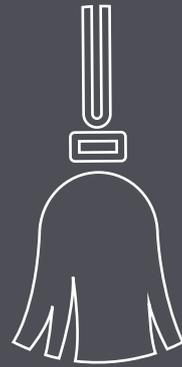


Julie's Bicycle

SUSTAINING CREATIVITY



Julie's Bicycle Practical Guide:

Procurement

The arts and creative industries are ideally placed to lead on environmental sustainability. With creativity and inspiration they can champion a greener economy, energy efficiency, challenge our reliance on fossil fuels, make creative use of otherwise wasted materials and open new ways to greener production and living.

Procurement: Version 2014



Julie's Bicycle Practical Guide: Procurement

What this guide will cover

This guide will help you and your organisation become more resource efficient by giving advice on integrating environmental sustainability into the decisions you make when choosing your products and services.

It covers the basic principles of procurement decision processes, sustainable procurement policies and liaising with suppliers, as well as specific buying advice for common products and services.

Reducing your impacts across procurement intersects with many different roles, from specifying what is needed, to how materials and products are used, and waste management.

Who is this guide for?

This guide is aimed at anyone within your organisation who makes buying decisions especially office, finance, facility and procurement managers.

What this guide will not cover

This guide focuses on environmental sustainability, although references are made to social and financial considerations, it should be noted that its focus is on reducing your carbon footprint and environmental impacts.

Further art-form-specific information, case studies, and support can be found on the Julie's Bicycle website.

Creating the Conditions for Change

There are four key stages to taking action on environmental sustainability:



- **Commit:** put in place the structures, resources, policies and responsibilities necessary to support and action your initiatives.
- **Understand:** understand your impacts and establish systems to measure and monitor them on a continuous basis.
- **Improve:** implement an action plan to reduce your environmental impact
- **Communicate:** engage your stakeholders including your team, suppliers and audiences; share and exchange knowledge with others in the industry.

Your success at integrating environmental sustainability into the way you work is often dependant on the internal culture of your organisation and the resources available to you.

Your key ingredients are **knowledge, skills, time, and enthusiastic people.**

It's important that the whole organisation should be involved in the process; this is an opportunity to test new ideas, build support and use existing experience. Without buy-in from people, you will at best limit, and at worst fail, to achieve your goals.

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Introduction

Everything you buy leaves a trail of environmental impacts – from the materials used and their extraction, to the energy and water used in manufacture, transport, and shop fronts, through the product's use time and ultimately disposal. This makes your purchasing decisions a powerful tool to influence positive change.

Regardless of the size of your organisation your contracts with suppliers (big or small) have strong leverage in steering supply chains in a more sustainable direction.

Integrating environmental sustainability into your decisions about products and services will require planning, research, change of tender and final decision making, however the growing availability of environmentally conscious products and services should make this process straightforward and less time consuming.

The bigger the demand for environmentally conscious products and services, the bigger the market for these will grow resulting in more options and potentially reduced costs.

Starting Points

Make a list of the things you buy, your suppliers and your annual spend.

From here you can establish:

- Where you spend the most money.
- What you buy the most of.
- What ends up in your bins most often.
- Where changing your provider and/or product have the most impact.
- Where you already know alternatives exist.
- If there any products or services that you have previously tried to switch to more environmentally sustainable alternatives, and why it didn't end up happening. Have conditions changed?
- Which (if any) contracts are coming up for renewal, or which ones are temporary.

Examine your buying systems and decision-making processes by asking the following questions:

- Do you have an ordering system in place that considers environmental sustainability?
- Is there an opportunity for staff to suggest more environmentally sustainable alternatives?
- Who decides how much and of what is bought?
- Are you frequently making last-minute buying decisions?

From here you can set yourself a realistic plan and prioritise which areas have the highest environmental impact, the areas of biggest spend and the switches that are easiest to make. You may not be able to change your buying habits overnight as often you are tied into a contract, however this is an opportunity to use the time to do some research into new suppliers.

