laxpayers too much lecycled aggies 'cosi

By Paul Thompson

SCOTTISH local authorities are being forced to pay double the amount for recycled aggregates than they would for virgin material thanks to minimum recycled content limits on projects.

Government and local planning authority guidelines require a set level of material used on each scheme to be recycled.

These demands are skewing the market to such an extent that local authorities are being forced to pay twice the amount for a tonne of recycled aggregate than they would for similar quantities of virgin stone.

Local authorities across central Scotland would be expected to pay between £4 and £5 per tonne for virgin type 1 sub-base

material, according to sector sources

But the same amount of type I sub-base produced from recycled material would cost £9.50 per tonne ex-works. Add haulage costs on top of that base price and the onsite cost for recycled type I could tip the £10 mark.

The extra costs are eventually passed on to council tax payers across the country, according to Richard Bird, executive officer at the Brifish Aggregates Association

at the British Aggregates Association.
He said: "You cannot blame the recycled aggregate producers – it's a simple case of supply and demand. Policies to enforce the use of more recycled aggregates have artificially skewed the market.

"Demand for these sorts of materials is so high producers can virtually charge

what they like. Unfortunately it means that council tax payers are getting nothing like the value for money they should."

Mr Bird claimed the problem stemmed from there not being enough material available for recycling.

He said: "Policy says there should be more recycled content in projects. That's fine but there is a maximum amount of recycled material available for aggregate use in the country and we are probably close to that maximum.

"Using recycled material does not need to be pushed through by the planning process. With the tightening of the landfill tax it makes sound commercial sense anyway." paul.thompson@emap.com

Visit www.cnplus.co.uk/sustainability