

# Flintshire Resource and Waste Strategy



2024 - 2030

# Foreword

In 2022 Flintshire Council released its climate strategy pledging to take urgent action to reduce carbon emissions to net zero by 2030 and committed to support and promote the Welsh Government's strategy to create a sustainable, circular economy in Flintshire.

Unsustainable consumption of precious resources has a significant impact on our environment and climate. Taking steps to reduce consumption and move away from traditional linear resource models of make, buy, dispose, to a circular model to preserve the environment for future generations is a must.

It will take a collective effort from residents, our workforce and the wider community to reduce consumption and our impact on the environment.

This Resource and Waste Strategy will set out our aims to enable and support residents living in Flintshire to make it easier for them to reduce their impact on the environment and their carbon footprint and move Flintshire towards a circular economy.

## Our vision

Our vision is to lead Flintshire towards a circular economy, maximise our resource efficiency, minimise waste and work collaboratively with our communities to take collective environmental responsibility. Through an effective resource and waste strategy, we aim to safeguard the well-being of current and future generations, support the local economy and reduce our impact on climate change.

## Our Strategic Objectives

1. To be a net carbon zero Council by 2030 and support wider decarbonisation actions across the County
2. Prioritise waste minimisation through proactive engagement with our communities
3. Increase reuse and repair through partnership with third sector organisations.
4. Achieve Welsh Government targets to reuse, recycle and compost over 70% of the waste we collect.
5. To provide efficient, innovative, and cost-effective services.
6. Meet budgetary requirements and avoid fines.
7. To invest in our infrastructure to future proof services to accommodate service growth.
8. Utilise proportionate and effective enforcement for non-conformance.

# Our current service and progress so far

## Where are we now



Provide a weekly recycling service for **72,441** households



Spend over **£3.4M** on the disposal of residual (black bin) waste



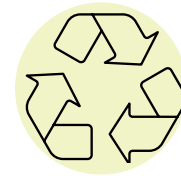
Operate two closed landfill sites generating electricity for methane extraction



Produce soil conditioner from the composting of garden waste



Generate an income of **£750k** for the sale of recyclable materials

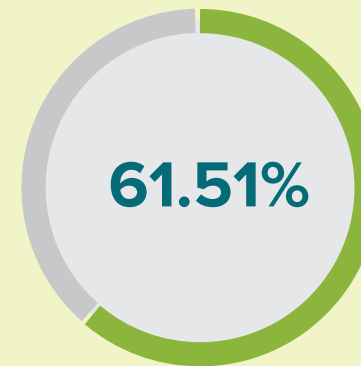


Operate five household recycling centres achieving **81%** recycling

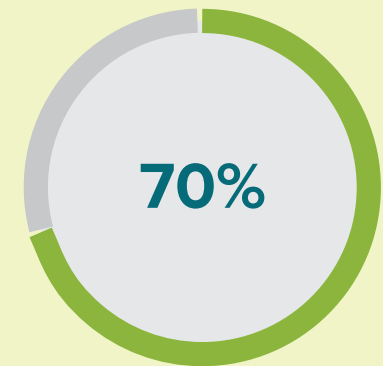


Enforce against waste crimes such as fly tipping and side waste

2022/23 recycling rate:



2025 recycling target:



