



# Lewes District Council Draft Sustainable Waste Management Strategy

## Foreword

Taking proper care of our waste and managing it in a sustainable way is fast becoming one of the most important environmental issues of our time. Europe and UK Governments are making new legislation constantly and there is an increasing pressure to act, as landfill space is running out. Lewes District Council is at the forefront of this work as the authority that collects waste and recycles it. We work with East Sussex County Council and its contractors Onyx, as well as residents, local organisations, community groups and charities to achieve our goals. We have won funding from DEFRA (the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) to set up some of our kerbside recycling schemes and we are very proud to be one of the authorities whose residents produce one of the lowest amounts of waste across the country.



We recognise that there is still a lot more that can be done and we have aspirational targets of achieving zero waste. Our aims are to do this as cost effectively as we can as it is all of us as Council Taxpayers that foot the bill. We can not do it alone and we need the good will and co-operation of all residents and businesses to make sure that this is a success. We have started well, with your help we can achieve much more. This document is the abbreviated version of our full Waste Strategy (which can be found on the Council's website at [Lewes.gov.uk](http://Lewes.gov.uk)). Please take a little time to read it and let us know your thoughts on its contents.

**Councillor Sarah Osbourne**

**Lead Councillor - Environment**

## Key policies

The key policies of Lewes District Council's (LDC) Waste Strategy are based on the eight key principles below.

- ❖ The waste hierarchy
- ❖ The best practical environmental option
- ❖ The proximity principle
- ❖ The self-sufficiency principle
- ❖ The sustainable principle
- ❖ The principle of Best Value
- ❖ Environmental Management
- ❖ A Precautionary Principle

The Waste Strategy aims to ensure that Lewes District complies with waste management legislation and meets its statutory targets and exceeds them where practical considerations and resources allow. Waste prevention and minimisation is the first priority of the Waste Strategy.

*The Council has a policy to oppose incineration with energy recovery and would prefer to see more sustainable options such as the development of alternatives like, in-vessel composting, anaerobic digestion, and mechanical biological treatment for true residuals (i.e. not from mixed waste<sup>1</sup>).*

The Council has signed up to an aspirational target of 'zero waste' disposed of directly to landfill. By formally agreeing and adopting this Waste Management Strategy, this council is

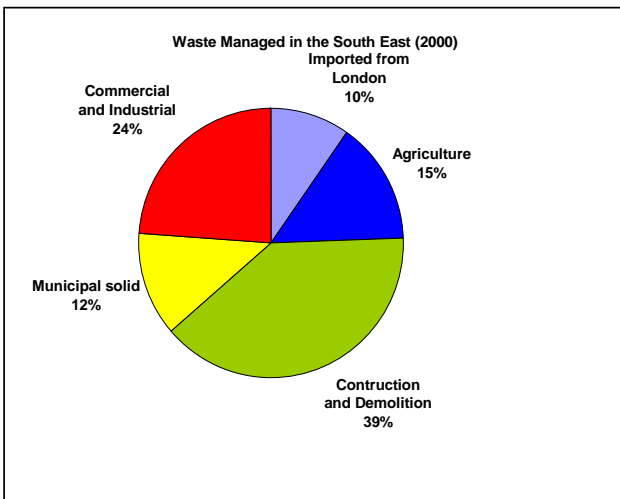
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committing to working together in partnership to deliver it. Progress will be reviewed biannually by key stakeholders (users of the services), with a full review of the Waste Strategy every five years.

### Why is the Waste Management Strategy necessary?

The majority of waste, or “rubbish”, produced in Lewes District (and in the country) is disposed of to landfill. In the operational year 2004/05 our recycling rate was 17.72% (5,500 tonnes) of the household waste collected by LDC. A further 10.2% was diverted from landfill (home composting etc). The remaining waste was landfilled, which means we disposed of approximately 25,000 tonnes of household waste in 2004/05 by burying it in the ground (excluding waste in Household Waste Recycling Sites –HWRS operated by East Sussex County Council).

