



UK Packaging PRO appointed to lead the UK's packaging recycling scheme

- An industry bid led by the Food and Drink Federation (FDF) and the Industry Council for Packaging and the Environment (INCPEN) – 'UK Packaging PRO' – has been appointed by PackUK as the Producer Responsibility Organisation for the UK's packaging recycling (pEPR) scheme
- The bid has backing from over 100 organisations: retailers, product manufacturers, packaging producers, NGOs and waste management organisations
- The move will shift the UK towards a more integrated circular economy in packaging: in time making more recyclable materials available to businesses

UK Packaging PRO has been appointed by PackUK as the national Producer Responsibility Organisation (PRO) for the UK's packaging recycling scheme, Extended Producer Responsibility (pEPR) scheme. The bid was led by the Food and Drink Federation (FDF) and the Industry Council for Packaging and the Environment (INCPEN) on behalf of their members.

The appointment marks a major milestone in the delivery of the UK's packaging reforms.

Created by packaging producers and backed by organisations representing nearly half of the UK's EPR fees, UK Packaging PRO brings a united industry voice to one of the nation's most ambitious environmental reforms in decades. This new not-for-profit organisation will help shape a packaging system that works better for people, planet and producers by ensuring industry's insights are reflected in the scheme.

The EPR reforms mark a fundamental shift: placing responsibility directly in the hands of those who design and place packaging on the market. UK Packaging PRO will champion collaboration and innovation across the value chain, accelerating progress toward higher recycling rates, reduced waste and a more circular system.

UK Packaging PRO will work closely with PackUK, governments, local authorities, the waste and recycling sector, and obligated producers of all sizes to:

- Improve recycling rates, by supporting innovation and improvements in how packaging is made, used, collected and recycled
- Ensure fees and incentives align with real environmental progress
- Support local authorities with data, insight and practical tools
- Lead industry's efforts to improve and reduce packaging and support better recycling, across all four nations of the UK



The formal appointment of UK Packaging PRO will commence on 1 April 2026, with responsibilities introduced gradually. Karen Graley, who has led the successful application process, will continue as Head of UK Packaging PRO, directing the ramp up and mobilisation. Karen has a distinguished career in packaging innovation, working at both Waitrose and M&S, and was a founding director of OPRL.

Sebastian Munden CBE has been appointed Chair of the Board for UK Packaging PRO. A senior adviser, board director and champion of innovation in the circular economy, Sebastian brings over 30 years' global FMCG experience, most recently as former chief executive of Unilever UK & Ireland.

Karen Graley, Head of UK Packaging PRO, said:

"We're very proud to have been appointed to play such a vital role in the Packaging EPR scheme. UK Packaging PRO was created to give producers a genuine seat at the table. With strong governance in place, a clear mobilisation plan, and broad support from across the sector, we are ready to get to work – in close partnership with PackUK, governments, local authorities and organisations across the value chain to deliver a packaging system that works better for everyone."

Sebastian Munden CBE, Chair of the Board for UK Packaging PRO, said:

"Many of us in the industry have been working for this moment for many years. Although it has been a long time to get here, this is only the very beginning of industry-led EPR in the UK. A cost-conscious, data-driven, innovation-minded approach will be good for citizens, local authorities and producers, with benefits in standards of living and to the economy. I am looking forward to a genuine partnership between government and business."

Karen Betts OBE, Chief Executive, The Food and Drink Federation (FDF), said:

"I'm proud that FDF and INCPEN have played the central role we have in ensuring the UK's new EPR scheme has the right architecture and the right industry support to ensure it succeeds. EPR is a massive reform and a once-in-a-generation opportunity to transform food packaging and the UK's recycling system for the better."

"I'm confident that UK Packaging PRO will be a strong part of the new system from the get-go, led by industry and working collaboratively with other stakeholders, who perform equally vital roles, to deliver better outcomes for the environment, businesses and consumers. It's taken a great deal of hard work to get this far, and we're excited now to take UK Packaging PRO to the next stage."



Jeremy Blake, CEO, Pack UK, said:

"I'm delighted to welcome UK Packaging PRO as the new Producer Responsibility Organisation (PRO). This announcement follows a rigorous selection process, as PackUK was committed to choosing the best candidate possible to represent the diverse interests of the packaging industry. The appointment of the PRO will further enhance the scheme by unlocking the benefits that an industry led organisation can bring. I have full confidence that we have found that in UK Packaging PRO and look forward to working together with the PRO to achieve the shared goals of packaging producers and local authorities alike: higher recycling rates, lower costs and improved efficiency."

Paul Vanston, UK Packaging PRO Director and CEO of INCPEN, said:

'The UK Packaging PRO is a home for all sectors, public and private; and a home for driving innovation, high recycling rates, and efficiency & effectiveness in close partnership with Pack UK. The years of hard work by so many to get to this point must now be proved worth it through the great whole-system results we all achieve together'.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORTIVE QUOTES

Helen Fenwick, UK Packaging PRO Director and Senior Corporate Affairs Manager, Unilever UK & Ireland, said:

"The appointment of UK Packaging PRO is an important step toward delivering a more effective and efficient packaging system in the UK – one that strengthens producer responsibility, drives real progress on recycling, and supports the transition to a more circular economy. We're committed to working collaboratively across the system to help make the PRO a success."

Gareth Callan, UK Packaging Pro Board Director and PepsiCo UK Sustainable Packaging Lead, said:

"I'm delighted that PackUK has appointed UK Packaging PRO to work on delegated responsibilities in EPR. PepsiCo supports well run EPR to help create a world where packaging never becomes waste. We've initiated the process of collaboration to enhance circular value chains through FlexCollect and I'm excited to continue that journey with waste managers and Councils to bring better recycling outcomes and services to citizens."

Notes to editors

1. Formal appointment of UK Packaging PRO is 1 April 2026. UK Packaging PRO will be sharing more detail on our operational plans for the year soon.



2. UK Packaging PRO is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee established to support the delivery of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for packaging in the UK.
3. It has been created and supported by industry to respond to legislation placing responsibility on those who design and place packaging on the market.
4. The organisation will take a cross-industry approach, working with stakeholders across the packaging value chain to support the effective implementation of EPR, improve recycling outcomes and reduce packaging waste.
5. UK Packaging PRO will operate within the framework set by UK packaging EPR regulations and is now moving into its next phase of development and delivery.
6. As a newly established organisation, UK Packaging PRO will begin its existence from 1 April and will continue to build its capabilities over time. Engagement with stakeholders across industry, local authorities and the wider value chain will be an important part of this next phase.

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