

13.0 Ensuring quality re-use collection activity



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Summary: Good practice guidance for those involved in procuring quality re-use activity to help ensure that a quality re-use service is operating.

Audience: The section will be of interest to all those involved in the procurement of re-use preparation activities: Producer Compliance Schemes and / or local authorities and their waste management partners (the 'buyer') and also the re-use operators themselves (the 'supplier').

Benefits: Providing services that deliver high quality products for re-use within a legal framework. Reducing disposal to landfill and benefiting the local community through provision of quality lower cost products.

Drafting specifications, agreements and contracts

This guidance is divided into two sections:

- The Buyer
 - Producer Compliance Schemes
 - Local authorities and waste management partners
- The Supplier
 - Re-use operators

Each party has its own legal advisors, policies and internal requirements for contracting. This guidance is not designed to replace such procedures but to supplement them and provide support by demonstrating areas of good practice to include in their own documentation.

13.1 The Buyer

(Producer Compliance Schemes and / or local authorities and their waste management partners)

Producer Compliance Schemes (PCSs) are required under the WEEE Regulations, to work with local authorities and Designated Collection Facility operators (DCFs) to clear sites of separately collected household WEEE and to arrange for its onward transportation to a suitable re-use operator or treatment facility.

Some local authorities (LAs) may delegate the day to day management of the DCFs to their waste management partners (who may or may not have the authority to offer or agree on contracts or agreements with re-use operators) but both are required to abide by the '[Code of Practice for Designated Collection Facility Operators](#)' published by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills in 2010. The Code states that they have to make all WEEE arising at the DCF available to the PCS without charge, including appliances considered to be suitable for re-use.

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The Code contains practical guidance on the minimum standards which must be met by PCSs and the operators of DCFs under the Regulations. This includes a provision to ensure that systems are in place to identify whole items of WEEE suitable for refurbishment and re-use and to ensure good practice by only passing appliances for re-use to a re-use organisation that has the capabilities to test and fully refurbish the appliances, thereby ensuring re-use occurs. PCSs are encouraged within the Code to develop relationships and agreements with organisations (and this may be through or in conjunction with their LA partners) specialising in the refurbishment and re-use of electrical and electronic equipment, either on a commercial or charitable basis.

Developing good communication and cooperation channels between the PCS and LAs is therefore good practice as this makes it clear who will be seeking suitable re-use partners and who will issue the contract or agreement.

For LAs there is **EU legislation** that governs the wording and tendering process. Directive 2004/18/EC coordinates the procedures for the award of public works contracts, public supply contracts and public service contracts. PCSs and other non-public organisations are not as restricted but should ensure that a transparent system is implemented throughout their own process in order that all parties can understand their role.

13.1.1 Required environmental permits or exemptions

Re-use organisations are required to have a minimum level of environmental compliance for the re-use/refurbishment of WEEE in place. This is called a **T11** exemption and is issued, approved and monitored by the Environment Agency. It has a maximum re-use/refurbishment limit of 1000 tonnes per site per year and sets down maximum levels of appliances that can be stored at the premises at any one time. This can be varied by local officers depending on site conditions etc. A T11 exemption is designed to allow re-use/refurbishment activities only and does not permit the blanket treatment or recycling of WEEE (for example the disassembly of components into material fractions for sending on to smelters etc.).

Organisations receiving and preparing more than 1000t of appliances for re-use per year, or who are also treating WEEE at the same facility, are required to have one of three different **standard permits**, or a bespoke/specialised waste management permit from the Environment Agency.

The Environment Agency may also issue a Paragraph 40 Exemption for the re-use and refurbishment of WEEE. The amount of WEEE that can be stored or re-used on this exemption is restricted to 80 cubic metres of storage by category and 5t of processing per day. The limited amount of permitted storage allowed, may be too restrictive for re-use operators and so consideration should be given to the volume of WEEE likely to be passed to them to ensure that this is not exceeded.

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If the re-use operator is to issue a PCS with WEEE evidence, it is required to either be an Approved Authorised Treatment Facility (AATF) or be allied to an AATF who will issue the evidence on its behalf. This arrangement has to be approved by the Environment Agency in advance, and the PCS must also record details of the volume of WEEE likely to arise at the re-use operator's facility to complete its operation plan. AATFs must submit details of their sampling plans, controls and treatment processes (including re-use treatment) with the annual application to the Agency. WEEE re-use evidence can only be issued by an AATF on whole appliances that have been prepared for re-use in the UK and are ready to be placed back on the market.

Any organisations wishing to export whole appliances for re-use (on which WEEE evidence is to be issued) must either be an Approved Exporter (AE) themselves, or trade with another AE. AEs must supply details of their overseas outlets and / or preparation for re-use facilities with their annual application to the Agency. WEEE evidence can only be issued on whole appliances that are being exported for re-use and not where treatment or recycling is to be carried out overseas.

