

ECOⁿnect

North Western Universities Purchasing Consortium Ltd



NWUPC Sustainability News



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Issue 16

Welcome to the Sixteenth edition of ECOⁿnect, the NWUPC's e-newsletter focusing on Sustainable practices and projects from across our member and supplier base. There are some fantastic projects being undertaken by our members and suppliers alike and we are delighted to be able to shine a spotlight on them.

If you would like to feature in our next edition, please contact **David McIntyre**.

Why is it important to use sustainable cleaning products?

Here are just a few reasons why it's important to use sustainable cleaning products.

- It's been predicted that by 2050, there will be more plastic in the seas than fish.[1]
- The UK has produced 8.3 billion metric tonnes of plastic since 1950 (half of this since 2002)
- 79% of these plastics sit in our natural environment
- Less than 9% plastics used are recycled

Sustainable cleaning solutions and protecting the natural environment remain high on the agenda for Banner, a supplier on the NWUPC Cleaning and Janitorial supplies framework.

Discussions about how to better protect the natural environment have moved higher up the public agenda in recent years, but this issue has long been on Banner's radar.

As one of the largest distributors of workplace products, with over 350 fleet vehicles making over 18,000 deliveries per day, Banner has a responsibility to operate responsibly.

One element of operating responsibly is a commitment from Banner to continually review their highly complex supply chain, which is the most significant part of their environmental footprint and social impact.

This commitment has led to the introduction of many environmentally and ethically sourced products in recent years. In fact, Banner currently offers over 3,000 products that are 50% recycled and has introduced many products that help customers to reduce single-use plastics in the workplace.



Spotlight on: Latest sustainable cleaning products

OceanSaver pods are the latest sustainable cleaning products to help reduce the use of single use plastic in the workplace.

Each Pod contains concentrated active ingredients that dilute in water and provide users with the option to reuse an existing plastic bottle or to buy a fully recyclable OceanSaver 'bottle for life'.

This enables users to reduce their plastic consumption, reduces the amount of waste and in turn, the amount of plastic that pollutes our oceans.

If we were to use one full truck of OceanSaver Pods in place of buying traditional trigger sprays, the carbon footprint would be reduced by 80% and prevent the equivalent of eight trucks of plastics from entering the ocean.

To find out more about OceanSaver Pods please [click here](#).

Banner evolution

Banner is not only committed to sourcing environmental and ethical products. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is integral to the way Banner conducts itself.

Banner evolution operates across four key pillars, Our Natural Environment, Our Supply Chain, Our Communities and Our People. This helps Banner to deliver social value and impact for its customers, community, suppliers and employees.

To find out more about Banner evolution please visit www.BannerUK.com/evolution and follow Banner on LinkedIn [@Banner_1](#) and Twitter [@Banner_1](#).

Banner is proud to be a strategic supplier on NWUPC Cleaning and Janitorial supplies framework Lots 3, 4 and 5. To place an order or to make an enquiry about the framework please contact your Banner account manager, **Hannah Turner** on **0843 538 3311 ext. 5241** or at Hannah.Turner@BannerUK.com

[1] World Economic Forum, Ellen MacArthur Foundation and McKinsey & Company: The New Plastics Economy: Rethinking the future of plastics (2016)



Harper Adams University

***“We were going through 46,000 single-use cups a year, which was too much”
“It is entirely replicable across our sector and I hope many more universities soon follow suit.”***

Ditching Disposables

Harper Adams University is the UK's first higher education facility to permanently ban single-use cups, setting a precedent for others to follow. Harper Adams University specialises in agricultural and rural programmes for students from around the globe. Set within a 550-hectare working farm, it's not surprising that this university focuses on how to manage the demands a growing population has on the planet.

This higher education facility ranks sustainability issues high on its agenda and is a leading specialist university in tackling the future development of the planet's food production, processing, animal sciences, engineering, land management and sustainable business. From molecular diagnostics laboratories to food processing facilities, students are well equipped to test their theories in the field – literally. The university's foodservice operations reflect this ethos, offering students a range of eateries, from cosy cafés to student restaurants, which offer an extensive and imaginative range of dishes made with ingredients grown on site or sourced locally, all produced in the most environmentally friendly way possible.

