

RECYCLING



BUILDINGS

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WHY?

We will all be familiar with the 'Reduce, Reuse, Recycle' mantra. Discouraging single-use items, reusing or repurposing items we already have and recycling the rest all help reduce our carbon footprint. It's also a great way of modelling the church's commitment to the environment to the congregation and local community.

Some items are clearly not recyclable, so we should perhaps add to this mantra 'Incineration with energy recovery', 'Incineration' and, only as a last resort, 'Send to landfill'. Councils and waste collection companies have very different approaches to this conversion of 'Waste to Energy', so doing some research can help us apply pressure to improve energy capture.

HOW?

Most churches and councils recycle standard items of paper, cardboard, glass and some plastics. To make it easier for church users, why not install some of the many colour-coded collection bins available in appropriate locations around the building?

Check with your local council to find out what they will collect. If you are not sure if items are recyclable or how to recycle them in your local area, look at the 'What to do with' section on the Recycle Now website: <https://www.gov.uk/recycling-collections>

<https://www.recyclenow.com/what-to-do-with>

Annual league tables of local council effectiveness are produced on 'Let's recycle': <https://www.letsrecycle.com/councils/league-tables/>. As part of your community engagement, consider encouraging your local council to do more.



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You may wish to become a drop off location for a specific product, which you know your church family would appreciate but your council doesn't collect, e.g., plastic bottle-tops or silver foil, or perhaps do an annual collection of larger items such as bikes?

There are many national programmes operating through community collection hubs like churches. You can recycle anything from IT equipment to bras, coffee pods to PPE. Here is a selection to inspire you; web searches will reveal many others which may be more relevant to your church or area:

Bras: <https://www.againstbreastcancer.org.uk/recycling/bra-recycling/>

IT: <https://www.recycleit.co.uk/>

Ink cartridges: <https://www.recycle4charity.co.uk/>

Bikes: <https://thebikeproject.co.uk/>

Coffee grounds: <https://www.bio-bean.com/renewals/>

PPE: With the dramatic increase of PPE use during Covid, compostable PPE is now available or consider using this zero waste programme to recycle it: <https://zerowastebboxes.terracycle.co.uk/collections/personal-protective-equipment/products/disposable-face-masks-zero-waste-box#acc-1>

Terracycle offers a wide range of free recycling programmes including bread bags, crisp and confectionery packaging, toys and games, Marigolds, makeup and plastic pens: <https://www.terracycle.com/en-GB/>

Finally, some things really are not recyclable (such as disposable nappies!). Washroom support companies are often used by churches to dispose of nappies and other hygiene products so aim to select one which incinerates this waste to create energy rather than sending it to landfill.



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LONGER READS & OTHER RESOURCES

WRAP – Circular Economy & Resource Efficiency Experts help organisations use resources more sustainably: <https://wrap.org.uk/>

Paper Round (Waste management & business recycling): <https://www.paper-round.co.uk/>

<https://www.london.anglican.org/kb/waste-collection-and-recycling/>

CASE STUDIES

Two Eco Churches who take recycling serious are St Faith's Church, Lee-on-the-Solent and Swansea Methodist Church:

https://www.stfaithslee.org/recycling_hub/

<https://www.swanseamethodist.org.uk/the-circuit/pitton-methodist-chapel/>

STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Taking action on this topic will contribute to these UN Strategic Development Goals:

