

# BIKE REUSE TOOLKIT

A guide for local authorities working with others to make bike reuse happen at recycling centres

Guidance and templates are provided to help set up service level agreements and data recording



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Produced with support from



**Circular Communities Scotland represents hundreds of repair, reuse and recycling charities and social enterprises across the country. Members prevent products and materials from entering landfill, create local jobs and economic opportunities, and promote social and environmental justice in their communities.**

This toolkit has been developed with cross sector support, including local authorities. The aim is to make as many bikes as possible available for reuse. It also highlights how bike reuse organisations provide socioeconomic benefits more generally, using bikes they have collected or received directly to encourage and support affordable access to bikes.

Local authorities can use this toolkit as a way of driving policy and gaining approval for taking forward an important circular economy opportunity; the reuse of bikes through recycling centres.

# CONTENTS

<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. Methods</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3. Data reporting</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>4. Training and awareness raising</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>5. Case Study: Angus Council</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>6. Case Study: Perth &amp; Kinross Council and City of Edinburgh Council</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>7. Templates</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<b>14</b>

# 1. Introduction

## Aim and target audience

This toolkit is aimed at local authorities seeking to develop or improve their capacity for bike reuse and is principally focused on recycling centres (household waste recycling centres in most cases) where bikes are dropped off by members of the public and collection and reuse services are usually provided by reuse organisations (typically social enterprises).

- The data reporting template, methodologies, procurement practices, site layouts and training described in this toolkit are taken from examples of good practice already being delivered across the country and can therefore be replicated with confidence.

This toolkit is focused on manual bikes, with e-bikes very rarely being donated for reuse at recycling centres (at time of writing). In a 2023 survey by Circular Communities Scotland, of 24 bike reuse organisations surveyed, the majority stated that they are currently not accepting e-bike donations, for electrical repair, full refurbishment or sale to new owners.

## The values that adoption of the toolkit is supporting

Important aspects of bike reuse are the socioeconomic benefits that can be realised, where reused bikes can be provided on a more affordable basis than new, and therefore more accessible to a wider range of people in our communities. They are also often made available by organisations that play important roles in providing volunteering, training and local jobs, delivering circular economy practices which can also lead to improved health outcomes.

Such organisations are also delivering innovation, for example Cycling Scotland supported The Bike Station's [Wee Bike Library](#) where families can borrow bikes for free and exchange them for the next size up as their children grow.

## The current situation

Bike reuse services involving recycling centres are implemented in a variety of ways and the social enterprises providing these services often have a Service Level Agreement (SLA) in place. Depending on the local authority SLAs can set out selection criteria for bike quality at the recycling centres.

- See more on this in [Methods](#) section.

Containers for storing bikes are typically provided at recycling centres, or there is an area set aside for dropping off bikes. In some cases, reuse containers are located at the entrances to sites, but in many others they are located in positions which may not be optimal in terms of being in the line of sight of householders.

Data reporting is often based on standard bike weights being applied to the number of bikes managed, with the type of data collected varying depending on the local authority.

## What successful implementation of the toolkit will look like

Successful implementation will require utilisation or adoption of the toolkit by local authorities followed by greater levels of bike collections from recycling centres, more reuse, and the availability of bikes at affordable prices. To understand if there has been more reuse, work is required to identify current levels of provision and the impact of changes in policy and behaviour. These require support, action and data reporting by the key parties involved i.e. the local authorities and the bike reuse organisations.

## 2. Methods

### Collaboration

Local authorities and reuse organisations should communicate their needs, challenges and restrictions to foster collaborative and effective partnerships. Transparent working practices will support this, with data reporting, site management methods and awareness-raising sessions facilitating the best outcomes.

### Procurement of services

Local authorities may develop service level agreements (SLAs) with reuse organisations directly or decide to procure bike reuse services by engaging an organisation(s) through either a single tender action request (STAR) or competitive tendering process. This can then be considered from the perspective of developing and agreeing contracts or Service Level Agreements (SLAs). SLAs can be binding contracts, but are often used by local authorities to set out their relationships with reuse organisations without the additional complexity that contracts may involve.

