

Material Stream Icon Guidelines

recycle

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Material stream icons

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Background

The material stream iconography was initially developed in 2004 to support the national Recycle Now (and subsequently Wales Recycles) campaign branding, help raise awareness of the different types of materials that can be recycled and promote local recycling services by providing a consistent look and feel. The icons are widely recognised and used nationally across recycling services.

The material stream icons primarily represent the most common items that can be recycled. Individual material categories have been assigned a distinctive colour, supporting icon image(s) and wording to reinforce what can be recycled. The visual representation of the icons helps make recycling easier for people with disabilities, language and literacy issues. Different icon options are available so they can be tailored to suit the shape and size of the space available on the channel or hardware to which they're applied.

The icons were initially tested using signage at household waste and recycling centres across England, and surveying users before and after the material stream icons were introduced. Images were tested for recall and recognition. The findings showed that overall, the use of the icons on signage improved peoples' ease of use at the sites.

Finally, the icons provide a set of practical signposts that show what can be recycled and can be used in many applications including:

- Local authority communications
- Information boards and signage at recycling bring sites and household waste and recycling centres
- Hot foiling information on containers
- Bin stickers and tags
- Container labels
- Out of home advertising
- Local authority websites
- Social media content
- Vehicle livery

Brand usage

Recycle Now is the national recycling campaign for England and Northern Ireland, and Wales Recycles is the national recycling campaign for Wales. They aim to motivate more people, to recycle more of the right things, more often.

The Recycle Now and Wales
Recycles campaign logos and
material stream icons are in
widespread use by over 90% of
local authorities and are widely
used by retailers, community and
not-for-profit groups, educational
institutions, commerce and industry
to communicate recycling messages.

the use of the icons on signage improved peoples' ease of use at the recycling sites



Recycle Now 'swoosh' brand mark

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The Recycle Now/Wales Recycles 'swoosh' brand mark is included as part of the On-Pack Recycling Labelling (OPRL) scheme and used by numerous retailers.

The OPRL scheme, which is led by the **British Retail Consortium** and supported by **WRAP**, has been developed to reduce consumer confusion and provide simple advice and consistent labels on what can and cannot be recycled based on access to recycling facilities.

If you are a brand or retailer and would like to include the Recycle Now/Wales Recycles 'swoosh' brand mark on your packaging, please contact OPRL.

Benefits of using the icons

- Consistent message for citizens the icons are in widespread use by over 90% of local authorities across a range of recycling communications. The icons help residents understand what can and cannot be recycled through their local services
- Save money the icons have been developed for you to use and can significantly reduce design costs
- Well recognised and established the icons have been used since 2004 across national and local communications, and are therefore familiar to residents and communities
- Tried and tested findings showed the use of the icons improved peoples' ease of use when recycling
- Complement local recycling campaigns the material icons can be used to support and enhance recycling information and messaging

the icons are used by over 90% of local authorities

Icons in action





















Step-by-step guide

Select a material stream category you want to use – such as 'glass' – then decide on the most relevant icon within that stream e.g., 'mixed glass'.











Consider the item or channel for which you need to use the material stream icon – such as a leaflet, household waste and recycling centre signage, container signage, bin stickers or vehicle livery.





If there is not a suitable icon available, please contact WRAP at partnerenquiries@wrap.ngo

WRAP will review each request to determine whether it would be useful and if it is, commission the design and add it to the library of icons and the overview document.

Decide whether you want to use a portrait or landscape material stream icon – this will depend on whether you're displaying multiple icons together or using it as a single application, and the space available on the item to apply the icon – see page 6.

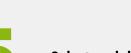




Based on the end application, select the most relevant file type – such as an .eps file type in CMYK for bin signage, or a .jpeg file type in RGB for digital use on a website or social media post – see page 7.







Select and download the relevant icon and incorporate it into your design.





Select and download the file

Icon introduction and application

The material stream icons should be used to reinforce what can and cannot be recycled, and can be used to support recycling communications.

Option 1 portrait

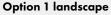


Option 2 portrait



Option 3 portrait







Option 2 landscape





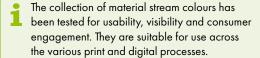
newspapers & magazines

Option 3 landscape

Option 3 should be used on applications such as signage, or where several material stream images will appear adjacent to each other, and must always be accompanied by either the Recycle Now mark or a Localised Recycle Now mark - see Recycle **Now Brand Guidelines**

Material stream categories

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Automotive waste	9
Building materials	10
Glass	12
Hazardous waste	14
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Metals	17
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	33
Waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE)	34





Colour references and end application

As part of the design process, it's essential to use the relevant colour reference and file type. Once you know the item or channel for which you need to use the material stream icon, and how the artwork will be produced, you should select the most relevant file type. For example, if you plan to print a leaflet, you must use CMYK colours, and if you plan to apply the icon on a digital channel, such as a website, social media asset, or digital billboard, you must use RGB colours.

