

Waste and Recycling Policy

Background

1. The Scottish Seabird Centre (SSC) is a conservation and education charity (Registered Scottish Charity no. SC025837). Our purpose is to conserve seabirds and the environment, inspire and educate people about the Scottish marine environment, and to motivate people to care for it. Our work is underpinned by a not-for-profit visitor experience - the Scottish Seabird Centre Trading Limited (registered Company no. SC183214) - and net income generated is re-invested in the Charitable objectives.
2. We recognise that in delivering our charitable activities we may also have some adverse impacts on the environment. Our main environmental impacts arise from greenhouse gas emissions from energy use and travel, waste generation, water use, and the use of non-renewable resources. We are committed to continual improvement in our own environmental performance, to meeting our statutory environmental obligations and to reducing our environmental impacts.
3. We wish to ensure that Scotland's marine environment is healthy and wildlife rich. The pervasive presence of plastic in our oceans pose a severe threat to seabird populations and marine biodiversity. It's estimated that around 90% of seabirds have ingested plastic which can lead to a plastic induced illness called "plasticosis" and can also lead to malnutrition, intestinal blockage, and exposure to toxic substances. Surface feeding birds, such as petrels and storm-petrels, are particularly vulnerable due to their feeding habits and migration patterns. Entanglement in plastic debris, such as fishing nets and packing straps is also a risk leading to injuries, restricted movement, and drowning. We must therefore tackle waste, and in particular plastic pollution as a priority, making the transition away from single-use plastics to less polluting alternatives.

Principles

4. One of the ways in which we can minimise our impacts on the environment is through responsibly managing our waste. We strive to meet the following principles:
 - i. Embrace the principles of a circular economy by purchasing products that are durable, reusable, repairable and recyclable.
 - ii. Embrace the principles of, and follow the waste hierarchy by reducing our waste, repairing and reusing items where possible, recycling and using waste operators that recover materials and waste for energy generation.
 - iii. Support community re-use and recycling projects where possible.
 - iv. Avoiding the use of "single use" plastics and other damaging single use items where possible.
 - v. Responsibly disposing of any hazardous waste through recognized programs or collection centers (i.e. batteries, cooking oil, paint etc).

- vi. Raise awareness of waste issues with our staff and members to encourage them to observe best practice.
- vii. Reduce our waste generation over time and aim to achieve net zero landfill.
- viii. Set and review our performance against objectives annually.

Identifying and managing waste

5. To meet our objectives our approach is guided by the principles of the Circular Economy and the Waste Hierarchy.



When managing our waste and selecting our providers, we aim to:

Reduce

- Avoid waste (think before you buy).
- Buy durable products, fit for purpose, with long lives.
- Buying re-furnished products where appropriate.
- Avoid “single use” plastics and use and offer reusable items such as water bottles, refillable coffee cups and Tupperware instead.
- Carry out waste audits to monitor types and volumes of waste so they can be targeted and reduced.

Reuse

- Offer incentives (discounts) to customers with re-usable takeaway cups for hot drinks.
- We are a water re-fill point to reduce the use of single use plastic bottles.
- Support community re-use and recycling projects and donate unwanted items to charities such as Reuse Scotland/Zero Waste.
- Offer items for free on local re-use sites.

Repair

- Repair, clean, refurbish or re-purpose unwanted items.

Recycle

- Split waste and recycle correctly to turn waste into new products.
- Split waste into the following waste streams:
 - Mixed recycling (paper, card and metal),
 - Food waste,
 - Glass,
 - Soft plastics (office),
 - General waste/landfill.
- Be a recycle point for: batteries, ink cartridges and stamps.

Recover

- Use waste providers who take advantage of new technologies such as anaerobic digestion.
 - Ensure food waste is separated so it can be used in anaerobic digestion and produce energy from waste.
 - Ensure cooking oil is recovered and collected for use in making Biodiesel.

Disposal

- Be committed to minimising the amount of waste disposed of.
- Be committed to using responsible waste providers who:
 - maximise recycling,
 - have systems in place to recover energy from waste,
 - minimise waste that ends up in landfill,
 - have carbon reduction commitments and targets.

Commitment and goals

6. Our current commitment is to ensure that no more than 1% of our total waste should ever end up in landfill.
7. Our long-term goal is net zero landfill where none of our waste ends up in landfill. Where it is all re-used, recycled or recovered and used within the supply chain, supporting the circular economy, reducing the need for virgin materials and minimising our impact on the environment.

Further information and Useful Links

- Circular Communities Scotland
<https://www.circularcommunities.scot/>
- Reuse Scotland
<https://www.reusescotland.org/>

- WRAP (Waste and Resources Action Programme)
<https://www.wrap.ngo/>
- Hamilton Waste
https://www.hamiltonwaste.com/wp-content/uploads/Hamilton_Our-Commitment.pdf
- North Berwick Recycling Centre
<https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/northberwickrecycle>

Feedback

We are always looking to improve our performance and organisations sustainability, so if you have any thoughts, comments or suggestions on this policy, please get in touch at info@seabird.org stating the name of the policy in the subject line of the email.

Created: February 2025

Approved by: Harry Huyton (CEO)

Date for Review: February 2026