



Moving the world beyond waste

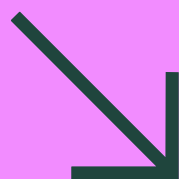
Plus, trustees' report and financial statements
for the year ended 31 December 2025

Annual Review 2025



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“We are no longer waste managers; we are resource managers”



As I reflect on the past year, my overriding insight is that 2025 marked a critical period of transition for our profession: we are shifting decisively from being traditional waste managers to becoming resource managers. Across the UK, the public, commercial sector and policy-makers are finally waking up to the true value of our resources.

This momentum is clearly reflected in the sheer volume of policy developments we have navigated recently. Extended producer responsibility and the Deposit Return Scheme have been delivered by the government, and crucial work has been done on waste crime, vape waste, critical minerals and industrial strategy.

This has been a deeply significant year, in what is a truly transformative decade for our sector. To lead this change, we must embrace what I call elemental resource management. We are no longer waste managers; we are resource managers.

We must stop looking at discarded clothing as just waste destined for incineration – instead, let's ask how its wool, viscose, nylon or cotton fibres can be extracted via chemical recycling. Let's use artificial intelligence and machine learning to distil value from household materials. Let's develop advanced fibre-to-fibre recycling, and recover gold, platinum and rare-earth metals from discarded electronics.

Change can be uncomfortable for some, but at CIWM we are fully embracing this transition towards a 'world beyond waste'. Over the past year, we have

increased our connection to government, updated the Policy & Innovation forum, welcomed new trustees, and increased the volume of member content within *Circular* magazine.

Furthermore, following the circular economy paper we published last year, we are acutely aware that the competencies our sector requires will need to evolve – and here we are helping, too, with our world-class training and qualifications programmes. In the near future, skills in disassembly, repair and refurbishment will become far more critical than the traditional ability to simply load and unload a bin.

When our sector was founded in the 19th century, its core purpose was to protect public health. Today, our rallying call has evolved: we now have the profound ability to protect the UK's economic interests. By championing resource recovery and industrial symbiosis, we can keep valuable, secondary raw materials within the UK economy.

The UK, out of necessity, achieved incredible resource efficiency during World War II, and we must return to that deeply circular mentality to protect the resources we need.

Our sector has the power to enable innovation, catalyse change and lead this vital transition for the nation. I, for one, am excited by that.

**Professor David Greenfield FCIWM,
President of CIWM 2025/26**

Introduction from the CIWM Members' Council

The CIWM Members' Council is the official representative body of CIWM members and provides a valued link between CIWM members, the CIWM regional committees and the Trustee Board and staff team. The council meets three times a year to provide input into CIWM's key projects and activities and to share updates from each region. The council is made up of representatives from each of the 10 CIWM regional committees, the presidential team and a member of the early careers team. In 2025 the council provided essential feedback and recommendations into:

- The review of the policy and innovation forum and strategic expert groups
- The brand update for the CIWM and the Circular Economy Institute
- The work of the Early Careers Team to attract members early in their careers
- The workplan of the policy and innovation forum

In addition, the council also voted on the Junior Vice President, electing Elizabeth Parkes in April 2025.

A year in numbers

It's been a busy year, with CIWM staff and volunteers working hard to achieve an amazing performance

Membership

Welcome to **2,229**
new CIWM members



This year saw **32**
new **CIWM-affiliated**
organisations and **11**
new **commercial partners**



4,610 people
attended our
sector-leading events



Congratulations to **86** new **Chartered**
Members and **12** **Fellows**

Policy

In 2025 Our Policy, Innovation and Technical team:



Represented CIWM on **32** advisory panels and **64** working groups

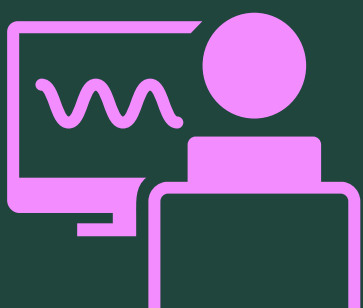
Responded to **35** consultations

They attended **27** government working groups and policy meetings



Issued **8** member briefings and **4** position papers

Online



135,000 unique visitors to **Circular Online**

CIWM Connect:



7,064 page views



640 conversations started

Social media following of **17,949** for **CIWM** and **5,820** for **CEI**



Events and training

This year we developed **10** new CIWM training courses, **2** new CEI training courses and **1** new CIWM qualification



4 cohorts

Veolia
Operational
Excellence
Programme



10,083

Total qualification
certifications issued



3,197

Continuing
competency
tests taken



3 cohorts

NHS Waste
Managers
Programme

7,588

Qualification
registrations



**Virtual training
courses:**

391 learners
across **44**
courses

**E-learning
courses:**

953 learners
across **45**
courses

**Bespoke training
courses:**

446 learners
across **50**
courses

EPOC:
(Environmental Permitting
Operators Certificates)

157 learners
across **12**
courses



Lost opportunities

Professor David Greenfield's 2025 presidential report looks at key materials that are lost from the circular supply loop and suggests ways we can fix the problem

To the circular economy strategist, discarding waste is the primary indicator of an unsustainable system – of being in a cycle of resource amnesia. We live in a world shaped by what we throw away and waste is often seen as an inevitable by-product of progress rather than what it is: a design flaw.

The global scale of this inefficiency is staggering. Between 2016 and 2021, the world consumed 582 billion tonnes of virgin resources – nearly 80 per cent of the total resources consumed during the entire 20th century. The situation is equally precarious in the UK. Our national circularity rate sits at a mere 7.5 per cent, meaning more than 90 per cent of our materials are sourced from virgin extraction, with 80 per cent of that extracted overseas. By reimagining

waste as a beginning, rather than an end, we can stop squandering the very resources required for a resilient future.

In his 2025 presidential report, Professor David Greenfield took a deep dive into these 'lost materials', using six examples as case studies. He points out the economic, social and environmental benefits that are being thrown away by not reusing, repurposing and recycling these materials, and disproves the myth that circularity is more expensive than a linear make-use-throw model.

The cooking oil paradox

There is a profound irony in the UK's energy strategy: we are scouring the globe for used cooking oil (UCO) while simultaneously spending millions to

scrape it out of our sewers. In 2023, the UK sourced 1.5 billion litres of UCO-derived biofuels from 89 countries. Remarkably, only 4.4 per cent of that oil originated within our own borders.

This is a failure of logistics and imagination. While we import fuel from halfway across the planet, uncollected domestic UCO is frequently poured down kitchen sinks. This contributes to roughly 300,000 wastewater blockages (known as 'fatbergs') every year, costing the UK approximately £200m annually to manage. We are, effectively, paying twice for the same resource: once to import it and once to clean it out of our pipes.

Re-sell seashells from the seashore

The tech sector's next great material

Presidential Report

isn't a rare earth mineral; it's a by-product of the seafood industry. The UK generates between 30,000 and 96,000 tonnes of seafood shells annually, most of which end up in landfill. However, these shells contain chitin, which can be processed into chitosan, a natural polymer driving a global market valued at between £6bn and £12bn.

