

True Cost of Waste: ASBP Webinar

Katherine Adams | 9th February 2026

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About Reusefully



Reusefully is a partnership created to provide **expert circular economy advice and support within the built environment.**



We enable the **practical implementation of circular economy thinking** throughout construction and provide evidence-based support for related policy development. We collaborate and work with others who genuinely share this objective and value our commitment.



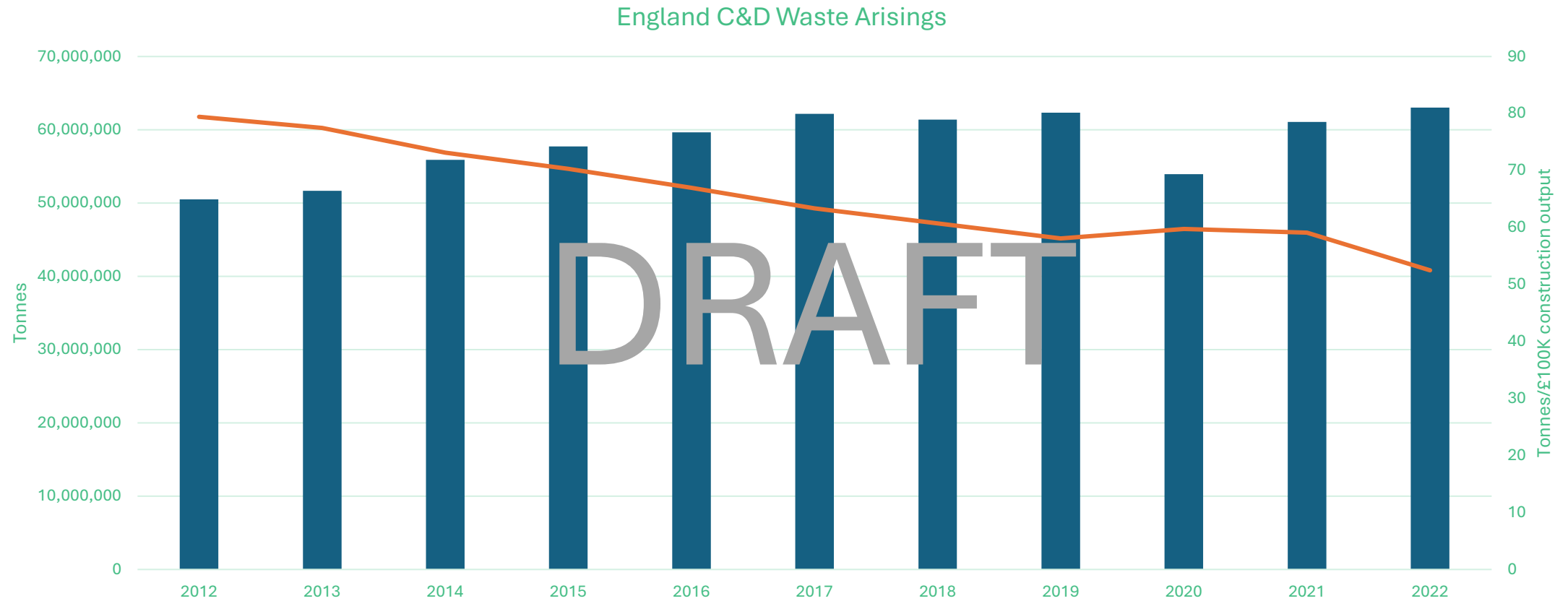
We address **material and resource efficiency, embodied carbon, design for deconstruction, waste prevention, reuse and recycled content.** Collectively, Reusefully brings together over 100 years of experience, working across small practical projects to large scale R&D.

