

EMS - Environmental & Sustainability Policy

STATEMENT OF POLICY

Playle & Partners LLP recognises its responsibility to Environmental and Sustainable Development and is committed to the prevention of pollution associated with its activities and continually improving levels of Quality & Environmental compliance to at least those required by BS EN ISO 14001 (and all associated legislation & codes of practice & imposed requirements). We will actively seek to enhance the environment and to reduce any negative impact upon it as far as is reasonably practicable, by recognising its responsibilities through a positive policy on health and safety in the workplace, control of pollution and care for the local environment. The Company will also meet its obligations under the Environmental Protection Act (EPA) and potential for pollution from its activities will be assessed and either eliminated or controlled so far as is reasonably practicable.

Generally

Business is conducted with due regard to the environment, its habitats and biodiversity. Our aim is to work towards continuous improvement in environmental management and performance; and to encourage support from clients and all third parties involved with our business. We consider that only by the promotion of this concept and philosophy amongst all employees can the needs and expectations of our clients be met, and our reputation for Quality and Environmental control be maintained. To meet these expectations the company's objectives include, but are not limited to, the following:

- To continually search for product excellence and reductions in environmental impacts through improvements to design, delivery performance and client response through the company's commitment to continuous improvement.
- This is to be achieved through formalised procedures and assigned responsibilities as detailed in the Quality Manual and associated documents, which together, provide a Management System dedicated to meeting and exceeding customer and environmental requirements.

The effectiveness of this system is constantly monitored and periodically reviewed by the senior management of the company who are committed to its support. It is the responsibility of the management and their representative, the Quality Assurance Manager, to ensure that employees are familiar with the Management system and that it is understood, implemented and maintained.

All employees are given the appropriate training necessary to satisfy the objectives of the policy.

The overall responsibility for Quality & Environmental control is vested in the Managing Partner with the delegated responsibility to the Quality Assurance Manager for day-to-day control.

It is essential that all aspects of the system are worked to, and to this end compliance with the manual is mandatory upon all employees.

OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY

'Our business will.....

- Adopt and aim to apply the principles of "sustainable development" - that is, development which meets the needs of the present, without compromising the abilities of future generations to meet their own needs
- Seek to improve its environmental performance continuously
- Ensure compliance with all relevant environmental and sustainable legislation and regulations.
- Offset any negative impact on climate change carrying out our services may have on the environment by way of a Carbon Reduction Pledge
- Continue our commitment to the RIBA 2030 Challenge
- Become a Carbon Net Zero company by 2050
- Offset any negative impact on climate change carrying out our services may have on the environment by way of registration with www.carbonfootprint.com
- Foster the commitment of all management and staff to improving the environmental performance of the business, supported by our Sustainable Champions.
- Promote awareness and understanding of environmental issues and promote sustainable practices, within our offices as well as on all our projects wherever practicable.
- Promote recycling and develop embedded procedures for recycling waste by providing a means of collecting waste products which can be recycled, e.g. aluminium cans, plastic, glass and paper, etc.
- Strive to adopt the highest available environmental standards in all areas of operation
- Adopt a total "cradle-to-grave" assessment of our services
- Aim to minimise the use of all materials, supplies and energy. Wherever possible we will use or specify renewable or recyclable materials and components
- We will minimise the production of waste where possible and any disposal of waste will be carried out with due care for the environment. All waste paper & cardboard is recycled, disposals of equipment must consider whether:
 - equipment can be refurbished or repaired and donated to an organisation such as a local charity or school - items such as IT equipment, mobile phones, furniture, photocopier, printer cartridges might be particularly desirable
 - it is possible to recondition the equipment to a level where it could be re-sold
 - the item can be dismantled for parts or if it contain materials that can be recycled and therefore reduce waste
- Adopt an environmentally sound transport strategy and where practicable, reduce the fuel consumed.
- Encourage staff to use public transport as first preference to travel to and from site by way of implementing an in-house Oyster card programme for all staff to utilise.
- Encourage similar environmental standards to our own from all third parties involved with our business - suppliers, vendors, contractors
- Assist our clients to utilise our services in an environmentally sensitive manner
- Include environmental consideration in investment decisions
- Assist in developing economically - viable solutions to environmental problems in our industry.

