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EDITORIAL VIEWPOINT

By **Brendan Gilligan**

Last month, a story caught my attention that was both funny and troubling. A cow named Beau Vine in Wiltshire got approval from the Government to dispose of people's waste. This raised concerns that criminals are taking advantage of weak rules to dump waste illegally.

Fly-tipping in rural areas has become a big problem. One reason is that it's too easy to get a waste carrier license and organised criminal gangs exploit this loophole. They use these permits to appear legitimate and then illegally dump large amounts of waste, including hazardous materials, endangering the livelihoods of rural communities.

To test the system, the Country Land and Business Association (CLA) applied for a waste carrier license in Beau's name. They got approval in under three seconds, with no questions asked. This wasn't a one-time issue. A second application under the name Lawrie Load was also quickly approved, showing that even basic checks are missing.

Currently, to apply for a license, you only need to provide a name, address, email, and pay a small fee. No identity checks or photos are required.

Ann Maidment, Director of CLA South West and Beau Vine's owner, said: *"Beau Vine is great at grazing and lounging around, but waste management is not his job. That he got a license so quickly shows there are serious flaws in the system. If a cow can get a license, it raises the question: who is the Government rejecting?"*

A system that approves applicants instantly, without checks, isn't protecting the environment. It is aiding fly-tippers. The Government needs to implement proper checks and standards to stop this issue and protect communities.

This comes as rural communities continue to struggle with frequent fly-tipping. A CLA survey found that nearly three-quarters of farmers face this issue each year, with some getting targeted several times a month. Each incident costs about £1,000 to clean up, and 85% of farmers have invested in security measures such as CCTV and lighting.

This online story was published on the same day that changes to protect farmers from fly-tipping were blocked by government ministers. See page 5 for the full story.



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WATA and BPF call on government to protect sectors from fuel cost spikes

The Washed Aggregates Trade Association (WATA) warns that its members and the wider waste and recycling industry face increasing exposure to fuel shortages and price volatility due to the ongoing conflict in the Middle East, which is affecting oil supplies.

The UK's £24 billion waste and recycling sector supports over 140,000 jobs and underpins the £100 billion construction industry.

The supply of recycled and washed aggregates is vital for sustainable materials and environmental standards, but the sector relies heavily on reliable and affordable fuel for transport and operations.

Andy Hill, CEO of WATA, comments: *"While we recognise that this is a fast-moving and complex global situation, it is vital that the government provides clarity and sets out how it plans to safeguard essential industries if disruption continues, including confirming which sectors are deemed critical and how access to fuel for these sectors will be protected in the event of shortages."*

"We're particularly concerned that, in the absence of a clear action plan, waste and recycling operators could face significant operational challenges, whether through fuel shortages, restricted access or further cost increases."

WATA is calling on the government to:

- Prioritise the waste and recycling sector for fuel in the event of any supply issues, as was done during the Covid pandemic;



- Allow the temporary use of red diesel for businesses in the sector operating machinery, including washed aggregate plants;
- Cut taxes on fuel duty and suspend the forthcoming fuel duty rise for businesses in the waste and recycling industry

Meanwhile, a recent survey by the British Plastics Federation (BPF) shows that 98% of member companies have faced rising raw material and operational costs, with over 63% reporting delayed or cancelled orders.

The challenges extend beyond virgin polymers to include additives, components, and machinery, as well as higher freight charges and difficulties sourcing from the Far East.

In a statement, the BPF said: *"The plastics industry occupies a strategic*

position in the UK economy. As the third-largest manufacturing sector, it employs 145,000 people, has a turnover of £30.7 billion, and is one of the UK's top ten exporting sectors."

"Disruption is likely to be experienced in critical markets - the supply of fresh food and water, defence, healthcare, mobility, and the digital and energy infrastructures."

Philip Law, BPF's Director-General, said: *"The UK has had a growing dependence on the Middle East as a source of feedstock and polymers. The war has had an exaggerated impact on the UK's plastics industry, as the UK imports more than half of its raw materials for plastics. The UK Government should be acutely aware of this vulnerability in the UK's security and act to protect an industry so central to our national interests."*

Fly-tipping law change to protect farmers blocked

Countryside campaigners are angry after the Government rejected amendments to address what rural groups call a "fundamental injustice" in fly-tipping laws.

During a Commons debate on 14th April, ministers voted against proposals that would have made convicted fly-tippers responsible for cleanup costs and required local authorities to collect waste from both public and private land.

Currently, landowners, including farmers, face hefty cleanup costs and potential prosecution for waste dumped on their

property.

During the Commons debate, MPs expressed concern about this unfair burden. Conservative MP Andrew Snowden stated that rural farmers often suffer significant losses due to fly-tipping by criminals.

Policing and crime minister Sarah Jones acknowledged the issue, describing fly-tipping as "repulsive" and noting that communities are affected. She mentioned the Waste Crime Action Plan, published on 20th March, which includes tougher penalties for offenders, but maintained that the Government does not

support requiring councils to clear private land due to high costs.

Campaigners, including the Countryside Alliance, argue that this decision upholds an unjust system.

Johnnie Furse from the Countryside Alliance criticised the Government for missing an opportunity to reform the broken system. The alliance, along with the National Farmers Union and other groups, will continue to push for changes to ensure farmers are not unfairly burdened by others' actions.



Catherine David. Picture credit: WRAP

WRAP's UK Packaging Pact launches with 100 signatories

The UK Packaging Pact has officially launched, with 100 organisations committed to this new ten-year voluntary agreement.

Developed by WRAP, the initiative was formally introduced on 21st April at Sustainable Ventures, where founding signatories gathered to celebrate the start of the programme.

According to WRAP, the Pact aims to foster co-ordinated action across various sectors to promote a more sustainable, circular approach to packaging.

Catherine David, CEO of WRAP, commented: "The UK Packaging Pact is a unique, complete system approach to unlocking packaging transitions across the value chain.

"No other programme brings together the key players needed to deliver the enormous changes we must make."

The UK Packaging Pact is the successor to the UK Plastics Pact, expanding the lens from plastics to all commonly used packaging materials, including glass, paper, card, metals, plastics and bio-based materials.

The Pact is structured around four interconnected goals:

- **Optimise packaging: Reducing single-use formats, eliminating problematic materials and improving recyclability, while increasing recycled content;**
- **Scaling reuse and refill: Supporting interoperable systems to increase reusable packaging;**

- **Supporting infrastructure investment: Building evidence to accelerate investment and address system bottlenecks across collections and processing;**
- **Harmonising data: Simplifying reporting requirements and improving traceability to enable data-driven decisions.**

David added: "Policies are essential, but they alone cannot deliver, and the Packaging Pact will deliver the practical change necessary through a flexible framework allowing signatories to focus on the actions most important to them.

"Today, we begin to unlock progress - to reduce businesses' costs - to mitigate against risks - and to prepare for the future."

The launch comes in response to rising global waste and resource pressures. Businesses also face cost challenges due to energy and raw material prices, with the International Energy Agency noting that oil price volatility, driven by geopolitical instability, affects the cost of virgin plastic resin.

WRAP's new Pact aims to help the industry address these environmental and economic challenges while promoting circularity.

Read more about the UK Packaging Pact by scanning the QR code.



WRAP launches TV campaign, backed by Sky

WRAP has launched a new TV campaign, 'Rescue Me, Recycle', to promote recycling in homes across the UK.

The campaign is currently airing on Sky channels and aims to encourage people to recycle more and use resources better.

Although many people intend to recycle, their actions can be inconsistent. WRAP's recent research shows that while 89% of UK households recycle regularly, 79% of them throw away at least one item that could be recycled.

On average, each household misses recycling two to three items. Additionally, only 9% of people feel "very confident" about what can be recycled.

WRAP received £200,000 in advertising support from Sky Media's Sky Zero Footprint Fund, which provides £2 million in media value for organisations working to make environmental changes. WRAP won the Fund's *Catalyst Category*, which helps charities and not-for-profits create awareness.

Working with the creative agency Among Equals, the 'Rescue Me, Recycle' campaign addresses the lack of confidence in recycling. It gives common household items, such as toilet roll tubes and perfume bottles, human traits and voices to inspire people to care about them and to view recycling as an act of 'rescue.'

The TV advert features a character based on a toilet roll, showing its 'dreams' and what happens if it's not recycled.

By making these everyday objects relatable, the campaign aims to reach those who may not care much about recycling and encourage them to recycle more.

The advertising campaign, targeting households, supports the ongoing Recycle Now campaign, which runs on social media and other digital channels and leads up to Recycle Week from September 14th to 20th. During this week, additional 'Rescue Me' characters will highlight other recyclable items that people often throw away.

Supported by partnerships with government, councils, retailers, and manufacturers, Recycle Week aims to unite the nation in improving recycling habits.

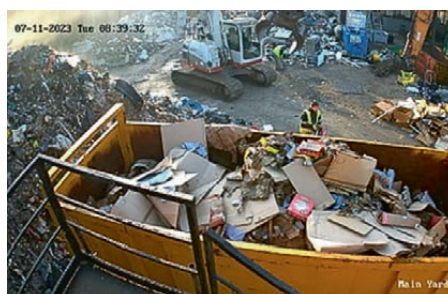
Waste management company fined just £1 after worker crushed by excavator

A waste management company in Hampshire has been fined after a man had both legs amputated when he was crushed by a 15-tonne excavator.

The 24-year-old man was working for R W Waste Limited at its yard in Shedfield on 7th November, 2023. The excavator, operating in the same yard, reversed over him as he was sorting waste. Both of Mr Parrott's lower legs were later amputated, and he has been unable to return to work since.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that R W Waste Limited failed to protect workers and other visitors to the site. The company had not put in place suitable arrangements to keep pedestrians safe while vehicles were moving around the yard.

Health and safety legislation requires workplaces to be organised so that pedestrians and vehicles can circulate safely. Where large vehicles must reverse,



A CCTV screenshot of the waste yard at R W Waste, shortly before the incident. Picture credit: HSE

employers must consider additional precautions and implement them where appropriate to protect those working nearby. HSE guidance on reversing states that most of these accidents can be avoided by taking simple precautions.

R W Waste Limited pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) and Section 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.

At Southampton Magistrates' Court on

16th April, 2026, the court heard that the appropriate fine, after trial, would have been £180,000, which was reduced to £120,000 to reflect the company's guilty plea. However, as the company had gone into liquidation and was unable to pay, it was ordered to pay a nominal fine of £1. No order for costs was made for the same reason.

HSE Inspector Nicola Pinckney said: *"The failures of this company has left a young man with truly life-changing injuries. He has not been able to work since."*

"Unfortunately, this type of accident is sadly not uncommon in this industry."

"After the incident, and following enforcement action taken by HSE, the company did introduce a number of readily available measures that significantly reduce the risk of this happening again."

"We take these failures seriously and will hold those to account who fail to keep their workers and other people safe."

EA to require reporting on all green list waste exports from July

Starting on 1st July, 2026, all exports of Article 18 waste from England must be reported to the Environment Agency (EA). This new rule expands the checks that were originally for waste tyre shipments to every green list waste stream.

Exporters must submit Annex VII data every month, which means they will report on the shipments made in the previous month. The EA aims to ensure that waste is correctly classified, disposed of in the right place, and managed in an environmentally safe manner. These new rules apply only to exports, not to imports of green list waste.

Since the EA can only enforce rules in England, exporters in Scotland, Wales, or Northern Ireland won't have to follow these requirements unless their local authorities - SEPA, Natural Resources Wales, or NIEA - set up similar rules.

Along with monthly reports, exporters must show proof that the facilities receiving the waste abroad are properly authorised. The minimum requirements include proof of authorisation according to local laws, GPS location data, geotagged photos of the facility's equipment and activities, a flow chart of the process, a valid Article 18 contract between the exporter and the receiver, and contact information for a specific person at the facility.

Exporters may also need to provide additional documents about environmental management, health and safety measures, and emergency plans.

These new rules are similar to those already in place for waste tyre exports, where the EA has been enforcing stricter checks since October 2025. In just five months, they issued 48 notices for

missing information and 21 prohibitions. About 89% of UK waste rubber is sent to India, but documentation problems persisted - only 54 of 4,189 forms were compliant.

The EA plans to introduce fees for the compliance programme, pending public consultation and ministerial approval, but compliance efforts will proceed regardless.

The EA describes the changes coming in July 2026 as a temporary step. More reforms to Article 18 waste controls are planned for 2027 through Defra's mandatory digital waste tracking programme, which will require new laws. Until this system is ready, the EA will continue to rely on monthly submissions and targeted compliance checks.



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Exchange for Change confirms flat 20p deposit for DRS

Exchange for Change, the not-for-profit, industry-led organisation delivering the Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) across England, Scotland and Northern Ireland, has confirmed that a flat 20p deposit will be applied on all in-scope containers when the scheme launches in October 2027.

The 20p deposit will be applied to all single-use drinks in PET plastic, steel, and aluminium containers between 150ml and 3 litres at the point of purchase and will be fully refundable to consumers when the containers are returned.

This announcement follows a detailed consultation with industry stakeholders and a review of current deposit return schemes in Europe and around the world.

The research examined different deposit amounts and methods to determine the most effective way to encourage consumers to return containers. The aim was to set a deposit that is simple and fair for both producers and retailers.

Confirming the deposit amount is an important step for Exchange for Change as it prepares for the DRS launch. By

announcing the deposit amount with just under 18 months to go before the scheme starts, they hope to help producers and retailers plan accordingly.

The research examined how consumers react to different deposit levels, ranging from 10p to 30p. Results showed that deposits below 15p are unlikely to motivate people to return 90% of containers within three years. A 30p deposit could make drinks too expensive for consumers.

The analysis also examined the idea of different deposit amounts based on the container's size or material. Although some countries with a DRS use variable deposit structures, the findings suggest that these models often lead to lower return rates for smaller containers.

Russell Davies, Exchange for Change chief executive, said: "The deposit value is a pivotal part of how the deposit return scheme will work in practice. That's why we've engaged widely with industry, undertaken extensive market research and in-depth analysis on how schemes work in other countries."

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HAVE YOUR SAY!

"This work has identified that a flat 20p deposit is the most proportionate and sustainable amount for the UK."

Commenting on the announcement, Travis Way, Managing Director at RVM experts EcoVend, part of international circular economy specialists Reconomy, said: "While much of the industry had anticipated a flat 20p deposit, its confirmation is a helpful step forward for businesses preparing for the UK's Deposit Return Scheme."

"Having greater clarity at this stage allows retailers, producers and operators to plan with more confidence, particularly when it comes to infrastructure, cashflow and customer engagement."

"With further detail still to come and the Deposit Management Organisation continuing to develop the framework, this remains a critical period for industry preparation. Continued engagement and education with retailers will be key to ensuring a smooth and effective rollout."

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DRS amendments for reverse vending machines published

Amendments to legislation designed to accelerate the rollout of reverse vending machines (RVMs) for the UK's Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) came into force last month.

Under the new Class CA provisions, RVMs can be installed within the curtilage of a shop, including both internal spaces and the immediate external vicinity of the premises, as well as canopies or enclosures required for the operation of the machines.

While the new rules remove the need for planning permission in many cases, they impose strict conditions on the size, placement and location of RVMs.

The footprint is capped at 80 square metres, with a maximum height of four metres, while machines installed into shop walls must not protrude more than two metres.

Travis Way, Managing Director at RVM experts EcoVend, said: "We welcome the decision to allow retailers to install reverse vending machines without requiring full planning permission. This is a positive step forward, making the journey toward preparing for the UK Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) more straightforward and accessible."

