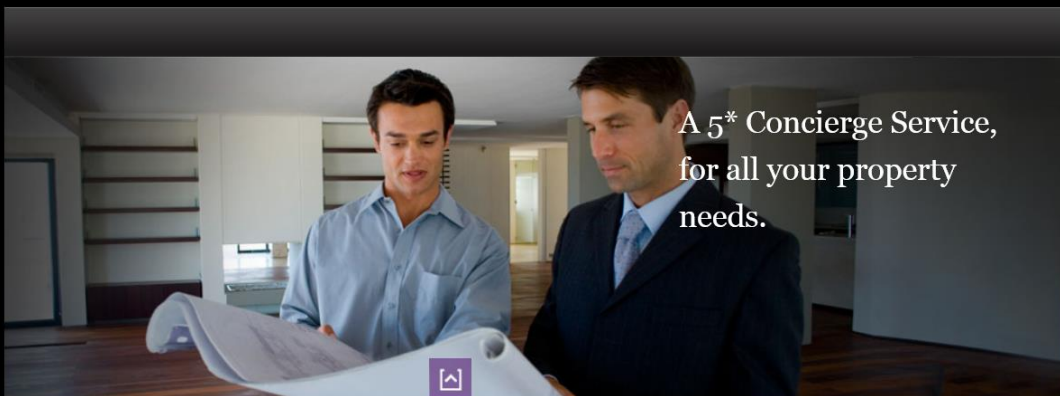


# Winsper

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### UK Recycling Finance Before Ethics



As At  
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Author  
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## UK Recycling – Finance Before Ethics?

*Can you guarantee that items sifted and sent for recycling, by the end user, are actually recycled? As householders and industry separate out these waste products, a detached organisation takes the materials onwards, for profit, or at least on a 'Cost Neutral' caveat, within the UK. But what if the cost of recycling, is to the detriment of the collection authority or sub-contracted PLC?*

### Overview.

Household recycling came to the fore in the UK c2005, with the introduction of various differentiating rubbish bins, collected on a rotational 2 weekly cycle. The material was then processed and sold onwards, mainly to Asia. However, due to the economic downturn in 2008, recycling in many UK local authorities became financially unviable and 3 out of 4 Local Authorities started to dump a percentage (Estimated at 200,000 Tonnes pa)<sup>1</sup> of their recycling waste into landfill sites.

### Case Examples<sup>1</sup>.

In 2008, of the 400 Local Councils surveyed, of the responding 2009, 75% admitted the practice of sending a percentage of recycling to landfill sites due to costs and the financial downturn.

The worst offenders were Medway and Portsmouth County Council, which admitted to sending over 11% of household sifted recycling, including bottle banks, to landfill sites. Additional to this, Pembrokeshire County Council confessed that 19% of Kerbside recycling would end up in landfills.

Some councils were countering the financial effect, by storing recycling until the market became more viable (Profitable?), such as Plymouth.

### Present Day.

As the economy in the UK stagnates, is 100% of household recycling arriving at the correct destination? With legislation in place, this should be the norm across the councils, however, evidence exists that this is not the case<sup>2</sup>.

On the 17<sup>th</sup> of this month (October 2012), Stroud News and Journal reported that Stroud District Council, via its private partner Veolia would take cardboard on non-recycle weeks and that it would go direct to landfill.

### Summary.

Whilst these two articles (Listed Below) only scratch the surface of recycling in this economic downturn, it does highlight that recycling whether tax payer led or via private partners, has to be financially viable. How much financially viable, above cost neutral, is at the discretion of the reader and if indeed it crosses sector boundaries from household into industrial / construction.

### [E Signed]

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## References / Links

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2. Stroud News And Journal – Recycling Article.

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