

# Southampton

## Waste

*Last updated May 2025*

Contents

1. Household waste..... 3

2. All Local Authority waste ..... 4

3. Fly-tipping ..... 5

Resources..... 7

Waste dashboard ..... 7

Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs..... 7

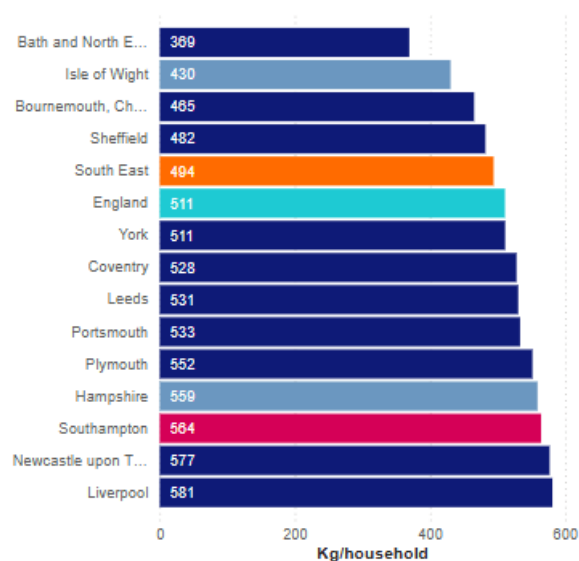
Policies and strategies..... 7

## 1. Household waste

Southampton City Council is responsible for providing waste and recycling services. This includes the collection and disposal of residual, recycling, glass and green waste. Caution should be taken when comparing different areas because of external factors which can affect performance such as the population, housing types and the rural or urban classification.

Residual waste per household (measured in kilograms) is calculated as the household waste not sent for recycling divided by the number of households within a local authority. A lower residual waste per household is desirable, with residual waste more costly to dispose of, not to mention the environmental impact of waste that is not recycled. In 2023/24, the Southampton residual household waste per household was 564kg, down from 570kg in 2022/23, however, despite a decline over the last year, Southampton has the third highest residual waste per household among ONS comparators.

Residual household waste per household (kg/household) (Ex NI191) for Southampton and ONS comparators: 2023/24  
Data source: DEFRA - Local Authority Waste Tables



The percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting in Southampton increased to 29.6% in 2023/24 compared to 27.4% in 2022/23. This value is lower than the percentage in both the South East (46.2%) and England (42.3%). It should be noted that this metric includes food waste which Southampton does not currently offer; however, all authorities will need to implement household [food waste collections](#) from the 31 March 2026. The above could partially explain why the recycling figure in Southampton is lower than the national average. The percentage sent for recycling excludes any waste collected for recycling but then rejected. In 2023/24, 16.2% of recycling in Southampton was contaminated, a decrease after a consecutive increase over the last three years. Currently the Materials Recovery Facilities used by Southampton does not have the capability to separate certain recyclables such as pots, tubs and trays which are more widely

available to be recycled in other areas. Hampshire is planning to deliver a new recycling facility which aims to increase recycling and lower contamination rates.

Further data on Southampton can be found in the interactive Power BI dashboard linked below. The dashboard allows the user to interact with a range of waste data.

- [Waste Dashboard](#)

