

A guide for Local Authorities seeking to procure reused paint in support of schools, communities, and voluntary groups

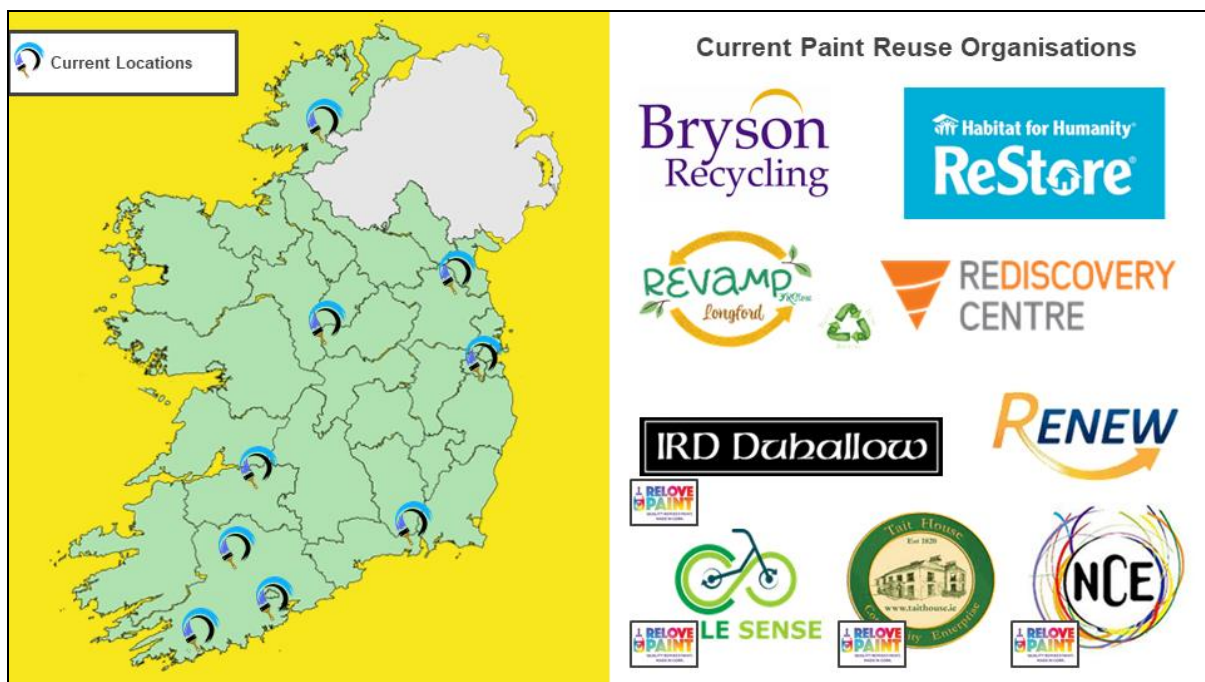
The challenge:

Paint waste remains a significant environmental problem in Ireland. In 2016 – the most recent year for which data is available – 2,000 tonnes of paint were exported from Ireland for incineration at a public cost of €600,000. The procurement of reused paint by Local Authorities from the social enterprises that comprise the Paint Reuse Network is one way to help solve this problem.

The Paint Reuse Network:

The Paint Reuse Network is a partnership between the Rediscovery Centre and Ireland’s Regional Waste Management Planning Offices, which aims to reduce paint waste in Ireland, and maximise the use of paint that is in circulation. As part of this network, [nine social enterprises](#) collect leftover paint from Civic Amenity sites, remix it to a high standard, and resell it at affordable prices (typically between €10 and €15 per 5.6 litre bucket).

At present, social enterprises carry out this work in Dublin, Limerick, Waterford, Longford, Cork, Skibbereen, Duhallow, Drogheda, and throughout Co. Donegal, as shown in the map below.



Current Paint Reuse Organisations

- Bryson Recycling
- Habitat for Humanity ReStore
- REVAMP Longford
- REDISCOVERY CENTRE
- IRD Duhallow
- RENEW
- LE SENSE
- Tail House
- NCE

Paint Reuse Network members and locations

The opportunity:

The paint reuse business model presents an opportunity for Local Authorities to procure paint at a cost-effective price. Paint from these organisations retails at between €10-€15 per 5.6 litre bucket, the revenue from which helps to support community employment and training. This approach also aligns with the following three national policy objectives,

- Action 148 of the [Climate Action Plan \(2019\)](#), which mandates the inclusion of green criteria in all procurements using public funds;
- [Circular 20/2019](#) from the Dept. of Public Reform and Expenditure, which seeks to promote the wider use of environmental and social considerations in public procurement; and,
- The National Waste Management Plan for a Circular Economy (under consultation), which proposes a national target of 10 kilograms of reuse per capita per annum.

