

Environmental resources for business



If you are unable to read this document because of disability or language please call the Kingston Council Helpline on **020 8547 5560** or ask someone to call on your behalf.

Why should your business take action on the environment

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Why should your Business take action on the environment?

Kingston currently faces many challenges in the way it manages its environment, not only because of pressures from government but also from real issues in the local and global environment. Tackling these issues will involve many varied activities by our residents, schools, businesses and community groups, including waste minimisation, recycling, energy efficiency, protected species conservation and fair and equitable trading.

At Kingston Council, our vision is:

“To improve the quality of the local and global environment by delivering a coordinated programme of projects that increases the environmental awareness and influences behaviours of the Kingston community, and provide professional support and expertise.”

In order to ensure the Kingston community is aware of these issues, Kingston Council produced an Environmental Awareness Strategy in 2006 to consolidate and realise the environmentally-related long term objectives of the Council's Policy Programme, Member Priorities, the Community Plan and Waste Strategy.

Some businesses in the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames are already demonstrating a real commitment to tackling environmental issues and we hope that this environmental resource booklet will further help you to join in our quest to improve the quality of the local and global environment and realise the many diverse benefits in doing so.



What is a sustainable business?

A sustainable business is one that maintains its bottom line; it is financially secure with excellent prospects. But money is not the only bottom line and businesses are now finding that they cannot operate sustainably in isolation from society or the environment.

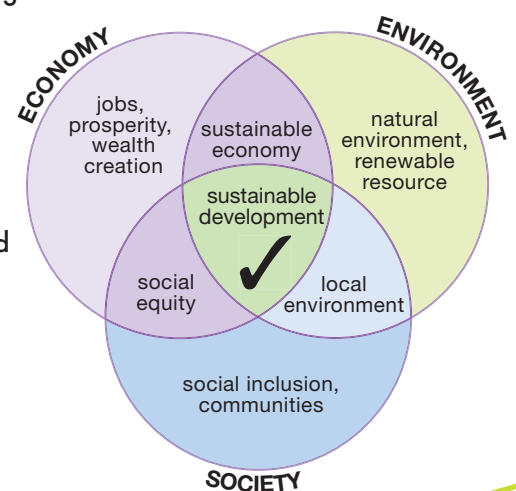
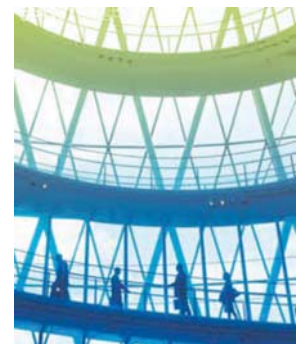
Increasingly, businesses are being forced to consider the financial implications of environmental legislation, but they are also reaping the financial rewards of efficiency savings which add to the bottom line.

Businesses that recognise the social as well as environmental impacts of their dealings also find many advantages and now see the environment and society as a strategic opportunity as more customers want to do business with responsible companies.

In short, a truly sustainable business is one which maintains its triple bottom line; it contributes to a secure economy, reduces its impact on the environment and improves the social well-being of the community.

The benefits of making your business sustainable include

- cost savings from efficient resource use
- increased competitive advantage
- commercial benefits such as preferred supplier status and access to capital
- new, like-minded business partners
- increased customer loyalty and more satisfied employees
- better community relations
- positive media coverage





Example of a Sustainable Business in Kingston

One organisation in The Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames that has embraced sustainability is Chessington Garden Centre, winners of a 2005 Surrey Sustainable Business Award.

Their **key achievements** include:

- Implementation of an Environmental Management System (EMS) leading to ISO14001 certification
- Major improvements in recycling, increasing from 36% of waste recycled to over 80% of waste recycled in less than 2 years
- 11.1% reduction in the volume of carbon emissions based on number of customer transactions in the past 2 years. This has been achieved through improved energy efficiency, reduced landfill and improved vehicle management
- Travel plans have encouraged staff to cycle, walk or use public transport which has reduced distance travelled by vehicles and staff by over 17%
- 9% reduction in electricity consumption through the use of innovative technology
- Established an education and training programme in sustainability issues that targets staff, customers and suppliers
- Enhanced the schools programme with over 50 schools taking part in special events and work experience

- Operation of a sustainable procurement policy. For example, the purchase of timber from sustainable sources.

