

The Tibetan Kitchen



EPR – Post audit review

10th January, 2016



The
Naturesave Trust



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and in accordance with BioRegional's 10 One Planet Principles

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ONE
PLANET
LIVING



An
initiative
by BioRegional

One Planet Living is a positive vision of a world in which we are living happy, healthy lives, within the natural limits of the planet — wherever we live in the world — and we have left sufficient space for wildlife and wilderness. Real life examples show that this is possible.

Ecological footprinting shows that if everyone in the world consumed as many natural resources as the average person in Western Europe, we'd need three planets to support us. If everyone consumed as much as the average North American, we would need five planets. In China and South Africa the overall average is one planet, but this disguises considerable variations between different regions and lifestyles.

One Planet Living is BioRegional's vision of a sustainable world, in which people everywhere can enjoy a high quality of life within the productive capacity of the planet. It uses ten principles of sustainability as a framework, which were developed out of BioRegional's work on the BedZED eco-village.

The One Planet Living approach and ten principles framework is a simple way to plan, deliver, communicate and mainstream sustainable development and the green economy.

The Sustainable Business Clinic is an accredited environmental consultancy and has been contracted by the Naturesave Trust to undertake an Environmental Performance Review (EPR) of The Tibetan Kitchen. This forms part of the commercial insurance package given by Naturesave Insurance, whose aim is to use insurance as a vehicle for sustainable development.

This report is a post audit review of recommendations on how the The Tibetan Kitchen could trade in a more sustainable manner in accordance with One Planet Living Principles as developed by Bioregional.

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Introduction

In order to assist companies with more environmentally aware trading practices, The Naturesave Trust provides each Naturesave Insurance commercial policy holder, with a FREE Environmental Performance Review (EPR) of their business premises and trading practices.

This document outlines the review of recommendations given in the EPR, conducted for The Tibetan Kitchen, on the 20th March 2015.

The surveyor has conducted a telephone interview to:

- Attain feedback on the EPR process.
- Assess which recommendations have been implemented.
- Assist the client in attainment of the recommendations where required.

When objectives are met to the satisfaction of the independent surveyor and The Naturesave Trust, they will be acknowledged by the issue of an Environmentally Aware Trading Certificate (EATC).

The Company can continue to meet these principles in order to become endorsed as a One Planet Living Company by Bioregional. For more information contact Bioregional or check out their Facebook or Twitter pages.

2 Executive Summary

The Tibetan Kitchen is to be congratulated on its existing sustainability initiatives and genuine commitment in developing an ethical, sustainable and environmentally friendly approach to catering. This is reflected in all of its activities from procurement to hosting cultural events. Sustainable principles are embedded in every aspect of the organisation, which help make it a leader at the forefront of the sustainable food movement.

The client is also using the EPR and follow up reports in food vendor applications, for Glastonbury Festival as well as others, and is planning to apply to cater at Shambala in August, providing an adapted vegetarian menu.

Feedback on the EPR process was that it *"...was very useful and good for planning our five-year plan. The recommendations have provided good stepping stones and pulled everything together into ten clear categories. It was also helpful in having a face-to-face meeting to stimulate ideas and we will showcase what we do this summer. We hope this will spark interest at festivals and give other food vendors new ideas."*

3 Review of Recommendations

Zero carbon:

Recommendation 1:

It is recommended that The Tibetan Kitchen take regular meter readings to make it easier to spot changes in energy consumption that might not otherwise come to light. This practice helps to measure improvements made on site, and can help to rectify invoicing issues and thereby improve cash flow management.

Outcome:

A resource monitoring spreadsheet has been emailed to the client so that any changes in consumption can be spotted. The spreadsheet has been designed to make it easy to monitor utility consumption, since it's linked to graphs that can help display ongoing consumption of energy and water, as well as the production of waste. It will also help identify times of the year or month when consumption is at its highest / lowest, allowing for better resource management of the Tibetan Kitchen.

Recommendation 2:

Improve electricity and heating by switching to a supplier that sells 100% renewable energy, such as Good Energy or Ecotricity. Information on renewable energy tariffs can be found by consulting the green energy tariff of an existing supplier, or by visiting Which? Energy. For online green energy price comparison services, see Green Energy Switch.

