

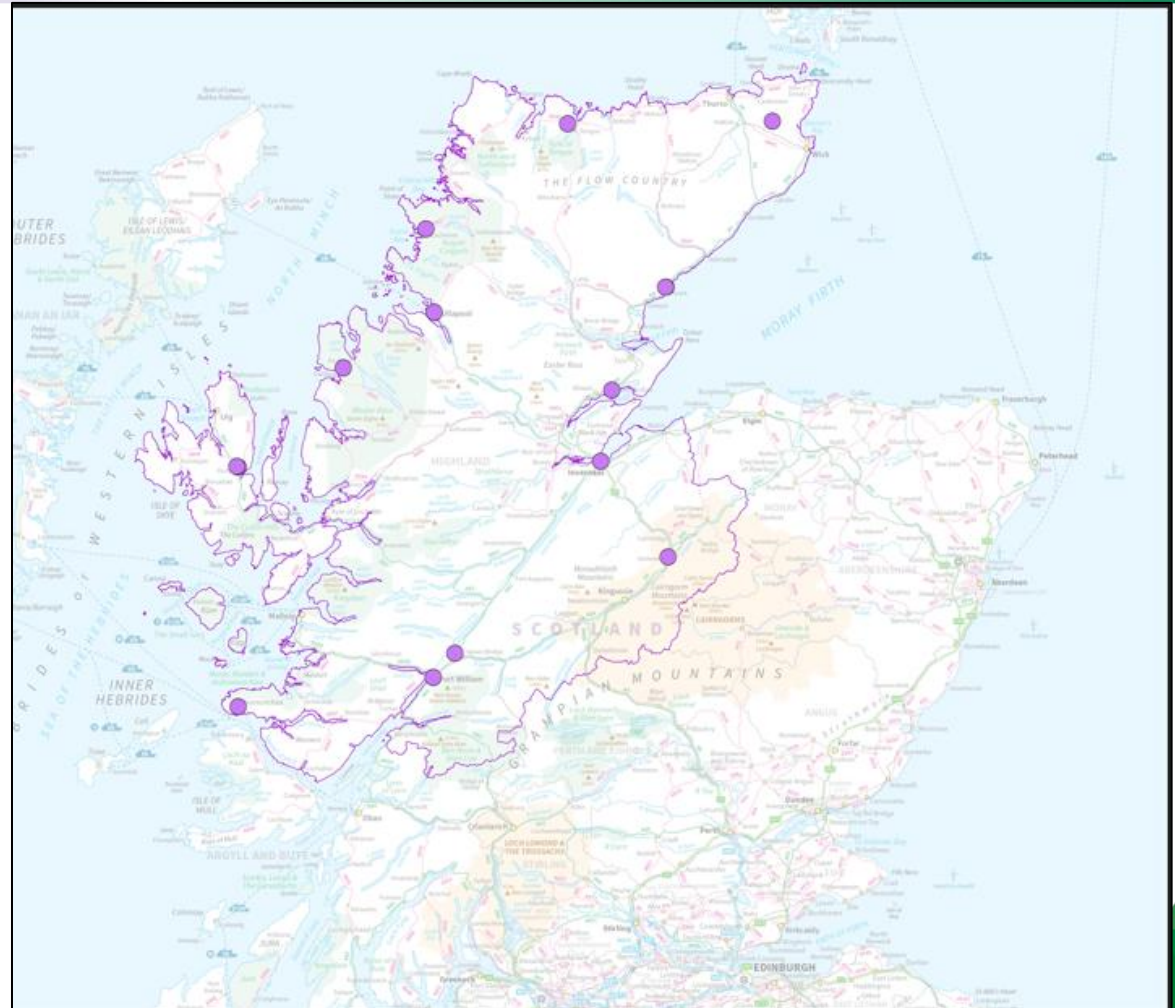
Transformation of Waste and Recycling Collections