Not only do they have excellent relations with their local community, more customers and happy staff, they have also made substantial financial savings for example:

- £2,800/year on electricity usage and
- £900/year saving on skips to landfill due to increased recycling
- Increased purchasing of environmentally friendly products.

Other examples of sustainable businesses

Many more case studies illustrating the significant gains made by much smaller businesses can be found on the Environmental Resources page of the following website

www.egeneration.co.uk/surrey

The resources in this booklet are appropriate for business of all sizes, but information specifically designed to help small businesses is available from www.smallbusinessjourney.com or telephone **020 7566 8788**.



Resources available to increase the sustainability of your business

There are many resources available to help you make your business sustainable. This booklet provides details of these resources under the main headings of:

- Waste
- Energy
- Water
- Transport
- Legislation
- Biodiversity
- Procurement
- Environmental Management System (EMS)
- Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and general sustainability
- Ecofootprinting
- Training
- Awards

Quick Links

You can also find quick links to local services, contacts and initiatives on page 21-25 and quick links to national organisations that can help you reduce waste and energy consumption and provide other environmental advice on page 26



waste



According to Envirowise, minimising waste could save your company 1% of turnover.

reduce
your rubbish
if you don't...who will?

Waste

According to Envirowise, minimising waste could save your company 1% of turnover. Every pound saved on material costs goes straight to the bottom line and many waste minimisation measures cost nothing to implement.

Legislation, such as WEEE (Waste Electrical and electronic equipment) regulation, Hazardous Waste Legislation and the EU Landfill Directive are forcing businesses to address the issue of waste and non compliance means fines or even prosecution.

Also there are many hidden costs to waste, for example the cost of treatment, floor space, energy and wasted labour, the real costs can be 5-20 times the cost of disposal.

Not only do you save money when you minimise your waste, but you also help the environment. 85% of waste currently goes to landfill in the UK. These landfills take up land space, they cause air and water pollution and they cause a nuisance through odour, noise and litter. There is also the waste raw materials and energy used in making the products that end up as waste.

The resources here can assist you in managing and minimise your waste and help you to realise all potential cost savings.

- www.envirowise.gov.uk
Envirowise offers UK businesses free, independent, confidential advice and support on practical ways to increase profits, minimise waste and reduce environmental impact. Call **0800 585794**.
- www.egeneration.co.uk/surrey
On this site you can search for recycling contractors in the area collecting a range of materials (Recycling Directory), materials you may be searching for as a business and which other business wish to get rid of (Materials Exchange) as well as lots of information and advice on how to reduce your waste.
- www.kingston.gov.uk/recycling
If you are out and about, you can use the many on street recycling bins placed around the Borough, and if you are a resident here, the Council offers a range of household recycling services, as well as lots of useful information on how to reduce your waste. To order your Household Guide to Reducing, Reusing and Recycling in the Borough call the Hotline on **020 8547 5560**

- www.kingstonfirst.co.uk/recycling
KingstonFirst have launched a trade waste collection and cardboard recycling service for businesses within the Business Improvement District in Kingston town centre. For an information pack please visit their website.

Setting up your own recycling

Kingston Council does not provide a recycling service for business waste. We can only provide a free waste collection and recycling service, funded through the council tax and government grant, for domestic waste. Your business rates, which go into a central government pot, do help cover such services as street cleansing but do not pay for business waste collection, recycling or disposal. In Kingston all business waste is managed through the private sector.

Although you cannot have your waste recycled free of charge, this does not mean that you can't recycle waste cost effectively.

One of the best ways to achieve cost effective recycling is to share a recycling bin with businesses in the same building or neighbouring businesses. For example, an 1100 litre wheelie bin (the large euro bins) may cost around £11 per collection. You may share this bin with a neighbour and only have it collected fortnightly, meaning your monthly costs would be £11 each.

You may also be able to save money on your normal trade waste disposal if you are recycling your waste, either by reducing your normal trade waste bin size (say from an 1100 litre to a 660 litre) or frequency of collections (i.e. from weekly to fortnightly), allowing you to recycle and save money or cover the costs of your recycling.

