

Devolution – the age of the recycling revolution

The [final recycling figures for 2016/17](#) show the average combined reuse, recycling and composting rate across Wales' 22 Local Authorities was 64%, an increase of 4 percentage points on last year's final figure and 59 percentage points higher than the rate in 1998/99, when the data was first collected following devolution. It is also 6 percentage points higher than the current Statutory Recycling Target of 58%.

Welcoming the statistics, the Cabinet Secretary for the Environment and Rural Affairs, Lesley Griffiths said:

“Wales leads the way in the UK when it comes to recycling, with these latest figures confirming we are exceeding our ambitious 58% target. It is also encouraging to see Ceredigion has already met our 2025 target of 70%.”

[Further figures released today](#) (external link) show the amount of biodegradable municipal waste Local Authorities are sending to landfill has reduced by 89% since the first full year of the scheme in 2005-06.

Authorities sent 90,827 tonnes of biodegradable waste to landfill in 2016-17, 77% less than the legal allowance of 390,000 tonnes. All 22 Local Authorities achieved their individual allocated allowance.

Reducing the amount of biodegradable waste going to landfill helps to cut greenhouse gas emissions, preventing the production and release of methane into the air from landfill sites.

The Cabinet Secretary said:

“It is also great to see the amount of waste we are generating continues to fall year on year. This achievement is thanks to Local Authorities and householders' commitment to recycling. Together, we can continue to make improvements.”

Emyr Roberts, Chief Executive of Natural Resources Wales, added:

“It is great to see that Local Authorities are stepping up to meet this challenge. Less waste going to landfill shows that we are managing our resources in a better, more sustainable way.

“However, considerable amounts of recyclable material are still being thrown away. This demonstrates further opportunities to keep

resources in use for as long as possible as we aim to move towards a circular economy.”

“Producing less waste and maximising recycling will ensure that we manage our limited resources in a better way, which is good for the people, economy and environment of Wales.”