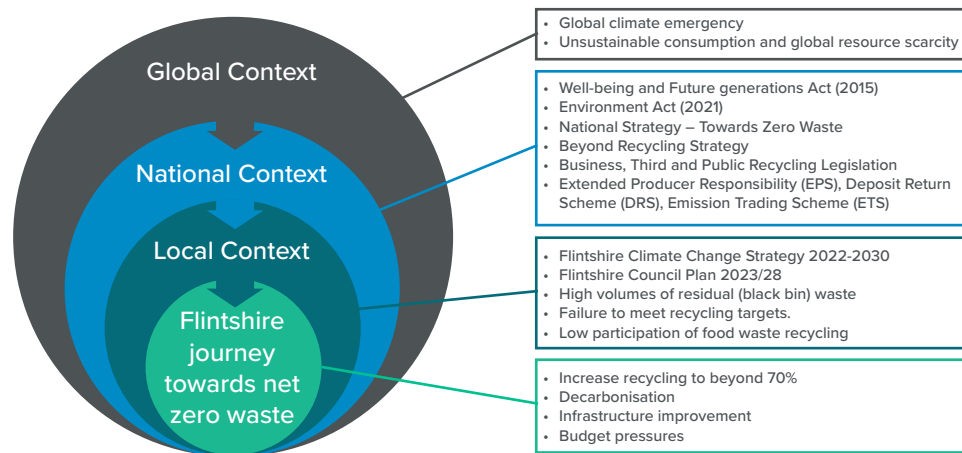
# The Case for Change

The climate emergency and our unsustainable consumption of resources has been recognised by the Welsh Government and Flintshire County Council.

Moving to a circular economy is key to significantly reducing our carbon emissions and our over-exploitation of natural resources, and to help reverse the decline in biodiversity. Crucially, it can also improve economic and social outcomes. The drivers, and legislative and strategic framework in place to support our move towards a more circular economy are summarised below:

**Figure 1: Global, national, and local context**

## FLINTSHIRE - SHAPING STRATEGIC THINKING



### Global Drivers

We are facing a global climate crisis, and it is now widely accepted that human activity is affecting the climate on a scale that is having detrimental effects on all living things. To avoid the worst impact of these effects we need to take urgent action to limit the increase in global temperatures by 1.5°C above preindustrial levels as outlined in the Paris Climate Change Agreement.

### National Drivers

The Welsh Government has set an overall zero waste target by 2050 and ambitious recycling targets for councils in the interim period.

These are statutory targets and an Authority can be fined if they are not achieved.

In addition to the above targets, we also need to ensure we work with our communities to protect the long-term impact of our decisions in line with the Well-Being and Future Generations Act (2015) and adapt to the reforms that have been included within the Environment Act (2021). The reforms are designed to increase the recyclability of packaging waste, improve recycling, reduce litter, and increase business recycling.

### Local Drivers

At a local level Flintshire Council has committed to tackle climate change and become carbon neutral by 2030 through its climate change strategy (2022/30)

There is a statutory obligation on Flintshire Council to achieve a 70% recycling rate by 2024/25 or face significant financial penalties. Flintshire’s current recycling rate of 61.51% for 2022/23 is significantly below the 70% target for 2024/25 and there is need, therefore, to take urgent action to increase our recycling rates and avoid being fined.

Every year all councils across Wales have to set a budget that balances what they plan to spend with the money they receive to deliver services, and this is the law.

Flintshire is facing a budget gap of £32m in 2024/25 with potential solutions identified to bridge the gap at £18m, leaving a remaining shortfall of some £14m.

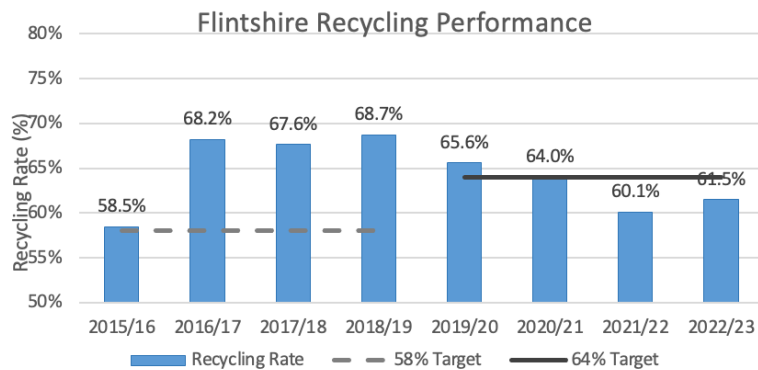
There is little left to cut and without more funding, difficult decisions will need to be made to deliver a lawful and balanced budget.

# Drivers for Change

In recent years we have achieved great success in increasing the amount of waste we recycle in Flintshire to 61.51% in 2022/23. We would like to thank residents of Flintshire for engaging with our services to reach this target.

Despite this progress we need to do more to increase our recycling rate to 70% and beyond, reduce our carbon impact and ensure that overall waste arisings reduce, increase reuse, and recycle as much as we can to promote a circular economy.

