

Bulky Waste Guidance: What is reusable

How much of the waste stream is reusable and recyclable?

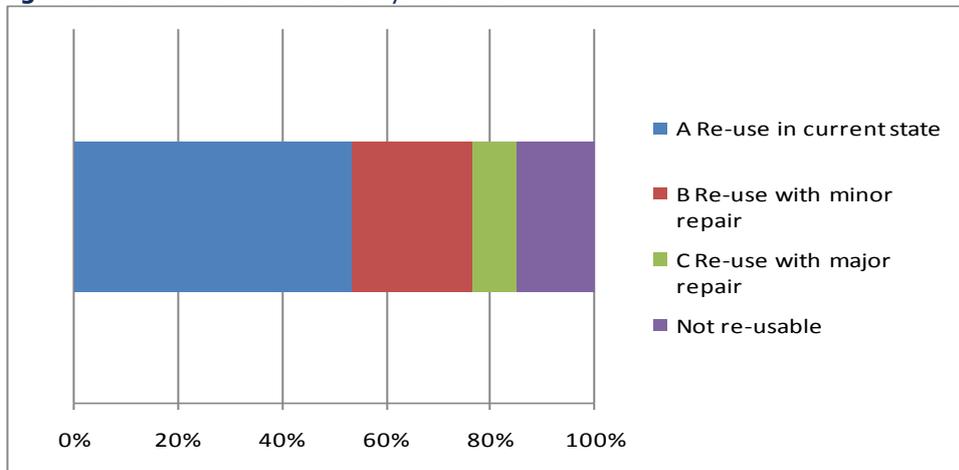
The following tables provide examples of the potential for reuse and recycling of the bulky waste stream both from collections and items delivered to HWRCs.

Most items have potential to be either reused or recycled, and the level of reuse will depend on how much repair and refurbishment is seen as practical. The proportions presented are extrapolated from findings of observational studies undertaken by Resource Futures in York and North Yorkshire, and are used here to reflect the character of the waste stream.

Household Waste Recycling Centres

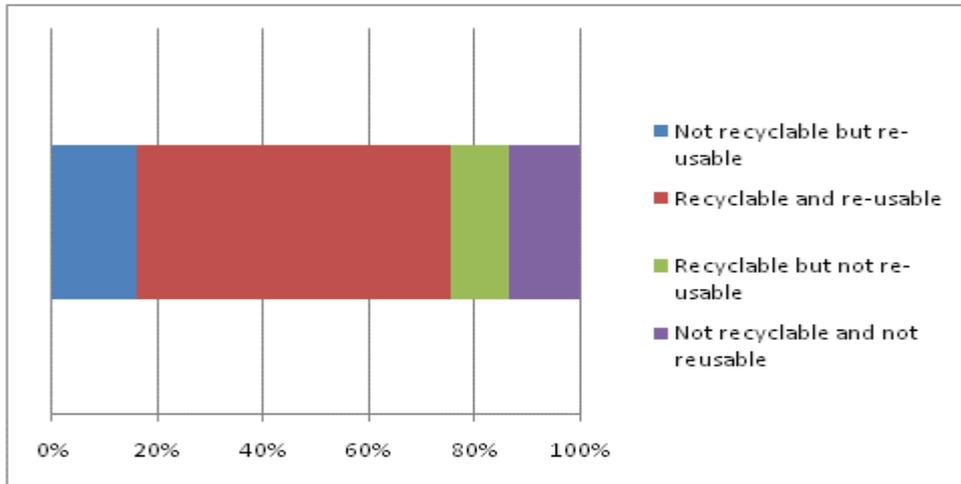
Figure 1 below illustrates the reuse potential for items brought to an HWRC. Figure 2 shows the combined potential for reuse and recycling, and distinguishes between the options available between reuse and recycling. This shows that over 80% is estimated as reusable given the right conditions on site, e.g. protecting and storing items to prevent damage, and provision of repair facilities.

Figure 1 Potential reuse and of bulky waste at HWRCs



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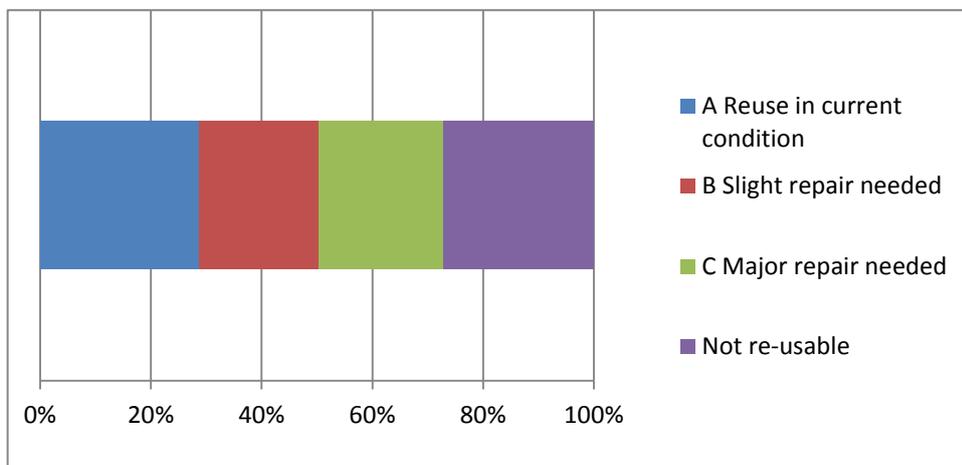
Figure 2 Combined reuse and recycling potential of bulky waste at HWRCs



