

Circular Economy Action Plan



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Introduction

On 27 June 2019, Islington Council formally declared an environment and climate emergency and committed Islington to becoming carbon neutral by 2030. 'Vision 2030: Building a Net Zero Carbon Islington'¹ (Vision 2030) sets out how we aim to achieve this challenging target, with a vision to create a clean and green Islington in response to the climate emergency.

Vision 2030 sets a target of Islington achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2030. This target is based on scope 1 and scope 2 emissions, that is, direct emissions from within Islington, and indirect emissions from using electricity generated in another location. Scope 3 emissions, those related to the goods we consume within Islington that are produced and disposed of elsewhere, are excluded to avoid double counting.

However, the level of these consumption emissions is very significant, indeed more than those identified within scope 1 and 2 together. Fulfilling our Vision 2030 commitments will not be possible without reducing our consumption related emissions, so we should consider how to reduce the emissions associated with our consumption, by considering the environmental impact of the food and products that we buy, in terms of their design and the materials used, how we can get the most use out of them and what will happen to them when we no longer need them or can no longer use them for their original purpose.

A circular economy is not simply about managing materials and waste in the most sustainable way possible - reducing, reusing, composting and recycling.

It involves how we procure goods to maximise product lifespan, reuse and repair. It involves planning policy to encourage sustainable development. And it involves developing policies to encourage sustainable economic development.

This action plan sets out how we will help Islington move towards a more circular economy. We are also calling on the government to do more to set policies and legislation to drive the circular economy.

This is the beginning of a transition and to be successful we will work with residents, community groups and businesses to help them to play their part. Businesses in particular can lead the way by setting their own circular economy policies and targets, by reviewing their businesses processes to eliminate waste and to make their products and services more sustainable.

Through this action plan, we as the council are taking the lead and working to identify ways to support a circular economy in our borough but we need you, residents and businesses, to help us achieve this goal.

¹ <https://www.islington.gov.uk/~media/sharepoint-lists/public-records/energyservices/businessplanning/strategies/20202021/20201209vision2030islingtonzerocarbonstrategy1.pdf>

Glossary

BID: Business Improvement District

Carbon Emissions: Any process that produces CO₂ emissions, usually by burning fossil fuels

Commercial waste: Waste from commercial premises

Composting: A natural biological process, carried out under controlled aerobic conditions (requires oxygen)

GreenSCIIES: Green smart communities integrated energy systems (www.greenscies.com)

Household waste: Waste from households

IFPA: Islington Food Poverty Alliance

IFP: Islington Food Partnership

ISEP: Islington Sustainable Energy Partnership (www.isep.org.uk)

LES: Local Economy Strategies

NLWA: North London Waste Authority (www.nlwa.gov.uk)

Recycling: The process of converting waste materials into new materials and objects

Refurbish: Restoring something so it can continue to be used for its original purpose

Repairing: To fix something that was broken so it can be used again for its original purpose

Repurpose: To use something for a different purpose to what it was intended for

Residual waste: Waste that is not recycled, composted or reused

Reuse: To use something again that would otherwise have been thrown away

RRP: (Waste) Reduction and Recycling Plan

Scope 1 Emissions: Direct emissions that occur locally from activities such as burning gas in boilers to heat homes and businesses or petrol/diesel vehicle emissions

Scope 2 Emissions: Indirect emissions that occur from using electricity generated in another location, i.e. from the electricity grid where the emissions could be from coal or gas-fired power stations that supply electricity to homes and businesses in Islington

Scope 3 Emissions: Emissions that are related to consumption and are recorded at the point of production of the goods e.g. emissions caused by the manufacture of vehicles outside of Islington

SME: Small or medium size enterprise (business)

Upcycling: Creating a product of higher value than the original

Vision 2030: 'Vision 2030: Building a Net Zero Carbon Islington', Islington's strategy and action plan for achieving a net zero carbon Islington by 2030

Background

What is a Circular Economy?

A circular economy is an alternative to a traditional linear economy (take, make, use, dispose), in which we keep resources in use for as long as possible, extract the maximum value from them whilst in use, then recover and regenerate products and materials at the end of each service life.

It involves things being designed to last longer, to be repaired and to be effectively repurposed, refurbished, and recycled or composted only at the end of their useful life. It is one where supply chains are more local and use materials already in circulation.

A circular economy is not just one where we recycle more stuff.

The circular economy has impacts on every aspect of our life and we can all do our bit in our own local ways.



Figure 1 The circular economy impacts on every aspect of our life and we can all do our bit in our own local ways

It also requires government to create the right framework for change and for big business to transform their practices. There are signs of positive change and in Islington we are laying the foundations for this change locally.

The Ellen MacArthur Foundation for Circular Economy describes three key principles for the circular economy in urban environments. These are:

Eliminate waste and pollution

We need to consider waste and pollution as design flaws rather than inevitable by-products of the things we make. By changing our mindset and harnessing new materials and technology, we can ensure they're not created in the first place.

Circulate products and materials

We can design products to be reused, repaired, or remanufactured. But making things last forever isn't the only solution. When it comes to products like food or packaging, we should be able to keep them in circulation, so they don't end up in landfill.

Regenerate nature

There's no concept of waste in nature. Everything is food for something else – a leaf that falls from the tree feeds the forest. By returning nutrients to the soil and other systems, we can enhance natural resources.

Why is circular economy important in achieving Islington's net zero carbon (Vision 2030) vision?

Islington's Net Zero Carbon Vision 2030 strategy focusses primarily on reducing direct emissions from homes and businesses burning fossil fuels such as gas, diesel or petrol (scope 1 emissions), and those caused by generating electricity used in Islington (scope 2 emissions). However, we must also reduce our indirect emissions caused by consumption of goods (scope 3). This means tackling upstream emissions created outside of Islington by the production of goods and the downstream emissions associated with their disposal.

Scope 1 emissions

- Direct emissions that occur locally from activities such as burning gas in boilers to heat homes and businesses or petrol/diesel vehicle emissions.

Scope 2 emissions

- Indirect emissions that occur from using electricity generated in another location, i.e. from the electricity grid where the emissions could be from coal or gas-fired power stations that supply electricity to homes and businesses in Islington.

Scope 3 emissions

- Emissions that are related to consumption and are recorded at the point of production of the goods e.g. emissions caused by the manufacture of vehicles outside of Islington.

Figure 2 Definition of scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions

Borough-level figures released by London Councils² suggest that emissions relating to Islington's residents and businesses, both within and outside Islington (scope 1, 2 and 3) in 2018 totalled over two million tonnes. That is approximately 8.6 tonnes for every person in Islington. Of this, 680,000 tonnes of CO₂e emissions are scope 1 and 2 emissions from Islington's households and businesses³.

This means that two thirds of emissions relating to Islington residents and businesses, some 1,400,000 tonnes, are related to the manufacture, transport, consumption and disposal of consumer goods outside of Islington.

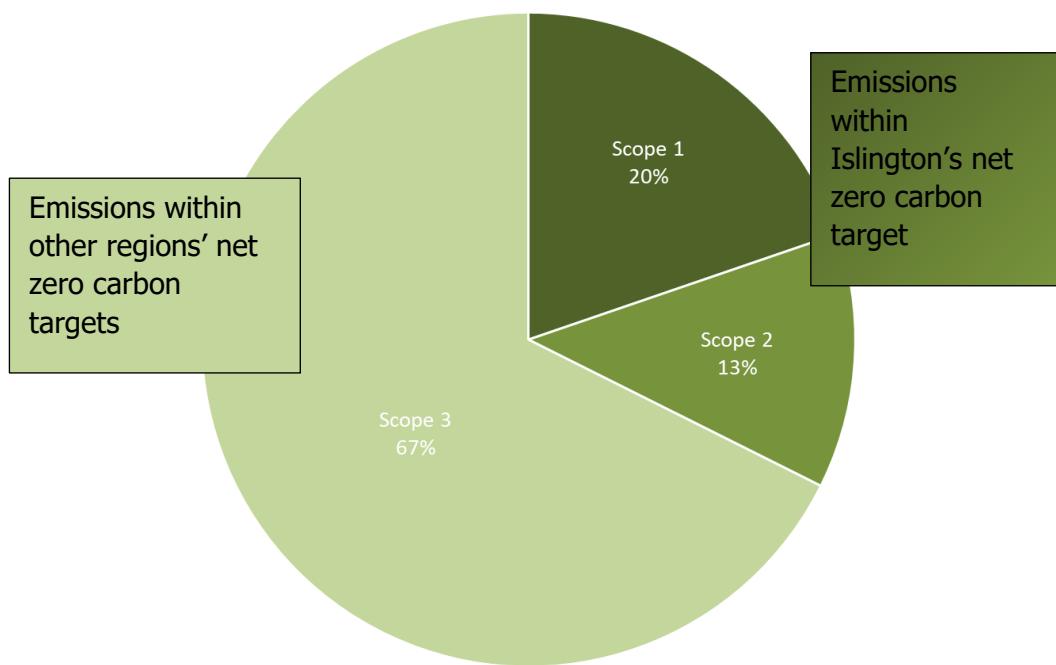


Figure 3 Proportion of Islington's Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions

We therefore need a focus on reducing emissions arising outside of Islington, but as a direct result of our own spending choices and behaviour.

For example, tackling food waste and packaging could help reduce the 11% of carbon emissions that are generated by food and non-alcoholic beverage consumption. Supporting repair and reuse initiatives could help tackle a further 5% of carbon emissions.

Our Circular Economy Action Plan will have an impact on scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions and is part of a wider range of actions by other Local Authorities, business and government. In particular, policies at a national level, such as producer responsibility and fiscal measures to reduce packaging can drive systemic change across all categories of emissions.