Our team

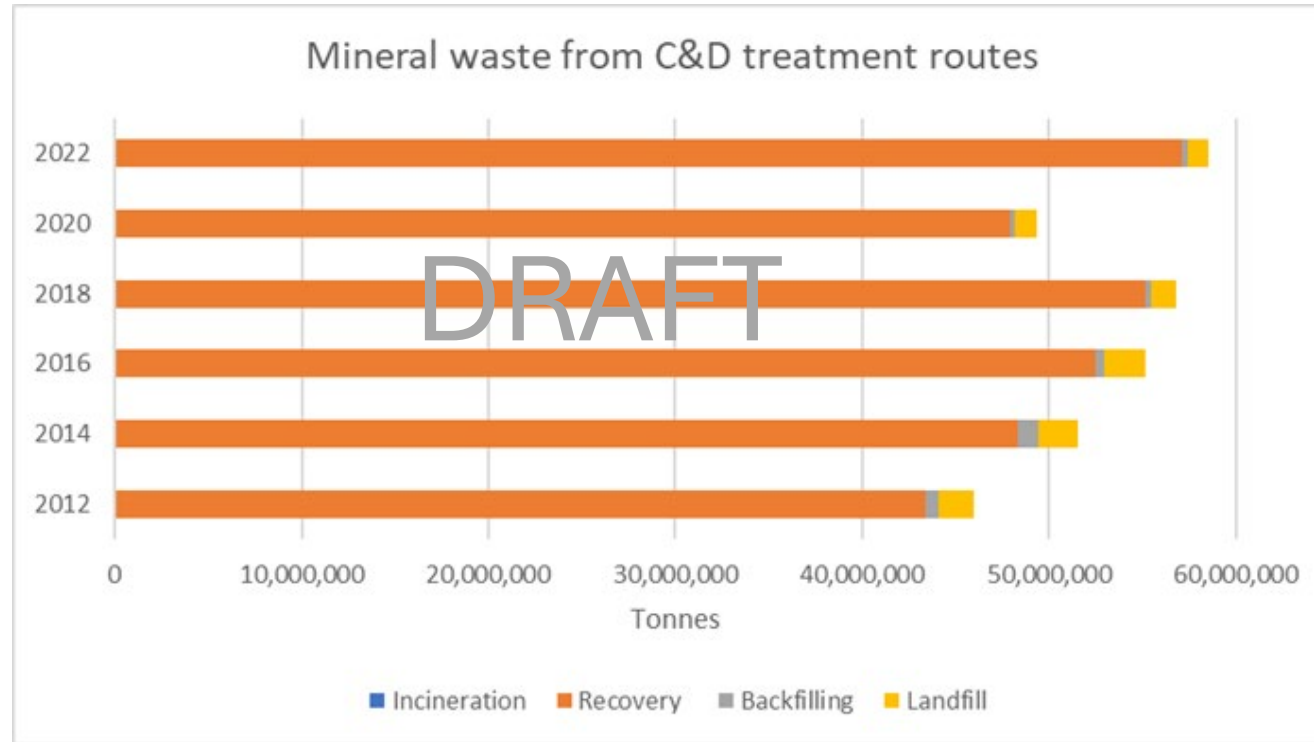
- A committed group of individuals who are **passionate about circularity and sustainability**. A mix of experience and youth.
- Currently standing at a team of nine and 3 associates, but with plans for modest recruitment and expansion towards the end of this year.
- A team whose experience and expertise is recognised at national and international level.
- More at www.reusefully.co.uk/our-team



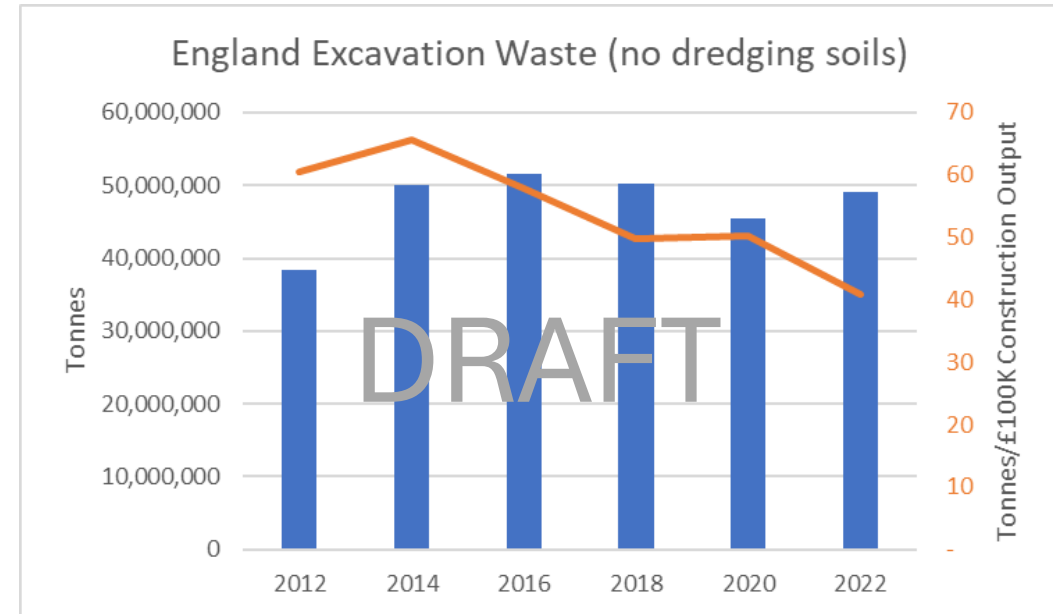
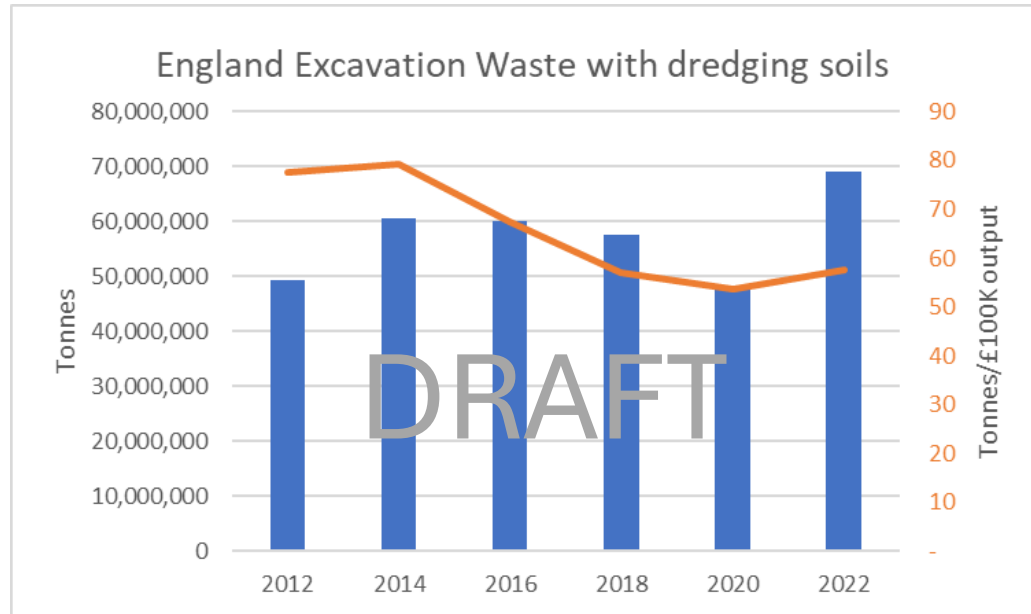
England waste stats (provisional)



