

Environmental Information Regulations – Response - 27077

I am writing to make a request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 regarding the disposal of used aluminium collected through kerbside recycling services in your area. As part of a wider investigation into the UK aluminium recycling chain, I recently submitted Freedom of Information requests to all district and borough councils within your county. Those councils have directed me to you as their Waste Disposal Authority, stating that they do not hold all the information I have requested because the sorting, processing and onward sale of recyclable materials is your responsibility, not theirs. As the statutory Waste Disposal Authority responsible for the processing and recycling of materials collected at the kerbside by these councils, I am seeking the following information.

1. What happens to the aluminium collected at the kerbside by the waste collection authorities in your area after it is conveyed to you.

a. Which Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) or facilities sort the aluminium from the recyclable waste stream?

Kerbside collected recyclables are processed at Masons MRF, Great Blakenham, Suffolk.

b. Who operates this MRF? Is it operated by yourselves, a contractor, or a third party? Please name the operator.

Biffa.

c. Once sorted, to which company or organisation is the aluminium sold or transferred for recycling or reprocessing? Please name the company or organisation.

Biffa have a materials marketing team who will source the best place to send aluminium for recycling. In 2024/25 all aluminium captured for recycling from Masons MRF was sent to Novelis UK Ltd.

2. Where is the aluminium recycled?

a. Do you have any contractual requirement or policy directive specifying that aluminium must be recycled in the UK?

No

b. Is your aluminium recycled in the UK, or is it exported for recycling abroad?

c. If exported, to which country or countries is it sent?

In 2024/25 all aluminium captured for recycling from Masons MRF was sent to Novelis UK Ltd.

3. What volume of aluminium is collected and what income does it generate?

a. How many metric tonnes of aluminium were collected at the kerbside across your area in the most recent financial year for which data is available? Please state the year.

1,600 tonnes in 2024/25.

b. How much income did you derive from the sale of this aluminium in that year?

The contract sees a 75% share of the overall income coming back to the councils, which was circa £1.6m in 24/25.

c. Does this income subsidise, or make a substantial contribution to, the cost of your waste collection programme and is any of the income redistributed to your collecting councils?

Indirectly, yes, this income supports the delivery of waste services for both the collecting councils and Suffolk County Council as the disposal authority.

4. What contractual arrangements are in place?

a. With whom do you have contracts for the sale or transfer of sorted aluminium?

Biffa (previously Viridor Waste Management) contract ref CD0842/2 [Contracts and orders over £5,000 - Suffolk County Council](#)

b. Do the contracts specify if the aluminium must or priority given to recycling in the UK?

No

c. Do the contracts require reporting on the final recycling destination of the aluminium?

Suffolk County Council receives quarterly information from Biffa detailing the destination of all the recyclables which is then reported on the government database: Waste Data Flow. Members of the public can access Waste Data Flow for free and see end destinations in Question 100. <https://www.wastedataflow.org/>