Bulky waste collections

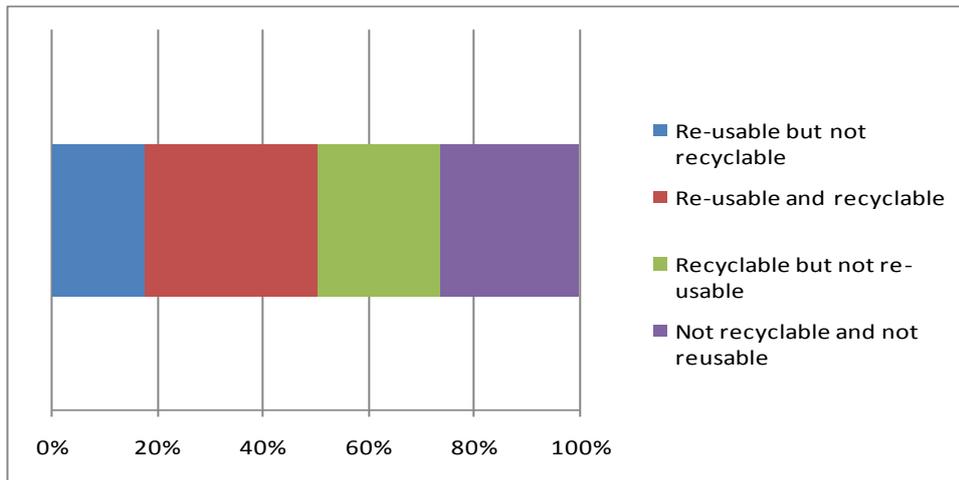
The realistic potential for reuse is in the order of 50% (see Figure 3), and again this is dependent on having the right infrastructure to carry out repairs and systems to collect and keep items in good condition. This estimate assumes markets for viable items. (Current good practice in the UK demonstrates reuse levels of around 40% achieved by Bulky Matters in Lancaster. The gap is largely attributable to the current lower reuse rates of large electrical items against the potential.) Figure 3 below, illustrates the reuse potential of items collected. It shows the levels of repair required to make an item suitable for reuse. Figure 4 shows the combined potential for reuse and recycling and distinguishes between the options available between reuse and recycling.

Figure 3 Potential reuse of bulky waste from collections



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Figure 4 Combined reuse and recycling potential of bulky waste



The following Table 1 provides a profile of the different items observed.

Table 1 Profile of waste streams observed

	Hard furniture	Soft and other furniture	General	Large WEEE	Other WEEE	Total
HWRC	31%	5%	29%	13%	22%	100%
BW Collections	12%	45%	5%	33%	5%	100%

Estimating Potential

To estimate the potential level of reuse, items need to be examined. A decision is then taken as to whether they can be used immediately in current condition, they are in need of minor repairs, or they require major repairs before being made fit for reuse. That potential will depend on the capacity to make the necessary repairs and the market for the finished item. If it is not possible to examine the items but you have bulky waste tonnage information, the data in this section can be used to estimate the potential amount of reuse.

Where bulky waste-specific tonnage data is not available, an estimation could be made using local composition information. If this is not available, in general terms between 10-20% of HWRC waste arisings are bulky waste including WEEE, and just under 2% of collected kerbside waste is bulky waste.

Table 2 demonstrates the potential diversion, with a scenario for an HWRC with a total annual throughput of 7,000 tonnes, of which 20%, (1,400 tonnes) is bulky waste. By adding together the three diversion categories, we can calculate the total potential diversion:

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Not recyclable but reusable (such as soft furniture) + **Recyclable and reusable** (such as wooden furniture and white goods) + **Recyclable but not reusable** (not whole or broken) = **Potential diversion**

The calculation shows that, in this instance, there would be the potential to divert 1,214 tonnes through a combination of reuse and recycling:

223 tonnes reuse + 836 tonnes reuse or recycle+ 155 tonnes recycle= 1,214 tonnes diversion

Table 2 Scenario - HWRC with total throughput of 7,000 tonnes/annum

Bulky waste 20% of total throughput		1,400 tonnes
Not recyclable but re-usable	16%	223
Recyclable and reusable	60%	836
Recyclable but not reusable	11%	155
Not recyclable and not reusable	13%	186
	100%	1,400

Table 3 demonstrates the potential diversion with a scenario for a bulky waste collection service with a total annual total of 750 tonnes. By adding together the three diversion categories, we can calculate the total potential diversion:

Not recyclable but reusable (such as soft furniture) + **Recyclable and reusable** (such as wooden furniture and white goods) + **Recyclable but not reusable** (not whole or broken) = **Potential diversion**

There would therefore be the potential to divert 553 tonnes through a combination of reuse and recycling:

132 tonnes reuse + 245 tonnes reuse or recycle + 176 tonnes recycle= 553 tonnes diversion

Table 3 Scenario – Bulky waste collection of 750 tonnes/annum

Total bulky waste collected		750 tonnes
Reusable but not recyclable	18%	132
Reusable and recyclable	33%	245
Recyclable but not re-usable	23%	176
Not recyclable and not reusable	26%	197
	100%	750

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Summary

Key points from this section:

- An estimation of the potential reuse and recycling tonnages can be made, based, ideally, on local composition and tonnage data. However, if this is not available, less accurate estimations can be made by applying broad assumptions. For more information about monitoring, see section on Data management, which can be accessed through the main Bulky Waste Guidance page.
- Whilst the potential is an estimation, actual reuse and recycling will depend on a number of factors; for example, the markets for the materials, the way the items are presented and stored, and the level of repair required etc.

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