From a sustainability standpoint, the data is transformative. Shell-derived textiles produce 80-90 per cent fewer carbon emissions and require only 0.1 per cent of the water used to produce traditional leather. Chitosan can also be used in medical devices and pharmaceuticals, and as a plastic replacement in packaging.

Seafood shells are a masterclass in industrial symbiosis; they are rich in calcium carbonate, so can replace concrete and lime in the built environment to create permeable surfaces that mitigate urban flooding.

New opportunities for British wool

Wool is a high-performance, renewable

material that is currently experiencing systemic economic collapse in the UK. As synthetic, oil-derived materials have come to dominate the textile market, the value of natural wool has declined sharply.

The economics are indefensible: it costs a farmer roughly £1.20/kg to shear a sheep, yet the average auction price has hovered at just 81.9p/kg. Consequently, an estimated 20 per cent of UK wool is lost – often burned or buried because it is worth less than the cost of transport. This is a policy failure of the highest order. At a time when 7.9 million UK households lack adequate loft insulation, we are quite literally throwing away one of nature's most effective, fire-resistant insulators.

Lithium: the three per cent recovery problem

It's the 'white gold' of the net-zero transition – the literal heart of the battery revolution, and of critical importance to our automotive and energy sectors. Yet the global recycling rate for lithium is a dismal three per cent.

“We are moving backwards when we need to accelerate”

The global lithium market is projected to more than double from £24bn in 2023 to £56bn by 2030 – so what is stopping us from recycling this valuable and essential substance?

- Lithium is found in very small amounts within products, which makes 'mining' it from electrical waste difficult and economically unviable.
- Products are designed poorly, with no anticipation of them being repaired, reused or dismantled.
- Manufacturers need very high-purity lithium, which requires highly effective separation at the recycling stage – something that is difficult to offer.
- Unlike the European Union (EU), the UK lacks the policies to stimulate lithium recovery and incentivise industry investment.

Is this something we can change? Greenfield's report says yes. The UK

Cooking oil

218m

tonnes of used cooking oil (UCO) is produced every year around the world



15.4m

tonnes are recovered for use in biofuels, animal feed, roads, feedstocks and bioplastics

The UK is heavily dependent on UCO for its biofuels obligations

We used **1.5bn litres** in 2023, but produced just **4.4%** ourselves. **Why can't we produce UCO domestically?**



Seafood shells

6-18m tonnes

produced annually. Global shell estimates represent a massive **untapped resource** that is currently treated as residual waste

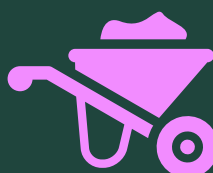
Chitosan: the biopolymer of the future

Extracted from shells for in use in **medical wound care, eco-textiles and biodegradable packaging**



Restoring aquatic ecosystems

Scallop shells are returned to Scottish rivers to **restore pH balance and levels**



Sustainable 'seashell concrete'

Shells can replace **20%** of concrete, creating permeable surfaces that can **reduce urban flooding**



of the weight of shellfish is shells

needs policy interventions that require batteries to contain minimum levels of recycled lithium, and which set out specific lithium-recovery targets. Furthermore, implementing Digital Product Passports would enhance product transparency and traceability throughout the supply chain.

Producing battery-grade materials from recycled cells is difficult, but the effort is worth it because it uses 80 per cent less energy and water than conventional mining. If we fail to secure this loop, we remain tethered to fragile, high-impact global mining chains and fluctuating shipping costs.

Designers should be encouraged to embed circularity principles early in the design stage of products, to allow efficient recycling of critical material – not just lithium, but rare earth metals, too.

The need for investment in domestic recycling infrastructure is also palpable. This would not only enable the most efficient recovery of lithium, but also prevent lithium-ion batteries from ending up in residual waste, where they present a severe and growing fire risk.

Gallium and tin: the invisible backbone of your tech

Every integrated circuit in your smartphone and every LED in your home relies on gallium. Despite being present in almost all modern electronics, gallium has a zero per cent end-of-life recycling rate. This creates a massive strategic vulnerability: China currently refines 98 per cent of the world’s supply.

Similarly, tin is the ‘glue’ of the digital age, used in the solder of every circuit board. In 2022 alone, the global e-waste stream contained approximately £1bn



worth of tin. Currently, the UK lacks the domestic capacity to process its own tin-rich e-waste, frequently shipping it overseas and losing the chance to reclaim the metal.

There is hope in regional innovation: two gallium-extraction projects in Cornwall and County Durham have the potential to contribute £2bn to the UK economy. By localising these recovery tech hubs, we can secure the ‘invisible backbone’ of our technology sector.

Why the UK is falling behind

The UK lags behind its international neighbours in the race for resource security. While England still awaits the publication of its Circular Economy Growth Plan, the EU has already established clear deadlines and mandates that provide greater certainty for investors.

Closing this gap is a massive engine for economic growth. Securing the battery supply chain alone could create

100,000 jobs (35,000 in manufacturing and 65,000 in the wider supply chain). Domestic lithium-extraction projects could provide an additional 1,000 skilled jobs.

From linear to circular

The resource tragedy of our time is that we are moving backwards precisely when we need to accelerate. Between 2018 and 2023, the global share of secondary materials actually declined, from 9.1 per cent to 7.2 per cent. We are consuming more virgin material and recovering less of it.

Greenfield’s report makes strong recommendations to help the UK move beyond its ‘take-make-dispose’ mindset. Whether it is UCO, wasted wool or the gallium in our pockets, we must stop viewing these materials as trash and start seeing them as the cornerstone of our future resource security. The goldmine is in our trash; we simply need the policy and the will to stop burying it.

Feature	EU	UK
Traceability	Digital Product Passports required by 2027	No equivalent policy
Battery targets	Mandated lithium recovery and recycled content	Outdated regulations; no specific recovery targets
Market support	Strategic tax credits and sustainability surcharges	Limited incentives for circular business models

Influence and impact

CIMW's Policy, Innovation and Technical team has been hard at work ensuring we speak with authority and consistency when communicating with the industry as a whole — government, stakeholders and the wider sector



Policy, Innovation and Technical team

Through 2025, the CIWM Policy, Innovation and Technical team has spearheaded a comprehensive portfolio of research and strategic policy development, addressing the most pressing challenges and opportunities within the resources and waste-management sector.

Through strategic partnerships, commissioned studies and rigorous data analysis, the team has delivered critical insights into: fiscal policy; the social value of reuse; the systemic impacts of the Emissions Trading Scheme; and the immense potential of overlooked critical materials. Our work continues to unite, equip and mobilise the professional community to lead the UK's transition to a low-carbon, circular economy.

Shaping future financial and fiscal policies

To ensure the UK's economic framework actively promotes circularity, our team partnered with

Resource Futures to deliver the landmark report *Shaping future financial and fiscal policies for a more circular economy in the UK* (bit.ly/3OJQkfG). This research systematically reviewed seven key policies to assess their impacts, unintended consequences and interactions across the sector.

The research was structured around three overarching strategic aims: decarbonising the waste sector; increasing recycling; and reducing resource consumption.

Our findings highlight that, while financial levers have already driven materials up the waste hierarchy, future fiscal measures must be significantly more nuanced. We established clear strategies for improvement, concluding that some revenues raised through fiscal policies should be explicitly ringfenced and reinvested to drive system-wide changes.

