



## Perth College Recycling Campaign

Delivered by Perth & Kinross Council's Waste Services Team

Perth College UHI has a campus on Crieff Road in Perth. During term time, the students live in the accommodation and during the university holidays, the accommodation is utilised as a hostel.

The accommodation is serviced by the Council's fortnightly blue bin Dry Mixed Recycling service (for paper, cardboard, plastic bottles, rigid plastic packaging, tins and cans) and a fortnightly green bin general waste collection. In the same bin compound, there are glass recycling facilities for green, brown and clear glass bottles and jars. The communal bins are within walking distance of each of the 3 accommodation buildings

### The Contamination Problem

For many months, there has been consistent contamination in the blue recycling bins, and a large quantity of glass in the general waste bins. This contamination has meant that the blue bins designated for recycling have not been emptied, with the material eventually having to be sent to landfill, at cost to the Council and the environment. This unsustainable practice cannot continue and going forward the College will instead likely need to cover the increased costs of disposal.

### Improved Infrastructure

In the latter half of 2021, Perth & Kinross Council's Waste Services Team stepped in to support the College with the introduction of improved recycling infrastructure. The aim was to make recycling a more pleasant and convenient experience for the students.

The first task was the refurbishment of the communal bin store in spring 2022, transforming the original bin store (pictured, near right) to the refurbished bin store (pictured, far right).





*Above (left to right):*

*The new signage for the general waste bins, glass recycling bins and dry mixed recycling bins*

#### **Checklist for Improvements:**

- ✓ The bins and paved area were power-washed and clearer labels were added to the bins (bin decals) to identify the items that can and cannot be put in each bin.
- ✓ Bin locks were fitted so that the lids cannot be opened by the residents, thus reducing the chance of black bags and larger contamination being dumped in the recycling bins (i.e. only recyclable items will fit through the aperture of each bin).
- ✓ New signage was designed and installed to designate the three sections of the communal bin area (blue bin, glass recycling and general waste).
- ✓ A QR code was added to the Glass Recycling signage, enabling residents to easily report when the Glass Recycling Bins need additional emptying between scheduled collections.

To assist residents inside each flat, two blue reusable wipeable bags were purchased for each of the 16 flats in the campus accommodation. This encourages residents to collect and carry the recyclable items from the living area to the communal bin store.

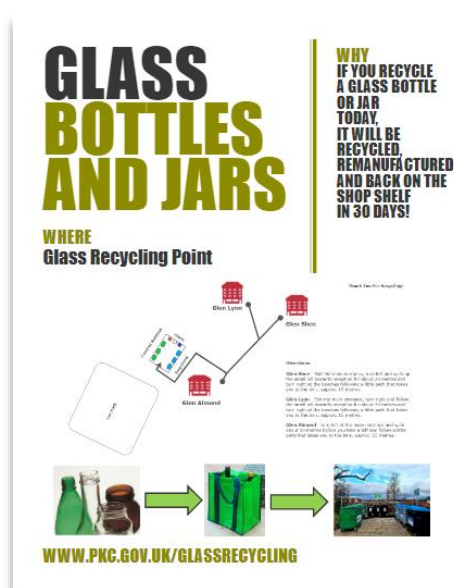
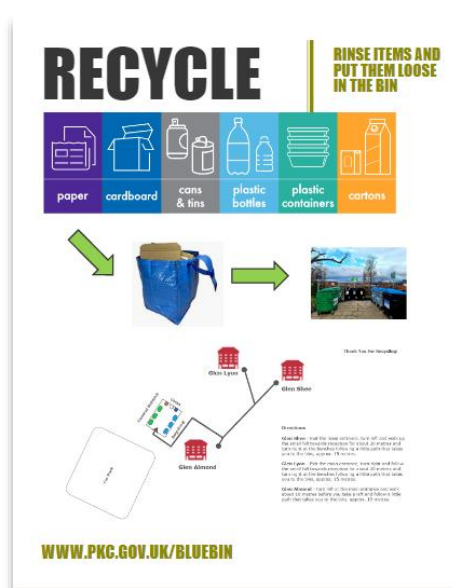
Similarly, three green reusable sponge-able bags were purchased for each of the 16 flats for collecting and carrying glass bottles and jars.

Attached to each of the bags with a green carabiner clip is a laminated A5 two-sided label: on one side, there is clear instruction about how to fill the bag with clean, rinsed recyclable

items and a map detailing how to walk from the flat to the communal bin store, empty the bag and then return it to the flat for re-filling. On the other side is a picture of all the materials that can be collected for recycling in the bag; supporting any residents with language barriers and people of any age who might be visiting the students.



Above: Glass Recycling Bags and Dry Mixed Recycling Bags, all with labels



Above (left to right):  
Each flat also has a Dry Mixed Recycling Poster and a Glass Recycling Poster installed, to remind the students how and where to recycle



Finally, to add some fun for the students recycling, and to guide them to the communal bin area, (which they might otherwise not be aware of), stencilled artwork has been temporarily sprayed onto the area leading up to the bins, using eco-friendly washable chalk paint. These stencils include footprints to follow, plus text and pictures highlighting that the bins collect three different material streams.



These stencils are reusable and are made by nearby St John's Academy in Perth, whose Design & Technology Department use specially purchased machinery to melt down plastic bottles and lids, creating different coloured sheets of recycled plastic which can then be made into a variety of recycled objects (including soap dishes and reusable stencils). Each stencil is the equivalent of 7 large milk cartons.

### Further Encouragement

The students in each flat have also been given a Waste Awareness Goodie Bag, encouraging them to reduce their food waste (using a rice scoop and spaghetti measurer, a shopping list and recipe cards showing how to use up leftovers to re-create a range of Love Food Hate Waste recipes) and to recycle their batteries (by collecting them in a reusable cardboard battery recycling box for taking to, and emptying at, any shops which sell batteries and therefore offer a take-back scheme).



*Thank you once again for coming and making a great deal of difference to this campaign. I very much appreciate the effort putting this all together. Residences General Manager, Perth College*

### Monitoring the Success of the Campaign

Just a few weeks after installing the new signage, there is already anecdotal evidence from the Waste Services Team that there has been less contamination in the blue bins. Over the coming weeks and months, the Waste Services Team will monitor the quality of recycling in the blue bins, and any increase in the number of times that the Glass Recycling Bins are emptied.

It is hoped that:

- ✓ The students will reduce the contamination in their blue bins (which will help reduce their impact on climate change as more resources can be saved).
- ✓ More glass bottles and jars will be recycled instead of being dumped in landfill - glass can be recycled an infinite number of times, without losing quality; and this reduces the need for mining valuable resources to make new ones.
- ✓ Potentially, with less waste being put in the general waste bins, Perth College can reduce the number of general waste bins on-site and/or the frequency that the general waste bins are emptied.

**If you would like to see a similar Recycling Campaign delivered in your community, please email [WasteAwareness@pkc.gov.uk](mailto:WasteAwareness@pkc.gov.uk) to register your interest.**

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