



# SUSTAINABLE BUSINESSES >

Session plan

BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS



Prince's Trust

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SOMETHING**

In partnership with:

**Howden Group  
Holdings**

# AT A GLANCE

This is the second session in the ‘Building a Sustainable Business’ unit. In this session we will look at green business performance in more detail. Business sustainability is the practice of operating a business without impacting the environment negatively. A green business looks beyond profit to consider its impact on society and the wider world, and functions in the best interests of the local and global environment.

Please note: The emerging nature of this topic means new evidence and information is being released every day. While we strive to keep this content up-to-date, we actively encourage you to incorporate any new and evidenced information that may arise.



## CURRICULUM LINKS

- ✓ SMSC: values and ethics
- ✓ PSHE and citizenship: personal values



## MATERIALS

- ✓ Business reports resource
- ✓ Sustainability awards worksheet

# LEARNING OUTCOMES

- ✓ Be aware of the environmental impacts of businesses
- ✓ Understand how businesses set objectives and report on their sustainability improvements
- ✓ Evaluate the sustainability improvements of a selection of businesses

# ACTIVITIES

| ACTIVITY                | TIME          | PAGE      |
|-------------------------|---------------|-----------|
| <u>What a waste</u>     | 10 minutes    | <u>03</u> |
| <u>Recycling</u>        | 15-20 minutes | <u>04</u> |
| <u>You be the judge</u> | 30-40 minutes | <u>06</u> |
| <u>Wrap up</u>          | 5-10 minutes  | <u>07</u> |

## WHO CREATED THIS SESSION PLAN?

This session plan was co-created with Justine Oakes. Justine Oakes CEnv, MIEnvSc, MIEMA is an environmental professional with over 25 years experience in both the public and private sector. She is currently the Sustainability Manager at the University of Suffolk and Business and Research lead for the Suffolk Sustainability Institute. Working in partnership with local and national sustainability initiatives, the University of Suffolk is a transformational university, absorbing the best of UK University traditions and aligning them with a modern world of employment and entrepreneurship.



# WHAT A WASTE >



## TIME REQUIRED

10 minutes

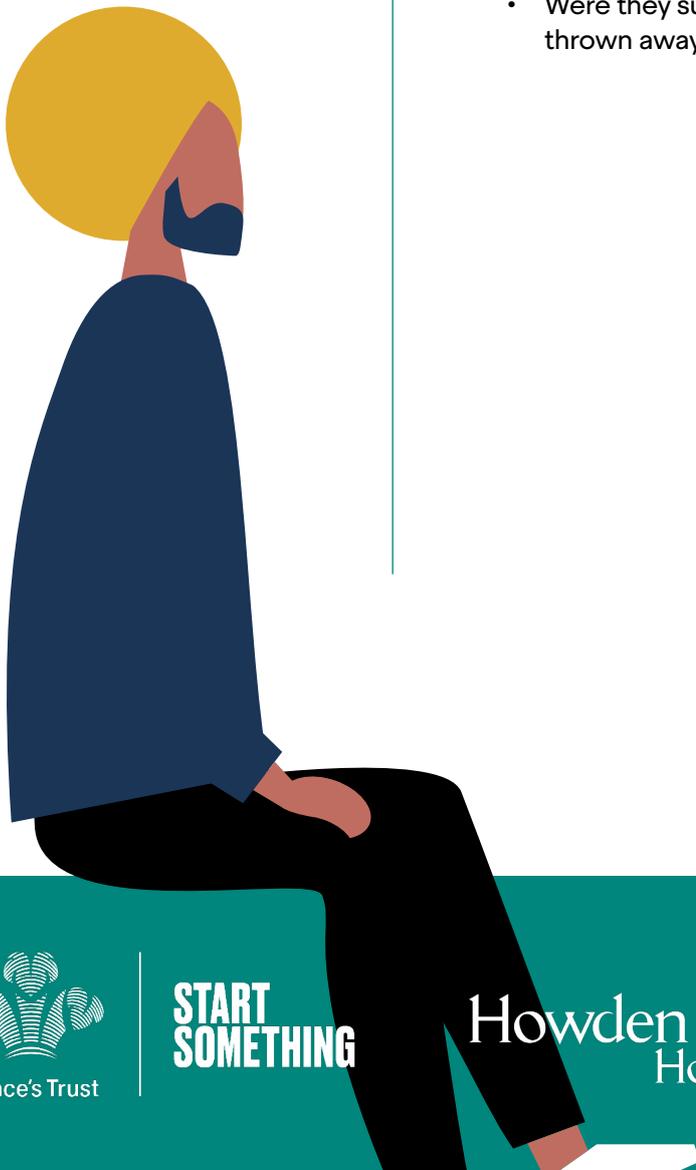


## MATERIALS

- ✓ Completed home activity worksheet (from previous session)

