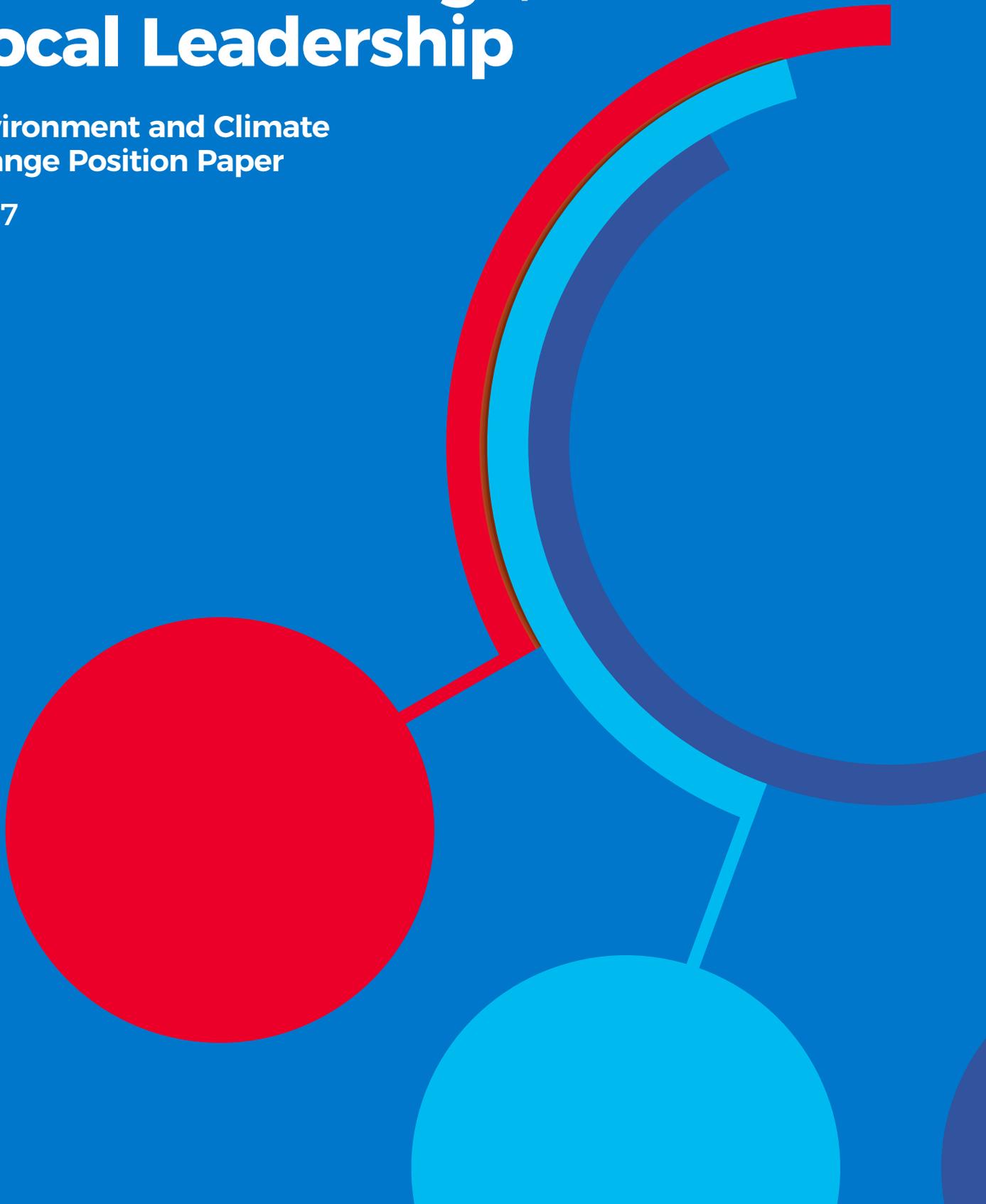




# Global Challenge, Local Leadership

Environment and Climate  
Change Position Paper

2017



# Foreword



How we protect our environment and tackle climate change says a lot about us.

