

MRWA Reuse Strategic Framework

Purpose and scope

This Framework sets out the Authority's strategic direction for reuse and provides a high-level overview of recent progress.

Its scope covers the reuse of household items, including initiatives to embed reuse behaviours, grow a reuse culture in our communities and make effective use of our site assets. It also identifies reuse outcomes to be supported by our Future Waste Services.

Strategic fit

National policy and legislation aims to drive decarbonisation and residual waste reduction through a stronger focus on prevention, reuse and recycling.

- The Climate Change Act 2008 - and extension of the UK Emissions Trading Scheme to waste - support the role of reuse in reducing carbon emissions.
- The Environment Act 2021 sets resource efficiency measures, while national targets aim to drive residual waste reduction and improve reuse and recycling performance.
- The forthcoming English Circular Economy Growth Plan is expected to build on Government's zero waste circular economy ambition.
- The Procurement Act 2023 places public benefit at the centre of procurement and provides authorities with greater flexibility to achieve social value outcomes.

The LCR Zero Waste Strategy aims to reduce residual waste as much as possible and drive a shift away from wasteful behaviours. Underlying this, the MRWA Zero Waste Strategy includes a Reuse Focus and aims to embed a reuse and repair culture by:

- Understanding reuse attitudes and changing behaviours.
- Developing a Reuse Network.
- Working with our partners to grow reuse, including community organisations who have valuable local knowledge, relationships and experience.
- Understanding the options for developing Hubs as focal points for reuse in the community.
- Making reuse easier through improved services and infrastructure.
- Embedding reuse into our Future Waste Services.
- Developing new methods to measure and monitor the impact of expanded reuse.

Both Strategies are founded on the People, Planet and Economy benefits of zero waste action and recognise the significant social value available from growing reuse.

Where we are now

The Authority's Behaviour Change Programme has built up our focus on reuse in recent years through trialling and scaling up successful initiatives. In 2025/26, over £160,000 was allocated to MRWA commissioned reuse projects and our first large-scale reuse campaign.

- Projects ranged from textiles repair, school uniform banks and promotion of reusable sanitary products, nappies and wipes.
- MRWA supported local 'Library of Things' initiatives providing affordable access to products on a lending basis, helping residents save money and minimise their environmental impact.
- MRWA expanded its involvement in National Repair Week and developed a range of reuse and repair videos to spotlight local reuse community organisations.
- The 'Find Your Re-Purpose' campaign highlights how reuse benefits people and their communities. Across two phases it aims to raise awareness, shape beliefs and support residents to adopt positive reuse habits.
- MRWA continued to develop its 'Choose to Reuse' campaign targeting consumer choices in the run-up to Christmas.

A review of the Zero Waste Community Fund has aligned it to the MRWA Zero Waste Strategy, ensuring the annual £165,000 investment increasingly supports reuse. The Fund continues to deliver value, with the 2024/25 round achieving a return on investment of £4.77 for every pound spent.

Our Waste Management and Recycling Contract (WMRC) expires in 2029 and there are limited opportunities to increase reuse activity within the current arrangement. During 2025-26 constructive discussions with Veolia have identified small-scale opportunities to improve reuse activity at specific HWRCs.

The Strategy Team is developing a Reuse Improvement Plan 2026-29 to further scale up reuse activity ahead of the new contract(s).

What we have learnt

Recent MRWA-commissioned research has investigated reuse attitudes / behaviours and the challenges / barriers to reuse.

Across the research, the most consistent barriers relate to visibility, connectivity, lack of collaboration across organisations, practical access and space constraints.

Further specific findings are shown below:

- Magpie found that LCR residents believe in the environmental benefits of reuse but do not always see visible reuse activity locally. Space constraints are a common barrier, and cost savings are an important motivation for reuse.
- In 2025/26 Magpie evaluated the Re-Purpose campaign messaging and highlighted the need to show residents how / where to reuse and repair and to deliver this through interactive and engaging online content.
- Hubbub identified challenges for community reuse organisations including financial pressures, limited space, lack of awareness, limited collaboration and in some areas a negative stigma towards reused goods.

LA Engagement

Engagement with Local Authorities (LAs) has identified the importance of a strong strategy and consistent funding to drive progress. Developing relationships with community organisations can take time and building trust is important. Financial arrangements between contractors and community organisations must be designed carefully to ensure shared incentives and understanding. Approaches ranging from simple reuse donation points to more advanced reuse hub systems integrated into the community were identified. [WRAP's HWRC Guide](#) also includes advice on developing reuse and repair.

Strategic Direction for MRWA

The MRWA Zero Waste Strategy sets our ambition for decarbonising resource use and moving towards a zero waste circular economy. We recognise the key role which reuse can play in reducing residual waste and delivering this vision. The Authority is committed to increasing reuse activity and embedding a reuse culture across LCR. Insights from recent research and engagement with other authorities show a consistent set of system barriers and opportunities – particularly around behaviour, visibility and community infrastructure – that shape the direction set out below.

1) Outcomes

Our reuse focus will achieve the following outcomes:

- Increased reuse of resources to reduce waste and carbon emissions at source and divert more material from residual treatment.
- Widespread adoption of reuse and repair behaviours.
- Improved access to easy and affordable reuse opportunities for residents.
- Stronger social value through community reuse organisations.
- A reuse system fit and adaptable for the future.
- A stronger LCR circular economy.

2) Practical Steps

To deliver our reuse outcomes MRWA will lead on:

- Improving our understanding of reuse systems, attitudes and behaviours.
e.g. learning from best practice and expanding our understanding of resident's views.
- Developing the Behaviour Change Programme to embed a culture of reuse.
e.g. scaling up successful community reuse initiatives such as libraries of things, whilst identifying new reuse concepts to pilot.
- Integrating reuse more clearly into service design and contracts.
e.g. adopting a new reuse first approach to integrate social value into service delivery.

We will enable our residents and stakeholders to improve reuse by:

- Supporting repair and reuse activity at home and in the community.
e.g. expanding our campaigns into new areas showing residents how and where to repair and reuse.
- Strengthening partnerships with, and between, reuse organisations.
e.g. developing LCR's first reuse network.
- Increasing the capture of reusable items at HWRCs.
e.g. working with Veolia to support the recently launched GoodBox reuse scheme.

3) Measurement

Diverting material for reuse generates positive social value through recirculating items in our local economy and communities. A variety of measures could track our reuse progress, but limiting these to a small number will provide greater clarity and focus. Some metrics would require further development and a range of indicative measures are listed below. Additional metrics may be available depending on their application in e.g. procurement, contract management or Zero Waste Strategy monitoring. Examples include:

Criteria, e.g.	Indicative measure	Practicality
Amount of reuse	Tonnes diverted through reuse	Good
Affordable goods	Number of items re-distributed to households	Good
Jobs and skills created in community organisations	Number of reuse jobs created Number of employees / volunteers trained in repair Number of training sessions	Good
Volunteering and community engagement	Number of direct engagements Volunteer hours	Good
Community sector partners	Number of organisations supported Number of reuse network members	Good
Carbon emissions reduction	Estimated carbon saving of diversion from EfW Estimated carbon saving of avoided consumption	Requires further development and specialist advice
Attitudes towards reuse	Trends in attitudes and behaviours	Requires further development and regular surveys

Our strategic direction for reuse is ambitious and must be. By rethinking resources and reusing more we can secure measurable benefits for our people, planet and economy. Working with residents and stakeholders we will expand reuse and take the next steps on our zero waste journey.

Strategy and Development Team
MRWA

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