Circular Economy Framework



City of London Corporation | October 2024



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Executive Summary

This document outlines the City of London Corporation's Circular Economy Framework 2040. The Circular economy is a system where materials never become waste and nature is regenerated.

The transition to a circular economy requires a large systematic shift both in processes and ways of working. It will also require a change of mindset to adopt new practices and significant collaboration to ensure its success.

The City Corporation plans to approach these challenges by firstly looking internally at how we can adopt circular practices within our own operations and then looking at how we can act as a facilitator to the Square Mile to support its transition.

There is huge opportunity to be gained from making the transition, both environmentally and economically. The circular economy plays an integral part in the transition to a net zero future and thus in turn helps deliver the City Corporation's Climate Action Strategy and its commitments to be net zero by 2040. It will help support existing businesses on their own sustainability journeys, whilst also creating space for new sustainable businesses to emerge.

This document outlines a framework to circularity that will guide the transition needed to be made by different areas of the City Corporation whilst also outlining the mechanisms the City Corporation will put in place to support the Square Mile as a whole to make this transition.

Shorter term action plans are to be developed throughout the course of the framework to 2040. This allows for flexibility in an ever-changing field to ensure that the best approach is being taken and the right factors are being prioritised.

The action plan for the City Corporation operations 2024–2027 has particular focus on:

- · Waste and Resources
- Portfolio and Capital Projects
- Supply Chain
- Training, Communication and Engagement

The action plan for the Square Mile 2024-2027 key focus areas for The Square Mile are:

- Built Environment
- · Food and Beverage
- Training, Communication and Engagement

These areas were identified as having the most potential impact if circularity was embedded. City Corporation colleagues across many teams within the organisation will be required to collaborate to deliver the actions required. Performance measures have been set within these key areas which will be monitored on an ongoing basis with annual reporting of progress to the relevant committees.



What is the Circular Economy?

The Ellen Macarthur Foundation¹ defines the circular economy as "a system where materials never become waste and nature is regenerated. In a circular economy, products and materials are kept in circulation through processes like maintenance, reuse, refurbishment, remanufacture, recycling, and composting".

This is wider than just looking at domestic waste recycling and even just waste minimisation. It is a system wide approach to resource management which recognises that there is a finite amount of resource which need to be managed in a more sustainable way.

The City Corporation recognises the need to make this transition and has included as a key action in its Corporate Plan 2024-2029 to:

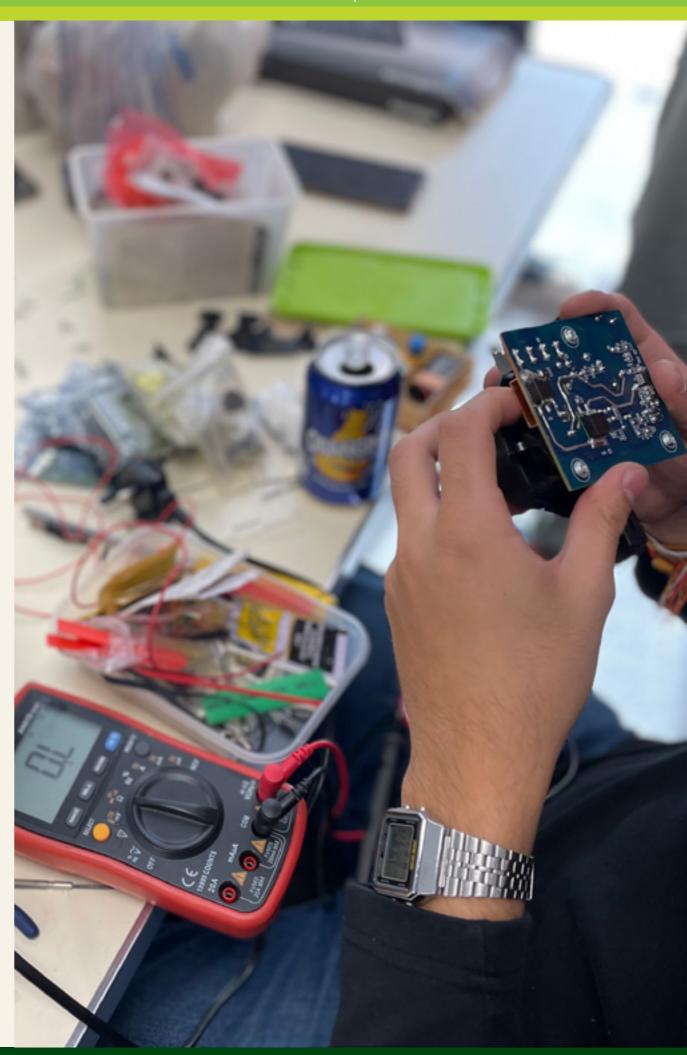
'Implement a Circular Economy Strategy and embed circular economy principles into our building projects'.