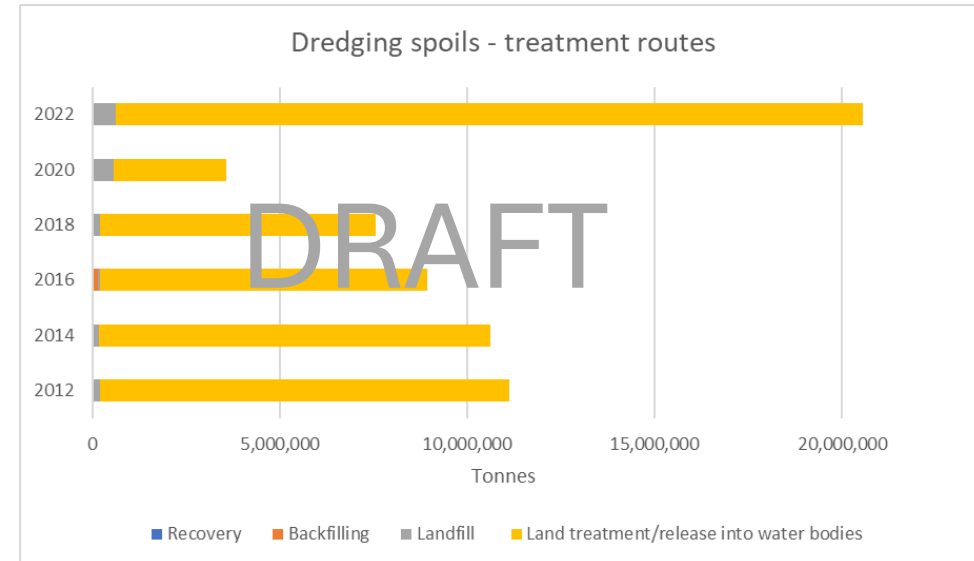
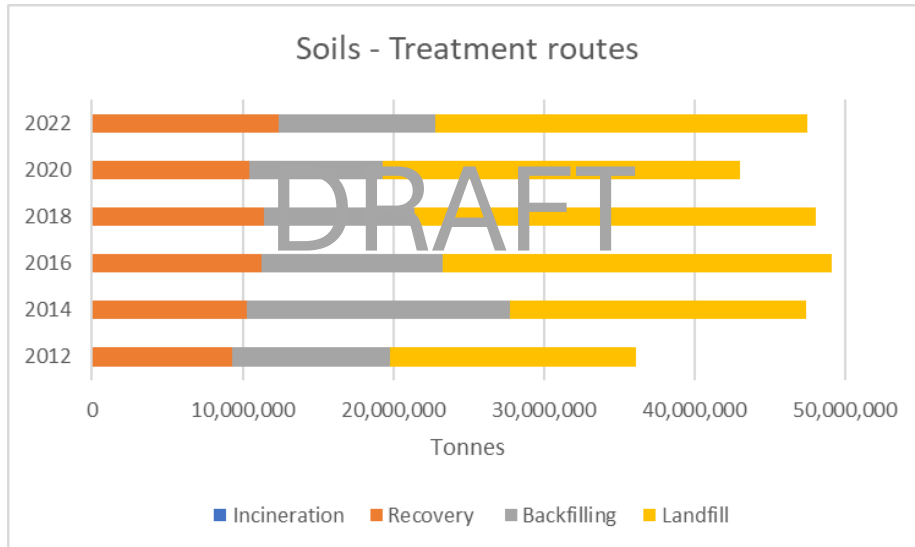
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