

# RESOURCE USE

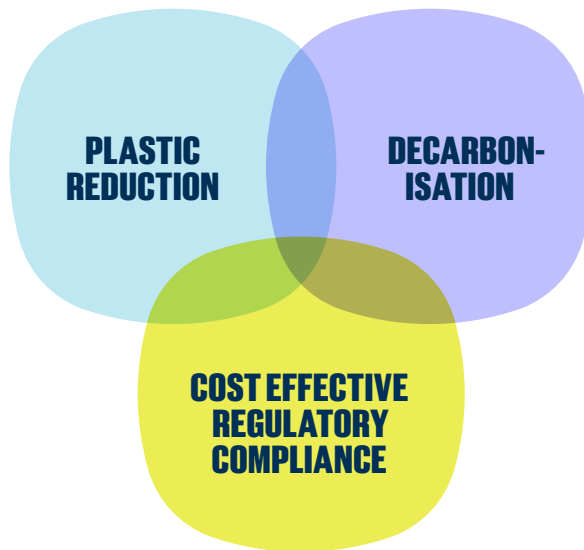
A  
SUSTAINABLE  
FUTURE

EQUAL  
ACCESS

## PLASTICS AND PACKAGING

Plastics and packaging are essential to keep food fresh and avoid waste. But we need to make sure our packaging:

- Is designed to be recyclable at the end of its life.
- Has a minimal impact on the environment.
- Complies with current and emerging regulations in a cost-effective way.
- Is attractive to customers, using innovation where appropriate.



In 2024, we've continued our focus on plastic reduction in line with our goal of a 30% reduction by the end of 2025. To date, we've reduced our plastic footprint by 21% compared to our 2018 baseline year.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> To date, we've reduced our plastic footprint by 6,642 tonnes compared to our 2018 baseline year.

As our Kantar market share decreased from 6.1% to 5.4% over the 6 years, this equates to a reduction of 20.8% relative to market share.

<sup>2</sup> Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances.

PROJECT	TONNES REDUCED
 Switching mushrooms to PET and flow wrap	81
 Switching breaded chicken to card	48
 Ready meal sleeve reduction	46
 Removing lids from houmous	46
 Switching soup to cartons	41
 Salmon tray redesign	40
 Rolling out paper banana bands to all lines	38
 Switching cordials to quad strength concentrate	36
 Reduced gauge steak trays	22
 Carrot bag weight reduction	13
 Trial of kitchen roll in a paper wrapper	10
 Unwrapped swedes	5

We've started a programme of supplier assessments to baseline our performance on responsible sourcing of packaging materials, starting with PFAS<sup>2</sup> forever chemicals, nurdle-free supply chains, and sustainably sourced aluminium.

We've developed our carbon accounting methodology by assessing the climate change impacts of packaging at component level and have developed our expertise in this area using Gabi software to complete lifecycle assessments and decide on the right course of action.



## OWNED BY YOU

In support of Recycling Week, over 17,000 members joined in to learn more about the impact of plastic packaging and to help shape how we might tackle the issue in the future.

We've invested in our data systems to ensure we have 100% compliance in submitting data for Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) ahead of the new legislation coming into force in 2025. We've also joined a working group with other retailers and brands preparing for the [deposit return scheme \(DRS\) for drinks containers](#) by 2027.

We've collected soft plastics across our UK-wide network of 2,300 collection points since 2021. With the lack of a UK recycling solution, we introduced soft plastic collection points in communities to increase recyclability and reduce the volume of soft plastic going to landfill. In 2024, we recycled over 2,000 tonnes of polyethylene. No soft plastics collected by Co-op were exported, sent to landfill, or incinerated without energy recovery. Currently, 5% of the soft plastic we collect is recycled back into thermoforming film, and 62% is upcycled and made into bags and sacks. The remaining 33%, including food waste and cigarette packets, is unrecyclable or contaminated material and is burnt for energy recovery.

