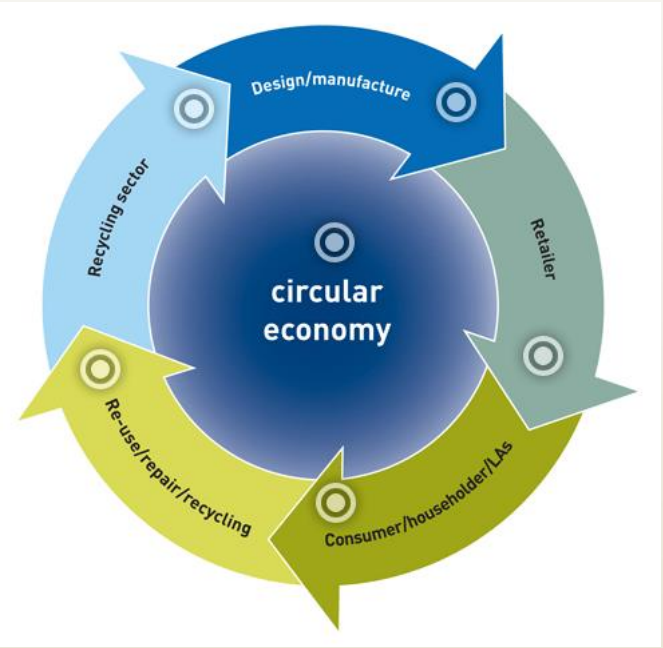
Circular Economy

A circular economy seeks to rebuild capital, whether this is financial, manufactured, human, social or natural. This ensures enhanced flows of goods and services. The concept is built upon three core principles:

- Design out waste pollution
- Keep products and materials in use
- Regenerate natural systems



Design

To design out waste, products must be made using regenerative materials and modular design techniques in order to be longer-lasting and easier to disassemble and repair.

Servicing and repair

Products should remain in their original use for as long as possible. This could be achieved by manufacturers retaining ownership of their products and implementing re-use and repair services. ‘Sharing economy’ models such as leasing and hiring also support this. Think about it as subscribing to a TV streaming service rather than buying a physical box-set for your favourite TV show.

Re-manufacture, re-use or recycle

Allow the lifetime of products to be extended at the end of their ‘first life’ by repurposing them or enabling other, subsequent uses. Also ensure that products can be easily separated into component parts and materials, enabling use in new products and displacing the use of virgin raw materials.

Why do we need a circular economy?

The world’s population is expected to peak at 10bn in 2050. The earth’s raw materials, our resources, are not limitless. As a result, the costs of labour and raw materials are increasing.

The business opportunities presented by a circular economy offer new ways to mitigate these risks to allow businesses to grow and diversify. Moving to a circular economy will contribute to sustainable economic growth and has the potential to increase productivity and create jobs, whilst reducing carbon emissions and preserving valuable raw materials.

By keeping products and materials in use for longer, businesses can be more resilient against exposure to resource supply risks and volatile commodity prices.



For further support and details of any opportunities for grant funding please contact a Carbon Charter advisor.

Case studies

Lodge Farm

Lodge Farm specialises in growing strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, and runner beans. It is a ‘Locally Sourced’ supplier for the East of England Co-op and also sells its produce at the farm gate and through local farm shops and food markets.

The farm has been awarded with a Gold Level Charter and are continuously looking to improve their environmental performance. One of their recent developments has been to turn runner beans which have ‘gone over’ into hummus and other Middle Eastern dips. By turning their would-be waste into useful products, Lodge Farm are helping to promote a circular economy.

NVCS Ltd

NVCS Ltd has been trading since 1984 and supplies, services and produces vending machines for coffee, food and drink across the East Anglian region.

The company has been awarded with a Bronze Level Charter and are encompassing the core circular economy concepts within their work. They refurbish second hand coffee machines which are then re-sold to clients. In addition to this, their coffee sacks are re-used in displays and for crafting materials, and they have signed up to the food sharing network Olio, to help minimise their food waste.

Betty and Miller

Betty and Miller are producers of homemade/hand-stirred patés, marmalades, jams, chutney and jellies which are made from local produce at their site in Crowfield.

The company has been awarded with a Bronze Level Charter and is working to reduce its waste and work to the principles of a circular economy. One of the ways they are achieving this is by changing their jam and marmalade making process. The previous process involved disposing of the pith and pulp of fruits, however, this is now included within the recipes and so only the pips are wasted. The business is also working with some of its caterers to re-use glass jars and/or use their own containers in order to reduce packaging.

