

A waste management and recycling strategy for Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council

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Cyngor Bwrdeisdref Sirol

**Blaenau Gwent**

County Borough Council

V1 INTERIM REVIEW

# **BLAENAU GWENT COUNCIL: WASTE MANAGEMENT AND RECYCLING STRATEGY 2018-2025**

An inclusive waste management and recycling strategy for Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council.

Publication Date: June 2022



*a better place to live and work*

This document sets out an interim review of the waste management strategy and recycling strategy for Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council.

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Interim Review Strategy 2018-2025

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# Contents

1.0 Executive Summary	5
2.1 National Context	7
2.2 Local Context	8
3.0 Our Vision and Strategic Objectives	9
3.1 Vision	9
3.2 Key Objectives	9
4.0 Delivering the Strategy	10
4.1 Working Together	10
4.2 Engagement First	10
4.3 Ambitious Targets to Maximise Recycling	11
4.4 Strong Community	11
4.5 Fair and Equitable Enforcement	11
5.0 Monitoring	12
5.1 Performance	12
5.2 Timeline	12
6.0 Investment	13
Appendix 1: Summary Action Plan and Timeline	14
Appendix 2: Current Service	17
Appendix 3: Integrated Communication Package – a practical approach	18
Appendix 4: Well Being Goals	19



# 1.0 Executive Summary

The strategy sets out how Blaenau Gwent will provide residents, local businesses and visitors with an efficient, smart and modern waste management and recycling service for now and into the future. The strategy reflects Blaenau Gwent's commitment to protect and sustain the environment through its well-being objectives. It also sets out how Blaenau Gwent aims to meet challenging Welsh Government targets, to avoid possible fines, whilst delivering improved services within a revenue budget which is increasingly stretched.

Blaenau Gwent's vision for its waste and recycling service is

**Working together to build strong and environmentally smart communities.**

Five key objectives, aligned to the Corporate Plan, have been identified to ensure the Council continues to improve services for all stakeholders.

## Objective 1 – Working Together

## Objective 2 – Engagement First

## Objective 3 – Ambitious Targets to Maximise Recycling

## Objective 4 – Strong Community

## Objective 5 – Fair and Equitable Enforcement

In developing the actions, and changes needed to the service, Blaenau Gwent has considered what its service should look like.

Welsh Government Strategic Target Areas	2024/25 Targets	What Does Good Look Like for Blaenau Gwent Stakeholders
Min. levels of reuse & recycling/composting	70%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100% of residents have collections services enabling them to recycle</li> <li>Residents have access to information allowing them to participate in maximising recycling</li> <li>Any waste that is produced is placed in correct recycling containers</li> <li>Council provides collections in the right container at the right place and on time</li> </ul>
Min. proportion of reuse /recycling /composting from source separation (incl. bring banks and HWRCs)	80%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council sources economic and environmental solutions for an increased range of materials</li> <li>Residents are informed on the range of materials and bring minimal non-recyclable waste to the HWRCs</li> <li>Residents have places to go where experts can repair broken goods and extend their life</li> <li>Residents have advice on how to upcycle their own goods and textiles</li> </ul>

Max. level of landfill	5%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maximum sorting and capture of materials at kerbside and HWRCs</li> <li>• Minimum food waste and information freely available to all residents</li> <li>• Minimum textiles discarded in residual waste – advice freely available to residents</li> </ul>
Max. level of energy from waste	30%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council has in place policies that promote engagement first and fair and equitable enforcement last, giving every resident the opportunity to participate in services in the correct manner to maximise recycling</li> </ul>
Min. levels of preparing for reuse (excluding Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE))	1.0%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residents have access to and use reuse shops and reuse networks where they can pass on goods to others</li> <li>• Re-use services generate an income for re-investing into the service and into the community</li> <li>• Council works closely with the third sector to create work programmes to improve employability and opportunity for unemployed residents</li> </ul>

The strategy reflects Blaenau Gwent’s commitment to protect and sustain the environment and provide all Blaenau Gwent residents and local businesses with a first-class waste management and recycling service.

As the strategy covers such a significant time period it was determined that it would be sensible to undertake a more significant review every three years. This interim review is the scheduled review three years on from the adoption of the strategy.

