

goodmarks* Policies and Procedures

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Doing the Right Things for a Better Future

At mark-making*, we believe that business should only be a force for good, and that true sustainability involves uniting economic growth and human progress without negatively impacting the planet. Every time we do something that achieves this goal, we leave a positive mark.

We call these our **goodmarks***

Our foundational philosophy

For three decades, mark-making* has followed a simple principle: profit is the reward for serving society well. This philosophy underpins our longstanding commitment to supporting local communities and protecting the environment.

In 2010, we formalised this commitment by dedicating our time, skills and resources to a diverse range of local and national charities, community initiatives and environmental causes. This ongoing community engagement has evolved over the years, ultimately contributing to our achievement of B Corp certification.

B Corp certification: recognition of our efforts

In 2020, we began our journey toward B Corp certification, using this rigorous framework to build upon our existing goodmarks* philosophy. We're proud to have achieved an Overall Impact Score of 121.3, significantly exceeding the required threshold for certification.

This achievement validates our commitment to meeting the highest standards of:

- Social and environmental performance
- Public transparency
- Legal accountability

Ongoing commitment

Our B Corp certification represents a milestone, not a destination. It strengthens our resolve to consider the impact of every decision we make, whether it affects our team members, clients, suppliers, or the wider world.

This handbook outlines the policies and procedures that guide our efforts to consistently leave goodmarks* across all aspects of our operations. These guidelines help us fulfil our pledge to balance purpose with profit and ensure that mark-making* continues to be as purposeful as it is profitable.

Making goodmarks* – all of our responsibility

Becoming a B Corporation means that our focus on doing the right things has to be sharper than ever. We've always promoted a culture of honesty and integrity at mark-making*. But now, we're considering the impact of every single decision we make – whether it relates to our team, our clients and their customers, our suppliers, or the world around us.

To supplement all job descriptions, the following elements will be considered as part of the broader performance evaluation of each mark-maker. They have been created to support the company in achieving its Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) KPIs.

More than ever before, we're going out of our way to balance profit and purpose; to make sure that wherever we go and whatever we do, we leave nothing but goodmarks*.

Every mark-makers' responsibility:

Your role includes the requirement to support, maintain and improve mark-making*s environmental and social impacts and actions and to protect the reputation of the company.

Depending on your role and seniority, the following elements will be considered for performance evaluation:

- Championing mark-making*s goodmarks* story
- Supporting mark-making* to maintain B Corp status
- Living the B Corp values of considering all stakeholders, society, and the environment when making key decisions within the business
- Being an advocate for sustainable business development
- Looking for continuous improvement opportunities
- Supporting the regular collection and review of environmental and social impact measurements
- Encouraging and helping clients and suppliers to become more sustainable

- Engaging with the rest of the mark-makers to support the goodmarks* initiative
- Ensuring that mark-making*s purchasing policies are as sustainable as possible, given business and practical considerations

Balanced Scorecard

So that we can ensure that all key stakeholders and areas of possible impact are considered in key decision-making within the business, we have the following ‘Balanced Scorecard’ to help prompt the appropriate discussions.

Stakeholder / Impact area	Notes / Descriptions	- / = / +
Financial implications Including shareholder impact		
Business benefit Including PR, marketing, client development, reputation, etc.		
Employee impact Both in and outside of work		
Supplier impact Including all key suppliers		
Client impact Including direct benefit to our client/s, cost, ESG, etc.		
Environmental impact Taking into account ‘whole of life’ costs and not just ‘up-front’ costs		
Societal and community impact Including PR, marketing, client development, reputation, etc.		
Our values Does it fit with our values and those of B Corp		
Final assessment Overall decision		

Code of Ethics Policy

An introduction to our ethical approach

At mark-making*, we believe that the best way of doing good business is by being a good business. And this means considering the impact of every decision we make.

A significant part of this decision-making revolves around our wider ethical approach – or in other words, the way we conduct ourselves as a professional organisation, as a group of human beings and as individual mark-makers.

Reaching this desired standard of conduct involves doing many small things properly, consistently, in every aspect of our work.

Whenever we achieve one of these ‘things’, we leave behind a positive mark. We call these marks our goodmarks*. And it’s our desire to continue leaving these that underpins our commitment to having a Code of Ethics that’s more than just a tick-box exercise – instead, something that acts as a daily reminder of the standards we set for ourselves and the behaviours we demand of one another.

Before we get into what our Code actually covers, it’s worth noting that, although the following content has come from us, and is bespoke to us, we do draw guidance from the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) CAP code, as well as the Design Business Association (DBA) Code of Conduct.

Who does our Code of Ethics apply to?

Our Code applies to every individual employed by mark-making*, up to and including our founders and Company Directors. For each of us, the observing of our Code is non-negotiable. It’s a crucial part of making our agency what it is. And because of this, it’s an absolute requirement.