Imogen Percy-Bell

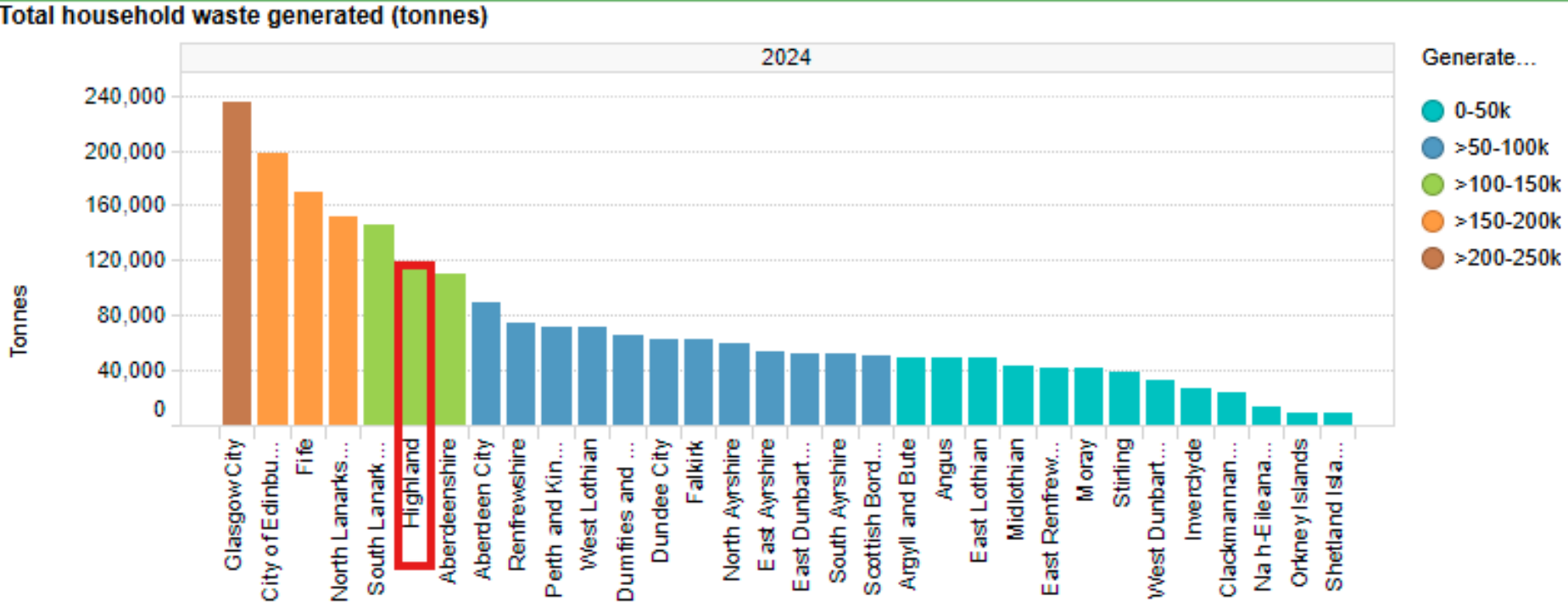


Highland Council area

- 4,000 miles of roads
- 10,000 square miles
- 6 islands
- 134,000 households
- 6,000 Business Waste customers
- 4,500 litter bins

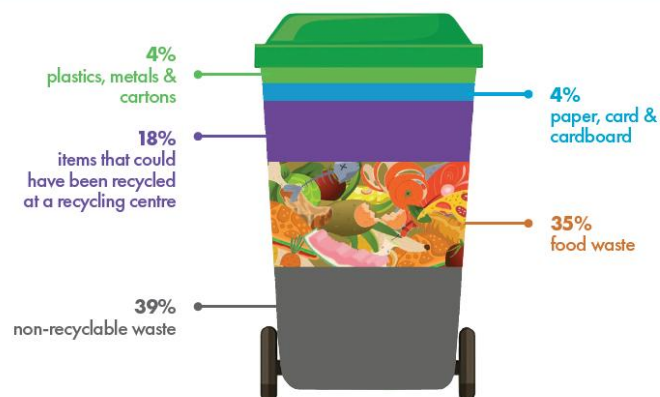


Waste generated by Local Authority area



Highland Council context

An average bin in Highland contains...



Waste Data

Total amount of waste generated in Highland in 2025

Recycling Rate: 45%



Household Waste Recycling Centres

21



Types of Material accepted



30,200 tonnes handled
19,900 tonnes sent for disposal
10,300 tonnes recycled

£7.1 million of funding from the Scottish Government's Recycling Improvement Fund

- Reduce waste sent for disposal
- Improve the quality of recycling
- Maximise the capture of recycling
- Reduce the carbon footprint of the service

Kerbside waste and recycling collections prior to roll out

**Blue bin (240l) for
Dry Mixed Recycling**



Collected every 2 weeks

**Green bin (240l) for
non-recyclable waste**



Collected every 2 weeks

**Inverness only
23l food waste caddy
– 30K h/hlds**



Collected every week

Transformation of waste and recycling collections

Mixed plastic & metal containers



GREEN BIN AND BLUE BIN ARE COLLECTED EVERY 4 WEEKS

Paper & card



New **smaller*** non-recyclable waste bin



Additional 30K food waste properties

GREY BIN IS COLLECTED EVERY 2 WEEKS

*140 l bin with food waste collections

*180 l bin without food waste collections

Procurement

Procurement programme included:

- 7 x food waste collection vehicles
- 130,000 x non-recyclable waste bins
- 30,000 x 23l & 7 l food waste caddies
- Business waste recycling bins for 6,000 customers– 2 wheeled and 4 wheeled bins
- Twin stream recycling contracts
- Split compartment recycling skips for small isles, Knoydart and Kilchoan
- Food waste storage skips for WTS
- Contract for the distribution of bins and caddies to households
- Supply & installation of doors for Caithness WTS
- Contract for the extension to the Skye WTS

Delivery

140,000 grey Non
recyclable waste bins
delivered

280,000 wheeled bins
converted to twin
stream recycling

32,000 food waste
caddies delivered

6,000 business waste
customers recycling
bins converted

Waste Transfer
Station modifications

Communications
campaign

Recruitment/pooling
staff/backfilling

Identify secure bin
stores!