## 2.0 Introduction

### 2.1 National Context

The waste and recycling strategy was aligned to the latest Welsh Government Strategy 'Towards Zero Waste' which was launched in 2010 and the subsequent targets which are highlighted below:

*Table 1: Headline targets for Municipal Waste from WG – Towards Zero Waste*

Target Year	2010/11	12/13	15/16	19/20	24/25
Min. levels of reuse & recycling/composting (or AD)	40%	52%	58%	64%	70%
Min. proportion of reuse /recycling /composting from source separation *	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%
Max. level of landfill	-	-	-	10%	5%
Max. level of energy from waste	-	-	42%	36%	30%
Min. levels of preparing for reuse (excluding Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE))	-	0.4%	0.6%	0.8%	1.0%

\*kerbside, bring and/or civic amenity (CA) site

The Welsh Government has since reviewed its Waste Strategy and published 'Beyond Recycling – A strategy to make the circular economy in Wales a reality' in 2021. The Welsh Governments aim is to keep resources in use for as long as possible and avoid waste. They aim to achieve this by:

- Supporting businesses in Wales to reduce their carbon footprint by becoming more resource efficient;
- Providing the tools to enable community action;
- Phasing out unnecessary single-use items, especially plastic;
- Eradicating avoidable food waste;
- Procuring on a basis which prioritises goods and products which are made from remanufactured, refurbished and recycled materials or come from low carbon and sustainable materials like wood;
- Striving to achieve the highest rates of recycling in the world;
- Reducing the environmental impact of the waste collection from our homes and businesses; and
- Taking full responsibility for our waste.

Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) and Deposit Return Schemes (DRS) are being phased in 2024 and these schemes will need to be considered in terms of how they may affect the objectives

of this strategy. Welsh Government have also commissioned a national Waste Composition Analysis exercise in the Spring and Autumn of 2022, the results of which will indicate what materials are still in resident's black bag waste and could be targeted in future campaigns.

## 2.2 Local Context

The global pandemic has certainly affected the delivery of the strategy and in particular has affected the team's ability to engage with the public and other stakeholders. The roll out of the Trade Waste service was disrupted by the many lockdowns and closure of local businesses and also impacted on the planned development of a network of Repair cafes.

Since the adoption of the strategy, Blaenau Gwent has pledged its support to Welsh Government's ambition for the Welsh public sector to be carbon neutral by 2030, and have developed a Decarbonisation plan which sets out how we intend to deliver on this ambition over the next ten years. The plan will also help to ensure that decarbonisation is built into long term plans, including this strategy, to improve well-being in Blaenau Gwent. Two of the transition pathways identified within the Decarbonisation plan directly relate to waste:

- Transport direct – transition to ultra-low emission vehicles and the related infrastructure;
- Waste – working towards zero waste and a circular economy.

Ultra-low emission vehicles have been trialled with front line services and will be considered with the fleet replacement programme. However, the new Centre of Operations is integral to Blaenau Gwent achieving a low carbon fleet as we cannot transition to a low emission fleet without the appropriate infrastructure in place to support it.

The consolidation of the enforcement activities into one team in Community Services has changed the way we deliver our services in this area with a more joined up and coordinated response.



## 3.0 Our Vision and Strategic Objectives

### 3.1 Vision

**Working together to build strong and environmentally smart communities.**

### 3.2 Key Objectives

Five key Objectives have been identified to ensure Blaenau Gwent continues to improve services for customers and other stakeholders.

**Objective 1 – Working Together** - Blaenau Gwent will work together with its residents, contractors, community groups and the third sector to increase the range of materials able to be recycled, maximise recycling and value, and increase the opportunity for re-use.

**Objective 2 – Engagement First** - Blaenau Gwent will be part of a programme of public engagement and invest in communications and resources to support this Waste Strategy.

**Objective 3 – Ambitious Targets to Maximise Recycling** - Blaenau Gwent will explore opportunities to divert waste from disposal by increasing the levels of re-use, recycling and composting. Ensure that all households have either a regular collection service or a convenient alternative arrangement available to them.

**Objective 4 – Strong Community** - Blaenau Gwent will continually review its services and seek new ways to work with residents and communities to ensure best practice is implemented and services are retained locally where possible.

**Objective 5 – Fair and Equitable Enforcement** - Blaenau Gwent will implement a programme of Enforcement that is both fair and consistent to enable those residents who are not participating in the recycling schemes to participate.

