Final Report

European Pathway to Zero Waste: embedding sustainable procurement for public sector organisations in south east England

Report on the provision of bespoke advice on embedding sustainable procurement within procurement policy and practice.

Project Ref: MPP001-001
Task number: 3.2
With the contribution of the LIFE financial instrument of the European Community
In November 2008, the Environment Agency (EA) in partnership with South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) submitted an application for funding under the European Commission's LIFE+ programme for the EPOW project. In April 2011 WRAP took over SEEDA's areas of responsibility.

The full title of the project is “European Pathway to Zero Waste: demonstrating the route to zero waste to landfill via end of waste protocols and building a recycling society”.

This European demonstration project will run for three years from 1 Jan 2010 to 31 March 2013. The project will develop and build on the achievements of the Southeast of England’s Pathway to Zero Waste (PTZW) programme, which is a partnership of the EA, SEEDA, and WRAP.

EPOW will also work with other Member State (MS) regions to demonstrate the application in other EU regions of the lessons learnt in the project.

Research date: September 2011 to October 2012
Date: March 2013

Published by:
European Pathway to Zero Waste
Waste & Resources Action Programme
21 Horse Fair
Banbury
Oxfordshire
OX16 0AH
http://www.wrap.org.uk/content/wrap-and-european-pathway-zero-waste

Written by: Samantha Dunn, Andy Marsh and Phil Duddell
Executive summary

The European Pathway to Zero Waste (EPOW) programme seeks to deliver practical ways of achieving zero waste to landfill in south east England.

As part of this programme in the south east, eight tasks were identified to address waste by increasing supply of recycled and re-used materials and products onto the market and in creating demand for these materials and products within markets. As part of Task 3 – Creating Demand, sustainable public procurement was identified as a key driver for helping to stimulate demand.

Bespoke assistance was provided to public sector organisations and where relevant, their private sector supply chains, to enable procurers to embed resource efficient practices into procurement policy and contracts. The assistance was prioritised according to the key UK public sector spend areas of information communication technology (ICT), furniture, textiles, waste and construction categories. The organisation’s procurement spend profile was also taken account of.

The project aimed to stimulate greater demand for recycled materials, re-useable/refurbished products and for products with lower waste impacts. This has been achieved through the adoption and implementation of sustainable public procurement strategies, standards and targets.

The main objectives were:

- deliver targeted assistance to a minimum of 40 public sector organisations in south east (SE) and, where relevant, their private sector supply chains to secure “voluntary commitments” to embed sustainable public procurement strategies into organisational policy and practice; and
- deliver £1bn procurement commitment in corporate policy documentation and £150m in tenders and contracts.

The programme identified in excess of 60 target organisations and ultimately supported 41 organisations from across the public sector, with good representation from Local Authorities, Central Government, Higher Education, Healthcare, and Museums. For each participating organisation a bespoke action plan was developed and implemented.

Ultimately this work has helped public sector bodies to:

- take the theory of sustainable procurement, as exemplified through the UNEP Marrakech Task Force\(^1\) and Defra’s National Sustainable Public Procurement Programme\(^2\) (NSPPP) and put it into practice;
- integrate sustainability within current corporate and procurement documentation, for example policy, specifications, Pre-Qualification Questionnaires (PQQ), Invitation to Tender (ITT), tender evaluation, targets and contract management;
- identify and embed sustainable procurement practices within contracts where significant resource efficiency opportunities exist, delivering financial and resource efficiency benefits;
- monitor and report progress against sustainability objectives; and
- develop guidance for internal staff to build the capability of procurers.

---

\(^1\) [http://esa.un.org/marrakechprocess/itsuspubproc.shtml](http://esa.un.org/marrakechprocess/itsuspubproc.shtml)

Delivered by WRAP, this element of action 3 of the EPOW project has **successfully influenced £5.34bn procurement commitment in corporate policy and £310.9m in tenders and contracts**, well in excess of the initial objective.

It has ultimately contributed to EPOW’s overall programme aim to develop a recycling society with economic benefits from both reducing input costs through resource efficiency and creating a market demand for recycled content products in south east England.

## Background

Launched in January 2010, the European Pathway to Zero Waste\(^3\) (EPOW) programme investigates practical ways to achieve zero waste to landfill in south east England and will share the results with relevant EU regions. The programme will run until March 2013 and is jointly delivered by Environment Agency (EA) and WRAP.

The overall purpose of EPOW is to demonstrate how EU regions can develop and introduce successful programmes that lead to zero waste to landfill in their region. As targeted in the revised Waste Framework Directive (WFD), EPOW aims to develop a recycling society with economic benefits from both reducing input costs through resource efficiency and creating a market demand for recycled content products in the south east England.