By being more resource efficient - reducing, reusing, recycling and composting more of what we consume, and by repairing and repurposing where possible - we can reduce waste and

² <https://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/our-key-themes/environment/climate-change/consumption-based-greenhouse-gas-household-emissions>

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-local-authority-and-regional-carbon-dioxide-emissions-national-statistics-2005-to-2018>

the associated carbon emissions and costs involved in the extraction and transportation of raw resources, and the production of new materials. We can keep resources in good use for longer, retaining carbon within the product for longer and we can reduce the carbon emissions from the disposal of unwanted goods at the end of their life. With a third of food that's produced for human consumption wasted globally, and greenhouse gases from food production accounting for 30% of total greenhouse gases, reducing food waste in particular has the potential to significantly reduce emissions of greenhouse gases.

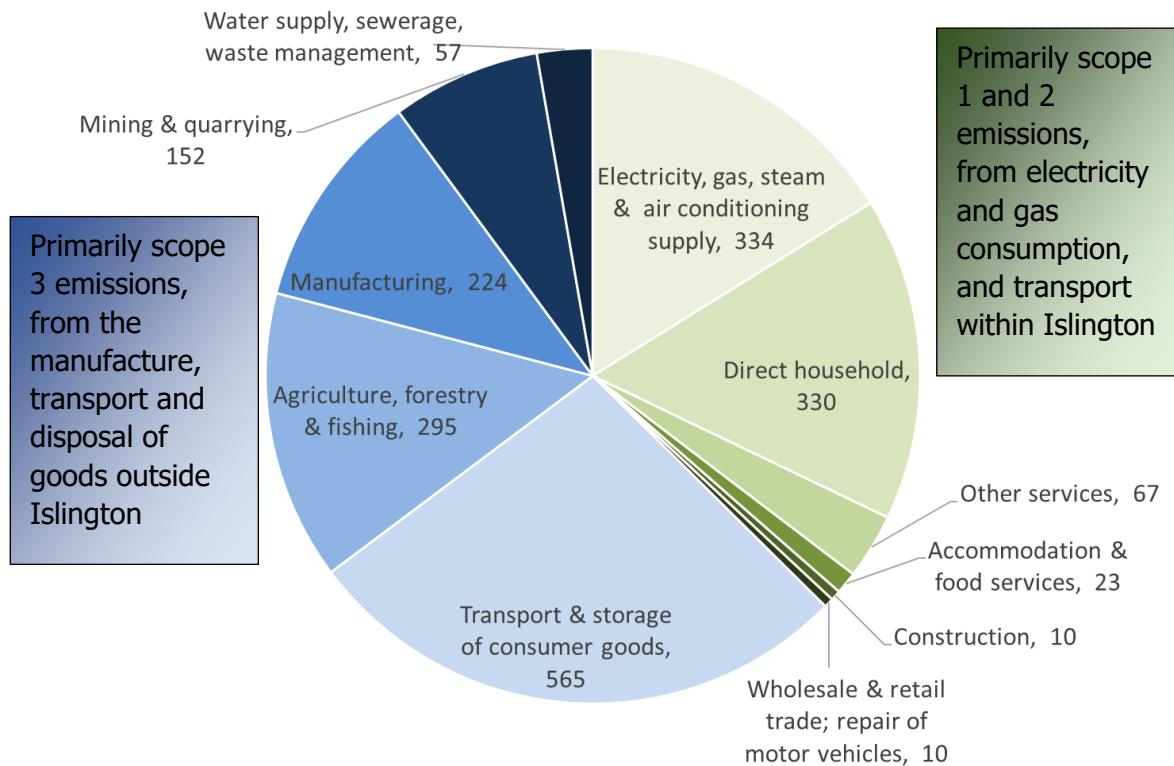


Figure 4 Total emissions by source industry (Ktonnes CO₂e) 2018. This chart gives a breakdown of the sources of scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions and is based on the London Councils data referenced above.

About our Circular Economy Action Plan

Our Circular Economy Action Plan supports the ambition of Vision 2030 of Islington becoming net zero carbon by 2030. Islington Council has already made progress in a number of initiatives to support the circular economy, including action on waste, recycling and reuse, transport and local business support. These actions are set out in 'what we're already doing'.

This Action Plan sets out what more we can do to support a circular economy in Islington.

- **Policies and strategies**

We are embedding circular economy principles into our core strategies, from planning, to procurement and will continue to do so in support of our wider net zero carbon ambition. Ensuring circular economy principles are embedded in our strategies provides a solid foundation enabling tangible actions to follow.

- **Buildings**

84% of scope 1 and 2 carbon emissions in Islington arise from building use. The way they are designed, built and used can have a substantial impact on material and resource use and overall carbon emissions. Our Local Plan, the way we build Council homes and the way we manage our own buildings can all support a circular economy.

- **Transport**

In compact cities, the effective local transport of people, products and materials is central to a circular economy, enabling local goods and material flows. This in turn supports smaller scale transport options for goods and effective local public transport options, in turn reducing energy and resource consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, and improving local air quality.

- **Sustainable and affordable energy**

Achieving net zero carbon emissions and a circular economy involves ensuring that our energy needs – both for heating and electricity – are met in a sustainable way. This means considering different forms of heating provision such as heat networks and heat pumps and innovative ways in which we can harness and re-use waste heat, as well as renewable electricity. We also need to ensure that energy is affordable for local residents and businesses and help those in fuel poverty.

- **Local Economy**

A circular economy brings a range of economic benefits, from improved resource security at a larger scale, through to new economic and employment opportunities at the local scale. Innovation, improved resource efficiency, better customer offers and increased levels of materials reuse, remanufacture and recycling can all drive job creation and economic growth.

- **Planning**

A circular economy requires planning, and Islington Council's Local Plan sets out a range of policies that will influence and drive the nature of development in Islington over the coming years. By embedding circular economy principles into local planning policy, local authorities can ensure building development is more circular in nature, reducing materials and resource

use, material transportation and disposal, and retaining embedded carbon within existing building infrastructure.

- **Waste Reduction, Reuse and Recycling**

Reducing material and resource consumption is central to the circular economy. Recycling and reuse services can support this through the collection of quality materials, and through reuse, recycling and composting at local facilities into new products that are themselves, recyclable.

- **Communications and engagement**

Circular economy messaging will be embedded in our communications and engagement activity.

This Circular Economy Action Plan is the beginning of a journey. Although the council has a leading role in reducing carbon emissions in Islington, we cannot deliver on the net zero carbon target on our own. We will need to work closely with and welcome ideas and input from residents, local businesses and community groups to enable and encourage them to help Islington achieve net zero carbon and transition to a circular economy. As new opportunities arise, we will keep this action plan under regular review.

Governance

Vision 2030 already has a robust governance structure in place to ensure the effective delivery of the action plan. Each of the actions in this action plan will be owned by specific teams/services and sit under a specific Vision 2030 work stream, ensuring the actions are managed and monitored within that existing governance structure.

The benefits of a circular economy are far reaching with benefits not only for carbon emissions, within Islington and beyond, but also for resource use, local air quality, and a range of social benefits, many of which are measured and monitored already. However, we need to understand more about how we can measure the benefits and outcomes from this action plan. To this end, we will explore, in partnership with London Councils, the GLA and organisations such as ReLondon how our move towards a circular economy can be measured with the aim of developing specific circular economy performance indicators.

The Plan will be kept under constant review, **and we will publish an updated Circular Economy Action Plan by April 2024** which will build on the actions and commitments set out in this Plan.

Funding

Vision 2030 set out in detail the ways in which Islington has invested in carbon reduction initiatives. Islington's 2021/22 budget included both revenue and capital funding commitments to support the Vision 2030 action plan, and additional commitments have been made through Islington's Carbon Offset Fund.

As well as directly funding initiatives, external funding sources are being actively explored and pursued, including grant funding and investment opportunities.

Funding implications for individual commitments are set out in the Action Plan section.

What we are already doing

Across the services that Islington provides, there are many examples where circular economy principles are already embedded into policies and strategies and where actions are being taken. This might be because it already makes better business sense to reduce resource and material use, because we are already trying to reduce the harmful impact of waste and to recycle more, or because of our fairness agenda which, by encouraging local employment, skills and opportunities can also support local business and employment, local transportation and local material flows.

Here are some examples.

Transport

The Islington Transport Strategy 2020-2041 was adopted alongside the Vision 2030: Net Zero Carbon Islington Strategy. It sets out a number of proposals which support circular economy objectives.

These include:

- Encouraging local businesses to switch to zero emissions vehicles, bicycles or cargo bikes for local deliveries. This will build on initiatives such as the Low Emissions Neighbourhood (LEN) in Archway.
- Where vehicle use is unavoidable, look to increase car sharing and in the case of the commercial sector, freight consolidation.
- Supporting and promoting electric car club schemes and carpooling initiatives and working with car club providers to ensure use is accessible and affordable.
- Investigating the development of a freight consolidation strategy that encourages the use of cargo bikes.
- Working with cycle hire providers and the Mayor of London to develop cycle hire in Islington and make cycling more accessible.
- Working with Transport for London and our contractors to ensure that wherever possible, transport schemes reuse materials and use pollution-absorbing and sustainable materials and techniques.

Road building and maintenance

Islington Council is responsible for maintaining 262 km of roadway and pavement directly and through its contracted services. Wherever possible and practical, materials such as kerbstones and paving stones are reused on site, or otherwise removed and stored at sites within Islington for use at subsequent projects. Materials that cannot be reused are removed for recycling as aggregate and other building materials.

Sustainable and affordable energy

Renewable electricity minimises resources used and waste, while ground and air source heat pumps concentrate natural heat to heat homes in an emissions-free way much more efficiently than direct electric heating. District heat networks provide a cost effective and efficient means of delivering energy to a local area.

