

Foreword by Ben Bradshaw

Minister for Waste



There are important changes underway in the way we deal with waste. We can see this in several different ways.

First, we are making significant progress in diverting waste from landfill and in increasing our recycling rates. Second, public environmental consciousness is rising – in particular concern about the serious risk of dangerous climate change.

Third, it has become quite clear that we have to raise our sights on waste policy by making faster progress in landfill diversion and recycling so as to reach the levels achieved by many of our European neighbours and by putting more emphasis on the linkages between waste and other policies and in engaging a wider range of players.

That means taking account of waste in our broader carbon and resource policies, in our approach to sustainable consumption and production and to Government procurement policies. It means engaging more actively with people and organisations in production, retailing, education and many more sectors.

It also means putting more emphasis on waste prevention and re-use; and it means motivating individuals and businesses to appreciate the environmental and economic benefits from waste reduction and in obtaining value out of what might previously have been seen as useless waste material.

Finally, these ambitions will not be achieved without bringing into play a new range of policy instruments and tools. This includes better price mechanisms; smarter, more focused regulation; and voluntary agreements based around priority materials, products and sectors.

This strategy shows how we intend to make these themes central to our future direction on waste policy.

In compiling the strategy we have greatly benefited from the responses to the consultation which we launched a year ago. There was a broad welcome for the direction we set out then, especially in proposing a more holistic approach to waste.

This is a strategy for the whole community, not just for Government. We need to generate and maintain the desire to take responsible action on waste, in which we share a sense that what we do to reduce or better manage waste – as designers, as producers, as retailers, as purchasers, as consumers – will make a real difference to things we care about. Different people and different organisations in different parts of the country will play their part in different ways reflecting different circumstances and that is a good thing.

Waste Strategy for England 2007

No strategy can stand still. Alongside our plans to deliver what we set out here, we will continue to develop and adapt our approach to take account of new thinking, new evidence and new approaches.

This evolution in our approach will require close collaboration with a wide range of people and organisations outside Government, as well as delivery bodies whose contribution is central to achieving our ambitions, such as the Environment Agency, the Waste and Resources Action Programme, local authorities and many more.

In this spirit of a shared enterprise, I am delighted to be publishing this waste strategy.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ben Bradshaw', with a stylized, flowing script.

Ben Bradshaw