



# Simpler Recycling for Businesses in England

January 2025



In 2024 successive governments laid plans to simplify recycling for all households, businesses and non-domestic premises in England. The Separation of Waste (England) Regulations 2024 requires all businesses with 10 or more Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) employees to segregate specific waste streams for recycling by no later than 31st March 2025.



**Steve Reed, Secretary of State for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs**

*"We will end the throwaway society and work towards a zero-waste economy where resources are reused and recycled, creating new jobs and investment, but also protecting nature."*



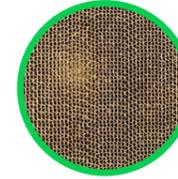
**Mary Creagh, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (Minister for Nature)**

As Minister for Nature, Mary Creagh is responsible for many of the Government policies, ranging from domestic biodiversity, through to green finance and the circular economy.

Simpler Recycling is one of a raft of legislation aimed at changing behaviours in every part of the material chain; which range from product manufacturer, wholesaler, retailer, and consumer. At the Reconomy Group we're ideally placed to support our customers by offering products and services addressing compliance requirements. This includes packaging Extended Producer Responsibility (pEPR), right through to bulk management of material under the Deposit Return Scheme (DRS), and the collection of materials which focuses on extending the lifecycle of our valuable resources.

## What is the impact of Simpler Recycling on businesses?

By 31st March 2025, all businesses (except those classified as microbusinesses with less than 10 FTE employees) in England will be required to present the following materials for recycling:



### All Paper & Cardboard except material containing:

- ✗ Glitter or foil
- ✗ Laminated paper
- ✗ Stickers and sticky paper
- ✗ Padded lined envelopes
- ✗ Paperback & hardback books
- ✗ Wallpaper



### All Glass bottles and jars. This doesn't include:

- ✗ Windowpanes
- ✗ Car windscreens
- ✗ Pyrex or other kitchenware
- ✗ Drinks glasses



### Metal containers including:

- ✓ Steel and aluminium tins & cans
- ✓ Steel and aluminium aerosols
- ✓ Aluminium foil
- ✓ Aluminium food trays
- ✓ Steel and aluminium jars and bottle lids
- ✓ Aluminium tubes



### All food waste including:

- ✓ Food intended for human or household pet consumption, regardless of whether it has a nutritional value
- ✓ Biodegradable material resulting from the processing or preparation of food,
- ✓ Inedible food parts such as bones, eggshells, fruit and vegetable skins, tea bags and coffee grounds.