Our five fundamentals and specifics

Our mark-making* ethical commitments are broken down into five specific pillars. Fundamentally, though, any interaction we have, behaviour we exhibit, action we take or work we produce must always be legal, decent, honest, transparent, respectful and considered.

1. Legality and Governance

We ask you to commit to undertaking any measures necessary to ensure that, to the best of your knowledge and ability, anything you do relating to mark-making* is lawful and done within the approved system of organisation and control that governs it.

We comply with all current local laws and regulations, as well as all relevant Fair Trade laws. While part of our focus on wellbeing means that we operate in line with all applicable Health & Safety legislation and regulations.

We abide by the Modern Slavery Act (MSA) 2015, including the rejection of any form of exploitation. All employees and stakeholders are prohibited from offering, promising, giving, soliciting, or accepting any bribe, in accordance with the Bribery Act 2010.

We honour all contracts and commitments, and never agree to anything we don't feel we can honour. We respect business secrecy as an organisational priority (both our own and that of others) without transparency being diminished in any way.

The role that data plays within our industry is becoming increasingly significant, which is why we comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 and all associated regulations, as part of the UK's implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

2. Honesty, Transparency and Integrity

We ask that you commit to actively promoting a culture of honesty, transparency, and integrity within every aspect of our business, conducting yourself in a manner that upholds our values of professionalism and human decency.

This approach of openness and accountability governs every part of our business, including the way we interact with our fellow mark-makers and our wider mark-making* community (suppliers, clients, and any other stakeholders).

We expect every mark-maker to behave in a consistently 'upright' manner. This includes maintaining your own standards of conduct and helping to ensure that others do the same. With this in mind, we encourage the reporting of any unethical occurrences or incidents, whether these happen knowingly or unknowingly.

And it's important to understand that you can do this without any fear of sanction or consequence, as documented in our Whistleblowing Policy.

We also expect you to take all reasonable care to avoid making misleading statements, concealing information, or overstating facts in any internal or external communications or conversations. Claims that we assume to be true, but can't be substantiated (or haven't been) should also be avoided.

3. Treatment of People

We ask you to commit to actively helping us promote a culture of respect, fairness, and equality, in which the enjoyment of life at work and outside work is of paramount importance.

mark-making* places huge significance on the wellbeing of its people. Through our Welldoing initiative, we look to support every mark-maker as a whole person, not just as an

employee, in the pursuit of a life well-lived and a job well done. We ask that the whole team helps us to keep hitting these heights, by being respectful and considerate of our fellow mark-makers at all times.

We also ask that this courtesy be extended to interactions with members of our wider mark-making* family and the community as a whole.

Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy outlines our commitment to promoting diversity, equality, and inclusion within our business and beyond.

We act with respect for all human rights and always treat everyone fairly and equally, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

In line with our compliance with the Modern Slavery Act, we reject exploitation of any kind. We also adhere to our own Anti-Harassment and Anti-Bullying and Victimisation Policies.

To augment all of the above, we provide ongoing internal training to increase awareness of historic and current cultural sensitivities.

4. Respectful Marketing

We ask you to commit to helping us ensure that any marketing or creative output we produce is always knowingly legal, decent, honest, transparent, respectful and considered.

Our approach to the people within our marketing is broadly the same as our approach to people in the real world. But there are marketing-specific standards we uphold in addition.

As a fundamental rule of our business, we avoid any form of Impact Washing. Our aim is always to show a fair, balanced and accurate representation of modern society.

Our marketing never features stereotyping, exploitation or appropriation. It never intentionally offends prevailing standards of decency and it doesn't abuse customers' trust or lack of experience / knowledge.

The depiction of children and those under the age of 18 is always appropriate, decent and sensitive within our marketing. Positive social behaviour, lifestyle and attitudes are never knowingly undermined.

Thanks to GDPR compliance, our email marketing is always permission-based, while any digital marketing is targeted appropriately when relevant. In terms of transparency, our marketing comms are always clearly distinguishable as marketing comms.

We commit to ensuring our work is always consistent with current social, economic and environmental principles, taking the latest governmental and/or scientific guidance into account.

And whenever we're required to make any environmental claims in our own marketing, we base them on the full lifecycle of the product being promoted.

To ensure all our clients and stakeholders are aware of the importance we place on upholding these marketing standards, we've created an external-facing Ethical Marketing Policy, which is shared with all relevant parties.

5. Sustainability and Environment

We ask you to commit to helping us be as sustainably-minded as we can possibly be, and to making decisions that don't simply mitigate negative environmental impact, but encourage a positive one.

With this in mind, we make sure that all mark-makers are trained on the principles of sustainable procurement.

One of our main goals in this area is to become a climate-positive business by consistently offsetting 110% of our total emissions. We ask for the support of all employees in helping us achieve our goal.

