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# Modus Sustainability Policy (Full Version)

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**Our mission is simple. To create furniture of the highest standards in terms of design, quality and durability that enriches life today without compromising tomorrow.**

## A Sustainable Future

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We want to create the very best furniture without jeopardising the wellbeing of future generations. This means that we have clearly defined goals to ensure that our business practice respects environmental limits, avoids depletion of resources, promotes social justice and equality of opportunity and understands the interconnectedness of a healthy economy, society and environment. Every decision made now must be formulated with a clear understanding of its impact on the future.

## Responsible Manufacturing

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The wellbeing of our planet depends on sustainable business practice, and as a manufacturer we acknowledge the antagonism between industrial production and sustainability, and we understand the responsibility we bear for reducing consumption of energy, water and raw materials and minimising loss of habitat, biodiversity, production of waste and emissions. Because we manufacture in-house we have greater control over the environmental impact of our production activities and we are able to closely monitor this impact.

We are committed to preventing pollution of the watercourse, air and ground and to operating in a manner that is both concurrent with all current legislation and reaches beyond our legal requirements so that we are operating in a way that causes, not only the least harm, but also provides the greatest benefit.

## Intelligent Design

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We consider the design process to be an integral part of sustainable practice and see creativity and sustainability as inseparable. At the heart of the business is the belief that the best approach is a very carefully considered one. We do not manufacture short-lived, fashion inspired products with a transient value, a Modus product has an inherent longevity in terms of both aesthetic and function.

We work with a broad roster of both British and international designers, including well established names and emerging creative talent, all of whom are committed to a sustainable methodology. We believe that the design stage is the single most important stage for sustainable consideration and informs the product's carbon footprint, or embodied energy. Our goal is to embed sustainability in the design process, to promote the sustainable design credentials of each product and to use innovation and the power of design as a force for change.

## Circular Economy

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As much as possible we are working towards circular practice. In contrast to traditional linear practice (extraction of raw materials, production of goods, distribution, use and end of life), circular practice is inherently regenerative, minimal materials are used, and, having been recovered from closed loops, are kept in circulation without reducing their value. Products themselves are kept in use as long as possible, then, at the end of their lifespan, each component

is disassembled and re-used or recycled so that zero landfill is generated. Every Modus product has been designed with ease of repair or refurbishment in mind, replacement parts are available wherever possible and we offer a take back service that sees products rehomed, refurbished or remanufactured and given a new life.

We will always aim to use materials with the highest recycled content and well-established recycling streams, to design products with extremely long lifespans, using the most environmentally sensitive materials that will re-enter their respective loops at the end of their life. Wherever possible we will use renewable energy and our entire in-house production and operations are powered by renewable energy. Dematerialisation and decarbonisation are two key aims – we ask our designers to conceive a superior product using a minimum of resources.

## Case Study: The Milo Chair

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A product that has replacement parts designed-in can have its in-use life extended considerably. This is the case with the Milo chair by Simon Pengelly. The most vulnerable and least durable part of any piece of upholstery is the fabric cover itself. Milo has a padded, removable cover and contrasting zip. Once the upholstery cover reaches the end of its life, or a new interior scheme is being introduced, a replacement cover can be made which can simply be zipped on, vastly extending the life of the chair and creating an absolute minimum of resources to be recycled.

## Continuous Improvement

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In our quest for excellence, we will always seek the most sustainable way forward and continue to assess and modify our methods so that best practice can be achieved. Sustainability is a continual journey along which many incremental changes need to be made. The true environmental cost of a product is the sum of all its impacts throughout its lifecycle from cradle to grave. To this end, we aim to scrutinise and improve every aspect of a product, from the design and development stage, to material selection, the supply chain, production processes, administration, distribution and use right through to end of life, via a carefully considered life cycle analysis.

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This process of continuous improvement takes into account emerging innovative processes and practices in order to progress ever in a more sustainable direction. The entire supply chain is involved, requiring close collaboration and a shared responsibility between all concerned.