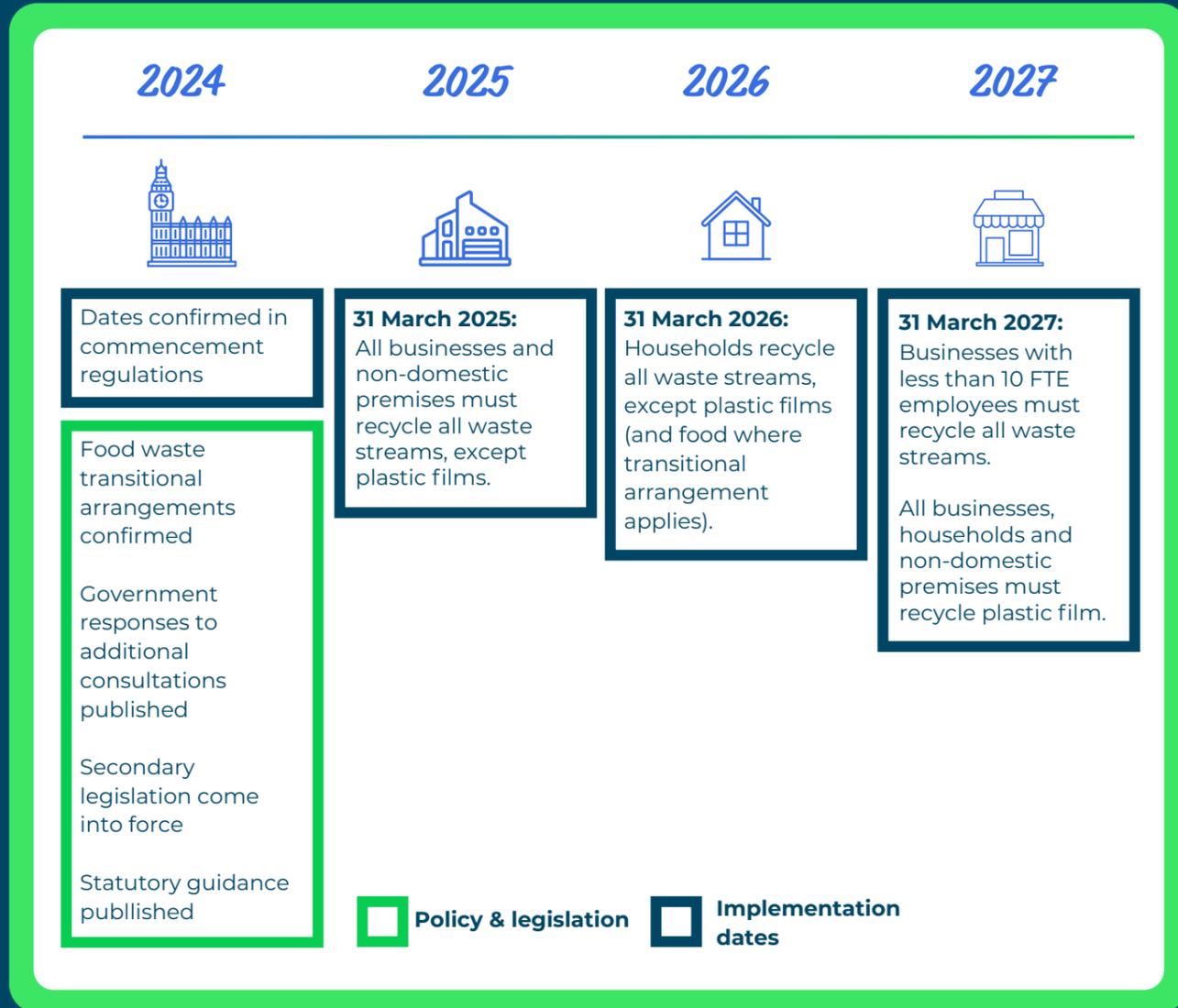


### Plastics including:

- ✓ Plastic bottles made from polyethylene terephthalate (PET, including amorphous, recycled PET), polypropylene (PP), and high-density polyethylene (HDPE)
- ✓ Pots, tubs, and trays made of PET (including amorphous, recycled and crystalline PET), PP (including expanded PP), and polyethylene (PE)
  - ✓ PE and PP plastic tubes larger than 50mm x 50mm
- ✓ Cartons for food, drink and other liquids, including aseptic and chilled cartons
- ✓ Plastic film packaging and plastic bags made of mono-polyethylene (mono-PE), mono-polypropylene (mono-PP), and mixed polyolefins PE and PP, including those metallised through vacuum or vapour deposition (to be included from 31st March 2027).

# The Facts

## What is the timeline to implement Simpler Recycling across all businesses and households in England?



### Do all businesses fall in-scope of this legislation?

The number of FTE employees you have will determine the date by which you will be legally obligated to comply with Simpler Recycling. Both the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and the Environment Agency have confirmed that **Simpler Recycling is applicable to all businesses in all settings.**

A common misconception is that construction sites are not required to comply with this legislation. Regardless of whether you operate a construction site or care home, a prison or a place of worship, a retail store or restaurant, a school or storage facility, or a hotel or hospital, you are obligated to separate and recycle all relevant waste streams.

### Is Dry Mixed Recycling (DMR) acceptable under Simpler Recycling?

Secretary of State, Steve Reed has determined that by default, businesses should aim to separate paper and card from all other dry materials so their potential to be recycled is not reduced. We will complete a TEEP assessment with you to determine if it is **T**echnically, **E**conomically, or **E**nvironmentally **P**racticable to collect dry materials in this way.

Where we believe that the separate collection of paper and cardboard isn't appropriate, **we are able to utilise an exemption which will allow you to put paper, cardboard, metals and plastics** in a co-mingled bin which will be classified as Dry Mixed Recycling (DMR).

### Can Glass bottles & jars be put into Dry Mixed Recycling bins?

The reforms allow for glass to be placed in dry mixed recycling, but **only if the waste carrier wants the material to be co-mingled.** Our Supply Chain team have spoken with circa 130 suppliers across England. The feedback is that less than 10% intend to co-mingle glass with other dry recyclables.

Therefore, if you dispose of any glass bottles & jars you will, in most areas, need a separate glass recycling bin. If you only produce one or two glass coffee jars each week, we encourage you to source an alternate packaged product so that you avoid the need for unnecessary bins.

### Is there a minimum level of food waste a business has to produce before it's required to separate it for recycling?

Under Simpler Recycling **there is no minimum volume of food waste** that businesses in England have to produce before they are legally obligated to segregate and recycle it.

The amount of food waste your business generates will determine the frequency of collection required. Whilst we can arrange for food waste to be taken away fortnightly in most areas, we strongly recommend that you opt to have it collected weekly, especially during the warmer months of the year.

### Is the use of macerators and digesters to treat food waste still allowed?

Macerators have been banned in Scotland and Wales, and their use in England is currently **under review** by Government. At the time of publishing this guidance document, they are still an accepted form of treatment for food waste. It should be noted that under Regulatory Position Statement 229, food waste should not remain on site for more than 7 days before being processed via a macerator or digester.

## Can recyclable waste streams be co-mingled with general or construction type waste streams?

All materials specified as recyclable under Simpler Recycling **must be collected separately** from residual, general or construction waste. The co-mingling of materials is not allowed even if the receiver of the waste operates a facility, such as a Materials Recycling Facility, which is capable of segregating materials.

## What are the consequences of non-compliance?

Should you fail to segregate relevant materials, you may experience or incur:

- X Missed collections
- X Wasted journey fees
- X Excess weight charges
- X Contamination charges

In the event that the Environment Agency identifies you as non-compliant, they will provide advice and guidance. However, if the advice and guidance is ignored the Environment Agency will be able to issue a compliance notice under section 45AZA or section 45AZB (industrial or commercial waste) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. In the event that a waste producer ignores or fails to comply with the notice, it will be deemed that an offence has been committed, meaning that the Environment Agency can take action according to their enforcement and sanction policy. **It is at the discretion of the court under sentencing guidelines to determine the level of fine** to be applied or other action to be taken against a business and/or its Directors.





To review the full Government response to the Consultation outcome please [click here](#).

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