



RECYCLE, UPCYCLE AND CYCLE

THE KEY TO JESSICA'S PAINT GREEN SUCCESS



Business name: JW RESTORE LTD

Location: Islington, London

Paint Green status: Signed up to Paint Green in 2023

With cycling her preferred mode of transport and a talent for reusing, recycling and upcycling, Jessica Walters has found multiple ways to support the principles of the Painting and Decorating Association's Paint Green scheme.

A self-titled female 'Stig of the Dump' with a life-long aversion to waste, Jess launched her painting career five years ago, specialising in exterior restoration because she loves architecture, working outside and making things beautiful again.

When the PDA launched its landmark Paint Green scheme in 2023, Jess was among the first to sign up, bringing her own unique vision to embedding sustainable principles into her day-to-day on-site working practices.

"I hate waste," said Jess. "I just can't throw anything away. If there's a possibility it could still be used for something, I'm saving it! So when the PDA launched the Paint Green initiative, I was immediately on board.

"My incentive is to get restoration work locally so I can cycle or walk to work – I give an attractive discount to Islington clients, so I don't have to make daily journeys in the car.

"It's a win-win for me and my clients – I'm never late, fuel costs are kept low, no parking fees or parking tickets! And my mental health is positive – I'm happier and healthier.

Yes, I lose a bit on my financial profit, but I get to work in my neighbourhood, word of mouth spreads making me busy, and clients love that I'm local as it builds trust.



“It also allows me to reduce my carbon footprint while supporting a more sustainable, community-based way of working.”

As well as finding innovative ways to reuse items others might consider fit for the bin, Jess actively engages her clients in conversations about waste and offers them a ‘Paint Green Saving Scheme’ if they require coatings she already has in stock, including specialist fillers and resins that are commonly costly.

“The majority of my work is external and there are certain colours, like black for downpipes or white for mouldings and door surrounds, which are extremely popular.

“Instead of charging the client the price of a full tin and leaving them with a half full one that will sit there going rusty in a cupboard, I charge them for the amount I use and leave a small jar or pot with just enough for touch-ups. I’ve learnt that clients need some paint leftovers for reassurance.

“Anything that I think can be re-used in some way is kept – I call it my ‘treasure’. I have little bags and boxes of bits and bobs that I carry with me, from scraps in every grade of sandpaper to plastic yoghurt pots, to re-purposing old brushes, cutting bristles for fine angles or simply labelling for cleaning, stirring or staining work.

“For me, working this way is fulfilling. I love the thrill of finding exactly the right scrap of something I have

recycled or reused, that just finishes off a job beautifully or being able to take on a project knowing that the client isn’t going to be left with another tin of slowly hardening paint to add to their collection.”

As well as finding myriad ways to reuse items, Jess also promotes the use of low-VOC and specialist exterior water-based paints to her clients, alongside sharing her passion for durability and longevity when working on houses.

Jess added: “My work is always collaborative. I spend time understanding what a client wants to achieve emotionally as well as visually.

“Whether it’s a full restoration or a colour consultation, I see each project as contributing to the ongoing life of a building.

“A Victorian terrace restoration stands out, where the client moved away from standard white and returned to a Portland stone palette, contrasted with blue-grey juniper ash woodwork.

“The result felt authentic to the building’s heritage while still personal to the owners. Being part of that process, and leaving a quiet, lasting mark, puts a smile on my face.”

Jess is also a member of the Archway Upcycle Group (AUG), a volunteer-led community initiative that offers free space to upcycle and encourages people to repurpose discarded items into functional and artistic products.

“I’ll be running some paint workshops with AUG in 2026,” says Jess.

“I’ve got some coatings that I’m planning to donate and I’m looking forward to teaching people painting skills, so they can find the joy in upcycling something that’s been thrown away and giving it a new lease of life without it chipping and cracking in future.

“While I happily think of myself as a bit of a ‘Stig of the Dump,’ collecting bits from here and there, I don’t have piles of stuff accumulating everywhere, because I get so much pleasure when I can repurpose it and that’s what drives me.

“I would 100% recommend that PDA members join the Paint Green scheme. It’s not just about the environment; it’s about the conversations you can have with your clients about all the ways you’re working to be less wasteful – surely everybody hates waste?

“It’s also about the connections you get to make with organisations like AUG. I feel I’m finding a fun way of adapting the Paint Green principles into my business and letting it evolve into a passion project.

“It’s opened up new opportunities and allowed me to look at my business and do things in a completely new way.”

For more about the PDA and Paint Green go to:

www.paintingdecoratingassociation.co.uk