As the successful applicants will be handling waste appliances (e.g. collections from DCFs) they will also need to have a **waste carriers permit**. Currently, charities may hold an exemption for this permit, but are required to have a letter from the Environment Agency confirming that the exemption is in place. From December 2013 all charities will be required to hold a waste carriers permit.

A Duty of Care document (waste transfer note) and / or a Hazardous Waste Consignment Note (HWCN) will be required to record the movement of all waste from the DCF to the re-use operator's facility. It is good practice for the buyer to receive copies of these with the weekly or monthly reports to check against site records. NB: If appliances are to be collected direct from homes, businesses or other similar sites, items may not necessarily be deemed to be waste if for example, a householder has confirmed it is still working, and is just unwanted (UEEE).

13.1.2 Service Level Agreement / contractual areas to consider

In developing a Service Level Agreement (SLA), including explanations relating specifically to re-use operations, 'The Buyer' should consider:

What re-use appliances are to be included?

What are the potential types and quantities of appliances that will be available for re-use from their nominated collection points (e.g. DCFs)?

This information may be available from historic data or as the result of a feasibility study relating to the particular area and collection site. It should be noted that there will be variances in the quality of the items being brought into the site as well as the volumes.

It is good practice to provide applicants bidding for a tender with this information so that an agreement can be reached about the types of that they can accept and prepare for re-use, and those appliances or WEEE which will be rejected. For example, not all re-use operators have the facilities to accept and prepare refrigerators (due to the requirements for degassing / regassing etc.) or they specialise only in one appliance group such as computers or white goods.

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The list below gives some examples of what may be potentially accepted or rejected:

Acceptable appliances	Rejected WEEE
Washing machines / dishwashers	Smoke detectors
Refrigeration equipment	Fluorescent tubes
Televisions and computer monitors	Televisions with damaged or broken screens
Tumble dryers	Electric blankets
Electric cookers	Gas cookers
Microwaves	Satellite dishes
Vacuum cleaners	Electric bikes
Power tools	Medical equipment
Electric lawn mowers	

Different re-use operators may therefore need to be approached or sought to handle separate streams where necessary. Alternatively instructions will need to be given to DCF personnel as to the types of WEEE to place in a separate re-use storage area for collection (the remainder being placed in the normal WEEE containers for recycling).

Return of WEEE deemed unsuitable for re-use

Not all appliances that have been collected from a nominated collection point are suitable for re-use and so remain WEEE. There may be a number of reasons for this:

- markets – no longer available or limited for some equipment types, for example the UK market for video recorders;
- contamination – beyond basic cleaning controls, for example where there may be concerns for medical and hygiene equipment;
- technology and safety – requirements have advanced and the appliance can no longer be considered safe to use, for example old heating appliances; and
- function – following testing and repairs the appliance does not functioning correctly.

Exemptions may need to be put in place to allow re-use operators to return WEEE to a DCF or bulking up point without charge. PCSs may wish to provide containers at the re-use operator's facility for them to place WEEE, which they will then arrange for the collection and recycling at an AATF (and subsequent WEEE evidence).

Records should be kept to track appliances that were originally collected from a DCF and afterwards returned to the WEEE collection and recycling system, to provide confirmation of the duty of care taken.

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Legal compliance

Before considering any private or third sector organisation to be an acceptable re-use partner, the legal status of the organisation applying should be vetted and scrutinised. Items to consider include:

- The legal status of the organisation should be verified. If they are a registered company this can be checked with [Companies House](#).
- If the organisation claims to be a charity, you can check that they are registered as a charitable organisation with the [UK Charity Commission](#). The Charity Commission has a register on its website which users can use to search by either the charity name or registration number if known.
- Community interest company's (CICs) are registered with the Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) and are included in the [Community Interest Company register](#) on the BIS Website.

Collection frequency

DCF's are often short on space, and not all will have space for the separate storage of appliances that may be suitable for re-use. Some sites may require a daily or weekly collection and others on an ad-hoc / call out basis. There should be some flexibility in the level of service expected as well as regular reviews to ensure that there are no undue impacts (such as the capacity not being sufficient; collections being requested when insufficient numbers are available etc.).

It will be important therefore to consider what capacity is available at each nominated collection point, and then set a maximum number of appliances that can be stored. It would be good practice to also agree a trigger rate (e.g. when the numbers of appliance reach 70% of the site capacity), which prompts a phone call to the re-use operator to enable them to programme in a collection.

Provision of space and / or containers at the collection site

The buyer may wish the re-use operator to provide suitable, weatherproof storage areas or containers at each site where possible appliances (that meet an agreed criteria) can be placed by the site personnel or public delivering the appliance, whilst waiting collection by the re-use operator.