- Our innovative and award winning Bunhill 2 project uses waste heat from London Underground tunnels and was completed on 22 July 2021.

- Building on the success of Bunhill, we will progress the GreenSCIES project which, uses waste heat from additional sources such as electrical substations and data centres to deliver that heat to local residents and businesses.
- We are leading the London-wide Renewable Energy workstream as part of the London Climate Change Programme.
- We will continue to source renewable energy for the council's operations and consult with external clients in switching to renewable energy.

Local economy

Circular Economy business support

Islington Council is committed to providing targeted practical and resource-based support SMEs wishing to become more sustainable and implement circular business models. We also help businesses to access other sources of support including from ReLondon's business support service, which a number of small businesses in Islington have already benefited from.

Business Audit Scheme

We have set up a business audit scheme that provides advice to businesses on how to reduce their carbon footprint and this includes advice on waste, recycling and circular economy practices.

Case studies

Aperi Deli

Aperi-Deli on Caledonian Road is demonstrating circularity in their business model with refills of olive oils and customer container reuse. Their shelving and flooring in the shop is constructed from reclaimed timbers including from whisky barrels and wine barrels.

Aperi Deli are on a journey to improve their environmental performance which can offer savings to the environment, their bottom line and benefits customers too.

Background Props & Studio Hire

Background Props & Studio Hire on Brewery Road provide a vast range of studio equipment and props. These are supplied on a hire basis and reused by successive customers, reducing waste of single use equipment.

The Home of Sustainable Things

The Home of Sustainable Things on Barnsbury Street curates, showcases and sells work exclusively from designers who specialise in sustainable products. Their range includes furniture, lighting, homeware, artworks and other craft pieces.

Their current selection explores the use of construction waste, hemp, mycelium, discarded eggs, tree bark, coffee and tea waste as building materials. It demonstrate how so-called "waste" and useful everyday objects can be upcycled and transformed into valuable products. The objective is to create an alternative to the conventional resource-heavy design market by focussing on a better use for natural resources as well as providing knowledge sharing and skill development opportunities for interior designers, architects and other creatives to share working practice and ideas. They also have ambitions to set up a local shared design workspace specialising in such sustainable design projects.

Sheepers

Sheepers is an online and mail order shop in Islington selling high quality sheepskin apparel inspired by the owner's Polish heritage.

Sheepers have ensured that their slippers are made ethically and are used from off-cuts. This means that they do not bulk buy cheap sheepskin or wool. Instead, they use off cuts from other methods of farming, applying a circular economy model and reducing waste.

Additionally, any items with slight faults e.g. untidy stitching, are sold as 'seconds' at a discounted price rather than being thrown away. Again, ensuring all materials are put to good use and waste is minimised.

Waste reduction, reuse and recycling

Waste Reduction and Recycling Plan

We are already delivering a range of measures through our Waste Reduction and Recycling Plan to reduce waste and increase recycling, including a range of publicity campaigns and engagement activities.

Islington's recycling service

Islington Council - in partnership with the North London Waste Authority (NLWA) - is working hard to ensure that we can collect a wide range of materials that meet and exceed regional and national requirements. We also ensure that as much of the material that we collect for recycling as possible is recycled here in the UK into new products. Currently, 100% of the plastic that is recycled is reprocessed here in the UK. Through the NLWA, we are transparent about this process, and more information about what happens to your recycling can be found at www.nlwa.gov.uk.

Islington Council's Digital infrastructure

The council is already increasingly managing its IT infrastructure on circular economy principles.

We have already moved to a default procurement model which is to purchase products as services where possible. We already rent or lease products, leaving the responsibility for repair and disposal with the product supplier.

We procure our laptops on time limited leases. All laptops issued to our staff are tracked and return for secure data cleansing and reuse at the end of the lease period.

Any older devices are returned for recycling.

Similar leasing models for mobile phones are harder to come by. However, devices such as mobile phones contain valuable materials and metals which can be extracted and reused, so corporate mobile phones are returned at the end of their use for fully traceable recycling.

Our priority in our offices is to reduce, wherever possible, the use of paper. Mobile working has enabled, and required paperless working and the use of printers in our offices has declined dramatically in recent years. But they are still needed from time to time and as with our laptops, our printers are leased, ensuring that it is in the supplier's interest to repair and extend the operating life of the devices, and to take back for responsible disposal devices at the end of their operational life.

Each office has a recycling container for unused cables so that these can be recycled and valuable materials extracted and reused.

New phone apps installed on our laptops have resulted in a reduced need for separate telephone equipment from approximately 5,000 units five years ago, to around 1,000 now.

Many of our data centres are locally hosted, utilising battery backup power supply. We aim to move these line of business systems and key infrastructure components to more reliable, energy efficient cloud-based services.

Reuse - Resident Support Scheme

We support residents facing severe financial hardship and in need of one off or temporary help with urgent living costs through Islington's Resident Support Scheme. Bright Sparks is a key partner in the Resident Support Scheme, giving residents access to new, reused and repaired items.

Reuse - Washable Nappies

We promote and subsidise the use of washable nappies in conjunction with Real Nappies for London and NLWA. Residents can apply for a nappy voucher which can be redeemed with participating suppliers or nappy laundry services.

We also run washable nappy, baby clothes and maternity wear swaps to pass on items that are no longer required to other residents free of charge thereby making their use affordable to everyone.

Reuse - Dress for Success

Dress for Success is a charity that takes in donations of clothing from professional women and then distributes them to women from low-income backgrounds who are about to attend interviews or start work. The charity works in partnership with employment support services, including iWork, who identify and refer women to this service.

Reuse – Library of things

We have opened Islington's first 'Libraries of Things'. A library of things is a place where local residents can save money by affordably renting out things like drills and sewing machines, items that are widely owned but seldom used. This supports the sharing economy in Islington and reduces the carbon impact from product consumption.

Surplus food

We promote sharing and repair services including food sharing apps and services such as Olio, Too Good To Go and Plan Zheroes. We have actively run campaigns encouraging residents to use Olio to share surplus food from home, and in Chapel Market, businesses were encouraged to sign up to Too Good To Go, so that surplus food from businesses could be purchased at reduced prices.

We work with the London Food Partnership (LFP) to help build relationships with local businesses and to redirect surplus food from industry to those residents with highest need via local community food projects, and through Islington's cargo bike support initiatives, we are supporting local food hubs to reduce motorised transport associated with local surplus food redistribution.

Islington Council supports community food growing and composting projects within the borough. Octopus runs a community plant nursery on Tufnell Estate which acts as a learning

hub for food growing and a demonstrator garden for the Climate Action project "Action for Local Food" which is a collaboration between Octopus, Global Generation and Islington Council. The goal is to empower the community to grow more food locally and reduce food waste in Islington to help address the issue of climate change from a grass roots level. The aim is also to create compost within the borough to support these food growing initiatives.

We are also supporting Octopus in their work to develop and operate a pilot eco-digester for food waste to enable local, quality compost production without food waste leaving the borough, providing soil improver and nutrients to further enable local food growing.

And we work with residents and communities around the borough to promote home composting by providing subsidised compost bins and composting training and advice.

NLWA

Residual waste prevention plan

NLWA is the regional Waste Disposal Authority responsible for managing the waste collected by seven north London boroughs including Islington. Islington works in partnership with NLWA and the other six constituent boroughs, to support the delivery of a Residual Waste Prevention Plan⁴.

The objectives of the plan are to reduce local authority collected waste in north London, promote resource efficiency and the circular economy, minimise climate impacts and improve the local environment through a comprehensive and sustainable programme of waste prevention and recycling activities and communications to encourage the same.

Waste prevention activities include:

- ongoing activities such as stalls and presentations to community groups;
- training others to deliver these activities in order to extend the impact of what NLWA delivers already;
- New Initiatives including funded through NLWA's Waste Prevention Community Fund (see below);
- high profile events, such as NLWA's annual Waste Prevention Exchange conference and London Upcycling Show.

Communications work includes:

- face-to-face communication with residents through outreach events and presentations about recycling, encouraging residents to recycle well;
- funding to support localised initiatives to tackle recycling contamination;
- supporting activities such as social media work, videos, a mobile display and recycling app, and;
- a major new recycling communications campaign to tackle recycling contamination.

Waste Prevention Community Fund

We promote NLWA's Waste Prevention Community Fund and offer support and guidance to any Islington organisation that wishes to apply for funds. The fund is particularly aimed at projects that focus on electrical repair and reuse, prevention of food waste, furniture and textile reuse, and the reduction of single use plastics.

⁴ https://www.nlwa.gov.uk/sites/default/files/inline-files/2565222-nlwa-residual-waste-reduction-plan-2020_v5.pdf

London Upcycling Show

We support and promote the London Upcycling Show (an established part of the NLWA's programme of waste prevention activity that has been delivered annually since 2016). It aims to encourage reuse, repair and upcycling of large household items such as furniture, helping to preserve valuable resources and divert reusable items from disposal.

It provides opportunities for residents to learn practical skills using free/low-cost approaches for upcycling through demonstrations, workshops and specialist talks on the day.

Competition entries will be exhibited at the event to illustrate the value in upcycling to extend the life of household items.

The event also showcases the industry by inviting stallholders relevant to upcycling to promote their local services and products. A key aim of the show this year will be to create a networking opportunity for like-minded individuals and businesses in the sector, including a business development talk/drop-in session for residents who want to establish a business in this sector.

Action Plan

Our Circular Economy Action Plan builds on the work we are already doing as a Council to move towards a more circular economy. Our new commitments are summarised in the Summary Action Plan at the end of this section. In this section we set out the detail.

Islington Council's policies and strategies

This section sets out how we are embedding the circular economy in our policies and strategies.

