

# Going Green in Lambeth

A guide for Lambeth's Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations











#### **Funded by**







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#### A guide for Lambeth's Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations

- Are you a community organisation in Lambeth wondering if you could be doing more to manage your environmental impact?
- Are you finding that funders are asking about your environmental impact and you're not sure you can give the strongest possible answers?
- Do you struggle to balance the desire to become more environmentally sustainable against the pressing everyday needs of your organisation?

This guide is for you. With simple actions you can take today, and inspiring stories of local initiatives, we will show how you can play your part in making Lambeth a cleaner, healthier place to live, work and visit.

In 2019, Lambeth was the first Local Authority to declare a climate emergency. In March 2022, Lambeth Council's cabinet approved a Climate Action Plan to enable the borough to become carbon net zero compatible and climate resilient by 2030.

Lambeth's voluntary and community sector organisations of all sizes are a vital part of achieving this goal. And as this guide will show, these organisations are often at the forefront of developing and driving good practice.

Many funders now expect organisations to be able to explain how they are mitigating their environmental impact. More and more you will see application forms with sections dedicated to outlining your policy and procedure around environmental sustainability.

Workers are increasingly keen to work for ecologically responsible organisations. Reducing your environmental footprint and telling others why you're doing it helps the planet, makes you more attractive for prospective employees, and sets a standard for other organisations to follow.

### By acting on the tips in this guide today, you can make Lambeth a better place and your organisation can become more:

1 Ethical

2 Fundable

3 Attractive to staff and volunteers

There are lots of tips included here so you can choose what's right for your organisation. Now it's over to you to select the actions that you commit to doing today. These actions could form part of your organisation's new or refreshed Environmental Policy.

Please note that this is primarily a digital guide. If you wish to print any sections, please be careful to manage your print settings to only print the pages you need. This guide has been designed to minimise ink use when printing.

Image credit: https://love.lambeth.gov.uk/vauxhall-city-farm-community-garden/

### **About Integrate**

Integrate supports Lambeth's voluntary and community sector by building voice, developing capacity and attracting investment.

To find out more about our work visit: www.integrateagency.co.uk

Lambeth's Climate Action Plan You can find Lambeth's Climate Action Plan here:

https://tinyurl.com/yc2v8tnf

#### Working to an ISO informed standard

ISO 14001 is an internationally agreed standard that sets out the requirements for an environmental management system. It helps organisations improve their environmental performance through more efficient use of resources and reduction of waste, gaining a competitive advantage and the trust of stakeholders.

At Integrate, our ambition is that organisations uplift their existing commitments towards this standard, and we aim to support you taking associated actions, through this document, through our events and within our surgery sessions.

Our events and surgeries are free to all voluntary sector organisations working in Lambeth, and can be booked here: <a href="https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/the-integrate-agency-cic-15956125463">https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/the-integrate-agency-cic-15956125463</a>

The opening paragraph above is an extract from this document which sets out the benefits and steps involved in attaining this standard: https://www.iso.org/files/live/sites/isoorg/files/store/en/PUB100372.pdf

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## Section One **Energy**

We always made choices around energy and appliances based on price, thinking that our primary duty was to reduce costs so that more money could be spent on projects.

When we opened our centre, we were just grateful for any space and didn't think about simple ways to make our building more energy efficient. We put up with draughts and squabbled over the thermostat.

We spent so much time concentrating on our organisation's survival so we could be there to meet immediate needs that we had lost sight of our role in the bigger picture. It was a case of 'one day we'll get round to it' and today is that day.

Minimising energy use is the single, biggest area in which you can directly reduce your organisation's carbon emissions. If you share a building with other organisations, set up a meeting so you can go through this guide together to agree targets and actions.