The Corporate Plan also highlights the need to drive "dynamic economic growth". The adoption of a circular economy framework supports the sustainability of this growth and has the potential to deliver demonstrable savings whilst also creating new opportunity in a greener more sustainable economy, such as through the generation of green jobs and technologies. The increase in reuse, repair, remanufacture and recycling creates huge opportunity for new and more efficient business practice.

Progress of the circular economy is already being made in many areas of the City Corporation:

- Circular economy guidance is being included in the Net Zero Design Standard from the Climate Action Strategy.
- <u>Planning for Sustainability SPD</u> introduces a number of key actions and measures to embed circular economy in development proposals.
- Increasing number of clothes, bikes and electrical repair sessions, and "Give and Take" opportunities for residents.
- Significant progress with regards to building a more sustainable supply chain through exploring refurb and reuse platforms. (see Appendix 1 for further detail).

However, it is clear a more focused and structured approach is required to educate both internal teams and occupiers of the Square Mile as to what the circular economy is and how best to work collaboratively to achieve it.





Prolong: To support our residents prolong the life of their items we run Repair Workshops ranging from textiles to electricals and woodwork to both support with repair and teach repair techniques.

Reuse: Many items are thrown away when still in a usable condition. To avoid this, Give and Take days are run to provide the opportunity for residents to give away items they no longer need and take things they may have a use for.

Refurb: The emerging City Plan and Sustainability SPD requires development to take a 'retrofit first' approach, prioritising the retention and retrofit of existing buildings.

Recycle: Our household recycling rate 22/23 was 29.8 % with work ongoing to improve the opportunities for our residents to recycle in the Square Mile.

Why is the circular economy important to the City Corporation and the Square Mile?

The City is a leader on the world's stage for financial and professional services and so is uniquely placed to lead and support the transition to a circular, more sustainable economy.

The City consumes a huge amount of resources and materials each year. From residents and workers to construction and demolition, there is significant potential for the circular economy to shift how the City operates for the better.

- In 2022 the Square Mile produced circa 287,000 tonnes of waste.
- Of that waste around 193,000 tonnes was inert, construction, and demolition waste making up around 67% of the total waste produced that year.
- FY22/23 The City Corporation spent circa £274,000,000 on purchased goods and services equating to millions of items which have the potential to generate waste.

The transition to a circular economy comes with many benefits.

- For our residents it means greater support to repair and reuse items and greater access to recycling.
- For construction in the City it allows for creative, cutting-edge reuse techniques to be put into practice providing first class facilities.
- For businesses in the City, it means office space will be sustainably designed, with better capacity for retrofit or built with material passports documenting every material to enable future reuse.
- For our visitors the City of London becomes a more sustainable place to visit with facilities in place to make it easier to spend time here being circular as possible.

These elements will make the Square Mile a more sustainable and attractive place to live, work and explore.



How does the Circular Economy Framework align with the City Corporation's existing strategies?

The circular economy is already an integral concept for the City Corporation and is incorporated within several existing strategies and documents across a range of departments. This Circular Economy Framework is key to forwarding this ambition as it enables the consolidation of the data produced and progress made by all of these strategies to provide a holistic overview of the City Corporation's transition to a circular economy.