"This approach particularly supports smaller retailers by reducing the administrative burden associated with installation. That said, it remains essential that retailers have clear guidance on the steps needed to be fully prepared for the UK DRS, which comes into effect in October 2027."





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Flexible plastics collections are coming - but can the waste industry cope?

By Michael Plant, Supply Chain Director of HAHN Plastics UK

The past few months have brought significant change to household waste collection, with 'Simpler Recycling' reforms bringing greater consistency to what is collected and how it is handled. But while attention has focused on harmonising collections, a more complex shift is fast approaching - kerbside collections for film plastics.

From March 2027, all local authorities will be required to collect flexible plastic packaging from households under the Flex Collect scheme. This means items such as plastic bags, crisp packets and food wrapping will enter the recycling stream at scale for the first time. Crucially, councils and waste operators will need to both collect these materials and ensure they can be effectively sorted and reprocessed. That raises a critical question for the sector: is the UK's waste infrastructure ready?

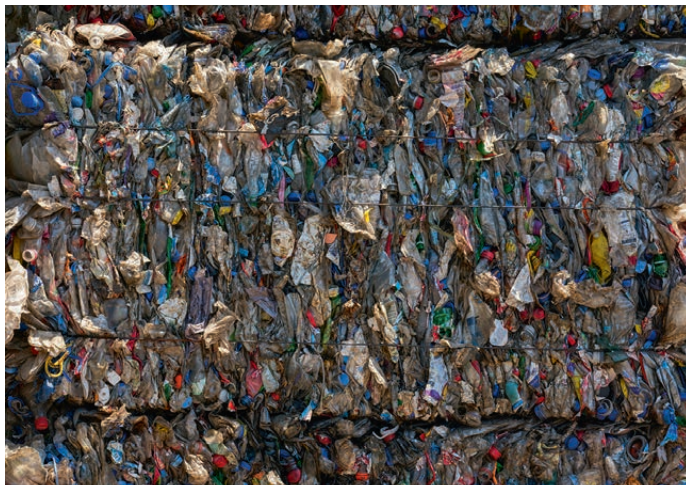
Across Britain, more than 100 Material Recovery Facilities (MRFs) process over 4m tonnes of material each year, forming the backbone of how household recycling is sorted and prepared for reprocessing. On paper, that suggests a system with the capacity to respond to change. In practice, the picture is far more uneven.

Much of the UK's infrastructure is made up of smaller facilities, often designed around traditional dry recyclables such as paper, card and rigid plastics. They were not built with flexible plastics in mind, and adapting them to handle these materials is not straightforward.

Film plastics behave very differently. Being lightweight, they can be easily contaminated and are difficult to separate using conventional sorting technology - often requiring additional stages of cleaning and processing before they can be reused. This is where the current gaps in the system become clear. The challenge is not just how much we can process, but whether our infrastructure is currently capable of handling a more complex material stream at all.

Aside from looking at capacity, we need to take a long, hard look at the very structure and consistency of our industry as well. The UK's recycling system is shaped by a mix of local authority contracts and private waste operators, each with its own approach to how MRFs are designed and run. As a result, infrastructure varies significantly across the country, from the technologies in place to the types of materials facilities are able to handle. This lack of uniformity presents a real challenge as film collections are introduced at a national level.

While some facilities may be able to adapt, others will require more fundamental upgrades, creating an uneven playing field in how materials are processed. Without greater alignment, a standardised collection system risks feeding into a fragmented processing network.



Germany offers a useful point of comparison. There, recycling systems have been developed in a far more co-ordinated way, with investment across collection, sorting and reprocessing aligned from the outset. This has enabled the infrastructure to evolve alongside policy, rather than lag behind it, and has helped create a system better equipped to handle more complex materials such as flexible plastics.

What is needed now is a more co-ordinated national approach to infrastructure development. That means bringing together local authorities, waste operators and processors to ensure investment is directed in a consistent and strategic way, so that the system evolves as a whole rather than in isolated parts. This must be supported by meaningful government investment.

If the UK is serious about meeting its net zero ambitions, the UK's recycling system must be recognised as critical national infrastructure, on par with energy and transport. Only then can the sector process film plastics at scale. Without targeted investment, there is a risk the system captures more film plastics than it can effectively recycle, placing increasing pressure on facilities that are not yet equipped to handle them at scale.

The next phase of reform must therefore focus as much on infrastructure as it does on collection. Investment in sorting, cleaning and processing capacity must happen now, and in a way that ensures the system develops consistently across the country.

Flex Collect represents a significant opportunity to reduce waste going into landfill, but for it to succeed, it must be supported by the right foundations. As well as it being about collecting more material, closing the loop is about ensuring we have the infrastructure to turn it back into something of value.

Survey: UK bins 1.6 billion pieces of plastic packaging a week

The Big Plastic Count, a recent survey organised by the environmental charity Everyday Plastic, gathered data from over 68,000 participants nationwide, who documented every piece of plastic packaging they discarded between 9th-15th March this year.

In total, the survey calculated that participants threw away an astonishing 1.5 million pieces of plastic packaging during that week. When projected across all UK households, this amounts to approximately 1.6 billion pieces each week, totalling around 82 billion pieces annually.

Daniel Webb, the founder of Everyday Plastic, emphasised that plastic waste has reached “national crisis” levels. He stressed that reducing plastic production, rather than merely increasing recycling efforts, is crucial for addressing the issue.

“The Big Plastic Count has once again shown that plastic production is out of control, with billions of pieces being discarded each week. Recycling cannot keep pace with this volume, and we are incinerating more plastic than ever before. We cannot simply burn our way out of this



Plastic-wrapped fruit and veg is difficult to recycle, but is sold in lots of shops and supermarkets

problem,” he stated.

The survey found that 82% of the plastic waste identified originated from food and drink packaging, with the most common items being fruit and vegetable packaging. This type of packaging is made from soft film plastic, which is challenging to recycle on a large scale in the UK, resulting in most of it being incinerated.

One major issue with plastic is that most types are not biodegradable, meaning

they do not decompose in the environment as paper or food waste do. Instead, plastic can persist for hundreds of years, contributing to plastic pollution.

Everyday Plastic has called on the Government to take several actions: Eliminate plastic packaging from uncut fruit and vegetables by 2030, halt the construction of new waste incinerators immediately, and stop the export of plastic waste to other countries.

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**LISA GILLESPIE**E: lisa.gillespie@hotmail.co.uk**Director of People and Culture at
Settlement Agreement Solicitors**

Lisa has over two decades' experience in leadership roles in the HR and employment law sectors. With qualifications in employment law, psychology, NLP and mediation, she isn't afraid to challenge dogmatic thinking. She approaches everyday people's issues with one mission: to put the human back into human resources.



'Lord of the Things'

Jack Dorsey - the wizard of tech who built a global town square and then wandered off to disrupt your wallet - has been prophesising about the demise of middle managers.

According to Dorsey, in his recent post *From Hierarchy to Intelligence: Jack Dorsey's Blueprint for the AI-Native Organization "BLOCK"* (scan the QR code) we're standing on the edge of a managerial extinction event.



Middle managers, he says, are toast. Artificial Intelligence will vaporise the bureaucratic layer cake, leaving behind just three roles: *"those coding the AI, those giving it direction, and those questioning the direction."* Whilst I disagree that the Romans introduced hierarchy - I'd say that happened around 2334, when Sargon of Akkad conquered the Sumerian city-states... I think he has a point.

For generations, middle managers have been the connective tissue of the corporate body. From interpreting executive visions, translating strategy into task lists, forwarding emails and convening meetings to demonstrate they are doing something, they were the diplomats between the dreamers at the top and the doers at the bottom. Without them, chaos reigned; with them, mediocrity thrived. But now, Dorsey's AI fuelled Darwinism suggests that connective tissue is obsolete as AI will do all of that.

In Dorsey's vision, corporate life becomes something like an ant colony: the coders build the hive, the leaders oversee it, and a small council of philosopher critics asks whether the activities are moral, legal, or likely to bankrupt it.

It's a brutal simplification but credit where credit is due; it's also elegant.

There's already evidence his vision is creeping in. AI systems now monitor workflows, assign tasks, and generate performance reviews more consistently than any human boss with a calendar full of 121s. As an HR professional, I can see the sense in this. Algorithms don't hold grudges, don't gossip in the break room, and don't raise grievances. They simply optimise.

In that sense, AI isn't just replacing managers - it's becoming the world's most competent (and objective) one.

But while the idea of AI middle management sounds efficient, it raises a delicious irony: if software can lead, are we sure humans will still feel led? Management was always part logistics, part theatre. The 121 meeting isn't just information exchange - it has become ritual. It gives people a sense of connection and emotional calibration. Replace that with a dashboard, and it can end up looking suspiciously like an expensive human latency problem.

Three roles to rule them all

Let's look at those three surviving roles Dorsey foretells.

Individual contributors who build the system, directly responsible individuals who own specific outcomes on 90-day cycles, and player-coaches who remain hands-on while developing people. It's a clean triad - the builders, the deciders, and the coaches. Everyone else? Redundant.

Of course, we've heard extinction stories before. The internet was supposed to end newspapers. (They're still here, just hanging by a subscription thread.) Automation was supposed to kill

all factory work in the 1990s - and then Amazon built warehouses the size of small villages. Middle management, too, has cheated death for decades. Every flattened hierarchy eventually fattens again.

Why? Because humans crave structure - and someone has to organise the chaos. The dream of three clean roles ignores that people are messy, politics are inevitable, and ambiguity loves a meeting invite.

Dorsey's claim sounds dystopian, but behind the provocation lies optimism: an organisation so fluid, intelligent, and transparent that it doesn't need bureaucratic glue. It's the fantasy of frictionless co-ordination - everyone working with perfect clarity, no politics, no dead weight, just flow.

That fantasy has haunted every management theorist since Frederick Taylor first timed factory workers with a stopwatch. Dorsey's twist is that, this time, *the stopwatch is conscious*.

Whether that world becomes utopia or absurdity depends less on AI and more on us. If we design AI as a tool for empowerment, we may finally liberate people from the drudgery of reporting chains. If we design it as a control mechanism, we'll simply automate oppression at scale. Either way, middle managers won't be the only ones facing obsolescence - so will anyone whose work depends on ambiguity, politics, or PowerPoint.

Maybe Dorsey is right, and we're watching the managerial meteor streak across the corporate sky. Or maybe, true to form, middle management will rebrand itself again - this time as AI liaisons, data curators, or emotion engineers. After all, extinction in business is just another word for reorganisation.

If history teaches anything, it's that the middle always finds a way back. After all, who else is going to schedule the meeting to discuss what AI just decided?



Routeware expands UK presence with acquisition of PermiServ

Routeware, a global provider of innovative AI-powered solutions for waste and environmental services, announced last month the acquisition of PermiServ, the leading UK company in garden waste permit management for local authorities. This partnership will enable councils to access advanced AI-driven tools that were previously unavailable to many local authorities.

The acquisition emphasises Routeware's long-term commitment to supporting UK local authorities with top-tier solutions that simplify operations, enhance resident experiences, and improve the delivery of environmental services. Currently, Routeware collaborates with over 100 local authorities in the UK and has recently launched its latest waste and recycling technology platform for local governments, called Routeware SmartCity. This platform allows local authorities of all sizes to lower costs, boost productivity, and enhance crew safety by streamlining processes, automating tasks, and utilising data more effectively.

PermiServ partners with councils throughout the UK to manage subscription-based garden waste services. It offers comprehensive permit administration, logistics for fulfilment, and effective communication with residents. Its specialised software and managed services help councils reduce administrative burdens, improve compliance visibility, and deliver reliable services to residents.

Together, Routeware and PermiServ will provide local authorities with a more integrated operating model, linking resident engagement, permitting, routing, in-cab systems, compliance workflows, and service optimisation into a unified platform.

By integrating PermiServ, Routeware strengthens its role at a crucial touchpoint between councils and residents, expanding its capability to support the entire lifecycle of subscription-based services - from sign-up and permitting to

collection, compliance, and performance visibility.

Jeremy Collins, CEO of Routeware, said: *"PermiServ has established itself as the trusted market leader in garden waste permit management for UK local authorities. Their strong council relationships, operational expertise, and resident-focused approach align perfectly with Routeware's mission to simplify environmental services through connected technology. We are pleased to welcome the PermiServ team to Routeware and look forward to investing further in solutions that councils and residents rely on every day."*

PermiServ will continue to operate with its existing team and customer focus, ensuring continuity of service for councils. Customers will maintain their current relationships and points of contact.

The combined organisation will focus on:

- Enhancing integration between permitting, routing, and resident engagement systems;
- Supporting councils in streamlining service workflows and reducing manual processes;
- Investing in digital tools that strengthen compliance, reporting, and service transparency;
- Expanding Routeware's long-term investment and presence within the UK local authority sector.

Routeware has made significant investment in the UK market in recent years, and this acquisition further demonstrates its commitment to working in partnership with local authorities to support modern, efficient and resident-focused environmental services.

Founded 25 years ago, Routeware is trusted by 1500 customers to digitise operations and support resilient communities. The company has offices and customers throughout the UK, the United States, and Canada. For more information, visit www.routeware.com

Company ordered to clear illegal waste site and pay £20,000 in fines and costs

Mr A. Fitzgerald, the Director of Concept Investments Limited in Sheffield, has been ordered to clear an illegal waste site on land owned by his company by 18th May.

Both the company and Fitzgerald pleaded guilty at South Yorkshire Magistrates' Court and were fined a total of over £20,000, including costs. Additionally, Fitzgerald received a 12-month community order mandating him to complete 140 hours of unpaid work.

The Environment Agency (EA) first visited the site in July 2022 and discovered a significant amount of mixed waste, including fridges, electrical items, and inert waste such as soil and stones.

During a follow-up visit later that year, the EA informed the site occupier that he could not store waste without a permit and gave him six weeks to remove it.

In January 2023, officers returned to the site and found that none of the waste had been removed, and in fact, new waste had emerged.

The Agency then issued a formal notice requiring that the site be cleared by 5th June, 2023, but this notice was not complied with.

In late 2024 and early 2025, the Agency received complaints about waste burning at the site. Sheffield City Council advised the operator to cease this activity, as it was negatively affecting local residents.

Another individual charged in connection with the same site has pleaded not guilty to operating a regulated facility without an environmental permit, with the trial scheduled to begin on 11th February, 2027.

Commenting on the sentencing, Ben Hocking, Area Environment Manager for the EA in Yorkshire, said: *"It's clear that Fitzgerald and the company were well aware of what was happening on that land, and they repeatedly ignored our requests to stop operations and clear the waste."*

"Waste criminals damage our communities, and we are cracking down across the sector on those flouting the regulations."



Built to last. But are skip hire companies built for what's next?

DANIEL HOLLOWAY

Founder of
GRAFTT



Technology is moving fast in waste management. Route optimisation, Digital Waste Tracking, real-time data and visibility - the industry conversation is increasingly dominated by operators investing in systems, data, and automation.

We've just published the industry's first report, and there's a number sitting in our survey data that should give everyone pause.

71.4%.

That's the combined proportion of two very specific operator profiles. Businesses doing 80% or more of their revenue through B2B and those trading for over 20 years are taking fewer than 20% of their bookings online. These aren't struggling companies; this company profile is the backbone of this industry. Experienced, commercially established with deep client relationships and real weight in their local and regional markets.

And they are almost entirely offline in how they transact.