- Visit <u>www.bigcleanswitch.org</u> and sign up for updates on the changing energy situation. Then, when the time is right, switch to a green tariff.
- Set yourself a target for energy use reduction. Look through your bills over the last year and set an achievable target (based on energy consumption rather than price).
- Order a smart meter and then make the readings visible to staff.
- Add timers and/or signs by every appliance in your building that uses electricity, gas or water and ensure you use a thermostat (perhaps a Smart thermostat that is connected to an app on your phone, especially if you are using your building with less regularity since Covid 19). Prompts for signs are included with this guide including 'Keep this fridge three quarters full' and 'Only boil as much water as you need'. These signs should help you use energy more efficiently across lighting, cookers, kettles, microwaves, fridges, heating, air conditioning, taps, hoses, screens, water coolers and outlets.
- Add a standing item on energy usage to your Board agenda so they can track any year on year decrease in energy use. Incentivise staff to reduce their energy use by celebrating milestones along the way to meeting your target.
- Enable working from home where possible it reduces electricity, leads to a reduction in individual carbon footprints thanks to reduced commutes, and fewer offices supplies are used, reducing waste.
- Insulate your organisation's building (and consider any staff's home office arrangements also). If you aren't able to make any substantial changes such as cavity or loft insulation, you could potentially add secondary glazing (removable panels or plastic film), carpet underlay and draught proofing (such as door excluder brushes and foam strips between floorboards). Refer to the terms of your lease and consider any health and safety implications before making any changes.
- Look at every nook and cranny that air can travel through and imagine them combined into one hole in your wall. 'So that's why it gets so cold in here!' Every change you make will make that hole smaller.
- Investigate solar panels and energy efficiency schemes that you may be eligible for: https://tinyurl.com/32k75mjh
- 10 When buying appliances, consider energy star ratings as a major factor in your decision making.
- A note about carbon offsetting if this is part of your organisation's approach Carbon offsets should always be the absolute last resort. The below are in a hierarchy of most to least preferable:
  - **Prevent** emissions by reducing the number of trips taken
  - Reduce emissions by saving energy or taking lower carbon options for trips, and
  - <u>Invest</u> in your own renewable energy (can you install solar panels, can you connect to a local renewable energy source).
  - If you are looking to Offset, use Gold Standard certified projects. Find out more: https://tinyurl.com/mrxsau43

#### Spotlight on:

#### #InTheLoop

Lambeth is improving on-street bins. This will make it easier for everyone to recycle when they are out and about in Lambeth.

www.hubbub.org.uk/lambeth-intheloop

#### Community TechAid

Community TechAid is based in Lambeth, SW9

We are a grassroots charity in south London whose vision is to end the digital divide. Our mission is to enable sustainable access to technology and education needed to extend digital inclusion to all.'

To achieve this they promote the reusing, repairing, refurbishing and recycling of technology. They gather donated laptops, tablets and smartphones, wipe the data and refurbish them, and return them to use by giving them to those in need.

Find out more about their work here: www.lambethtechaid.org.uk/business-device-donations

#### Global Justice Now

Global Justice Now has its Headquarters in Lambeth, SW9.

'We are a democratic social justice organisation working as part of a global movement to challenge the powerful and create a more just and equal world. We mobilise people in the UK for change, and act in solidarity with those fighting injustice, particularly in the global south.'

Find out more about their work here: www.globaljustice.org.uk

#### **Repowering London**

Repowering London is based in Lambeth, SW9

Since 2011, Repowering has empowered communities to fund, install and manage their own clean, local energy. We believe that putting people at the heart of the energy system is key for fighting the climate emergency, building resilient communities and promoting technological innovation.

www.repowering.org.uk/our-story





## Section Two **Procurement and Supplies**

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We buy from social enterprises and sustainable local businesses wherever possible for various products and services including cleaning products and services. We consider carbon impact in our food choices when we order catering (including packaging) and never buy more than we need, to minimise waste.

With larger purchases, price used to be the major factor, and with smaller purchases it tended to be more about convenience, even when that meant disposable plastic cups at events. Just making the switch to having sustainability benefits as a major consideration across all purchases and supplier relationships, has shifted our mindset so much.

What you buy and who from matters hugely. Buying from organisations who share your values helps support ethical businesses and promotes sustainable practice.