This commitment to an intelligent use of resources, minimising environmental impact and producing products of the highest quality with exceptionally long life cycles, is integrated into the company. A positive dialogue is actively encouraged and a team of Sustainability Ambassadors, representing each department, that champion our goals, is nurtured in every area of operations from production to sales, warehouse to administration. Employees are actively encouraged to put forward their own suggestions for sustainable practice so that even very small changes can be implemented, that will, over time, make a considerable difference. We believe that every individual has a part to play in promoting sustainability so that profit does not come at the expense of people or planet.

## Social Responsibility

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Above and beyond quantitative results that demonstrate improved environmental or social performance, we also value a qualitative approach that cannot be measured in numeric language but rather in more human terms such as charity involvement, relationships with clients, employees, and suppliers, recognising the needs of the local community and fostering positive engagement with all stakeholders. Modus seeks to make a positive contribution to society that forms part of its progressive legacy.

## Responsible Persons

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The board of directors has overall responsibility for ensuring that this policy is adhered to.

The Compliance Manager has day-to-day responsibility for implementing this policy, monitoring its use and effectiveness and auditing internal control systems and policies and procedures to ensure they are effective in preventing the risk of environmental pollution and minimising environmental harm. The Compliance Manager is also responsible for investigating claims of environmental pollution and for updating this policy to remain in line with legal obligations.

Line Managers are responsible for ensuring that those reporting to them understand and comply with this policy.

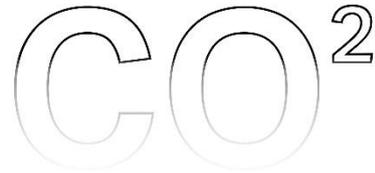
The Sustainability Coordinator is responsible for reviewing and updating this policy in line with current changes to socio-environmental issues and company progress.

We have set out a seven point plan to help us with our mission that sets out our goals and how we will try to achieve them.

**We have set out a seven point plan to help us with our mission that sets out our goals and targets and how we will try to achieve them.**

**We aim to keep our energy use and CO2 emissions to an absolute minimum, making reductions whenever and wherever we can**

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We understand that the single most important environmental consideration for any business practice is the de-coupling of CO2 emissions from growth. To help keep our CO2 emissions as low as possible, our HQ, our London showroom and all our production facilities and warehousing now draw 100% of their electricity from renewable sources including a local solar array. This transition to 100% renewables is something of which we are very proud.<sup>1</sup>

We try to keep our furniture miles to a minimum by opting for local suppliers whenever possible: 82% of our suppliers are based in the UK and 17% in Europe with just 1% coming from outside Europe. We carefully manage distribution schedules, keeping all warehousing as close to production as possible and ensuring products can be flat packed and nested wherever possible. We have clear incentives to encourage staff to cycle to work and car share. Our showroom staff all cycle to work, drive electric vehicles or use public transport.

We have a clear energy efficiency programme that helps our staff keep our energy use as low as possible with a wood pellet boiler to heat the factory and HQ, speed doors at all production entrances and between facilities to keep in the heat, and architect designed glazing with overhang and natural ventilation to keep us cool. All light bulbs are low energy bulbs, monitors have timers and led desk lamps adjust to ambient light levels, even our website uses a hosting service that is powered by 100% renewable energy.<sup>2</sup>

Although we are fully powered by renewables and do everything we can to drive down emissions, we are yet to transition to an electric fleet and sometimes we need to fly, drive or travel by train, for this reason, we have chosen to offset these carbon emissions. We know offsetting is a contentious issue but we have chosen to mitigate the emissions that we have yet been unable to eradicate with UK based tree planting projects that are paired with Verified Carbon Standard (VCS) offsets. For every tree planted in South West England, one tonne of carbon is saved via REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation) projects in Brazil, protecting Amazonian forest habitat and bringing additional social benefits to the local community. All offsets meet BSI's PAS2060 specification on carbon neutrality.

We carefully monitor and calculate our emissions with the help of Carbon Footprint and we are Carbon Neutral to the PAS 2060 Carbon Neutrality standard. Becoming Carbon Neutral does not mean we will rest on our laurels or polish our halos, it will push us to continue to work to cut carbon in every area of our operations. We believe that by supporting tree planting projects and deforestation prevention projects we can help rebuild the forests that are vital to combat our climate crisis.