The table below shows the most common colour references and end applications

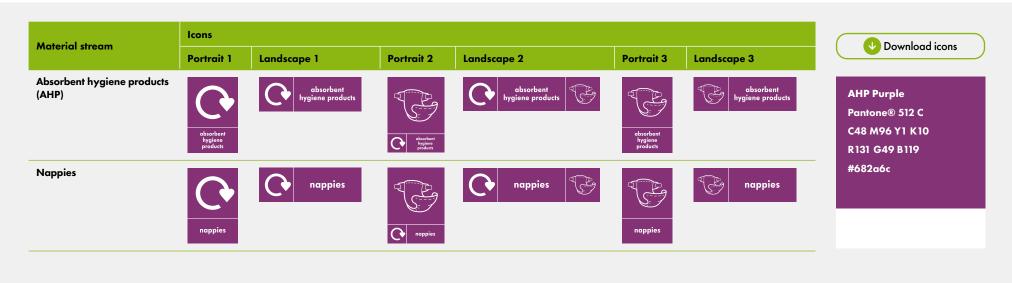
Colour references & file types	File type		Application
CMYK Process	EPS	eps	Print
RGB	JPEG	peg	Digital







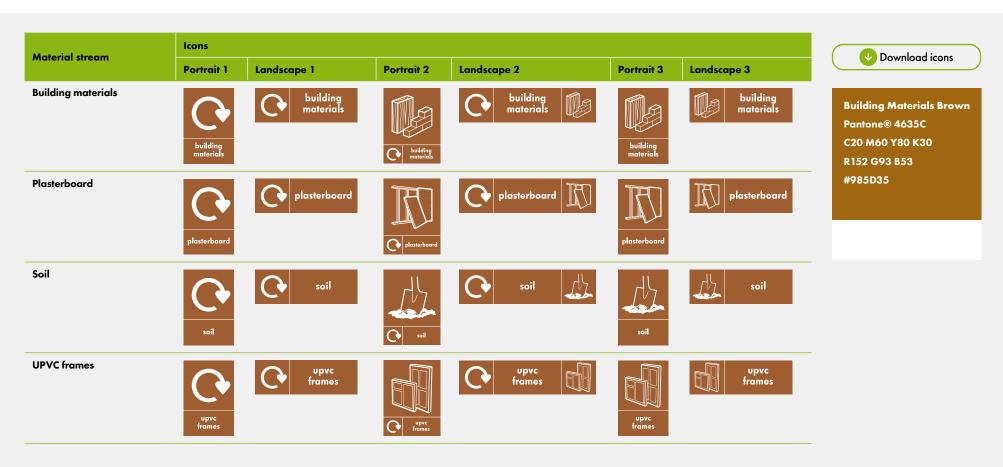
Absorbent hygiene products (AHP)