This involves a collective use of renewable, green energy wherever possible. And it requires individual contributions to improving waste management and reducing our waste to landfill by using less, reusing more and recycling everything we can.

A commitment to sourcing and purchasing as sustainably as possible is an important ask of all mark-makers. This involves buying locally whenever feasible, and includes consideration of how client work is developed. Along with the more obvious benefits, this brings to our local economy and community, it reduces CO2 emissions from deliveries.

We also ask for a commitment to helping us to minimise fuel consumption from all work-related transport and travel. While the minimisation of water use is an ongoing environmental priority for everybody within the agency.

Code of Ethics responsibilities

As a mark-maker, you must commit to taking a share of responsibility for the ethical integrity of our business, including our individual and collective behaviours, processes, conduct, actions and relationships.

Our Directors have ultimate responsibility and accountability for ensuring compliance with this Code. On a day-to-day basis, however, our wider Leadership Team is the group with ethical stewardship of mark-making*.

We actively encourage ongoing reflection and feedback from all mark-makers regarding our ethical approach. To help make sure we continue to meet the standards we've set ourselves, regular ethical training will be provided for all employees.

In order to allow all mark-makers to confidently communicate their views, opinions and ideas, we've created a confidential and, if desired, anonymous feedback form for the team to use.

Our mark-making* ethical declaration

As employees of mark-making*, we must all commit to adhering to our Code of Ethics as an integral part of our daily roles.

Our promise to each other is that we'll always hold true to it, and hold ourselves and each other accountable to it.

When using third parties ('associated others'), we'll always seek to use ones that share our values – and we'll always encourage existing ones to align with them, too.

Finally, we'll continually evaluate the effectiveness of our Code to ensure it remains relevant and fit for purpose. This includes responding to any feedback provided at any time, from any member of the mark-making* family.

Ethical Marketing Policy

An introduction to our ethical marketing approach

At mark-making*, we believe that the best way of doing good business is by being a good business. And this means considering the impact of every decision we make.

A significant part of this decision-making revolves around the way we conduct ourselves as a professional organisation, including, in no small part, the way we go about developing our creative output, both for ourselves and for our clients.

Marketing in an ethical way involves doing lots of little things properly, all of the time. Whenever we do one of these 'things', we leave behind a positive impression.

We call impressions like these our goodmarks*.

And it's our desire to keep leaving these goodmarks* that underpins our commitment to having an Ethical Marketing Policy that's more than just a tick-boxing exercise, rather something that acts as a daily reminder of the standards we set for ourselves within our work.

Before we get into what our Policy actually covers, it's worth noting that, although the following content has come from us, and is bespoke to us, we do draw guidance from the

Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) CAP code, as well as the Design Business Association (DBA) Code of Conduct.

Who does our Ethical Marketing Policy apply to?

Our policy applies to two main audiences.

Firstly is our own mark-making* team – the mark-makers (direct employees of the agency). For this group, adherence to our Ethical Marketing Policy (EMP) is non-negotiable.

The second group is what we call our wider mark-making* family. By this, we mean any third-party organisations or individuals we work alongside to produce our creative output.

We'll always seek to use third parties that share our values – and we'll always encourage existing ones to align with them, too.

Our five EMP fundamentals and specifics

We break down our mark-making* Ethical Marketing Policy commitments into five specific pillars. Fundamentally, though, any work we produce is always required to be legal, decent, honest, transparent, respectful and considered.

1. Legality and Governance

We commit to undertaking any measures necessary to ensure that, to the best of our knowledge and ability, all marketing we produce is lawful and done within the approved system of organisation and control that governs it.

We comply with all relevant Data Protection acts and regulations, including the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

This means that our email marketing is always permission-based, and our digital marketing targeting approach is always appropriate (we take steps to understand tracking, cookies, etc.).

2. Honesty and Transparency

We commit to absolute honesty and openness in all aspects of our marketing activity, with the aim of making sure we always represent our work's true commercial purpose.

We actively avoid any form of Impact Washing, meaning we never knowingly conceal from, or mislead, our audience.

We also make sure our marketing comms are clearly distinguishable as marketing comms – e.g. ensuring clarity on whether content is paid advertorial or editorial content.

3. Treatment of People

We commit to treating people fairly, equally and without prejudice of any description. We produce marketing that's sensitive to the individual, the wider community and the current cultural climate.

Our marketing never features stereotyping, exploitation or appropriation of the underrepresented or historically oppressed. It never intentionally offends prevailing standards of decency and it doesn't abuse customers' trust or lack of experience / knowledge.

If we use a person (or people) in our marketing to highlight a negative situation, care is always taken to portray them with honesty, integrity and dignity (see section 02).

The use of children and those under the age of 18 within our marketing is appropriate, decent and sensitive. Positive social behaviour, lifestyle and attitudes are never undermined.

Our aim is always to show a fair, balanced and accurate representation of modern society.