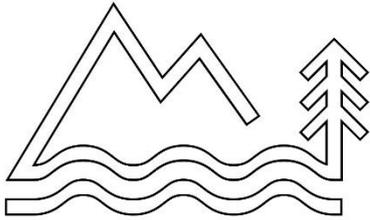
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# Modus Sustainability Policy (Full Version)

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## We will always avoid depletion of habitat and resources

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We shun the superfluous or frivolous, preferring instead, classic products that are designed to last and that are crafted from a minimum of raw materials. In addition to longevity of design, quality of finish and environmental considerations, materials and finishes are chosen for their ease of maintenance and durability.

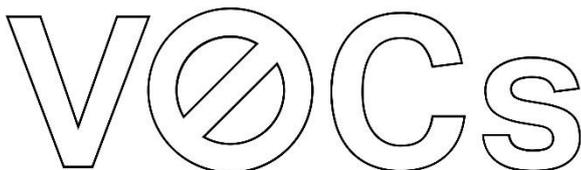
In order to protect our precious forests and the biodiversity they support we aim to buy only FSC certified timber and board, FSC certified or recycled cardboard and FSC certified and recycled paper. We have FSC Chain of Custody which means that we are able to sell products with FSC certification, within our collection, 67.5% is available with certification and we are working on the remainder.

We choose materials with the highest possible recycled content and well-established recycling streams so that we can use closed loop systems wherever possible. Our cork stools and tables are manufactured using 95% recycled material. We give preference to fabrics that have been created from rapidly renewable materials with lower water demands such as flax, nettle or hemp or those that have been created from post-consumer waste.

The fabulous grounds of our HQ and production site have been developed to ensure maximum biodiversity including the planting of many pollinator attracting varieties, a wildflower bank and the retention of wild spaces. We do not use pesticides or artificial fertilisers but instead opt for organic alternatives, we even make our own compost. Hand scything the wildflower bank avoids the use of mechanical mowers (and their associated CO2 emissions) and destruction of species and helps keep traditional, rural methods alive.

## We limit and avoid the use of potentially harmful substances and the creation of emissions

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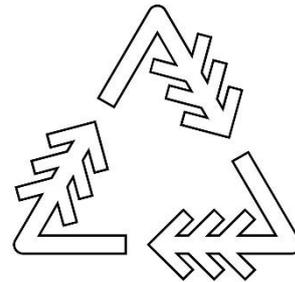


Due to their impact on climate change<sup>3</sup>, environmental pollution and human health, we try to keep to an absolute minimum, our use of products containing any volatile organic compounds (VOCs) or potentially toxic substances, we use CertiPUR certified foam<sup>4</sup> on all sofas and easy chairs, and give preference to board product with the lowest emissions<sup>5</sup>, naturally flame retardant fabrics and naturally dyed fabrics and hides. Our cork products are bound with a solvent

free binder, we have phased out all GRP and we are almost there with chromium plating, having moved to a much less environmentally damaging powder coat alternative. We will always opt for the least harmful material, process and finish to help protect indoor air quality, people and planet.

## We aim to create an absolute minimum of waste

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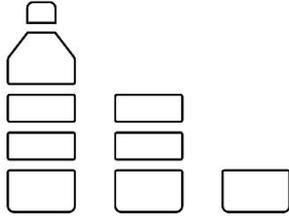
First and foremost, we design products to last, a Modus product is durable and timeless. If a component becomes broken we offer replacement parts wherever possible. Several of our ranges can be refurbished with new components; table tops, upholstery covers or bases, to extend their life in use multiple times. Once a product reaches the end of its life it can be returned to us via our take back system for re-homing, refurbishment or remanufacture: We will reclaim the value from every single part and give the product a new life. We always design for ease of disassembly so that individual materials may be separated for recycling or composting and return to their respective material cycle.

