

Buying Green doesn't cost the Earth

Environmental Procurement Policy Supplementary Guidance II – Supplies, Services and Works

The Council will optimise the environmental benefits of procurement decisions, in accordance with the principle of Value for Money.

Ensuring 'value for money' involves much more than 'lowest upfront cost'. It involves considering 'whole-life' financial costs (e.g. with respect to energy savings, durability, reduced maintenance, and waste reduction), and reducing environmental (and other) risks. The concept that environmental benefits are worth paying for, provided the financial cost is not excessive, is also implicit.

By making a commitment to this policy, the Council will help to conserve energy and resources, and reduce waste and pollution. Furthermore, through the Environmental Procurement Policy, the Council will contribute to greening the supply-chain by supporting, and participating in, the trade of more environmentally sustainable supplies, services and works.

It outlines Council Policy and opportunities that all purchasers, including contractors are expected to follow.

There is additional, more detailed, guidance covering the specification of contracts:

*Environmental Procurement Policy
Supplementary Guidance I – Specifying Contracts*

Contact the Environment and Sustainability Team (Environmental Management Officer – 020 8760 5768 x 3849) for support/advice on what the options are for green procurement in your area.

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1. **How to use this Guidance**

This guidance should be used for the procurement of all supplies, services and works. It should also be used when establishing the conditions of a contract with goods or/and service providers. This guidance is to help you take into account the longer-term benefits and costs when selecting a product or item of equipment. By reviewing the entire life-cycle (life-cycle analysis) of a product or equipment you can choose more environmentally, and economically, sustainable products. A life-cycle analysis includes identifying the environmental effects during manufacture, packaging, transportation, waste and disposal issues, as well as the environmental effects, such as energy and resource consumption, during use.

2. **Selection criteria using life-cycle analysis**

A life-cycle analysis requires taking account of the total cost of a purchase – assessing not only the immediate purchase price, but other costs such as manufacturing, energy and/or water use, length of product life and the methods of disposal (see the Waste Hierarchy below). There are a number of recognised standards such as energy efficiency ratings, recycled material contents, and environmental friendliness to help you with your ‘analysis’ (see information on some of the logos and standards to look out for, later in this document). Note, however, many brands claim to be ‘environmentally friendly’. If a product makes an environmental claim it should carry an explanation about why it is less harmful to the environment than other products.

When assessing a product’s disposal options follow DEFRA’s (Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs) ‘Waste Hierarchy’:

- ◆ **Reduce** - Only buy something when absolutely necessary.
- ◆ **Re-Use** - Have systems in place whereby furniture, equipment and other office items can be re-allocated within the council instead of discarded.
- ◆ **Recycle** - Specify that the supplier of the item should operate or subscribe to a take-back scheme for packaging and unwanted/spent items, which can be re-used or recycled.

You should also aim to:

- Minimise the amount of materials consumed.
- Buy goods that are made from recycled material and/or are recyclable.

- Arrange with suppliers to minimise packaging and/or take packaging back for reuse/recycling.
- Use more durable products.
- Maintain & repair equipment so as to extend its life.
- Buy energy efficient appliances.
- Use vehicles that are less polluting.

Below is a list of supplies, services and works procured by Croydon Council and guidance on environmental considerations.

3. Stationery

Stationery and other office products are the Councils most common purchase. A large percentage of Council officers are responsible for ordering these products. The Council have a contract with a preferred supplier.

The Councils aim is for purchasers to select items from the preferred suppliers green options identified by the 'green tree' symbol in their catalogue. In addition, the preferred supplier has produced a supplementary catalogue of their range of environmentally friendlier products called their 'Environmental Product Listings'. All staff involved in purchasing stationery should have a current copy of this supplement. The supplement is available from the Procurement Department or Local Agenda 21.

All purchasing officers should select products from the Environmental Product Listings whenever practicable. Products include:

- Recycled printing and writing papers. Including all imprinted letterhead paper, envelopes, and copy paper. (Paper products shall contain a minimum of 30 percent post-consumer recycled paper.)
- Paper products. Including file boxes, hanging file folders, and other products composed largely of paper. (Paper products shall contain a minimum of 30 percent post-consumer recycled paper.)
- Remanufactured laser printer toner cartridges and remanufactured or refillable inkjet cartridges.

In addition the following paper-saving options are recommended:

- Create electronic letterhead for use as an alternative to pre-printed paper.
- Use duplex features on laser printers and copiers. Pre-set equipment to duplex where ever possible.
- Send and store information electronically when possible. This includes email, web site and electronic fax.
- Review record retention policies and implement document imaging systems.
- Other waste prevention practices that further the goal of this policy.

