

NATIONAL HISTORY MUSEUM OF LONDON, ENGLAND

Procurement objectives

Procurement at the Museum has always been managed by departmental budget holders and buyers. The Procurement Team was formed more recently to coordinate and advise on procurement across the organisation. They are constantly reviewing and refining its processes, but the EPOW project offered an opportunity to provide the team with sustainability focussed guidance.

Over a period of six months, the EPOW project helped embed sustainability considerations within the Museum's procurement documents and processes. Procurement consultants worked with the Museum's team to consistently articulate the Museum's objectives through the policy and guidance information. Expert advice was also provided to improve a range of contracts and embed sustainability issues within future procurements.

One of these contracts was the waste and recycling contract, which is for the effective management and disposal of a range of waste from the Museum's public galleries, offices and laboratories, in accordance with the waste hierarchy.

Background

The Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP), established as a UK independent not-for-profit company in 2000, has been working since 2010 with the Environment Agency (UK government agency responsible for protecting the environment and promoting sustainable development) on the LIFE+ funded programme [European Pathway to Zero Waste \(EPOW\)](#). The programme was developed to test different ways to cut waste in the South East of England. One of these projects has involved working with the Natural History Museum in London to improve sustainable procurement practices through targeting new contracts.

The Natural History Museum is a registered charity and receives grant-in-aid from the UK government. It is one of the leading Natural History establishments in the world, having in excess of 70 million specimens, as well as a wide-ranging scientific scope. The Museum



Criteria used

Following a review of the current waste management contract, a number of recommendations were made for inclusion in the new specification and contract. These required suppliers to demonstrate an appropriate approach to:

- **Service provision**, including mobilisation, capability, capacity, how suppliers can assist with improving recycling rates, management of contamination and collection of additional waste stream such as food and garden waste;
- **Management and monitoring of performance information**, progress against targets, including overall weights, disposal routes and CO2 savings through recycling;
- **Legislation and industry best practice**; and
- **Waste disposal and processing**, including use of sustainable reprocessing solutions, notification of any changes to facilities and disposal routes and ensuring a full auditable trail is available for inspection.



Results

The Museum is in the process of appointing a new waste and recycling contractor to manage removal of waste. Inclusion of the sustainability recommendations in the waste and recycling contract procedures will allow the Museum to select a service provider that can help the Museum meet the waste and recycling targets set out in its Environmental Management System.

Detailed requirements for service provision, performance monitoring and waste disposal routes will be included in the new contract. The service provider will also be required to implement new facilities to allow additional streams such as food and garden waste to be composted. It is expected that the introduction of new waste streams alone, will increase the amount of material recycled by an estimated 50 tonnes, or 7% of total waste.

Environmental impacts

Diverting waste by effectively implementing the waste hierarchy will reduce the demand on landfill sites and the production of methane and environmental contamination associated with landfill facilities. The extraction, refining and processing of virgin materials can destroy natural habitats and cause significant air, land and water pollution, as well as consuming significantly more energy than the reprocessing of recycled materials. Increasing the recycling rate of the Museum, will provide additional resources for reprocessing, reducing the need for extraction of natural resources.

Lessons learned

There are a number of alternatives to processing waste while adhering to the waste hierarchy. Choosing the right options can maximise economic benefits to an organisation, as well as managing the environmental impacts, through resale programmes.

The review of waste facilities and the increase in waste streams being recycled will result in an increase in the amount of waste recycled. However, we will need to educate and engage with departments across the Museum to ensure the facilities are used correctly and recycling rates are maximised.