Islington Council is committed to embedding circular economy principles into its core strategies and will continue to do so in support of our wider net zero carbon ambition. Ensuring circular economy principles are embedded in our strategies provides a solid foundation enabling tangible actions to follow.

As a borough and planning authority, Islington must produce its own strategic plans such as local plans, environment plans, and procurement policies to ensure we meet the needs of the local context, and act in general conformity or alignment with the Mayor of London's various strategies (e.g., the London Plan, Environment Strategy, Responsible Procurement Policy). Boroughs are therefore able to influence their own operations and services, new developments, and help residents to make choices which accelerate a circular economy and reduce consumption-based CO₂ emissions and waste.

We are already demonstrating our commitments to promote and adopt circular economy principles across several of our policies and strategies including Vision 2030 and our draft Local Plan. This integrated approach provides the council with a strong platform and mandate for prioritising actions with the greatest impact as it develops its Circular Economy Action Plan.

We will continue to embed circular economy principles into our Policies and Strategies across the borough.

In 2019, Islington Council declared a **Climate Emergency**⁵ and committed to creating a clean and green Islington and becoming net zero carbon by 2030. **Vision 2030: Building a Net Zero Carbon Islington by 2030**⁶ sets how we plan to achieve this and includes commitments to ensure that 'circular economy principles are embedded in local businesses and supply chains are sustainable', to 'explore how to encourage small businesses who provide circular economy services', and to 'work with circular economy organisations to support resident engagement'.

Our Strategic Plan **Islington Together, For a More Equal Future**⁷ includes specific commitments to creating a cleaner, greener, healthier Islington and restates its commitment to working towards a target of net zero carbon by 2030.

⁵ <https://www.islington.gov.uk/environment-and-energy/climate-emergency>

⁶ <https://www.islington.gov.uk/~media/sharepoint-lists/public-records/energyservices/businessplanning/strategies/20202021/20201209vision2030islingtonzerocarbonstrategy1.pdf>

⁷ <https://democracy.islington.gov.uk/documents/s25785/Appendix%20A%20-%20Strategic%20Plan.pdf?>

Our **Waste Reduction and Recycling Plan 2018-2022**⁸ includes a specific commitment to develop a Circular Economy Action Plan as well as including circular economy design and build policies into our new Local Plan.

Our Reduction and Recycling Plan will be renewed in 2022 and we will ensure that circular economy principles are embedded into this new Plan.

Our draft new **Local Plan**⁹ will include robust new policies for delivering sustainable development based on circular economy principles. This includes policies to ensure that all developments adopt a circular economy approach to design and construction and that buildings are designed to help to support people recycle.

Our **Progressive Procurement Strategy 2020/27**¹⁰ states that an inclusive economy underpinned by social value will be delivered through 'driving sustainability through our supply chain to reduce waste, particularly single use plastic and food waste, develop a circular economy and support our goal of becoming carbon neutral by 2030 for example limiting energy consumption'.

Our **Transport Strategy**¹¹ sets out how the council will deliver its vision of a fairer, healthier, safer and greener transport environment in the borough by 2041.

Our **Housing Asset Management Strategy 2013–2043**¹² sets out how management of the council's housing stock will take account of potential impact on the natural and built environment of building materials and practices as well as their long term cost and durability.

Our **Food Strategy 2010**¹³ aims to improve individual, community and environmental well-being by making healthy and sustainable food available and accessible to all. This wide ranging strategy has recently focused on food poverty, following a needs assessment in 2017. The wider framework is currently under review by the Islington Food Partnership and will be updated shortly.

⁸ <https://www.islington.gov.uk/recycling-and-rubbish/recycling/waste-reduction-and-recycling-plan-2018-2022>

⁹ https://www.islington.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/local_plan_review

¹⁰ <https://democracy.islington.gov.uk/documents/s23016/Progressive%20Procurement%20Strategy%202020-27%20-%20strategy%20document.pdf>

¹¹ <https://democracy.islington.gov.uk/documents/s23401/Transport%20Strategy%20-%20Appendix%20One%20Draft%20for%20Adoption.pdf>

¹²

<https://democracy.islington.gov.uk/Data/Executive/201307111930/Agenda/E1%20Housing%20asset%20management%20strategy%20app%201.pdf>

¹³

<https://democracy.islington.gov.uk/Data/Executive/200911191930/Agenda/Appx%20Food%20strategy.pdf>

Buildings

This section sets out how we will apply circular economy principles to how new and existing buildings are managed in Islington.

Our strategy for achieving net zero carbon makes it clear how important buildings are in the challenge ahead. 84% of scope 1 and 2 carbon emissions in Islington arise from building use. The way they are designed, built and used can have a substantial impact material and resource use and on overall carbon emissions.

Buildings can be thought of as 'material banks', storing large quantities of embedded carbon that can, if the building is designed in the right way, be harnessed for future use.

Local Plan

Boroughs can use their role in planning to influence and require developments to incorporate circular economy to reduce embodied carbon, reduce waste creation and keep materials in use for longer. The requirement for a Circular Economy Statement within the new London Plan only applies to large developments (140+ units) that need to be referred to the Mayor of London for decision. However, Islington Council will incorporate circular economy requirements into its new Local Plan. This will, in turn, drive more circular thinking in building design and use. This in turn will have wider benefits in relation to whole life cycle carbon emissions and drive more circular thinking.

Further details of how circular economy fits into our Local Planning policies can be found in the Planning section.

New Homes

Islington Council's Local Plan aims to meet and exceed its housing target of 7,750 homes by 2028/29, which equates to a target of 775 new homes per year. The council's New Homes programme helps meet this target by aiming to build 550 new genuinely affordable council homes by 2022, mainly by developing small infill sites and increasing residential density on existing sites in the borough.

Our New Homes Design Guide will set out guidance and standards for these new homes, and specifically circular economy principles to be included in the design, build and use of the buildings. These include a 'layering approach' to design, with the aim of:

- designing out waste – ensuring that waste reduction is planned in from project inception to completion, including consideration of standardised components, modular build and re-use of secondary products and materials
- designing for longevity
- designing for adaptability or flexibility
- designing for disassembly
- using systems, elements or materials that can be re-used and recycled, wherever possible.

Circularity will be measured using performance indicators based on the London Plan and Local Plan.

Site waste reduction and specific targets for re-used and recycled content in materials specified for our new buildings will also be required. And our guidance for new build design

and build contracts will also include tougher targets for waste reduction, reuse and recycling during the construction phase.

Case study | Vorley Road

We are demonstrating our commitment to circular economy in new homes through our demonstrator Vorley Road development.

Vorley Road is residential development at a prominent junction near Archway station. The residential buildings are targeting Passivhaus standard to keep operational energy to an absolute minimum.

As part of the development process, a circular economy statement was developed and submitted. The statement addresses circularity in construction by looking at three main themes:

- Material selection – how can the development achieve its purpose with the least impact?
- Adaptability and flexibility – how can the development evolve throughout its lifetime and change to suit changing environments and occupation?
- Design for deconstruction – what will happen to the development when it is no longer meeting the requirements of the community?

Within this, the circular economy approach has looked at the site from two viewpoints:

- What's already there, undertaking an in-depth, pre-demolition audit with circularity being a focus; and
- Maximising material and resource recovery from materials on site and being creative about opportunities.

What will be added:

- Design out waste though a considered approach to construction.
- Sourcing low-impact materials, high in recycled content and low embodied components.
- A no excuses policy for household recycling.
- Develop clear maintenance strategy and programme for maintenance and elemental replacement.

The Vorley Road PassivHaus project is expected to be completed in 2025.

('Vorley Road Circular Economy Statement', May 2021, Etude on behalf of Islington Council)

Islington Council's buildings

Islington Council manages a portfolio of over 1000 non-residential assets ranging from substations to the Town Hall and including offices, schools, operational depots, parks and leisure facilities.

As part of the move to a Corporate Landlord model, a new Asset Management Strategy will be prepared. This will ensure that the overarching strategy for our built estate aligns with the councils' strategies including sustainability.

As we move towards a new post-Covid future of changed work patterns, we have an opportunity to rethink how we use and manage our portfolio of properties. Islington is reviewing its strategy for managing these properties, and one of the core principles will be

to ensure we do what we can through this process to support our net zero carbon ambitions and to apply circular economy principles wherever practical.

Each property will have a defined asset management plan to ensure that the building is not only fit for purpose but when opportunities arise sustainability and the circular economy are included as primary objectives. This could include considerations such as:

- whether an asset is being used in the most resource efficient way;
- whether under-used assets could be offered for short term leases to, for example, community groups or for projects that support the local circular economy;
- maximising reuse and repair and the use of recycled and recyclable products in refurbishment projects, or;
- ensuring flexibility of use and longevity are built into space and asset design and use.

In any project, sustainability issues will form a key foundation, along with health and safety, financial viability and future proofing flexibility.

We will integrate circular economy principles into the design and decision making process for the refurbishment of our council facilities, as and when they arise, focussing on maximising reuse and repair and the use of recycled and recyclable products in refurbishment projects, and ensuring flexibility of use and longevity are built into space and asset design and use.

Case study | ReLondon creates a Circular Office by design

- The former ReLondon office in Shoreditch is a great working environment that showcases circular economy principles, bringing together best practice and new innovations, delivered for the same price as a traditional low spec fit-out.
- The brief was to retain items, use refurbished and recycled materials and to consider open source design or leasing where appropriate. This meant understanding what would happen to items at the end of their life too. It also provided an ideal opportunity to showcase some of the innovative circular businesses that are part of ReLondon's business support programme.
- ReLondon carried out a detailed review of existing materials and their condition and retained and re-used as much as possible including carpets, to blinds, kitchen cabinets and network cabling.
- Where new materials were needed these were procured based on circular principles and to complete the story, Circular Office operation was considered too. This includes food waste collections, flexible working (75% desk ratio), flip-top desks (flexible event space), an eco-cleaning contract and organic milk delivery in re-usable glass bottles.
- (Edited from 'The Circular Office Guide', The Prince's Responsible Business Network)

Transport

This section sets out how we will incorporate circular economy into the way we manage our own fleet.