Let's be precise about what the data shows: 67% of operators whose revenue mix is 80% or more B2B are processing less than 20% of their bookings digitally. At the same time, 56% of operators who have been trading for more than two decades sit in the same bracket. When you look at those two profiles together, over 71% are, by any reasonable measure, digitally inactive when it comes to online management.

This is not just a technology gap - it's a structural one.

The reason is understandable. Skip hire has historically been a relationship

business. Accounts are managed by phone, and jobs are booked by regular customers who know their number off by heart. Repeat workflows without friction because the relationships were built long before online booking existed. For a business that's been in operation for 20+ years, the systems that work, work, and there's been little commercial pressure to change them.

But that logic is starting to strain.

The behaviour of those that operators serve is changing. Construction companies, commercial managers and buying teams are becoming increasingly procurement-driven. They want digital audit trails, consolidated invoicing and booking confirmations they can manage from anywhere at any time. The expectation of self-serve access, even in commercial relationships, is rising - particularly with a generation becoming driven by efficiency.

There's also a competitive pressure building from outside the traditional industry. Platforms and brokers are positioning themselves precisely into the gap between what established operators currently offer digitally and what commercial buyers are increasingly expecting. If long-standing operators don't modernise how B2B customers interact with them, they risk someone else doing it for them, albeit at a margin.

The irony is that these operators have every advantage in the fight. The relationships, the compliance track record, the local knowledge and the capacity. What they often lack is the infrastructure to surface those strengths, digitally, to a commercial manager who's never going to pick up the phone.

Technology in skip hire doesn't have to mean disruption. For the operators who built this industry, it should mean protection.

The data says they're not there yet. The question is how long that remains a choice.

Metal recycler expands with skip hire takeover

Total Metal Recovery, a reputable recycling company based in Bromsgrove, has recently expanded its operations by acquiring A-Z Skips, a nearby skip hire service.

This acquisition was made possible thanks to financial backing from ART Business Loans and BCRS Business Loans. As a result, Total Metal Recovery has successfully retained seven existing jobs while also creating an additional driver position, reflecting the company's commitment to supporting employment within the community.

Both Total Metal Recovery and A-Z Skips operate on the same road in Stoke Prior, facilitating a seamless integration process. With this collaboration, Total Metal Recovery aims to enhance its waste management services significantly.

The company is well-known for its expertise in the collection, processing, and recycling of scrap metals. In contrast, A-Z Skips offers a diverse range of services that include not only skip hire but also effective waste sorting, secure confidential waste destruction, and the sale of aggregates.

Following this acquisition, the new combined workforce totals 17 employees.

Total Metal Recovery Director Matthew Dunn said: *"Both the lenders were very good in supporting our ambitions and thorough in enabling us to get the finance to acquire A-Z Skips, which allows us to offer the full waste service package to our customers."*

"The acquisition comes at a pivotal time, with market conditions evolving and demand on the rise. We valued our experience with ART Business Loans and BCRS Business Loans, as they took a holistic approach by considering both the opportunity and the people behind the business. We are excited about what lies ahead."

Roz Haque, Business Lending Manager at ART Business Loans, said: *"Total Metal Recovery's acquisition of A-Z Skips is an excellent example of how the right funding can help established businesses expand their capabilities and serve their customers better."*

"We are pleased that ART Business Loans could provide the support to realise their business growth plans, capitalising on an opportunity literally next door to their existing premises. Their focus on providing trusted services shows the kind of sustainable growth we like to support."

Please mention *Skip & Waste* magazine when replying to any adverts



Pictured (L-R): Alex Chew, Business Development Manager and Tula Welsh, Sales Manager (both Hills Waste Solutions). Enock Ebbah, Sustainability Manager; Rich Crocker, CEO & Alexandra Grozea, Marketing Manager (all Bristol Care Homes) at Bristol Care Homes' Glebe House site in Almondsbury, Bristol

Care home provider appoints waste management partner

Leading care home provider Bristol Care Homes has appointed Hills Waste Solutions as its recycling and waste management partner, on an initial two-year contract. Bristol Care Homes' sites at Almondsbury, Thornbury, Horfield and Fishponds will be serviced from Hills' Avonmouth depot.

Enock Ebbah, Bristol Care Homes Sustainability Manager, said: "Our partnership with Hills Waste Solutions is a pivotal step toward achieving our long-term net zero goals. By leveraging real-time waste data and a waste-hierarchy-led approach, we are significantly enhancing our recycling efficiency."

Caroline Wilde, Divisional Director - Commercial & Industrial at Hills Waste Solutions, said: "Bristol Care Homes' decision to partner with Hills demonstrates their strong commitment to progressing towards net zero. We are proud to welcome them alongside the growing number of care home operators who trust us to support their sustainability goals. Our team will work closely with theirs to ensure full compliance, drive continuous improvements in recycling performance, optimise waste management efficiencies and help reduce carbon impacts across their operations."

Tula Welsh, Sales Manager at Hills Waste Solutions, commented: "The management team at Bristol Care Homes can utilise Hills' customer portal, which gives them real-time data about their bin weights, sustainability metrics, and real-time collection updates, helping them to track progress and make informed decisions."

Rich Crocker, CEO, Bristol Care Homes, summarised: "Working with Hills Waste Solutions fully aligns with the short and long-term aims of our waste management processes, reducing waste wherever possible, increasing our recycling opportunities and considering the impact we have on the environment through carbon footprint reductions."

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Representatives from all the partners involved in the trial

Wales unveils its first trial with hydrogen refuse vehicles

Earlier this year, Wales unveiled its first comparative demonstration of hydrogen and electric refuse collection vehicles (RCVs), marking a major milestone in the nation's ambition to accelerate cleaner, greener transport solutions.

The trials will be delivered in partnership with Ricardo, Hyppo, Caerphilly County Borough Council and Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council. The Welsh Government's Climate

Innovation scheme and Circular Economy are supporting this important feasibility and demonstrator work to the value of over £420,000. This demonstration is part of a whole systems "challenge" that brings zero-emission technologies together side by side for the first time, marking a significant step towards cleaner, more sustainable fleet operations across the country.

The showcase event brought together

public sector leaders, industry specialists, and local authorities to see both vehicles in action side by side. The trial is designed to gather real-world operational data, compare performance, and inform future investment in zero-emission fleet technologies across Wales.

Delivered by the Cardiff Capital Region (CCR), one of the UK's city regions, bringing together ten local authorities across South East Wales, the project represents a significant step towards decarbonising heavy-duty vehicles and reducing emissions in communities across South East Wales.

Mike Brough, CCR's Strategic Director for Regional Growth, said: "This trial is exactly the kind of innovation CCR exists to champion. Heavy-duty fleets are one of the hardest sectors to decarbonise, and by bringing hydrogen and electric technologies together in a real-world environment, we're helping local authorities make informed, future-proof decisions. It's exciting, genuinely groundbreaking work and a fantastic example of regional collaboration driving practical climate action."

Throughout the trial, engineers and fleet managers will examine energy usage, range, operational performance and suitability for different terrains and routes. Insights from the trial will help shape the next phase of zero emission fleet planning across Wales.

Skip hire sector embraces carbon-cutting engine cleaning technology

Bristol-based skip hire company Bateman Skips has started using Engine Carbon Clean technology in its operations. This solution, provided by their sister company 1stinrail, aims to cut emissions and improve fuel efficiency for their fleet of skip loaders, roll-on roll-off skips, tipper vehicles, and mobile equipment.

The technology, owned by Advanced Hydrogen Technologies (AHT), was tested in a 12-week trial in November 2024 with 41 vehicles from 1stinrail.

Alan Maye, the Operations Director at 1stinrail, said: "The testing looked at performance, usability, and how well it fits into everyday work. The trial resulted in an average 19.52% reduction in CO₂ emissions and fuel use, showing we can save on carbon and costs while keeping our fleet available."

After this successful trial, Bateman Skips has integrated the technology into its fleet



to cut emissions and boost fuel efficiency.

Paul Rann, Managing Director of Bateman Skips, said: "We expect to reduce our fuel usage and lower our greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution. This will be the first time our fleet benefits from this kind of treatment. We will treat our 16 skip trucks, three tippers, one roll-on roll-off skip, two 360° excavators, two loading shovels, and a material handler after their shifts. A team of engineers will perform an initial treatment, followed by regular follow-ups to ensure maximum benefits."

Paul added that this technology provides a way to manage waste with fewer emissions. "Our trucks will produce less carbon and particulate matter during their trips. The cleaning process is also environmentally friendly. It takes about 60 minutes, so it fits into our service schedule, and uses the engine's air intake, replacing the air with hydrogen made on-site from tap water. This cycle lasts about 45 minutes, cleaning the engine and breaking down carbon deposits, which helps the engine run better and reduces tailpipe emissions."

Alan also mentioned that beyond saving on fuel and helping the environment, 1stinrail has noted operational improvements, such as fewer unexpected maintenance issues with diesel particulate filters (DPF) and exhaust gas recirculation (EGR) valves. Each vehicle typically needs about four treatments per year for the best results and consistent performance.



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CSH expands cross-county to deliver waste management services

CSH Environmental started as Colchester Mini Skips in 1981, rebranding in 1988 to Colchester Skip Hire, before the current rebrand in 2013. Since then, it has grown into a multi-service waste management company.

Today, CSH offers a variety of waste services, going beyond just skip hire. It provides skips and tankers, with the tanker service operated by its sister company, AA Turner Tankers.

Company Director Daniel Cox explains that CSH is no longer just a skip hire business. The company has shifted its focus to sustainability and recycling. This change led to a rebrand, as the name Colchester Skip Hire did not reflect their expanded services or their focus on trade waste. CSH now serves the entire East Anglia region and beyond using its own vehicles, and also works through a brokerage across the country.

CSH has invested significantly in its fleet

to improve visibility and expand its service area. The company's blue lorries are easy to spot, which helps promote the brand. Newer vehicles are also more efficient: they lower costs, reduce downtime, and save fuel. This means CSH can keep prices competitive for customers and maintain reliable service.

To enhance operations, CSH acquired additional land at the end of 2025 and built new storage facilities. This added space allows for better storage of empty skips and bins, and enables waste processing on-site.

When it comes to recycling, Daniel notes that managing sustainability in waste is challenging, but CSH uses the "Five R" approach: recycle, reuse, reduce, repurpose, or refuse. The company avoids sending waste to incineration or landfill, except for hazardous materials like asbestos.

CSH collaborates with local companies and charities to recycle complex products.



They also run a campaign that lets farmers drop off waste for free, donating the profits back to charity for training and development. CSH transforms the waste into items such as park benches and drinking cups, supporting a circular economy.

Daniel concludes that CSH has a dedicated team of hard-working employees. In the next five years, the company aims to acquire more sites to improve efficiency and become a leading waste management provider in the region.



Pictured (L-R) Keith Tart, Paul Conlon, and Barry Carson

CK International acquires Lyndex Recycling Systems

CK International, a leading manufacturer of waste compaction equipment, announced the acquisition of Lyndex Recycling Systems Limited (30th March 2026), a UK-based specialist in the design, manufacture, and supply of channel balers and recycling machinery.

The acquisition marks a significant step in CK International's growth strategy, expanding its product portfolio and strengthening its position across the UK, Ireland, and international recycling markets.

Headquartered in Northern Ireland, CK International has built a strong reputation for designing and manufacturing high-quality balers and compactors for a wide range of sectors, including waste management, retail, distribution, and local authorities. With the addition of Lyndex Recycling Systems, CK International enhances its capabilities within the channel baler and scrap recycling segment, further broadening its ability to deliver complete recycling solutions.

Lyndex Recycling Systems, based in Telford, brings with it a long-standing engineering heritage rooted in the legacy

of Lindemann Maschinenfabrik. The company is recognised for its expertise in channel balers and its comprehensive service offering to the scrap recycling industry, including equipment refurbishment, spare parts supply, and specialist engineering support.

Speaking on the acquisition, Paul Conlon, Chairman of CK International, said: *"This acquisition represents an exciting opportunity for CK International to expand our offering and strengthen our position within the recycling industry. Lyndex brings a wealth of experience, engineering expertise, and a strong reputation in the market, which aligns perfectly with our own values. Together, we are well-positioned to deliver enhanced solutions and support to our customers."*

The acquisition ensures continuity for Lyndex customers, who will continue to receive the same high level of service and support, while benefiting from access to CK International's wider product range, manufacturing capabilities, and international network.

Keith Tart of Lyndex Recycling Systems added: *"Joining CK International marks*



With the acquisition complete, CK International now brings expanded capability to the market, including:

- Higher capacity machines and expanded product offering
- A broader, stronger service and maintenance network
- Increased spare parts capacity
- Integration across product lines

Early initiatives are already underway, including:

- Product development
- Expansion of field service coverage
- Upgrades to production capacity

a positive step forward for Lyndex. Their investment and support will allow us to build on our heritage while continuing to deliver the quality products and service our customers expect."

Powering the future together

A landmark acquisition brings two strong companies together, combining expertise, innovation, and shared ambition to create a stronger future. This strategic partnership leverages the unique strengths of both organisations, enhancing service and support capabilities while delivering even greater value to customers.

With expanded resources, strengthened operational excellence, and a commitment to quality, the newly united business now offers a larger and more diverse product portfolio than ever before. Customers can expect a wider product portfolio, broader solutions, and the confidence of working with an organisation built on proven success.

This handshake marks more than an agreement - it represents growth, opportunity, and the beginning of an exciting new chapter for CK International.



History and heritage



Paul Conlon working on his first-ever baler in 1996

CK International is a Northern Ireland-based manufacturer of recycling and waste compaction equipment, employing over 100 people. Established in 1996, the company specialises in the design and manufacture of a comprehensive range of balers and compactors for use across sectors including waste management, retail, distribution, warehousing, and local authority recycling facilities.

The CK International product portfolio ranges from small vertical balers and compactors to channel balers and fully automated twin ram balers; typically installed in major Materials Recovery Facilities (MRFs), capable of processing up to 35 tonnes of waste per hour. The company is now recognised as one of the top suppliers of waste compaction and baling equipment, with a customer base that

includes well-recognised global brands.

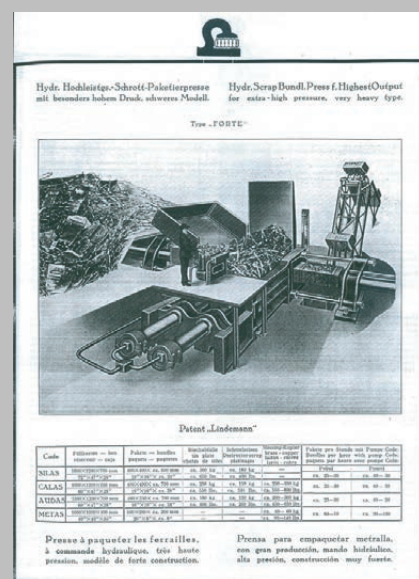
In addition to its strong presence in the UK and Ireland, CK International has a distribution network across Europe. The company also operates in the UAE and Australia, with twin ram installations in the Netherlands, Italy, Germany, Dubai, Australia, Japan, and New Zealand.

CK International's continued success is underpinned by its commitment to customer support, offering comprehensive customer care, 365 days a year. This includes nationwide coverage for field service engineers, supported by an experienced in-house technical team. From initial concept and design through to manufacturing and ongoing aftersales care, CK International provides a complete solution for its customers.

www.ckinternational.co.uk
www.lyndexrecycling.com

Lyndex Recycling Systems Limited is a UK-based leader in the design, manufacture, and supply of channel balers and waste recycling machinery. Building on a heritage that dates back to 1913 with Waldemar Lindemann and Lindemann Maschinenfabrik GmbH, the company continues a long-standing philosophy of engineering high-quality, high-performance equipment built to last.