- Reduce waste generation by choosing products that are reusable, recyclable, compostable, or made with recycled content.
- 2 Consider whether you can fix, borrow or buy used before buying new
- Protect biodiversity by avoiding products that contribute to deforestation, ocean pollution and other environmental destruction
- Audit the environmental credentials across all current suppliers and identify those you rate as less satisfactory in order to consider alternative suppliers
- 5 Consider buying locally to reduce travel miles and support Lambeth's businesses

#### Spotlight on:

#### SRA Catering, Cleaning and Printing

Community TechAid is based in Lambeth, SW9

SRA was set up to help improve or re-establish work habits for those whose lives have been interrupted by mental illness. This includes accessing adult education, work placements and support to find a job.

SRA has three social enterprises where this training takes place – catering, cleaning, and print, which includes our Copyshop and print finishing. You can find out about purchasing their services here:

www.sra-ltd.co.uk

#### **Library of Things**

Steam cleaners, PA systems and projectors... Sometimes you need something just for a day or two. It's best to never buy new if you can avoid it, and better still to borrow just for as long as you need!

A Library of Things is an initiative that allows you to borrow useful items, on demand. There are self-service lockers full of Things inside Upper Norwood Library Hub, 39-41 Westow Hill, SE19 1TJ (Crystal Palace location).

Browse their offer: www.libraryofthings.co.uk/catalogue/browse

#### Repair Cafés

At Repair Cafes, you can extend the life of appliances by getting them fixed.

www.thegoodlifecentre.co.uk/community-repair-events

#### **Buy Social**

Whenever you are buying something, check Social Enterprise UK's directory of suppliers first! You can search for local businesses here:

www.directory.socialenterprise.org.uk/seuk/en/seuk-members



## Section Three **Paper**

The printer used to whir all day long and our filing cabinets were overflowing. We took advice from another charity who had recently become paperless about how to digitise our data and processes while ensuring everything is secure. We tried to imagine how we would set things up to be future ready if this was Day I for our charity. It took a while to change the culture, but eventually we gave away our printer.

100,000 sheets of A4 paper has a carbon footprint of 6,000kg and requires eight trees and 2,000kWh of energy. The same paper recycled seven times produces 3,200kg of carbon over its lifetime. A page printed with a laser printer produces approximately 1g of CO2.

- Consider your current use of paper where can changes be made to save you paper, ink, staff filing time and storage space? Some studies have shown that 45% of office paper is discarded that same day.
- 2 Where signatures are required for documents, can you make the switch to fillable PDFs and e-signatures?
- Consider where paper forms can be replaced by e-forms and experiment with different eform builders (such as GoogleForms, SurveyMonkey and JotForm).
- Focus on minimising rather than eliminating sometimes paper-based solutions are necessary to support inclusion, some staff may prefer taking written notes. It's a journey of understanding and skills building to adapt to a reduced paper office. The first step is to hold a conversation with staff and volunteers.
- Many people worry about cyber security when they consider switching to digital records. Using a digital document management system will generally allow you to set better access protocols to protect your data than a paper-based system.
- Speak to an organisation who considers themselves paperless and find out how they went about their journey. Ask your network for tips by posting on social media.

#### Spotlight on:

#### Digital solutions to consider:

(Credit: www.jotform.com)

Google Drive. This free app allows you to save all formats of files to your Drive or a company Drive and share them with others.

**Dropbox**. Dropbox has both paid and free subscriptions, according to the amount of storage you need. You can upload the app to any device to access your documents wherever you are, and you can allow other people to access your Dropbox folders or send files via Dropbox.

Evernote. This app allows you to save all types of notes, from receipts to handwritten doodles.

Adobe Reader and EchoSign. Adobe's apps let you work with PDFs, make notations on them, and even add signatures to important contracts and documentation.

Cam Card. This app lets you make the most out of your networking events by giving you a way to digitally save and use all of the business cards you collect.

Mobile phone camera. No matter which phone or provider you have, you likely have a decent camera. You can take clear photos of any document you'd like to save and either upload them to your computer or email them to yourself to file. There are also apps to create pdfs from photos taken on your phone.

