



MERSEYSIDE RECYCLING & WASTE AUTHORITY

Merseyside Recycling &

Waste Authority

Annual Report 2024/25



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A message from our Chairperson

It is with optimism that I present our latest Annual Report, reflecting on a period of significant activity. In 2024/25, we navigated both opportunities and challenges as we continued our vital work serving the communities of the Liverpool City Region (LCR).



The year brought mixed figures in our waste management efforts. The region's overall recycling and composting rate stayed steady at 35%. However, this was accompanied by an increase in total household waste, which grew from 709,589 tonnes to 719,575 tonnes.

Interestingly, while the overall recycling rate percentage stayed the same as the year before, the actual volume of materials collected for recycling and composting increased, totalling 155,012 tonnes compared to 150,972 tonnes in 2023/24. At the same time, we saw a small increase through our Resource Recovery Contract (which handles residual household waste from the Liverpool City Region) of 8745 tonnes to a total 468,390 tonnes. Similarly, the generation of residual waste on a per-household basis saw a small increase, moving from 621kg to 631kg.

Despite these figures, I am confident in the growing commitment within our

communities toward more sustainable practices. Our fundamental purpose remains steadfast: to create a cleaner, healthier environment for all residents of the Liverpool City Region. This mission goes beyond our core operations, as demonstrated by our commitment to social responsibility and our investment in local sustainability initiatives through the £165,000 Zero Waste Community Fund.

I want to extend my sincere gratitude to our staff for their dedication and innovative spirit throughout the year—your exceptional efforts are instrumental. My deep appreciation also goes to our valued stakeholders and the wider community. Your continued support and constructive engagement are invaluable as we move forward together.

Thank you,
Councillor Catie Page, Chairperson

Looking ahead

The waste management sector is undergoing significant transformation, and we are ready to embrace the changes. We're actively preparing for national initiatives like Simpler Recycling from April 2026 and the Deposit Return Scheme from October 2027, which will improve our collective recycling efforts across the region.

Our core focus is on developing and implementing our new Zero Waste Strategy. This isn't just about managing waste; it's about leading the way toward a future where our region produces less waste and has a minimal carbon footprint. We're committed to reducing overall waste volumes and significantly increasing our recycling rates.

To achieve this, we are strengthening our crucial partnerships with district councils, industry leaders, environmental groups, and government agencies. By working together, we can drive innovation and ensure our practices are as sustainable as possible.

MRWA is also beginning a major services review to modernise its recycling and waste management services across the region. This initiative is a crucial step in a long-

term strategy to provide the Liverpool City Region with more efficient, accessible, and environmentally friendly facilities.

We believe true change happens at every level. That's why we're not only improving our own services, like our Household Waste Recycling Centres, but also funding local community groups to deliver waste reduction and reuse projects. We're focused on inspiring everyone to create less waste, reuse items, fix things instead of throwing them away, and recycle and compost more.

By working together, we can make meaningful progress toward a more sustainable future for the Liverpool City Region.

Lesley Worswick, Chief Executive



“we’re
focused on
inspiring
everyone to
create less
waste”



MRWA Corporate Plan 2025 - 2030



This plan sets out how we will deliver against our MRWA Zero Waste Strategy over a five year period. It will necessarily evolve during its lifetime, particularly in the way we measure our performance and achieve our five year aims. This will allow us to be flexible to the changing context within which we operate and to be responsive to future challenges and opportunities.

The plan sets out five priority focus areas. These priorities drive everything we do. They champion sustainability, the move to a more circular Liverpool City Region and support our work to manage the resources of the City Region and do our bit to tackle the climate emergency.

**To be successful
we will need to
think and work
differently.**

To be successful we will need to think and work differently. We will need to invest in our people and in improving how we do things including taking a whole system approach to managing resources and waste, and collaborating with our partners across the Liverpool City Region and beyond.

Our Vision

To lead the way towards zero waste across the Liverpool City Region.

Our Values

We will do this in a way which is Respectful, Socially responsible, Collaborative, Transparent, Innovative, and we will operate with Integrity.

Our Mission

We have a passion for the environment. Working together, we will transform resource management and help our communities reduce, reuse and recycle, to protect our planet from climate change.

Our 5 Priority Focus Areas:

- Deliver our statutory and contractual duties
- Develop new and improved services
- Ensure the highest standards of governance and performance
- Implement our Zero Waste Strategy 2040
- Educate and influence behaviour change



People

In 2025 we launched our ambitious new Zero Waste Strategy, placing our residents at the heart of the journey. The Strategy is built on two key pillars: Good Governance to ensure our path is clear and effective, and Social Value to maximise the positive impact on people's lives. We believe that participating in reuse and recycling projects enriches our communities.

