

Circular Towns Guide

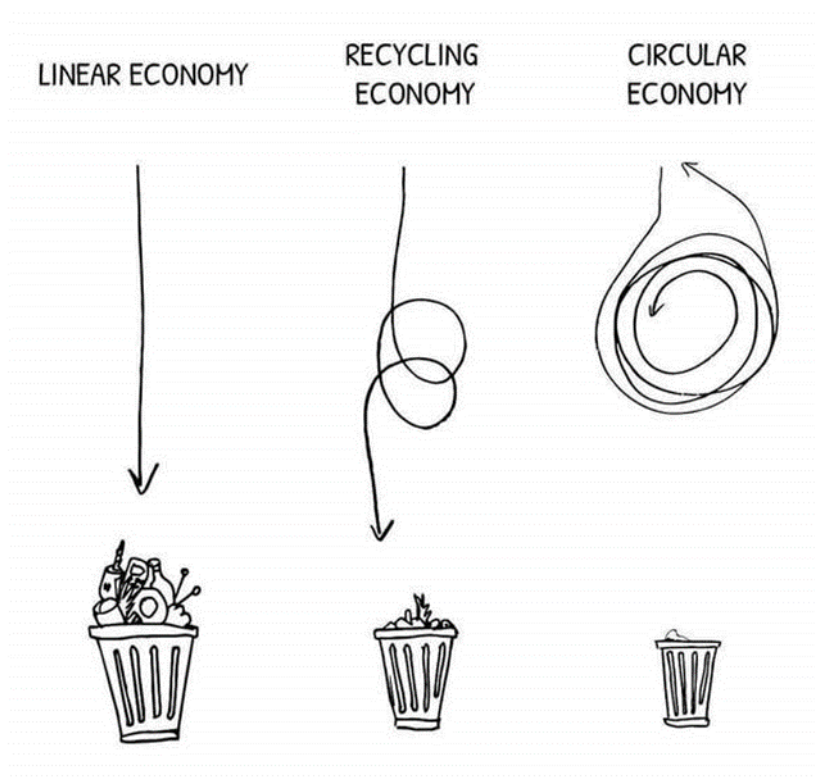
Climate change is set to be the most challenging issue of our age, and will have far-reaching consequences across the world. In order to take action, we need to change the way we interact with the planet, including through our towns and communities.

One way to do this is through the **circular economy**, a model which illustrates how we can make the most of every resource we have, reduce waste – or even stop it from happening in the first place. This guide aims to show you how your town can benefit from circular economy principles, and how you can get started on your circular journey!

WHAT IS THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY?

We currently live in a **linear economy**, in which we **take** resources from the Earth, **make** products from them, and then **dispose** of them after only a short period of usage. This both uses huge amounts of raw resources and generates a high amount of waste, which is simply unsustainable – if we continue consuming our resources at the current rate, we'll need three planets worth of resources by 2050!

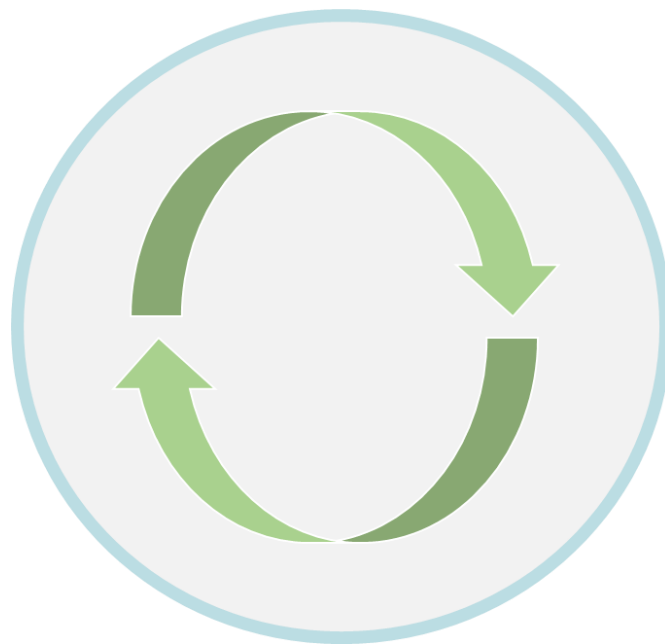
One step better is a **recycling economy**, in which we can **recover certain materials** to keep them within the economy for longer, but this involves destroying the original product to extract the resource, and can **still generate waste**, as well as being **energy-intensive**. The circular economy is a way of working that promotes using **only what we need**, stopping waste and making the most of all our resources, including people, products, services, systems and our planet.