With a strong focus on reliability, performance, and customer service, Lyndex has built a reputation for delivering practical, cost-effective solutions that maximise operational efficiency and equipment longevity. Its commitment to innovation, quality, and comprehensive aftersales care continues to strengthen its position within the UK and international recycling markets.



Lindemann technical specification from 1925

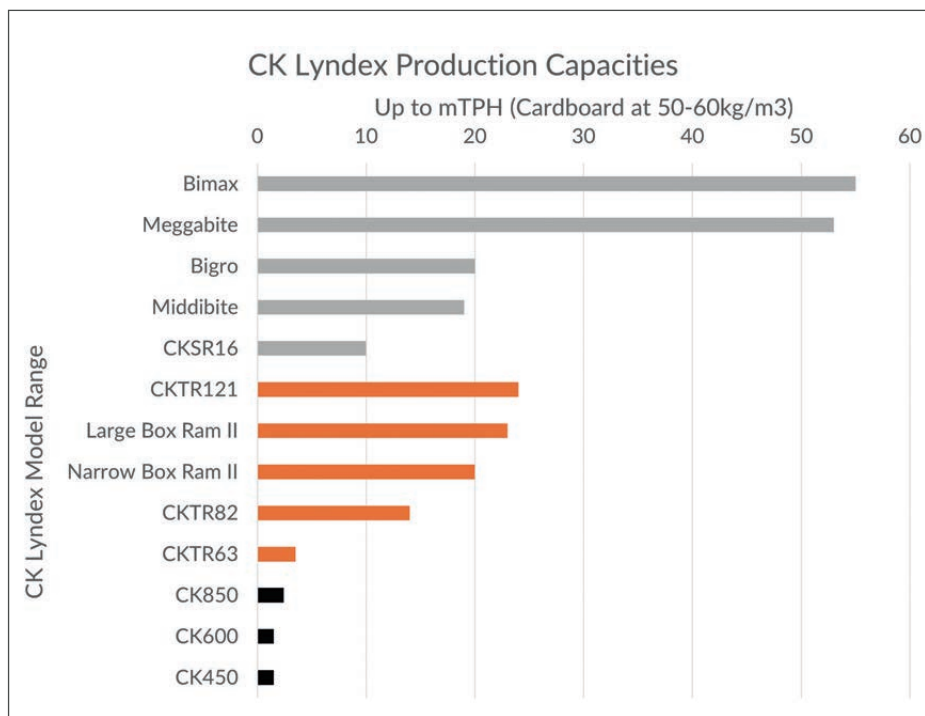
Continued on page 20 >>

CK International and Lyndex unite to deliver an expanded waste handling equipment portfolio

Following the successful acquisition of Lyndex by CK International, two highly respected names in the waste handling and recycling equipment industry have come together to offer customers an even stronger and more comprehensive product portfolio.

This strategic combination brings together CK International's proven manufacturing expertise and engineering innovation with Lyndex's established product range and market experience. The result is a powerful partnership delivering enhanced service support, broader product choice, and industry-leading waste management solutions for customers across the UK, Ireland, and international markets.

The newly expanded portfolio now includes advanced **Twin Ram Balers**, high-capacity **Channel Balers**, **Semi-Automatic Balers**, **Vertical Balers**, and **Waste Compactors**, combining the strengths of both CK International and Lyndex product lines.



This chart highlights the expanded product portfolio following the acquisition of Lyndex, clearly demonstrating increased throughput capacity across a wider range of solutions

The Twin Ram Baler range is designed for large-scale recycling and waste processing operations requiring flexibility, durability, and high output.

These balers are ideal for material recovery facilities, manufacturers, and large recycling centres.

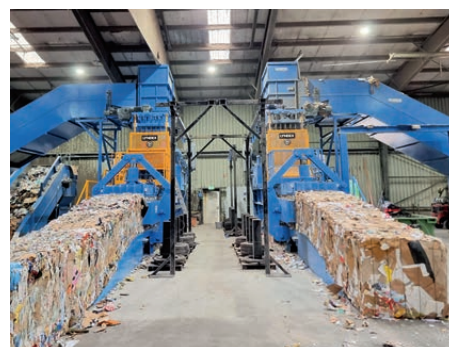


CKTR63-60T-22kW Twin Ram Baler processing cardboard waste



The expanded Channel Baler range offers continuous-feed baling solutions for operations handling consistent waste streams and requiring maximum throughput.

Ideal for logistics centres, retailers, warehouses, and recycling plants with large volumes of single waste streams.



Two Bimax machines processing cardboard

The Semi-Automatic Baler range offers a cost-effective solution for businesses seeking efficient waste compaction with operator-controlled bale finishing.

Perfect for growing businesses, warehouses, and commercial waste operations.



CK850HFEPC Semi-Automatic Horizontal Baler

The Vertical Baler range delivers compact, practical, and low-cost solutions for businesses with limited space and moderate waste volumes.

Ideal for retailers, hotels, warehouses, and production facilities.



CK151 Vertical Baler

For more further information and key specifications for the CK Lyndex product portfolio please visit:-

 www.ckinternational.co.uk

 www.lyndexrecycling.com

or contact

 **+44 (0)28 8775 3966**

 sales@ckinternational.co.uk



The CK International and Lyndex Compactor range offers reliable waste volume reduction systems for general waste and recyclable materials.

Ideal for supermarkets, hospitality, manufacturing, healthcare, and distribution centres.

SC300 Compactor with walk on platform and hand fed hopper

Stronger together

The integration of CK International and Lyndex represents a major step forward for customers seeking dependable waste management equipment backed by exceptional service and technical support.

By combining engineering excellence, trusted brands, and expanded manufacturing capacity, the new organisation is positioned to deliver one of the most comprehensive waste-handling equipment portfolios in the market today.



A team driven by expertise, service, and vision

The people at CK Lyndex are at the heart of the company's continued success, bringing together decades of industry knowledge, engineering expertise, and a shared commitment to customer service.

With a highly experienced team across sales, manufacturing, service, and support, CK Lyndex is dedicated to delivering reliable solutions and outstanding customer care at every stage of the customer journey. From initial consultation and machine installation to preventative maintenance, after-sales support, and rapid breakdown response, customers can rely on a professional and responsive service team focused on minimising downtime and maximising operational efficiency.

Leading the business into this exciting new chapter is newly appointed Managing Director James Murray, whose vision and leadership will drive future growth, alongside Sales and Marketing Director Paul Lilley, who will focus on strengthening customer relationships and growing international markets.

Together, the CK Lyndex team is committed to providing industry-leading products backed by exceptional service and long-term partnership.



James Murray



Paul Lilley

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Material recovery facilities (MRFs). Sorting & separation solutions

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Software systems for skip hire & waste management.
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Driving high-performance at scale: Kaizen & Europress deliver for Panda

Kaizen Recycling continues to strengthen its position as a trusted engineering partner within the waste and recycling sector, delivering high-performance solutions that meet the increasing demands of modern processing facilities. A strong example of this is the ongoing partnership with Europress Umwelttechnik and Panda, culminating in the successful installation of a second high-performance channel baler at Panda's Millennium Park facility in Dublin.

Building on the success of the original installation, Panda once again selected Kaizen and Europress to enhance operational efficiency and future-proof its processing capabilities. The latest addition - a **Europress HP-B180 H channel baler** - has been specifically engineered to process demanding waste streams such

as SRF (Solid Recovered Fuel) and RDF (Refuse Derived Fuel), where compaction force, durability, and consistent bale quality are critical.

This second installation represents a continued investment in robust, high-throughput technology. The HP-B180 H delivers exceptional bale density and system reliability, ensuring materials are processed efficiently while maximising transport and storage efficiencies. Integrated with advanced conveying and feeding systems, the solution has been seamlessly incorporated into Panda's existing infrastructure, supporting increased throughput and operational resilience.

A key performance advantage of the system is its ability to produce dense, uniform bales, typically achieving dimensions of approximately 1,100 x 1,100



“The decision to install a second baler at Millennium Park is a clear endorsement of the performance delivered by the initial system. It substantially increases overall processing capacity, ensuring Panda can accommodate rising material volumes without compromising efficiency or environmental performance. Since commissioning, the system has delivered consistent and reliable operation—demonstrating the long-term value of investing in high-quality engineering solutions. For Panda, this translates into improved uptime, enhanced material handling capabilities, and measurable operational efficiencies.”

— RICHARD MAWSON
Director, Kaizen Recycling Limited

x 1,400mm, with **bale weights in the region of 1.5 to 1.7 tonnes**. This higher bale weight significantly improves logistics efficiency, reducing handling frequency and transport costs while maintaining consistent quality across output streams.

Kaizen Recycling's role extends beyond equipment supply. With extensive industry experience, the company provides full lifecycle support - from concept design and system integration through to commissioning and after-sales service. Its

partnership with Europress Umwelttechnik ensures access to industry-leading baling technology, combining proven German engineering with practical, site-specific solutions.

As the recycling sector continues to evolve, driven by increasing volumes and tighter environmental targets, projects such as this highlight how the right technology - delivered by the right partner - can set new benchmarks in performance, reliability, and sustainability.

KAIZEN Recycling Ltd & Europress Umwelttechnik GmbH – A Strong Partnership for Sustainable Recycling Solutions

Since 2022, KAIZEN and EUROPRESS have enjoyed a successful partnership that has resulted in the completion of numerous projects across the UK and Ireland.

With over 25 years of experience, EUROPRESS Umwelttechnik GmbH stands for innovative environmental technology "Made in Germany". Whether conveying, dosing, sorting, compacting or binding, their high performance systems, including stationary channel balers with up to 210 tonnes press force and mobile units for flexible applications, are designed for maximum efficiency and tailored to individual customer requirements.

Together, we deliver reliable solutions to the challenges of the recycling industry.



info@kaizenrecycling.co.uk
01743 343400
www.kaizenrecycling.co.uk





Presona AB appoints new sales and service partner for Ireland

Swedish-based Presona AB is pleased to announce Aggcycle Engineering Ltd as its new partner across the island of Ireland, covering both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. The company will provide sales and service, including spare parts for Presona baler systems.

James Vaughan, Founder of Aggcycle Engineering Ltd, commented: "We are

excited to partner with Presona, a well-established and highly respected brand within the waste and recycling sector. This partnership represents a significant opportunity to grow Aggcycle Engineering across Ireland, while delivering industry-leading baler technology, service, and support to our customers. We look forward to building a strong presence for Presona in the Irish market and supporting long-

term growth for both businesses."

"We are pleased to begin our collaboration with Aggcycle Engineering Ltd across Ireland and Northern Ireland. James Vaughan brings strong energy and an entrepreneurial mindset to the market, and we believe this partnership will help strengthen Presona's presence in the region through local expertise and support," says Martin Skogmalm, CEO of Presona AB.

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Setting new standards in bale weight and energy efficiency for MRFs

As Material Recovery Facilities (MRFs) face increasing pressure on energy costs, material quality and overall operating efficiency, the focus is shifting from simple throughput to measurable performance, particularly on the cost per bale.

It is within this context that REP-TEC's SAMSON twin ram baler is setting new standards, combining mechanical design, energy optimisation and data visibility to align with the real priorities of modern MRF operators.

At its core, the SAMSON twin ram baler is engineered around three key performance outcomes.

Maximising bale weight remains fundamental. REP-TEC's larger ejector chamber design enables the consistent production of heavier, denser bales across a range of commodities, including plastics and OCC. In practical terms, this delivers bales in the region of 600 kg for plastics and 650 kg for OCC, improving transport efficiency, reducing haulage costs, and increasing downstream value.

Alongside this, **minimising energy per bale** is addressed through REP-TEC's

ECO-DRIVE system. Developed in response to rising energy costs and operational demands, ECO-DRIVE combines variable speed drive technology with proportional hydraulic control and intelligent feedback systems. Motor speed and oil flow are continuously matched to demand, eliminating unnecessary energy use during idle phases. The result is typically up to 30% energy savings compared to conventional systems, without compromising throughput.

Increasingly, operators also require real-time insight into performance.

REP-TEC's **TRACKTEC platform** provides live monitoring of uptime, throughput, bale count by material and energy consumption

per bale, alongside key machine health indicators. The system can operate as a standalone cloud-based platform or integrate into wider plant control systems, supporting data-driven decision-making across the facility.

This combined approach reflects a wider industry shift, where efficiency is no longer defined by output alone, but by how effectively that output is delivered. Working closely with plant builders and operators across the UK and Ireland, REP-TEC continues to support MRFs in achieving higher bale quality, lower energy consumption, and improved operational control - setting a new benchmark for twin ram baler performance.

ABOUT REP-TEC: Established in 2020, REP-TEC has already made a significant impact in the recycling industry with its high-performance, fully automatic balers. Based outside Dungannon in N. Ireland, REP-TEC is committed to providing cutting-edge solutions that meet and exceed the evolving demands of the recycling sector. The company was founded by Colm Grimes, who recognised the need for more automated systems to help recycling companies combat labour shortages and tighter controls. REP-TEC also design and manufacture conveyor systems and bespoke recycling solutions.



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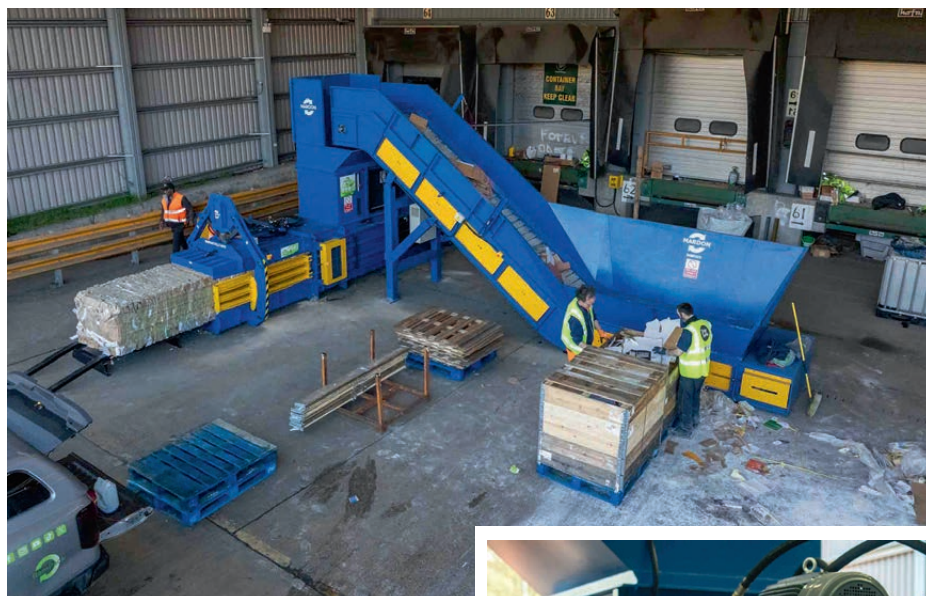
How Mardon helped Travis Perkins handle 150 tonnes of waste a month

One hundred and fifty tonnes of cardboard and plastic every single month. That is the waste challenge that Travis Perkins faces at its national distribution centre in Northampton, and one that demands far more than an off-the-shelf solution.