Community Wealth Benefits (CWBs) are a potential lever in terms of the content and requirements of SLAs. The Scottish Government [consultation](#) on this notes that CWBs can support efforts to achieve a just transition. There are different solutions in terms of SLAs and contracts, depending on circumstances, and all options should be considered.

In the 2018 Scottish Government report of the “Strategic Public Social Partnership (PSP) Model in Scotland”, PSPs are described as being a potential pathway to more collaborative practices between sectors. The report comments that, assisted by dedicated, hands on support, the strategic PSP model worked well in the projects that were assessed.

An important aspect of procurement rules in the context of bike reuse is described in the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014. This enables conditions to be included relating to training and recruitment, as well as economic, social or environmental wellbeing in a local authority’s area, which are additional to the

main purpose of the contract (i.e. bike reuse). Use of community benefit requirements may demonstrate compliance with the sustainable procurement duty which applies to all regulated procurement. In terms of a STAR, a detailed justification to demonstrate why a competitive quote or tender is not possible should be provided, where the reasons could include:

- Need for supplier continuity whereby a change in supplier would be detrimental to the contract, service users etc.
- Goods / services / works are only available from a particular supplier.

### Service Level Agreements (SLAs)

SLAs are important to ensure that the local authority and its service providers (in this case, reuse organisations) understand their roles. An SLA template accompanies this document, with a summary of the basic agreement elements provided below (more detailed options for an SLA are also provided).

## 2. Methods

### **The local authority's role under an SLA would be to commit to:**

- Ensuring that the SLA clearly defines that the primary aim of the service is to reuse bikes whole or for bikes to be stripped down for spare parts.
- Having evidence of reuse organisations' waste licences and/or exemptions.
- Separately collecting bikes at each recycling centre as long as there is space on site to do so and permit the reuse partner to remove these.
- Providing a secure container or set aside area (ideally under cover) at each of the recycling centres for the storage of bikes for reuse. This should be locked at night to prevent theft.
- Specifying the frequency of collections e.g. weekly.
- Ensuring contact details (telephone numbers and email addresses) for staff at the reuse organisation are provided to recycling centre staff.
- Promoting bike reuse where possible, including via council websites and at appropriate events.

- Requiring data reporting in line with this toolkit.
- Agreeing a site working method with the reuse organisation. If cherry picking of bikes is to be allowed this may result in a reuse organisation moving unwanted bikes from a reuse container or set aside area to a recycling container at the site.
- Obtaining reuse organisation documentation related to risk assessments and insurance.

### **The reuse organisation's role, under an SLA, would be to commit to providing:**

- Evidence of waste licences and/or exemptions.
- A vehicle with which to undertake transportation of bikes from recycling centres to the refurbishment and reuse site.
- Personnel to remove bikes from the recycling centres.
- A suitable site to allow refurbishment of bikes
- Waste transfer notifications.
- Data as set out in this toolkit, each month, provided two weeks from the end of the previous month.
- Evidence that it has the required insurance in place.

- A risk assessment for carrying out work at the recycling centres.
- Contact details to recycling centre staff to support communications and the operation of a smooth service.

The first bullet point under the local authority's duties reflects the aim of the SLA, which is that it fosters and grows the reuse of bikes and components, thereby providing more affordable access to bikes. It is understood that recycling will be a by-product of reuse activities but this, and the resulting contracts with scrap merchants, should not be the fundamental purpose of setting up an SLA.

Consistent data reporting is important for evidencing reuse, recycling and other circular economy activity, and for demonstrating the impact and value of supporting affordable access to bikes. From a national and regional perspective, data can support strategic opportunity developments, for example to identify the potential for the setting up of targeted hubs, perhaps for specific component types. More effective plans and strategies can be developed for the sector when these are supported by data.

