waste reduction, creating long-term behavioural change. › Maintenance and development of communications with Surrey primary schools to promote participation in recycling and waste activities.

Key Objectives	Actions
<p>Strengthen workforce capability by building the confidence and skills of waste operatives, caretakers, and depot staff to improve recycling performance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Training and engagement with depot staff and crews to reduce contamination, including depot-level training and crew training on contamination identification and procedures, with conference sessions with management to build a collaborative culture across Surrey. › Delivery of joint workshops to empower both caretakers and managing agents providing practical skills, tools, and confidence to improve communal waste management.
<p>Ensure compliance and readiness for reforms by preparing Surrey D&Bs for upcoming collection and packaging reforms, including plastics and flexibles requirements, by March 2027.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Conducting trials to determine the best way to present plastic films and flexibles at kerbside for collection from March 2027 and for the MRFs to process the material, aiming to identify a solution that maximises recycling capture while minimising contamination and operational disruption.
<p>Promote reuse and waste minimisation by increasing opportunities for residents to reduce waste, reuse materials and adopt more sustainable consumption habits.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Development of a Waste Minimisation and Refuse Diversion Plan (WMRDP) setting out SCC’s approach to reducing and diverting material from residual waste, and increasing reuse, providing a framework for achieving better value for money, improved environmental performance, supporting the reduction of carbon, and associated net-zero goals.



Monitoring

Progress against the SEP work programme will be monitored and reported back to a SEP Officers Group at quarterly intervals.

Review

The SEP work programme will be kept under dynamic review to assess the progress and success against the priorities and objectives. Where certain initiatives are not achieving the desired results, these will be reassessed and altered accordingly with the SEP priorities in mind. These will be developed and agreed with a SEP Officers Group.

Revision process

There will be no further revisions or amendments as SEP 2027 is set to run to 2027, at which point the new unitary authorities in Surrey will develop their own waste management strategies.

Engagement with Government

SEP has been actively engaged with Government since the publication of RaWS in 2018, inputting into numerous consultations to feed our information into the processes to help shape the future of waste services both in Surrey and across the UK. SEP has officers present on multiple steering and information groups, along with ensuring a Surrey presence is maintained across multiple Government and industry conferences and forums, covering the broad range of policy changes, from the Collection and Packaging Reforms to carbon liabilities extending to waste through the UK Emissions Trading Scheme. We will continue to engage with all Government and industry bodies throughout the coming years to ensure SEP's voice is heard to facilitate delivery of an effective and efficient recycling and waste service for the Surrey taxpayer.

SEP will call upon the Government to:

- › Continue to work with producers and manufacturers to reduce waste and increase reuse and repair of products to move to a truly circular economy. Local authorities have limited influence over the waste it is obligated to treat and dispose of, with real impacts only possible at the design and manufacturing stage of products, eliminating planned obsolescence and facilitating easy repair. Where products cannot be easily repaired, the cost of treating waste should sit with the producers, incentivising manufacturers to produce products that result in less waste overall.
- › Continue to work with producers, manufacturers and the waste industry to increase the recyclability of products and packaging waste and facilitate investment in the sector. Materials currently in scope of Simpler Recycling are more difficult to recycle and have limited markets for them as a result, particularly plastic film and flexibles. This poses a challenge to local authorities for both meeting recycling targets and delivering services with decreasing budgets. Investment in the sector is crucial to ensuring material generated in the UK is processed and recycled within its borders, aligning with the principles of a circular economy.
- › Provide adequate funding for local authorities to deliver the services that meet requirements and deliver on our environmental targets and ambitions. The Local Government Association estimates that local authorities' core funding per person fell by 26% in real terms during the 2010s and forecasts suggest a £6.2 billion pound funding gap in the years 2024–2026³. Surrey's ability to maintain its high-quality waste services will rely on fair funding arrangements from Government, complemented by well-designed producer responsibility schemes.

Appendix 1 – Current performance and waste composition

Recycling and waste performance in Surrey is currently monitored by measuring the amount of household waste generated within the county and how much of it is either recycled, recovered or sent to landfill. The following charts show Surrey’s overall performance and highlights where SEP will target its improvements:

Figure 5: Surrey’s Household Waste Treatment 2015/16 – 2024/25 (WasteDataFlow)

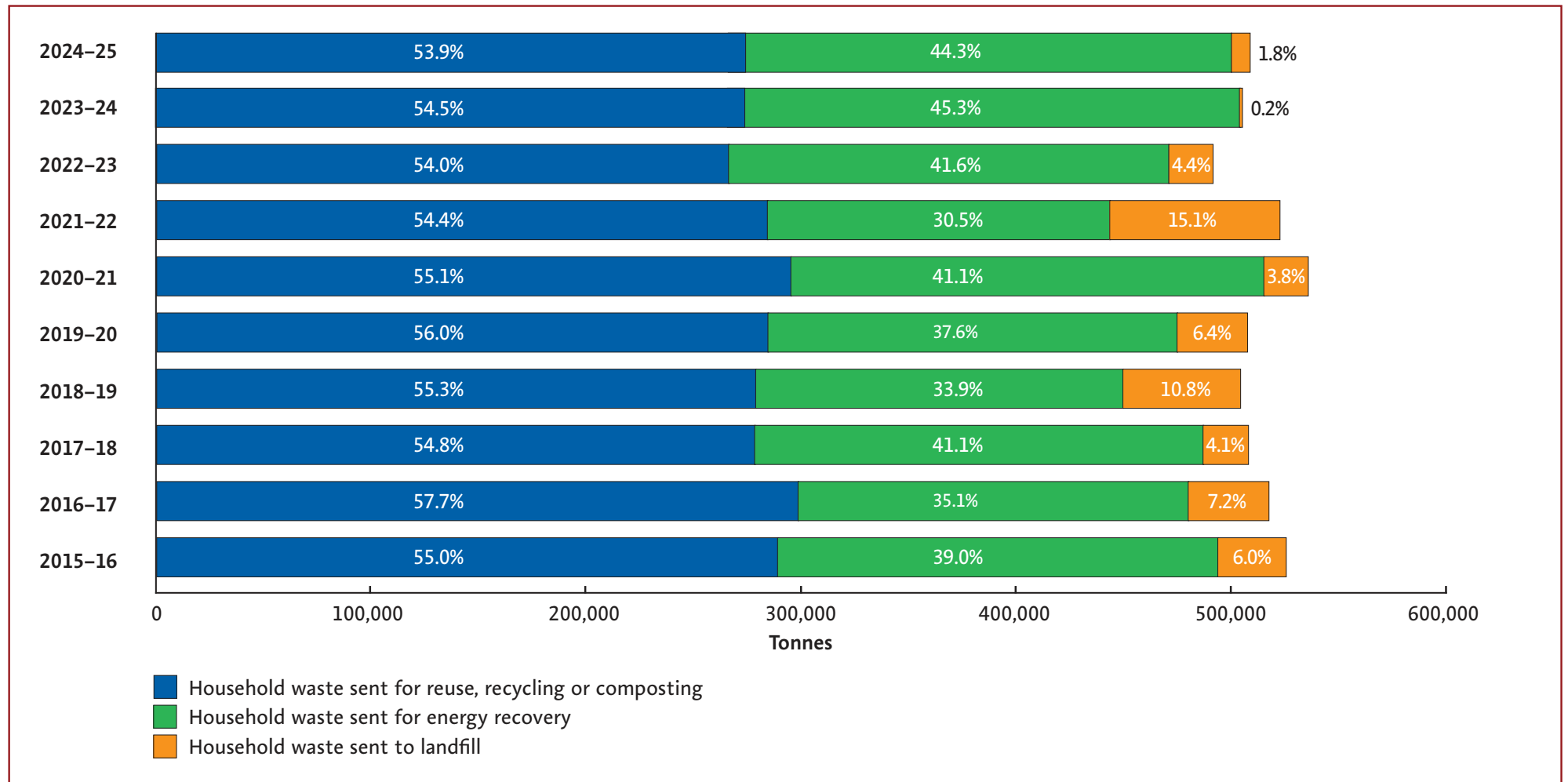


Table 4: Surrey's Total Tonnes based on Household Waste Treatment 2015/16 – 2024/25 (WasteDataFlow)

Year	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Tonnage	529,433	520,108	509,763	507,428	510,830	539,77	522,900	496,457	509,064	507,976

