

BHCC CIRCULAR ECONOMY ACTION PLAN

The city plans to make the transition to a more efficient use of raw materials through adopting circular economy practices. This action plan has been developed and published alongside the council's Circular Economy Routemap to push forward this agenda using the council's planning, procuring and convening powers.

In its current form, the Action Plan is divided into two halves. The first half looks outward and includes actions to promote circular economy activity across the city. The second half looks inward and includes actions to align council activities with Circular Economy principles. Both set of actions focus on two priority sectors: Food & Drink and the Built Environment.

Over time, the Action Plan will be regularly updated and reissued as the Routemap's priority areas expand and as new opportunities emerge and the council's understanding of and ability to deliver circular economy solutions improves.

Promoting Circular Economy activity across the city

As a local planning authority, owner and user of land, roads and buildings; procurer of goods and services; and as a convenor of individuals and organisations, Brighton & Hove City Council plays an important role in promoting Circular Economy activity across the city.

Promoting a circular Food & Drink sector

Every year, one third of all food produced for human consumption is lost or wasted. This waste is directly contributing to climate change, with food systems currently accounting for 21-37% of total greenhouse gases. Circular economy solutions in the food sector not only help tackle climate change, they can also help tackle biodiversity loss from pesticides and fertiliser run-off and address enduring hunger, malnutrition, and an escalating public health crisis.

Even with all the right policies in place, the council cannot realise a circular food sector on its own. To support local businesses in their transition to circular business models and practices, and to foster consumer demand, the council has committed to the following resident- and business-facing actions.

Resident-facing actions

2022

1. Support community organisations in delivering their circular food activities for the purpose of creating a healthy, sustainable, and fair food system in Brighton & Hove
2. Deliver a ['circular food champions' volunteer scheme](#) to support residents in educating, empowering and engaging with friends, family, neighbours and colleagues on food waste prevention, reuse and recycling.
3. Deliver four circular economy community events across the city to include a focus on food & drink.
4. Deliver a targeted programme to support on-going circular economy learning and action in schools, to include a focus on food, and embed this within the wider 'whole school approach' to climate action.

2023/24

5. Assess the potential for increased food production opportunities on council owned farmland in accordance with the developing City Downland Estate Plan and associated Implementation Plan

Business-facing actions

In 2021 the council created a working group with Brighton & Hove Food Partnership and other food related organisations to develop a set of Circular Economy actions for the city's Food & Drink sector building upon progress made in the city on this work. Next steps include:

2022

6. Finalise a set of Circular Economy actions for the Food & Drink sector to be signed off by the Circular Economy Member's Working Group.

2024

7. Deliver an event showcasing local circular Food & Drink solutions and create opportunities for peer learning and exchange to help businesses better understand and implement Circular Economy principles in their day-to-day activities.

Planning a circular Built Environment

Brighton & Hove's built environment sector is the highest user of raw materials and has the biggest influence on CO2 emissions from construction, in use, through to demolition. It determines the city's character and the way people travel, work and live.

As a Local Planning Authority, we can ensure through City Plan policies and further planning guidance that new development proposals are built to high sustainability standards and take into account the principles of circularity to minimise the use of new materials, avoid and reduce waste and support high recycling rates. We can encourage the consideration of innovative building design and construction methods, designing for adaptability, flexibility and re-use. The following actions will be introduced to deliver a Circular Economy for the city:

2022

8. In collaboration with industry stakeholder groups, promote circular construction training programmes with agents and developers.
9. Develop ways of monitoring embodied carbon in new build developments-to improve awareness of and encourage the adoption of low-carbon, circular construction practices in the private housing sector.

2025

10. Embed Circular Economy principles in the new City Plan with policies that identify the Circular Economy factors required to be incorporated in development proposals.

Cross-cutting, business support actions

2022

11. Explore the development of a meantime use protocol for city landlords to support the development of a new "future of the high street programme".
12. Consult with business support organisations within and beyond Brighton & Hove, to identify actions the council and its partners can take to support local businesses in implementing Circular Economy solutions.

13. Review business accreditation schemes to better understand circular economy criteria embedded in each to support business engagement on the circular economy and inform public procurement.

