

Delivering Scotland's circular economy – A Route Map to 2025 and beyond

Fairer Scotland Duty Summary

May 2022

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Summary

<p>Title of Policy, Strategy, Programme etc</p>	<p>Delivering Scotland’s circular economy – A Route Map to 2025 and beyond</p>
<p>Summary of aims and expected outcomes of strategy, proposal, programme or policy</p>	<p>The Scottish Programme for Government 2020-21 and the Climate Change Plan update 2020 committed to: develop a Route Map to reduce waste and meet waste related targets for 2025; and work with partners to develop a post-2025 Route Map to identify how the waste and resources sector will contribute towards Scotland’s journey towards net zero in the period to 2030 and beyond.</p> <p>The Route Map will be a strategic plan we develop to provide the basis to consolidate action, refocus efforts and ensure greater policy coordination.</p> <p>It will propose packages of measures which address the challenges which reinforce the linear economy where we take, make then dispose of goods and materials, in order to deliver the change required both to achieve the targets and prepare for the net zero goals.</p> <p>The Route Map is a continuation of our Circular Economy Strategy ‘Making Things Last’ published in 2016¹, alongside other policy work to embed the principles of a circular economy in Scotland and take action to make good use of our planet’s finite resources.</p> <p>The Route Map will support progress towards the national outcomes for economy (we have a globally competitive, entrepreneurial, inclusive and sustainable economy) and environment (we value, enjoy, protect and enhance our environment).</p> <p>The Route Map consultation proposes a range of additional legislative and non-legislative measures that can positively contribute to the delivery of the targets and make progress towards carbon reduction. Proposals have been grouped into six packages, which span action across the whole circular economy, plus an additional package of cross cutting measures.</p> <p>The packages of measures contained within the Route Map are:</p>

¹ Making Things Last: a circular economy strategy for Scotland - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

Package	Background and objectives
Promote responsible production, consumption and reuse	Material consumption and waste are the primary drivers of nearly every environmental problem we currently face, and around 90% of the carbon impact of Scotland's waste is produced before disposal. We want to challenge the current approach to production and consumption by improving product design, mainstreaming reuse and repair, and incentivising sustainable choices.
Reduce food waste	Almost one million tonnes of food and drink is thrown away every year in Scotland. Not only does this cost Scottish households an average of £440 per year, but household food waste alone accounts for 2.7% of Scotland's total carbon footprint. We want to reduce food waste from all sources, building on our Food Waste Reduction Action Plan.
Improve recycling from households	Up to 60% of what households put into general waste bins can be recycled using existing recycling services, helping to conserve our natural resources and keep valuable materials flowing through our economy. We want to improve and optimise the performance of household recycling collection services to make the right choices the easier choices for households, ensure high standards across Scotland and maximise diversion of waste from disposal.
Improve recycling from commercial businesses	Commercial and industrial waste accounted for 28% of Scotland's waste in 2018. We want businesses to have the information and support they need to reduce waste and maximise recycling, with clear incentives in place to ensure that the most sustainable choices are the easiest choices.
Embed circular construction practices	Construction and demolition accounts for around half of all waste produced in Scotland. We want to embed circular construction practices and increase awareness to reduce resource needs, reduce waste and carbon, and encourage refurbishment and reuse.
Minimise the impact of disposal	While our goal is to continue to reduce the amount of residual waste we produce, until we move to a fully circular economy there is a need to consider how to minimise the impact of residual waste. We want to achieve the best environmental outcomes for materials that can't been captured for reuse or recycling, and ensure environmental and economic value of

