

NORTH LONDON WASTE AUTHORITY

REPORT TITLE: STRATEGY AND POLICY UPDATE

REPORT OF: MANAGING DIRECTOR

FOR SUBMISSION TO: AUTHORITY MEETING

DATE: 4 DECEMBER 2025

SUMMARY OF REPORT:

This report updates on local and national policy developments relevant to the strategy and operations of the Authority. This includes the adoption of the North London Joint Waste Strategy 2025-2040, Extended Producer Responsibility for Packaging payment assessments for 2026/27 and a campaign promote action which would reduce battery fires in waste.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Authority is recommended to note the content of this report.

SIGNED:  Managing Director

DATE: 24 November 2025

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This paper provides an update for Members on north London strategy and public affairs activity, as well as government consultations and policies that are relevant to the Authority and have the potential to affect the Authority's operations, performance and/or costs. It provides an update on:

- 1.1.1. North London Joint Waste Strategy 2025-2040;
- 1.1.2. Extended Producer Responsibility for Packaging (pEPR) payments;
- 1.1.3. A campaign to promote action which would reduce battery fires in waste

2. NORTH LONDON JOINT WASTE STRATEGY 2025-2040 – TOWARDS A LOW WASTE NORTH LONDON

- 2.1. The North London Joint Waste Strategy 2025-2040 forms the basis of how North London Waste Authority and its seven constituent boroughs manage waste and work together to deliver essential waste services in the best interests of north London's residents.
- 2.2. The strategy is the result of an extensive development process, which included detailed analysis work and listening to thousands of residents over a two-phase engagement exercise, to ensure that their priorities are reflected. A summary of the North London Joint Waste Strategy, "Towards a Low Waste North London", can be found in Appendix B to this paper with the full version available following this link: <https://nlwa.gov.uk/JointWasteStrategy>
- 2.3. The strategy sets out a clear ambition to move towards a low waste north London and meet the challenges of the climate emergency. All eight authorities are committed to managing waste according to the waste hierarchy, prioritising waste reduction, maximising reuse, repair, recycling and using the most climate-friendly means of disposal possible for unavoidable waste. To achieve these aims and help meet ambitious targets, NLWA and the constituent boroughs will provide environmentally friendly, value-for-money services for council taxpayers.
- 2.4. Following the approval of the Strategy by the Authority and all seven north London boroughs, the North London Joint Waste Strategy 2025-2040 has been officially adopted.
- 2.5. The outcome of each authority's governance process is as follows:
- 2.5.1. 17 June - Barnet – Cabinet – Approved
 - 2.5.2. 19 June – NLWA – Authority - Approved
 - 2.5.3. 15 July - Haringey – Cabinet – Approved
 - 2.5.4. 16 July - Camden – Cabinet – Approved

- 2.5.5. 21 July - Hackney – Cabinet- Approved
- 2.5.6. 22 July - Waltham Forest – Senior Leadership Team – Approved
- 2.5.7. 25 September – Islington - Executive Meeting – Approved
- 2.5.8. 15 October – Enfield – Cabinet - Approved
- 2.6. It should be noted that no significant changes to the Strategy have been requested at these meetings, and as a result the final Strategy will remain as it was approved by each authority.
- 2.7. As set out in the Strategy, delivery plans will align with borough Reduction and Recycling Plans (RRPs), which are currently due to be refreshed in 2026.
- 2.8. Ahead of the development of the new RRP, work has begun to produce a short-term interim delivery plan, outlining how NLWA and the boroughs will undertake work to deliver on the priorities of the Strategy.
- 2.9. Progress towards the aims of the Strategy will be monitored and presented to the Authority on an annual basis via the NLWA Annual Report.

3. Extended Producer Responsibility for Packaging (pEPR) Payments

- 3.1. In November 2025, PackUK (the pEPR Scheme Administrator) notified local authorities of their payment assessments for 2026/27, the second year of the scheme. The EPR scheme is intended to make producers of packaging pay a greater proportion of the costs of dealing with packaging they produce, and incentivise them to reduce packaging in the future.
- 3.2. For 2026/27, PackUK have opted to not update the payment calculation model and instead have used the same data and calculations used in the final 2025/26 assessments provided in July 2025.
- 3.3. The only adjustments made to assessments are an uplift to account for inflation (CPI at 1.9%) and the removal of a small deduction of around 0.4% which was previously included to account for a scenario where insufficient producer fees were raised to cover Local Authority costs.
- 3.4. As a result, the north London authorities' have had their 2026/27 assessments increased by 2.3% on 2025/26 amounts. The below table shows the Year 1 and Year 2 assessments for each authority.