The City Corporation has published the <u>Corporate Plan 2024–2029</u>. The implementation of a Circular Economy Strategy is highlighted under the 'Leading Sustainable Environment' outcome section in which it outlines a key action to 'Implement a Circular Economy Strategy and embed circular economy principles into our building projects'.

The City Corporation has set out its Climate <u>Action Strategy (CAS)</u> to achieve net zero across its operations by 2027 (Scope 1 and 2), across its full value chain and investments by 2040 (Scope 3) and support the achievement of net zero for the whole of the Square Mile by 2040. The circular economy impacts the Climate Action Strategy in a number of areas, namely: purchased goods and services; waste generated in operation; and embodied carbon, therefore playing a critical part in the City Corporation achieving net zero. There are a number of ongoing projects through the Climate Action Strategy that the Circular Economy Framework will closely align to such as the Sustainable Supply Chain project, Net Zero Design Standards and the Embodied Carbon Action Plan.

The City of London emerging City Plan 2040 highlights the importance of delivering world class sustainable buildings that are adaptable and informed by circular economy principles and treat materials as a resource. Further guidance can be found in the <u>Sustainability SPD</u>.

In addition to environmental sustainability, this framework recognises the potential human impact of the production and manufacturing of goods, therefore reuse of materials already in existence helps to deliver on the City Corporation's Ethical Policy and Modern Slavery Statement.



What is our Vision and Mission?

Vision

The City of London Corporation exemplifies, drives and innovates circular practices, leading the Square Mile as a circular city by 2040.



Mission

To support and educate everyone who lives, works, learns and explores here to adopt circularity.



The City of London Corporation's definition of a circular organisation:

An organisation that has embedded circular practices into all areas of operation and supply chain, makes decisions with circularity as a key focus, and continues to find new and innovative ways of working to drive greater circularity.

The City of London Corporation's definition of a circular city:

A city that has made a systemic shift to prioritise the sharing and reuse of materials and resources for the greater benefit of society through more circular education, collaboration, and investment.

How will the City achieve Circularity?

The City Corporation and Square Mile aim to operate within a circular economy by 2040 which requires a systematic shift in how business and life operates to make it a reality. **The City Corporation is committed to making this shift.**

The circular economy is a constantly changing landscape with exciting developments occurring all the time whilst also being incredibly complex and impacting on a wide spread of operations.

To tackle this challenge an overarching framework to 2040 has been set out along with two accompanying action plans for the shorter term. This approach has been taken to ensure there is firstly, a clear overarching strategic direction, secondly, that immediate progress is being made and tracked, and also, that there is flexibility of approach to allow for changes in technology, legislation, and culture which will undoubtably have an impact on the delivery of the circular economy.

The two action plans focus on the two key areas of scope:

1. The City Corporation

This encompasses all aspects that are under direct control of the City Corporation, including all local authority functions, green spaces, markets and institutions.

The key focus areas for The City Corporation are:

- Waste and Resources
- · Portfolio and Capital Projects
- Supply Chain
- · Training, Communication and Engagement

2. The Square Mile

This incorporates all activity within the boundaries of the City.

The key focus areas for The Square Mile are:

- Built Environment
- · Food and Beverage
- · Training, Communication and Engagement

Many of the actions that make up these plans are already underway and will run to March 2027 where their progressed will be reviewed. They consist of key performance measures for each focus area and sitting under those are detailed actions as to how these performance measures will be progressed and achieved.

From 2027 a new action plan will be created to continue work started and to add any new and relevant performance measures that need to be taken into account. This will repeat till we reach the goal of a circular city and organisation in 2040.



The City of London Corporation Action Plan 2024-2027

In this framework the City Corporation refers to all buildings owned and run by the corporation along with its local authority functions (i.e. residential waste).