4. The Environment

We commit to never producing marketing that elicits a negative contribution to the world around us – and actively encourages positive impact whenever possible.

Whatever the requirement may be, we always make sure our marketing is consistent with current social, economic and environmental principles – taking the latest governmental and/or scientific guidance into account to help ensure this.

Whenever we're required to make any environmental claims in our own marketing, we base them on the full lifecycle of the product being promoted.

5. Responsibilities

We commit to taking full responsibility for the ethical integrity of the marketing we produce – and making ethically-focused quality assurance a fundamental part of our marketing process.

We actively encourage ongoing reflection regarding all marketing we produce. And we provide regular ethical marketing training for all relevant employees.

Our Directors have ultimate responsibility, and accountability, for ensuring compliance with this policy.

On a day-to-day basis, however, our wider Leadership Team is the group with ethical stewardship of our marketing.

Finally, we'll continue to evaluate the effectiveness of our mark-making* Ethical Marketing Policy to ensure it remains relevant and fit-for-purpose. And we'll communicate it to all third parties at the beginning of any new business relationships.

Anti-Slavery Policy

Background

At mark-making* we're constantly looking at our business through the lens of its wider role in society. So, as we juggle the management of our people, operations, commercials, clients and the creation of award-winning work, our eyes are always open to much bigger and broader issues. Which is why we genuinely believe that sustainability, the environment, waste management, human rights and the true cost of a throw-away society are topics that just can't be ignored.

As part of this, we aim to have high ethical standards and, as such, commit to be in compliance with section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 on slavery and human trafficking (despite being below the size of business required threshold.)

What is slavery?

The Modern Slavery Act (MSA) 2015 covers four activities:

Slavery	Exercising powers of ownership over a person.
Servitude	The obligation to provide services is imposed by the use of coercion.
Forced or compulsory labour	Work or services are exacted from a person under the menace of any penalty and for which the person has not offered themselves voluntarily.
Human trafficking	Arranging or facilitating the travel of another person with a view to their exploitation.

This policy covers all four activities.

How is it relevant to us?

Modern slavery is a complex and multi-faceted crime, and tackling it requires many organisations and individuals to play a part. At first glance, individuals may think this subject is irrelevant to us, but it is not. At a very basic level, preventing exploitation and human trafficking and protecting our workforce and reputation makes good business sense.

The MSA 2015 recognises the important role businesses can, and should, play in tackling slavery and encourages them to do more. With this in mind, companies need to pay particularly close attention to their supply chain, especially those areas which have historically proven to be at risk of the activities mentioned above in 'What is Slavery?':

- Outsourced activities such as cleaning, waste management, etc.
- Short-term hire of low-skilled labour.
- Sourcing of raw materials from certain locations in the world.

Responsibilities

The Company, our managers and our colleagues have responsibilities to ensure our fellow workers are safeguarded, treated fairly and with dignity. Everyone must observe this Policy and be aware that 'turning a blind eye' is unacceptable and simply not an option.

The Company will:

- Maintain clear policies and procedures, preventing exploitation and human trafficking and protecting our workforce and reputation.
- Be clear about our recruitment policy.
- Examine our supply chains and be clear with key suppliers of our expectations regarding the Act (supply chains below).
- Lead by example by making appropriate checks on all employees, recruitment agencies, suppliers, etc. to ensure we know who is working for us.
- Ensure we have in place an open and transparent grievance process for all staff (please see our Grievance Procedure).
- Seek to raise awareness so that our colleagues know what we are doing to promote their welfare.
- Make a clear statement that we take our responsibilities to our employees and our clients seriously (see Anti-Slavery Statement below).

Managers will:

- Listen and be approachable to colleagues.
- Respond appropriately if they are told something that might indicate a colleague is in an exploitative situation.
- Remain alert to indicators of slavery (see Identifying Slavery below).

- Raise the awareness and ensure all employees are provided a copy of this Policy and are aware of their responsibilities.
- Use their experience and professional judgement to gauge situations.

Colleagues will:

- Keep your eyes and ears open—if you suspect someone (a colleague or someone in our supply chain) is being controlled or forced by someone else to work or provide services, follow our reporting procedure (see Reporting Slavery below).
- Follow our reporting procedure if a colleague tells you something you think might indicate they are, or someone else is, being exploited or ill-treated.
- Tell us if you think there is more we can do to prevent people from being exploited.

The risks

The areas of risk we face, related to slavery and human trafficking, are limited. We have a direct relationship with our suppliers. However, that does not mean that we can be complacent and not vigilant. We manage these risk areas through our procedures set out in this Policy, including being very clear about it in our Guide for Supply Partners.

Our procedures

Anti-slavery statement

We make a clear statement that we take our responsibilities to our employees, people working within our supply chain and our clients seriously.