Outcome:

The Tibetan Kitchen has spoken to Ecotricity and has moved over the gas supply. The electricity contract is on a four year contract that expires in 2017. At this point the Tibetan Kitchen will move their energy supply to a 100% renewable tariff.

Recommendation 3:

See Appendix 5 of the EPR for funding schemes dedicated to energy efficiency and renewable technology. One of these may fund a lighting replacement programme throughout the premises.

Outcome:

The funding schemes are being kept for future application. The client is in the process of buying the premises as opposed to leasing it. Once the property has been purchased there will be greater incentive to install renewable energy technology. The plans to install solar and solar water heating are part of the five-year business plan.

Recommendation 4:

Heating and hot water can account for 60% of total energy usage. By ensuring that efficient heating systems are specified, operated and maintained, potential savings can be substantial. Lowering set points by only 1°C can potentially reduce annual heating bills by up to 8%, so reduce the temperature on the thermostat down to the lowest comfortable level. Consider installing a thermostat guard in the upstairs studio to prevent staff or visitors adjusting the temperature. See Appendix 2 and 3 of the EPR.

Outcome:

The client has recently installed a new energy efficient boiler after research on Ethical Consumer. The boiler is a top rated Ideal-Logic boiler that was also made in Britain.

Recommendation 5:

It may be possible to increase the energy efficiency of the kitchen appliances. Consider installing control technology, which automatically switches power off or turns down the temperature on unused cooking equipment. Automatic pan sensors are available for gas and electric hobs, which turn the hob off or down after the pan is removed from heat. This is good for quiet times. Energy can also be saved by not turning on equipment until it is needed.

Outcome:

The client has researched this area. As there is only one large range with two cooks, it was decided that personal vigilance on energy use would be more appropriate.

Recommendation 6:

Install a door closer on refrigerators, hang strip curtains on in-coolers to maintain moisture levels or use programmable thermostats to automatically adjust ventilation and air conditioning. When replacing kitchen equipment, ensure that new appliances are rated A++ for energy efficiency and check they are set to their most energy efficient settings. See Appendix 3 of the EPR for further information on how to keep fridges running as efficiently as possible.

If replacing refrigeration systems, choose a fridge that is HFC-free. HFC (hydrofluorocarbon), a greenhouse gas, is traditionally used as a refrigerant in cooling systems. HFCs do not damage the ozone layer, but their global warming potential is many times higher than CO₂. One tonne of the widely-used gas R404a has a warming effect equal to 3,900 tonnes of CO₂ over a 100-year period. Normal fridge use and maintenance creates a high level of HFC leakage. HFC-free refrigerants are natural with minimal impact to the environment.

Outcome:

Door closers are to be installed on the domestic fridges. To the back of the building there is a cold room which negates the use of large energy drawing fridges and freezers.

Zero waste:**Recommendation 1:**

When sourcing GM-free palm oil, the Sustainable Restaurant Association (SRA) has advised a general policy of prioritising sustainably certified palm oil rather than removing it from the supply chain. The SRA's Online supplier directory lists certified suppliers. Liverpool-based company Olleco supplies rapeseed and vegetable oil and collects used cooking oil to generate renewable energy. Rapeseed oil is a non-GM alternative.

Outcome:

The client has conducted extensive research around the issues of palm oil. Two certification bodies have been found that indicate sustainably certified palm oil. The client is in discussion with both of the wholesalers on sourcing RSPO (Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil)-certified or GreenPalm palm oil for use in the kitchen.

Recommendation 2:

In order to increase composting volume, why not consider a wormery? A wormery is a simple, clean and efficient way of turning ordinary organic kitchen waste into nutrient-rich liquid plant feed and excellent organic compost.

Outcome:

A wormery has been installed to the back of the building.