2030

14. By 2030, working with partners, support the development of Circular Economy hubs in and around the city designed to foster circular business activity by, for example, housing start-ups, materials, research, commerce, educational and skills programmes and events

Promoting Circular Economy activity inside the council

Given the purchasing power and material footprint of local government, councils must look inward to improve the circularity of their own projects and services to influence the development of, and lead the way to, a sustainable, circular economy in the sector. At Brighton & Hove City Council actions will be taken to extend the lifetime of council assets, reduce consumption of primary materials, design out waste and increase demand for circular economy products and services.

Procuring for a Circular City

As a procurer of services, cities catalyse the introduction of circular economy goods and services including leasing of façades and materials. The following actions will be introduced to deliver a circular economy for the city:

2022

15. Review and update the Sustainable Procurement Policy with Orbis partner authorities and incorporate Circular Economy principles in line with BHCC's Circular Economy Routemap.
16. Create a tool to support officers when developing environmental sustainability specifications to include circular economy considerations.

2023

17. Create a specification writing masterclass to include circular economy principles for commissioners and buyers
18. Identify a means to monitor circular economy spend.

2025

19. Aim for 25% of all priority area, internal and external council spend to be on circular products and services, with at least 50% supplied by local companies.

2027

20. Aim for 50% of all priority area, internal and external council spend to be on circular products and services, with at least 55% supplied by local companies.

2030

21. Aim for 75% of all priority area, internal and external council spend to be on circular products and services, with at least 60% supplied by local companies.

Utilising the full value of food waste

To utilise the full value of food waste beyond energy production, the council will be investing in a new food waste collection service. The following actions will be introduced to deliver a circular city:

2023

22. Develop a full feasibility study and business case exploring two options for the future delivery of refuse and recycling services, which includes a new food waste collection service.
23. Consult on the future delivery of refuse and recycling services with residents, trade unions and staff before presenting back to a future committee for a decision.

Circular construction and maintenance

As a constructor of buildings and roads, the public sector can specify circular materials, designs and methods of construction and maintenance for new and existing developments.

Buildings

The following actions will be introduced to deliver a circular city:

2022

24. Pilot reclamation audits and deconstruction of existing buildings for new build housing projects, using reclaimed materials on site wherever possible.
25. Separate construction waste streams from housing maintenance projects at the council's Housing Centre.
26. From 2022 undertake a Circular Economy opportunities assessment and evaluation of all new build housing construction projects.
27. Set outcomes for all new build housing projects using the RIBA Climate Challenge 2030 Targets and Checklist (subject to Housing Committee agreement in June 2022).
28. From 2022 undertake a whole life carbon assessment process on all new build housing projects.

2023

29. Undertake research and feasibility for implementing materials passports on new building housing construction projects and develop a strategy for implementation.

2025

30. By 2025 specify in project briefs at least 50% of all materials used in a new development are recoverable at the end of life of the building on all new build housing projects.

2030

31. By 2030 specify in project briefs at least 60% of all materials used in a new development are recoverable at the end of life of the building on all new build housing projects.

Roads and the public highway

The following actions will be introduced to deliver a circular city:

Ongoing actions

32. Continue investigating and piloting the use of recycled materials in planned highways maintenance and construction.
33. Continue investigating and piloting the latest innovations in pothole prevention and repair driven through new contract.

2022

34. Develop a programme of Surface Extension Treatments, removing one surfacing cycle over the Whole Life Design of roads.

2023

35. Explore leasing highways assets for use in temporary locations.
36. Review the UKGBC “Circular economy guidance for construction clients” for the purpose of designing out waste and material consumption through the council’s specification of highways construction projects.
37. Explore options and propose a KPI for monitoring performance on the ‘right first time’ principle across all highways projects with the aim of reducing their material and carbon intensity
38. Explore the potential of commissioning a street furniture maintenance review for the purpose of identifying whole life cycle material, carbon and cost-saving interventions.
39. Review the existing Asset Management Plan to reduce the environmental impact of highways maintenance and construction.

2024

40. By 2024 develop and begin delivery of a sustainable drainage plan to protect highways and properties from surface water flooding and extreme weather events, protect the chalk aquifer, and provide natural habitat for local species.
41. Investigate primary and secondary material consumption data captured through the provider’s carbon accounting system required in the new highways contract model.