4. Pens & Pencils

Refer to the Environmental Product Listing. However, some general rules include: avoiding pencils made from hardwood and avoiding writing implements (e.g. marker pens and correcting fluids) which contain xylene or other solvents that damage the environment.

5. IT and other Office Equipment

Environmental impacts associated with IT and office equipment include: energy consumption, materials used in the manufacture, product recyclability, packaging and shipping, hazardous emissions, thermal emissions and noise. IT equipment is procured via a preferred supplier and contract managed by the Network & Technical Consultant, Finance and IT. The photocopier contract is tendered and managed by the Document Support Manager, Office Services. Environmental criteria is addressed in the tendering process and

all potential suppliers are required to provide information about the environmental performance of their products, in order to make a comparison.

General rules in product selection include:

- energy efficient electrical appliances (e.g. equipment with an 'A' or 'B' European Eco-Label),
- energy efficient IT equipment (eg with energy star minimum standards or higher),
- photocopiers with 'snooze' mode,
- equipment which uses less resources to operate e.g. printers and photocopiers which print double-sided (and then set double-sided as default),
- plain-paper fax machines when existing thermal fax machines require replacement. There are a number of advantages including; the back of used paper can be used for receiving faxes, the rolls of paper that are used in thermal fax machines are not recyclable. Direct computer to fax technology is even better and as PC's are replaced this function will be available,
- Consider also the durability, upgrade-ability and reparability of products prior to purchase.

Energy star label



This is awarded to equipment/units with less than 30 watts of energy consumption on stand-by, and a quick re-start. Note: some Energy Star models achieve much lower energy use on stand-by than others.

6. Electrical Appliances

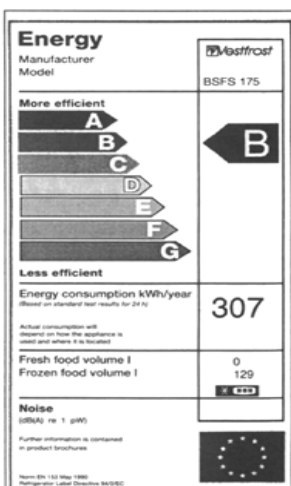
Appliances, such as fridges and microwaves must be energy efficient. Energy efficiency of a product should be assessed when replacing old appliances (Category A and B for products carrying an EC energy label).

It is preferable to purchase equipment which runs on mains electricity rather than batteries (batteries take 50 times more power to manufacture than they can ever provide). However, where batteries are required, rechargeable batteries should be selected.

In addition Council will not purchase:

- products containing or made with chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs)
- refrigeration and air-conditioning products which contain HCFCs, HFCs or CFCs

Energy Efficiency labels



The most energy efficient alternative should be selected. Energy efficiency can result in an economically as well as environmentally sound choice. Energy efficiency labels are mandatory for many household appliances. The labels have information regarding the energy efficiency of the product by way of a ranking from A (the best) to G (the worst).

Fridges If buying a new fridge for your office, you must choose an energy efficient model. They all have an energy rating of A (preferably) or B, meaning consumption of electricity is reduced. Through reduced energy use, these products save money over the long term as well as benefiting the environment.

Light bulbs Energy saving light bulbs use only 20% of the energy normal light bulbs use. They last 8 times as long as an old-fashioned light bulb and over the whole life-time are much cheaper despite higher initial cost.

7. Office furniture

Before purchasing new furniture check the availability of second-hand furniture within the Council. *To find out what is on offer contact the Facilities Co-ordinator – Operations on ext. 5652.*

Your Department can get second hand furniture, not required by other Departments, for free (or your Department could offer up unused items for re-use). Currently, the furniture is collected by the Facilities Co-ordinator, offered to departments free of charge and the excess is offered to schools or charities. Outlying offices will need to make their own arrangements for transportation of the furniture. Occasionally, staff are able to purchase odd bits of furniture for personal use at a reduced price.

For new furniture the Council has a preferred supplier and contracts with a select number of companies, contact the Accommodation Manager, Corporate Services, x5668 for more details. As part of the tendering process the environmental status of each company must be assessed. Although it is less common to purchase wooden furniture, any new wooden furniture must have the FSC label or equivalent (see the Councils timber policy below).

