



Swansea's reuse 'Corner Shop'

'The Corner Shop', a reuse facility situated adjacent to the household waste and recycling centre (HWRC) at Llansamlet in Swansea, was established around three years ago in a shipping container previously used as an office.

Now the shop, which is open seven days a week, is contained within two modular buildings, one for clothing and bric-a-brac and the other for electrical items and furniture. Its proximity to the HWRC is beneficial as residents can donate items for reuse while disposing of waste.

Five staff engineers or technicians are employed solely for the refurbishment of electrical goods and are housed in three workshops. In addition, a further six staff have received accredited training as PAT testers.

Currently, 30 to 40 flat screen televisions are refurbished every month at the shop. All electrical items are repaired or refurbished if necessary and PAT tested before

being sold in the shop, and each item carries a service report so that it has traceability.

Maximising interception of recyclables

The majority of items for sale in the shop come from satellite HWRCs at Clyne, Garngoch, Penlan and Tir John, which are collected by HWRC staff in addition to items from bulky household waste collections.

The most original method of capture, however, is the black bag intercept, where staff members sort through black bags brought for disposal.

A recent waste analysis study at the site revealed that approximately 60 per cent of the waste in black bin bags is in good enough condition to be recycled. The service captures items that can be reused or recycled and also educates the public on what should and shouldn't be put in their residual waste bins.

The HWRC at Llansamnet, which via The Corner Shop currently reuses 67 to 70 tonnes of waste every quarter, will soon be converted to a recycle-only centre where residual waste will not be accepted.

In future, residents will be asked to remove improperly sorted or contaminated waste and prepare it properly for recycling or reuse.

The social benefits of reuse

In addition to the technical staff hired to refurbish electrical items in the shop, volunteers assist in its daily operation. These volunteers have learning difficulties and have been placed via a partnership with the local social services department to increase their interaction with the public.

Other partnerships set up by the site include a weekly bicycle collection in collaboration with Swansea prison. Bikes of various sizes, including children's bikes, are taken to the prison where they are serviced as part of prisoner training. The shop receives on average 20 to 25 bikes every week, which are sold on from around £10 in The Corner Shop.

Items from the shop are also donated to Pendery Providers of Penlan in Swansea, which caters for people struggling after relationship break-ups. Crockery, frying pans, kettles, saucepans, plates, cutlery and crockery are donated to provide help to people that have been rehomed but have no household goods.

