

London Borough of Brent

GREEN BUSINESS GUIDES

MEDIA AND CREATIVE



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INTRODUCTION

Starting your sustainability journey doesn't need to be complicated!

Brent Council has created this simple toolkit to share our top tips for going green.

The Covid-19 crisis has had a huge impact on the media and creative sector. As businesses start to recover, there is an opportunity to embrace a 'new normal' that is better for the planet and good for business.

Considering the environment as your business recovers from Covid-19 can help:

- Save money, through cutting down your energy and water bills
- Attract new customers, who want to fight climate change
- Create new opportunities for innovation, through offering new products and services

In the long-term, being 'greener' will help future-proof your business against increasing environmental laws and regulations. It will also protect you against some of the results of the climate emergency, such as water shortages and more extreme weather conditions. Take action now to minimise the negative impact on your business and help the fight against climate change.

We've pulled together our top tips across three key areas:



The words and phrases that are used to talk about climate can be confusing! That's why we've also put together a glossary of key terms at the end of the toolkit.

What is Brent Council doing?

In July 2019, Brent Council declared a climate and ecological emergency and committed to achieving carbon neutrality by 2030. Brent's [Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy](#) sets out our proposed priorities and a pathway to carbon zero.

Some of the core objectives within our strategy are built around supporting the transition to a low-carbon, circular economy model, and supporting our businesses to go green and reduce the carbon footprint of their operations.




KEY ACTIONS TO HELP YOUR BUSINESS



REDUCING ENERGY USE

Saving energy is one of the simplest ways to increase your profits.

DID YOU KNOW?

Buildings like theatres could save around 25% on their energy bills through simple energy efficiency measures. See arup.com 

Reducing your energy use saves you money on your bills, and with rising energy prices, this is more important than ever. Improving the energy efficiency of your business can make it a more comfortable place for customers and staff, for example by keeping buildings warmer in the winter.

Reducing your energy use is also good for the environment. Energy is typically created by burning fossil fuels. This releases greenhouse gases into the air, contributing to global warming. Burning fossil fuels also causes poor air quality and can contribute to water pollution.

9 SIMPLE TIPS


Here are some simple steps you can take to cut your energy costs

HEATING, COOLING AND VENTILATION


1 Turn down the heat

Turning down the heat, even by 1 or 2 degrees, can result in big savings. Especially consider turning down heating in warmer months, and in spaces like workshops and storage areas.

2 Service your boiler annually

A regularly serviced boiler can be 20% more efficient than a poorly maintained one, according to [Julie's Bicycle](#) .

3 Invest in a more efficient boiler

Boilers have an efficiency rating of A to G, where A is the most efficient. According to [Julie's Bicycle](#) , newer, more efficient boilers can be over 15% more energy efficient, saving you money in the long run.

4 Maintain ventilation systems


Regularly check air flows and clean ventilation systems, as blockages and dirty filters reduce air flows, increasing energy usage.

LIGHTING

5 Switch to energy-efficient lighting

Fluorescent lamps or LEDs are very energy efficient and can save a lot of money. It is usually possible to switch building lighting to LEDs without changing the light fitting. LED film lighting equipment is long lasting, and produces much less heat than traditional lighting, meaning it is more comfortable and safe to work with.

6 Install light sensors

Sensors can achieve savings of up to 50%, according to the [Carbon Trust](#) . They are especially useful in toilets, storerooms, foyers, lobbies and back of house areas.

EQUIPMENT

7 Efficient equipment

Equipment that is more efficient saves energy and money in the long run. Choose options with a good energy efficiency rating, and with features such as automatically switching off when not use.

BUILDING FABRIC

8 Install insulation

Installing insulation on internal appliances, external walls, windows and roofs is a big opportunity for energy saving that will payback financially within a year or two.

TRAVEL

9 Save on travel

Try to minimise travel by staying local as much as possible. When you do need to travel, consider more sustainable options such as electric or hybrid vehicles.

REDUCING ENERGY USE (CONTINUED)

TOP TIPS

Monitor your energy use

Keeping a close eye on your energy bills will help you understand your progress and set targets to reduce your energy use.