The Paint Reuse Network therefore provides Local Authorities with a method for dealing with surplus paint while also supporting Ireland's transition to a circular economy and the objectives of social enterprises around the country.



Remixing Paint at the Rediscovery Centre



Working examples:

Relevant examples of this principle have already been implemented in two local authorities.

Fingal County Council

Fingal County Council have successfully procured reused paint for a number of years from Rediscover Paint in Ballymun, a founding member of the Paint Reuse Network. In 2022 Rediscover Paint won the tender to provide €3,000 worth of reused paint to community groups and housing estates in the Fingal area. In total 1,646 litres of paint was delivered to 22 community groups. Paint was thereby diverted from incineration, saving nearly 4 tonnes of embodied CO₂.

Included in Annex 1 below is the specific wording from the Fingal tender, which could be replicated by other Local Authorities. Note that the burden of producing and delivering the paint as well as liaising with community groups is on the supplier. Several examples of groups that were provided with paint as part of Fingal County Council's initiative are detailed in Annex 2.

Cork County and City Council

Another instructive example has been implemented by Cork County and City Councils. These Local Authorities made €3,000 available to [Northside Community Enterprises](#) (NCE) for the purpose of providing reused paint to schools and community groups. Through this initiative NCE delivered up to 112 litres of paint to 38 different groups, with 12 of those groups returning to purchase additional paint. This initiative also allowed NCE to complete some relatively large paint orders, thereby advancing the expertise and experience of its staff. Photos from some of the projects that received paint are included in Annex 3 below.



Next steps:

Local authorities wishing to embark on a similar tendering process may consult the Paint Reuse Network, which can be reached @ research@rediscoverycentre.ie, by contacting Sinéad Fox of Fingal County Council @ sinead.fox@fingal.ie, by contacting Cork City Council @ EnvironmentCCP@corkcity.ie or Cork County Council @ EAO@corkcoco.ie

Annex 1

Tender Re: Supply of paint for Reuse to [Local Authority]

- Supplier will process interior and exterior paint of various colours up to a value of €3000 and make it available / deliver it to Community Groups, Community Centres, Schools and Organisations in [Local Authority] area.
- Supplier will ensure that all Health and Safety legislation is adhered to, for staff dealing with this product. Supplier shall ensure that all insurance is in place for all duties within this arrangement.
- Supplier will collect unused/leftover paint and treat the product to create high quality paint for reuse. Supplier will handle all queries and correspondence from community groups regarding the volumes and deliveries and maintain this information in accordance with GDPR Data Protection guidelines.
- Supplier will provide an image with text for using on social media for this collaborative initiative. The aim of this project is to demonstrate Reuse.

Annex 2

Mourne View Estate Residents' Association, Skerries

This residents' association received over 70 litres of exterior white and grey reused paint to revamp public walls in their housing estate. The paint donation supported the ongoing work of the voluntary group, which manages the upkeep of the estate by painting walls, landscaping, and community clean up days. Photos below show the before and after of painting undertaken in 2022.



Before



After

Balbriggan Tidy Towns

Balbriggan Community Murals – as part of Balbriggan Tidy Towns – and Taylor's Hill Residents' Association received paint through the Fingal tender and proceeded to paint the walls of a hitherto neglected lane-way. Many different groups including crèches, schools, scout groups, youth groups, and seniors helped to paint the lane-way, and were encouraged to be creative in the process. The laneway was completely transformed into a vibrant and colourful space. Moreover, many different community groups were brought together as part of the painting process and are still involved in the maintenance of the walls.



Before



After

Annex 3

Cork County and City Council ReLove Paint Community Giveaway

Photos below show some of the results of the paint giveaway to community groups in Cork County and City. The initiative was supported by the Community, Culture, and Placemaking Directorate in partnership with ReLove Paint and Northside Community Enterprises.

The first photo shows some of the paint mixed by staff of Northside Community Enterprises. The second photo is of the assembly hall in Castlemartyr Primary School. The school was provided with paint for the mural pictured. The third photo shows the sports hall in Doneraile Secondary School, which was repainted through the initiative.



Paint prepared by Northside Community Enterprises in Cork City



Mural painted in Castlemartyr Primary School



Doneraile Secondary School