Council will not purchase:

- hazardous materials such as wood preservatives or wood treated with preservatives containing pentachloro-phenol, lyndane or tributyltin-oxide
- building materials or furniture made from hardwoods unless certified as being from a sustainably managed source

8. Timber Purchasing

The WWF has prepared a procurement policy for Local Authorities. It states: Forest management can be environmentally appropriate and socially beneficial, but it can also be environmentally and socially damaging. This policy recognises the responsibility of this local authority as a consumer of forest products to ensure that we have a neutral if not positive effect on the world's forests. Re-use of timber is the best option, followed by the use of sustainably grown local timber.

With immediate effect, the Council gives preference to timber and timber products which are from a sustainable local source or carry the Forest Stewardship Council's (FSC) Trademark, or other label from an equivalent internationally recognised, globally applicable, independent certification system for good forest management. This will take into account environmental, ecological, biodiversity, social and economic needs, showing the timber (tropical, temperate or boreal, hardwood or softwood) or timber product is from a credible sustainable source.

As a second resort only, the Council will use non-FSC timber from another known source, and will attempt to gain as much assurance as possible that the forest is well-managed and will provide documentation of proof. (Documentation must be provided to prove that every attempt has been made to obtain certified sources before exploring alternatives - flexibility in terms of species specification should be pursued.)

All officers with responsibility for specifying for large quantities of timber will be required to inform contractors/suppliers of council wood purchasing policy and to devise a suitable method of monitoring contractors' success in purchasing timber under this policy. Guidance will be given by the Council to relevant officers as to the information they should provide to

contractors working on Council contracts, or proposing to tender for them. Guidance should also be given to contractors and suppliers as to the background environmental information that the Council considers to be the acceptable minimum in order to ensure that its policy is being adhered to.



The Forest Stewardship Council (**FSC**) is committed to bridging the gap between responsible producers and consumers of forest products world-wide. It enables producers who can demonstrate sound forest management to reach consumers who wish to have an independent guarantee that the forest or woodland of origin is managed according to agreed social and environmental principles and criteria. The FSC therefore provides an incentive in the marketplace for good forestry practice. It does this by providing an umbrella organisation and structure, within which respectable independent certifiers can operate according to clear guidelines and using agreed standards covering social, environmental and economic aspects of forest management.

9. Building maintenance and cleaning

Council will minimise resource, chemical, energy and water consumption in all areas of building maintenance and office servicing. Examples of this include:

- Attaching water saving devices to bathroom and kitchen taps and cisterns.
- Selecting uncoloured, unbleached, recycled toilet paper and towels.
- Providing roller towels (to be used in preference to paper towels).
- Selecting biodegradable products when purchasing detergents & cleaning products.

Council will not purchase any cleaning materials containing:

- More than 0.5% phosphorous
- Nitrilo-tri-acetic acid
- More than 3% of ethylene-diamino-tetra-acetate
- More than 5% by volume of chlorine
- More than 3% by volume of optical brighteners, synthetic colours and perfumes.

10. Catering

Environmental impacts associated with providing beverages and food within Council can best be addressed from within the Catering Contract. Environmental impacts include the use of disposable products, single-serve products, packaging and organic waste. Opportunities for more sustainable catering include addressing these impacts and expanding the purchase of Fairtrade products locally grown and/or organic foods, where possible.

Fair Trade products



Fairly traded products are those where the growers in developing countries receive a larger share of the price you pay. Fair trade associations and co-operatives use methods such as fixed advanced payments and in some cases contribute to local healthcare and education.

Procurement of Fairtrade tea, coffee, sugar etc for Council catering can be specified in the catering contract. For other activities, the purchase of Fairtrade products should be made from a Fairtrade Supplier. Fairtrade products include tea, coffee, cocoa, rice, fruit and sugar. Many of these are organic too.



Organically-grown food

Organic fruit and vegetables are grown without using artificial chemicals, using methods that keep the soil in a healthy balance. Organic dairy products and meat come from animals fed with organic food. This approach makes

organic food more environmentally friendly than conventional food with a reduced risk of diseases and chemical residues.

Beware of terms like 'natural', 'from the farm', 'country' etc. which have no defined meaning. The word 'organic' is legally protected. The Soil Association is the main organisation in the UK that checks 'organic' food. Look out for their logo or for a European certification label.

Buying organic food is not always the most environmentally sound option. For instance, local non-organic produce in a plain bag may have less impact on the environment than, for example, organic pears shipped all the way from Chile. However, supporting organic farming is recommended if extra cost is not prohibitive, since organic farms are generally smaller-scale, employ more people and receive fewer subsidies than conventional farms do.

11. Works, parks and open spaces

The Council has a number of contracts for the management of green space in the Borough. Although the contracted companies are responsible for carrying out the day-to-day tasks, the Councils, Parks and Open Spaces department maintains control over the procurement of products and equipment. Therefore, the Council must ensure the procurement of the most environmentally friendly products and equipment and must ensure the environmental management of its contractors.