Develop a Sustainable Procurement Policy



A sustainable procurement policy states your organisation's minimum 'green' requirements for different suppliers, products and services. It is a good way to communicate your commitments to existing and new suppliers, and ask them to comply or join you in making a commitment to sustainability.

Part of the policy may include the decision process you expect to be followed after each purchase. It's also a useful reference document for any staff making purchases.

Keep the format of the document clear, simple and straight to the point, so it can be the most practical for your organisation and team in decision making.

You can also set yourself targets and KPIs as part of an environmental policy and action plan. For example, a percentage of spend in high-impact areas switched over to 'greener' alternatives every year.

If you face constraints through your local authority or another umbrella organisation that dictates procurement policy or even suppliers, work with them to develop some joint guidelines.

AEG: Environmentally Preferable Procurement Policy

In 2010 AEG introduced a shared environmentally preferable procurement policy (EPP) as a resource to all of their venues and offices worldwide, based on new trends and innovations and providing purchasing guidelines to everyone responsible for making procurement decisions. "AEG depends on these purchases to run our business, and recognises the opportunity to make responsible purchasing decisions that minimise our environmental footprint and support suppliers engaging in environmentally friendly practices". AEG's EEP is part of their global 'IEARTH' environmental sustainability program, which outlines eight 2020 environmental goals. One goal is "Responsible Purchasing: 50% of total budget for designated high-impact products and services to be spent on environmentally preferable options." Although they are still working on tracking progress towards this goal more effectively, by the time of their 2014 Sustainability Report 45 AEG venues were purchasing "at least one category of environmentally preferable product". This kind of framework can be an effective way to enable staff to make greener purchasing decisions.

aegworldwide.com/sustainabilityreport/pdf/Sustainability-Report

Random House, Paper Procurement Policy:

Random House is committed to a programme of continuous improvement and reporting of direct and indirect impacts to minimise the influence that they have on the environment. They were the first UK publisher to publish a pro-FSC paper procurement policy, and the first book publisher in the world to gain FSC chain-of-custody accreditation. In January 2010 they secured a deal with their paper mills to enable them to use FSC paper on 100% of their b/w demy, royal, A format and B format titles.

[You can read their procurement policy here.](#)

Choosing and Liaising with Suppliers



Every product and service will have two parts to its environmental impact: the service or product itself, and the operational impact of the supplier. However, buying greener doesn't always mean you have to switch suppliers, so talk to your existing suppliers about alternatives they can offer and ask to see their environmental policy first.

Rank their products or service offers from most to least sustainable. Set up 'preferred products' and 'red' (i.e. banned products) lists with your regular suppliers, so that when ordering, the greenest products are automatically selected. For products on the 'red' list, source sustainable alternatives.

- If you can convince your supplier that you are an important customer and/or that environmental sustainability is also in their business interest, you can work on improvements together using the relationship you already have. It's worth asking existing suppliers about their future plans before targeting new suppliers or contractors. They could be looking to expand or replace their range.

If you don't feel like your existing supplier or service aligns with your sustainability objectives, it's time to look for greener alternatives. You can normally sample products from new suppliers before committing to a contract. When choosing a new supplier you should:

- Ask your existing and potential new suppliers about their policies on travel, packaging, print materials and their own sourcing, too.
- Buy local wherever possible, and use local traders, people and contractors. This not only supports the local economy, but also reduces delivery distances and transport emissions.

Knowles West Media Centre and Bristol Energy Co-op

Knowle West Media Centre is an arts organisation and charity based in Knowle West, South Bristol. "At KWMC we have leased our roof to the Bristol Energy Co-op (<http://www.bristolenergy.coop>) who have installed 104 x 240 Watt Innotech panels and four inverters. The 25kW solar PV array was installed in July 2012. We are also participating in a battery storage and DC system trial, with Western Power Distribution, which supplies energy to power our training room lights and charging points in the kit store, but its essential purpose is to provide additional power during local surges in demand for power. We originally thought the batteries would be directly powered from the solar panels, but they actually draw power from the mains to reflect the power generated by the solar panels. This has reduced our mains electricity cost by 25% and the panels generate approximately 40% of what we used to use before we had them. The difference is what we export to the National Grid."