REDUCING OUR IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT

There are many things we can do as employers and employees to reduce the energy and material consumption of the business. Listed below are just some of the ways we can have a positive impact in reducing our energy consumption and material usage and reduce our impact on the environment.

What we do:-

- Turn lights off when they are not needed
- All lighting will be replaced by LED fittings as soon as possible, (LED fittings will always be installed where a repair to an older fitting is taking place)
- Turn off power supply to equipment when not in use.
- Turn off all equipment at the end of the working day such as computers, portable electric heaters, printers and monitors.
- Turn heating temperatures down to a minimum (approximately 20 degrees Celsius) and turn heaters down to frost protection only at weekends when there is nobody in the offices.
- Fit timers to heating boilers so the office is only heated for a few hours before staff arrive and whilst occupied. The timer is then set to switch off or switch to frost protection at night and weekends when the office is unoccupied.
- Reduce the use of electric fans in the summer months, open windows.

- Keep all windows closed in colder months and report drafty/broken windows to the practice manager
- Close all doors in the colder months to prevent drafts and heat being lost.
- Report any defective radiators to the practice manager
- Reduce water usage where possible, report any leaks and turn off taps when not in use.
- Encourage staff to operate a 'paperless office' policy
 - Wherever printing is necessary encourage staff to print double sided and/or two to a page to reduce paper usage.
 - Use suitable font size to minimise pages, if possible
 - Use electronic communication methods to minimise paper usage, where possible
- Re-duce / Re-cycle / Re-use, where possible:-
 - Recycling is a big deal and an easy way for individuals to do their bit! We have lots of different bins across the office for different types of waste materials. All staff now have the ability to recycle paper, glass, plastic and tins. These are collected fortnightly by the council from the main bins located in our car park.
 - Actively trying to cut our plastic usage, we no longer have plastic cups by the water dispensers. Glasses are provided to staff and our guests.
 - When catering for our in-house CPD sessions we get the Team lunch. Occasionally there is leftover food which we offer to other members of staff ensuring no wastage.
 - Sometimes we require samples of flooring when planning and designing. Through the company Forbo we recycle these samples further reducing our contribution to landfill.
 - The Practice has a printing budget which is tracked monthly. We try to keep all printing to a minimum and remind email recipients in our disclaimer to think carefully before printing any email.
 - Cutlery and crockery in the office will be reusable not 'one use'
 - All Ink cartridges are recycled, where possible or given back to the supplier for recycling by a certified organisation.
 - All batteries are recycled in accordance with the Battery Directive - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/batteries>
 - All Electrical and Electronic equipment, once it reaches the end of its life for our purposes is either donated or disposed of in line with The Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive (WEEE) via our IT specialist – all disposal documentation is maintained by our IT specialists and is available upon request – Also see our IT Policy, Clause 19.12 – WEEE link:- <http://www.hse.gov.uk/waste/waste-electrical.htm>
- Best Practices in Purchasing of Goods and Services – 4R Principles (Re-duce / Re-cycle / Re-use / Re-place) Ethically sourcing products, ensuring we consider the environmental impact of each purchase before we buy it. We cannot guarantee every purchase will be net zero or 100% from a sustainable source as we also have to take into account the economical impact on us as an SME, but wherever possible we will make the ethical choice.
- Whenever possible, source Fair Trade or CTZ Certified consumables like tea, coffee, sugar ([UTZ Certification \(Now Part of the Rainforest Alliance\)](#) | Rainforest Alliance (rainforest-alliance.org) OR [Fairtrade Products](#)) - We have no bias towards one certification scheme in particular. We have looked closely at all of them, and can see the benefits and limitations of each. The products and suppliers' choice of certification scheme is largely dictated by what was the right fit for their producer at the time. The costs to achieve certification and ongoing audit fees are generally borne by the producer or farmer themselves, so we wouldn't expect dual certification (and the dual cost that comes with it) we try to avoid debates on the value of one versus another.
- Whenever possible, source recycled and sustainably sourced consumables like toilet rolls, kitchen rolls, hand soap, washing up liquid, printer paper, stationary and purchase items that have been manufactured within the UK to reduce the carbon footprint - Ensuring all procurement has taken sustainable / ethical items into consideration before purchase, such as recycled paper / compostable bin bags / soy based inks / eco friendly cleaning products, where practical, etc.
- Actively look to procure products with a longer lifespan, we won't simply going for the cheapest 'quick fix' option
- When renewing supplier contracts we will consciously look for greener energy suppliers / sustainably sourced items wherever economically possible for an SME
- We will actively encourage our sub-contractors to be ISO14001 certified or ask them to sign up to our Environmental and Sustainability Policy
- Actively encourage staff to '**think green**' whenever going about their daily life, this includes recycling items and going paperless whenever possible - Increase employee 'buy-in' to sustainable initiatives - i.e. cycle to work scheme / carbon offsetting / monitoring tools / recycling
- Encourage staff to '**travel green**' – to walk where able, use public transport where possible, any new car lease agreements will be for fully electric or hybrid vehicles.
- Implementing appropriate dress codes within the office to promote cooler clothing in the summer and warmer clothing in the winter – this will help to save energy

- Encourage staff to have plants around the office / on their desks – this will create a ‘happier’ office environment and improve the air quality in the workplace
- Encourage staff to take part in community events to give back to the community – this could be by way of volunteering days / charitable events etc.
- Offset any carbon emissions etc. associated with the daily running of the business through donations to worthwhile ventures
- Sign up to charitable donation sites wherever possible – ensuring purchases provide help and support for others wherever possible – such as <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk> or Amazon Smile etc.
- **Supply Chain** - not only does the Practice encourage environmental mindfulness internally but it also looks to the wider supply chain. We regularly make suggestions on how we can do things better to reduce our impact of doing business. These include:
 - Car sharing where possible or using public transport to travel to meetings
 - Using Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Skype or other similar virtual face-to-face technology
 - Recommending sustainable measures – this involves looking at the design, life-cycle cost versus the initial implementation cost. An area which we are particularly good at this is finding alternative lighting solutions.
 - Using local resources – we aim to recruit local staff. This has a direct impact within the immediate community in which we operate.
- Check monthly (by visual inspection) to ensure procedures described above are followed.

PLASTICS AND SINGLE USE PLASTICS POLICY GUIDANCE

Statement of Intent

Playle & Partners LLP are a consultancy and predominantly office based company, as such the impact our services have on the environment are limited. We are not responsible for providing environmental impact reports or for carrying out environmental inspections. That being said we recognise our responsibility to Environmental and Sustainable Development and are committed to the prevention of pollution associated with its activities and continually improving levels of Quality & Environmental compliance to at least those required by BS EN ISO 14001 (and all associated legislation & codes of practice & imposed requirements).

At Playle & Partners we have significantly reduced our single use plastics and will continue to work towards cutting out all single use plastics wherever possible. In any areas where this is not possible, we have committed to using the least harmful approach and most sustainable solution.

Commitments

- Reduce the amount of plastic, particularly single use plastic we use in all areas of our business.
- Where plastic is used, review and implement best practice ‘end-of-life’ solutions wherever possible
- Educate our teams on the impacts of plastic waste and encourage them to adopt best practice behaviours to support our goals

Actions

Reduce

- Identify and eliminate unnecessary plastic materials used in the office and as part of our working practices, particularly single use plastics and unrecyclable plastics.
- Remove single use plastics from our consumable products, e.g. wooden stirrers, glass milk bottles, plastic free tea bags, metal cutlery provided for all, etc.
- Source alternative products for office use which do not include plastic wrapping or non-recyclable materials
- Continue to utilise software and new technologies to work electronically, reducing unnecessary associated plastic stationery used with hard copy materials
- Provide alternative stationery for staff use e.g. wood based pens, to reduce the number of plastic items available in the stationery cupboards in our office
- Use reusable glass water bottles for meetings and encourage the use of reusable water bottles by our staff through provision of reusable water bottles for all our people.
- Minimise plastic in our sanitary and cleaning products through use of large bottles, refillable bottles for hand soap and hand sanitizer and use of detergent-free cleaning solutions wherever possible

Reuse

- Reuse or refurbish IT equipment, wherever possible, through our PC and laptop refurbishment scheme in conjunction with our IT company.

- Consistently review, collect, and reuse unwanted stationery items from our office
- Keep, clean and refill containers (e.g. soaps, hand sanitizers etc) to reduce plastic consumption, wherever possible
- Shopping bag storage area for staff to share and use.
- Contact sample suppliers (e.g. suppliers of architectural samples) for them to collect and reuse samples which are no longer needed.

Recycle

- Clean, segregate and recycle our plastic waste to maximise the amount of plastic we recycle, through our local scheme.
- Proactively research specialist recycling areas for hard to recycle materials (e.g. architectural samples)

Encourage 'redesign'

- Substitute plastic items for reusable or recyclable alternatives wherever possible
- Switch to more sustainable plastic items if plastic cannot be avoided (e.g. more durable, fewer resources, designed for disassembly or end-of-life treatment)
- Source products which use of recycled materials within the products we buy to create demand for secondary plastics

Share and collaborate

- Arrange CPD events for our teams to demonstrate the impact of single use plastics and how the use of these can be eliminated or reduced.
- Actively take part in campaigns to encourage our teams to adopt behaviours that limit the impacts of plastic, both at work and at home
- Avoid use of single use plastics wherever possible in our designs and encourage our Clients to adopt these principles through explanation of the benefits
- Share our knowledge or experiences through our social media platforms to help accelerate change

HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

As a consultancy and predominantly office based company, we do not deal with the delivery and storage of vast amounts of hazardous substances, however with regards to the products used within our office for cleaning purposes. We ensure:-

- these are stored correctly in their designated storage area / cleaners cupboard. Examples of hazardous substances are bleach based cleaning solutions, etc.....
- All third party operatives and employees who use hazardous substances have access to the Risk Assessment, Safe System of Work and COSHH Assessment for that substance before using it.
- Employees must ensure that they wear any required personal protection equipment (PPE) as identified by the Risk Assessment.
- We are not licensed hazardous waste carriers and therefore DO NOT need to dispose of hazardous waste.

SITE SPECIFIC ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

As noted previously, as a consultancy and predominantly office based company, we do not deal with many of the on site specific environmental issues that can arise from the day to day onsite and operational activities, such as air pollution; noise pollution; waste management; water pollution; contaminated land, Ecology, Archaeology or cultural heritage issues; etc. However, in the unlikely event of a non-conformity occurring on site or an emergency situation we would react proportionately to the services we provide. Informing the site manager immediately and the Playle & Partners LLP Quality Assurance Manager.

TRAVEL TO SITE / MEETINGS

As previously mentioned, all staff are encourage staff to '**travel green**' – to walk where able, using public transport where possible, cycling to work whenever practical and to consider fully electric or hybrid vehicles whenever looking to purchase a new vehicle. However, there are times when getting to a site visit or meeting will require the use of a vehicle. In this instance we recommend staff:-

- Ensure the vehicle tyres are inflated to the correct pressures, to reduce the wear on the tyres and decrease fuel consumption.