Supply chains

We tell the companies we do business with that we are not prepared to accept any form of exploitation. From the date of this policy, all relevant supplier contracts will contain an anti-slavery clause. This clause, which flows down through all layers of our supply chain, prohibits suppliers and their employees from engaging in slavery or human trafficking.

We apply reasonable due diligence to risk-assessing our supply chain and use the following mechanisms to do this:

- Supplier mapping, initially performed on spend level and then industry sector, to identify key vulnerabilities.
- Risk assessment of spend areas in relation to the supply chain and their propensity of historically proven risk.
- Training and knowledge sharing for key purchasing people.
- Ensuring all suppliers deemed 'at risk' are fully supportive to the aims of this Policy, (including asking for copies of their Anti-Modern Slavery Statement and Policies).
- Harmonising those processes which are already mutually inclusive of the aims of this Policy into the due diligence.

- If any issues are identified, then this is escalated to the senior stakeholders in the business, with all methods of remediation to be available (up to and including exiting the relationship with the supplier).

Recruitment

If, through our recruitment process, we suspect someone is being exploited, a Director will be informed and will follow our reporting procedures (see Reporting Slavery below).

Using recruitment agencies:

- The Company follows firm policy and only uses reputable recruitment agencies that have been agreed upon and specified.
- We expect all recruitment agencies with whom we engage:
 - To fully comply with the Modern Slavery Act 2015.
 - They are free from ethical ambiguities.
 - They are transparent, accountable and auditable.
- If the Company has reason to believe that any recruitment agency has failed to meet these standards, a Director should be informed, and any contracts with them would be terminated.
- We keep agents on the list under annual reviews.

General recruitment:

- We always ensure all staff have a written contract of employment.
- We always ensure staff are legally able to work in the UK.
- We provide information to all new recruits on their statutory rights, including sick pay, holiday pay and any other benefits they may be entitled to.

Identifying slavery

There is no typical victim, and some victims do not understand they have been exploited and are entitled to help and support. However, the following key signs could indicate that someone may be a slavery or trafficking victim:

- The person is not in possession of their own passport, identification or travel documents.
- The person is acting as though they are being instructed or coached by someone else.
- They allow others to speak for them when spoken to directly.
- They are dropped off and collected from work.
- The person is withdrawn, or they appear frightened.
- The person does not seem to be able to contact friends or family freely.
- The person has limited social interaction or contact with people outside their immediate environment.

This list is not exhaustive. Remember, a person may display a number of the trafficking indicators set out above, but they may not necessarily be a victim of slavery or trafficking.

Often, you will build up a picture of the person's circumstances, which may indicate something is not quite right. If you have a suspicion, report it to one of the Directors who will follow our reporting procedures.

Reporting slavery

This list is not exhaustive. Remember, a person may display a number of the trafficking indicators set out above, but they may not necessarily be a victim of slavery or trafficking. Often, you will build up a picture of the person's circumstances, which may indicate something is not quite right. If you have a suspicion, report it to one of the Directors who will follow our reporting procedures.

Training

We ensure that all employees are made aware of this Policy and their obligation to comply with this Policy.

Monitoring

We will review our Anti-Modern Slavery Policy regularly, at least annually. We will provide information and/or training on any changes we make.

Environmental Policy

At mark-making* we're constantly looking at our business through the lens of its wider role in society. So, as we juggle the management of our people, operations, commercials, clients and the creation of award-winning work, our eyes are always open to much bigger and broader issues. Which is why we genuinely believe that sustainability, the environment, waste management, human rights and the true cost of a throw-away society are topics that just can't be ignored.

As a part of this, we're committed to reducing the impact of our activities on the environment, reducing emissions and preventing pollution. We have been net carbon negative (and climate positive) since 2020.

In order to continue to meet this commitment, we will:

- Meet all necessary legislative, compliance and consent obligations which relate to our business.
- Actively stay informed on environmental issues, especially those that are directly relevant to our business.
- Continue to make all mark-makers aware of the impact of their actions and their responsibility to the environment through communication, discussion and training.

- Work with our clients and suppliers to encourage high environmental standards that match our own.
- Continue our open dialogue with our clients, the public and other interested parties about our environmental impact.
- Minimise our environmental impact by operating suitable systems in our office that help us recycle more and waste less.
- Manage our buildings and site in an environmentally sensitive manner.
- Wherever practicable, adopt best environmental practice when planning and developing new and existing operations.
- Operate a thoughtful and responsible Sustainable Procurement Policy by selecting, wherever practical, materials and services which are less damaging to the environment.
- Set environmental objectives and targets to enhance our environmental performance and monitor and review the results on a regular basis.
- Continually improve our Environmental Management System to protect the environment and prevent pollution by continually reducing waste, effluent, emissions, noise and the use of scarce resources, as well as improving the efficiency of our use of energy, water and natural resources.

Sustainable Procurement Policy

At mark-making* we take ethics and sustainability seriously, which is why they are built into our core company values.

