

## Landfill Trends Dashboard Update

23<sup>rd</sup> July 2025

The [Landfill Trends Dashboard](#), accessible via the Footprint Services interactive reports menu, has been refreshed with the most recent data (2023), revealing a number of notable patterns in the management of waste via landfill in England.

### Waste Received In Landfill

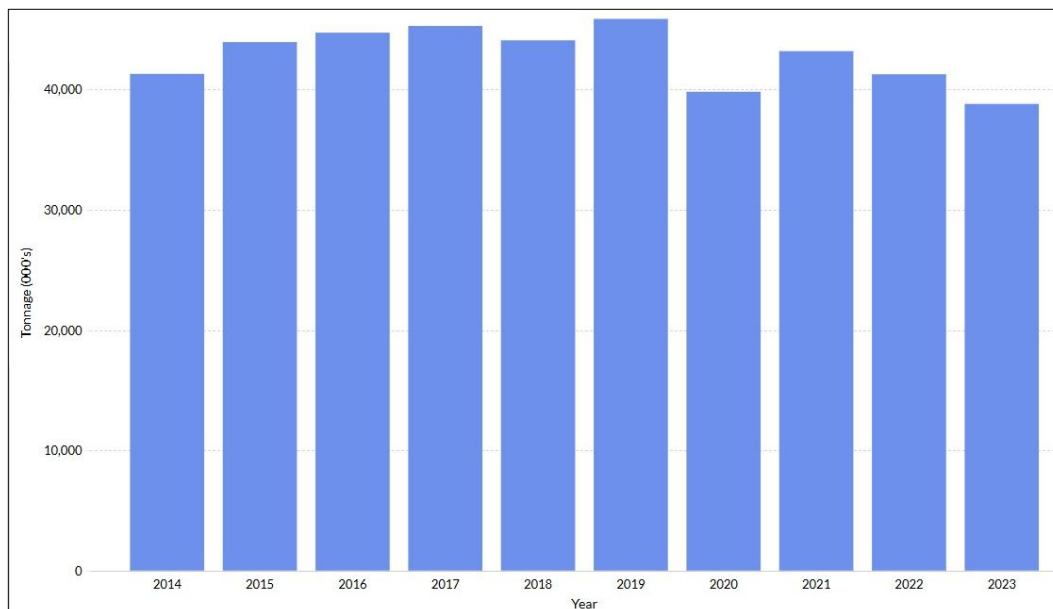


Fig. 1: Tonnage (000s) of waste received at landfill sites in England 2014-2023

Since 2019, the volume of waste entering landfill sites across England has shown a steady downward trend (see Fig. 1). This includes all landfill categories, namely inert, non-inert and hazardous wastes. While the sharp dip in 2020 can be attributed to the societal and industrial disruptions of the COVID-19 pandemic, the overall decline since the 2019 peak reflects a gradual shift in waste management practices.

Although this reduction points in the right direction – reducing landfill dependency – it also underscores a persistent challenge: England still sends a substantial amount of waste to landfill.

### Landfill Site Classification

Landfill facilities cater to different waste streams and are broadly categorised as follows:

- **Inert** – for non-organic, mineral-based materials (e.g. soil, rubble, concrete).
- **Non-inert** – for household, municipal and industrial process waste.
- **Hazardous** – for solid waste with dangerous properties (e.g. toxic, corrosive or reactive substances).

Even non-inert landfill operations make extensive use of inert materials. Soil and rubble, for example, are essential for daily cover and environmental management, as well as for capping completed cells prior to restoration.