It says what kind of nation we want to live in.

It says how we want to engage with the world and each other.

It says what sort of future we want to build for our children.

The Scottish Conservatives believe in protecting and enhancing our natural heritage. We must do more than just repair damage, we must also improve our environment. We believe it is our duty to the next generation to leave Scotland a better place than we found it.

In this document we set out our commitment to deliver a Scotland that produces more and wastes less. A Scotland that builds and heats more homes without destroying greenspace or polluting our planet.

A Scotland where we work with our farmers and communities to restore our landscape. A Scotland where everyone and everywhere can see the benefits of cherishing our vast natural capital.

Scotland has heard too many warm words and seen too much inaction when it comes to building a sustainable future. It is time we set aside the notion that missed targets and slipping deadlines are something simply to be accepted.

Our approach will provide Scots with a greener and more pleasant land to call home. We set ourselves this task because it is one of the great challenges of our times. It is for this generation to tackle the issue and ensure that the next will live in a better, more productive and more sustainable world.

I ask you to join us as we meet that challenge head on.

Ruth Davidson  
Leader of The Scottish Conservative  
and Unionist Party

 @RuthDavidsonMSP

# Introduction



At a time when global economic demand and environmental systems are under intensive and competing strain, a new approach is required. We can no longer consume our natural resources at the current unsustainable rate, and we can no longer think of economic development as a competing force against environmental protection.

The Scottish Conservative approach to the Environment and Climate Change is founded on three key tenets. The first is a belief that Climate Change is one of the great challenges we face, and we must show leadership on the world stage to reduce global emissions. The second is that, in the long term, resource prices will increase, and moreover, access to these resources will become less reliable. By decreasing our reliance on products which are manufactured abroad we can reduce global emissions but also grow the economy

and create jobs here in Scotland. The third tenet is that we need to look holistically at our management of the environment. That means making the business case, but also recognising that for certain projects the business case will not be viable if assessed via conventional accounting. Therefore, we recognise a role for Natural Capital in order to progress key projects.

We have set out ambitious plans across seven key sections including; Circular Economy, Biodiversity, Energy, Homes and Transport. These plans either match or exceed existing targets, but, more importantly, also identify how we will achieve them. We will prioritise achieving behaviour change, technological advancement, big data and innovation in order to tackle climate change, boost biodiversity, grow the economy, create more, better jobs and ensure new ideas are delivered for the benefit of Scotland.

Maurice Golden  
Shadow Cabinet Secretary for the Environment,  
Climate Change and Land Reform

 @mgoldenmsp

# Designing a Circular Economy

The Circular Economy is an economic system where resources are used for as long as possible at their highest utility value in order to extract the maximum benefit from them. For Scotland, this would create more higher skilled jobs, close the productivity gap as well as help to reduce income inequality.

For Scottish businesses, the implementation of Circular Economy business models will allow them to turn inputs into assets by improving their ability to control supply chains and manage long-term costs. For consumers, it will provide opportunities and flexibility to reduce and manage the costs of products and services. For the environment, it can minimise negative externalities and help play a part in minimising our carbon footprint. The bottom line is that a Circular Economy will be a win for businesses, a win for consumers and a win for the environment.

To successfully transition to a Circular Economy, we need to refocus current Government intervention. Government leadership on technological advancement, education and behaviour change, and the creation of a Centre for Circular Economy Excellence will together help to achieve an estimated £3 billion economic boost.

A Design Academy will stimulate innovation, and become a catalyst for embedding Circular Economic practices and thinking into the design sector. This will cover system, product and business model design. We will support the design of new technologies that enable innovative asset tracking, data management, reverse logistic solutions and connectivity. New business models will be encouraged around renting, leasing, servitisation, remanufacturing and re-use. We will take a cohesive approach to delivering all business support functions provided by Government.

