



Ethical Consumer

Markets Report 2018

ethical
consumer



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Executive Summary

This year's Ethical Consumer Markets Report shows that government measures have slowed green spending, even as more consumers attempt to improve the sustainability of their purchasing. Government changes to taxation and subsidies have caused the collapse of two key green markets. Falling sales for solar panels and energy-efficient cars accounted for the slow growth seen by the ethical market overall which, at +2.5%, was outstripped by inflation in 2017.

Green Spending

In many sectors, consumers are turning towards more sustainable options as their concern for the environment grows. Green energy grew an impressive 56.3% in 2017. Ethical clothing increased by 19.9% and buying second-hand clothing for environmental reasons increased 22.5%, in a year which saw much media about the environmental impacts of fast fashion. Ethical Food and Drink was also up 16.3%, the largest increase since 2012, fuelled by growing sales of vegetarian products. The strength of such spending is remarkable since UK retail sales fell in 2017 for the first time since 2013 and have remained challenging since.

Our YouGov survey also exposed growing environmental concern. Over a quarter of those who responded to our YouGov survey stated that they had avoided buying a product or using a service due to its negative environmental impact in the past year – an increase of 65% since 2016.

Government cuts

Yet this drive for green options was offset by the removal of government support for green spending. Sales of solar panels fell by 87.4% in 2017 after the government reduced support for at-home solar energy generation. The market for energy-efficient cars also fell 28.4%, following changes to road taxation.

In 2016, the government cut incentives for solar panels, known as Feed-in Tariffs (FITs), by 65% and, in 2017, it ended subsidies for solar thermal schemes.¹ The market has been declining ever since and, in 2017, it was less than a quarter of its 2010 size, when FITs were first introduced. As of April 2017, the government also changed its rules on road taxation. The new rules leave buyers of fuel-efficient cars £140 worse off after the first year than under the previous regulations. Encouragingly, however, sales of alternative fuel vehicles (pure electric and hybrid vehicles) continued to grow. Pure electric vehicles were not affected by the changes in taxation.

The impact of such changes on the market as a whole is apparent. If the decline in solar panel sales and energy efficient cars is excluded, growth in ethical spending looks healthy at 5.5%.

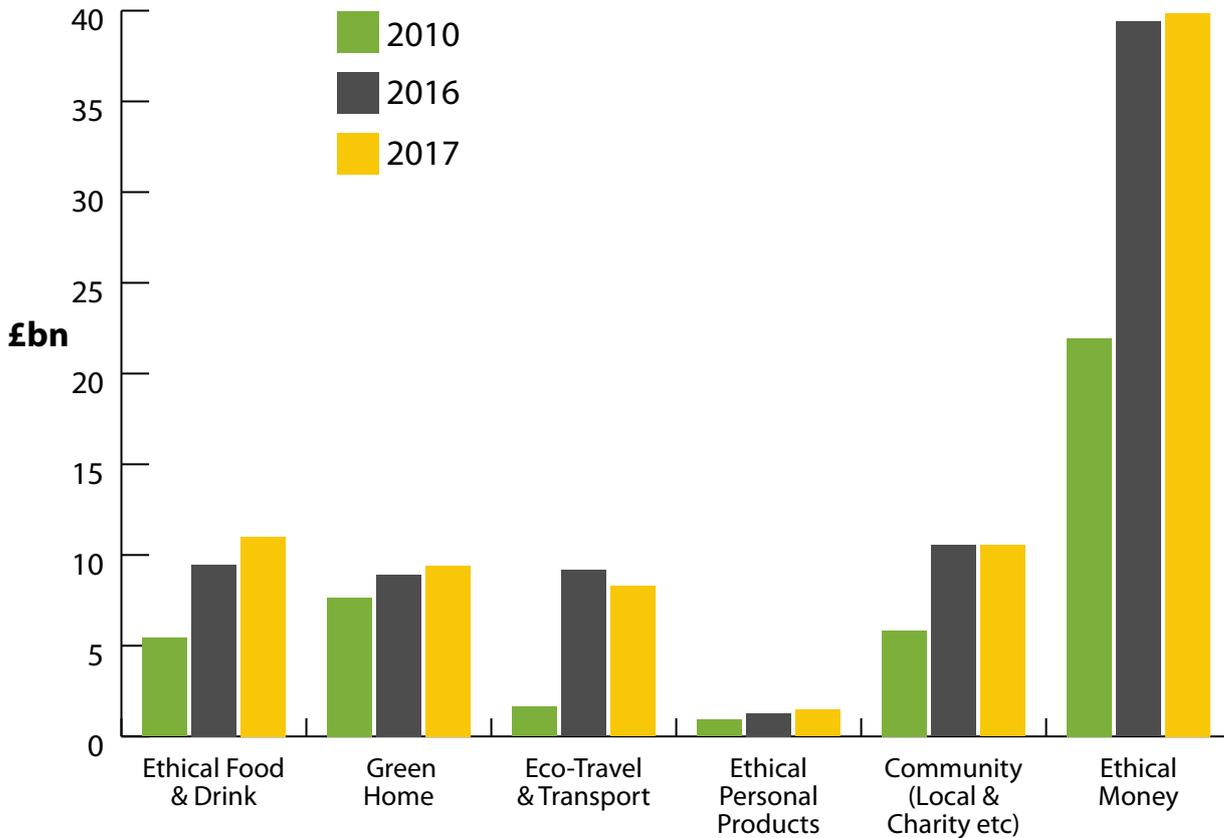
The UK government's removal of financial incentives around renewable energy installations and lower-impact cars shows that we currently have a regulator choosing not to help ethical markets.

References: 1 <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2016/apr/08/solar-installation-in-british-homes-falls-by-three-quarters-after-subsidy-cuts>; <https://www.independent.co.uk/environment/solar-power-crisis-tory-government-new-installations-drop-80-per-cent-conservatives-solar-trade-a7682501.html>

Ethical spending in the UK, 2000 – 2017



Year on year comparison



Average Ethical Spend

(£ per household, per year)



Ethical Food and Drink	2010 £m	2016 £m	2017 £m	% Growth 2016 - 2017
Organic	1,475	1,810	2,000	10.5%
Fairtrade	1,094	1,608	1,720	7.0%
Rainforest Alliance	1,198	2,377	2,955	24.3%
Free range eggs	419	677	724	7.0%
Vegetarian products	541	574	657	14.5%
RSPCA Assured	573	1,726	2,050	18.8%
Sustainable fish	121	694	902	30.0%
Subtotal	5,421	9,466	11,008	16.3%

Green Home	2010 £m	2016 £m	2017 £m	% Growth 2016 - 2017
Energy efficient appliances	2,068	2,795	3,010	7.7%
Energy efficient boilers	2,332	3,268	3,575	9.4%
Micro generation	249	476	60	-87.4%
Energy efficient light bulbs	43	110	136	23.8%
Ethical cleaning products	42	75	80	6.7%
Sustainable timber and paper	1,655	1,207	1,306	8.2%
Buying for re-use – household items	823	682	751	10.1%
Green electricity tariffs	432	309	483	56.3%
Subtotal	7,644	8,922	9,401	5.4%

Eco-travel and Transport	2010 £m	2016 £m	2017 £m	% Growth 2016 - 2017
Alternative fuel vehicles	n/a	2,377	3,077	29.5%
Cars under 100g CO ₂ / km	846	5,786	4,144	-28.4%
Bicycles	795	1,010	1,065	5.4%
Subtotal	1,641	9,173	8,286	-9.7%

Ethical Personal Products	2010 £m	2016 £m	2017 £m	% Growth 2016 - 2017
Ethical clothing	63	36	43	19.9%
Buying for re-use – clothing	321	510	625	22.5%
Ethical cosmetics	525	721	799	10.8%
Subtotal	909	1,268	1,467	15.7%

Community	2010 £m	2016 £m	2017 £m	% Growth 2016 - 2017
Local shopping	2,330	2,691	2,291	-14.9%
Charity shops	468	677	703	3.8%
Charity donations	3,040	7,158	7,558	5.6%
Subtotal	5,836	10,527	10,552	0.2%

Total without Boycotts	20,607	39,356	40,714	3.5%
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Boycotts	2010 £m	2016 £m	2017 £m	% Growth 2016 - 2017
Food and drink	1,084	961	1,206	25.5%
Transport	1,068	1,026	1,009	-1.7%
Personal	333	577	528	-8.5%
Subtotal	2,485	2,564	2,743	7.0%

Ethical Basket & Boycotts Total	23,092	41,920	43,457	3.7%
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Ethical money	2010 £m	2016 £m	2017 £m	% Growth 2016 - 2017
Ethical banking	9,043	21,480	20,918	-2.6%
Ethical investment	11,300	15,200	16,151	6.3%
Credit unions	1,552	2,549	2,602	2.1%
Ethical share issues	52	182	200	9.9%
Subtotal	21,947	39,411	39,871	1.2%

Grand Total	46,028	81,331	83,328	2.5%
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Ethical Food & Drink

It has been a strong year across the board for ethical food and drink, with all seven categories seeing impressive sales growth. The market grew by 16.3%, the largest increase since 2012, suggesting that it has recovered from the fall in sales of Fairtrade products seen in 2014.