Groundbreakers

The catering team at Harper Adams is continually looking for ways to minimise the university's impact on the environment. One area that has been a recent focus of attention is the use of disposable cups.

“Prior to the scheme we used recyclable cups, but the waste streams meant they were difficult to segregate correctly,” explains David Nuttall, Catering Manager. *“We were going through 46,000 single-use cups a year, which was too much.”*

Following an encounter with a local businesswoman, Alison Thomas, at a Shropshire Chamber business networking event and learning more about her 'Shrewsbury Cup' concept, David was keen to get involved.

The Shrewsbury Cup is a project where customers pay a £1 deposit for a reusable, insulated cup which they return for a refund at any participating outlet. The concept grew in response to the thousands of single-use, non-recyclable cups being left strewn across the landscape following the Hay Festival in 2018.

Determined to make a change, Alison and her co-founder Sophie Peach were determined to put a stop to it and, with the support of the Hay Festival and its vendors, she trialled the Shrewsbury Cup concept. Alison achieved an impressive 92% reduction in waste, proving that it was a viable option for reducing the use of single-use materials across all foodservice outlets.

Towards the end of 2018 the AGRI Project, part funded by the European Regional Development Fund and delivered by Aston and Harper Adams Universities, met with Alison to see what support they could offer the project. This resulted in a trial across the university campus over a course of a number of weeks in 2019, supported by a 'Choose to re-use' campaign, with all takeaway drinks served in Shrewsbury Cups, an alternative to single-use cups.

Testing the Water

"Although today's students seem keen to try new concepts, particularly those that have a positive impact on the environment, we weren't entirely sure how it would be received," recalls David. "We were concerned about the logistics and whether students would bring cups back and queue for their refund."

After the three-week trial was over the results clearly showed that it had been a great success and the huge impact that they had hoped to have by eliminating single-use cups could be achieved. The Shrewsbury Cup concept has now been permanently rolled out across the Harper Adams University campus, complete with the university logo branding on the side, and has gone down really well with students keen to embrace the sustainable initiative.

"We are really proud to be the first university to remove disposable cups from all outlets," says David. "It is entirely replicable across our sector and I hope many more universities soon follow suit."

Clear communication played a pivotal role in the success of the concept's roll out and acceptance, with the university engaging in open dialogue with students.

"Some students questioned why the university chose to use what seem to be plastic cups, so we created posters which state the facts," explains David. "The cups are made from polypropylene, which is a thermoplastic that has been designed to last over 365 washes. They are also 36 times less likely to go to landfill compared to paper cups, where only one in every 400 is recycled, and they can be recycled when they reach the end of their working life. The cups create 95% less CO2 over a year than disposable paper cups, which



are lined with plastic to retain heat, and the Shrewsbury Cup lids are now biodegradable to further reduce the environmental impact."

Teething Problems

As with most new concepts, there have been a few operational issues which needed to be addressed, such as availability of stock, ease of return and cups being returned damaged.

"Following the trial we spoke to students and staff and saw that we needed to provide satellite areas where they could return their cups," explains David. "Initially we purchased 2,000 cups, but soon realised we needed to purchase more cups as they weren't all coming back straightaway, as some users keep several cups and then bring them back all in one go. We bought another 3,000 to ensure that there is plenty of stock for all students to use."

David explains that due to damage and some cups not being returned they have suffered a 15% loss of stock, but as the cups cost under £1 for the university to purchase this hasn't equated to a financial loss. Rolling out a reusable cup scheme throughout the campus means that visitors also need to follow suit and purchase a reusable cup for £1.

"Now we have to make sure that all visitors to the university are aware of the scheme, which includes clubs that use the site over the weekend or anyone attending events," says David. "They are invited to bring their own cup and receive a 10% discount, and we encourage the use of their own reusable cups as much as possible."

