



2019

Driving the sustainable
development of Plastics recycling

RECOUP

Welcome to the 2019 RECOUP Brochure

Today, with greater focus than ever before on the leakage of used packaging into the natural environment, many more organisations are recognising the urgent nature of the change that is still required and are taking action. Indeed, there has been a fundamental shift in attitude in the last 12 months towards improved long-term use of resources and the development of circular economy models.

There is a paradox however. As a widening range of initiatives to tackle the challenge are unveiled, there is an increasing risk that meaningful action will become harder than ever to implement while the debate continues to heighten.

Today's priority is to ensure that all end-of-life plastic is controlled, reusing and recycling this valuable resource. The plastic recycling and supply chain now needs to work beyond its legal obligations to address environmental issues and achieve improved resource use.

Industry must seize the opportunity while the media spotlight remains squarely on plastics. Collaboration between business, industry and local government as well as consumer education is now vital to improve understanding of the challenges the plastics recycling sector faces and to facilitate a proactive approach.

To achieve a truly circular economy, every link in the chain needs to be committed to working in partnership to implement real change and develop end markets for recycled materials.

It has been particularly pleasing then to see RECOUP membership continue to grow throughout 2018 as well as engagement with initiatives such as Recyclability by Design and the Black Plastic Packaging Recycling Forum.

This brochure gives a valuable insight into these and a range of opportunities to help increase plastics recycling and I would like to encourage you to consider how you can work with RECOUP to ensure the right action is taken.

Stuart Foster, Chief Executive Officer, RECOUP

“Ensuring that this valuable resource is recycled is a key part of developing a circular economy, improving resource security and achieving environmental responsibility.”

Professor David Bellamy, OBE
RECOUP Patron

Becoming a world leader in plastic resource management

Opinion: Stuart Foster, Chief Executive Officer, RECOUP

No-one could have predicted the pressure and attention placed on plastics in recent years fuelled by the 'Blue Planet effect'. Politicians, consumers, media and businesses are all demanding change, and RECOUP is central to delivering that change through increased recycling and better use of plastic resources.

Clearly, it cannot be right to allow plastics to leak into the environment but neither is it acceptable to lose the opportunity to utilise plastic as a fit for purpose and cost-effective material for so many applications.

Creating the right balance of legislative drivers and positive long-term business conditions will allow a viable and resilient system to be established which demonstrates the value of plastics as a circular material and prevents plastic in the natural environment. Extending producer responsibility is seen by many as one of the key drivers to achieving these aims.

RECOUP's work remains focused on promoting recyclability during the design of packaging and products, including the creation of guidance documents, testing of packs at each stage of the recycling process and generating case studies.

The messages given to householders and businesses around plastics recycling must be aligned and based on facts. RECOUP is addressing this challenge through the Pledge2Recycle Plastics initiative.