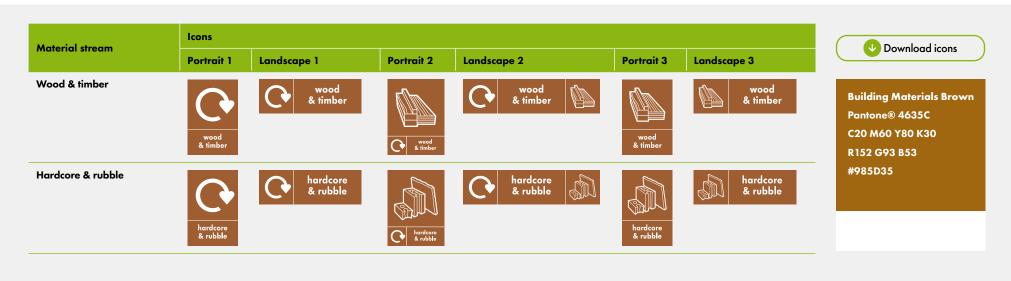
Automotive waste



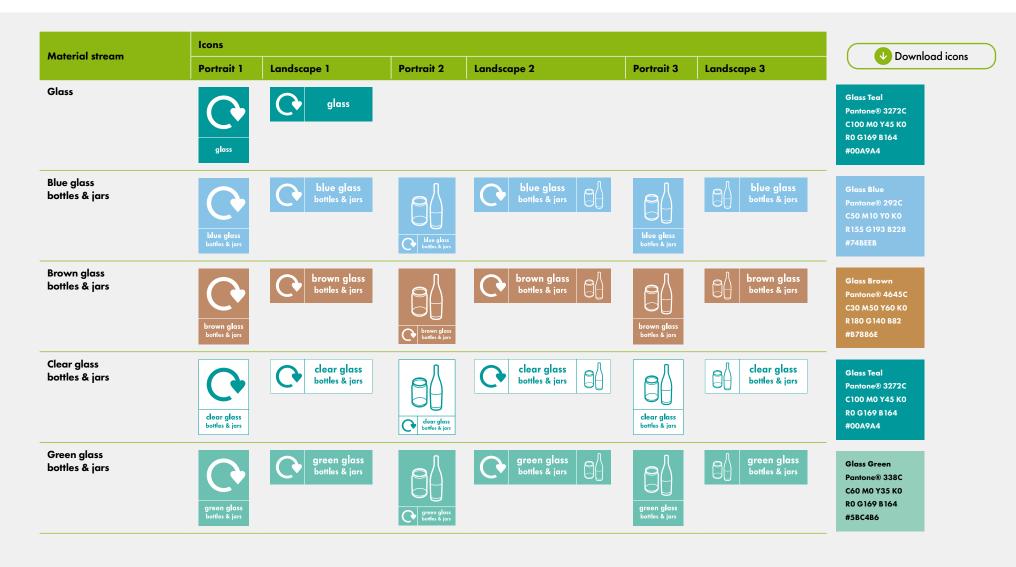
Building materials



Building materials



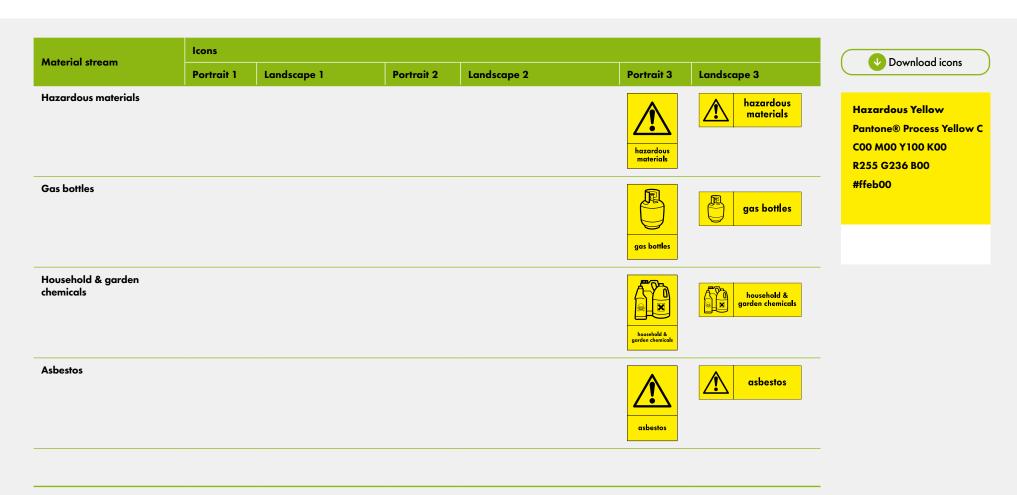
Glass