A circular economy promotes the **re-use of products and resources**; in a circular economy, when we make a product, we use **materials already within the supply chain** rather than virgin natural resources; the product should be **long-lasting**, and when it does eventually break down, it should be **repairable** or able to be **reformed** into new products, feeding back into the cycle. This helps **retain their value** and ensure we don't waste anything, which reduces both our reliance on **raw materials** and the **impact on the planet**.

The [Ellen MacArthur Foundation](#), which aims to promote the transition to the circular economy, outlines **three principles** of the circular economy:

- **Designing out waste and pollution** – waste and pollution are not accidents, but part of the design process; by changing our mindset to view waste as a design flaw, we can use new technologies and materials to avoid creating it in the first place.
- **Keeping products and materials in use** – we should aim to retain the value of the materials we have throughout their lifetime, by reusing, remanufacturing, and refurbishing what we already have, and help it avoid ending up in landfill.
- **Regenerating natural systems** – a circular economy should not just avoid harming our natural resources – it should actively support them. By regenerating our soil, water, and other natural resources, we can enhance the ecosystems we are part of.



WHY CARE ABOUT THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY?

The circular economy isn't just about recycling; it looks to help us make the **best use of everything we have**, including people, services, systems and our planet. It can help towns become carbon-neutral by reducing emissions, and make businesses more profitable in the ever-changing landscape left by COVID-19. Whatever your ambitions for your town, we can help you reach them.

Some of the benefits of the circular economy include:

- **More resilient businesses** – supporting circular economy practices in your town's businesses can mean they **save money, reduce their carbon footprint, and work with more local suppliers**. This makes them **more adaptable** to future challenges, like new legislation or changing supply chains, and can **help them grow**.
- **Reducing waste** – by implementing circular economy strategies in your town, you can **reduce the waste** generated by your community, and ensure that **fewer of our finite natural resources are used**.
- **Tackling climate change** – cutting carbon emissions is a hugely important step to managing climate change – by becoming a circular town, you can **reduce your carbon footprint**, as well as **cutting your energy costs!**
- **Strengthening your town's offer** – both residents and visitors look for **unique places** to live and visit, and a circular town is exactly that! Introducing circular initiatives gives your town a **talking point**, and can **attract new people** to the area.
- **Community development** – the circular economy can help **promote active travel**, such as cycling and walking, which improves a town's health and wellbeing, whilst initiatives such as a Free Fridge or a Library of Things **encourage co-working** and can bring people together, helping to develop a **stronger sense of community**. New circular projects can also **create job opportunities** and give people the chance to **learn new skills**, or apply existing ones in new contexts.

We need to take a more circular approach to our lives – **enabling clean growth and using our resources efficiently** was identified as one of the key challenges by the Government's National Industrial Strategy in 2019. [WRAP](#), a national organisation dedicated to reducing waste, has also helped inform policies and create strategies to engage the public in waste reduction, including [Love Food, Hate Waste](#).

Climate change is a problem we can no longer ignore, and we need wide-scale reshaping of our economy to enable us to make a difference. COVID-19 has had an unprecedented impact, throwing supply chains into chaos and changing priorities for both businesses and communities. **'Business as usual' is no longer sustainable** or applicable for the rapidly-changing landscape we must contend with.

But as many problems as the pandemic has caused, it has also presented new opportunities. As we reshape our economy, we can do so in a way that supports **local businesses, creates new opportunities for communities, and is better for the planet.** Embracing the circular economy can give a town a competitive edge, ensuring it is ready to deal with future challenges.

