

## A-Z of office waste reduction

This is a simple A – Z of office waste minimisation, with contact details referred to throughout available at the end of the document. If you have any feedback, please place something in the suggestion box, contact one of the Environment Champions Action Team, or email [sustainability@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:sustainability@brighton-hove.gov.uk)

### A

**Aluminium foil** – Kim Jackson, Ground floor Hove Town Hall takes these to schools to use in their charity projects.

### B

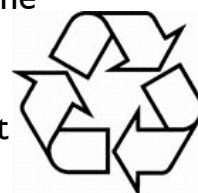
**Batteries** – Buy rechargeable batteries. A recharger can charge batteries up to 1,000 times. Even better – buy a solar powered battery recharger e.g. from the Centre for Alternative Technology!

**Bag for life** – Most major supermarkets will provide you with a “bag for life” and will replace it when it wears out. Taking this along to each shopping trip / when you go to buy your lunch will avoid the need to use new plastic bags.

**Bottles** – Reuse them by filling them with drinks. Plastic and glass bottles can then be recycled when they cannot be reused anymore.

**Bins** – Do you need an individual bin or can you share one? As habits change and the amount of waste produced is reduced and the amount recycled increases, there will be less need for individual bins. They will not get full in a day and less bins mean the cleaners can spend their time emptying recycling bins instead of nearly-empty waste bins.

**Buy recycled** – Check for the mobius loop, and the wording which says how much of the product has been recycled – a number inside the triangle indicates the percentage of recycled material the product is made from. If there isn't a number inside, it should mean that the product is recyclable, rather than made from recycled materials, but check the wording. Guilbert do a range of recycled stationery products and are willing to expand their range if there is a demand.



### C

**Cardboard recycling** – Hove Town Hall: flatten boxes and take them to outside basement area or contact GSAs if you have a lot, for smaller pieces use office bins. Oxford Street: flatten boxes and take them to the basement. Good condition boxes? - Offer them on the Office Furniture Exchange or For Sale bulletin boards for people who are moving and can use them for packing.

**Cans** – Should be rinsed and crushed, and taken to recycling points in kitchens. A can crusher is available in the ground floor kitchen of Hove Town Hall.

**Carrier bags** – Only accept carrier bags from shops when absolutely necessary (make sure you keep receipt when you leave the shop!). Use a “Bag for Life” or take your own bag. Reuse plastic bags as many times as possible before recycling them. There is a plastic bag recycling point in Hove Town Hall on the first floor landing.

**Cards (greeting)** – Can be recycled in mixed paper bins or the pictures can cut out and reused as a gift tag.

**Computers** – ICT will take these and pass them onto a company which either reuses or recycles the parts.

**Climate change** - Global methane emissions from landfill are estimated to be between 30 and 70 million tonnes each year - methane is the most potent climate change gas. As well as this, the carbon emissions needed to produce and transport products as we consume more all increase carbon dioxide emissions.

**Cotton reusable bags** – A good alternative to plastic bags for carrying shopping. Jute bags were given out as part of the Environment Champions launch, which can be reused.

**CDs/CD ROMs** – Both can be recycled. If you do not have CD recycling in your office, contact The Beacon Press, who will supply you with a small box to collect the CDs in and come and collect it when it is full

## **D**

**Disposable items** – Try not to buy them! Try and buy products which are reusable and hard wearing, so saving money as well as the environment!

**Doing your bit** – If everyone did just a bit towards reducing their waste we would make a difference. If everyone thought about everything they did around reducing their waste then we would make a **huge** difference!

## **E**

**Envelopes** – When sending mail internally and even externally to those you know, use old envelopes. Cross out or put a label over the old address. Don't get enough post to stock up on old envelopes? Look at the Envelope Exchange in the Wave library (under Sustainability) for those people with a surplus of envelopes.

**Email** - Don't print out emails unless absolutely necessary – you can archive emails. Instead of writing paper notes for people when they get phone message, send them an email using the “**while you were out**” facility in the **Corporate Stationery** folder

When sending an email to many people, put the email addresses in the “bcc” box. This way, not only are all the email addresses confidential, but if you do need to print out the email, it doesn't also print out a long list of email addresses in a narrow column!

## **F**

**Fax machines** – Use paper that has only been used on one side for the fax machine but don't forget to check it's loaded the right way!

**Fax cartridges** – Can be recycled through the post rooms at Kings House or Brighton Town Hall. Other charities will also take cartridges – check the Recycling Directory for details.

**Furniture** – Our new office furniture contract means they will take back and recycle any furniture you bought from them. For existing furniture bought before 1<sup>st</sup> January this year, post the item on the Office Furniture Exchange bulletin board.