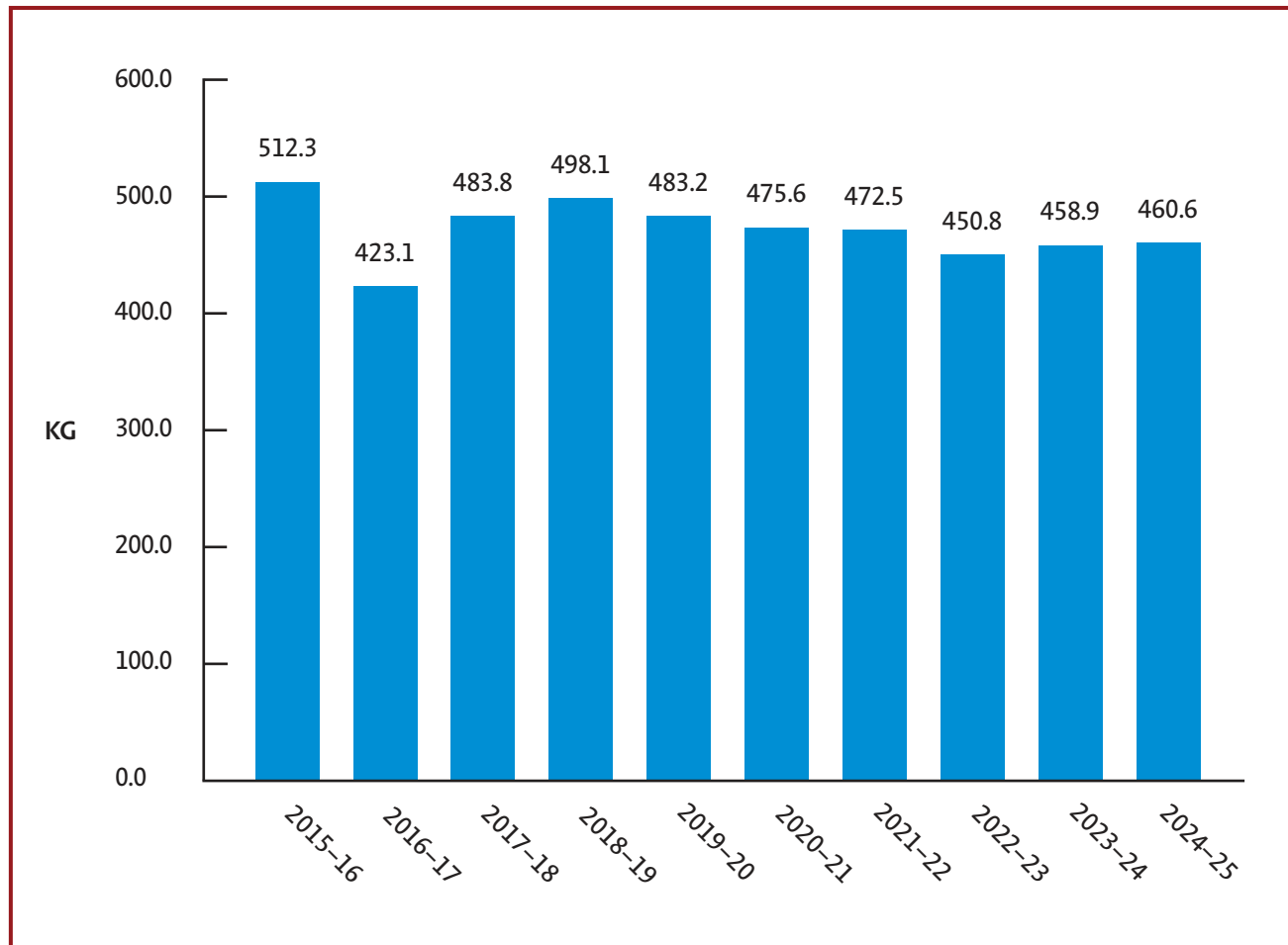


Since a peak recycling rate of 57.7% in 2016/17, Surrey has encountered numerous challenges to maintaining and improving on this rate. From 2016/17 SCC lost markets for recycling carpets and rigid plastics, and the ability to compost autumn leaf litter from street cleansing. In addition, standards applied by the Environment Agency around what could be recycled began to tighten at this time with re-processors focussing more on quality, and not quantity, and demanding material with less contamination, which led to more recycling being rejected by materials recovery facilities (MRFs). These challenges, coupled with the fact that Surrey already provides food waste collection, means that improving our recycling rate requires greater interventions, with the SEP programme focussing on diverting recyclable material from the residual waste stream.

We have continued to reduce the amount of material sent to landfill, with SCC's new residual waste contract that started in 2024 stipulating 0% waste to landfill. Whilst it is not possible to fully eradicate the use of landfill across Surrey's waste services, the effectiveness of the new residual contract is clear in the reduction of landfill use since 2022/23.

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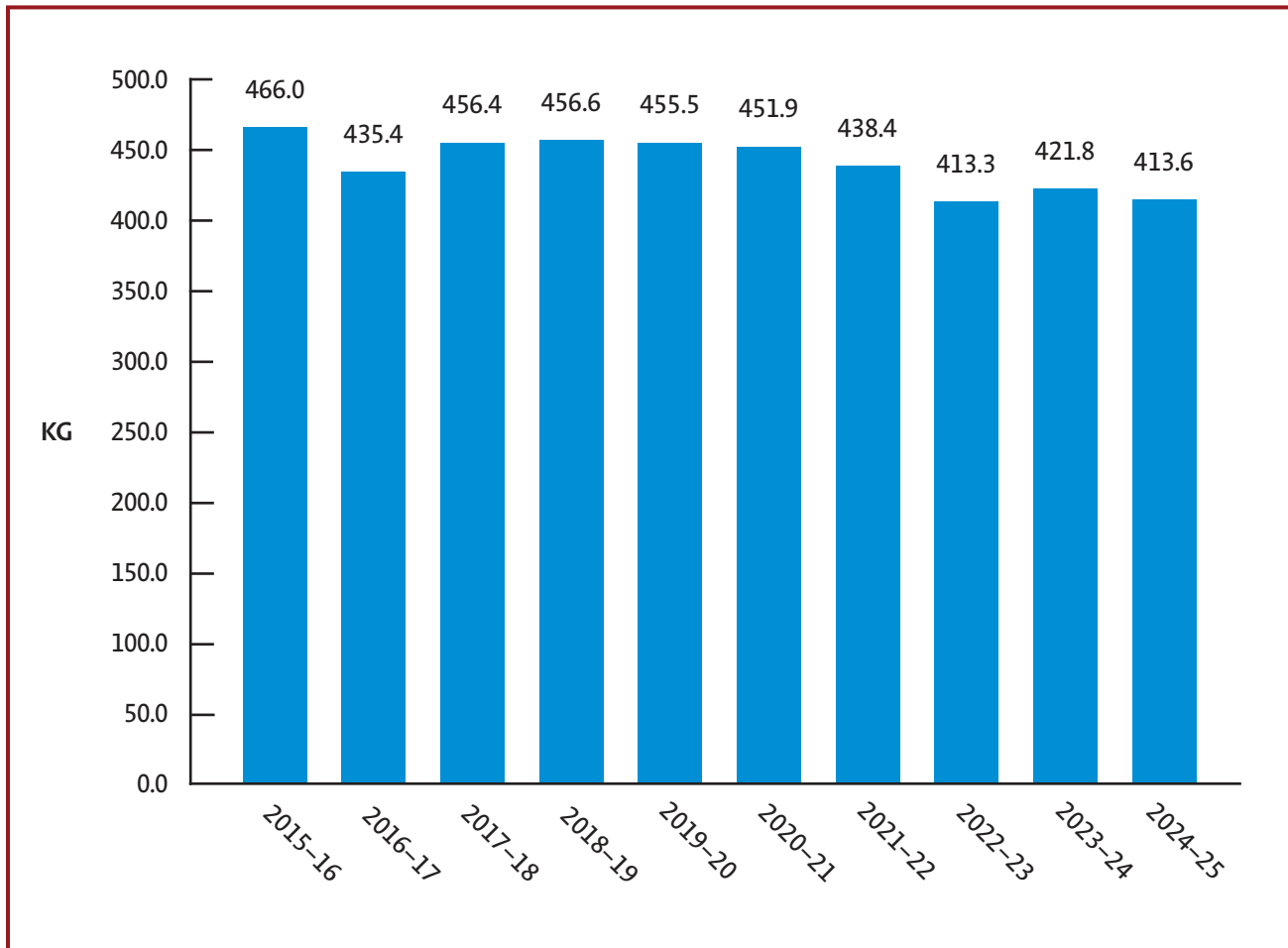
Figure 6: Residual household waste per household (kg) in Surrey from 2015/16 – 2024/25 (SCC Contract Data)



The amount of residual household waste collected per household in Surrey has come down significantly since 2015/16, with households producing approximately 52kg less in 2024/25. Whilst this has risen since 2022/23, the SEP programme is focused on maximising recycling and diversion, with the aim to further reduce the amount of residual waste produced.



Figure 7: Residual household waste per person (kg) in Surrey from 2015/16 – 2024/25 (SCC Contract Data)



The amount of household waste collected per person in Surrey has reduced broadly in correlation with waste produced per household, with approximately 52kg less residual waste produced per person in 2024/25 compared to 2015/16.

