

**MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 9 AUGUST 2011**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Mrs Blackmore (Chairman)  
Councillors Ash, Field, FitzGerald, Mrs Joy,  
D Mortimer, Mrs Parvin, Paterson, Mrs Stockell and  
Yates

**46. The Committee to consider whether all items on the agenda should be web-cast.**

**Resolved:** That all items on the agenda be web-cast.

**47. Apologies.**

Apologies were received from Councillor Mortimer.

**48. Notification of Substitute Members.**

It was noted that Councillor Joy was substituting for Councillor Mortimer.

**49. Notification of Visiting Members.**

There were no Visiting Members.

**50. Disclosures by Members and Officers:**

There were no disclosures.

**51. To consider whether any items should be taken in private because of the possible disclosure of exempt information.**

**Resolved:** That all items be taken in public.

**52. Minutes of the meeting held on 12 July 2011**

**Resolved:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 12 July 2011 be agreed as a correct record of the meeting and duly signed by the Chairman.

**53. 'Making Waste Work for Maidstone' Review**

The Chairman welcomed Steve Goulette, Assistant Director of Environment & Regulatory Services and Paul Vanston, Kent Waste Partnership (KWP) Manager to the meeting. Mr Goulette gave a brief

overview of the waste and recycling arrangements, setting out the Maidstone context.

Mr Goulette explained to Members that Maidstone had been part of the waste partnership for a number of years and that to ensure they were getting the most out of the partnership Maidstone had undertaken a Best Value Review of Maidstone's waste and recycling collection services in 2009. The outcome of which was the creation of a specific waste strategy for Maidstone including an action plan. Mr Goulette mentioned that prior to the review Maidstone had performed poorly in comparison to the other Kent authorities but with £500,000 (including £300,000 from KWP) of investment to make changes to the service, including the addition of a separate food waste collection service, satisfaction had risen to around 80%. Mr Goulette told the Committee that the current waste contract was due to expire in 2013 and that they would shortly be tendering for a new contract in partnership with Swale and Ashford. He confirmed there would be opportunity for the Committee to input into the work on the new contract.

Mr Vanston explained that the KWP included all thirteen Kent authorities and took the strategic view on waste with the Kent taxpayer in mind. The Committee noted that each authority contributed £5,000 annually and that last year Maidstone had received £318,000 of value back. Mr Vanston then gave a presentation (at Appendix A) which highlighted a number of key issues including:

- There were 300 million tonnes of waste generated in Europe of which household waste made up only a small proportion.
- The amount of waste going to landfill for Kent had reduced from 90% prior to 2006 to around 40%.
- The most important element for waste management was diversion from landfill.
- There were 8.3 million tonnes of food waste generated in the UK of which 5.3 million was considered to be avoidable waste.
- The most effective way of dealing with waste was to have action plans for each waste material.
- There was an opportunity to create an income stream from waste and that anything going to landfill was a lost opportunity.

The Committee queried why it appeared from the presentation that the Midlands had high rates of recycling. Mr Vanston informed them that the areas concerned were mainly rural and that collections of garden waste had contributed significantly to the higher rates.

Members asked what was being done about the promotion of recycling in particular education around food waste. Mr Goulette told them there was an ongoing national campaign to promote food waste recycling – Love food, hate waste. The Committee also noted that education in schools was carried out on a regular basis. They felt that the amount of food waste was unnecessary and agreed that education should continue and recommended that the Borough Update feature something outlining how much food is thrown away.

The Committee questioned why compost could not be used to generate an income. Mr Vanston explained that income from waste fluctuates and has its own market, for example there is little demand for green glass in this country, but that most household waste material could be recycled back into usable products. The main issue with compost would be ensuring a high quality output that can be sold economically to balance with the cost of collection and/or processing.

Mr Vanston told the committee that there was possible income to be gained through the collection of plastic bottles and the Council had the opportunity to consider this as part of the new contract, it was noted that the collection of plastics was expensive.

The Committee asked what the biggest barrier to collecting plastics was, Mr Vanston responded that the different types of plastic made it hard for residents to identify what could be recycled and collected. The Committee queried if were KWP doing anything to lobby packaging manufacturers for the standardisation of plastics. It was explained that 60 years ago there were no plastics but they had now become commonplace being a lighter and cheaper product than glass and could extend the shelf-life of certain food stuffs. The Committee agreed that it would be easier if there was some sort of standardisation for plastics that would allow residents to easily identify what they can recycle and put this forward as a recommendation.

Members questioned the environmental impact of sending waste abroad for recycling if there was no market in the UK. Mr Vanston explained there was a proximity principle and that although there was not always a UK market there were risks associated with exporting waste as well as strict criteria. Once waste has left the country it was not possible to control what happened to it. For this reason the Allington site had agreed not to export any waste.

Members asked Mr Vanston how best to tackle the issue of people putting the wrong thing in recycling bins and how to improve access to recycling for people living in terraced properties and flats. Mr Vanston told the Committee that technology in this area was being developed so that sorting machines could read barcodes embedded in the material and then sort the waste accordingly. Mr Goulette added that work was ongoing with landlords to improve facilities for people living in flats, the Committee agreed this was positive and recommended that this work be continued.

In response to a question about putting glass in with residual waste the Committee was told that glass made up around 6% of residual waste. They asked if there were any plans to introduce a kerbside collection for glass. Mr Goulette informed them that this would be looked at as part of the new contract and the aim was for glass to be collected with the dry recyclables, the committee supported this. It was noted that recycling rates for glass banks were good.

A Member queried if it was possible to have clauses within the new contract that would allow for some flexibility around recyclables and new options as new technology becomes available. It was confirmed that this was possible and Mr Vanston advised the Committee that the contract should be flexible at the end of the process rather than changing collections. The Committee understood that this could allow additional materials to be collected in the future. The Committee concurred and said that it would be important that the new contract provided some flexibility in its terms and conditions in relation to use of new technologies and changes to collectables.

A Member asked how much councils should be doing to pick up all types of waste. It was noted by the Committee that items from the bulky and freighter services go to landfill but that a number of companies will take back packaging and in the case of some appliances, the old is removed when the new is delivered. The Committee noted that any diversion of waste from landfill would reduce costs and recommended that options are investigated for joint working with charities or social partnerships for the reuse and recycling of items.

The Chair thanked both Mr Goulette and Mr Vanston for their informative presentations and discussions and reminded Members that there was a visit to the closed-loop site on Friday.

**It was resolved that** as part of the new contract for waste (tender due September 2011) that:

- a) Flexibility and new options in relation to use of new technologies and changes to collectables is included in the terms of the new contract;
- b) An option for a kerbside glass collection is considered as part of the new contract;
- c) further consideration be given to properties where access to recycling is an issue such as Victorian terraces and flats to make recycling as easy as possible;

**It was resolved that** in relation to the OSC review of waste & recycling that:

- d) Officers should continue to lobby for the standardisation of plastics in products to make it easy for residents to recycle;
- e) Further action is explored to reuse or divert items from landfill that are collected through the bulky waste service through working with charities and other social partnerships; and
- f) There is a continued education on food wastage and promotion of recycling with a feature in the Borough Update outlining how much food is thrown away in Maidstone.

## **54. Future Work Programme and Scrutiny Officer Update**

Members discussed their future work programme and the forward plan. The Committee debated the inclusion of the Review of Neighbourhood Forums due to Cabinet in August for September's agenda. Members considered that they had already had opportunity to comment on the Review of Neighbourhood Forums and did not feel it necessary to revisit it at this time.

The Committee noted that in October they were meeting as the Crime and Disorder Overview & Scrutiny Committee. Members requested that an update was included in the agenda from Kent Police to update the committee on the position of Kent Police in relation to the riots. It was agreed by the committee that they would request an update from the police and would formulate specific questions at the September meeting.

**Resolved:** That the future work programme was amended to include an update from Kent Police for the meeting of the Crime and Disorder Overview & Scrutiny Committee in October.

## **55. Duration of the Meeting**

6:30pm to 9:00pm

**Maidstone Borough Council:  
Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committee  
09 August 2011**

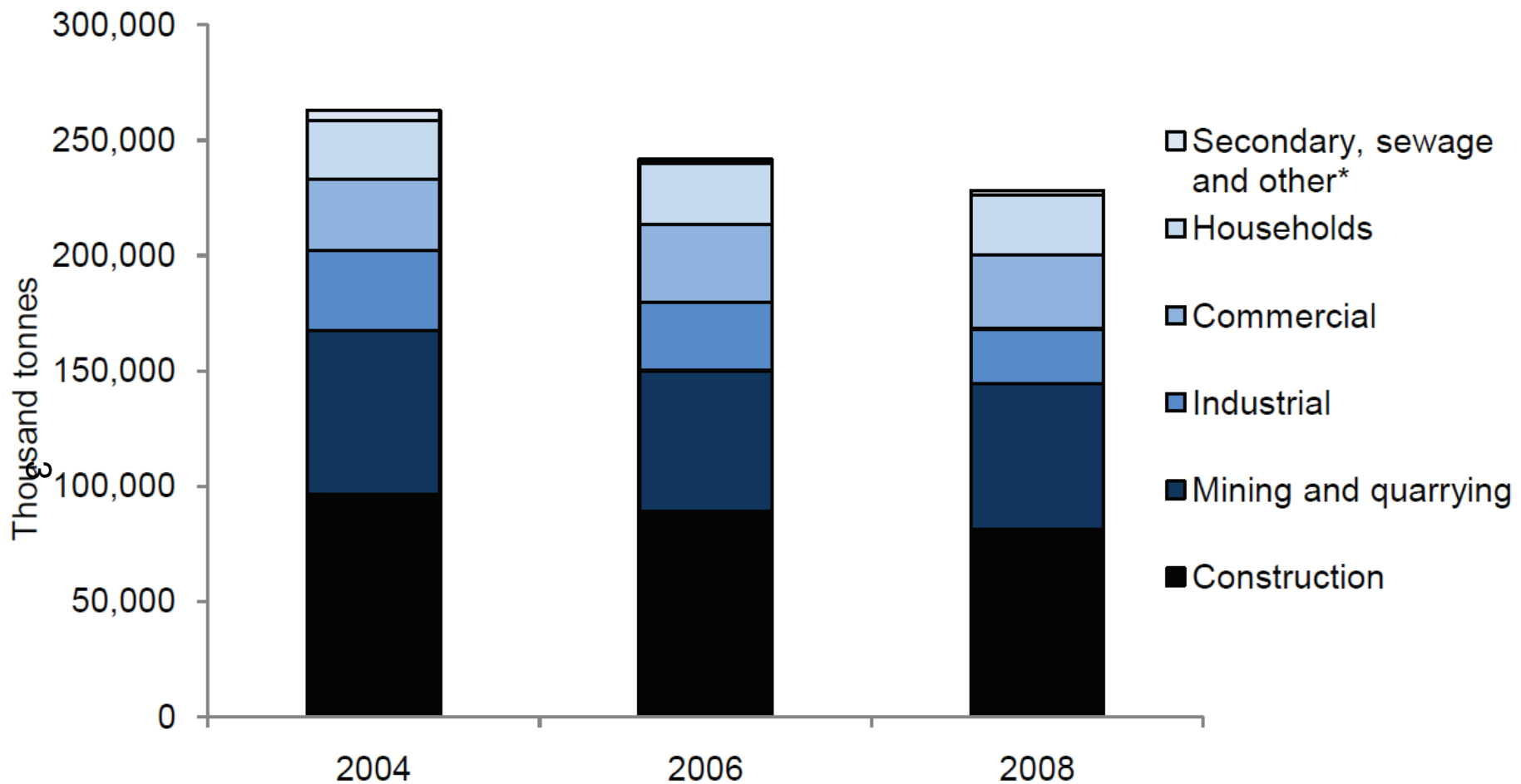
**Paul Vanston,  
Kent Waste Partnership Manager**