This is great news for certifications, after several announcements in 2016 created fears that the market could return to a decline. Despite Sainsbury's, Mondelez and Tesco all indicating that they would move away from the Fairtrade scheme in 2017,² other retailers, brands and consumers have all demonstrated ongoing faith in independent certifications. Survey data from Kantar Worldpanel shows that 83% of people trust the Fairtrade mark. Fairtrade volume sales were up 2.5%, however this was far outstripped by growth in value sales – up 7.0% for the year –, suggesting that buyers are placing greater value on Fairtrade goods. Accordingly, it continues to be the label of choice for the Co-op supermarket, moving to use 100% certified cocoa; and has been extended across new products such as Ben & Jerry's new dairy-free ice-cream.

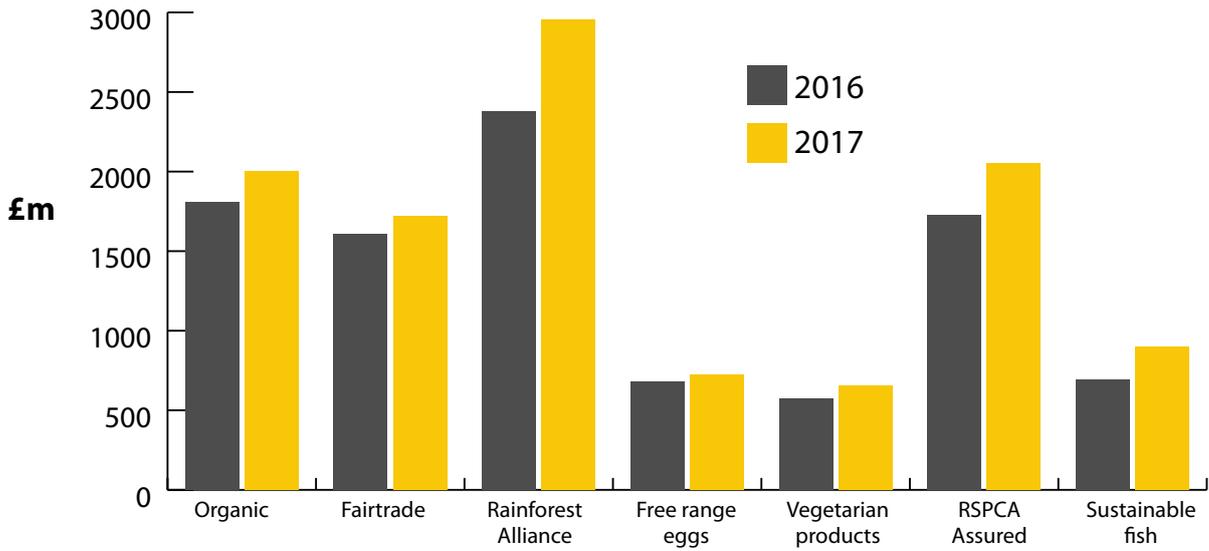
The increasing popularity of vegetarian and vegan lifestyles also appears to be a driving factor for growth in the market as a whole. Sales of vegetarian products were up 14.5% in 2017. In fact, our estimates for the vegetarian sales market appear to have been overly-modest in recent years, and we have changed our methodology for the 2018 Report. Mintel have again started to produce their reliable meat-free market report each year. In line with this, we are now reporting a market of £657,000,000 – almost £100 million greater than previously thought. This figure more accurately reflects the many new vegetarian products being launched, as well as the growing aisle space that supermarkets are giving to vegetarian and vegan goods. Indeed, our own survey found that 11% of people are vegetarian and 3% vegan – an increase of 52% and 153% respectively since 2016. The statistics are even more impressive amongst 18-25-year-olds, 17% of whom said that they were vegetarian and 4% vegan in 2018.

The growth is perhaps unsurprising considering the news reports throughout 2017 on the serious environmental impacts of meat-eating. For those still eating meat or fish, a growing number are also seeking more environmentally friendly options, with 19% trying to eat fish rather than meat, and sales of sustainable fish up an impressive 30.0%.

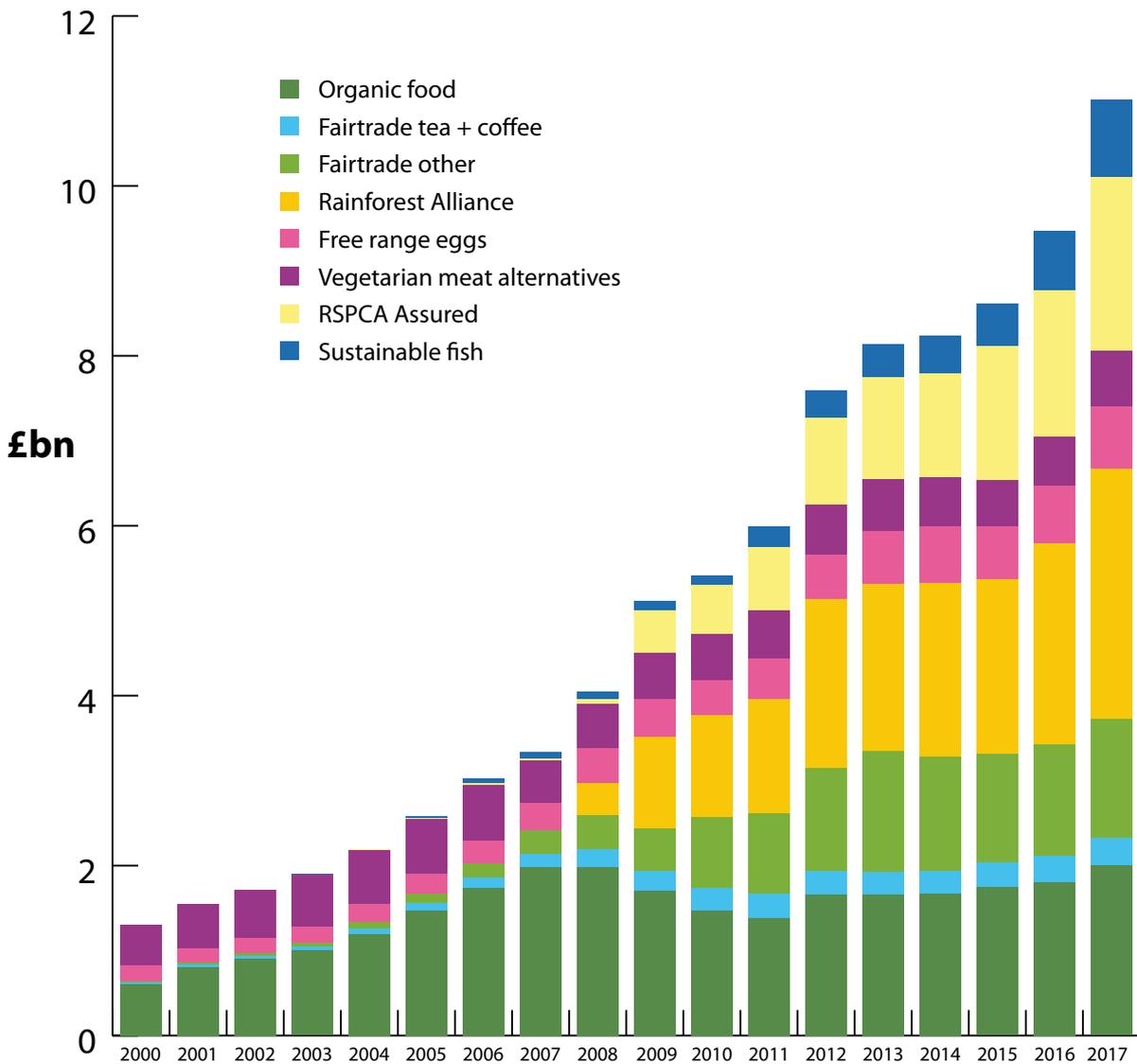
This narrative of growing environmental concern helps to explain growth across the ethical food and drink section. At least 64% of those surveyed stated that they had made some dietary decisions for environmental or animal welfare reasons in the past year. Rainforest Alliance-certified products also saw impressive growth of 24.3%. The certification focuses on environmental measures. Although much of its growth can be accounted for by increasing volume sales for coffee across the UK markets (offsetting falls in sales of tea as more consumers turned to herbal drinks), it also suggests an increasing desire for brands and consumers to reduce their carbon impacts.

