

WASTE STRATEGY FOR ESSEX

CONSULTATION SURVEY

Why Your Views Matter

We want to know what you think to help us make sure we get things right for the future management of waste in Essex and understand what our strategy means for residents of Essex.

This is an opportunity for you to have your say on the draft strategy and Strategic Environmental Assessment. We want to understand whether you think the vision, priorities, targets and ambitions in the strategy are the right ones. We want to know if there is anything else you think we should consider.

We will review all the feedback we receive. Each response will help to shape the final version of the Waste Strategy for Essex.

We want to ensure that everyone who wants to have their say is able to do so. If you would like a large print version of this document, a paper copy, or to discuss alternative options, please contact 0345 6037625 or email wastestrategyforessex@essex.gov.uk.

Data protection

Essex County Council is facilitating this consultation on behalf of the Essex Waste Partnership. Essex County Council fully complies with information legislation. If you would like the full details of how we use personal data, and the rights you have about its use, please go to www.essex.gov.uk/privacy-adults or call 03457 430430.

Taking Part

You can fill in our online feedback form at: www.consultations.essex.gov.uk/rci/waste-strategy-for-essex-consultation

You can send back a paper feedback form to: Freepost RTKH-XUBZ-CJZS, Essex County Council, Waste Strategy for Essex, County Hall, Chelmsford, CM1 1QH. However, if you want to help the council save money, please use a stamp, and send to this address: Waste Strategy for Essex, Essex County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford, CM1 1QH. You may wish to keep a copy of your response to our consultation for your own records.

The consultation period will open on **Wednesday 13 September 2023** and closes on **Wednesday 22 November 2023**. Paper copies will be accepted by post for a further five working days, closing on Wednesday 29 November 2023.

Your opinions are valuable to us. Thank you for taking the time to read this and respond. Please ignore any questions that you do not wish to answer.



WASTE STRATEGY FOR ESSEX

CONSULTATION SURVEY

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Our Vision

To help us move towards our net zero targets, the partnership has drafted a vision for the future:

We aspire to be a zero waste county. By working together we will reduce waste, protect the environment and conserve resources.

Achieving zero waste in Essex means reusing and recycling as much as possible, and recovering as many resources as possible from the waste that remains.

What is the Essex Waste Partnership?

A partnership comprising all 12 district, borough and city councils and the county council in Essex (see appendix 13). The partnership was set up to ensure cost-efficient and sustainable waste management across the county.

Net Zero means a state where there is a balance between the amount of greenhouse gases released into the atmosphere by a human activity, and the amount which is removed. A commitment to net-zero carbon is associated with a commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to achieve this balance.

Resources means materials that can be used to create products. Resources can be virgin materials or secondary raw materials.

Strategy

Recovery means a waste treatment process that is used to recover energy and new raw materials from the waste. Recovery waste treatment processes include anaerobic digestion and Energy from Waste (EfW).

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Our Targets

We believe we should, as a minimum, commit to achieving national waste targets set by the government. Therefore, our proposed targets are:

Net zero greenhouse gas emissions We will contribute to reducing the county's greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050

Waste disposal

We will send no more than 10% of waste to landfill by 2035

Waste reduction

We will halve the amount of residual waste produced per person by 2042

Collection Services

residents have access to separate food waste collections by 2026. We will ensure that all Essex Residents have access to comprehensive recycling services for plastic, paper and card, metal, glass, food

and garden waste by 2026.

We will ensure that all Essex

Recycling

We will reuse, recycle, or compost 65% of waste by 2035

Current Performance

In 2020 Essex councils collected over 725,000 tonnes of waste and recycling, the equivalent weight of roughly 58,000 London buses.

On average, each resident in Essex produces around 463 kg of waste per year which is 16% more than the national average. In 2020/21 the recycling rate in Essex was 52% which is higher than the national average of 44%.

As one of the largest waste partnerships in the country, the EWP recognises it has a key role to play in delivering a more circular economy in the UK and contributing to the achievement of national waste and recycling targets. Setting targets enables the partnership to track its performance against its vision and strategic aims. To find out more about national targets, please visit **Appendix 4 National Legislation**.