# EU, UK and Kent Overview

Kent Waste Partnership

Figure 3 Total waste generation in England, by sector, 2004 to 2008

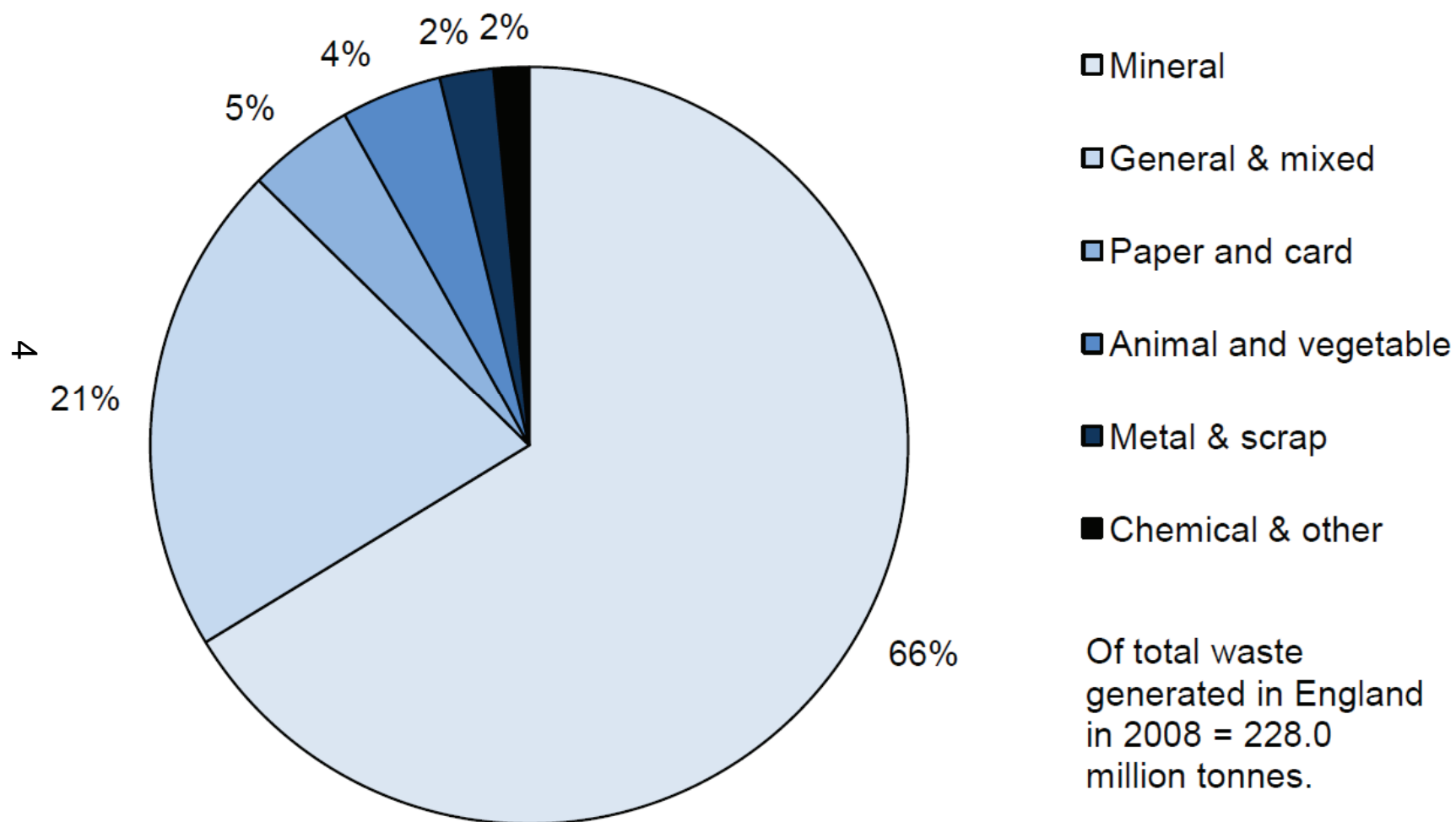


\* 'Other' includes healthcare wastes, batteries & accumulators, dredging spoils and solidified/stabilised/vitrified wastes.

