



SUZANNE HOWE
COMMUNICATIONS



Our expertise in *Sustainability*

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suzannehowe.com



“Our clients value our broad thinking and our experienced hand-picked team of experts.”

Founded by experienced PR professional Suzanne Howe in 1996, Suzanne Howe Communications (SHC) is widely recognised as a specialist trade PR and marketing agency.

SHC operates in four main sectors – food, packaging, cleaning and FM. The talented SHC team also has experience in sustainability communications.

SHC includes a hand-picked team of professionals delivering PR, social media management, marketing strategy and content generation.

Clients have direct access to its combined knowledge and skills, and can be assured that the senior team give business direction and support at the level clients require.

SHC works with experienced marketing partners, offering clients integrated and creative PR and marketing campaigns, website design, exhibitions and digital marketing.

How can SHC benefit your business?

Positive impact

SHC is motivated by excellence, enthusiasm and broad thinking. Working in partnership with clients, SHC creates solutions which have a positive impact on a business.

Relationships with the media

SHC specialises in the food, packaging, cleaning and FM industries and has developed a wealth of experience and has unrivalled relationships with key trade and consumer media.

Experienced consultants

The business model for SHC is based around using only experienced consultants, including journalists, PR consultants and social media specialists.

The team has many years of experience across its key sectors, working for clients such as Kimberly-Clark Professional, Cleanology, Fenton Packaging Solutions, Truvox International, Cleenol Group and Natural Selection Foods.

In-depth knowledge

SHC constantly researches each industry we serve, monitoring trends, innovations and legislation.

Campaign planning

The SHC campaign planning process includes setting a communications strategy, objectives and tactics that aim to support business and marketing objectives.

Coverage reporting

SHC provides regular coverage reporting in co-operation with Ace Media, measuring audience reach across print and digital, domain authority, and brand mentions.

Account management

SHC has an account management process that ensures a planned and measured activity calendar with regular strategy reviews and evaluations of activity.



PR



SOCIAL
MEDIA



EVENTS



DIGITAL
MARKETING



DESIGN

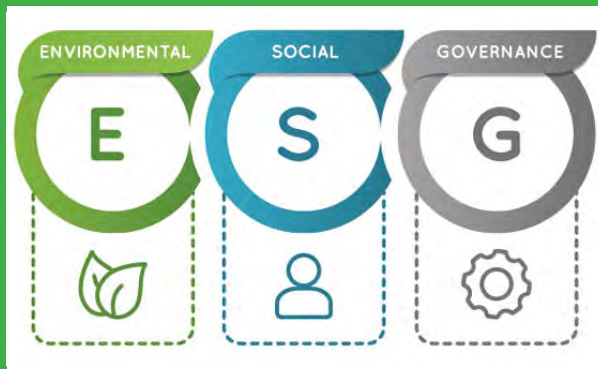


PHOTOGRAPHY

Key Trends

To ensure we always offer up-to-date and accurate advice, SHC constantly researches news feeds for each industry we serve.

We regularly monitor and report on trends, innovations and legislation via regular bulletins which are shared with our clients.



**REDUCE
REUSE
RECYCLE**



Mantras and legislation

The sustainability agenda is evolving rapidly, with suppliers to all industries innovating to meet ever more stringent legislation and increasingly well-informed consumers, who are demanding products and services which minimise harm to, or have a positive effect on the environment and people.

According to the Chartered Institute of Marketing, 80% of consumers want more sustainable packaging, and there has been a proliferation of products, services and businesses which claim to meet that demand.

Reduce, reuse, recycle

Several mantras now apply, such as **'Consume less to live more'**, and **'There is no planet B'**, but **'Reduce, Reuse, Recycle'** is perhaps quoted most frequently.

Recycling is often cited as *'the'* solution, but in reality, with ineffective and widely variable collection infrastructures, the most effective solution would be to produce less in the first place. This is particularly true for packaging where other end-of-life solutions such as compostable materials gain the headlines.