Delivered in 18 months

LEGACY

Improved cross-boundary working with all our teams, resulting in a more dynamic and flexible workforce that can embrace change.

- Teamwork and collaboration
- Staff working in different operational areas
- Upskilling Operatives
- Dedication of the teams to ensure we delivered

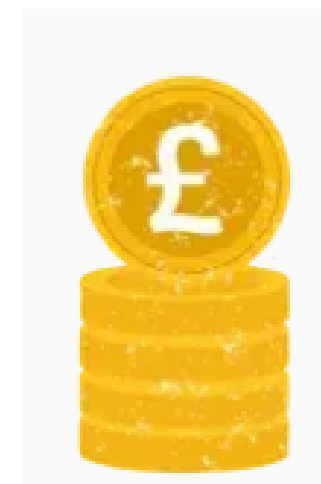
Measuring success

- Reduction in waste collected from the kerbside – **7,800 tonnes**
- Increase in food waste sent for recycling – **2,500 tonnes**
- Reduction in carbon – **7,800 tonnes**
- Recycling rate increased to **42.5%** - 6% increase!
- Reduction in contamination and increase of approx. **3,000 tonnes** in the output of material after it has been processed at the reprocessors
- Council now receives an income from kerbside collected material stream resulting in significant savings from Dry Mixed Recycling treatment

Innovations – Alignment with national policy

New twin stream recycling and waste collection system aligns with key national policies

- ✓ Household waste and recycling charter – closed loop recycling
- ✓ Circular Economy Bill
- ✓ Packaging Extended Producer Responsibility – value for money for Highland communities



Innovations – Technology

New postcode bin collection day search on website

The Highland Council

Home

Check your household bin collection days

Your address

Your address

Enter a postcode to search for the address *

Choose address *

Select...

Did you find the address on the list above? *

☒ Yes ☐ No

Your waste and recycling collection dates 2025/26

Your collection day is Monday

*Some residents may have a grey bin

Your green bin* is for plastics, metals and cartons - every 4 weeks.

Your blue bin is for paper, card and cardboard - every 4 weeks.

	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan 2026
Grey	3	7	5	2	7	4	1	6	3	1	5
Green	10	14	12	9	14	11	8	13	10	8	12
Blue	17	21	19	16	21	18	15	20	17	15	19
Grey	24	28	26	23	28	25	22	27	24	22	19
Green	31										

Your bin collection days

1 Glaick Steading, Ainess, IV17 0XW

Non-recyclable waste

Your grey waste bin will be collected **every 2 weeks** on a **Monday**

Your next collection date is **02 February 2026**

[What can go in my grey general waste bin?](#)

Paper, card and cardboard recycling

Your blue recycling bin will be collected **every 4 weeks** on a **Monday**

Your next collection date is **09 February 2026**

[What can go in my blue recycling bin?](#)

Plastics, metals and cartons recycling

Your green recycling bin will be collected **every 4 weeks** on a **Monday**

Your next collection date is **23 February 2026**

[What can go in my green recycling bin?](#)

Permiserv Business Waste Twin Stream recycling tool

Recycling Collection 1

Collection Frequency: 
Collection Period: 1st April 2026 - 31st March 2027
Collection Period Including Suspensions: 1st April 2026 to 31st March 2027
Uplifts: 1 x 1100L