OUTCOME

Key recommendations from our policy analysis include:

Refocusing policy development on sectors and material streams that possess the highest overall environmental impacts

Designing nuanced incentives to promote contemporary goals such as reuse, reduction, higher-quality recycling and deep decarbonisation

Using extended producer responsibility schemes to explicitly incentivise and promote reuse and remanufacturing activities

Ensuring robust data, monitoring, and enforcement mechanisms are in place, which we identified as essential prerequisites to guarantee that financial incentives achieve their intended behavioural effects.

Quantifying the social value of reuse

Despite their central role in the circular economy, justifying the higher operational costs of reuse initiatives compared with traditional recycling has remained a challenge. To address this, CIWM funded an extensive study in collaboration with Tech-Takeback, focused on quantifying the previously 'invisible' social value generated by the UK's reuse sector.

The research concentrated heavily on technology reuse for digital inclusion, evaluating three prominent social value frameworks:

TOMs (Themes, Outcomes, and Measures (TOMs))

HACT (Housing Association Community Trust)

LOOP (National Social Value Standards Framework).

The findings demonstrated that each framework measures different impacts, leading to wide variations in social value calculations.

For example, when evaluating Tech-Takeback's 2023/24 operations, the TOMs framework calculated £657,000 in social value, focusing primarily on organisational and economic impacts. In contrast, the HACT framework, which is designed to assess the social value of housing and assigns high financial proxy values to individual wellbeing and benefits to the exchequer, calculated much higher social value for the same activities.

To overcome the complexities and inconsistencies of current measurement frameworks, the team developed a Social Value Toolkit (bit.ly/4ewyuqO). This provides reuse organisations with practical guidance

on how to navigate the various calculators, track ongoing wellbeing metrics, and report their social impact accurately to secure public sector contracts and additional funding.

OUTCOME

The sector-wide analysis revealed that our sector likely generated over £120m in social value in 2023/24, by collecting, processing and preparing items for reuse.

We also identified an immense reserve of latent social value: for example the estimated 20 million unused, but functional, laptops in UK households that could be reclaimed, data-erased and repurposed for digital inclusion.



Navigating the systemic impacts of the Emissions Trading Scheme

The planned forthcoming expansion of the UK Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) to include energy from waste (EfW) facilities by 2028 represents one of the most significant regulatory shifts for our sector. To prepare our members, the team commissioned Ceres Waste, Renewables & Environment to conduct a system-wide impact assessment.

Our modelling indicates that the pass-through costs of ETS allowances will increase the price of EfW treatment drastically. Based on current waste compositions (approximately 50 per cent fossil carbon), local authorities could face additional costs of roughly £660m to £850m per year, while commercial and industrial waste producers could see cost increases of up to £700m per year by 2035.

The report highlights, however, that these costs can be heavily mitigated by decarbonising the residual waste

stream. Up to 70 per cent of the fossil carbon in residual municipal solid waste originates from plastics, so targeted pre-sorting is highly effective. If the sector achieves a 65 per cent recycling rate and extracts 30-60 per cent of the remaining plastics from EfW feedstock, local authority ETS costs could be effectively halved.

This separation also creates a potentially lucrative new market segment, generating 0.9 to 1.9 million tonnes per year of hard-to-recycle plastics that can serve as feedstock for the UK's emerging physical and chemical recycling infrastructure, potentially generating up to £780m in value.

The CIWM team identified crucial practical challenges in regard to how fossil carbon is measured. Allocating ETS costs requires precise carbon accounting, but manual

sampling of heterogeneous waste is highly resource-intensive, costing approximately £15,000 per sample. We have urged the UK ETS Authority to implement a practical framework that balances the use of default carbon factors with bespoke sampling, ensuring that stakeholders who invest in pre-sorting and decarbonisation are financially rewarded for their efforts.

Furthermore, our research warns of severe unintended consequences if the ETS is poorly implemented. If landfill taxes do not rise concurrently (and landfill bans are not implemented), gate fees for EfW could exceed landfill costs, driving waste down the hierarchy. We also highlighted the risk of increased waste crime – which currently costs the UK economy more than £1bn annually – as less scrupulous waste handlers may attempt to circumvent rising disposal fees.

To address these risks, we recommended aligning ETS costs with EPR fees, ensuring that brands and manufacturers, rather than just local authorities, bear the financial responsibility for fossil-based packaging placed on the market.

“Targeted pre-sorting is highly effective... local authority ETS costs could be effectively halved per year”

A strategic roadmap for the next four years

To guide CIWM's engagement with the UK government, the Policy and Innovation Forum commissioned the independent review, *Let's not waste the next four years*. This mapped the progress of the 2018 resources and waste strategy and aligned our sector's priorities with the government's Plan for Change agenda.

CIWM formulated 10 core policy recommendations to drive job creation, economic growth and resilience:

Centralise the circular economy: The forthcoming Circular Economy Growth Plan must serve as the bedrock for the government's growth and clean-energy missions, underpinned by a clear sector roadmap with enforceable metrics.

Cross-government policy

Integration: Defra, the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, and HM Treasury must align their roadmaps tightly to avoid placing unintended administrative and financial burdens on local authorities and businesses.

Incentivise green skills: Skills England must broaden its focus to target and fund vital green skills in the resources and waste sector.

Enhance resource resilience: The UK must prioritise resource security, in partnership with our sector, to insulate

the domestic economy from global supply chain volatility.

Expand extended producer responsibility (EPR): Following the rollout of packaging EPR, the government must rapidly extend EPR policies to new waste streams, including waste electrical and electronic equipment, batteries, textiles and mattresses.

Support reuse and repair: We require specific policy support, clear targets and assigned responsibilities throughout the supply chain to commercially scale reuse operations.

Reform regulatory outcomes:

Regulators must collaborate with sector bodies to foster innovation, establish a new strategic policy statement for sector outcomes and issue tougher, faster penalties for persistent non-compliance.

Integrate Emissions Trading Scheme

into EPR fees: The increased costs of treating fossil-based materials via energy from waste must be reflected in packaging EPR fees, ensuring

producers bear the full carbon impacts of unrecyclable products.

Fully implement 2018 reforms:

Stalled reforms, particularly the waste carrier, broker and dealer registration system, and the full rollout of digital waste tracking, must be executed without further delay.

Tackle waste crime: The £1bn drain caused by waste crime must be met with vastly increased resources, closing regulatory loopholes exploited by criminals through immediate Landfill Tax reform and stringent enforcement.

The CIWM Policy, Innovation and Technical Team is dedicated to ensuring these insights are translated into practical actions and ambitious policy measures. We will press for the publication in 2026 of the Circular Economy Growth Plan and a roadmap for our sector, and will continue to collaborate with government stakeholders and our members to maximise the sector's contribution to sustainable growth and to greater resource security and efficiency.