Recommendation 3:

Compost coffee grounds. Ground coffee is plant-based organic matter, and can therefore be allowed to decompose in a controlled environment. Coffee grounds and filters are fully organic and can be placed directly onto a compost pile or buried in a worm bin. Be sure to maintain sufficient carbon-rich material in the compost pile by adding in more paper, dried leaves or other carbon-rich materials to adjust the nutrient balance.

Outcome:

The Tibetan Kitchen does not offer coffee as part of the menu. However, there is a raft of different bins to collect the different waste streams for recycling. During festivals staff are instructed to separate waste in different colour coded bags.

The client has also designed a new menu flyer that is single sided so that the back can be used as a shopping list.

Sustainable transport:**Recommendation 1:**

Promote sustainable travel by including information about local bus and train routes in the premises and on the website. This could form part of an overall promotion on health and wellbeing.

Outcome:

The client has uploaded travel information to the website detailing bus and tram routes. The site is well serviced by public transport networks and the client has installed a bike rack outside.

Recommendation 2:

During events, why not hold workshops based around food miles from field to fork to grow awareness with customers on how important it is to shop local and support the local economy?

Outcome:

In the summer many local allotment holders bring in their grown produce to compliment the dishes. The Tibetan Kitchen is planning to run a series of cooking classes, aimed at parents of young children, who also have allotments. This is to teach recipes, using locally grown food, and will run from the summer to the autumn of 2016.

Recommendation 3:

If you're looking to buy more vans for the festival/events side of the business, be aware of the government's Plug-in Van Grant which can assist in the purchase of low-carbon vehicles. Grants totalling 20% of the value of a new electric (plug-in) car or van, up to a maximum of £8,000, are available towards the cost of eligible vehicles.

Outcome:

This information is being kept for future reference as at present the current year's budget cannot afford a new van

Recommendation 4:

Contact any long distance suppliers to assess what types of transport they use and whether it is possible to reduce the company's delivery footprint. To gauge a transport footprint, use the following questions:

- Do you have an environmental policy? What percentage of your fleet consists of electric vehicles or vehicles with modern, fuel-efficient engines?
- What training do drivers receive in minimising fuel consumption? Are vehicles fitted with fuel monitoring systems?
- Are delivery routes optimised to minimise mileage? Are trackers fitted to all vehicles to monitor the efficiency of routes travelled?

Outcome:

The client is in conversation with the nationwide wholesaler Booker on palm oil, and is also emailing questions to Booker to see what their stance is regarding sustainability and to provoke discussion.

Sustainable materials:

There are no recommendations.

Local and sustainable food:**Recommendation 1:**

Create a map of local suppliers, featuring food miles, to inform your customers of the food's provenance.

Outcome.

The client has designed a food map. There are plans to use a designer to turn this into a poster. Another option for the summer is to use the food map as a vehicle for creative education, employing a local artist or art student to create a pavement mural food map for the front of the shop.

Recommendation 2:

Continually assess your food sourcing approach in order to ensure that the most ethical and healthy purchases, embedding the smallest number of food miles, are preferred.

Outcome.

The client is in continuing discussion with wholesalers on more ethical alternatives to some products such as palm oil. The local food economy is continually growing and so new products and providers are coming into the market.

Sustainable water:**Recommendation 1:**

Keep a track of your billing data and water use to determine actual water use on a six monthly basis. It's best to track actual usage, as some bills are estimates, which can

be incorrect. Taking your own readings makes it easy to spot changes in consumption that might not be clear from price changes alone, and to measure improvements or irregularities. You might also be able to pinpoint areas where you could cut back.

Outcome:

The water is on a meter and regular readings are taken for the water company. The client also has the resource monitoring spreadsheet to record more regular meter readings.

Recommendation 2:

Consider adding tap aerators to the staff toilet. This will add air to the water flow to reduce the amount of water used. Check that the flow rates for the taps are fit for purpose to avoid push taps being set to run for too long. Visit AL Challis for water saving products for both bathrooms and kitchens.

Outcome:

The client is measuring the taps and sourcing aerators from eBay.

Recommendation 3:

If buying a dishwasher, look for products with the new water efficient product label – the Waterwise Marque – and the Energy Saving Recommended mark. These models can save water, energy and money.