Twin Streaming Parameters

Frequency:
Total Litres for 4 Weeks: 0

Twin Streaming Ratio Split

FIBRES

60%
0



CONTAINERS

40%
0

Lower Leeway

20

%

Upper Leeway

10

%

Fibres 

	sack	140L	240L	360L	660L	1100L
Quantity	0	0	0	0	0	0

Containers 

Innovations - Infrastructure



Portree Waste Transfer Station modifications

Innovations - Infrastructure

New twin stream recycling skips for small isles and peninsulas



Challenges

Local government budgets

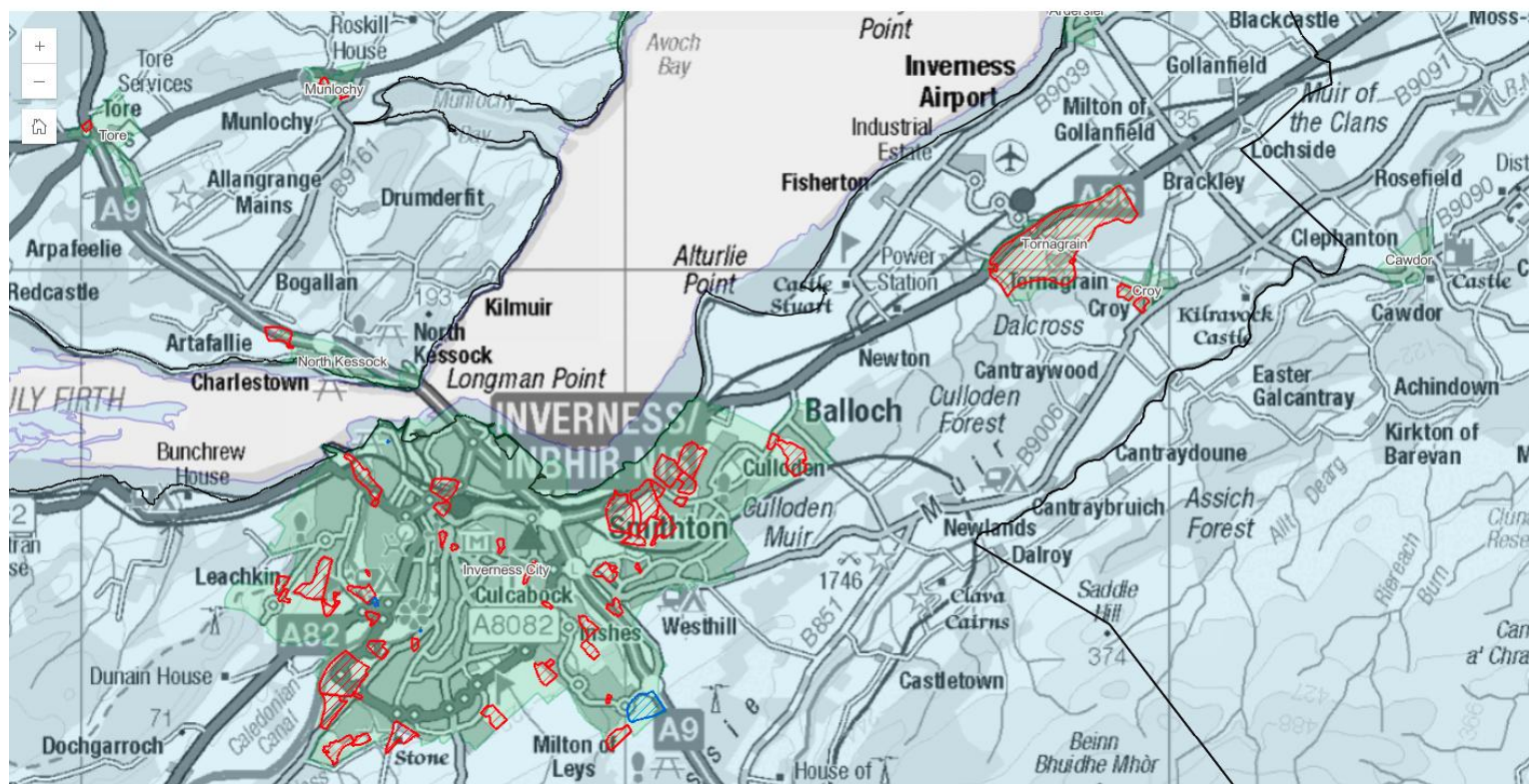
- RCV fleet and housing growth
- Quality of kerbside collected recyclable material

-

Housing growth in Inverness/Nairn challenge

- 1000 new properties per year
- No additional budget for collections or fleet
- Challenged to reduce fleet size
- Utilise Easyroute to model additional properties
- Add 3rd loader to routes in areas with housing growth
- Result - Maximise existing RCV fleet with minimal costs

Housing Land Audit 2024 ⓘ



Quality of kerbside collected recyclable material

Investment in communications, education and awareness to embed circular economy principles:

- **Consistent communications campaigns utilising a range of printed and digital media**
- **Waste Aware Team fully resourced**
- **Direct engagement with the public including school pupils**
- **Training and toolbox talks for collection and WTS Operatives**

Future goals

- Route optimisation to continue
- Flexibles and films be introduced to kerbside collections in 2027?
- HWRC focus
- Targeted communications campaign to provide support and advice to the public

Reuse and Repair Fund

£700,000 has been allocated to help community project that promote reuse and repair, and help build a circular economy.

Empowering communities to reuse and repair items such as clothing, textiles and dense plastic —materials with a high carbon impact—is essential in supporting the Highland Council to manage future financial pressures including the new Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS)



Thank you for listening!

Any questions?