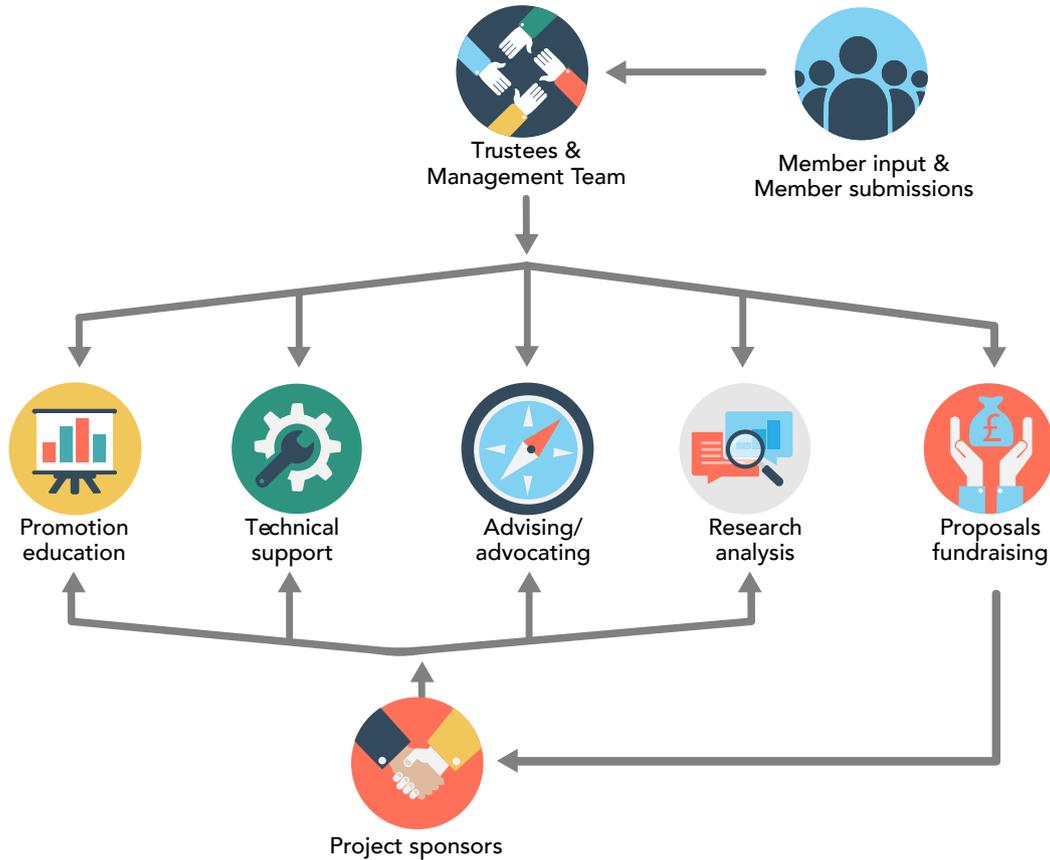


Beyond this core work, markets must be supported and stimulated. Sustainable procurement initiatives need to ensure much wider use of recycled plastics in the manufacturing of new products.

Indeed there is more to plastics than packaging. Work on recycling more plastics from other sectors including bulky household plastics, toys, clothing, electrical equipment and end of life vehicles is also important and represents a significant opportunity.

The UK has the opportunity now to become a world leader in plastic resource management. By supporting RECOUP you can help to make this happen.

How RECOUP works:



Governance

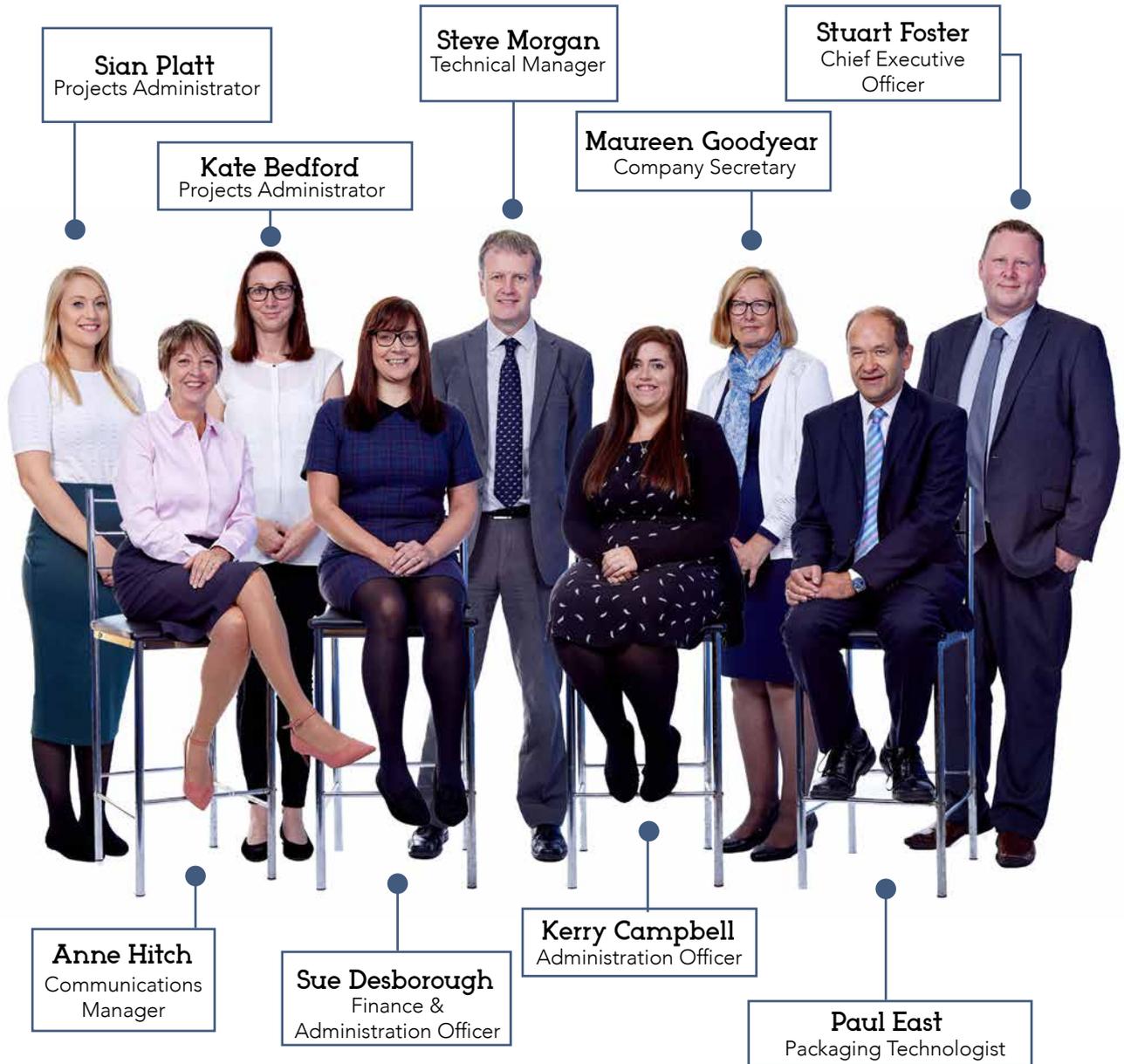
RECOUP is supported by members from all parts of the plastic, packaging and recycling chain.