“Prioritise resource security to insulate the UK economy from global supply chain volatility”



CIWM's Dan Cooke and Minister for Nature, Mary Creagh MP

Feel like you've missed some of these updates? email membership@ciwm.co.uk to check your mailing preferences



Working hard for our members

Our members are at the centre of everything we do, and without the efforts of our volunteers and trustees we wouldn't be where we are today — at the forefront of progressive resources and waste management



In 2025, CIWM remained steadfast in its core purpose of 'moving the world beyond waste'. This year, we focused heavily on amplifying our members' voices, enhancing the value of their membership and ensuring they are positioned to lead the way as we journey toward a sustainable circular economy. Let's look at some of the things we've been doing for the people at the heart of CIWM – our members.

Listening to you

We are committed to listening to our community and have gathered valuable feedback this year through our second

member insights survey.

Responding directly to member feedback, we also increased our technical content significantly. This focus on high-quality, relevant information resonated strongly with our community, driving up the Net Promoter Score (bit.ly/4eseZja) for *Circular* and *Circular Online* from 16 to 23. Through these initiatives, we have successfully increased member representation on key topics, enhancing CIWM's impact within the broader sector and with the general public.

To empower our members to share their expertise, we launched the CIWM contributor database, making it easier than ever for members to step forward as event speakers and contribute to *Circular* articles, podcasts and webinars.

The hard work of the CIWM team was recognised on a national stage when our CEO, Sarah Poulter, won CEO of the Year at the Memcom Excellence Awards. This prestigious accolade celebrated her strategic leadership and championing of inclusion, and her role in establishing CIWM as the definitive voice for the resources and waste sector.

Leading sector thinking with the reset Policy and Innovation Forum

To ensure our members have access to the best evidence-based insights, we launched our refreshed and reset Policy and Innovation (P&I) Forum in March 2025. Operating as a dynamic thinktank and chaired by former WRAP CEO Marcus Gover, the forum brings together industry leaders, specialists and academics. Its new structure is designed to drive collaboration and direction across CIWM's Specialist Expert Groups, giving our members greater, more coordinated influence on sector research and progressive policy.

A new look

Following the strategic acquisition of the Circular Economy Institute (CEI) – a key driver in our push towards a circular economy (see page 16) – we undertook a rebranding process for the CIWM group. This has resulted in an updated, harmonised brand family that brings CIWM and CEI closer together

Strengthening governance and leadership

We strive continuously to ensure that CIWM is guided by robust governance and diverse expertise. Following a rigorous assessment process, we announced key appointments to our Board of Trustees ahead of the June 2025 presidential inauguration. We welcomed Richard Hulland, chief risk and assurance officer for Veolia

in Northern Europe, as a new trustee and confirmed the reappointments of Trevor Nicoll, as a trustee, and John Kutner, as honorary treasurer. These appointments support the stability, strategic financial acumen and the sustained guidance we need to continue serving our members, learners and the sector effectively.



Richard Hulland, chief risk and assurance officer for Veolia

Empowering the next generation: the CIWM early careers ambassadors

In 2024, CIWM took a landmark step to future-proof the resources and waste management sector by appointing its first Early Careers President, Charlotte Davies (pictured), and establishing the early careers ambassadors programme. This diverse team of 12 professionals – representing consultancies, local authorities and academia – has championed the voices of younger people at the start of their careers as well as those who have recently joined the sector, whatever their age.

Under Charlotte's leadership, the team's overarching goal is to elevate the waste sector's profile in the fight against climate change, establishing it as critical to meeting our net-zero targets. 'We are aiming to enhance current outreach programmes, workshops and webinars to provide valuable insights into industry trends and career opportunities in the circular economy,' she says. 'Instead of using end-of-life thinking, we need to shift to systems thinking.'

Crucially, the programme champions equality, diversity and inclusion. 'We collect waste from everybody and we manage resources for everybody, so we need to be representative of the wider population too,' Charlotte says.



Early Careers President
Charlotte Davies

The ambassadors are already making significant strides in reshaping the industry's culture and public outreach. Ambassador Tabitha Skeats says the group is 'prioritising educational outreach, to get more young people involved and interested in the sector' and empowering the new generation to innovate.

Our early careers ambassadors represent CIWM at careers fairs, sector conferences and other events, as well as engaging with those in education – from primary school pupils right through to university students.

Breaking down historical barriers is another core focus. Ambassador Khadeeja Osman advocates for widespread cultural change to challenge 'outdated perceptions'. She says the team is striving to create inclusive environments where 'diverse voices are not just "there", but are heard and valued'.

Alongside this cultural change, the early careers ambassadors are also driving vital conceptual and technological shifts. Research fellow Sadish Oumabady notes that this new generation is spearheading a 'cultural shift in viewing waste as a resource and pushing for circular economy models'. This is echoed by senior waste consultant Emma Copley, who hopes to fundamentally change waste from a 'cost or burden to a resource and opportunity'.

Embracing innovation is also key. Operations manager Laura Fisher believes that by 'embracing AI we can make the resources and waste sector an industry of choice as we encourage new talent into the sector'.

As we look back on 2025, the early careers ambassadors have proven vital in realising CIWM's strategic direction: ensuring our sector remains dynamic, inclusive and ready for the future.

OUTCOME

Early careers ambassadors have attended **52 events** over the past **14 months**

23

presentations
or talks

9

discussion
panels

2

lectures
given

3

careers fairs
for CIWM



The Ambassadors
attended **42
meetings** and
gave a total of
259 hours of
voluntary work

There is an ambassador
on **4** SEGs, the Policy and
Innovation Forum, the
Members' Council and **7**
CIWM Regional committees

President Charlotte Davies
sits on the **CIWM Board
of Trustees**

An award-winning year for training

A big part of our role at CIWM is empowering the people who work in our sector using our trusted experience in vocational education and technical training

Education and training have remained at the very heart of CIWM's mission over the past 12 months. With our comprehensive programme of training courses, we aim to equip our 7,000-strong membership with the skills they need to navigate a rapidly evolving policy landscape.

A defining highlight from this year was our highly successful collaborative programme with NHS England, which secured the 'Excellence in Employee Training and Skills Development' accolade at the 2025 Materials Recycling World National Recycling Awards.

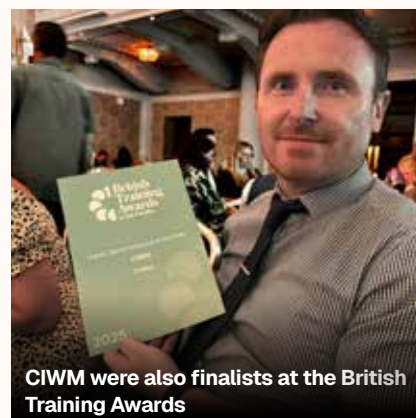
The course was developed specifically for NHS waste managers and is officially endorsed in the NHS clinical waste strategy. It supports the service's ambitious

commitment to becoming a net-zero carbon healthcare provider by 2040 and addresses crucial legislative requirements.

The impact of this award-winning programme across the healthcare sector has been truly exceptional. To date, we have supported more than 2,000 learners across 51 NHS trusts, ensuring that waste managers are fully equipped to meet stringent regulatory demands and achieve challenging waste-segregation targets well ahead of schedule.

The long-term financial and environmental projections are highly encouraging: the training is expected

to save the NHS approximately £11m annually in recurrent revenue costs while contributing to a remarkable 30 per cent reduction in carbon emissions from waste by 2030.



