



Household waste recycling, municipal waste and fly-tipping (2022/23)

Key findings for the Lancashire-12 area

David Jenks, Business intelligence analyst

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For further information on the work of Business Intelligence, please contact us at:

Business Intelligence
Lancashire County Council
County Hall
Fishergate Hill
Preston
PR1 0LD

E: BusinessIntelligence.insight@lancashire.gov.uk

W: www.lancashire.gov.uk/lancashire-insight

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1 Overview

The Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) publishes [waste and recycling statistics](#). This report deals with waste collected by local authorities, but does not include figures for commercial waste collected by private or public operators. Landfill sites accept private and municipal waste, but we have only considered the rate of municipal waste sent for landfill. This report therefore differs somewhat from a number of other articles on Lancashire Insight in that the local authorities responsible for the geographic areas covered can directly influence the results analysed here. The article on local government employees is similar in this respect.

1.1 Definitions of terms used in this report

Lancashire County Council is regarded as a 'disposal' authority in that it disposes of waste collected within the 12 districts that it covers. The districts are 'collection' authorities which mainly collect household waste deposited in their householders' bins or by special appointment in the case of bulky items such as furniture. The collection authorities also provide rubbish bins for waste in public places and collect litter from street surfaces. The districts can provide small recycling facilities known as 'bring sites' but often as a result of vandalism and arson these facilities have been withdrawn. The unitary authorities, Blackburn with Darwen and Blackpool, are both collection and disposal authorities. All 15 authorities work together as partners (the Lancashire Waste Partnership) and have adopted a single [Municipal waste management strategy](#).

Most of the collected waste is regarded as 'household' waste, on which the results in Table 1 are based. The newer, narrower definition of 'waste from households' is not relevant to the figures shown here. Local authorities collect some waste from other sources or generate waste as a result of their own activities which cannot be classed as 'household waste' and is not included in the figures on recycling rates. This waste is often of a type unsuitable for recycling, reuse or composting. This waste combined with household waste is known as 'municipal waste' and is relevant to the sections on waste sent to landfill and energy from waste.

As well as disposing of all this collected municipal waste the disposal authorities also provides a number of [household waste recycling centres](#), where the public can bring their own household waste, often bulky items, to the centres and bypass the districts' kerbside collections. This is why the total waste collected by the twelve districts is a lot less than the amount disposed of by the County Council. Some categories of waste accepted at these centres are not regarded as household waste but fall under the wider 'municipal waste' definition.

The definition of 'household waste' sent for recycling, which is produced for each financial year and analysed in this report, differs from the narrower 'waste from households' sent for recycling [definition](#), which was introduced by Defra in 2014. The article lists types of waste which were previously 'Non-household waste' and which therefore only come under the definition for municipal waste. Statistics relating to the narrower definition are produced by calendar year. See the fuller explanation in the Background section.

2 Key findings

2.1 Household waste sent for recycling, reuse or composting

The 2022/23 statistics on household waste sent for recycling, reuse and composting reveal that the rate for the Lancashire-12 area of 42.8% was below the North West rate of 45.3%, but above the England rate of 41.7%. The Lancashire-12 percentage rose by 1.6 percentage points (pp) over the previous year.

At the district/unitary level, recycling, reuse and composting rates varied between lows of just 29.6% in Blackburn with Darwen to 45.6% in South Ribble.

Only two of the authorities in the Lancashire-14 area saw improvements in their recycling rates over the past 12 months, Blackpool with 3.8 percentage points (pp) and just 0.1 pp in South Ribble. The improvement in Blackpool was the fifth best in England.

2.2 Collected household waste per person

Hyndburn had the 14th lowest figure in England for household waste generation per head at just 284.5 kg. The top five authorities were all London boroughs, the best being Lambeth at 215 kg.

2.3 Percentage of waste sent to landfill

The percentage of municipal waste that was sent to landfill in 2022/23 was 34.9% for the Lancashire-12 area, 16.5% for Blackpool and 2.6% for Blackburn with Darwen. Blackpool's figure was 11th highest out of 123 collection/disposal authorities and Lancashire-12 6th. The figure for Lancashire-12 was the lowest since 2015/16.

2.4 Fly-tipping

For the Lancashire-12 area, there were 23,598 reported incidents of fly-tipping during the year to March 2023.