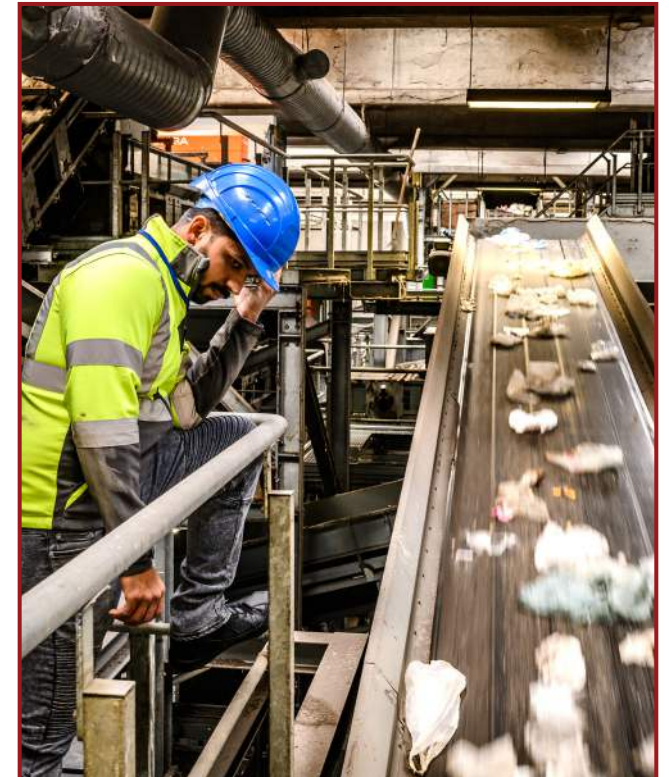


Figure 8: DMR Contamination in Surrey from 2015/16 – 2024/25 (SCC Contract Data)

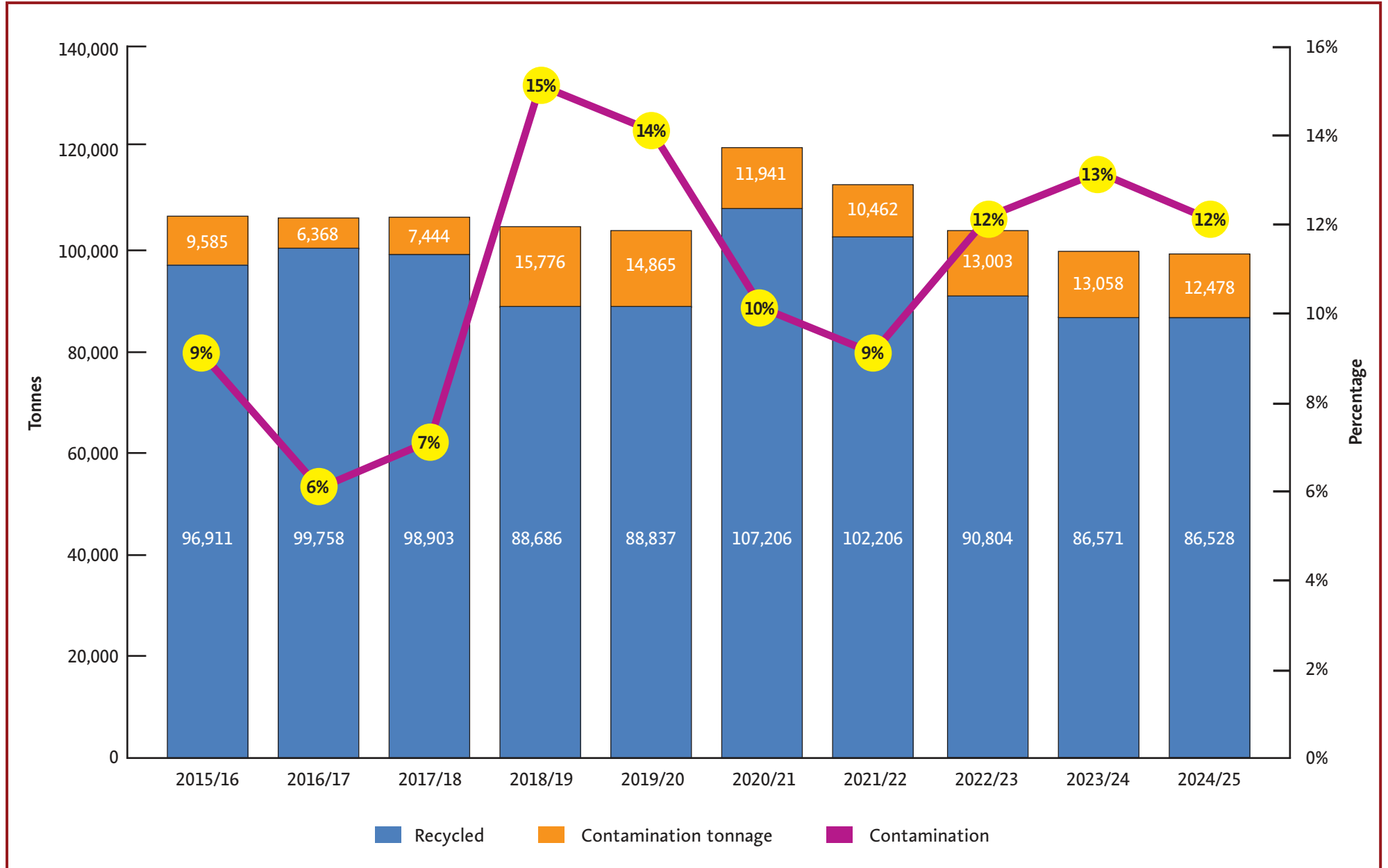


Table 5: DMR Contamination in Surrey (tonnage) from 2015/16 to 2024/25 (SCC Contract Data)

Year	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Recycled tonnage	96,911	99,758	98,903	88,383	88,587	107,951	102,206	91,280	87,054	85,881
Contamination tonnage	9,585	6,368	7,444	15,722	14,823	11,941	10,462	12,526	12,575	11,989

In 2015-16, data began to be collected on contamination of dry mixed recycling (DMR) following the introduction of legislation that required MRFs to sample material being delivered. Figure 8 shows a large spike in 2018-19, which was when the reporting mechanisms for contamination data was standardised. Whilst contamination reduced significantly following this spike, since 2021 / 22 it has increased above our target rate of 10%. Reducing contamination is a core focus of the SEP programme and how this will be achieved can be seen in Appendix 2.



How Surrey compares nationally

Defra publishes performance data on an annual basis for each local authority in England. Table 1 below shows Surrey's position in a league table with all other local authorities in England in relation to performance data on recycling rates, residual waste per household, and collected household waste per person for 2024/25.

Table 6: Position in the Defra league table for 2024/25

Authority	% recycled, reused or composted	Rank in England	Residual household waste per household (kg)	Rank in the league table	Total household waste per person (kg)	Rank in England
Disposal Authorities Only (out of 27) – one authority has no data available						
Surrey County Council	53.9%	3	451.1	8	408.3	11
Collection/unitary authorities only (out of 294) – one authority has no data available						
Elmbridge	53.7%	36	395.3	62	361.8	175
Epsom & Ewell	51.3%	52	395.4	63	324.7	73
Guildford	58.0%	15	351.8	34	345.8	131
Mole Valley	55.5%	30	367.4	42	370.3	197
Reigate & Banstead	54.1%	34	375.2	46	331.4	92
Runnymede	46.6%	86	384.13	53	307.5	40
Spelthorne	44.8%	99	431.4	101	325.9	75
Surrey Heath	59.0%	11	346.1	29	345.6	130
Tandridge	57.6%	18	353.5	35	347.9	134
Waverley	55.8%	29	363.3	40	351.6	144
Woking	55.0%	32	348.8	32	326.1	76

Surrey has the second-best rate of recycling of 53.9% when compared to its peer disposal authorities. Most waste collection authorities in Surrey (8 out of 11) rank in the top 50 for recycling, reuse and composting performance.