## **G**

**Green waste** - There are compost bins in the ground and first floor kitchens in Hove Town Hall. The Recycling Directory will tell you what can and can't go in there, as will information by the bins themselves.

**Glass** – Some offices have glass recycling, as do the ground and first floor kitchens in Hove Town Hall.

**General waste** – Yes, although we would like to reduce total waste, there will be some waste you will still need to throw away e.g. food packaging.

## **I**

**ICT** - Print double sided if you have a duplex (double sided) printer. If you don't have a duplex printer you can buy a duplex attachment for your printer, contact ICT purchasing for more information. Photocopy double sided.

Don't forget to print preview documents, if they go just over the page reset the page margins.

You can also do this in Lotus Notes - if the signature / disclaimer / any unimportant information goes on to the next page, do not print it out, select the pages you do want to print. Try to print an even number of pages if possible to make full use of double-sided printing.

Don't print out emails unless absolutely necessary – you can archive emails.

Instead of writing paper notes for people when they get phone message, send them an email using the “**while you were out**” facility in the **Corporate Stationery** folder

Share documents instead of printing them out

If you have staff newsletters, why not email them, put them on the shared drive or post them on the Wave instead of printing a copy for everyone.

**All this information is available in more detail in the “Reducing your Waste through ICT document” on the Wave library.**

## **J**

**Junk mail** – Reduce junk mail by subscribing for free to Mailing Preference Services.

## **K**

**Kitchen waste** – see Green Waste – this can be composted.

## **L**

**Lunchbox** - Choose products with the least amount of packaging. Avoid juice boxes, plastic outer packs, individually wrapped cheese slices, etc.-anything you throw away before even using the product!

Buy canvas or string shopping bags you can use again and again.

Store leftovers and pack sandwiches in reusable containers, not foil or clingfilm.

Avoid food packaged in individual servings. Buy in bulk. It saves money and the environment. Separate them into reusable containers if necessary.

Buy drinks in refillable containers. Use a durable refillable mug or glass at work.

**Landfill sites** - Water and oxygen are required to break down rubbish. But water and oxygen are in short supply deep in a landfill, so products often remain in there for a number of years. For example, a plastic bottle can take around 500 years to break down in a landfill site, whilst a glass bottle will take over a million years!

Poorly managed sites result in polluted ground or surface waters.

Without proper control, landfills can be a source of nuisance to neighbours as a result of, for example, odours, flies, litter or noise in the surrounding area.

Even with good site management, many current landfill sites are nearly full and we are rapidly running out of suitable land, close to where the waste is produced, for new landfills.

Most importantly, when we landfill our waste we are simply burying - and losing - our resources, and the energy and the time which have been used to make the product.

## **M**

**Magazines** – If still in good condition these can be given to reception areas (e.g. citydirect), waiting rooms or be left in staff rooms to be re-read by others.

## **N**

**Newsletters** – If they are to be widely circulated why not put them on a shared drive, the Wave on online today or email them round rather than printing out individual copies.

**Newspapers** – May be taken to animal sanctuaries (e.g. Cat Protection / RSPCA) for bedding or schools and nurseries for artwork. Recycle anything else in mixed paper bins.

## **O**

**Office Furniture Exchange bulletin board** – If you have spare office furniture or files / other stationery you no longer need, post them on the board for others to use. If you need any stationery or furniture, look here first before buying something new.

**Office Furniture recycling** – If you have no luck on the bulletin board, try one of these organisations who can organise to take away office furniture and reuse it:

Emmaus Furniture Recycling

Magpie Furniture Recycling

YMCA

## **P**

**Printers** – Don't forget to print double sided if you have a duplex printer. If you don't, when you buy a new printer why not get a duplex printer and save on future paper costs. Many printers can have a duplex attachment added to allow them to print double sided – contact ICT Purchasing for more information.

If you print only one side out and make a mistake, reuse the paper or place it in the “reuse” box by the printer.

**Photocopiers** – Most copiers can produce double sided documents, just select “1 to 2 sided” on the options menu and load your document in the top feeder. If you make a mistake, reuse the paper or place it in the “reuse” box by the photocopier.

**Paper** – Reduce by not printing emails and using double sided options for printing and photocopying. Also share documents and reuse paper with printing on one side by making scrap pads. Recycle paper when it has been used on both sides.

**Page margins** – Reduce these to reduce the amount of paper you use if you print out the document – see “Reducing your waste through ICT” in the Wave library for how to do this.

**Plastic bottles** – Crush and recycle in some offices and the ground and first floor kitchens of Hove Town Hall / in the kitchen in Oxford Street. Reuse water bottles by filling them up with tap water / any other drink to take out / to work / while exercising.

**Paper towels** – Try to use the hand dryer instead to cut down on waste – did you know in Hove Town Hall we use around 100 packets of paper towels a week!

