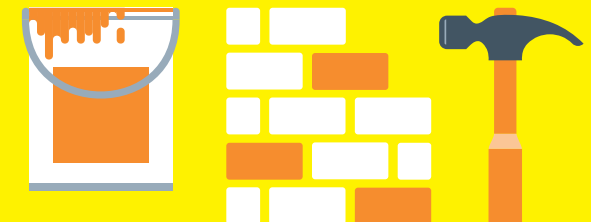


5. Facilities management



The way you manage the physical space in which you and your staff work, and your customers dine is a vital part of the circular economy jigsaw.

The furniture you buy; the carpets and paint you specify; the kitchen equipment you invest in – these are decision points that need to be thought through carefully. They are big investments, but it's all too easy for them to hit the planet as hard as they hit your pocket.

But if approached in the right way, they also offer an opportunity for you to make your business more circular and sustainable in the long term.

Things you can do to make a difference

5a. Supply – resource specification

- Buy second-hand and refurbished kitchen equipment
- Renovate, refurbish and re-use furniture, fixtures and fittings
- Decorate floors, walls and ceilings with sustainable materials

5b. Use – resource efficiency

- Share your kitchen space when you're not using it

5c. End of life – resource recovery

- Fall in love with repairing
- Give pre-loved items a second chance in life
- Recycle what you can't repair or re-use
- Use refurbishments or facility end of life as an opportunity to replace with a more efficient solution - see chapter 2 & 3

5a. Supply - resource specification

There are lots of things to consider when choosing new equipment for your kitchen or furniture for your dining space and office.

Quality. Value for money. Style. They're all important, but at the very top of your list of priorities should be the impact on the environment.

Kitchen equipment

Before you invest in new kitchen equipment, explore whether second-hand or refurbished equipment can meet your needs. You'll be amazed what others consider to be surplus to requirements.

Buying second-hand is a perfect example of a circular economy as it saves money and preserves valuable resources. Just one word of warning – pay attention to the energy efficiency of older appliances as poor performance can cancel out any short-term financial and environmental benefits you might have achieved in the long run.

If you do decide buying new is the way to go, make sure you choose equipment that is built to last and is designed to be easily repairable. Although the upfront cost might be higher, you will prolong the life of the equipment and replace it less often.

Furniture, fixtures and fittings

The cost – both financial and environmental – of making new furniture, fixtures and fittings is considerable. So wherever and whenever you can, you should renovate, refurbish and re-use existing items.

With a bit of creativity – and there are people that can help you if that's not your forte – there are sustainable options for resizing, retopping or refinishing existing storage units, furnitures, soft seating – the list goes on...

Companies such as [Crown Workspace](#) and [Rype Office](#) re-use, repair and remanufacture commercial furniture. They also support businesses designing sustainable new working spaces. [Goldfinger Factory](#) transforms reclaimed and sustainable materials into exquisite furniture and interiors for restaurant and cafes. [Opendesk](#) is 'changing the way furniture is made by connecting customers to local makers'. And [Smile Plastics](#) make a wide range of stylish products including counter tops, table tops, partitions, bathrooms and toilet cubicles made out of recycled plastic.

Incorporating re-use into your interior design can help achieve cost and carbon savings and leave budget for other investments.

Where new items do need to be bought in, try to choose ones that are:

- ♦ Re-used, repurposed, remanufactured or recycled
- ♦ Fully recyclable, re-usable and easy to repair/upgrade
- ♦ Bio-based (for example, [Adaptavate](#) and [Biohm](#))
- ♦ Leased/shared rather than owned by your business.

For more ideas and inspiration, download the Business in the Community's [Circular Office Guide](#), 2019



Floors, walls and ceilings

When it comes to decorating your floors, walls and ceilings, there are plenty of opportunities to make more environmentally conscious decisions.

Some flooring companies, like [Interface](#), use recycled materials (including old fishing nets) for their carpets. They also offer customers a take-back scheme for their old carpets – some of which are provided to low-income households via the not-for-profit [Greenstream Flooring](#).

When it comes to ceilings, less is more. It's now very popular to do away with ceiling tiles all together – the resulting 'industrial look' is certainly very fashionable but it also offers some real practical benefits – the exposed services are easier to adjust, maintain and repair.

Where ceiling tiles are needed or desired, companies like [Armstrong](#) offer new tiles that have been upcycled from old ones. Their mineral fibre tiles are also fully recyclable.

Turning attention to the walls, and innovative companies like [Paint 360](#) and [Newlife Paints](#) produce high quality products that have been manufactured using waste paint that's been diverted from landfill or incineration.

Meanwhile, [Ecor](#) and [Adaptavate](#) are two examples of environmentally sustainable alternatives to traditional plasterboard products.

Case Study

Kind on the environment and on the eye

THE REFURBISHMENT OF THE BUXTON HOTEL AND PUB IN EAST LONDON WAS A THREE-YEAR LABOUR OF LOVE.