As one of the UK's largest builders' merchants, the large-scale Northampton distribution site runs around the clock, generating a continuous flow of cardboard and plastic packaging waste from incoming and outgoing goods. Managing that waste efficiently isn't just an operational priority; it's a commercial one, too. Poor waste management means lost rebate revenue, unnecessary disposal costs and a site that struggles to keep pace with demand.

When Travis Perkins decided to upgrade their baling setup, they chose Mardon Recycling Machinery. With over 20 years of experience supplying waste handling and recycling equipment to businesses across the UK, Mardon has earned a reputation for taking the time to understand what customers actually need and then delivering it.

The solution was the installation of a **RamPack CM70 Fully Automatic Baler and conveyor system** (pictured). A high-capacity, fully integrated setup engineered to handle the relentless flow of waste across a busy, round-the-clock site. From the initial conversation through to delivery, installation and onsite training, the Mardon team managed every stage of the project,



ensuring the operation kept running smoothly throughout.

The results spoke for themselves. Guy Sambrook, General Manager at Travis Perkins, said: *"The delivery, installation and ongoing service have been second to none. Any issues with our previous machine, they kept us updated on timelines. Highly recommended."*

For Mardon, this is what they do best. It isn't just about supplying equipment; it's about providing a complete service tailored to each customer's specific needs. It's an approach that has led to long-standing relationships with clients across distribution, manufacturing, retail, hospitality, healthcare and beyond, and it's



the reason businesses like Travis Perkins trust Mardon when it matters most.

Whether you're managing a single site or a national operation, Mardon has the expertise, the equipment and the people to help turn your waste into an asset.

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TRACEY WESTBURY

Director – Westbury Environmental Limited

Tracey has worked in the waste industry for over 35 years across all sectors. She now acts as a consultant supporting small - medium site operators providing advice and services in waste regulation including permitting, waste recovery, end of waste and environmental management systems.



BUSINESS CLINIC

CONSULTANCY

Permit reviews: Don't let your old licence shrink your business

There are many very old Waste Transfer Station Environmental Permits still around. Some began as Control of Pollution Act licences; others were issued under the Waste Management Licensing Regulations. Many have been varied, updated, transferred and amended, but the core wording can still be decades old.

Those old permissions are now being pulled into modern permitting through the Environment Agency's permit review process. In principle, that is reasonable

Standards and Appropriate Measures guidance have moved on, and permits drafted decades ago often do not reflect today's regulatory expectations. In practice, though, the process is creating real problems for operators.

One issue is where the old licence does not clearly describe what happens on site. For example, a small waste transfer station may have used a trommel screen for years. The regulator may have inspected the site, seen the screen, and regulated on that basis without raising any fundamental concern. Then the permit review arrives. Suddenly, the old licence is read closely, and someone decides it does not expressly authorise waste treatment. If the conditions are unclear, the fact that the screen has been there for years may not help.

The result? The operator may need a permit variation simply to keep doing something they have done openly for a long time.

That is significant. Variations take time, cost money and create uncertainty. For small operators, it can feel particularly unfair when the activity has been known to the regulator for years.

And then we get to waste codes.

Many old licences did not include a tidy modern list of EWC codes; they described

waste types more broadly. During permit review, the Environment Agency must decide which waste codes to include in the updated permit.

A sensible approach would be to use the relevant standard rules waste code list as a starting point where the site activity is broadly comparable. But I am finding that this is not what is happening.

Some operators are finding that the proposed waste code list is based only on recent waste returns. If a site has not accepted a waste type for a while, the code may be omitted. That may look tidy administratively, but commercially it can be damaging.

Just because a site has not accepted a waste stream recently does not mean it should lose the ability to accept it.

Markets, customers and contracts change.

A waste transfer station needs a permit that reflects its lawful operating scope, not a snapshot of recent inputs.

So what can operators do? The most important point is this: do not treat the Regulation 61 notice as a box-ticking exercise.

The Regulation 61 notice usually starts the review process. It asks the operator for information so the Environment Agency can update the permit. Responses can be detailed and time-consuming, so it is easy to see why some operators are tempted to keep answers brief. But that is a mistake. A thin response can lead to a thin permit.

If you do not explain what you do on site, what plant is used, which wastes you need to accept, and what controls you already have, you leave someone else to fill the gaps - and they may not do it as you would.

The same applies to Appropriate Measures. Operators are being asked whether they comply, and each relevant



measure should be reviewed properly. Where you comply, confirm it. Where something is not applicable, explain why. Where improvements are needed, set out what you will do and a realistic timescale.

If this is not done properly, the reviewed permit may require day-one compliance with conditions that the site is not yet ready to meet.

Permit reviews should bring old permissions up to modern standards. They should not remove lawful activities, narrow commercial options, or produce permits that do not reflect how sites actually operate.

So, if you receive a Regulation 61 notice, do not see it as just another request for information. See it as your chance to protect your permit.

**GOT A QUESTION
ASK THE EXPERTS**

*If you need help with any of the above, please get in touch.
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Robust and easy to manoeuvre: the new MGBneo⁴ 400 litre from Craemer

Designed for municipal and commercial waste and recycling applications

With a volume of 400 litres, the bin is ideal for the disposal of multiple household and commercial waste and recycling streams. Particularly suitable in locations where space is limited and manual handling is a consideration for collecting heavier waste.

Cost-efficient solution for medium waste volumes

The MGBneo⁴ 400 has a usable volume of 400 litres. This makes it a cost-effective solution for locations with moderate waste volumes, such as communal dwellings, whilst optimising emptying frequencies. Features such as a reinforced base and ergonomic handles make it the ideal waste disposal container for the public and private sectors. Thanks to its four wheels, it can be handled easily during waste collection.

The ideal solution for both household and commercial waste

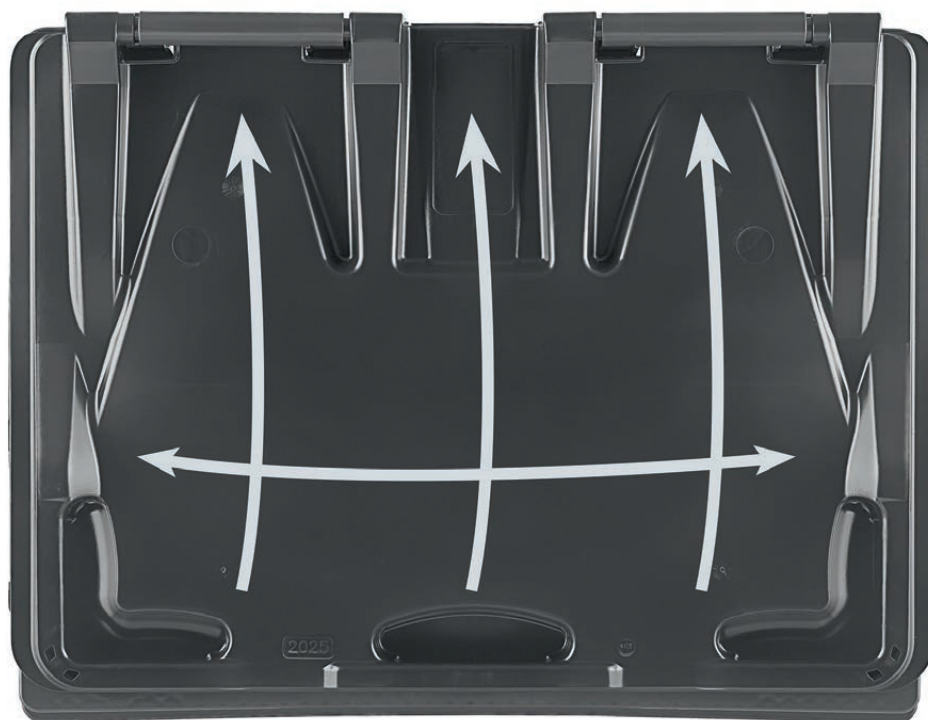
With its sturdy construction and easy handling, the **MGBneo⁴ 400** is the latest addition to the **Craemer Group's** range of four-wheeled wheelie bins. This container is a cost-efficient solution for medium-sized waste volumes and is suitable for both municipal waste collection and commercial applications. This innovative and efficient 400-litre model is now available as standard and comes with a variety of options for different applications.



The new 400-litre container features the tried-and-tested ergonomic handle design



Quick and easy lid replacement thanks to optimised lid bolts



The double-curved surface of the lid channels rainwater to the sides and the rear

Standard version and variants

The standard version has four 200mm swivel castors; 160mm castors are available as an optional extra. The standard bin is also equipped with optimised, robust lid pins that make it quick and easy to fit or remove the lid. This model is based on the lid design of the 660-litre bin, which has a proven handle and corner design. Its double-

curved surface directs rainwater to the sides and rear. To reduce noise, the lid can be fitted with up to eight dedicated inserts as an optional extra. The bin has ergonomic handles on all sides and reinforced corner areas to improve handling and enhance structural stability.

As with other models in the MGBneo⁴ series, the 400-litre version can be adapted to different collection and



BACKGROUND

The Craemer Group is one of the world's leading manufacturers of durable logistics and waste disposal solutions. The company is headquartered in Germany and has over 60 years' experience in plastics processing. The portfolio includes plastic pallets for a wide variety of requirements and a broad range of transport and storage containers, including stacking boxes, round containers, tubs and pallet boxes, as well as large wheelie bins (MGB type).

All Craemer products are of proven quality and made of high-quality polyethylene (PE) that withstands the most stringent requirements.

Craemer has since established itself worldwide as a specialist in metal forming, plastics processing and toolmaking: The group operates four European production sites and has a global network of sales partners and its own subsidiaries.

For more details contact the UK team:-

☎ **0800 032 4289**

✉ **sales.uk@craemer.com**

🌐 **www.craemer.com/uk**



disposal concepts using various options. These include a glass aperture with a flexible rubber insert, a paper aperture for inserting large items, a cardboard aperture, and a lid-in-lid solution.

To enable digital traceability, an RFID chip can be fitted. The surrounding ribbing in this area provides additional stability. A standard drain plug can be inserted into the base area as required.

Newquay charity nears 10,000 wetsuits recycled

A mental health charity for young people in Newquay is celebrating a significant milestone in its fundraising and recycling efforts.

The Wave Project's Pre-Loved Wetsuit Scheme has successfully reused or recycled nearly 10,000 wetsuits, raised £98,000 in sales, and prevented an estimated 15 tonnes of neoprene from ending up in landfills since its launch two years ago.

This initiative was established to tackle the environmental issues associated with neoprene.

While neoprene is a durable and effective material for wetsuits, it is challenging to recycle, leading to the disposal of thousands of wetsuits each year. This issue is particularly acute in Cornwall, which accounts for a substantial portion of the UK's non-recyclable neoprene waste.

The Wave Project has developed a circular solution that allows unwanted wetsuits to be donated, reused, or responsibly recycled through partnerships with Cornwall Council and SUEZ. This project not only makes surfing more accessible to the local community but also encourages people to extend the life of their surf gear by reusing wetsuits and selling them at affordable prices.

Wetsuits can be donated at The Wave Project shop and at designated recycling points across Cornwall. Usable wetsuits are prepared for resale, while those beyond repair are sent for specialised recycling.

All profits from this initiative go towards funding The Wave Project's surf therapy programmes, which support young people facing mental health challenges across the UK.

The demand for support continues to rise, with one in five children in the UK now experiencing a diagnosable mental health condition, and half of all lifelong mental health issues beginning before the age of 14.

Mark Hillson, PFI General Manager at SUEZ, said: "We're proud to work alongside The Wave Project and Cornwall Council to show how practical, local partnerships can drive real environmental progress. Neoprene is notoriously difficult to recycle, so creating a circular route that keeps thousands of wetsuits in use and out of the waste stream is a major achievement."



New guide unlocks fleet efficiencies in waste and recycling operations

Finning UK & Ireland has published a practical guide detailing the small operational improvements to fleet management that can improve uptime, productivity, and safety in waste and recycling facilities.

Waste and recycling operators are facing mounting operational pressures, from rising costs and tighter contracts to increasing scrutiny on safety and managing unpredictable waste streams.

Sites are also demanding operating environments that accelerate wear on machinery. Mobile Plant Managers are therefore under pressure to improve efficiency, reduce emissions and maintain equipment availability.

To address these challenges, Finning UK & Ireland, the world's largest dealer of Cat® equipment, parts and aftermarket services, has published an industry guide designed to help operators identify practical ways to improve machine productivity, availability and safety by taking incremental steps that will yield wide-ranging financial and operational gains.

The guide, entitled *Running a safer, cleaner site: A practical guide for driving productivity and efficiency in the waste and recycling sector*, draws on the company's extensive experience working with national and regional waste and recycling operators across the UK and Ireland, and outlines a clear four-step approach to improve site performance.

The report draws on the realities of working in the sector, with many sites

running below expected financial targets, not because they're doing anything wrong, but because small inefficiencies compound over time and become a costly burden for operators.

The guide explores some of the key challenges faced by waste operators, including:

- **Managing equipment availability;**
- **Improving site safety where plant and people interact;**
- **Using operational data more effectively;**
- **Ensuring machines are matched to the real demands of the site.**

The guide offers a series of practical steps so operators can implement changes on their sites - as soon as tomorrow.

Jonathan Davies, Industry Manager for Industrial & Waste at Finning UK & Ireland, said: "Progress in this sector rarely comes from one big change. It comes from getting the basics right, week after week.

"When operators build a consistent approach to equipment use, maintenance and site processes, the impact on safety, fuel use and productivity can be significant."

The guide also highlights how improving operational visibility and strengthening site systems can help operators reduce downtime, improve reliability and create safer working environments.

The full guide is available to download by scanning the QR code.



AEB Amsterdam eliminates nitrous oxide canister risks with Magnapower overband magnets

AEB Amsterdam, one of Western Europe's largest and most advanced Waste-to-Energy (WtE) facilities, has successfully removed the operational risks posed by nitrous oxide (N₂O) canisters in its waste stream following the installation of two Magnapower overband magnets supplied by COMERGO SERVICES, Magnapower's partner in Belgium.

Processing around 1.4 million tonnes of waste annually, AEB, like many waste and recycling operators across Europe, has seen a sharp rise in nitrous oxide cylinders entering household waste. These high-pressure metal canisters, increasingly linked to recreational misuse, present a serious hazard when they reach waste plants. Under heat or pressure, they can explode, endangering workers and causing significant damage to equipment.

Despite public guidance advising against the disposal of nitrous oxide canisters

in household bins, volumes continue to increase. Manual removal had become unsafe and unsustainable for AEB, prompting the search for a fully automated solution.

To mitigate the risk, AEB installed two heavy-duty Magnapower permanent overband magnets engineered for continuous operation in high-throughput environments. Positioned strategically within the processing line, the units generate a deep, powerful magnetic field capable of lifting and extracting metal contaminants, including nitrous oxide cylinders, from the fast-moving waste streams.

Since commissioning, AEB has reported a zero pass-through rate for nitrous oxide canisters. Every cylinder entering the waste stream has been intercepted before reaching downstream equipment.

This outcome demonstrates the effectiveness of magnetic separation as a frontline defence against hazardous metal

Key benefits delivered include:

- Complete elimination of explosion risks within the plant;
- Protection of critical machinery from impact and heat damage;
- Improved operational continuity with fewer stoppages;
- Enhanced environmental and regulatory compliance;
- Increased worker safety
- Low ongoing operating costs.

contaminants in modern waste processing.

Jan Comergo of COMERGO SERVICES commented: "AEB came to us with a clear challenge and a clear expectation: they needed a solution that would remove every nitrous oxide canister from their waste stream. The Magnapower overbands have delivered exactly that. We value our partnership with AEB and are pleased to support their leadership in safe waste processing."