The strategy reflects Blaenau Gwent's commitment to protect and sustain the environment and provide all Blaenau Gwent residents, local businesses and visitors with an efficient, smart and modern waste management and recycling service for now and into the future.

In future we must prevent waste from being generated, where we cannot prevent, we must reduce, repair, re-use, recycle and compost more. Waste must be considered a resource from which as much value as possible should be recovered. Disposal should only ever be the last resort

## 4.0 Delivering the Strategy

### 4.1 Working Together

Blaenau Gwent will work together with its residents, contractors, community groups and the third sector to increase the range of materials able to be recycled, maximise recycling and value, and increase the opportunity for re-use.

Since 2018 we have:

- Constructed and opened a second Recycling Centre at Roseheyworth;
- Worked with Welsh Government to develop an Outline Business Case for a Regional Wood Facility at Silent Valley;
- Successfully secured funding to support the rollout of a Repair Café network across the Borough;
- Developed a regional online Repair Directory for residents to access the nearest repair outlets;
- Constructed our first Reuse Shop at Roseheyworth Recycling Centre which is operated by our contracted partner Wastesavers;
- Successfully secured funding to construct an Education Centre at Roseheyworth Recycling Centre;
- Successfully secured funding to convert a barn at New Vale Recycling Centre to a Reuse shop;
- Appraised options for a new Centre of Operations and selected a preferred site;
- Developed initial designs for the Centre of Operations;
- Trialled an ultra-low emission vehicle for recycling;
- Through our partners Wrap Cymru, participated in a bulk density exercise to inform future fleet development and infrastructure requirements;
- Started to work on the transition of Silent Valley Waste Services coming in house.

### 4.2 Engagement First

Blaenau Gwent will be part of a programme of public engagement and invest in communications and resources to support this Waste Strategy.

Since 2018 we have:

- Delivered a series of roadshows across the Borough to engage with residents about the side waste enforcement policy;
- Delivered the 'Keeping up with the Joneses' campaign through a consistent message and approach;
- Introduced a new Trade Waste service to all customers which is compliant with the latest Welsh Government legislation through a consistent message and approach;
- Developed online communications for reuse shop at Roseheyworth;

## 4.3 Ambitious Targets to Maximise Recycling

Blaenau Gwent will explore opportunities to divert waste from disposal by increasing the levels of re-use, recycling and composting. Ensure that all households have either a regular collection service or a convenient alternative arrangement available to them.

Since 2018 we have:

- Introduced black bag sorting policy at New Vale recycling centre;
- Introduced a 'No side waste policy' at kerbside for residual waste;
- Maintained all kerbside collections throughout the course of the pandemic and subsequent lockdowns;
- Through our partners Wrap Cymru, participated in a plastic film trial;
- Introduced a new larger, weighted reusable cardboard sack for all residents;
- Changed the way we collect tetrapak cartons so these can be processed for recycling;

## 4.4 Strong Community

Blaenau Gwent will continually review its services and seek new ways to work with residents and communities to ensure best practice is implemented and services are retained locally where possible.

Since 2018 we have:

- Introduced a new Trade Waste service to all customers which is compliant with the latest Welsh Government legislation. Bespoke multi-stream collections vehicles have been purchased and a new pricing structure has been developed to ensure the service is sustainable going forward;
- Carried out a route optimisation exercise on all our recycling rounds;
- Introduced in-cab technology across the recycling fleet;
- Reinstated a number of rear lane collections utilising bespoke vehicles

## 4.5 Fair and Equitable Enforcement

Blaenau Gwent will implement a programme of Enforcement that is both fair and consistent to enable those residents who are not participating in the recycling schemes to participate.

Since 2018 we have:

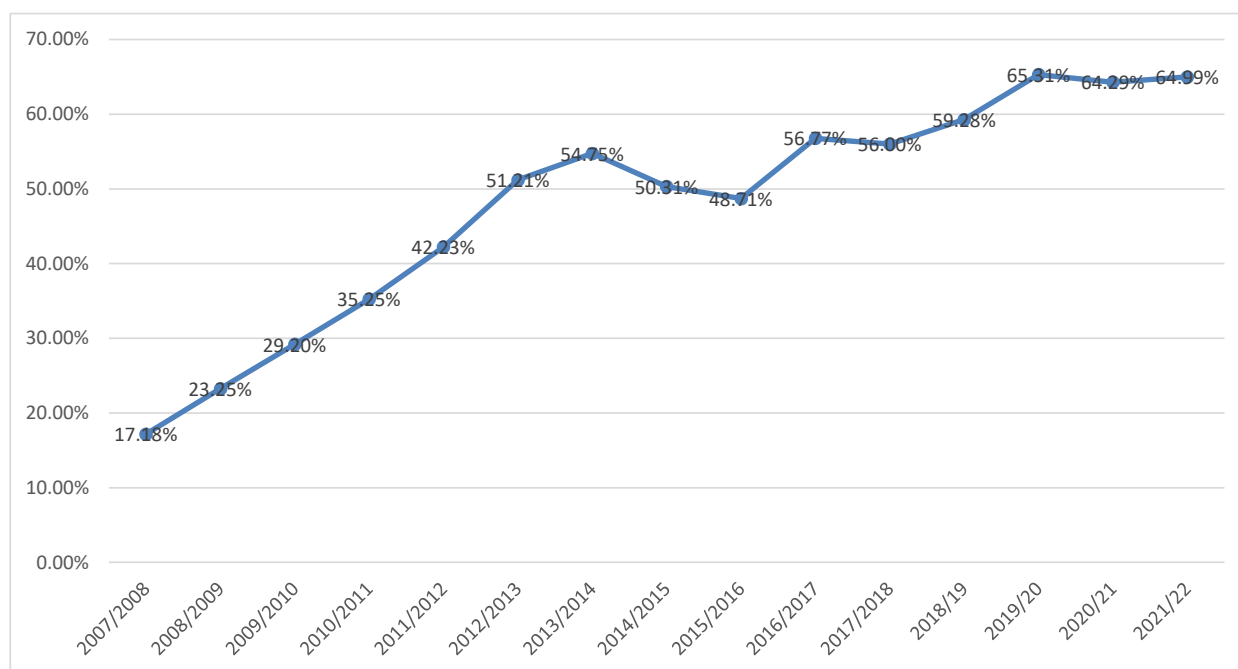
- Introduced a consolidated Enforcement Team in Community Services;
- Introduced a 'No side waste policy' at kerbside for residual waste;
- Delivered the 'Keeping up with the Joneses' campaign;
- Utilised powers under Section 46 of the the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to take enforcement action against residents who are not following Blaenau Gwent policies for recycling;
- Developed a process for the misplacement of waste;
- Worked with residents to phase out communal collection points where this is possible;
- Carried out Commercial Duty of Care checks in Town Centres;

# 5.0 Monitoring

## 5.1 Performance

Annual performance is shown below. Performance has increased since the introduction of the Strategy in 2018/19 but has plateaued since then. This review sets the direction of travel for the next three years as we work towards 70%.

2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
17.18%	23.25%	29.20%	35.25%	42.23%	51.21%	54.75%	50.31%	48.71%	56.77%	56.00%	59.28%	65.31%	64.29%	64.99%



Assuming the total municipal waste remains constant over the next few years, to achieve 70% we would need to reduce our residual and increase our recycling by 1562.44 tonnes. This means that for every 1% increase in our recycling rate would require a swing of 308.66 tonnes

## 5.2 Timeline

Appendix 1 identifies the key actions to deliver Blaenau Gwent’s Objectives. They outline Blaenau Gwent’s commitment to continuous improvement, the delivery of statutory objectives and engagement with its stakeholders throughout the process. The dates indicated are the dates at which Blaenau Gwent will start work on the evaluation and delivery of any specific action.

## 6.0 Investment

There are number of actions, included in Appendix 1 that will require capital investment. For capital spend that continues to move the Council towards a Circular Economy, Blaenau Gwent will prepare capital grant applications justifying how the investment would assist in meeting or exceeding of statutory targets through the identified service change or enhancement.

Other actions will require revenue investment from within a revenue budget which is increasingly stretched. In these circumstances a case by case cost benefit analysis will be carried out to identify how the actions can be delivered though invest to save means.

# Appendix 1: Summary Action Plan and Timeline

These are the proposed key actions – how they will be tactically delivered will be determined at the point each project / change is to be implemented.