CIWM were also finalists at the British Training Awards

“To date, we have supported more than 2,000 learners across 51 NHS trusts”

Pathways to career progression

Alongside our bespoke partnerships, we introduced the CIWM Development Pathway and the CIWM Advanced Pathway: rigorous extended training programmes that are vital for career development.

The eight-month Development Pathway is perfect for new operatives, and teams with limited sector experience, who want to build essential knowledge and confidence. The 12-month Advanced Pathway is more suited to professionals already active within the resources and waste sector. Both programmes use a blend of live webinars, tutor-led virtual sessions and on-demand e-learning. The Advanced Pathway provides

43.5 hours of continuing professional development (CPD) and gives learners a deep technical understanding of interconnected subjects – vital for ongoing career advancement.

Enrolment on both courses includes complimentary CIWM Affiliate membership. Upon successful completion, participants are automatically upgraded to CIWM Technical members.

As we reflect on a year of profound educational achievements and celebrate the vast talent within our industry, CIWM remains dedicated to raising industry standards and producing best practice guidance. We

extend our deepest gratitude to our expert trainers, commercial partners and dedicated learners.

Equipped with robust practical skills, our members are driving the transition towards a sustainable future, and we eagerly look forward to many more successes in 2026.

OUTCOME

It's been a busy and successful year for training at CIWM, recognised by a prestigious award and the introduction of pathways for those keen to progress in the resources and waste sector.



It's good to talk

This year, our events have gone from strength to strength, bringing together people from all around the circular economy to collaborate, communicate and innovate

CIWM's meetings and conferences are known throughout the sector and beyond for their innovative formats, lively debates and captivating keynote speakers.

The landmark events we staged in 2025, augmented by regional open meetings and site visits,

brought together policymakers, industry leaders, academics and the next generation of sustainability professionals. We fostered essential dialogue, showcased practical innovations and generated actionable solutions to some of the resource-and-waste sector's most pressing challenges.

Festival of Circular Economy 2025

Returning for its fourth, highly successful year in May 2025, Festival of Circular Economy was a jam-packed, two-day hybrid event that explored the future of the design, economics and implementations of circular practice.

Day 1: Mindsets, design and future textiles

The festival opened with a keynote from Dr Sally Uren OBE, executive director of Forum for the Future, who emphasised that achieving a circular economy by 2050 requires a fundamental mindset shift. Dr Uren outlined four business transition trajectories: profit supreme; shallow gestures; tech optimism; and courage to transform. She said we must see the world as a set of interconnected materials and value chains.

The tension between visionary design and cautious corporate culture was explored in the Design at the Crossroads session. Mark Shayler and Paul Foulkes-Arellano urged businesses to empower designers early on. They noted that treating 20 per cent recycled content as the 'summit of sustainability' is insufficient and called for designers to act as systems thinkers.

Textile futures were brought to life by a panel chaired by Dr Katarina Rimarcikova, featuring Michael A Cusack, of ACS (Advanced Clothing Solutions) and Mattia Trovato, of Manteco. Cusack shared how ACS evolved from renting kilts in 1997 to being a multifaceted clothing rental business, while Trovato detailed Manteco's century-long legacy of pioneering recycled wool, born out of necessity in 1940s Italy.

The profound potential of remanufacturing was outlined by Agnese Metitieri, of Circulêre. She presented a five-step remanufacturing process, highlighting that remanufacturing can reduce resource extraction by up to 80 per cent, cut carbon emissions by up to 93 per cent and decrease production costs by up to 65 per cent.

Day 2: EPR, circular infrastructure and material innovation

The second day focused on the life-cycle of materials and infrastructure. A pivotal session on extended producer responsibility (EPR) featured Dr Margaret Bates, head of the UK EPR for Packaging



Scheme Administrator, Defra, and Sophie Thomas, of etsaW Ventures, exploring how new eco-modulation rules will financially penalise wasteful packaging and reward recyclable or reusable designs. Dr Bates stressed the market signal that EPR sends: 'If it's not recyclable, refillable or reusable – don't put it on the market.'

Real-world circular infrastructure featured heavily. Anthesis and McDonald's presented their collaborative tool to measure the circularity of restaurant interiors, sharing how making 'no-brainer' changes increased interior décor circularity from a 14% baseline to 39%. In the built environment, Jonny Plant, of Corstorphine & Wright, showcased the Unusual Rigging HQ project, which was built entirely on circular principles. By designing for disassembly, and using reused steel and timber, the project achieved an estimated total embodied carbon of just 364kg of CO₂ per square metre, well below the 950kg average.

Finally, the festival highlighted incredible material innovations, notably Ananas Anam's Piñatex – a durable textile upcycled from discarded pineapple leaves. The company's Head of Research and Sustainability, Raquel Prado-García, highlighted the importance of using life-cycle assessments to guide improvements and warned that true sustainability is about sufficiency, not overproduction.



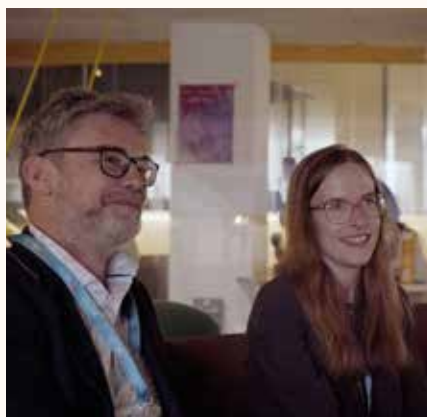
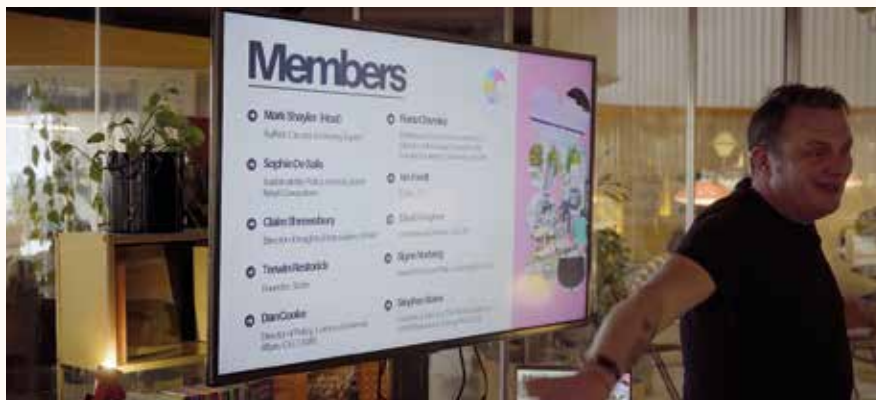
“Dr Bates stressed the market signal that EPR sends: ‘If it’s not recyclable, refillable or reusable — don’t put it on the market.’”

CEI roundtable: 'Selling the sizzle' of the circular economy

Alongside Festival of Circular Economy, the Circular Economy Institute (CEI) hosted an insightful roundtable, sponsored by VEV, titled *Simplifying language and 'selling the sizzle' of the circular economy* (bit.ly/4dteX9K). Facilitated by sustainability guru Mark Shayler, the session addressed a critical barrier to change: how the language we use helps or hinders resource management.

