

Local Authority WEEE collections and funding available from Material Focus to support with local community collections

To: All authorities across the UK

The Electricals Recycling Fund

The [Electricals Recycling Fund](#) from Material Focus aims to expand existing methods or trial new creative and practical ones for recycling small household electricals.

Local authorities are encouraged to apply for this funding to support them in delivering initiatives to make the recycling of small WEEE (waste electrical and electronic equipment) easier for residents, take them out of landfill/energy from waste and potentially help reduce the prevalence of vehicle fires caused by incorrectly disposed of batteries in kerbside household waste and recycling bins.

What funding is available?

This year, Material Focus is looking to support pilots that introduce or expand local recycling options. **£1 million** is available to fund pilots – including on-street collection banks, community drop-off points in high-footfall locations such as libraries and leisure centres, and refurbishment of existing bring banks.

- Organisations (local authorities and registered charities) can apply for up to £100,000 of funding for on-street bring banks and community drop-off.
- Take a look at their [how-to guides](#) and [case studies](#) for inspiration from previous pilots.

[Applications are open](#) until **31st May 2026**. Now in its third year, the Fund has already supported over 70 pilots across the UK, helping more than 12.5 million people reuse or recycle their electricals.

Find all the information you need to support your application, including a template to prepare your answers and FAQs, in the [application pack](#).

The funding is available to spend on capital such as bring banks, bins, and containers, that are central to the delivery of the services proposed. The funding is not available to purchase any major capital assets such as vehicles/property. If your project involves the use of vehicles they will need to be rented.

Background

The collection of WEEE by local authorities at the kerbside and in the community is not a statutory duty currently, and it is not part of the scope of Simpler Recycling in England or devolved nations' policy to collect from the kerbside. Research has shown that only around 100 authorities (out of over 300 nationwide)¹ collect some form of WEEE or batteries at the kerbside. Most HWRCs (household waste recycling centres) do accept WEEE for recycling, but these can be inaccessible for those without cars, can be a considerable distance for residents to travel to, and some require booking systems.

The funding from Material Focus aims to support more convenient drop-off points and bring banks in the community. The aim is to increase capture rate, save valuable materials from landfill/incineration, and remove these items from incorrect household bins which can cause fires when battery-containing items are disposed of in the household kerbside scheme.

Material Focus is an independent not-for-profit organisation, funded by the UK's Extended Producer Responsibility Regulations. Under WEEE EPR regulations, electrical producers have legal obligations for the environmental impact of their products throughout their lifecycle. This includes financing the collection, treatment, and recycling of electrical waste to recover the precious materials inside them.

Material Focus Resources, how-to guides and case studies

Material Focus has produced several case studies and how-to guides that may support local authorities' applications for funding and also provide good practice guidance for those who wish to proceed with their own WEEE collections, or are unsuccessful with funding as it is expected to be a competitive process.

Material Focus' WEEE how-to-guides cover:

- On-street bring banks
- Reuse
- Kerbside
- Repair
- Community drop-off
- Flats
- Vapes

Pilot Studies

Materials Focus have also worked with councils across all four nations of the UK with various pilot studies across a wide range of authorities, from rural districts to urban boroughs, to large waste partnerships. The findings of their pilot studies [can be explored here](#).

Research

Material Focus has also conducted wide-ranging [research](#) into the impacts of WEEE, the scale of the challenge and consumer research. They are also interested in the issue of battery fires and are currently conducting research into this.

¹ [Kerbside collection drives up council recycling of batteries and small WEEE | Resource Media](#)

APSE Comment

APSE encourages all local authorities to apply for the funding available to them to introduce localised collections of WEEE to help their residents recycle their unused electricals, saving them from the residual waste stream or contaminating recycling collections which we know has a detrimental impact on local authority fleet and recycling infrastructure.

Whilst kerbside collections of WEEE are increasingly commonplace, the majority of councils do not yet collect it and many are not in a position to do so due to logistics and challenges of collecting WEEE from the kerbside, such as limited capacity in special compartments in refuse collection vehicles, and the cost of retrofitting vehicles. Other factors can be room for storage and fire risk at waste transfer stations.

Local, convenient, community collections act as a 'bridge' between a full-scale kerbside collection and the relative inconvenience of residents travelling to HWRCs to dispose of small electrical items.

Future policy around EPR (extended producer responsibility) for WEEE and the ETS (emissions trading scheme) are also expected to have an impact on WEEE. For example, WEEE items are generally made of 'fossil-based carbon' plastic materials which will be a factor in the ETS, therefore it is in local authorities' interest to divert as much of this away from incineration as possible.

For local authorities that do not yet collect WEEE at the kerbside and may not have community drop-off points or are unable to gain funding, they are also encouraged to promote the ['Recycle Your Electricals' locator](#) to residents to help them locate existing recycling and reuse points.

Many electrical retailers, such as Currys, do take certain items of WEEE for recycling, but many residents are not aware of this. The [Recycle Your Electricals locator](#) can help pinpoint convenient reuse, repair and recycling points depending on the item the resident wishes to recycle.

Encouraging use of these alternative outlets can help further divert these materials from household bins and the need for HWRC journeys, freeing up space and capacity in HWRCs and allowing for greater accessibility, particularly for those in rural areas or who do not have access to a car.

Hear all about it!

Niamh McBride, Environmental Partnerships Lead at Material Focus, will be speaking at the upcoming [APSE Waste and Recycling Seminar on 18 June at Sheffield Town Hall](#). She will be presenting on the Recycle Your Electricals campaign and reducing battery fires. Authorities are encouraged to attend to hear from Material Focus, ask any questions on the campaign, and hear from other leading industry experts and speakers from across local government.

Bonni Jee
Principal Advisor

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Networks are a free service included as part of your authority's membership of APSE and all end with an informal lunch to facilitate networking with peers in other councils. If you do not currently receive details about APSE Network meetings and would like to be added to our list of contacts for your service area please email enquiries@apse.org.uk.

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- Roads, Highways and Street Lighting
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- Veterans and Military Champions Network
- Local Government Reorganisation Network
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