References: 2 <https://www.marketingweek.com/2017/07/14/fairtrade-ethical-commitments-trust/>

Year on year comparison



Historic market share



Green Home

Growth in this market looks moderate overall (5.3%). However, this headline figure conceals a dramatic year for several of the sub-categories, with green energy tariffs growing an impressive 56.3%, and micro-generation slumping by –87.4% in 2017.

New renewable energy providers have seen remarkable growth in recent years, gaining an increasingly significant portion of the market. While the big six (SSE, Scottish Power, EDF, British Gas, E.ON, and npower – none of which were 100% renewable in 2017) still hold 80% of the domestic retail market, they lost over 4% market share in 2017.³ More and more consumers are turning to renewable energy, in the face of growing concern about climate change. The sector has seen impressive growth over the past two years and is now one-and-a-half times the size that it was in 2015.

Sadly, it has not been good news across the wider green home sector. Sales growth for renewable providers has been largely offset by the collapse in at-home solar energy generation. In 2016, the government cut incentives for solar panels, known as Feed-in Tariffs (FITs), by 65% and, in 2017, it ended subsidies for solar thermal schemes.^{4,5} The solar panel market has since plummeted, declining 48.5% in 2016 and 87.4% in 2017. In 2017, it was less than a quarter of its size in 2010, when FITs were first introduced.

This decline accounts for the modest change in the market as a whole: if micro-generation is excluded, green home sales show a far more healthy growth of 10.14%. Sales figures for ethical cleaning products, FSC-certified goods and second-hand household items were all up (+6.7%, +8.2% and +10.1% respectively).

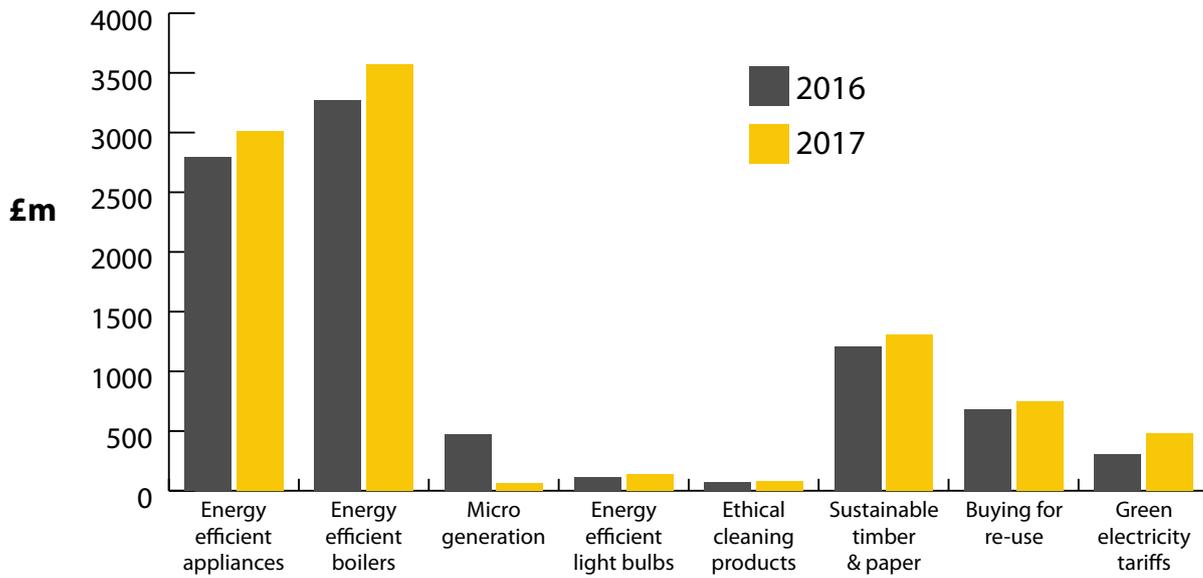
Sales of energy-efficient lightbulbs also grew 23.8% – further attesting to the significance of government intervention in consumer markets. In 2016, the EU began its phase-out of halogen lightbulbs, which ended in September 2018. The ban on halogen bulbs is designed to push consumers towards the use of more efficient LED lighting, and it appears to have worked. Significant market growth for the energy efficient lightbulbs in the past two years (42.9% in 2016) has been caused by rising LED volume sales.⁶

Sales of energy-efficient boilers increased by 9.4%. We changed the methodology for this dataset in the 2018 report to reflect improving energy efficiency as the technology improves. Only boilers with 92% efficiency or greater are included in the sales data for 2017, and the figures for 2016 and 2015 have been recalculated.

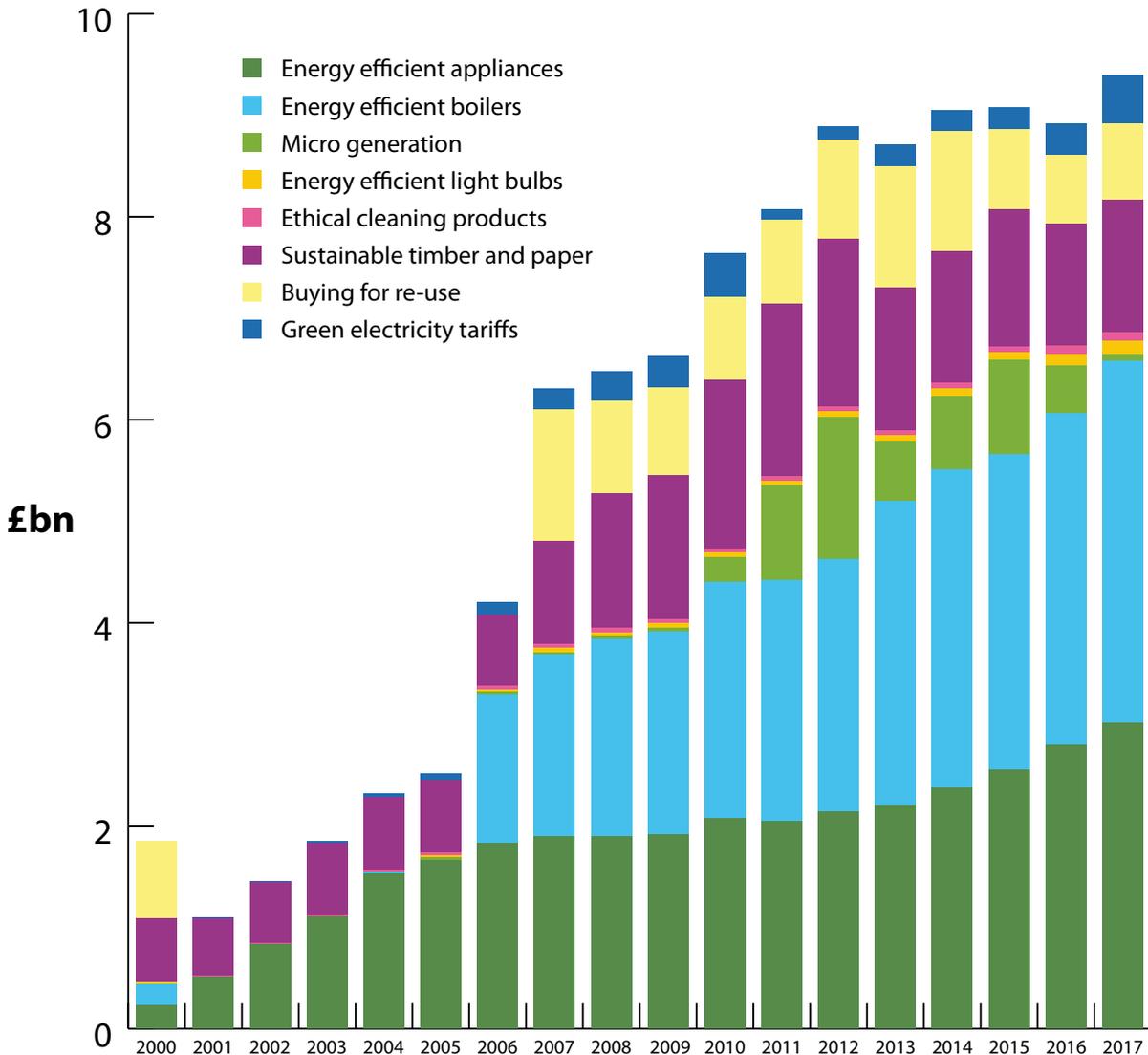
The health of these sectors appears to reflect growing environmental consciousness amongst consumers. This year, over a quarter of those who responded to our YouGov survey stated that they had avoided buying a product or using a service due to its negative environmental impact in the past year – an increase of 51% since 2016. Such environmental concern helps to explain how the green home market has withstood the collapse in solar panels overall.