EPOW has the aspiration target to influence a reduction in the amount of waste sent to landfill in the south east of England by 10% (0.6 million tonnes) over the course of the programme. Reducing waste to landfill will help to ensure that we make more efficient use of our resources and beyond, and create new markets and opportunities for recycled and re-used materials. In the longer term, EPOW’s ambition is for zero non-hazardous waste to landfill by 2020.

This work forms part of the EPOW programme and addresses Action 3 ‘Creating demand for sustainable products’. Action 3 is designed to demonstrate how public sector demand for products and services with recycled content or with lower waste impacts can be stimulated through sustainable procurement, and how green procurement can be expanded to the private sector. It forms one element of a suite of deliverables which have been developed to enable sustainable procurement to be embedded within organisations policy and practice.

Other deliverables from Action 3 comprise:

- Market analysis of green / sustainable procurement opportunities in public and private sectors in the south east of England\(^4\).
- Free to use e-learning modules for key procurement categories\(^5\):
  - Construction
  - Textiles
  - Furniture
  - Information Communication Technology
  - Re-use and remanufacturing opportunities
- Report detailing common barriers to embedding sustainable procurement which offers some real-life solutions an organisation could adopt as part of its core strategic development\(^6\).

---

\(^3\) [http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/aboutus/wfo/epow/123624.aspx](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/aboutus/wfo/epow/123624.aspx)


\(^5\) [http://www.wrap.org.uk/content/sustainable-procurement-e-learning-modules](http://www.wrap.org.uk/content/sustainable-procurement-e-learning-modules)

\(^6\) [http://www.wrap.org.uk/content/sustainable-procurement](http://www.wrap.org.uk/content/sustainable-procurement)
• Exploratory study to develop and test a methodology to identify and support procurement planning in the National Health Service (NHS) for items of frequent use that pose a high risk in terms of availability. In addition the project has identified products that might present immediate opportunities to change supply, critical raw componentry and end of life disposal models. This work will act as a demonstrator for future initiatives.

All deliverables will be made available on the EPOW website\(^7\).

\(^7\) [http://www.wrap.org.uk/content/sustainable-procurement](http://www.wrap.org.uk/content/sustainable-procurement)
# Contents

1.0 Introduction to the project and its objectives ................................................. 8  
1.1 Project methodology ......................................................................................... 8  
   1.1.1 Recruitment and engagement of participating organisations ................. 8  
   1.1.2 Development and implementation of action plans .................................. 9  
   1.1.3 Audits ........................................................................................................ 9  
   1.1.4 Case study development ........................................................................... 9  
2.0 Project outcomes ............................................................................................... 10  
3.0 Conclusions ....................................................................................................... 11  
Appendix 1: EPOW Targeted Assistance Programme Introductory Workshop ........ 12  
Appendix 2: Client Action Plan and Audit Templates .............................................. 13
Glossary

WRAP: Waste & Resources Action Programme
EPOW: European Pathway to Zero Waste
EA: Environment Agency
PQQ: Pre-qualification questionnaire
ITT: Invitation to Tender
WFD: revised Waste Framework Directive
NSPPP: National Sustainable Public Procurement Programme

Acknowledgements

WRAP, on behalf of EPOW, would like to thank the 41 participating organisations that were the recipients of the targeted assistance support, comprising:

- Central Government or Government Agency
- Local authorities
- Higher education
- Healthcare
- Museums
1.0 Introduction to the project and its objectives

The project aimed to stimulate greater demand for recycled materials, re-useable/refurbished products and for products with lower waste impacts through the adoption and implementation of sustainable public procurement strategies, standards and targets.

The objectives were to:

- deliver targeted assistance to a minimum of 40 public sector organisations in south east England and, where relevant, their private sector supply chains to secure “voluntary commitments” to embed sustainable public procurement strategies in organisational policy and practice;
- deliver £1bn procurement commitment in corporate policy documentation and £150m in tenders and contracts, within the life of the project; and

The scope of targeted assistance provided focus on resource efficient products and services rather than energy, transport or social aspects of public sector procurement. The work builds on the Defra’s NSPPP, training delivered by WRAP which is in line with existing international, EU and UK policy on sustainable and Green Public Procurement as exemplified through the UNEP Marrakech Task Force.

1.1 Project methodology

This section provides a summary of the key activities undertaken during the course of the programme.

1.1.1 Recruitment and engagement of participating organisations

WRAP provided an initial contact list of public sector procurement representatives within the south east of England. This was drawn from a range of sources which included client organisations that had participated in:

- Defra’s NSPPP training

Further procurement contacts and client organisations were identified by working with the NSPPP Advisory Board, purchasing organisations and regional structures and networks such as the public sector procurement framework for the south east run by Improvement and Efficiency South East (IESE). Additional contacts were also provided within the aforementioned market analysis and best practice report.

Representatives were also invited to workshops which were delivered in London and Reading to find out more about EPOW, the purpose of the project and how they could be recipients of the targeted assistance. The agenda and presentations from the workshops are provided in Appendix 1.

