

Waste Management – Event Organiser

An important part of measuring the impact on global warming (carbon footprint) caused by your event is to find out how much waste is being produced and how it is being handled and treated. This gives you peace of mind that your waste is being handled legally but can also help you to consider areas where financial savings can be made; after all, it costs you money to dispose of your waste. This briefing sheet will help you to know which questions to ask your waste management contractor so that you can get the right information about what has happened to your waste.

As with our other Briefing Sheets, this sheet is designed to give you the right information which you'll need to enter into the [Julie's Bicycle Creative IG Tool](#). We also recommend that you read this in conjunction with the suite of [Green Event Guides](#).

What to measure and why

The obvious thing for many event organisers to measure is the amount of material that was recycled compared to the amount that wasn't. Other things like **waste reduction** are also really important as they can save you money right from the outset, but waste reduction is quite hard to measure because it's not there to weigh or count! This Briefing Sheet does not cover waste reduction.

So whilst it's important to measure recycling rates, there are a few other things you can measure too. The chart on the right is called the Waste Hierarchy and this tells us the order in which we should **treat** waste so that we can achieve the best environmental outcome. **Disposal** (landfill or incineration) is at the bottom and is the least desirable, and **Waste Minimisation and Prevention** (not creating waste) is the most desirable and therefore at the top. When you report what you've done with the waste from your event you need to use the five terms.

There are lots of different types of **treatment plant** which your waste contractor may use to take the rubbish from your event. The key thing to understand is which type of **treatment plant** belongs with each part of the waste hierarchy. **Waste Minimisation and Prevention** and **Preparing for Re-use** are fairly easy to understand. Either you're not creating waste (**Prevention**), using less (**Minimisation**) or re-using something (**Preparing for Re-use**).

Waste contractors might use lots of confusing terminology to describe what's happened to your waste (which treatment plant it's gone to); they can also get things wrong when describing which part of the waste hierarchy they relate to. Figure 2 below explains where each treatment falls in terms of the waste hierarchy.