References: **3** <https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/energy-markets> **4** <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2016/apr/08/solar-installation-in-british-homes-falls-by-three-quarters-after-subsidy-cuts>; <https://www.independent.co.uk/environment/solar-power-crisis-tory-government-new-installations-drop-80-percent-conservatives-solar-trade-a7682501.html> **5** <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2016/mar/04/solar-thermal-panels-latest-to-be-hit-by-uk-subsidy-cuts> **6** <https://www.theguardian.com/money/2018/aug/11/switch-led-light-bulbs-halogen-ban>

Year on year comparison



Historic market share



Eco-travel and Transport

Eco-travel and transport declined dramatically in 2017, falling by 9.7%. This is despite an impressive 29.5% rise in sales of alternative fuel (electric and hybrid) vehicles. Sales of non-AFV vehicles emitting under 100 g of CO₂/km fell by 28.4% in 2017. In fact, the number sold (280,614) was the lowest since 2012, accounting for the decline in the market overall.

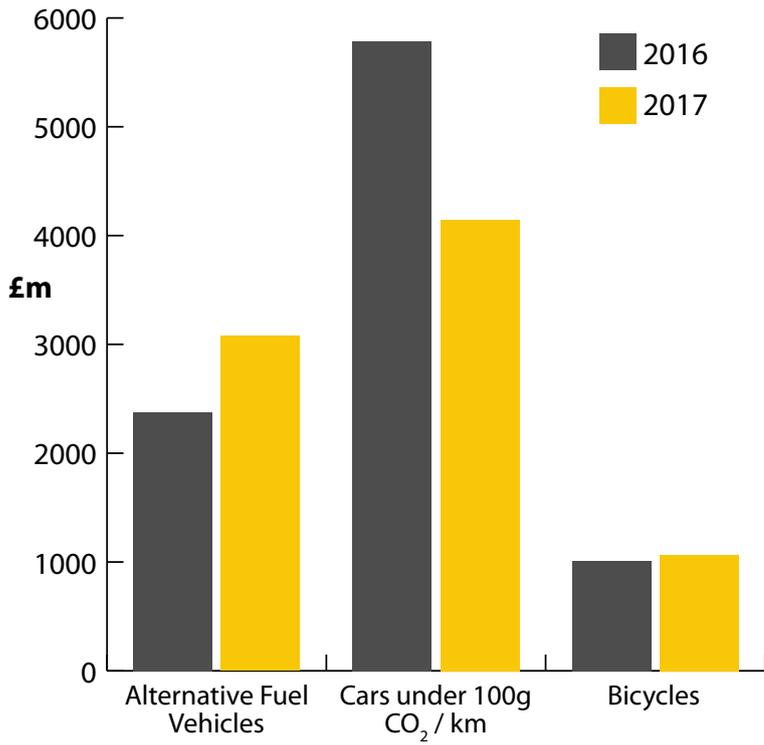
The market has been heavily hit by changes to vehicle taxation that came into effect in April 2017. Previously, cars with CO₂ emissions under 100 g/km had been exempt from road taxation. However, under the new rules, only cars with zero emissions receive an exemption, and those under 100 g/km receive no tax benefits after the first year.⁷ This leaves buyers of fuel-efficient cars £140 worse off after the first year of registration. The decline in this sector helps to explain why the Eco-Travel and Transport market fell despite the narrative throughout the rest of the report that consumers are becoming more concerned about their environmental impact.

Since our 2016 YouGov Survey, those who say that they have avoided particular modes of transport (for example driving or flying) due to its environmental or social impact in the past year has increased 50.2%. Whilst the desire for green transport clearly remains strong, it therefore appears to be government measures that have slowed spending in the market as a whole.

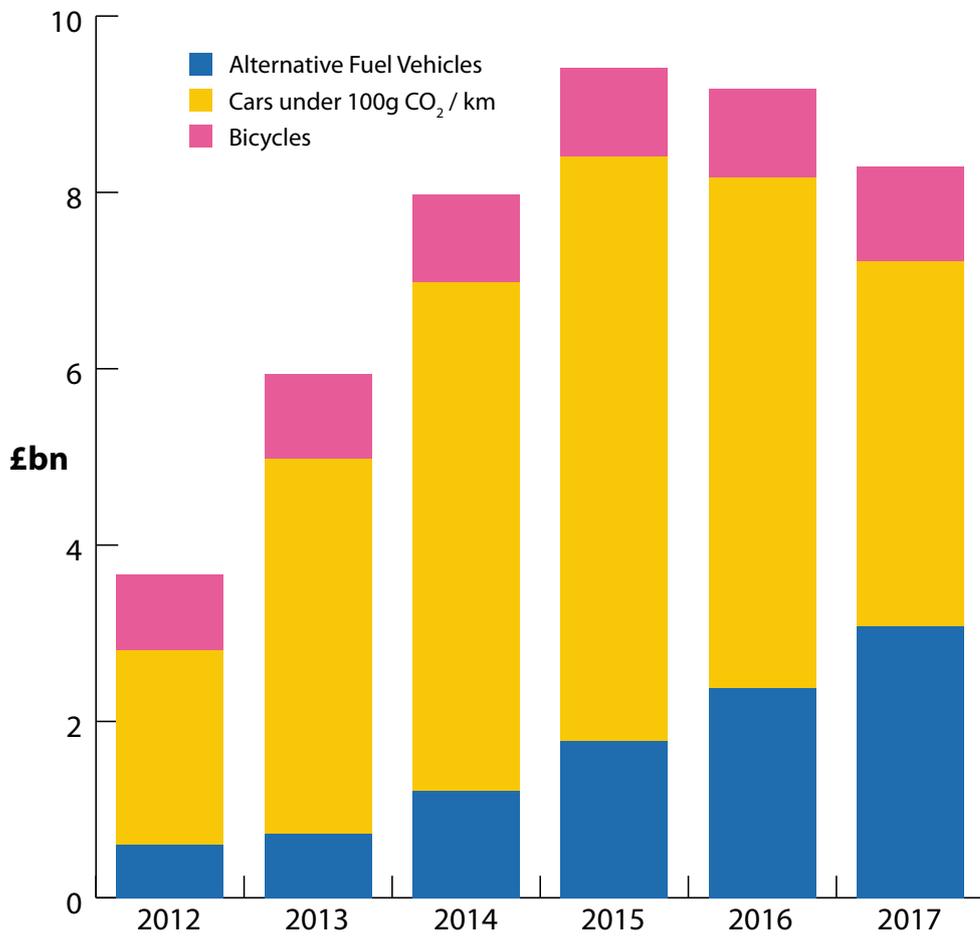
Likewise, the value of bicycle sales continued to increase, by 5.4%. However, volume sales remained stable suggesting that cyclists are paying more for their bicycles, rather than that a growing number of people are cycling.⁸

References: **7** <https://jct.bsdev.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Road-tax-changes-April-2017-and-onwards.png> **8** Mintel, Cycling – UK – March 2018

Year on year comparison



Historic market share



Ethical Personal Products

As in other sectors, environmental consciousness appears to have fuelled considerable growth in the sales of ethical personal products in 2017. The market increased by 15.7% overall, with particularly strong growth for both ethical (19.9%) and second-hand (22.5%) clothing.