PCs and LAs may wish to work in partnership to provide these facilities at the DCFs.

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Reporting structure

When writing a service level agreement it is good practice to include information on the reporting level and structure expected by you, the client.

You should set out the type of information required, the timescales and deadlines and what (if any) supporting documentation is also needed. You may like to include who this information will need to be supplied to and the method of submission e.g. postal or electronic submission. You should also decide on whether you need the information to be reported on a weekly or monthly basis and on a 'per-site' or combined site basis.

For example:

- Information on the number of collections made in the relevant period. This may include adherence to key performance indicators relating to the number of collections made within an agreed time / frequency or when a certain number of appliances have been received (to prevent stock-piles / over capacity at collection sites).
- Information on the type, quantity and weight of the appliances collected. The weight may be based on actual weights or on agreed protocols, which should be made clear.
- Information on the type, quantity and weight of the appliances collected that were assessed / prepared for re-use, and also the same for those appliances that were assessed as unfit for re-use and so have become WEEE - on either a weekly or monthly basis.
- Information relating to complaints.

A simple sample table that could be used to report back to a PCS or LA.

Week 27	Appliances collected	Weight kgs	Quantity of REEE	Re-use weight kg	Quantity of WEEE	WEEE weight kg	Service days collection delay
Monday	10	500	8	400	2	100	4
Tuesday	8	400	3	150	5	250	3
Wednesday	7	350	5	250	2	100	2
Thursday	12	600	6	300	6	300	1
Friday	14	700	12	600	2	100	0
Total	51	2550	32	1700	17	850	2 Avg

WEEE evidence

The buyer should provide clear guidance as to which PCS the WEEE evidence generated by the re-use operator (if they are an AATF or by their AATF partner) is to be issued to. This information must be agreed in advance as LAs and their DCF operators, including those who also operate as AATFs, are not permitted to transport and treat WEEE independently (including for re-use) with the aim of selling the resulting evidence unless they are not contracted to a PCS.

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13.1.3 Operational processes and capacity for re-use

As good practice, re-use organisations in the UK should be working to achieve compliance with the recently introduced publically available specification (PAS) for re-use. PAS 141 is available for purchase from the BSI and electronic copies can be purchased online from the [BSI website](#). WRAP has developed a [set of protocols](#) to increase the re-use of electronic products and ensure that they are tested and repaired to a minimum level. Using these protocols will support the move towards compliance with PAS 141.

The buyer should, as a minimum, receive details of the staff the supplier is proposing to use. They should have a history of servicing/repairing electrical appliances and be able to provide evidence of the following good practice procedures:

- **Preparation for re-use** – each piece of equipment should be visually inspected to determine whether the piece of equipment is suitable for preparation for re-use. Each appliance should be safe to use (see below) and free from defects and be able to function in the same way as when it was originally placed on the market.
- **Inspection, safety and functionality** - each test should be recorded against a unique reference number for each appliance (date; test details; carried out by etc.), including statements where tests have failed (and re-tests carried out) and the appliance is deemed unsuitable for re-use (WEEE) and the recycling route taken.
- **Training** – operators should be able to produce certificates demonstrating competency in the electrical safety testing of portable appliance (PAT). PAT testing in the UK is a regulatory requirement under [The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989](#), (Further information on PAT testing can be obtained from [The Institute of Engineering and Technology \(IET\)](#)).
- **Personal data** – if the supplier is to receive and prepare IT equipment for re-use, then the buyer should be aware that this equipment may contain personal data on recording devices such as computers, laptops, electronic tablets, mobile telephones, storage cards and external hard drives. All data on IT electronic media on any UEEE or WEEE should be removed as part of the re-use process to ensure data protection.
- **Software** – this may be transferred if licensing permits; non-transferable copyrighted software on equipment should be removed in accordance with either a documented software removal procedure or the software’s own removal command. Where licensable software is loaded, the new licence pertaining to the software should be provided with the equipment and any previous licences and stickers removed.
- **Replacement parts** – where replacement components are required to replace a missing or faulty component to enable the equipment to be re-used, the re-use organisation should ensure that the use of such replacement components does not impair product safety, impair or reduce the function of the equipment.
- **Capacity for work** – the re-use operator should be asked to provide evidence of working hours and how many appliances can be assessed in a week / month (this may be via records of past shift patterns, output records etc.) in order to verify that they have the capacity available for the work being contracted.

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A visit to the re-use operator's premises should ascertain whether procedures are being carried out. Assess if there are sufficient work-spaces, benches, water inlet and drains and power outlets etc., for the volume of UEEE / WEEE being received in order to ensure that the preparation for re-use process is robust and compliant. Ensure that surplus appliances are not being diverted to other operators or exporters without the necessary downstream checks being carried out.