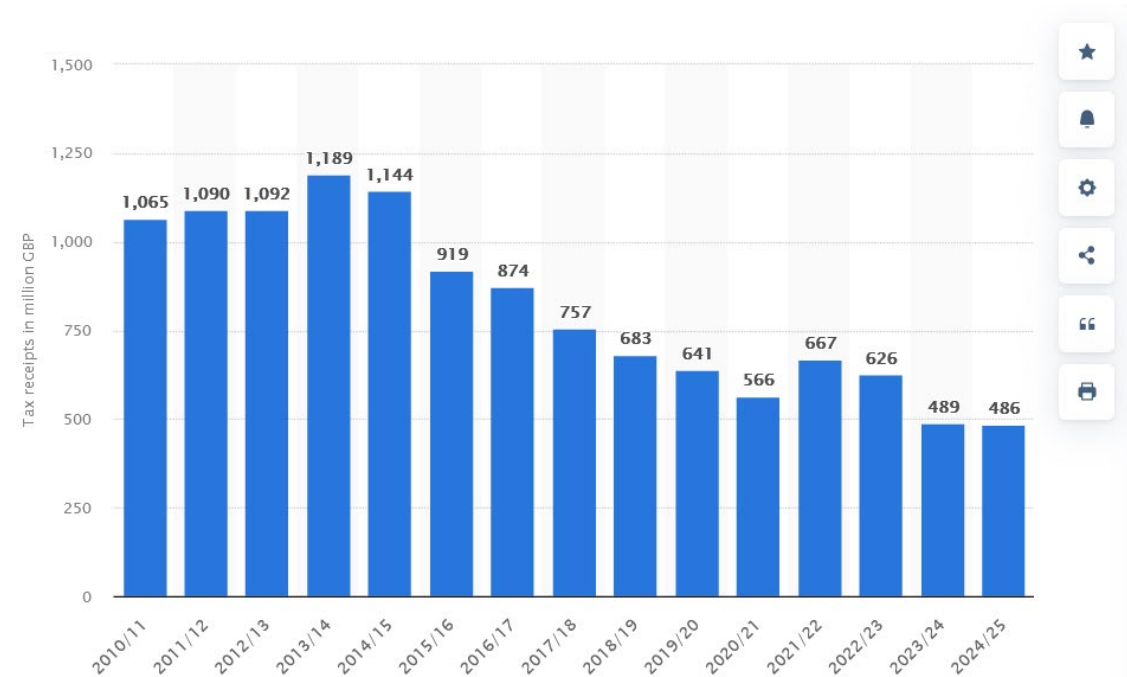
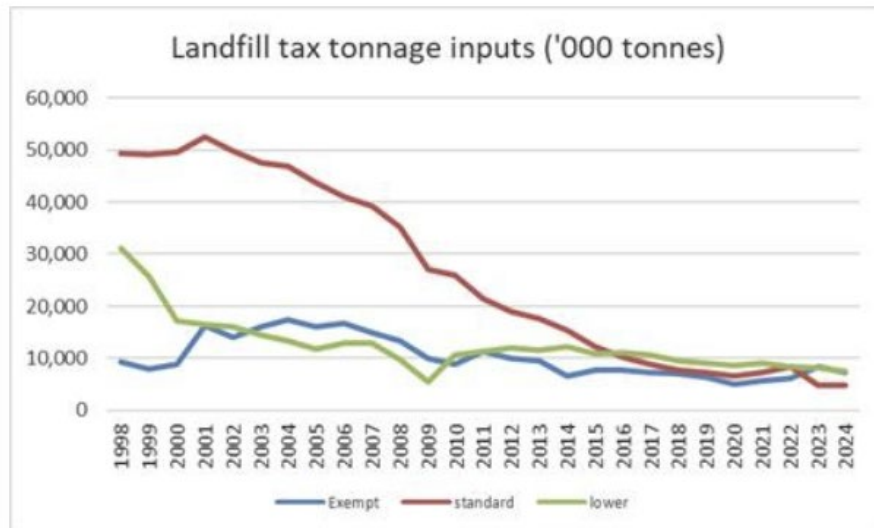
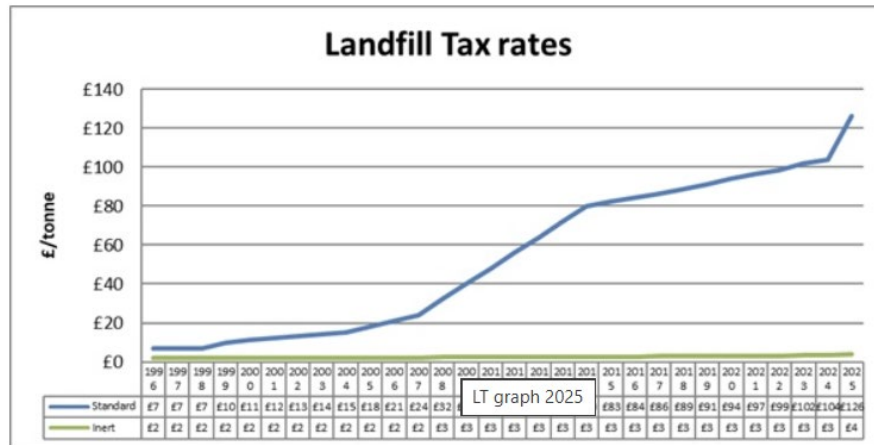
England waste stats (provisional)