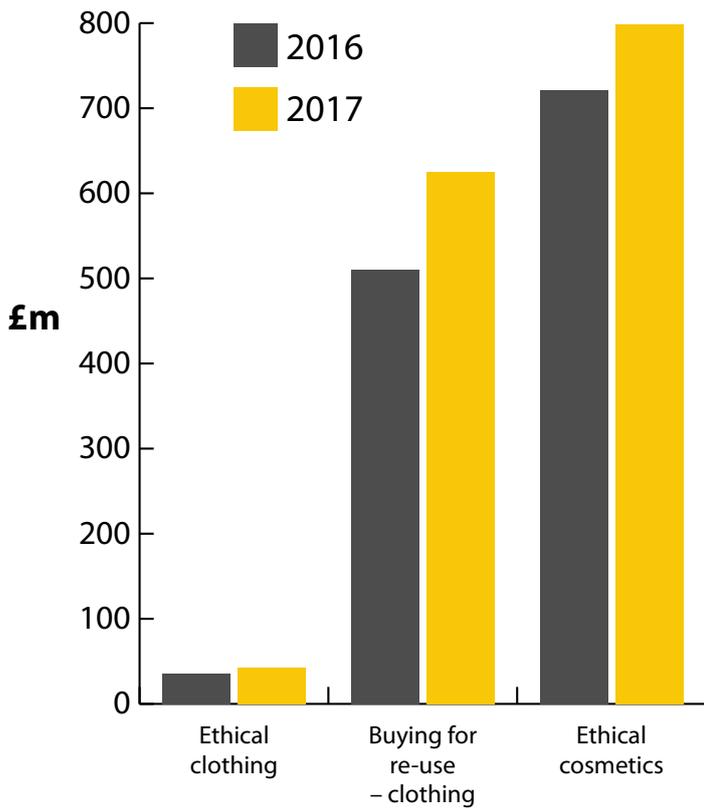
News articles throughout 2017 highlighted the environmental impacts of fast fashion.⁹ Prominent reports from organisations like the Changing Markets Foundation and the Ellen MacArthur Foundation drew attention to the effects of viscose production and microfibres among other areas.¹⁰ Our 2018 survey found an increase in both the number of people buying second-hand clothing for environmentally friendly reasons and in the amount that they were spending on such items.

Similarly, UK sales for ethical clothing reached an estimated total of £42m in 2017. This figure only accounts for organic cotton clothing and fairtrade cotton clothing, and the total is quite small relative to other sectors. As such it probably under-represents ethical activities in this area and does not reflect all current developments. For example, the Better Cotton Initiative is a WWF-led collaboration with a wide range of global brands. Although it has been criticised for having low standards, it is one recent development in the ethical clothing sector. Its 2017 annual report claimed that in 2016/17 Better Cotton was grown in 21 countries by 1.3 million licensed BCI Farmers and accounted for 14% of global cotton production. 14% of cotton clothing sold in the UK would be worth £billions. In addition, we know that the Austrian company Lenzing, grew global revenues by 5.9% in 2017. They produce Tencel and Lyocell, which are less damaging types of viscose fibre, which has recently been attracting the attention of campaigners.

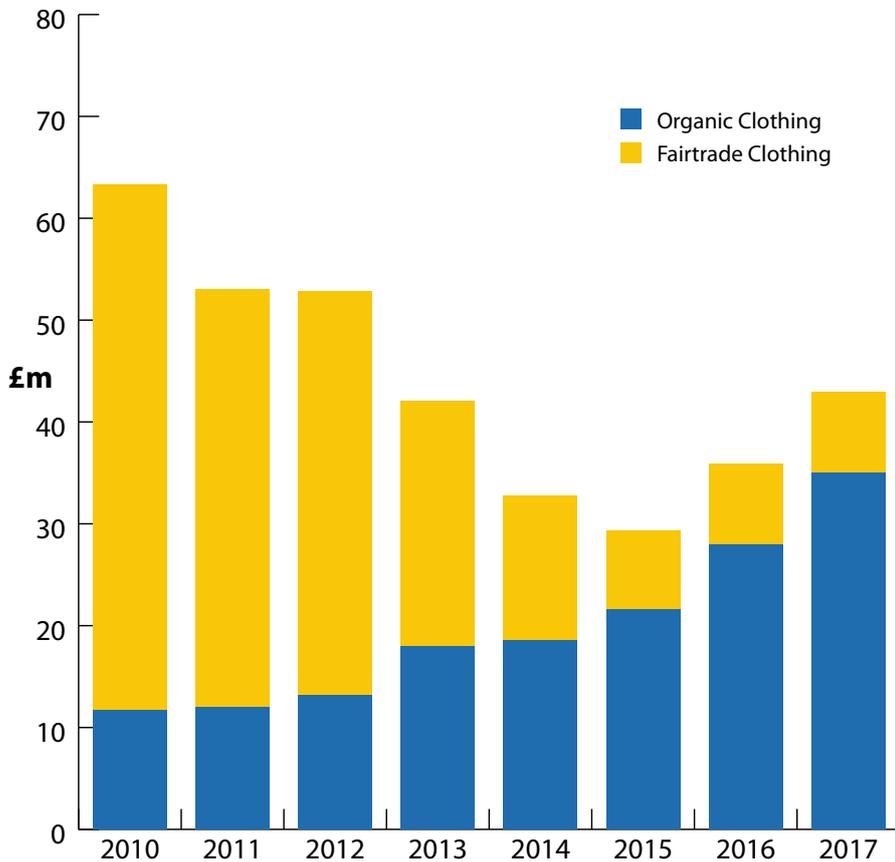
Environmental concerns may also be partially responsible for a rise in sales of ethical cosmetics of 10.8%, as more consumers opt for organic or natural beauty products to avoid environmentally damaging chemicals and synthetic pesticides. The rise can also be accounted for by growing health concerns. Ecovia Intelligence's '2017 Report on the UK Market for Natural & Organic Personal Care Products' states that "Consumer demand for natural and organic personal care products is being driven by concerns about synthetic chemicals in cosmetics & toiletries ... Standards are becoming more important, with a growing number of symbols & logos becoming visible on natural personal care products."¹¹ This trend mirrors the movement for cleaner living that has gained momentum in the UK in recent years.¹² Finally, prominent campaigns by Cruelty-Free International and The Body Shop for a UN ban on the animal testing of cosmetics and the Lush Prize's support for animal-free science have raised the profile of cruelty-free brands. This suggests that the ethical cosmetics market will see ongoing growth in coming years.

References: **9** <https://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-40498292>; <https://www.economist.com/the-economist-explains/2017/04/11/the-environmental-costs-of-creating-clothes>; <https://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-41570540>; <https://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/2017/jun/29/microfibers-plastic-pollution-apparel-oceans> **10** https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/assets/downloads/publications/A-New-Textiles-Economy_Summary-of-Findings.pdf; <https://changingmarkets.org/portfolio/dirty-fashion> **11** <http://www.ecovaint.com/1204-60> **12** Hitwise, Data Day Britain, 2017 Clean Living Report

Year on year comparison



Historic market share



Community

The community shopping market (up 0.24% on last year) has seen a small decline once the 2017 inflation rate of 2.7% is taken into account.¹³ Charity shops and charity donations both increased at a moderate rate. However, this growth was offset by a larger fall in local shopping for environmental reasons.