If there's one thing COVID has shown, it's the power of community action; we need towns and communities engaged to help us ensure that we can help us all to become **greener, fairer, and stronger.**

1 million plastic bottles are bought globally every minute – but only 7% of them are recycled.⁵

Moving to a circular economy model in Europe could halve carbon emissions by 2030, and reduce our consumption of primary materials by 32%.³

A circular economy could greatly improve our standard of living, and see households benefit from more than £2500 in disposable income each year.²

By 2050, there will be more plastic in the oceans than fish.¹

We throw away over 6.6 million tonnes of household food waste each year in the UK. Of this, 70% could have been eaten.⁴

WHAT IS A CIRCULAR TOWN?

A circular town is one that makes use of the circular economy principles throughout the community – within its schools, businesses, and local authority, as well as within its residents' homes. It promotes **reducing waste and consumption**, and **makes best use of the resources it has** for the good of the residents – whether through **sharing, reuse, repair, or repurposing**.

When waste is created in a circular town, it should be looked at as an opportunity to use it for something else – such as using food waste as feedstock for anaerobic digestion, as in the Malton case study below.

This guide has been put together by [York and North Yorkshire LEP](#) as part of our [Circular Yorkshire](#) campaign, which champions the circular economy across our region. Communities have a critical role to play in driving sustainable change, providing an important place to **share ideas** and **generate local action**. This guide aims to introduce the concept of a circular town, illustrate what it looks like in action, and provide inspiration and guidance to help you engage your town and community in the circular economy.



Case Study – Circular Malton, Ryedale

Resilient businesses – reducing waste – strengthening your town’s offer – tackling climate change – community development

For an example of a circular town in action, we need to look no further than Malton. This pretty Georgian town in the rural district of Ryedale has a thriving circular community behind it, and is leading the way in innovation. Malton is well-known as the food capital of Yorkshire, and attracts thousands of tourists each year, as well as being a popular place to live.

The [Circular Malton](#) initiative was launched in 2019 by a group of stakeholders, led by **Sue Jefferson**, a Malton resident and one of YNY LEP’s Board Members. Having come across the concept of the circular economy through her work with the LEP, she saw it as a way that both the **economy and the planet could thrive together**.

A lot of Circular Malton’s work so far has focused on **educating** and **inspiring** residents to help enable change, as well as highlighting the opportunities that can come from a circular economy, such as an anaerobic digester that could use the town’s food waste and **produce energy** to help power homes and businesses. Other initiatives under exploration include **reducing plastic waste** by providing drinking fountains, **creating new jobs** through an upcycling workshop, and central charging points for electric vehicles, as well as championing existing projects, like the [Ryedale Free Fridge](#).



Businesses with food that is surplus or coming to its use-by date can donate it to the Free Fridge, where residents can collect it. The initiative helps **reduce food waste** and ensure that local residents can benefit from a range of free food, from fresh fruit and veg to baked goods.

By bringing a variety of circular economy concepts into the community, it helps make them **tangible** and **achievable**; businesses and residents can see what a difference a few small changes can make, creating a desire to achieve more – many of the Circular Malton volunteers have been enthused by the pace of the circular economy, and how easily their range of different skills can contribute. Malton has made huge strides to become **Yorkshire’s first Circular Market Town**, and with its dedicated band of stakeholders and the community behind it, is keen to help other towns engage with the circular economy agenda.



GETTING STARTED

So, if you want to kickstart a circular initiative in your town, where's the best place to start? This guide should give you a framework to build on to ensure you get your community engaged, on-board, and making steps to become more sustainable.

Step 1: Put a team together

The key to a successful initiative is having a team who can **spread the workload**, and **drive change together**. Ensure you have a **diverse group**, who can spread the word to all areas of the community – you may want to involve businesses, community groups, schools, council members and officers.

No one needs to be an expert on climate change or the circular economy – the most important quality for your team members is having a **positive attitude**, and a desire to make a difference to the planet and drive change in the town.