England waste stats (provisional)



Landfill Tax



[Additional Information](#)

© Statista 2026

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<https://www.statista.com/statistics/284354/landfill-tax-united-kingdom-hmrc-tax-receipts>

ETS and waste incineration energy from waste

- Voluntary Monitoring, Reporting and Verification (MRV) only period would apply for the sector starting from 1 January 2026.
- Fully from 2028
- Can be significantly mitigated by diverting fossil carbon plastics from residual waste through minimisation, re-use and recycling.
- Around £48/tonne – 50% increase in gate fees
- £800 million/year in costs
- Operators to pay for greenhouse gas emissions by purchasing "carbon allowances" are expected to be £80-£98/t in 2028



UK Emissions Trading Scheme Scope Expansion: Waste

A joint consultation of the UK Government, the Scottish Government, the Welsh Government and the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs for Northern Ireland

Closing date: 2 August 2024 (extended from 18 July)

May 2024

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Material costs

Annual construction material prices more than double in 20 years

By [Specification Online](#) February 09, 2026

Table 2: construction materials experiencing the greatest price increases and decreases in the 12 months to November 2025, UK

| Construction materials | (% change) |
|---|------------|
| Imported sawn or planed wood | 11.9 |
| Electric water heaters | 8.5 |
| Other builders' ironmongery | 6.9 |
| Gravel, sand, clays and kaolin - exc aggregate levy | -3.7 |
| Imported plywood | -4.5 |
| Concrete reinforcing bars (steel) | -7.0 |

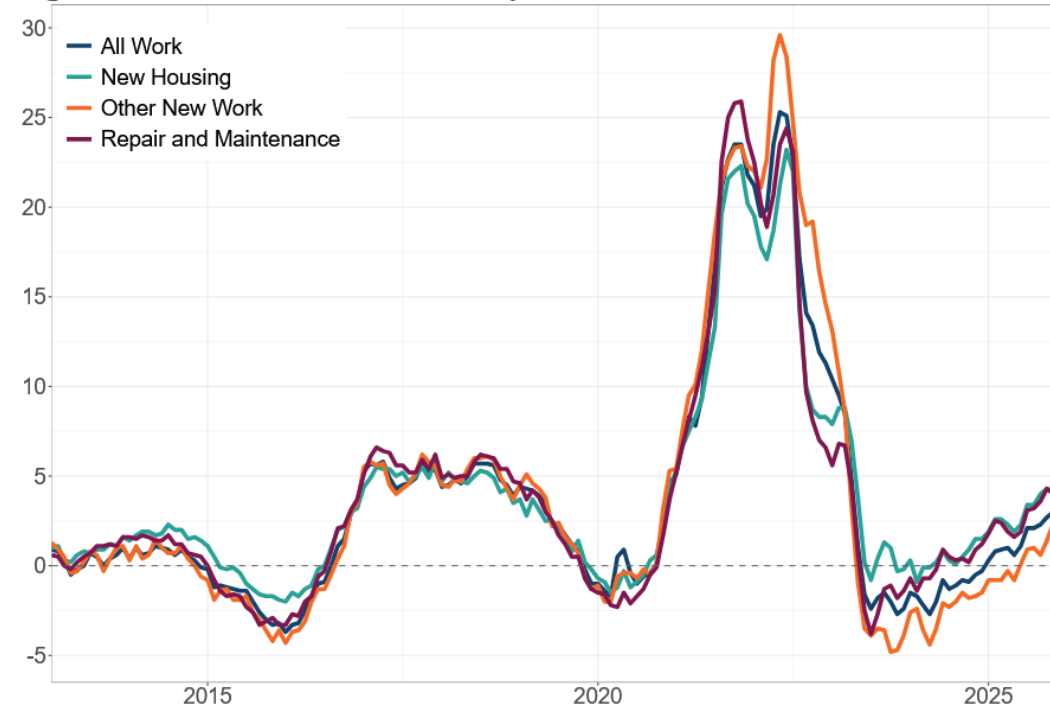
Table 4: top 5 exported construction materials in 2024

| Top 5 exported materials | £ (million) |
|----------------------------|-------------|
| Electrical wires | 1,026 |
| Paints and varnishes | 806 |
| Lamps and fittings | 440 |
| Builders ironmongery | 397 |
| Air conditioning equipment | 386 |