For example, if an operator is to receive 1000 televisions a week, but only work five days a week on an eight hour shift pattern, with a two-man team, each man would need to assess and test 12.5 appliances per hour (less than 5 minutes per unit). This is an unlikely scenario that will need further examination and a visual check to be sure that the re-use procedures are robust enough to ensure the safety and functionality of the appliances being placed back on the market and that sham re-use practices are not being employed.

13.1.4 Guarantees and outlets for appliances prepared for re-use (REEE)

It is good practice for each appliance to be issued with a warranty or guarantee against failure. This should be for a minimum time period of twenty eight days from the date of supply to the new user. This should also be extended to REEE that is exported.

The buyer should request information (and updates from time to time) and evidence from the re-use operator on the outlets that the appliances prepared for re-use (REEE) are to be marketed or have been sold in order to be assured that bonafide re-use is being carried out. This may be established by the re-use operator being required to submit an annual report on its activities for the year, and expected markets etc. for the forthcoming year.

Some LAs may have a policy on exports. This will need to be established at the start of the contract, and controls and audits built into the agreement to safeguard against breaches.

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13.1.5 Added value

The buyer may find that benefits will be achieved by awarding a contract to an organisation that offers added value, such as one from the third sector.

Social benefits may include providing work for the long term unemployed, providing work and employment for disabled groups, creating new or securing jobs within an organisation by the successful award of this contract. Other benefits could include re-use appliances being made available to low income families in the community via charity shops or housing schemes.

CREATE Liverpool: Helping local communities through re-use

CREATE is an organisation started in 1996 to provide employment opportunities to long term unemployed or disadvantaged adults by providing training in the repair and refurbishment of used white goods.

It has trained over 500 people and helped them secure sustainable employment. It has also put several thousand appliances back in to the local market in Merseyside for low income families, housing associations and other charities.

Details of the achievements made by a re-use operator may be included in an annual report, from which PCSs and LAs and their re-use partners will be able to generate positive media statements.

13.1.6 Pricing structure

The buyer should set out what pricing structure is expected, and how this will be monitored and reviewed. This may include allowances for collection, management and administration of a WEEE evidence system, as well as for the re-use standards employed (such as accreditation to the PAS141) in order to establish and grow a sustainable re-use operation.

Whilst it is normal industry practice to allow re-use operators to keep the revenue from the sale of REEE they produce, consideration should be given to what compensation may be necessary to off-set the expenditure the operator has to incur for appliances that fail the tests and have to be returned to the WEEE treatment system. This will include collecting appliances from a DCF and the necessary handling, testing etc.

Mechanisms should also be considered to allow for price fluctuations outside the operators control – for example the cost of fuel may rise considerably over the duration of the contract.

Financial status and payment terms

It is good practice to vet any organisation applying for a contract to ensure that they are financially stable, prior to awarding a service contract. This could include asking them to supply a business plan setting out their expected income and expenditure streams and, information on the company infrastructure - for example vehicles and equipment and the number of staff committed to the supply of the service. It would also be good practice to ascertain their level of skill and past experience of

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providing these services. This could be supplemented with copies of independently signed audited accounts and / or a signed statement of turnover from the previous financial year(s), as part of the tendering process.

Business continuity will be an important factor to consider – is the re-use company going to be operating throughout the length of the agreement? Is their business plan robust enough to give you the confidence you need that they can sustain their operation? Can they cope with the throughput you are envisaging? Can they market (sales) sufficient stock to genuine clients / outlets? What impact might there be if any grants they are reliant on get reduced or cut?

Consideration should be given to the proposed invoicing and payment schedule. Extended payment terms beyond 30 days could potentially cause cash flow issues for the successful organisation, especially if it is a third-sector operator. Issues of this nature are not in the best interest of either the buyer or the organisation that has won the contract, as it is likely to cause problems to the level and frequency of the service delivered. Other areas that should be considered and included in the development of service level agreements are:

- **Referees** – Good practice would dictate asking for two or maybe three independent referees to verify the applicant’s suitability for providing the services to the supplier. At least one referee should be a recent contract that is the same or similar in nature to the services being required.
- **TUPE Regulations 2006 – The Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) regulations 2006**, may affect the successful organisation winning the contract. These regulations are designed to protect the employment of workers; therefore it is possible that the organisation which is successful in winning the contract may have to employ the staff from the previous contract holder if they are providing a continuing service to the local authority or producer compliance scheme. There is extensive information on TUPE on the [Direct Government](#) website.
- **Health and Safety** – Health and safety at work is regulated by the [Health and Safety at Work Act 1974](#). The Health and Safety Executive website provides excellent guidance for health and safety in the workplace, there is also a full section devoted to the health and safety of the waste industry entitled [Waste Industry Safety and Health \(WISH\)](#). These deal specifically with issues relating to the safe handling of [waste electrical and electronic equipment](#). This is a valuable source of information for PCSs and LAs as it provides information and guidance for the minimum standards required. Applicants should be asked for details of their health and safety record. This request for information should include details of any reportable accidents, near misses, copies of their method statements, risk assessments and a written health and safety policy to show their commitment to health and safety in the workplace.
- **Insurance** – This will include the expected levels of cover for employer’s liability, public liability, motor vehicle and ideally see some level of disaster recovery insurance. LAs will have their own standard requirements, but should check standard clauses and delete reference to professional indemnity cover as this is not applicable to this type of service agreement.