- Ensure regular maintenance service to the vehicle(s) to ensure engine performance (to avoid black smoke and ensure efficient use of fuel)
- Keep within the speed limits at all times. Speed has a big effect on fuel consumption of the vehicle. The optimum speed for fuel efficiency is between 50-60 mph (subject to speed limits and driving conditions) travelling at 70mph will use 25% more fuel than travelling at 50mph.
- Reduce weight by removing unnecessary items that do not need to be carried.
- Do not leave the engine idling for long periods of time, switch it off whilst in traffic jams or whilst waiting for long periods of time.
- Avoid harsh acceleration as this can increase the fuel consumption of the vehicle by up to 30%. And avoid harsh breaking which will wear the breaks out sooner than if used gently.
- Keep windows closed to reduce drag.
- Avoid or limit the use of the air conditioning where possible. Using the air conditioning can increase the fuel consumption by up to 10%
- Plan their route to ensure the most cost effective one is used, and if possible avoid travelling at peak times. Select the shortest route to / from the company and the targeted venue.
- Consider sharing a car for work. Two or more people sharing a car will make considerable savings on fuel and vehicle repair bills over a year and reduce your carbon foot print.
- When choosing vehicles for business or personal use choose ones which are environmentally friendly with low carbon dioxide emissions. Cars with low carbon dioxide emissions have reduced road tax and offer better fuel consumption and are better for the environment.

GENERALLY

All staff are encouraged to:-

- Aim to source all services and consumables for the business from companies that are also environmentally friendly, look for ISO 14001 certification.
- Report any item of concern that could potentially become an environmental incident immediately.
- Come forward with any ideas or suggestions on how the company can improve its environmental performance and provide to an EMS champion or committee member.
- Help us to minimise our environmental impacts, everybody can make a contribution and a difference.
- All personnel who attend any site are asked to separate waste into the appropriate waste disposal facility so that recyclable waste ends up being recycled and not sent to landfill.

THE PARTNER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

The cooperation of all employees is essential for the success of this policy. However, ultimate responsibility for achieving the policy objectives, and for ensuring compliance with the relevant Acts of Parliament as well as the various Codes of Practice, lies with the Partners of Playle & Partners LLP, assisted by the EMS Committee.

INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the duty of all employees to ensure that this policy is adhered to. New staff will be introduced to the Policy as part of the induction process and existing staff will be circulated with individual copies of the policy and its content will be discussed at team meetings, with regular training on all company policies undertaken by all on a yearly basis by way of our online training platform or regular Business Briefing training.

OTHER ASSOCIATED PLAYLE & PARTNERS POLICES

This policy should be read in conjunction with a number of other Playle & Partners policies and practice procedures including:

- Health & Safety Policy
- Complaints procedure
- Training and Development Policy
- Recruitment Policy
- Customer Care Policy

REMEMBER



Reduce the amount used.
Replace existing products for more environmentally friendly ones.
Reuse products where possible.
Recycle.



EMS

Monthly Office Inspection Checklist (visual only)

Waste Management	
1. Use both sides of paper in printers/photocopier?	
2. Establish recycling bins for used packing materials, cord binding, envelopes and other material that can be reused / recycled ?	
3. Use refillable and environmentally friendly stationeries wherever possible ? (e.g. refillable ball pens, pencils, markers, etc.)	
4. Waste is segregated with separate containers, and properly labelled?	
5. Waste paper for recycling purpose is properly disposed in the designated containers?	
6. Spent cartridges of printers are collected for recycling?	
7. Batteries and computer wastes are collected centrally for proper disposal ?	
8. Not using paper cups, paper plates, plastic forks and spoons, and other disposable tools?	
9. Refillable and biodegradable detergent is used?	
10. Cloths and towels are used in pantry?	
11. Records of waste disposal and waste recycling are maintained?	
Water Conservation	
12. Does the office keep a record of water consumed?	
13. "Save Water" stickers and the number to report leaking faucets are indicated properly?	
14. No running tap or water leakage is observed?	
Energy Conservation	
15. Does the office keep a record of energy consumption within the operation for monitoring purposes?	
16. Switch off air-conditioners, lighting, computers, printers, photocopiers and electrical appliance when they are not in use or no one is left in the room/work area ?	
17. "Energy Saving" stickers are properly placed ?	
18. The temperature of air-conditioners is set at 20-25.5°C ?	
19. Computers are in energy saving mode when idle for 20 minutes or more ?	
Indoor Air Quality	
20. Do all rooms have ventilation available	
21. Do all rooms have a green plant	
Other items	