You also need to **nominate a group leader**, who can take on the responsibility for keeping everyone on track and keep the initiative going. This can be quite a time-consuming role, so make sure whoever you choose is committed and can offer a couple of hours a week!

Step 2: Work out where you're starting from

No matter where you are, there's likely to be examples of the **circular economy in your town** – even if they're not labelled that way! Maybe there's an initiative like the Ryedale Free Fridge or a food bank that distributes surplus food, or a milkman who uses reusable glass bottles instead of plastic.

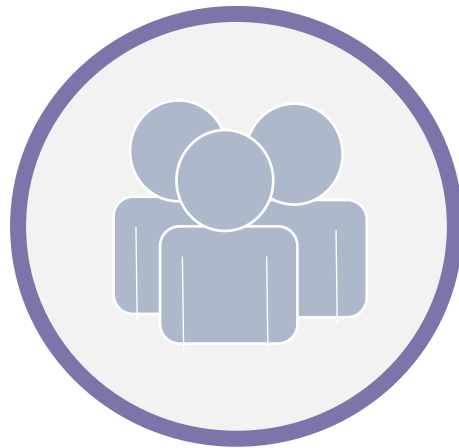
By understanding what is **currently on offer**, you can **build your circular plan** from there, and help **promote** and **leverage** the work that's already being done. This also avoids you duplicating work!



Step 3: Choose your circular champions

Once you've got a good understanding of the current circular economy landscape, you can **reach out** to the organisations you came across in your research and **ask them to become circular champions**. These organisations help **demonstrate the circular economy** in a town setting, and are a **visible example of circular principles**.

If you're having trouble finding organisations that would be good circular champions, why not reach out to some of the **most promising candidates** and ask them to make **circular commitments**? This could include a shop swapping to **plastic-free packaging** or offering a **take-back scheme** for consumable products, or a school pledging to **reduce their energy consumption** and **increase their recycling** by a certain percentage.



Step 4: Create your circular vision

The next step is to work with your community to **co-create a vision statement** for your town. This might involve businesses, schools, or even a community energy project. Be bold, but understand that the first step, much like Circular Malton, will be **changing attitudes**, and crucially, behaviour, towards **waste and consumption**.

Consider creating a **10-year vision** that will help you scope out a **long-term ambition** for your circular economy initiative – what kind of results you'd like to see, who is engaged or leading the initiatives, and what the **benefits will be to the town**, as well as to the environment.

The vision should be exciting – both **inspiring and uniting stakeholders**, whilst providing **strategic direction** to the initiative. Using the Circular Malton vision as inspiration, try using the tool on the next page to envision a newspaper headline you'd like to see in 10 years, focused on your town.

What is a circular champion and what do they do?

Being a circular champion is similar to being a brand ambassador for your circular town, and can involve:

Visibly making commitments to sustainability and explaining why they're beneficial

Supporting other organisations to make changes within their operations

Supporting the circular town initiatives

Acting as a case study for the town, demonstrating what circular actions they take and what they plan for the future

Circular Malton vision

Our Vision: A successful, appealing, healthy, happy market town

Our Mission: Creating a culture of collaboration and a circular economy legacy that prospers

What is the story being told? Why is it newsworthy?

NEWSPAPER	
HEADLINE	
[Your town here] is at the heart of a revolutionary new project...	Image

Where do you see the article being featured? Who would you like to report on your project?

What is it about in more detail? Which elements are important?

What image would you choose to represent the story?

Step 5: Identify your opportunities

Not every idea will work for every town, so it's important that you **consider the current landscape** you're working with and what **opportunities** you could tap into, including those already being offered by other businesses or organisations.

The great thing about working at a town level is that you often have a relatively small population to engage, so you can **trial schemes and initiatives** that would be more difficult with larger places. Setting up a wash-and-reuse scheme for packaging amongst takeaway businesses, or encouraging more recycling is easier when you have a smaller number of people to get on-board with the idea. Make sure you **listen to the community** and get their input – it's much easier to get people engaged if they feel like they've been involved from the start!