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- Equal opportunities – There are a number of legislative requirements that need to be considered covering equal opportunities and fairpay. This would include any work that is to be carried out by the re-use operator overseas.
- Data protection - Any personal information on individuals named in the application / agreement is likely to fall under the requirements of **The Data Protection Act 1998**.
- Costs of tendering – It is common to say that costs for any legal advice given to an organisation tendering for the contract is at their own risk and expense.
- Confidentiality - Good practice would dictate that the entire tendering process is kept confidential. All organisations wishing to tender for the contract should be made fully aware of the need for confidentiality throughout the tendering process and agreement if appropriate.
- Communication – A key element needed to establish and maintain a positive working relationship, it is good practice to hold regular communication meetings between all stakeholders to ensure that the level of demand and quality of service is maintained.
- Criminal background checks and identification - If the applicant’s employees are to be going into customers houses or associating with vulnerable people, it would be good practice to request that the applicants staff who are carrying out these duties are checked via the **Criminal Records Bureau (CRB)** to ensure that they do not have a criminal record.
- Sub-contractors - Are subcontractors to be allowed or not? If they are, then what level of involvement or service will they provide to the main contract holder and ultimately you the client? Good practice would suggest that if subcontractors are to be allowed, then the same vetting process and requirements pertaining to stability; personnel; qualifications and training levels etc. should equally apply to them, so as to ensure legal, financial, and environmental and health and safety compliance.

13.1.7 Final note to the buyer

Once the re-use operators have been shortlisted it is good practice for a buyer to visit the organisations prior to awarding the contract, as the time spent on site will also help the buyer to ask questions relating to important operational areas such as health and safety, environmental compliance and re-use evidence and markets. The supplier can provide visual evidence of their processes and the quality of their output material during a visit, which may otherwise be lost in the documentation of their process.

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(Private or third sector organisations who provide collection and preparation of re-use services to local authorities, Producer Compliance Schemes and other non-governmental bodies or businesses)

There are different types and sizes of suppliers offering re-use. The three main categories considered in this guidance are:

- commercial re-use organisations who may also provide WEEE treatment (disassembly) services;
- third sector charitable organisations; and
- community interest companies.

1. Commercial re-use organisations

Commercial re-use organisations often work with large organisations such as asset management or lease/hire companies and specialise in high value equipment such as I.T. or communications equipment like mobile phones. They have established lines of procurement for components or parts that are required to refurbish an appliance. In most cases this equipment is never actually regarded as “waste”, which negates the need for environmental permits. They are unlikely to make collections from Designated Collection Facilities (DCFs) due to the poor quality of appliances that may arise and their specialist processes.

Those commercial operators who also have WEEE treatment facilities, may provide an additional re-use service alongside if their supply is of sufficient quality to warrant the extra space and staff. This may include operators who work with retailers providing a home delivery (of new goods) and take-back (of the old appliance) service. Appliances arising from this are likely to be in good condition visually (due to not having been taken to a HWRC or stored outside or put into skips) and the previous owner may also have confirmed that the appliance was still working (or required a minor repair). They can work with PCSs and LAs to provide a collection and re-use service from DCFs.

Some smaller commercial organisations work with LAs or their waste management partners on a very local basis selling appliances that have been through their assessment and testing process to local second-hand shops or via small auctions or eBay. They can have held ‘totters’ rights in the past, selecting suitable appliances from HWRCs without any formal agreement in place.

2. Third sector charitable organisation

Not for profit organisations – for example charities working with disadvantaged adults to provide training and employment opportunities. These can also vary in size from a small combined solitary workshop and sales outlet, to having a noticeable presence on the High Street and a chain of retail outlets capable of reselling large quantities of REEE to the public. They may be dependent on grants, donations and other fundraising and see the sale of REEE as a way of providing more sustainable funding.

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3. Community interest companies

Community interest companies (CIC) are a reasonably new legal entity. They often have similar goals to registered charities but must be operated by a group “for the good of the community”. They are allowed to return a profit for their shareholders or members.