3 Background information

The household waste and fly-tipping results contained in this research article are produced by the [Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs](#) (Defra) but have been obtained from the [GOV.UK](#) website. The website has a section on [waste and recycling statistics](#). This includes the statistical dataset [ENV18 - Local authority collected waste: annual results tables](#), including the file 'Local authority collected waste generation from April 2000 to March 2023 (England and regions) and local authority data April 2022 to March 2023'. The fly-tipping data are available within statistical dataset [ENV24 – Fly-tipping incidents and actions taken in England](#) and the file 'Fly tipping incidents and actions taken, reported by local authorities in England 2012/13 to 2022/23'.

The household waste recycling data analysed in this report is a broader version of the 'waste from households' measure introduced by Defra in May 2014. The 'waste from households' data is used to report household recycling rates under the European Union Waste Framework Directive (2008/98/EC). It provides a harmonised UK level indicator across the four UK countries. Data is produced on a calendar year basis.

The data tables from Defra are accompanied by a [Methodology Summary](#)

A complementary piece of work is the [recycling in the UK](#) web page published by Sita. The page allows the performance of each local authority to be ranked against all other authorities across the UK.

4 Description of the geographies used in this report.

The Lancashire-12 area is comprised of the 12 local authorities that fall within the Lancashire County Council disposal authority boundary. The Lancashire-14 area incorporates the two additional unitary authorities of [Blackburn with Darwen](#) and [Blackpool](#), which are both collection and disposal authorities, and has a joint Minerals and Waste Development Planning authority. Please refer to the [Geographies web page](#) on Lancashire Insight.

The 12 collection authorities within the LCC boundary are [Burnley Borough Council](#), [Chorley Borough Council](#), [Fylde Borough Council](#), [Hyndburn Borough Council](#), [Lancaster City Council](#), [Pendle Borough Council](#), [Preston City Council](#), [Ribble Valley Borough Council](#), [Rossendale Borough Council](#), [South Ribble Borough Council](#), [West Lancashire Borough Council](#) and [Wyre Borough Council](#).

5 Analysis of the Lancashire-14 figures

5.1 Household waste sent for recycling, reuse and composting

Table 1 details the percentages of household waste arisings that have been sent by a local authority for reuse, recycling or composting. Please note that that household waste does not include the clearance of fly-tipped waste (see table 2).

Lancashire has, within a generation, undergone a step change in how it deals with household waste. The amount of household waste either recycled or composted was a miserly 1% in 1990. The 2022/23 figures reveal that the rate for the Lancashire-12 area of 42.8% was below the North West rate of 45.3%, but above the England rate of 41.7%. The Lancashire-12 percentage rose by 1.6 percentage points (pp) over the previous year.

At the district/unitary level, recycling, reuse and composting rates varied between lows of just 29.6% in Blackburn with Darwen to 45.6% in South Ribble.

There was a target originally set when the UK belonged to the EU for the UK to recycle 50% of waste generated by households by 2020. From 2019/20 to 2021/22, no Lancashire-12 or Lancashire-14 authority achieved the target. In 2013/14 South Ribble was the first Lancashire authority to hit the target when it achieved 50.5%, however, percentages have largely fallen back since. Limits for the percentage of organic material being landfilled were relaxed in 2013

Table 1: Local rates for percentage of household waste sent for recycling, reuse or composting and residual household waste (kilograms)

Waste collection authorities	Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting 2021/22 (%)	Residual household waste per household (kg) 2021/22	Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting 2022/23 (%)	Residual household waste per household (kg) 2022/23	Change in percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting 2021/22 to 2022/23	Change in Residual household waste per household (kg) 2021/22 to 2022/23
Burnley	32.2	505.1	31.5	476.8	-0.7	-28.3
Chorley	46.7	472.2	46.0	443.0	-0.7	-29.2
Fylde	44.4	454.8	41.0	460.0	-3.4	5.2
Hyndburn	33.0	426.0	30.6	435.7	-2.4	9.7
Lancaster	38.5	477.9	36.2	488.0	-2.3	10.1
Pendle	31.0	590.9	29.6	564.5	-1.4	-26.4
Preston	32.3	560.0	30.7	535.8	-1.6	-24.2
Ribble Valley	37.6	547.4	36.5	521.8	-1.1	-25.6
Rossendale	32.9	533.8	31.5	508.7	-1.4	-25.1
South Ribble	45.5	462.7	45.6	431.5	0.1	-31.2
West Lancashire	47.5	504.6	44.5	496.9	-3.0	-7.7
Wyre	45.7	441.3	40.3	463.6	-5.4	22.3
Lancashire-12*	41.2	579.7	42.8	528.9	1.6	-50.8
Blackburn with Darwen	30.4	606.2	29.6	591.7	-0.8	-14.5
Blackpool	41.7	527.8	45.5	469.9	3.8	-57.9
North West	45.8	530.7	45.3	494.4	-0.5	-36.3
England	42.5	541.4	41.7	508.8	-0.8	-32.6