Greenhouse gas means gases that trap heat in the atmosphere and contribute to climate change. This causes the greenhouse effect. Water vapour, carbon dioxide, nitrous oxide, methane and ozone are the primary greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

10. Which of the following statements best describes your thoughts on the targets in the draft strategy?

I would prefer I think the more ambitious targets are about right

I would prefer less ambitious targets I would prefer no targets at all

I'm not sure

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Achieving zero waste in Essex means reusing and recycling as much as possible, and recovering as many resources as possible from the waste that remains.

The partnership will create plans, publish our progress, and regularly review this strategy to ensure it is fit for purpose.

To find out more about how our targets and ambitions are defined, please visit **Appendix 10 Targets** and **Ambitions Definitions**.

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Approach to Partnership Vision

The next section of the consultation survey asks you questions about the approach the partnership proposes to follow to deliver the partnership's vision, targets and ambitions.

The priorities cover:

- Supporting the move to a circular economy
- Partnership working to maximise the impact of our work
- Services that deliver the waste hierarchy
 Supporting
- Supporting residents to reduce their waste and recycle more

What is the waste hierarchy?

The Waste Hierarchy sets out the order in which options for waste management should be considered based on environmental impact. It is a legal framework that has become a cornerstone of sustainable waste management.

What does it mean in practice?

Under the waste hierarchy, activities that prevent waste and increase recycling are shown to have the least impact. Applying the waste hierarchy when designing services and making decisions will help the partnership take the right decisions and achieve our vision of a zero waste county.

Achieving zero waste in Essex means reusing and recycling as much as possible, and recovering as many resources as possible from the waste that remains.

Move to a Circular Economy

The best way to reduce the environmental impact of waste is to embrace a circular economy. In a circular economy, our finite resources are conserved and used efficiently. That's why the circular economy is a priority in this strategy and the partnership proposes to:

Realise the opportunities arising from the circular economy model that will bring wider benefits to Essex

To deliver this priority, the EWP will:

- Encourage the growth of the green business sector and jobs in Essex to deal with waste in innovative ways
- Support businesses to adopt circular economy principles and practices
- Integrate the principles of the circular economy in council strategies and policies
- Support communities to reduce their waste and reuse and repair more
- Design services that increase closed loop recycling where waste is collected and recycled to make the same type of product.

What is a circular economy?

A circular economy is an economic system designed with the intention that maximum use is extracted from resources and minimum waste is generated for disposal.

Why is the circular economy a good thing?

There are clear environmental benefits from reducing waste in manufacturing, and designing products that are easy to repair and recycle. The transition to a circular economy can also provide opportunities for green growth and jobs.

Where are we now?

Most products are still designed and created using a linear economy model where resources are taken, manufactured, used and disposed of. We have moved into a recycling economy where a proportion of materials are recycled but not retained at their highest quality.

How do we get to a circular economy?

The transition to a circular economy requires us all to rethink how resources are valued and managed. The model relies on designing products that are durable, easy to maintain and repair. This encourages and enables individuals to reuse the products many times. Finally, the products should be designed to enable straightforward recycling when they can no longer be reused or repaired.

What is closed loop recycling?

Closed-loop recycling is a process where waste is collected and recycled to make the same type of product. For example, glass bottles can be remade into more glass bottles.

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Services that Deliver the Waste Hierarchy - Prevention

The best way to reduce the impact of waste is to prevent waste being produced in the first place. We can do this by using less materials during manufacture, only buying what we need, and using what we already have. The partnership is proposing to deliver services that follow the waste hierarchy with priority given to waste prevention:

Deliver a system that puts waste reduction at its centre

To deliver this priority, the EWP will:

- Develop and deliver information and activities to help and inspire residents to reduce their waste
- Design future waste collection services to encourage residents to reduce their waste
- Work with government to seek stronger legislation and regulation to hold businesses to account
- Support local businesses that operate sustainably or encourage waste reduction

What is waste prevention (waste reduction)?

Action to prevent waste being produced to reduce or minimise the amount of waste requiring final disposal. Minimising waste saves on collection and disposal costs and helps to reduce the demand for raw materials.

Why is waste prevention important?

Although we need to recycle more, we need to address the problem that we create too much waste. On average, each resident in Essex produces around 463kg of waste per year (equivalent to roughly half the weight of a Fiat 500) that's almost 8% less waste per person compared to 2010-11, but 16% more than the national average.

What is the waste hierarchy?