Set targets

Set realistic targets for reducing energy use and give each one a deadline. For example, you might decide you want to reduce energy use by 30% over six months. If you have different departments or buildings within your business, try to set each one a specific target.

Get staff involved

Make sure that everyone understands how and why to save energy.

GO FURTHER

Switch to renewable energy

Renewable energy is created from a natural source than can be quickly replenished, such as wind or sunlight. It is competitively priced and helps reduce your carbon footprint.

Albert's [Creative Energy Project](#) helps you switch to a 100% renewable energy supplier.

The [How to Buy Sustainably Sourced Power](#) handbook from Julie's Bicycle outlines what sustainably sourced renewable electricity is and how to purchase it.

Encourage active travel

Many of your business's carbon emissions won't come from your equipment and operations, but from more indirect uses of energy. One example of this is the emissions created when staff travel to and from work.

You can reduce these emissions by encouraging staff to walk, cycle, or jog to work, rather than driving. Encouraging active travel can also increase productivity, lower employee sick days, improve staff retention and reduce car parking issues.

Transport for London's [active travel toolkit](#) provides practical tools to enable staff to choose active travel options to and from work. If staff do need to travel by car, help co-ordinate car sharing, and encourage them to use electric or hybrid vehicles.

Free tools and resources

The [Green Theatre Guide](#) from Julie's Bicycle. Albert's [toolkit](#) outlines top ways to reduce your carbon footprint.

The [Better Business Guide to Energy Saving](#) from the Carbon Trust outlines how to identify energy and cost savings that can be made easily with little to no cost.

Also available from the Carbon Trust is their [Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning Guide](#).

Also available from the Carbon Trust, the [Effective Energy Management for Business Guide](#) outlines how to save money through energy management, monitoring and managing your energy use more efficiently.

[Quick Wins to Reduce Building Energy Consumption](#) from The Mayor of London.

REDUCING WASTE


Reducing waste is a great way to save your business money.

Cutting down on how much you buy and reducing waste disposal costs are both big opportunities to make savings. Reducing waste is not only good for business, but also helps tackle climate change. When we waste items, we waste all the energy and water it takes to produce, transport and package them.

Plastic can create a big problem, as when it is wasted it can take hundreds or even thousands of years to break down, creating long lasting environmental damage.

Food waste is also a major issue. When food is not disposed of properly, it releases methane, a powerful greenhouse gas, which contributes to global warming.

DID YOU KNOW?

The amount of food and drink wasted in the UK in 2018 that could have been eaten would fill eight Wembley stadiums. See wrap.org.uk 

4 SIMPLE TIPS

Try making changes in the following areas


1 Reduce plastic waste

Buy products with less plastic packaging, especially flexible plastic like plastic bags, which can't easily be recycled.


Avoid single-use items like disposable cutlery and plates. Re-usable alternatives will save money in the long term, or you could opt for biodegradable products like wooden cutlery.

Consider banning single-use items, like plastic water bottles, on set or in the office. Make sure there are refill stations and encourage staff to buy a re-usable bottle instead.

2 Reduce food waste

Only buy what you need – this saves money up-front and on waste disposal costs. For example, pre-ordering catering for cast and crew before production means food can be cooked to order and there is less need to over-prepare. Check out Albert's guidance on [cutting food waste](#) .

3 Recycle

Recycling waste is often cheaper than general waste disposal. Brent Council offers a business waste collection service which is provided by our partner [Veolia](#) .


Try to buy products that can be easily recycled, and make sure you have plenty of clearly labelled recycling bins for staff and customers to use.


For items like light bulbs and lamps, ask your lighting supplier if they can collect dead bulbs.


For sets and timber, use a waste removal service with a focus on recycling and reuse.

When you buy electronic equipment, ask your supplier how they can be sustainably disposed of.

4 Redistribute

The Food and Drink Surplus Network from [WRAP](#)  (The Waste and Resources Action Programme) helps you find organisations that will redistribute surplus food.

Look for local charities or Freecycle networks to donate equipment and materials. Items like props, wardrobe, unused paint, and set materials can have multiple second uses. Organisations including the [Reuse Network](#)  can help identify donation points.