A Circular Economy Education and Skills Academy will encapsulate a schools' programme which will engage with pupils across a diverse range of disciplines to highlight the opportunities a Circular Economy presents. In the tertiary sector, the Academy will link diverse research topics to speed up the pollination of innovative work. Development of key skills such as engineering, repair, remanufacturing and Circular Economy accounting will also be important in realising our Circular Economy plans.

## Our Aspirations

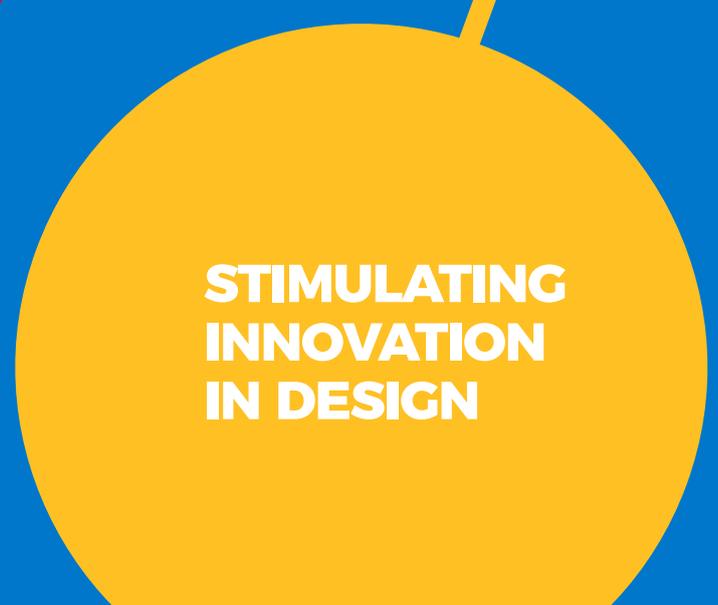
- **Create a Centre for Circular Economy Excellence** – a world-leading facility for Circular Economy activities to encompass the academies and institute listed below.
- **Establish a Circular Economy Education and Skills Academy** to link our education sector with business and boost the economy.
- **Create an Institute of Re-use** which would foster and encourage more re-use activity in the business and third sectors.
- **Develop a Design Academy** featuring Scotland's best designers to foster collaboration with business and academia.
- **Introduce a Circular Economy Awards scheme** for businesses, public and third sector and communities. It will recognise best practice, innovation and early adopters.
- **Ensure public sector procurement** completely aligns with our Circular Economy potential and enables behaviour change. Circular Economy services and products should be the first choice in procurement to help pump-prime the Circular Economy market.



We will create a **Centre for Circular Economy Excellence** for Scotland – a world-leading facility for Circular Economy activities.



**£3 BILLION  
ECONOMIC  
BOOST**



**STIMULATING  
INNOVATION  
IN DESIGN**

We will **establish new national parks** for Scotland with support from local communities.



# Restoring our Natural Landscape

We value the rich biodiversity and natural resources of Scotland's landscape, and believe it is essential to maintain and restore them to the highest environmental standards. From the craggy peaks of the Cuillins in Skye, to the gentle rolling fertile farmland of Aberdeenshire, from the Devonian volcanics of the Cheviot Hills to the idyllic sandy beaches of Ayrshire, we have some of the most diverse and spectacular natural landscapes in the world. The following measures will enhance our landscape, help mitigate flood risks and boost tourism.

We believe in restoring the natural landscape and enhancing ecosystems, but progress has been slow - we want to change that. Woodland creation targets have not been met since they were introduced. Furthermore, little consideration has been given to the quality of woodland necessary to promote biodiversity. Peatland restoration can further offset carbon emissions, and enhance our natural landscape, but Scotland is lagging behind expert advised goals. Missing all these targets means less chance of offsetting carbon emissions, and represents a lack of commitment to our rural landscape.

Too many of our beaches, lochs and rivers suffer from poor water quality. We will take action to reverse this trend: cleaning up beaches, improving inland waterways and restoring wetlands.