[Carolyn Hassan, Director](#)

www.juliesbicycle.com/latest/case-studies/knowle-west-media-centre

Certifications, accreditation schemes, and already-existing lists can be useful tools. For example, many organisations refer to the Marine [Conservation Society's Sustainable Fish Guide](#) to measure the carbon footprint of their fish supplies.

Julie's Bicycle also runs a Green Arts Marketplace, which lists suppliers to the creative industries who can provide green goods and services or who have environmental commitments. www.greenartsmarketplace.com

Some Key Environmental Sustainability Certification and Accreditation Schemes for Suppliers:



ISO 14001 is an international standard and certification for effective environmental management systems. It helps provide a framework for organisations to integrate environmental sustainability into their operations.



The Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS) is a voluntary initiative designed to improve companies' environmental performance, based on a European Regulation. Registered companies have to exceed minimum legal compliance and work on continuous improvement of their environmental performance and are independently verified and assessed.



ISO 50001 is an international standard and certification for effective energy management systems.



The Carbon Trust Standard is a UK certification for organisations and businesses actively working to reduce their carbon footprint. Independently verified, it covers impacts from energy, water use, and waste.



ISO 20121 is an international standard and certification for sustainable events management systems, covering environmental, social, and economic impacts.



OHSAS 18001 is an international standard and certification for occupational health and safety management systems. Please note that it does not address environmental sustainability.



The Carbon Trust also offers Carbon Footprint Labels for products: The Reducing CO2 Label shows that an organisation has measured and certified the carbon footprint of its products and services. Re-certification is necessary every 2 years and is only successful if the carbon footprint has been reduced. The CO2 Measured Label shows that an organisation has accurately measured the carbon footprint of its products and services, but does not demonstrate a commitment to reduction.



Creative Green is the UK's leading environmental certification scheme for the creative sector, covering festivals, venues, indoor events and offices. This Julie's Bicycle respected certification scheme has been running for five years and has certified over 700 organisations to date. It provides a rigorous, independently assessed approach to the understanding, management and sustained reduction of your environmental impacts.

More specific certifications and labels are detailed in the sections that follow.

Procurement and Waste



With everything you buy, it's good to think about what will happen to it at the end of its life, and your buying decisions should match your waste management choices.

If you want to minimise the amount of waste that goes to landfill, you will need some understanding of waste types, the waste processing facilities available in your local area or the ones used by your waste management contractor.

- Check with your contractor what they can recycle. Recycling icons on a product or packaging do not guarantee that the facilities to recycle it are available in a particular location.

Ideally, you want the materials coming into your organisations to match the types of materials you can recycle or compost.

See our Practical Guides for Waste Management at Buildings and Outdoor Events for more information. www.juliesbicycle.com/resources

Contracting and Tendering



It's good to think about 'whole life' costs and not just 'upfront' costs when thinking about value for money as the cheapest option is not always the best environmental option – greener products often have lower operating costs over their lifetime, including maintenance and in some cases disposal costs.

Explicitly include environmental or green clauses in tenders and contracts – this shows that you are committed, and expect the suppliers you work with to join your commitments.

Consider what is most important to you, as well as what you need to know – such as event debriefing, waste management, water management and energy suppliers.

Think about the 'triple bottom line' when considering new contracts – financial, social and environmental impacts. Include a rating category for each in tenders, ideally equally weighted to each other and other categories such as quality or experience.