The Board of Trustees meets quarterly to represent their sector and contribute to the development of RECOUP's strategy and tactics.

The Trustees are supported by a team of senior managers and directors who act as professional advisors with specific expertise in recycling, finance and legal issues. This team help to ensure the financial and operational activities of RECOUP serve the best interests of plastics recycling and provide best value for members.

Trustees are nominated and elected by RECOUP members.

Working to deliver the sustainable development of plastics recycling.



Our vision

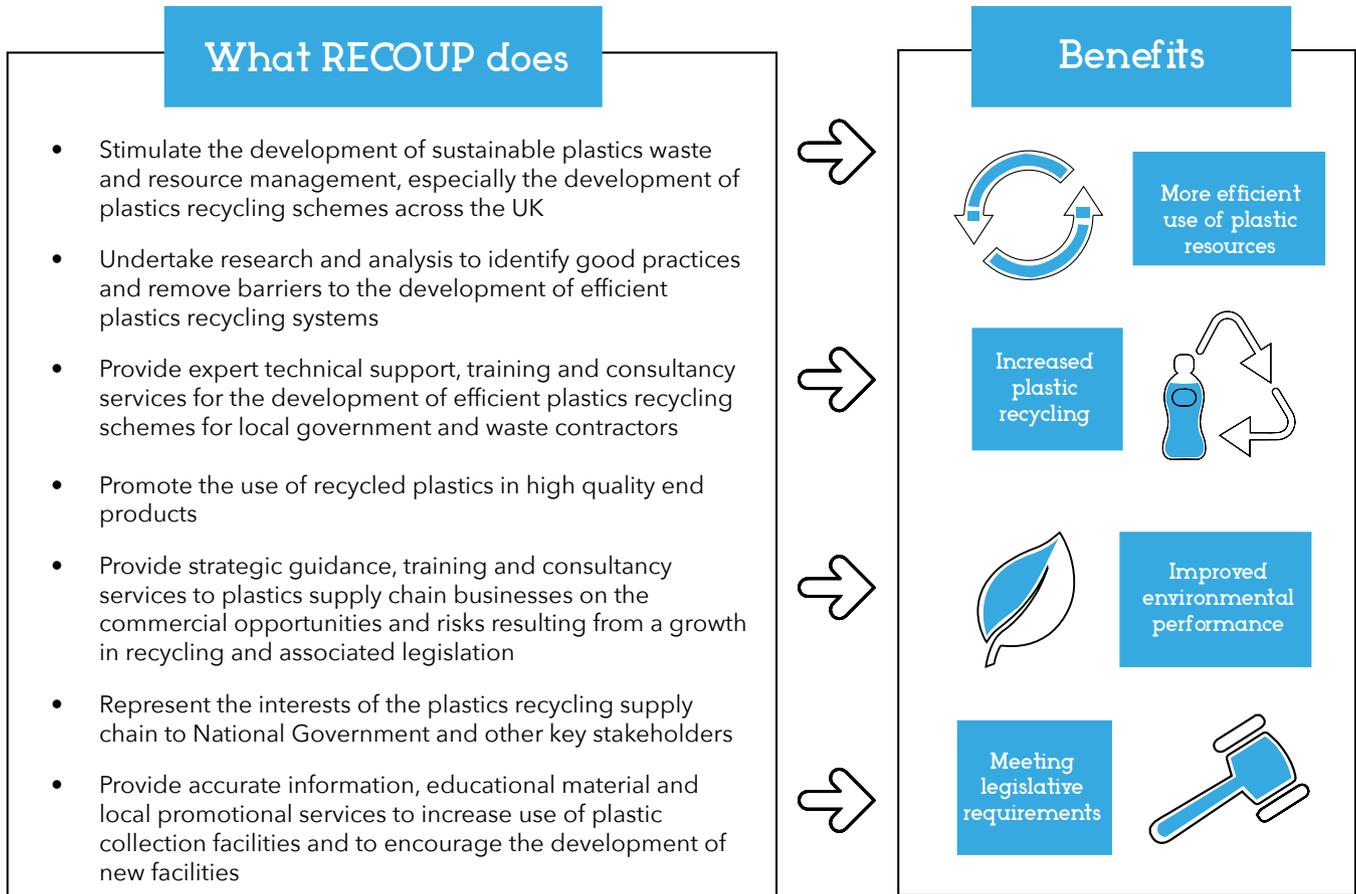
RECOUP's vision remains to lead and inform the sustainable development of plastics recycling that protects resources.