Source: Defra – Waste Statistics Regulation return to Eurostat, 2004 to 2008

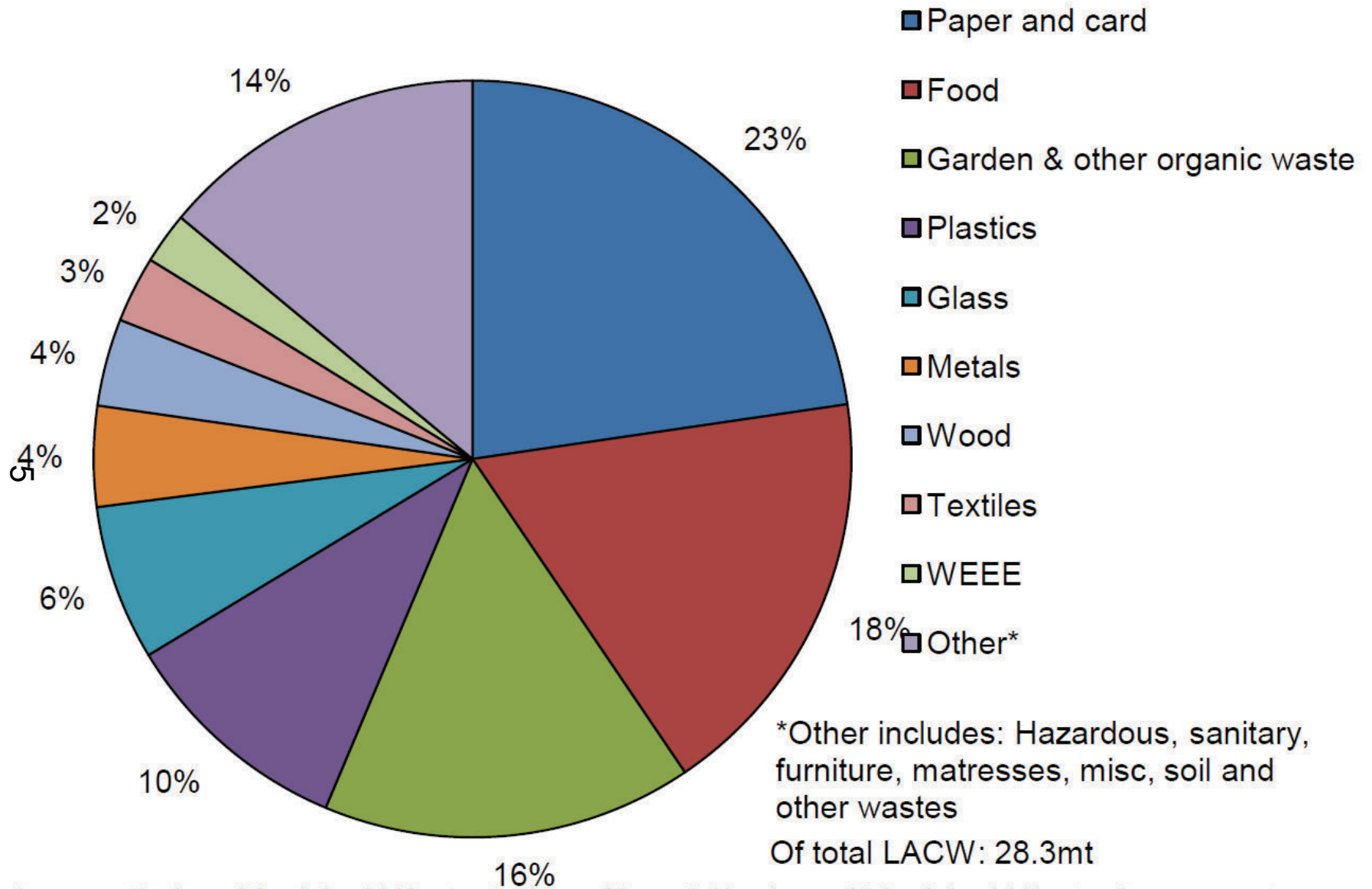


Figure 4 Total waste generation in England, by waste type, 2008



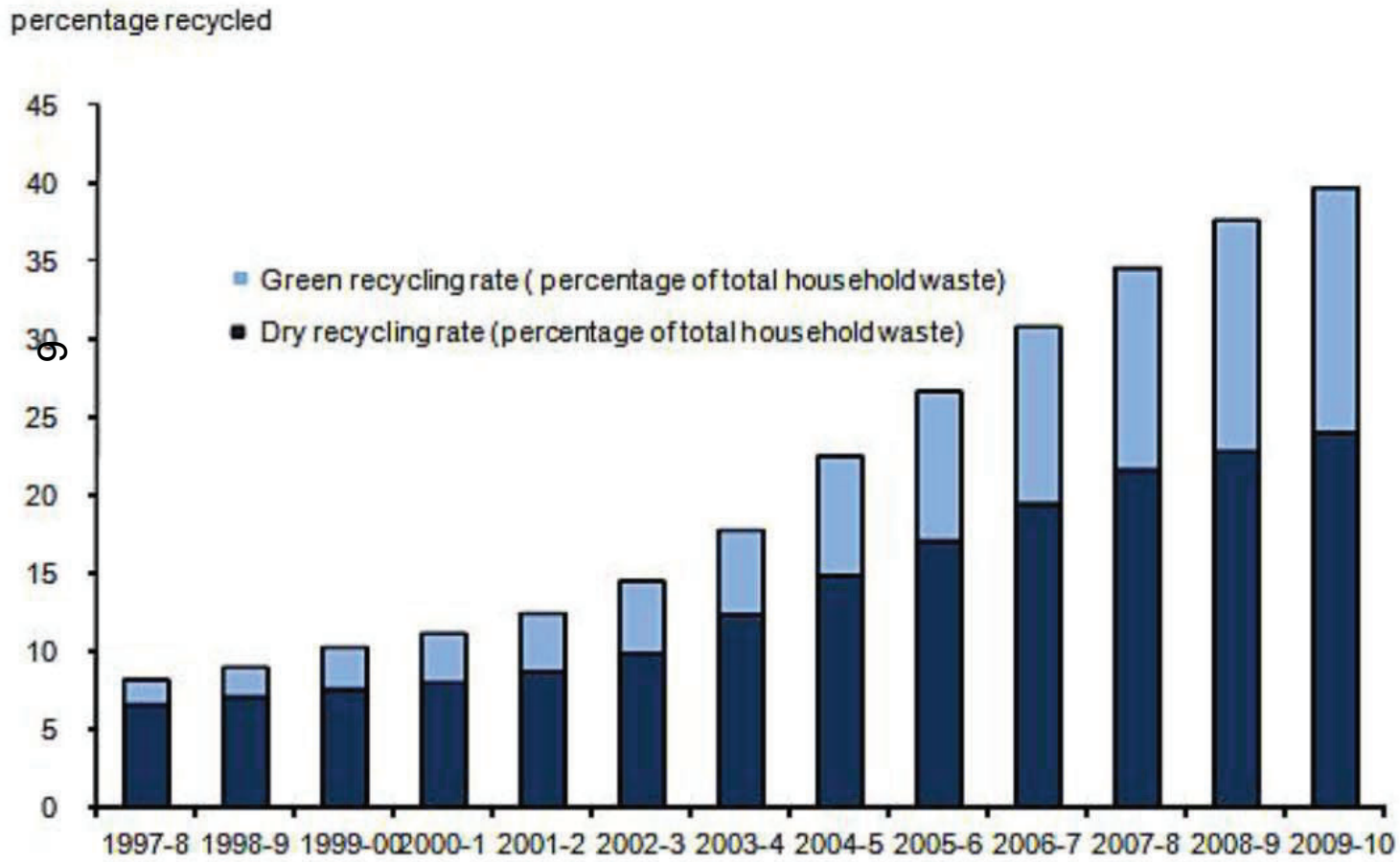
Source: Defra – Waste Statistics Regulation return to Eurostat, 2008

Figure 10 LACW composition, England 2006/07



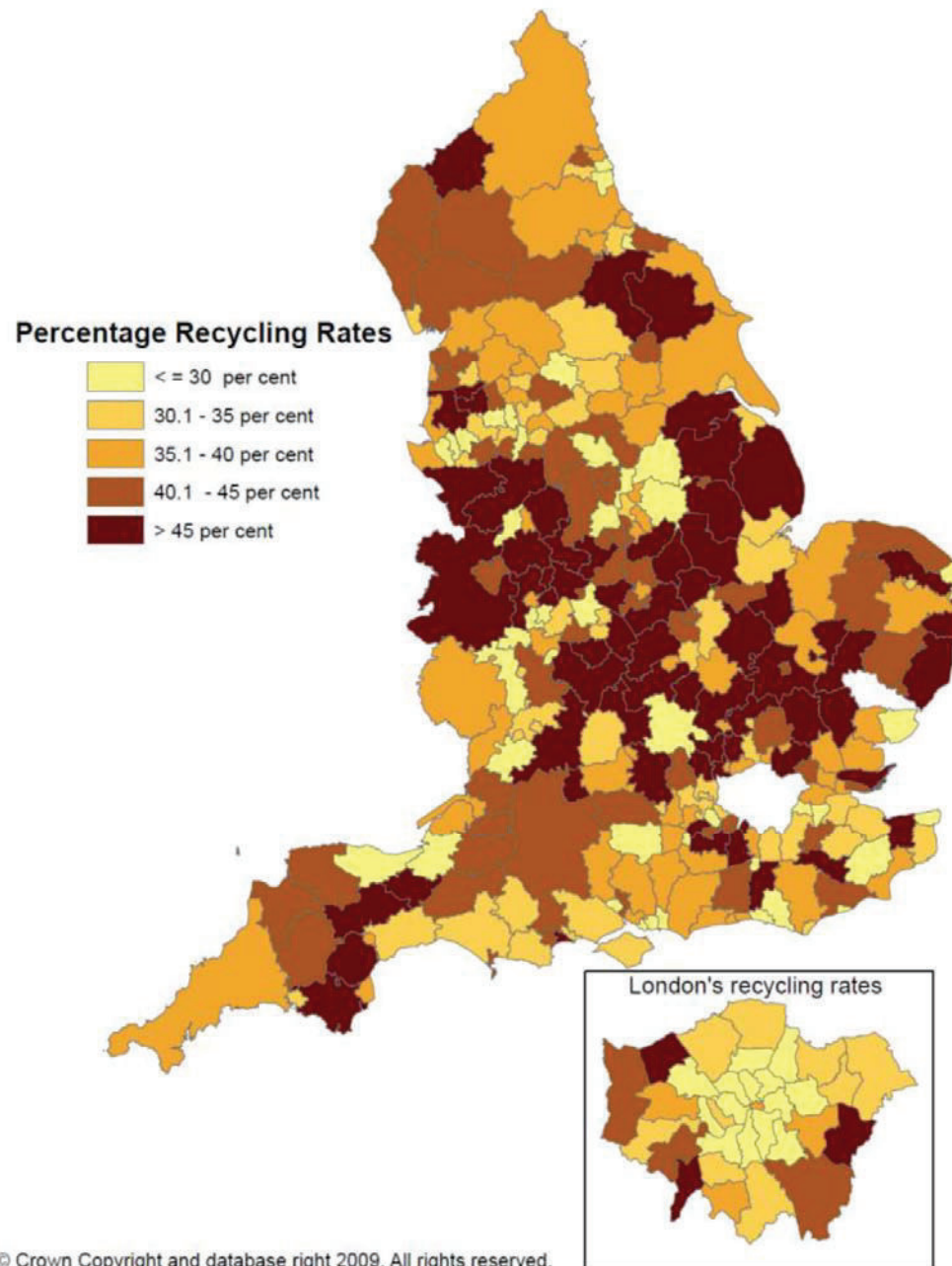
Source: Defra - Municipal Waste Composition: A Review of Municipal Waste Component Analyses 2009

Figure 12 Green and dry recycling rates of household waste, England 1997/98 to 2009/10

