



# BRIGHTON PEACE & ENVIRONMENT CENTRE

## CLOTHING AND FOOTWEAR

With the growth of really cheap stores such as Primark, we're buying more clothes and shoes than ever before. The changing nature of fashion makes it ultimately unsustainable and until the day that it becomes unfashionable to be fashionable, we need to make some smart choices. As with all shopping, ask yourself "Do I really need this?" and ideally, buy fewer, but better quality textiles which will last longer. Also look for fairly traded textiles. You can calculate the environmental impact of your clothing by visiting [www.ecotextile.com](http://www.ecotextile.com).

### Clothing

*Labour Behind the Label's* report "Let's Clean Up Fashion" found that none of the major high street clothing retailers paid their workers a living wage. Visit [www.cleanupfashion.co.uk](http://www.cleanupfashion.co.uk) to see this very interesting report.

To limit the environmental impact your choice of clothing has, avoid 'easy care', 'non iron' and 'crease-resistant' fabrics, as they tend to have been treated with formaldehyde and other toxic chemicals. Ordinary dry cleaning also uses environmentally-unfriendly chemicals, so use a dry cleaner that uses **Green Earth** cleaners such as **Johnson Cleaners**, 141 Western Road, Brighton, Tel: 01273 323554.

### Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

Hold a Clothes Swap. This can be as simple as inviting your friends around and asking them to bring their unwanted clothing. **Swapo-rama-rama** has information to help you set up a public clothes swap at [www.swaporamarama.org](http://www.swaporamarama.org). You can try swapping online - offer your unwanted clothing and other items, and ask for items you do want by joining Freecycle at [www.freecycle.org.uk](http://www.freecycle.org.uk).

Repair your clothes. Do it yourself, ask a handy friend, or take a course in dressmaking or alterations at **Brighton and Hove City College**, Connaught Road, Tel: 01273 736491.

If you are short on time, or not too nifty with a sewing machine, then take your repairs and alterations to a professional:

- **A C Alterations**, 24 North Street, Tel: 01273 677688

- **Express Repairs & Alterations**, 37 Blatchington Road, Tel: 01273 763945
- Hire clothes for special occasions from: [www.walk-in-wardrobe.co.uk](http://www.walk-in-wardrobe.co.uk) or [www.youngs-hire.co.uk](http://www.youngs-hire.co.uk).

### Secondhand and Recycled Clothing

All charity shops and jumble sales sell recycled clothing. There are many secondhand and vintage clothing shops in Brighton, especially around North Laine. **Traid** (Textile Recycling for Aid and International Development) - 39 Duke Street, Brighton, and **Red Mutha** - 92 Trafalgar Street, Brighton, make clothes from recycled textiles.

### Hemp Clothing

Consider hemp clothing as an alternative to familiar fabrics. Growing hemp requires far less water and pesticides than cotton, making it a more eco-friendly material.

### Retailers that Sell Hemp Clothing

- **Conscious Clothing Brighton** - [www.conscious-clothing-brighton.co.uk](http://www.conscious-clothing-brighton.co.uk) and **The Natural Store** - [www.thenaturalstore.co.uk](http://www.thenaturalstore.co.uk) sell hemp, bamboo and organic cotton clothing
- **Greenwich Village Market**, 18 Bond Street, Brighton has some **Braintree** Hemp clothing.
- **The Hemp Shop Ltd** - [www.thehempshop.co.uk](http://www.thehempshop.co.uk)
- **Inbi Hemp** - [www.inbi-hemp.co.uk](http://www.inbi-hemp.co.uk)
- **The Hemp Trading Company** - [www.thtc.co.uk](http://www.thtc.co.uk)



Photo courtesy of Judyth Greenburgh



## Retailers that Sell Fair Trade and Organic

- **Debenhams** (some of the John Rocha brand), **H&M**, **M&S**, **New Look**, **Next** and **Zara** have a very limited range of organic cotton clothing. However, often, when they sell out, they do not immediately replace them
- **M&S** sells the **Greenpac fleece** which is made completely from recycled plastic bottles
- **Love That Stuff** - [www.lovethatstuff.co.uk](http://www.lovethatstuff.co.uk), hold a stall every third Saturday of the month at the *Fairtrade Fair & Farmers' Market, The Friends' Meeting House, Ship Street, Brighton*
- **Gossypium** - [www.gossypium.co.uk](http://www.gossypium.co.uk)
- **Natural Collection** - [www.naturalcollection.com](http://www.naturalcollection.com)
- **People Tree** - [www.peopletree.co.uk](http://www.peopletree.co.uk)
- **Traidcraft** - [www.traidcraft.co.uk](http://www.traidcraft.co.uk)

## How Can You Tell if it's Fair Trade?



There are two main authenticating bodies: the **Fairtrade Foundation** (with its Fairtrade logo displayed on products), and the **International Fair Trade Association (IFAT)**.