"We have had a few cups returned broken, so we need to talk to staff about being more vigilant about checking cups when they come back," explains David. "Overall, the project has been a resounding success."

'This article was originally published in TUCO magazine April 2020'



NETpositive
FUTURES

Supplier Engagement Tool (HE) Content Refresh & Dashboard Development-Consultation

NETpositive Futures hopes that you, your colleagues and families are all well. We know it has been a tough time for everyone, and whilst we have made a conscious decision not to overload you with briefings and updates we have been thinking about all of the people we work with.

We have begun a consultation process with our existing users of the tool to achieve the following:

CONTENT REVIEW:

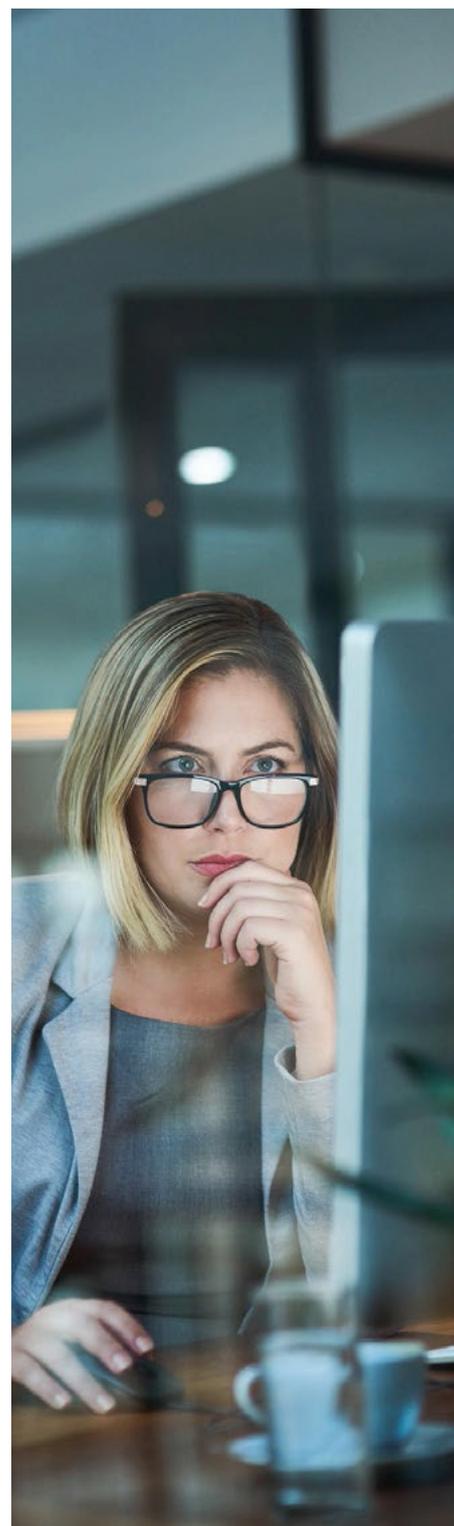
To refresh the content of the tool for suppliers (e.g. to include more social value and business resilience). We carry out this process roughly every 18 months and the purpose is to ensure that issues and actions are updated to reflect changes in the sustainability and social value landscape. During the past 18 months we have been in regular contact with the steering group, receiving feedback and exploring new content needs.

DASHBOARD REVIEW:

To review and update the dashboard to make it easier to extract data from the tool for reporting purposes. We have also received feedback and several suggestions for improvements to the dashboard functionality. Our developers are on standby to carry out amendments to the functionality once we have received feedback and agreed the necessary developments. If this means the development of a totally new dashboard, we are committed to achieving this.

Our existing tool users have been emailed and asked to complete a short questionnaire to give their thoughts/suggestions on the proposed tool refresh and potential dashboard developments. If you are a user of the Supplier Engagement Tool but have not received the email and would like to be part of this consultation process please email admin@netpositivefutures.co.uk and we will send the link to the questionnaire.