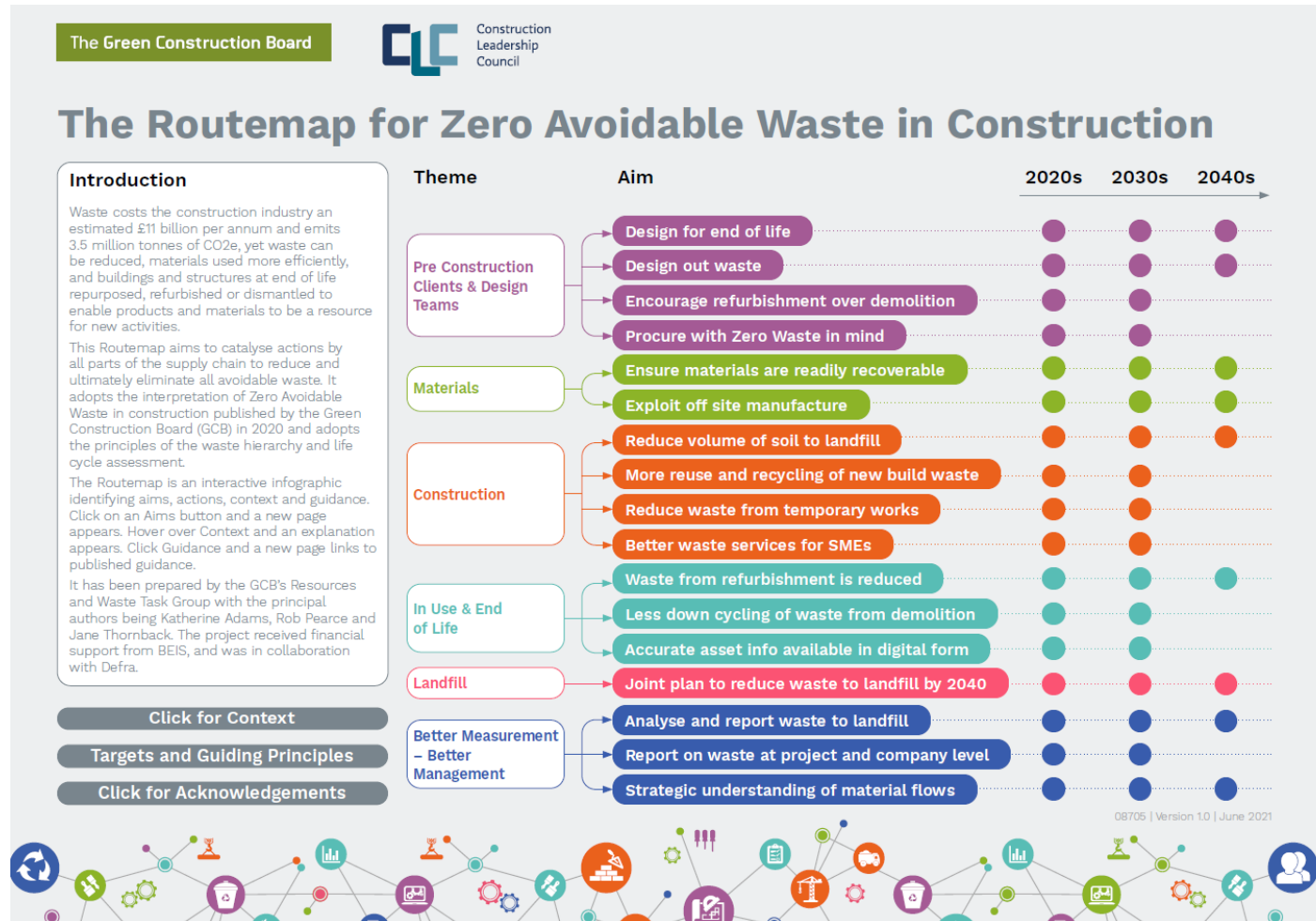
Table 5: top 5 imported construction materials in 2024

| Top 5 imported materials | £ (million) |
|----------------------------|-------------|
| Electrical wires | 2,764 |
| Lamps and fittings | 1,044 |
| Sawn wood > 6mm thick | 1,033 |
| Air conditioning equipment | 988 |
| Builders ironmongery | 915 |

Figure 2: construction material annual price inflation, UK



Routemap for Zero Avoidable Waste



Routemap for Zero Avoidable Waste

Design out waste

Aim: The use of materials is optimised in the design of the buildings and structures and waste is designed out throughout the design and construction process

| 2020s | 2030s | 2040s |
|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Waste reduction targets are commonplace in most construction projects.Professional institutions develop training and CPD.BS8895 is widely adopted throughout the design process for major projects. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">By 2030 costs are reduced by 10% through designing out waste and material optimisation. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">The amount of waste generated from new build construction is minimal. |

[Context](#) [What else would advance the delivery of this ambition?](#) [Click for Guidance](#)