Governance – supporting our people and services

Governance is about how we ensure that we are doing the right things, in the right way, for the right people, in a timely, inclusive, open, honest and accountable manner. Good governance leads to:

- Effective leadership
- Good management
- Good performance
- Good stewardship of public money
- Good public engagement
- Good outcomes for our service users

The governance framework comprises the culture, values, systems and procedures by which the organisation is directed and

controlled and brings together an underlying set of legislative requirements, good practice principles and management processes. The framework aims to ensure that in conducting its business the Authority:

- operates in a lawful, open, inclusive and honest manner
- makes sure that public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively
- has effective arrangements for the management of risk
- secures continuous improvements in the way that it operates.

The Authority's governance arrangements are reviewed on an ongoing basis through the Primary Assurance Group (PAG) each year.

PAG determine whether there are any areas of concern and plan for improvements through a set of defined actions for the forthcoming year. The review of governance was set out in the Annual Governance Statement approved by Members at the April 2025 meeting. No significant issues were identified through the yearly review.

All Authority Meetings and Reports can be found on our website –

www.merseysidewda.gov.uk/authority-and-committee-meetings-agenda-and-reports/





Business as usual

Our Business Services team are crucial in providing core support including financial administration, HR, recruitment, and public enquiries. It also manages the Household Waste Recycling Centres van booking system, handling ~72,000 bookings per year.

A key priority for 2024/25 was resourcing. Recruitment included a new Project Team for the waste contract services review, plus roles in Finance and Strategy. All staff received induction and access to development opportunities like CIPFA, CIPS, and Leadership & Management.

After achieving the Fair Employment Charter's 'Aspiring' level, the team is now applying for 'Accredited' status. Team members also supported the Climate Action Group, delivering staff initiatives such as a clothes swap, a book drive, and reuse workshops.

Employee wellbeing remained a high priority. All staff have access to an Employee Assistance Programme and resources covering mental and physical health.



Education

A cornerstone of our Zero Waste Strategy is education, which is vital for inspiring the behaviour change needed to achieve our goals.

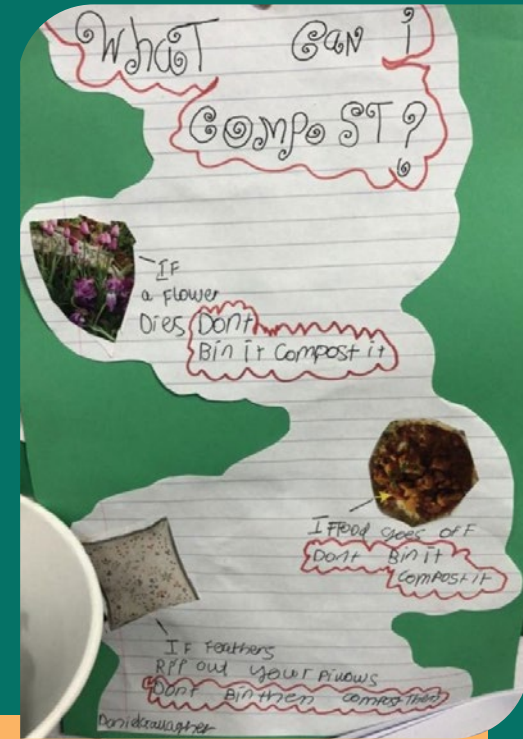
The MRWA education programme continued to trial pilot schemes while building resources to educate residents further, engaging 9,350 people across the Liverpool City Region.

The Recycling Discovery Centre in Gillmoss, operated by Veolia, continued to welcome residents from across the region. The Centre had a successful year hosting new events, including textile workshops, open days, and British Sign Language family events.

In addition to our contractual education programmes, MRWA delivered 11 further projects across the region. Six of these focused on developing our educational resources for future engagement with schools and groups. These resources included animated videos showing the journey of recycling and waste, activity packs, and lesson plans to help teachers embed sustainable practices into the curriculum.

The remaining five projects concentrated on direct engagement with primary and secondary students and educators. These sessions covered topics ranging from the circular economy and composting to achieving zero waste.

A student's poster encouraging composting from our Composting Champions project



Students' notes on waste during workshop before the UN-style Conference project, delivered by the Liverpool World Centre



Investing in our communities



| | |
|--|--|
| Zero Waste Community Fund | Across the sixteen projects (totalling £164,995.21 of funding) the programme attained £737,685.17 in Social Value. This gives a Return on Investment of £4.47 for every £1 of funding. |
| Community engagement and reuse projects. | Across the noted community engagement and reuse projects we attained £76,566.86 of social value. |
| Campaigns | Across the reported campaigns and impressions, we attained £1,743,037.72 of social value. |

Social Value

MRWA has long recognised the importance of creating broader impact beyond our core service delivery. This year we aimed to move beyond simply delivering social value to understanding and evidencing its true impact. Initial steps included piloting social value measurements across select projects and procurement processes, alongside developing frameworks to guide consistent application. This gradual introduction has allowed us to build internal confidence, test approaches and learn what works in practice.

Within 2024/25 an initial set of metrics were established to support the reporting of social value across three key areas - Zero Waste Community Fund, community engagement, and wider campaigns. The result? A total social value figure of £2,557,289.58.

