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**Sustain**  
Environmental Management

**bhc furniture**  
plan - manage - install

# FURNITURE RECYCLING



**RECYCLE - SAVE YOUR MONEY  
AND VALUABLE RESOURCES.**

# FURNITURE RECYCLING PROCESS.



Landfill tax is increasing on an annual basis, so disposing of your waste is going to cost you even more in the future, as well as having a negative perception with your customers.

By continually throwing office furniture away we are harming the environment, wasting valuable materials and wasting money.

Office furniture is typically made up of five different types of materials which can all be recycled with a bit of effort: Woods, metals, plastics, fabrics and foams.

The Senator Group has been manufacturing office furniture for over 30 years so we have a good idea of what is in your furniture and also the best ways of disassembling and recycling each of these materials.



## Wood

Each different type of board (Melamine Faced Chipboard, Medium Density Fibreboard or pure timber), is recycled in several different ways.

Around 50% of the wood recycled is typically used in a large Biomass Boiler in the North East to generate green energy or as a source of fuel for Biomass Boilers in larger Hospitals around the UK.

Approximately 15% of the recycled board is hogged then shredded and used for animal bedding.

The remaining 35% is used in the manufacture of new board panels, creating a closed loop recycling system for desk tops.

## Metals

Metal in the furniture is separated from the other materials using handheld power tools. The main two metals used in office furniture are Aluminium and Steel, both of these metals can be recycled many times, and so it's very important that none are thrown to landfill.

Sustain also has a bespoke gas strut decommissioning machine, which converts the gas stem in a chair into an inert lump of steel, with the gas being safely released.



## Plastics

Office furniture will usually be of the following polymers: PVC, Polypropylene, Polystyrene, Nylon and Polyurethane.

All the different plastics are removed from the furniture, their polymer identified and then segregated accordingly. All hard plastics are granulated and turned into plastics granules or pellets. These granules can then be extruded into a variety of new products, including components for new office furniture.

## Packaging

Sustain also recycles all forms of packaging used within the furniture industry, including cardboard, paper, novafoam, shrink wrap, bubble wrap, stretch wrap and expanded polystyrene. For more information on this please contact Sustain on the contact details on the next page.



## Fabric

All fabric on chairs, sofas and screens is segregated depending on whether it is natural or synthetic fibres. The fabric is stripped from the furniture, cleaned if necessary and then baled together with clean production waste fabric from Senator's Seating factory.

It will be used as packaging material, animal bedding, mattress filling, carpet underlay or sometimes even the filling material inside boxing punch bags. In this way each year, despite fabric being very light, Sustain recycles around 50 tonnes of fabric.

## Foam

Contrary to popular belief, the foam on seating, sofas and some screens can be recycled. The foam from redundant furniture is stripped from the other materials, cleaned if necessary and then baled. This foam is then shredded, glued and pressed and turned into carpet underlay.

In this way, each year - despite it being relatively light - Senator recycles over 25 tonnes of foam.

