



Green Guide for Heritage Organisations

This guide contains quick, easy and low-cost actions for heritage organisations who want to tackle the climate crisis together.

We know it can be tricky to take action when capacity and resources are stretched, and the impact is hard to measure. This guide has suggestions for small interventions that collectively can make a big difference.

The guide has been researched, developed and produced by a group of emerging professionals who make up the Green Museums Collective, with support from Cornwall Museums Partnership and funding from South West Museum Development and Cornwall Council.

5 minute free tasks

Offer free water bottle refills. Advertise that you do this.

Put vegan and local products on the top of your menu. This encourages people to think about these options first, rather than as an afterthought.

(Re)use plastic wallets instead of laminating. Laminated paper cannot be recycled and will not biodegrade.

Recycle vinyl, nitrile and latex gloves and single-use face masks. Take them to CMP's TerraCycle point at Krowji or pass to one of the CMP team.

Talk about your actions. Use social media to tell your audiences about any action you are taking, however small.

Register individual Climate Commitments with Cornwall Council at letstalk.cornwall.gov.uk/climatecommitments. Encourage employees and volunteers to consider their activities and decisions.

5 minute low-cost tasks



Encourage refillable containers. Give a discount to people who bring a reusable cup.

Propagate houseplants for office areas. Water them when you empty your dehumidifiers.

Get involved in Cornwall Council's Forest for Cornwall initiative:

cornwall.gov.uk/environment/countryside/forest-for-cornwall-programme/.

Participation ranges from supporting the project to growing and planting free trees.

30 minute free tasks

Choose food items that do not contain palm oil. Even those that claim to use sustainable palm oil.

Encourage employees to switch to green pensions. Nest have a sustainable fund, just transfer over for free <https://makemymoneymatter.co.uk/>

Carry out a regular waste audit to

- Identify the main waste streams your museum produces
- Highlight locations where particular materials are used
- Identify items for reuse/recycle
- Create a baseline for recycling targets

Book a free waste audit <https://www.cornwallwastesolutions.co.uk/waste-audit/> or undertake your own.

Write an organisational sustainability statement. Lay out your commitments and publish them. You can use Julie's Bicycle 'Environmental Policy and Action Plan' template

https://juliesbicycle.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Environmental_Policy_and_Action_Plan_Creation_template_-_no_branding.pdf

Get involved in Cornwall Council's Carbon Neutral Cornwall Hive. Read blog posts about sustainability in Cornwall and contribute your own ideas for moving towards carbon neutrality.

30 minute low-cost tasks



Opt for paper and cardboard packaging and glass bottles or cans rather than single use plastic in your shop and café. Stock objects made from natural materials such as paper and wood where possible.

Change your supplier of toilet paper and paper towels to suppliers that use recycled fibres or fast growing fibres and uses plastic-free packaging. Suggested brands: Ecoleaf (Suma), Essential, Traidcraft, Who Gives a Crap.

Review your environmental monitoring for temperature and relative humidity to see if you can reduce the need for environmental control. Use fans to circulate warmer and drier air, they use less energy than heaters or dehumidifiers.

Do you have more time or budget?

Print exhibition resources on recyclable materials like acid free cardboard. Stick to only one material to increase the possibility of recycling. Or consider how you can reuse non-recyclable exhibition materials afterwards.

Set up a Library of Things or connect with <https://www.kloth.org.uk/>. Use your location to host a community shared collection of common items e.g. carpet cleaners, hedge trimmers, sewing machines. Items that are expensive, large or rarely used can be purchased once and used by all.

Switch to a green energy supplier. “Green” energy is non-polluting and comes from renewable sources that do not produce greenhouse gases or increase carbon emissions. Changing energy supplier can make a huge difference to the environmental impact of an organisation. Look for terms like ‘renewable electricity’, ‘renewable gas’ and ‘carbon offset gas’ when choosing your tariff. Suggested brands: Ecotricity, Bulb, Octopus, Ovo Energy, Good Energy.

Reduce the carbon emissions of your website

- Reduce number of images allowed per post to 4 and use fewer moving parts
- Use JPEG formats for photographs and compress all images using Photopea or TinyPNG to ensure that they are below 100 KB
- Add ‘Smush It’ plug in if using WordPress.org which can compress your site for you.
- Test all webpages against www.websitecarbon.com to ensure that they do not produce more CO₂ than the average site (aim for a lower percentage)

- Find out where your server is and how it is powered: UKFast offer carbon-neutral hosting based in the UK