Act now

- Clients, design teams and contractors set project waste reduction targets during design and construction.
- Design teams share their learnings and best practice on designing out waste within their practices and externally through their networks.
- Design teams write up case studies on how designing out waste has been considered within the design process and what changed as a result.
- Design teams implement waste reduction practices in their design work.
- Design teams undertake material optimisation through design choices and material selection working with manufacturers.
- Professional Institutions and universities and colleges include designing out waste in training, CPD and academic courses.
- If participating in environmental certification schemes, such as BREEAM, LEED etc pursue the credits that relate to waste reduction and material efficiency.
- At project level, contractors and quantity surveyors, reduce the wastage allowances that are set for materials and do not over order.
- Contractors incentivise subcontractors to reduce waste.
- Contractors and subcontractors manage materials on site carefully to avoid damage.
- Manufacturers and contractors collaborate to implement reusable packaging schemes.

[Back to Route Map](#)

The Green Construction Board Construction Leadership Council

Routemap for Zero Avoidable Waste

The Routemap for Zero Avoidable Waste in the Construction Sector

Report on waste at project and company level

Aim: The generation, true cost and recovery routes for all construction waste streams is known in detail

2020s

- CLC to require standard and consistent reporting for major projects from 2022.
- Contractors to develop key performance indicators and benchmarks for all building and waste types by 2024.
- The true cost of waste is starting to be measured and reported on major projects.

2030s

- CLC to require standard and consistent reporting for medium sized projects from 2030.
- CLC works with industry to agree voluntary waste reduction targets.
- Refinement of key performance indicators and benchmarks.
- True cost of waste is commonly measured for most projects.

2040s

Act now

Clients

- Work with other clients to ensure consistency with waste reporting requirements.

Contractors

- Provide more detailed information by reporting on waste arisings and recovery for key waste streams and share through appropriate forums and bodies.
- Analyse project data to develop KPIs and benchmarks for waste generation and recovery by building/infrastructure type and waste type.
- Work out how much waste is costing you, including the materials you are wasting.
- Work with waste management companies to generate better data from waste facilities by requiring the PAS402: Waste resource management – Specification for performance reporting Standard.

Software providers

- Work with contractors to review data inputted on waste and develop key performance indicators.

Context

What else would advance the delivery of this ambition?

Click for Guidance

Context

There is no mandatory requirement for contractors or clients to report their waste from construction, demolition and excavation making it difficult to assess what is good and best practice for waste generation and recovery. Moreover, the true cost of waste (the cost of the materials wasted, labour, management and disposal costs) is rarely measured and reported. Older and more recent studies have shown this can be up to 13 times as much as the disposal cost. If this figure was to be applied to approximately 13 million tonnes of waste that is generated from new build activities then the true cost of this is estimated at £11 billion per year. Whilst some companies do report their waste performance on a company basis, this varies in its consistency and granularity. Waste data on certain projects may be collected and reported via environmental certification schemes, but this is not collected centrally. Historically, projects were reporting waste as part of the Site Waste Management Plan Regulations, but government halted this in 2013. The only system that aggregates data on waste arisings and recovery routes and generates KPIs is BRE's SmartSite, which are available for a fee. These KPIs are used to set benchmarks in BREEAM. The National Federation of Demolition Contractors require their members to report on their waste and produce annual reports.

When the capability to properly measure and report waste has been established, CLC can work with industry to agree voluntary targets for reducing the amount of waste year-on-year.



The Green Construction Board



Construction
Leadership
Council



True Cost of Waste




wrap Material change for a better environment

Builders: Reducing the cost of waste on site

The Halving Waste to Landfill Commitment
Specialist and SME contractors commit to:

- estimating waste
- finding ways to reduce waste
- avoiding waste on site
- recycling more waste
- recording and reporting waste

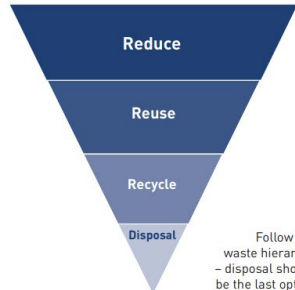


Why reduce waste?
Reducing the waste produced on site will benefit both your business and your clients.

- reducing material purchase and waste disposal costs will save you money
- meet client requirements for waste generation, reuse or recycling
- demonstrate you are an informed contractor and enhance your reputation

The True Cost of Waste
The cost of waste can be as much as £1300 per skip when you include the value of the wasted materials.

VAT 20%
Labour 3%
Skip hire 12%
Value of wasted materials 65%
Source: AMEC



Use all the empty space in a skip or sack – you're charged per pickup.

Suppliers and merchants can collect or buy wood pallets from site. Stack them neatly and phone ahead to let them know how many you have for pickup.

Follow the waste hierarchy – disposal should be the last option

How do I get started?

Download the documents to get started.