Charities and CICs are more likely (but not exclusively) to apply for re-use contracts from LAs and PCSs. They are often licensed to handle waste and issue re-use evidence on low volumes of poorer quality appliances that commercial operators regard as not being cost-effective.

13.2.1 How can I promote my re-use services to the buyer?

There are several ways to make the buyer aware of the services you offer:

- A direct approach. Research individuals or teams responsible for re-use at your LA, PCS or local electrical retailer, and invite them down to see how your organisation operates. The contact details of all PCSs in England and Wales can be found on the [Environment Agency website](#). The [Scottish](#) and [Northern Ireland](#) agencies have similar information on their websites. Electrical retailers are required to either contribute to the UK DCF system (which provides for householders to take WEEE back to the local HWRC) or to provide their own in store take back service. Whilst national chains are likely to be managed centrally at a head office, local independent stores may be a good route to approach.
- Improved PR. Making local dignitaries such as your member of parliament, mayor or town councillor aware of the services you offer. This is important as the re-use services that you offer not only benefit the environment but are also likely to create or safeguard local jobs in the community.
- Get yourselves noticed for all the right reasons. Local newspapers, radio stations and even local television are always looking for a good story to tell. Positive exposure of this nature is good for all stakeholders.
- Advertise your services. Tell your re-use story on your company website. Let the outside world know what you do, give them details about your re-use rates, the waste diverted to good causes and tell them about individual success stories like job outcomes or good work that you have been able to do by reusing electrical goods.
- Build an impeccable reputation. Building a reputation by word of mouth is the best way to promote your services to a LA or PCS. Delivery of a consistently high quality service will result in promotion.
- Keep yourself up to date with relevant legislation and guidance. WRAP has [published information on re-use](#) and manufacturing and information on resource efficiency savings from re-use that can be found on its website.

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13.2.2 Demonstrating good practice to the buyer

The following items are all regarded as good practice and will give confidence and help demonstrate to the buyer that you operate a professional organisation:

- documented company policies;
- health safety and environmental accreditations;
- environmental permits;
- trained staff;
- professional memberships;
- you follow and apply recognised re-use specifications; and
- you follow and apply industry codes of conduct.

You should familiarise yourself with the information in this guidance that is principally aimed at the buyer as these will be key points you can follow to ensure you can meet their criteria.

Documented policies

As part of the procurement process you may be asked to provide documented company / organisational policies to support your application. The policies listed below are not exhaustive but are seen as examples of good practice:

- health and safety policy;
- environmental policy;
- corporate social responsibility policy;
- equal opportunities policy;
- ethical trading policy; and
- training and development policy.

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Health, Safety and Environmental Accreditations

Accreditations awarded by an independent organisation help to prove credibility to a buyer. Examples of good practice external accreditations are:

- ISO 9001 Quality Management System;
- ISO 14001 Environmental Management Standards;
- EMAS Eco Management and Assessment Scheme;
- OSHAS Occupational Health and Safety; and
- ISO 27001 Information Security.

There are many organisations that provide training and services to implement these standards. It is important to choose wisely before committing to any one individual or organisation. It is recommended that re-use organisations read information available on the British Standards Institute before committing resources and funds to an **ISO standard**. Information on the EMAS scheme can be found by visiting the Institute for Environmental Assessment and Management (IEMA) who implement EMAS via the **Acorn Scheme**.

Environmental permits

You must be legally compliant and demonstrate you have appropriate permitting.

Typical examples of the type of permits you may need are detailed below, information on all these permits can be found by following each of the appropriate links to the Environment Agency (for England and Wales) website. Similar information may be found on the **Scottish Environment Protection Agency** and **Northern Ireland Environment Agency** websites.

- **waste management license;**
- **waste carriers license;**
- **hazardous waste producer;**
- **approved treatment facility (ATF);**
- **approved authorised treatment facility (AATF);**
- **T11 exemption for the re-use of WEEE; and**
- **paragraph 41 exemption for the storage of WEEE.**

This list is not exhaustive and it is good practice for anyone that is preparing to handle, process or generate electrical waste to contact the Environment Agencies before allowing any activities take place.

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Training staff

It is good practice to have a well trained workforce that act in unison as a team; a buyer would regard a re-use organisation being able to provide evidence of continuing staff development and training as good practice. You could possibly provide evidence on the ability and experience of your workforce in the following ways:

- curriculum vitae;
- individual profiles;
- training certificates; and
- professional qualifications.

Recognised re-use specifications

Quality re-use organisations should follow and apply a recognised re-use specification instilling confidence in buyers and end users of REEE that the appliances are supplied to a recognised specification.

PAS 141 is a publically available specification relating to processing for re-use of waste and used electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE and UEEE). It covers all aspect of the preparation for re-use process. As a minimum, re-use organisations in the UK should be working to achieve compliance with this specification which is available for purchase from the British Standards Institute (BSI) and can be purchased online from the [BSI website](#).

