



UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL
SUSTAINABILITY
NETWORK
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BRISTOL SUSTAINABLE FASHION RESOURCE

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WHAT IS SUSTAINABLE FASHION?

Sustainable fashion is a relatively recent movement which aims to tackle the conventional fast fashion industry which produces vast amounts of textile waste, carbon emissions (between 4-10% of global emissions), exploitative working conditions and uses huge amounts of resources including water.

The nature of the fast fashion industry is to produce large quantities of clothing to cater to increasingly shorter trend cycles and competitive prices, and the clothes are often poorly made which means they can easily fall apart so get thrown away instead of passed on to charity or thrift shops.

Sustainable fashion initiatives are diverse, and often aim to improve working conditions, encourage making your own clothes, use materials which have been sustainably sourced, produce more durable clothing, reworking old clothing, buying second hand and, more recently, renting clothing.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

- Most clothes are made from plastics, contributing to the microplastics crisis (UNEP, 2018)
- The textile industry releases thousands of chemicals to the environment, which is not only damaging for wildlife, but also humans (Immago.com, 2022)
- Materials grown for use in textiles require vast amounts of water, leading to the depletion of natural water sources like the Aral Sea (Hoskins, 2014)
- The global fashion industry contributes to 8-10% of global carbon emissions (UNEP, 2018)

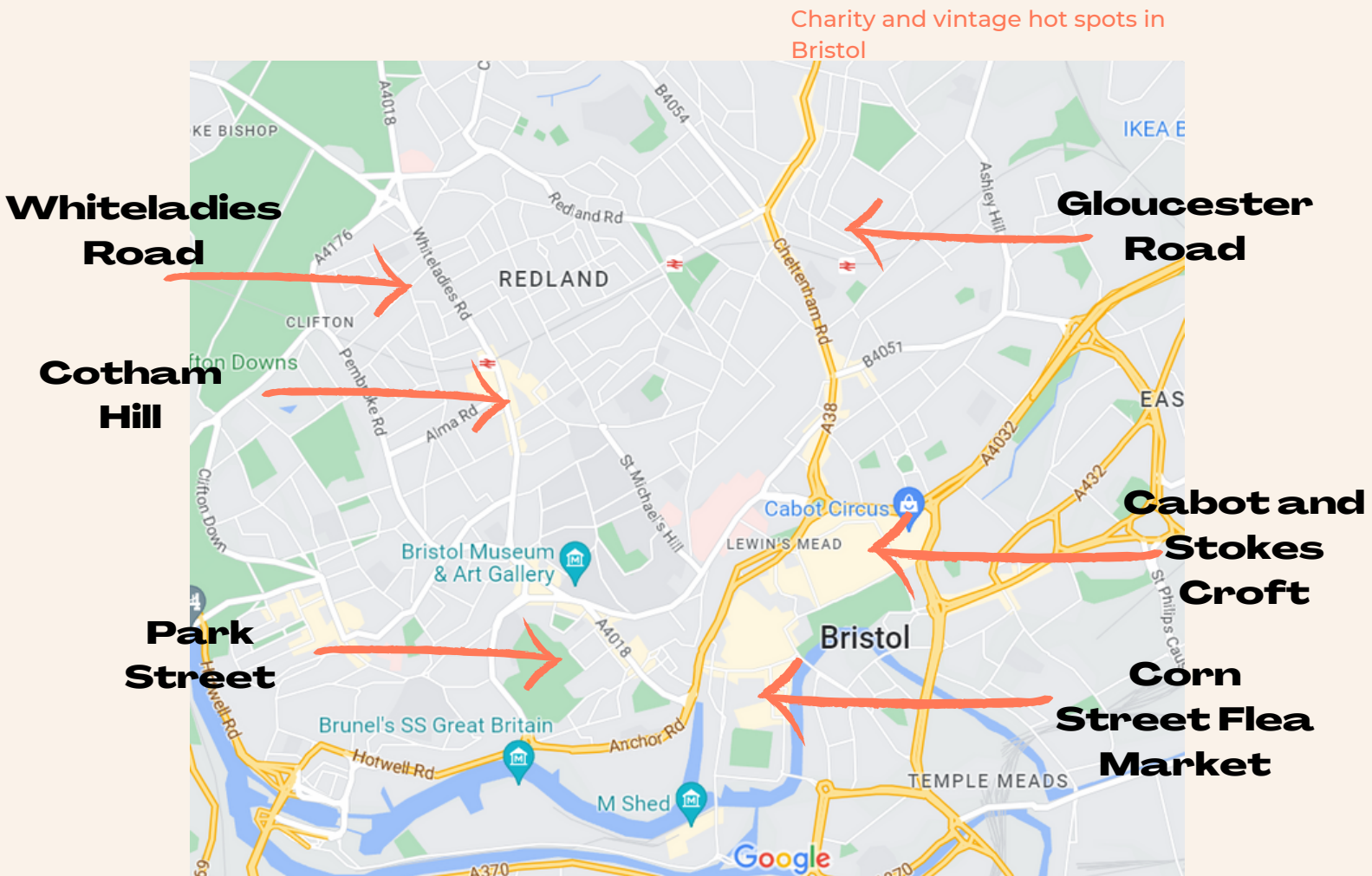
GREEN WASHING

Green washing is a tactic deployed by many fast fashion companies to give the illusion to consumers that the products they are making are somehow 'more' sustainable than previous fashion lines. This may include claiming that clothes are recycled, carbon neutral, or organic. Often these claims are left deliberately vague, and lull the consumer into a false sense of security about the sustainability and ethics of the brand, which is likely still engaging in exploitative methods (Fullerton, 2022)

Some people even question if the fashion industry can ever be sustainable, given the nature of short trend cycles and polluting materials and practices (Pucker, 2022)



WHERE SHOULD I SHOP?