	Year 1 2025/26 (Provisional)	Year 1 2025/26 (Revised)	Year 2 2026/27	Difference (25/26 Revised vs. 26/27)	% Change
Barnet	£4,509,420	£6,079,454*	£6,219,722	£140,269	2.3%
Camden	£2,305,917	£3,008,585*	£3,078,001	£69,416	2.3%
Enfield	£3,260,220	£4,608,456*	£4,714,785. 27	£106,329	2.3%
Hackney	£2,759,487	£3,884,419*	£3,974,043	£89,624	2.3%
Haringey	£2,899,695	£3,448,908*	£3,528,484	£79,575	2.3%
Islington	£2,371,623	£2,669,446*	£2,731,037	£61,591	2.3%
Waltham Forest	£3,283,676	£4,113,722*	£4,208,637	£94,914	2.3%
NLWA	£14,479,000*	£13,204,359	£13,509,017	£304,659	2.3%
North London Total	£35,869,038	£41,017,350	£41,963,726	£946,376	2.3%

*Amount expected to be paid, as explained in para 3.5

- 3.5. It should be noted that, exceptionally for 2025/26, the Treasury have guaranteed that all local authorities will receive at least the amounts originally presented to them in the provisional assessment notices in November 2024. This means that if an authority was assessed a lower amount in their July 2025 revised assessment, the original amount would still apply.
- 3.6. As NLWA was initially allocated £14,479,000 for 2025/26, the shortfall in amounts is expected to be paid via Section 31 grants by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government in March 2026.
- 3.7. The latest available data show that NLWA expects to spend approximately £16.1m in 2025/26 to manage the relevant packaging covered by the EPR scheme in its recycling and residual waste streams. This means that the 2026/27 pEPR payment assessment covers around 83% of NLWA's actual costs. This is a decrease compared with the 2025/26 provisional assessment amount, which covered approximately 90% of NLWA's actual costs for 2024/25.
- 3.8. In September 2025, local authorities were approached by PackUK to sign a declaration to confirm its 'intention to spend the pEPR funds solely on household packaging waste management and recycling.' Following dialogue with the boroughs and other local authorities, NLWA signed this declaration. Alongside the signed declaration, letters were sent by the north London authorities to PackUK, outlining concerns of a shift in direction of the scheme away from cost recovery and towards inappropriate direction of local authorities' activities.
- 3.9. Following these letters, the Authority Managing Director and borough Directors of Environment met the new chief executive of PackUK. The meeting was constructive, with the north London authority officers emphasising the opportunity for PackUK to gain insight into local authority waste operations through effective liaison with them.

4. WASTE BATTERY FIRES – JOINT LETTER AND PARLIAMENTARY ROUNDTABLE

- 4.1. Over recent months, the Authority has made a concerted effort to engage with Government on challenges associated with waste battery fires and sought to move policy on this issue. This has included speaking at events - such as the LetsRecycle Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) conference -, meeting with officials and including it as a key ask in the Authority's 'Call to Action'.
- 4.2. More recently, Authority officers coordinated a joint letter to Minister for Nature, Mary Creagh CBE MP and Minister for Building Safety, Fire and Democracy, Samantha Dixon MBE MP. This was signed by the Chairs of all London's waste disposal authorities as well as representatives from Veolia, Biffa and FCC Environment. The letter is included at appendix A to this paper. The letter and the information in it have been reported in a range of trade press publications and websites.
- 4.3. NLWA has also partnered with charity Electrical Safety First to deliver a planned parliamentary roundtable on waste battery fires later in December.

5. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. There are no equality issues arising from this report.

6. COMMENTS OF THE LEGAL ADVISER

- 6.1. The Legal Adviser has been consulted in the preparation of this report, and comments have been incorporated.

7. COMMENTS OF THE FINANCIAL ADVISER

- 7.1. The Financial Adviser has been consulted in the preparation of this report, and comments have been incorporated.

List of documents used:

Contact officer:

Michael Clarke
Unit 1b Berol House
25 Ashley Road
London N17 9LJ

APPENDIX A: JOINT LETTER ON WASTE BATTERY FIRES

Mary Creagh CBE MP, Minister for Nature

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Seacole Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

Copy to: Samantha Dixon MBE MP, Minister for Building Safety, Fire and Democracy

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

Wednesday 12th November 2025

Dear Ministers,

We are a group of organisations – the North London Waste Authority (NLWA), LondonEnergy Limited (LEL), East London Waste Authority (ELWA), West London Waste Authority (WLWA), Western Riverside Waste Authority (WRWA), Biffa, Veolia and FCC Environment - concerned by the rising number of fires caused by lithium-ion batteries which are incorrectly disposed of. We are writing to push this issue up the agenda and request urgent action to address the real and significant risk it poses.

While attention rightly continues to focus on avoiding fires during the ‘working life’ of batteries – including those hidden in small electricals - what happens once they are disposed of is an increasing concern across our sector. According to the National Fire Chief’s Council and Recycle Your Electricals, 1,200 waste battery fires were reported in 2023, an increase of seventy-one per cent on the previous year.¹

Specifically:

- There was a fifty-three percent increase in the incidence of battery fires between 2023 and 2024 at facilities serving NLWA.
- ELWA recorded a fifty-seven per cent increase in fires at its own facilities during the same period.
- WRWA reported eight fires across their sites during 2024/25 and has already recorded ten incidents in 25/26.

We all take proactive steps to stem the rising risk of waste battery fires, from advanced but costly fire suppression systems to communications campaigns such as NLWA’s recently launched ‘[Lead the Charge](#)’ and [Veolia’s Dangerous Waste](#) campaigns. Yet waste battery fires continue to have a real financial impact on struggling local authorities and the public purse – Eunomia and the ESA estimate that battery fires cost over £1bn per year accounting for damage to property, vehicles, waste management infrastructure, and the cost of emergency response services.² A risk of physical harm to waste operatives and the general public is also posed by waste fires caused by batteries alongside a detrimental environmental impact, not only due to the fumes released upon burning but because of the toxic wastewater created when tackling fires.

While the new WEEE regulations are a welcome and long-overdue step in the right direction, particularly in holding online marketplaces accountable, further action is needed to stem the flow of substandard electrical goods into the UK. Many lithium-ion batteries and chargers sold via third-party sellers originate overseas, where safety standards may be lower or poorly enforced. Without strengthened controls at the border and better enforcement of import standards, unsafe products will continue to enter the UK market and end up in homes, workplaces, and ultimately, the waste stream, fuelling further fire risk and undermining the aims of the new regulations.

Even if producers are obliged to take steps to strengthen battery safety standards, they must not get a free pass on disposal issues. The existing producer responsibility regime (EPR) for batteries - established by the 2009 Waste Batteries and Accumulators Regulations - created the retail take-back scheme (battery collection points in supermarkets) and an accompanying obligation for producers to join a compliance scheme. However, with the proliferation of, and advances in, electricals, these regulations have not worked sufficiently to create the right disposal behaviour among consumers. They must be enhanced.

Greater strategic direction from government is now required to create the step change we need. This government and those previously have promised a review of battery regulations to encourage proper disposal and improved recycling rates. This would in turn reduce incidents of battery fires, while proposals to introduce convenient, funded kerbside collections of waste electricals through EPR are still being deliberated on. The risks posed by waste battery fires are simply too great, and we urge your department to bring forward these policy interventions at the earliest possible opportunity.

We are looking forward to reading your reply and would be grateful for the opportunity to meet with you to inform this policy as it is developed and implemented.

Yours sincerely,

Cllr Clyde Loakes MBE
Chair, North London Waste Authority

Edward Brown
Operations Director, LondonEnergy Limited

Cllr Rezina Chowdhry
Chair, Western Riverside Waste Authority

Cllr Krupa Sheth
Chair, West London Waste Authority

Cllr Miraj Patel
Chair, East London Waste Authority

Craig Konczak
Business Director MRFs, Biffa

Brian Ashby
Head of Municipal Collections and Streetscene, FCC Environment

Pascal Hauret
Managing Director - Municipal, Veolia UK



Towards a low waste north London

Summary guide to the North London Joint Waste Strategy 2025 - 2040



Background

The seven borough councils of Barnet, Camden, Enfield, Hackney, Haringey, Islington and Waltham Forest collect the waste and recycling for two million residents. North London Waste Authority is responsible for recycling, composting and disposing of the waste collected by the councils.