The Lyric Hammersmith and First Mile Recycling

The Lyric Hammersmith switched waste providers from H&F waste to First Mile and have been really happy with the results. They consulted them from the start to understand their needs and provided suitable signage and bins to maximise the capture of recycling on site. Their fun and captivating signage has now filtered down into staff and audience, with detailed and clear information on how to recycle efficiently, recycling points and fun references to polar bears! The Lyric is now recycling all of its waste which makes them zero to landfill theatre.

www.lyric.co.uk

Buying with Environmental Sustainability in Mind



General Principles:



The general principles of sustainable procurement are:

Avoid, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle.

Do you need it? Can do without something, or upcycle or repurpose existing resources? If you do need to purchase, here are some guidelines when making your choices:

- Buy only as much as you need to.
- Consider hiring, borrowing, or sharing resources before you buy something new.
- Buy products that contain or use renewable, reused, or recycled content and that contain materials with a low environmental impact, which are manufactured in a way that minimises environmental impact, and are fairly traded.
- Choose products that are long lasting and that can be reused, recycled or biodegraded
- Choose products with minimal packaging that contains post-consumer recycled content, and is recyclable.
- Choose ethical suppliers that provide safe working conditions and fair pay.
- Choose suppliers that offer end of life reuse, recycling, recovery or remanufacture (in order of priority).
- Choose products made locally where possible, to reduce transport miles.
- Choose products that are manufactured or supplied by companies with certified health and safety, energy, environmental and/or event sustainability management systems.

Upcycling, Repurposing, Reusing?

You may come across a number of similar terms, some of which are, at times, used interchangeably (although they have subtly different meanings).

'Upcycling' was coined as a response to the idea of recycling often being closer to 'downcycling' – taking whole materials and products, smashing them up, and re-making them into something inferior to the original product or material. Upcycling describes taking waste materials or products and converting them into new materials or products of better (environmental) value or quality.

'Repurposing' generally means using a product or object in a different way than it was intended, either by modifying it for a new function or simply by changing the way it is used.

'Reusing' is using a product or object more than once, either for the same function or for something different, but without fundamentally changing the item.

Materials:



Prioritise:

- Materials that are borrowed, hired, or leased.
- Reclaimed/reused/recycled, especially metal and wood.
- Non-PVC materials e.g. canvas or velcro ties for marquees, signage, cabling tape.
- Zero or low Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) adhesives and coatings.
- Water-based and low VOC paints.
- Non-coated or self-finished timber, metals, paper and board.
- Natural varnishes, lacquers, waxes and oils.
- Natural or recycled insulation e.g. rockwool, corkboard, recycled cellulose.

City Arts and Nottingham Caribbean Carnival

"City Arts began developing their green policy in 2013. This prompted us to address our energy, waste and water consumption within the organisation, beginning by looking at the general wastage associated with office work and then moving on to our creative programme. This focus inspired us to highlight the environmental issue of recycling in the theme for our troupe in the 2013 Nottingham Caribbean Carnival.

"The overall troupe was called Neptune's Ocean Trash Can, and the group wanted to highlight the amount of waste that goes into the sea, specifically forming vortex of particles in the ocean, nicknamed Ocean Trash Cans. Our visual theme was water, with our Carnival King as Neptune. As with any carnival project, we have cupboards full of past projects, so we decided to recycle everything we could, rather than investing in new materials. We also looked at creative re-using, such as making flowers out of old Pepsi bottles and decorations out of old carrier bags. Leading the troupe was a galleon ship, made around a 'reclaimed' shopping trolley. The final part of our troupe was three street theatre performers, nicknamed the scaggies, who interacted with the public, gathering rubbish as they went and pegging it to their costumes, so by the end of the carnival they were a walking rubbish pile. It is an age old carnival tradition to convey strong messages through the dance and celebrations, and we enjoyed bringing that to our troupe."