Now we want to use our buying power as a force for good. To protect people and the natural environment, cut our carbon emissions, support our local community and influence others to make positive change.

By placing sustainability criteria at the heart of our procurement policy we also hope to achieve B Corp accreditation and be officially recognised for hitting the highest standards of social and environmental performance, public transparency and legal accountability. It will also add value to our business and help us to protect our clients from reputational risk.

Our Sustainable Procurement Policy should be read in line with our Guide for Supply Partners, which is designed to support it.

We will:

- Train our staff on the principles of sustainable procurement and ensure that the objectives of this Policy are embedded in how we operate.
- Source 100% renewable energy to support our climate positive position.
- Consider the energy efficiency of any equipment being purchased.

- Purchase the eco version of cleaning and janitorial products where possible, as well as bleach-free paper and low VOC ink where possible. We will consider recycled/environmentally preferable office supplies (paper, pens, notebooks etc.).
- Specify our energy performance requirements within the design stage where new buildings, extensions or refurbishments are being considered.
- Take into account ‘whole of life’ costs and not just ‘up-front’ costs when considering value for money, since greener products often have lower operating costs over their lifetime, taking into account maintenance, and, in some cases disposal costs.
- Buy local wherever possible to ensure we support the surrounding economy and community. This will also benefit the environment through reduced delivery distances and CO2 emissions.
- Consider buying second-hand, reconditioned or remanufactured goods to support the local reuse and repair sector and help the environment.
- Source food which is sustainably sourced, seasonal and local.
- Make food choices to reduce the proportion of meat and fish, and present vegetarian or
- vegan alternatives.
- Share the principles of our Sustainable Procurement Policy with our clients and supply chain to raise awareness, and work with them to ensure alignment.
- Ensure our events are as sustainable as possible.
- Ask suppliers about their own standards and working practices, and make sure they know what matters to us.
- Screen key suppliers for:
 - Compliance with all local laws and regulations, including those related to social and environmental performance
 - Good governance, including policies related to ethics and corruption.
 - Positive practices beyond what is required by regulations (e.g. environmentally friendly manufacturing processes, excellent labour practices).
 - Payment of the National Living Wage.
 - Third-party certifications related to positive social and/or environmental performance.
- Give consideration to suppliers with ownership from underrepresented populations.
- Commit to purchasing core products (at least 50% of expenses) from independent suppliers local to us.
- Maintain a preferred supplier list which we will check for good governance, positive practices and third-party certifications.

Sustainable Procurement Checklist

All purchases, whether large or small in value, have an impact on people and the planet; therefore, everyone with purchasing responsibilities has an important role to play.

When purchasing on behalf of clients, consider the general elements below, but also:

- Choose an environmentally accredited supplier where possible
- Ask about the sustainability credentials of the purchase, and what is the best option

Things to consider before making a purchase:

- Is there a need to purchase?
- Consider hiring, borrowing, or sharing resources with customers or partners before buying something new.
- Order only what is needed to avoid/reduce waste.
- Consider second-hand, refurbished or reconditioned.
- Consider recyclability and end of life.
- Consider 'whole life' costs and not just 'upfront' costs, e.g. cost of operation, repairability, upgradability, maintenance and disposal costs.
- Is there an 'eco' option?
- Consider the energy consumption of any equipment being purchased.
- Buy local where possible, which can have a positive impact on social value, the environment and boost the
- local economy, as well as shortening delivery distances and reducing transport emissions
- Screen for legal and ethical compliance
- Look for positive environmental practices and standards
- When writing a tender for services ensure that sustainability criteria is given a strong weighting to ensure alignment with your Policy
- Ask suppliers about their environmental and ethical standards and make sure they know it matters to us.
- What policies do they have in place? Do they use minimal and recyclable packaging for example?
- Consider the following:
 - Trusted Eco and Ethical labelling can help you easily identify products/companies that are working to high environmental and ethical standards. This site: <http://www.ecolabelindex.com/ecolabels/?st=country,gb> lists all the labels commonly used in the UK for your information
 - Is the product produced ethically? Ethical goods websites such as this <https://www.ethicalconsumer.org/how-to-shop-ethically> have a wealth of information to help with your buying decisions.

Community Support Policy

At mark-making*, not only do we strive to do the best work for our clients, we also want to be a force for good; to leave a positive mark. The intended purpose of our community support activities is to achieve positive social, environmental and /or community impact, with an emphasis on embracing the power of being more human.

mark-making* provides support in the form of, but not limited to:

- pro bono projects
- volunteering days
- monetary donations

We encourage every mark-maker to get involved and welcome individuals to propose organisations that could benefit from our help.

