

Liverpool Living Lab Project Brief

Project Name	Waste in Liverpool City
Project theme(s)	Waste Disposal, circular economy
Associated sustainability target	zero avoidable waste across the Liverpool City Region (LCR) by 2040.

Project overview (challenge, inputs, desired outputs)

Context

Liverpool City Region has a waste target, aligned with its net zero target, of zero avoidable waste across the Liverpool City Region by 2040. [MRWA-ZeroWasteFramework-2022-ZW-Print-V1-A4.indd](#). From March 31st 2026, councils will legally be required to collect household food waste from every household to be sent for composting or anaerobic digestion.

Challenge

Liverpool's recycling rate is 18%, the second worst in the country compared to the national average of 42% recycling rate. Waste issues, such as fly tipping, are also faced in areas with high student population, particularly during the student change over period at the end of the academic year.

The University has direct influence on waste management practices on campus, through the provision of infrastructure, services, guidance and education, however, once students relocate from halls to private accommodation, our influence is limited.

It would be beneficial to gain a better understanding of students' waste management practices in private accommodation and beyond the boundaries of university property. The current data available will be regional, therefore we don't know what can be attributed to students compared to wider residents. Focused interviews and surveys may therefore help to paint a clearer picture of students' experiences around waste, which might include -

- Students' current waste management practices in private accommodation (e.g. preparation (breaking down boxes, rinsing jars etc), segregation internally, sorting into external bins etc), whether they tend to litter.
- Students' knowledge and understanding around local waste infrastructure, processes and requirements (e.g. what can go in each bin, bin collection dates, what to do with bulky waste, what to do with specialist waste, such as batteries, electrical appliances etc), opportunities for resale, reuse and donations
- The challenges students face in following local waste guidelines and any supporting factors that would help them to improve.

Inputs

Merseyside Waste and Recycling Authority waste data
Leave Liverpool Tidy reports
DEFRA waste data

Outputs

In order to achieve the waste target, solutions and recommendations are required for managing waste across the city.

We ran a successful 'living lab' type of project previously with post-grad project management students, where they identified student-led and peer-to-peer activities to tackle litter and improve recycling practices amongst students living in private accommodation across LCR. This could be an extension of this, with an analysis of the impact that each of these initiatives have (either through waste data or surveys with students).