Alison Denholm, Creative Programme Officer

www.city-arts.org.uk/video/sea-themed-carnival-troupe-nottingham-caribbean-carnival/

Avoid or Limit:

- Non-FSC certified timber or wood-based products.
- Tropical hardwood, MDF, plywood and veneered panels.
- PVC, epoxy resin plastics, acrylonitrile butadiene styrene (ABS) plastics, polycarbonate plastics, polystyrene and latex (except for hand gloves).
- Carpets, vinyl, self-adhesive vinyl graphics.
- Materials and coatings containing VOCs and solvents – formaldehyde, perchlorethylene, xylene.
- Plasterboard.
- Materials which shed particles or fibres during installation.
- Materials or substances that can be irritating to skin.
- Don't over-purchase products such as paint – work out how much you'll need.

Printed Materials and Merchandise:



- Check that inks used on printed materials are environmentally friendly and have a soy or other vegetable oil base rather than petroleum, and contain a low percentage of volatile organic compounds (VOCs). For apparel printing, water-based inks may also be suitable, and are generally a more environmentally friendly choice.
- Avoid inks that contain heavy metals such as barium, copper and zinc.
- Choose only 100% (preferably post-consumer) recycled paper for copy paper and promotional materials. If this isn't possible, choose paper which is a mixture of recycled content and fibre sourced from sustainably managed forests (see certifications below).
- Choose the lightest paper appropriate for your needs. 200gsm paper uses twice the wood fibre as 100gsm paper.
- Stick to standard formats as much as possible and speak to your printer about which format is best for minimising waste from paper offcuts.
- Choose an ISO 14001 certified printing company, or a local supplier who uses certified paper and vegetable inks, and choose ISO 14001 certified merchandise companies or local suppliers who use certified organic materials for clothing and low-environmental-impact materials for other types of merchandise.
- Avoid glossy and laminated materials where possible as these use components such as plastics that make them much more difficult to recycle.
- Look for a printer using waterless or low-alcohol processes.
- Choose textiles, garments and uniforms that use materials which are either not dyed or use plant-based dyes.
- Choose clothing or textiles made from organic cotton (which avoids the huge impact of pesticides and fertilisers associated with non-organic cotton) or more sustainable materials such as bamboo fibre (which grows faster and with less water) or even fabrics made from recycled PET bottles.
- Use non-PVC materials for banners.
- Choose corrugated plastic board over foam-core for signs.
- Avoid chlorine-bleached paper/board.

The Spark Arts for Children

The Spark Arts for Childrens' main level of activity is around print for marketing, and specifically the brochure and bookmarks for the festival. They work with printer Taylor Bloxham who sources paper from sustainable sources such as Howard Smith Paper Group who supply a carbon balanced paper, and support the World Land Trust. As they do a large amount of printing in the office, they print in draft and reuse paper where possible and use The LCB Depot, who supply 100% recycled copy paper

thesparkarts.co.uk

Some Key Textile Certifications:



The Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS) is a textile processing standard for organic fibres which includes both ecological and social criteria, backed by independent certification of the entire textile supply chain.



The Soil Association in the UK certifies organic textiles according to GOTS, covering the whole supply chain from field through manufacture to final product against environmental and social standards.



The Global Recycling Standard (GRS) focuses on the percentage of pre- and post-consumer recycled content of a textile product. It has strict conditions for how waste is handled during the production process, water treatment requirements and chemicals use, and social responsibility in accordance with the International Labor Organisation (ILO) criteria.



The OEKO-TEX® Standard 100 is an independent testing and certification system for textile raw materials, intermediate and end products at all stages of production. The certification indicates that harmful substances were not used in textile production.



Fairtrade Cotton focuses on fair social and working standards for cotton farmers. Please note that this does not guarantee that environmental impacts are being addressed.



Companies signed up to the Fair Wear Foundation (FWF) Code of Labour Practices are committed to certain social standards and rights for their factory workers. Please note that this does not guarantee that environmental impacts are being addressed.

Key Paper and/or Sustainable Forestry Certifications:



The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) is an international, non-governmental organisation dedicated to promoting responsible management of the world's forests. It helps consumers to identify, purchase and use timber and forest products produced from well-managed forests.