As we move forward, we are committed to scaling up this work by embedding social value across our strategic planning and performance monitoring, ensuring it becomes a sustained and defining element of how we operate and deliver projects within our communities.



The Zero Waste Community Fund

Through our Zero Waste Community Fund 2024/25, a partnership with Veolia, we invested £165,000 into sixteen community groups across the Liverpool City Region. This funding is designed to empower local residents to reduce, reuse, and recycle more effectively.

These grants enabled our community partners to deliver innovative projects that directly impact waste reduction. The funded initiatives ranged from educational waste workshops in schools and repair cafés to cookery lessons on reducing food waste and community composting programs.

By supporting these diverse projects, we are helping to drive tangible, long-term behavioural change within our communities and moving closer to a zero-waste future.



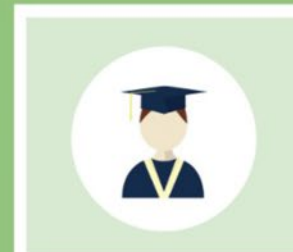
What did we achieve?



16 waste prevention, re-use and recycling projects



£165,000 investment in the environment



763 training sessions and events



Diverted 754 tonnes of materials



8335 people engaged



11,622 volunteer hours

Reuse and repair

At the heart of our mission is the belief that reuse and recycling projects empower the people they serve. In 2024/25, we delivered a series of community-based programmes focused on extending the lifecycle of materials including textiles, electronics, and sanitary products, ensuring sustainable solutions remain accessible to all.

Reusable Sanitary Products

This project's main aim was to address behaviour and attitudes around reusable period products and assess whether removing certain barriers would lead to an increase in community uptake. 2024/25 saw the second year of this scheme collaborating with Hey Girls and continues to show positive feedback and uptake.

| Year | Participants | Items | Percentage likely to continue behaviour moving forward | Percentage likely to recommend reusable to others |
|---------|--------------|-------|--|---|
| 2023/24 | 314 | 727 | 94.3% | 98.1% |
| 2024/25 | 323 | 841 | 93.7% | 98.3% |

Feedback included –

'I've wanted to try this for ages so it was a great opportunity to try and be more sustainable'

Repair initiatives

In conjunction with the national Repair Week 2025 campaign, we worked to support a range of organisations in the creation of local repair projects, aiming to provide residents with the opportunity to share skills and upcycle/repair goods. This included the launch of one repair shed and five smaller workshop schemes

| Partners | Participants | Workshops | Events | Repairs |
|--|-------------------------|---------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Clockwork Studios | 34 | | 3 | 26 |
| Swanside Community Centre | 350 | 8 | 1 | Approx. 400 |
| Kensington Fields Community Association | 65 | 10 | 7 | 280 |
| Port Sunlight Village Trust | 246 | 3 | 1 | |
| Dovecot and Princess Drive Community Association | 200 | 4 | 1 | 202 |
| Total | 895 participants | 25 workshops | 13 events | 508 repairs |

Repair Shed

This aimed to support a community organisation launching a repair shed/ space that would provide legacy and continued development beyond the smaller Repair Week 2025 schemes.

We collaborated with Friends of Bowring Park who delivered eight workshops and three expert-led repair sessions, engaging with 48 participants and repairing 52 items, as well as transforming a community space to facilitate ongoing activities and lay the groundwork for a Library of Things. This project generated an estimated £36,768 in social value notably through reduced isolation and new hobby development.

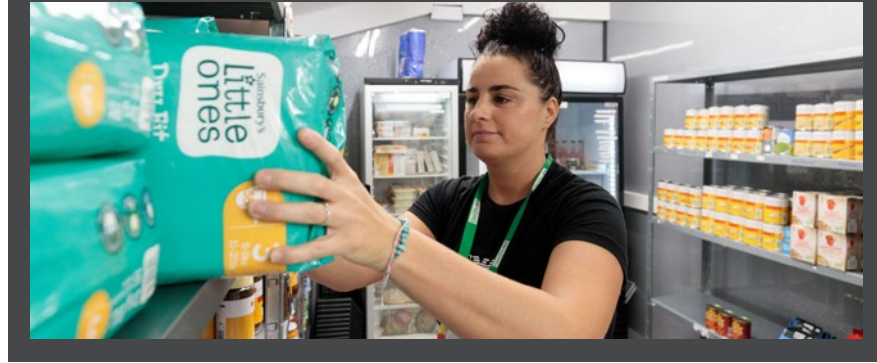
100% of attendees reported they would now choose to repair before replacing an item, 92% expressed interest in attending future sessions, and 72% gained confidence in making repairs independently.

| Direct Engagement | Wider Engagement | Workshops/ Events | Volunteers | Repairs |
|-------------------|------------------|---|--------------------------|---|
| 136 | 20,000 | 8 workshops, 3 expert-led repair sessions | 12 volunteers – 50 hours | 52 items were repaired 12 electrical items were repaired including lamps, radios, electric blankets 12 items of jewellery were repaired 10 damaged household items were upcycled 15 garments were repaired or repurposed in the sewing workshops 3 golf clubs were regripped |



Reuse and repair

continued...