Things to consider when designing projects:

- What are your town's main industries?
- What facilities tend to be used, or what is underutilised?
- Location – are you coastal, rural, urban, or market town?
- What problems need solving and how could the circular economy help?

Case study: R-evolution, Driffield

Reducing waste – tackling climate change – community development

Bikes can be a **huge asset**, offering **active travel opportunities** and an easy way of keeping fit. However, the **disposal** can be a real headache. Thousands of bikes end up being **broken up for scrap** or **dumped in landfill** every year, with most only needing **minor repairs** to be usable once again. This is one of the problems that **R-evolution** set out to tackle.

The programme takes donated or abandoned bikes, and trainees help repair and refurbish them, **saving them from the scrapheap**. Any bike that can't be fixed is stripped down for parts, ensuring **nothing is wasted**.

Set up by John Marshall in 2014, the charity **originally started in prison workshops** as a way for offenders to **develop engineering skills** they could use in the real world after release. However, it has now grown to encompass **community workshops**, with trainees coming from a **wide range of backgrounds**, as well as a retail space, training programmes, and bike libraries.

It's a project that **benefits everyone** – trainees get the chance to learn practical skills and earn qualifications, whilst also developing their self-esteem, and the **recycled bikes go back to the community**, reducing waste, whilst enabling active travel and innovative schemes such as the bike libraries.

Children often outgrow bikes quickly, and this can **present a problem** as parents are either unable to replace the bike or the bike ends up being disposed of, creating waste. **R-evolution solve this problem** by loaning bikes to children on a yearly basis, allowing them to **swap it out** if they outgrow it. By implementing a **lending model**, this helps **avoid waste** and keeps children interested and engaged with cycling, helping them to **stay fit and healthy**.



R-evolution is going from strength to strength, with **new horticultural projects being developed** across East Riding and new opportunities on the horizon. John credits the growth to two factors – the **passionate, engaged team** behind the project, and the fact that **R-evolution is embedded in the community**. “It works because **it's what the community needs**,” he said. “That would be my top tip to anyone looking to set up something similar – don't assume you know what needs doing, ask your community what they need, what problems need solving. **Opening a dialogue can really open doors.**”

Step 6: Make a plan

So, you have an **engaged team**, a **good understanding of your local landscape**, and a **vision for the future**. Now, how to get there? You need to **develop an action plan** that breaks down your **ideas** into **tasks** that you and your team can undertake.

This is the point at which you can be **thinking up projects** that will form the basis of your initiative – again, look at the back of the guide for inspiration! These projects need to be successful to help **prove the benefits of becoming more circular**, so don't be afraid of making them small-scale to start with, and scaling them up as you go. This also gives you a chance to learn **what works and what doesn't** within your town.

It's sensible to plan like you would for a business – make a one-, two-, and three-year plan, with **specific milestones** and criteria you can hit to know your project is a success.

Top tip: try and ensure each step of your plan aligns with the SMART framework below!

S pecific	Can you break your larger aspirations into small, specific goals?
M easurable	How will you measure your progress?
A chievable	Is your goal realistic and success possible?
R elevant	How does your goal relate overall to your circular vision?
T ime-bound	When do you hope to reach key milestones?

Key considerations

Why – What – How – Who

What do you want to achieve?

Why is it needed? What issue are you solving?

How will you achieve it? How will you measure your success?

What will it require in terms of resources (time/space/money/materials)?

What do you want to achieve by particular points in time?

Do you need funding? If so, how will it be funded?

What is the current format of your group (e.g. community group, club, CIC)? How will this affect your future plans and what you can access?

How long do you see the project continuing? Is it something you hope to grow? Who will manage it long-term?

Step 7: Look for funding

Whatever your action plan looks like, it's likely **you'll need further support to drive change and develop your initiatives**. As businesses change the way they operate, **they may need funds** to purchase equipment, or access consultancy. You may want to have a **profit-generating project**, which can **support itself** and your circular ambitions, but this will also likely require funding. You can apply for **external funds** through **charities, social enterprises, and Government initiatives** – there is a list of useful organisations to connect with at the end of this guide.