Islington Council's fleet

We are applying circular economy principles to our Council fleet and are leading the way in converting existing diesel powered vehicle to electric. This approach makes maximum use of the embedded resources in our existing fleet by retaining these resources and extending the lifespan of the vehicle.

In October 2021, Islington took delivery of England's first retrofitted split body heavy goods recycling vehicle. By retrofitting this vehicle, its expected lifespan has been extended by some five years, substantially reducing the resource impact of this vehicle's disposal.

Our second retrofitted electric RCV is already in production, and we will are committed to retrofitting at least eight more REVs over the next two years.

We will apply circular economy principles to our fleet replacement programme by ensuring that retrofit is prioritised.

Where possible we are also avoiding the use of vehicles altogether, both by running more efficient services and using bikes, ebikes and cargo bikes for a range of services instead of cars and vans.

In addition to this, the council is already committed to switching from fossil fuelled vehicles to electric, zero tailpipe emission vehicles and to reducing the overall resource impact of our fleet. We have already taken delivery of our first two fully electric refuse collection vehicles and number of fully electric smaller 'caged tipper' refuse collection vehicles, as well as trialling a range of other innovative emissions reducing ideas and technologies. For example at the Town Hall, electric council vehicles are charged up ready for use and at the end of the working day and are plugged back into the grid to discharge, enabling the Town Hall to be powered directly from the vehicle batteries.

We are committed to phasing out all fossil fuelled vehicles by 2030 and to support this, we are investing over £1.5m in providing electrical charging infrastructure at our main and sub-depots to support the move to a zero tailpipe emissions fleet.

Local Economy

This section sets out how circular economy principles will be embedded into how we support our local economy.

A circular economy brings a range of economic benefits, from improved resource security at a larger scale, through to new economic and employment opportunities at the local scale. Innovation, improved resource efficiency, better customer offers and increased levels of materials reuse, remanufacture and recycling can all drive job creation and economic growth.

Local Economy Strategies and Community Wealth Building

We are embedding circular economy principles within our Local Economy Strategies and Community Wealth Building strategy.

Our Local Economy Strategies (LESs) outline the different issues and identify the different needs of the various town centres and economic clusters in the borough and recommend tailored approaches to strengthening local economies in these areas. Underneath this, clearly defined performance indicators are included in LES implementation plans, providing clear objectives for local economy officers to work towards.

A Green Economy Officer will be responsible for promoting the circular economy and other environmental initiatives, within the Local Economy Team, equipping officers with the right knowledge and tools to promote the circular economy to local businesses and residents and increase uptake of initiatives.

As our circular economy agenda evolves, we will embed circular economy principles and objectives will in LESs across the borough, ensuring it is effectively promoted and local people and businesses can benefit.

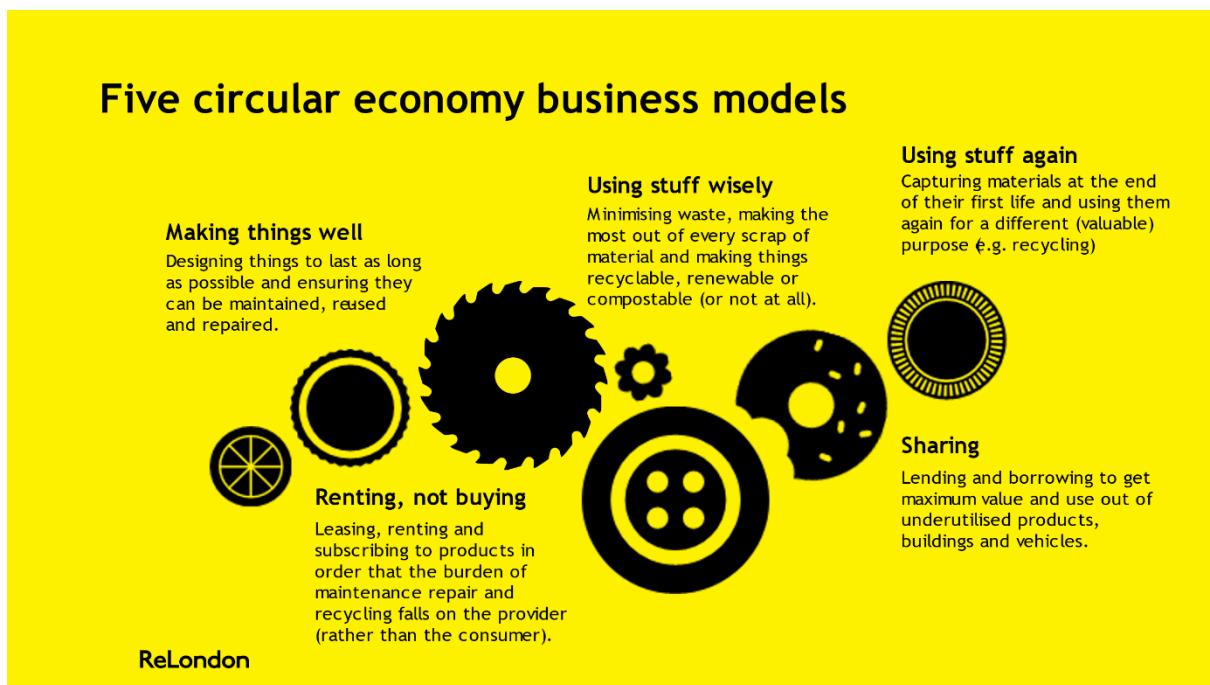


Figure 5 The five circular economy business models, ReLondon, www.relondon.gov.uk

Community wealth building is a people-centred approach to local economic development. At its core, it is about redirecting, retaining, and circulating wealth in the local economy, to maximise benefits to local people.

Islington's community wealth building approach is embedded in our 'Fairer Islington' agenda, seeking to ensure that economic, social and environmental justice sit at the heart of all of our support across the borough.

The council applies the community wealth building approach through four key themes:

Local People: Improving the quality of life for Islington residents, where people are supported into and progress in meaningful, well-paid jobs, and have affordable access to goods and services.

We aim to make it easier for local people and businesses to apply circular economy principles into their everyday lives and feel the benefit.

Local Businesses: Targeted support for local high streets and businesses, ensuring locally-rooted economies can thrive.

Adoption of circular economy principles presents new opportunities amongst our business community for innovation and progression

Local Wealth: Supporting local businesses and strengthening local supply chains, ensuring wealth is circulated within the borough and fairly shared.

We will aim to identify opportunities to reuse materials, reduce waste, and save money for local communities and businesses

Local Place: Making Islington a place that is healthy, well-connected, and safe through inclusive planning and urban design.

We will work closely with the planning policy team, informing and influencing to ensure circular economy is incorporated into future planning policy.

Circular Economy business support

Islington Council is committed to providing targeted practical and resource-based support to businesses in Islington wanting to transition to more circular business models. **We will provide advice and support to SMEs wishing to become more sustainable**, and help businesses to access other sources of support including from ReLondon's business support service.

To back this commitment up, **we will launch a circular economy grant fund for Islington SMEs** by April 2022, supported by £200k of Covid recovery funding.

Lessons learnt from this, and from ReLondon's engagement with SME's in Islington and elsewhere will be used to inform future strategy and help us understand how we can empower Islington residents and businesses to adopt circular economy practices, and how we can effectively embed it in our wider community wealth building strategy.

ISEP and Sustainability Awards

Islington Sustainable Energy Partnership (ISEP) is a network for organisations in the borough who want to reduce energy costs, cut carbon emissions and manage their environmental impacts. They promote sharing and learning between energy and

sustainability professionals, provide advice, events and resources and help members get involved in local community projects. They currently have 60 members, some of whose core activities involve waste management and circular economy projects. **We will work with our ISEP to raise awareness of the circular economy, to share best practice from around Islington and to increase membership of ISEP amongst the Islington business community.**

Islington Council, through ISEP and in partnership with the Camden Climate Change Alliance, hosts a sustainability awards event celebrating achievements of businesses, community organisations and schools, who are leading the way in the delivery of sustainable services and products. **We will celebrate the best circular economy practices by reflecting circular economy within a specific award category.** We aim to host this event again in 2022.

Progressive Procurement Policy

Vision 2030 highlights the importance of procurement in reducing carbon emissions:

"By changing the way we procure goods and services, we can use our collective leverage to incentivise change and enable innovation. By introducing Social Value as a meaningful criterion in our commissioning decisions, we will be able to encourage responsible business practices in regards to carbon emissions."

Our Progressive Procurement Strategy was approved in October 2020. The policy introduces the concept of 'social value' into Islington's contracts which includes 'ensuring our definition of social value embraces our response to the climate emergency, embedding targets to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2030 across all relevant contracts'.

The strategy states that 'through active leadership and progressive supply partnerships, the council's supply chain needs to help maximise economic, social and environmental benefits for its local communities' and that social value will be achieved by (among other actions) 'driving sustainability through our supply chain to reduce waste, particularly single use plastic and food waste, develop a circular economy and support our goal of becoming carbon neutral by 2030 for example limiting energy consumption'.

Procurement based on circular economy principles can mean purchasing goods as a service, through rental or leasing models, ensuring goods are designed for longevity, repair, disassembly and recycling, or are made in a way that designs out waste from the manufacturing process.

We will build circular economy principles into our concept of social value as part of our progressive procurement strategy.

To support circular economy principles through our procurement, **we will identify where procurement of targeted high spend and high embedded carbon items can be focussed around circular economy principles.**

We will identify opportunities for new circular economy procurement models, such as leasing rather than purchasing to enable ownership of products, and therefore responsibility for product lifespan, repair and disposal to be retained by the manufacturer.