Textiles Workshops

This was a second phase project supporting community groups to run textile workshops across the City Region, covering areas unaddressed within the 2023/24 year. These sessions included resources, materials and targeted working within their local community. While session coverage varied based on provider and location, content included repair and upcycling, children's uniform & costume swaps/repair sessions, scrap fabric dyeing and rag rugging.

| Partners | Participants | Workshops | Events |
|--------------------|--------------|-----------|--------|
| Hazlehurst Studios | 75 | 3 | 1 |
| Gateway Collective | 69 | 8 | 0 |
| Make Huyton CIC | 40 | 3 | 1 |
| Total | 184 | 14 | 2 |

Feedback included –

“My kids have all left home now so I’ve been looking at hobbies and things to do in my retirement, trying out growing my own veg with the kit has been a lovely introduction to growing. We’ve downsized to a flat so it’s given me ideas for what I can do in my own small balcony.”

One Metre Garden/Grow your own

This project aimed to work with partners to develop resources that demonstrate how to save food waste and money by growing your own food in limited spaces. We partnered with Urban Grow Liverpool to develop and distribute windowsill growing kits, inclusive of all resources and support needed to successfully begin growing regardless of garden access. Kits included a pot, seeds, soil, tools, educational resources and access to a network of other growers to receive support. Urban Grow Liverpool also provided a range of social media promotions and appeared on BBC Radio Merseyside to promote the scheme.

| District | Households engaged |
|-----------|--------------------|
| Liverpool | 128 |
| Sefton | 56 |
| Halton | 7 |
| St Helens | 4 |
| Knowsley | 12 |
| Wirral | 33 |
| Total | 240 Households |

Community Composting

The purpose of this project was to educate, inform and enable individuals, households, and communities to work together, support each other and influence changes in behaviour so that less food waste is discarded in household residual waste bins. Phase 2 of the Community Composting project saw the development of three new community composting sites as well as the continued support of those set up in 2023/24, enabling residents with limited access to private gardens to compost.

| Location | Participating Households | Number of Workshops | Tonnes diverted in 24-25 |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|
| EcoTherapy Garden, Kirby | 30 | 3 | 1.5 |
| Victoria Park, Waterloo | 30 | 3 | 2.5 |
| Bentick Street, Wirral | 17 | 6 | 0.5 |
| Bright Park, Knotty Ash | 30 | 4 | 1 |
| Wonky Garden, Ditton | 25 | 3 | 1 |
| Liscard Community Links, Liscard | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| Totals | 132 Households | 21 Workshops | 6.5 tonnes |



Useful Utensils

This year staff supported the production and distribution of a food waste reduction kit known as useful utensils. These kits contain information around food preparation and storage as well as tools to support portion control and waste management. This scheme partnered with 12 community organisations and social supermarkets to deliver 232 kits across the Liverpool City Region.



Reuse mapping

To better support our community projects, we undertook a major project to map reuse activities across the Liverpool City Region. Our research showed that while the passion for reuse is strong, practical hurdles like funding and space often get in the way. Crucially, we found that many valuable items are lost simply because different community groups aren't always connected. The secret to success? Passionate local champions and strong community networks. Armed with this insight, we can work towards boosting reuse by increasing awareness, improving access, and building a powerful, connected network across the region.

Planet

Our new Zero Waste Strategy redefines waste as a valuable resource, which is fundamental to reducing our carbon emissions. It sets out a path towards net zero carbon, outlining the key decisions needed to drive down emissions and maximise reuse, repair and recycling. A major focus is tackling food waste, currently the single biggest component in our general waste bins.

MRWA provides waste disposal services to five district Waste Collection Authorities and also delivers services on behalf of Halton Borough Council. The Authority manages two long-term waste contracts: the Resource Recovery Contract for residual waste, which runs until 2043, and the Waste Management and Recycling Contract (WMRC) for recyclable waste and residual waste transfer and haulage, which is due to expire in 2029.

As the WMRC approaches the end of its term, MRWA is required to determine the most appropriate future delivery model for waste services beyond 2029. In preparation, the Authority has initiated the Future Waste Services Project, which aims to review the provision of the Authority's services and to procure a new waste services contract for implementation from 2029, should the current arrangements not be extended.

During the reporting period, the project successfully completed Phase 0 and progressed into Phase 1. Key activities included engagement with Waste Collection Authorities, confirmation of project governance and team structures, and the completion of a strategic review and options appraisal. This work has focused on understanding current service performance, legislative and policy changes, strategic objectives, and the behavioural changes required to support increased reuse and recycling.

The project has been supported by a team of external industry specialists working closely with MRWA officers, whose operational experience has provided valuable insight into existing strengths and areas for improvement. Engagement with key stakeholders, including WCAs and Authority Members, has played a central role in informing the project's development to date.