Focus Area	Performance Measure	Key Actions and Comments	Key Stakeholders
Waste and Resources	Achieve recycling rate of 40% across the City Corporation.	Provide more recycling services to all residents. Achieve all targets set out as part of the Reduction and Recycling Plan (RRP). Create a zero-waste framework for Corporation operational properties. Communication and engagement campaigns.	Waste Strategy Team Waste Strategy Team City Surveyors Corporate Coms with Waste Strategy Team Support
	Achieve a reuse rate of 10%.	Identify where reuse is already happening and create a baseline. Ensure processes are in place to help facilitate reuse within the organisation. Continue to support residential reuse.	Waste Strategy Team with FM/Building manager support FM/Building manager with Waste Strategy Team and Procurement support Waste Strategy Team
	Reduce waste by 10% per employee based on a 2022 baseline.	Calculate the 2022 baseline. Work with facilities management/building management teams to highlight reduction opportunities.	Waste Strategy Team Waste Strategy Team and FM
	Monitor and reduce associated carbon emissions.	Work with the CAS team to collect and monitor this data for the Square Mile and the City Corporation.	Waste Strategy Team and CAS team
Portfolio and Capital Projects	Increased incorporation of the Net Zero Design Standards for City Corporation Projects.	Understand the baseline for current project uptake of the Design Standards. Use the Design Standard tracker to monitor uptake.	Resilience and Sustainable Design Coordinator
	Project standardisation to include CE standards.	Circular economy standards to be included in new standardisation programme for all projects.	Commercial Director Portfolio Management Implementation Lead
	Inclusion of Green Leasing Clauses in all new contracts for leased properties.	Circular economy requirements to be included in Green Leasing clauses.	City Surveyors

The City of London Corporation Action Plan 2024-2027

Focus Area	Performance Measure	Key Actions and Comments	Key Stakeholders
Supply Chain	The number of contracts that include the climate and CE metric: • 75% new contracts by April 2027 • Overall 40% of contracts by 2027	Specific circular economy requirements included in the climate metric.	Responsible Procurement Team
	Collect and share 5 case studies per year from across the supply chain demonstrating best practice in the circular economy.	This should include: • Split of material tonnage per treatment type • Carbon savings • Cost saving	Responsible Procurement Team
	Baseline the financial impact of the circular economy.	Baseline current spend on circular products and services. Begin to understand the cost implications associated with circular solutions vs traditional disposal. Work with purchasing team to see if circular activities could be added as a product category	Waste Strategy Lead and Responsible Procurement Team
Training and Engagement	65% of City Corporation employees trained on circular economy.	Set up an online training module within City Learning.	Waste Strategy Lead, CAS and Climate Champions
	Annually host 4 events for residents, 2 events for colleagues and 2 public facing campaigns.	Events to both educate on and facilitate the circular economy.	Waste Strategy Team
	Trial 2 new circular innovations.	Ensure the City is staying up to date with new circular market trends through new innovations and technologies.	Waste Strategy Team

The Square Mile Action Plan 2024-2027

The City Corporation will act as facilitator in the transition of The Square Mile to a circular economy.

Focus Area	Performance Measure	Key Actions and Comments	Key Stakeholders
Built Environment	Reduction of embodied carbon in the Square Mile.	Work with applications and large construction companies to create a baseline of current reuse using post completion circular economy statements. Support the standardisation of how circular economy is reported in pre-redevelopment and pre-deconstruction audits. Ongoing monitoring of reuse and retention data collected in post-construction reporting. Measure the percentage of retained structure, facades and other elements. Identify and encourage cross-business collaboration actions which increase the reuse of materials in construction. Baseline to be created through the Embodied Carbon Action Plan. Value-Based assessment of material consumption as it is important to ensure the retainment of high value materials.	Planning and Development Teams, Waste Strategy Lead Collaboration with Local Authority network Planning and Development Teams Square Mile Partnership Group Support from Waste Strategy Lead
		Work with and align with the Embodied Carbon Action Plan. Support in the education and engagement of developers operating in the Square Mile. Ongoing monitoring of post-completion whole life-cycle carbon assessments.	Support norm waste strategy Lead
	Increase in uptake of material passports	Track the number of projects that are utilising material passports in construction to better support their future reuse. Track the number of projects that are utilising material passports pre-demolition in order to plan for the materials next use.	Planning and Development Teams

