Executive Summary

Increasing the amount of bulky waste reused and recycled has positive environmental, economic and social benefits for local authorities and the wider community. The revised Waste Framework Directive sets out how waste needs to move up the waste hierarchy from recycling and disposal to waste prevention and reuse. The UK government and the devolved administrations see reuse as a key part of moving towards a zero waste economy. The guidance provides practical help as well as information on the policy context, commissioning and procurement and on the benefits of reusing and recycling bulky waste.

WRAP research suggests that the UK is currently reusing less than half of the municipal waste that could be reused each year indicating there is potential for improvement. In terms of bulky waste, it is estimated that around 30% is reusable in its current condition or with minor repairs, although this varies according to the method of collection and nature of the area in which it arises. Preserving quality is key to more reuse, keeping items dry and protected from damage during the collection process enables more items to be reused. For kerbside collection this means collecting items from undercover or from inside homes and intercepting items at Household Waste Recycling Centres and storing them undercover. The guidance provides details on the options that maximise reuse, the potential costs of the options and on estimating the amount of potential in your area. This will help you plan services, determine resources required to deliver services and inform contract specifications where services are contracted out.

Third Sector organisations and small and medium enterprises (SMEs) can play a vital role in reuse, providing both collection and refurbishment services and the distribution of items. Third Sector organisations working in reuse can bring important social benefits to the local community. Third Sector organisations often work with other local authority departments, such as housing and social services; this provides an opportunity for cross team working and greater efficiencies.

Local authorities can support and encourage the Third Sector through a variety of ways from setting up Reuse Forums, payment of grants and reuse credits, to awarding contracts or sub-contracts for the delivery of collection services. The guidance provides information on the commissioning process from planning the outputs required of the services and the options to deliver these through to the procurement of a service.

When designing a bulky waste service it is important to take account of the fact that often residents see the council’s bulky waste service as the first point of call for disposing of bulky items. First impressions count, and a bad experience with bulky waste services can put people off reusing bulky items.

Effectively communicating the reuse options to households is vital. Although many householders believe that reuse activities are a form of recycling, providing clear and concise information about the services provided will help more people to choose reuse. The guidance provides hints and tips on how
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to communicate with householders; this advice will be enhanced later in the year when WRAP has completed more research on what messages work.

Whilst the sections are designed to stand alone they do relate to each other. The sections are as follows:

1. **Definitions** – this provides information on the definition of bulky waste and reuse, this can vary but it is important that all involved in the provision of a service use the same definition when communicating to the public.

2. **What is reusable** – this provides information on the amount of reuse and recycling that is potentially possible, what is achieved on the ground varies according to the quality items collected, extent of repair facilities and local markets.

3. **Benefits of reusing and recycling bulky waste** – this provides information on the social, economic and environmental benefits of reusing/recycling bulky waste.

4. **Communications** – this provides an overview of the latest research on behaviours and barriers along with hints and tips for communications.

5. **Options for collections** – this provides information on options for both kerbside collection and Household Waste Recycling Centres. For each option there is an estimation of the potential for reuse.

6. **Costs** – using the options detailed in section 5 (Options for collection) this provides indicative costs for the service options identified.

7. **Data management** – this provides information on the data needed to plan a service, provide on-going monitoring and evaluate performance.

8. **Legislative context** – this provides an overview of legislation related to the collection of bulky waste.

9. **Health and Safety** – this provides information on the current guidance and legislation relevant to the collection of bulky waste.

10. **Commissioning and procurement** – this provides information about the commissioning and procurement process and the options available. Even if you are not going to contract out a service there is useful information on planning, particularly looking at what outputs you want from the service.

11. **Commissioning and procurement: the Legal framework for Local Authorities** – this provides information to accompany that provided on the commissioning or procurement process.

12. **Third Sector involvement in procurement** – this section looks at how the Third Sector can be involved and how to build in socio-economic outputs and benefits for the council as a whole.

13. **Sample Social Clauses**

14. **Sample Bulky Waste Collection Specification**

A number of case studies are also provided to help illustrate the key points and provide service specific information. The case studies cover:

- Liverpool City Council and Bulky Bob’s – the procurement of a bulky waste collection service.
- Doncaster Council and Doncaster Refurnish – an example of a subcontractor arrangement between a waste management company and a Third Sector organisation to deliver bulky waste services.
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- Somerset Waste Partnership – an example of reuse credits and joint working.
- Banbridge – a council run reuse shop on a HWRC.
- Farthinghoe – a recycling and reuse only HWRC.
- Norfolk – a partnership approach, with a waste management company, to provide reuse shops on an HWRC.

A number of supporting documents are also provided:

- an example unable to collect notice;
- an example call centre check list; and
- an example of a customer satisfaction survey.

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