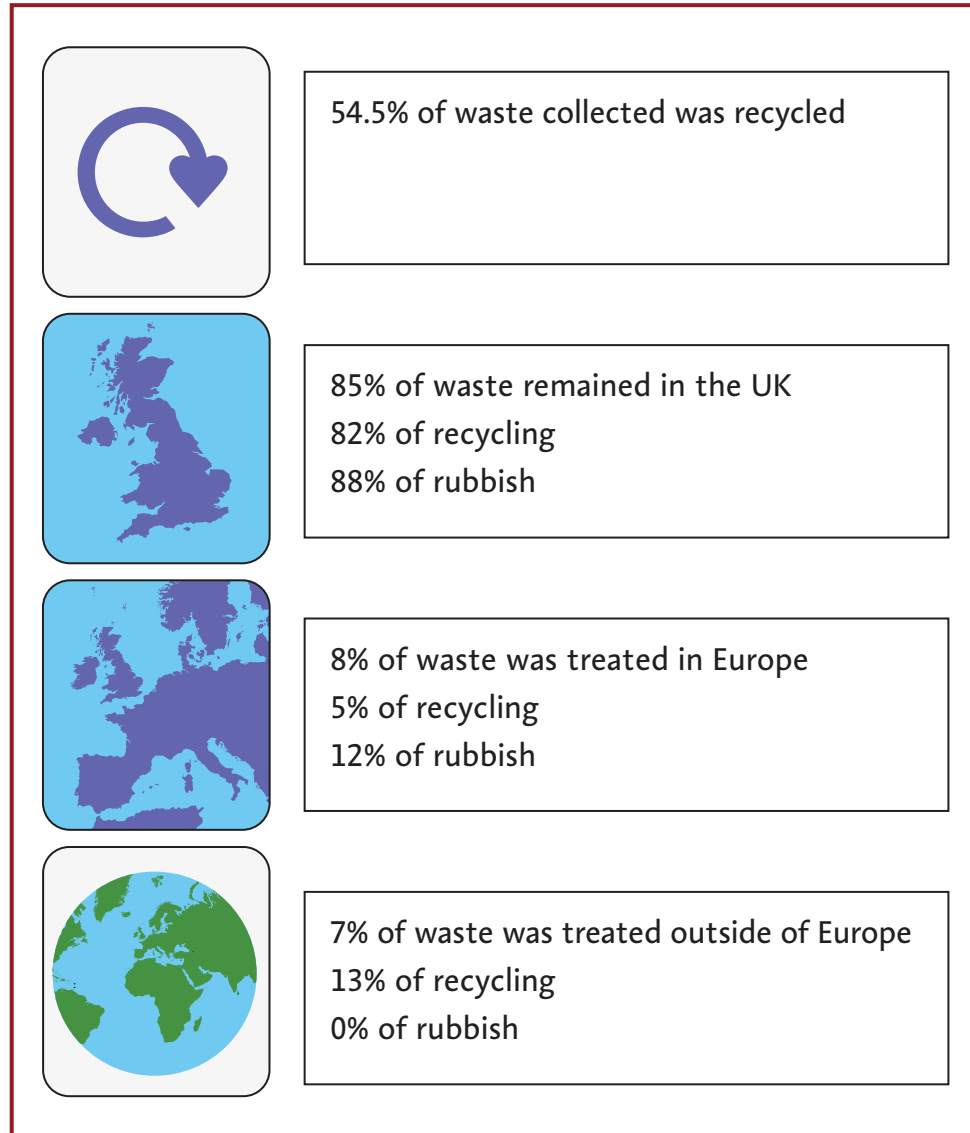
However, performance on residual waste is less encouraging with seven authorities placing in the top 50 for residual household waste per household with the rest between 53rd and 101st. Only one authority of 11 is in the top 50 for collected household waste per person with the rest between 73rd and 197th.

In summary, while recycling performance is mostly encouraging, residual waste volumes are relatively high compared to other authorities in England. The SEP programme has been devised with waste minimisation and diversion as a core priority to reduce waste arising wherever possible, and divert material to recycling and reuse where waste is created.



Where our recycling and waste goes

Figure 9: Where our recycling and waste went in 2024/25

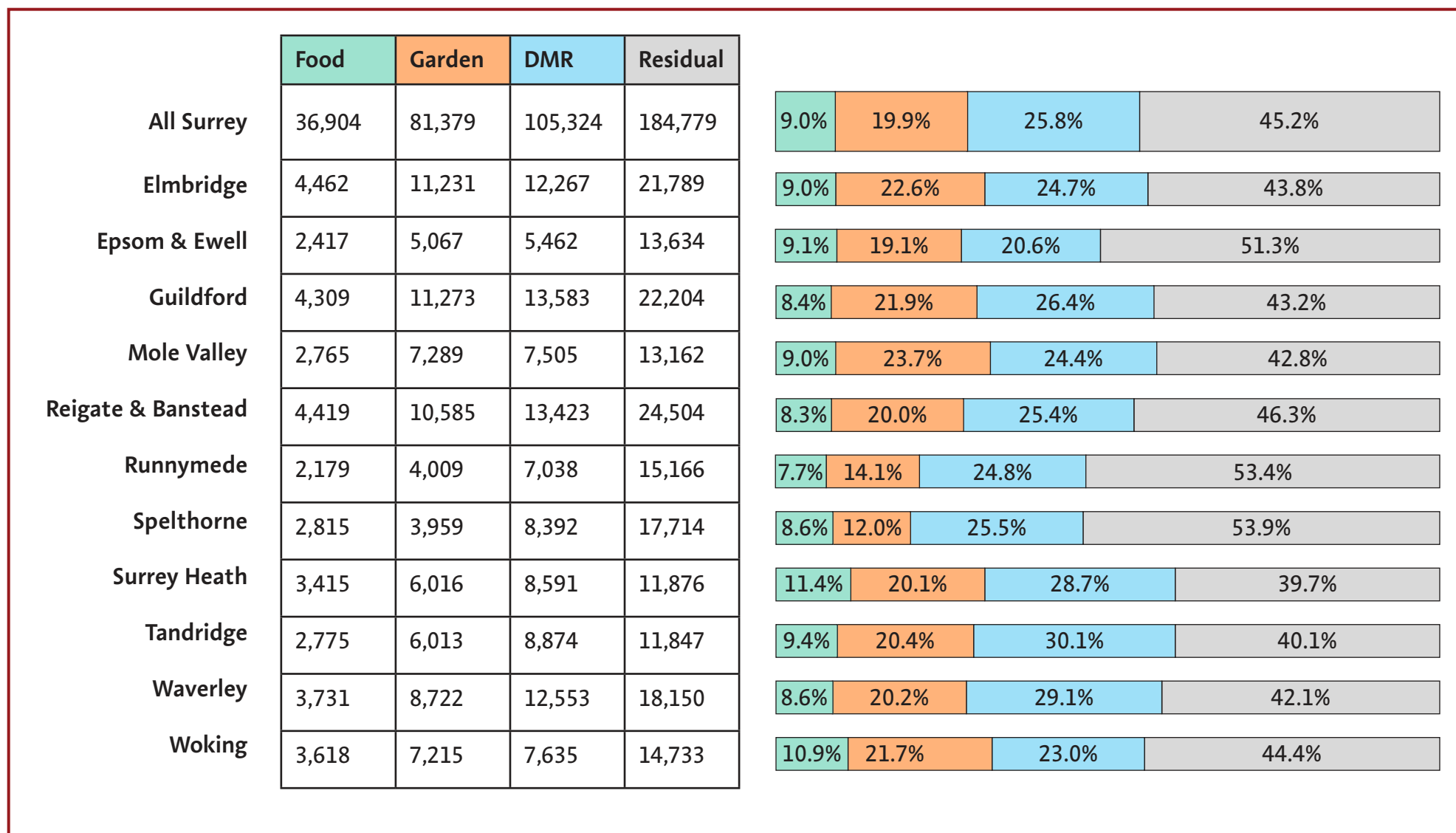


Waste Composition



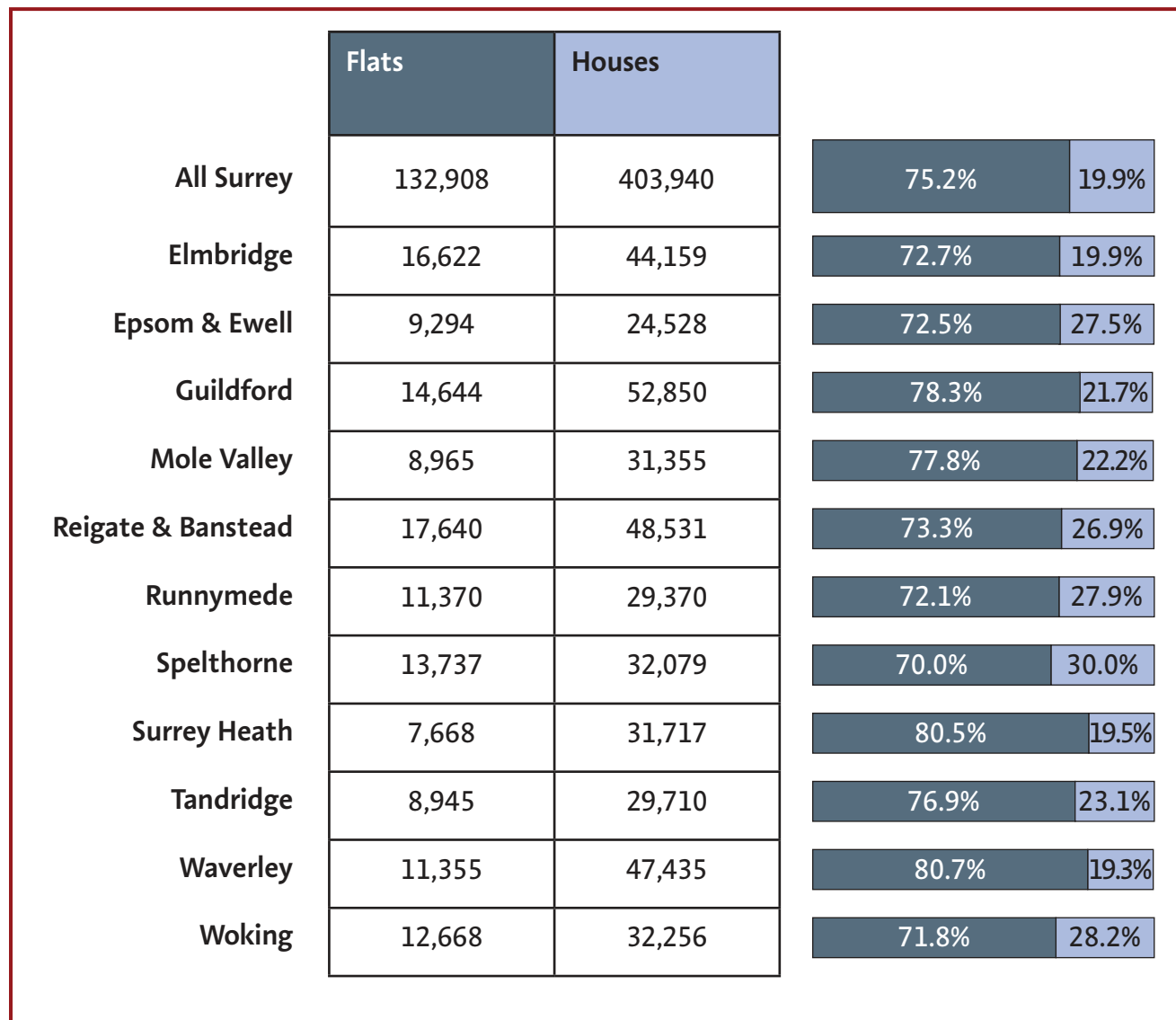
The 2024/2025 tonnages of material collected from households in Surrey shows that 54.8% of material is diverted for recycling, with 45.2% remaining as residual 'black bag' waste, sent for energy recovery.

Figure 10: Surrey's Composition and Waste Tonnages⁴



⁴ Proportions shown as %, actual values in tonnes.

Figure 11: Proportion of Flats ⁵

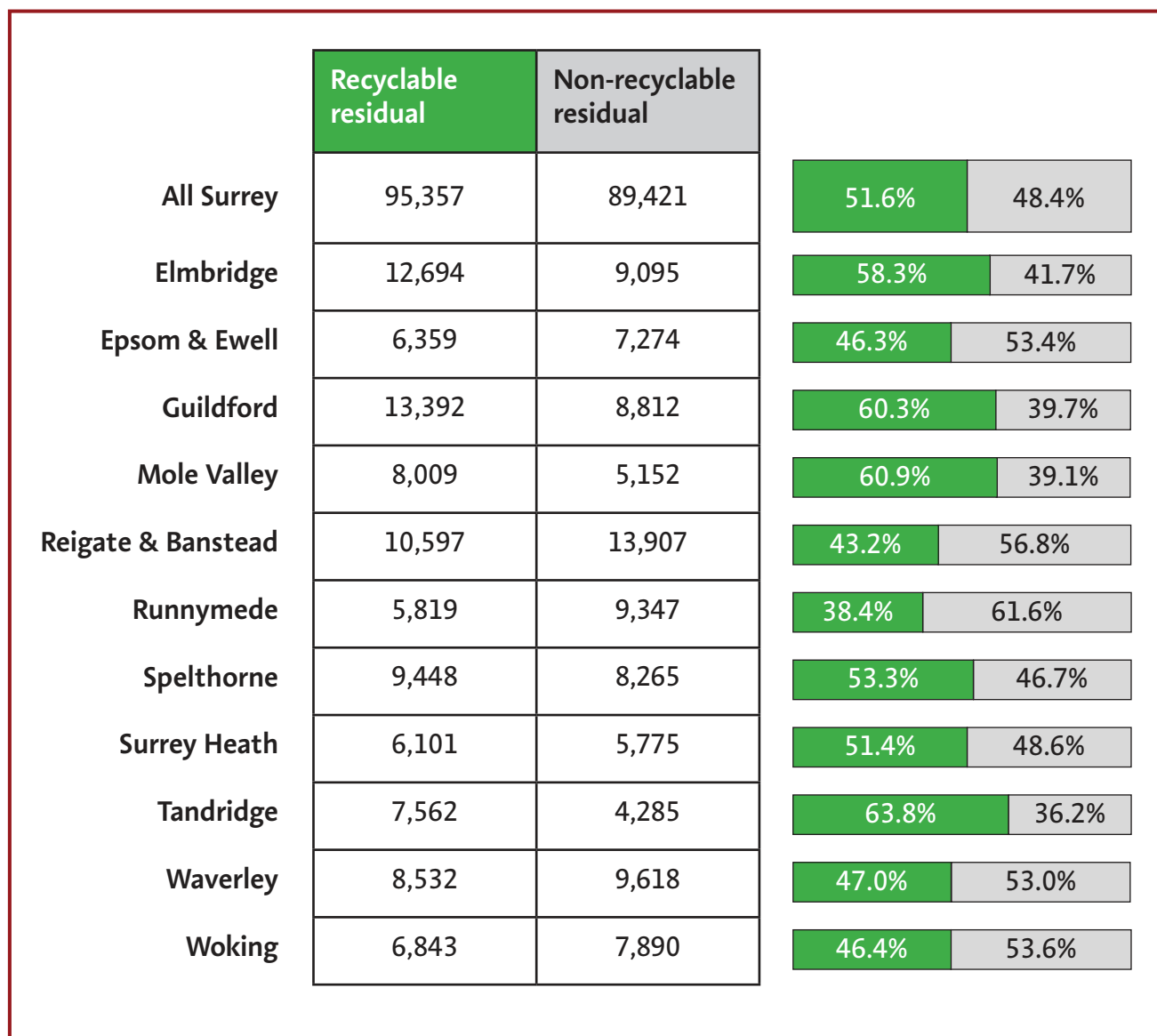


The most recent composition study conducted in 2021 shows that 52% of material in Surrey's residual 'black bag' waste could be recycled.

52% of material in 'black bag' waste could be recycled

⁵ Data extracted from the LLPG on 30 April 2025. Flats have been identified using RD06, RH02, RH03 classifications, covering both flats & HMOs.

Figure 12: Non-recyclable / Recyclable Material in Residual Stream ⁶



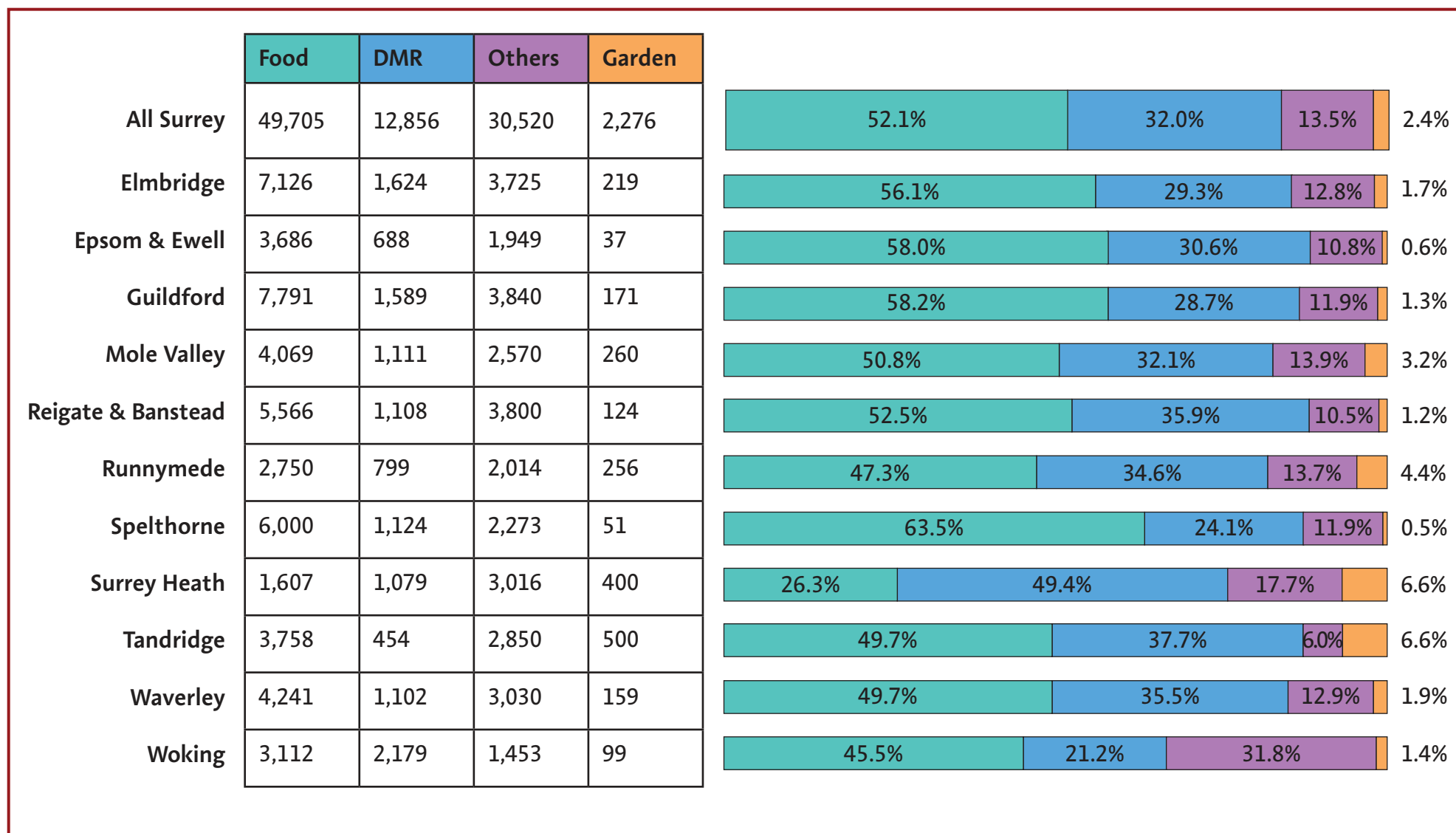
Of this recyclable material remaining in the residual stream, over half is food waste, equating to approximately 50,000 tonnes. A key priority of SEP is increasing resident participation in food waste collection, with a target of capturing an additional 10% of food waste.