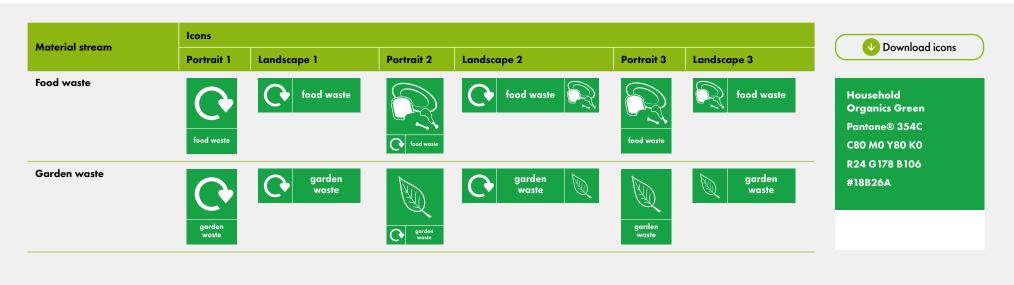
Glass



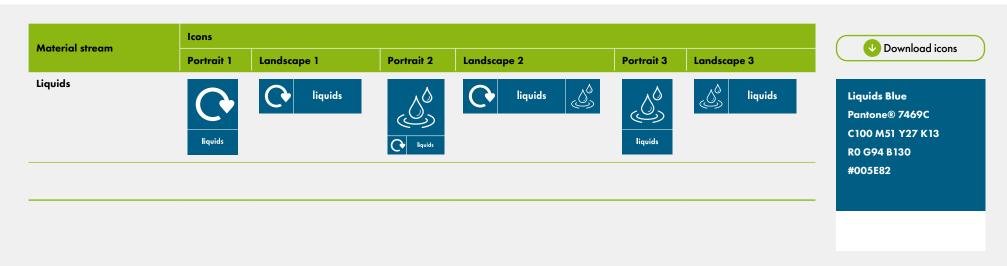
Hazardous waste

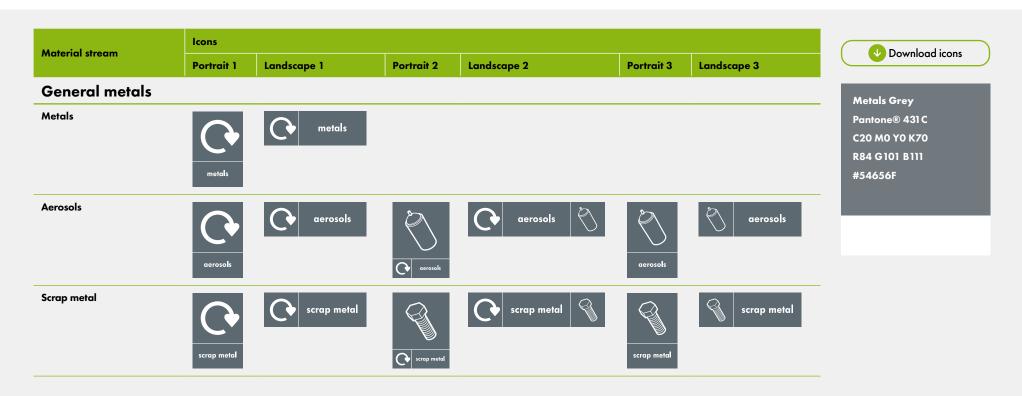


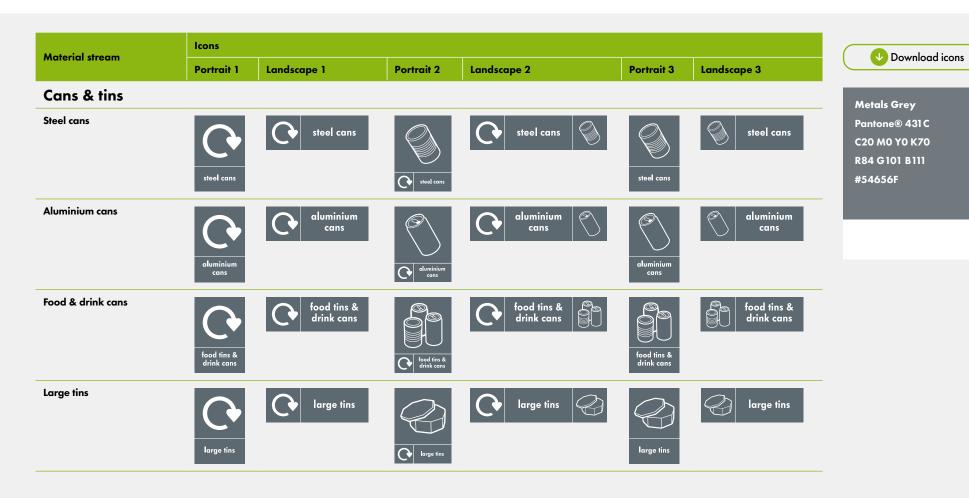
Household organics