## 2. Methods

### Cherry picking

Cherry picking is the term used for behaviour where organisations screen donated goods, identifying and taking those which have a value rather than a cost. This can be a fundamentally important aspect of a reuse service for some organisations, which may struggle to manage the volume of unscreened items and/or the disposal/recycling costs of those that cannot be sold. Some local authorities support this activity at recycling centres, whereas others prefer all items to be removed.

### Site layouts and signage

Bike reuse drop off points should be under cover, with clear signage and at the entrance to recycling centres wherever possible. This would encourage householders to drop their items off for reuse rather than stopping at recycling containers first, where there may be a temptation to get rid of everything at the same time. Interviews with waste officers have indicated that reuse increases the earlier and easier it is to drop off items at reuse locations on site.

Prominent signage should be installed next to reuse containers and set aside areas to allow householders to understand where they need to go to drop off items, as well as how the items should be stored and positioned. To encourage bikes to be stored in a way which minimises damage, and makes the uplift process more straightforward, householders should be encouraged to position bikes in the way shown in Figure 2 on [page 11](#), an example of current practice in place in Perth.

- Signage should also include information on what happens to bikes, for example:
  - “these bikes are collected by (organisation name) for reuse and refurbishment”.
- Guidance on best practice for signage at recycling centres, including for bike reuse, is available from Zero Waste Scotland [here](#).

### 3. Data reporting

**Reuse organisations should provide data on their site collections to give the local authority the overall weight and number of bikes uplifted. Where the recycling centre does not have a weighbridge the number of bikes counted can have a standard weight applied to provide the overall weight.**

Alternatively, if there is a weighbridge the local authority may want the weight of bikes uplifted to be based on a ticket. In this case, recording the number of bikes uplifted can be based on one of the following methods:

- The number of bikes actually counted by the reuse organisation.
- The weighbridge ticket weight divided by the standard weight(s).

A standard weight can be determined by the reuse organisation taking a sample of the bikes it collects and making an average of these. This can be updated at future points in time. Alternatively, the weights shown in table 1 can be used. These have been derived from discussions with local authorities and bike reuse organisations during the development of this toolkit and are also the standard weights used by the Reuse Network.

**Table 1.** Standard bike weights that can be applied for data reporting

	Adult bike	Kids bike	Mixed (adult and kids)
Standard bike weight	15kg	10kg	12.5kg

Depending on the local authority it may be enough to report the Mixed number and weight of bikes, or the preference may be to split this into adult and kids bikes. Table 2 below shows how this should be structured, on a frequency agreed in the Service Level Agreement (monthly recommended).

Table 2 also provides an opportunity for the recording of data for bikes donated directly to reuse organisations, rather than only through recycling centres. The fate of bikes captured

from donations as a whole is important, because of the significance of providing as many people as possible with affordable access to bikes, as well as the training, skills development and employment associated with this.

As a result of circular economy, sustainable development and community development policies, wider bike reuse data may be something that many local authorities want to be able to report on, to demonstrate the full value of bike reuse activities. As such, the following table provides a template for reporting outputs that reuse organisations should be asked to provide as part of a service level agreement (SLA). The table as shown would present data that includes both collections from recycling centres and donations direct to organisations. If only recycling centre data is required the capacity of

**Table 2.** Indicative monthly reporting template – bikes collected

	January					
	No of bikes			Weight of bikes		
	Adult bikes	Kid bikes	Mixed Total	Adult bikes	Kid bikes	Mixed Total
Collected from HWRCs	100	100	200	1,500kg	1,000kg	2,500kg
Donated directly to reuse organisation	100	100	200	1,500kg	1,000kg	2,500kg
Total	200	200	400	3,000kg	2,000kg	5,000kg

### 3. Data reporting

the reuse organisation for managing data would need to be considered e.g. if a sophisticated stock management system is in place then separate data for recycling centre collections and donations direct to shops may be possible. Where there is no such system, an estimated approach may be another way forward, which could potentially be informed by occasional sampling (understanding that reuse levels are likely to be higher for bikes donated directly). However, this will be for discussion and agreement between local authorities and reuse organisations.