Of the remaining material, 32% is material that could be diverted to the DMR stream, with a further 13% capable of being recycled through more bespoke markets. The SEP programme is focussed on increasing the proportion of materials recycled through diverting these from the residual stream. Figure 13 and Figure 14 show the proportion of recyclable material left in the residual stream by category and material type respectively.



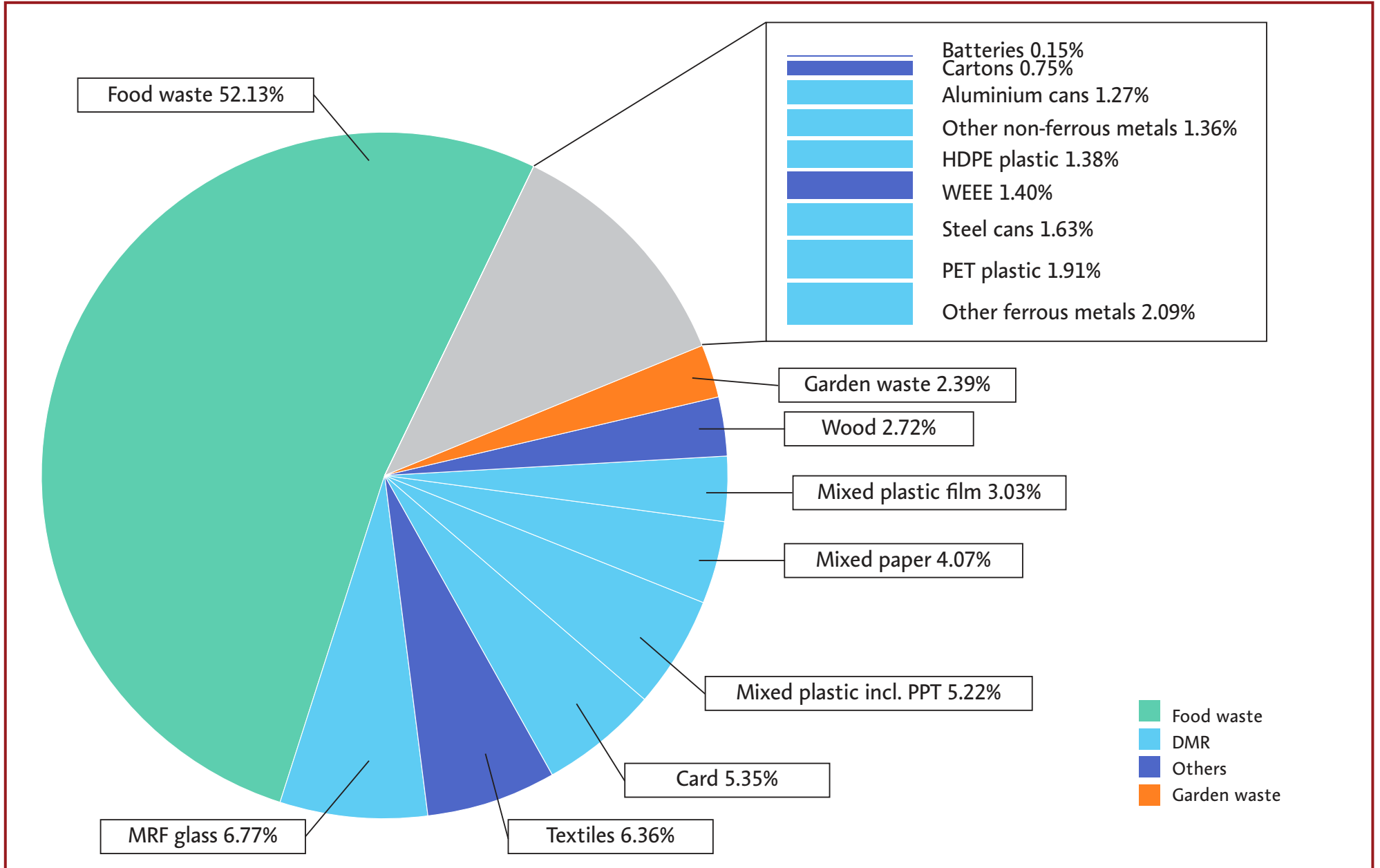
⁶ Proportions shown as %, actual values in tonnes.

Figure 13: Recyclable Material by Stream ⁷



⁷ Proportions shown as %, actual values in tonnes.

Figure 14: DMR / Other Streams by Material Type



Appendix 3: SEP programme

Introduction

This programme sets out the shared approach to improving recycling, reducing waste, preparing for upcoming national collection, and packaging reforms across Surrey, following a period of four months engagement with all 12 D&Bs.

The agreed **SEP Priorities** for the programme are to:

1. Increase proportion of material recycled,
2. Improve quality of material sent for dry recycling,
3. Support higher participation in food waste recycling,
4. Improve and target waste minimisation,
5. Promote and maximise reuse; and,
6. Explore new opportunities to divert material streams from residual waste.

The programme seeks to achieve the following **Outcomes** to:

1. Optimise residents experience with waste services,
2. Improve environmental performance,
3. Mitigate ETS liabilities; and,
4. Ensure maximum EPR funding is received in future years to support continued efforts of the programme.

Consequently, the programme focusses on six key **Objectives** to:

1. Improve the quality and quantity of dry recycling across Surrey by supporting residents to recycle more and reduce contamination.
2. Boost food waste participation by encouraging more households to recycle food waste and reduce the amount sent to residual bins.
3. Engage schools and communities by expanding participation in SEP projects among schools and community groups across Surrey.
4. Strengthen workforce capability by building the confidence and skills of waste operatives, caretakers, and depot staff to improve recycling performance.
5. Ensure compliance and readiness for reforms by preparing Surrey D&Bs for upcoming collection and packaging reforms, including plastics and flexibles requirements, by March 2027.
6. Promote reuse and waste minimisation by increasing opportunities for residents to reduce waste, reuse materials and adopt more sustainable consumption habits.

Programme overview

The programme overview, below, highlights projects and interventions planned from Quarter 3 2025/26 to Quarter 2 2027/28. Each project contributes to one or more objectives and is mapped to the relevant SEP priorities (P1–P6) and outcomes (O1–O4). The projects are grouped as Delivery, Enabling, or Business as Usual (BAU) activities. It also sets out when projects will be active across the programme period.

Project or Intervention	SEP Priorities						Outcomes				25/26		26/27				27/28						
	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	O1	O2	O3	O4	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2					
Scoping Work and Trial – Plastics Films and Flexibles	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓													
DMR Campaign, Contamination and Simpler Recycling	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓	✓													
Increasing Participation – Food Stickers Intervention			✓			✓	✓	✓	✓														
Waste Minimisation and Refuse Diversion Plan				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓													
WEEE Capture Improvement	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓													
Textiles	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓													
Audience segmentation	Enabler						✓																
Caretakers and Managing Agents Capacity Building							✓	✓	✓														
Depot Engagement and Crew Support							✓	✓	✓														
Consultancy Support							✓	✓	✓	✓													
Review and update SEP 2025							✓	✓	✓	✓													
Residual Waste Composition Analysis							✓	✓	✓	✓													
Schools Engagement – Grant Scheme							✓	✓															
Schools Engagement – Direct Communication							✓	✓															
Surrey Waste Tracker							✓																
Surrey Recycles Search Tool							✓	✓							✓								
Engagement Events – Resources Pack and Delivery							✓	✓															
Waste Data System and Performance Reporting							✓	✓															
Ongoing Communications							BAU						✓	✓									
Policy Monitoring and Consultation Responses							BAU						✓	✓	✓	✓							

Project delivery outline

The project delivery outline, below, details the individual projects, or interventions that collectively deliver the SEP priorities and programme objectives. Each project has been structured to define its purpose, objectives, expected outcomes, success measures and key dependencies and/or risks.

