

March 2011

Waste Management

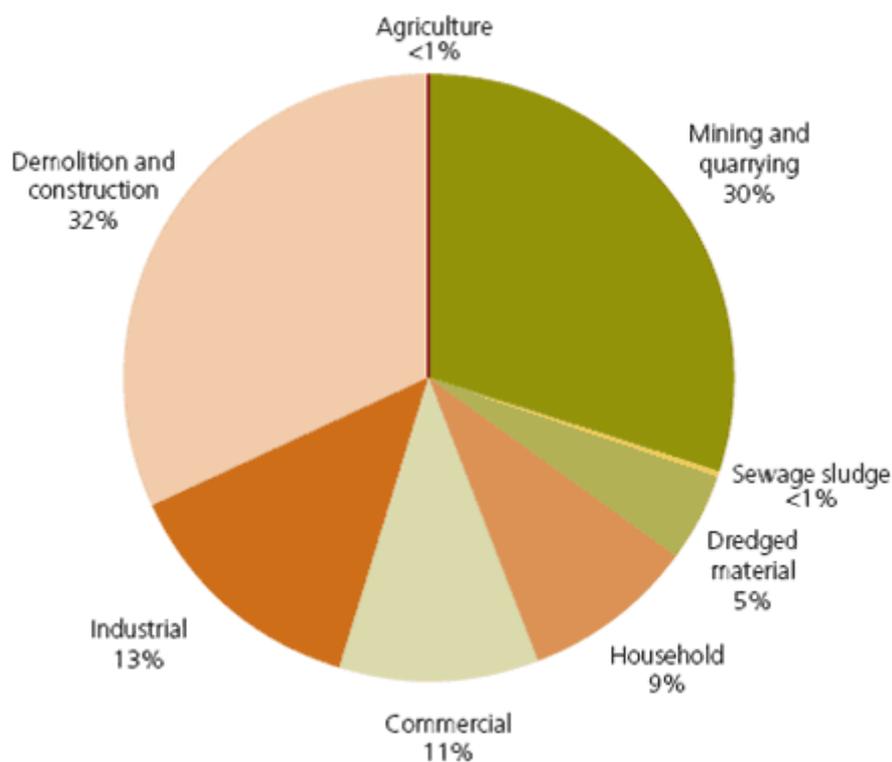
“Will the proposal lead to a change in the financial costs or the environmental and health impacts of waste management?”

- It could do if it affects volume, content or management of waste. These pages help you understand if it will.

Waste policy is an important component of sustainable development. The UK has a number of national and legally binding European targets and policies. Waste is defined as: “...**any substance or object...which the holder discards or intends or is required to discard.**”

Waste comes from many different sectors of the UK, not just households. The distribution of waste arisings (by volume) across the different sectors in England is shown in Figure 1:

Figure 1 - Estimated Total Annual Waste Arisings by Sector (England)