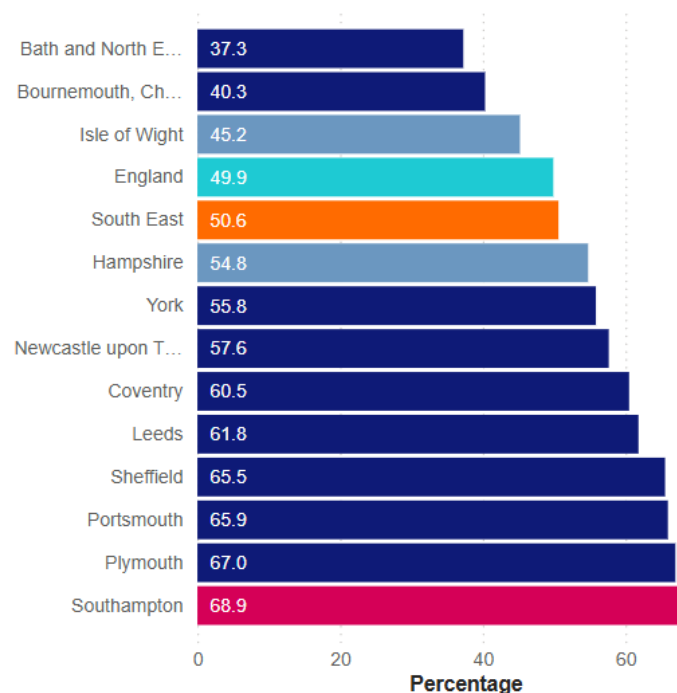
## 2. All Local Authority waste

Local authority waste includes household waste plus non-household waste such as street sweepings and fly-tipping clearance plus commercial waste. Local authorities can manage collected waste by sending the waste for recycling, landfill, incineration with energy recovery/without energy recovery or other.

The best form of waste management is recycling as it lowers carbon emissions and reduces the financial and environmental cost to produce new products. However, this method is not possible for all types of waste. Incineration is thought to be next most favourable as it prevents waste pilling up in landfill and potentially causing contamination. In Southampton, incineration involves burning municipal waste at Marchwood Energy Recovery Facility and producing electricity for the National Grid. Finally, landfill is where large holes are filled with non-recyclable waste. This method is least favoured as it can cause environmental issues however it is sometimes the only method for certain waste.

**Percentage incinerated with EfW for Southampton and ONS comparators:  
2023/24**

Data source: DEFRA - Local Authority Waste Tables



The most common form of waste management for Southampton is incineration with EfW (energy from waste), followed by recycling or composting then landfill. In 2023/24, 68.9% of all Southampton's waste was sent for incineration with EfW; the highest among comparators. 27.1% was sent for recycling or composting in 2023/24; one of the lowest among comparators. 3.9% of Southampton waste was sent to landfill (2023/24), which is lower than the England average (5.5%).

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### 3. Fly-tipping

Fly-tipping is the illegal disposal of household, industrial, commercial or other controlled waste. It can be liquid or solid waste and dumped on land or in water. The waste is usually dumped to avoid disposal costs. Reducing the incidents of fly-tipping is important to help create greener and safer areas.

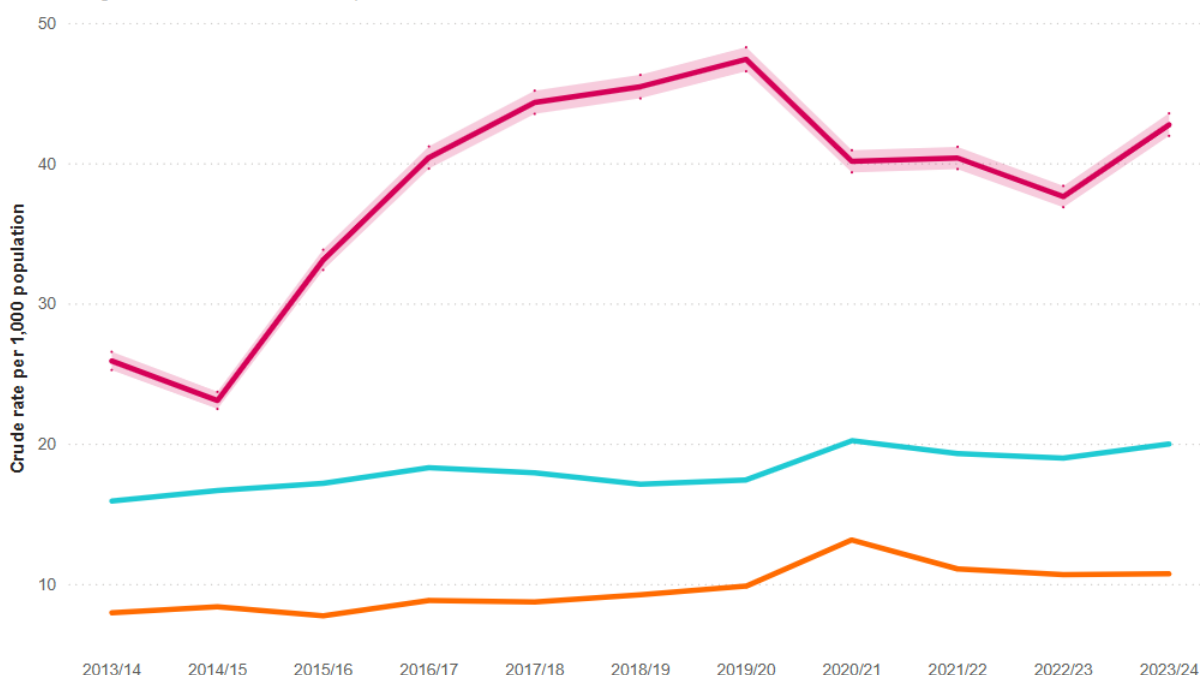
Caution should be taken when comparing different areas because of known discrepancies in the way local authorities report the data, as highlighted in the [national fly-tipping publication](#). A high volume of fly-tipping doesn't necessarily indicate that it is more of a problem, it could be reflective of recording practices, some areas are more rigorous at recording, or a combination of the two.