We cannot continue to landfill the majority of our waste as we have in the past. Landfilling rubbish is not sustainable because by disposing of waste to landfill, the opportunity to utilise large proportions of the waste as a secondary resource is missed. Landfill sites use up land which is valuable, not infinitely available and full of natural resources such as wildlife. Eventually we will run out of suitable landfill sites. In addition, the European Commission’s Landfill Directive places limits on the amount of biodegradable municipal waste that can be landfilled in the future.



“Municipal” waste, which includes household rubbish, is only approximately 12% of the total waste produced annually in Lewes District. The remaining waste is commercial and industrial, special and inert / construction and demolition waste. This strategy document is focused on domestic municipal waste, because this waste is in the direct control of the Council and it is the waste that the UK Government has set statutory targets for.

The **waste hierarchy**: An internationally accepted principle shows the best through to the worst ways of dealing with waste. Preventing waste is the first priority, then re-using it, then recycling or composting it, and only then considering disposal as the final option. Thinking of rubbish as a resource will help to ensure that the waste hierarchy is successfully implemented.



Source: in Murray R. *Creating Wealth from Waste* from work by Merrill Lynch

### What are the targets for waste management in Lewes District Council?

In response to the European Landfill Directive, the UK

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Government has set targets for recycling and composting household waste that will be applied to each local authority in England through the Best Value system. The Government's targets for Lewes District Council are detailed in Table 1.

**Table 1: Waste Management Targets for Lewes District Council**

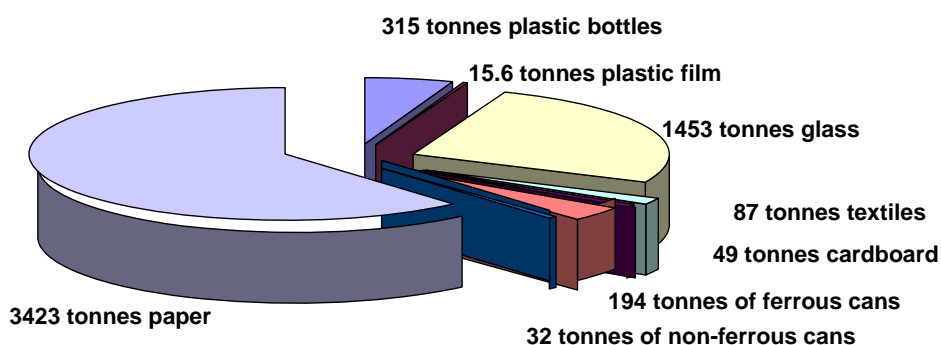
	00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06
Lewes District Council (actual recycling performance)	9.36 %	10.31%	11.5%	15.5%	17.72%	
Government Targets		9 %			18 %	27 %

Lewes District Council has additionally set itself the following targets for the future:

- To recycle 40% of domestic waste by 2010
- To recycle 50% of domestic waste by 2015

Of the 31,000 tonnes of total waste collected by LDC (including recycling) during 2004 / 05 the following graph shows how many tonnes of each material was recycled.