Additional contacts for consideration were identified throughout the course of the project to ensure that the pipeline of public sector client organisations to engage with was sufficient to achieve the project objectives.

---

8 http://sd.defra.gov.uk/advice/public/nsppp/
10 http://www.southeastiep.gov.uk/
1.1.2 Development and implementation of action plans
For each participating organisation a bespoke action plan was developed (see Appendix 2), which provided a clear outline of the tasks to be undertaken and the time-line. All action plans were approved by WRAP to ensure that they contributed to the project objectives and enabled behavioural change, in terms of embedding sustainable procurement within the participating organisation. The type of work delivered included:
- development of sustainable procurement policy and guidance;
- design of specifications and contracts for resource efficient and reusable products and materials; and
- provision of general advice on existing resources such as the Government Buying Standards\textsuperscript{12}, Green Public Procurement\textsuperscript{13} and where applicable WRAP guidance.

1.1.3 Audits
The assistance provided for each organisation was audited by the project delivery team which involved the collation and verification of an evidence base to demonstrate how each client’s action plan contributed to the project goal of delivering £1bn procurement commitment in corporate policy documentation and £150m in tenders and contracts. It also served to confirm the attributable spend values that had been influenced. Appendix 1 provides a summary of the audit which was completed for each organisation to validate the work conducted and spend influenced.

1.1.4 Case study development
Throughout the delivery of the assistance, the project team identified options for developing exemplar case studies to inform and encourage other public sector organisations to embed sustainable procurement strategies within policy and practice. Three case studies have been developed to support this, covering:

- Embedding sustainability in procurement policy
- Embedding sustainability in ICT contracts
- Embedding sustainability in procurement practices: a museum’s perspective

\textsuperscript{12} http://sd.defra.gov.uk/advice/public/buying/
\textsuperscript{13} http://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/what_en.htm
2.0 Project outcomes

As part of the project, approximately 60 public sector organisations were engaged, with the assistance being successfully delivered to 41. Figure 1 provides a breakdown of participants by sub-sector, with the greatest representation being from the higher education and local authority sectors.

Figure 1: EPOW Sustainable Procurement Targeted Assistance, Sector Breakdown of Participants

The programme of work has successfully influenced £5.34bn procurement commitment in corporate policy and £310.9m in tenders and contracts. In some circumstances, due to a change in direction by the client organisation or opportunities that emerged during the course of the assistance, the work conducted did not always reflect the details initially recorded within the action plan. The spend influenced and reported has been updated accordingly to reflect this.

As part of delivering the assistance, client organisations were provided with amongst other things, guidance and sample contract clauses which were relevant and proportionate to the organisations procurement. Examples of the assistance provided include, but are not limited to:

Policy:
- Developing sustainable procurement policy or integrating sustainability in the procurement strategy
- Implementation roadmap and action plan
- Workshops to understand category sustainability priorities
- Incorporating sustainability in procurement procedures and documentation e.g. ITT, PQQs

Contract:
- Category guidance
- Increased recycled content in products
- Encouraging the procurement of ‘green label’\(^\text{14}\) products
- Embedding the Government Buying Standards
- Establishing KPI’s as part of the contract management process.

\(^{14}\) Included for example, Fair trade, Green energy rating
3.0 Conclusions

Sustainable procurement has an important role to play in building sustainable organisations, combating climate change, securing future energy and material supplies, and risk management. Increasing evidence\(^ {15}\) suggests that organisations that manage their resources effectively can improve operational efficiency and achieve cost reductions. It is also recognised\(^ {16}\) that an organisation with good sustainability standards is better able to attract and retain high quality staff, reducing employee turnover rates and recruitment costs.

From a financial perspective, cost remains fundamental to any purchasing decision, however there is increasing recognition\(^ {17}\) by organisations that cost is no longer the sole consideration. Sustainability is about driving a more holistic approach that will challenge demand at source, assess total lifecycle costing and reduce disposal costs. Sustainable procurement is also about managing risk (e.g. price volatility or security of supply; reputation) and creating opportunity (e.g. using cheaper recycled materials).

This project demonstrates that increasingly organisations are recognising the benefits that can be gained from procuring more sustainably. By integrating sustainability into the procurement policy, strategy, process and procedures, procurement decisions can have a significant impact on the environmental footprint of the supply chain.

Whilst the assistance provided was bespoke to each organisation’s individual requirement, there were common themes which illustrate that many public sector organisations experience similar barriers to embedding sustainable procurement. These primarily comprised:

- developing a workable sustainable procurement policy with an accompanying action plan for its implementation and adoption. The policy should also include how and to whom progress is reported, which should ideally be at the senior executive level within the organisation and be widely communicated to ensure organisational support.
- ability to encourage the procurement of ‘green label’ products and products with increased recycled content, through embedding the Government Buying Standards, for example. Furthermore, to establish KPI’s as part of the contract management process to be able to monitor and report on progress.

