

More jobs, less carbon: why we need landfill bans



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The UK puts at least £3.8 billion¹ of resources in landfill each year. Keeping these resources out of landfill would support skilled jobs and cut the UK's carbon emissions.

Remaking old products requires skilled labour for disassembly, fault finding and repair. High quality recycling is a sophisticated industrial process, requiring engineering and technical skills.

Selling the products created through reuse, remanufacturing and recycling generates profit, justifying the labour required to process them. In contrast, landfill just has a labour cost. Landfill is easy, but it makes no sense economically.

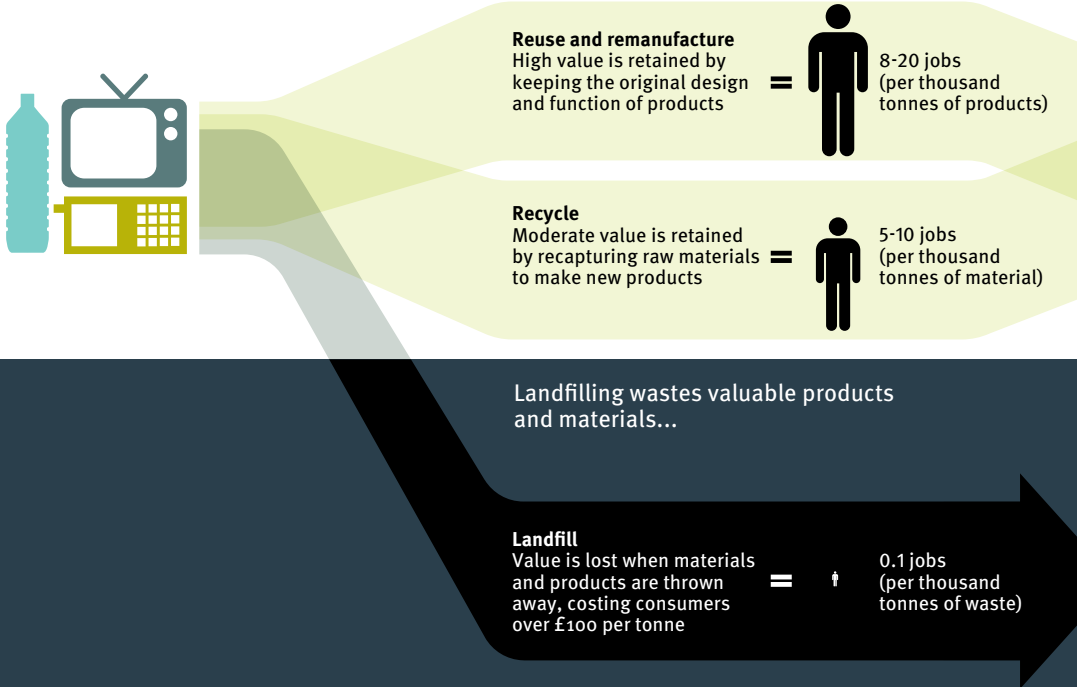
Three actions would secure more skilled jobs and value:

- Landfill bans – to prevent products and materials from being wasted
- Better collection systems – to keep the quality of materials up
- New infrastructure – to reprocess and remanufacture

Landfill bans help stimulate better collection systems and economies of scale, underpinning infrastructure investment. Scotland, Austria, Germany, Sweden, the Netherlands, and several US states have already introduced them. It is time the UK did too.

Avoiding landfill creates jobs and cuts carbon

Reuse, remanufacturing and recycling create new, valuable products.
Selling these generates profit which supports skilled jobs



How many UK jobs could be created by keeping five materials out of landfill²

Wood 3,200

Textiles 6,600

Electronics 9,500

Food 12,100

Plastics 16,100



...and creates carbon emissions

14.1 MtCO₂e³



=

emissions from

2.7m homes



Stopping these products going to landfill could mean:



and getting

10%

of the way to meeting the 4th Carbon Budget⁵

What kind of jobs are they?⁴



Anaerobic digestion

Plant manager. £40-60k
Skills: SCADA training, HNC engineering



Textile recycling

Driver. £22k
Skills: C1 driving licence



Panelboard manufacturing

CAD technician. £13-29k
Skills: Computer aided design, 3D modelling



Plastics manufacturing

Facilities engineer. £30-40k
Skills: Mechanical and electrical engineering, equipment design



Electronics remanufacturing

Electrical engineer. £20-40k
Skills: Electrical engineering, programming

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Notes and references

- ¹ Value of wood, food, textiles, and plastics, from Green Alliance, 2013, *Why we need landfill bans*, of £2.5 billion plus £1.3 billion in waste electronics from WRAP, 2012, Electrical product material composition.
- ² Based on calculations from a wide range of recycling, remanufacturing, and reuse jobs estimates. Full details are available from www.green-alliance.org.uk/morejobs_sources
- ³ Committee on Climate Change, 2013, *Meeting carbon budgets*.
- ⁴ Examples listed are from jobs websites listing vacancies in existing UK recyclers, remanufacturers, and reprocessors at the time of publication.
- ⁵ The 4th carbon budget covers a five year period, but landfill emissions are stated per year. To make this comparison, the emissions savings from ending landfilling were applied to each year of the five year budget period and compared to the reduction needed to move from the third budget period to the fourth budget period.

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