The Waste Hierarchy sets out the order in which options for waste management should be considered based on environmental impact. It is a legal framework that has become a cornerstone of sustainable waste management.

What does it mean in practice?

Under the waste hierarchy, activities that prevent waste and increase recycling are shown to have the least impact. Applying the waste hierarchy when designing services and making decisions will help the partnership take the right decisions and achieve our vision of a zero waste county.

Achieving zero waste in Essex means reusing and recycling as much as possible, and recovering as many resources as possible from the waste that remains.

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To deliver this priority, the EWP will:

- Support business to deliver reuse and repair services
- Support communities to deliver local reuse and repair initiatives
- Develop and deliver information and activities to help and inspire residents to reuse and repair more
- Support sharing platforms that promote reuse
- Develop enhanced reuse services through Essex County Council's network of Recycling Centres
- Lobby government to accelerate a repair and reuse culture within business

What does reuse mean?

For businesses, reuse means designing products to be used many times, such as reusable packaging. In homes, reuse includes buying products that use refillable containers or reuse plastic bags. It contributes to sustainable development and can save raw materials, energy and transport costs.

Why is re-use important?

Although we need to recycle more, we need to address the problem that we create too much waste. On average, each resident in Essex produces around 463kg of waste per year (equivalent to roughly half the weight of a Fiat 500) that's almost 8% less waste per person compared to 2010-11, but 16% more than the national average. If we reuse more products, we can reduce the amount of waste generated.

What is the waste hierarchy?

The Waste Hierarchy sets out the order in which options for waste management should be considered based on environmental impact. It is a legal framework that has become a cornerstone of sustainable waste management.

What does it mean in practice?

Under the waste hierarchy, activities that prevent waste and increase recycling are shown to have the least impact. Applying the waste hierarchy when designing services and making decisions will help the partnership take the right decisions and achieve our vision of a zero waste county. Achieving zero waste in Essex means reusing and recycling as much as possible, and recovering as many resources as possible from the waste that remains.

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Services that deliver the Waste Hierarchy - Recycle

If waste cannot be prevented or products and materials reused, then turning materials into new products by recycling is the next option on the waste hierarchy. That's why Recycling is a priority in this strategy and the partnership proposes to:

Increase recycling by delivering comprehensive services and supporting residents to recycle as much as possible

To deliver this priority, the EWP will:

- Provide collection services, recycling centres, and local community recycling facilities
- Ensure that all Essex residents have access to separate food waste collections
- Ensure that all Essex residents have access to frequent and comprehensive services for recycling plastic, paper and cardboard, metal, glass, food, and composting garden waste
- Ensure residents have the right information to recycle as much as possible
- Continue to support home composting

What does recycling mean?

The reprocessing of waste materials into the same products or different ones.

Where are we now?

Our recycling rate varies in each area of Essex and has plateaued over recent years. A significant change is needed to achieve our targets. By improving recycling collections and the introduction of kerbside food collections, we have increased the proportion of waste recycled from 21%in 2000/01 to 52% in 2020/21. But our recycling rate varies in each area of Essex and has plateaued over recent years.

Roughly 25% of waste thrown away in the general rubbish bin is food waste. Not only is this a waste of money but it's also damaging the environment. When food waste is sent to landfill, it doesn't just safely breakdown. Instead, it lets off harmful greenhouse gases which contribute to climate change. However, when food waste is recycled at the kerbside, it is transformed into energy and fertiliser. It's amazing to think that recycling just six tea bags generate enough energy to boil a kettle to make another cuppa!

Disposing of food waste in the general rubbish is also costly. In fact, it's costing Essex taxpayers £9 million a year to dispose of! Currently not all households in Essex have access to a separate food waste collection.

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Services that deliver the Waste Hierarchy - Recovery

The waste hierarchy shows that if we can't prevent, reuse or recycle, then recovery of energy and materials from the waste is preferable to disposal. By rethinking our waste and recovering energy, we can ensure that the climate impact of managing food and non-recyclable waste is minimised and reduce our reliance on disposal by landfill. That's why Recovery is a priority in this strategy and the EWP proposes to:

Use technologies for the treatment of food and non-recyclable waste that aim to minimise the environmental impact of waste, and maximise energy and material recovery

To deliver this priority, the EWP will:

- Reduce our reliance on disposal by landfill
- Use anaerobic digestion as the most viable technology for the treatment of unavoidable food waste to recover energy and fertiliser
- Use Energy from Waste (EfW) as the most viable technology for the treatment of residual waste to recover energy and materials
- Aim to capture and use heat from Energy from Waste (EfW) facilities to improve the efficiency of treatment facilities for residual waste
- Continue exploring new technologies to improve the efficiency of treatment facilities, such as carbon capture and storage
- Continue working to reduce the amount of plastic material in residual waste

What does landfill mean?