With an unprecedented level of corporate and consumer interest in plastics, packaging, resources and recycling, RECOUP will continue to lead the way as the UK's plastic value chain co-ordinators.

As increasingly ambitious proposals and strategies around resources and recycling gain traction, change

in plastics resource management is happening too. In the years ahead, this must continue at a pace which satisfies political, media and consumer pressure. It must happen in a way which provides meaningful environmental protection.

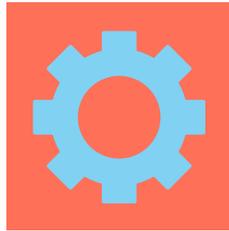
RECOUP is confident that by working together we can meet the challenge and our work will continue in the following areas to benefit the environment, businesses and consumers.



Our Work



Plastic collections



Administration

The UK's leading authority on plastics waste and resource management, providing expertise and guidance to a wide range of clients across the plastics supply, use and recycling chain.

Built on a network of members and associated organisations across all sectors involved in plastics manufacture, use, disposal and recycling.



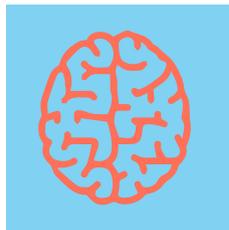
Stakeholder engagement including annual conference



Encouraging use of recycled plastics in manufacturing



Design for recycling / eco-design



Consumer engagement



Pot, tub and tray recycling



Plastic films and flexibles

RECOUP works with many other leading international plastics recycling organisations to ensure that it stimulates the implementation of latest best practices and developments world-wide.

UK Household Plastics Collection Survey

The RECOUP UK Household Plastics Collection Survey is a specialist research-based report for those working in, or making decisions about, the plastics value chain and developing sustainable plastics recycling.

Focusing on the collection of waste and recyclables by all Local Authorities in the UK, the Survey report provides a comprehensive review of the collection of household plastics for recycling in addition to the challenges and opportunities Local Authorities face.

Examining a wide range of subjects including kerbside collections, the treatment of residual waste, litter and disposal as well as markets for recycled plastics, OPRL labelling, behaviour change and consumer communications, the report is set to help inform the new Waste and Resources Strategy. It is hoped that this new strategy will transform the legislative drivers and funding, to influence how plastic is designed, collected and managed.

Supported by the Local Authority Recycling Advisory Committee (LARAC) and sponsored by PlasticsEurope, the report includes a range of case studies from Local Authorities to showcase practical

examples and share valuable insight from those delivering collection services.

This could help support approaches in future strategy and guidance to develop collections and responsible consumer behaviour for used plastics packaging.

“The unique characteristics of plastics enable them to play a major role on the road to a more sustainable and resource efficient future... we all need to work collaboratively to ensure that materials are well managed throughout their lifetime.”