Green Production Guide has a Food and Material Donations [toolkit](#)  which gives suggestions on items that can be donated.

REDUCING WASTE (CONTINUED)

DID YOU KNOW?

The world produces about 300 million tonnes of plastic waste every year – nearly the weight of the entire human population. See [unep.org](https://www.unep.org) 



TOP TIPS


REDUCE, RE-USE, RECYCLE (IN THAT ORDER!)

1 Reduce
Buy less, and only buy what you need.

2 Re-use
Where possible, try re-usable options or think of creative ways to re-purpose waste.

3 Recycle
Reprocess waste into something new.

Free tools and resources

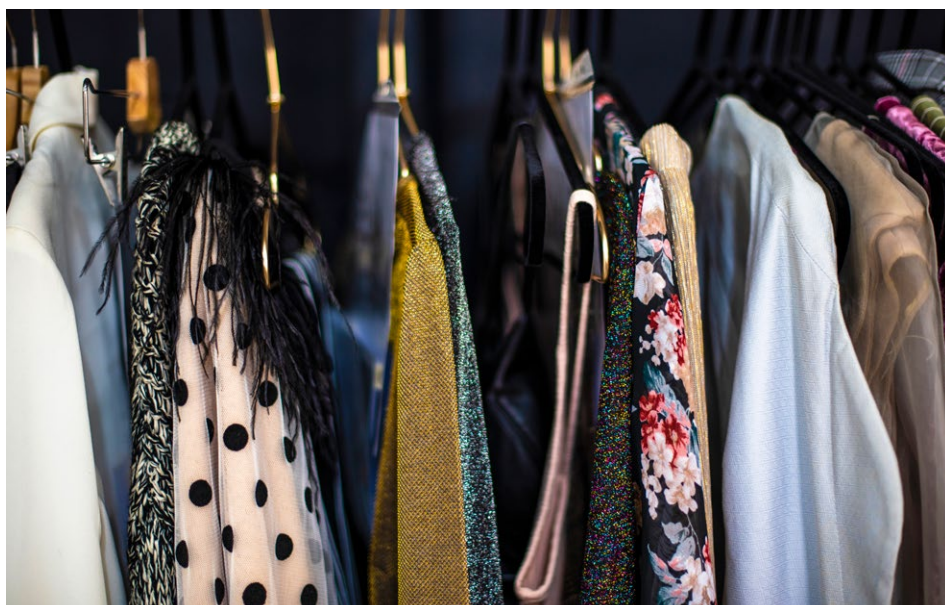
The [Waste Management in Buildings guide](#)  from Julie's Bicycle's outlines how to take an informed look at your waste management needs and system, and helps you make cost effective decisions in managing waste sustainably.



PURCHASING RESPONSIBLY

Everything you buy has an environmental impact. This means your purchasing decisions are a powerful tool for change.

Buying sustainable products and services is often cheaper, helps improve reputation, and can help get ahead of legal requirements. The bigger the demand for environmentally sustainable products and services, the bigger the market for these will grow, resulting in more options and reduced costs.



5 SIMPLE TIPS

Here are some ways you can make sure you are using your money more responsibly, whilst keeping costs to a minimum

1 Hire, borrow or share
Consider whether you need to actually buy something or whether it could be hired, borrowed or shared with another business. For items like specialised equipment, props and costumes, this is usually a cheaper option and reduces waste.

2 Reduce waste
Buy only as much as you need, and make sure to correct over-orders. Opt for suppliers that use minimal packaging, especially plastic packaging, or who offer a packaging re-use scheme.

3 Buy second-hand
Freecycle networks can be a good source of items such as costumes, and is usually cheaper than buying new.

4 Choose durable and efficient products
The cheapest option isn't always the best, and can lead to greater costs and waste further down the line. More durable and energy-efficient equipment will last you longer and save money in the long run than buying new.

5 Source locally
Sourcing items and services locally reduces travel, which often cuts costs as well as supporting other local businesses. For example, opt for local catering and cleaning services where possible.

PURCHASING RESPONSIBLY (CONTINUED)

TOP TIPS

Write a list of all the things you buy, your suppliers and your annual spend

Think about where you spend the most money and what you buy most of. From there you can establish where you can make more sustainable swaps.