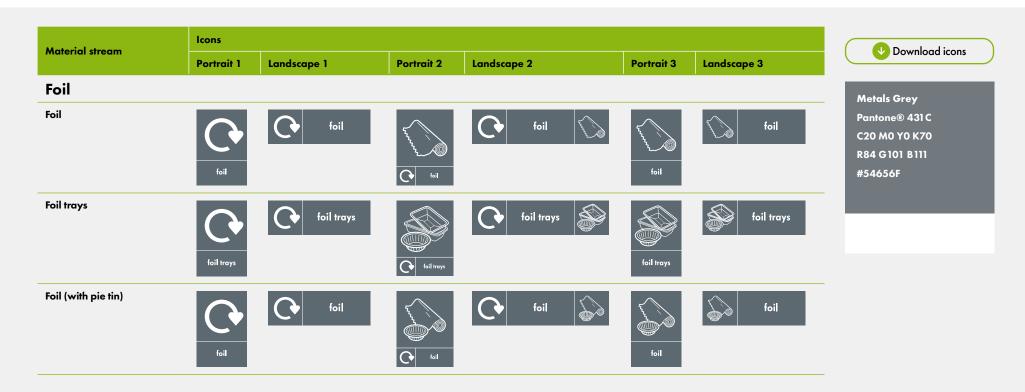
Liquids

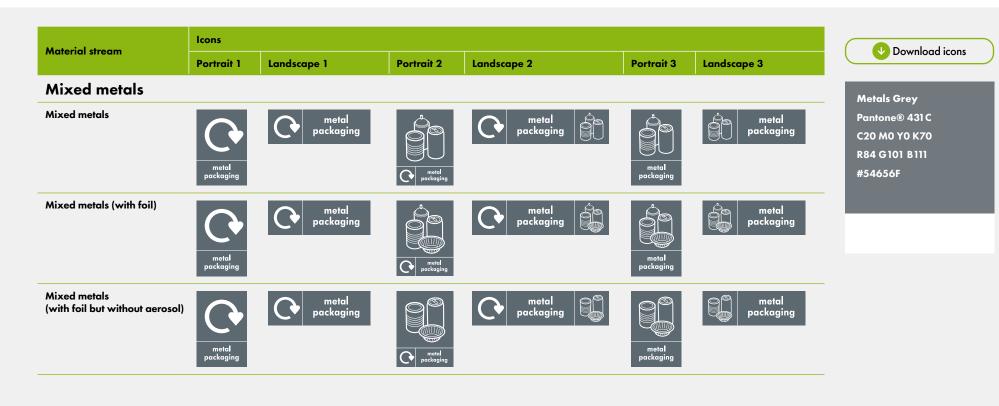






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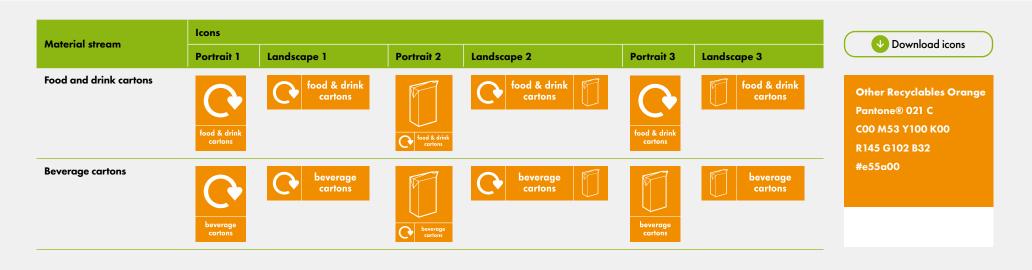