The number of fly-tipping incidents per 1,000 population in Southampton during 2023/24 was 42.7, an increase from last year (37.6 per 1,000 population). The Southampton rate continues to be significantly higher than the South East (10.7 per 1,000 population) and England (20 per 1,000 population).

**Fly tipping incidents, crude rate per 1,000 population between 2012/13 and 2023/24, for Southampton and England and South East**

Data source: DEFRA - Local Authority Waste Tables

Area ● England ● South East ● Southampton



Further analysis can be carried out on fly-tipping incidents by breaking down where the fly-tipping happened (land type), the type of waste that was fly-tipped (waste type) and the size of the waste (volume).

In 2023/24, 46.8% of fly-tipping incidents in Southampton included household black bags (5,124 incidents). This is an increase of 20% compared to last year (4,269 incidents); commercial black bags, other electrical, white goods, other primary waste, animal carcass and asbestos also all had an increased number of incidents compared to 2022/23.

The most common size and volume for fly-tipping incidents in Southampton during 2023/24 was single black bags (55.1%, 6,031 incidents) followed by single items (28.1%, 3,072 incidents); these have been the two most common incidents for the last six years.

The most common place for fly-tipping in Southampton during 2023/24 was on council land, with 61.1% of all incidents occurring here, followed by footpaths and bridleways (21.8%) and highways (14%). Council land incidents and highways incidents both increased in the last year by +40% and +23.9% respectively, whereas footpaths and bridleways incidents decreased by -21.9% compared to 2022/23.

Further data on Southampton can be found in the interactive Power BI dashboard linked below. The dashboard allows the user to interact with a range of waste data.

- [Waste Dashboard](#)

## Resources

### Waste dashboard

The Waste dashboard presents a range of data to provide intelligence on Waste Management in Southampton. Three main topics are covered: household waste, all local authority waste (includes commercial premises and other non-household waste) and fly-tipping.

- [Waste Dashboard](#)

### Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs

The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) publish statistics on waste generation and management. Data is published annually and is available at local authority level which enables local benchmarking and trend analysis to be conducted.

- [Local authority collected waste management](#)
- [Fly-tipping statistics for England](#)

### Policies and strategies

National and local policies are outlined below.

- [UK Government – Simpler Recycling in England](#)
- [Southampton City Council – Waste Improvement and Transformation Plan \(2022-2027\)](#)
- [Southampton City Council – Household Waste and Fly-tipping policy \(2023-2026\)](#)
- [Southampton City Council – Our Green City](#)