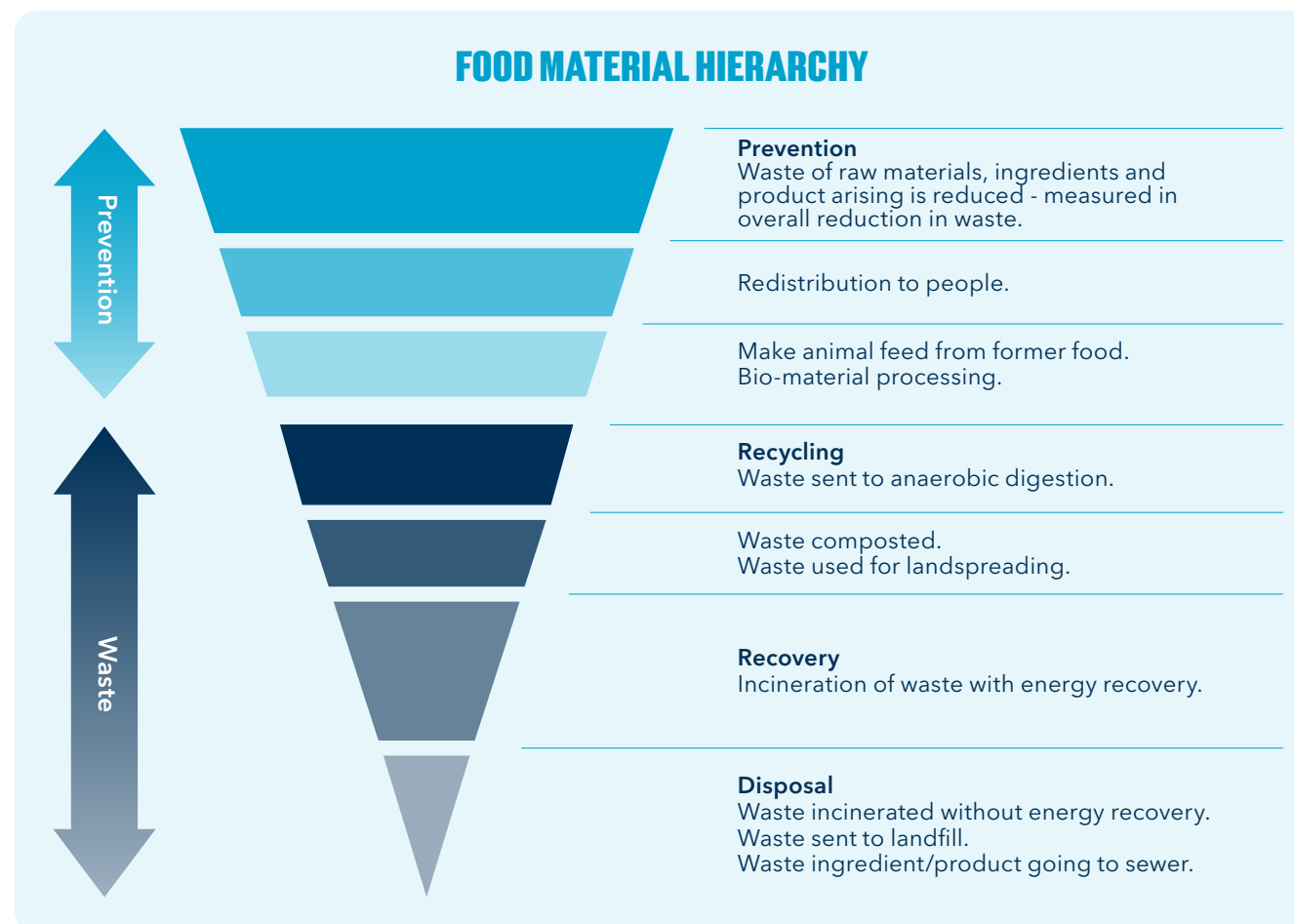
In 2025, we're aiming to achieve our target of a 30% reduction in our plastic footprint. We know this is a challenge, but we are focused on working with our suppliers to pursue opportunities that reduce plastic. After this point, in line with successor agreements to the UK Plastics Pact and WWF Basket, we'll be focusing on further decarbonising our packaging footprint across all materials, towards a net zero position by 2040. We'll do this by reducing the weights of all materials where we can, removing unnecessary packaging components, increasing recycled content, and working with suppliers to develop carbon efficient manufacturing processes. We'll continue to look for innovative packaging formats and materials that are low carbon, recyclable, and cost effective under the new cost regime of EPR. We're also preparing for the new regulatory landscape by ensuring materials are designed to be in the lowest

eco-modulation category possible, whilst ensuring we stay in line with emerging recyclability guidance and preparing our stores and systems for the arrival of DRS and [Simpler Recycling](#).

## FOOD WASTE

Food loss and waste is impacting negatively on the environment, the economy, food security, and nutrition.

Our priority remains to prevent food waste and surplus from being created in the first place. We source our Co-op's food and drink with care, so we are passionate about making sure it is valued and protected along the supply chain. We work with suppliers and colleagues to prevent and reduce the amount of food waste we create by continuously improving how we order, manage, handle and sell our stock.



We partner with Caboodle at store, and a range of national and local partners at depot, to redistribute as much edible surplus food as possible, with the remainder being used to make green energy<sup>1</sup>.

