

St Mary's Procurement Guidelines

We believe that, as Christians, we should spend our money wisely; considering not simply what appears to be 'best value for money', but the wider ethical and environmental implications of our purchases.

Ethical procurement

Whenever we buy goods, the money we spend is spread across the supply chain - from the producer to the point of sale. We believe that our money should be shared fairly across the chain as well as resulting in a fair price to us. We want to know that our purchasing decisions will not harm others now or in the future.

Ethical considerations include whether the workforce in the supply chain enjoys fair rates of pay and humane working conditions; that there is no involvement in repressive regimes and no involvement of slave or child labour.

Environmental issues include issues of humane rearing of animals, sustainable fishing, avoidance of links with de-forestation, palm oil transparency, low levels of pollution and toxic chemicals in the supply chain, the sustainable sourcing of raw materials and the avoidance of single use plastics.

Environmental issues also include the carbon footprint of any commodity and the chain of disposal of the waste products. The aim is to minimise greenhouse gas emission and other pollutants which will adversely affect the health and wellbeing of current and future generations, both in this country and around the world.

We should also consider **governmental issues**, such as tax avoidance by companies and their parent companies, excessive rates of director pay, and evidence of political lobbying that does not accord with principles of human rights and justice.

How can we know what is ethical?

Trying to be ethical is not easy, but there are organisations which do the research and analysis for us:

The Fairtrade Foundation certifies standards that are met in the production and supply of a product. For farmers and workers, it includes their rights, safer working conditions and fairer pay:

<https://www.fairtrade.org.uk/buying-fairtrade/>

The Rainforest Alliance aims to stop deforestation of rainforests. They certify ingredients that are produced using methods that support the three pillars of sustainability: social, economic, and environmental: <https://www.rainforest-alliance.org/find-certified>

Ethical Consumer researches the business practices and sources of thousands of companies and products. It grades the impact of each on the environment, society and animal welfare:

<https://www.ethicalconsumer.org/about-us>

LOAF is a useful guide to food purchasing: food that is **L**ocal, **O**rganic, **A**nimal Friendly and **F**airly traded.

St Mary's Commitment

In our decisions about purchasing products for St Mary's Church, we will aim to be both ethically and environmentally sustainable.

In considering cost, wherever possible, we will assess the long-term costs, both to ourselves and to others, of our decisions, ensuring that we don't pass on a significant burden to others and minimise any damaging consequences to God's creation.

February 2023