The table below shows our recycling performance since 2015/16 and whilst progress with recycling has kept pace with Welsh targets in previous years as an authority, we have failed to meet targets set in 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23, and we are currently not on target to achieve a 70% recycling rate by 2024/25.



The Council faces significant fines for not achieving the statutory recycling targets. The fines for missing the targets over the two years 2020/21 and 2022/23 equate to circa £1.13M, and we are not set to meet them in 2023/24 resulting in the fines increasing.

Furthermore, the targets increase further from 1 April 2024 and the Council will face higher fines of £1.2m per annum based on current recycling levels.

## Waste composition

In 2022 an analysis of our household residual waste took place, the results of which can be seen in the pictorial diagram below.

The analysis shows that despite Flintshire’s comprehensive weekly recycling service 58% of the contents of the residual waste bin (black bin) are materials that could be recycled either at the kerbside or at the household recycling centres. The remaining 42% are items that are not currently recyclable and should be placed in the residual waste stream.

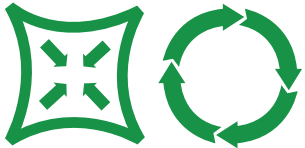


To help us reach a recycling target of 70% we need to divert recyclable materials from the residual bins stream (black bin) to the existing kerbside recycling services. The compositional analysis shows that 13,410 tonnes of material in the residual bin could have been recycled using our current service and of this, 6,940 tonnes was food waste.

Taking into consideration the need to divert recycling from the residual waste stream to increase recycling rates and avoid financial penalties it is imperative that we take prompt corrective actions to meet statutory targets.

Within this strategy we have outlined our priorities that seek to address this risk to reduce our waste, increase recycling and decarbonise our activities so that we meet our strategic objectives.

# Priority 1 - Waste Minimisation and Reuse



Our priority is to reduce overall waste arisings within Flintshire and increase the amount we reuse to avoid disposal. Our approach will be focused on helping residents and business reduce the amount of waste they produce and enabling better reuse of items.

## What We Want to Achieve

- Raise awareness of waste minimisation and reuse in households and businesses
- Encourage positive behavioural change towards waste prevention, minimisation and reuse.
- Reduce the overall amount of waste generated per household.
- Make it easier for residents to reuse and repair items.

## How we will achieve this:

### Communicating and Engagement

Consistent and clear messages are essential to support wider behavioural change. We recognise that residents across Flintshire want to be able to make the right decisions on how to minimise their impact on the environment. We want to improve our engagement with residents seeking more effective ways in which to communicate and raise awareness in ways that suits their needs including door knocking campaigns, roadshows, social media, mailshots and letter drops to households.

We will do this by:

- Setting out a communications plan for each year outlining key activities, promotional themes and how they will be delivered to residents.
- Promoting how residents can reuse and repair their items through targeted campaigns.
- Promote how residents can avoid single use items.

- Use data to identify households with high amount of waste to provide targeted messaging on reducing and reusing their waste.
- Ensure our communications literature is available in multilingual languages and readily available.
- Provide educational visits to Parc Adfer energy from waste facility to local students and community interest group.
- We will promote alternative places to donate/sell reusable items, such as online platforms or charities.
- Make minimising food waste a continuous targeted communication campaign.

### Third Sector Collaboration

- We will continue to support and expand third sector collaborative work to achieve our goals.
- We will make it easier for residents to repair broken items through our support and promotion of community repair cafés
- We will make it easier for residents to borrow items, rather than buying new, through increased collaboration with the borrow bus and developing a 'library of things'.

### Household Kerbside Collections

- Continue to provide vouchers towards the cost of reusable nappies to reduce the number of disposal nappies in the residual bin
- We will ensure that collected bulky items from homes are segregated for reuse where possible.

### Household Recycling Centres (HRCs)

- We will make it easier for residents to donate items for reuse at our HRCs.
- We will continue to promote our deconstruction facility at the Rockliffe (Oakenholt) HRC site, to deconstruct bulky items into their component parts in order to minimise waste.

# Priority 2 - Increase Recycling



We need to increase our recycling rate to 70% and beyond by 2024/25 to ensure that we meet Welsh Government targets, avoid materials from being needlessly discarded, promote a circular economy, meet net zero carbon targets and avoid financial penalties.

