



**SOMERSET
HOUSE**

**Somerset House installs UK's first
Toucan Eco Flow bio-cleaning system**

Somerset House is London's working arts centre built on historic foundations around one of the most beautiful courtyards in Europe. Situated at the very heart of the capital, Somerset House is home to the UK's largest and most exciting creative community and is overflowing with new ideas, young businesses and fresh perspectives.

Today, Somerset House is a vibrant public space that welcomes over 3 million annual visitors to enjoy an eclectic mix of public events, from contemporary exhibitions to outdoor concerts and films, and an ice rink in winter. There are currently 400 resident organisations from the arts and cultural sectors, and the wider creative economy operating out of the site, as well as Somerset House Studios – an experimental workspace offering space and support to up to 100 artists.

Supporting a sustainability strategy

As part of its long-term sustainability strategy, Somerset House Trust has made positive steps towards greater green credentials, from improving the building's energy efficiency with insulation, to fitting LED lighting and smart controls.

It has also installed a co-generation scheme which comprises a CCHP gas engine to heat the

building as well providing 60% of its electricity at the same time.

In partnership with Incentive FM, Somerset House Trust's management team turned its attention to its internal operations and investigated several new systems with the aim to reduce plastic waste and chemical consumption during cleaning processes.

Greg Van Duin, senior facilities and operations manager of Somerset House Trust, explained: "Sustainability is high on the agenda for Somerset House. We're part of several focus groups with those operating large cultural facilities in London and together we're looking at how we can work towards achieving net zero carbon emissions targets. There is a climate emergency, and we need to be responsible with our daily operations to ensure we're making changes where we can.

"When approaching our cleaning regime, we were looking for a solution that wouldn't interfere with the building. We have a lot of different surfaces, materials, furniture and antiques, and it was important to reduce the build-up of chemicals that can cause damage long-term.

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also to improve the wellbeing of housekeepers by reducing contact with chemical cleaning agents. Cost-effectiveness was another factor to consider – being able to eradicate our need for consumables would allow us to make savings that could be invested into other areas of maintenance.”

Green cleaning with Toucan Eco Flow

Through Incentive FM, Somerset House Trust’s management team were introduced to the Toucan Eco bio-cleaning system. The system requires only tap water, salt and a low voltage electrical current to produce an effective disinfectant cleaner through a process called electrochemical activation that kills up to 99.999% of bacteria and is certified as a general disinfectant. It’s also non-toxic, non-hazardous and non-allergenic, so it is safe for staff to use on a daily basis in the majority of areas.

Following a trial period, the UK’s first Toucan Eco Flow unit was installed in Somerset House in September 2019. The larger Flow system creates a continuous supply of concentrated solution which is stored in the 10-litre holding tank, and then diluted while being dispensed into spray bottles or buckets, producing an unlimited supply on tap.

“The benefits of the larger Flow unit were obvious for Somerset House,” Greg continued. “The fact that it creates unlimited amounts

of sanitiser is a simpler and more effective process for our housekeepers. We operate with a 40-strong janitorial team, so minimising risk by reducing the number of products we use and ensuring there’s a constant supply of cleaning solution has allowed us to streamline operations to create an impressive degree of efficiency.”



Susan Ryan, head of cleaning at Incentive FM, explains: “The system is being used right across Somerset House as part of the daytime cleaning regime including washrooms, offices,

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gallery spaces – even to spot clean stains on carpets. We complete the core clean of office and studio areas in the evening with Toucan Eco, and the areas open to public in the mornings, with spot checks throughout the day. Spray bottles of the solution are used with microfibre cloths, as well as a flat mop system which allows us to pre-soak mop pads with the Toucan Eco solution.

Saving chemicals, plastic waste and money

“Before installing Toucan, we were ordering anywhere up to 150 bottles of cleaning agents per month, and these single-use bottles were disposed of after use. We keep a small stock of descaling agent, but Toucan Eco has allowed us to drastically reduce the volume of cleaning chemicals we use, and with that we’ve made huge savings on our plastic waste.”

In a sample four-month period, the facility would have ordered 600 bottles of cleaning agents from toilet cleaner to glass cleaner, saving around £1,000 during this period alone by switching to the Toucan Eco bio-cleaning system.

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Steve Courtney, Toucan Eco product specialist at Robert Scott, added: “Being able to sit down with the operations and FM teams at Somerset House and understand their requirements for the site and its housekeepers meant we recommended the larger Toucan Eco Flow unit. This has created many benefits for the team on site and longer term, with a reduction in plastic waste and requirements for a cleaning agent. We’re extremely pleased to see such an innovative piece of cleaning technology in such a prestigious facility.”

“For me, it’s not just the sustainability and cost-effectiveness of the product that’s of benefit – I love the fact that it’s completely harmless for the staff to use and we know that all areas of the site are safe and clean for everyone,” Susan concluded. “They’re also happier using Toucan Eco as it’s one solution that can be used for the majority of tasks and areas.”

For more information about Somerset House please visit www.somerset.org.uk.

For more information about Toucan Eco bio-cleaning system please visit www.robert-scott/toucan-eco.





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