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SPOKES RESPONSE TO CIRCULAR ECONOMY CONSULTATION

30.10.15

Consultation website...

<https://consult.scotland.gov.uk/zero-waste-delivery/making-things-last>

Government circular economy webpages...

<http://www.zerowastescotland.org.uk/our-work/circular-economy>

SPOKES RESPONSE

Note that our response was made via an online QA, and the entries below have been extracted from the pdf of the completed QA as images, since text was not possible. Therefore, apologies for the small and blurry font! In due course all responses should appear at the consultation website above.

We responded to 3 questions, as below.

Reuse

B We are looking for feedback on the ideas in this section on extending the life of goods through reuse.

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The government should support and promote bicycle recycling and the organisations which currently do this - in particular, The Bike Station, with its centres in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Perth (www.thebikestation.org.uk). Well over 50,000 bikes have now been recycled - either brought back into use or, if too far gone, then stripped down for components and/or for metal recycling. In addition to boosting the circular economy, such schemes contribute in many ways to many other government environment and health objectives.

Repair

C We would like feedback on extending the life of goods through stimulating greater levels of repair by businesses, community organisations and individuals.

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See our comments re bicycle recycling in section B (re-use) - also relevant here, since repair and the necessary skills are inextricably linked with that.

Recycling

E We are looking for feedback on the proposed approaches to expand recycling among households and businesses and improve the quality of recycled materials.

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The Scottish Government should put in place a DRS (deposit-refund system) as soon as possible. Countries and States that have a deposit system have less litter, broken glass and hard plastic on roads and paths - which form a serious puncture risk as well as an eyesore for cyclists and pedestrians.

It must be stressed how inconvenient and annoying punctures can be, particularly given the government's wish to hugely increase bike commuting and other utility cycling. In general, cycling has been shown to be a significantly more reliable means of getting from A to B in a predictable time than motor travel, since congestion has far less effect on a bike than on a motor vehicle. A puncture on a commute, however, can cause the occasional very late arrival, affecting anyone cycling to work, whether a cleaner, a lecturer or a brain surgeon, possibly with vitally important arrival times. Indeed only recently one of our members, a GP, told us that he had suffered a puncture on his way to an important meeting (and would have missed the meeting entirely had he not been near a tram stop and recalled that Edinburgh Trams now carries bikes!)

We note that in the US, container litter fell 70-85% in deposit law states (www.bottlebill.org/about/benefits/litter.htm) and we see no way for Scotland to achieve anything like similar reductions without a DRS. We also note that DRS's are popular and have many other advantages (www.bottlebill.org/about/benefits.htm).