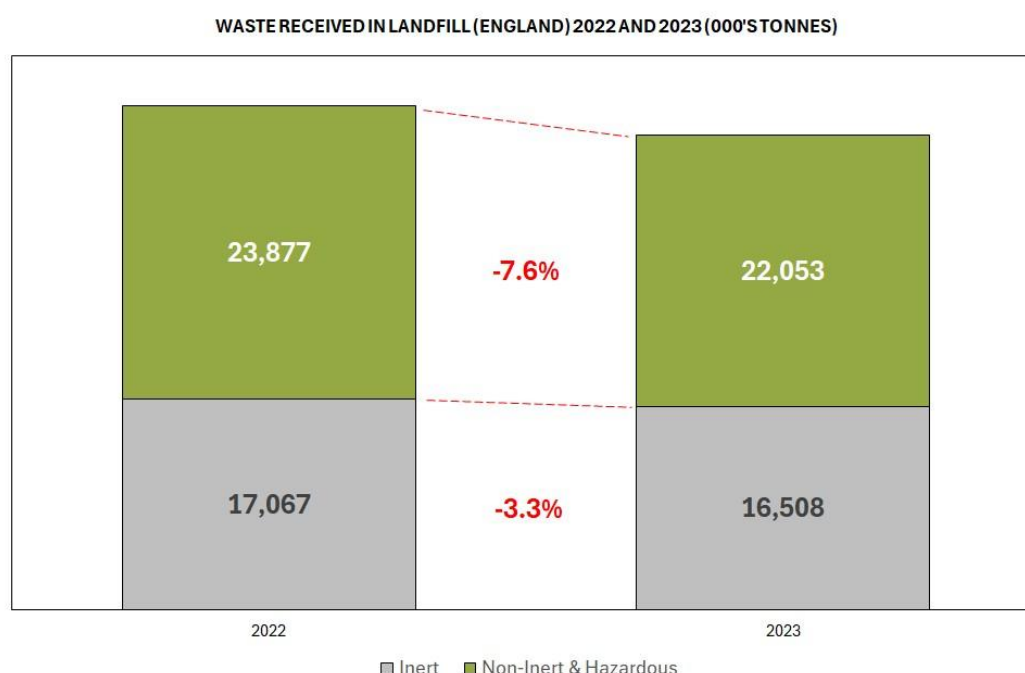


Fig. 2: Comparison of tonnage 2022 vs 2023 for inert and non-inert landfill sites.

Recent data (Fig. 2) shows a more rapid decline in waste volumes received at non-inert sites compared to inert ones. This is likely driven by a combination of escalating landfill tax rates – particularly for non-inert and hazardous waste – and the growing availability of alternative treatments, such as energy from waste (EfW) and enhanced recycling processes. The 20% increase in landfill tax introduced in 2025 is expected to further accelerate this trend.

## Regional Disparities in Landfill Volumes

While the national trend shows a decline, closer analysis reveals regional disparities. In several counties or sub-regions, landfill volumes actually rose between 2022 and 2023 (see Table 1). These increases are likely linked to local population growth and major infrastructure projects, which generate large volumes of waste – especially inert material from excavation and construction.

Sub-Region	2022	2023	% +/-
Essex	2,411,055	2,818,179	16.9%
Buckinghamshire	2,886,313	2,766,274	-4.2%
Cambridgeshire	2,316,479	2,688,324	16.1%
Staffordshire	1,991,398	1,931,129	-3.0%
Oxfordshire	1,924,404	1,626,248	-15.5%
Kent	1,403,853	1,553,784	10.7%
Surrey	1,287,751	1,527,443	18.6%
West London Waste Authority	262,003	1,463,211	458.5%
Greater Manchester	1,331,256	1,374,007	3.2%

Table 1: Top 10 counties / subregions for received landfill tonnages in 2023

## Landfill Capacity Trends

Landfill is inherently a finite solution. As waste fills the void space in existing landfill cells, overall capacity diminishes. Since 2014, England's available landfill capacity has fallen by 33% (see Fig. 3).