AEB's investment reflects a growing industry trend, as waste operators across Europe seek automated, reliable technologies to manage the escalating challenge posed by nitrous oxide canisters. The success of the Magnapower overband magnets underscores how targeted engineering solutions can deliver immediate, measurable improvements in safety and operational resilience.

Matt Hencher, Commercial Director at Magnapower, added: "Working with AEB and COMERGO SERVICES on this project has been a great example of how collaboration leads to real operational improvements. The overbands are performing exactly as designed, and the zero pass-through rate speaks volumes about the system's capability."



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Baldwin Skip Hire boosts efficiency with Pronar and SANY machinery

Baldwin Skip Hire, a long-established, family-run waste management business just outside Norwich, has grown significantly since it was established over 30 years ago. What began with a single lorry and around 40 skips has grown into a substantial operation handling approximately 700 skips, operating eight lorries, and managing a 10-acre transfer station.

As waste volumes increased, the business faced mounting pressure to process materials more efficiently and maximise outbound loads.

The challenge

With a high throughput of mixed waste streams - including wood, aggregates, and general waste - Baldwin Skip Hire needed a solution to reduce material volume, improve processing speed, increase payload efficiency in roll-on bins, and transition more waste away from landfill.

Robert Baldwin, Owner, Baldwin Skip Hire, researched a range of recycling shredder manufacturers over three to four years and studied the performance of their machines before making a decision.

Investing in a Pronar Pro.S1 shredder

After engaging with Global Machinery

Solutions and seeing the machine at the Norfolk Show, Robert arranged a site demo arranged by Recycling Sales Manager Jason Purllant.

Robert was drawn to the Pronar Pro.S1's versatility and adaptability across multiple waste streams. Its hook-lift design also allows it to be easily transported, while interchangeable shaft configurations enable the machine to handle different materials effectively.

Municipal shafts are now used for wood and general waste at the site, delivering a finer, more consistent output - while aggregate shafts are fitted periodically for processing harder materials such as

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concrete. The Pro.S1 produces material down to approximately 100mm, making it suitable for RDF (Refuse Derived Fuel) applications.

SANY SY135C excavators

Baldwin Skip Hire operates three 13-tonne SANY SY135C excavators, with the most recent model supplied by Global Machinery Solutions. Known for their durability and strong hydraulic performance, these machines are well-suited to the demanding conditions of a busy recycling site.

One SY135C has more than 12,500 hours on the clock and is still going strong. Combined with a market-leading five-year offering, SANYs provide both performance and long-term peace of mind.

Implementation and training

Global Machinery Solutions supported the introduction of the Pronar Pro.S1 with a full on-site demonstration, followed by operator training delivered to four members of the Baldwin team. Ongoing aftersales support and servicing have ensured both the shredder and excavators continue to operate at optimum performance.

Results

Since introducing the Pronar Pro.S1, Baldwin Skip Hire has seen a marked improvement in operational efficiency across the site. By shredding and compacting waste more effectively, the business is now able to increase the payload of each roll-on bin by approximately two tonnes. This has had a direct impact on transport efficiency, reducing the number of movements required and lowering overall haulage costs.

The shredder has also streamlined the waste handling process, allowing material to be processed more quickly and consistently. This has improved the overall flow of operations, helping the team keep pace with incoming volumes and reducing bottlenecks on site. Rather than increasing capacity, the machine has made it significantly easier to move material through the yard and out to its next destination.

Robert Baldwin is pictured with one of the three 13-tonne SANY SY135C excavators at the site



remains a central, multi-functional asset within the operation.

Robert Baldwin said: "I'd been looking at shredders for three or four years before making a decision. After seeing the Pronar and having the demo, it just made sense. It's made the whole site run more efficiently. We're getting about two tonnes more into each roll-on bin now, which is a big saving."

"The SANY machines are fantastic - robust and well-suited to the job. One of ours has done over 12,500 hours and is still going strong. The warranty is a major selling point, and the backup from Global Machinery Solutions has been spot-on. If we need anything, they're straight on it."

Jason Purlant, Recycling Sales Manager at Global Machinery Solutions, said: "Robert had done his research and was clear on what he needed the machine to achieve. The Pronar Pro.S1 stood out for its flexibility and ability to handle different waste streams efficiently. Once it was on site for the demo, it quickly proved its value."

"We've continued to support the team with training and after-sales to make sure they're getting the most from both the shredder and their SANY machines."

In addition, the ability to shred waste down to a uniform size has enabled Baldwin Skip Hire to divert more material into RDF production instead of landfill. This not only supports more sustainable waste management practices but also aligns with growing market demand for alternative

fuel sources.

The versatility of the machine has been another key benefit. With the ability to switch between municipal and aggregate shafts, the team can adapt the machine to suit different material streams as required. This flexibility ensures the shredder



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The workforce 'Simpler Recycling' forgot

One of the largest workforce mobilisations the UK waste sector has seen in a generation is colliding with a pipeline that was already thin. What the regulatory calendar demands, and what needs to shift.



By Reece Dalgas, Founder, WasteGrid - wastegrid.co.uk

When Hull City Council confirmed it had hired 70 new staff to deliver its 'Simpler Recycling' rollout, the figure barely registered beyond the local press. It should have. Seventy people, for one city. Multiply that across the roughly 79 English councils that reportedly told the BBC they would miss the 31st March deadline, and the hundreds that did hit it, and the scale of what this legislation actually demands starts to come into focus. 'Simpler Recycling' is not just a bin policy. It is one of the largest single workforce mobilisations the UK waste sector has seen in a generation.

And it is not the only thing happening at once.

In the space of 18 months, operators are absorbing pEPR, the March 2026 household rollout of 'Simpler Recycling', the March 2027 micro-business deadline, the move to mandatory plastic film collections, and from October this year, mandatory Digital Waste Tracking for every permitted and licensed receiving site in England.

Each of these carries its own workforce load.

DWT alone means weighbridge staff, intake officers, and compliance teams need to be retrained before October or recruited new. Food waste collections mean more HGV drivers, more crew, more rounds. pEPR means more compliance seats. Plastic film means new sorting labour in MRFs. The policy stack is compounding, and it is landing on a workforce pipeline that was already thin.

The HGV side alone should be keeping operators up at night. The UK has a structural driver shortage of 40,000 to 60,000 and an ageing workforce, with around 55% of drivers aged between 50 and 65 and fewer than 1% under 25. The Road Haulage Association reckons we need to train tens of thousands of new drivers every year just to stand still.

In 2025, the Government quietly let the centralised HGV skills bootcamp scheme end when centralised funding ran out. We are trying to meet rising demand with a shrinking pipeline, and the waste sector is competing for that pipeline against logistics, construction and agriculture.

Dean Willshee, MD of Willshee's Waste and Recycling, put it plainly in the company's own East Staffordshire case study. "One of our biggest issues is, as the company continues to grow, making sure we have the right people in place with the right attitude." Willshee's has grown 20% a year for a decade. If an operator at that scale is flagging hiring as the constraint, the smaller skip hire yards and MRFs without an in-house HR function are in deeper water than anyone is saying.

The sector's response so far has mostly been to throw more job adverts at generic platforms. It doesn't work. Generic job boards don't understand that a Class 2 with Hiab, a CPC in date, and 18 months of MRF experience is a different hire from a Class 2 with a fresh pass and no site exposure. They don't filter for WAMITAB. They don't know a waste carrier licence from a food hygiene certificate. The result is a hiring process that runs on volume rather than on qualification matching, which is how under-briefed new starters end up on safety-critical sites.

Which brings us to the piece that gets the least airtime. Six fatalities across the sector in the last reportable year. CIWM and ESA are right to push the new health and safety strategy hard. But hiring quality is a leading safety indicator, not a back-office concern. When volumes are rushed and induction slips, risk rises. Every yard manager already knows this. The workforce conversation and the safety conversation are the same.

Three shifts would help. First, treat qualification-matched hiring as a compliance issue, not an HR preference. Second, put as much weight on the quality of induction going in as on the CV coming through the door. Third, stop trying to solve this alone when the same pressure is arriving at every yard at the same time.

The regulatory pace has set the deadline. The question is whether we meet it with a workforce that is trained and on the books, or one that's scrambling in week one of a new collection round.

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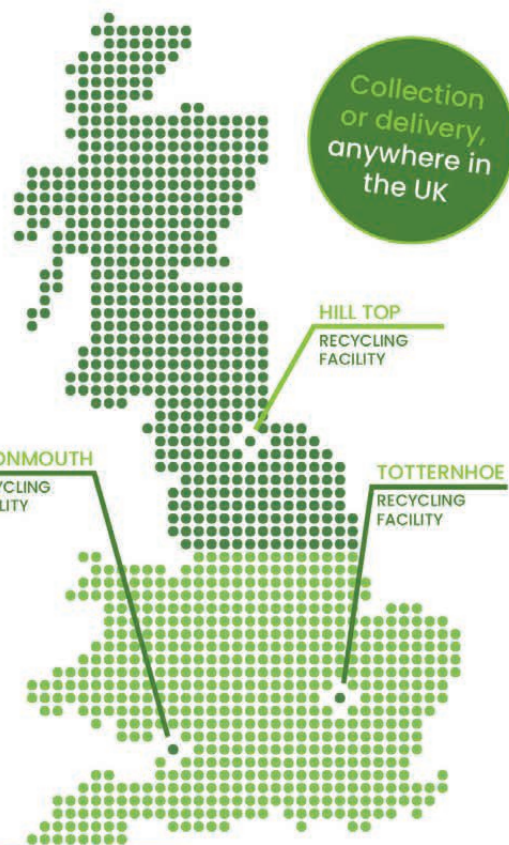
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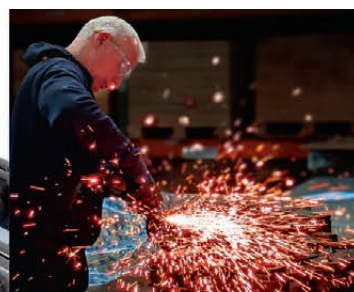


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The next generation of circularity

JESSICA MORGAN-SMITH

Partner at MPG, based in Bingley, Bradford and Skipton, North Yorkshire



The circularity and recycling sector is often misunderstood from the outside, with people often seeing 'waste' as a simple issue without understanding the complexities of the industry and innovation that drives towards a circular economy. Take this from the woman who is lovingly known as "the bin lady"! For those starting out in the industry, that perception is (thankfully) changing. With that in mind, I chatted to a few relatively newbies to the waste industry to get their views.

Lillie Reeve, who joined Breedon Group after graduating with a degree in Environmental Sustainability, reflects a common starting point. Like most people who start work in the circularity industry, she initially had a limited understanding of the sector, but exposure through early-career experience quickly reshaped that view. Now working within the recycling and quarrying industry, she highlights the scale and variety of work involved:

"The recycling and waste side of quarrying is vast, and there is always something new to study; there is never a boring day..."

For Lillie, one of the industry's defining features is its pace of change. With legislation evolving and best practices constantly improving, her role demands continuous learning and collaboration. It's this environment that keeps the work engaging and progressive.

Ellen MacCallum, who works in our permitting team at MPG, echoes this, pointing to the diversity of projects as a major attraction:

"Every project is different, and I feel like I'm learning new things all the time..."



Ellen MacCallum

It's really rewarding when things come together."

She also highlights something often overlooked, which is the genuine commitment within the industry to sustainability. From the inside, it becomes clear that the agenda for most businesses is not just to comply with regulations but also to improve environmental outcomes and develop innovative solutions actively.

Charlie Chandley, from our planning and permitting team at MPG, had a similar experience entering the sector with little prior knowledge. What stood out most was the complexity behind the scenes:

"I didn't expect there to be so much that goes on behind the scenes... waste can often be dismissed, but it plays a fundamental role in so many different industries."

Through his planning and permitting work



Charlie Chandley

on waste and recycling applications, Charlie has seen firsthand the level of detail required before operators can even consider starting work on a site. From environmental risk assessments to protecting sensitive habitats to Fire Prevention Plans and the rest. While he acknowledges that the process can be lengthy, he also recognises its importance:

"Whilst the approval process for an application may be lengthy, it ensures an operation meets all the current standards.... An increase in the rate at which applications are decided would be a significant improvement, provided the standards do not decrease."

Across all three perspectives, the common thread is an initial misconception of the industry.

There remains a widespread misunderstanding of the industry and the value it delivers. This disconnect between perception and reality is one of the sector's biggest challenges, but also one of its biggest opportunities with the move away from 'waste' as a negative to 'circular economy' as a goal.

As new professionals enter the field, they bring fresh perspectives and a much-welcomed willingness to challenge outdated assumptions. Their experiences reveal an

industry that is dynamic, technically demanding, and deeply committed to sustainability.

The message from this new generation seems pretty clear: the circularity and recycling sector is not just about managing waste, it's about reframing waste as a resource and recognising its essential role in building a more sustainable future. So come on in and join us!

Jessica has a wide experience of planning, permitting, operations, compliance, management systems and enforcement support.

If you have any queries about planning, permitting or compliance, please contact jessica@mpgyorks.co.uk or 07936359662.



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Eurocell grows PVC-U recycling programme to 142 branches - extending its reach to Scotland

Eurocell, the UK's leading manufacturer and recycler of PVC-U window and door systems, has significantly expanded its post-consumer PVC-U recycling programme, rolling the service out to a further 53 branches to create a 142-strong national network for the trade.

The expansion introduces the service to Scotland for the first time, with Eurocell branches in Edinburgh, Edinburgh West, Falkirk, Glasgow, and Glasgow East now actively participating in the scheme.

Despite PVC-U being highly recyclable and having a potential lifespan of up to 350 years, installers and the trade have historically faced limited access to practical recycling routes. Bulky window and door frames present severe operational challenges on small sites, frequently resulting in:

- **Expensive skip hire costs cutting into project margins;**
- **Time-consuming, unpaid trips to local tips;**
- **Valuable, recyclable materials ultimately being treated as general waste.**

Working with Biffa and major regional waste management partners, including Rhinos, CTSR, D&G, Avon Reclamation, and PVC Collections, Eurocell is providing installers with a localised, highly efficient route to dispose of replacement materials.

Through the expanded network, trade

customers can easily arrange domestic and small-load collections via their local branch or by phone. Material is collected, consolidated at regional transfer stations, and transported to Eurocell's specialist recycling facilities in Ilkeston, Derbyshire and Selby, North Yorkshire, where it is re-ground and extruded to be manufactured into new window and door profiles.

Joy Naylor, Manufacturing & Recycling Director at Eurocell, said: *"We know that dealing with old, bulky window frames is a massive operational headache and a growing cost for window and door installers and fitters. By expanding our recycling network to 142 branches, we are taking the hassle out of waste disposal."*

"Our closed-loop system means the trade can drop off waste or arrange collections locally, saving them skip fees and time off the tools. Just as importantly, it gives our installers a brilliant sustainability story to tell their homeowner customers, proving that the old windows they remove are being responsibly recycled right here in the UK, and going back into the manufacture of new PVC-U windows and doors at our manufacturing facility in Derbyshire."

Eurocell operates the largest closed-loop PVC-U recycling system in the UK. In 2025 alone, Eurocell processed 36,000 tonnes of recycled PVC-U through its operations and achieved 30% recycled content across its extruded products, keeping valuable materials in circulation.