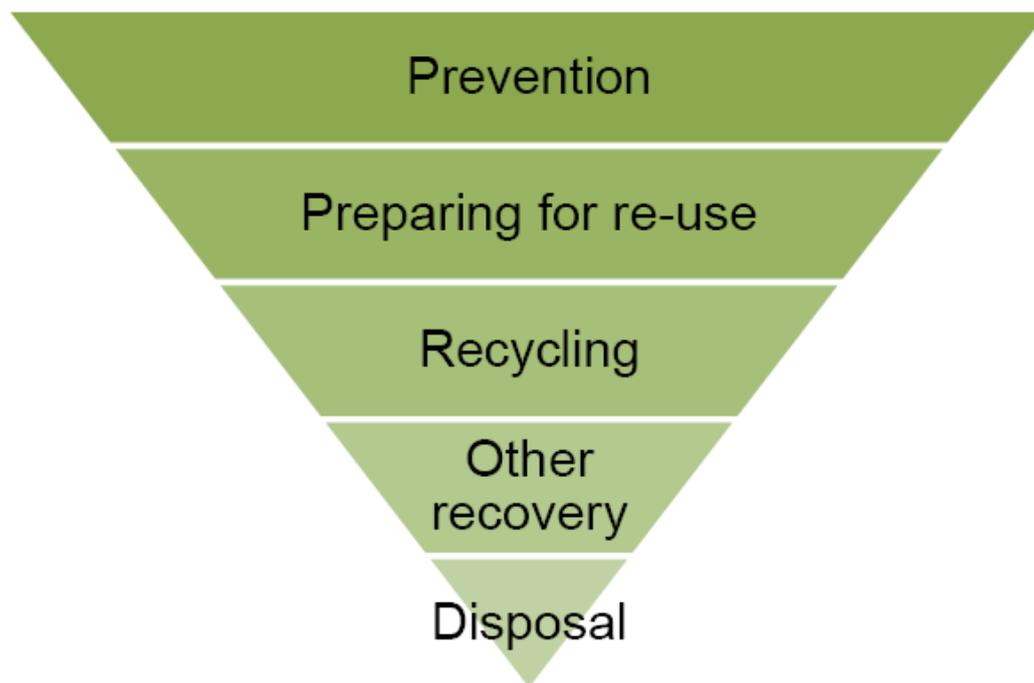


Source: Agriculture – Environment Agency Agricultural Model (2004); Mining and Quarrying – British Geological Society/Defra (2004); Construction and Demolition – Survey of Arisings and Use of Alternatives to Primary Aggregates in England, 2005: Construction, Demolition

and Excavation Waste, Report for Communities and Local Government by Capita Symonds (2007); Commercial and Industrial – Environment Agency Commercial and Industrial waste survey (2004 estimates based on 2002/03 data); Household – Defra WasteDataFlow (2004/05); Sewage Sludge – Water UK (2005); and Dredging Spoils – CEFAS (2004)

Government policy recognises different options for managing waste and some options are preferable to others. The Waste Hierarchy sets out the preferences in descending order:

Figure 2 - The Waste Hierarchy



Waste Policy Option

Your policy option will impact on either the financial costs or the environmental and health impacts of waste management if it:

- Affects the **use** of recycled materials; and/or
- Changes the total **amount** of waste; as

either a one off impact; or a change in the growth of waste arisings.

- Changes the **type** of waste produced or collected; and /or
- Changes how waste is **managed** (see Figure 2); and/or
- Changes **where** waste is generated or managed; and/or

Even if your policy option seems unrelated to waste, one of the incidental effects of your policy option may be to change the use, production, type, management or location of waste. The following examples should help you consider if your policy option may have a significant impact.

Changes the total amount of waste

- Changes in the design standards of new products (e.g. for safety reasons) could lead to a change in the total quantity of material used in the production process (93% of production materials are never used in the final product), products or packaging.
- Changes the use of 'disposable' products (e.g. disposable nappies). 80% of products are discarded after single use.
- Requires replacement of goods, equipment or plants before their planned end of life e.g. safety or product standards or emission standards.
- Tightens health and safety regulations that may require greater quantities of products (e.g. food) to be disposed of rather than consumed.
- Affects the storage or transport of perishable (e.g. food) products.
- Affects one of the major sectors of society that produce waste, shown above in the pie chart, for example, culling of cattle in response to the BSE and Foot and Mouth outbreaks created huge amounts of waste which needed disposal.

Affects the use of recycled materials

- Encourages the use of recycled material e.g. encourages the use of recycled glass, compost from household waste or recycled paper.
- Changes in design standards (e.g. for safety reasons) could affect the extent to which the production process can re-use material or use recycled products
- Alterations in building standards could affect the use/re-use of aggregates or the use of recycled materials.

Changes the *type* of waste produced or collected

- Changes in design standards (e.g. for safety reasons) could affect the types of material in the end product and therefore the type of waste collected. Over 80% of the environmental impacts from products are determined during the design phase.
- Changes to reduce the hazardousness of waste could significantly reduce the management costs of the waste and lead to better protection of the environment and human health.

Changes how waste is managed

- Changes in health and safety standards could determine how a certain waste stream is disposed of e.g. high temperature incineration of medical waste and the ban on composting of certain categories of high risk animal by-products

Changes where waste is generated or managed

- Changes in where waste is generated or managed will change the environmental and health impacts generated from the transportation of the waste.
- Changes where waste is managed could change the localised environmental and health impacts of waste management.

If you think that your policy proposal / option may impact on either the financial costs or the environmental and health impacts of waste management , you should contact Defra officials - waste.strategy@defra.gsi.gov.uk - for guidance on how to identify, quantify and value each of the impacts.

Defra officials can assist you in understanding how your policy option may interact or conflict with existing or planned Government policy on waste. Where there are significant impacts, it is important that the experts in waste policy incorporate your policy's effects into their work and that they work with you to try to limit any tension between your policy and theirs.