Both the number of people shopping locally for environmental reasons and the amount that they were spending declined, according to our 2018 YouGov survey. This meant that local shopping sales fell by 14.9%, the first decline since the recession in 2012. More and more consumers are buying online. Online retail sales increased 9.4% year-on-year and accounted for 17.4% of all retailing, as of March 2018.¹⁵ Indeed, the decline in local shopping was most dramatic amongst 25-44-year-olds, who are also the most likely to purchase online.¹⁶ In line with this shift, the number of independent stores also declined slightly throughout 2017.¹⁷

Nonetheless, some charity shops appear to have harnessed this shift towards online purchasing. For example, British Heart Foundation saw online sales, primarily through eBay, increase by 28%.¹⁸ These sales appear to have helped fuel ongoing growth in the charity shop sector overall, which was up 3.8%, although they continue to account for only a fraction of total income. The success of the charity shop sector, which has grown steadily since 2010, also reflects a growing number of consumers purchasing second-hand goods for environmental reasons. According to our YouGov survey, buying second-hand clothing for environmental reasons has increased consistently since 2010. The buying of second-hand household items also returned to growth this year, after a decline in last year's report. Finally, the charity shop sector may in fact have benefited from recent austerity measures and a fall in disposable income,¹⁹ as consumers look to cut costs by buying second-hand.

This year, we changed our methodology to increase the number of charities looked at for the charity shops dataset. This means that the market figure is now just over £700,000,000, around £125 million larger than previously suggested. Not only does this more accurately reflect the size of charity shop sales as a whole, it means that we can get a better picture of the entire market year-on-year even when individual charities see large fluctuations in income.

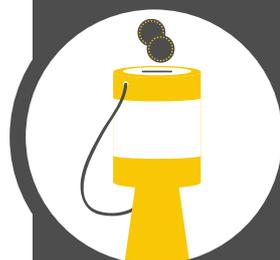
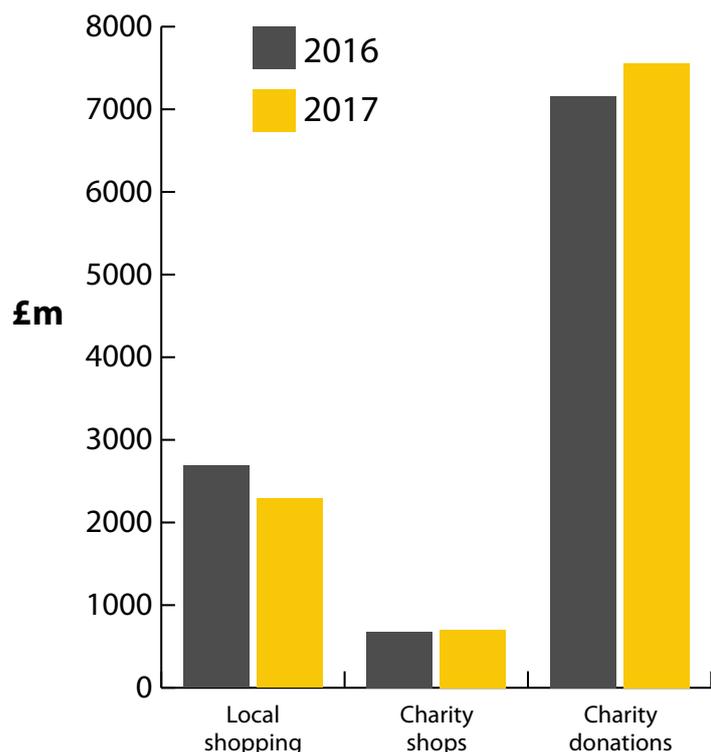
Charity donations also saw reasonable growth of 5.6%. This reflected an increase in the amount that individuals were giving, rather than the

number of those that donated to charity. Donations made for overseas aid and disaster relief were up in particular, probably due to a number of international disasters that sadly took place in 2017, and were highly covered by UK media, including the Rohingya crisis, Hurricanes Harvey and Maria, the earthquake in Mexico, and monsoon flooding and landslides in Bangladesh, Sierra Leone and Colombia.²⁰

In recent years, the Charities Aid Foundation has increased the number of survey participants for its annual UK Giving Report, making it a more reliable data source. As of 2018, we have therefore changed our methodology to use its figures as the foundation for our own calculations. Again, our previous methodology appears to have underestimated the size of the UK market for charity donations, which we now estimate to be around £7.5 billion.

References: **13** <https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/inflationandpriceindices/bulletins/consumerpriceinflation/december2017> **14** <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/business/news/uk-retail-sales-drop-consumer-spending-austerity-wages-income-brc-a8342661.html> **15** <https://www.ons.gov.uk/businessindustryandtrade/retailindustry/bulletins/retailsales/march2018> **16** <https://advantec.co.uk/ecommerce-consumer-behaviour-survey-2017> **17** <https://www.talkingretail.com/news/industry-news/number-independent-stores-decreased-2017-report-reveals-24-04-2018> **18** British Heart Foundation, Annual Report 2017 **19** <https://www.thisismoney.co.uk/money/news/article-5608323/Disposable-income-falls-time-2011-inflation-bites.html>; <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2017/jun/30/britons-savings-at-record-low-as-household-incomes-drop-says-ons> **20** Charitable Aid Foundation, CAF UK Giving 2018 Report, March 2018

Year on year comparison



Boycotts

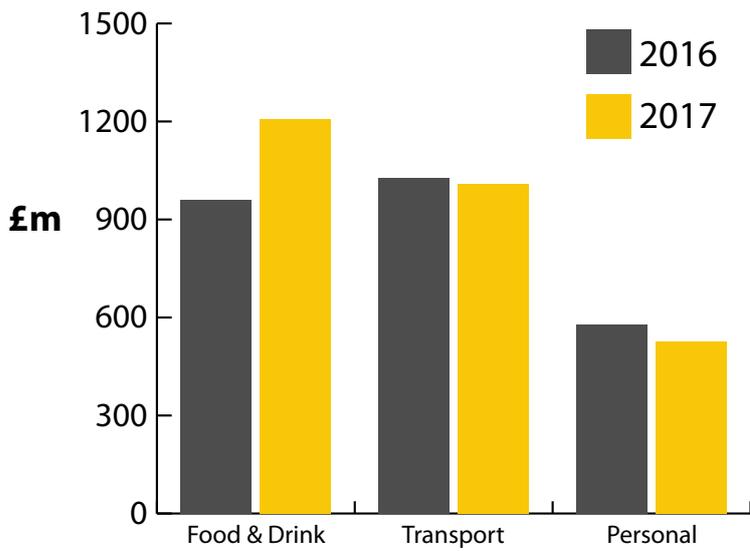
The YouGov survey, commissioned by this report, was answered by 2,017 people and gives us an impression of the prevalence and impact of boycotts in the UK. We asked respondents if they had boycotted products and/or services from any of the following industries for ethical reasons; Food & Drink, Transport and Personal Products (cosmetics and toiletries).

We also asked them how much money they thought they had withheld from these sectors. Half answered by 2017 people said they had boycotted one of these over the last 12 months, up from 48% last year. By extrapolating these findings and applying them across the whole UK adult population, we have been able to estimate the total amount of money withheld from corporates owing to boycotts in these sectors, as £2.74 billion.