We have clearly identified recycling streams for everything that can be reused or recycled. Sample furniture pieces, prototypes and ex display items are donated to local schools and community groups. We donate fabric and leather scrap to local schools and colleges where our waste is put to great use in Art and Design classes. A wide range of packaging components including strapping, net and used reels go to a local organisation that provides training opportunities for young adults with learning difficulties and gives access to art and craft materials to local schools, care homes, colleges and creative groups. All timber waste is either donated to local schools or recycled less than a mile from our site. All foam remnants are collected for recycling into chip foam. We have carefully nested cutting procedures for CNC board and digital fabric cutting so as to minimise waste and we carefully monitor any upstream waste that is unable to be recycled or re-used so that we can take steps to phase out any waste with no recycling stream. We work with a waste management partner that enables us to send nothing to landfill.

Where deliveries are made direct to site using our own fleet of vehicles we can offer a packaging take back service and in many cases we can deliver packaging free using our made to measure, reusable quilts. Wherever we can we minimise materials so that the fewest resources are used and the least waste is created.

# Modus Sustainability Policy (Full Version)

## We aim to keep our plastic footprint to an absolute minimum

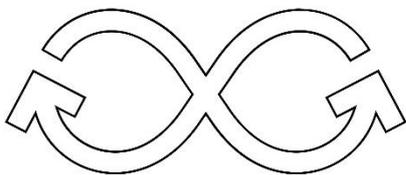


Due to its accumulation in the natural environment, its toxicity and its non renewable status, we try to keep our plastic footprint as small as possible, opting for renewable materials wherever we can. Where we do use plastic our aim is to favour recycled plastic, to keep single use plastics and virgin plastic use to an absolute minimum and to reuse or recycle everything we possibly can.

We have overhauled our packaging to reflect this commitment, swapping plastic tape to paper tape, foam corners and edging to paper-based alternatives, trialing bio-based home compostable polymers in place of plastic bags and replacing pallet wrap with recycled plastic strapping. We haven't quite got there yet but we are working towards replacing all single use petrochemical based packaging products and replacing them with bio based, compostable alternatives, our goal is to use entirely recyclable and renewable packaging materials and we are working with our suppliers to phase out plastic packaging further up the supply chain.

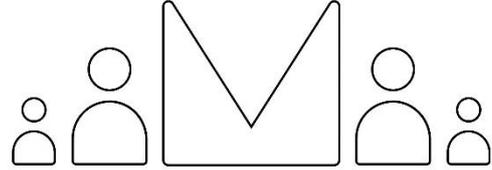
Our moulded foam products use substantially less plastic than traditional upholstery methods and produce no waste. Any offcuts of foam produced by traditional methods are collected for reuse so that every scrap is diverted from landfill. Our canteen has no single use plastics, and never has, no plastic cups, plates, cutlery, straws or plastic lined paper cups are used. We use reusable containers for food storage and all staff are provided with refillable water bottles and fabric shopping bags. Our environmentally friendly cleaning products are refillable and we use pens made with recycled paper barrels, because every incremental change means less plastic in the marine and terrestrial environments.

## We think carefully about from whom and where we buy



We look beyond price and quality to the wider, whole cost implications of procurement. Wherever possible we will buy locally. We have clear procurement policies in line with the Ethical Trading Initiative <sup>6</sup>, and the UN Global Compact <sup>7</sup>, to ensure that no one along the supply chain has been exploited.

## We have a positive impact on the local community and on society as a whole



Our staff are our greatest asset and the people whose lives we can affect most directly so we like to reflect this in the way we work, this means that our team of employees enjoy enhanced benefits such as extended holiday for those who have been with us for three years or more, family friendly employment, flexible working, generous staff discounts on our products and a comprehensive wellbeing package. All staff are paid, as a minimum, the real Living Wage as per the living wage foundation's recommendation and we are proud to be an accredited Living Wage Employer<sup>8</sup>.