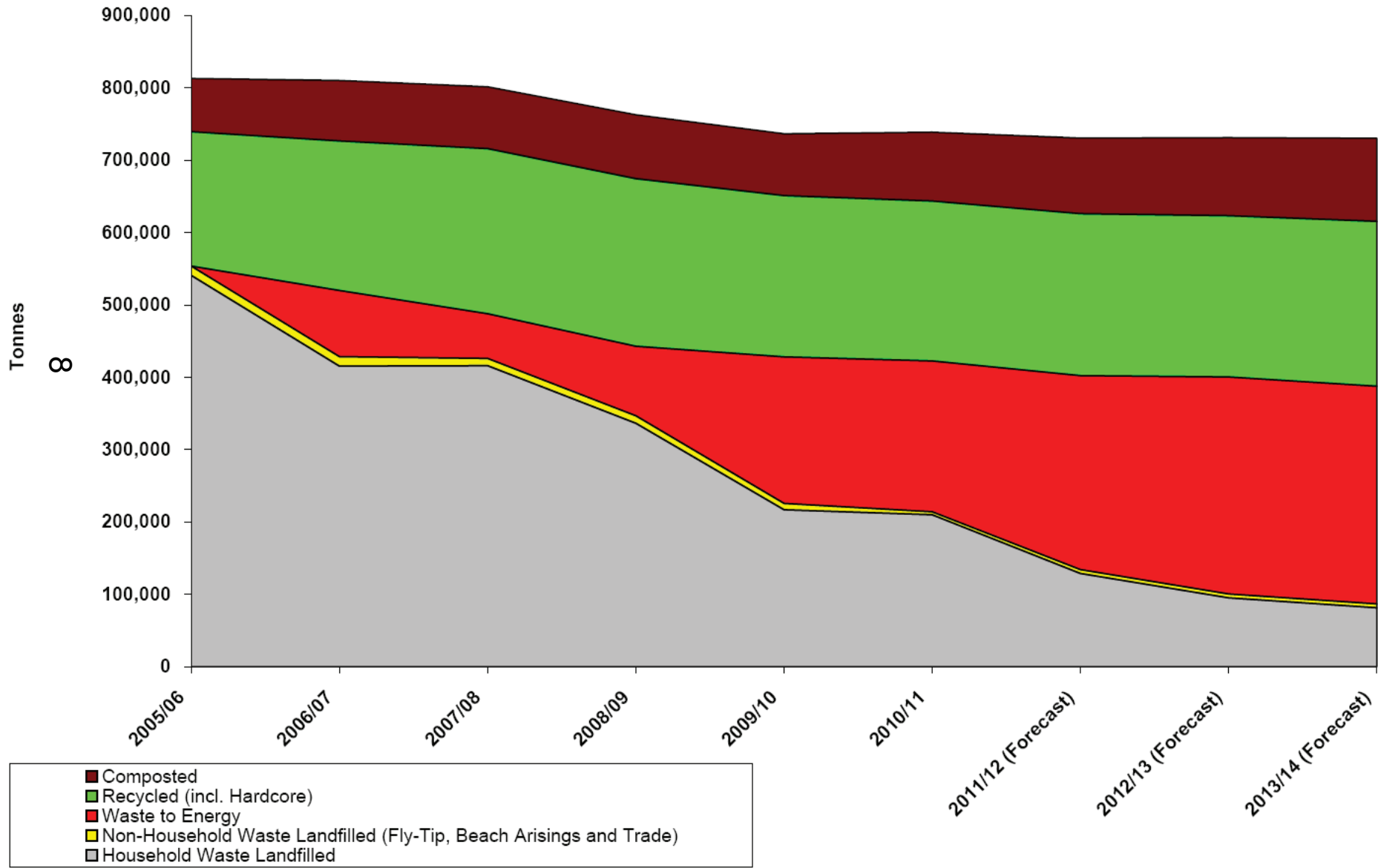


Source: Defra, WasteDataFlow

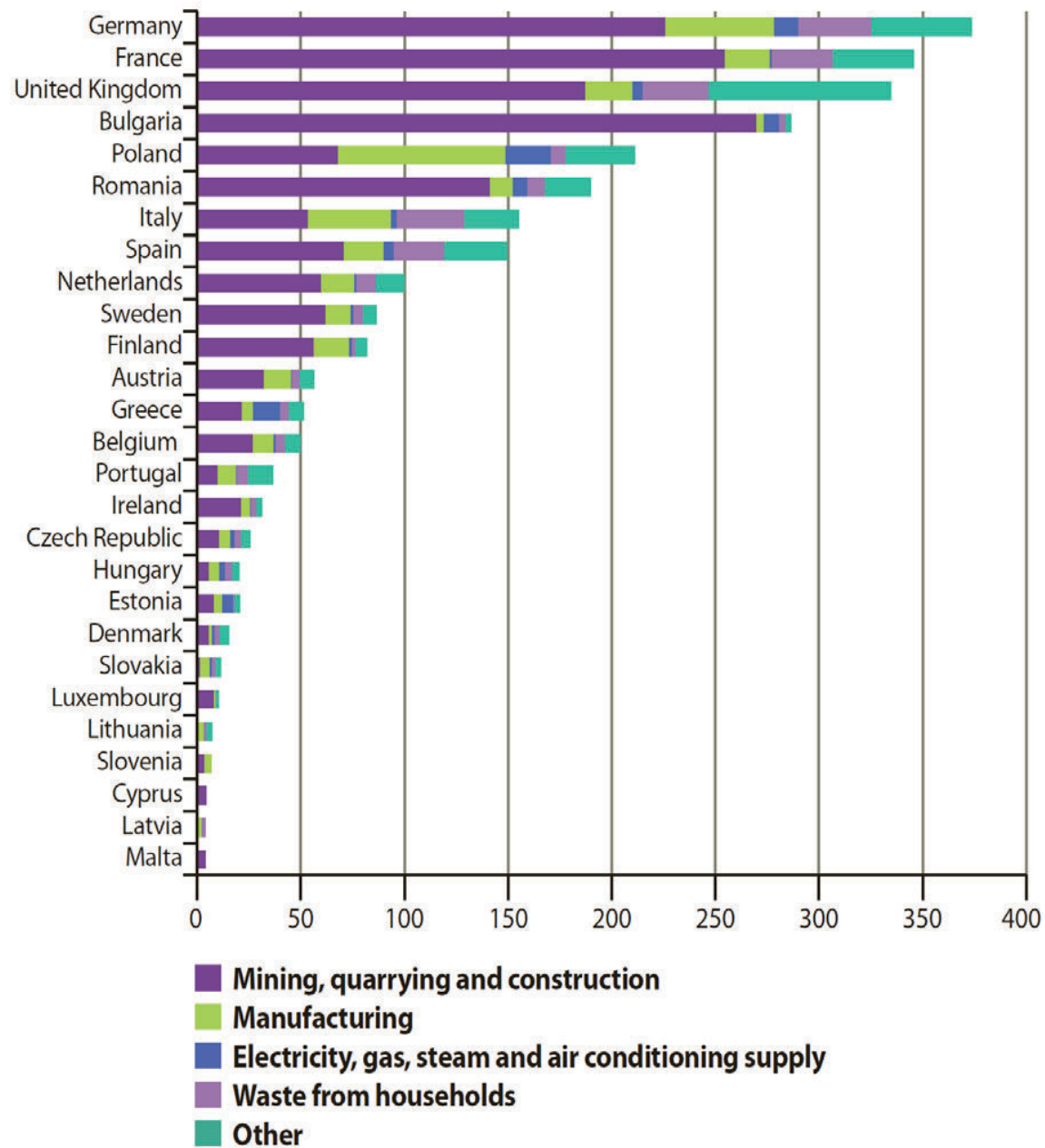
Figure 13 Local authority recycling rates, England, 2009



## Levels of Municipal Waste in Kent

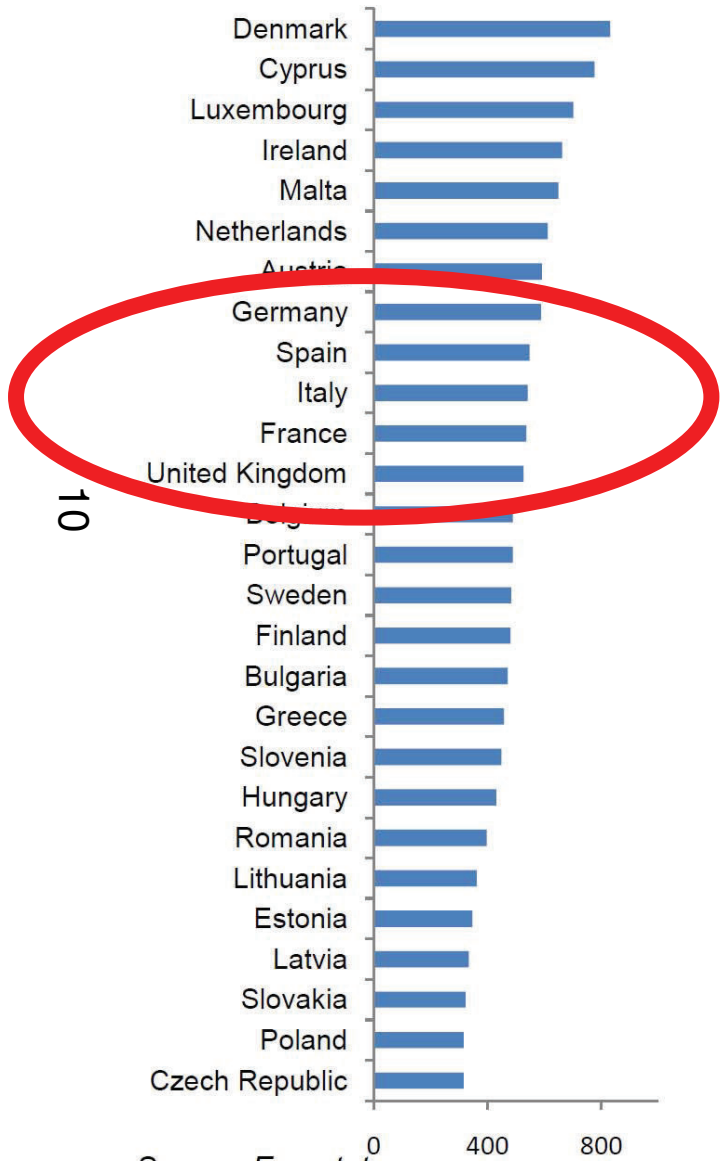


## Waste generation by economic activity (2008)



Source: Eurostat (online data code: [env\\_wastrt](#))