Landfill or Landfill sites means land in which waste is deposited, often disused quarries. Essex still relies too heavily on landfill as the main method for disposing of waste. In 2022 we sent around 350,000 tonnes of resident's waste to landfill. Landfill is not a long-term option for non-recyclable waste. According to the waste hierarchy, it is environmentally the worst option and is likely to continue to cost more than other waste management options.

What does Anaerobic Digestion mean?

Food waste in the majority of Essex is collected by waste and recycling crews and taken to local processing plants.

Anything that is not food waste, such as caddy liner bags or packaging, is separated from the load.

Food waste is then processed and transformed into a biogas that is rich in methane, and fertiliser. This biogas is used to generate green energy that can be used across Essex. By using this green energy, it reduces our need to use fossil fuels.

What does recovery mean?

In recovery, a waste treatment process is used to recover energy and new raw materials from the waste. Recovery waste treatment processes include anaerobic digestion and Energy from Waste (EfW).

What does Energy from Waste (EfW) mean?

Energy from waste is a recovery process that takes residual waste and turns it into electricity.

Energy from Waste facilities need to be correctly and flexibly sized, efficient and be designed with emerging technologies in mind, to ensure we further reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve efficiency in the future. Capturing and using the heat generated from EfW processes significantly increases the overall efficiency of the process and the environmental benefits.

What does Carbon capture, utilisation and storage mean?

Carbon capture, utilisation and storage is a technology to prevent carbon emissions produced by industrial activity being released into the atmosphere. Carbon captured is either stored deep underground where it cannot enter the atmosphere, or used in other industrial processes.

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Collaborate and Innovate

We can achieve more when we work together and in partnership with others, learning from each other and trying new things. That's why collaboration and innovation is a priority in this strategy and the partnership proposes to:

Innovate and work collaboratively with each other and with government, businesses and institutions to create a more sustainable waste system

To deliver this priority we will

- Work to reduce the carbon impact of waste operations by increasing use of alternative fuels for our vehicles and equipment, and making waste transport routes as efficient as possible.
- Work together to make the network of recycling centres, waste transfer stations and depots as efficient as possible
- Explore carbon capture and carbon offsetting to mitigate unavoidable greenhouse gas emissions.
- · Stay abreast of innovation, trends and examples of best practice to shape service design
- · Work together and maximise opportunities to increase recycling in public spaces and reduce litter.
- Be an active voice striving to shape government policy, legislation, and regulation through engagement, consultations, and lobbying.
- Work together to develop opportunities for employment, environmental benefit, and reduced costs.

What is the Essex Waste Partnership?

A partnership comprising all 12 district, borough and city councils and the county council in Essex (see appendix 13). The partnership aims to ensure cost-efficient and sustainable waste management across the county.

What does carbon offsetting mean?

Carbon offsetting can help individuals and organisations to compensate for any emissions they cannot avoid or reduce by paying for an equivalent amount of emissions to be reduced or removed elsewhere.

What does carbon capture, utilisation and storage mean?

Carbon capture, utilisation and storage is a technology to prevent carbon emissions produced by industrial activity being released into the atmosphere. Carbon dioxide is captured and either stored deep underground where it cannot enter the atmosphere, or used in other industrial processes.

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Educate and Engage

Supporting residents with information and education that inspires changes in attitudes and adoption of new behaviours is essential to achieving the partnership's vision, targets and ambitions for a zero waste county. That's why education and engagement is a priority in this strategy and the partnership proposes to:

Listen to residents and deliver information and initiatives to encourage changes in attitudes and behaviour to reduce waste and recycle more

To deliver this priority, the EWP will:

- Engage regularly with residents to understand barriers, improve service design and increase participation in waste prevention and recycling services
- Examine the composition of recycling and waste to identify opportunities to target initiatives and design of services
- Provide service information and develop and deliver a programme of activities and education to embed waste as an environmental issue and inspire residents to make changes

The Love Essex brand created for the Essex Waste Partnership enables the partner councils to deliver better results for residents through cost effective campaigns and services. Providing consistent messages, the Love Essex campaigns and services inspire behaviour change with the goal of reducing waste, recycling more and making Essex a better place to live.