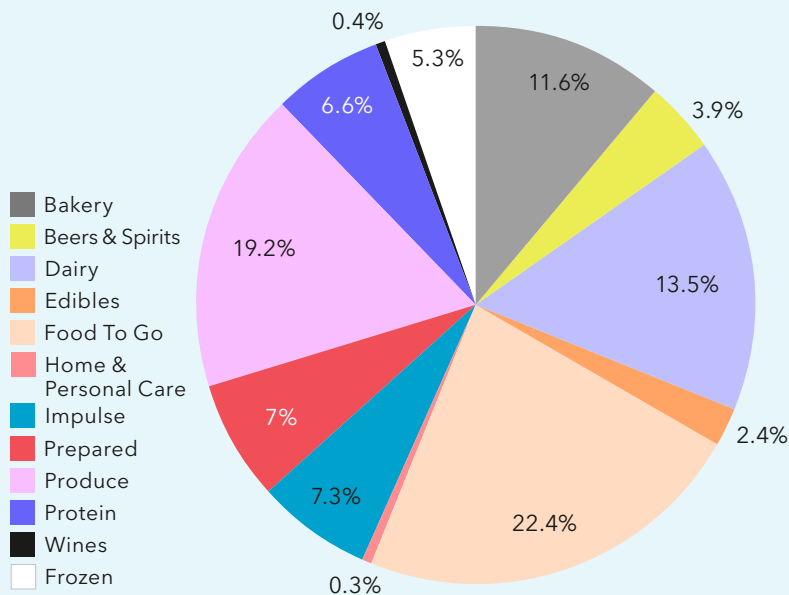
In tackling food waste, we continue to follow the food material hierarchy (see diagram on previous page).

This year, we've reduced food waste by a further 2.7% compared to 2023. The food waste we generated in store and depot, broken down by category, is shown in the graph below, highlighting where our greatest volumes of food waste were.

Our operational food waste total and food waste intensity<sup>2</sup> has remained stable in 2024, sitting at 1.03%.

We have almost halved food waste in our depots over the past year through a combination of changes in process, engagement with suppliers, and ongoing redistribution efforts by stock managers.

### CATEGORY FOOD WASTE TONNAGE %



<sup>1</sup> Through anaerobic digestion.

<sup>2</sup> Food waste intensity is a metric that measures the amount of food we've wasted relative to the amount of food we've handled in our operations. It's calculated by dividing the weight of food wasted by the weight of food handled.

<sup>3</sup> 86k head of broccoli, 26k packs of blueberries.



### One size doesn't fit all

We have a diverse range of store sizes, locations, and sales profiles, making a one-size-fits-all approach unsuitable for optimising product delivery to stores. We also know that waste occurs frequently in fruit and veg categories. We carried out several waste prevention activities focused on fruit and veg in 2024, including matching case sizes to the specific needs of our unique range of stores, preventing waste while ensuring

fresher products were available.

During 2024, this approach has been successfully rolled out on broccoli (including Tenderstem®), green beans, avocado, blueberries and raspberries, preventing 29 tonnes of broccoli and 4 tonnes of blueberries<sup>3</sup> from being wasted on just two of the product lines.

In 2025, we're planning a further roll out, adding an additional eight product lines.



# 6,111 tonnes

The amount of surplus food redistributed from our stores and depots combined was 6,111 tonnes

At stores we redistributed 5,299 tonnes through the platform Caboodle to 1,898 local community groups. And our depot teams shared 812 tonnes of surplus food with a range of partners, including FareShare, City Harvest, The Bread and Butter Thing, and Company Shop.

See [here](#) for more detail on supporting access to food in our communities.

In 2025, we will continue working towards a 50% reduction (versus 2022) through accelerating our focus on preventing food waste and ensuring our food is valued by everyone.



## CASE STUDY



### Turning surplus food into social value

Caboodle plays a crucial role in reducing our food waste at store, whilst supporting the community. Local groups, such as our Community Fridges (run in partnership with Hubbub), are matched with their local Co-op stores via the Caboodle platform, ensuring that quality food can be eaten by those who need it, instead of going to waste. Community groups can easily register on the Caboodle platform and choose convenient collection slots, in the morning or evening. This initiative has successfully redistributed over 20,000 tonnes of food to community partners across the country to date, significantly impacting food security and sustainability.

“ I always feel it’s really important that we support our local community and food banks. We have been using Caboodle for a few months now and it’s working really well for us. They collect every day and they take everything! It makes it all much easier. My team and I feel so much better knowing the food is going to good use and not just going in the bin. ”

Helen, Store Manager at Co-op Telford



## OPERATIONAL AND CONSTRUCTION WASTE

Over the past year, we produced 58,628 tonnes of waste from our operations, with the proportion diverted from landfill remaining at 99% (2023: 96%). Our on-site Salvation Army collection banks also helped customers and members to donate 4.9kt of clothing and textiles.








