Something better than recycling?

Glass, steel tins and paper are regularly removed from doorsteps around Britain to be melted, smelted and pulped ready to be turned into raw materials for reuse in objects as diverse as jam jars and newspapers. The problem is, recycling is not always the most environmentally acceptable process.

Let's take a car engine for example. Scrap metal merchants have existed almost as long as the car. Their job is to break the car down into different materials (mainly steel) and send the metal off for smelting and recycling. However, this act of recycling uses energy and produces carbon dioxide, the gas most associated with climate change. Energy is required to collect the car, remove the engine, crush it, extract the metal, smelt the metal, reform it into iron ingots and then use this to manufacture a new steel product — potentially another car engine!

Surely all this effort could be avoided if we could turn the old engine into a new engine without completely destroying it?

Remanufacturing transforms products from worn out into as-new condition. It's a process that can help save materials, costs and lessen environmental impacts. It also benefits consumers by providing lower-cost high quality products.

The UK now leads the world with a new standard designed to help manufacturers with the process of remanufacturing: BS 8887-220:2010. The standard has been developed by a committee of volunteer experts from the automotive, printer cartridge and remanufacturing industries, amongst others. It defines the processes by which used product is turned, through a series of manufacturing of steps, into a like new product. BS 8887-220:2010 has been written to be applicable to all sectors.

For more information or to order a copy of the standard, visit http://shop.bsigroup.com/bs8887-220