Throughout, the focus remained firmly on preserving and restoring as many original features as possible. Original elements were stored off site before being brought back at the end of the project.

Materials re-used include: decorative bricks, facade stonework, parts of the original steel structure, floorboards as well as some beautiful fireplaces, tiles and chimney pots.

This approach saved around 21% of the whole life carbon emissions that would have been generated in comparison to fitting-out a new pub and hotel to a similar specification. Just as importantly, it also helped add character and provided an element of continuity, celebrating the original features whilst removing the old parts that don't have function any more. The building just looks and feels 'right'.



Lighting

Have you ever thought of lighting as a service and not a product? With the 'Pay Per Lux' solution, conceived by Philips, you don't own your lighting – you rent it.

The benefit is that the responsibility for the performance of the lighting fixtures shifts from the consumer to the manufacturer, encouraging longevity and recyclability. It means you can always use the best lighting solution for your needs without ever having to purchase, maintain and responsibly dispose of the hardware.

5b. Use - resource efficiency

A low-cost airline can disembark passengers, clean the plane, re-load people and cargo and have it back in the air in as little as 25 minutes. Impressive stuff.

These companies have got turn-arounds down to such a fine art. That's because it costs them money – and lots of it – to have their planes sitting empty on the ground.

Now think of your kitchen. There are times when it's full of life and activity; the beating heart of your business. But there are probably also times when it's working at half capacity or even completely empty. That's a terrible waste of space and useful equipment time.

A kitchen shared is a problem solved

Sharing things is becoming all the rage. Companies like Zipcar and Airbnb have made sharing cars and accommodation feel like a completely normal thing to do. The food service sector could be next in line!

More and more food business owners are starting to rent out their kitchen facilities when they're not in use. All sorts of companies are on the look-out for commercial kitchen space they can rent, either on a short-term or ongoing basis. These include catering companies, small food brands, teaching organisations, food tasting and even photoshoots. The best bit is that they often need the space when you don't.

ShareDining is an online platform connecting kitchen owners across London with kitchen users. All potential kitchen users are vetted and must provide evidence that they hold all the required certifications and insurances.

You could also advertise your kitchen space on general sharing platforms such as Gumtree.



5c. End of life - resource recovery

Buying high quality equipment, furniture and construction materials will prolong their life, but eventually the time will come when you feel you need to upgrade or replace.

It's really important that you dispose of items that are surplus to your requirements in a responsible way – the circular economy relies on it.

Don't throw away – there is almost certainly someone out there who will very gladly take your old chair, fridge, mirror – whatever it might be – off your hands and do something useful with it.

The forgotten art of repairing things

The satisfaction of rolling up your sleeves and fixing something is a wonderful feeling. But it's an experience that few people enjoy these days. A chair with a wobbly leg? Replace it. A scratch on the floor? Buy a new one. A dodgy thermometer in the fridge? Chuck it.

Previous generations would be horrified at how quick we are to give up on items that still have plenty of life left in them. If we are to save our planet, we need to fall back in love with repairing.

So next time something goes wrong, why not have a go at fixing it? You might surprise yourself. And if it's beyond your capabilities, look into getting a professional in to help – it will almost certainly cost you a fraction of replacing the item like for like and it's much better for the environment.

Give pre-loved items a second chance in life

There are almost certainly people in your local community who could really benefit from items that are surplus to your requirements. Even broken items: just because you can't or don't want to fix them doesn't mean they're beyond saving in the hands of someone else.

Contact local charity shops, re-use organisations and local community groups to see if they can give your pre-loved items a second chance in life. At best you might be able to recoup some money for them; at worst you will save on disposal costs, and you'll be safe in the knowledge that you've protected the environment and given something back to your local community.

Don't forget there are websites that enable you to donate or sell your unwanted items to people who are based further afield. [eBay](#), [Gumtree](#) and [Preloved](#) are great if you're looking to get some money back for your items, or [Globechain](#), [Freecycle](#), [Frengle](#) and [Community Reuse](#) are more suitable if you're happy simply to donate.



5. Facilities management

Recycle what you can't repair or re-use

Items that are beyond repair and cannot be re-used can usually be recycled. It's highly unlikely these days that the only option available to you is disposal.

A quick internet search should give you lots of local options. If you're struggling, you can check out specialists in the sector such as [Ramco](#). They refurbish, reutilise and recycle food manufacturing and food service machinery and are a great outlet for more specialist equipment.



Take-away

Nando's is using the platform **Globechain** to ensure that equipment and furniture they are no longer using doesn't go to waste, but instead gets redistributed to charities and communities that really need them.

By listing over 6,000 items of furniture and equipment such as chairs and tables, lighting fixtures and cooking appliances for re-use, Nando's has been able to save charities over £37,000 and prevented 82,300 kilos of items from being thrown away.