Consider nominating one member of your group to keep **up-to-date with potential funds and support initiatives**, and to pass the information onto other members of the group when they come across new programmes.

Step 8: Find opportunities to collaborate

It can be hard to lead an innovative initiative by yourself, so **external collaboration** can be a great way of **spreading the workload**. Try **teaming up with another town** that has also launched a circular economy scheme, to **share ideas and lessons learnt** with each other. This kind of co-working can also be a great way of **holding your initiative accountable** and ensure you're making progress!

You can also seek support from your **district council, your local LEP and Growth Hub**, and of course, the **businesses and organisations within your town** itself. Maybe your local school can help produce materials to promote the project, or a business could post publically about how they're making changes to become more circular. By involving a **range of people**, you not only share the workload, but you also get a **range of perspectives** on how you can work together to enable change.



Case study: Borrow Don't Buy, Plymouth

Reducing waste – tackling climate change – community development

Sometimes making the best use of resources involves sharing them. This is the key idea behind **Borrow Don't Buy**, a Plymouth-based **Library of Things**. The scheme works like any library, allowing users to **borrow and return items** for a low cost, but instead of books, their collection includes cat carriers, kitchen equipment, and camping stoves – all items that people might need, but not on a regular basis.

Set up by a group of friends in 2017, Borrow Don't Buy allows borrowers to **loan out these items when needed**, meaning they don't have to buy their own, which **saves resources**. It also **democratises access** to higher-cost items that not every household could afford, by **spreading the cost** across a number of users. Most items are **donated by the public**, and the library now has over **400 items**, all stored at their base of operations – a coworking space in the centre of Plymouth.



Beyond just saving money and materials, a Library of Things can also **support community development**, encouraging residents to come together to **volunteer, share items**, and **showcase their skills** at the associated Repair Café. Sol Moyano, one of Borrow Don't Buy's founders, admitted that **reigniting a sense of trust amongst the community** was one of the biggest challenges they'd faced, with new users frequently concerned as to how the library could ensure borrowers would actually bring back the items they'd borrowed.

"We're essentially a **trust-based organisation**," Sol said. "We cannot guarantee that people are going to return what they borrow, but we trust they will." And with **over 1150 loans** completed, and only one item not returned, the system seems to be working.

This is possibly because Borrow Don't Buy was **partially kickstarted by a crowdfunding campaign**, with local residents helping **donate the funds to get the project off the ground**, leading to a sense of **pride and ownership of the initiative** within the community. They also had support from Santander and Plymouth Council, but crowdfunding allowed them to **test the idea and prove the demand** from the community.

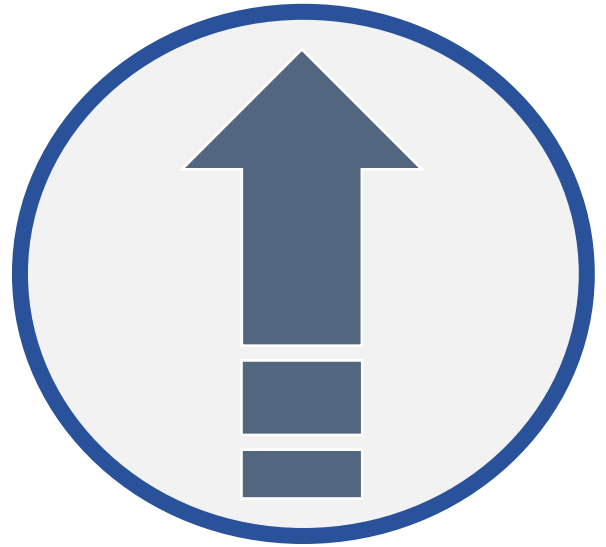
Although the pandemic has forced the team to adapt how they lend out items, that demand is **continuing to grow**, and they hope to **nurture a network** of more Libraries of Things across the UK.

