

Sustainability - What's it all about?

Sustainable development: Finding ways of meeting the needs of the world today whilst helping to preserve the world for future generations.

People are becoming more and more aware of the world's decreasing resources and increase in carbon footprint due to pollution.

We can all improve how we live and become more sustainable and museums are no exception.

This leaflet provides you with an insight in to sustainable practices here at Chiltern Open Air Museum. We are constantly thinking of more ways we can be environmentally friendly and any suggestions are welcome.

Please send your suggestions via e-mail to:

hlfvisitor@coam.org.uk



Reduce, reuse, recycle



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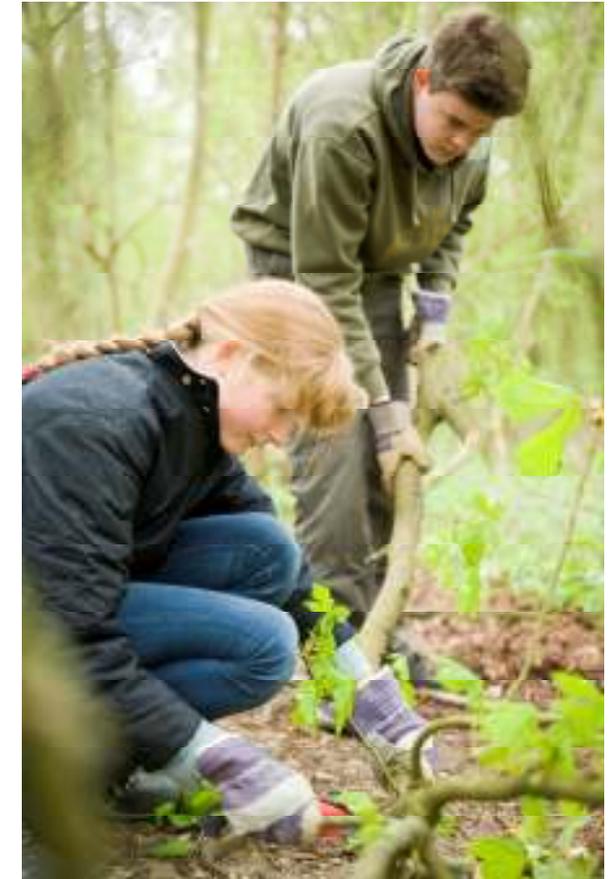
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Chiltern Open Air Museum Green Trail



Helping to create a more
sustainable future



**CHILTERN
OPEN AIR
MUSEUM**

*Where buildings come
alive through history*

A Sustainable Museum

1. Hedgerow Fencing

Hedge laying is a craft that has been practised for hundreds of years. This type of fencing is built by weaving the shoots of growing plants in front and behind wooden stakes- therefore it uses nothing but the material that is there. This essentially makes it a 'living fence' which is excellent for wildlife. Therefore we do not need to buy in materials or waste energy cutting down trees which makes it a sustainable type of fencing.



2. Barrel Bins

The recycling bins you see dotted around the site are in fact recycled themselves. The barrels are made of oak and were once used to store bourbon in the United States. After America, they are shipped to Scotland, filled with whiskey, emptied, then finally recycled again and turned in to these bins.

3. Prefab Allotments and Compost Heaps

Many foods you find in supermarkets are the product of an unsustainable food system and due to the transportation of these products our carbon footprint is significantly high. Growing your own food is one step towards a more sustainable lifestyle. It is organic and does not require any transportation.

In the field next to the Prefab we have an allotment and behind the Prefab you can explore a recreated typical 1940's garden where fruit and vegetables are grown to use in our Museum Tea Room.

Composting also contributes to a sustainable lifestyle and we have 4 compost heaps here. Compost heaps break down organic waste and when applied to the garden, it provides the soil with nutrients as well as helping to improve its structure.



4. Haddenham Croft Cottage

Haddenham is the most sustainable of all buildings at the Museum as it is made out of wychert; a building material native to Haddenham and its surrounding area in Buckinghamshire. Wychert is a mixture of decayed limestone, straw and water and can be used again and again. However to

build as well as maintain its structure, wychert must not become too dry as it will crumble, and if it becomes too wet it will not hold its shape.



5. Reed Bed Sewage System

At the Museum we have an effective and sustainable reed bed sewage system. The Common Reed (*Phragmites Australis*) has the ability to transfer oxygen from its leaves, down through its stem and roots in to the reed bed, where it encourages micro-organisms that digest the pollutants in the sewage to colonise in this area. If you use the Mid Site Loos the sewage flows through the reeds and the micro-organisms treat the sewage without the need for harsh chemicals.



6. Garston Forge

Our blacksmiths use the forge to make items for the Museum. For example, they have made fire pokers which you can see in the Toll House, door latches for some of the buildings including Leagrave Cottage, iron signage which hangs on many of our gates, and the lovely seat surrounding the lime tree on the Village Green.

7. Working Farm

We grow and make our own hay on site for animal feed. We have created traditional hay ricks which can be found in the farmyard behind Hill Farm Barn. These hay ricks are thatched in the winter for protection against harsh weather conditions such as strong wind, rain and snow.



Our animals also keep traditional and sustainable practices alive by providing manure as a fertiliser. This fertiliser adds valuable organic matter and microbes to the soil. And because it contains more Nitrogen and Potassium in it than Phosphorus it benefits a wide range of garden plants.

8. Woodland Walk - Coppicing

Coppicing is an ancient form of woodland management which takes advantage of the fact that trees make new growth from the stump when cut down. Coppicing creates an open woodland which allows light to reach the woodland floor, encouraging a wide range of fauna and flora.



9. Uses of Coppicing

Buildings – The hazel that has been coppiced has provided us with the material to make thatching spars and the ash obtained is used for the pole rafters for the structure of the Iron Age House roof.

Heating – Spend time getting warm in front of the fire in our buildings such as Leagrave Cottage, Haddenham Croft Cottage and the Toll House. The coppiced wood is used as fuel for these fires and they also help to preserve the buildings themselves.

Farm – The farm team at the Museum use the coppiced wood to build hurdles and repair cart and wagon shafts. The hurdles are made in the Bodger's Camp near Arborfield Barn and examples of our hurdles can be seen at the farm.