# ACTIVITY STEPS >

1. If you want to do some extra reading before this session, the following websites provide useful information:
  - <https://sustainablebusiness.org.uk/network/>
  - <https://www.green-growth.org.uk/network>
  - <https://www.pro-manchester.co.uk/sector-groups/green-economy/>
  - [https://secure.manchester.gov.uk/info/827/growing\\_a\\_business/6634/environmental\\_support\\_for\\_businesses](https://secure.manchester.gov.uk/info/827/growing_a_business/6634/environmental_support_for_businesses)
2. Start the session by encouraging the learners to share the results from their home activity from the previous session.
3. Guide a discussion about the packaging waste they observed and recorded. You could ask:
  - How many waste items did you record?
  - What types of waste did you record - paper, cans, plastic, etc.?
  - Which type of waste was there most of?
  - Were they surprised about the amount of packaging that is thrown away every week?



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# RECYCLING >



## TIME REQUIRED

15-20 minutes



## MATERIALS

- ✓ Images of different packaging waste (optional)

# ACTIVITY STEPS >

1. Ask the learners what 'recycling' means. Explain that it is the process of converting waste materials into new materials and objects. For further information to share about recycling, read the box below.
2. Show the learners images of different packaging waste (you could show them [this](#)) or write/name the different types of packaging from their home activity. Ask them to identify which ones can be recycled and which ones would have to be thrown away to landfill.
3. Ask the learners what they think plastic is made from. Explain that plastic poses a particular problem for the environment (which they should be aware of from previous sessions). Plastics are man-made; they do not occur in nature. They are often made from oil that comes out of the ground. The process of making plastics is usually quite complicated.
4. Emphasise that it is important that, as a society, we focus on producing and using materials that are more easily recycled and ideally try and use the least amount of packaging possible.

If you would like to discuss recycling further, have a look at the box below for more information you could share with your group.

## RECYCLING

When we recycle, used materials are converted into new products, reducing the need to consume natural resources. If used materials are not recycled, then new products are made by extracting fresh, raw material from the Earth, through mining and forestry.

Recycling also helps conserve important raw materials and protects nature for the future. Using recycled materials in a factory manufacturing process uses considerably less energy than that required for producing new products from raw materials.

Plus, there are extra energy savings because more energy is required to dig out, refine, transport and process the raw materials, so that it is ready to be used by the factory. By recycling we provide industry-ready materials and reduce substantial air and water pollution.



Because recycling saves energy, it also reduces greenhouse gas emissions, which helps to tackle climate change. Current UK recycling is estimated to save more than 18 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> a year, that's like taking 5 million cars off the road every year.

Recyclable materials are reprocessed into new products and as a result, the amount of rubbish sent to landfill sites reduces. Landfill is essentially a big hole in the ground, into which we tip all our rubbish and then cover it up and dig another hole. There are over 1,500 landfill sites in the UK, and as this rubbish starts to breakdown it creates another dangerous climate change gas, called methane.



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Session plan: Sustainable Businesses | 05

# YOU BE THE JUDGE >



## TIME REQUIRED

30-40 minutes



## MATERIALS

- ✓ Business reports resource
- ✓ Sustainability awards worksheet

# ACTIVITY STEPS >

1. Tell the learners that they will be introduced to three businesses in this activity. Explain that businesses often communicate their annual achievements against sustainable development performance, through the use of reports and posters.
2. Explain that businesses have to prove they have improved their performance by collecting data throughout the year. This data focuses on how much energy, water and waste they use and produce.  

Bigger businesses will often release an annual report to the public to show how they are doing and communicate the activities they are undertaking to reduce their environmental impacts.
3. Put the learners into small groups or pairs and inform them that they have been chosen to sit as judges on 'The Prince's Trust Sustainability Award Panel'.
4. Using the 'Business reports resource' and the 'Sustainability awards worksheet', they must discuss who they think should win 1st, 2nd and 3rd prize. Their decisions should be based on how well the businesses have done in reducing their environmental impacts over the year.
5. After the learners have been given sufficient time to decide and record their decisions, ask each group who they awarded first prize and why. You could even have a debate between groups that awarded different businesses 1st prize.
6. Continue the discussion by asking:
  - Why did you award the other businesses 2nd and 3rd prize?
  - What was the most impressive sustainable action they read about?
  - Did all their group agree? How did they come to a mutual decision?



# WRAP UP >



## TIME REQUIRED

5-10 minutes

# ACTIVITY STEPS >

1. Have a reflective group discussion to end the session. You could ask:
  - What did you learn in today's session?
  - Why is recycling important?
  - What types of things can businesses do to be sustainable and limit their impact on the environment?

## FEEDBACK

If you would like to share your feedback on this session plan or the entire unit, please complete our survey [here](#).



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