The Council will:

- Minimise the use of herbicides, insecticides and other pesticides
- Not use pesticides banned or restricted by the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
- Avoid the use of peat-based horticultural products
- Use compost, mulch, and other organic soil conditioning products
- Minimise the use of new building materials by using reclaimed brick and building stone and recycled aggregate
- Select timber from sustainable sources, such as FSC products or equivalent
- Select construction material that minimises the impact on the ozone layer
- Minimise the use of PVC products
- Purchase recycled plastic road cones
- Use recycled plastic outdoor wood substitutes. Including benches, fencing, signs and posts
- Purchase dustbins made from recycled plastics
- Choose water-based paints where possible
- Not use paints which contain lead
- Choose remanufactured paints

The Council will also:

- Support and encourage the use of recycled content construction, building and maintenance products. Including carpet, tiles and insulation
- Support and encourage the use of re-crushed cement concrete aggregate and asphalt
- Support and encourage the use of cement and asphalt concrete containing tire rubber, glass, recycled fibre, plastic, fly ash, or other alternative products

12. Vehicles

Croydon Council is now registered with Motorvate. Motorvate is a Government-backed award scheme, designed to help organisations cut their fleet travel costs and at the same time help the environment. Motorvate require participating organisations to achieve a 12% reduction in their fleets Carbon Dioxide emissions over a 3 year period. 3% of which must be achieved through reduced business mileage.

In addition, the Council's Transport Management Section will always give consideration to the use of alternative fuels to reduce the impact on the environment, and grant schemes will be accessed in order to maximise the fraction of new vehicles with alternative fuels.

The following points should also be considered when choosing a vehicle:

- The need to minimise both exhaust emissions and fuel consumption
- Vehicles should have low levels of nitrogen oxides (NOx), hydrocarbons (HC), carbon monoxide (CO) and particulate matter (PM) in their emissions
- Coolants used for air conditioning should have little, if any contributory impact on ozone layer depletion and global warming
- Vehicles should be designed for ease in disassembly and recycling of their parts when no longer in commission
- Vehicles should use large amounts of recycled parts
- Vehicles should make minimal external noise

Vehicle procurement decisions will always be carried out in consideration of the Council's Green Travel Plan. The GTP aims to achieve a reduction in the Council's overall emissions.

13. Other green labels and logos

Ecolabel



The EU eco-label scheme, as laid down in Council Regulation (EEC) 880/92, is one element of a wide strategy aimed at promoting sustainable production and consumption. The objective of sustainable consumption is to reduce or at least contain the impact of consumption on the environment. With this aim in mind, the strategy embraces the promotion of environmentally aware behaviour patterns, in particular by identifying and promoting "green" products. The purpose of the Community eco-label is to influence the market by guiding consumers toward products with a reduced environmental impact.

The award of the eco-label means that successful applicants are permitted to use the official flower logo on their approved product. Thus a consumer in a supermarket who is faced with a line of different brands of laundry detergents (for instance) will be able to pick out, by means of this visual logo, the one or two which achieve a high standard of environmental performance compared with the rest of the field.

Recycled/recyclability



This symbol (the Mobius Loop) means that a product can be recycled or, if a percentage figure is included, it means that it contains recycled material. If the symbol is on a plastic product and there is a number between 1 & 6 in the middle this indicates what type of plastic it is – for the purposes of recycling.

14. Environmental Management Accreditation

When choosing a supplier of goods or services you should also look to see if they have a corporate environmental policy and/or are accredited to one of the following environmental management standards:

ISO 14001

ISO14001 is a voluntary, internationally recognised standard for environmental management systems. It is similar to the ISO 9000 series that many departments are already familiar with.

The difference being that it applies to the environmental management systems that a company has in place.

EMAS



The Eco Management & Audit Scheme (EMAS) is a voluntary scheme to help organisations improve their management of environmental issues. It is designed to bring about:

- Improvements in environmental performance
 - Improvements in the quality of service delivery
 - Financial savings
 - Better management control
- A systematic and consistent approach to environmental management across the whole organisation
 - The possibility of external validation of environmental performance.

Corporate Environmental Policy

The requirements of achieving EMAS or ISO14001 status can be quite onerous for small companies. In lieu of an environmental management system, an alternative criteria to look for is whether or not the company has an Environmental Policy which leads to practical action to reduce environmental impact, with respect to energy, water, waste, pollution and/or resources used.

In all cases, the company/supplier must be able to demonstrate the environmental claims they are making.