Reconomy to open £20m plastic recycling facility

Reconomy, a London-based resource management company, has announced that its Eurokey brand is investing £20 million to open a 138,000-square-foot plastic recycling facility in Corby, Northamptonshire.

Reconomy states that this facility will be one of the largest dedicated plastic recycling plants in the UK, helping supermarkets, retailers, and grocers recycle plastic in a closed-loop system.

The facility will process various grades of plastic materials sorted at Eurokey's Kettering facility, recycling them into pellets for use in manufacturing packaging for supermarkets.

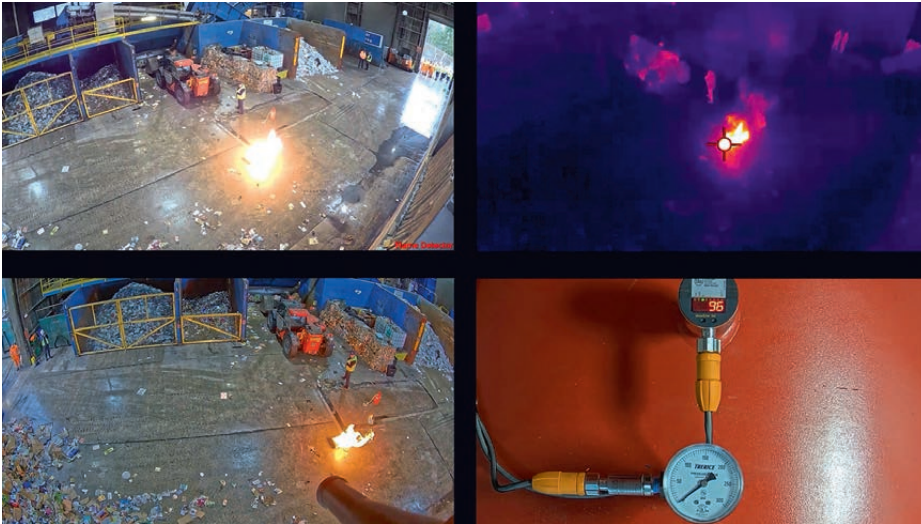
This investment enables Eurokey to recycle plastic materials domestically. Currently, the UK heavily relies on exporting recovered plastics due to a lack of domestic infrastructure capable of recycling this material at scale.

Mike Benton, Managing Director of Reconomy's recycle loop, stated: *"This is an exceptional milestone for our business and for the UK's plastics recycling industry. This facility will play a significant role in increasing domestic recycling capacity and reducing reliance on virgin plastic by keeping high-quality materials in circulation."*

An advantage of the new site is its proximity to Eurokey's sorting facility in Kettering, which is less than 10 miles away. This location will help reduce dependence on exports, lower transportation costs and associated carbon emissions, and cut reliance on virgin plastics.

Zubair Bajwa, Operations Director at Eurokey, remarked: *"We are very proud to play a leading role in strengthening the UK's plastic recycling industry at this critical time. For over 30 years, our business has helped leading supermarkets and retailers maximise the recycling potential of their plastic materials, and this new site will allow us to go even further in delivering circular solutions for our customers."*

Construction of the facility is nearly complete, and it is expected to become fully operational in the second half of 2026. Once at full capacity, the site will be able to recycle 38,000 metric tonnes of plastic materials annually and will create over 30 new jobs, stimulating local economic growth.



A three-cannon **Fire Rover** system, plus additional detection, was installed to protect the highest-risk areas. The system integrates thermal imaging, flame detection, and video smoke analytics, all continuously monitored by trained operators 24/7.

Every alarm is human-verified before action is taken. This ensures response is both immediate and accurate - eliminating unnecessary activations while enabling rapid intervention when it matters. Once confirmed, trained operators can remotely deploy targeted water cannons to suppress fires in the safest, most effective manner.

As Claire Shears, Service Manager - Strategy, Commercial & Depot at SWISCo, explains: *"We can go home at the end of the day knowing that it is being monitored and if there is a fire, it will be put out really quickly."*

Fire Rover also ensures the system remains fully operational, identifying issues in real time so they can be addressed without delay.

Since installation, SWISCo has moved from relying on people to spot fires to having continuous, verified detection and immediate response built into its operations to protect its daily operations. Risk is now actively managed rather than left to chance. The result is a site that is not only compliant but controlled - with the confidence that if a fire starts, it will be identified and dealt with quickly, at any time of day or night.

In high-risk environments like waste, compliance alone doesn't protect you. Understanding your risk - and designing around it - is what actually changes your risk profile.

To learn more about how Blazequel could help protect your facility fire hazards and enable you to operate with confidence, contact the team today! See details below.

Transitioning to a risk-based approach to fire protection

Fire risk in waste transfer stations and Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) is not static. It evolves daily, driven by unknown materials, lithium-ion batteries, and constantly changing waste streams. This was a risk that SWISCo had already encountered.

Operating a waste transfer station and HWRC, SWISCo identified key fire risk areas across its site, including the tipping hall, waste bunkers, and internal storage piles. Like many operators, their previous approach relied heavily on staff visually identifying fires. With the risk of developing outside of operational hours, this created a clear vulnerability.

Having experienced fires on site and with the requirement to submit a Fire Prevention Plan (FPP) to the Environment Agency, SWISCo recognised the need for a more robust, risk-led solution. The challenge was not just compliance - it was ensuring the site could operate safely, with

confidence, at all times.

A detailed risk assessment was carried out to understand how fire could realistically develop across the site. Rather than applying a generic solution, the approach focused on aligning detection and suppression with the actual operational risks.

The proposed solution was accepted by the Environment Agency as an alternative measure within the FPP. Crucially, it reduced the need for significant additional water storage on site and supported compliance with fire water capture requirements.



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DR ANNA WILLETTTS

Anna is an environmental criminal lawyer, specialising in defence work in the waste and recycling industry. She is dual-qualified, having completed a PhD in geochemistry and worked as an environmental consultant for five years before qualifying as a lawyer.

Anna represents waste and recycling businesses and directors who are prosecuted by the regulators for environmental and waste offences.



BUSINESS CLINIC

LEGAL

Updated Environment Agency customer service commitment

Just a short one from me this month.

I wanted to draw readers' attention to the Environment Agency's updated customer service commitment of 16th April.

This has a section on 'unreasonable behaviour' and gives the following examples:

Unreasonable behaviour

Unreasonable behaviour stops us from providing a fair, efficient service. It places excessive pressure on employees and diverts resources from those who genuinely need our help.

Examples include:

- *persisting after matters are closed - carrying on with complaints or demands after all formal processes are complete;*

- *damaging reputations - making statements or taking actions aimed at harming the organisation or our employees;*
- *insisting on irrelevant issues - pushing us to act on matters outside our responsibilities;*
- *ignoring procedures or respect - refusing to follow established processes or showing disrespect to staff;*
- *excessive contact - overwhelming our resources with repeated contact or unnecessary detail;*
- *false or incomplete information - withholding key facts or providing misleading information;*
- *targeting employees with complaints - making complaints about staff who are actively trying to help.*

(Note, however, that further up the commitment it says that the Environment Agency want you to:

'contact them if you are unhappy and want to complain and tell them what you think about their service so they can improve.')

I make no comment or opinion on this new commitment, except to provide this example. My client had a CAR form indicating a number of issues on site which the Agency wanted improved.

His consultant and I agreed that the improvements needed to be made (no Stage 1 Challenge this time...) and that once he made them, he should notify and update the Agency. This he did by sending photos and a video each week demonstrating the improvements and correspondence from his consultant. He has now been told that he is overwhelming the Agency with too much information.

We are not clear whether this falls under bullet point 5. And the phrase 'you can't win' springs to mind....

**GOT A QUESTION
ASK THE EXPERTS**

Anna is 'Past President' of the Chartered Institution of Wastes Management and Co-Convenor of UKELA's Waste Working Party.
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Sunbelt Rentals exceeds target in GB Spring Clean initiative

Sunbelt Rentals UK & Ireland has supported the Great British Spring Clean 2026, as part of their social sustainability and environmental strategy, with teammates coming together throughout March to collect litter and support their local communities.

The Great British Spring Clean, organised by environmental charity Keep Britain Tidy, is the UK's largest mass-action environmental campaign, bringing together individuals, communities and organisations to improve local environments.

As part of the campaign, Sunbelt Rentals teams pledged to collect 100 bags of litter, working in partnership with local community organisations and alongside external volunteers to take part in clean-up activities between 16th-29th March. Activities took

place across multiple locations, from Warrington to Dundee, including local community spaces, green areas, and locations surrounding their depots.

In total, 79 teammates participated, collecting 256 bags of litter, exceeding its original pledge and helping to create cleaner, safer spaces for the communities they serve.

Sunbelt Rentals' involvement forms part of its wider approach to social sustainability, empowering employees



to make a real difference in the places where they live, work, and operate. By investing time, skills and support into local initiatives, the business enables its people to support the causes that matter most to them while delivering meaningful impact at a local level.

Lisa Kennedy, Social Sustainability Manager, said: "It's been incredibly inspiring to see so many of our teammates roll up their sleeves and take on this challenge. Supporting our local communities and helping to keep shared spaces clean and safe for everyone to enjoy is something we're really proud of."

The initiative reflects Sunbelt Rentals' belief that positive change starts with its people, with colleagues playing an active role in improving shared environments and supporting their communities.

Local artist brings reuse to life at Northamptonshire recycling centre

A new reuse collection container at one of West Northamptonshire's Household Waste Recycling Centres (HRWCs) has been given a striking new look thanks to a collaboration between FCC Environment and local graffiti artist Binty Bint. Binty has designed and painted the reuse container at Sixfields Household Waste Recycling Centre, creating bold, eye catching artwork aimed at encouraging residents to think twice before throwing items away.

The project forms part of FCC Environment's commitment to delivering social value across the West Northamptonshire waste and recycling contract, combining environmental messaging with support for local talent.

Alexander Walsh, FCC Environment Contract Manager, said: "Reuse is one of the most impactful ways we can reduce waste, and making reuse areas more visible and engaging really matters. Working with a local artist like Binty has allowed us to bring that message to life in a creative, community focused way, while supporting local skills and talent."

Reuse areas at Household Recycling and

Picture credit: FCC Environment



Waste Centres play a vital role in keeping valuable items in use for longer, reducing waste and supporting a more circular economy. The newly designed container helps highlight this service, encouraging residents to donate items that could be reused rather than disposed of.

Ruth Bain, Head of Commercial, Cynthia Spencer Hospice Charity, said: "We are so grateful to Binty for her amazing artwork at our reuse shop, showcasing Cynthia Spencer Hospice in such a delightful way."

"This wonderful artwork really stands out and draws attention to the reuse shop and will help to encourage more people to donate items that can be given a second life and shop with us, while also supporting local creativity. It's a win-win for us all."

FCC Environment works in partnership with local authorities to manage waste responsibly and deliver services that are sustainable, innovative and rooted in local communities.

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AIC introduces patented I.C.M.S™ for Waste-to-Energy sector



Thomas Kelly - Control System Architect, AIC Group Limited; Ethna McNamee - Head of Regional Business Western Region, InvestNI; Conan O'Carroll - Control System Architect, AIC Group Limited

AIC Group Limited, Headquartered in County Armagh, Northern Ireland, has announced the publication of a new patent alongside the launch of its Intelligent Combustion Management System (I.C.M.S™), a next-generation control platform designed to improve the efficiency, stability and environmental performance of the Waste-to-Energy (WtE) and Thermal Treatment Systems the company manufactures.

AIC Group is an engineering-led company specialising in the delivery of bespoke Thermal Treatment and WtE systems across the medical, hazardous, agricultural and municipal sectors. The company operates across the full project lifecycle, from client consultation to system design, manufacturing, installation, and maintenance. Ensuring complete control over system performance and long-term reliability.

Developed in-house, the patented I.C.M.S™ introduces a predictive approach to system control that represents a significant departure from conventional incineration technologies.

Traditional systems rely on reactive control - adjusting combustion conditions only after process deviations are detected. In contrast,

I.C.M.S™ uses extensive sensor data and predictive modelling to assess incoming waste before it is processed, enabling the system to anticipate how variations in waste composition will impact performance and to optimise operating parameters in advance, which is unprecedented to date within the industry.

At the core of the system is Sentinel™, AIC Group's proprietary predictive intelligence engine, which continuously analyses operational data and dynamically adjusts combustion conditions, waste feed rates and emissions control strategies in real time.

This combination of pre-emptive control and continuous adaptive optimisation allows the system to maintain stable combustion, maximise energy recovery and ensure consistent emissions performance, even when processing highly variable or challenging waste streams.

The technology is fully integrated across AIC Group's bespoke systems, covering waste handling, loading, combustion, energy recovery and emissions control. By embedding predictive intelligence across the entire process rather than isolated components, I.C.M.S™ delivers whole-system optimisation, reducing

Through the platform, clients can access:

- Real-time and historical system performance data, including combustion conditions, temperatures, pressures and efficiency metrics;
- Energy generation and heat recovery performance;
- Emissions monitoring and compliance data;
- Waste throughput and feed characteristics;
- Equipment status, alarms and diagnostic information

In addition, the platform enables:

- Automated parts ordering and service requests;
- Predictive maintenance scheduling based on live operational data;
- Detailed lifecycle cost tracking and performance analysis;
- Continuous efficiency optimisation insights.

inefficiencies, minimising operator intervention and improving overall plant reliability.

A key differentiator is the integration of a customer-facing digital platform that connects directly to the on-site control system. This provides operators with a level of visibility and control not typically available in conventional Thermal Treatment facilities.

This integration supports data-driven operation, improved asset management and reduced lifecycle costs, introducing a level of predictive maintenance and operational transparency that has not traditionally been available within the sector.

An upcoming deployment of I.C.M.S™ will be delivered as part of a 1 tonne per hour (1 TPH) hazardous and medical WtE facility located in York, UK, where the system will be used to optimise performance and ensure compliance under highly variable operating conditions.

Each system developed by AIC Group is completed through detailed waste stream analysis and site-specific assessment, enabling AIC Group to design and manufacture systems tailored to specific operational, environmental, and

regulatory requirements.

As one of the only companies in Northern Ireland designing and manufacturing complete waste Thermal Treatment and Waste-to-Energy systems, AIC Group continues to invest in engineering innovation to support an efficient and sustainable approach to waste management.

The development of I.C.M.S™ and Sentinel™ has been supported by Invest Northern Ireland, with financial support contributing to the expansion of AIC Group's internal ICT and control systems departments and the creation of specialist engineering roles required to deliver this advanced technology.

“Extensive R&D over the past number of years has facilitated the rollout of this cutting-edge technology. The launch of I.C.M.S™ marks a significant step forward in how our Thermal Treatment and Waste to Energy systems are controlled and emphasises our commitment to advancing our product range to meet the needs of today's world,” said Conor Donnelly, Managing Director at AIC Group.

“By predicting how waste will behave before combustion begins

and continuously optimising performance, we can deliver more efficient, stable and compliant systems, while giving operators a level of visibility and control that has not previously been achievable.”

Ethna McNamee, Head of Western Regional Business at Invest NI, said:

“Our Western Regional Office has been supporting AIC Group since it was established eight years ago, ranging from R&D and trade support to job creation. It's been great to be part of its growth journey, and I'm delighted that we have been able to support this latest project. Securing the publication of its new patent and successfully developing its I.C.M.S system showcases AIC's long-term innovation ambitions.

