

More investment to help councils with recycling

In the budget The Scottish Government set aside £70 million to improve recycling infrastructure in Scotland.

Today on Global Recycling Day they are launching the fund which local authorities can now apply for. The money is to be used to find new ways of recycling with innovation playing a key role. Some councils have raised the recycling rate to almost 70% while others report figures of around 17%.

The Recycling Improvement Fund which is one of the biggest single investments in this area, is aimed at accelerating Scotland's ambitious waste and recycling targets and net zero commitment. Councils are encouraged to promote waste prevention or reuse, improve the consistency of collections, collect problematic materials such as electrical items, improve sorting and treatment infrastructure, or introduce new low-carbon technologies.

Environment and Climate Change Secretary Roseanna Cunningham said: "Our aim is for Scotland to be a zero waste society with a circular economy based on good, green jobs. We will continue to lead by example as we head towards COP26 in Glasgow.

"While we have made significant long-term improvements on recycling, we need to accelerate progress if we are to meet Scotland's ambitious recycling and climate change targets. This is vital to our green recovery and to put an end to our contribution to climate change.

“The Recycling Improvement Fund offers an opportunity for national and local government and the waste sector to continue our partnership to reinvigorate improvements in recycling across the country, and make it easier for households to make the right choices.

“The fund will help local authorities to take forward projects that tackle key challenges and increase recycling performance in their area. We’re also keen to see new ideas from local authorities that can ensure our recycling infrastructure keeps pace with the modern economy. For example, the growth in waste electrical equipment and the role re-use and repair can play, or broader changes in household behaviours which affect the volume and types of waste managed by local authorities.

“In addition, planned changes, such as the introduction of the Deposit Return Scheme, will mean our recycling infrastructure will need to innovate and modernise in the years ahead, ensuring we continue to be bold world leaders in creating a more circular economy.”

Chief Executive, Zero Waste Scotland Iain Gulland said: “Zero Waste Scotland is proud to be working with the Scottish Government and local authorities to deliver one of the country’s most exciting and ambitious recycling, reuse and waste prevention programmes in our history, which will improve services and infrastructure for people across the country. I’m really looking forward to applications from local authorities for ideas to develop their infrastructure.

“This fund will be transformational in helping our communities embrace a circular economy, where materials and products are kept in use for as long as possible, and where new economic opportunities and social benefits flourish.”

COSLA spokesperson for Environment and Economy, Councillor Steven Heddle said: “We welcome this fund and look forward to working in partnership with our member Councils, the Scottish

Government and Zero Waste Scotland to facilitate change and bring benefit to communities throughout Scotland.

“Councils across Scotland have set themselves ambitious climate change targets, and tackling our throw-away culture is part of this. Councils know their local communities and understand the specific opportunities and challenges in their areas. The fund offers real opportunity to start addressing some of these at the local level, offers breadth of opportunity and seeks change and innovation.”