Pro bono work

This is where we get to make the most of experience and skills to make a real and tangible impact. As much as we would like to, mark-making* recognises that it cannot support every cause, and so with regards to pro bono projects, we have developed the following criteria to help determine what makes a good project:

- Will it make the most of our specific skills in brand, campaigns or communications?
- Will it make a unique contribution that the organisation would otherwise not be able to afford?
- Will it be a direct benefit to, and make a positive impact in, our local community?
- Is the cause something that is close to our hearts?
- Does the project present the opportunity for personal development within the mm* team?
- Will the project present the opportunity for a positive news story/PR opportunity?

Need some inspiration? Check out the mm* blog for some great past examples that include, YIMBY Festival, Emma's Trust, Oxford University Svalbard Expedition, Chipping Norton Theatre campaign, The Chippy Larder and ChippyWellFest.

mark-making* allocates, as a minimum, one percent of our capacity to pro bono work each year. This capacity is calculated at the start of the year and reviewed each quarter.

Volunteering days

Each mark-maker has the opportunity to volunteer for a day with their chosen charity or cause. This day can be taken in the working week or in your own time. If it is carried out in your own time, you will receive a day's holiday in lieu. For full details of how this works,

please refer to the Volunteering Policy in the Employee-related Policies and Procedures section of the handbook.

In order to promote the charity and to illustrate our commitment to supporting the local community we would like everyone to write a short blog post about their day (don't forget to take some pics).

Monetary donations

Sometimes only hard cash will do. We have a matching scheme for mark-makers who carry out fundraising activity or personally donate to a charity up to the sum of £50 per person. At the end of the year, any unused charity budget will be allocated to a charity of the team's choice.

Charitable partners must be registered UK charities, (<https://www.gov.uk/find-charity-information>), or local, social or environmental causes known to us, or close to us. All UK charities are required to make their accounts and trustee reports public or available upon request. If a donation is considered to be significant, we will check these. Local donations are also screened through personal engagement.

Sustainable Travel Policy

An introduction to our sustainable travel approach

At mark-making*, we believe that the best way of doing good business is by being a good business. This means considering the impact of every decision we make, including how we travel for work and how we support our team's daily commutes.

Travel and transport represent one of the most significant areas where we can make a meaningful difference to our environmental impact.

These conscious choices about how we move through the world are part of our goodmarks* philosophy. Our Sustainable Travel Policy isn't just about ticking boxes, it's a daily reminder that sustainable travel practices can save time and money, improve air quality, reduce our carbon footprint and demonstrate our commitment to being a truly responsible business.

This policy reflects our ongoing commitment to reducing emissions that contribute to climate change, whilst ensuring our people can work effectively and safely.

Who does our Sustainable Travel Policy apply to?

Our policy applies to two main audiences.

Firstly, our mark-making* team – all direct employees of the agency. For this group, adherence to our Sustainable Travel Policy is an integral part of our environmental commitments and goodmarks* philosophy.

The second group is our wider mark-making* family, which includes any third-party organisations or individuals we work alongside. We'll always seek to work with partners who share our values around sustainable travel, and we'll encourage existing partners to align with our approach.

We also extend our influence by educating clients about sustainable travel options and incorporating these principles into project planning where appropriate.

Our sustainable travel commitments

We break down our mark-making* Sustainable Travel Policy commitments into four key areas. Fundamentally, though, every travel decision we make must consider environmental impact, safety, cost-effectiveness and business necessity.

1. Travel Hierarchy and Planning

We commit to following a clear hierarchy that prioritises the lowest-impact travel options:

Virtual first approach: We encourage the use of virtual meeting technology for all interactions that don't require physical presence. This includes client calls, team meetings, training sessions and project reviews. Video conferencing not only reduces our carbon footprint but often saves valuable time for both our team and clients.

Public transport for longer journeys: For essential travel to distant destinations such as London and the North, we prioritise trains and other public transport options. Rail travel typically produces significantly lower emissions than car or air travel for these distances.

Flight restrictions: We avoid flying unless absolutely necessary, with particular restrictions on domestic and short-haul flights to destinations such as other UK cities, Paris, and Brussels, where alternative transport options exist.

Journey planning: We encourage efficient route planning, combining multiple meetings or activities where possible to minimise total travel requirements.

2. Daily Commuting and Local Travel

We commit to supporting and encouraging sustainable commuting options:

Cycle to Work Scheme: We actively offer and support the UK Cycle to Work Scheme, making cycling more affordable and accessible for all mark-makers.

Office facilities: We provide secure places to lock bicycles, and shower facilities for cyclists, to remove practical barriers to sustainable commuting.

Flexible working: We support flexible and hybrid working arrangements that can reduce commuting frequency whilst maintaining productivity and collaboration.

Local travel: For work-related local travel, we encourage walking and cycling where practical. Given our location in an area with limited public transportation options, we actively promote carpooling among colleagues whenever car travel is necessary.

3. Business Travel Guidelines

We commit to responsible business travel practices:

Safety first: Employees must ensure all travel arrangements are suitable and prioritise their personal safety in all circumstances.

