

Status	Version	Author	Date	Changes
Final	1.0	CEO	10/02/2025	Final draft for approval by Board

## Environmental sustainability policy

### Contents

Environmental sustainability policy.....	1
1. Policy statement.....	1
2. Applicability.....	2
3. Impact on the environment.....	2
4. Managing this impact .....	2
5. Materials and resources .....	2
6. Managing waste.....	3
7. Energy use .....	3
8. Water use.....	3
9. Emissions and Transport .....	4
10. Suppliers .....	4
11. Management .....	4
12. Communication .....	4
Regulatory Guidance: .....	5
Useful Links:.....	5

### 1. Policy statement

We will reduce and effectively manage our impact in a responsible manner, by ensuring that environmental considerations are integrated into decision making.

Risk assessment will be used to identify potential environmental risks and where these are identified, strategies will be implemented to eliminate or minimise these risks.

None of us can save the planet alone, but all of us can do something and, as a charity, we should and, it not only saves money, but can earn income too.

- An estimated 13 billion plastic bottles are disposed of each year.
- It takes 75% less energy to make a plastic bottle from recycled plastic compared with using 'virgin' materials.
- On average, each person in the UK throws away their own body weight in rubbish every 7 weeks.

Up to 80% of the contents of our dustbins could be easily recycled or composted.

## 2. Applicability

This policy applies to all trustees, other volunteers, employees, contractors, and third-party representatives of We Hear You (the "Charity"). Its requirements should be reflected in other policies and procedures, agreements and contracts, as necessary.

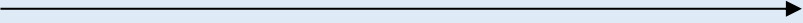
## 3. Impact on the environment

These are examples of how organisations have an impact on the environment:

- Air emissions - boilers and workshops.
- Land contamination - oil and chemical storage.
- Waste disposal - waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE), hazardous materials and clinical wastes.
- Water discharges - swimming pools, kitchens, offices and production facilities.
- Resource use – energy, water and office supplies.

## 4. Managing this impact

We will manage this impact through the Waste Hierarchy below:

Eliminate	Reduce	Re-Use	Recycle	Dispose
Avoid producing waste in the first place	Minimise the amount of waste you do produce	Use items as many times, as possible	Recycle what you can only after you have re-used it	Dispose of what's left in a responsible way
Best  Worst				

## 5. Materials and resources

We will:

- Install and use recycling bins in our office and/or at events.
- When ordering stationery, fundraising resources etc, do so in bulk. This costs less and reduces transport costs.
- Where practicable buy products manufactured from recycled waste.
- For fundraising, where practicable, buy items such as running vests made from recycled material and poly bags that are biodegradable.
- Create digital versions rather than printing leaflets, posters, fundraiser packs. These are more eco-friendly, easier to share and cost less.
- If we are working with a commercial partner, we will ensure they've signed up to the [TRUST registration scheme](#) (Trader Recycling Universal Standard).

- Recycle unused or single copied paper as scrap paper.
- use a crosscut shredder, then recycle sensitive or confidential information.
- Undertake double sided printing and back to back photocopying where practicable.
- Retain e-mails and documents on the hard drive and not automatically print so we reduce toner and paper usage, and we can find them again, if we need to.
- Make use of e-mail in preference to hard copy mail.
- Encourage the use of water in jugs at meetings rather than plastic water bottles.
- Where possible encourage the use of fair-trade tea and coffee, and other products.
- Use rechargeable batteries if it is practicable, this is both economical and is far better for the environment.
- Buy cardboard, not plastic, if we need to use disposable plates/cutlery at an event.

## 6. Managing waste

We will:

- Where cost effective, make every effort to recycle waste, such as cardboard, glass, paper and plastics.
- Where possible, recycle mobile phones, and toner and cartridges.
- Include energy efficiency in our purchasing of electronic equipment - to use less energy, when we use them, and less waste when we dispose of them.
- Dispose of hazardous items, such as oils, chemicals, fluorescent tubes, batteries etc, and electrical items properly and not simply dumped in the bin.
- Encourage the use of effective environmentally friendly cleaning products and other products such as e-cloths.

## 7. Energy use

We will:

- Use energy efficient lighting.
- Encourage staff to turn off lights, televisions, monitors and other equipment when not in use. It's more environmentally friendly, saves money and helps reduce fire risk.
- Where practicable, turn off or down heating in unoccupied rooms or areas, with heating reduced to 'frost protection' levels when unoccupied, e.g., Christmas.
- Ensure that doors and windows are not left open after we cease work to save on heating costs and improve security.
- Ensure doors and windows are draught proofed where practicable.

## 8. Water use

We will:

- Turn off or repair dripping taps, which can waste up to 10,000 litres of water a year.

## 9. Emissions and Transport

We will:

- Ensure that staff, where practicable, make use of the public transport system.
- Encourage shared transport use by staff where it is practicable.
- Source goods and services locally, where this is cost effective.
- Coordinate meeting timings and locations to minimise travel.
- Review the work of meetings to reduce frequency of meetings and use online. It cuts travel, can save wasted work time and is always popular.
- Avoid automatic attendance at meetings on every occasion and, instead staff will only attend when an active role is required.

## 10. Suppliers

Whilst not an over-riding factor in decision making, we will seek to work with suppliers who share our aims and who seek to minimise their environmental impact. Equally, in deciding which types of supplies/products we purchase, we will be mindful that some are less damaging than others and will take this into account.

## 11. Management

Consideration will be given to nominating someone to lead and coordinate on environmental and waste management issues.

Objectives will be included and monitored through the annual Business Plan.

We will carry out an annual environmental audit or energy efficiency tests.

We will include an environmental statement in the Trustees' Annual Report.

## 12. Communication

To be fully effective, environmental awareness and action will be cascaded down through the management chain. For example, by:

- Induction and awareness courses.
- Role definitions and appraisals.
- Posters, newsletters etc.

## Regulatory Guidance:

[Charity Commission: Going Green: Charities and Environmental Responsibility](#)

[Charity Commission: Environmental responsibility for charities](#)

[Environment Agency: Waste Management](#)

## Useful Links:

[ES: Energy saving opportunity scheme \(ESOS\)](#)

[CT: Guidance on complying with ESOS](#)

[CT: Employee awareness and office energy efficiency](#)

[CT: Building energy efficiency](#)

[CT: Energy efficient lighting](#)

[WRAP \(Waste & Resources Action Programme\)](#)

[Recycle Now](#)

[Centre for Alternative Technology \(CAT\)](#)

[Charity Retail Association: Waste Law & Regulation Guidance Note](#)