WRAP has developed [a set of protocols](#) linked to PAS141 to ensure that appliances are tested and repaired to a minimum level.

Whilst it is acceptable for a re-use organisation to develop their own in house specification, should you decide to do this you should record the re-use process and appliance checks you have carried out. A simple example worksheet template is provided in Appendix 1, this template is basic and is designed to make re-use organisations think about developing the minimum processes involved and then to develop/design their own internal worksheets.

In order to provide a full auditable trail for re-use, organisations should record where the appliances have come from and to whom they have been sold. This is particularly important if any of the re-used appliances (REEE) are to be exported.

Containers of used / second-hand electrical goods are often stopped at the ports for inspection by the authorities. Having a robust audit trail showing the tests carried out and level of process undertaken would be seen as good practice.

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Professional memberships and sources of guidance for re-use operators

Senior managers should keep up to date with industry requirements for environmental compliance, WEEE industry codes of practice and safety. There are many different types of trade associations and professional organisations available. Taking out individual or corporate membership of relevant industry bodies such as [The Chartered Institute of Wastes Management \(CIWM\)](#), [The Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment \(IEMA\)](#), [The International Solid Wastes Association \(ISWA\)](#), [The Furniture Re-use Network \(FRN\)](#) or the [Community Recycling Network \(CRN\)](#), is an excellent way to keep up to date with information. Demonstration of knowledge and expertise will give confidence in your professionalism and increase business opportunities.

13.2.3 Securing product supply

PCs and LAs have been encouraged by Government to work together since the inception of the WEEE Regulations, to provide local solutions that are beneficial to all the stakeholders involved in the collection, re-use and recycling of EEE.

Some LAs delegate the day to day management of the DCFs to their waste management partners, who may or may not have the authority to offer or agree on contracts or agreements with re-use operators but are required to abide by the [Code of Practice for Designated Collection Facility Operators](#) published by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills in 2010. The Code states that they have to make all WEEE arising at the DCF available to the PCS without charge, including appliances considered to be suitable for re-use.

It is in the interest of a buyer working within the WEEE system (PCs and LAs) to partner with a re-use operator who can offer them sustainable and compliant re-use services to an agreed specification. Those re-use operators who can provide clear management reports; hold all the correct exemptions or permits; work to a quality standard and who can issue WEEE evidence (or who work with another approved treatment operator who can on their behalf – with the approval of the Environment Agency) will offer great benefits to those buyers.

The table below details some of the industry bodies that provide codes of practice, guidance and hyperlinks to the relevant information.

Industry Body	COP/Guidance
WRAP	Good Practice Guidance for the collection and treatment of WEEE
BSI	PAS 141 Specification (Purchase)
BIS	Collection of WEEE from Designated Collection Facilities
Environment Agency	How to become an Approved Authorised Treatment Facility AATF
	Issuing WEEE Evidence GN04
	Independent Audit Reports GN03
	Applying for a T11 exemption
	Guidance on Recycling Recovery and techniques (Includes re-use)
HSE	Safe Waste and Recycling Collection Services
	Health and Safety Training for the Waste and Recycling Industry

WRAP is a good source of industry [guidance and news](#), and offers advice and support to businesses of all sizes.

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13.3 Frequently Asked Questions

The following questions and answers may be of interest to the buyer and supplier. This is not an exhaustive list, but should help prompt discussions between both parties.

Q. What are the markets for re-used appliances?

A. Re-use operators should be open to answering this question clearly, providing details of any guarantee or warranty they provide. Outlets will include:

- their own shops;
- working with a local charity to provide low-cost appliances to families in need;
- eBay or similar on-line shop; and
- overseas charities – such as Computers for Africa. (NB: ask for details of all overseas charities to ensure they are bone fide).

If the operator does not know where the appliances are sold (for example if they are sold to a dealer or a broker) then more investigation may be needed to ascertain the outlet is genuine.

Q. How do I refurbish appliances to make them ready for sale?

A. Re-use operators should have a documented testing and refurbishment process in place that can provide a full audit trail demonstrating quality, from the point of arrival to the point of sale.

If the operator has no documentation to show what tests are carried out then this may indicate that they do not have an adequate system. Just carrying out a PAT test and basic clean is inadequate.

Q. What experience do I need to have in refurbishing appliances?

A. A good operator will have:

- engineers who are trained in the repair and refurbishment of electrical appliance;
- been established for many years so will have a large number of referees and satisfied clients that can verify their existence and quality of service;
- training records and certificates available for inspection at any time; and
- robust testing procedures in place such as the WRAP re-use electrical product protocols.