“The company's investment has enabled it to develop and deploy cutting-edge technology that will enhance operational efficiency, improve environmental performance, and deliver tangible benefits to its clients. It's fantastic to see a company in Mid Ulster achieve this patent. This journey has the potential to inspire other businesses to invest in the development of renewable energy technology.”

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MARCO MUIA, BSc (Hons) MSc MCIWM, Managing Director at Oaktree Environmental Limited.

Marco specialises in all aspects of waste planning, environmental regulation and training, including CIWM/WAMITAB COTC/OCC assessment.



B BUSINESS CLINIC

ENVIRONMENTAL

Digital Waste Tracking and waste operators

As a consultant, I've always advised caution when there is excitement or dismay about incoming legislation and guidance, mainly because the majority of the time, something that was due to come in has been delayed or even shelved.

Well, not quite so with Digital Waste Tracking (DWT). The legislation has been passed and published, but only for Wales and Scotland, as far as I can tell at the time of writing. The England version will no doubt be a carbon copy. The key points are summarised below, but there is still a lack of guidance for small operators who don't use software, so we need to keep a watching brief over the next few months.

The Digital Waste Tracking (Wales) Regulations 2026

- Made on 26th March 2026 and coming into force on 1st October 2026.
- The Welsh Minister, as the "designated person", has the duty to establish, maintain and operate

an electronic system to track controlled waste ("the digital waste tracking system" DWTS).

- The designated person's functions include approval of software.
- The designated person must ensure that a digital waste record number is assigned to records entered into the DWTS.
- The record number must be sent to the operator of the permitted facility who recorded the information.
- The operator must pay the digital waste tracking fee of £26.
- The regulations exclude some waste transaction including household waste deposited at civic amenity sites, for example.
- Provides for digitally excluded operators who have to apply to be accepted as such.
- The definition of a digitally excluded person includes those "for whom it is not reasonably practicable to use electronic communications or to keep electronic records for any

reason". Let's see what the guidance states.

- The regulations also make provision for enforcement, compliance notices, offences, civil sanctions and appeals.
- The regulations provide for the setup of the system, but not much guidance.

Whilst operators have already been invited to test the service in a private beta (autumn 2025), my concerns are for those operators that do not have waste software or resources available to meet the new requirements and record/submit their waste inputs. However, the gov.uk guidance page (updated on 25th February 2026) mentions an alternative way of submitting data using a spreadsheet as a temporary solution until October 2027. This makes sense, as it would allow operators to check software out by talking to other users before committing to a solution.

Hopefully, by then, a solution will be available in the form of simplified software. Not everyone needs an all-singing-and-dancing (expensive) system that they only use in a limited capacity.

We still don't know how well the system will work. If anyone reading has started the beta, please let us know what you think.

Just as I finished writing, I received a notification which included the following: **"A voluntary beta test for the digital waste tracking service opens on 28th April, with permitted waste receiving sites and software developers for the waste sector encouraged to take part and help refine the system ahead of full rollout."** Great timing!

Scan the QR code to find out more.

Nothing is stopping any operator from trying the beta to see how it goes, as the mandatory requirements do not take effect until October.



**GOT A QUESTION
ASK THE EXPERTS**

If you have any questions about this article contact Marco on **01606 558833** or e-mail him at **marco@oaktree-environmental.co.uk**



UKPN earns zero waste to landfill certification

UK Power Networks (UKPN) has achieved platinum certification for successfully diverting 99.4% of its recoverable waste from landfill. This certification resulted from an audit of its waste management practices for 2024/2025 conducted by Beyondly, a company specialising in environmental compliance.

UKPN delivers electricity to nearly 20 million people in London, the South East, and the East of the UK. The company aimed to minimise the amount of recoverable waste sent to landfill by the end of 2025 and requested that Beyondly audit its progress.

The independent audit reviewed data from the 2024/25 period, covering 131 waste collection sites and seven waste

service providers. It showed that UKPN reached a 99.4% diversion rate, including waste from streetworks, and a 96.7% rate when excluding streetworks waste such as stones and soil.

UKPN mentioned that it performs over 40,000 roadworks each year to maintain and install underground electricity cables, which creates a large amount of waste. The recycling rate for streetworks waste was nearly perfect at 99.9%, surpassing the 99.5% goal.

It is worth noting that some landfill disposal may still occur for certain regulated hazardous wastes or when mandated by law, distinguishing this from unnecessary non-hazardous landfill waste.

Mark Norman, head of environment and sustainability at UKPN, called the certification “significant” and recognised that some landfill waste is unavoidable. He said achieving platinum certification marks an important milestone for UKPN and shows their efforts to reduce waste and promote recycling.

“Independent verification by Beyondly shows our commitment to minimising avoidable non-hazardous waste,” he added.

Chris Smith, Beyondly’s lead consultant for resource efficiency, said the business is excited to continue working with UK Power Networks in 2026 to build on this successful certification.

CRJ secure UK and Ireland dealership with Tana

CRJ Services is now the exclusive dealer for Tana’s full range of recycling machinery in the UK and Ireland. This partnership will help CRJ provide better shredding solutions for various waste and recycling needs.

Tana’s products include shredders, landfill compactors, and screening machines, all designed to improve efficiency, recover more materials, and enhance waste processing for different applications.

Jari Mannala, CEO of Tana Oy, stated: “We are pleased to partner with CRJ, which has a strong reputation in the waste and recycling sector due to its technical expertise and service capabilities. We look forward to working together to offer Tana’s advanced waste-processing solutions to more operators in the region.”

CRJ is introducing the Tana Shark and Tana Hammerhead single-shaft shredders, which produce finer output sizes to meet specific material requirements. These machines will enhance CRJ’s existing HAAS Tyron twin-shaft slow-speed shredders, enabling better handling of diverse waste types and processing goals.

The Tana shredders are particularly suited for waste streams that require finer size reduction and precise output control.

By adding Tana to their offerings, CRJ aims to strengthen its position as a solution-focused partner in the waste and recycling industry, providing expert advice, reliable machinery, and robust after-sales support across a range of applications.

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Charity shops receive tonnes of unwanted clothes



Expecting charity shops to recycle your unwanted clothes is creating a rubbish pile - here's how to help to avoid that

VIOLET BROADHEAD

Research associate,
University of Bristol



Charity shops are generally seen as a responsible way to get rid of unwanted belongings. In theory, donating items allows them to be reused and raises money for important causes. However, many charity shops struggle to make use of the donations they receive.

The UK has more charity shops per person than any other country, handling hundreds of thousands of tonnes of used clothing every year, in addition to a wide range of other household items.

When goods are donated to charity shops, they are either sold to local customers to be reused or purchased by commercial companies and traded through complex international markets.

An estimated 70-90% of donated goods follow these routes, with local traders reusing and recycling as much as possible. However, large quantities are also dumped and burned, resulting in environmental damage and waste.

My ongoing research shows the challenges charity shops face in reusing donated goods. Charity shops are the primary outlet for used textiles in the UK: roughly half of all textiles currently collected for reuse and recycling are charity shop donations. This role already puts them under significant pressure and is likely to become more challenging if production and disposal rates increase.

My research found that many charity retail staff are very focused on fundraising. Shops have strict financial targets to ensure they are supporting the charitable cause. As one charity retail senior manager put it: *"That's why you exist."*

Charity trustees have a legal duty to act in the best interests of their charity and to manage its resources responsibly, so shops which aren't profitable can end up being closed.

This can be problematic for the reuse of low-value goods, which offer a limited return on staff labour time and shop floor space. In the words of another interviewee for my research: *"We can't stick everything out with a penny on it, that's not how it works. We have to prioritise what we're going to see the biggest return on."*

This issue is intensified by the overwhelming volume of discarded goods. Charity shops in the UK receive an estimated 350,000 tonnes of used clothing every year, in addition to a wide range of other household items, the quantities of which are not well documented.

Sorting and preparing donated goods for sale is time-consuming and labour-intensive. In one shop, a senior manager at a national charity retailer told me: *"They get that many donations, and they're that understaffed - they don't have the time or the space, so it's easier and better just to put it in the bin."*

As a result of these challenges, donated goods that are potentially reusable (as well as those that are too worn out for sale) may be landfilled, incinerated, or recycled into low-value applications such as mattress stuffing.

This problem is linked to levels of consumption in the UK and other high-income countries. The average number of garments purchased per person globally increased by roughly 60% between 2000 and 2014, with each item being kept for half as long. In 2022, UK shoppers bought 1.42 million tonnes of new textile products, and this figure could reach 2.37 million tonnes by 2030. Much of this clothing is low quality, with little potential for reuse.

International markets for used goods are increasingly oversaturated and vulnerable to geopolitical unrest, so they are increasingly constrained in what they will accept.

What you can do to help

1) Make sure your donations are clean and in working order. Overstretched charity shop staff may not have time to sew a new button onto a shirt or even clean a piece of crockery. If something you want to get rid of is broken and you don't know how to mend it, take it to your local repair cafe first.

"When I was very short of money, I either made do with what I had or bought second-hand (sometimes donations from friends). Any clothes I did buy were always 'classic', which meant their lifespan was pretty indefinite. As a child, hand-me-downs were very commonplace, and it was only shoes that I ever received new, the joys of being the youngest of four boys."

- Rob M.

In reply to Rob M.

"I agree, but I think the sugar rush of cheap clothes tempts many folk. I was in Tesco recently, and there was a whole floor devoted to clothing. All of it was ridiculously cheap. Some dresses were cheaper than the fabric would cost you, even if you bought it from a market stall. Ditto the kids' clothes. Many parents and grandparents overbuy for their kids simply because they're so cheap."

- Liz M.

"Try to donate seasonally appropriate goods. If you bring jumpers in June, the charity shop has to find somewhere to store them until September..."

"I understand your point, but in the UK, seasonal isn't such a big thing. People in the UK wear jumpers all year round. You'll be able to buy summer stuff out of season because so many people take holidays to hot places in the winter."

- Brendan G (Editor)

"I've sourced a large percentage of my clothes from charity shops over the years and have been a volunteer. Please visit a smaller charity shop and see how they operate differently!"

"I'm afraid a lot of the larger 'national' charity shops have created the issues raised for themselves. They overprice items and create boutique-style shops that severely limit the amount of stock they can display. To add insult to injury, they then sell good-quality donations (that should be sold through shops) very cheaply to large resellers. I've become so incensed by this that I only ever donate items to small charities now."

"When it's cheaper to buy new clothes in a supermarket than secondhand in a charity shop, management is clearly at fault, not the buyers or the donors."

"This 'big business' model of charity shop also shuns the important community role smaller shops often play. At its best, the charity shop is often a welcoming place for people to pop by for a friendly chat and a source of cheaper clothes, books, and toys for those who can't afford to buy new at retail prices."

"The small animal charity I volunteered for often had sale days to clear old stock very successfully. We sold what we couldn't sell to a textile stuffing manufacturer and barely had a bin bag a week to throw away. Throwaway donations came in, but they tended to be the exception to the rule."

"I appreciate the article; it makes some good points. I abhor fast-fashion and the rubbish it's creating with synthetic fabrics, but it appears to be pointing the criticism in the wrong direction." - Trish J.

- 2)** Try to donate seasonally appropriate goods. If you bring jumpers in June, the charity shop has to find somewhere to store them until September.
- 3)** If you have a lot to donate, call your local charity shop first. Check if they have the capacity to take it, and don't be offended if they politely decline or ask you to come back another day.
- 4)** Take items which can't be reused, such as worn-out socks and stained teatowels, to a recycling point instead of a charity shop.
- 5)** Find specialised outlets that will offer the best chance of an item being reused. For example, consider a baby bank for buggies and cots, or a scrap store for unwanted craft materials.
- 6)** Get involved with groups in your local community who are working to tackle waste, or consider setting up your own.

This article first appeared at www.theconversation.com

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John trained at Saltcoats Burgh in the late 60s. After a decade he moved to PD Beatwaste Ltd/ Wimpey Waste Management Ltd. He then joined the Civil Engineering Dept at Strathclyde University before posts at Renfrew, Hamilton, Inverness and East Ayrshire Councils.

A Fellow of CIWM, he served on their Scottish Centre Council from 1988-2009.

He is a Fellow of the Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland and was their President between 1991-92.

JOHN CRAWFORD

Police-style powers? Really?

I was intrigued to read in March that the Government is considering giving Environment Agency staff powers to arrest people suspected of being involved in illegal waste transport and disposal, seize assets, and search premises without a warrant. Penalties of up to five years' incarceration for those convicted are promised, and anybody caught fly-tipping will have penalty points added to their driving licences.

Just the stuff the public wants to hear now that the latest estimates suggest we're getting close to the 30% mark for the amount of waste handled by crooks in the UK. Emma Reynolds MP is also quoted as saying: *'If you dump rubbish on our streets, you will be joining a clean-up squad and picking up the tab'*. Really?

Does she think the Council Trade Unions will be happy with the idea that their Members will have to work alongside convicted criminals who'll have no interest in putting in a decent shift? What if the miscreants are skint and can't pay for the disposal charges associated with their fly-tipping behaviour? And what if the person doesn't have a driving licence?

I'm amazed at the number of Police car chases on TV where the driver is either already banned or has never passed a

driving test. Personally, I think it's just another PR stunt to grab headlines, but it hasn't been thought through properly.

One of my great-grandfathers was a Police Sergeant in Kirkcudbrightshire. He'd previously been a gamekeeper, and the photos we have of him show he was over six feet two tall and built like a tank. My sister and her late husband both served in the Strathclyde Police Force for the final three decades of the last century and over the years, I would liaise closely with the local constabulary for the area where I was working, so I have a good understanding (OK it's second-hand) of the issues the police face on a daily basis and the amount of training they have to go through to keep us safe.

Will the Environmental Agency staff be kitted out with standard Police Kit, e.g., the (made-to-measure) body armour, handcuffs, radios, and cameras? And will they be happy to undergo the level of training expected of our police Officers to enforce these proposed new powers? Will they be trained to cope with situations where the crooks might have weapons?

Has it not dawned on the Government that, if EA staff fear for their personal safety, they can simply withdraw from the situation, citing the Health & Safety legislation (an option not available to

Police Officers)?

One of the main reasons we have so few Fixed Penalty Notices issued for dog fouling is that, in many cases, the owner of the animal responds aggressively when challenged, and the Council Officer simply backs off.

Hasn't anybody in authority wondered why there's been such a proliferation of illegal landfills in the last few years? I don't apologise for restating my opinion that landfill tax isn't the prime reason: more the inability of the EA's staff to effectively enforce the legislation, and something that can only be remedied by disbanding the organisation and handing its powers back to the Councils.

At the end of January, I wrote to Baroness Sheehan in such terms. Also, I pointed out that the costs of clearing up the Kidlington site seemed excessive (£230/tonne after Landfill Tax and disposal charges were stripped out), and asked whether the work had been put out to tender. I'm still waiting for an answer.

And I've now given up writing to the BBC's *North West Tonight* and *Newswatch*, pointing out that showing clips of a large illegal landfill has nothing to do with fly-tipping: these are two quite separate problems and need different solutions.

But I'm not in the PR game! Or am I?

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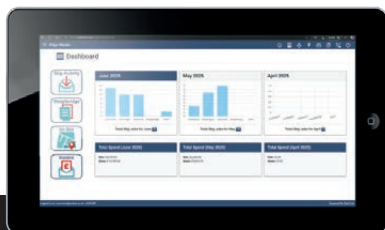
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Other software available include:

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RoadTrak

Bulk Haulage Software that manages deliveries and collections at the click of a mouse. RoadTrak is really easy to add new jobs, either in advance or retrospectively.

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