	Strategic Objective	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
				70%
<b>HWRC</b>	<b>Strong Community</b> <b>Working Together</b>	Open re-use furniture and large items shop at New Vale. Establish contacts for Repair cafes	Develop network of Repair cafés	
<b>Kerbside Recycling</b>	<b>Engagement First</b> <b>Ambitious Targets to Maximise Recycling</b>	On-going ‘Keeping up with the Joneses’ campaign Promotion of kerbside collected household batteries	On-going ‘Keeping up with the Joneses’ campaign	On-going ‘Keeping up with the Joneses’ campaign
	<b>Ambitious Targets to Maximise Recycling</b>	Market review to identify further opportunities for extending recycling materials including plastic film	Introduce financially viable new materials for recycling	Consolidate extended service to maximise recycling
	<b>Strong Community</b>		Plan for fleet replacement and future proof fleet for new / additional materials and the latest technology	Procure new fleet
<b>Kerbside Residual</b>	<b>Fair and Equitable Enforcement</b> <b>Ambitious Targets to Maximise Recycling</b>	Continue with side waste enforcement	Continue with side waste enforcement	Continue with side waste enforcement

	Strategic Objective	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
	<b>Ambitious Targets to Maximise Recycling</b>	Review residual collection frequency and containment	Trial reduced residual frequency and/ or reduced containment or number of bags	70% Introduce reduced residual frequency or reduced containment
<b>Waste Transfer Station</b>	<b>Working Together</b> <b>Ambitious Targets to Maximise Recycling</b>	Ensure transfer station is compliant and future proofed to incorporate further developments Investigate options available for baling	Investigate options and procure for replacement baling solution	Introduce baling solution
	<b>Working Together</b>	Work with other local authorities to develop a partnership for Regional Wood Facility. Secure funding	Construct Regional Wood Facility	Commission Regional Wood Facility
<b>Trade Waste</b>	<b>Strong Community</b> <b>Ambitious Targets to Maximise Recycling</b>	Survey commercial premises to identify any gaps in the market. Trial trade waste recycling service at Roseheyworth Recycling Centre	Grow service - review service to provide access to all local businesses.	Create network of Community Recycling Ambassadors in local businesses
<b>Engagement and Education</b>	<b>Engagement First</b>	Opening of Education Centre. Develop an education programme to be delivered at the centre	Carry out participation and set out study and deliver focussed and targeted communications to maximise recycling	Survey residents to ensure we are delivering what we said we would Create network of Community Recycling Ambassadors in schools and Council Buildings
<b>Communications supporting service changes</b>	<b>Engagement First</b> <b>Ambitious Targets to Maximise Recycling</b>	Promote textiles, domestic batteries and small WEEE collections at kerbside	Social media communications for reuse HWRC site shop and bulky items outlet. Communications for any	Communications for reduced frequency or reduced containment of residual

	Strategic Objective	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
		Analyse results of Waste Composition Analysis	additional kerbside collected materials. Targeted communications campaign based on Waste Composition Analysis results.	70% collections and enhanced recycling
<b>Centre of Operations</b>	<b>Working Together</b> <b>Strong Community</b>	Financial options for new Centre of Operations. Planning permission sought	Construct new Centre of Operations	Transition to new Centre of Operations



## Appendix 2: Current Service

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	
Residual Waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collected 3 weekly using 240 litre bins or 4 black bags per household, with no side waste accepted.</li> </ul>
Recyclate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Weekly collection of recyclate for all households in either a Troliboc, 55-litre black boxes with different coloured lids, to distinguish the materials, and hessian reusable sacks.</li> <li>Recyclate collected weekly include food tins and drink cans, empty aerosols, newspapers, magazines and junk mail, catalogues and telephone directories, glass jars and bottles, plastic bottles, mixed plastics, clothes, textiles and paired shoes, small WEEE and domestic batteries.</li> <li>A weekly AHP and nappy collection service is open to all household which provides extra capacity where needed.</li> <li>Provision of two HWRCs - with black bag sorting required.</li> </ul>
Organics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A weekly collection of green waste is operated from March to November each year collected in green hessian sacks.</li> <li>Food Waste is collected source segregated on a weekly basis in 23 litre green caddies. The Authority supplies food liners to residents for this service.</li> </ul>
Trade Waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Weekly Residual Waste collections to approximately 300 trade customers.</li> <li>All customers have residual and recycling collection contracts.</li> </ul>
Disposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Residual Waste is treated at Viridor's Energy from Waste Facility at Trident Park in Cardiff.</li> </ul>
Contractual Arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Silent Valley Waste Services Ltd are currently contracted to operate the New Vale and Roseheyworth HWRCs and the Waste Transfer Station on behalf of BG and are the permit holders for all sites.</li> </ul>