If it is a new organisation, it may have employed ex-service engineers from the electrical repair industry with a good history which can be verified by checking. Buyers should be wary of operators who just say that they have been doing this for years as this does not indicate that good practice procedures are in place. Further investigation may be needed to establish the quality of service and of the refurbished appliances.

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Q. What risks may be associated with re-use operations?

A. There is no additional risk in partnering with a re-use organisation compared with any other organisation as long as the buyer contracts with a competent, compliant and bonafide re-use organisation.

The risks of contracting with a non compliant organisation include:

- the risk of prosecution from regulatory bodies such as the Environment Agency, the Health and Safety Executive or from civil litigation;
- pollution to the environment from hazardous appliances such as televisions and refrigerators;
- financial loss from fines or additional unanticipated costs of disposal;
- loss of service to clients could cause complaints, or fly tipping; and
- bad publicity for the LA or PCS, which would reflect on those who awarded the contract, or the original producers who value their brand reputation.

Q. How can I ensure a re-use organisation has the right credentials?

A. Consider the following:

- assess the organisation's records for legal compliance (corporate);
- assess the organisation's records for legal compliance (health and safety and environment);
- assess the organisation's level of infrastructure to ensure it is adequate for the level of service required; and
- assess the organisation's level of technical ability to ensure it is adequate for the level of re-use services required.

It is good practice for an organisation to be audited by a member of staff that is familiar with the legal complexities of the above bullet points.

Q. What requirements need to be met for re-use to meet the Code of Conduct for DCF operators?

A. A DCF operator is responsible for:

- having an agreement with a PCS to clear all separately collected household WEEE deposited at the site, including those appliances that may be selected as suitable for re-use;
- making sure that all separately collected household WEEE deposited at the site is available to the PCS without charge. There must be no diversion of WEEE from the site to channels outside those agreed by the PCS including those appliances that may be selected as suitable for re-use; and
- ensuring that systems are in place to identify whole items of WEEE suitable for refurbishment and re-use.

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Q. How can I contract with the organisation, while taking into consideration local options and best value?

A. Balancing quality and price is always difficult, however it is good practice to consider sustainable local solutions when considering the applications. Consider the positive effect on the local community for providing or securing local jobs and by working with local stakeholders, like charities and environmental groups.

13.3.2 Questions for suppliers to consider asking the buyer

Q. As a re-use operator I am investing a lot of money in equipment, staff and infrastructure and the attainment of standards. What processes are you going to put in place to ensure that I will continue to receive enough appliances for my organisation to be sustainable?

Q. Do I have to comply with the re-use specification PAS 141 or can I design my own processes?

Q. Who is going to pay the disposal costs for the hazardous appliances like CRT's, LCD's and refrigeration that fail the re-use process?

Q. Is this contract exclusive, what happens if another charity or organisation lobbies you for re-use appliances?

Q. Can I claim any recycling credits of any kind for diverting appliances away from the waste stream into re-use?

Q. Are you going to promote/advertise the re-use in the area and the work that we carry out to members of the public?

Q. Is there a possibility of working together so that we can enter and maybe win one of the industry's recycling competitions?

Q. Are you going to put any measures in place to stop the appliances being taken from premises by "totters" for the scrap value of the metals?

Q. How can we work more closely with you and your stakeholders to secure more items for re-use?

Q. Is there any other separately collected obligated WEEE that we can have access to in the area, such as WEEE from kerb-side collections?

Q. How can we work more closely to provide local infrastructure for the local community like training or jobs?

Q. Do you require any minimum standards for data eradication on IT equipment, mobile phones etc.?

Q. Do I have to have ISO approved standards in place to be able to apply for the contract?

Q. What do I do if I am getting too many appliances and I can't cope?

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Organisation A: good practice example

Organisation A has been established for some time now and has a good reputation locally as the work they do helps to support the community or charities in the area. The senior management team are well qualified and fully understand the complex interaction between all the WEEE sector stakeholders.

It has either exemptions or waste management licenses in place and is willing to share Environment Agency reports on request with visitors. It openly displays information around the site on health and safety, environmental policy and performance, copies of public and employee liability policies and offer site inductions to all visitors.

It is open to visitors, is proud of its achievements and is willing to show visitors around the site including its workshops and re-use facilities. It is often enthusiastic about the work it does and encourages visitors to stop and question staff members about their role in the organisation.

The workshops are well organised, tidy and free of clutter; it is easy for visitors who are not from a technical background to understand the workflows, systems of work and final outputs from the process. Visitors can see and understand where the failed appliances are sent for recycling and see finished product on display ready for sale.

If challenged the re-use organisation can easily provide an auditable trail for all the appliances passing through the organisation. This trail includes the items that fail the process and the appliances that are to be sold. The organisation can easily demonstrate that the re-used appliance is safe, fit for purpose and are prepared to back up what it says with a guarantee.

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