Notes: Please refer to the background information section of this report*

Source: Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) – [Local authority collected waste generation from April 2000 to March 2023 \(England and regions\) and local authority data April 2022 to March 2023.](#)

Only two of the authorities in the Lancashire-14 area saw improvements in their recycling rates over the past 12 months, Blackpool with 3.8 percentage points (pp) and just 0.1 pp in South Ribble. The improvement in Blackpool was the fifth best in England. Elsewhere in Lancashire there were small falls with the greatest changes being in Wyre (-5.4 pp), Fylde (-3.4 pp) and West Lancashire (-3 pp).

(Specific source: (LA_and_Regional_Spreadsheet_202223, Table_3 and Table_4))

5.2 Residual household waste per household

In 2022/23, the amount per household in the Lancashire-12 area of 528.9 kg was above the England average of 508.8 kg. Hyndburn district, with around 435.7 kg per household, had the lowest figures in the Lancashire-12 area, and seven other Lancashire authorities recorded per household figures of below 500 kg. Pendle (564.5 kg) had the highest

household average in the Lancashire-12 area. Blackburn with Darwen (591.7 kg) was highest in the wider Lancashire-14 area, although experiencing a fall of -14.5 kg (2.4%) on the 2021/22 figure.

Seven of the Lancashire-12 districts experienced falls in residual waste per household of over 20 kg. These falls were particularly steep at the county level (-9.6%) and in South Ribble (-7.2%). The fall in Blackpool was -57.9 kg, or -12.3%.
(Specific source: (LA_and_Regional_Spreadsheet_202223, Table_3))

5.3 Collected household waste per person

Hyndburn had the 14th lowest figure in England for household waste generation per head at just 284.5 kg. The top four authorities were all London boroughs, the best being Lambeth at 215 kg.

(Specific source: (LA_and_Regional_Spreadsheet_202223, Table_4))

5.4 Landfill tax

The HM Revenue and Customs website contains a number of [tax and duty bulletins](#) that are updated on a regular basis. The landfill tax bulletin reveals the long-term decline in the tonnage sent to landfill. By the 2022/23 financial year the receipts were £626 million, which was £41 million lower than the previous financial year although the 2022/23 figure is provisional. The standard Landfill Tax rate from 1st April 2023 is £102.10 per tonne (+VAT), whilst the lower rate, for inert or inactive waste, is £3.25 per tonne (+VAT). Figures from 2016 are not directly comparable to earlier years, owing to the devolution of Landfill Tax in Scotland from April 2015.

5.5 Percentage of waste sent to landfill

Nationally and in the North West region, the amount of household waste sent to landfill has declined sharply during the 21st Century. In 2022/23, 7.2% of 'local authority collected' waste for England was sent to landfill (down -0.9 percentage points from 8.1% in 2021/22). For the North West region, the rate was higher at 9.6% (up 0.5 pp from 9.1% in 2021/22). The North West figure was well above the lowest regional percentage of 0.1% recorded in London (down by -1 pp from 1.1% in 2021/22) but falling below the East Midlands (11.9%), North East (11.5%) and East (22.9%) region rates,

(Specific source: (LA_and_Regional_Spreadsheet_202223, Table_2a))

The percentage of municipal waste that was sent to landfill in 2022/23 was 34.9% for the Lancashire-12 area, 16.5% for Blackpool and 2.6% for Blackburn with Darwen. The figure for Lancashire has consistently remained above 30% in recent years, but the rates for Blackburn with Darwen and Blackpool have fluctuated more since 2012/13, see Table 2 below. Blackburn with Darwen's latest rate is 63rd lowest out of 123 disposal/unitary authorities, some of which send nothing at all to landfill. Blackpool ranks at 11th highest and Lancashire 6th highest.