The discussion highlighted the danger of using complex, scientific jargon. Environmentalist Trewin Restorick pointed out that terms such as 'net zero' and '15-minute cities' have become separated from their original intent, and are often used as 'attack weapons' by opponents of sustainability policies. The panel, including Signe Norberg (Head of External Affairs at the Aldresgate Group) and Prof Fiona Charnley (University of Exeter), agreed that terms such as 'circular economy' and 'sustainability' can sometimes intimidate or confuse. They suggested that the focus shifts to tangible benefits, local emotional connections and practical community impacts.

Participants broke into groups to develop targeted pitches. When



"Terms such as 'circular economy' and 'sustainability' can sometimes intimidate"

communicating to the fast-fashion industry, focus was placed on the financial risks of legislation and the resilience offered by subscription models. For Generation X, the messaging shifted to the economic benefits of returning commodities to the supply chain and slogans such as 'bought to be bought again'. For

policy-makers, CIWM's Dan Cooke summarised an elevator pitch focusing on economic resilience, job creation and clean-energy security.

The overarching conclusion was that the sector must learn to sell the joy and practical benefits of circularity to successfully move hearts and minds.



Resource Conference Cymru 2025

Resource Conference Cymru returned in March 2025 as a sold-out, in-person event at Sophia Gardens, Cardiff.

Serving as the premier gathering for Wales' resources and waste leaders, the conference equipped attendees with the insights needed to advance the nation's world-leading journey towards a resource-resilient future.

A highly anticipated agenda focused on Wales' path to resource resilience, examining strategies that are driving waste reduction and net-zero progress. Attendees also benefited from essential, up-to-the-minute policy briefings, including critical updates on the Emissions Trading Scheme. The event provided excellent networking opportunities, allowing sustainability pioneers and industry leaders to connect directly with the policymakers shaping the future of resource management in Wales.

Hack the Loop: problem-solving fast fashion

In late 2025, we proudly hosted our first-ever academic hackathon, *Hack the Loop: Problem-solving fast fashion for a circular approach to textiles* (bit.ly/4weTiJK). The global fashion industry discards more than 92 million tonnes of textiles annually and this virtual event was designed to confront this linear failure head-on.

Organised in collaboration with leading academic partners – including the University of Exeter, the University of Leeds, the University

of Edinburgh, CEIC Wales, Cardiff Metropolitan University and the Circular Economy Institute – the event challenged students and early-career professionals to design scalable circular solutions in just 50 minutes.

Hosted by Dr Katarina Rimarcikova, the hackathon resulted in five visionary proposals. These ranged from ‘Local Threads’ (a digital marketplace with garment passports) and ‘EcoStar’ (a reparability rating label), to an international reuse model diverting unsold clothing to the Dominican Republic for safe repair.

The winning concept was a transformative circular deposit return scheme for clothing, developed by Sammy Smithson, Bhavna Palli and Lily Dunkley. Under their proposal, consumers pay a refundable

deposit upon purchasing a garment, which is returned as store credit when the worn-out item is given back to the brand. The returned textiles are then processed in onshore recycling facilities to become new fibres. Judges praised the model as a practical, service-based form of EPR that inherently connects sustainability with genuine business incentives.

Crucially, Hack the Loop wasn’t just a creative exercise; it was an incubator for actionable policy. The winning team secured one-to-one mentoring with a CIWM expert and all five proposals are being submitted to the UK government’s Circular Economy Taskforce to inform national policy discussions. As team member Smithson noted: ‘The circular economy isn’t optional any more. It’s the only sustainable way forward.’

“The winning concept was a transformative circular deposit return scheme for clothing”



OUTCOME

The extraordinary success of, and high attendance at, CIWM’s 2025 events demonstrate an industry that is eager for knowledge, ready for transformation and committed to collaborative action. From empowering the next generation of designers at Hack the Loop,

to setting the national agenda at Festival of Circular Economy, CIWM Northern Ireland Resource and Waste Management Conference, and Resource Conference Cymru, CIWM remains at the forefront of the circular transition. We are very grateful to our sponsors, academic partners, speakers and delegates, and we look forward to continuing this vital momentum in 2026.

Expanding the circle

Our acquisition of the Circular Economy Institute not only strengthens our global reach, but also our presence in parts of the circular economy outside of traditional resources and waste services

In 2024, CIWM marked a significant milestone by acquiring the Circular Economy Institute (CEI) and its extensive global network of Circular Economy Clubs (CECs).

This strategic acquisition naturally complements the core activities of both organisations, significantly boosting CIWM's expansion into broader areas of the circular economy beyond our traditional remit of resources and waste management.

Founded in 2014 by Anna Tarí, the CEC network was a passion project during her time at the United Nations, starting as a blog before evolving into face-to-face networking events. Today, it provides a highly collaborative space for sharing circular economy expertise.

CECs operate on a devolved, regional model. There are currently 280 worldwide, empowering individuals to organise events, share best practices and influencing regional policy-makers.

The CEI emerged out of the CECs in 2020, bringing a robust certification programme for those working in



the circular economy. While CIWM continues to offer first-class training focused on the resources and waste aspects of the circular economy, the CEI's curriculum broadens our educational scope by encompassing the entire life-cycle process, including reuse, refurbishment and remanufacturing.

The alignment between CIWM and CEI is a natural progression of past successful collaborations. CIWM's established reputation, active membership and training expertise will give the CEI the additional rigour

and gravitas to scale its impact. The regional structure of CECs also closely mirrors CIWM's regional centres, facilitating seamless integration.

Consumer demand is increasingly rewarding circular practices, moving us towards a tipping point where doing things the right way will become the most cost-effective approach. By integrating the CEI into the CIWM group, we are extending the global reach and capabilities of both organisations, positioning CIWM to drive society's transition towards a truly circular economy.



Anna Tarí CEI's founder on the organisation's link-up with CIWM

I see this tie-up as an incredibly positive step. We have collaborated on projects before, so our two organisations already know each other very well. CIWM is a deeply respected institution, with immense knowledge, training expertise and an engaged membership, and our network will help it expand its reach.

People often ask me if the world will ever truly achieve a circular economy. I am incredibly optimistic, because I see CEC members every day who want to take real action, not just talk. We are getting there and, together with CIWM, we are poised to accelerate that journey.



CIWM is collaborating with charity WasteAid on projects in The Gambia

Our responsibility

Raising standards and leading by example: how is CIWM making a difference at home and abroad

CIWM's commitment to sustainable practices extends far beyond our daily operations; it is deeply woven into our overarching mission to move the world beyond waste.

As the leading professional body for the resources and waste-management sector, representing more than 7,000 individuals across the UK and Ireland, we recognise our unique responsibility. We strive not only to raise industry standards through best-practice guidance and education, but also to lead by example in the realm of corporate social responsibility (CSR).

This past year has been testament to that dedication, highlighted by the retention of our highest CSR accreditation and the life-changing impacts of our international circular economy partnerships.