'Tackling food waste - our biggest waste stream, is a key focus going forward'



Sustainable Development

Goals Report

| Themes | Strategic Outcomes |
|---------|--|
| People | Governance Social value |
| Planet | Climate and carbon Resource efficiency |
| Economy | Cost efficiency Circular economy Green jobs and skills |

Aspects include:

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Zero Waste Strategy | Health, Safety and Wellbeing |
| Social Value | Accountability and transparency |
| Community Fund | Equality and Diversity |
| Behaviour Change Projects | Supporting Skills Development and Green Jobs |
| Circular Economy | Infrastructure and Assets |
| Education, Awareness & Communications | Procurement and Contracts |
| Legal & Regulatory Compliance | Climate Risk Assessments |

In 2019, MRWA declared a climate emergency. Since then, we have worked to identify and measure our impacts as good business practice.

As we produce our fifth sustainability report, we will, from here on, integrate our sustainability reports into this MRWA Annual Report. This will allow the reader to have a wider understanding of the business and our long-term drivers as a local waste disposal authority.

The impact of climate change is evident on people, the planet, and the economy. MRWA pledges to continue to monitor our performance against our priority UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The United Nations has identified that action is essential at global, local and individual levels to achieve the SDGs. MRWA's focus is on three key themes: People, Planet and Economy. These help us to evaluate our actions and impacts as we continue to gather data to assess our performance against the SDGs.

Within each theme, we have outlined specific drivers as strategic outcomes for the organisation.

For us to identify our priority SDGs, we have investigated our themes and drivers and separated them into a set of aspects. These aspects are linked by applicability to each of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Those that have the most aspects indicate which SDGs are our top priority and should work towards.

Responsible Consumption and Production



Achieving responsible consumption and production will ensure the efficient use of resources and the minimisation of waste.

This will require increased reuse and recycling of the waste produced and a significant reduction in the quantity of residual waste, including contamination of recycling by non-target materials.

Sustainable Cities and Communities



Well-managed cities and their communities can be hubs of innovation for resource circularity, environmental protection, social benefit, and economic prosperity.

Quality Education



This goal is critical for employees and residents so they can be prepared for future changes to waste management, treatment, and activities. We will offer lifelong learning opportunities for our employees and encourage healthy living and lifestyle choices.

Additionally, the drivers and aspects are evaluated through potential positive and negative impacts. Enabling us to focus our efforts on progressing the impact we have within the community and environment, and understanding areas we can contribute to, such as volunteering, education and awareness, and waste management.



Good Health and Well Being



We will demonstrate care for the physical and mental well-being of our employees. We will maximise the reuse of unwanted resources to support social value in the community and nurture small businesses and community groups to be more resourceful and sustainable, and we will aid nature's recovery across our operational estate and closed landfill sites.

Climate Action



This goal is critical for increasing resource efficiency and avoiding waste, reducing carbon emissions, and mitigating climate change, creating social value, and generating green jobs.

Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals

As a strategic waste and resource management authority across the Liverpool City Region, we have a responsibility to reduce carbon emissions, improve social value and conserve natural resources. We continue to advocate the reuse of resources to reduce avoidable waste and conserve the 'embedded energy' of unwanted household materials.

Our next steps include reviewing the MRWA and Zero Waste LCR websites to ensure information is easily accessible and education and resources are available to the public. We will continue to engage, support and grow the LCR Circular Economy Club to promote waste prevention and the reuse of materials. Where possible, we aim to lower greenhouse gas emissions associated with our services and promote conscious material production and consumption.

We aim to support educational projects to adopt the circular economy and improve recycling rates. Educational visits to the Gillmoss Recycling Discovery Centre saw a total of 8,766 individuals. Additionally, engagement across social media for the Zero Waste LCR revealed 34,875 users.

Our outcomes also include raising staff empowerment and productivity. This initiative has commenced with all 31 staff members receiving training on various topics, including carbon literacy and social value. We aim to support staff resilience by providing employee assistance programmes to help with any physical or mental health struggles. In addition, distributing a monthly wellbeing newsletter and maintaining a climate champions group for those interested in driving climate action.

We seek to set out a positive approach to diversity, social mobility and wellbeing and understand that investment in our staff, community and services will help us to advance actions towards our zero waste strategic outcomes and priority sustainable development goals.

2024/25

Carbon Footprint Report

In the previous decade, the average annual global greenhouse gas emissions were at their highest levels in human history. In 2019, MRWA recognised that people, the economy, and the planet were suffering from the escalating effects of human-induced climate change. In response, we committed to reducing the impacts of climate change associated with our activities.

Over the last five years we have made progress towards our sustainability and climate commitments, including completing a carbon emissions baseline study and creating a tool to measure our emissions. Across our estate, we continue to assess opportunities to increase renewable energy generation, reduce our energy usage and work with nature where we can minimise and mitigate emissions from our closed landfill sites.

Calculation Method - The Authority has calculated its CO₂e emissions for the financial year of April 2024 to March 2025 using the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Protocol (GHG). Moving forward, staff travel and un-expensed journeys will be calculated using an average from the last five years, with a review every few years.