Steps to set up a recycling group:

1. First of all visit the KingstonFirst website (www.kingstonfirst.co.uk/recycling) for an information pack on their trade waste and cardboard collection service to find out if the scheme is suitable for you.
2. If you still need to set up your own recycling contact your neighbouring businesses to find out if they are interested in recycling
3. Find out roughly how much paper and card they produce (e.g. half a large bin per week?) and combine this with the amount you produce to estimate the required bin size and number of collections you will need (for example weekly or fortnightly).
4. Contact several recycling contractors and find the cheapest and most flexible option (Recycling Contractors are listed in the Recycling Directory online:
 - www.egeneration.co.uk/surrey
5. Agree with your neighbour(s) who will be invoiced each month for the collections.





A 20% saving in energy consumption can have the same positive effect as a 5% increase in sales, according to The Carbon Trust.

Energy

Global warming is caused by a dramatic increase in the amount of greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide, a by-product of all types of energy consumption. Businesses are responsible for 54% of the nation's carbon emissions. By using energy more efficiently we can help to reduce carbon dioxide emissions, reducing the rate of climate change and the damage to the environment. The workplace is a major consumer of energy and has a big role to play in energy efficiency.

By saving energy, businesses can also save money - lower energy costs bring immediate savings to the bottom line, increasing profitability.

A 20% saving in energy consumption – realistically achievable by most businesses – can have the same positive effect as a 5% increase in sales, according to The Carbon Trust. With the cost of energy set to increase further, using energy efficiently will become essential to maintaining your bottom line.

- www.thecarbontrust.co.uk
The Carbon Trust provides free, practical advice to business and public sector organisations to help you reduce energy use. You may qualify for a free energy audit. Call the helpline on **0800 085 2005**.



● www.ecsc.org.uk

Design and implement projects to create a socially responsible, sustainable energy future. Provide advice lines, bespoke training programmes and awareness raising campaigns / communications. They also provide technical advice on energy saving improvements / installations and energy auditing. They can also provide excellent help with renewable technologies. Call them on **020 7922 1662**

● www.eca.gov.uk

Enable a business to claim 100% first year capital allowances on their spending on qualifying plant and machinery. There are 3 schemes for ECAs: energy saving plant and machinery, low carbon dioxide emission cars and natural gas and hydrogen refuelling infrastructure and finally water conservation plant and machinery. Please visit the website of the ECA scheme to see how this can benefit your business.

Transport

See the transport section on pg 11 to see how your company can switch to sustainable use and forms of transport and reduce your carbon dioxide emissions as well as save money on fuel costs.

● www.egeneration.co.uk/surrey

This website provides information on sustainable energy use for businesses and also provides a downloadable leaflet on how climate change can impact your business.





Water

Water



Cut down on unnecessary usage; a leaky tap could be costing your business £700 a year!

Water efficiency, like energy, should be seen by business as an opportunity to save money. Through better utility management and monitoring of water consumption, savings can be made by cutting down on unnecessary usage. For example, a leaky tap could be costing your business £700 per year!

Water prices are rising due to severe shortages in the South East, and the increasing demands that new housing places on the water supply. So now there is more reason than ever to use your supply efficiently.

- www.envirowise.gov.uk

The Big Splash is to encourage UK companies of all kinds and sizes to join in and achieve savings of £10 million just by minimising their use of water. This project is run by Envirowise. Call **0800 585794**

- www.environment-agency.gov.uk

Monitor water use and abstraction and have information on demand management, saving water and the Water Efficiency Awards. Call **08708 506 506**

- www.thameswater.co.uk

Thames Water has produced a water efficiency guide for businesses

called WaterWise, which provides information, advice, audits to help you use water efficiently and save money, there is even an online tool to allow you to calculate how much your business could save by being water efficient. There is also additional information on the Thames Water website. For the WaterWise guide visit <http://waterwise.fortune-cookie.com> Or call the helpline on **0845 9200 800**

- www.eca-water.gov.uk

The Water Technology List has been developed by DEFRA and the Inland Revenue in partnership with Envirowise to encourage more efficient water use and improvements in water quality. You can save money on your water bills and your tax bill by purchasing products on the Water Technology List (WTL).



Transport

Greenhouse gases, such as carbon dioxide, occur naturally in our atmosphere, and are essential for keeping the planet warm. However, the huge increase in man made greenhouse gases has meant that the planet is warming up to an unnatural amount, leading to rising sea levels and unstable climatic conditions.