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Research, planning and performance monitoring

We want residents to be able to hold the partnership to account for achieving our aims. Therefore the partnership will:

- Create action plans to set out clear milestones and pathways to delivering our vision, targets and ambitions
- Adopt best practice indicators to monitor performance and track progress
- Review and publish performance and progress annually against the vision, targets, and ambitions of this strategy

	partnership will:				
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o fi	nd out more aboเ	ut national targe	ts, please visit App	endix 4 National	Legislation.
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We recognise that national policy and legislation, the composition and volume of our waste, and

Strategic Environment Assessment Questions

The partnership has commissioned a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). The Environmental Report (Appendix 8) presents the findings of the SEA and has been prepared in accordance with the SEA regulations. This assessment ensures a high level of protection for the environment and that sustainability is at the forefront of the strategy.

In this section of the survey, you have the opportunity to give us your views on the Environmental Report on the Strategic Environmental Assessment. If you don't wish to provide feedback on the SEA, you can click 'no' to move to the final section of the survey.

To view the Environmental Report (SEA) in full, please view Appendix 8 which can be found at www.consultations.essex.gov.uk/rci/waste-strategy-for-essex-consultation

\bigcirc	\bigcirc
Yes	No
f 'Yes', proceed to question 39. f 'No', proceed to question 42.	
oes the Environmental Report corrected the draft Strategy?	tly identify the likely significant effects of
\bigcirc	\bigcirc
Yes	No
If 'Yes', proceed to question 41. If 'No', proceed to question 40.	
/hat are your views on the likely sign	ificant environmental effects of the draft

Equality and Diversity Monitoring Questions

Thank you for answering the questions so far. In this final section we ask you to let us know a bit more about you, so we understand who we are hearing from.

All responses are anonymous and your answers will be kept completely confidential. It is voluntary to disclose this information. If you choose not to answer these questions, it will not affect your participation

42.	Which district(s), boroug	h(s) or city does	your organisation	cover? Please tick	all that appl	
	BasildonBraintreeBrentwood	ColchesterEpping ForeHarlow	est Outtle	dring esford thend		
	Castle Point			rock		
	○ Chelmsford	Rochford	◯ I live	I live in another neighbouring county		
	Other (please state)	O Prefer not to	say			
	(,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,					
ŀ3.	Which age group do you	belong to? Please	e select only one op	tion.		
	O Under 16	<u> 35 - 44</u>	○ 65+			
	<u> </u>	<u> 45 - 54</u>	○ Pre	fer not to say		
	35 - 34	<u> 55 - 64</u>				
!4 .	What is your gender?					
		Female	○ Non	i-binary		
	Prefer to self-describe (c	option to state belo	•	fer not to say		
5 .	What is your ethnicity? Ple	ease tick all that a	pply			
\bigcirc		ack British African	Asian or Asian I	British Chine	ese	
\bigcirc	White Irish Black or Bl	ack British Caribbea	_		d Other	
\bigcirc	White Other	e/Black African	Asian or Asian IAsian or Asian I	() Not k	Known	
\smile	•	e/Black Caribbean	Mixed White/As	() Prefe	r not to say	
\smile	Traveller of Irish O Black Othe	r	Asian Other		r, please state	
	Heritage		Asian Other			
l 6.	What is your religion/ fait	:h? Please select	only one option			
	○ Christian	Buddhist		None		
	Muslim	Sikh		O Not sure		
	Hindu	Jewish		Other, please sp	ecify	
ŀ 7 .	Do you consider yoursel	f to have an impa	airment? Please se	elect all that apply.		
	○ No impairment	Mental Heal	th Needs	O Autism spectrur	m disorder	
	Hearing impairment/de	af 🔾 Drug or alco	hol addiction	Other (please specify)		
	_	○ Visual impairment/blind ○ Physical impairment ○ Prefer not to say				
	O Deafblind	O Learning dif	ficulties/disabilities			