## Our Aspirations

- **Create 15,000 hectares of new quality woodland** per year – up from 7,600 hectares in 2015 with a focus on biodiversity and flood prevention.
- **Establish new national parks** where there is local support. Commission a feasibility study to explore the viability of sites.
- **Create new hiking and nature trails** similar to the West Highland Way.
- **Commit to restoring degraded peatland**, which will help to protect against flooding and act as a natural carbon sink. Provide long-term investment security to encourage the creation of local jobs.
- **Improve the water quality** of our lochs, rivers, watercourses and coastal bathing water by providing strategic support to riparian and other stakeholders.
- **Realise the potential of Scotland's blue carbon stocks** by protecting seagrass meadows, kelp forests, and cold-water coral reefs.
- **Create a new phosphorus and priority substances recovery programme** to help prevent the loss of valuable resources from the water environment.
- **Protect our wild areas**, especially those with designations and others specifically classified as 'wild lands'.

# Restoring Scotland's Biodiversity

Scotland is blessed with a rich and diverse range of flora and fauna, and we are committed to protecting that biodiversity as well as enhancing it. We will take a three step approach – **understand**, **safeguard** and **enhance**.

Information is the key to protecting our natural heritage, and that is why we will tackle the existing gaps in knowledge by establishing a Biodiversity Baseline. Crucial to that process will be working alongside key stakeholders to involve them as full partners and leverage their expertise.

From the great glens to suburban Scotland, we take a broad view of safeguarding our biodiversity across Scotland. Our towns and cities will be improved by the creation of new greenspaces and our countryside will see the increased restoration of natural habitats.

We want to go further than conservation and see our biodiversity enriched. Our approach will introduce new agricultural methods to support the environment, halt the spread of invasive species and effectively manage deer.

## Our Aspirations

- Establish a **Biodiversity Baseline** through a comprehensive project to survey and model Scottish biodiversity.
- Tackle invasive species – such as Rhododendron, Japanese Knotweed and Giant Hogweed – head on by setting up an **Invasive Species Action Fund** to provide grants to relevant stakeholders.
- Boost biodiversity, improve our communities and re-engage children living in urban areas with nature by gearing the planning process to help create a **network of green corridors**, nectar networks and greenspaces.
- Offer advice, incentives and support to farmers to **encourage regenerative farming** by helping them identify new practices that will benefit them and our environment the most, including regenerative farming methods in agriculture college curriculums and farming apprenticeships.
- Initiate and fund a rolling programme of **seabird island restoration** to increase the breeding opportunities available by removing predators introduced by humans, and ensure future introductions are prevented.
- Work with farmers and communities to monitor and **stop the spread of animals released illegally**.

We will take a three step approach to protecting Scotland's biodiversity – **understand, safeguard and enhance.**





We will support research and development in organisations involved in **emerging renewable technologies**, particularly tidal, to secure a viable route to market.

# A Secure and Low-Carbon Based Energy Sector

We have long argued that Scottish energy generation should be based on three key pillars: security of supply, affordability and decarbonisation. Our transition to a low-carbon economy will be focused on the creation of jobs, support for innovation and investment in cutting edge technology.

Central to meeting these targets will be continued support for the renewable energy sector: with half of Scotland's energy to come from renewables by 2050. Through our proposed Scottish Renewable Energy Bond, everyone will be able to share in our renewable future.

We must ensure a robust energy mix for Scotland. The Scottish Conservatives are the only party to support our nuclear industry, and will continue that support by exploring options for new stations at Hunterston and Torness.

As part of our plan to have a more flexible electricity network, expanding our energy storage capacity and establishing an electric arc furnace will help us to address our increasing reliance on intermittent sources of energy. We will establish a Sustainable Energy Innovation Centre and to help make Scotland a global leader in this field.