In 2024, we continued to monitor construction waste through our partnership with Reconomy, recording 3,388 tonnes of waste and diverting diverting 96% from landfill.

## WATER

Throughout 2024, we have continued to improve our water consumption data across the estate. This is helping us to identify opportunities for water efficiency investment and informing our water audit plans. In 2025 we intend to install automatic water meters across some key sites to enable more efficient leak and consumption monitoring.

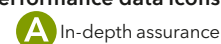
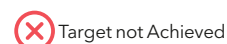
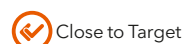


## RESOURCE USE DATA



 Target Achieved 
  On Track 
  Close to Target 
  Behind Schedule 
  Target not Achieved 
  Restatement 
  In-depth assurance

Issue	2024 Target	Performance against Target	KPIs	Baseline	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025 Target	SDGs		
Operational waste			Total operational waste from running our business (kt)	-	83	73 <span>R</span>	59 <span>R</span>	59				
			This KPI has been restated from ‘Total waste’ to ‘Total Operational waste’ as the figure does not include construction waste. The restatement also removes Customer Salvation Army Charitable Donations from the figure.									
			% of total waste diverted from landfill (including energy-from-waste, anaerobic digestion, recycling or reuse)	-	98	99	99	99				
Food waste	We will reduce food waste generated in our stores and depots by 50% by 2030, compared to 2022	<div><div></div><div>To date, we have reduced our food waste by 31% compared to 2022</div></div>	Food waste – store and depot, (tonnes)	21,388 (in 2022)	-	21,388	15,151	14,726 <span>A</span>	We will reduce food waste in our stores and depots by 50% by 2030, compared to 2022	<div>12<div>RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION</div><div></div></div>		
			Food surplus redistributed total (tonnes)	-	6,951	7,309	6,095	6,111 <span>A</span>				
			Food surplus redistributed through FareShare, TBBT, City Harvest and Company shop (tonnes)	-	1,177	911	899 <span>R</span>	812 <span>A</span>				
			Food surplus redistributed through Co-op Food Share (prior to 2022); and through Co-op Caboodle from 2022 (tonnes)	-	5,774	6,398	5,202	5,299 <span>A</span>				
			Store food waste intensity (the % of products our stores handle that becomes food waste)	-	1	1.3	1	1				
			Store and depot food waste intensity (% products from store and depot that become food waste)	-	-	-	-	1.03 <span>A</span>				

## RESOURCE USE DATA




### Key Performance data icons

Issue	2024 Target	Performance against Target	KPIs	Baseline	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025 Target	SDGs
Plastics and packaging	We will reduce our plastic footprint by 30% by the end of 2025, compared to 2018	<div></div> <p>To date, we've reduced our plastic footprint by 6,642 tonnes compared to our 2018 baseline year. As our Kantar market share<sup>1</sup> decreased from 6.1% to 5.4% over the 6 years, this equates to a reduction of 20.8% relative to market share.</p> <p>Our packaging target of 30% reduction by the end of 2025 is a challenge but we are focused on working with our suppliers to pursue opportunities that reduce plastic.</p>	% reduction in plastic packaging per 1% market share (from 2018)	-	Packaging: 11.6 Carrier bags: 7.2 Total: 18.8	Packaging: 16.7 Carrier bags: 7.5 Total: 24.2	Packaging: 18.3 Carrier bags: 7.4 Total: 25.7	Packaging: 12.9 Carrier bags: 7.9 Total: 20.8	We will reduce our plastic footprint by 30% by the end of 2025, compared to 2018	
			% average recycled content in our own-brand plastic packaging	-	33	35	33 (PET 71%)	41 (PET 79%)		
			Total Packaging handled (tonnes)	284,979 (2006)	181,630	165,617	150,849	172,810		
			Packaging handled by material (tonnes)							
			Glass	128,027 (2006)	99,889	90,028	80,173	65,892		
			Plastic	78,492 (2006)	41,507	37,980	35,424	38,588		
			Paper	42,794 (2006)	26,892	25,107	23,564	57,027		
			Steel	27,381 (2006)	5,632	4,934	4,424	4,416		
			Aluminium	8,285 (2006)	7,710	7,443	7,104	6,756		
			Water	We will reduce water consumption across our properties by 10% by 2025, compared to 2020	<div></div> <p>Our water consumption for 2024 was similar to 2023 consumption, reflecting an improvement in our overall water data. We continue to develop our proactive water efficiency measures, such as improved leak monitoring, and will continue to seek other ways to reduce consumption throughout the year.</p>	Average water used per site (m3)	310 (in 2020)	344		
% water reduction (y/y)	-	11 (increase)				18 (increase)	30.2	1 (increase)		

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RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



<sup>1</sup> Kantar Total Till Roll market share