This document is a summary of the North London Joint Waste Strategy 2025-2040. You can read the full strategy at nlwa.gov.uk/JointWasteStrategy

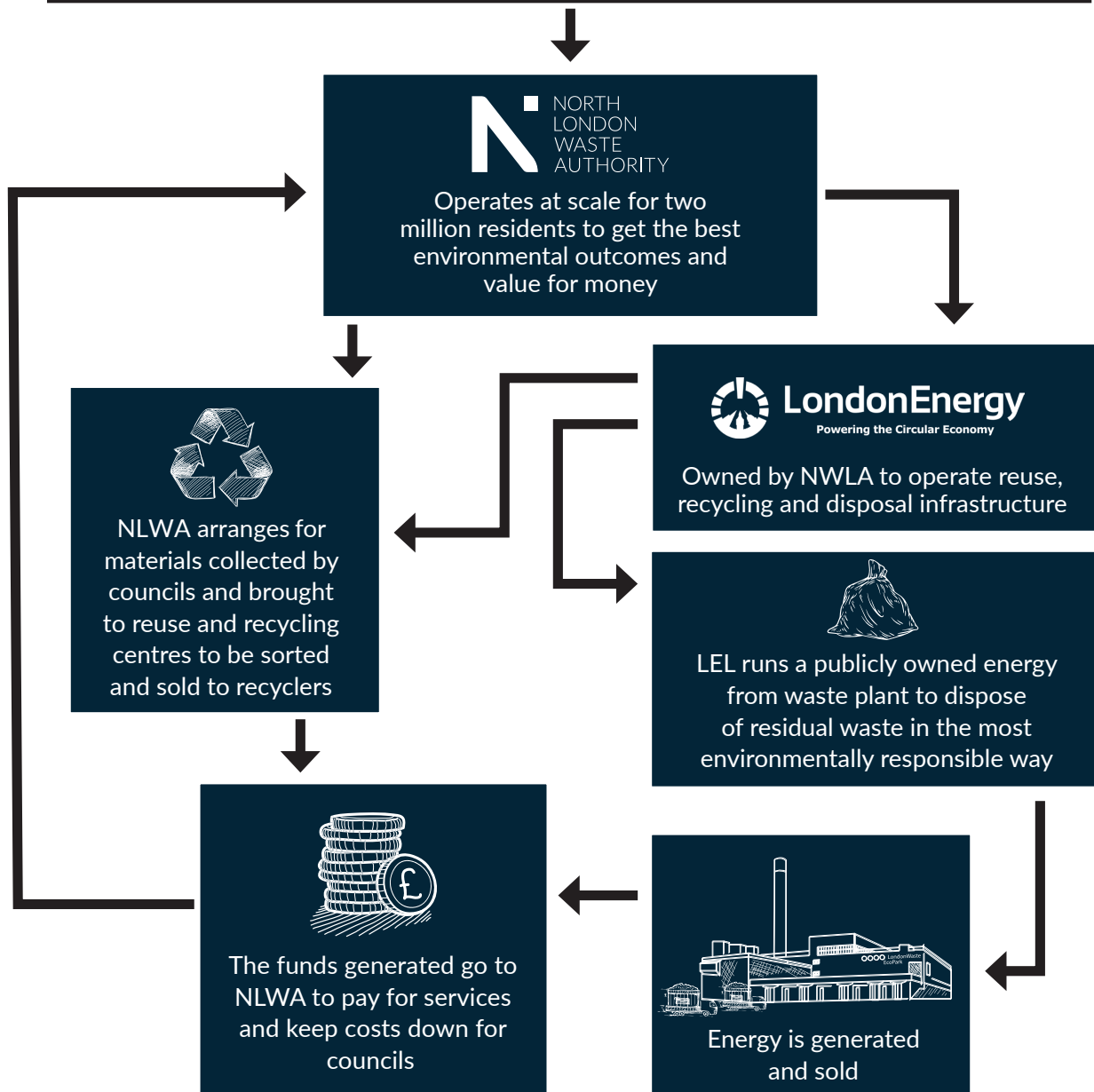
The North London Joint Waste Strategy forms the basis of how all eight authorities manage waste and how we work together to deliver essential waste services in the best interests of north London's residents.

To develop this strategy, we spoke with and listened to residents, community groups and local businesses. We engaged with 2,100 residents through a survey, focus groups, and pop-up stalls across north London, and the views they provided informed the contents of the strategy.

We then ran a public consultation on the draft strategy, listening to the views of a demographically representative sample of residents to ensure we heard the voices of north London's diverse communities. We engaged over 3,000 residents and their views have been considered and incorporated into the final Strategy.

By working together with communities, businesses, and government, we can build a more sustainable, resilient, and low-waste future for north London. This strategy marks a bold step forward in that journey.

Councils collect rubbish and recycling from households. They pay a levy to NLWA depending on the amount their residents throw away.



Vision and aims

Our vision is to move towards a low waste north London and meet the challenges of the climate emergency.