## Waste generated (kg per person per year)



Source: Eurostat

## Waste management

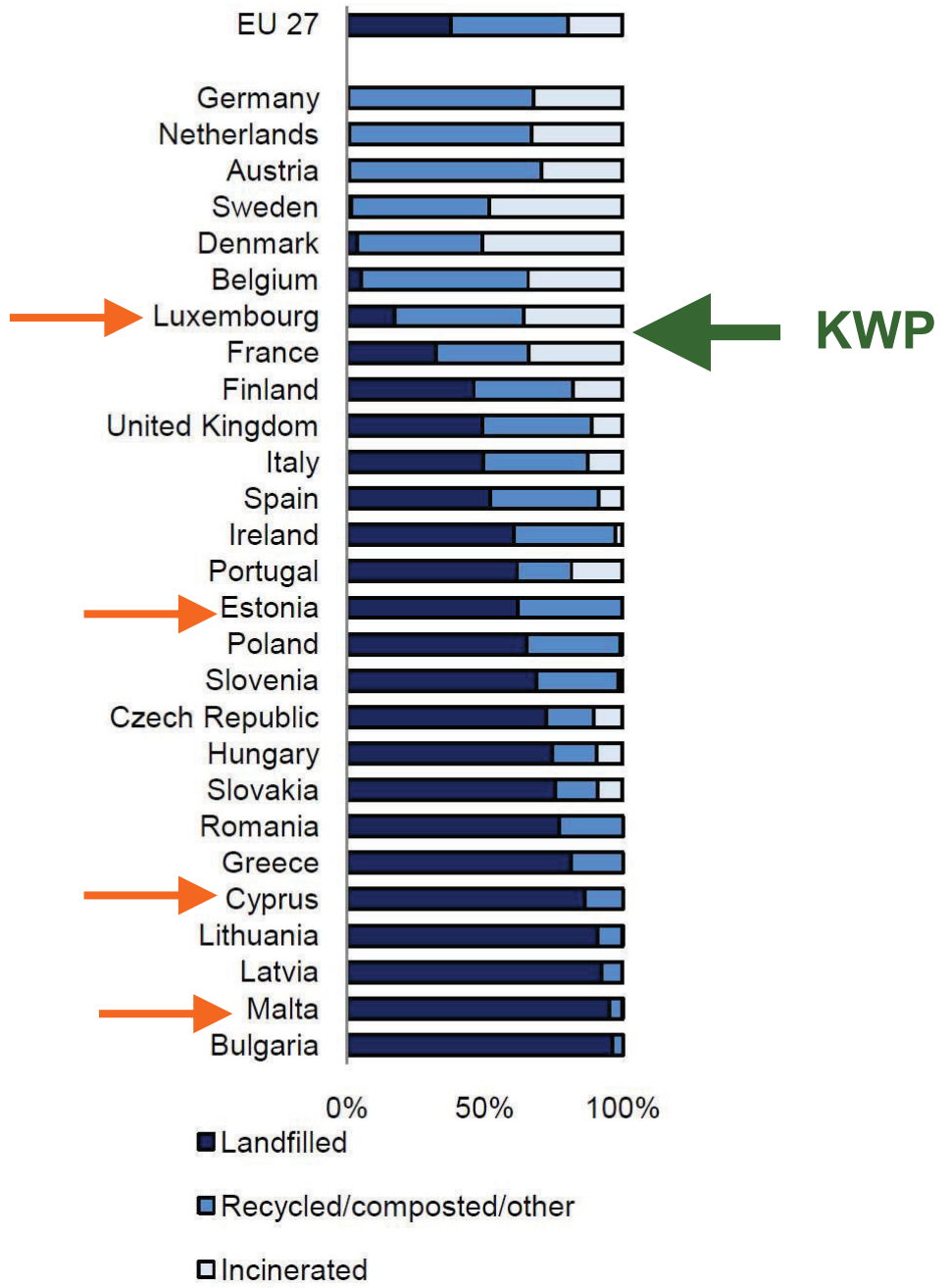
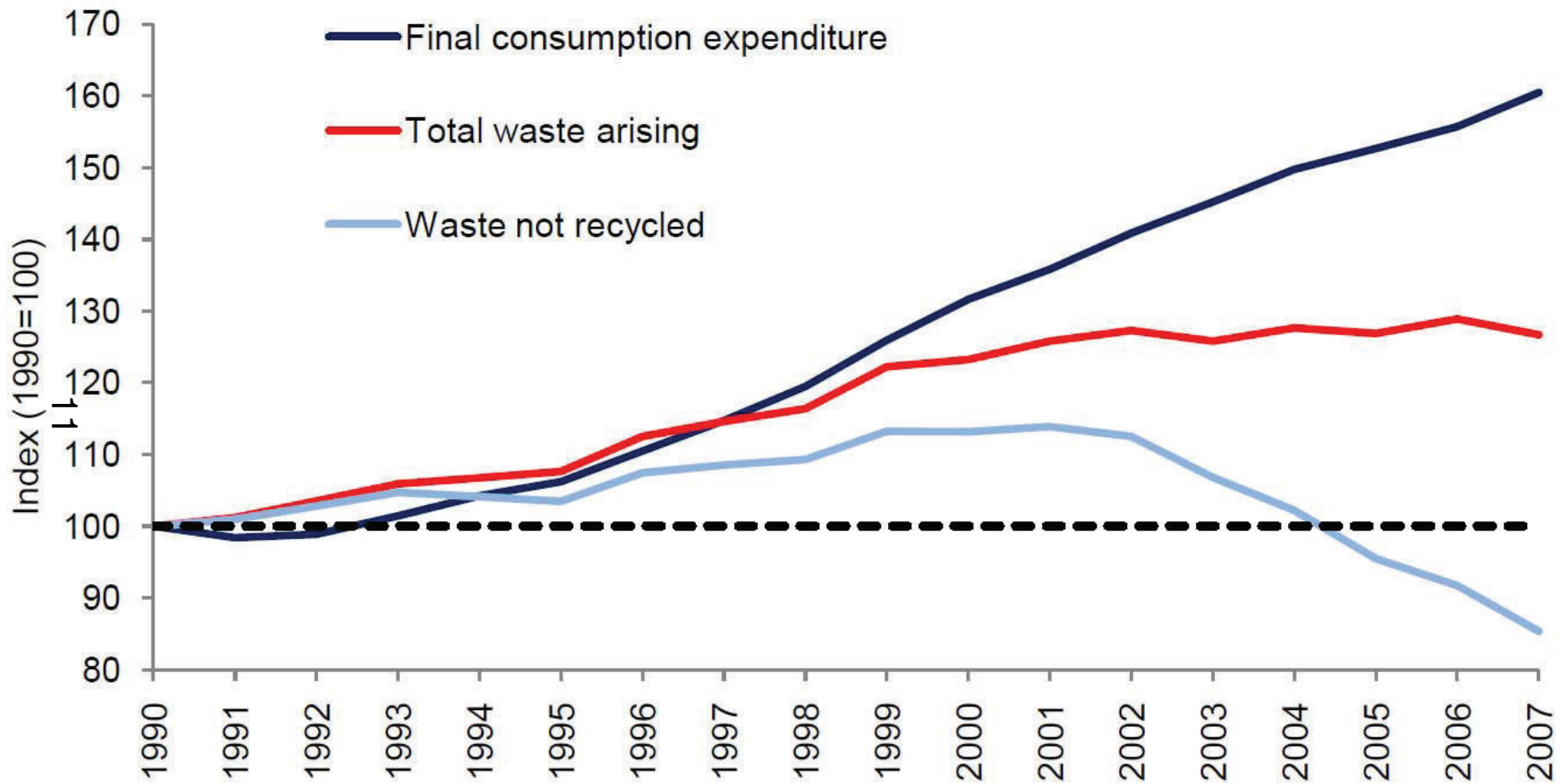


Figure 14 Household final consumption expenditure and waste arising, UK, 1990 to 2007