We will encourage potential suppliers to work together with us on achieving best practice and innovation in the application of circular economy in achieving social value through procurement and we will develop and publish advice and guidance and work with potential

suppliers to help them to understand the objectives of our progressive procurement policy, including, where appropriate, circular economy principles.

Planning

This section sets out how our local planning policies are incorporating circular economy principles and requirements.

A circular economy requires planning, and Islington Council's Local Plan sets out a range of policies that will influence and drive the nature of development in Islington over the coming years. By embedding circular economy principles into local planning policy, Local Authorities can ensure building development is more circular in nature, reducing materials and resource use, material transportation and disposal, and retaining embedded carbon within existing building infrastructure.

Islington Council's draft Local Plan

Our new Local Plan¹⁴ will include policies to ensure that all developments adopt a circular economy approach to design and construction and that recycling is enabled and encouraged for occupants. This will be achieved through a number of policies including:

- Policy S3 which sets out sustainable design standards for developments. As part of these requirements developments are required to set out how they have considered environmental impacts from construction materials and the responsible sourcing of materials.
- Policy S10 sets out how all developments must adopt a circular economy approach to building design and construction in order to keep products and materials in use for as long as possible and to minimise construction waste. The policy also sets out how building design should enable deconstruction to ensure the maximum value of materials can be recovered and materials re-used or recycled. A minimum 10% of the total value of materials used in the construction of both major and minor developments should derive from recycled and reused content in the products and materials selected. Developments are required to provide an Adaptive Design Strategy to set out how a circular economy approach has been achieved.
- Policy ST2 requires development proposals to provide waste and recycling facilities, including high quality storage and collection systems which are designed to help support people recycle.
- Policy H4 as part of delivering high quality housing requires consideration to be given to how recycling and waste will be stored, collected and managed, especially in flats. To achieve this proposals should show how separate storage (within suitable containers) of food waste, mixed dry recycling and any non-recyclable waste can be accommodated within the home. This is in recognition of the fact that effective segregation of recyclable materials and high recycling rates are dependent on the provision of convenient, well designed facilities both within the home and in common areas.

Our local planning policies are complemented by planning policies in the London Plan which also requires development proposals to take into account circular economy principles. This includes a requirement for major applications that are referable to the Mayor for decision (those for 140 or more units) to provide a Circular Economy Statement. This will include setting out how performance against circular economy objectives will be monitored and reported.

¹⁴ https://www.islington.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/local_plan_review

Vision 2030 commits us to delivering an Islington Zero Carbon Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The SPD will provide detailed guidance to supplement the policies in the new Local Plan once it is adopted. It will address a range of topics including providing examples of best practice and detailed criteria for allowing energy efficiency measures on historic buildings (such as solar panels, double glazing) and will explore relevant links to the circular economy.

Space for recycling

For residents to be able to effectively separate out their recyclable waste for recycling, they need the space to be able to do it. Research shows this is one of the key reasons residents don't recycle.

We already have robust guidance to ensure that new developments provide sufficient space for recycling in new developments. The draft new Local Plan reinforces this requirement, ensuring that new developments provide space both within the home for segregation of recycling, as well as in communal bin areas.

We will update this guidance (for recycling storage space) as appropriate to ensure it is robust and effective.

Waste Reduction, Reuse and Recycling

This section sets out how we will encourage a circular economy through sharing, reuse, repair and recycling.

Reducing material and resource consumption is central to the circular economy. Recycling and reuse services can support this through the collection of quality materials, and through reuse, or recycling and composting at local facilities into new products that are themselves, recyclable.

Reuse and Recycling Centre

Our Reuse and Recycling centre in Hornsey Street is conveniently located at the centre of Islington. Operated by London Energy Limited under contract to NLWA, the centre recycles around 70% of everything that's brought to the site. A pedestrian drop off facility at the Hornsey Street entrance enables a wide range of materials to also be dropped off by pedestrians and cyclists.

Despite the high recycling rates, we are keen to explore how the material brought to the site can be managed in a more circular way. For example, reusable furniture is already kept aside and collected for resale in one of two different reuse shops. We will work with the NLWA to enable additional material streams to be collected for reuse or recycling at the site and for other materials to be provided to more local, sustainable outlets.

We will investigate expanding our bulky waste collection and bulky reuse collection services to collect a wider range of recyclable materials, in effect providing a mobile reuse and recycling centre service for recyclable and reusable material streams.

Islington Council's commercial recycling and waste service

Our commercial recycling and waste service offers the same high quality recycling service to businesses as we do to our residents, with the same assurances about the end destinations. We are committed to offering recycling services for a range of materials, including food waste, at competitive prices and with arrangements to suit the needs of businesses.

Our commercial recycling and waste service will offer advice on recycling solutions and ideas to meet business needs while also helping the environment.

It aims to:

- Be the greenest in London
- Send no waste to landfill
- Be competitively priced

To achieve this we will develop a business case for expanding our commercial recycling and waste service.

Waste electrical and electronic equipment

Domestic digital equipment

Islington Council offers opportunities for the recycling of laptops and mobile phones at its reuse and recycling centre, network of small electrical recycling points and collections from homes. However, these items are often suitable for refurbishment and reuse. Many charities offer take back options for mobile phones, and organisations such as Mer-IT will accept a range of devices for refurbishment and use in training, or for donation.

The Repair Directory, managed by the Restart Project with support from NLWA lists businesses and organisation that can repair electrical items. We will work to support this important project, raise awareness of it, and to ensure any businesses in Islington that can offer a repair service for electrical items is listed on the directory.

We also host a number of recycling points for small electrical items to be recycled, as well as offering a free home collection service through NLWA. There are currently six such sites in Islington, as well as the reuse and recycling centre, but this doesn't provide all residents with easy access to these facilities, so we will provide additional sites for recycling small electrical items in convenient locations.

Right to repair

Many devices are disposed of because they have minor faults or as a result of built in obsolescence. At present, some manufacturers actively prevent device repair through design and warranty clauses. We support the right for consumers to repair the goods they own and while the government is to pass a 'right to repair' law, we will encourage the government to go further in giving consumers greater rights to enable them to repair their own devices.

White goods

When goods such as fridges and freezers are purchased by the customer, the responsibility for the product on the producer of the product ends. Responsibility for maintenance and disposal at the products end of life falls with the consumer. This provides the producer with very little responsibility for extending the life of the product. In fact, ensuring that product has a limited lifespan creates demand for new products.

By purchasing goods as a service, or by entering into rental or leasing arrangements, the responsibility for extending the product life, and for responsible disposal by reuse, repair or recycling falls with the producer.

The cost of these goods, and especially the unexpected cost of renewal or repair can be significant and, just as the rental of good quality properties can provide residents with an affordable home, a similar principle applied to goods within the home can equally benefit the occupant.

We will explore providing residents in our rented council homes a rental service for quality items such as white goods to protect them from financial uncertainty resulting from product failure.

Incentivising the circular economy through VAT

Repairing domestic goods is often more expensive than buying new goods, exacerbating the linear economy and pricing out more sustainable, circular alternatives. Reducing the level of VAT charged for home repairs and professionally repaired goods would help to stimulate demand for these services. Similarly, VAT is charged on building refurbishment whereas no VAT is charged on new build. **We will therefore actively support demands for government to zero rate VAT on repairs and refurbishments¹⁵.**

¹⁵ Green Alliance Added value: improving the environmental and social impact of UK VAT (green-alliance.org.uk) https://green-alliance.org.uk/added_value.php

Encourage and enable the sharing economy

Library of Things

We have opened Islington's first 'Libraries of Things' this year. A library of things is a place where local residents can save money by affordably renting out things like drills and sewing machines, items that are widely owned but seldom used. This supports the sharing economy in Islington and reduces the carbon impact from product consumption.

Islington's Library of Things is a partnership with Library of Things Ltd and Bright Sparks, a reuse and repair shop in Finsbury Park.

And of course, Islington's network of book libraries provides the straightforward service of enabling our residents to borrow and share books rather than purchasing.

We will identify opportunities for opening additional 'Libraries of Things' in Islington, and whether the service can be more closely aligned with Islington's libraries service.

However, there are many opportunities for unwanted items to be shared, swapped or sold online or taken to local charity shops and we will support the use of these sites, especially to residents requesting our bulky waste collection services.

We will support local, informal exchange ideas, such as 'thing exchanges' 'little free libraries', give and take days and jumble trails that can not only reduce waste, but encourage community engagement, through our communications channels, helping to identify and access funding sources, advice, and guidance.

Bright Sparks

Islington set up Bright Sparks in 2010 and it has grown to become a successful and independent reuse organisation. Islington continues to support Bright Sparks through facilities support, through its Resident Support Scheme partnership and through its furniture reuse collection service. We will work in partnership with Bright Sparks and similar organisations to develop and bring forward further opportunities for repair and reuse in Islington.

Refill

We have promoted the use of reusable, refillable water bottles through the Refill App, encouraging businesses to sign up to enable residents to refill their water bottles in cafes and bars, as well as by installing free water fountains across Islington. We will continue to encourage the use of refill opportunities. Islington works closely with our local market businesses through our Town Centre managers and we will work with food retailers in Islington markets to use refillable food containers and will trial the use of refillable food containers for takeaway meals.

Food

Changing our food system to one based on the principles of the circular economy is one of the most powerful things we can do to fight climate change and restore biodiversity¹⁶. One third of food produced globally is thrown away, including 6.6 million tonnes each year in the UK, while 30% of global greenhouse emissions come from food production. By reducing the

¹⁶ <https://ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/topics/food/overview>

amount of food wasted, and by redistributing surplus food we can make a significant impact on global CO2 emissions.