We will manage north Londoners' waste according to the waste hierarchy, prioritising waste reduction. We will maximise reuse, repair, recycling and use the most climate-friendly means of disposal possible for unavoidable waste. We will provide environmentally friendly, value-for-money services for our council tax payers.

We want to:

- Prioritise waste prevention and reduction.
- Create a more circular economy.
- Minimise the environmental impacts of waste, especially the effects on climate change.
- Develop our services with residents, community groups and local businesses.
- Provide resident-focused services that deliver the best value for council tax payers.

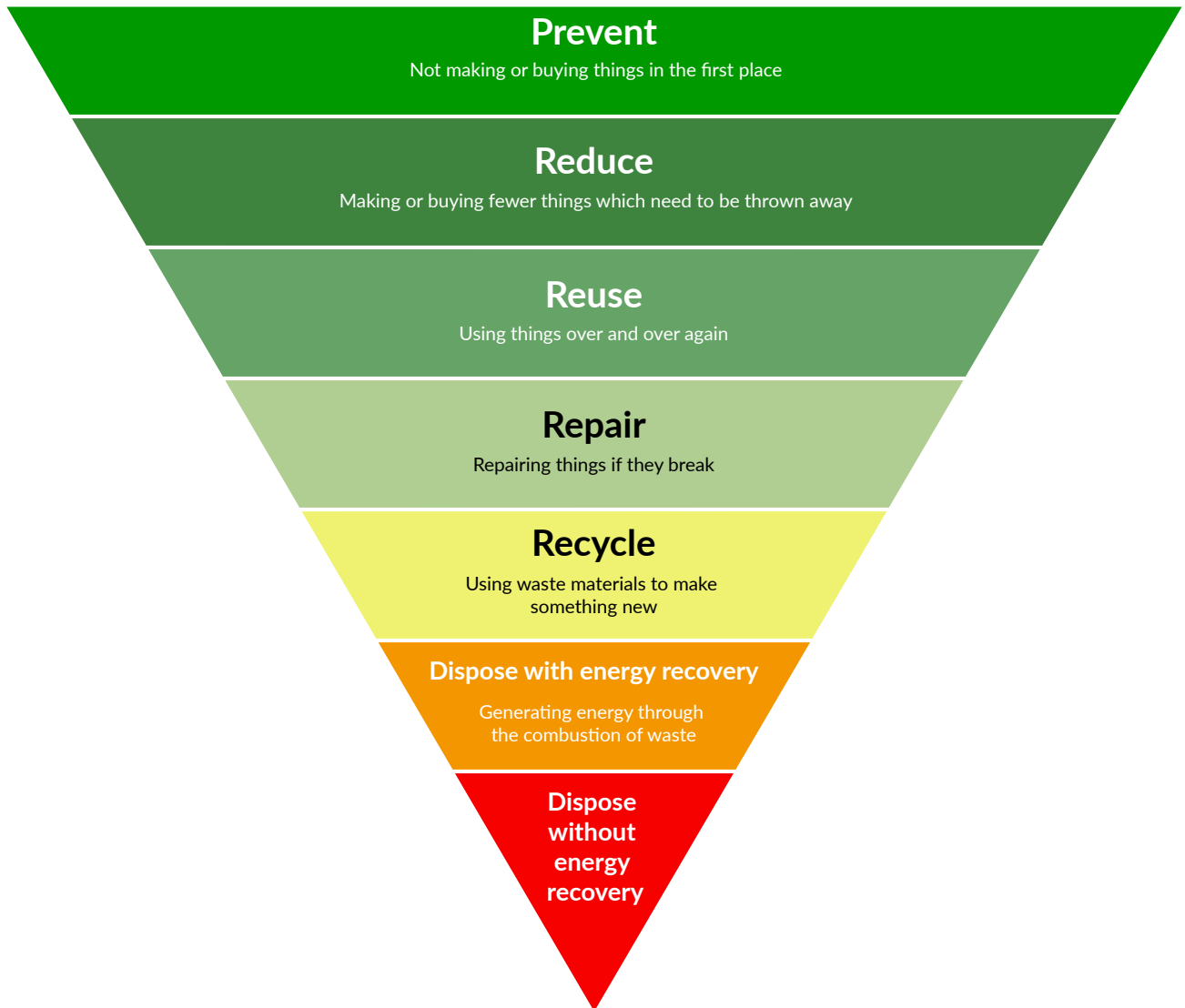
We will do this by:

- Using innovative waste management policies which contribute to achieving our environmental goals.
- Working with residents and businesses to minimise the amount of residual waste.
- Increasing uptake of reuse and repair.
- Maximising recycling.
- Diverting resources and waste from landfill.
- Delivering the infrastructure needed to manage north London's waste, and work with the local community to maximise the benefits of our facilities.
- Increasing accessibility of our services and information for all members of the community.
- Maximising all opportunities for social value benefits from waste and resource management, including employment, skills and wellbeing.

