



How to guide

# Vapes: Setting up vape recycling in your area



# Contents

---

---

Vape collection and recycling

---

Top tips from our funded pilots

---

Checklist for setting up your own vape recycling

---

Cost summary – estimated from previous pilots

---

Electricals Recycling Fund impact

---

Case study spotlight: Oxfordshire

---

Communications toolkit

---

Material Focus support

---



# Vape collection and recycling

An estimated 8.2 million vapes are thrown away or recycled incorrectly every week – 13 per second. And despite the disposable vape ban introduced in June 2025, so-called reusable models continue to be thrown away at an alarming rate, meaning vape recycling is just as important as ever.

We have created this guide to help you set up your own. It is based on key lessons from Oxfordshire's vape recycling pilot.



# Top tips

## 1. Infrastructure innovation

- Custom-designed vape bins prevent contamination – resulting in a clean waste stream of vapes, segregated at source
- Budget for bulking containers and vermiculite so that you can store vapes safely in bulk at household waste recycling centres

## 2. Effective use of regulation

- The Producer Balancing System, could help allocate a vape recycler for your project
- Find out more by downloading our [Vape Recycling Briefing](#)

## 3. Communications

- Strong, integrated communications boost visibility
- Coordinate communications across multiple councils and channels
- Use targeted paid and organic campaigns
- Consider making the fire risk of lithium-ion batteries in vapes central to messaging. It is both a safety concern and motivator for public behaviour change

## 4. Partnership working

- Close collaboration between county council, district councils, contractors, and PR partners ensures smooth roll-out and operational efficiency

## 5. Flexible implementation

- If small retailers don't want vapes bins on their premises, approach universities, NHS sites, bars, and council buildings instead

# Checklist for setting up your own vape recycling collection

- ✓ **Agree the number and location of vape bins with stakeholders**
- ✓ **Order bins from manufacturer** – allow up to 6 weeks for delivery
- ✓ **Agree process for emptying bins** – e.g. frequency and method
- ✓ **Train waste crews** to collect vapes
- ✓ **Add vape bin locations to our Recycle Your Electricals locator** – email [hello@materialfocus.org.uk](mailto:hello@materialfocus.org.uk)
- ✓ **Create a marketing plan** to promote the new service
- ✓ **Design eye-catching signage and stickers with clear recycling instructions** – see our [assets](#)
- ✓ **Order promotional materials** – e.g. posters, flyers, stickers
- ✓ **Launch marketing campaign** – e.g. owned channels, local PR, partner channels, paid advertising
- ✓ **Tell residents** where to recycle vapes

# Cost summary – estimated from previous pilots (p1/2)



## Clear vape tube

C-Thru™ 15L Vape Recycling Bin, available from Glasdons: £66.35 + VAT.



## Broxap vape bin

Derby Vape Recycling Bin, available from Broxap: estimated £600 + VAT.



## Bulking equipment

Blue bulking barrels: approx £250 for 10.

Vermiculite: approx £500.



# Cost summary – estimated from previous pilots (p2/2)



## Servicing

Staff and vehicle rental: £1,500.



## Project management

Some pilots absorb project management into existing staffing. Others have brought in temporary part-time project managers to deliver the pilot.



## Communications

Previous pilots ranged from £1,000 to £3,000.

See project spotlights for example costs.

# Electricals Recycling Fund impact

Since 2020 we have funded three pilots collecting vapes in the UK.

Between them, our vape pilots have set up over 160 collection points, and collected over 222,400 vapes for recycling.



**3  
funded  
vape pilots**





# Pilot spotlight

## Oxfordshire

Target population	300,000 households
Funding amount	£41,464
Pilot duration	November 2023 – November 2024
Pilot aim	To develop and roll out dedicated vape recycling services across Oxfordshire.
Outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>100,000 vapes (3 tonnes) recycled</li></ul>



# Pilot spotlight: **Oxfordshire**

## Collection approach

Oxfordshire set up dedicated vape recycling bins at each of the seven household waste recycling centres (HWRC) operated by the county council – available to all 300,000 households in Oxfordshire.

They also developed dedicated kerbside collection of vapes for 70,000 households in Cherwell District Council area, and trialled 60 new public drop-off locations for vapes in Oxford and Cherwell.

## Communications approach

The communications campaign ran across social media channels from all three partners. Oxfordshire County Council front-loaded paid comms in the month following launch; Cherwell District Council appointed a consultancy to run keyword Google ads; and Oxford City Council ran paid promotions throughout the life of the pilot. Media included:

- Digital marketing campaign (£600)
- Boosted facebook ads and posts (£200)
- Leaflets (£364)
- Vehicle panels (£700)
- Posters (£225)

## Key learnings

**Kerbside and HWRC bins were deemed the most cost effective** – public bring banks proved expensive and less sustainable in the long term due to servicing costs.

**Using existing methods streamlined operations and simplified the service for users** – e.g. instructing people to put their vapes in clear plastic bags.

**Be flexible** – when small retailers didn't engage, bins were placed in universities, NHS sites, bars, and council buildings instead.

We've created a communications toolkit of HypnoCat assets and bring bank designs, that you can use to use to promote your project.

These include: posters, leaflets, bin wraps, bin hangers, press ads, pull-up banners, lorry / vehicle sides, stickers, social media posts.

All driving people to drop off their electricals...



Clockwise from top left:  
Pull-up banner  
Bin hangers  
Posters & leaflets  
Social media posts  
Bin wraps  
Lorry/vehicle sides

# Material Focus support

Check out our [website](#) for more information on funding opportunities, toolkits and resources to support your projects.





Material Focus is an independent, not-for-profit organisation on a mission to save valuable, critical and finite materials inside electricals from going to waste. We lead the 'Recycle your electricals' campaign.



[facebook.com/recycleyourelectricals](https://facebook.com/recycleyourelectricals)



[tiktok.com/@recycleyourelectricals](https://tiktok.com/@recycleyourelectricals)



[@recycleyourelectricals](https://twitter.com/recycleyourelectricals)



[@recycleyourelectricals](https://instagram.com/recycleyourelectricals)



[hello@materialfocus.org.uk](mailto:hello@materialfocus.org.uk)



[LinkedIn.com/company/materialfocus](https://LinkedIn.com/company/materialfocus)



[www.materialfocus.org.uk](https://www.materialfocus.org.uk)