Site Waste Reduction Protocol Summary



Download

Site Waste Reduction Protocol



Download

CWIC Calculator



Download

User Guide



Download

Hogganfield Park Case Study



Download

Kier Construction Case Study



Download

<https://www.zerowastescotland.org.uk/resources/site-waste-reduction-protocol>

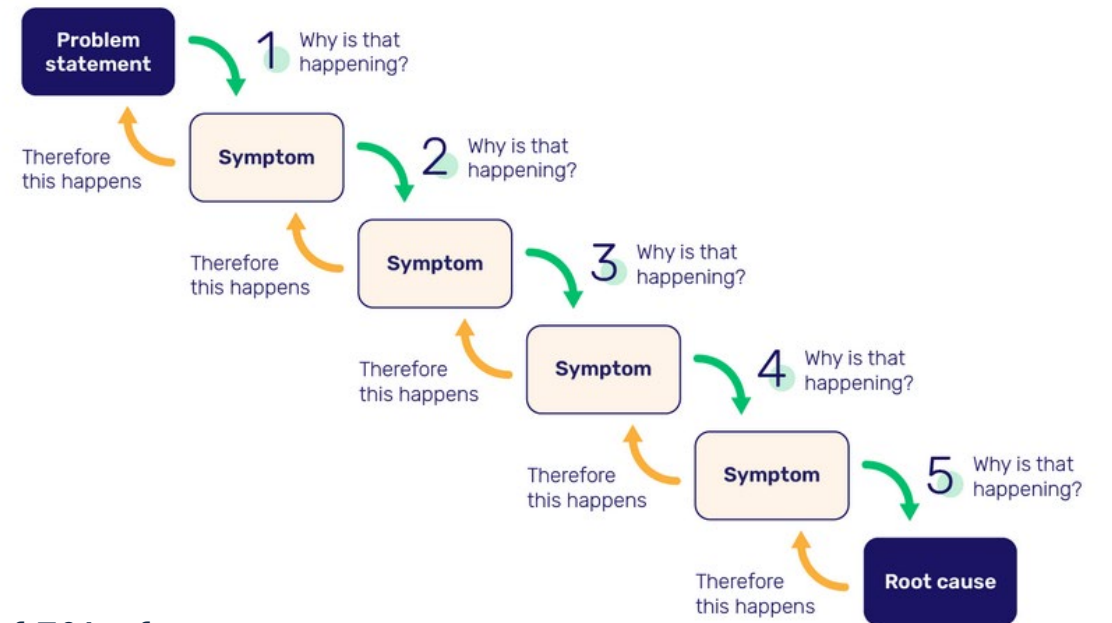
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Wastage rates

- The difference between the quantity of materials required and the actual quantity of materials ordered and delivered to site.
- From this, the wastage rate (%) can be derived.
- Wastage allowance – the quantity of materials that are purchased to ensure that the task can be completed without running out of materials.
- A certain level of wastage is therefore inevitable (to varying degrees).
- Concrete blocks - Proposed wastage rate: Baseline 5 % (where there is evidence of multiple good practices, such as return of unused product and design to avoid cutting, this could be reduced to 3%)
- Ready Mixed Concrete - proposed wastage rate: 1-2%



Lean construction



Measured direct costs of avoidable errors are in the order of **5%** of project value. This equates to approximately **£5 billion per annum** across the sector in the UK and is higher than average profit levels across the industry (around 3%) <https://getitright.uk.com/reports/strategy-for-change>

Some useful info


SUPPLY CHAIN SUSTAINABILITY **SCHOL**

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WASTE AND RESOURCE EFFICIENCY
The Waste Hierarchy
VIDEO
An introduction to the Waste Hierarchy.

Beginner 2 minutes


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WASTE AND RESOURCE EFFICIENCY
Introduction to Waste
E-LEARNING MODULE
Waste diversion benefits and principles.

Beginner 45 minutes


LEARN MORE



SCHOL The Circular Economy
WASTE AND RESOURCE EFFICIENCY
The Circular Economy
E-LEARNING MODULE
The move away from the typical linear model.

Intermediate 45 minutes

LEARN MORE



WASTE AND RESOURCE EFFICIENCY
Measuring and Reporting Waste in the Built Environment: A Practical Guide
DOCUMENT/PRESENTATION
The principles, scope and methodology for improved waste and resource efficiency reporting.

Intermediate 60 minutes

LEARN MORE

ASBP The Alliance for Sustainable Building Products

About Membership Activities Resources News Events



ZAP
Zero Avoidable Packaging waste in construction

FREE Toolkit Launched!

ZERO WASTE SCHEME

Business & Enterprise Citizens Knowledge About Search



CONSTRUCTION SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS

Design out waste in construction

27 Feb 23

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Recommendations

- Really understand your waste – granularity
- Concentrate on the ones that are causing you the most issues!
- Identify the root cause(s)
- Set waste intensity benchmarks
- Provide resource (it could pay for itself)
- Incentivise (project manager, site and subbies)
- Share findings and learnings with manufacturers, clients, designers

Thanks for Listening

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