Here is a map of some hot spots for charity shopping and vintage shopping. One of the best spots is Gloucester Road, which has numerous charity shops and other independent businesses dotted along one of the longest roads of independent businesses in Europe!

INITIATIVES IN BRISTOL

Bristol has lots to offer
with sustainable
fashion..

FASHION FORWARD SOCIETY

This is a University of Bristol society which is very active and has a wide membership. The group's focus is on sustainable fashion, and runs workshops on how to make your own clothes, fashion shows and clothes swaps where you are bound to find something you love!

SUSTAINABLE FASHION MARKET (UOB)

The Sustainable Fashion Market is an initiative coordinated by a small group of students and has taken place 3 times so far. The aim of this market is to showcase local, sustainable fashion businesses and also give a platform to creative students who make their own clothes or run small vintage businesses. Keep an eye out on their Instagram @sustainablecraftsmarketuob for their next events!

SUSTAINABLE FASHION WEEK (SFW)

Sustainable Fashion Week is an annual event which has taken place in Bristol, and works throughout the year with communities, organisations and individuals to educate people and give people skills around sustainable fashion.

FLEA MARKETS

Bristol is home to several frequent flea markets which showcase local businesses and vintage fashion, including the Saturday Corn Street Market, and the Sunday Tobacco Factory flea market.

REPAIR LOCATIONS

There are a few places which offer clothing repairs, including the Bristol Folk House, Alteration Station, All Stitched Up and Urban Tailor to name a few.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

LIFESTYLE CHANGES 01.

Engaging with sustainable fashion doesn't have to cost the earth, and it can be achieved in small manageable steps. Why not challenge yourself to only buying second hand for a month? Or make sure you donate old clothes instead of binning them? Why not get up a YouTube video on how to sew up a hole in your favourite dress? All of these are achievable, all you need is a bit of patience!

GET CREATIVE 02.

Sustainable fashion isn't just about spending time looking through clothes rails in charity and vintage shops, often you don't find exactly what you're looking for, but sometimes you find something better!

Why not try out making your own clothes? Knitting, sewing and crocheting are all really valuable life skills to have, and because they have become so popular in the last few years, you are spoilt for choice with online patterns and tutorials which make it all less daunting. This way, you can make unique pieces which are tailored to your size.

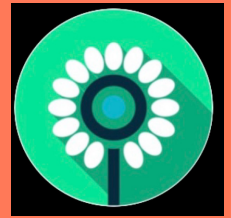
It is true that some materials can be a bit expensive. One tactic is to look in charity shops (normally in the bric-a-brac section) for second hand balls of yarn and sometimes bits of fabric at a discounted price!

SET UP A CLOTHES SWAP 03.

Setting up a clothes swap can be a great way to exchange your unwanted clothes for other second hand items, and can make for a brilliant social event!

All you need is to collect people's unwanted clothes, make a note of how many items they donated, which they can then exchange for tokens. On the day of the clothes swap, hand people the tokens they earned, which they can use to 'shop' from all of the donated clothes available! If you want, you can grade the clothes bronze, silver and gold depending on the quality and type of clothing, to make sure it is more fair and that people who donate high quality items can get other high quality items in exchange.





USEFUL LINKS AND SOURCES

FLEA MARKETS:

[HTTPS://THECULTURETRIP.COM/EUROPE/UNITED-KINGDOM/ENGLAND/ARTICLES/6-GREAT-FLEA-MARKETS-AND-CAR-BOOT-SALES-IN-BRISTOL-UK/](https://theculturetrip.com/europe/united-kingdom/england/articles/6-great-flea-markets-and-car-boot-sales-in-bristol-uk/)

FASHION WEEK:

[HTTPS://WWW.SUSTAINABLEFASHIONWEEK.UK/THE-SFW-PROGRAMME](https://www.sustainablefashionweek.uk/the-sfw-programme)

CAN FASHION EVER BE SUSTAINABLE?:

[HTTPS://HBR.ORG/2022/01/THE-MYTH-OF-SUSTAINABLE-FASHION](https://hbr.org/2022/01/the-myth-of-sustainable-fashion)

[HTTPS://WWW.GLAMOURMAGAZINE.CO.UK/ARTICLE/GR
EENWASHING-FASHION](https://www.glamourmagazine.co.uk/article/greenwashing-fashion)

WHAT IS SUSTAINABLE FASHION?:

[HTTPS://IMMAGO.COM/SUSTAINABLE-FASHION-IMPORTANT/](https://immagocom/sustainable-fashion-important/)

PROBLEMS WITH FAST FASHION:

[HTTPS://WWW.UNEP.ORG/NEWS-AND-STORIES/STORY/PUTTING-BRAKES-FAST-FASHION](https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/story/putting-brakes-fast-fashion)

[HTTPS://WWW.GENEVAENVIRONMENTNETWORK.ORG/R
ESOURCES/UPDATES/SUSTAINABLE-FASHION/](https://www.genevaenvironmentnetwork.org/resources/updates/sustainable-fashion/)

[HTTPS://WWW.THEGUARDIAN.COM/SUSTAINABLE-BUSINESS/SUSTAINABLE-FASHION-BLOG/2014/OCT/01/COTTON-PRODUCTION-LINKED-TO-IMAGES-OF-THE-DRIED-UP-ARAL-SEA-BASIN](https://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/sustainable-fashion-blog/2014/oct/01/cotton-production-linked-to-images-of-the-dried-up-aral-sea-basin)