Waste hierarchy

Our guiding principle is the waste hierarchy, where preventing waste in the first place sits at the top.

This will help us transition away from a take-make-dispose economy to a more circular system which keeps resources in use for as long as possible.



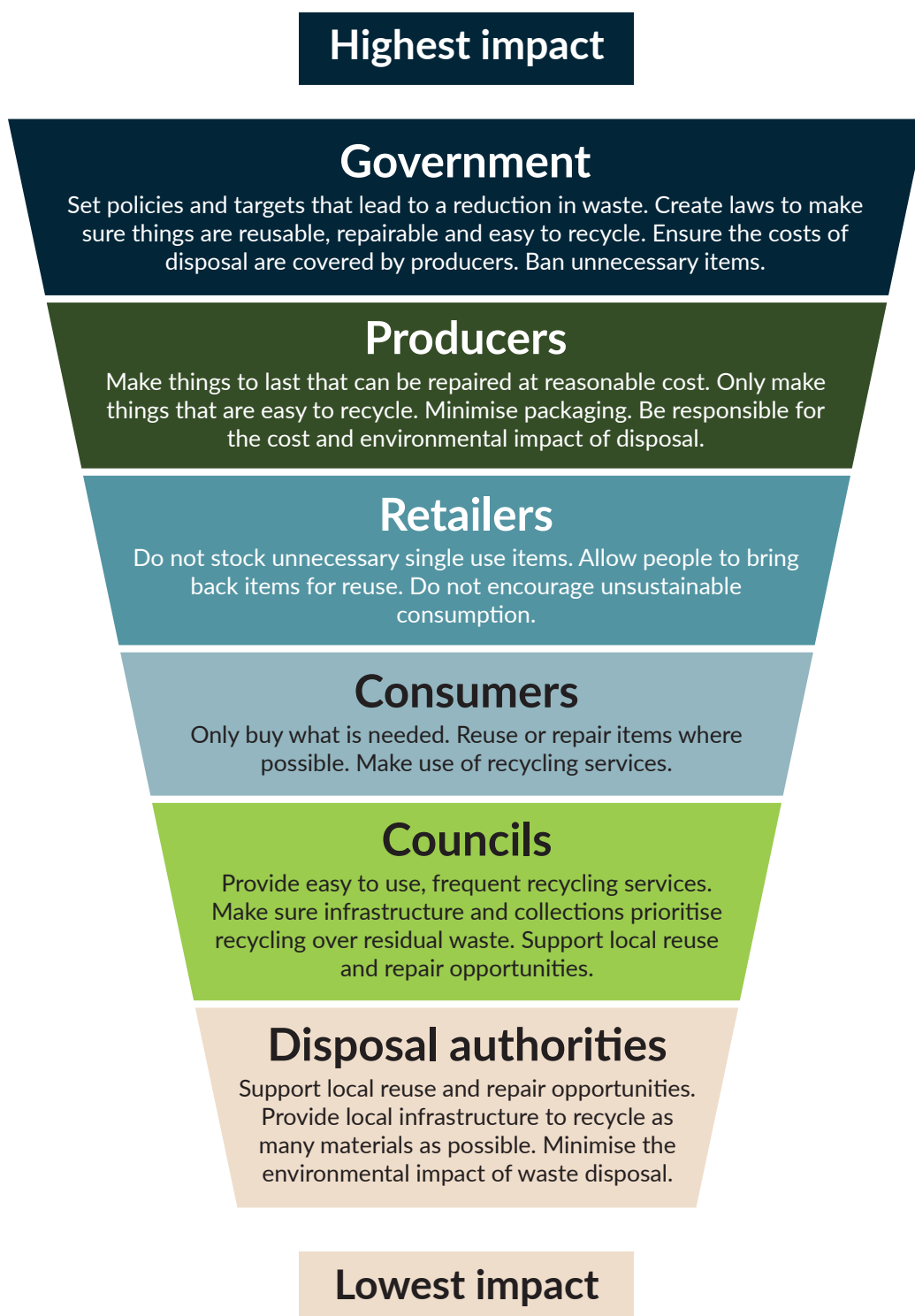
We want the items produced and used to be designed sustainably and have as long a life as possible. So rather than making, using and then throwing stuff away in a linear system, a circular economy means finding new ways of making use of materials and keeping value in the system.