**Packaging** - Choose unpackaged items wherever possible, or packaging that contains recycled materials and can be recycled easily e.g. paper, cardboard, glass.

**Phone books** – Can be recycled in mixed paper bins.

**Paperless office** – Will we be able to achieve this? Electronic Document Management Systems are being looked at. In the mean time archive emails you want to keep, share files, put things in the shared drive and print out double sided

## Q

**Question** – Do you really need it? The amount we consume is rising all the time, and one of the effects of that is more waste! Try to buy things with little packaging or with recycled / recyclable packaging. Always think when leaving the house whether you'll need to take a bag with you rather getting a new one and just adding to your pile of plastic bags!

## R

**Reduce** – Use this guide and further information in the Wave library (under sustainability) to reduce your waste as much as possible.

**Reuse** – Use reusable glasses for drinks, reuse paper that has only been used on one side, reuse cartons / containers / boxes / envelopes instead of throwing them away.

**Recycling** - At the shop, ask yourself these questions: can this product or its packaging be reused or recycled? Was it produced from recycled materials? Whenever possible, choose products that meet these criteria. Use the recycling facilities around the building, using the Recycling Directory (for Hove Town Hall and Oxford Street) to see where the facilities are and what can be recycled.

**Recycling Directory** – Hove Town Hall and Oxford Street neighbourhood office both have a directory of what can be recycled where in these offices. A copy is available on the Wave library, under sustainability.

**Rethink rubbish** – It isn't all 'waste' – it came from a natural resource and could be reused, or recycled into a resource for yourself or someone else.

**Rechargeable batteries** – See Batteries.

## **S**

**Stamps** – Once the envelope is too tatty to reuse, tear off the bit with the stamp on and put it in the box in Kings House reception or send them to Lara Ashby, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Priory House or Lynne Martin, Kings House, who send them to charity

**Staples** – instead of staples, use a staple-free stapler (available in the Natural Collection catalogue) or use reusable Supaclips (from Guilbert).

## **T**

**Toner cartridges** – Can be sent to the Kings House or Brighton Town Hall post rooms to be passed on to charity

**Tea bags** – can be put in compost bins.

## **Think**

Think back through your day: the empty toothpaste tube, the cereal box, the drink can in you lunch, your gum wrapper, the food you left on your plate at dinner. Natural resources such as water, wood and fossil fuels go into the production and transportation of all these things. When we throw them away, we are throwing away our valuable resources.

## **W**

**Wood** – Any wood you don't need? The Wood Recycling Project will take away old wood for less than the cost of having it removed by a waste company. Or if it's a small piece drop it round there yourself.

## **Y**

**Yellow pages** – This cannot be recycled with other mixed paper, as the yellow dye contaminates the recycling. Some local council provide recycling for this but Brighton & Hove doesn't as yet.

## **Z**

**Zero waste** – An aspirational target, but in order to be a sustainable society we need to work towards this. By reducing the packaging and generally the amount of resources we use, what we do use should be things we know we can reuse many times over, has come from and can be recycled.

## Useful websites and contacts

**Beacon Press CD Recycling.** 01825 768 611. [www.beaconpress.co.uk](http://www.beaconpress.co.uk)

**Wood Recycling Project,** Municipal Market, Circus Street, Brighton.

01273 570 500. [www.woodrecycling.org.uk](http://www.woodrecycling.org.uk)

**Magpie Recycling Cooperative** 01273 565642

**Emmaus Furniture Recycling** 01273 412093

**Magpie Furniture Recycling** 01273 677577

**YMCA Furniture** 01273 777 212

**Centre for Alternative Technology:** [www.cat.org.uk](http://www.cat.org.uk)

**Natural Collection.** [www.naturalcollection.co.uk](http://www.naturalcollection.co.uk)

**Mail Preference Service:** Tel 020 7291 3310. [www.mpsonline.org.uk](http://www.mpsonline.org.uk).

**Cat Protection,** Saltdean 01273 812568

**RSPCA,** London Road, Brighton 01273 554218

**Guilbert:** [www.guilbert.co.uk](http://www.guilbert.co.uk)

ICT Purchasing:

[ict.purchasing@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:ict.purchasing@brighton-hove.gov.uk)

Sustainability Team:

[sustainability@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:sustainability@brighton-hove.gov.uk)

[Recycling Directory:](#)

The Wave Library: Sustainability

[Reducing your Waste through ICT:](#)

The Wave Library: Sustainability  
(coming soon...)

[Envelope Exchange;](#)

The Wave Library: Sustainability

Office Furniture Exchange bulletin board

The Wave; Groups; For Sale & Rent

For Sale bulletin board

The Wave; Groups; For Sale & Rent