## What We Want to Achieve

- To reduce food waste volumes in the residual waste bins
- To increase our recycling rate to 70% and beyond
- To make it easy for residents to recycle their household waste.
- To provide all flats with a comprehensive recycling service
- Ensure businesses are compliant with workplace recycling reforms.
- Divert recycling from the residual bin.
- Collect additional recyclable items.
- Reduce missed collections and provide real time service information.
- Restrict the amount of residual waste collected at the kerbside

## How we will achieve this:

Working with our communities we will provide a clear and comprehensive service to residents and business in Flintshire. Making it easy to recycle is key to engaging with residents and changing long term behaviours.

## Communicating and Engagement

We will consistently promote how residents and businesses can recycle their waste, making it clear what can and cannot be recycled.

Using data, we will proactively engage with low performing areas and businesses in Flintshire to address barriers to recycling and monitor participation to inform targeted activity for engagement.

We will engage in a variety of ways including:

- Site visits and door knocking campaigns
- Increased roadshows at high footfall locations including Connect Centres, household recycling centres, community events and fetes and local markets.
- Increase the use of social media and informative videos.
- Engage in National recycling campaigns and promote Recycle Week
- Continue to door drop leaflets and engage through council tax notices, annual calendars and targeted campaigns.
- Work closely with landlords/housing associations/FCC housing officers to provide joint solutions to improve recycling.

## Household kerbside Collections

We will:

- Encourage residents to use the existing kerbside collection services already provided by the Council, including absorbent hygiene products, such as nappies and incontinence waste products, and clinical waste.
- Introduce new materials for collection at the kerbside with a focus on flexible plastics, small electricals, textiles
- Introduce measures to increase resident participation in our food waste recycling collections service.
- Review market availability for items we cannot currently recycle and set up new contracts.
- Implement efficient and effective recycling and waste collection rounds, minimising their impact on the environment.
- Review suitability of our recycling containers.

- Provide a comprehensive recycling service to all flats within Flintshire, including food waste collections.
- Utilise technology to provide real time service information on collection rounds.
- Review our assisted collections policy and utilise technology to minimise missed collections.
- Our aim is to prevent recyclable materials from being unnecessarily thrown away. Currently 58% of the contents of household black bins could be recycled. We will restrict the amount of residual waste that residents can dispose of in the black bin to encourage greater recycling by all residents either by reducing the frequency of collections or the capacity of the bin. The proposed changes would be supported by a comprehensive recycling service in addition to an extensive communications campaign and support for households that have and will continue to need additional capacity.

### Household Recycling Centres (HRCs)

We will review our HRC provision with a view to provide an effective and efficient service to maximise recycling.

We will:

- Continue to seek sustainable markets for hard to recycle items.
- Introduce a ‘no recycling in residual waste’ policy so that recycling can be identified and removed prior to disposal.
- Deconstruct bulky household items that cannot be reused to recover recyclable material and avoid disposal.

### Street Cleansing

We will explore sustainable methods for our street cleaning operatives and community litter picking groups to segregate recyclable littered items.

### Commercial Waste

We will work with local business, business groups and leads to ensure they are compliant with forthcoming changes to workplace recycling through active engagement and promote waste minimisation and reuse.





# Priority 3 - Decarbonisation



We have committed to be net carbon zero Council by 2030 and supporting wider decarbonisation actions across the County.

## What We Want to Achieve

- Meet Net Zero by 2030 in line with the council climate strategy.
- Ensure services are procured in line with carbon neutral objectives.
- Ensure our future infrastructure is carbon neutral.
- Enable residents to reduce their carbon footprint by minimising waste production.

## How we will achieve this:

### Communicating and Engagement

Communicate with residents and business on how they can reduce their carbon footprint by waste reduction, reuse and recycling. This will be delivered using targeted campaigns using social media, roadshows, door knocking.

### Fleet review and transition plan

A large proportion of the carbon emissions from waste activities are through the use of diesel collection vehicles. We are committed to reducing the environmental impact of our fleet by transitioning to ultra-low emission vehicles (ULEV).