These emissions are attributable to the Authority's activities, including administrative and contractual duties, its obligation to manage seven closed landfill sites along with those from our Contractors, Veolia

Merseyside and Halton, and Suez, for which we are responsible under the GHG protocol. It should be noted that under this protocol, emissions from Energy from Waste (EfW) plants are not reported by MRWA, but by the operators of the facilities.

Emissions by scope - Scope 1 is from diesel, landfill flare gas, company vehicles and natural gas used in the office. Scope 2 is predominantly electricity consumption at sites. Scope 3 is emissions from landfill waste, emissions associated with site vehicles and transfer of waste by rail to Wilton EfW.



Figures - The Authority's footprint is approximately 30,546t CO₂e for 2024/25. This is 5,489t lower than last year (largely due to decreased landfill) with an aggregated uncertainty level of 7.7%. MRWA is committed to reducing the carbon footprint of all its activities, including the landfilling of residual waste when our EfW facility is not available.

Next Steps - We continue to take steps in reducing MRWA carbon emissions, with figures showing a 5,489t CO₂e reduction from 2024/25. Our priority remains reducing the amount of residual waste, which is where we believe we can have the greatest impact on reducing carbon emissions. This data will influence our work in several areas, including the community fund, social value, procurement, education, communications and operations.

Our Climate Action Group has implemented several initiatives, including 'Climate Champions', a team to promote internal activities to engage and educate staff to reduce carbon emissions. We have also introduced a sustainability training programme for all staff, which involves a range of sessions, including an introduction to sustainability, and we have worked with the Carbon Literacy Trust to develop an accredited Carbon Literacy training course for all staff to complete. This has raised general sustainability and carbon awareness.



Proactive stewardship of former landfill sites

Our commitment to environmental protection extends long after a landfill site closes. The Authority actively manages seven former sites, ensuring they remain safe and compliant with the highest environmental standards.

Each site is fitted with advanced equipment to control and mitigate emissions like landfill gas and leachate. We run a continuous monitoring programme to protect the local ground, watercourses, and atmosphere. This includes regular noise checks to guarantee we remain a good neighbour to nearby communities.

Our comprehensive maintenance schedule ensures all safety and monitoring equipment functions perfectly. This proactive approach uses a blend of industry-leading strategies—from condition-based checks to risk-based assessments—to prevent issues before they arise. Together, these programmes demonstrate our commitment to environmental safety, legal compliance, and our duty of care.



Water course sampling at Sefton Meadows

Securing Key Infrastructure: Sefton Meadows Bridge

The road bridge at Sefton Meadows is a vital link between two restored landfill sites, providing safe access for maintenance teams and the public.

To ensure its long-term integrity, we commissioned a Principal Inspection in November 2023. Acting on its findings, we identified the highest-priority repairs, which were successfully completed in October 2024.

This proactive investment continues with a scheduled programme of works across 2025-27 to address all remaining medium and low-priority recommendations, securing the bridge for years to come.

Encouraging sustainable behaviour through media campaigns

To achieve our shared environmental goals of increased recycling, waste reduction and tackling climate change, we know that engagement is key. Our communication campaigns are specifically designed to bridge the gap between intent and action, fostering a culture of sustainability across the region. Over the past year, we have implemented several successful campaigns and conducted vital research to better understand and influence waste management habits.

During 2024/25, we appointed behavioural change organisation, Magpie, to run a research project with us to better understand residents' attitudes towards recycling, food waste and reuse.

The project engaged over 1,000 residents through surveys, focus groups and workshops to create a final report addressing the barriers and facilitators individuals face when it comes to managing waste and resources responsibly. These factors were then analysed, and a final messaging matrix was produced to ensure all future communications and projects are relevant and engaging.

Our **Recycle Right** platform is a core part of our strategy to improve both the volume and quality of recycling. Using local transport networks, outdoor media, and digital channels, we delivered key messages to help residents

reduce contamination in their recycling bins. We also shared a series of communications that showed residents what happens to their recycling after collection, building a stronger connection between their actions and the positive outcomes.