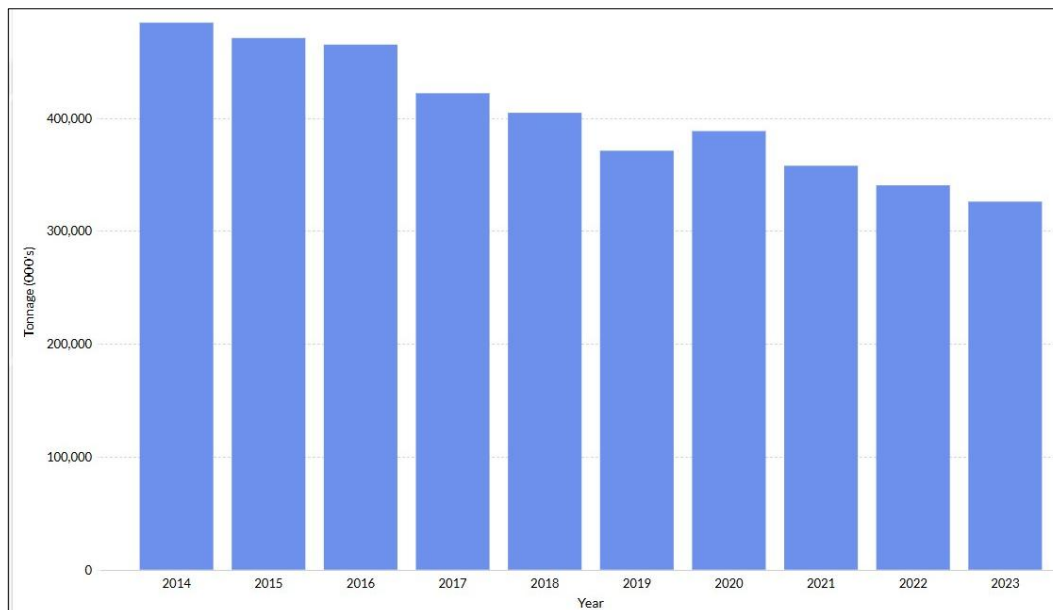


Fig. 3: Available recorded capacity at landfill sites in England 2014-2023

It is technically possible to develop new landfill cells, and in some areas this has occurred (e.g. Leicestershire, Bedfordshire, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire – see Fig. 4). These expansions may be necessary where viable alternatives are lacking or where waste volumes are simply too high for current infrastructure. However, as landfill use becomes increasingly discouraged by economic and environmental factors, operators may find future cell development financially unsustainable.

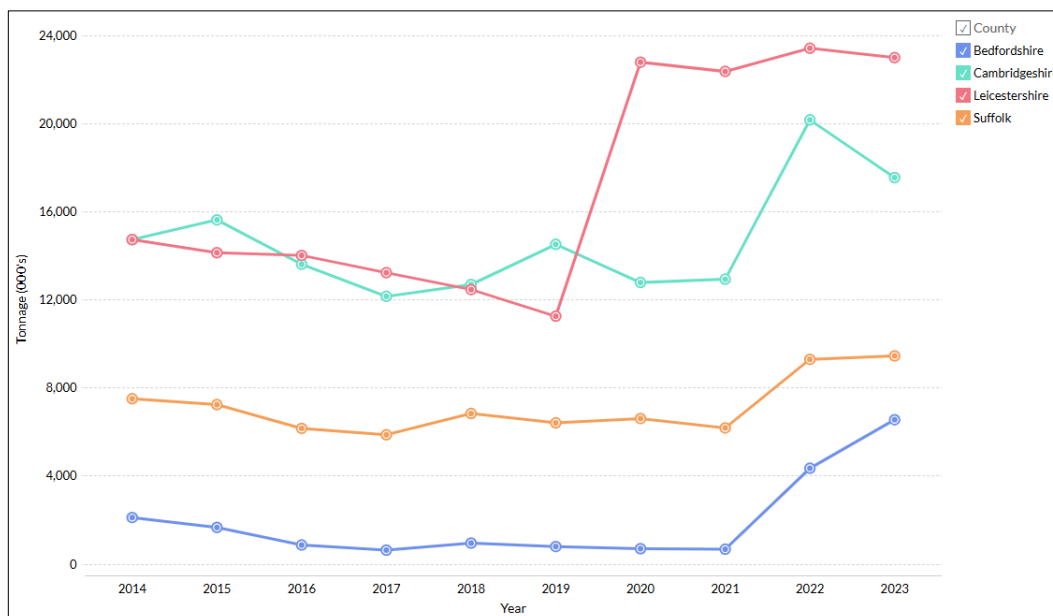


Fig. 4: Recorded landfill capacity trend in Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Leicestershire and Suffolk

Notably, the biggest capacity reductions are seen in non-inert and hazardous sites (see Fig. 5), reinforcing the impact of policy and economic measures aimed at diverting these waste streams elsewhere.

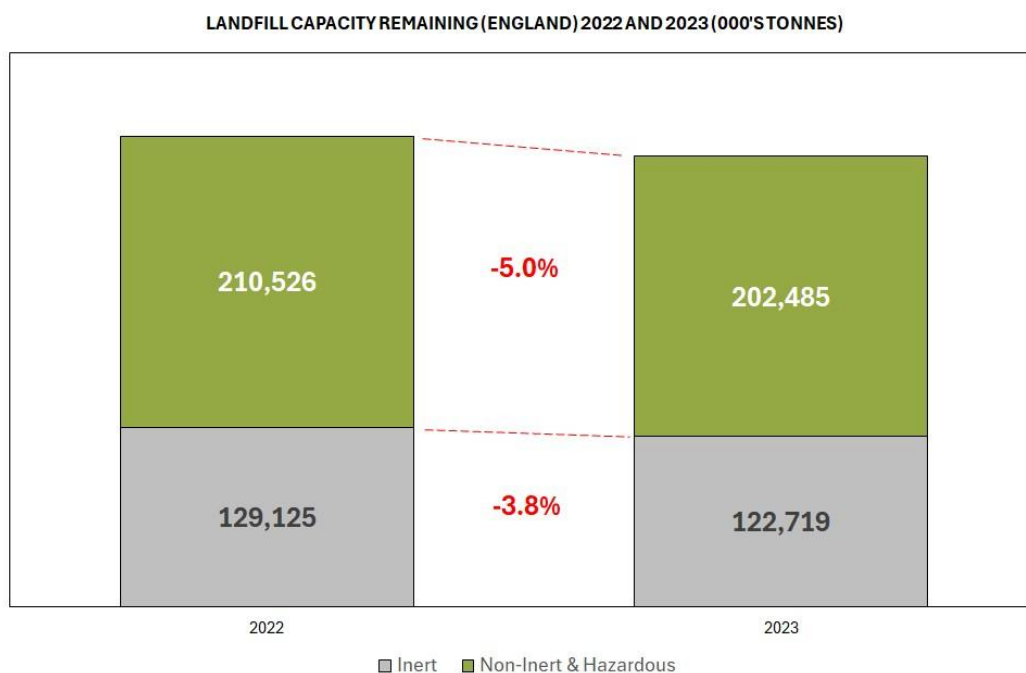


Fig. 5: Comparison of recorded capacity 2022 vs 2023 for inert and non-inert landfill sites.

### The South East's Landfill Dependency

Analysis of waste origin data reveals that a significant proportion of landfilled waste originates from London, the South East and the East of England. This does not necessarily mean the receiving sites are in those regions – waste is frequently transported elsewhere – but it does indicate a regional concentration of landfill dependency (see Fig. 6).

This is especially true for waste code 17 05 04 (soil and stones), which reflects the scale of construction and infrastructure activity in and around these high-growth areas, including national projects such as HS2.

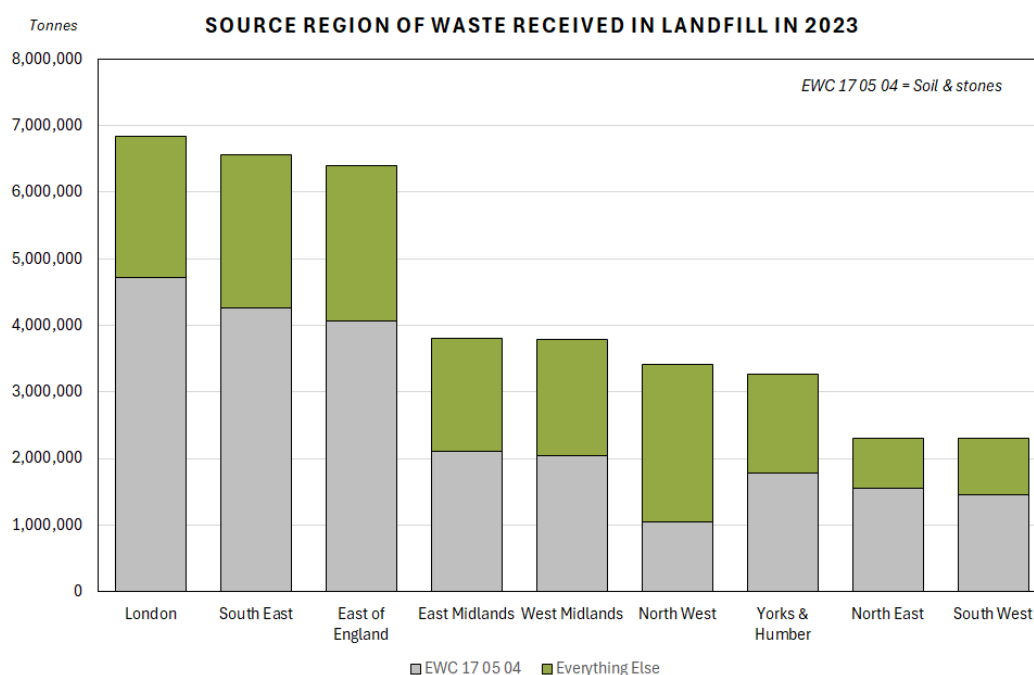


Fig. 6: Source region of waste received in landfills across England in 2023

## **Conclusion**

The latest data update from the Landfill Trends Dashboard paints a picture of gradual but meaningful progress toward reducing landfill reliance in England. The consistent year-on-year reduction in waste tonnages, especially in non-inert streams, signals that fiscal and policy measures are having the intended effect. However, the journey is far from complete.

Regional surges in landfill use, ongoing capacity pressures, and the continued dominance of waste from infrastructure-heavy regions remind us that transitioning to a circular economy will require coordinated action, sustained investment and robust infrastructure alternatives across all regions.

With landfill capacity diminishing and costs rising, the future of waste management in England must lean heavily into prevention, reuse and recovery - transforming waste from an end-of-pipe problem into a valuable resource stream.