## Appendix 3: Integrated Communication Package – a practical approach

Communications that underpins the strategy to achieve Blaenau Gwent's goals

- There will be a **focus** on – and prioritisation of – those behaviours/actions which will make the greatest contribution to the waste and recycling strategy's overarching objectives.
- Communications and engagement **activity must align with and complement the wider waste strategy**. In particular this means linking with any future service changes as identified in the Action Plan in Appendix 1. The focus will be on delivering excellent service change communications, with additional communications, engagement and behaviour change activity scheduled in around this.
- Adopting a **project-focused** rather than 'always on' communications approach, with two types of communications project: those linked to service change (time-specific and delivered as an integral element of the wider service change), and those not linked to service change (non time-specific and delivered as discrete projects), all of which will have clear objectives and timelines. This means that at any one time there may be **one key communications focus**; it also means that there will be short periods between projects during which there will remain only a low level of communications outputs e.g. the Council's social media accounts.
- Developing communications activities and materials from scratch can be expensive and time-consuming. Where possible, the Council will **make use of existing materials/templates** etc, amending them as necessary to meet its own specific needs. This does not mean that 'one size fits all', only that where possible, the Council will continue to make use of existing materials/templates etc as a starting point, with additional bespoke materials and activities to be developed at a later stage as needed. This approach is **low-cost and low-risk** compared to developing materials from scratch.
- Investigating opportunities to **benefit from the Welsh Government's Behaviour Change Programme** and other national initiatives as they are developed. This is likely to provide multiple opportunities for participation and collaboration.
- Continuing to make the most of **existing networks and partnerships**.
- Using findings from planned trials **target specific audience segments** using the channels and messages that will best work for them. The focus will remain on targeting those segments which will have the **greatest impact – which will also deliver the best value for money**.

## Appendix 4: Well Being Goals

How Blaenau Gwent's Strategic Waste Objectives and Action Plan will result in multiple benefits for our communities and contribute to the national well-being goals.			
Well-being goals	5 ways of working and how we will deliver	Blaenau Gwent's Strategic Waste Objectives that deliver against well-being goals	How actions beneficially contribute to the national well-being goals
<p><b>A prosperous Wales</b> An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.</p>	Long-term	<p><b>Strong Community</b></p> <p><b>Ambitious Targets to Maximise Recycling</b></p> <p><b>Working Together</b></p>	<p>Services designed so that everyone can participate.</p> <p>Maximise benefits of emerging technologies to recycle more and introduce additional materials.</p> <p>Providing residents with a more suitable HWRC and re-use facilities for the future to achieve 70% recycling rate by 2025.</p> <p>As new materials are included in the recycling services Blaenau Gwent will first seek reprocessing outlets in Wales.</p>
<p><b>A more equal Wales</b> A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio-economic background and circumstances).</p>	Integration and Collaboration	<b>Strong Community</b>	<p>Services that are accessible to all residents, local businesses and visitors to Blaenau Gwent.</p> <p>Improvements to HWRC will</p>





capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).			<b>Smart Communities</b>
<p><b>A globally responsible Wales</b> A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.</p>	Prevention	<p><b>Strong Community</b></p> <p><b>Ambitious Targets to Maximise Recycling</b></p>	A strategy that is aligned to the waste hierarchy through providing opportunities to recycle what is produced and reducing the amount of waste disposed.
<p><b>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language</b> A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.</p>	Involvement and Collaboration	<p><b>Engagement First</b></p> <p><b>Working Together</b></p>	Engagement - all communications with our community will be provided in English and Welsh.

**The Five Ways of Working**

**Long-term** - The importance of balancing short-term needs with the needs to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs.

**Integration** - Considering how the public body’s well-being objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, on their objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies.

**Involvement** - The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves.

**Collaboration** - Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the body itself) that could help the body to meet its well-being objectives.

**Prevention** - How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help public bodies meet their objectives.

WRAP's vision is a world in which resources are used sustainably.

Our mission is to accelerate the move to a sustainable resource-efficient economy through re-inventing how we design, produce and sell products; re-thinking how we use and consume products; and re-defining what is possible through re-use and recycling.

Find out more at [www.wrapcymru.org.uk](http://www.wrapcymru.org.uk)