Project or Intervention	Outcomes	Success measure	Dependencies/Risk
<p>Scoping Work and Trial – Plastics films and Flexibles</p> <p>Preparing for Simpler Recycling by determining the best way to present plastic films and flexibles at kerbside for collection from March 2027 and for MRFs to process.</p> <p>The aim is to identify a solution that maximises recycling capture while minimising contamination and operational disruption and to assess how best Surrey can comply with the requirements of Simpler Recycling.</p> <p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Compare loose versus bagged presentation methods for plastic film and flexibles across several areas, assessing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o resident compliance o impact on crews, and o impact on MRF operations 	<p>Forecast with trial data with qualitative assessment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Operational impacts understood and mitigated measures for MRFs and crews. – Recommendation on preferred presentation method (loose or bagged) with justification to feed into wider Simpler Recycling Communications Campaign. – Forecast with trial data with qualitative assessment. 	<p>A report with recommended method (bagged vs loose).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Preferred method agreed with MRF providers and collection contractors ready for roll out. – Capture 50% of plastic film and flexibles from residual waste. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Agreement and cooperation from MRFs to trial and provide data. – Agreement and timely engagement with all D&Bs and collection crews. – Resident compliance with trial instructions.
<p>DMR Campaign, Contamination and Simpler Recycling</p> <p>Following enabling work on audience segmentation, we will design and deliver a multichannel DMR contamination campaign tailored to each authority’s needs and countywide printed communication to all households that informs residents of the Simpler Recycling changes. The opportunity will also be used to highlight ETS impact and to instil positive recycling behaviours.</p> <p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Set up a Contamination task group. – Increase resident knowledge of what can/cannot be recycled. – Support behaviour changes ahead of Simpler Recycling implementation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Widespread awareness of correct recycling practices. – Reduction in contamination across D&Bs. – Stronger public understanding of Simpler Recycling. 	<p>Campaign reach and engagement statistics.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Reduction in contamination, measured by authority, to below 10% across Surrey. – Positive shifts in resident knowledge (survey results). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Accurate audience research. – Need for consistent messaging across all channels. – Risk of limited impact if campaigns are not well-targeted.

Project or Intervention	Outcomes	Success measure	Dependencies/Risk
<p>Increasing Participation – Food Stickers Intervention A roll out of ‘No Food Waste’ stickering and leaflet interventions will be carried out in targeted areas. This will include follow-up engagement to those properties that have had bin stickering from 2020. Countywide data from districts and boroughs will be collated to identify priority rounds.</p> <p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › To sticker approximately 150,000 individual residual bins, reminding residents to recycle their food waste by December 2026. › To accompany those receiving stickers with a leaflet, directly to their letterbox. › To provide direct follow-up communications to at least 160,000 properties that received a sticker from 2020-2025 by December 2026. › Increasing food tonnage captured and recycled by 10% or 5,000 tonnes per annum. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Increased participation in food waste recycling. › Reduction of food in residual waste (composition analysis to be conducted at appropriate time to tie in with ETS roll out). › Increase resident awareness of food recycling. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › At least 75% of targeted households reached. › At least 10% increase in food recycling tonnage collected. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Availability of resident data to identify target rounds. › Approval of participating D&Bs. › Delays in data collections. › Logistical challenges in distribution. › Low response from residents to the messaging.
<p>Waste Minimisation and Refuse Diversion Plan The WMRDP sets out Surrey County Council’s approach to reducing and diverting material from residual waste, and increasing reuse, preparing for national waste reforms; Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR), and the UK Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS). It provides a framework for achieving better value for money, improved environmental performance, supporting the reduction of carbon, and associated net-zero goals. This SEP Programme shares common goals and compliments the WMRDP as it aims to deliver local, practical actions through joint projects, resident engagement, and partnership working.</p> <p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Reduce residual waste generated per household. › Increase recycling and reuse of key materials (plastics, food waste, textiles, WEEE). › Encourage behaviour change among residents, schools, and communities. › Prepare for upcoming reforms and manage financial pressures of ETS. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Reduce carbon impact of waste. › Increased diversion of waste from the residual stream. › Consistency with SEP 2027 and UK legislation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › A decrease in residual waste. › An increase in capture of recyclables – including food, plastics, textiles and WEEE. (Measured by project areas detailed here). › Promotion of re-use activities and reuse scheme at CRCs. › An increase in items reused through CRCs. › Residents recognising the importance of reuse and self-reporting behaviour change to reuse e.g. of furniture clothes etc, through resident surveys. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Low response from residents to the messaging. › Difficulty in engaging with relevant partners, both D&Bs and contractors. › Need to ensure consistency between SEP programme and WMRDP.

Project or Intervention	Outcomes	Success measure	Dependencies/Risk
<p>WEEE Capture Improvement To scope the potential for service expansion, collection points for small WEEE (including vapes and batteries and collections from flats), capturing items for reuse at CRC shops, and repair of items through community initiatives and CRC shops.</p> <p>A focus on addressing vapes as an emerging item of priority for capture will be included.</p> <p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Map current WEEE recycling collections, and drop off points, and explore other locations e.g. food banks, libraries and supermarkets to introduce collection points. As well as the potential to service these using compliance schemes, by March 2026. › Plan and deliver effective pro-active communications to residents on how to recycle their electricals during the project period – by June 2026. › Expand the capability for reusing electrical items taken to CRCs through the ‘Revive’ shops. › Promote suitable ways to repair electrical items, including repair cafes, and CRC shops. › To increase WEEE recycling by 5%. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Reduction in small WEEE related fires. › Messaging to residents resulting in better engagement with recycling services. › Clear guidance to residents on the disposal of vapes (disposable and reusable). › Addition of vape collection points across the county. › Cost savings with a reduction in rejections (from WEEE in DMR bins) and material loss from fires. › Resident behaviour change, to separate small WEEE and batteries correctly from refuse and DMR. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Increase in tonnage of small WEEE collected for recycling. › Residents aware of how to recycle small WEEE and batteries (could be evaluated in surveys). › Reduction in WEEE related fires. › Consistent provision of collection services across the county. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Service expansion dependant on collection capacity, and collaboration with depots / collection contractors. › Missed collections would undermine resident confidence in recycling and encourage using the residual bin as an alternative. › New collection points would require permissions. › Data collection processes are limited. › A holistic approach looking at CRCs and kerbside would be required.
<p>Textiles To create more accessible and visible opportunities for residents to reuse or recycle textiles. This project will pilot and scale community-based activities such as clotheswapping events, discounted cloth nappy schemes, textile recycling drives in schools and Council Offices.</p> <p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Increase opportunities for residents to reduce, reuse, and recycle textiles; promote cloth nappy use; engage schools and community D&Bs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Messaging to residents resulting in better engagement with recycling services. › More visible local textile reuse and recycling opportunities. › An increase in textiles collected for recycling by 5%. › Resident behaviour changes to separate textiles from refuse and DMR. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Number of textile events held. › Tonnage/number of items diverted. › Number of households engaged. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Partnerships with schools and community groups. › Low uptake by residents

Enabling Works	Outcomes	Success measure	Dependencies/Risk
<p>Audience Segmentation Create resident profiles with SCC Insights team, ensuring communications and interventions are tailored and targeted.</p> <p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Develop audience profiles for key resident segments. › Map suitable communication channels and messaging styles. › Tailored campaign. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Clear segmentation model for Surrey residents. › Tailored campaign materials based on behavioural and demographic profiles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Segmentation model completed. › Used to inform countywide behaviour change projects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Data access and quality from the SCC insights Team. › Insights not adequately translated into campaign actions. › Availability of other SCC teams to provide support. › Support from D&Bs with local data insights.
<p>Caretakers and Managing Agent Capacity Building This programme delivers joint workshops to empower both caretakers and managing agents providing practical skills, tools, and confidence to improve communal waste management. The workshops will also gather insights from participants to understand challenges and identify opportunities for collaborative solutions across Surrey.</p> <p>Objectives Deliver two joint workshops for caretakers and managing agents from at least 20 estates across the county by September 2026:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Equipping participants with practical tools and knowledge to manage waste and recycling effectively. › Strengthening collaboration to reduce contamination, fly-tipping, and improve resident participation. › Gathering information from participants to understand estate-level challenges and work collaboratively on solutions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Improved caretaker confidence and operational capability. › Stronger collaboration between caretakers, managing agents and the D&Bs. › Reduced contamination and missed collections. › Increased resident engagement and recycling participation. › Countywide insights to inform SEP interventions and future programmes. › Produce online resource pack for D&Bs- capturing key learnings and good practice examples. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › 80% of nominated estates represented. › At least 60% of participants report improved skills and collaboration. › Measurable reductions in contamination 3–6 months post-workshops. › Documented best practices and follow-up actions implemented. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Commitment from managing agents to release caretakers for training. › Low attendance. › Limited follow through on learned practices within estates.