We also reaffirmed and retained our Pledge for Net Zero, as accredited by

SocEnv. This certification depends on CIWM having a clear plan for carbon neutrality and demonstrating that we are reducing carbon emissions across scopes 1, 2 and 3.

CIWM is also a major funder and supporter of the resources and waste sector's Net Zero Transition Plan, which is being developed by WRAP. This is due to be reviewed and adopted by the UK government's Net Zero Council.

Retaining the Gold standard

We retained our Gold CSR accreditation in 2025. This award represents the highest standard for social responsibility, reinforcing our unwavering commitment to meeting rigorous standards in our internal operations and our wider membership.

The assessment – conducted by leading national assessment organisation CSR-Accreditation – evaluated our initiatives against a comprehensive, internationally

recognised framework. This rigorous process focuses on four vital pillars: environment, workplace, community and philanthropy. By structuring our CSR approach around these pillars, we have been able to demonstrate a measurable and structured commitment to social and environmental responsibility. Achieving this top-tier status places CIWM alongside other notable, forward-thinking organisations, such as Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, Buckinghamshire New University, Morgan Sindall, Oxford Business College and B P Collins.

Of the achievement, CIWM's CEO, Sarah Poulter, said: 'Being re-awarded the Gold CSR accreditation is an incredibly proud moment for our Institution. It reaffirms our significant commitment to making a tangible difference for future generations and demonstrates that we are actively living up to our word, all while empowering our members to do the exact same. We remain resolute in our commitment to maintaining and building upon this prestigious achievement for years to come.'

A global impact

While our domestic achievements set a strong foundation, our CSR vision is inherently global. In 2025, we proudly celebrated the outstanding achievements of our three-year collaboration with the international non-governmental organisation WasteAid. Together, we established the Dennakuwo Circular Economy Network in The Gambia – a nation grappling with a severe waste crisis characterised by widespread pollution and inadequate waste-management infrastructure.

Launched in early 2022, the initiative targeted the Greater Banjul Area, which is home to approximately 58 per cent of the country's population. Dennakuwo is a Mandinka word meaning 'together we can'. True to its name, the network has evolved into a vibrant hub for collaboration, innovation and training, bringing together local government representatives, Gambian entrepreneurs, students and community members to forge sustainable waste-management solutions.

The sheer scale of the network's educational impact is a point of immense pride for WasteAid and CIWM. Since its inception, the programme has delivered more than 17,000 hours of training, playing a critical role in raising professional standards within the region's waste-management sector. This extensive



Business training has been delivered through the Dennakuwo network

“The engagement with these initiatives, and their outcomes, has been remarkable”

curriculum covered a wide array of vital topics, including business market training, finance, customer service and circular economy training. Furthermore, participants received hands-on technical instruction through plastic recycling demonstrations and advanced compost making, alongside micro-enterprise development training.

The engagement with these initiatives, and their outcomes, has been remarkable. The Dennakuwo network has grown to more than 300 members, with an impressive 89 per cent of them participating in at least one training session or event. More than 80 per cent of these participants have reported a direct, positive impact on their local businesses.

Link to WasteAid's *Impact Report*:
bit.ly/4bOVn5S

Fostering innovation and enterprise

Beyond training, our CSR efforts in The Gambia nurtured green innovation. Through the Waste-to-Use Challenge – which focused on plastics, textiles and organics – WasteAid awarded £22,000 in prize funding to help key environmental initiatives flourish. The programme has also provided crucial support for nine emerging enterprises, equipping them with financial aid,

technical training and mentoring. Business training has been delivered through the Dennakuwo network. The project's hands-on approach included deploying CIWM representatives on technical site visits to provide enhanced, on-the-ground support for the Kanifing Municipal Council.

This initiative perfectly exemplifies how a direct link between the UK and The Gambia can facilitate a highly dynamic exchange of expertise and innovation. It ultimately fosters a circular economy approach that protects vital resources and the environment for future generations.

The Dennakuwo Circular Economy Network stands as a leading example of how collaborative, practical action can address urgent, real-world waste-management challenges. WasteAid firmly believes that this model can be applied to other developing nations in the future to promote sustainable practices globally.

As we look ahead, CIWM remains dedicated to leveraging our expertise, resources and Gold-accredited CSR framework to champion professional competence, reduce carbon emissions, support communities and move the world beyond waste.



The Dennakuwo network has more than 300 members



Fostering future innovators: CIWM's support for the University of Oxford's Uncover Engineering programme

As part of CIWM's steadfast commitment to advancing the circular economy and championing greater diversity within the resource management sector, we were proud to support the University of Oxford's Uncover Engineering course in 2025, in partnership with the Waste Environmental Education and Research Trust (WEERT).

Now in its third year, the programme is strategically designed to promote engineering science to high-achieving students from backgrounds that are currently underrepresented in higher education. The 2025 cohort featured two dedicated groups: one specifically for girls; another for students of Black African and Caribbean heritage.

The funding from CIWM and WEERT covered the necessary costs of the pupils' daytime activities and their residential accommodation. In total, 75 Year 10 students were given the opportunity to attend.

During the intensive two-week course,

the students engaged in hands-on engineering sessions at Oxford's world-class laboratories, undertaking practical projects such as drone building and metalworking.

Crucially, the curriculum also connected these bright young minds directly with the practical applications of the resources and waste sector. The pupils visited key operational engineering sites, which, this year, included the Lakeside energy-from-waste facility in Colnbrook, operated by Grundon and Viridor.

These practical, site-based experiences were accompanied by formal dinners held at St Hugh's and Exeter colleges. These collegiate gatherings provided a unique opportunity for waste-industry professionals to interact with the students, discuss their activities and highlight potential career pathways within the circular economy.

One attendee at a formal dinner for students in the Black African and Caribbean heritage cohort was CIWM

President David Greenfield. Reflecting on the experience, he noted that the passion and insight demonstrated by the students were 'truly inspiring'. He emphasised the critical importance of the Uncover programme, stating that such educational initiatives are vital to help 'shape practical, systems-based education to enable the circular economy and resource management'.

The real-world impact of this scheme has been incredibly positive. Jack Robinson, access and alumni manager with Oxford's Department of Engineering Science, praised the diverse group of students for their exceptional ability to collaborate, share innovative ideas and approach complex engineering challenges together.

Furthermore, the feedback from the pupils underscores the immense value of CIWM's investment. One student described the course as an 'unforgettable experience' that actively strengthened their interest in pursuing an engineering career.

Supporting essential initiatives such as Uncover Engineering is essential if CIWM is to realise its ambition of inspiring the next generation of engineers, and ensuring our vital sector continues to benefit from a diverse, passionate and highly skilled workforce.



Regional round-up

CIWM member volunteers organise events ranging from site visits and technical talks to formal dinners and fundraisers. Here's a selection from 2025

CIWM's 10 Regional Committees have had a busy year, organising and attending a range of local and regional in-person events and online webinars, as well as contributing to our core activities.

The volunteers who make our Regional Committees possible are vital to our organisation. They see how industry and government activity affects those who work in our sector, which is invaluable experience for our policy work.

A big thanks to everyone who has organised or attended these events across the UK and Ireland – your effort and commitment are truly appreciated.

