

# Sustainability Champions



No.31, Burford



FSC traceable papers and cards



Handmade wooden products

## The Phive

Zoe Duff, Founder

**A family-run business, The Phive seamlessly blend their passion for creative education with their desire to protect the planet. Founder, Zoe Duff, explains how they ensure sustainable practices flow through every aspect of their business.**

### **Tell us about the sustainability of your products**

"All of our products have multiple uses and many of our products are designed to last for generations.

"Our printing takes place in Witney, and we insist on sustainable practice for waste control, as well as only using FSC traceable papers and cards, biodegradable laminates and plant-based inks.

"Our packaging is handmade in Cornwall using sustainable practices, with offcut waste being donated to local primary schools for crafting, and our wooden products are handmade in Devon using sustainably grown and FSC traceable maple wood and plant-based inks.

"We re-use old packaging when sending out parcels and only buy plastic-free packaging and marketing materials."

### **Do you get comments from customers about your sustainability?**

"Lots of customers, both online and in our Burford Shop, love the fact that when they purchase from The Phive, we plant a tree locally at the Blue Cross Rehoming Centre in Burford. One customer recently commented 'It's like the cherry on top of all your other thoughtful and conscious decisions behind your brand, and I salute you. This stuff matters!'"

### **Are staff involved in your sustainability practices?**

"The Phive don't have any staff but the collective of businesses, who we share No.31, Burford with, all have the same mission to be as sustainable as possible."

### **What are your plans for the future?**

"I hope to expand my product range to include products that support teens and adults struggling with their literacy skills. We are also hoping to expand into new retail outlets alongside fellow sustainable

businesses following the model I created at No.31, Burford – our sustainably focused shop collective."

### **Is there anything you'd wish you'd known before you started your journey?**

"The Phive was started from a 'people and planet first' perspective as we want to one day be a B-Corp. I did find it embarrassing to be asking so many probing questions of my manufacturers but now I don't feel worried, I even ask for the ink specification forms and have them checked by a chemist!"

### **What advice would you give to businesses at the start of their sustainability journey?**

"Think about what is achievable for you right now. What small things can you do to help with the impact your business has on the planet? It's better to start small than not at all!"

"Research who you work with and make sure suppliers are also doing their bit, don't be

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A sustainably focused shop collective



Supporting literacy skills



Tree planting



Plastic-free packaging

## The Phive

continued

afraid to dig deep on this by requesting things like details about manufacturing processes and even who their suppliers are, the whole chain needs to be considered.

"Is there anything that you buy that can be bought locally? Remember, being sustainable is not always about the materials that something is made from, it's also about where it came from and how long it took to get here!"

"Have some future goals for the sustainability of your business. You might have products and practices in place that are not good for the planet, things that can't be changed straight away. Try to create a plan for changing these bigger things over time so that you feel like you are heading in the right direction."

"Understanding some of the larger programmes that you can be part of in the future such as gaining B-Corp status can provide you with a great road map for the future of your sustainability journey."

### Do you have any 'quick win' suggestions?

"Reusing packaging such as bubble wrap is better than throwing it away. Tell your customers that you are on a mission to reduce waste and that they might see some plastic packaging being reused."

"Look at reducing the amount of energy used within your space by shutting doors etc."

"Don't buy anything containing virgin plastic that cannot be reused for many years."

"If you have a workforce, think about how

you can encourage them to be more proactive for the environment and how you can provide for them more sustainably. Tiny things like not providing cups at the water fountain and encouraging the use of refillable bottles and coffee cups is an easy win!

"If you are a product-based business like The Phive, do an audit of how your products get made and see if there are any elements that can be changed to improve their impact on the planet."

"Join a scheme that gives back, such as a tree-planting scheme. We prefer local schemes for this so that you can be sure the money is going to the trees."

[www.thephive.com](http://www.thephive.com)

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