The Blue Angel (Der Blaue Engel) is a German certification scheme covering different product groups. Its paper certification is generally considered the most stringent in Europe: paper must be made from recycled fibre and use no chlorine-based bleaching agents or other harmful chemicals during production.



The Rainforest Alliance certifies paper and timber products to FSC standard as well as its own Rainforest Alliance Certification, looking at chain of custody and sustainable forest management.



The Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) is a global sustainable forest management certification system covering ecological, social, and ethical standards.



The Sustainable Forest Initiative (SFI) is a forest certification standard for sustainably managed forests considering mainly ecological factors. It is much more commonly used in the US.



The EU Ecolabel helps to identify products and services that have a reduced environmental impact from the extraction of raw material through to production, use and disposal. There is an Ecolabel standard available for paper.

CD Packaging

Switching from a plastic jewel case to a pure card wallet can reduce CD packaging carbon emissions by up to 95%. Moving to a combined card and plastic option reduces GHG emissions by over two thirds. A consumer survey conducted with the Entertainment Retailers Association has shown that audiences are supportive of this, with many buyers expressing a preference for card.

- The key impacts associated with card-packaged CDs are the choices of paper and printing – apply the principles outlined in the 'Printed Materials and Merchandise' section.
- The impact of shrink-wrap for cardboard packaging, compared to the plastic jewel case, is miniscule so it should be used if required to ensure the album can be packaged in card rather than jewel-case. Use alternatives to non-recyclable PVC.

For more information, see [Impacts and Opportunities: Reducing the Carbon Emissions of CD Packaging \(Julie's Bicycle, 2009\)](#).

Equipment:



Digital:



- Could you hire rather than buying it outright?
- Choose equipment that is energy efficient, made from recycled materials, recyclable and multi-functional (where possible).
- Think about how long each piece of equipment will last, how quickly it will become outdated and how you will dispose of it. Check whether the supplier has a take-back or disposal scheme or obligation.
- Consider how easy a certain piece of equipment will be to maintain: are spare parts easily available through the manufacturer? How long is the warranty? How specialised is the equipment?
- Purchase energy-efficient models when replacing old equipment. As a starting point, check the EU Energy Star database.
- Choose appliances that have an A, A+, A++ or A+++ energy efficiency rating. Avoid category B or lower energy rated electrical products.
- Ensure that printers/photocopiers etc. use cartridges that can be recycled.
- Buy rechargeable batteries rather than single-use batteries. Make sure you recycle all used batteries.
- Switch all lights to low-energy bulbs or LEDs.
- Make arrangements with your lighting supplier to collect and dispose of dead light bulbs.
- Choose natural refrigerants such as ammonia or hydrocarbon. Avoid hydro fluorocarbons (HFCs) refrigerant gases.
- Ensure that equipment is made in an ethical manner – e.g. that factory conditions meet labour standards.

It's easy to assume that digital is greener than print – and this can be the case. However, digital services also have carbon footprints, from the materials including plastics and rare metals used in their construction, to the energy required to run devices, servers, and infrastructure.

- Change to a web hosting service powered by renewable energy.
- Where possible, move your computing to a centralised external data centre powered by low-carbon energy and actively addressing their carbon footprint.
- If you are running an in-house data centre, make sure it is sized for your needs, as these are often not used to their full potential. Ask your IT manager to look into ways of maximising usage, and to look into other ways of improving the efficiency of your server rooms e.g. cooling systems.

Look into the environmental commitments of the companies providing your email and other digital services. There are now many well-known names investing heavily in switching their services to be renewably powered.

Cleaning:



Catering and Food:



- Choose local companies where possible, to minimise travel.
- Choose companies that use environmentally friendly cleaning products (or buy environmentally friendly cleaning products).
- Ensure that hand towels and toilet paper are made from 100% post-consumer recycled paper.
- Choose less hazardous cleaning products that have a lower environmental impact (e.g. biodegradability, low toxicity, low volatile organic compound (VOC) content, reduced packaging).
- Buy concentrated cleaning products where appropriate, and dilute them on site, which means you can buy large quantities without the associated transportation or packaging costs.
- Choose products with recyclable packing and refillable bottles.