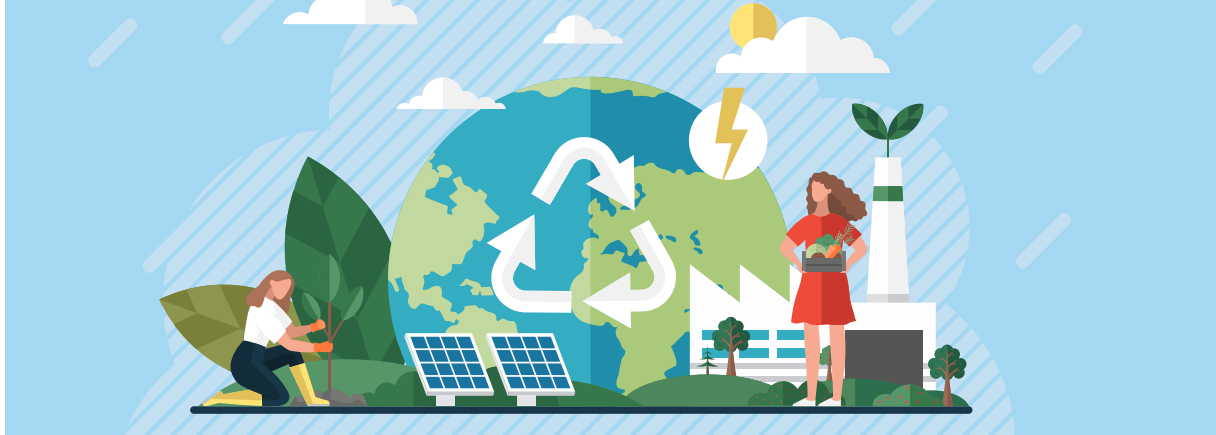
The **Zero Waste LCR** brand is central to our waste prevention efforts. We ran campaigns that promoted home composting, food waste reduction, and various reuse initiatives, including clothing exchange and repair. Our seasonal campaigns, such as the "Choose to Reuse" push at Christmas, encouraged residents to make sustainable choices during peak consumption periods.

We also partnered with the national Recycle Your Electricals campaign. We amplified their messages locally, using the eye-catching 'Hypno Cat' artwork from Material Focus to raise awareness about fire prevention and the importance of properly recycling small electrical items and batteries.

By highlighting the positive impact of recycling and waste reduction, our communication campaigns are designed to foster a sense of collective achievement. These efforts are crucial in empowering residents to make more sustainable choices and helping us all move closer to a zero-waste future for our region.



Economy



By embracing a circular economy, we can turn our waste into opportunities, creating valuable green jobs and skills right here in our region.

This year, we've actively boosted our support for community reuse and repair initiatives and are committed to expanding these vital services. Ensuring our core operations are efficient and effective is key to sustaining this journey. With the UK government also championing a circular economy, we are perfectly positioned to accelerate our progress and build a more sustainable and prosperous future for the Liverpool City Region.

Contracts & Operations Management

The Authority's contracts team oversees two major waste contracts: the Waste Management and Recycling Contract (WMRC) and the Resource Recovery Contract (RRC). Our rigorous oversight involves managing contractor performance and key performance indicators (KPIs) to ensure both contracts consistently meet expected standards.

Resource Recovery Contract (RRC)

The RRC, operated by Merseyside Energy Recovery Ltd, is instrumental in managing non-recyclable residual household waste. This contract provides the Authority with a Rail Transfer Loading Station (RTLS) in Kirkby and a state-of-the-art Energy from Waste (EfW) plant at Wilton International on Teesside.

In 2024/25, 468,390 tonnes of residual household waste was managed through the RRC, up from 459,645 the previous year. This waste is being put to highly effective use, generating up to 50 megawatts (MW) of electricity via an Energy from Waste facility – enough energy to power approximately 63,000 homes and significantly contribute to the local economy.

Waste Management and Recycling Contract (WMRC)

Under the WMRC, operated by Veolia, MRWA manages a comprehensive network of 16 Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs), two Materials Recovery Facilities (MRFs), and four Waste Transfer Stations. Our Contracts team works closely with all Merseyside District Councils to ensure a seamless interface between their collection services and the disposal and processing of waste at these facilities.



Overall waste performance

We serve over 1.5 million people across the Liverpool City Region by making recycling easier and more efficient. Through our partnership with Veolia, we provide 16 local Household Waste Recycling Centres where residents can responsibly dispose of over 40 different types of materials including cans, cardboard, garden waste, glass jars and bottles, paper, large plastics, scrap metal, textiles, electricals and white goods.

We also manage the sorting of kerbside recycling for five of our six local councils at our specialised Materials Recovery Facilities in Bidston and Gillmoss. This ensures our residents' recycling efforts result in high-quality resources which can go on to be made into something new.

What happens to the waste that can't be recycled? Since 2017, we have moved away from traditional landfill. Instead, working with our contractor SUEZ, "black bag" waste is sent by rail to a dedicated Energy from Waste plant in Teesside. By treating waste as a fuel rather than a problem, we generate enough electricity to power approximately 63,000 homes — turning household waste into a vital contribution to the National Grid.

The overall recycling rate stayed almost flat, dropping slightly from 35.31% to 35.22%

Despite some positive movements in certain areas, the stability of the overall rate suggests that increases in waste tonnages offset gains in recycling

Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs)

Recycling rate at HWRCs rose from **66.09%** to **67.51%**, showing a slight improvement.

Recycling tonnages through HWRCs increased from **88,868 tonnes to 97,158 tonnes** (+9%).

Overall **tonnages through HWRCs** grew from **162,629 to 172,003 tonnes**, reflecting greater usage by residents.

Resource Recovery & Energy from Waste (EfW)

Resource Recovery Contract tonnages increased from **459,645 to 468,391 tonnes** (+2%).

