



environmental
services
association

ESA PRESS STATEMENT

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ESA: UK sleepwalking into waste treatment capacity crisis

LONDON, 07 August 2017: The Environmental Services Association (ESA), the voice for the UK's resource and waste management industry, today issued a stark warning following the release of a new report ("Residual waste infrastructure review issue 12") into UK waste treatment capacity by consultancy Eunomia.

ESA Executive Director, Jacob Hayler said:

"Eunomia's findings are flawed and have been contradicted by report after report from everyone else who's looked at our residual waste treatment needs.

Year after year these consultants have claimed that the UK was heading for overcapacity – its earlier reports suggested that we would already have reached overcapacity today – and it is galling that they continue to repeat the message when we are crying out for more investment in our industry. Their abilities to overstate available capacity and under-predict residual waste arisings are astounding.

The consensus position on waste treatment is that we will end up over five million tonnes short of energy from waste capacity by 2030. This is what the government needs to understand if it is not to sleepwalk into a capacity crisis."

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Notes to editors:

1. The Environmental Services Association (ESA) is the trade association representing the UK's resource and waste management industry, which is leading the transformation of how the UK's waste is managed.
2. We work with all levels of government, regulators and the public to deliver a more sustainable waste and resource management solution for the UK. ESA's Circular Economy report '*Going for Growth – A practical route to a circular economy*', which outlines how a Circular rather than a linear economy can help manage resources sustainably, can be downloaded [here](#).
3. ESA's Members manage waste on behalf of the whole of society and we are recovering more than ever before. For example, the industry has helped quintuple the UK's household recycling rates over the last decade.
4. **The sector at a glance**
 - Total turnover: **£11 billion**
 - Direct Employment: **106,000 people** (*including waste collection, treatment and materials recovery*)
 - Municipal waste handled each year: **27 million tonnes**
 - Energy generated (across landfill gas, anaerobic digestion and energy from waste) each year: **approximately 11,867 GWh**, which is 3.5% of the UK's electricity
 - **9,083 GWh of that was renewable electricity** (taking out non-biodegradable portion of EfW) which is **11%** of UK's renewable electricity
 - Greenhouse **gas emissions down by 70% since 1990.**
 - The **top seven companies account for approximately 40% of turnover.** Many hundreds of SMEs provide either localised or more specialised services
 - Waste & recycling is the **most highly rated of all council services** by the public (2016 survey)

For further details please visit www.esauk.org

Press Contact

Toni Waters – Communications and Membership Officer

ESA Press Office - (0207) 591 3219 (DD - (0207) 591 3206)

Mobile - (07841) 572 834

Email - t-waters@esauk.org / press@esauk.org