

Beyond Recycling

Making the circular economy a reality in Wales

Around 1,000 citizens and stakeholders across Wales were engaged during the consultation.

This is a snapshot of some of the key points they raised – a detailed summary is available.



Core Theme - Headlines

The consultation asked for views on six core themes.

Build on our recycling record

- A standardised and consistent recycling collection is important.
- Recycling must be easy and accessible to domestic and non-domestic premises.
- Investment in recycling infrastructure needs to support longer term aims such as re-use, repair and remanufacture.
- The value of recycle and confidence in the recycle market needs to be increased



Investing in infrastructure

- To enable a zero waste and low carbon Wales, accessible regional and community hubs are needed to deal with priority materials.
- Resource efficient transportation for waste management is needed, including in rural areas.
- Young people, schools and circular economy stakeholders should be represented and engaged in the approach.



Driving innovation and material use

- Innovation needs to be stimulated to develop circular economy appropriate solutions, and create a strong economy
- Opportunities to shorten supply chain should be taken improve business resilience
- Focus should be on promoting the most appropriate materials for purpose, determined via an assessment



Supporting prevention and re-use

- To achieve prevention and re-use, future policy needs to create an economic and cultural shift. Education is key
- Working with communities and social enterprises is essential to support the growth of the re-use and repair sectors
- Donation of surplus equipment should be carried out by all sectors – private, voluntary and public
- Wasted food needs to be tackled and surplus recognised as a resource.



Enabling communities and businesses

- Communities need to be encouraged and supported to take collective action.
- Businesses need to be provided with support to innovate, adapt and showcase their actions towards a circular economy.
- The concept of Zero Waste Towns is welcomed but needs detail to have meaningful impact.



Using government levers

- Improving resource efficient procurement within the public sector is a positive first step towards a more circular economy
- As a large primary producer of waste, resource efficiency in the construction sector is an essential focus.
- Extended producer responsibility (EPR) is key to promoting more responsible changes at a design level and the effective introduction of a Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) in context of an already high recycling nation will need careful design.



Beyond Recycling

Making the circular economy a reality in Wales

Around 1,000 citizens and stakeholders across Wales were engaged during the consultation. We also engaged a number of specific groups through bespoke events. This is a snapshot of what they said.



Targeted Stakeholder Engagement

This is a summary of the key points raised through the targeted engagement with specific groups as part of the consultation.

Local Authorities

- Recycling targets should be realistic and achievable.
- There should be support for the re-use and repair of materials.
- The impacts of policies on local authorities such as a Deposit Return Scheme should be considered.



Young People

- Focus on single use items in general not just single use plastic.
- We need to take action on litter for many reasons including for wildlife and for tourism.
- Convenience is the key motivation for many, so there should be an incentive for doing the right thing.



Waste Sector

- Separate collection of materials is supported.
- There needs to be strong and stable markets for recycle to provide confidence and certainty to the industry.
- Regulation and enforcement are important but there needs to be clarity and consistency and a level playing field.



Business

- Many businesses saw an opportunity to save and make money through more circular behaviours.
- Support and guidance is needed on helping businesses to reduce waste and take new opportunities.
- We should take steps to connect the resources and materials collected and produced in Wales with the businesses that need them.



Communities and Environmental Groups

- There should be a focus on reducing the use and disposal of unnecessary plastics.
- Action should be taken to reduce waste especially by businesses.
- Communities would benefit from support to develop sustainable initiatives to improve the local environment.



Academia

- The strategy should be founded on evidence.
- There should be a clear pathway which sets out the actions that will be taken to reach zero waste by 2050.
- There is an important role for universities to consider their impacts through the resources they use and the behaviours of staff and students.



Key Stakeholders – NRW and WRAP Cymru

- How progress towards zero waste and other goals is monitored is key, including keeping track of any enforcement action taken.
- There should be genuine and meaningful join-up across Government to move to a more circular economy in Wales.
- Procurement could be a vital tool in reducing waste, improving environmental outcomes and supporting the Welsh economy.



Engagement beyond Wales

- Wales is a leader in sustainability. This should be used as a foundation to support innovation and test new ways of working.
- There is an opportunity to shorten supply chains to offer better economic resilience and retain economic benefits locally and regionally.
- There should be an awareness of the global materials landscape and an assessment of how we take the opportunities that lie ahead.