Scotland Regional Committee

CIWM's Scottish Regional Committee met four times in 2025. In April, the region's AGM and Spring Seminar, at Edinburgh's Cosla Conference Centre, was themed around 'Navigating Scotland's circular economy and waste policy updates'. The Autumn Seminar, held at the Malmaison hotel in Dundee in

November, focused on 'Packaging the future: Packaging EPR policy, practice and progress'.

A highlight of the year was the Christmas lunch. It raised £1,000 for Maggie's charity, which supports people affected by cancer. The event, at Glasgow University Union, also included a CPD session featuring a joint presentation by CIWM President Dr David Greenfield and Early Careers President Charlotte Davis.

North East Regional Committee

Members attended 10 Regional Committee meetings across the year, as well as the AGM in April. Highlights of 2025 included a site visit to J&B and a FlexCollect presentation, as well as a Christmas lunch that included presentations and provided networking opportunities.

Cymru Wales Regional Committee

A packed 2025 included a site visit in March to Pura NappiCycle, in Carmarthenshire, to learn about the company's pioneering work in recycling nappies. In the same month,

members attended the Resource Conference Cymru in Cardiff. Other events included a Meet Your Centre Representative at RWM, in September, and the CIWM Cymru Conference and Christmas Lunch, in November.

As well as six regional meetings through the year, representatives attended three Wales Resource Sector joint stakeholder meetings organised by WESA (in March, July and September) and monthly meetings of the Welsh Infrastructure Alliance, organised by the Institution of Civil Engineers.

The CIWM Cymru committee also responded to several consultations relevant to the sector in Wales, on topics including: Natural Resources Wales regulatory charges and updated fire prevention and mitigation plan guidance; the *Collections blueprint 2025*; exemptions reform to the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016; revisions to *Separate collection of*

waste materials for recycling: A code of practice for Wales; and delivering a deposit return scheme for drinks containers in Wales. (Explore CIWM's consultation responses in full at bit.ly/4sB7kSX)

Volunteer committee members also supported wider CIWM initiatives by participating in volunteer strategy activities and engaging with special interest groups, including helping produce podcasts and written articles for *Circular*.

East Anglian Regional Committee

Members undertook a number of site visits during the year, notably to The English Distillery near Norwich, Thameside Nature Discovery Park in Stanford-le-Hope, Essex, CleanTech East in Norfolk, and Palm paper recycling firm in King's Lynn.

Social highlights included the CIWM Gala Dinner, the Recoup Conference and awards dinner in September, and the L&SC 67th annual Christmas luncheon.

Other events included the CIWM presidential inauguration, in June, and webinars, including a membership drop-in, a session featuring Essex Fire and Rescue Service, and the South West region's webinar on EPR and waste crime.

Members also attended three CIWM board meetings and two meetings of the Member's Council.

Midlands Regional Committee

The Midlands organised seven technical events in 2025, in addition to six Regional Committee meetings.

The technical events began with a 'Health and safety in collection' event in Coventry, which included technology updates arising from the tragic death of a waste collector while on his round in the city.

There were also site visits to: a Ministry of Defence base, which provided insight into the issues of managing waste from a military

site; JCB, covering POPs, PFAs and pollution; and Sherbourne MRF.

The AGM in April was themed 'AI on waste' and included presentations from different technology providers. Members also organised a virtual members' drop-in, the Circular Economy Club meeting on construction waste, the annual LARAC/CIWM Craemer event on local authority waste issues, and an online update on digital waste tracking.

North West Regional Committee

Members witnessed best practice in textile collection and sortation during a site visit to SWD Premier Clothing's textile recycling facility in Little Hulton, Manchester. The event, in September, demonstrated how the organisation collects around 100 million clothing items from local authorities, charities and retailers from across the north of England, sorting and processing them, to find new owners.

Other events in 2025 included April's AGM at the University of Central Lancashire, in Preston, which included presentations on fire safety, plastics in forestry, FlexCollect plastics collections and battery collections, and a talk from early careers presidential team ambassador Bonni Gee.

The year, which included seven regional council meetings, culminated in the annual Christmas lunch at Manchester United's Old Trafford stadium. This included entertainment from comedian Ian Stone and the event raised £5,000 for the local Derian House Children's Hospice.

London and Southern Counties Regional Committee

A busy year included eight site visits to: Newhaven (Veolia) ERF; Biogen AD plant in Basingstoke; WRWA transfer station, MRF, household waste site and reuse facility in south-west London; N+P Crayford MRF in Dartford; Scarab Sweepers near Tonbridge; Broadgate; DS Smith's Kemsley Paper Mill, in Sittingbourne; and Suez Shepperton.



Regional round-up

The centre also hosted nine regional council meetings, including its AGM in April, as well as a Transforming Waste webinar, followed by a social, in July.

It also held six chartership bootcamp sessions through the year, supporting 14 candidates.

Republic of Ireland Regional Committee

The new Regional Committee met online for the first time in May, heralding a busy year featuring a range of events.

Members made site visits to Habitat for Humanity in Dublin (followed by a Christmas lunch) and KMK Metals in Kilbeggan, and took part in a roundtable event with Veolia (UK & Ireland), on nitrous oxide containers.

Online, in addition to other regular committee meetings, a DRS webinar in June attracted 45 attendees and, the following month, 33 people logged on for another webinar on circular economy standards.

The committee contributed to a number of consultations, including waste collection model of franchising, with assistance from Tina Benfield, circular economy at EU level and WEEE and batteries.

South West Regional Committee

Alongside committee meetings and webinars, the South West Regional Committee organised a day of presentations and thought-provoking



CIWM's South West Committee's Simpler Recycling event

“The event gave attendees practical strategies for dealing with new legislation”

discussion for its members. The events, entitled Simpler Recycling in Complex Times, gave attendees insights into practical strategies for dealing with the new legislation and delivered a wealth of knowledge and inspiration. Plans are already underway to repeat the format in 2026.

The South West Regional Committee also organised a site visit to Codford Biogas, hosted by Kevin Savory. The plant processes and recycles food waste, generating substantial amounts of renewable energy, as well as digestate that is used as a soil improver. It was an “insightful visit” where members got to see the plant workings and learn more about the

biological processes that enable the plant to operate smoothly.

Northern Ireland regional centre

Alongside its monthly meetings, the Northern Ireland Committee organised numerous events in 2025. Highlights included a site visit to Ulster Shredders and a special event to mark International Women's Day. More than 200 people attended a conference at Titanic Belfast, organised by CIWM NI and Recycle NI.

There was plenty of time for social meet ups too: the Committee's summer event saw 20 members gathered in Portrush for food, with some taking a surf lesson and enjoying a guided coastal walk.



Another amazing year

CIWM's role continues to grow. In the past year, we have worked to ensure our sector is not only heard, but also recognised as essential to the UK's environment, economy and resources.

Our work has helped shape the conversation around the skills, systems and standards needed for a more circular economy. We have also continued to champion the people

behind that transition, supporting a profession whose contribution is vital.

This progress is only possible because of our members, trustees, volunteers, partners and staff. You are helping to strengthen the sector and increase its influence when that matters more than ever. Thank you.

Sarah Poulter, CEO of CIWM