#### **Lambeth Library Printing**

You can print from computers in Lambeth's libraries from 20p a page & some Lambeth libraries enable printing from your own device via WiFi.

 $\underline{https://libraries.lambeth.gov.uk/computer-access-and-digital-services}$ 



## Section Four **Travel**

The transportation sector generates the largest share of greenhouse gas emissions. Improving air quality is one of Lambeth's top priorities as a council. Fewer miles driven means fewer emissions. Travelling by public transport, bike and on foot will help.

#### What can i do today?

- Ask staff how they travel to and from work and why, are there any opportunities to alter transport methods or ride share?
- Unnecessary idling of cars, trucks, and school buses pollutes the air, wastes fuel, and causes excess engine wear. Reducing idling prevents children and other residents from being exposed to diesel exhaust, reduces greenhouse gas emissions, and saves money on fuel. Many people don't realise the harm idling generates. Ensure staff are aware of how to drive and maintain their cars to reduce emissions.
- Consider reducing face to face meetings.
- 4 Investigate bike schemes and lock up spaces.
- 5 Enable working from home where appropriate.

#### Spotlight on:

#### **Mums for Lungs**

Mums for Lungs are based in Lambeth.

"We are a network of people who care about air pollution. Mums for Lungs was established in Brixton, London in 2017, when a number of us were on parental leave together. We became aware of the toxic levels of air pollution on the UK's streets while walking around with our babies, and decided we wanted to do something about it. We are a grassroots organisation with no formal structure. Most of our members are ordinary people with no specialist background in air pollution, who volunteer their time to campaign."

Find out more: www.mumsforlungs.org/who-are-we

Idling information can be found here: www.mumsforlungs.org/our-campaigns/idling

Credit: Photo by Leandro Boogalu: https://www.pexels.com/photo/blue-road-bike-1149601

#### Should you keep a pool bike scheme in your office?

#### What is a pool bike scheme?

A pool bike scheme is a bike or bikes that are shared and can be used by your employees to complete any kind of journey including:

Travelling to off-site meetings

Testing out a potential cycle commute

Employers can choose how many bikes to keep and how they should be used. You can even share with a neighbouring organisation.



#### How does a pool bike scheme

#### help the employer?

- Reducing time spent on travel
- Reduced need for car spaces
- Reduced carbon
- More active staff

#### Things to consider

- Bike suitability
- Bike maintenance planned and emergency
- Storage including locks
- Insurance
- Internal policies about the pool bike use including personal use, helmet policy and any risk assessments or health and safety documents that are required
- Monitoring use and outcomes

### How

#### How does a pool bike scheme

#### help the employee?

- Improved journey times
- Convenience

#### Consider a local Rent a Bike scheme:

Would some of your employees welcome the chance to try before they buy? Find out more:

https://tinyurl.com/5ez6hwhe

www.peddlemywheels.com/try-before-you-bike

#### Cycle friendly employer

Having a pool bike scheme is a key element of the Cycle Friendly Employer accreditation; The international benchmark for businesses wishing to enable and encourage more of their staff to cycle.

#### How to set one up

Both TFL and Cambridge University have useful guides to setting up a pool bike scheme. Consider speaking with local businesses such as Brixton Cycles, a worker's cooperative.



## Section Five **Finances**

In 2021, the amount of CO2 production financed by Britain's banks and asset managers was nearly double the UK's annual carbon emissions, according to a report by Greenpeace and WWF

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Trustees have a duty to maximise financial returns on behalf of their beneficiaries, as long as their investments don't harm those they aim to help. And with growing evidence that ethical funds can match or outperform mainstream funds in the long term, a number of charities are reviewing where they place their money.

To safeguard their reputation, charity trustees should weigh up whether their investment policy matches their mission and whether an ethical fund could match their donors' expectations.

The above is taken from CAF's article on ethical investment:

https://www.cafonline.org/charities/investments/time-to-invest-ethically

The current Charity Commission guidance on investment is here and there has been a recent consultation (and a notable judgement in the case of Butler-Sloss v Charity Commission):

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charities-and-investment-matters-a-guide-for-trustees-ccl4

#### What can i do today?

- Table a Board level discussion around your organisation's financial services and investments.
- 2 Ensure you are familiar with current guidance as linked to above.