But we also need to work towards a food system that helps to support the natural cycle of regeneration, where natural 'waste' is used to restore and regenerate nature, and to support food growing.

Islington's Food Strategy

The Islington Food Strategy was launched in 2010 supported by a steering group of members from the Islington Council, Voluntary and Community Sector partners, NHS, Sustain, City University and local businesses with an independent chair. The framework was supported by an action plan, revised every 3 years and included actions relating to sustainable food, ethical food, food growing and food waste reduction.

In 2017 it became apparent that more in depth work was required in relation to the actions around affordable and accessible food (i.e. food poverty). A needs assessment was undertaken in late 2017 and the steering group agreed to focus on food poverty for a 3 year period from 2019 to 2022 whilst retaining the remaining objective.

A Food Poverty Strategy¹⁷ and action plan were launched and the Islington Food Poverty Alliance (IFPA) was formed. The IFPA is now called the Islington Food Partnership (IFP) in recognition of the fact that the Food Strategy's core objectives remain a priority. IFP have committed to review and refresh the Islington Food strategy, mirroring actions of our partners in the wider south east of England food community. This process will take place throughout 2022 with a view to a full launch early 2023. The initial public consultation took place in October 2021 in tandem with our application for Sustainable Food Places (formerly known as Sustainable Food Cities) Bronze Award.

We will work within the IFP to incorporate circular economy principles of food waste reduction, surplus food redistribution and the use of food waste for soil regeneration into the new Islington Food Strategy.

A call to action

We will support calls to action issued by the NLWA, welcoming Environment Bill proposals and calling on government to take dynamic and substantial action on reducing waste. This includes specific measures to boost the circular economy including

- Supporting the Right to Repair campaign and embedding a 'right to repair' into consumer product markets.
- Measures to extend product life, such as availability of spare parts, repair services and eco-friendly upgrade opportunities
- Fiscal measures such as modulated VAT rates on products to nudge producer and consumer choices

Producer Responsibility

The government have recently consulted on proposals to bring in a Deposit Return Scheme¹⁸ on drinks containers, and to extend producer responsibility¹⁹ on packaging, so that the

¹⁷ https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/islington_food_poverty_action_plan_2019-2022.pdf

¹⁸ <https://consult.defra.gov.uk/environment/consultation-on-introducing-a-drs/>

¹⁹ <https://consult.defra.gov.uk/extended-producer-responsibility/extended-producer-responsibility-for-packaging/>

manufacturers of goods contribute the full cost of the collection and disposal of the goods they produce or import. Islington has responded positively to these consultations as an important step in moving towards a more circular economy. However, we would urge the government to progress this and other proposals that drive more circular resource use, including applying the extended producer responsibility principle to other products, including mattresses, textiles and electrical goods, as well as ensuring proposals support reuse over recycling wherever practicable.

Communications and Engagement

This section set out how Circular Economy messaging will form a core element of general net zero carbon communications and engagement activity.

Vision 2030 states:

"Although the council has a leading role in delivering carbon emissions in Islington, we cannot deliver on the net zero carbon target on our own. We will need to work closely with residents and local businesses and community groups to enable and encourage them to help our borough achieve net zero."

To move towards a circular economy, we are relying on residents, businesses, staff and other stakeholders to take action and we will actively engage and communicate with them to help make this happen. We will raise awareness and understanding of the circular economy and how it applies to what Islington Council does and the services we provide, among our staff. We will do this through information sharing, targeted expert advice and guidance and bespoke training where appropriate. And we will train our Net Zero Carbon Champions in Circular Economy Principles whilst offering a Circular Economy Training module to all staff as part of their environmental awareness training.

We will also need to raise awareness among residents and businesses of the importance and impact of reducing consumption based emissions and taking positive action to reduce the environmental impact of their behaviour.

Promoting and encouraging engagement with the circular economy will be a key topic within overall net zero carbon and corporate communications and engagement plans currently in development. We will seek to reach all sections of our diverse communities to engage with the issue.

We will align with existing local and national campaigns or other council-created campaigns at key intervals throughout the year, such as Circular Economy Week, London Repair Week and National Recycling Week.

Bespoke communications will also be developed to support behaviour change projects among target groups.

Islington Council's anchor institutions

Anchor institutions are typically large, locally rooted organisations that are here to stay. They employ a lot people, wield significant purchasing power and own or manage buildings and land. The way they do each of these things makes a significant difference to local communities.

Anchor institutions have a fundamental role to play in shaping Islington's future, generating more opportunities and wealth for local people and businesses and creating a fairer borough.

Islington's economy features a number of businesses able to individually function as anchor institutions, and we have two strong BIDs with the potential to function as 'mini networks' with a collectively important impact.

Size is not everything. Many local community organisations fulfil a vital role as 'community anchors', equally being here to stay and connecting local communities to support and opportunity.

Islington is developing an 'Anchor Institutions Network', bringing together like minded, locally rooted organisations to help build a fairer and more inclusive place, and this provides a great opportunity for exploring circular economy ideas and practices, particularly around awareness and understanding of the circular economy among their own staff, their procurement practices and management of their assets.

We will engage with Islington's anchor institutions to encourage and promote circular economy practices focussing on awareness and understanding of the circular economy among their own staff, their procurement practices and management of their assets.

Community Centres and groups

Islington has a vibrant and active network of community centres and community groups.

We will work with Octopus and the community centres in Islington to provide specific recycling opportunities for residents and to take part in community events. Many of the Adult Community Centres' courses take place in community centres and we would like to build on this partnership to support food growing and community composting, hosting community events that promote reuse and repair, and to provide greater opportunities for residents to recycle and reuse.

Adult learning and education

We recognise that key to achieving a circular economy is to help our residents to have the skills and knowledge to enable them to take action, whether this is by having a better understanding of what the circular economy means or of what actions can have an impact, or having the skills to enable them to take action.

Our Adult Community Learning (ACL) service works with colleagues and community centres to provide skills and training in a wide range of areas. For example, we offer family kitchen courses, helping families and children to cook and eat healthy meals together and at the same time, understanding how to avoid food waste.

ACL are also working closely with Fashion Enter, our affordable workspace partner to help residents develop sewing skills to enable them to alter, mend and make clothes –and in turn to encourage more sustainable fashion

Our DIY for Women course helps to provide the skills to enable women to make repairs and fix things that might otherwise be thrown away. Surveys show that women are less likely to feel confident carrying out repairs than men and these course aim to try to overcome this inequality.

Materials for our family learning courses are reused, and we are developing a cycle maintenance course.

There is an opportunity to integrate circular economy into many of the courses that we provide and **we will provide a range of adult learning course content to support the circular economy**, including reducing food waste and reducing the waste of consumer goods through repair and DIY, as well as broader courses on the circular economy and its role in reducing climate change.

In our Joinery Workshop and Training Facility on the Bush Industrial Estate we carry out repairs and maintenance to support our housing repairs service, with the focus on repairing existing fixtures and fittings rather than replacing with new. However, this facility is so much more than a repairs workshop.

We're providing training and apprenticeship opportunities for local residents, school leavers and school children, and care leavers, helping residents to gain valuable life skills to enable them to repair things that might otherwise be thrown away and to avoid waste in the first place.

In addition to training, it is important to have the opportunity to put skills into practice. Makerspaces are community based workshops where residents can go and use professional equipment to make, mend and meet. Again we are already exploring this idea through our partnership with Fashion Enter and will be opening our Designer Workspace in Finsbury Park in autumn 2021. **We will research the viability, business case and benefits of developing and creating other makerspaces in Islington.**

While our housing repairs service provides a valuable service to residents, many of the services they provide could potentially be carried out by residents themselves if they had the knowledge and skills to do so. By providing simple advice and guidance at the start of tenancy, the need for housing maintenance support could potentially be reduced. **We will explore how we can provide our housing tenants with more skills to carry out simple repairs and maintenance.**

Summary Action Plan

Action (click on the heading or action to go straight to that section)	Target date	Lead team	Funding implications
Buildings			
We will integrate circular economy principles into our own New Homes Design Guide for new Islington Council homes. These principles will include <ul style="list-style-type: none">• designing out waste• designing for longevity• designing for adaptability or flexibility• designing for disassembly using systems, elements or materials that can be re-used and recycled	March 2022	Housing New Build	None
We will integrate circular economy principles into the way we manage and refurbish our council-owned non-domestic properties through a new Asset Management Strategy that will aim to maximise asset longevity, flexibility and local community benefit.	September 2022	Property Services	None required for strategy development.
Transport			
We will retrofit at least ten refuse collection vehicles.	March 2024	Corporate Fleet	None
Local Economy			
We will provide advice and support to local SMEs wishing to become more sustainable and develop circular business initiatives.	March 2022	Inclusive economy and jobs	None
We will launch a circular economy grant fund for SMEs as part of our business recovery funding programme, helping businesses 'build back differently' after the Covid 19 pandemic.	March 2022	Inclusive economy and jobs	£200k budget approved

Action (click on the heading or action to go straight to that section)	Target date	Lead team	Funding implications
We will work with our ISEP to raise awareness of the circular economy, to share best practice from around Islington and to increase membership of ISEP amongst the Islington business community.	March 2023	Energy, sustainability and consulting	None
We will celebrate the best circular economy practices at the Islington Sustainability Awards by reflecting circular economy within the award categories.	March 2023	Energy, sustainability and consulting	None
We will build circular economy into our progressive procurement policy, for example through procuring 'products as services' or ensuring product longevity and circular design.	March 2022	Procurement and supply	None
We will identify where procurement of targeted high spend and high embedded carbon items can be focussed around circular economy principles.	March 2023	Procurement and supply and Recycling	None
We will identify opportunities for new circular economy procurement models, such as leasing rather than purchasing.	March 2024	Procurement and supply and Recycling	None
We will develop and publish advice and guidance and work with potential suppliers to help them to understand the objectives of our progressive procurement policy, including, where appropriate, circular economy principles.	March 2023	Procurement and supply and Recycling	None
We will encourage potential suppliers to work together with us on achieving best practice and innovation in the application of circular economy in achieving social value through procurement.	March 2023	Procurement and supply and Recycling	None
Planning			

