

Dear CIWM Member

I'm honoured to write to you in my new role as CIWM President to introduce you to the CIWM Annual Review for 2023 which provides a fantastic opportunity to reflect on the achievements of CIWM over the last year, particularly the contributions of our superb volunteer community.

The 2023 review also provides an opportunity to reflect back to CIWM's origins – created by a group of enthusiastic volunteers who wanted to share knowledge and best practices 125 years ago. While our world and our sector have gone through many changes over this time, the organisation's founding principles still resonate and inspire us today: sharing knowledge, ideas and best practice; building connections and collaborations; and deploying innovation and new technologies, all to protect human health and the environment.

Over the years, the dedicated professionals of CIWM and its predecessors have helped shape the way we work today. Pushing boundaries, challenging convention, solving problems, and serving the communities of the UK and Ireland.

Today, we network globally, extending our reach as a community further in January with the acquisition of the Circular Economy Institute and the Circular Economy Club. In addition, we also grew CIWM membership by more than 10% in 2023.

Throughout 2023, we used our influential voice to advocate for our members and the sector by responding to important consultations, pressing the government to implement delayed waste reforms, and highlighting key issues through topical research and reports. Our 'Leading the Way' digital series, showcased the achievements of our sector to new audiences, reaching more than four million people.

Our work to raise standards in the sector included the introduction of a new skills matrix, an enhanced Operator Competence Scheme, and new training courses and qualifications, including the Operational Excellence Programme with Veolia.

We have maintained good progress across all aspects of our five-year strategy and, as I look forward to my Presidential year and reflect on the progress made so far in 2024, this success is set to continue. Already this year, we have launched a new competence scheme in Northern Ireland, continued our work to showcase circular economy innovators and most recently, ahead of next month's general election, we have set out ten policies we want the next UK government to implement. This is all alongside continued membership growth.

To improve services to members, we have also continued to develop our volunteer-led volunteer strategy, progressed our digital transformation project to deliver a new membership



portal and new CIWM website, and continued to work closely with members to continue to develop a more inclusive experience for all.

As we look ahead, my presidential theme asks us all to consider how stuff gets to us and whether we, as a sector, could collaborate at earlier stages of the product lifecycle to reduce the amount and complexity of these items. It asks, can our sector get involved at the design stage of product development to reduce the impacts of items. As a sector, we see the results of overconsumption, disposable design and imperfect service models every day in the millions of tonnes of material we handle. By harnessing our ability as a community to bring together professionals from across the whole supply chain, we can support better decision making to effectively reduce our use of precious resources and continue to move us to a world beyond waste.

I hope to meet many of you over the coming year in order to thank you personally for your ongoing contribution to our purpose and for your continued commitment to continuing the vision of our founders 125 years ago – to share knowledge and best practice for the benefit of all.

Tim Walker

CIWM President, 2024/2025

