



Recycling Improvement Fund Case Study

Aberdeen City Council Reuse Shop



Introduction

Aberdeen City Council was awarded £36,450 from the Scottish Government's Recycling Improvement Fund to create a reuse shop and improve the reuse facilities at Hazlehead Recycling Centre.

Background

SUEZ Recycling and Recovery UK operate the Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) on behalf of Aberdeen City Council. A reuse facility at Hazlehead Recycling Centre had been in place for several years consisting of three conjoined ISO storage containers. This was well used by members of the public who have donated around 650 tonnes of items since the reuse facility opened in 2014.

Due to the popularity of the reuse operation, the containers often became full, putting a limit on the amount of items that could be donated and reused. The limited space available also made it difficult to deposit items and move around inside the containers.

Donated items were also transported elsewhere for processing making the process less efficient. There was a desire to keep all operations on-site and provide Aberdeen City Council residents with the opportunity to purchase donated goods.

Project activity

Aberdeen City Council used the funding to deliver a series of improvements to the reuse facility:

Reuse shop

One new container was procured, modified and installed to provide a facility for the reuse shop. Donated goods are checked, and electrical items PAT tested, before being displayed for sale in this inviting space.

Weatherproof canopy

A sturdy canopy was installed to provide an additional covered area that formed part of the new shop.

Outdoor storage space

A secure, traffic-free outdoor space was established to display items suitable for storing outside, such as bicycles and garden furniture.

Improved signage

Clear and engaging signage was installed to advertise the new facility as not just a place to donate goods, but also to buy them.



Benefits

Over an 18 month period 40,000 items have been sold in the reuse shop, resulting in 120 tonnes of materials being diverted from disposal or recycling.

The project has realised a range of benefits which have benefited both the environment and the local community:

Environmental benefits

- Waste coming into the HWRC is being managed in a more sustainable way.
- Awareness around the importance of waste reduction and reuse is being increased.

Community benefits

- Residents have the opportunity to purchase good quality items at a low cost.
- Income raised from the sale of reused items covers all the running costs of the facility, including providing employment opportunities for 2.5FTE members of staff.
- A Community Fund has been established which in 2023 provided £3,000 to local schools and community groups to support sustainable initiatives to help improve the environment around Aberdeen.

Added value

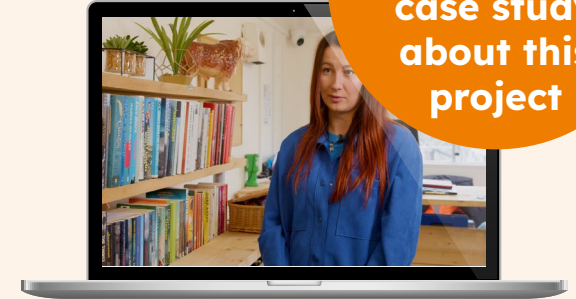


The Recycling Improvement Fund has been a catalyst for other improvements at the facility.

Since opening, a further container has been added for paint and DIY equipment, and the external storage and display area has been expanded.

The front of the reuse shop has also been enhanced using old pallets and wood waste to create a living wall decorated with donated plants.

Click here to watch a video case study about this project



“Recycling is very important - but reuse is perhaps more so as it allows materials to be kept in the value chain and given another life and a chance to be used again - this is much more sustainable in the long term.”

Colin Forshaw
Production Operations Manager,
SUEZ Recycling and Recovery UK



Next Steps

The reuse facility continues to go from strength-to-strength, with the following exciting plans in progress:

- Working with a community partner to deliver a bike reuse scheme.
- Expanding the footprint of the shop to enable it to accept large items, such as furniture.
- Creating a space for community educational events to promote reuse, repair and upcycling.



Search “Recycling Improvement Fund” on our website to find out more.

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