**Headline results**

- **Household recycling has increased** The proportion of household waste sent for recycling, composting or reuse between April 2010 to March 2011 in England was 41.2 per cent, increasing from 39.7 per cent in the year April 2009 and March 2010.

- **Household waste production has decreased** The generation of household waste continued to decrease between the financial years 2009/10 and 2010/11, with a 0.9 per cent reduction to 23.5 million tonnes. This continues the slowing in a reduction of household waste since 2007/08.

- **Waste generation per person has decreased** The weight of household waste generated in the year April 2010 to March 2011 in England, in kilograms per person, was 449 kg per person. Of this total, 185 kg was recycled, composted or reused whilst 264 kg was not.

- **Local authority collected waste sent to landfill has declined** The tonnage of local authority collected waste being sent to landfill by local authorities has decreased by 8.8 per cent between the financial years 2009/10 and 2010/11 to 11.4 million tonnes. This continues the decrease of tonnes sent to landfill since 2002/03, however the decrease has been slowing since 2008/09.

**Key points**

- The household waste recycling rate reached 43.2% in England in 2012/13 with much variation across local authorities.

- Green waste sent for compost in January to March 2013 was over 27% lower than in January to March 2012 due to weather conditions.

- Household waste arisings have fallen 12% since 2006/07, down to 22.6 million tonnes amounting to 423 kg of waste per person in 2012/13.

- Local Authority managed waste going for incineration with energy recovery rose 13% to 5.5 million tonnes in 2012/13 and has more than doubled in the last ten years.

The key points are genuinely the main findings from the year, rather than a summary of the whole publication, and attempt to capture the reader’s interest. The points are concise and easy to digest.

Historical context is provided, drawing attention to important trends. Possible reasons behind some of the movements in the data are given, which creates interesting and informative commentary and ties the figures to the wider context.
### Good Practice: Statistical Commentary

Annual local authority level data up to 2010/11, a statistical summary note and information on local authority waste policies and the Waste Review are also available. Additional analyses can also be produced via the reporting tool on the WasteDataFlow website.

#### Usage of the Statistics

Data on waste management is collected to monitor policy effectiveness, particularly its commitments in the Waste Review and to support policy development. In particular it is used to monitor progress towards the EU target that 50% of household waste is recycled, prepared for reuse or composted by 2020. The underlying data held in WasteDataFlow is used extensively by local and central government, the waste industry and the public. It is reported by all local authorities, often from management information supplied by their waste management contractor.

Factors affecting household waste range from individual household behaviours, the advice and collection services provided by local authorities, the increasing cost of Landfill Tax, and to some extent wider issues like the state of the economy. Some quarterly waste data shows a clear seasonal fluctuation. This may be due to various factors, in particular for recycling a seasonal decrease in the amount of garden waste being generated in the autumn/winter months. For this reason comparisons should be made with the same quarter in previous years or using full 12 month periods.

A new section provides the user with helpful contextual information about the statistics and their uses, aiding understanding.

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This tells the user that additional context and more detailed information for individual local authorities is available. However, users need to find and analyse this themselves. The release does not summarise the local data, include context or commentary on how the statistics are used or summarise these additional elements.
There is a tendency for recycling rates to be similar in adjacent areas although high and low recycling rates are spread across England.

Ashford Borough Council, where there is no green recycling, had the lowest recycling rate at 12%.

Rochford District Council had the highest recycling rate at 67%, with over 56% of their recycling comprising green waste.

73 out of 352 local authorities in England achieved a 50% or more recycling rate, based on amounts sent for recycling.

Local authority level statistics are now summarised, including a map. The release explains that local practices may vary and that this can affect comparability between areas. This minimises the extra work the user needs to do to understand the statistics and helps them to decide if the additional detail might be useful to them.
Household waste and recycling

The amount of waste collected from household sources decreased by 0.9 per cent, between the financial years 2009/10 and 2010/11, to 23.5 million tonnes.

The average annual change in total household waste over the five years to 2010/11 was a decrease of 1.6 per cent with household waste generation decreasing annually since 2006/07.

The proportion of household waste recycled (including composting and reuse) has continued to increase, rising from 39.7 per cent in 2009/10 to 41.2 per cent in 2010/11. In 2010/11 household recycling tonnage was 3.0 times that of 2001/02, increasing from 3.2 to 9.7 million tonnes.

The amount of household waste generated per person per year in kilograms in the financial year 2010/11 was 449 kg, of which 185 kg was recycled and 264 kg was not recycled. This continues the trend since 1983 when our records began of recycling per person increasing year on year, however, total household waste generated per person has only been falling year on year since 2006/07.

In 2010/11, household sources accounted for 89.5 per cent of local authority collected waste generation.

- The household waste recycling rate reached 43.2% in England in 2012/13 with much variation across local authorities. The rate of increase in the last year is insufficient to meet the 50% EU target by 2020.
- The recycling rate in January to March 2013 was lower than a year previously due to low collection of green waste for composting resulting from the freezing temperature and bad weather conditions that occurred in March 2013, recorded as the coldest in over 50 years. Green waste sent for compost in January to March 2013 was over 27% lower than in January to March 2012 and the lowest since January to March 2008.
- The household recycling rate was increasing rapidly until recent years. The rapid rise occurred while local authorities were introducing and expanding their recycling collection schemes.

Here the focus is primarily on reporting the numbers and how they have changed since last year. While long term trends are mentioned, there is no contextual information, and the important fact that household recycling rates are slowing down is not covered. European targets for recycling are not mentioned.

The declining rate of increase in household waste recycling is emphasised and a graph is used to aid presentation. The release discusses trends and anomalies and puts forward some reasons why these might be happening. It also draws attention to the European target for household recycling.
Local authority collected waste generation and management

- The total amount of local authority collected waste generated has decreased by 1.3 per cent to 26.2 million tonnes between the financial years 2009/10 and 2010/11. This continues the reduction seen since 2007/08.
- The proportion of local authority collected waste being recycled, composted or reused continued the long term trend by increasing to 40.1 per cent between the years 2009/10 and 2010/11.
- The proportion of local authority collected waste disposed of into landfill in 2010/11 was 43.4 per cent. Over the last 10 years local authority collected waste sent to landfill has decreased from 78.0 per cent of generation in 2001/02. In 2010/11 England sent just under half (49%) the tonnage of waste to landfill compared to 2001/02.

Local Authority managed waste going to landfill and incineration in England

- Disposal of local authority managed waste into landfill and incineration has fallen 44% since 2001/02, down to 14.0 million tonnes in 2012/13.
- The total amount of waste managed by Local Authorities fell by 1.4% in 2012/13, to 25.3 million tonnes.
- Local Authority managed waste going to landfill fell by 11% to 8.5 million tonnes in 2012/13 and has fallen over 60% in the last ten years.
- Local Authority managed waste going for incineration with energy recovery rose 13% to 5.5 million tonnes in 2012/13 and has more than doubled in the last ten years.
- Landfill Tax continues to be the main driver for local authorities to reduce waste to landfill. Generating energy from waste by incineration is preferable to landfill, although recycling and reuse are preferable to both.
- 34% of local authority managed waste went to landfill in 2012/13 and 22% went for incineration with energy recovery. Landfill Tax continues to be the main driver for authorities to reduce waste to landfill.

The commentary adds little to the headline figures, mainly just repeating the numbers. Time trends are not really discussed. The graph is not referred to directly and is also quite difficult to interpret.

The statistics are enhanced by commentary that explores time trends and discusses possible contributing factors. The graph is simpler and clearer. It is now much easier to compare trends across waste management methods.