Source: ONS, Defra



# Waste Reduction: but reduce what?

## Levels of Municipal Waste in Kent

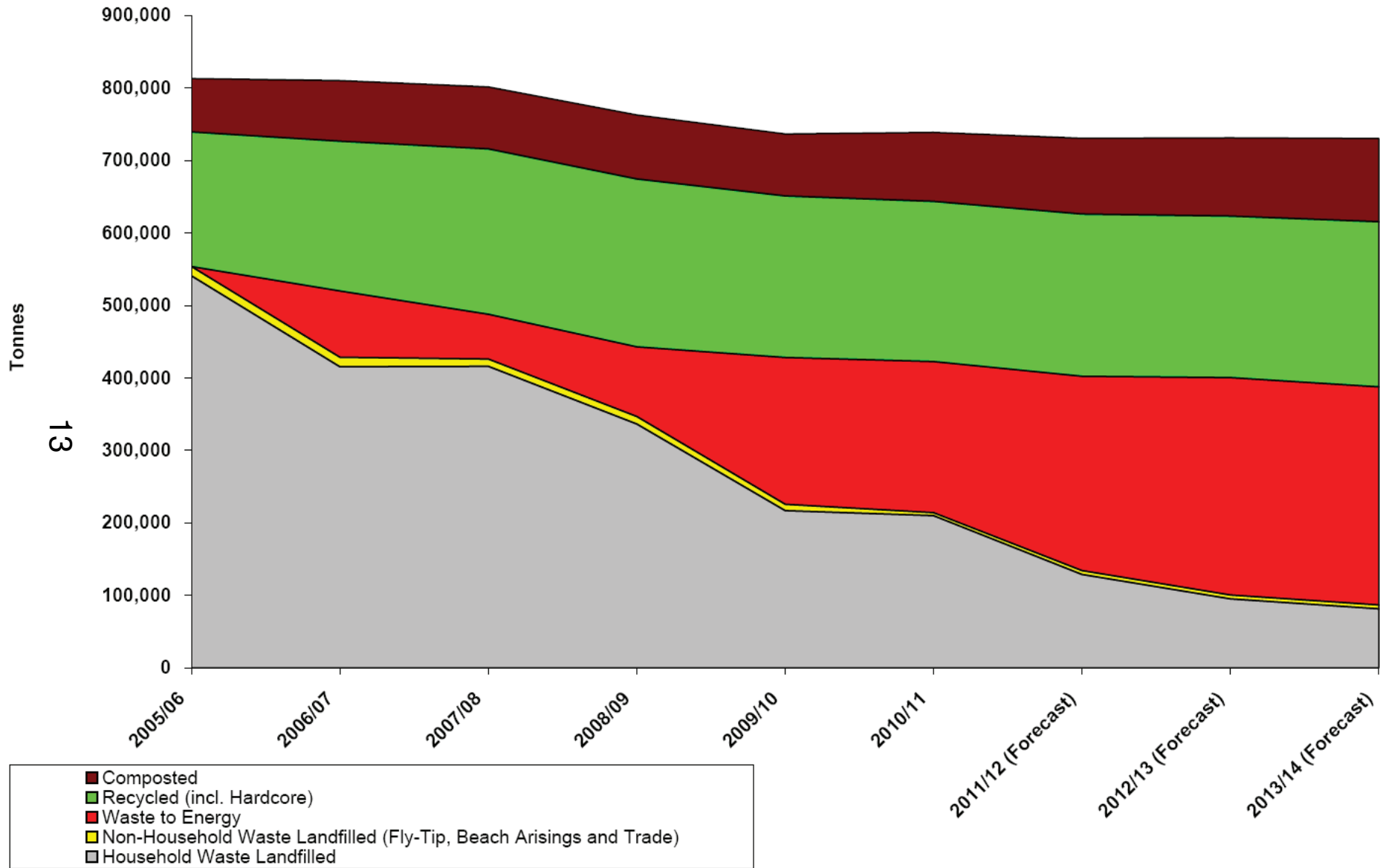
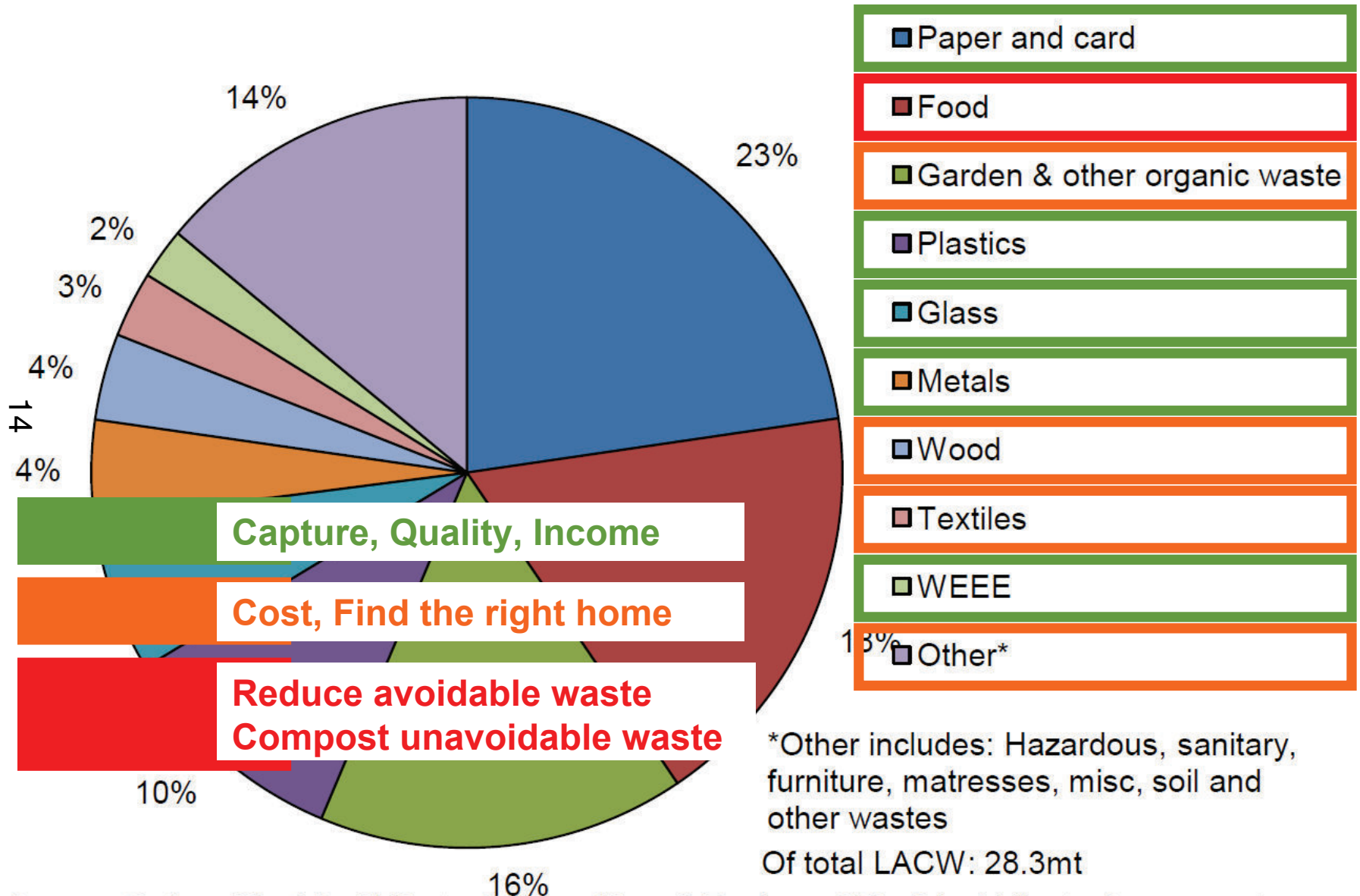
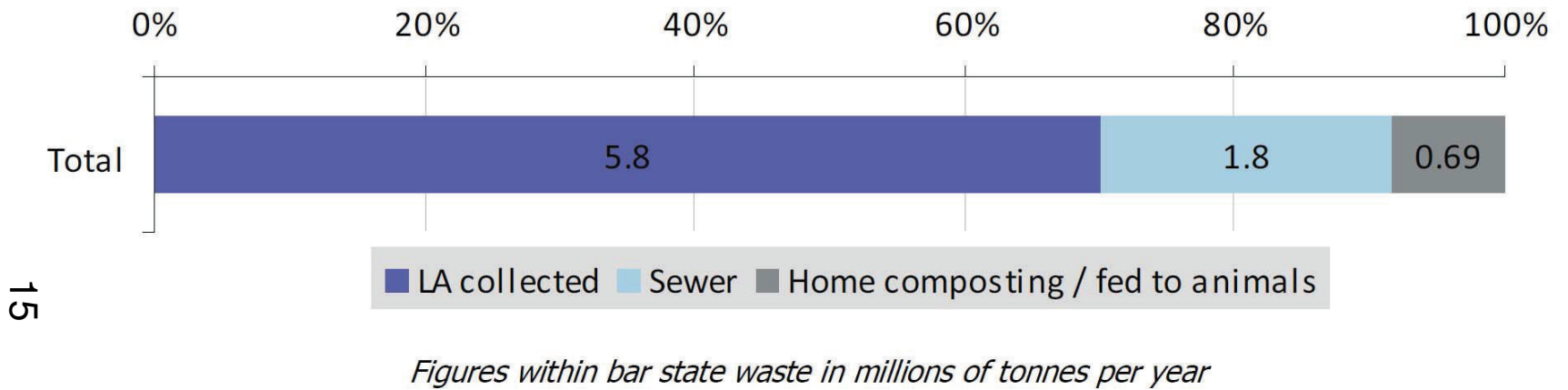


Figure 10 LACW composition, England 2006/07



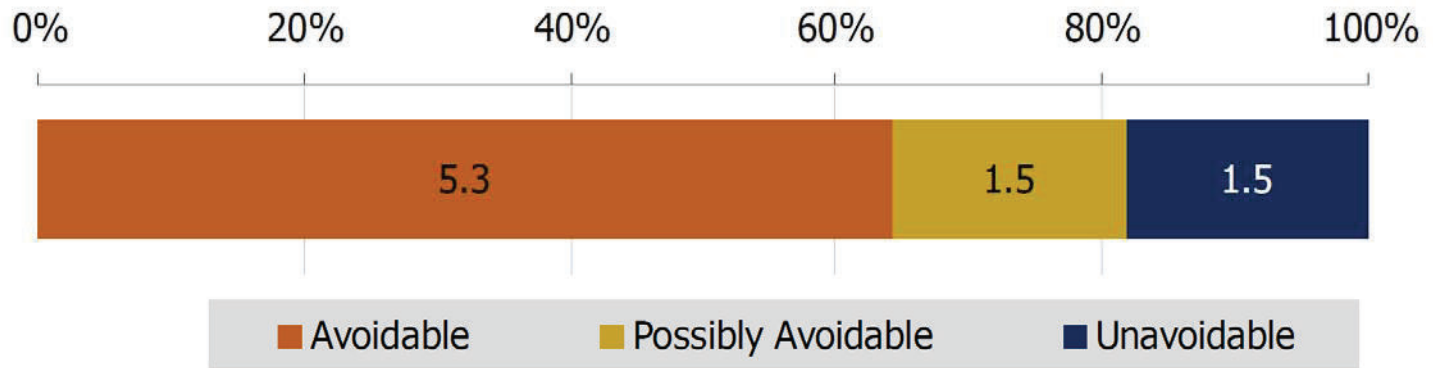
Source: Defra - Municipal Waste Composition: A Review of Municipal Waste Component Analyses 2009

**Figure C:** Weight of food and drink waste generated in the UK, split by disposal route



5.3 million tonnes per year is avoidable – approximately two-thirds of the 8.3 million tonnes (Figure D). The remaining 3 million tonnes per year is split equally between unavoidable and possibly avoidable waste.

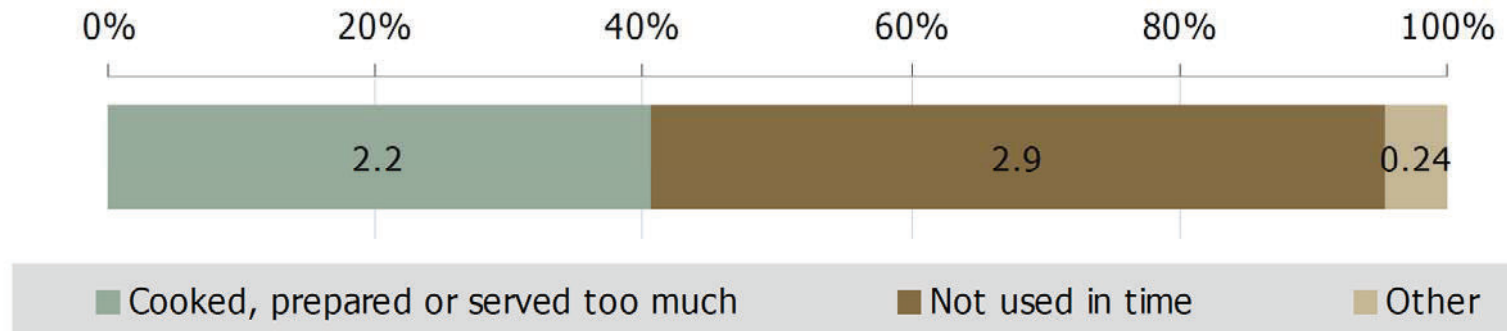
**Figure D:** Weight of food and drink waste generated in the UK, split by avoidability



*Figures within bar state waste in millions of tonnes per year*

Of the avoidable food and drink waste, 2.2 million tonnes is leftover after cooking, preparing or serving and 2.9 million tonnes is not used in time (Figure E).