Interestingly, WRAP undertook a survey of NSPPP delegates and published a report on ‘Implementing Sustainable Procurement: Overcoming Common Barriers’\(^ {18}\), whereby the top barrier was reported as being securing senior executive and organisational support.

With 41 participating organisations the project has influenced £5.34bn procurement commitment in corporate policy and £310.9m in tenders and contracts. A series of case studies have been developed to ensure that others can benefit from the insight and learning that was developed from the project.


\(^{16}\) [http://www.kier.co.uk/uploaded/supplychain/Kier%20Group%20Sustainability.pdf](http://www.kier.co.uk/uploaded/supplychain/Kier%20Group%20Sustainability.pdf)

\(^{17}\) [http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/news_and_views/jul2012/employee-engagement-key-sustainable-success](http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/news_and_views/jul2012/employee-engagement-key-sustainable-success)

\(^{18}\) [http://www.wrap.org.uk/content/sustainable-procurement](http://www.wrap.org.uk/content/sustainable-procurement)
Appendices

Appendix 1: EPOW Targeted Assistance Programme Introductory Workshop

- EPOW Programme Introductory Workshop
- Embedding Sustainability in Procurement
- Introduction to EPOW.pdf
- EPOW Targeted Assistance Overview
- EPOW Programme Introductory Workshop
- Achieving Zero Waste.pdf
Appendix 2: Client Action Plan and Audit Templates

Client Action Plan

Introduction

This Action Plan sets out a series of actions to be implemented by those responsible (as set out below) as part of the programme of support provided by European Pathway to Zero Waste programme (EPOW). The focus of this support is on assisting public sector organisations in the South East of England to embed sustainable procurement strategies in organisational policy and practice, with specific focus on resource efficient products.

This support is being provided by the Project Team on behalf of EPOW. The programme seeks voluntary commitment but in return for this support, EPOW requires full engagement and cooperation from ................. (...), including the provision of necessary people resources, information and documentation, to respond in a timely manner, and to provide supporting evidence that the actions proposed, and subsequently agreed, have been implemented. By agreeing to the actions set out in this Action Plan ............ (...) agrees to these requirements.

EPOW Commitment

EPOW agrees to provide ....(...) with the following support detailed in this Action Plan and to make available the necessary facilitation and technical expertise and resource to support (.....) achieve the identified actions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation and address:</th>
<th>Annual procurement spend:</th>
<th>£</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date of Visit:</td>
<td>Adviser:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Contact:</td>
<td>Adviser tel:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Email:</td>
<td>Adviser email:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Phone:</td>
<td>Project reference:</td>
<td>EPOW -targeted assistance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Brief description of project aims and objectives:

Procurement structure (include other relevant key contacts details):
## Recommendations / Actions

The following actions arise following the discussions regarding relevant assistance and progress to date within your organisation on embedding sustainability into the procurement process:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Date agreed</th>
<th>Responsibility (Client/Adviser)</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
<th>Expected outcome</th>
<th>Evidence of outcome requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Declaration

I can confirm that the information documented in this report is accurate to the best of my knowledge. I agree that (HO) commits to undertaking to the best of our ability the identified actions in the timescales indicated. I agree that (HO) will provide relevant documentary evidence of outcomes as required (e.g. amended procurement text adopted by a client organisation, quantification data).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation:</th>
<th>Email/tel:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contact Name:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contact Signature:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key supporting documents and information that has informed this Action Plan:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EPOW Targeted Assistance Audit Template

**Section 1: Organisational details**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Address:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main point of contact:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contact details (e-mail and telephone):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Email:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Section 2: Project details**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EPOW Declaration form signed:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action plan signed:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project area (policy or contract):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project (s) undertaken:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Section 3: Project delivery**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence submitted: (copy of doc sent to client, copy of amended doc from client, email from client)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of work completed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spend influenced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other influences of project delivery (carbon savings, waste diverted from landfill, social impacts e.g. job creation)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Associated documents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Published by:**

European Pathway to Zero Waste
Waste & Resources Action Programme,
The Old Academy, 21 Horse Fair,
Banbury, OX16 0AH
Email: epow@environment-agency.gov.uk
www.environment-agency.gov.uk/epow

While we have tried to make sure this document is accurate, we cannot accept responsibility or be held legally responsible for any loss or damage arising out of or in connection with this information being inaccurate, incomplete or misleading. This material is copyrighted. You can copy it free of charge as long as the material is accurate and not used in a misleading context. You must identify the source of the material and acknowledge our copyright. You must not use material to endorse or suggest we have endorsed a commercial product or service.

For more details please see our terms and conditions on our website at www.wrap.org.uk