Some important aspects of this outputs table/ template are listed below:

- The template above does not provide a breakdown for adult and kids bikes, which may be a difficult stock management exercise. However, this can be adapted to show this level of detail if agreed between the local authority and reuse partners.
- The numbers shown deliberately do not match what is collected in the month of January as described in Table 2. In reality these will not be the same because it takes time to process bikes.

- The “other” category is provided to allow organisation-specific approaches to be stated.
- The optional “in stock” row is a data requirement by those local authorities that want to understand a fuller picture

#### Data recording challenges and opportunities

To facilitate reporting and make data collection easier for the collecting organisations opportunities exist which could be encouraged and supported by local authorities:

- The templates provided with this toolkit could be stored in the cloud by the reuse organisation, for example using Google Docs, accessible at any time by the local authority.
- A number of bike reuse organisations (e.g. Angus Cycle Hub and The Bike Station) have developed apps which can be used from the donation point e.g. collecting bikes at HWRCs, to then recording their progress through the shop floor. Local authorities could encourage reuse organisations to use such apps in the future, which should increase productivity and effectiveness of the service.

**Table 3.** Indicative monthly reporting – outputs\*

Fates	No of bikes			Weight of bikes		
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Jan	Feb	Mar
Reused	40			500kg		
Stripped down for spares	90			1,125kg		
Scrapped/recycled	50			625kg		
Landfilled or energy from waste						
Other						
<b>Total</b>	<b>180</b>			<b>2,250kg</b>		
<b>Bikes in stock (optional)</b>	<b>100</b>			<b>1,250kg</b>		

\*Another dataset that could be added to the table includes bikes reused and provided free of charge, which could be an important metric if any funding support is provided through Cycling Scotland.

## 4. Training & awareness raising

**This toolkit has referred to the importance of collaboration and developing trust between local authorities and the reuse organisations providing reuse services. A way of developing this involves raising awareness amongst staff (and volunteers) of both local authorities and reuse organisations on the expectations and the requirements of services, in particular around the way in which reuse containers and set aside areas are managed and serviced.**

The following table therefore identifies a four-point checklist of activities that should be aimed for and signed up to by all parties, as part of any procurement process, as well as at the beginning of a service, and at different points in time during the service delivery period. This will enable problems to be identified, discussed and managed, as well as being an opportunity to identify improvement opportunities and act as refreshers, in terms of expectations.

The checklist could be delivered in a toolbox talk format, involving sessions on the ground that involve waste management officers, recycling centre staff and reuse organisation staff, with each responsible for communicating different aspects.

Subsequent and ongoing meetings should be held to review performance and to resolve issues that have arisen. The number of bikes uplifted in the previous period should be reported, along with the fates of these bikes, in terms of reuse, the number stripped down for parts etc.

Discussing the following checklist will assist the recycling centre staff to be clear about how well the reuse service is working. The reuse organisation should have the opportunity to provide similar feedback. This should then identify who needs to do what to support an effective, ongoing collaboration.

**Table 4.** Checklist for initial awareness raising session

No.	Item	Lead Party
1	Setting out the approach to the reuse service and expectations of the local authority (e.g. as defined in the SLA) to ensure the smooth operation of the recycling centre. This will include data recording, waste transfer notifications, reuse infrastructure management – expectations, frequency of uplifts, cherry picking, behaviour and movement on site, risk assessment and contact methods/details.	Local authority
2	Overview of the reuse organisation, its socioeconomic impacts and services supported by delivering bike reuse services. Description of how the reuse organisation typically works, what it does with bikes and who the recipients are.	Reuse organisation(s)
3	Who is responsible for different aspects of the service, and if cherry picking is allowed, the types of bikes that will be uplifted, and those removed. What is needed to ensure that the bikes are stored in a good condition to maximise reuse potential.	Reuse organisation(s)
4	How to deal with issues that arise – in a spirit of collaboration. The frequency of subsequent meetings between the parties should be agreed.	Local authority