**Figure E:** Weight of avoidable food and drink waste generated in the UK, split by reason for disposal



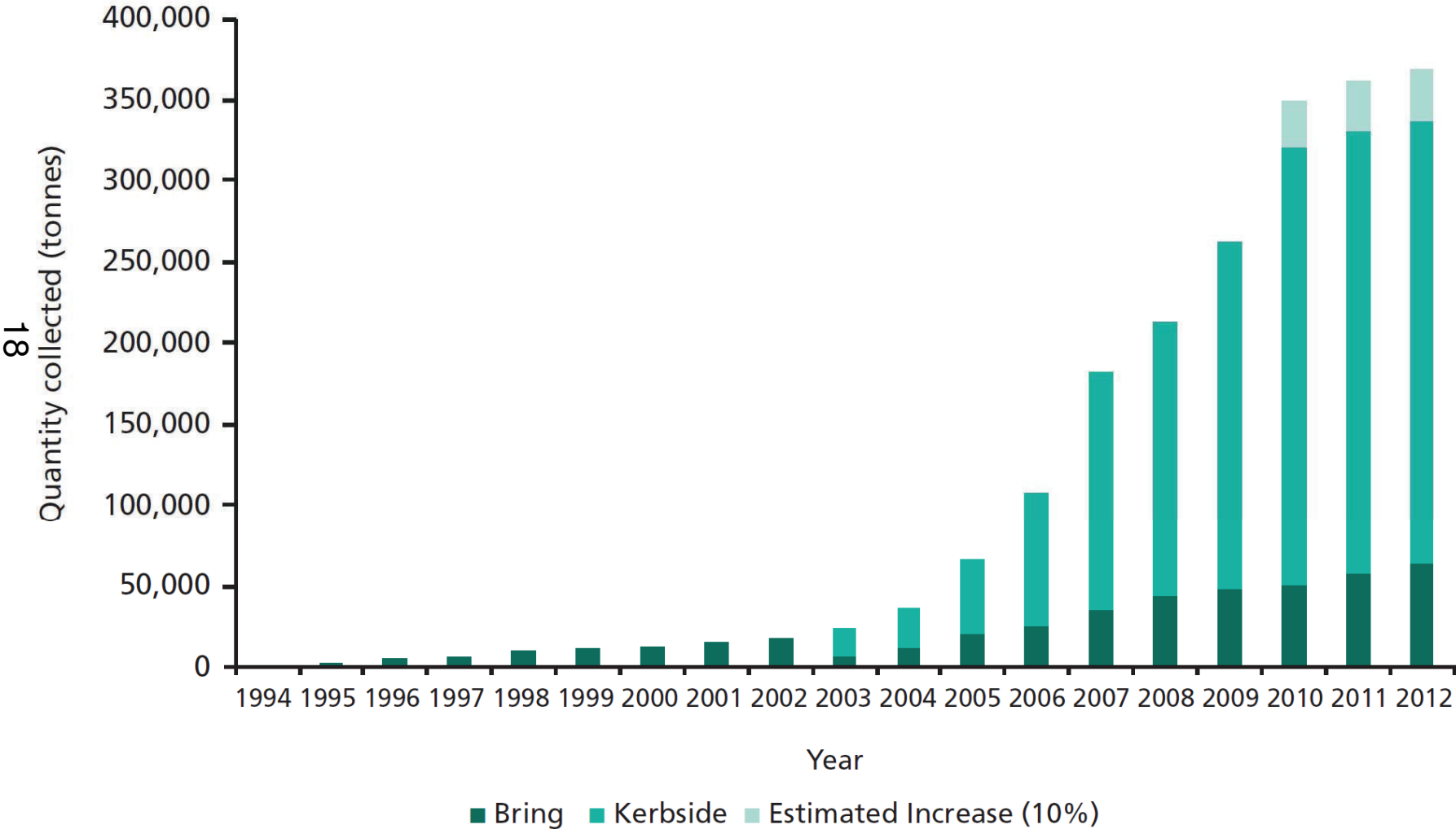
*Figures within bar state waste in millions of tonnes per year*



# Plastics: what can we do?

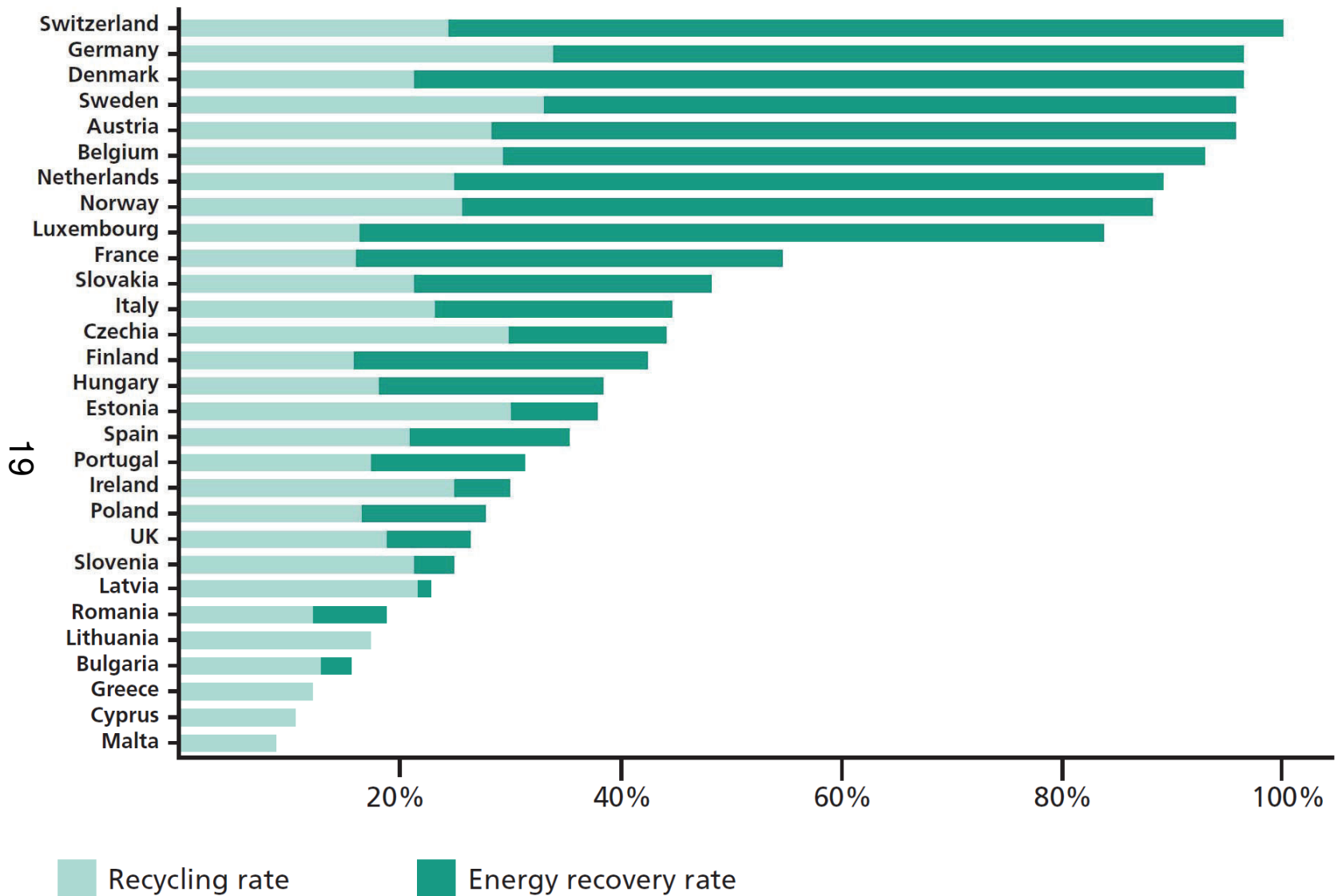
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Figure 1 – Growth in plastic bottle collections, by bring and kerbside schemes



Source: Recoup, UK Household Plastics Packaging Collection Survey 2010, Nov 2009

Figure 7 – Recycling and energy recovery rate per country in the EU<sup>9</sup>



Source: Recoup, UK Household Plastics Packaging Collection Survey 2010, Nov 2009





Polyethylene  
Terephthalate

Fizzy drink and water bottles. Salad trays.



High Density  
Polyethylene

Milk bottles, bleach, cleaners and most  
shampoo bottles.



Polyvinyl  
Chloride

Pipes, fittings, window and door frames  
(rigid PVC). Thermal insulation (PVC foam)  
and automotive parts.



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Low Density  
Polyethylene

Carrier bags, bin liners and packaging films.



Polypropylene

Margarine tubs, microwaveable meal trays,  
also produced as fibres and filaments for  
carpets, wall coverings and vehicle  
upholstery.