Step 9: Ready, set, launch!

Once you have your **action plan in place** and a **good team behind you**, it's time to get the word out and **debut your initiative** to the community! You may want to have a **launch event** – either virtually or physically – where you **present your ideas** and let people ask questions, or you may want to do it through a **social media campaign** or **website**. Whatever you choose to do, ensure your whole group is helping promote it to a wide audience.

This is also where your **circular champions have a key role** to play in **showcasing** what they're doing or have pledged to do for the circular economy, which can help **demonstrate the range of benefits and ways to get involved** to your community. By providing examples of the circular economy in action in the town, it **brings the concepts to life** and can get your audience on-board and eager to participate!

Don't just tell people why the circular economy is great – **give them ways to get involved**, from lowering energy usage and improving their recycling, to **introducing new business models** that reduce packaging and waste. These **concrete actions** will help drive the momentum forwards, and give residents a way to **engage with the campaign in their everyday lives**.



Example agenda

- Explanation of the circular economy and the benefits to communities
- What you hope to achieve through your project – a brief explanation of your vision
- How you plan to do it – go through your action plan and why it will be beneficial to your town
- Potential hurdles and how you plan to overcome them
- How businesses and residents can get involved

Step 10: Keep it going!

Don't let all your hard work peter out after the launch; **stick to your action plan, hold regular meetings, and keep everyone on task!** Look out for **other initiatives** you can get involved in and co-support, and make sure that you're making use of your **most important resource; your community**. Get their input, make them feel engaged and they're able to shape the project to what they need, and you should have a winning initiative!

Ongoing activities

- Progress reviews against your action plan to track how your initiative is progressing and adjust your approach if necessary – e.g. 6-month, 12 months
- Community engagement surveys and events to inspire and collect feedback from residents to shape your future plans
- Stakeholder engagement – collaboration helps spread the word, engage new partners, and provide more resource to keep the project moving forward
- Funding reviews – conducting regular funding reviews will help you keep abreast of new opportunities that you could access for the next phase of your action plan



Case study: Repair Café, Hovingham

Reducing waste – strengthening your town's offer –
tackling climate change – community development

There is a green revolution taking place in Hovingham. Nestled on the edge of the Howardian Hills, the village launched an **ambitious plan** to become greener after **66% of residents** said that they were **concerned about climate change**. This finding launched **Project Purple**, an initiative that aims to get the **whole community involved** in helping the village become **carbon-neutral in the 2030s**.

The project offers **advice** through their [website](#) on helping reduce your carbon footprint, as well as which grants can support carbon-saving home improvements, and have investigated the possibility of **renewable community energy**. They have also seen two new **EV charging points** installed to allow residents to charge electric cars and **enable greener travel**.

Project Purple's philosophy could be summed up as '**reduce, reuse, repair, recycle**', and practical schemes have been set up to help residents take part, including a **Shared Shed**, where residents can borrow, rather than buy, tools and gardening equipment, reducing their consumption, and a **Repair Café**.

Run every couple of months, the Repair Café gives residents the opportunity to present everything from **jewellery** to **electrical items** to the local volunteers, or Fixers, who run the scheme. Each of them has **their own specialism** – sewing, furniture repair, carpentry – that they will use to try and **make the item usable again**, thus saving it from **landfill** and **extending its lifetime**. At their first event, the Repair Café fixed **11 items in 2 hours**, as well as creating reusable shopping bags from spare fabric.

Setting up a Repair Café in your town can be a great way to engage with the circular economy, **reducing both landfill and consumption of new items**, collaborating with the community to showcase their skills and **inspire others** to get involved! The Repair Café network can provide guidance and support to help you get started – check out their resources [here](#).