As ever we value your support and feedback. This is a critical time for small businesses and we want to give them as much help and support as we can, whilst ensuring they are providing procurement professionals with the right information and a clear demonstration of evidence of action in line with your stated strategic sustainability and civic commitments.





Thomas Kneale & Co Ltd

Transparent Assessment of Thomas Kneale & Co Ltd Sustainable Credentials

Thomas Kneale & Co Ltd is a long established supplier to consortium members, in fact they are the only company to have been awarded all three lots on the "Framework Agreement FE 3118 NW for Soft Furnishings, Associated Products and Services.

Lot 1 - Bedding and Bathroom Textiles and Associated Student Accommodation Products

Lot 2 - Student Kitchen Starter Packs

Lot 3 - Window Coverings



The TK Sustainability journey began many years ago and was accelerated in 2015 when the team was expanded with a new recruit who brought considerable knowledge and experience in the field of in sustainability. Their remit was to ensure outstanding credentials throughout the organisation and to pursue exemplary practices throughout the supply chain. The hard work paid off when the company was recognised as one of only three winners at The University of Manchester Supplier Awards in 2017 for their engagement with and development of the NETpositive Futures tool. It was awarded confirming TK's

"Outstanding demonstration of impact by a local SME".

Since then TK has further enhanced its Sustainable profile through The EcoVadis Sustainability Platform, which has over 65,000 accredited companies across 160 countries worldwide. This is assessed on very comprehensive evaluation criteria which is evidence based. The tool allows up to 65 separate documents to be uploaded- including certificates, policies & procedures, independent audits, and



monitoring data. The categories of questions are within 5 separate pillars- General, Environment, Labour & Human Rights, Ethics and Sustainable Procurement. Given the ongoing journey that Thomas Kneale has been on over several years, actively evolving its actionable activities, the platform allowed for everything to be pulled together in one place and submitted for the first time in Autumn 2019.

TK were delighted to have been awarded the Gold medal for the quality and quantity of relevant evidence. This placed the company among the top five percent of all responders in every single category assessed. The Head of Marketing at EcoVadis informed TK that *"It never happened before that an SME achieved a Gold medal on their very first submission"* Carlos Gomez, Head of Marketing, EcoVadis.

TK was later invited by EcoVadis to lead on a webinar based on their own experiences as a business, in terms of its sustainable journey and its experience interacting with the platform to gather and submit the range of evidence required against the criteria. The invitations were sent out to a total of circa 100,000 EcoVadis interested parties with many listening in to the webinar. The webinar was extremely well received with excellent feedback and a whole host of questions asked at the time and subsequent to the webinar from organisations who were keen to share ideas and build on the points that they had heard.

TK is pleased to offer all readers the opportunity to view the webinar through the below link and to contact them using the details below if they can assist the Consortium members in any way in regards to this article.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q7i6Mvjo7Dw&feature=youtu.be&t=23>

Any further enquiries can be through **Karen Flack** - Sales & Marketing Manager at **Karen@thomaskneale.co.uk** or **Brett Mendell** - Director at **brett@thomaskneale.co.uk**.



phs Compliance water testing & swab service testing during COVID 19

Throughout the Coronavirus Pandemic, phs Compliance have remained open and continued to support customers with new health and safety procedures, while ensuring ongoing compliance with existing legislation. phs Compliance have created tailored packages to help premises prepare for a safe re-opening. Our services are designed to make the process of keeping your business safe, and legally compliant, as straight forward as possible. Universities should be taking a practical approach as they prepare buildings for blended learning in the Autumn Term. Now is a great time to start booking services to ensure buildings are safe and compliant for students and staff to return to, from PAT Testing to Water Service Testing.