## 5. Case study: Angus Council

### Angus Council and the Cycle Hub

**Angus Council has bike reuse services provided across its recycling centres by Angus Cycle Hub (trading as the Cycle Hub). The Cycle Hub is a social enterprise which originally began a bike reuse project from its base in Arbroath and has grown to now also run a community based hub in Dundee as well as supporting the northeast cyclehub.org project.**

The Cycle Hub collects circa 3,000 second hand bikes per year from Angus recycling centres. Bikes that are not reused are broken down for spare parts harvesting and recycling. This social enterprise delivers a number of different schemes and projects, supported by Cycling Scotland, to encourage people into cycling, an example of which is “ReCycles”, operating in Angus and Dundee and providing young people with free access to refurbished bikes. In 2023 it gave 1,700 bikes away free of charge as part of its affordable access to bikes project.

### Details of the Angus Council service

Angus Council has five recycling centres. Brechin, being the smallest site, does not have a bike reuse container. There are containers at each of the three larger recycling centres (Arbroath, Forfar and Montrose), with Carnoustie the fourth, smaller recycling centre (space constrained) having a dedicated set aside area where bikes can be dropped off. There are reuse containers for other items at Arbroath and Forfar. Reuse is important to the council and officers go out to schools to talk about this, with bikes used as a good example of the circular economy in action.

The Cycle Hub uplifts every week, with data provided monthly on bike numbers. The Council converts this to a weight, based on standard 12.5Kg weight per bike. These weights are then used for SEPA quarterly reports.

The Council has a meet and greet system for people arriving at the three larger sites mentioned. This allows the staff to direct people to the reuse container. The council has commented that the Cycle Hub service works well and they never have any issues.



Figure 1. Image of the Cycle Hub team in Arbroath (shop and warehouse) and the Dundee hub.

## 6. Case study: Perth & Kinross Council and City of Edinburgh Council

### Perth & Kinross Council

The council has had a bike collection point at all 9 HWRCs since 2010, with Remake Scotland doing collections from 2 of the HWRCs, and The Bike Station doing the rest. The total weight of bikes collected in 2022 from all recycling centres was 48 tonnes which were resold, repaired and sold or stripped for parts reuse and recycling.



Figure 2. Example of signage (Perth & Kinross Council) and a drop off point

The council has SLAs in place for both reuse organisations. As part of the conditions they must provide tonnage data quarterly, their own risk assessments and methodologies for working on sites.

The organisations are allowed to take only the bikes that are considered reusable as a whole or for parts and can place the rest in scrap metal bays for recycling. Organisations provide a timetable of when they will collect bikes in order to ensure the container does not sit full for too long.

In terms of layouts and the operation of recycling centres the council's view is that the following are worth considering:

- The location of bike collection points should be visible, however space at many recycling centres is restricted and there is not always this option.
- Signage is important and the council's signs indicate how people should stack bikes to avoid tangling and damage - to maximise reuse (see Figure 2).
- A good working relationship between site attendants and reuse organisation staff is beneficial.

## 6. Case study

### City of Edinburgh Council

The City of Edinburgh Council does not currently operate any reuse projects at recycling centres because of previous issues with material quality, but is exploring options to start this up again. Currently, The Bike Station and Brake the Cycle provide the council with data on the number of bikes donated directly to their facilities/shops. In 2023, 40 tonnes of bikes were dropped off, with 27 tonnes scrapped and 13 tonnes reused. This equates to circa 1,040 bikes using an average weight of 12.5 Kg for each bike. The council provides The Bike Station with a grant for these services.

### The Bike Station

The Bike Station is a community based organisation built on collaboration and building relationships, selling refurbished bikes and reinvesting into local community programmes across Edinburgh and Perth. It also provides free bikes, accessories, cycling lessons and group rides.