### **Section Six** Your services to lambeth residents

We provide routes into education, training and employment as well as support with lifeskills. Increasingly, we are supporting people towards careers in sustainable industries and we have worked with schools around developing eco-literacy among their pupils.

Some of our workshops have focussed on saving energy safely. With the cost of living crisis and the costs of fuel, this has involved advising people on how to 'heat the human, not the home' with guidance from Martin Lewis's website, and connecting them with resources on Lambeth Council's website:

www.beta.lambeth.gov.uk/housing/private-tenants/save-energy-keep-warm-your-home

- Evaluate your services to Lambeth's residents is there more that can be done to improve your environmental impact through your service offer across any products, resources, training or advice you provide?
- Are there opportunities to signpost your service users to other organisations who can support them to improve their environmental impact?
- Could you partner with local organisations focussed on environmentalism to increase your knowledge or to co-deliver projects?

#### Spotlight on:

#### Lambeth's Climate Partnership Group

Lambeth has united influential public, private, voluntary and community organisations to form the Climate Partnership Group – to help deliver Lambeth's ambitious Climate Action Plan. Partners are:

King's College Hospital

King's College London

LSBU Group

Hyde Housing Association

Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing Association

National Theatre

Lambeth Schools Partnership

Southbank Centre

Guy's and St. Thomas' Foundation

Guy's and St. Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust

https://love.lambeth.gov.uk/climate-action-plan-lambeth-launches-climate-partnership-group





## Section Seven Waste

Careful planning and effort across a business can make it possible to stop sending any waste to landfill. Of the 133 tonnes of waste produced at our head office in Manchester last year, zero went to landfill. There are lots of simple steps businesses can take towards this goal, such as engaging expert waste treatment contractors, replacing disposable plastic cutlery with bamboo, issuing staff with reusable water bottles, and replacing fluorescent tubes with LED lighting.

Phil Jones, managing director of Brother UK

#### What can i do today?

- Evaluate your current office waste mix. Are you sorting your waste effectively? What can be done about each type?
- Look at any single use plastics that are used and replace them with more ecologically sound alternatives.
- Use sorting bins for your recycling and see if you can arrange a compost solution for your food waste.

#### Spotlight on:

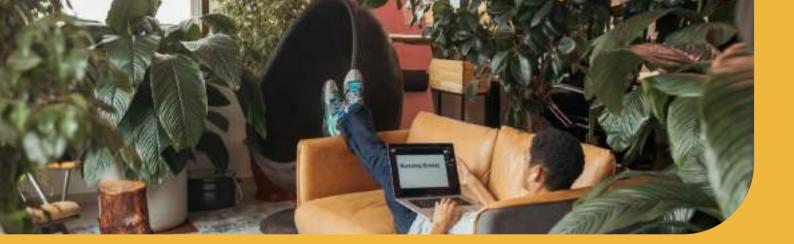
#### Renewables for Schools CIC

Renewables for Schools is based in Lambeth, SW4

"We provide renewable, practical and learning support for schools to help them make a difference in their communities and for the environment. If we all act now, we believe that schools can be zero carbon and powered using exclusively renewable energy by the year 2030."

Find out more: www.renewablesforschools.com

Credit: Photo by SHVETS production: https://tinyurl.com/ypax36ms



## Section Eight **Green Space**

It used to be so grey and dull, now every inch of usable space has colour and life. It's so much nicer and feels better for our air too.

Improving your surroundings by adding more plants inside and outside the office has a proven effect on wellbeing, as well as the environment.

