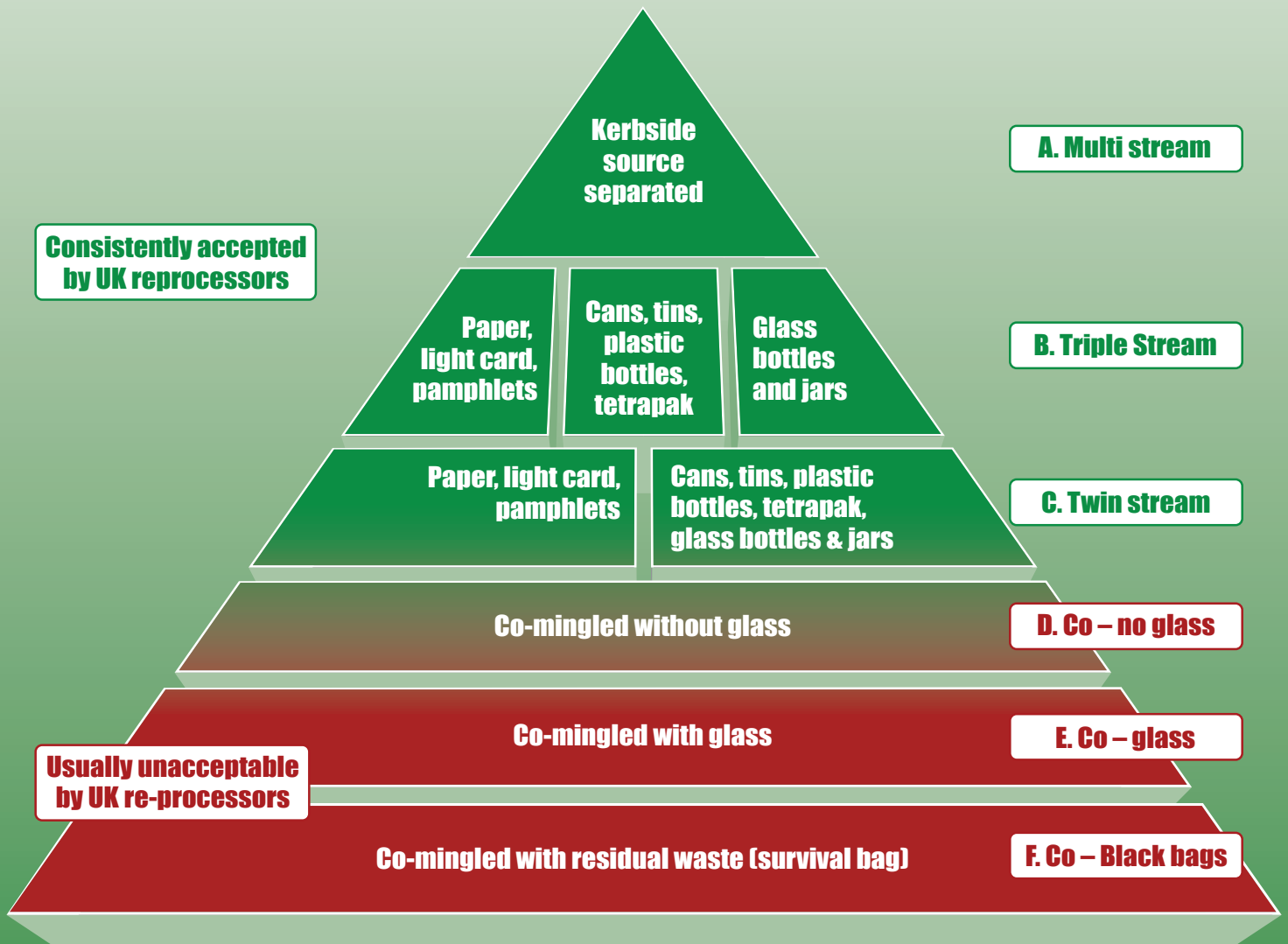




# CAMPAIGN FOR REAL RECYCLING

## Dry Recycling Collection Hierarchy



Consistently accepted  
by UK reprocessors

# RECYCLING COLLECTION SYSTEMS - THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY

Usually unacceptable  
by UK re-processors

## A. KERBSIDE SOURCE SEPARATED

Materials are put out by householders in one or more boxes which are then sorted at the kerbside by trained operatives. The most common combinations of materials in any one container are: Paper, glass, light card, pamphlets and textiles. Cans, tins, plastic bottles, other plastic containers are often placed in a second container. Items such as tetrapak, phones, batteries, electrical goods, oil and paint are also sometimes accommodated.

The kerbside sort approach uses manual labour to properly sort the materials into separate containers on the collection vehicle. Materials are not compacted.

There are many variations on this theme, (flexibility is a key advantage of this approach), and authorities practicing kerbside sort do not collect all of the materials noted above. The majority of waste collection authorities in England and Wales currently use a kerbside sort system.



## D. CO-MINGLED WITHOUT GLASS

Usually includes; paper, card, food and drinks cans and plastic bottles in one container and compacted in a standard refuse vehicle.

Cross contamination between materials and from unspecified items, and the degree of compaction, can result in serious quality issues for the re-processors. Some UK re-processors will accept loads from these sources but may offer a lower price as they have to re-sort the material before it enters their reprocessing plant. As much as 30% of aluminium cans (and some steel cans and plastic bottles) can be lost as contaminants in paper and other products, significantly reducing overall sales revenues.