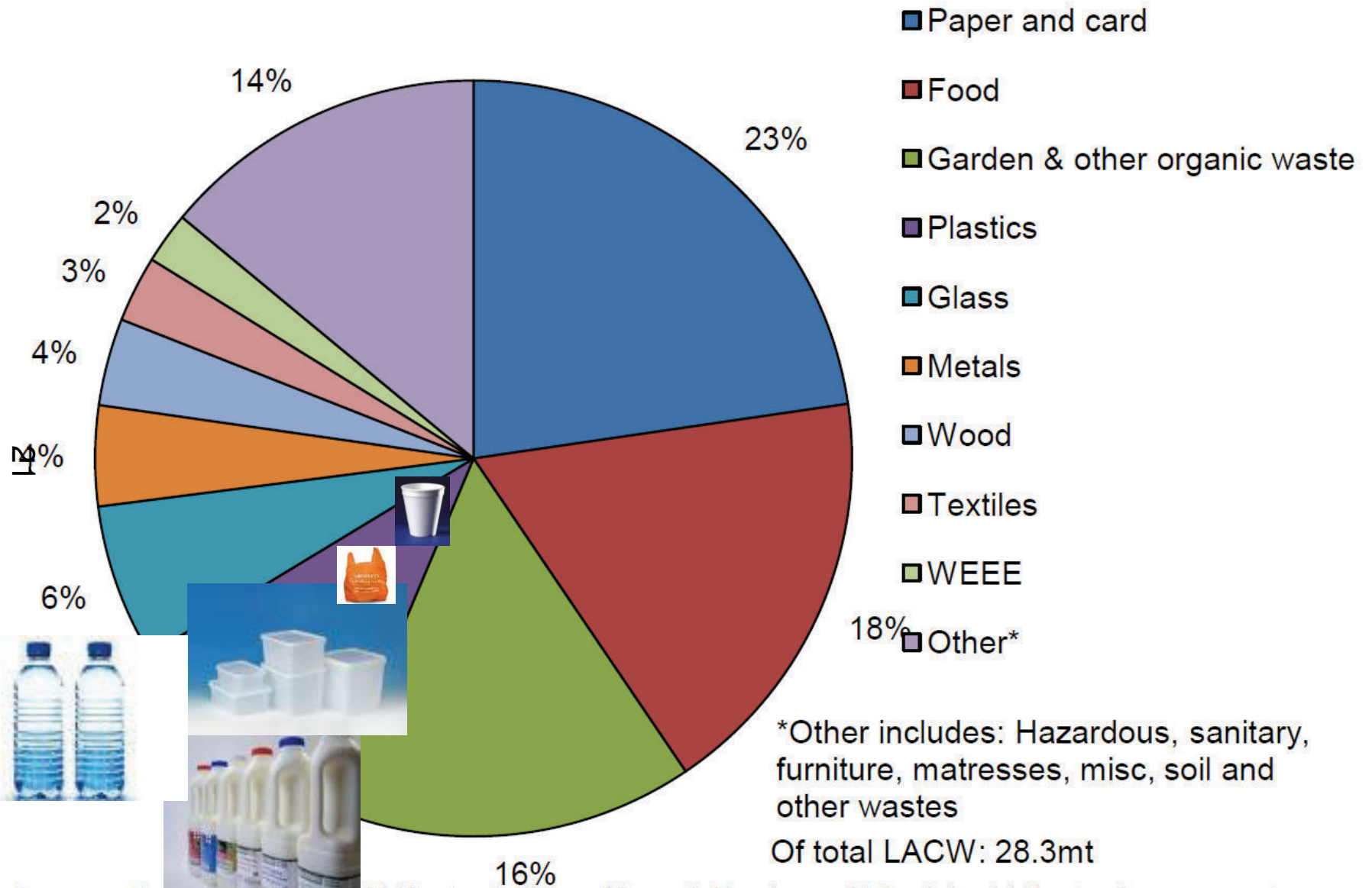


Polystyrene

Yoghurt pots, foam hamburger boxes and  
egg cartons, plastic cutlery, protective  
packaging for electronic goods and toys.  
Insulating material in the building and  
construction industry.

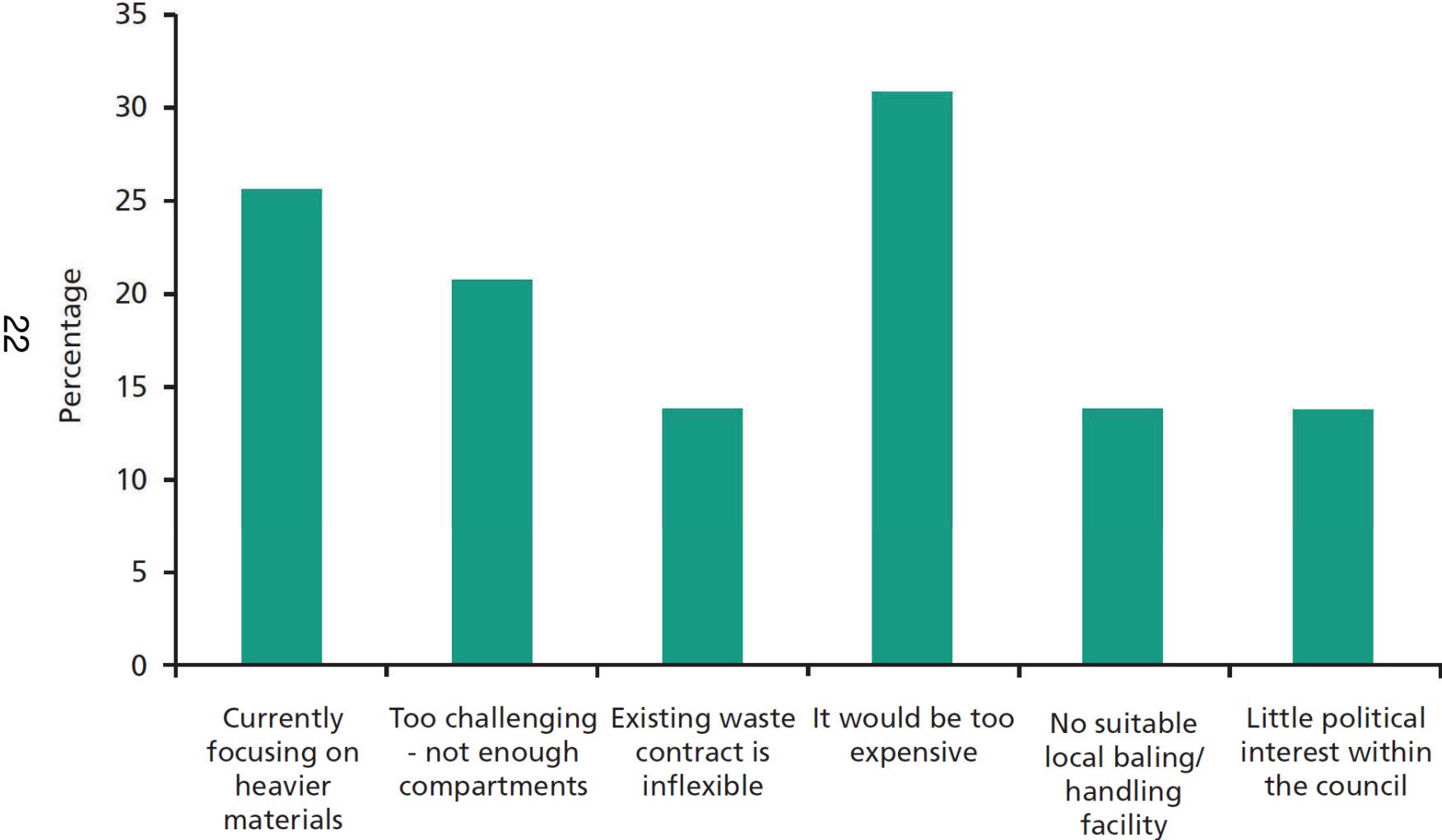


Figure 10 LACW composition, England 2006/07



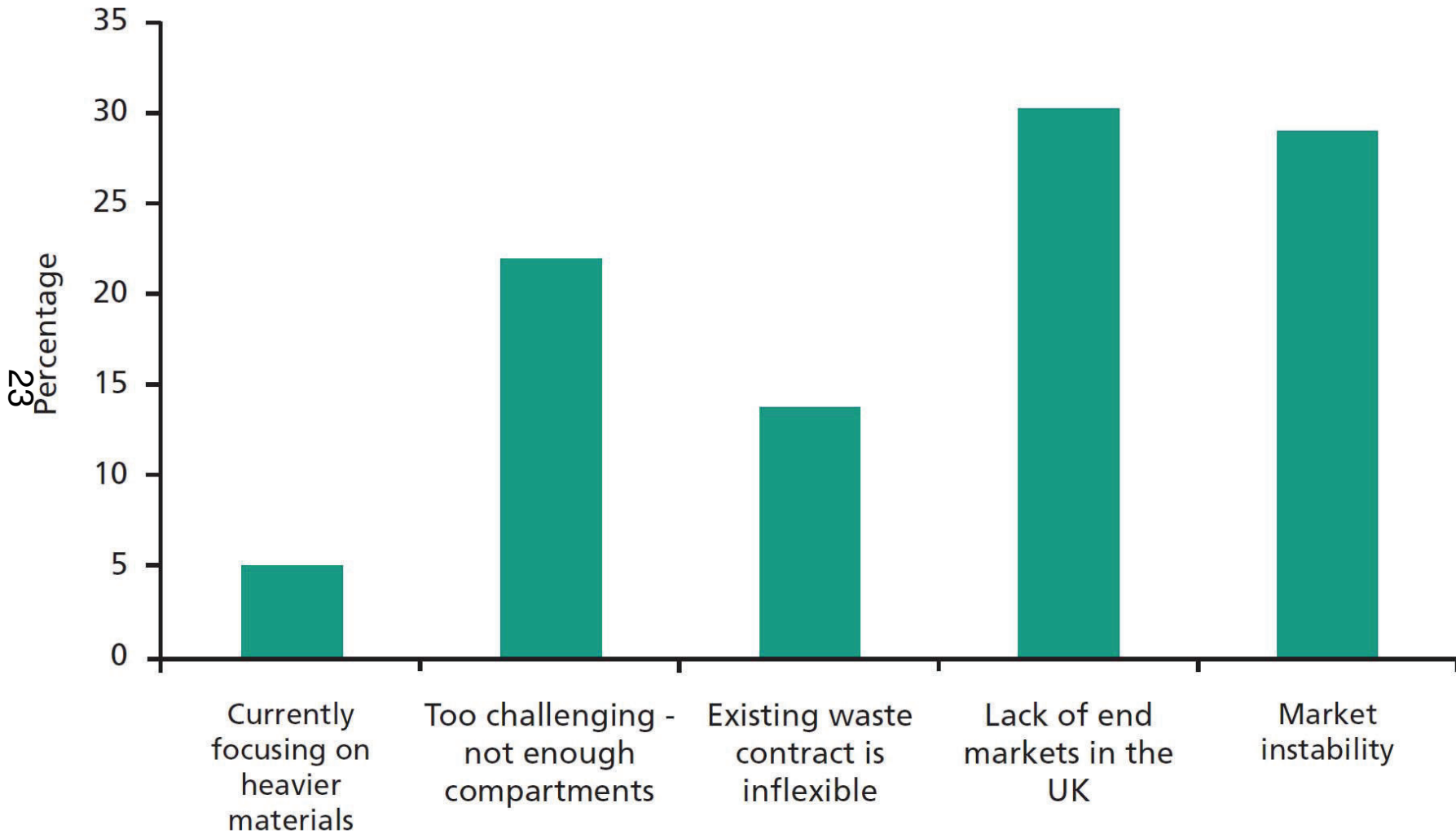
Source: Defra - Municipal Waste Composition: A Review of Municipal Waste Component Analyses 2009

Figure 23 – Factors preventing local authorities from collecting plastic bottles via kerbside



Source: Recoup, UK Household Plastics Packaging Collection Survey 2010, Nov 2009

Figure 28 – Factors preventing local authorities from collecting non-bottle household plastics



Source: Recoup, UK Household Plastics Packaging Collection Survey 2010, Nov 2009

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