Figure 1: The Waste Hierarchy

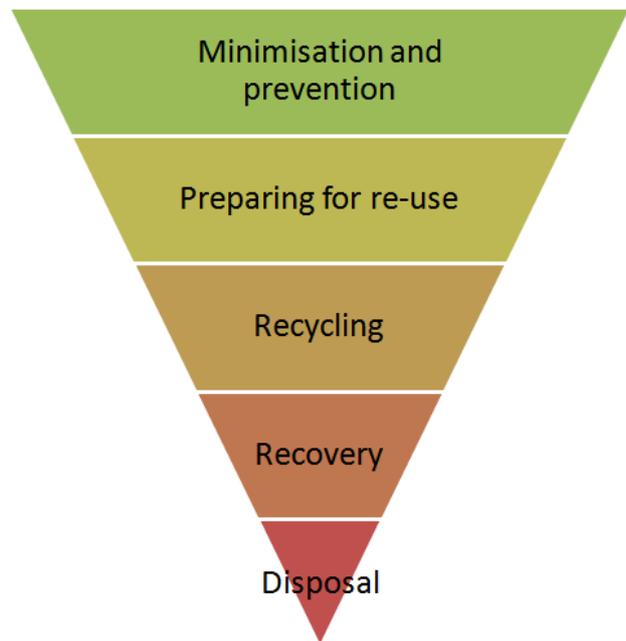
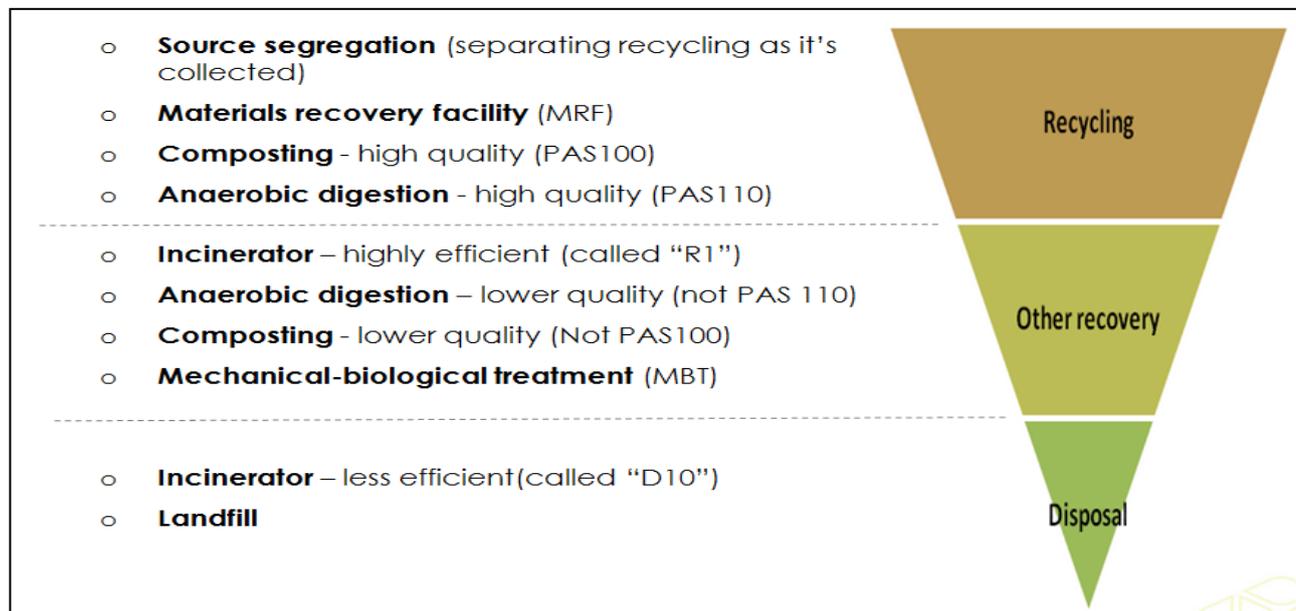


Figure 2: Types of waste management plant and which part of the waste hierarchy they belong in.



PAS 100 is the composting standard which differentiates between compost which is considered ‘recycling’ and that which is considered ‘recovery’ in the waste hierarchy.

PAS 110 is the standard for anaerobic digestion which determines whether the process is considered recovery or recycling in terms of the waste hierarchy.

R1 is the term used to describe the group of incinerators which are most efficient at recovering heat and electricity and which are thus considered ‘recovery’ operations in terms of the waste hierarchy.

D10 is the term used to describe the incinerators which are less efficient than R1 incinerators and are hence described as ‘disposal’ operations in terms of the waste hierarchy.

How to measure

You’ll need to get the information about how much is recycled and where it’s being taken, from your waste management contractor. Many waste companies are very helpful these days but unfortunately some of them aren’t so good with the follow up information. For event organisers this can be a real headache when trying to find out what happened to their waste. Keep this in mind:

- You’re paying the bill. You have the right to be provided with accurate information on what happened to your waste.
- Your waste management contractor is required by law to keep records of what happened to your waste; demand they share it.
- Waste contractors often charge by the tonne for removing material. Therefore you have the right to know what happened to it.

It will help if you can let your waste contractor know that you want the information in advance. If you make providing the information part of their contract then they can’t complain afterwards. Then you can withhold payment if they don’t provide the info you’ve asked for.

We’ve produced a letter which you can send to your contractor in advance of the event (www.kambe-events.co.uk/resources). We’ve also made a spreadsheet for them to fill in which they can use to report information (www.kambe-events.co.uk/resources). The spreadsheet looks complicated but, don’t worry because it’s the contractor who will have to complete the form and everything in it should make sense to them.

Next steps

Once you’ve persuaded your contractor to fill in the spreadsheet, you should have all your recycling figures neatly presented in a pie chart (which is generated automatically in the spreadsheet). You can enter these into the Julie’s Bicycle Creative IG Tool and this will help you to measure the carbon footprint of your event.