

# P16a Environmental Sustainable Purchasing Policy

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One of TCHC's Environmental Sustainable Development Policy Objectives is to minimise damage resulting from the use of resources by:

- Encouraging staff and members to buy goods and services which cause least harm to the environment
- Working with suppliers and contractors to ensure that their environmental standards are equivalent to those of TCHC.

This Purchasing Policy applies to everyone who buys and specifies goods and services on behalf of TCHC. It is also important that our contractors are encouraged to adopt similar policies, with environmental performance being added to the current requirements of quality, delivery and value for money.

All staff can play a major part in improving TCHC's environmental performance and supporting its Sustainable Development Policy, by considering what we use and buy for our work.

## 1 Purpose of the Guide

This guide sets out TCHC's policy on purchasing and gives tips and advice on how to find products which will be effective, value for money and does least harm to the environment.

## 2 Purchasing Policy Statement

TCHC is committed to the promotion of environmentally sound practice, preserving natural resources and preventing environmental pollution, while obtaining value for money in the selection of quality goods and services.

Staff have a major role to play in TCHC's Purchasing Policy. Therefore everyone is encouraged to:

- Reduce the need for products through the reuse and repair of existing and waste products
- Replace disposables with reusable's or recyclables, where available
- Minimise the use of non-renewable resources, hazardous chemicals and other pollutants, using products and materials that cause less damage to the environment
- Avoid certain environmentally damaging products, where any alternative, which provides value for money, is available
- Use products that are made for recycled or recyclable materials, where available
- Try at all times to secure best value i.e. the right quality at the best possible price.

## 3 Paper Policy Statement

Offices must as far as practical and possible:

Purchase / specify paper which subject to availability, quality and price:

- Contains the highest proportion of **recycled** material, with preference given to those products containing a high proportion of post-consumer waste
- Is elemental **chlorine free** (ECF), with preference given to products that are totally chlorine free (TCF)
- Hold as a minimum a Nordic Swan label, "Eco-Grade / Eco-Check" rating of 3 stars of equivalent.

Paper products using alternative waster such as sugar beet residue or straw based paper may also be considered acceptable where no viable recycled product is available.

**Offices must:**

**Avoid:**

- **Coloured and tinted** papers wherever possible.
- The use of **coated and glossy papers** where alternatives exist, as such materials require greater resource use and prove difficult to recycle.

Why is this important?

Approximately a third of all consumer waste is paper. The production of paper from waste materials reduces our demand on the natural environment as a supplier of raw materials and waste disposal facilities.

Tightly packed single species forests, associated with paper production, reduce biodiversity and support fewer species than a varied native forest. The pine needles that fall from these types of forest are acidic and acidify surface waters and nearby water courses.

The manufacturing process for paper requires the use of large quantities of energy and water, as well as the use of chemicals for bleaching the paper. The production of recycled paper only uses half that used to manufacture virgin paper. The production process also results in the creation of water effluents, emissions to air and solid wastes.

What can you do to help?

**Save paper:**

- Do you really need your own copy of periodicals/journals/in-house publications etc? Would a circulation copy do?
- Cancel any post that you still receiving for members of staff who have left the Organisation
- Use scrap pads for drafting and messages
- Reuse envelopes internally, or use the multi-trip envelopes
- Send memos etc. electronically as often as possible.

**Plastic Products Policy Statement**

- The specification and use of plastic products will be reduced where possible
- Where possible, products must contain a percentage of recycled plastic.

**Offices must as far as practical and possible:**

**Purchase / specify:**

- Refuse sacks that are made from 100% recycled plastic
- Office waste bins and liners made from 100% recycled plastic
- Marker posts, road cones and signage made from recycled plastic.

**Avoid:**

- Plastic products, where there is a more environmentally friendly option available e.g. recycled card level arch files should be purchased, rather than PVC covered files
- Plastic products with no recycled content
- Disposable plastic products, where longer lasting and reusable alternatives are available.

**Why is this important?**

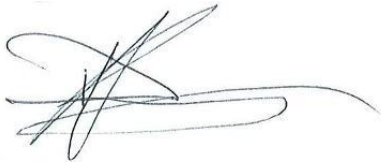
All plastics are made from oil, a non-renewable resource. The durability of plastics, make them extremely useful for a wide range of products. Many plastic products are designed for single use, e.g. bin liners. For this reason, vast quantities of plastics are buried every day in landfill sites. However, because of their durability, they do not readily decompose, and can remain in the environment for many years.

**What can you do to help?**

**Avoid using plastics unnecessarily:**

- Evaluate other materials for achieving the task in hand.

Avoid using plastic cups by using your own mug in the vending machines/water cooler.



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Dale Morgan, Chief Executive Officer - TCHC