We carefully consider how our business practice can benefit our local community and we have close links with several local schools and colleges, providing work experience placements, apprenticeships, and donating materials so that creativity can thrive. We provide paid internships and many of our former interns have returned to work with us. We donate fabric, timber and leather to the Art departments of several local schools and colleges and have links with a local arts organisation that gives artists access to our fabric scrap. We sponsor local teams, clubs and Young Enterprise schemes. We encourage our staff to take part in one big annual charity event and we sponsor the work of various charities including Maggie's <sup>9</sup>, Hope for Children <sup>10</sup>, The Stephen Lawrence Charitable Trust <sup>11</sup> Southwark Tigers <sup>12</sup> and Movement On The Ground <sup>13</sup>. Our Bob stools directly support the work of Movement On The Ground, providing displaced individuals with the basics we all need to survive.

## Case Study: The Bob Stool



The Bob stool (formerly known as Casper) is linked to the foundation Movement On The Ground, whose work supports refugees at the forefront of the European crisis. 10% of the profits from the sale of every stool goes directly to Movement On The Ground and for the past few years we have run projects to raise funds for this cause. In 2015, the

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# Modus Sustainability Policy (Full Version)

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Where's Casper? Project saw 15 one-off stools auctioned for Movement On The Ground and in 2016 the Who's Casper? Project saw 15 leading creatives customise a stool before each was sold in an online auction. The money raised from the sale of these stools was used to fund outdoor shelters and support the 'Just Giving' food truck that provides hot meals to individuals at the forefront of the European refugee crisis.

The Who's Casper? Instagram competition, which ran alongside this project, encouraged over 50 students to submit their designs for the Casper stool and one year 3 student from a London Primary School won an original Casper stool. We are proud to encourage the creativity of young minds.

## Case Study: Southwark Tigers

We have supported Southwark Tigers 12 since 2015. Southwark Tigers is a community rugby team and charity that assists young people in one of London's most deprived inner city areas. Through rugby, Southwark Tigers aims to provide children with structure, discipline, community, exercise and fun. We have funded tours, allowing Southwark Tigers to participate in the world's largest youth rugby tournaments and compete against the largest and most established clubs in the country. We have also donated essential kit and equipment, as well as Sales Director, Ed's time spent coaching the team 8.

**We follow a detailed internal Environmental Management System and we are independently audited on an annual basis. We are a proud member of the FISP, the Furniture Industry Sustainability Programme.**



**This Sustainability Policy is due for review on the 1<sup>st</sup> of June 2020 and thereafter annually.**

Signed:

Date: 1<sup>st</sup> June 2019

**Jon Powell**  
**Managing Director**  
(on behalf of the board of directors)

## References

1. Our energy is supplied by a local solar array and by Good Energy who follow a strict procurement policy and source all electricity from UK based solar power, wind power, hydroelectric power and biofuels that have been grown in areas without food shortages and without the loss of natural habitat or reduction of biodiversity. Gas emissions are balanced via verified carbon reduction programmes that support local communities in Nepal, Vietnam and Malawi. <https://www.goodenergy.co.uk/our-energy/>
2. <https://www.kualo.co.uk/webhosting/green-web-hosting>
3. <http://www.currentscience.ac.in/Volumes/102/12/1645.pdf>
4. All foam for our sofas and easy chairs is made from CertiPUR certified foam which contains no heavy metals, no formaldehyde, no PBDE, TDCPP, TCEP or 'Tris' flame retardants, no PCB, no phthalates, no vinyl chloride and has TVOC emissions of less than 0.5 parts per million.
5. We use E1 formaldehyde class boards as standard, these boards will ensure a product's compatibility with environmental assessment criteria regarding indoor air quality in assessments such as WELL, BREEAM and LEED. We can also supply many products with boards that are standards (which are stricter than European E1 formaldehyde class and permit < 0.5ppm) POA.
6. <http://www.ethicaltrade.org>
7. <https://www.unglobalcompact.org/what-is-gc/mission/principles>
8. <https://www.livingwage.org.uk/accredited-living-wage-employers>
9. <https://www.maggiescentres.org>
10. <https://www.hope-for-children.org>
11. <http://www.stephenlawrence.org.uk/architecture/>
12. <http://www.southwarktigers.com>
13. <http://movementontheground.com>