Tonnages to EfW also grew, from **380,907 to 384,420 tonnes**.

This shows an increase in energy-from-waste to manage residual waste.



+9%

RECYCLING TONNAGES THROUGH HWRCs INCREASED

OVERALL TONNAGES FROM HWRCs GREW

2.7%

OVERALL RECYCLING TONNAGES INCREASED

HOUSEHOLD WASTE RECYCLING CENTRES ARE PERFORMING WELL HIGHER TONNAGES AND IMPROVED RECYCLING RATE

VEOLIA ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

working in partnership



Thank you for recycling



Household waste & residual waste

Total household waste rose from **709,590 to 719,575 tonnes** (+1.4%).

Residual waste per household increased from **621.9kg to 631.3kg**, meaning households are generating slightly more non-recyclable waste.

Total residual waste also climbed, from **459,045 tonnes to 466,134 tonnes**.

Recycling tonnages

Overall recycling tonnages improved, from **150,972 to 155,012 tonnes** (+2.7%).

However, this did not translate into a higher overall recycling rate, as total waste increased at a similar pace.

Materials Recovery Facilities (MRF)

Inputs to our two MRFs decreased from **106,814 to 104,481 tonnes** (-2%).

Outputs (recovered products) also fell, from **76,193 to 74,753 tonnes**.

Key trends and observations

Household Waste Recycling Centres are performing well – higher tonnages and improved recycling rate.

MRF tonnage and outputs has dipped, reducing the proportion of usable materials recovered.

Overall recycling rate is stagnant, as gains in recycling are being balanced out by growth in total and residual waste.

Households are producing more residual waste per household, which is pushing the recycling rate down.

Energy-from-waste usage remains high.



Developing new food waste facilities

The Environment Act 2021 has introduced a significant change in how we manage waste. The Act mandates separate food waste collections for businesses starting in April 2025 and for households by April 2026. In response, the Authority is preparing its facilities to manage the food waste collected by our District Council partners.

It is expected that collected food waste will be delivered to one of the Authority's four waste transfer stations. Our role is to efficiently combine these smaller loads and transfer them to a specialised treatment facility.

Throughout 2024/25, we worked closely with our main contractor, Veolia, to develop the best solution. After reviewing various options, we concluded that building new, dedicated food waste handling facilities at each of the four transfer stations was the most effective approach. This plan provides a flexible service for the districts and allows us to manage the new waste stream without disrupting existing operations.

To ensure a smooth planning process, we submitted pre-planning applications to the relevant Local Planning Authorities. Following this, formal planning applications were submitted. In parallel with the planning process, we have been finalising the contractual details with Veolia for the construction of the new buildings and the operation of this vital new service.

Circular Economy Club

2024/25 saw a 13% growth in circular economy club membership from the previous year, with 144 registered members. Events hosted by the Liverpool City Region Circular Economy club included a session on Sustainable Fashion Systems and a Local Repair Showcase and was complimented by the distribution of seasonal newsletters keeping members informed and engaged throughout the year.

Sustainable Fashion Systems Event - This event focused on exploring the lifecycle of fashion and textiles. The event brought together individuals, businesses and community organisations eager to learn more about sustainable solutions within the industry. The session covered a range of topics, including the environmental impacts of fast fashion, the importance of making informed consumer choices, and the role of local communities in driving sustainable textile practices. This event provided valuable information for those seeking to understand the complexities of the textile industry and explore ways to contribute to a more circular and sustainable fashion system.

Local Repair Showcase Event - As part of the LCR wider involvement in Repair Week 2025 this event celebrated local repair spaces. The event attracted community members, skilled volunteers and

sustainability advocates discussing the local offering, best practice around repair and the potential growth of these vital schemes. The event was well received with attendees noting it gave them a deeper appreciation of the craftsmanship and community spirit behind LCR repair culture.

Budget

The Authority's net operating expenditure was some £77.0M in 2024/25, over 70% of which was on contracts to manage waste and statutory services.

The Authority's income from the Levy in the same period was £81.9M, and the Authority was able to make a contribution to its usable reserve balances of some £2.2M as part of a medium-term financial strategy to ensure that the authority has sufficient resources to meet forecast financial pressures over the coming years. These pressures include increasing levels of tonnage delivered for disposal and the cost of complying with new environmental legislation with respect to reducing carbon emissions and the recycling of food waste and plastics.

Further Information

This Annual Report is only a snapshot of what we do. For more information about MRWA go to: www.merseysidewda.gov.uk

To find out what you can recycle locally go to: www.recycleright.org.uk

To learn more about reuse and reduction go to: www.zerowastelcr.com

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The logo for recycleright, featuring the word "recycleright" in a bold, sans-serif font. The "i" in "right" has a green checkmark above it. The text is white on a dark green background.The logo for ZER WASTE, featuring the words "ZER" and "WASTE" in a bold, sans-serif font. A circular emblem is positioned between the two words, containing the text "LIVERPOOL CITY REGION" around the perimeter. The text is white on a dark green background.