Water Service Testing



Buildings that have been out of use during the coronavirus are legally required to undertake a water system check before reopening. This is because in both cold and hot water systems, bacteria in stagnant water can grow to harmful levels in as little as two weeks, meaning that anyone who consumes this water is at risk of developing

Legionnaires Disease. It is a legal requirement for related risk assessments to be reviewed when water systems are reinstated. Risk assessments of air conditioning units must also be reviewed, to avoid infected water droplets spreading through the air. Due to the airborne nature of Coronavirus, we recommend that air conditioning units have their filters changed while return-to-work checks are being carried out. These filters should then be changed on a regular basis. phs Compliance offers a range of services to ensure your water system is safe and legally compliant.

Swab Service Testing

The ability to know when surfaces have been contaminated will play a significant role in reducing the spread of Coronavirus. When a person infected with Coronavirus coughs, infected droplets land on nearby surfaces and instantly contaminate them. These droplets can remain on surfaces for several days, which makes it easy for the virus to spread without anyone realising. phs Compliance are offering Coronavirus Surface Swab Testing services to help businesses identify infected areas. They have a nationwide team of trained testers that can safely undertake swab testing at all workplaces, on everything from door handles to larger pieces of machinery. All testing is carried out in line with World Health Organisation guidelines, with results available in 3-4 days.

To find out more about how phs Compliance can help your university return back to education safely, please visit www.phscompliance.co.uk or call us on **0333 005 0456**.

Further information on the [PAT Testing](#) and [Water Quality Management](#) Frameworks can be found at HE Contracts.



wessex
fleet

Wessex Fleet - No Fuel Please – We’re British!

Electric Vehicles are clearly the future, but don't be embarrassed to have a few combustion engines on fleet right now. Wessex Fleet are on Lot 1 and 3 of NWUPC's Vehicle Hire, Car Club and Leasing Framework.

Despite these unprecedented times, moving from petrol / diesel to electric is still the right direction for fleet operators. New technologies are emerging all the time and the number of electric vehicles available on the market is expanding month on month. Even if we ignore the luxury car market populated by the likes of Tesla, Jaguar I-Pace or Audi E-tron, electric cars now provide 200 to 300 mile ranges within mainstream budgets. Such progress has transformed fleets. The van market is much the same. Small commercials are now widely available with ranges from 100 to 150 miles plus. These are perfect for low mileage, site based operations, campus facilities or requirements that rarely need a long trip. Citroen Berlingo, Peugeot Partner and Renault Kangoo EVs are fabulous options for many. All offer impressive capabilities and as residual values on electric vans have developed, prices have improved. With each year that goes by, EVs offer us more. Fleets must take advantage. Indeed they need to. However, a blend of vehicles is often still prudent. We should not be embarrassed to use fuel.

Electric fleets will still have to juggle charging issues, and bespoke commercials of Transit size and above still have limited EV options. There are some good, efficient combustion engines out there. For certain requirements, these shouldn't

be ignored. Not every sales guy or engineer will be able to accommodate electric vehicles in their current form. Not every delivery run can be done with an electric van. A longer trip will be needed from time to time. Drivers won't want to spend time in motorway services every day. Others can't or won't want to charge EVs. Such operational concerns or requirements are absolutely fair and reasonable. EVs are great, but don't feel that everything needs to be EV immediately. Using combustion engines is not a sign of policy failure, refusal to change, or lack of adventure.

Electrification is a process, not an event. Tracey Hamlin, National Account Manager for Wessex Fleet explains, *"Electric vehicles are a fantastic addition to any fleet. The tax, environmental and cost benefits of electrification are clear. The good news is that most fleets are embracing these changes. However, retaining a balance with efficient combustion engines should not be seen as a policy breakdown. Some jobs are still best done in a petrol or diesel vehicle. Currently the market for vehicles is in transition, and fleets should be too"*.

There is no embarrassment in having a low emissions fleet policy, that embraces all new technology. Electric should be the focus. However, for some operations the most efficient combustion engines are still a sensible option. This is a journey after all, and fuel is not a dirty word.

For further information please contact Simon Naylor at simon@wessexfleet.co.uk or corporatesales@wessexfleet.co.uk to see how they can help with the supply and management of your low emissions fleet.