## Our Aspirations

- Source at least **50% of Scotland's energy from renewables by 2030**, with individual targets for the heat, transport and electricity sectors.
- Develop the required regulatory framework and innovative finance solutions to support the **growth of district heat networks**.
- Work with key stakeholders (including the UK Government) to **invest in energy storage**, interconnection and demand-side response to ensure more system flexibility.
- Establish a **Sustainable Energy Innovation Centre** to make Scotland an internationally recognised centre of excellence in innovative energy management and energy storage.
- Support research and development in organisations involved in **emerging renewable technologies**, particularly tidal, to secure a viable route to market.
- **Ensure that Scotland's public sector leads the next chapter of our energy evolution** by implementing policies to maximise the use and deployment of renewable energy across the whole public sector estate.
- Commit to supporting **new nuclear power plants** at Hunterston and Torness.
- Support the development of an **electric arc furnace**, which is more flexible and environmentally friendly than a traditional blast furnace, for steel recycling and harnessing excess energy supply.
- We will encourage public participation in, and the sharing of economic benefit from, renewables through the introduction of a **Scottish Renewable Energy Bond**. Pooled ownership of renewables and local energy systems will share the benefits more fairly among Scotland's communities.

# Sustainable Transport

Sustainable transport is essential to Scotland's green future. Since 1990, there has been almost no change in overall emissions from transport. To tackle this, we will focus on encouraging the uptake of active travel and reducing road travel emissions. A shift to sustainable transport requires bold thinking, innovation, and co-operation.

Expanding the uptake of electric vehicles is central to reducing emissions and improving air quality. This will be achieved through changes to public procurement policy, making it more convenient to own an electric vehicle and increasing the number of charging points.

Encouraging cycling and walking will help achieve our goal of reducing emissions whilst improving public health. With a designated cycle way in each of Scotland's major cities, active travel will become a feasible alternative to car journeys.

Establishing urban consolidation hubs, a centre which reconfigures how deliveries are made to businesses and consumers, will make freight delivery more efficient and reduce the number of heavy goods vehicles on our roads. We will work with local authorities to plan how these centres can best be placed to reduce air pollution and boost local economies.

## Our Aspirations

- **Incentivise owning electric cars** by introducing a range of measures including free town centre parking and allowing use of bus and taxi lanes.
- **Establish a fund to expand electric vehicle charging points** in small towns, rural areas and train stations.
- Require all public bodies to conduct a cost-benefit analysis of replacing existing vehicle fleets with electric vehicles. **Mandate consideration of electric vehicles in future procurement plans.**
- **Establish electric vehicle sharing schemes** in major cities, whereby users can pick up and drop off cars at charging stations.
- Work with local authorities and third sector partners on improving our cycle path network by investing an additional £5m in active travel. **Establish one segregated cycle route in each of Scotland's cities**, and also support safe travel routes to schools.
- **Make air quality monitors available** to all of Scotland's primary schools.
- Where commercially feasible, **establish urban consolidation hubs** in Scotland's cities to reduce the number of heavy goods vehicles and improve air quality.
- Provide transition support to convert **buses and taxis to be powered by renewables.**

We will **incentivise owning electric cars** by introducing a range of measures including free town centre parking and allowing use of bus and taxi lanes.





We will deliver transformative change in energy efficiency across Scotland - with all properties, where practical, achieving an **EPC Band 'C' rating by 2030.**

# Energy Efficient Homes and Sustainable Development

The Scottish Conservatives are committed to tackling fuel poverty and reducing overall carbon emissions through a transformative change in the energy efficiency of our housing stock. Our proposal is to invest up to 10% of the Scottish Government's capital budget allocations in energy efficiency measures. As well as reducing consumption, we want to see more energy used within our housing sector originate from renewable sources.

We will stop the exploitation of our precious greenbelt by allowing local authorities to introduce a moratorium on specially designated sites. These sites would also be considered safe from development by Central Government as part of any appeals process. The factors influencing special designation will include land banking, local infrastructure, brownfield site access and community engagement.

