

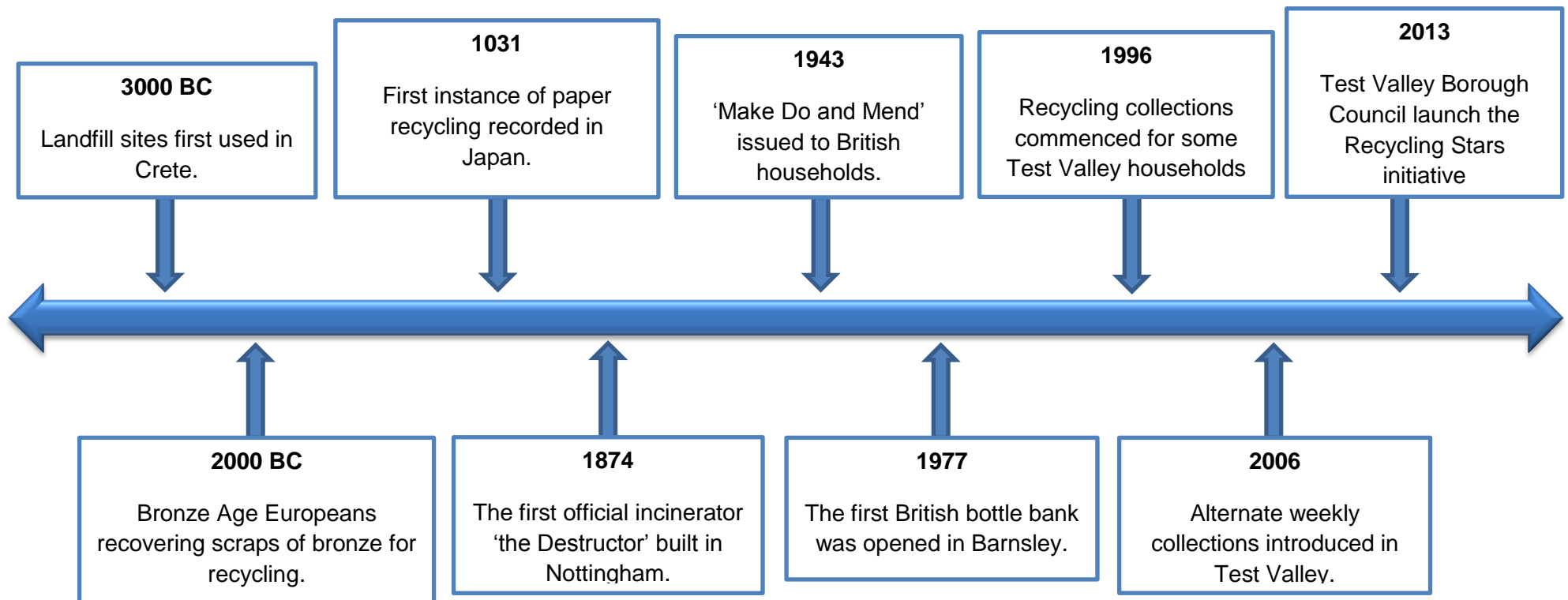
# A History of Waste and Recycling

Today's view that waste is a resource is not a modern idea. In fact, although the importance of reducing, re-using and recycling waste has increased in recent times, recycling has been carried out by people across the world for many thousands of years.

Throughout history, people have developed re-use and recycling practices to effectively manage the resources they have available to them. These practices were mostly led by the necessity to produce items for daily life or to live in pleasant surroundings.

It has only been in the last 40 years or so that the environmental concern for the disposal of waste has become popular. These concerns have led to the revival of many traditional sustainable practices, making recycling a part of everyday life for many.

This factsheet includes a huge number of key dates and facts in history and the waste and recycling themes they concern. They range from landfill sites being introduced in 3000 BC in Crete to present day recycling collections in Test Valley! Here is a brief summary:



Year	Period of history	Fact	Theme
3000 BC	Bronze Age	The residents of Knossos, Crete start placing waste in pits in the ground covered over with soil- Landfill.	Waste management
2000 BC		The Greeks melt down unused and broken items made from both metal and glass to produce new items.	Recycling
		The population of China begin composting as part of their daily waste disposal routine.	Composting
		Bronze Age Europeans recover scraps of bronze for recycling.	Reuse Recycling
500 BC	Ancient Greece	Government officials in Athens, Greece open a landfill site requiring all waste to be transported at least one mile beyond the city gates.	Waste management
1030		The first instance of paper recycling was recorded in Japan. This was due to the decline in the importance of the first national Library of Japan, the main consumer of paper in the country. Paper making became more main stream, but resources were in short supply. It gave rise to the term <i>kamiyagami</i> , which literally translates as 'paper-shop paper' - paper made from paper that has already been made into something.	Recycling
1297	Middle Ages	An increasing amount of waste was being deposited in towns across Britain. A law was therefore passed to make all householders keep the front of their house clear from rubbish, although most ignored it. Most residents burned household waste in open fires.	Household waste disposal
1345		'Rakers' were employed across London to rake rubbish together, load it into carts and remove it.	Household waste disposal
1407-1408		It is ruled that rubbish must not be put outside until it can be collected by Rakers. It was largely ignored to begin with, so Henry VI introduced a fine for those not complying.	Household waste disposal

Year	Period of history	Fact	Theme
1455	Middle Ages	Johannes Gutenberg invented the printing press, pioneering industrial-scale printing. Due to the scale of the process, the moveable metal type pieces would wear out during large print runs. Worn letters would be melted down to make new ones, kick starting the recycling of metal in Europe.	Recycling
1552	Tudors	A Stratford upon Avon Court fined William Shakespeare's father for 'depositing filth in the public street'.	Fly tipping
1588	Elizabethan Era	Elizabeth I granted special privileges for the collection of rags for papermaking.	Reuse
1800-1850	Victorian era	Many people lived by selling what they could find in other people's rubbish.	Reuse
		'Toshers' worked in the sewers collecting coins, metal, rope and jewellery that had been washed off the street.	
The term 'Dustmen' was first used. These men collected the ash from coal fires across London. The ashes collected were sieved and used to improve soil quality or in the brick making process.		Recycling	
1848		The Public Health Act of 1848 began the process of regulating the waste people threw away.	Household waste disposal
1855		Alexander Parkes invents the first plastic. It was made from plants not oil.	Plastic
1874	The first official incinerator, known as the 'Destructor' was built in Nottingham.	Waste management	

Year	Period of history	Fact	Theme
1875	Victorian era	The Public Health Act was amended to charge local authorities with the duty to remove and dispose of waste created by residents.	Waste management
1907	Edwardian era	The Public Health Act was amended again, allowing councils to collect waste from businesses and to charge for it.	Trade waste
1933	Post World War 1	For the first time, plastic begins to be manufactured from oil (petroleum).	Plastic
1936		The Public Health Act introduced regulations for building on contaminated land and the management of landfills. It also gave local authorities stronger powers to prosecute people dumping and scavenging waste.	Waste management
1943	World War 2	The British Ministry for Information issued the 'Make Do and Mend' pamphlet to households across the country. The booklet offered handy hints and tips for being frugal and stylish during wartime. Advice included mending, patching, darning and preserving materials from dirt and moths. It even includes upcycling, with advice on turning men's clothes into garments for women and children.	Reuse
1954		After 14 years, rationing ended in the UK. People began to enjoy the freedom of buying items they previously couldn't and less thought was shown to wastage.	Reduce
1956	Modern History	The Clean Air Act is passed and residential properties begin to be heated by oil or gas fired central heating or electricity. The waste that households produced changed from mostly ash and dust from fires to items such as food and paper which had previously been burned.	Household waste disposal

Year	Period of history	Fact	Theme
1960s	Modern History	Concern for the environment and the chemicals that humans release into the environment began to increase. A number of scientists released books about their concerns.	Waste management
1970s		Pressure groups began to form to lobby those in authority to consider the environmental impacts of humans.	Environmental concern
1973		The first political party concerned with environmental issues was formed in the UK.	Environmental concern
1977		The first glass bottle bank in Britain opened in Barnsley, South Yorkshire.	Recycling
1996		Recycling began to be collected in southern Test Valley on a trial basis.	Recycling in Test Valley
1998		All the incinerators (or 'Burners') are closed down in Hampshire as they do not meet EU Regulations	Waste management
2006		Alternate weekly collections are introduced in Test Valley New, efficient Energy From Waste plants are opened in Hampshire to incinerate (burn) our waste	Recycling in Test Valley
2013		Recycling Stars was launched in Test Valley to encourage everyone to waste less and recycle more.	Recycling in Test Valley