Kim Christiansen, Regional Director
PlasticsEurope

The RECOUP survey is available to download free at: www.recoup.org

Thank you to all the Local Authority waste management and recycling scheme managers, officers and contractors who responded to the survey – the unprecedented focus upon plastics means that your responses are more important than ever before.

2018 Survey shows steady progress in plastics packaging collected for recycling

2,260,000
**TONNES OF PLASTIC PACKAGING
 PLACED ON
 THE MARKET**

527,010
**TONNES OF PLASTIC PACKAGING
 WAS COLLECTED
 FOR RECYCLING
 FROM UK HOUSEHOLDS IN 2017**

COLLECTION RATE OF
59% FOR PLASTIC BOTTLES
FOR PLASTIC POTS, TUBS AND TRAYS 33%

Increase in consistency in materials collected for recycling from kerbside schemes



But consumer confusion is a growing concern



Working with businesses and communities

Designed to engage with communities across the country, RECOUP's special projects programme includes consumer surveys and insight work, education programmes for schools, recycling events and closed loop projects.

Education Programmes

Funded by Nestlé Waters and delivered in partnership with Wastebuster, RECOUP has developed education packs for Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 pupils at schools across the UK.

Available free of charge, the packs contain a wide range of education tools including teacher notes and assemblies. Wider support for schools has also been provided as part of the project to encourage recycling, including the provision of recycling bins.

Community projects and event recycling

Engaging with the wider community through sport, music festivals and other large-scale events such as air shows, is an important part of RECOUP's work.

Collaborating with brand owners and plastic recyclers, RECOUP carry out both material collections, sorting and recycling of various plastics. Complementing practical collection and litter picking events, which help to embed the message to keep plastic packaging out of the natural environment, education activities remind the consumer to do the right thing, not just at the event but when they are at home as well.

Guidance on recyclability

An important part of RECOUP's wider work within its special projects programme includes reviewing the

recyclability of plastic packaging. This activity involves examining the barriers to recyclability, proving or disproving recyclability in practical terms, looking at the commerciality of recycling, facilitating and collaborating with stakeholders without bias for the benefit of the plastics recycling value chain. It could not be undertaken without the valued support of RECOUP's network.



Cote Heath Park bench made from recycled plastic donated in 2017 through the Nestlé Waters community engagement programme





Pledge2Recycle Plastics

Plastics Recycling - Cutting the Confusion

RECOUP's national plastics recycling initiative has been renamed as part of the charity's continuing work to inspire people to recycle and reduce confusion about plastic packaging recycling across all demographics.

Pledge2Recycle Plastics replaces Pledge4Plastics, and the campaign has been updated with the creation of new, more relevant content. Through Pledge2Recycle Plastics, RECOUP will continue to provide resources and work as a catalyst to support consumer communications designed to drive plastics recycling across the UK.

Many successful campaigns have already been delivered as part of the Plastics Recycling - Cutting the Confusion trial in Norfolk, including a student Art and Design challenge and fashion show, community roadshows, a sculpture commissioned for One Planet Norwich and leaflets delivered with fridge magnets to local households.

All have been designed to educate consumers about what they can recycle locally and how best to prepare their waste plastic for kerbside collection.

The campaigns have also been designed to help people understand the recycling process and raise awareness of the wide range of every-day products made from recycled plastic.

This work has been made possible by match-funding received from M&S and RPC Group. RECOUP's research has highlighted that nearly 100 other Local Authorities would be interested in delivering similar projects.

Continued industry and member support is vital to make this happen.

15 Roadshows
Fashion show
52,000 leaflets
9,100 Fridge magnets



"Young designers were largely unaware that recycled plastic is often used to produce high quality textiles."

"Engaging with householders at roadshows proved to be a highly effective way of clarifying what can and can't be recycled in their region."



"Inconsistency in UK plastic recycling practice causes consumers to become disenfranchised with recycling initiatives."

Recyclability by design

“The essential guide for all those involved in the development and design of plastic packaging.”

Recyclability guidelines are available to download free of charge from the RECOUP website. www.recoup.org

Aimed at packaging technologists, buyers and designers, Recyclability by Design covers all forms of rigid plastic packaging and has been produced to help all stakeholders make their packaging more recyclable, examining recyclability from the outset of the production process. A vital part of the publication – the polymer specific recyclability tables – have been updated by RECOUP after engaging with sorting facilities and reprocessors to ensure the information is current, informative and accurate.