The Square Mile Action Plan 2024-2027:

Focus Area	Performance Measure	Key Actions and Comments	Key Stakeholders
Food and Drink	Increase the number of food and drink outlets that promote reusables.	Run a city-wide campaign to promote reuse. Engage with businesses through environmental health, licensing, and Clean City Award Scheme. Trial a cup club within the City to promote the use of reusables.	Waste Strategy team
	Food waste monitoring.	Monitor the diversion of food waste from general waste by tracking volumes against each other. Work with Veolia and Clean City Award Scheme members to gather data. Work with Eat Like a Londoner to continue campaign work across the City.	Waste Strategy team
Training and Engagement	Increase the number of businesses with a Circular Economy Strategy by 10% year on year.	Engage with businesses in the Square Mile and create a baseline. Hold training and engagement sessions, best practice meetings and run campaigns to increase awareness of the circular economy.	Waste Strategy Team
	Facilitate greater collaboration with businesses in the city around the circular economy.	Host a hackathon to drive innovation and idea sharing with key businesses within the City. Ensure the City Corporation is an active participant of circular working groups and facilitate these working groups.	Waste Strategy Team
	Training offered to 50 businesses within the City.	Work with Heart of the City to raise the profile of the circular economy.	Waste Strategy Lead and HoTC

Key Focus Areas and Milestones for Circularity

2024 - 2027

Baselining different circularity indicators to understand current performance.

Training and engagement of both City Corporation employees and residents of the Square Mile about the circular economy.

Embedding circular practices within both internally and externally facing policy.

2027 - 2030

Ensure suppliers are helping to facilitate the City to operate in a circular manner.

City wide commitment to a circular economy.

2030 - 2035

Circular construction is becoming standard practice.

Sharing economy becomes an easily accessible reality for residents and businesses within the Square Mile.



How this will help us to achieve a circular economy

Baselining the data allows for the progress of the framework to be continuously tracked.

By building education and awareness of the circular economy it allows for changes to be more easily embedded and accepted.

Policy is a great way to provide guidance of best practice and supports industry to make bold changes.

Suppliers are a critical part of the circular economy and it is important to bring them along on the journey in order to jointly benefit from the changes they implement.

Having key businesses and organisations committing to a circular economy provides momentum behind the drive to change.

Circular practices in construction ensures the continued attraction of new business and development to the Square Mile and ensures the sustainability of office space for generations to come.

A sharing economy prioritises reuse as opposed to purchasing new, a key element of the circular economy.

2035 - 2040

Creation of circular jobs within the square mile and within the City Corporation's supply chain.

Circularity is a key criterion for all decision making with in the City Corporation.



Circular jobs are a key indicator that new sustainable employment has been created as a result of a transition to a circular economy.

By having circularity as a key consideration for all decisions ensures that progress will continue to be made into the future.

2040

The City of London Corporation will be a net zero and circular organisation and the Square Mile will operate as a net zero and circular city.

Glossary and Useful Definitions

Deep retrofit: A retrofit involving significant works to the building fabric and results in a fundamental change to the building structure and/or services. Deep retrofits retain 50% or more of the existing building (by mass) and should aim to retain the existing super-structure and substructure, the most carbon-intensive elements. It may include changes to the building envelope including glazing, openings, façade and roof elements, central MEP upgrades.

Fit-out: The process of making a building or space suitable for occupation, either the first fit-out of a new build or re-fitting an existing building. Works, generally internal, can include services, finishes, fixtures, and furnishings.

Light retrofit: A retrofit involving relatively minor interventions, basic fabric improvements, replacement or adaptation of existing building elements to improve performance. Light retrofit is usually minimally invasive. It may include upgrades to the heat source and ventilation systems, loft insulation, cavity wall insulation.