Climate change

The effects of climate change are clear and governments and NGOs are working towards solutions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

In 2015, the historic Paris Agreement set out to substantially reduce global greenhouse gas emissions to limit the global temperature increase in this century to 2°C while pursuing efforts to limit the increase even further to 1.5°. COP26 saw the Glasgow Climate Pact aiming to turn the 2020s into a decade of climate action and support. Nations collectively agreed to work to reduce the gap between existing emission reduction plans and what is required to reduce emissions, so that the rise in the global average temperature can be limited to 1.5°.

Plastic?

High-impact images of plastic waste in the oceans have created a backlash against the packaging material. It is estimated that globally, only around 30% of plastic is actually downcycled while the rest goes to landfill or ends up in the oceans.

There are numerous organisations putting the issue under the spotlight and many are actively involved in working towards solutions. These





include: The Alliance to End Plastic Waste; City to Sea; and Plastic Bank, where the aim is to give 'waste' value.

As a result of the demonisation of plastic, there is a steady move towards finding alternative packaging materials and making plastic packaging – which can protect food and therefore reduce food waste – from recycled materials. But these are often in short supply. Legislation is attempting to influence and change behaviours to reduce the 'plastic problem', from the EU's **Single-use plastic directive** (SUPD), to plastic bans, and plastic taxes.

For producers this creates all manner of issues, but to those we need to add: Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR); Waste from Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) legalisation; and the expansion of Deposit Return Schemes (DRS).

Going circular

There is pressure from organisations such as the Ellen MacArthur Foundation to work as quickly as possible towards a circular economy – a model of production and consumption, which involves sharing, leasing, reusing, repairing, refurbishing and recycling existing materials and products as long as possible. In this way, the life cycle of products is extended, while reducing waste.



For the biggest picture, look no further than the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals which were launched in 2015 and designed to be a “blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all”. They are intended to be achieved by 2030. The 17 goals can be reorganised into the relatively new principle of ESG – **Environmental Social Governance**.

ESG criteria are increasingly used to screen investments based on corporate policies and to encourage companies to act responsibly. The EU Sustainable Finance Disclosure Regulation (SFDR) is a set of EU rules which aim to make the sustainability profile of funds more comparable and better understood by end-investors.

Another project with a 2030 deadline is the **European Green Deal**, a set of proposals to make the EU's climate, energy, transport and taxation policies fit for reducing net GHG emissions by at least 55% by 2030, compared to 1990 levels.

Carbon neutral?

Carbon offsetting has become commonplace and many companies are seeking Carbon Neutral status. Carbon offsetting is a way of reducing emissions or absorbing CO2 to compensate for a company's own emissions, but it's worth noting

that Greenpeace says: “Companies love talking about carbon offsetting. But to be serious about tackling climate change, they need to stop carbon emissions from getting into the atmosphere in the first place.”

Technology

For those managing premises, the rapidly rising cost of energy has led to increased interest in renewable energy, from thermal to solar and wind, while smart technologies such as energy efficient lighting are now a must.

Fleet managers are moving over to hybrid and electric, but for long distance hauliers, range remains an issue and there is renewed interest in hydrogen and biofuels.

New challenges

The risks posed by man-made “forever chemicals” called PFAS are becoming well known and a 2024 survey by Sapio Research, conducted on behalf of SHC’s client Celebration Packaging, found that the vast majority (80%) of consumers are not familiar with them and when informed about PFAS, some 96% of respondents stated they were concerned about the potential dangers forever chemicals pose.



Mind your language

In marketing sustainable products and solutions, there is the ever-present danger of greenwashing, and businesses and brand owners need to be very careful. In the UK, the Competition and Markets Authority has issued guidance to help businesses comply with their consumer protection law obligations.

SHC works with its clients to ensure that any claims made are truthful, accurate, clear and unambiguous. Where possible, claims must consider the full life cycle of the product or service, must be fair and meaningful, and must be substantiated.

Celebration Packaging’s white bagasse takeaway clamshells, dinnerware and chip trays are now both TÜV Home Compostable certified and are confirmed as PFAS-free by SGS.