## B. TRIPLE STREAM

**Container 1** Paper, light card, pamphlets

**Container 2** Food and drinks cans, plastic bottles, tetrapak

**Container 3** Glass bottles and jars (**NO COMPACTION**)

The separate collection of glass in a non-compacted state is a key feature of this approach. The non compaction of glass means that colour separation technology ensures the glass is suitable for re-melt. If glass is broken into too small pieces colour separation is not possible and it is usually only suitable for road aggregate. To options are a separate container on the collection vehicle and/or bring sites.

The other materials are loaded onto the collection vehicle in the above mixes and later sorted at a material recovery facility. As with the kerbside sort system there are variations and compaction is an issue with the mix of cans, tins, plastic bottles and tetrapak. Light compaction does not always cause separation problems but severe compaction may make separation of aluminium cans and plastic bottles for example, extremely difficult.



## E. CO-MINGLED WITH GLASS (AND OTHER MATERIALS)

**ALL MATERIALS IN ONE CONTAINER**

Consistent problems with most of the materials collected for re-processing. Key materials such as paper are usually considered only suitable for the export market, where re-sorting is frequently required. Materials collected in this way are vulnerable to price fluctuations, changes in export regulations and future tightening of quality specifications either by individual reprocessing industries or importing authorities in China or Indonesia. Alternatively, these materials find other low value uses such as glass to road aggregate. This results in markedly lower income being generated from the sale of materials. The inclusion of shards of glass in the materials mix also creates health and safety issues for staff working in MRFs.

Other materials that are increasingly collected that cause contamination problems include mixed plastics, textiles and tetrapak, compounding contamination problems.



## C. TWIN STREAM

**Container 1** Paper, light card, pamphlets

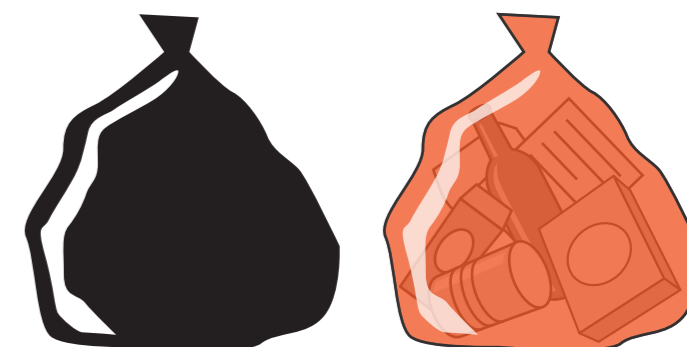
**Container 2** Food and drinks cans, plastic bottles, tetrapak glass bottles and jars (**NO COMPACTION**)

As above, these two combinations are loaded onto a collection vehicle for separation at a MRF. Lack of compaction is a key requirement with the container that includes glass.



## F. CO-MINGLED WITH BLACK BAG WASTE (SURVIVAL BAG)

Also known as the 'survival bag', the single container of recyclable material is collected at the same time and in the same vehicle as residual black bag waste. Recyclate material is compacted and frequently mixes with residual waste (such as kitchen waste). Materials collected in this manner are of little use to the reprocessing industry and their sorting creating significant health and safety issues for sorting staff.



## THE RECYCLING COLLECTION HIERARCHY

The recycle collection hierarchy focuses on the most commonly used collection systems currently practiced in the UK. The systems are based on collecting dry recyclables in a single pass by each dwelling.

There are many variations in both the broad collection systems outlined and the range of materials being collected. This hierarchy provides guidance on what the materials re-processing industries consider the best (and worst) collection systems currently being used. It is based on their experience of materials delivered to their factory gates.

The hierarchy specifically focuses on doorstep collection services. Bring sites have consistently provided very good quality materials but from a local authority perspective can only provide part of the recycling solution.

## TEXTILES – A SPECIAL CASE

The Campaign for Real Recycling strongly recommends the complete source separation of textiles at the kerbside. There are clear environmental and economic benefits from this approach that can be achieved by implementing such a scheme for this rapidly growing waste stream. The textile recovery industries consistently require the materials to be collected in totally separate containers (usually bags). The Textile Recycling Association can provide you with further information on how to implement a successful textiles kerbside collection scheme.

Textiles conversely cause contamination problems with paper and card re-processors as well as causing problems for most material recovery facility operations.

## KITCHEN WASTE – NOT A DRY RECYCLATE BUT A VITAL COMPONENT OF THE 'WASTE' SOLUTION.

Kitchen waste is not included in the pyramid diagram as it's collection in the same container as dry recyclables is not practiced. In tonnage terms, however, the campaign recognises that kitchen waste collection is a key component for local authorities to reach diversion targets.

The campaign recommends that kitchen waste is collected weekly in separate containers and separate from garden waste. There are several highly successful examples of dry recyclates and kitchen waste being collected weekly in the same vehicle (in different containers). The hierarchy can therefore be viewed as additional to the separate collection of food waste.

## CAMPAIGN FOR REAL RECYCLING SUPPORTERS INCLUDE:

- Ardagh Glass
- Berryman Glass
- Bryson Recycling
- Centriforce Products
- Chase Plastics
- Cleanstream Recycling
- Community Recycling Network UK
- Community Recycling Network Scotland
- Cylch - Wales Community Recycling Network
- ECT Recycling
- Friends of the Earth
- Greenfinch
- Newport Wastesavers
- Novelis
- Paperchain
- Recyclatex
- Straight plc
- Textile Recycling Association
- Tower Hamlets Community Recycling Consortium