New build: Developments where more than 50% of the building is demolished, the building will be classified as a new build.

Refurbishment: A range of improvement works, including repair, cleaning, refinishing and re-equipping to improve the condition, function, or performance of an existing building. Refurbishment works may form part of a retrofit strategy, contributing to an improvement in energy efficient and sustainability.

Retrofit: The upgrading of a building in relation to the installation of new building systems or building fabric to improve efficiency, reduce environmental impacts and/or adapt for climate change.

Retrofit with new build: Developments where less than 50% of the existing slab area is demolished, and the building is extended.

Reuse: The direct reuse of a product or materials for the purpose for which it was originally intended without significant modification. (Small adjustments and cleaning of the component or product may be necessary to prepare for the next use).

Substantial demolition: Development consisting of the removal, deconstruction, or demolition of 50% or more of the existing super and sub structure.

Total Demolition: Development consisting of the removal, deconstruction, or demolition of an existing building. Façade retention is not considered to be a carbon reduction measure due to the carbon impact of temporary works.

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Appendix 1 - Where the circular economy is in practice within the City Corporation.

Planning

Circular economy within current planning policy:

- Strategic Policy S16: Circular Economy and Waste: Co-operation with other Waste Planning Authorities to manage the City's residual waste, apportionment targets, safeguarding the wharf to provide riparian access for sustainable transport of waste
- Policy CE1 Zero Waste City: Developments designed to promote CE principles throughout the life cycle of a building, developments should incorporate waste facilities
- Policy CE2: Sustainable Waste Transport

Planning for Sustainability SPD: An SPD has been developed as part of a suite of wider policies and strategies to support sustainable development within the City. The SPD will help to bridge the gap between the Circular Economy Statement requirements for large referable schemes and the other schemes requesting planning permission within the City as well as providing wider sustainability advice to developers.

London Plan: All planning applications referred to the Mayor must include a <u>Circular Economy Statement</u> as required by draft London Plan Policy SI7 and prepared in accordance with the Mayors guidance document. <u>Policy SI7</u> also covers resource efficiency in the construction process and in the design, use and end-of-life of buildings.

Capital Build

Net Zero Design Guide: The Net Zero Design Guide provides standards to which new developments and major refurbishments can be designed, constructed and operated to support the City Corporation's net zero Commitments. The Design Guide will be a mandatory document that will impact RIBA Stages 1 and 2 of design and construction.

The Standard provides designers and developers with consistency in the definition of good practice and greater clarity on the delivery of environmentally sound and cost-efficient buildings, facilities, and overall high sustainability performance across the asset life cycle.

Procurement

Using procurement to reduce the use of Single Use Plastics: The City Corporation has been incorporating circular economy clauses into a number of different service contracts including Education, and Cleaning. It's also focussed on the use of Single Use Plastics (SUP) and through the adoption of an SUP Policy the City Corporation has influenced suppliers and contractors to minimise the use of single-use plastics in their service provision and find sustainable alternatives (where practicable), or biodegradable and/or recyclable where unavoidable. This has also included working with suppliers to restrict the purchasing of SUPs through online catalogues.

Leading by example the City Corporation developed a Plastic Free City Scheme which has supported 106 City businesses to eradicate tens of millions of single-use plastic items, including over 620,000 plastic straws, 19 million cups, and 12 million items of cutlery.

Waste and Recycling

Tech Takeback: The City Corporation working with Tech Takeback have run a number of popup events encouraging anyone with unwanted tech to donate them for reuse and refurbishment. The items (once data is erased) are donated directly to people in need or via reuse site Freegle.

Supporting reuse: General goods with a value of less than £5,000 can be uploaded to WarpIT – the reuse platform on the intranet. This allows all City Corporation staff to view what's available and transfer goods between departments, reducing procurement costs and benefiting the environment. IT equipment can be logged with the IS Service Desk for reuse, donation, re-sale to staff or recycling.