It provides the [Wee Bike Library](#) scheme referred to in the introduction, supported by Transport Scotland, for 2 to 16 year olds, who can borrow bikes for free and exchange them for the next size up as they grow, free of charge. The scheme provides a wide range of items, from balance bikes up to 24 inch wheel bikes, all refurbished by The Bike Station. This scheme is delivered through all three shops/branches (one in Perth and two in Edinburgh), with over 800 people signed up to the library in year 1.

Shifting Gears is a communities based equalities programme run by the organisation, funded by Transport Scotland, which involves working with people who are often under-represented in behaviour change programmes, including Women's Aid groups and Perth Autism Support.

# 7. Templates

## Accompanying this toolkit is:

- a) A [service level agreement template](#) incorporating:
  - Basic agreement clauses
  - Detailed agreements clauses
- b) An [Excel document](#) with data recording tables e.g. for use in file sharing platforms on the web.

LOGO HERE


### TEMPLATE OF A SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT (SLA) FOR BIKE COLLECTIONS FROM RECYCLING CENTRES

**How to use this template:**

1. The clauses described can be used, modified and/or deleted as required.
2. The text highlighted in yellow can be overtyped as required.
3. Two agreement types are provided:
  - Basic agreement clauses and
  - Detailed agreement clauses.

**It is recommended that the basic agreement clauses form the core of any SLA, with detailed agreement clauses chosen if and when required.**

Template produced in June 2024, version 01.



Template of a Service Level Agreement (SLA) for bike collections from household waste recycling centres

(LOGO HERE)

### DATA RECORDING

Standard bike weights that can be applied for data reporting

Weights, Kg per bike*		
Adult bikes	Kids bikes	Mixed
15	10	12.5
15	10	12.5

Standard bike weights that can be applied for data reporting

Weights, Kg per bike*		
Adult bikes	Kids bikes	Mixed
15	10	12.5
15	10	12.5
15	10	12.5
15	10	12.5
15	10	12.5
15	10	12.5

\* Weights shown are illustrative - use the preferred weight for your council area


Indicative monthly reporting template – bikes collected

	Running Total			January			February					
	No of bikes			Weight of bikes, Kg			No of bikes			Weight of bikes, Kg		
	Adult bikes	Kid bikes	Mixed Total	Adult bikes	Kid bikes	Mixed Total	Adult bikes	Kid bikes	Mixed Total	Adult bikes	Kid bikes	Mixed Total
Collected from recycling centres	100	100	200	1,500	1,000	2,500	100	100	200	1,500	1,000	2,500
Donated directly to reuse organisation	100	100	200	1,500	1,000	2,500	100	100	200	1,500	1,000	2,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>3,000</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>5,000</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>3,000</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>5,000</b>

Indicative monthly reporting – outputs

	No of bikes												TOTAL	Jan	Feb
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec			
Reused	40													40	500
Stripped down for spares	90													90	1,125
Scrapped/recycled	50													50	625
Landfilled or energy from waste														0	
<b>Total</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>2,250</b>
Bikes in stock (optional)	100													100	1,250



# Acknowledgements

Circular Communities Scotland wishes to thank all of the organisations who participated in the development of this toolkit:

## LOCAL AUTHORITIES

- Angus Council
- City of Edinburgh Council
- Glasgow City Council
- Fife Council
- North Ayrshire Council
- Perth and Kinross Council

## SOCIAL ENTERPRISES

- Angus Cycle Hub
- Bikes for Good
- The Bike Station
- Greener Kirkcaldy
- Recyke-a-bike

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Funded by Transport Scotland, this toolkit was produced with support from Cycling Scotland. Cycling Scotland is Scotland's national cycling charity. Working with others, to get more people cycling, more safely and easily in a better environment.

Find out more at [cycling.scot](https://cycling.scot)



## For further information about support available, visit [www.circularcommunities.scot](http://www.circularcommunities.scot)

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