- Give preference to organic, seasonal, fresh and fairly traded foodstuffs and drinks.
- Choose local foods wherever possible. Where foods not available from the UK are required, aim to source from Europe rather than further afield.
- Where possible avoid airfreighted produce.
- Buy seasonal produce. Fruit and vegetables grown in greenhouses out-of-season can have a very high carbon footprint.
- Give preference to opt-into meat caterers and trader to keep your food emissions down.
- Choose washable and reusable cutlery, crockery, napkins, cups and condiment tubs. If reusable is not possible, use disposable service ware which is compostable.
- Avoid polystyrene.
- Avoid single-serve sachets of pepper, salt, sugar, condiments, milk etc.
- Avoid plastic straws.
- Choose compostable food packaging, made from sugarcane waste, palm leaves, sustainably produced or recycled paper/card/wood, or bioplastics such as corn or potato starch in accordance with your waste management capabilities.
- Avoid unnecessary packaging. Plastics are often used to overpackage food where there is no need. You can do this by shopping at local markets or grocery stores rather than supermarkets.
- Avoid buying or selling bottled water by offering free tap or filtered water (and reusable cups/glasses).
- Meat should carry the British Red Tractor certification, British free range/outdoor reared, RSPCA Freedom Food and/or certified organic.
- Fruit and vegetables should be certified organic.
- Fish should be Marine Stewardship Council certified, be on the Marine Conservation Society's 'fish to eat' list and exclude all species on the 'fish to avoid list' at www.fishonline.org
- Eggs should be free range, RSPCA Freedom Food and/or certified organic.
- Tea, coffee, hot chocolate, sugar and bananas should be certified Fair Trade and/or Rainforest Alliance.

Battersea Arts Centre

Battersea Arts Centre repurpose their old computers after three years within the building for use by staff or artists or the have them removed by 123recycleforfree (who reuse and recycle electric equipment) who donate them to Computeraid. To ensure all laptops and computers are switched off at the end of the day, they nominated a member of staff to check this each day.

batterseaartscentre.wordpress.com

Some Key Food Certifications and Labels



The British Red Tractor is a food assurance scheme that covers production standards on safety, hygiene, animal welfare and the environment. Certified food and drink is fully traceable back to independently inspected farms in the UK.



RSPCA Freedom Food is a UK assurance and food labelling scheme dedicated to improving farm animal welfare, which inspects conditions in farms, hatcheries, transporters, animal handlers, abattoirs and processors.



The Soil Association in the UK certifies farms and businesses that meet UK, EU, and international standards on organic products as a minimum. Please note that not all certified organic food will hold any kind of visible standard – the labeling as 'organic' is in itself regulated.



The Linking Environment and Farming (LEAF) Marque is a certification and audit scheme for sustainable integrated farm management covering pollution, energy efficiency, water use, wildlife protection, and other environmental factors.



The Marine Stewardship Council's ecolabel is issued to businesses that have undergone third party verification to demonstrate that their seafood product comes from sustainable fisheries.



Rainforest Alliance Certification certifies farms that meet the standards of the Sustainable Agriculture Network and protect workers, wildlife, habitats and communities.



The Fairtrade Foundation addresses workers' and producers' rights. Certified products must meet certain labour conditions as well as minimum prices for farmers and growers. Please note that there is a lesser focus on environmental sustainability.

Accommodation:



- Choose hotels and accommodation providers with commitments to environmental sustainability.
- Encourage crew, staff and performers to stay with friends and family where possible when travelling or touring.
- For longer stays, renting flats can be more energy-efficient (and cost-effective) than staying in hotels or B&Bs.
- For more on choosing green accommodation, read our Practical Guide on Touring.