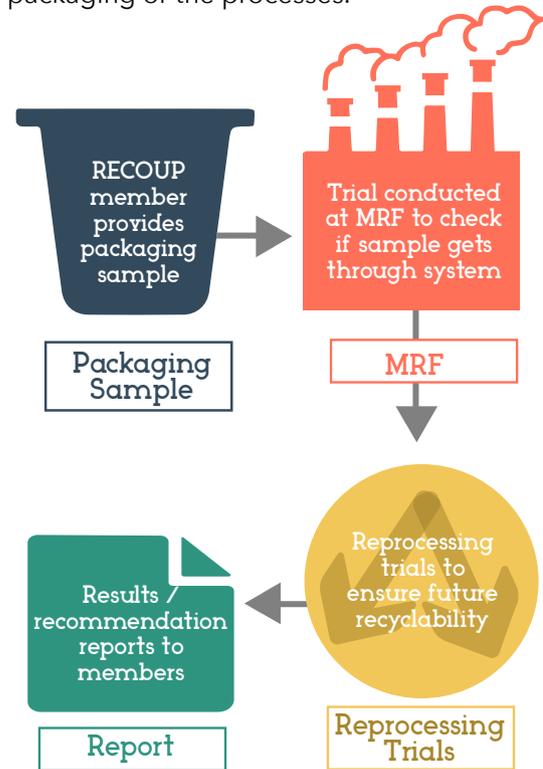
In the last 12 months, significant progress has been made with many more businesses engaging with this crucial work and pledging to discontinue using undetectable trays, increase their use of easily removable top films or design bottles to take a label which covers less than 60% of the surface area thereby allowing easy detection by sorting equipment.

But there remains a great deal of work to do to ensure that packaging life cycle end destinations remain high on the agenda.

For any packaging to be recycled, it must pass successfully through all the stages of the recycling process.

Packaging Recyclability Trials

As a service to members and other clients, RECOUP regularly undertakes comprehensive and confidential recyclability reviews through practical trials, while exploring opportunities to change either the packaging or the processes.



To find out what recyclability means for your business and to test whether current or future packaging will pass successfully through each stage of the recycling process including collection, sorting, plastic sorting and reprocessing, please contact the RECOUP team.

Membership focus: Working on behalf of our members

It has never been more important to maximise environmental performance with plastics recycling.

The last 12 months have seen an unprecedented level of attention given to the challenge our industry faces and with that comes a unique opportunity, but a limited amount of time, to exploit that awareness, help people understand their responsibilities, and to do something different.

By becoming a member of RECOUP, your support will ensure you are provided with greater opportunity to play your part in the urgent task of improving plastic resource management.

RECOUP membership provides access to the support and involvement of dedicated industry experts on your specific projects including the management of research programmes, pilot schemes and the roll-out of best practice processes.

Three levels of membership are available:

Affiliate membership is for strategic partners, charities and not-for-profit organisations.

Associate membership provides best value for local government and not-for-profit groups managing or planning to develop plastics recycling programmes.

Corporate membership is specifically designed to assist all commercial organisations involved in plastic product and packaging production, manufacture, use, retail, waste management, equipment supply or recycling.

Our support packages can be tailored to meet the specific needs of your organisation, to help you develop strategic plastics waste management plans, implement environmental legislation to the benefit of your company and to maximise your competitive advantage through efficient plastics waste management.

RECOUP's Corporate Membership package is offered at differing rates according to the size and turnover of your organisation.

All of RECOUP's membership packages are designed to offer you the greatest access to services and information required to maximise your environmental performance.

To become a member of RECOUP, call on +44 (0) 1733 390021 and we can discuss your business and the package that would suit you best, or email us at: enquiry@recoup.org

“RECOUP are an essential component in the M&S arsenal of knowledge sources on the management and understanding of our plastic packaging. We have worked closely with them on Pledge2Recycle Plastics and on the black plastic project and very much value our relationship.”

Kevin Vyse, Packaging Technologist & Packaging Innovation Lead, M&S Food

“We have a unique, time limited opportunity to make a real difference - join us and play your part in driving the sustainable development of plastics recycling.”

Stuart Foster, CEO, RECOUP

www.recoup.org | [@Recoup_UK](https://twitter.com/Recoup_UK)

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