	<table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="470 183 790 264"></td> <td data-bbox="790 183 1495 264">wasted resources and energy is harnessed efficiently.</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="470 264 790 600">Cross-cutting measures</td> <td data-bbox="790 264 1495 600">We have taken a whole-system approach to developing a Route Map to our 2025 waste and recycling targets. We want to ensure the right structures and support are in place to enable action across the Circular Economy, including strategic interventions and governance, research, data and evidence, sustainable procurement, and skills and training.</td> </tr> </table> <p>The specific policy detail for each intervention will not be fully defined at this stage. It is intended that the Route Map will enable the Scottish Government to articulate a strategic approach which will contribute towards existing targets and ambitions.</p> <p>Publishing the Route Map will not in itself result in impacts on those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage, however it is possible that the subsequent implementation of interventions may have an impact. This will depend on how interventions are developed and implemented.</p> <p>A Fairer Scotland Duty Summary has also been completed for the consultation on proposals for a Circular Economy Bill.</p>		wasted resources and energy is harnessed efficiently.	Cross-cutting measures	We have taken a whole-system approach to developing a Route Map to our 2025 waste and recycling targets. We want to ensure the right structures and support are in place to enable action across the Circular Economy, including strategic interventions and governance, research, data and evidence, sustainable procurement, and skills and training.
	wasted resources and energy is harnessed efficiently.				
Cross-cutting measures	We have taken a whole-system approach to developing a Route Map to our 2025 waste and recycling targets. We want to ensure the right structures and support are in place to enable action across the Circular Economy, including strategic interventions and governance, research, data and evidence, sustainable procurement, and skills and training.				
Summary of evidence	<p>Evidence has been gathered at this early stage in relation to factors that should be considered in the development of individual interventions which are likely to impact directly on people and their communities. It will be used as a basis for the development of detailed Fairer Scotland Duty Assessments where they are required.</p> <p><i>The poverty premium and affordability of living costs</i></p> <p>Available evidence identifies the existence of a ‘poverty premium’, where low-income consumers tend to overpay for goods and services. This can result in a lack of access to lower priced, better quality and more durable goods. This is noted in the main for energy, communications and insurance, but also for food.²³ These issues may also impact those living in remote rural areas of Scotland.</p> <p>In the case of food, this is a result of being unable to access large supermarkets to get multi-buy deals or facing higher delivery charges for small shopping baskets. It has also been noted that foregoing</p>				

² The poverty premium: a customer perspective, Personal Finance Research Centre, University of Bristol, 2020

³ Paying more to be poor: the poverty premium in energy, telecommunications and finance, Citizens Advice Scotland and Consumer Futures Unit, 2016

quality goods can be used as a coping strategy for those on low incomes.⁴ This implies a reliance on cheaper, potentially less durable goods. This may mean that low-income households face budget pressures if they are unable to avoid environmental charges (for example, by purchasing a reusable coffee cup) or if retailers respond to the introduction of a ban on the destruction of durable goods by moving away from stocking entry-level or bargain products.

Whether these issues occur will depend on the design of individual measures and should be considered further prior to the design of measures. It is possible that measures may be needed to support households purchasing long-lasting goods that will be more cost-effective in the longer term but are initially unaffordable.

Within Scotland, 9% of households reported that they did not manage well on their incomes, with the proportion being higher for those on benefits (including the state pension).⁵ Levels of perceived financial difficulty were also higher in more deprived areas, as measured by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation, with 17% of households not managing well in the most deprived decile.⁶ There are also connections to protected characteristics, with higher poverty rates for some groups.⁷

Those living in remote rural areas of Scotland also experience higher costs to achieve the same standard of living when compared to those in urban areas of Britain.⁸ This may mean that those on an equivalent income in a remote rural area may be more likely to face financial difficulty.

All of these groups have the potential to be particularly impacted positively or adversely if the charges related to household waste services change as a result of the proposed review of waste and recycling service charging, or for example if they receive a fine for littering. It is not yet possible to assess the likelihood or extent of any impact on those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage, as this would depend on how powers are implemented at secondary legislation stage.

Care will be needed to ensure that any changes to the way in which household waste collections (for example, garden waste) are charged for or incentivised, do not have an adverse impact on those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage and take account of any stigma around means testing in cost reduction for low-income groups.

⁴ Life in low income families in Scotland, Centre for Research on Families and Relationships, University of Edinburgh, 2003

⁵ Scotland's people annual report, National Statistics Publication, Scottish Government, 2019

⁶ Scotland's people annual report, National Statistics Publication, Scottish Government, 2019

⁷ Poverty & income inequality in Scotland: 2016-2019, Scottish Government, 2020

⁸ A minimum income standard for remote and rural Scotland, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, undate

It is not yet possible to assess the likelihood or extent of any impacts on those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage, as this would depend on what interventions are developed and how they are designed at later stages.

In addition, low-income households may currently qualify for reduced, or no cost at all, household waste collections (eg garden waste or bulky item uplifts). When developing interventions, any changes in which the way household collections are paid for or incentivised could have a positive or adverse impact on those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage.

Implications for those supplying or using redistributed foods

Evidence indicates that those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage face greater challenges regarding access to affordable, nutritious food and that there is a stigma associated with accessing emergency food provision. Furthermore, evidence shows food banks can struggle to provide nutritionally balanced food to their beneficiaries and there have been issues with the shelf-life of food provided^{9,10}. Just under half of organisations providing food parcels in Scotland reported supplying fresh food¹¹, suggesting that access to fresh food is currently limited for those reliant on these settings. However, this is not always the case¹².

Recycling rates

Recycling rates are variable across Scotland, varying both by geography, but also by housing type and levels of deprivation.