Reduce, reuse, recycle (in that order!)

Reduce: Only buy what you actually need, and prioritise long-lasting products.

Reuse: If you need to buy, buy second-hand.

Recycle: If second-hand isn't possible, buy products made from renewable, reused or recycled materials.



GO FURTHER

Ask your suppliers about their environmental credentials

Try to only buy from businesses that have sustainable practices. Watch out for 'greenwashing', where suppliers may claim to be 'eco-friendly' but are unable to back up claims with evidence.

Write a sustainable procurement policy

A sustainable procurement policy outlines your business's requirements for suppliers, products and services. It also helps communicate your commitments to new suppliers.

Julie's Bicycle's [Sustainable Procurement Guide](#) outlines advice on integrating environmental sustainability into your procurement policies.

Albert's guide to [Taking your Suppliers to Net Zero](#) outlines how to adopt a sustainable procurement policy and support suppliers to adopt more sustainable practices.

Free tools and resources

Albert's [Sustainable Suppliers directory](#) allows you to search for green suppliers for TV and film, including caterers, kit hire and scenery.

The [Green Vendors directory](#) from Green Production Guide includes sustainable suppliers for film, television and streaming production.



NEXT STEPS

Not sure where to go next on your sustainability journey? Why not...

1 Set a goal

The Government is calling on businesses of all sizes to commit to cutting carbon emissions in half by 2030 and reaching 'net zero' emissions by 2050. The [SME Climate Hub](#) provides a one-stop-shop to making a climate commitment and accessing tools and resources to help you on your journey.

2 Write a plan

Make a checklist of all the changes you need to make in order to achieve your end goal. From there, you can assign each action a deadline and a member of staff responsible for achieving it. Use your plan to track progress and celebrate success.

3 Get involved

We all need to work together in order to reach Brent's goal of carbon neutrality by 2030.

The [Brent Environmental Network](#) is a network of local residents, businesses, community groups and schools. As part of the network, you will receive a monthly newsletter packed with ideas and practical tips for reducing your environmental impact, as well as inspiring stories from local people who are taking on the climate emergency.

4 Get in touch

Did this toolkit help your business make sustainable changes? [Get in touch](#) to let us know how for the chance to feature in our newsletters or on our social media.

5 Spread the word

The media and creative industries have an important role in shaping public opinion, so why not use your influence to promote sustainability and encourage audiences to reduce their carbon footprint? Check out Albert's [Planet Placement Guide](#) for ideas on creating world-changing content.



GLOSSARY

Air quality

A measure of how clean or polluted the air is.

Carbon dioxide (CO₂)

A gas in the Earth's atmosphere. It occurs naturally, and is also created by human activities such as burning fossil fuels. It is the main greenhouse gas produced by human activity.

Carbon footprint

The amount of carbon dioxide produced by an individual or organisation in a given amount of time, or the amount of carbon dioxide produced during the manufacture of a product.

Carbon neutral

A process where there is no overall release of carbon dioxide, because the amount of carbon dioxide produced is the same as the amount taken out of the atmosphere.

Circular economy

A circular economy is an economic model that involves sharing, leasing, reusing, repairing, refurbishing and recycling existing materials and products as long as possible, to extend the life cycle of products and reduce waste.

Climate change

A pattern of change affecting global or regional climate caused by both natural processes and human activity.

Climate emergency

A situation in which urgent action is required to reduce or halt climate change and avoid potentially irreversible environmental damage resulting from it.

Fossil fuels

Natural resources, such as coal, oil and natural gas, containing hydrocarbons. These fuels are formed in the Earth over millions of years and produce carbon dioxide when burnt.

Global warming

The steady rise in global average temperature in recent decades, which scientists believe is largely caused by man-made greenhouse gas emissions.

Greenhouse gases (GHGs)

Natural and industrial gases that trap heat from the earth and warm the surface.

Renewable energy

Energy created from sources that can be replenished in a short period of time. The five sources used most often are biomass (such as wood and biogas), the movement of water, geothermal (heat from within the Earth), wind, and solar.

Published by Brent Council
www.brent.gov.uk