(Specific source: (LA_and_Regional_Spreadsheet_202223, Table_3))

Table 2: Percentage of municipal waste sent to landfill (2014/15 to 2022/23)

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Lancashire-12 area	39.4%	30.9%	51.4%	49.5%	39.0%	35.2%	35.4%	36.0%	34.9%
Blackburn with Darwen	67.1%	44.7%	22.8%	24.0%	41.5%	23.5%	0.7%	6.0%	2.6%
Blackpool	25.7%	16.9%	58.2%	46.6%	15.9%	11.4%	39.5%	17.9%	16.5%
North West	31.8%	24.2%	25.0%	19.7%	12.3%	8.8%	9.0%	9.2%	9.8%
England	24.6%	19.8%	15.9%	12.7%	10.8%	8.5%	7.8%	8.1%	7.3%

Source: Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) – [Local authority collected waste generation from April 2000 to March 2021 \(England and regions\) and local authority data April 2020 to March 2021](#).

(Specific source: (LA_and_Regional_Spreadsheet_202223, Table_3))

5.6 Total tonnage of waste sent to landfill

In terms of total tonnage of municipal waste sent to landfill, at 202,388 tonnes Lancashire's figure was second greatest for any disposal authority, quite a way behind Essex County at 333,420 tonnes.

(Specific source: (LA_and_Regional_Spreadsheet_202223, Table_2))

5.7 Energy from waste (municipal waste)

We have a Microsoft Power BI report which tracks the replacement of landfill as the main method of disposal by other methods: Recycling, composting and reuse; Incineration with Energy from Waste; and Incineration without Energy from Waste. This is for years beginning in 2000/01 and is for England and the North West region only. This lengthy time-series is not available for local authority statistics, but we have included the data points beginning in 2014/15 for the Lancashire-12 area, Blackburn with Darwen and Blackpool. As the percentages are based on *LA_and_Regional_Spreadsheet_202223, Table_2* they are slightly different to those given in *Table_3* (used for our Table 2) but which does not give figures for incineration rates. To open the report in a new window, click [here](#).

6 Fly-tipping

6.1 Fly-tipping cases in the Lancashire-14 area

Fly-tipping is the illegal deposit of waste on land contrary to the Environmental Protection Act 1990. The types of waste fly-tipped range from 'black bags' to large deposits of materials such as industrial waste, tyres, construction material and liquid waste. Reducing the incidents of illegal fly-tipping can help to create safer and greener communities, because environmental quality can influence people's perceptions of personal safety. In addition, optimising recycling and re-use is a core part of government policy to protect the environment. Fly-tipping is also associated with problems of [anti-social behaviour](#).

Information about fly-tipping is published at the local authority level by the [Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs \(Defra\)](#). Table 2 has the total incidents per Lancashire authority, whilst additional details for actions taken and costs incurred can be obtained from the original data release on the Defra website.

A total of 1,082,673 fly-tipping incidents were dealt with by local authorities in England in the year to March 2023, which represents a yearly decrease of 0.8%.

The results for parts of the Lancashire-12 area reveal quite a volatile pattern, with some very large increases and decreases from one year to the next. Without local knowledge, it is difficult to formulate an understanding of what is behind these particular results.

For the Lancashire-12 area, the 23,598 reported incidents of fly-tipping during the year to March 2023 represented a 4.1% decrease over the 2021/22 period. There were over 4,000 incidents in Preston and just under this figure in Lancaster and Pendle. Incidents rose by around a third in Fylde (100 incidents) and by slightly less (901) in Preston, but elsewhere fell substantially. In Fylde there were only 410 incidents.

In the Blackburn with Darwen and Blackpool unitary authorities, the number of fly tipping incidents normally remain more stable and relatively high. There were more incidents in both Blackburn with Darwen and Blackpool in 2022/23 than any of the Lancashire-12 districts. This was also true in 2018/19 and 2019/20.

