



## Bin the Bin

Effective and efficient waste management requires an integrated approach that recognises the need to reuse and recycle whilst also creating awareness of waste production habits. Recycling has numerous environmental benefits. Recycling saves energy, conserves natural resources, limits pollution, and it supports several sectors of the economy.

### University Strategy

Successive Strategic Plans have referred to the University's drive towards waste reduction. For the past year 450 tonnes of waste was produced here in NUI Galway with 52% recycled. Three Waste Characterisation Studies commissioned by the Buildings and Estates Office in recent years suggested that an average of 67% of waste in the general stream could in fact have been recycled if segregated and channelled correctly. Too many materials that can be recycled are passing through the office bin. Along with our colleagues in the Community and University Sustainability Project (CUSP) and the Green Campus team, Buildings & Estates are striving towards a reduction in the waste produced on campus and a 60% rate of recycling by 2025. We can only achieve real and significant environmental changes with the support, co-operation and enthusiasm of everyone who is part of the campus community. We are delighted to have now introduced Bin the Bin in every building on campus.

### Bin the Bin - How does it work?

Bin the Bin focuses on enhanced recycling in the workplace and asks everybody to help achieve this goal. As the name would suggest it removes the traditional under-desk office bin for which there is no segregation option and thus no recycling and replaces them with dedicated recycling stations in key communal locations on every floor of the building.

Initially the waste station will consist of two bins, general waste and recycling (consistent with our external black and blue bins). A brown organic bin will be in a few locations. The user deposits their general waste in the black bin as it is created but can store some recycling waste in the desk top recycler tray provided before depositing in the blue bin.



Since the introduction of Bin the Bin the campus recycling rate has increased from 45% to 52%. In buildings where it has been fully embraced it has achieved recycling rates of 70% plus.



### Benefits of the Project

#### If successful the scheme will deliver:

- Reduced waste to Landfill
- Increased Recycling
- Reduced Costs
- Aid in the reduction of energy use.

#### The success of this scheme depends on:

- A Commitment from senior management.
- Make it part of your Unit Environmental Strategy/ Policy
- The selection of a Champion in each Unit
- Communicating your Plans , Targets & Successes
- The creation of greater individual awareness

### The Evidence.

The binless office concept is widespread all over Europe and the USA and the benefits are tangible and noteworthy. We talked to colleagues in other universities and the business community who observed remarkable improvements in their recycling statistics as a direct result of implementing a binless office scheme.

- The University of Leeds reported a 25% increase in their recycling rate when all office bins were removed and replaced with dedicated recycling stations in key communal locations.

- PwC reduced their landfill waste by 50% over four years after introducing the binless office.
- Aviva have an 89% recycling rate which they attribute in no small part to a binless office system.
- William Fry introduced the scheme with a commitment of reducing their landfill waste by 30%.
- Abbott Ireland achieved zero waste to landfill across the six manufacturing sites with binless office contributing significantly to this fantastic achievement.
- University College Cork adopted a binless office scheme in May 2012 and demonstrated a 10% increase in recycling.
- An interesting comparable is NUI Maynooth whose recycling rate increased from 45% to 65% as a direct result of their campus wide binless office scheme.