Action (click on the heading or action to go straight to that section)	Target date	Lead team	Funding implications
Our new Local Plan will include policies to ensure that all developments adopt a circular economy approach to design and construction, such as keeping materials in use for longer, designing for deconstruction and recovery of material value, and minimising construction waste.	September 2022	Planning policy	None
Our new Local Plan will include policies to ensure that recycling is enabled and encouraged for occupants.	September 2022	Planning policy	None
We will require Circular Economy Statements for planning applications that are referable to the Mayor, consistent with London Plan policy and guidance. This will include setting out how performance against circular economy objectives will be monitored and reported.	January 2022	Planning policy	None
We will update our recycling and waste storage space guidance for new developments, as appropriate, to ensure it is robust and effective.	March 2023	Procurement and supply & Recycling	None
We will encourage developers and architects to work together with us on achieving best practice and innovation in the application of circular economy approaches.	March 2024	Planning policy & Recycling	None
Waste Reduction, Reuse and Recycling			
We will work with the NLWA to identify opportunities for additional material streams to be collected for reuse or recycling at the reuse and recycling centre and for materials to be made available to more local, sustainable outlets.	March 2023	Recycling	None
We will investigate expanding our bulky waste collection and bulky reuse collection services to collect a wider range of recyclable materials.	March 2023	Recycling	Potential funding implications, to be assessed

Action (click on the heading or action to go straight to that section)	Target date	Lead team	Funding implications
<p>Our commercial recycling and waste service will offer advice on recycling solutions and ideas to meet business needs while also helping the environment.</p> <p>It aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be the greenest in London • Send no waste to landfill • Be competitively priced <p>To achieve this we will develop a business case for expanding our commercial recycling and waste service.</p>	March 2023	Commercial recycling and waste	Under review
We will actively support digital repair by promoting repair directories.	March 2023	Strategic Communications / Recycling	None
We will provide additional sites for recycling small electrical items in convenient locations.	March 2023	Recycling	None
We will encourage the government to give consumers greater rights to enable them to repair their own devices.	March 2022	Recycling	None
We will explore providing residents in our rented council homes a rental service for quality items such as white goods to protect them from financial uncertainty resulting from product failure.	March 2023	Recycling & Targeted tenant services	None
We will actively support demands for government to zero rate VAT on repairs and refurbishments.	March 2022	Recycling	None
We will identify opportunities for opening additional 'Libraries of Things' in Islington, and whether the service can be more closely aligned with Islington's book libraries service.	March 2023	Recycling	None

Action (click on the heading or action to go straight to that section)	Target date	Lead team	Funding implications
We will support the use of online reuse sites and apps, both for food sharing, and especially to residents requesting our bulky waste collection services.	March 2024	Strategic Communications / Recycling	None
We will support local, community based exchange ideas and networks, through communications, help accessing funding and through advice.	March 2024	Recycling	None
We will work in partnership with Bright Sparks and similar organisations to develop further opportunities for repair and reuse in Islington.	March 2024	Recycling	Support to be assessed case by case
We will trial the use of refillable food containers for takeaway meals.	March 2023	Environmental Pollution / Recycling	Support to be assessed case by case
We will work within the Islington Food Partnership to incorporate circular economy principles of food waste reduction, surplus food redistribution and the use of food waste for soil regeneration into the new Islington Food Strategy.	September 2023	Environmental Health and Recycling	None
We would urge the government to progress this and other proposals that drive more circular resource use, including applying the extended producer responsibility principle to other products, including mattresses, textiles and electrical goods, as well as ensuring proposals support reuse over recycling wherever practicable.	March 2022	Recycling	None
Communications and Engagement			
We will embed circular economy messaging in our net zero carbon and corporate communications and engagement activity, focussing on raising awareness and understanding of circular economy among our staff, and consumption related behaviour change among residents and businesses.	March 2024	Strategic communications	None

Action (click on the heading or action to go straight to that section)	Target date	Lead team	Funding implications
We will engage with Islington's 'anchor institutions' to encourage and promote circular economy practices, focussing on awareness and understanding of the circular economy among their own staff, their procurement practices and management of their assets.	March 2023	Inclusive economy and jobs	None
We will work with Octopus and the community centres in Islington to provide specific recycling opportunities for residents and to take part in community events.	March 2022	Recycling	None
We will provide a range of adult learning course content to support the circular economy, such as how to reduce food waste, DIY and repair, or on the circular economy principles.	March 2023	Community learning and libraries	None
We will research the viability, business case and benefits of developing and creating other makerspaces in Islington.	March 2023	Inclusive economy and jobs	Support to be assessed case by case
We will explore how we can provide our housing tenants with more skills to carry out simple repairs and maintenance	March 2023	Property Services	None
We will urge the government to progress extended producer responsibility to other materials and progress other proposals that drive more circular resource use.	March 2022	Recycling	None
We will continue to encourage residents, community groups and businesses to act to transition to a circular economy and to support Islington's net zero carbon target.	Ongoing	All teams	None

Appendix: National and regional policies and strategies

Nationally and regionally, there is a clear set of policies driving the move towards a more circular economy.

The Clean Growth Strategy 2017²⁰, states that 'We want the UK to become a world leader in terms of competitiveness, resource productivity and resource efficiency: maximising the value we extract from our resources, and minimising the negative environmental and carbon impacts associated with their extraction, use and disposal. We will work toward achieving zero avoidable waste²¹ by 2050.'

Industrial Strategy, Building a Britain fit for the future, 2017²² states that 'A linear 'take, make, dispose' economy risks eroding the natural capital central to its long-term growth through resource depletion and environmental pollution. We are committed to moving towards a more circular economy – to raising productivity by using resources more efficiently, to increasing resilience by contributing to a healthier environment, and to supporting long-term growth by regenerating our natural capital'.

Our Waste, Our Resources, A Strategy for England, 2018²³ includes commitments to work towards all plastic packaging placed on the market being recyclable, reusable or compostable by 2025, to double resource productivity by 2050 and to eliminate avoidable waste of all kinds by 2050.

In 2021, a series of government consultations were launched aimed at introducing a **Deposit Return Scheme²⁴**, **Extended Producer Responsibility²⁵** and **Consistency in Household and Business Recycling²⁶**. These have since been enacted within the **Environment Act 2021²⁷**.

At the European level, the **Circular Economy Action Plan²⁸** was published in March 2020 and forms part of the **European Green Deal²⁹**. In July 2020, the UK Government published its **Circular Economy Package policy statement³⁰** which states 'The UK is committed to moving towards a more circular economy which will see us keeping resources in use as long

²⁰

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/700496/clean-growth-strategy-correction-april-2018.pdf

²¹ The Strategy defines avoidable waste as waste that 'could have been reused or recycled; when a reusable or recyclable alternative could have been used instead; or when it could have been composted or biodegraded in the open environment'

²² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/industrial-strategy-building-a-britain-fit-for-the-future>

²³

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/765914/resources-waste-strategy-dec-2018.pdf

²⁴ <https://consult.defra.gov.uk/environment/consultation-on-introducing-a-drs/>

²⁵ <https://consult.defra.gov.uk/extended-producer-responsibility/extended-producer-responsibility-for-packaging/>

²⁶ <https://consult.defra.gov.uk/waste-and-recycling/consistency-in-household-and-business-recycling/>

²⁷ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/30/contents/enacted>

²⁸ https://ec.europa.eu/environment/strategy/circular-economy-action-plan_en

²⁹ https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal_en

³⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/circular-economy-package-policy-statement/circular-economy-package-policy-statement>

as possible, extracting maximum value from them, minimising waste and promoting resource efficiency.'

There is a clear policy framework in London supporting a transition to a circular economy, enabling and requiring London Councils to take their own initiatives, as set out below.

The **London Environment Strategy (LES) 2018**³¹ cites the Inclusion of a low carbon circular economy as one of four strategic approaches needed to tackle London's environmental challenges and requires that 'a low carbon circular economy must be linked to the Mayor's other strategies to ensure it is factored into decision making across London'. Objective 10 of the LEL deals with 'enabling the transition to a low carbon circular economy' and Under the GLA Act 1999 London waste authorities have to act in general conformity with the municipal waste provisions in the LES when undertaking their waste functions.

The **London Plan 2021**³² states that 'all cities must face up to the reality of climate change and the need to limit their future contribution to this major global problem... Creating a low carbon circular economy, in which the greatest possible value is extracted from resources before they become waste, is not only socially and environmentally responsible, but will save money and limit the likelihood of environmental threats affecting London's future.'

In November 2019 the **London Environment Directors' Network (LEDNet) and the Transport and Environment Committee (TEC)** issued a joint statement that identified six priority areas that boroughs will seek to prioritise and support delivery of, through meaningful collaboration with each other, wider partners, residents and the business community. One of these was to 'reduce consumption emissions by two thirds, focusing on food, clothing, electronics and aviation.'

Other London strategies supporting the circular economy include **Skills for Londoners 2018**³³, the **Greater London Authority Group Responsible Procurement Policy**³⁴ and the **London Food Strategy**³⁵.

³¹ <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/environment/london-environment-strategy>

³² <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/london-plan/new-london-plan/london-plan-2021>

³³ <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/skills-and-employment/skills-londoners/strategy-and-research>

³⁴ https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/gla_group_responsible_procurement_policy_2021.pdf

³⁵ https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/final_london_food_strategy.pdf

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