

In response to a number of enquiries – particularly with reference to plastic packaging and the emerging 'NAKED' campaign – we have thoroughly investigated the position with regard to the products that we use in our production processes.

Firstly, we should point out that it is impossible to eradicate non-environmentally-friendly substances, products or processes either within our operation or indeed in the wider scope of our lives. But we can attempt to eliminate risk as far as possible.

Let's consider all of the options, not just unfriendly plastic.

1. **Print On Demand:** This is the process whereby we print when an order is confirmed and after payment has been made. This ensures that we **only** print what is required so that wastage is virtually non-existent. We print very locally to our Wiltshire distribution centre to keep transport costs to a minimum; delivery packaging is returned to the printer for reuse; we keep deliveries to the minimum possible whilst maintaining prompt service.

For the same reason – as well as for economic reasons – we are very careful to ensure that you have the most complete information as to how you organise, design and prepare your products for print so that we keep re-runs, reprints and so on to the absolute minimum. The new proofing tool will also eliminate third party interference in your publishing considerations which will considerably reduce communication costs.

2. **Digital Print Processes:** We use very specific print machines, engineered to provide the most ecologically sensitive processes possible. These are toner-based engines manufactured by Ricoh which means that the 'ink' is entirely recyclable along with its paper-based substrate without contamination. Inkjet products have to be recycled as cardboard, not paper.

All the **papers and card** that our printers use have been carefully sourced to ensure that they comply with the FSC - Forest Stewardship Council provisions. The logo is used to indicate that products are certified under the FSC system. When you see the FSC logo on a label, you can buy forest products with confidence that you are helping to ensure our forests are alive for generations to come.

3. **Consumables: Envelopes.** We believe that the cost and re-constitution processes involved in recycling paper into 'new' envelopes outweighs any gains that might be made in reusing these for consumer purchasing. In choosing virgin products, we try to ensure that our suppliers use Forestry certificated materials and that they are manufactured in the United Kingdom. We strongly dislike global importation of products locally available.
4. **Cellophane wrappers:** Though we would very much like to use only Plant –based, starch, or other 'natural' protectors the cost (multiplied more than three times) prohibits this at the present time. We have investigated the properties of the polypropylene cellos that we use and have established that they are recyclable to a limited extent in that they qualify for R5 marks and can be recycled and reused along with the 'newer' type soft 'plastic' drinks bottles at most recycling centres. Some kerb-side recoveries may accept them but this is a geographically local decision. Our cellos are susceptible to heat and will eventually break down in traditional landfill environments. Again, we try to ensure that these products are manufactured within the United Kingdom to cut down transport costs.
5. **Bubble Wrap:** We have been informed that the small bubble wrap bags that we use can be recycled alongside the standard supermarket bags both at those supermarkets that provide the facility and in recycling centres.

We have switched our buying to green (literally) biodegradable polyethylene polymer bubble wrap rolls which break down when exposed to heat and moisture in landfill and digested by microbes leaving behind no toxic residues. Some authorities prefer the use of polymers to the loss of valuable agricultural land in the production of PLA(plant/cellulose) based products.

6. **Packing Peanuts:** As I am sure most of you are aware now, the only peanuts we use are made of starch which dissolves as soon as it is exposed to water/damp. This gives us storage headaches but it is fun to watch the delivery drivers trying to find the 'lost' package when the back of his truck is wet in rainy weather!
7. **Cardboard packaging:** where we can and where pricing allows we buy recycled boxes. We **always** re-use boxes that we receive from whatever source. We buy in efficient quantities to reduce delivery costs and charges, to eliminate waste, and keep a tight control on storage.

We also prefer to use suppliers who are ethical and socially responsible employers; where possible we buy from employee-owned or family businesses as locally as we can and certainly within the UK.

There are always choices and decisions to be made. We do our best but we cannot be 100% 'clean' – and I defy anyone to say that they are in this world of hygiene, particularity and consumer driven economies. But we will maintain awareness of changes in production and material sources and – should commercial considerations/customer acceptance allow – will move towards greater ecological solutions where we can.

Lynda Harvey/Ian&Anne Lacey