Table 3: Fly-tipping cases (total incidents)

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Burnley	4,663	5,962	3,101	2,660	2,702	2,831	3,147	2,609	2,811
Chorley	881	886	880	1,070	897	894	1,435	1,037	872
Fylde	518	601	652	623	641	570	551	310	410
Hyndburn	1,030	2,232	2,983	2,229	2,613	2,829	3,308	2,534	2,634
Lancaster	3,717	2,750	3,765	4,006	2,708	1,942	2,827	3,736	3,953
Pendle	2,762	3,745	5,704	5,244	2,155	3,163	5,716	5,002	3,884
Preston	1,812	1,490	3,040	2,904	2,821	2,748	3,469	3,142	4,043
Ribble Valley	692	754	803	738	645	725	948	770	550
Rossendale	553	800	913	936	887	806	1,052	1,244	948
South Ribble	539	476	505	425	504	458	610	474	427
West Lancashire	930	1,134	1,204	1,254	1,212	1,870	3,246	2,470	2,043
Wyre	2,229	1,839	1,473	1,371	1,391	1,405	1,578	1,281	1,023
Lancashire-12 area	20,326	22,669	25,023	23,460	19,176	20,241	27,887	24,609	23,598
Blackburn with Darwen	3,034	3,817	3,883	3,857	3,494	3,763	6,509	4,383	4,167
Blackpool	4,328	4,190	3,920	3,424	3,568	3,319	3,907	3,626	4,402
Lancashire-14 area	27,688	30,676	32,826	30,741	26,238	27,323	38,303	32,618	32,167
North West	108,536	117,529	128,193	111,920	112,069	115,192	140,220	128,426	132,034
England	899,763	936,090	1,002,154	997,553	1,072,431	975,631	1,134,211	1,091,019	1,082,673

Source: Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) - [Waste and recycling statistics – local authority data](#)

District authorities provide collection services for household waste from wheelie bins and recycling boxes. Most authorities also have a policy whereby household waste left out for collection in a bin bag next to a wheelie bin is not collected as part of the normal collection service and is likely to be gathered separately and classified as fly-tipping.

Fly-tipping forms part of the much wider issue of waste management in general. The major focus is that legislative changes and landfill tax rates have placed attention towards moving

away from the traditional method of Landfill disposal and on to finding more innovative methods. The Covid-19 pandemic may have contributed to the widespread increase in incidents as the waste recycling centres were closed for long periods.

7 Related websites

7.1 Planning policy and recycling centres in Lancashire

The county council's website contains information on the authority's strategic role in [local planning policy for minerals and waste](#).

There are a number of [recycling centres](#) in the Lancashire County Council area. In addition, there are [two more in Blackburn with Darwen](#) and [one in Blackpool](#).

7.2 Selected recycling specialists in Lancashire

SUEZ is a national company that specialises in waste disposal and associated services. [The company's website](#) mentions the contracts it has with local authorities and other enterprises.

[Norpol](#) is a recycling specialist, which also carries out waste management consultancy and separation services. Its Nelson base was the first licensed and accredited polymer recycling centre in the North West. The firm states that it is their policy is to divert the maximum amount of waste away from landfill and recycle as much as possible.

[Shirley's Ltd](#) is a long-established firm in Darwen that specialises in the recycling of waste paper.

[Neales Waste Management Ltd](#) in Blackburn offers waste disposal services, waste recycling and site management. The company provides full recycling facilities to cater for materials such as paper, wood, plastics, metals, rubber and non-hazardous waste arising from civic amenity sites and municipal household wastes. All waste materials undergo segregation, be it screening, shredding, compaction or baling, to maximise their future value.

[Gardening Works](#) in Ribchester focuses on recycling organic waste. The company manufactures many of the products it sells and the main product groups cover home composting, vermicomposting, kitchen waste recycling, water recycling and sorting waste.

Waste management companies in Lancashire that are focused on providing services to the business community include [Silverwoods](#).

The [waste electrical and electronic public registers](#) mentions a number of Lancashire organisations.

[Recycling Lives Ltd](#) in Preston is well established organisation that offers a wide range of recycling and waste management solutions, including metal and plastic recycling, waste electrical and electronic equipment, and scrap car salvaging. It has a subsidiary, Advantage Waste Brokers, which offers a WEEE (waste electrical and electronic equipment) compliance scheme that operates across the UK.