This is the outcome we would like to see in north London and nationally, to help tackle the climate emergency by cutting down our consumption of virgin materials and avoiding the the associated carbon emissions.

Hierarchy of influence

Our vision of a low waste north London cannot be achieved by us alone. We must play a leading role in delivering this vision by driving innovation, enabling behaviour change, and investing in infrastructure and services that support waste prevention and circular practices.

Success also depends on action across the chain of influence through consistent government support and meaningful action from businesses to reduce waste at source and support circular practices.



Context

North London has:



Some of the country's most densely populated areas.



Areas with high levels of deprivation, alongside more affluent areas.



A highly diverse and mixed population.



A large proportion of households in flats and shared housing.



A more transient population, where people move in, out and around the area more than the UK average.

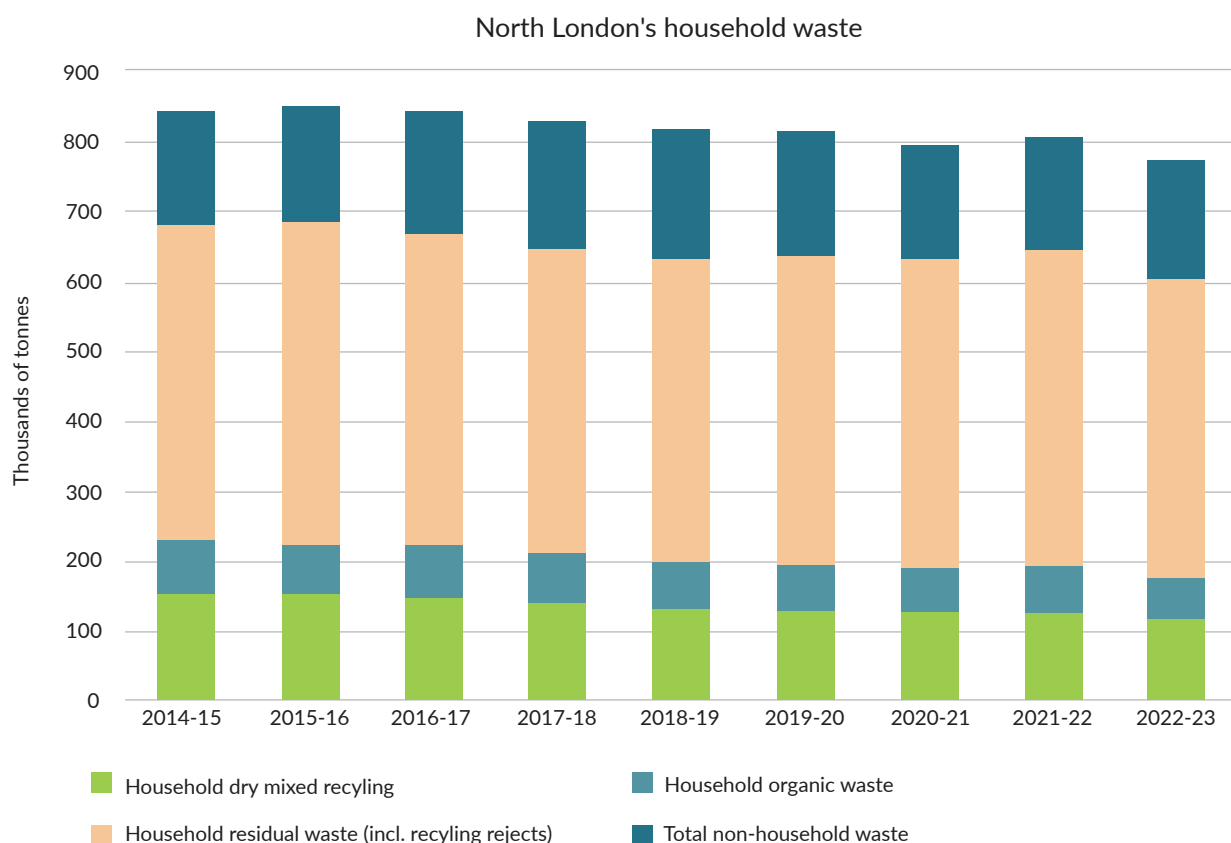


Far fewer homes with gardens than the UK average.

We must work within the local context, always ensuring we maintain a good understanding of local issues and deliver our environmental ambitions in collaboration with our community.