In particular, 2019 data indicated that the percentage of household waste recycled was substantially lower in the council areas of Glasgow, Dumfries and Galloway, Orkney, Shetland and Highland.¹³

Households living in flats, maisonettes or apartments are reported as having a lower rate of recycling for all materials, with the difference most marked for glass, based on 2017 data.¹⁴ Recycling rates also show correlation with the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation, with recycling rates for all materials being below average in the 20% most deprived areas, and above average in less deprived areas, based on

⁹ Evaluation of the application of the provisions of the law of 11 February 2016 on the fight against food waste, and the implementing decree of 28 December 2016

¹⁰ Nutritional adequacy and content of food bank parcels in Oxfordshire, UK: a comparative analysis of independent and organisational provision

¹¹ Mapping organisations responding to food insecurity in Scotland

¹² More than meals: making a difference with FareShare food

¹³ [Scottish household waste – summary data 2019, Scottish Environment Protection Agency, undated](#)

¹⁴ [Scotland's people annual report 2017, National Statistics Publication, Scottish Government, 2018](#)

2017 data.¹⁵The data does not show whether recycling rates vary by household income.

It is not yet possible to determine if these differences would mean that those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage are affected by changes to household recycling differently from those who are not disadvantaged, either in terms of the materials collected or the way that services are delivered or funded (eg garden waste collections).

It will be important that interventions focused on making changes to household recycling services are designed to ensure all communities have equitable access to recycling. Proposed interventions include the proposed recycling co-design project, and statutory guidance on recycling service standards.

As individual measures are designed, it will be important that changes to household recycling collections are designed to ensure that they are appropriate and accessible for households regardless of geographical location, housing type or the level of deprivation of a community. For example, this will be particularly critical if the duty of care on households to recycle is strengthened, or additional measures to incentivise positive behaviours (eg waste reduction or increased recycling) are identified.

Impact on jobs

The introduction of some interventions may provide training and skills development as well as job opportunities. This may impact positively those in precarious or low-paid jobs. Consideration is also needed if low-income or insecure employment might be negatively impacted. When the relevant interventions are developed, there is a need to consider re-skilling to access new jobs and access of disadvantaged groups to opportunities.

Reuse and socio-economic disadvantage

There are already examples of reuse projects targeted at improving life for those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage, for example Circular Communities Scotland¹⁶ and the UK-wide Reuse Network, who estimate they helped 1.5 million households in the UK in 2020¹⁷.

The introduction of some measures which would increase the access to affordable goods via secondary markets may have the benefit of normalising second-hand and reused goods. The socio-cultural

¹⁵ [Scotland's people annual report 2017, National Statistics Publication, Scottish Government, 2018](#)

¹⁶ [Circular Communities Scotland website](#)

¹⁷ [Social impact report 2020, Reuse Network, 2021](#)

	<p>complexities around using second-hand or reusable goods is something that should be considered when developing relevant measures. For example, quality, style and cleanliness of clothing all play a role¹⁸, and perceived contamination in particular has consequences for rental services and second-hand exchange^{19,20}. However, care would be needed to ensure that organisations supporting communities experiencing socio-economic disadvantage are able to benefit from any measures. This should include ensuring communications considered to ensure they are effective through existing networks using methods that are tried and tested.</p> <p>For all of these issues, further consideration will be needed via Fairer Scotland Duty Assessments prior to the development of specific interventions where appropriate.</p>
<p>Summary of assessment findings</p>	<p>This assessment has not identified the need for any changes to the proposals, because publication of the Route Map will not directly impact on those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage. However, this assessment will be updated following the public consultation to ensure that any issues raised there are considered and captured.</p> <p>In addition, this assessment has identified that there is the potential for there to be impacts once specific individual interventions are implemented. Further Fairer Scotland Duty Assessments should be completed where appropriate when specific interventions are being developed to ensure that any issues are fully considered and any changes necessary can be made to the proposals.</p> <p>It is worth highlighting that this may apply in particular to interventions within the packages that seek to promote responsible production, consumption and reuse, including application of environmental charges; to reduce food waste, including those that relate to the supply or use of redistributed surplus food; and to improve household recycling, including those that relate to co-designing future services or reviewing the current approach to service charging.</p>

¹⁸ Hur, E., 2020. Rebirth fashion: Secondhand clothing consumption values and perceived risks. Journal of Cleaner Production, 273, p.122951

¹⁹ Ackerman, D.S. and Hu, J., 2017. Assuring me that it is as 'Good as New' just makes me think about how someone else used it. Examining consumer reaction toward marketer-provided information about secondhand goods. Journal of Consumer Behaviour, 16(3), pp.233-241

²⁰ Clube, R.K. and Tennant, M., 2020. Exploring garment rental as a sustainable business model in the fashion industry: Does contamination impact the consumption experience? Journal of Consumer Behaviour, 19(4), pp.359-370

Sign off

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