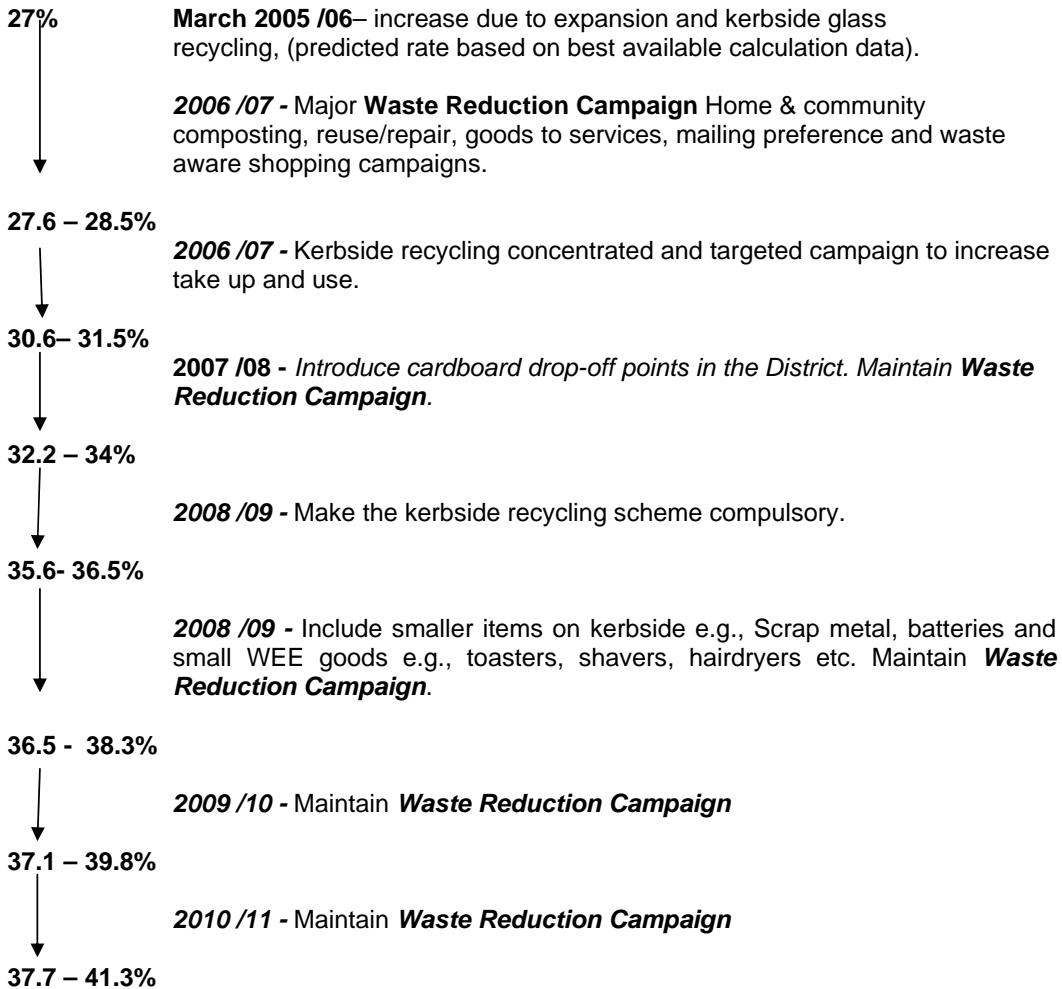
**Quantities of Material Collected for Recycling by Lewes District Council in 2004/05 in Tonnes**



It is difficult to predict what recycling behaviour will be as a response to Council action. The figures below are based on actual experience from other local authorities and are taken from the document 'The Household Waste Prevention Toolkit', unpublished but found on the web site of the National Resource and Waste Forum (nrwf), at: <http://www.nrwf.org.uk/Reportsandpublications.htm#toolkit>

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**What the Council Intends to do to achieve the targets set.**



**COMMUNITY OUTCOMES**

We expect the strategy to deliver the following outcomes for the local community:

A clean well maintained environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An efficient and reliable refuse collection service</li> <li>• Clean streets and public spaces</li> </ul>
A protected and improved environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Less waste going to landfill</li> <li>• Reduce CO<sub>2</sub> and methane discharge from waste</li> </ul>
A sustainable environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Less waste produced per head of population</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A wider take up of kerbside recycling</li> <li>• A wider range of items collected for recycling at the kerbside</li> </ul>
Better services, better value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A value for money waste management service</li> </ul>

For any comments on this document please contact us at:  
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or by writing to:

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