#### What can i do today?

- Map out your outdoor space to welcome biodiversity can any lawn areas be replaced by wildflower patches? Is there any room on your windowsills, roof, parking or patio areas for planting. Don't just think about the ground plants can go up too! Think about climbers and hanging baskets.
- 2 Look into Green Walls: www.urbangreening.info/benefits-of-green-walls
- Minimise the use of plastic when gardening and reuse everything to exhaustion!
- Do you have room to make your own compost from your kitchen and garden waste?
- Purchase a few houseplants (collect rainwater if you can always provide an exit route for creatures that might otherwise fall in!)
- Prioritise grey water and water only as needed, avoiding harmful chemicals (research other ways to reduce pests)

#### Spotlight on:

#### Incredible Edible Lambeth

'We aim to galvanise people and communities through growing and celebrating food. We want to encourage people to look at their local patch and see how they can transform it into a food growing space. We want to support a local food economy that thrives, employs more local people and keeps money in Lambeth.'

Incredible Edible Lambeth has a map of Lambeth based initiatives including farms, cafes, community gardens and food businesses. Explore what is happening locally here:

Find out more: www.incredibleediblelambeth.org/map

Credit: Photo by Anastasia Shuraeva: https://tinyurl.com/wawvk9sv



## Section Nine Staff Actions

When I'm thinking about our impact as a business, in a strange way I can sometimes forget about our actions as individuals. While I strongly believe that the climate emergency requires action at every level, there are still some important things each of us can do in our everyday lives at work and at home.

#### What can i do today?

- Invite staff to bring reusable water bottles and reusable coffee cups from home
- Consider food miles and carbon impact when bringing/ buying lunches. (e.g. encourage plant based, packaging, and limit wasted food)
- Consider your work wardrobe! Avoid fast fashion and prioritise natural fibres to avoid shedding microplastics when washing. Buy second hand and quality items that last years
- Donate professional clothing you no longer need to charities that support people into employment.
- Be familiar with the organisation's policy and practice and consider ways to make further improvements
- Tell your friends and partner organisations what your organisation is doing to make a difference. Share what has and hasn't worked

#### Spotlight on:

#### **Groundwork London**

Groundwork London has a centre in Lambeth, SE1

"Our vision is of a society of sustainable communities which are vibrant, healthy, and safe, that respect the local and global environment, and where individuals and enterprises prosper. Although unfortunately, we know that this isn't the reality for many living in London in 2022.

The Covid-19 pandemic has amplified inequalities and challenges facing individuals and communities across London, including poverty, health inequalities, and access to decent work and housing. We are also facing the ever-present global threat of environmental damage and climate change. At Groundwork, we believe that real, lasting change requires a holistic approach that benefits people, places, and the planet."

Groundwork have a host of services aimed at improving the environment. Find out more: www.groundwork.org.uk/hubs/london/services

Credit: Photo by Sarah Chai: https://tinyurl.com/y9kewxkz

### Other considerations

Don't just consider people you buy from, think about your funders and corporate supporters too, while always acting in the best interests of the charity and your service users.

Consider establishing red lines in approaching companies for support and doing some due diligence before making approaches (proportionate to the anticipated value/ level of support that might arise from the partnership).

#### Thank You.

Thank you for reading this guide, and we hope it has been helpful in provoking thought and supporting your plans towards improving your environmental impact.

#### **Resources and Useful Links**

Organisations are listed herein for information and inclusion is not intended as a recommendation.

#### Sustainable Ventures:

Sustainable Ventures has partnered with Lambeth Council to provide an exciting package of business and commercial support to cleantech SMEs in Lambeth. Find out more here: <a href="https://www.sustainableventures.co.uk/lerf">www.sustainableventures.co.uk/lerf</a>

A guide to developing your Environmental Policy, that may include tips from this guide:

https://tinyurl.com/y7pfeeuw

Carbon Trust

www.carbontrust.com

Free courses on sustainability for start ups:

https://tinyurl.com/y2sf6727

Free net zero support for small and medium enterprises:

www.betterfutures.london/betterfutures\_plus/

#### Staff training checklist:

- How frequently does staff training on the organisation's Environmental Policy take place?
- 2 Are all staff aware of, and able to demonstrate they are aware of the organisation's policy?
- 3 Are all staff given the opportunity to feed into and improve the organisation's policy and practice

### **Signage Prompts:**

Please print only the signs you will use and check your printer settings carefully to prevent waste.