Some Key Food Certifications and Labels:



The TripAdvisor GreenLeaders scheme aims to highlight eco-friendly hotels and B&Bs and rates them according to Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum. They are marked out on the TripAdvisor website through a GreenLeaders badge; clicking through brings up a list of the accommodation's green practices.



The Green Tourism Business Scheme rates the environmental sustainability of accommodation in the UK according to Gold, Silver, or Bronze. It is independently validated by the International Centre for Responsible Tourism (ICRT)



The Rainforest Alliance certifies paper and timber products and services that have a reduced environmental impact. There is an Ecolabel category for Tourist Accommodation Services.

Transport:



- Choose taxi firms, couriers and delivery companies that address their environmental impact, either by providing electric, biodiesel or hybrid vehicles, and/or sending their drivers on sustainable driving courses.
- Consider joining a car club scheme rather than owning one or more cars.
- If you do need to buy a vehicle, consider investing in a hybrid, or choose a fuel-efficient model. The Vehicle Certification Agency (VCA) publishes data on fuel efficiency and emissions: carfueldata.direct.gov.uk. It is worth noting that cars generally don't achieve the full MPG figure advertised by manufacturers.
- Take advantage of the government's First Year Allowance (FYA) scheme, which allows you to write off the cost of some low-emissions or zero emission vehicles against your taxable profits in the first year of setting up your business. See the HMRC website for more information.
- Avoid travel where possible by making use of video and/or conference software for calls and meetings.
- Combine trips or deliveries.
- Use cycle couriers for small local deliveries – they tend to be cheaper too.
- [See our Practical Guide on Business Travel and Staff Commuting](#) for more detailed information.

Energy:



- Buy 'green tariff' electricity from your current provider. Green tariffs are sometimes more expensive than standard tariffs, but you will not be subject to the climate change levy if you purchase renewables, which can make it more competitive.
- Switch to a 100% renewable energy provider such as Good Energy, Ecotricity or Green Energy.
- If your landlord has control over your electricity supply, ask them to switch to one of the above.
- Consider investing in on-site renewable energy generation.
- For more information, see our [Practical Guide to Energy Management in Buildings](#).

Banking:

- Choose an ethical bank, which lends its money to and invests in green and ethical businesses.
- Ask for electronic bank statements.

What Does it Mean to be Green?

Sometimes suppliers make unsubstantiated claims about their environmental credentials, and it can be useful to know some signs of 'greenwash' to look out for:

- Anything mentioning 'certified' (e.g. "certified organic") should have some kind of evidence of independent certification.
- Ideally, any vague claims such as "green" or "eco-friendly" should be clearly backed up and explained.
- There should not be any vague comparisons – e.g. "Now even better for the planet!" or "Uses Less Energy" – without further clarification.

If in doubt, ask questions of the supplier.

Further Reading and Resources



Julie's Bicycle Green Arts Marketplace:

Julie's Bicycle Practical Guides:

- [Sustainable Production](#)
- [Greening the Office](#)
- [Touring](#)
- [Communications and Marketing](#)
- [Waste Management in Buildings](#)
- [Waste Management at Outdoor Events](#)
- [Energy Management in Buildings](#)

[Ethical Consumer website](#)

[Lancaster University Ethical Health Check](#)

[Ethical Trading Initiative base code](#)

[Forum for the Future](#) sustainable procurement tool

As part of the London 2012 Learning Legacy, LOCOG has freely published a number of documents related to the organisation of the Olympic games in London. While these are far more in-depth than necessary for most organisations, they provide a useful detailed overview and reference point, including:

- [LOCOG Sustainable Sourcing Code for London 2012](#)
- [LOCOG London 2012 Food Vision](#)
- [LOCOG Sustainability Guidance Pack for Suppliers for London 2012](#)

[EU Energy Star Database](#)

[EU Ecolabel Catalogue](#)

[Marine Conservation Society](#)

[Triodos Bank](#)

Julie's Bicycle

SUSTAINING CREATIVITY

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