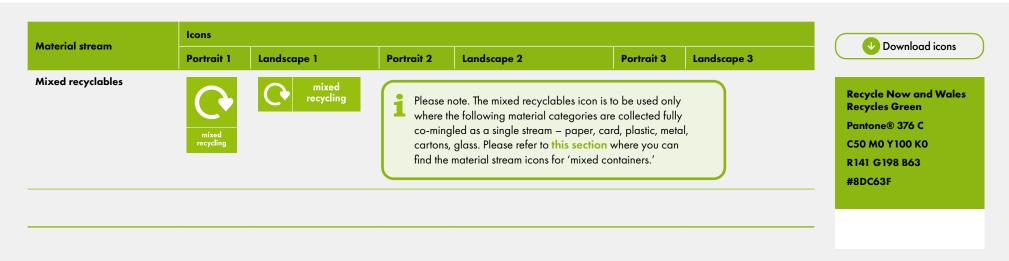
Mixed containers



Mixed containers



Mixed recyclables



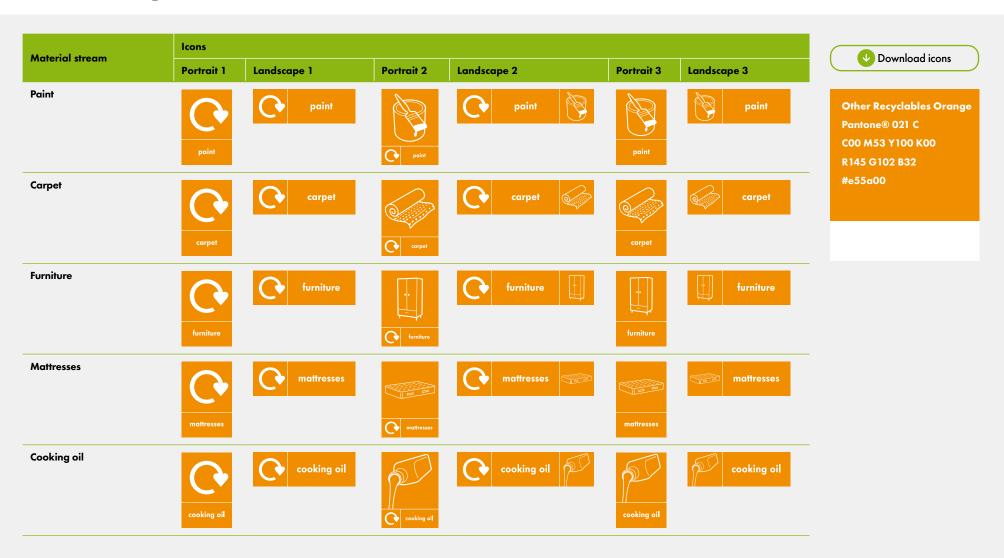
Non-recyclable waste



Other recyclables



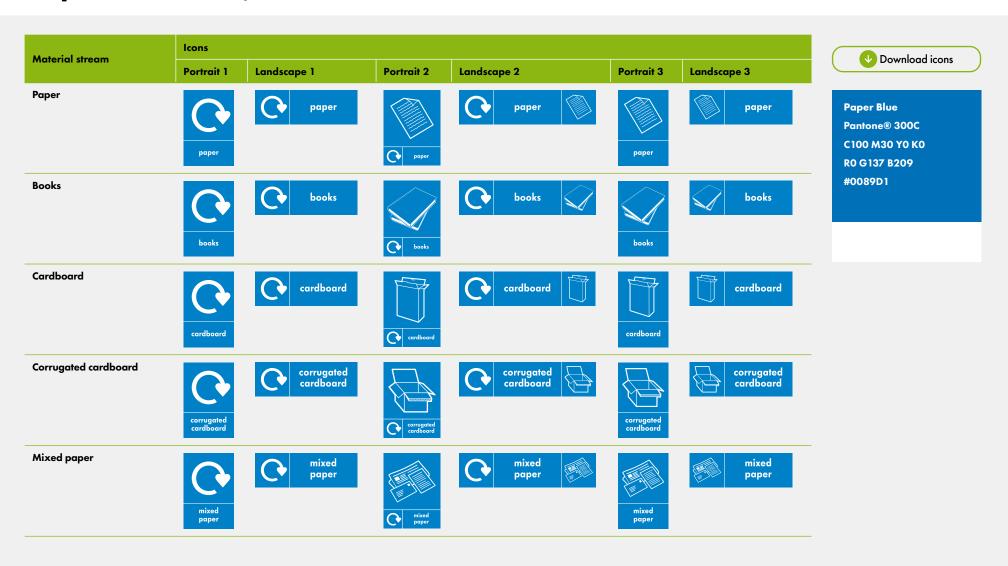
Other recyclables



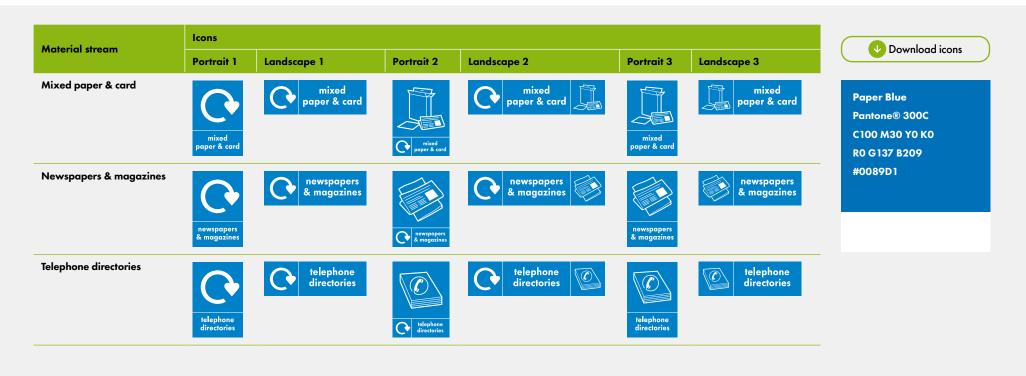
Other recyclables



Paper and card/cardboard



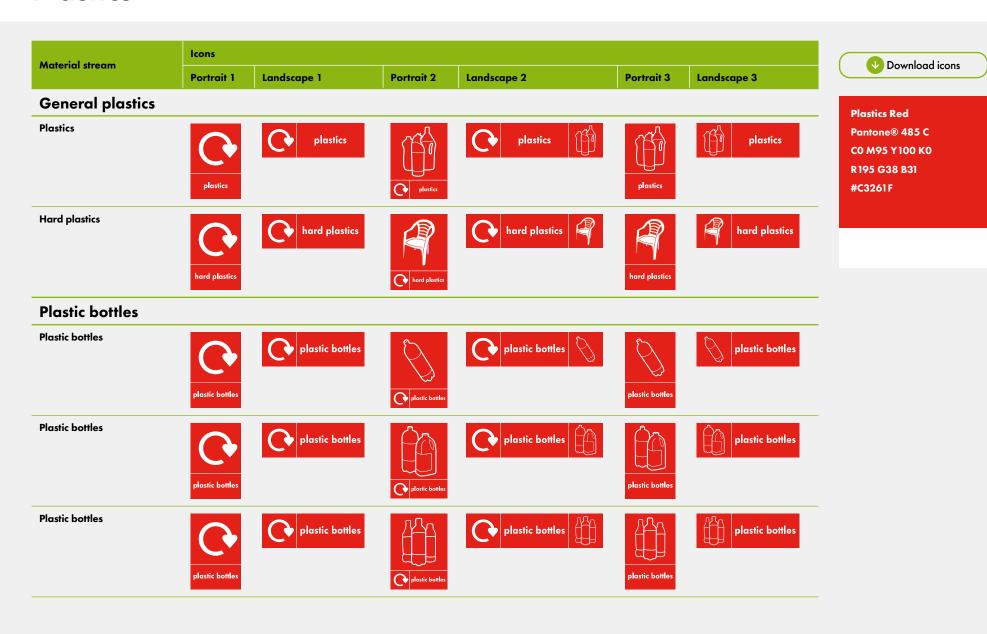
Paper





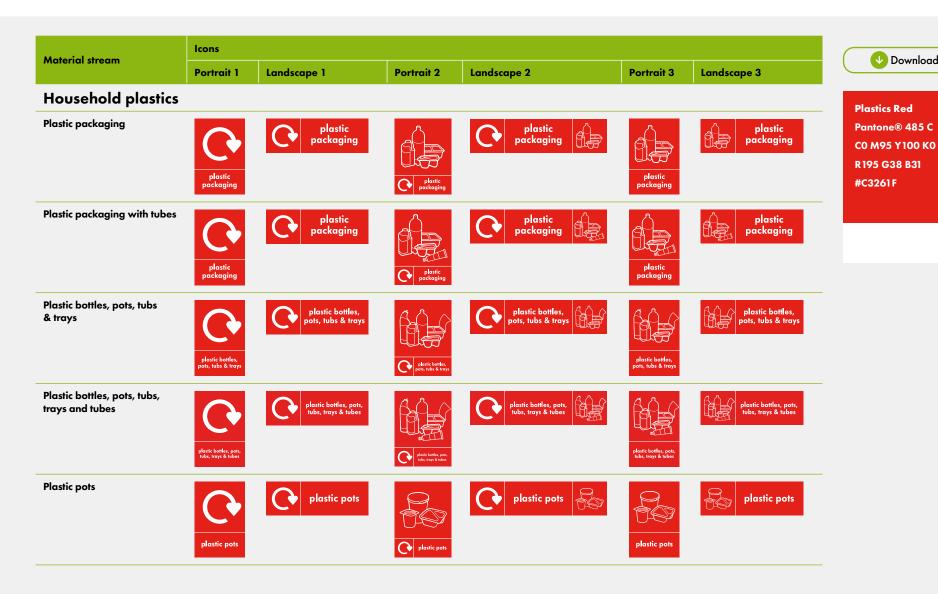


Plastics



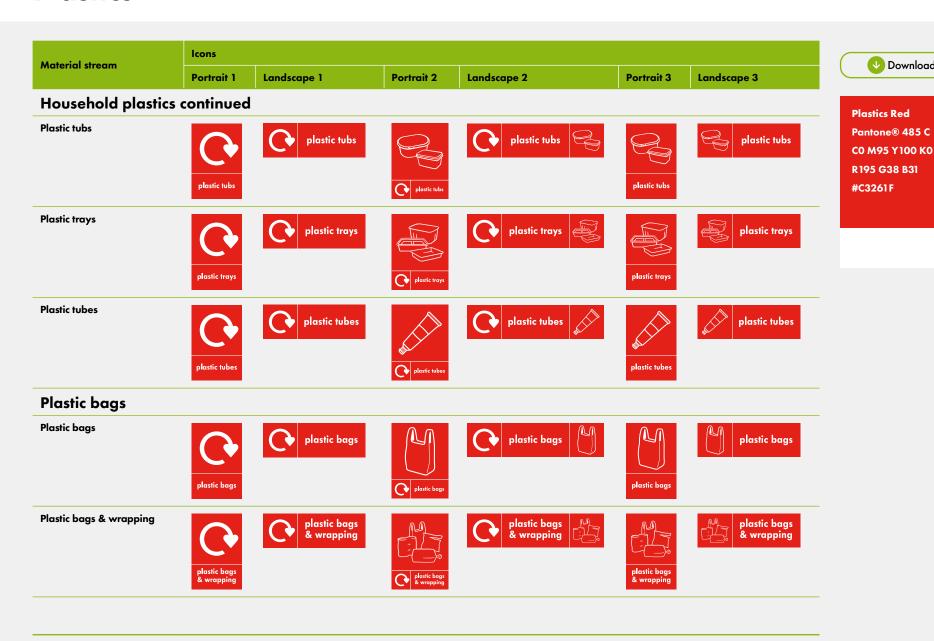
Download icons

Plastics



Download icons

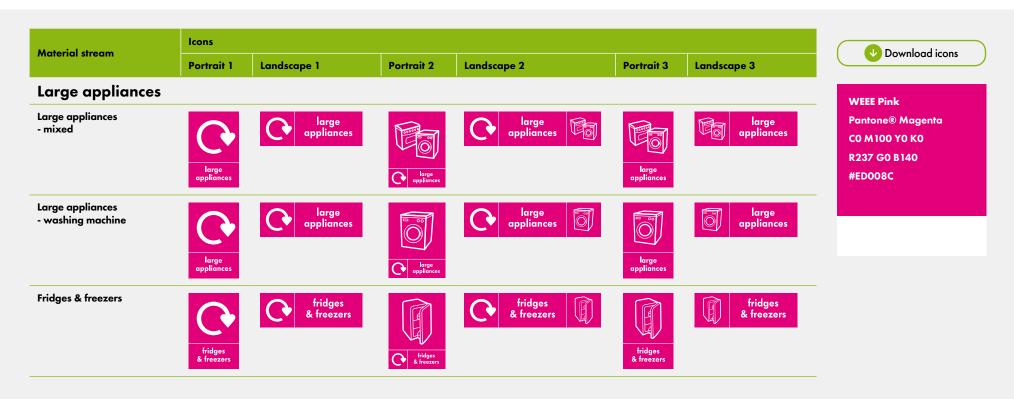
Plastics



Textiles



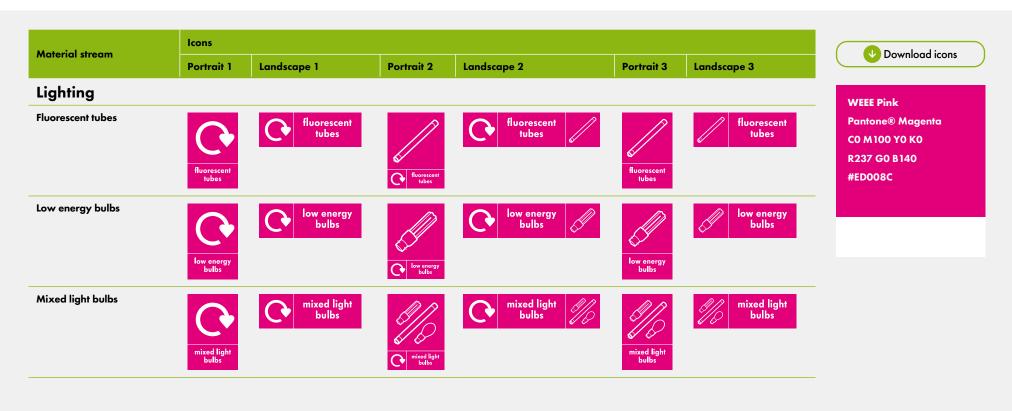








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Frequently asked questions and answers

- O I need to get approval for using the material stream icons?
- If you're using the icons as they appear in this guidance, then you don't need to get approval from us. If you'd like to send us your artwork for feedback, please email us at partnerenquiries@wrap.ngo
- Q Can I change the wording on an icon?
- It's important any text accompanying an icon is clear and labelled correctly for your circumstances and the end application. If you'd like to change the wording on an icon, please send us your suggested amend for us to consider at partnerenquiries@wrap.ngo