Recycling: Each site has access to recycling and food waste recycling facilities where staff can recycling paper and card, bottles and cans, plastic pots tubs and trays and cartons as well as food waste.

Public Realm and Highways

City Public Realm Materials Review – Sustainability in **Public Realm Design:** For the City Corporation the materials selected for use within the public realm need to serve both aesthetic and practical purposes as well as meeting social and environmental conditions. The Public Realm team commissioned the development of a material selection tool, to support decision making. The guide, developed by Hawkins Brown, takes into consideration ten commonly used materials within the square mile and assesses them against a range of 14 principles including embodied carbon, ethical sourcing, climate resilience and heat absorption, lifespan, maintenance impacts, recyclability/ reuse, aesthetics, cost, flooding, water stress, overheating, biodiversity loss, pests and diseases, and disruption to infrastructure. The tool prompts users to consider important questions connected with the need for specific materials and these prompts guide the user down a process of material selection. From a circular economy perspective a number of principles are embedded within the process from lifespan and longevity, need for maintenance and cleaning and end of life options.

Facilities Management

Reuse of floor panels – saving money and supporting a circular economy: One of the City Corporation's minor works contractors – Sykes – were able to reuse 110 raised access floor panels. During a refurbishment of 15–17 Eldon Street the contractor spotted an item that could potentially be reused elsewhere – floor tiles and tried to identify a circular solution.

Another CAT A refurbishment was underway at 4-7 Chiswell Street and the existing raised floors were due to be retained but, required a large number of raised floor tile replacements. The flooring was an obsolete Tate Flooring system which the contractor was unable to source any replacements replacement for. As the raised floor tiles stripped out of 15-17 Eldon St. were also from an obsolete Tate system, and the contractor had been unable to find a taker for them the senior commercial manager on site took one to Chiswell St. to see if it was a match. Fortunately, it turned out that they were an exact match, so they were able to re-use 110 tiles that would otherwise have gone to a recycling scheme or potentially disposal.

City Gardens

Top Soil reuse: Topsoil is the uppermost layer of soil and is rich in nutrients and organic matter. It's vital for food production but also in supporting biodiversity and globally we're at risk of losing it. The City Corporation's Climate Action Strategy funding helped to pay for soil testing for the Jubilee Gardens redevelopment. During site works topsoil was removed and stored ready to be re-used when it was time for soft landscaping work. The benefits of this approach was that the soil scientist could provide a view on whether the organic content was too high or low for the site. The challenges of this approach in general can be high costs but also identifying suitable storage if there isn't capacity on-site. Although the majority of sub-soils can be reused or mixed for reuse top soil can present larger challenges. This approach will be considered again.



Appendix 2 - Governance and Monitoring

The progress on the transition to a circular economy will be under constant review and monitoring.

The first action plan running to 2027 will focus on establishing the baseline for a number of key circular indicators to understand the current performance of the City Corporation. It will also focus on creating a template framework for each major department to implement to support the transition required from each team.

There is a small, dedicated budget devoted to embedding circularity managed through the Gardens and Cleansing team. However, there is a large emphasis on collaboration from every department as all have a key part to play in adapting their work in order to progress the circular economy.

There are a number of key projects that are underway that are funded by the Climate Action Strategy which are key pillars of the circular economy such as the Sustainable Supply Chain project carried out by Responsible Procurement and the Embodied Carbon Action Plan being carried out by Planning. The Circular Economy Framework will align closely with these projects and ensure that data and findings are shared.

It is the responsibility of the Waste Strategy and Biodiversity Group Manager in the Gardens and Cleansing Team to lead the framework and manage progress. This will be done with the support of key stakeholders and through reporting into the following groups:

- Monthly meetings with Circular Economy Working Group made up of stakeholders from across the organisation who own and are working on actions.
- Meetings every 6 months with a Circular Economy
 Partnership Group made up of internal and external
 stakeholders who will help to advise on best practice and
 the development of the framework.
- Annually progress will be reported to the Port Health committee providing an update on the transition to a circular economy.