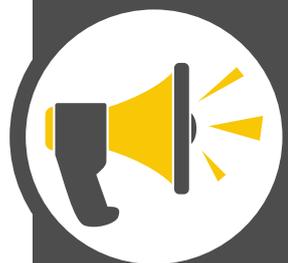
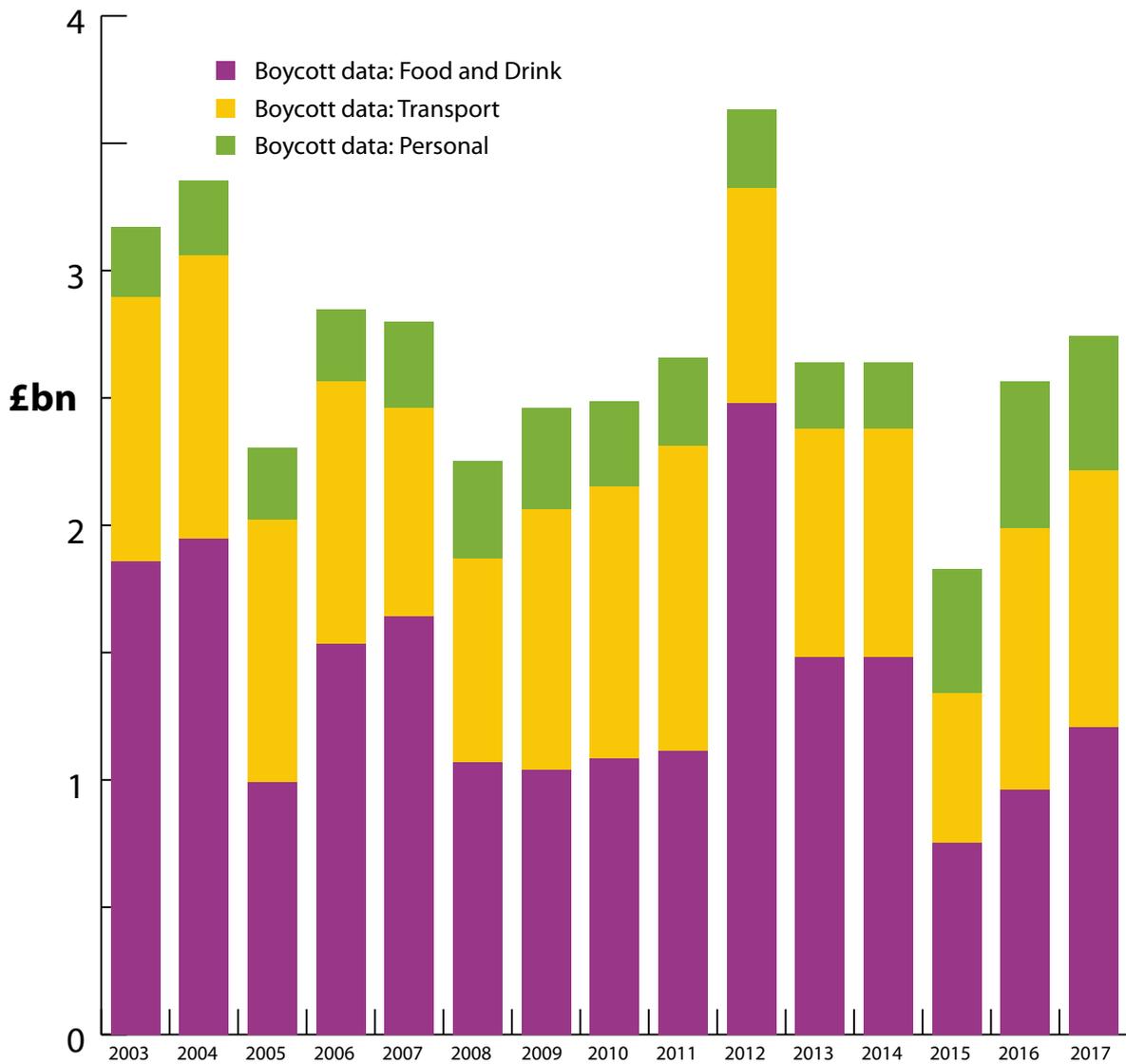
This figure shows a moderate growth since last year of 7.0%, a change entirely down to the increase in those boycotting food and drinks products. The amount withheld from corporates in this category is now £1.21 billion, an increase of 25.5% from last year. This rise corresponds with the data in our Ethical Food and Drinks section of the report, which shows that more and more people are opting for vegetarian and certified products in response, in particular, to environmental concerns. It makes sense that many consumers are also then avoiding meat and products like palm oil, the carbon impact of which has seen much media coverage in the last year.

On the other hand, the number of people boycotting transport options fell, as did those avoiding certain personal products, explaining the modest change in these markets overall.

Year on year comparison



Historic market share



Ethical Money

Growth in this sector has again been affected by ongoing declines in retail deposits at the Co-op Bank. For the second year running, growth in the market at 1.2% was outstripped by inflation rates of 2.7%. Nonetheless this figure shows that the Ethical Money market is slowly recovering from the Co-op Bank's crash in 2015 (in which it declined 9.2% overall). If the Co-op Bank's figures are excluded, we can see healthier growth of 7.3% for the rest of the sector.

Ethical Investments and Ethical Share Issues both grew in 2017. Ethical Share Issues were up by 9.9%. The growth in this market has been largely fuelled by increasing direct investment in renewable energy projects. Ethical Investments grew 6.3%, to be worth over £16 billion, although the EIRIS Foundation suggests that this figure does not yet reflect the "growing interest from members of the public when it comes to making ethical and responsible 'good money' choices." Fuelled by environmental concerns, an increasing number of consumers are turning towards sustainable investment, and the EIRIS Foundation suggests that the next step is to check whether "existing funds and providers meet the needs of all those now looking for genuinely sustainable investment products".²¹

Such concerns around ethical money have also seen estimated growth for many of the alternative ethical banks. Once figures for The Co-op Bank have been excluded, it shows a healthy growth of 21.2%. This suggests that at least some of The Co-op Bank's market share has been claimed by alternative ethical providers.

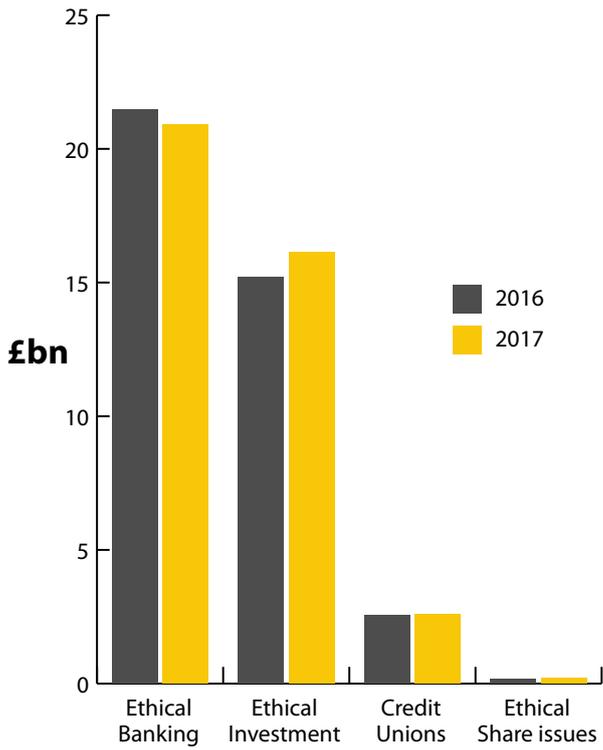
This year we have also added in an extra table (below) to track the growth in Building Society deposits. With growing publicity around mainstream banks' 'dirty' investments, from fossil fuels to the arms industry, Building Societies are increasingly viewed as another type of ethical alternative. Our figures show that the market has grown consistently since at least 2014.

Building societies

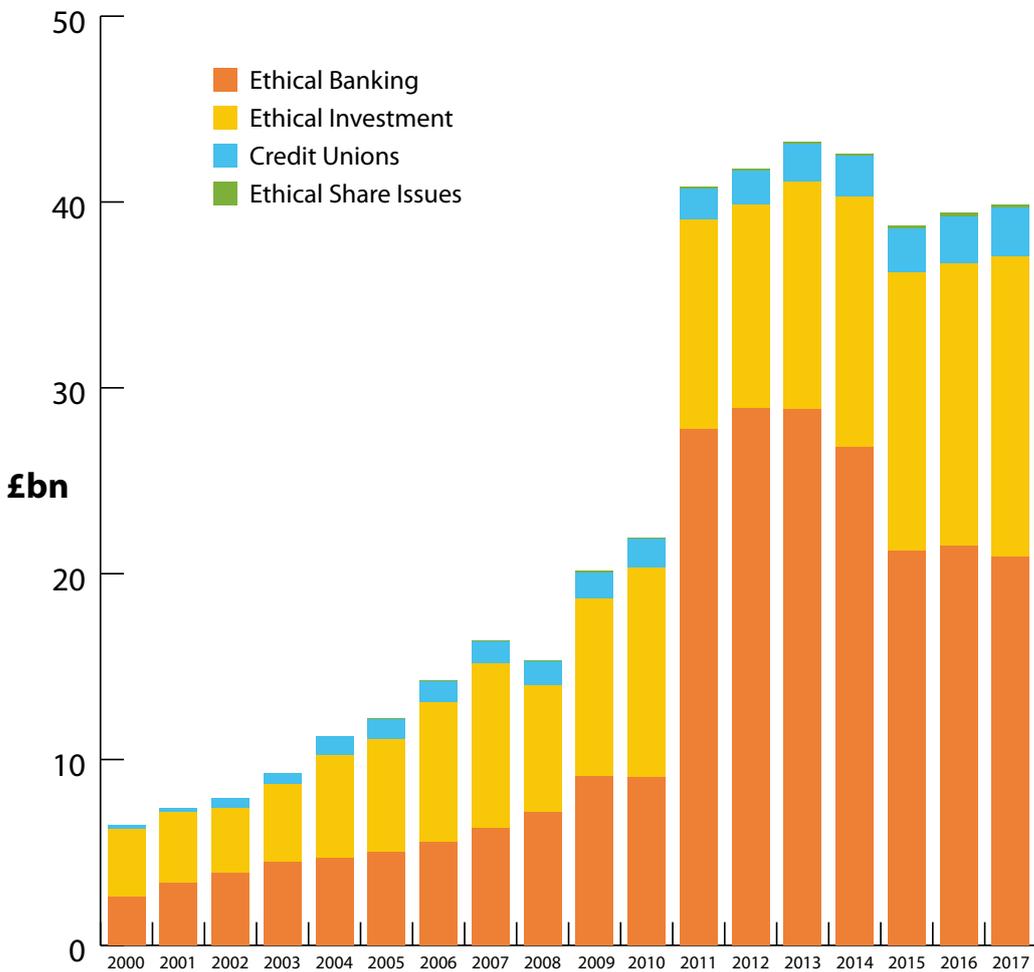
2010 £m	2016 £m	2017 £m	% Growth 2016-2017
192,150	241,848	251,411	3.95%