Useful organisations

- **Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs)** – these organisations offer support, guidance, and create policy to benefit the people, landscapes, and businesses of their regions. This guide is produced by [York and North Yorkshire LEP](#), but you can find your local one [here](#).
- **Growth Hubs** – the business support element of LEPs, Growth Hubs offer free, impartial support and advice to local businesses in their areas. They can often advise on funding, mentorship, and training. We're associated with [York and North Yorkshire Growth Hub](#), but you can find yours through your local LEP.
- **Local Authority** – your district council assists with the day-to-day support of the region, and can provide support and information for local community groups, charities, and businesses. Your district council will be the authority you pay council tax to, but if you're not sure, you can find them [here](#).
- **Plunkett Foundation** – this charitable organisation supports rural communities to overcome the issues they face through community-owned businesses. Communities pay an annual membership fee to access advice, support, and training through the various schemes that Plunkett deliver. You can find out more on their [website](#).
- **Community First Yorkshire** – another charitable organisation, Community First Yorkshire have a wealth of experience around setting up community and volunteering initiatives, and can provide advice and guidance on everything from setting up to governance and safeguarding. Their website is available [here](#).
- **UnLtd** – UnLtd provides advice and resources for social enterprises across the UK. The Learning Zone on their [website](#) has a range of useful guides, and they also run regular competitions for businesses to get in-depth support and funding.
- **Repair Café Network** – whilst you don't need to be part of the network to operate a hackspace or repair café, joining the network will give you access to various resources that you might find useful, as well as listing your initiative on the European map on the [website](#)!

Useful resources

- **Circular Yorkshire** – The [Circular Yorkshire](#) campaign was established by Y&NY LEP in 2019 to help raise awareness of and increase participation in circular initiatives. We organise events, offer support, and have a range of business-focused resources to help organisations and communities become more sustainable, which you can find [here](#).
- **WRAP** – Established in 2000, [WRAP](#) is a charity that champions sustainability measures across a range of countries, and provides guidance and expertise on waste. They have a range of resources and tools on their website to help businesses and organisations identify and tackle issues of waste.
- **Ellen MacArthur Foundation** – The [Ellen MacArthur Foundation](#) aims to promote and accelerate the transition to a circular economy, and offer webinars, information and resources to help organisations realise their circular potential.
- **Too Good To Go** – An innovative app operating across Europe, [Too Good To Go](#) allows food-based businesses to sell excess and surplus food at a reduced price to local consumers, helping eliminate food waste and make a profit from food that would have otherwise been binned!



Too Good To Go

Circular opportunities in your town

It can be difficult to know what makes a 'circular' idea or where to start, so feel free to use the list below for inspiration! The initiatives that will work in your town are dependent on a number of factors, including your location, demographic, and the problems you're looking to solve, so do your own research and choose one or two to begin with.

- Ask your retailers to try and offer zero-plastic or refillable packaging; this could include customers bringing their own containers to the shop to be filled, or takeaways offering containers that customers wash and return once they're used.
- You could set up a Repair Café to help repair, recycle, or even upcycle broken items, helping to reduce the amount of items going to landfill!
- Setting up a Shared Shed or Library of Things to encourage everyone to share tools and resources is a great way to become more circular. You don't need to have a physical shed at first; why not set up a social media group where people can post items they'd be happy to lend out and arrange pick-up and drop-off? This could later evolve into a physical storage point based within the community, like at a community centre, church hall, or library!
- Up to a third of all food produced is wasted, but working at a community level is a great way to tackle the problem. Encourage your food retailers to sign up to Too Good To Go (details on the previous page), and investigate setting up a Free Fridge, such as the one in Malton, where both businesses and individuals can donate food that needs to be eaten in a hurry to the community! If you have a lot of accommodation businesses, then a Free Fridge can be a great way of them donating food left behind by guests!
- Encourage your businesses to use local suppliers for items such as cleaning supplies, condiments, and soap; having a shorter supply chain makes it easier for suppliers to then offer these items in refillable packaging, helping avoid waste! This works particularly well with businesses such as hotels, who consume large amounts of these kinds of products.
- Hold a 'circular town' event once your group is established, and encourage your stakeholders to come together and publicise what they're doing to be more sustainable to introduce the town to the concept. You may want to encourage stakeholders to make a pledge detailing one or two measures they're putting in place to improve sustainability.

References

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