



RECYCLING

Waste minimisation and recycling are increasing priorities for the woodland and forestry sector.

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Recycling (ReC)

As a manufacturing region with many processes involving timber products (sawmills, furniture manufacturers, etc), there should be a focus on waste reduction, waste re-use and efficient use of wood co-products.

The EU Waste Directive is driving pulp mills, for example, towards using up to 100% recycled material. The Regional Spatial Strategy has developed regional targets for the reduction of waste and has reduced the proportion of waste disposed of into landfill. The Framework process showed that recycling is poorly understood and a low priority for the stakeholders involved so far, though waste targets are a powerful driver. Re-use and waste minimisation are, however, rapidly increasing as a priority for the sector.

Aims:

- To see all stakeholders in the woodland and forestry sector minimise waste and re-cycle as a matter of course.
- To develop closer working between energy and recycling.
- To set goals and advance wood-recycling action.

ACTION

Delivering the vision

Objectives	Actions
ReC 1 To gather and share information	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Form an expert working group to investigate and promote wood recycling and wood energy and associated expertise in the region as part of the Woodland and Forestry Forum programme.
ReC 2 To develop opportunities to promote waste minimisation and recycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Develop the recycling advocacy role of woodland initiatives.● Encourage the Forest Education Initiative and Forest Schools to include a recycling theme in their work programmes.● Link with the construction sector to re-use timber, especially in building restoration programmes.● Encourage businesses to link into the Waste Resources Action Programme (WRAP).
ReC 3 To develop recycling activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Devise an action plan for timber recycling connected to wood energy, including goals and targets, and find investment to deliver this action plan.● Define the timber-related issues for the Regional Waste Strategy.● Encourage public bodies to be specific about timber-related issues in their recycling targets.

CASE STUDY

Recycling green waste

The introduction of Landfill Tax charges in October 1996, linked with the Government's commitment to reduce waste, has helped to create a powerful business case for green-waste recycling.



The machinery is shredded and left in windrows to compost – £1 million worth of capital investment in specialist machinery and hardstanding.
Image: National Urban Forestry Unit.

Midland Composting and Recycling (MCR), set up by Walsall MBC and landscape contractors Jack Moody Ltd, takes prunings, leaf sweepings, grass cuttings and other waste materials from a range of sources across the West Midlands and converts them into commercial composts.

The composting and recycling facility has been established at Hollybush Garden Centre, near Walsall. The development includes a perimeter mound to screen the site, a 3.5-hectare concrete apron for composting and storage and a large shed for keeping machinery and products.

The facility has a throughput of 60,000 tonnes of green waste per year. MCR currently has contracts to take all such material from Walsall, Dudley, Wolverhampton, South Staffordshire, Stafford, Lichfield and Birmingham Councils. MCR operates a kerbside collection scheme for almost one million homes in Walsall, Dudley and Sandwell and also processes paper waste, manure from Dudley Zoo and green waste from landscape contractors and tree surgeons across the West Midlands.

The main compost products are British Standards certified and are sold to farmers, landscapers, local authorities and garden centres. They include horticultural compost (particle size under 10mm) and soil improver (under 25mm). The initiative has created jobs for 20 people (15 operatives, 4 in sales and marketing and an overall manager).



The commercial end product.
Image: National Urban Forestry Unit