Our performance and ability to achieve our environmental ambitions are also heavily influenced by government policy. Progress depends on having a strong legislative framework to guide behaviour. We need consistent and aligned policymaking across government, real support for local waste management operations, and timely delivery of key commitments.

Total waste processed in north London has remained fairly stable over the period 2014 to 2023, fluctuating around 800,000 tonnes since 2018-19.



Our approach

Prioritise waste prevention, repair and reuse

Our first priority is to **support a reduction in waste by promoting prevention, repair and reuse**. This will promote a circular economy, keeping materials in use and out of the waste stream for as long as possible.

We will:

- Campaign for government to ensure manufacturers and retailers are responsible for the costs of the waste they produce, while supporting the repair and reuse sector.
- Provide prevention, reuse and repair opportunities for our residents and businesses, to enable the move to a circular economy.
- Engage and inform residents to help them participate in waste minimisation, reuse and recycling systems.
- Expand our work with schools to promote waste prevention to the next generation.
- Strengthen partnerships with public sector authorities, environmental groups, campaigners, and grassroots organisations to help us design, develop and deliver waste prevention initiatives in our communities.
- Report data on total waste per person and residual waste per person to monitor our overall progress on waste reduction.

Targets

- Reduce avoidable food waste by 50%
- Reduce recyclable material in residual waste by 50%
- Double the proportion of material reused at our reuse and recycling centres



Maximise our recycling

If waste cannot be prevented, or items cannot be reused or repaired, our next best option is to **improve and maximise our recycling**. This diverts material away from rubbish bins and avoids using virgin material to make new products.



We will:

- Ask government to encourage the use of recycled materials and support local authorities with more local powers, resources and appropriate targets.
- Maintain clear, effective and efficient recycling collections and ensure that as many recyclables as possible are collected from residents.
- Collect food waste from every household and engage with residents to maximise their participation in the service.
- Explore new initiatives to expand the range of materials we can recycle.
- Secure a new contract for recycling processing and ensure the services meet our environmental ambitions and deliver social benefits.
- Provide the infrastructure north London needs to manage the waste produced in the area, reducing transport emissions and maintaining local responsibility and oversight.
- Aim for our recycling to be processed where it will be treated with the highest environmental standards, and within the UK wherever possible.
- Work with residents to ensure there is clear information on what can and cannot be recycled and use our outreach with community groups to help raise awareness.
- Build more partnerships with local businesses to support more circular business models and encourage use of our local services.

Targets

- 50% of household waste to be reused, recycled or composted
- 100% of recycling to be processed within the UK

Reduce the environmental impact of disposal

We want to prioritise **reducing the environmental impact of disposal, where there is no option to prevent or reuse waste.**

We will:

- Ask government to legislate to reduce plastic in the waste stream and ensure product designers and manufacturers are responsible for the emissions of their products.
- Improve our facilities to manage all of north London's waste using the latest and best technology to control pollutants and limit our environmental impacts.
- Use north London's unavoidable waste as a resource for society by generating energy and heat for the local area, reducing demand on fossil fuels.
- Investigate the use of carbon capture and storage technologies to further reduce the carbon impact of our facilities.
- Continue our progress to decarbonise our vehicles and look to electric or alternative fuels for our fleets.
- Actively monitor new technologies for sorting and treating waste to improve our infrastructure and decarbonise the waste stream.
- Produce new analysis examining the carbon impact of the waste produced in north London.



Targets

- Zero landfill for the waste collected by local authorities in north London

Provide value for money and social benefits

We will deliver collaborative, community-focused services which provide value for money and maximise social value.

We will:

- Campaign for adequate funding from government for waste services and policy that recognises the local requirements of north London.
- Ensure all residents have access to the services they need to reduce their waste, recycle more and dispose of items responsibly.
- Work collaboratively alongside partners to deliver the best possible services and influence government policy.
- Provide apprenticeship and training opportunities, educational activities, and community grants for local residents.
- Provide good quality green jobs, paying the London Living Wage, and training.
- Adopt sustainable procurement policies and use our influence to help reduce waste, drive environmental benefits and progress towards a circular economy.
- Develop and implement best-in-class asset management practices to maximise the life of our assets and safeguard their functions and value for the community.



Monitoring our performance

Reporting on the Strategy will be to the North London Waste Authority, which is made up of 14 councillors, two from each of the seven north London boroughs. Progress towards achieving our aims will be presented to the Authority, and the public, on an annual basis and in delivery plans which will be aligned to the north London boroughs' Reduction and Recycling Plans.