References: 21 <http://www.eirisfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Market-Sizing-press-release.pdf>

Year on year comparison



Historic market share



Consumer Opinion Survey

The Ethical Consumer Markets Report combines market size measurement with a YouGov opinion survey of general ethical consumer behaviours. We ask respondents a series of questions about their shopping habits. The results of this survey are freely available on the Ethical Consumer website. All figures (not market size calculations), unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 2,017. Fieldwork was undertaken between the 24th and 25th of October 2018. The survey was carried out online. These figures have been weighted and are representative of all UK adults (aged 18+).

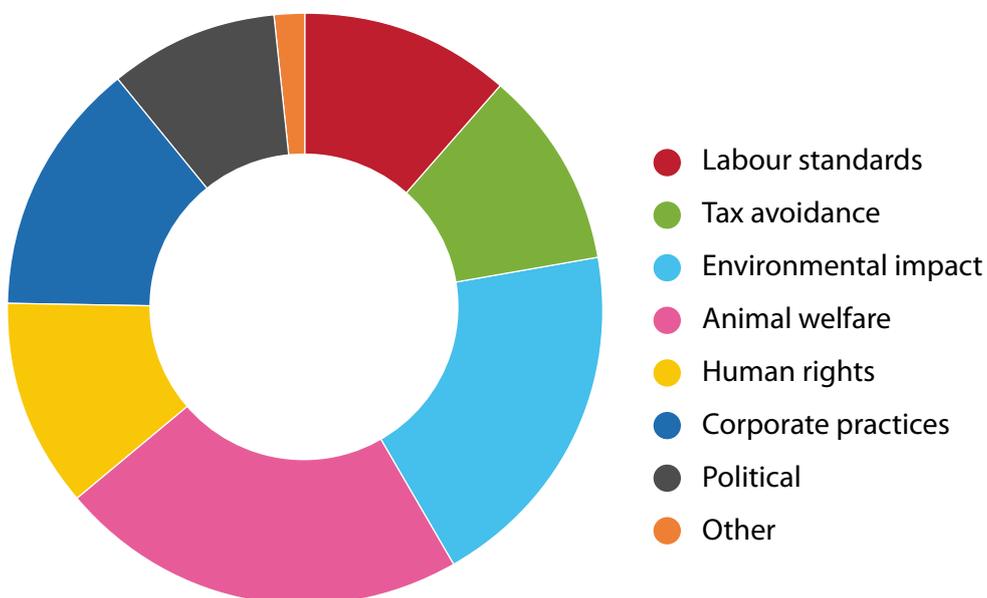
Personal Boycotts

Many large campaign groups have moved away from the use of boycotts as a campaign tool and towards supporting accreditation schemes like Fairtrade and the Marine Stewardship Council. Despite this, much of the UK population are currently operating personal boycotts over ethical issues. According to our survey, at least 49% of the UK population have chosen not to buy a particular product or shop at a particular outlet because of concerns about its ethical reputation

The most popular types of personal boycott operated by shoppers in the UK, in October 2018, were against businesses with poor animal welfare standards (31%), a negative environmental impact (27%) and unethical corporate practices (19%).

Since 2016, there has been a 65% increase in those that have avoided buying or using a product or service due to its negative impact on the environment. Such growth correlates with increasing press around issues such as palm oil and clothing, and their impact on our rapidly warming climate. The number boycotting for political reasons has also increased by 67% since 2016, perhaps following high-profile boycotts around Brexit and businesses linked to the Trump administration.

When consumers who claimed to boycott were asked which issues drive their decisions, their replies were as follows:



Ethical Diet Choices

At least 64% of those who answered our survey said they had make specific decision about their diet in the last year because of environmental or animal welfare concerns.

Since 2016, the number of vegetarians has increased by 52% and the number of vegans by 153% (although still only accounting for 11% and 3% of the population respectively). It is also worth noting significant year-on-year increases in the number of people avoiding red meat and choosing fish over meat since 2016 of 54% and 44% respectively.

The table below shows that by far the most popular change remains buying free-range products, a finding in line with the previous section which highlighted animal welfare as consumers' number one reason for boycotting.

Results of the question, "Which, if any, of the following have you done specifically for environmental/animal welfare reasons in the last year? (Please select all that apply)" were as follows:

	2018	2017	2016
Avoided eating red meat	14%	14%	9%
Bought free range meat or eggs	48%	52%	39%
Tried to eat fish instead of meat	19%	17%	13%
Not eaten any meat (i.e. I am a vegetarian)	11%	9%	7%
Not eaten any meat or animal products such as eggs and milk (i.e. I am a vegan)	3%	2%	1%
Other	6%	4%	3%

Other Ethical Activities

At least 74% of respondents were doing things in their lives specifically for social, environmental or animal welfare reasons in the last 12 months, a small decline from our findings last year, but a 7.4% increase since 2016.

The decline is likely to reflect a return to more normal levels after significant rises in 2017. Prominent campaigns around plastic pollution, fast fashion and palm oil appear to have placed ethical consumption on the public's radar last year. Although some of this interest continued throughout 2018, our figures show the difficulty of sustaining momentum for more sustainable buying.

Below are some of the significant figures from these findings:

- 63% of people recycled at least every week. However, this was a decline from 69% last year.
- A quarter of the population are avoiding using private cars and choosing to walk, cycle or use public transport instead.
- The number of those that have done the following in the last year for social or environmental reasons has increased by 20% or more since 2016: talked to friends or family about a company's unethical behaviour; chosen to buy/use a product or service because the company has a reputation for being ethical; recommended a company to a friend or family member because it is an ethical company.
- Women were much more likely to conduct ethical activities than men, with 78% of all women surveyed stating that they had done one of the things in this category, compared to 70% of men, and outperforming on all answers.

About this report

Ethical Consumer Research Association is the Manchester-based research co-operative behind Ethical Consumer magazine. It has compiled the sales data for this annual report since 2006.

Many organisations have been extremely helpful in providing data for this report including: ABCUL, British Egg Information Service, Charities Aid Foundation, DVLA, Ecovia Intelligence, EIRIS Foundation, GfK Marketing Services, Kantar Worldpanel, Irish League of Credit Unions, Mintel, MSC, Ofgem, Rainforest Alliance, RSPCA Assured, SEDBUK, SMMT, Suma Wholefoods, The Co-operative Group, The Fairtrade Foundation, The Soil Association, YouGov.

The 2017 Ethical Consumer Markets Report was compiled by Clare Carlile with assistance from Mackenzie Denyer, Rob Harrison and Joanna Long at Ethical Consumer. Thanks also to Adele Armistead at Moonloft for design and layout.

More information, and previous versions of the Ethical Consumer Markets Report, are available from <https://www.ethicalconsumer.org/research-hub/uk-ethical-consumer-markets-report>

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