We will develop a fleet transition plan that is linked to our strategic infrastructure plans and decarbonisation objectives.

### Infrastructure

Develop waste infrastructure that meets net zero targets and enables our operations to decarbonise.



# Priority 4 - Infrastructure



Delivering effective and efficient recycling services, that maintain the quality of the materials collected and ensure the capability of accommodating increases in future growth requires robust infrastructure to be in place.

## What We Want to Achieve

- To ensure the authority has full control of recyclable materials collected from households and businesses.
- Improve operational efficiencies of collection and transfer of materials.
- Ensure our infrastructure has the capacity for future growth in tonnages and new materials.
- Ensure the infrastructure meets and enable our carbon net zero targets.

## How we will achieve this:

### Infrastructure review

We want to ensure that we have full control of the materials that we collect and ensure operational efficiencies for our services. We will therefore undertake an infrastructure review with a view to reviewing the business case for our own Recycling Waste Transfer Station for the deposit and processing of recyclable materials, to enable us to meet decarbonisation and net zero targets. We will also review the Council's current HRC provision to determine whether the current service provision should be maintained.

The review will take into consideration:

- Decarbonisation and net zero targets
- Future capacity for increased volume of materials and new materials
- Operational efficiencies
- Review the Council's infrastructure requirements.
- Compliance with new permitting requirements



# Priority 5 - Enforcement

We want to ensure that we make reducing, reusing, and recycling household waste as easy and as accessible as possible.

We will continue to support residents on their recycling journey but we will also deliver fair and robust enforcement of waste policies and illegal activities such as fly tipping, where necessary.

## What We Want to Achieve

- Support residents that struggle to recycle
- Signpost residents to the most effective way of managing their waste.
- Ensure that households participate and recycle their waste.
- Prevent fly tipping, littering and side waste presentation.
- Educate on household and business Duty of Care

## How we will achieve this:

### Communicating and Engagement

We will proactively engage with residents that may be struggling to manage their waste, including visiting their property, to offer support through advice and practical measures to resolve issues.

We will regularly communicate waste Duty of Care requirements so both residents and businesses are aware of their responsibilities.

We will make it clear through regular communication that the authority will enforce against fly tipping, littering and side waste presentation and that action that will be taken and what those consequences are. We will publish details of enforcement action taken that result in Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) or prosecution to act as a deterrent.

### Household Kerbside Collections

We will empower operational collection crews to identify households that could be struggling to manage their waste so that early intervention and support can be provided to avoid escalation.

### Household Recycling Centres (HRCs)

- Continue to challenge and reject commercial waste from entering sites.
- Review the potential to introduce a resident booking system to prevent cross border tipping.
- Introduce a 'no recycling in residual waste' policy so that recycling can be identified and removed prior to disposal.
- We will not tolerate any form of verbal or physical aggression towards our staff who challenge our policies and procedures.

### Enforcement

We seek to:

- Take a fair and reasonable three stage process to tackle service issues which includes issuing a warning letter, use of Section 46 Notices and FPNs.
- Introduce the use of community protection warnings, community protection notices and/or Public Space Protection Orders for waste crimes that have a detrimental impact on the local community.
- Undertake a zero-tolerance approach on significant waste related crime such as fly tipping.
- We will not tolerate any form of verbal or physical aggression towards our enforcement team.

## Monitoring & Evaluating

### Infrastructure review

We will measure our performance against our Strategic aims using performance indicators to track our outcomes to our objectives and ensure we are meeting targets and offering value for mo We will also regularly update residents and the community on our performance against targets.

Strategic Aim	Measurement	Unit	
Minimise overall waste	Kilogram of resident waste generated per year per person	Kg /person/ yr	Annually
Reduce food waste in residual waste stream	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in Food waste yield.</li> <li>• Reduction in residual waste tonnages and composition</li> <li>• Increase in food Waste Participation Numbers</li> </ul>	tonnes/yr	Annually
Reuse / Recycling	Municipal Waste Collected and Prepared for Re-use/Recycling	Kg/hh/yr	Quarterly
Increase Recycling	Proportion of materials recycled	%	Annually
Satisfaction with services	Public Opinion Survey	Qualitative	Annually