Road transport now accounts for 22% of UK CO2 emissions, with road traffic rising by around 2% per year. Traffic Congestion and transportation issues are estimated to cost the UK economy £20 billion per year. Vehicle emissions are also the primary cause of local air pollution, which is linked to around 380 deaths per year in London, according to research by the NHS.

Introducing a Travel Plan can enable a business to address it's own parking and accessibility problems as well as making a contribution to cutting congestion and pollution.

A Travel Plan is a package of practical measures aimed at reducing single occupancy vehicle trips to a site, both by reducing unnecessary journeys and promoting the use of more sustainable travel modes such as cycling, walking, public transport and car sharing.

Developing a Travel Plan can help your business to:

- Cut the cost of business travel and staff parking provision
- Improve site accessibility
- Reduce on site parking problems
- Improve staff recruitment and retention
- Boost your environmental credentials

Transport

According to a British Chamber of Commerce travel survey, an average of £27,000 per business, per annum is lost due to congestion and transportation.

Transport

The following resources are available to help you realise these benefits by developing a travel plan for your business.

- **Kingston Council – Workplace Travel Plan Officer**

Available to help you devise your workplace travel plans and provide any advice and information you may require. Call **020 8547 5865** or e-mail travel.awareness@rbk.kingston.gov.uk

- **www.sweltrac.org.uk**

SWELTRAC is a pro-active partnership of 12 local authorities, bus and train operators, transport authorities, passenger and business interests. They can provide a range of funding initiatives to help businesses with travel plan implementation measures. Examples of funding include, up to 20 free Sheffield cycle stands, discounted Raleigh bicycles for use as pool bikes and funding of up to £5000 for a car share scheme, showers or cycle storage.



Contact details.

- **www.est.org.uk**

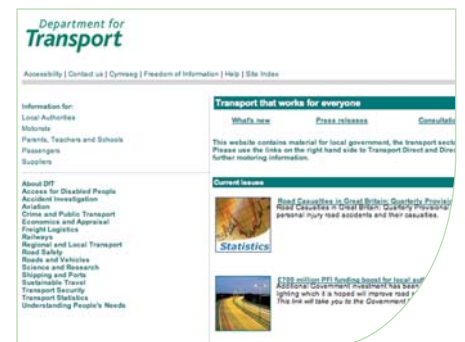
Information on reducing fleet costs, cutting vehicle emissions, clean fuels, new technology, grants for refuelling and recharging points.



Call **0845 602 1425**

- **www.dft.gov.uk**

The Department for Transport website contains a range of guidance on travel plans and other sustainable transport issues.





Biodiversity & Business

If you have outside space, you can almost certainly enhance biodiversity. Biodiversity is good for business. It provides water, energy, fuel, and raw materials; it also takes our waste and pollution among other things. In return your business can help sustain, conserve, create and enhance wildlife habitats and in doing so improve the living and working environment.

- www.businessandbiodiversity.org/whats_new.html
Excellent information on how business from all sectors can take part in biodiversity conservation. They have information on specific events and projects that your business can get involved in. Call **01865 318 800**
- www.kingston.gov.uk/the_natural_environment_and_biodiversity.htm
The Government's Local Biodiversity Action Plans allow even small companies to get involved in enhancing biodiversity of their local community.

- www.surreywildlifetrust.co.uk
The SWT offers corporate membership and ecological surveys and management plans. Call **01483 488055** for more information.



Your business can help sustain, conserve, create and enhance wildlife habitats and in doing so improve the living and working environment.



Corporate social responsibility (CSR) & general sustainability

Research from the Social Market Foundation shows that 82% of UK consumers prefer to purchase goods and services from environmentally and socially responsible companies

The term “Corporate Social Responsibility” has been used since the 1970’s and is about how companies manage their processes to produce an overall positive impact on society. It is basically about demonstrating their responsibility by having a sustainable business. Many companies now choose to improve and report on their CSR performance as it provides the many benefits listed in the introduction of this publication.

Research from the Social Market Foundation shows that 82% of UK consumers prefer to purchase goods and services from environmentally and socially responsible companies, so demonstrating your responsible business can even attract customers.

- www.bitc.org.uk/index.html
Business led charity that encourages and supports businesses to improve the impact they have on society and the environment. Excellent information and advice provided including how your business can get involved with local community groups and charities