Outcome:

The dishwasher is second hand and top of the range regarding resource efficiency.

Recommendation 4:

Consider twinning your toilet. Two and a half billion people don't have somewhere safe, clean and hygienic to go to the loo – more than a third of the people on the planet. By Twinning your toilet, you help those in desperate poverty to have access to a proper latrine, clean water and the information they need to be healthy. For just £60, you can twin your loo with a latrine halfway around the world, in a country of your choosing. Your donation is used by Tearfund to provide clean water, basic sanitation, and hygiene education. This vital combination works together to prevent the spread of disease. Children are healthier, and able to go to school while parents are well enough to work their land and grow enough food to feed their family. With better health, and more ability to earn a living, men and women discover the potential that lies within them to bring transformation.

Outcome:

The client has twinned the customer toilet with one in India. They have been sent a poster and framed picture that is on public display to educate customers.

Land use and wildlife:

Recommendation 1:

One in three mouthfuls of the food we eat is dependent on pollination at a time when a crisis is threatening the world's honey bees. Consider adopting a bee hive with the *British Beekeepers Association* and you will be supporting vital research into honey bee health, and education into good bee husbandry.

Outcome:

The client is supporting two local bee-related businesses. Three Bees Co-operative is a co-op that makes soaps and natural products and has hives in Chorlton. The Tibetan Kitchen sells the soaps at its Christmas market. Just Bee drinks also has hives in the local area and produces a honey infused spring water that is due to be sold nationwide.

Recommendation 2:

Consider making a bug hotel as an outdoor art feature. Bug hotels provide a place for insects to hibernate during the winter and also encourage insect pollination. More insects helps support UK song birds whose population has decreased by 70% and are a great food source for bats too. For inspirational design ideas have a look at Pinterest.

Outcome:

Once the building has been purchased there are plans to dig up the concrete outside and create an allotment and seating areas that have integrated bug hotels. Native flowering species that promote bees and bugs will also be planted.

Recommendation 3:

Consider installing bat boxes to the outside of the building. A single bat can capture 500 to 1,000 mosquitoes in a single hour, making customers more comfortable in the summer. They also play a key role in pollinating plants. See the Bat Conservation Trust for more information.

Outcome:

Nearby there is a conservation area and discussion has been had with a local ecologist on roost boxes and ways to further support urban biodiversity.

Equity and local economy:**Recommendation 1:**

Consider switching broadband and telephone networks to a more ethical provider. Ethical Consumer has a free buyer's guide for mobile phone networks and phone line providers.

Outcome:

The client has changed providers from BT to the Co-operative phone company.

Recommendation 2:

SMEs with a staff of fewer than 30 had to auto-enrol them into a pension plan by 1st January 2016. If The Tibetan Kitchen seeks to create a pension scheme for staff, consider operating an ethical pension or socially responsible investment scheme. This approach avoids supporting companies whose ethics are questionable and invests in those operating within a moral framework. For more information see Ethical Investors or Ethex.

Outcome:

The Tibetan Kitchen is researching ethical pension options due to two staff being full time. It has also received advice from local financial adviser, Gaia.

The Tibetan Kitchen has also joined the local TAG-pass-it-on loyalty card scheme, to promote local independent shops and eateries. The membership card can be used in local businesses to gain discounts. The client also stocks the card in the shop to help support the local economy in Chorlton and Didsbury.

Culture and heritage:**Recommendation 1:**

Consider hosting summer events such as a Big Lunch or Harvest Festival to aid community cohesion, raise awareness and encourage the community to grow healthy, sustainable food.

Outcome:

The client plans to do this as well as hosting seasonal parent cooking clubs.

Health and happiness:**Recommendation 1:**

Offer all staff the opportunity to participate in co-operative decision making processes. This will give employees a sense of having a stake in The Tibetan Kitchen's success, and of having their opinions valued, which can improve productivity and staff wellbeing.

Outcome:

The Tibetan Kitchen hosts staff away days and has also joined the Nationwide Caterers Association (NCASS). The Association has online courses and the client is offering all staff online CPD courses, such as food hygiene or gas safety.