**Traidcraft** is a fair trade organisation which existed before the Fairtrade Mark. If you are unsure whether an unlabelled fair trade product is legitimate, ask the

retailer if it comes from an **IFAT** approved supplier or whether the shop is a member of the **British Association for Fair Trade Shops (BAFTS)**.

## School Uniforms

*Ethical Consumer's* top rating goes to **Clean Slate**, which sells fair trade, organic cotton school uniforms. They do not use any 'easy care' chemical finishes or optical brighteners - [www.cleanslateclothing.co.uk](http://www.cleanslateclothing.co.uk).

Of the high street stores, *Ethical Consumer* recommends **M&S** or **Next**, although neither company is free of criticism.

## Jeans

**Ascension jeans** are Fairtrade-certified and use non-toxic bleach-free dyes. They came top in *Ethiscore's* ethical urban fashion study - [www.ascensionclothing.co.uk](http://www.ascensionclothing.co.uk).

The best recommended jeans by *Ethical Consumer* are:

- **Hug** - [www.hug.co.uk](http://www.hug.co.uk)
- **Kuyichi** - available at *Badger, 25 Bond Street, Brighton*
- **Greenfibres** - [www.greenfibres.com](http://www.greenfibres.com)
- **Debenhams** (some of the John Rocha brand), **M&S** and **New Look** now stock some organic cotton jeans - but bear in mind their labour-abuse records

## Footwear

You can send in your old jeans and have them made into sandals for you! Visit [www.recycleyourjeans.com](http://www.recycleyourjeans.com).

Currently, of the major trainer brands surveyed by *Ethical Consumer*, not one has committed to paying workers a living wage. For sports trainers they suggest looking at **ASICS**, **Brooks** and **Gola**. For fashion trainers they recommend:

- **Vegetarian Shoes** - [www.vegshoes.com](http://www.vegshoes.com)
- **Ethletic** - [www.ethletic.com](http://www.ethletic.com)
- **No Sweat** baseball boots - [www.earthandwear.com](http://www.earthandwear.com)
- **Worn Again** - [www.wornagain.co.uk](http://www.wornagain.co.uk) which can be purchased at *Narcist, 39B Sydney Street, Brighton*
- **Blackspot Sneakers** - [www.blackspotsneaker.org](http://www.blackspotsneaker.org).

Also have a look at:

- **The Natural Store** sell vegetable-dyed and vegan shoes - [www.thenaturalstore.co.uk](http://www.thenaturalstore.co.uk)
- **Conscious Clothing Brighton** sell hemp trainers - [www.conscious-clothing-brighton.co.uk](http://www.conscious-clothing-brighton.co.uk)
- Fair trade trainers made with sustainably-tapped natural rubber are available from [www.fairdealtrading.com](http://www.fairdealtrading.com)
- **Simple Shoes** are made from PET, bamboo, organic cotton, recycled car tyres, crepe, jute, cork and water-based glue - [www.simpleshoes.com](http://www.simpleshoes.com)

In Brighton, **Vegetarian Shoes**, *12 Gardner Street*, as well as selling their own footwear, also sell **Blackspot Sneakers** and **No Sweat** footwear.

## What you can do right now.....

Go through your wardrobe and make outfits from the 80% of your clothes that you don't normally wear. Put on your favourite and wait for the compliments!

## Resources & Further Information

'A Life Stripped Bare' by Leo Hickman  
Eden Project Books, 2005

'Green Living' by Sarah Callard & Diane Millis  
Carlton Books Ltd, 2001

'Green Living for Dummies' by Liz Barclay & Michael Grosvenor - John Wiley & Sons, 2007

'The Good Shopping Guide'  
Ethical Marketing Group, 2006

'The New Green Consumer Guide' by Julia Hailes  
Simon & Schuster, 2007

'The Rough Guide to Ethical Living' by Duncan Clark  
Penguin Books Ltd, 2006

[www.ethiscore.org](http://www.ethiscore.org)