Carbon measurement: We record and measure our travel emissions and offset 110% of our carbon emissions as part of our climate-positive commitment.

Efficient driving: When car travel is necessary, we promote fuel-efficient driving techniques and encourage carpooling or car sharing among colleagues whenever practical.

Accommodation choices: For overnight business travel, we consider the environmental credentials of accommodation providers where practical.

4. Fuel-Efficient Driving Practices

When driving is necessary, we commit to promoting fuel-efficient techniques that can reduce fuel consumption and CO2 emissions by as much as 25%, with 10-15% ongoing savings typically achievable.

Vehicle Maintenance

- Get your car serviced regularly for best efficiency
- Always use the right specification of engine oil (check your handbook)
- Keep your tyres at the correct pressure and check them before long journeys – under-inflated tyres will make your car use more fuel

Before You Travel

- **Save weight:** Extra weight means extra fuel, so remove unnecessary items. The fuel consumption of a mid-size car increases by about 1% for every 25 kilos of weight it carries.
- **Cut drag:** Remove bike racks, roof racks and boxes when not in use. Aerodynamic drag can increase fuel consumption by as much as 20% on the highway.
- **Plan your journey:** Use driving apps and check traffic news to avoid getting lost and reduce time spent in traffic.
- **Combine trips:** Cold starts use more fuel, so combine multiple errands where possible.
- **Consider alternatives:** For journeys of a couple of miles or less, consider cycling. For longer distances, consider electric bikes with tax-free incentives through schemes like [cyclescheme.co.uk](https://www.cyclescheme.co.uk)

Driving Techniques for Maximum Fuel Efficiency

1. **Accelerate gently:** Keep acceleration smooth and gentle. The harder you accelerate, the more fuel you use. Take 5 seconds to accelerate your vehicle up to 15 mph from a stop.
2. **Maintain a steady speed:** Avoid unnecessary speed variations. Tests show that varying your speed between 47 and 53 mph every 18 seconds can increase fuel use by 20%. Use cruise control on highways where conditions permit.
3. **Anticipate traffic:** Look ahead and maintain a comfortable distance from other vehicles. This allows you to maintain steady speeds and avoid unnecessary braking and acceleration.
4. **Observe speed limits:** Drive at 70mph and you'll use up to 9% more fuel than at 60mph and up to 15% more than at 50mph. Most vehicles are most fuel-efficient between 45-55 mph.
5. **Coast to decelerate:** Look ahead to anticipate when you need to slow down, then take your foot off the accelerator and coast rather than using brakes immediately.
6. **Change gear efficiently:** Try changing up at around 2,000 rpm (diesel) or 2,500 rpm (petrol). Many newer cars have gear shift indicators to encourage efficient gear use.
7. **Use air conditioning wisely:** At low speeds, open windows instead of air conditioning. At higher speeds, air conditioning becomes more efficient than open windows. Use the re-circulate option when using air conditioning.
8. **Minimise electrical load:** Turn off rear window heaters, demister fans and headlights when not needed.

Smart Idling Practices

- Turn off your engine when stopped for more than 60 seconds (except in traffic).
- Don't warm up your car by idling – scrape ice rather than leaving the engine running.

- The average vehicle with a 3-litre engine wastes 300 millilitres of fuel for every 10 minutes it idles.

Monitoring and Improvement

- Use fuel consumption displays where available to get real-time feedback.
- Track your fuel consumption to set personal improvement targets.
- Measure tyre pressure monthly – under-inflated tyres can increase fuel consumption by up to 4%
- Challenge yourself to extend the time between fill-ups whilst maintaining necessary travel.

Sustainable Travel responsibilities

As a mark-maker, you share responsibility for the environmental integrity of our travel practices and their contribution to our overall goodmarks* commitment.

Our Directors have ultimate responsibility and accountability for ensuring compliance with this policy. On a day-to-day basis, however, our wider Leadership Team provides stewardship of our sustainable travel practices.

We actively encourage ongoing reflection and feedback from all mark-makers regarding our travel practices.

Personal responsibility includes:

- Choosing the most sustainable travel option for each journey
- Following fuel-efficient driving techniques when car travel is necessary
- Accurately recording travel for carbon measurement purposes
- Suggesting improvements to our travel practices
- Advocating for sustainable travel options with clients and partners

Finally, we'll continually evaluate the effectiveness of our Sustainable Travel Policy to ensure it remains relevant, practical and effective in reducing our environmental impact. This includes regularly reviewing our travel data, carbon emissions and the practical effectiveness of our guidelines.

Integration with existing policies

This Sustainable Travel Policy aligns with our Environmental Policy commitment to being as low-carbon as possible and our Sustainable Procurement Policy principles. Together, these policies help ensure that mark-making* continues to be a business that serves society well whilst leaving nothing but goodmarks*.