Since more than 100,000 properties are at risk of flooding, we believe more needs to be done to prepare Scots for the damage it can cause. A new flood preparedness kit will be developed and provided to homeowners in areas at risk of flooding. This will include practical advice to help the public minimise flood damage and get back into their homes as soon as possible.

## Our Aspirations

- **Increase the energy efficiency budget** line gradually to reach 10% of the Scottish Government's capital budget allocations.
- Deliver a transformative change in energy efficiency across Scotland - with all properties, where practical, achieving an **EPC Band 'C' rating by 2030**.
- Require new developments to **maximise solar energy capture and install heat pumps**.
- Stipulate that new large scale housing and commercial developments feature **at least one electric vehicle charging station**.
- **Safeguard the greenbelt against development** where it is against the public interest.
- Increase funding available to SEPA, local authorities and local stakeholders to **improve flood management**.

# Maximising Scotland's Resources

The Scottish Conservatives are committed to minimising Scotland's waste. Our focus will be on applying the waste hierarchy with a prioritisation on waste prevention and preparation for re-use (including remanufacturing). We will re-invigorate and invest in consumer waste prevention campaigns to influence behaviour change and support the growth of our re-use sector.

We will also build our strategy around the production of high-quality recyclate. This will allow Scotland to attract investment and associated jobs from recycling plants – notably for plastics, mattresses and absorbent hygiene products. Scotland has a worse recycling rate than England and lags even further behind Wales – this needs to change. Although progress has been made, a lack of leadership has seen Scotland stalled in reaching several key targets.

We will review the Packaging Recovery Notes system with producers/brand owners taking more responsibility for the products they put on the market. At present, producer responsibility compliance in Scotland is considered lower than other similar countries, and this needs to be addressed. This would be linked to a reprocessing gap analysis, which will look at what is actually put on the market in Scotland and what potential that holds for reprocessing.

Landfill and incineration should be seen as an option of last resort. In the long term, we expect both options to play a small part in waste management with incineration only used in conjunction with energy and heat generation.

## Our Aspirations

- **Establish a £2 million annual fund** for waste prevention campaigns.
- **Introduce Circular Economy Buying Standards for the public sector** to drive the market for more durable/repairable products, re-used/refurbished/remanufactured products, those with recycled content and product service systems. Investigate a carbon 'Cap and Trade' scheme for the public sector to help prevent waste.
- Collaborate with the UK Government on **producer responsibility schemes for key materials** (including furniture and carpets) as well as products in relation to eco-design initiatives.
- **Establish a 75% recycling rate by 2035** – achieved through a single, consistent, easy-to-use recycling collection system for the vast majority of Scots. This will be supported by a **£50 million capital fund for local authorities**.
- **Establish a Rural and Island Waste Commission** to develop bespoke resource management solutions in these areas.
- **Develop a reprocessing infrastructure map for Scotland** to provide a clear market signal for more Scottish investment in facilities.
- **More stringent enforcement of the Materials Recovery Facilities Code of Practice** to improve the quality of recyclate.