Enabling Works	Outcomes	Success measure	Dependencies/Risk
<p>Depot engagement and crew support Training and engagement with depot staff and crews to reduce contamination. Includes depot-level training, crew training on contamination identification and lock-out procedures, and conference sessions with management to build a collaborative culture across Surrey. This will be based on collaborative working with authorities to understand the unique challenges and, opportunities.</p> <p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Understand challenges at five depots and design tailored training. › Deliver training to twenty-five drivers and fifty operatives by December 2026. › Hold three conferences sessions with depot managers across all D&Bs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Crews trained and confident in contamination reduction. › Consistent lock-out and reporting processes applied. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Training delivered to all targeted staff and depots. › Positive feedback from crews and managers. › Reduction in reported contamination across rounds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Availability of depot staff for training. › Consistency of training delivery across D&Bs. › Risk of low uptake or resistance from crews, and contractors. › Collaboration between Operations and Recycling officers required.
<p>Consultancy Support Each authority will be offered ten days of consultancy support to design and deliver local interventions tailored to their specific challenges in line with the SEP priorities. Support may include communications, data and performance, project delivery and strategic advice.</p> <p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Provide ten days of consultancy support to deliver local priorities aligned with SEPs programme objectives. › Consultancy days available until end of December 2026. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › D&Bs receive support to complete SEP priorities related projects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › 60% of D&Bs used at least part of their ten-day allocation. › 50% of supported projects reported positive outcomes. › 80% D&Bs satisfaction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Responsiveness of D&Bs to take up support via consultancy request procedure. › Consultant availability and expertise match to needs. › Low uptake if capacity is stretched.

Enabling Works	Outcomes	Success measure	Dependencies/Risk
<p>Review and update – SEP 2025 This project will update and extend the current SEP 2025, taking it beyond 2025 to 2027. The aim is to provide a bridge between the existing plan acknowledging both the shifting waste policy landscape and imminent Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).</p> <p>This bridging exercise will ensure that the SEP programme remains aligned with legislative changes and prepares all authorities for LGR transitions.</p> <p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Set up a dedicated project working group. › Update and extend SEP 2025 to provide a robust and compliant basis on which the new Surrey authorities can build any new strategy from. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Updated SEP document. › Priority actions identified. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › SEP 2027 produced. › Adopted by D&Bs to support the SEP programme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Engagement and timely input from D&Bs. › Delay in D&Bs approvals processes to adoption / endorsement of SEP 2027.
<p>Residual Waste Composition Analysis Understanding what is in Surrey’s residual waste is essential to inform future waste prevention, recycling, and service design decisions. An analysis will provide up-to-date evidence to identify opportunities to improve material capture and reduce disposal costs and understand the impacts of legislative changes.</p> <p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › To determine the composition of residual waste across Surrey. › To establish a baseline to measure future performance and progress following implementation of Simpler Recycling. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Comprehensive dataset and analysis report detailing waste composition by material type and source. › Evidence to inform future waste strategy reviews and investment decisions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Sampling and analysis completed across all D&Bs. › Report completed and shared with all D&Bs. › Data used to inform future strategy and infrastructure. › Findings used in measuring change after Simpler Recycling starts and in preparation of ETS. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › D&Bs coordination with sampling support. › Operational constraints or adverse weather. › Appropriate sorting site(s) identified. › D&Bs provision of data for representative sampling.

Enabling Works	Outcomes	Success measure	Dependencies/Risk
<p>Engagement Events – Resources Pack & Delivery SEP will develop a suite of resources that can be used by SEP and partners to support face-to-face engagement with residents, with a strong focus on reducing contamination of dry mixed recycling and increasing food waste participation. Resources will be available for use at existing public events across Surrey, allowing SEP and D&Bs to engage residents on recycling and waste. In-person engagement will be used to compliment online communications, encouraging behaviour change and providing feedback to inform future campaigns.</p> <p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Develop a standardised engagement toolkit (posters, visuals, demo materials, FAQs, games) for use by SEP, D&Bs and other stakeholders. › At least one engagement event in each partner authority takes place in the next year. › Use in-person interactions to reinforce consistent recycling messages and address local contamination or participation issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Increased awareness and correct recycling behaviours. › Stronger visibility of D&Bs/SEP. › Insight gathered to inform future campaigns and communications planning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Number of events delivered. › Number of residents directly engaged. › Feedback provided by residents during events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Logistical challenges. › Low attendance. › Inconsistent messaging.
<p>Waste Data System and Performance Reporting Management of SEP waste data keeping it up to date, reviewed and verified under the framework of a new data policy. This data will be made available through monthly and quarterly reports, presenting SEP's performance and providing analysis and insights into the relevant trends of recycling rates and contract delivery.</p> <p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Implement a new data policy framework to facilitate accurate and easily auditable data reporting. › Review current waste data management systems and ensure value for money, suitability to needs and readiness for LGR. › Produce standardised quarterly performance reports to track progress and provide insights to all D&Bs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Centralised, standardised accurate and reliable SEP waste data. › Regular performance reports produced. › Data used for effective planning and improvement, particularly deployed to facilitate LGR. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Standardised reporting meets Partner requirements, facilitating their internal reporting needs and reducing bespoke data requests. › Centralised data gathering and distribution. › Accuracy of data improves, streamlining review and reconciliation processes. › Improvement projects and procurements achieve greater standards and value for money due to quality of data informing them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Reliable and timely data submissions from D&Bs and contractors. › Inconsistent or inaccurate returns from D&Bs. › Performance and suitability of future data systems.

Business As Usual	Outcomes	Success measure	Dependencies/Risk
<p>Ongoing Communications Communications via SEP’s digital channels (SEP website and social media channels) to promote the recycling of all materials, increase participation in recycling services, promote waste minimisation, reuse, and repair. It will include promoting awareness events such as Recycle Week, specific holidays such as Halloween and Christmas and website maintenance to ensure it meets the most up-to-date standards.</p> <p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Regularly update and promote SEP channels with relevant content. › Support wider programme projects through consistent communications. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Residents more engaged with SEP messaging. Greater participation in recycling and reuse activities. › SEP website is fit for purpose. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Growth in digital engagement (followers, reach, clicks). › Consistent publication schedule maintained. › Evidence of increased resident awareness from digital campaigns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Reliance on timely and engaging content creation. › Dependence on staff capacity and external creative tools
<p>Policy Monitoring and Consultation Responses This work stream ensures that the partnership remains proactive and responsive to emerging government policies and consultation proposals on waste, recycling, and environmental legislation. SEP will prepare and submit consultation responses on behalf of the partnership, ensuring that the collective voice of the D&Bs and SCC is heard. D&Bs support will be sought where necessary, as per previous years. Updates will also be shared regularly with D&Bs to highlight potential operational and financial implications.</p> <p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Monitor and summarise government policies, strategies, and legislative changes relevant to waste and recycling. › Provide timely updates and briefings to D&Bs to support informed decision-making. › Prepare and submit consultation responses on behalf of the partnership when consultations are issued. › Consider and share implications of new policies for SCC and D&B operations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Partnership remains informed and prepared for policy and legislative changes. › Stronger collective influence on national waste and recycling policy. › D&Bs better equipped to adapt services and operations to comply with new requirements. › Improved collaboration between SCC and D&Bs on strategic planning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Policies tracked with briefings delivered. › Consultation responses submitted. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Timely policy briefing. › D&Bs network for coordinated consultation responses. › Timely feedback from D&Bs. › Low D&Bs input.

Appendix 3: Legislative Obligations

- **Environmental Protection Act 1990:**

This is the main legislation that has covered waste management for the last 30 years. Key responsibilities include (but are not limited to):

- o A duty to provide a domestic waste collection service to households. Local authorities can also offer collection services to businesses for which they can charge. This is exempt from VAT.
- o A duty to provide domestic waste disposal and provide the necessary facilities for homeowners to dispose of their own refuse.
- o And a duty of care to handle waste responsibly.

- **The Landfill (England and Wales) Regulations 2002:**

This implemented the EU Landfill Directive 1999 into UK law and sets minimum standards and targets to reduce reliance on landfill as a disposal option.

- **Waste and Emissions Trading Act 2003:**

The JMWMS requirement sits under this. It sets out that in a two-tier area, local authorities have a legal requirement to have a joint strategy for the management of recycling and waste from households. This legislation also states that the strategy must be kept under review, and any significant future revisions will require public consultation. However, this SEP 2027 document will serve to bridge the gap to Local Government Reform, at which time Surrey will cease to be a two-tier area and the requirement to have a joint strategy will be negated.

- **Waste Framework Directive 2008:**

This includes basic concepts and definitions related to waste management, such as definitions of recycling and waste, and a legally binding five-step waste hierarchy.

- **Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2011, 2012:**

This legislation chiefly transposes the requirements of the 2008 EU revised Waste Framework Directive into UK law. A key part of the regulation is to prioritise recycling over disposal. Local authorities are required to have regard to the waste hierarchy (above) in the preparation of waste development frameworks including local development plans.

- **Controlled Waste Regulations 2012:**

Classifies waste according to household, industrial and commercial for the provisions of the Environmental Protection Act. Sets out where charges for the collection or disposal of certain types of non-domestic household waste can be made.

- **Environment Act 2021:**

This Act provided the legal framework to deliver the targets set under the Resources and Waste Strategy along with amending existing legislation to enable consistency in collections.

- **The Separation of Waste (England) Regulations 2024:**

These Regulations describe the recyclable household waste and the recyclable relevant waste that must be collected separately from households, relevant non-domestic premises and businesses.

- **MRF Regulations and Code of Practice 2014, 2024:**

The main aim of the regulation (implemented via the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2014) is to improve transparency on material quality in the supply chain, through provision of accurate information on contamination levels. Under the 2024 amendment, more materials facilities are required to sample and report their waste, with all sampling and reporting needing greater material detail and higher frequency of testing.