- What font should I use for the text that accompanies the icon?
- The font is Futura EF. If you'd like us to send you this font, please email us at partnerenquiries@wrap.ngo

We might be able to share this with you for free, depending on your organisation type.

What if you don't have the icon I need?

A

If you can't find a suitable icon within the existing collection, please email us at partnerenquiries@wrap.ngo

We'll review your request to produce a new icon, and, if we agree it would be useful, we'll commission the design and add it to the collection of icons available to download from the WRAP website and to this document.

- We want to use these in black and white. Are we allowed to do this?
 - The material stream icons are strongest when used in full colour. However, there may be some examples when this is not possible, such as when you're applying this directly onto recycling containers. In these cases, you may use the icons in black and white. If you're unsure, please email us at partnerenguiries@wrap.ngo
- Can I combine the images and / or text of more than one icon

Α

In some cases, it might be appropriate to combine icons or text. You may also find you need to use the 'mixed recycling' icon rather than combining several icons. Please email us at partnerenquiries@wrap.ngo and we will assist you.

Contacts and further help

Contacts



partnerenquiries@wrap.ngo



Like Recycle Now



Tweet Recycle Now



Follow Recycle Now



Watch Recycle Now

Disability Discrimination Act Compliance

WRAP has designed the material stream icons and the recommended signage detailed in this guide to meet the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) guidance. The key requirements of the DDA in this area are that signs and their information should be clear, concise and consistent. The font chosen by WRAP is clear and easy to read.

The material stream descriptions and images are unambiguous. Signage text is scaled for visibility and the information layout is easy to understand. Colours have been chosen to maximise image and text visibility.

Colours are always used with contrasting foregrounds and backgrounds (either solid colour on white or white text and imagery on solid colours).

Note: For at-home communication templates, such as recycling container stickers, local authorities may wish to consider introducing Braille text additions.



A wide range of recycling communications guidance and resources are available from WRAP. Local authorities can also contact WRAP's Local Authority Support Team for further support email: la.support@wrap.ngo website: www.wrap.ngo/local-authorities