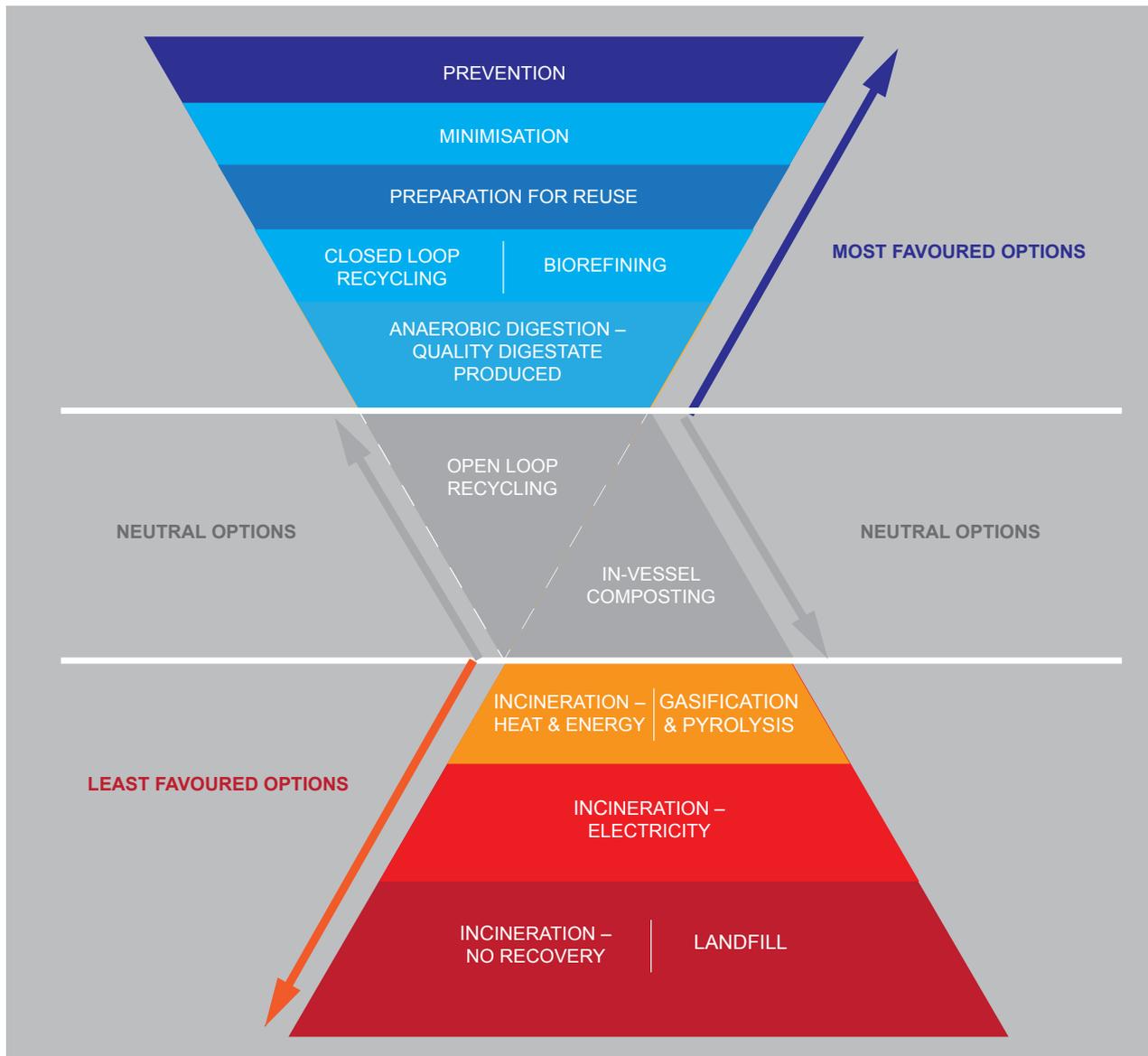


We will introduce **Circular Economy Buying Standards** for the public sector to drive the market for more durable/reparable products.

## Our Aspirations

- **Extend the powers of the Material Brokerage scheme** to act as a commodities dealership for local authorities by providing price stability.
- **Strengthen industry sector targets to reduce commercial and industrial waste** to ensure they become more circular; taking opportunities to shore up resilience by remanufacturing, reusing parts and using more secondary materials. Develop the existing Industrial Emissions Directive to capture raw material use and also waste generated.
- **Set a target of 5% waste to incineration by 2040** and introduce a **moratorium on any new incineration plants.**
- **Support a 5% waste to landfill by 2025** including a requirement for treatment of all wastes prior to landfill being designated.
- **Combine a landfill ban on mattresses and absorbent hygiene products** with incentives for local authorities to collect these materials separately as well as for recycling processors to build recycling plants.
- **Compulsory training for all waste management professionals.**
- **Establish a £10 million Clean Neighbourhood scheme** to clean up graffiti, fix pavements, manage dog fouling and reduce litter.

## The Waste Hierarchy





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