Case Study

For many years, Suzanne Howe Communications (SHC) has helped leading London-based commercial and office cleaning company Cleanology to tell its wide-ranging and ever-evolving sustainability story.

The journey begins in 2016, with Cleanology's entry into the market with Europe's first pre-portioned biotechnology sachet solution, before moving on to using uniforms made from recycled plastic bottles, a fleet of electric vehicles, support for The Hygiene Bank, and commitment to fair pay with the Living Wage Foundation.



Goals and achievements

Key goals and achievements that SHC has communicated to the media have been:

2016 saw Cleanology's entry into the market with Europe's first biotech wipe for tablets and mobile phones, and pre-portioned cleaning fluids and floor cleaner in sachets.

In 2017, Cleanology was shortlisted in the Workforce category of the European Cleaning and Hygiene awards, recognising excellence in employee relationships, training and diversity.

2018 saw Cleanology winning the Environmental Awareness category in the biennial Kimberly-Clark Professional Golden Service Awards.

In 2019, Cleanology revealed research into real attitudes to rates of pay, with almost two-thirds of employees concerned that cleaners should be paid fairly. Cleanology is a passionate advocate of the Real Living Wage and initiated the research to explore the attitudes both to wage levels and to perceptions around cleaners' pay.

In 2020, Cleanology became the first to kit staff out in uniforms made from 7,000 plastic bottles.

Later that year, Cleanology gave 20,000 people the chance to alleviate hygiene poverty by teaming up

with The Hygiene Bank for the UK's first National Hygiene Week – to raise awareness about hygiene poverty and distribute personal hygiene and cleaning products to those in need.

Cleanology has continued to support and raise funds for The Hygiene Bank and from 2020 to 2023 has raised over £67,000.

2021 was when Cleanology went electric, when following a deal signed with Nissan, it took delivery of its brand new all-electric London fleet.

Later in 2021, Cleanology's long term commitment to fair pay in the cleaning industry resulted in a win at the prestigious Living Wage Champion Awards.

In 2022, Cleanology then joined the Living Wage Foundation's Recognised Service Provider (RSP) Leadership Group. The group acts to encourage wider take-up of fair pay, and to make the accreditation scheme more effective.



Meet our core sustainability team

SHC's business model is based around using only experienced consultants, including journalists and social media specialists.



Suzanne Howe

Founder and Managing Director

Suzanne started SHC in 1996. Prior to this, she worked in three top London PR agencies across a broad range of clients in the food and packaging sectors.

Over the last 25 years, Suzanne has developed a network of highly talented specialists, including PR consultants, social media experts, designers, journalists and photographers.

In her spare time, she enjoys cooking, socialising, dog walking and going to the gym.



Bill Bruce

Senior Consultant

With 40 years' experience, Bill is an all-rounder who started his career as a graphic designer, before moving into marketing, PR and journalism. For the past 20 years his main focus has been the food and beverage industry with a particular interest in packaging and environmental sustainability.

Stephanie Sergeant

Account Director

Stephanie has more than 25 years experience in PR. As happy working with big global brands as she is internet start-ups, she approaches all of her work with real gusto to maximise both results and fun. As a Northern lass, she loves a good brew, pie, and woolly hat.



Jonny Sharp

Media Relations Consultant

Jonny has a wealth of experience in B2B and B2C PR across a range of sectors. He is a former national newspaper and magazine journalist, with highly developed 'news sense' and 'selling in' knowhow. His expertise includes writing press releases, case studies and thought leader articles.



Deborah Sparkes

Account Manager

Deborah provides invaluable support to the SHC account teams, helping them to keep up-to-date with press features and key industry events. Having been on the SHC team for more than a decade, she knows the media and key contacts that enable us to maximise all PR opportunities to the full.



Want to start a conversation?

We are *passionate* about building communications strategies and adding value to clients, from *local start-ups* to *global corporations*.

SHC can provide clients with a *broad range of skills*, from marketing to events planning, to meet the needs of a rapidly evolving communications environment.

- We know you're always looking for ways to improve your business.
- Have you thought about getting more expert help to share your messages more effectively?
- We will help take your business to the next level.

Let's talk!

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