

Environmental Sustainability Policy

Aims

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.

Applicability

This policy applies to all trustees, other volunteers, employees, contractors, and third-party representatives of Refugee Workers Cultural Association (the “Charity”). Its requirements should be reflected in other policies and procedures, agreements and contracts, as necessary.

Managing this Impact

Impact can be managed 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
<p>Best ➔ Worst</p>				

Ideas to Consider

Section 1 - Materials and Resources

1. Consider installing recycling bins in your office and/or at events.
2. When ordering stationery, fundraising resources etc, do so in bulk. It costs less and reduces transport costs.
3. Where practicable buy products manufactured from recycled waste.
4. For fundraising, you can now buy items such as running vests made from recycled material and poly bags that are biodegradable and;
5. Rather than printing leaflets, posters, fundraiser packs, etc create digital versions - not only more eco-friendly, but these are also easier to share and cost less.
6. Unused or single copied paper should be recycled as scrap paper.
 1. For sensitive or confidential information, use a crosscut shredder, then recycle it.
7. Double sided printing and back to back photocopying should be undertaken where practicable.
8. Don't automatically print e-mails and documents. Retaining them on the hard drive reduces toner and paper usage, and you can find them again, if you need to.
9. Make use of e-mail in preference to hard copy mail.
 1. For example, for distribution of minutes of meetings. This not only avoids wasting resources but is cheaper and quicker.
10. Encourage the use of water in jugs at meetings rather than plastic water bottles.
 11. If you need a water bottle for car/train journeys, the gym etc make it a re-usable one.
 12. Where water dispensers are provided, consider installing those that draw and cool mains water, rather than bottled supplies.
 13. Where possible encourage the use of fair-trade tea and coffee, and other products.
 14. If it is practicable rechargeable batteries should be used, this is both economical and is far better for the environment.
 15. Don't buy fruit/vegetables pre-packed – it's more expensive and creates plastic waste.
 16. When you do buy loose fruit/vegetables, leave them loose and don't use plastic bags.
 17. Buy UK, ideally local, instead of overseas produced food (and other materials) and try to buy in-season foods – it's cheaper, healthier, reduces air miles and supports local businesses.
 18. If you do need to use disposable plates/cutlery at an event, buy cardboard, not plastic.

Section 2 - Managing Waste

1. Where cost effective, every effort should be made to recycle waste, such as cardboard, glass, paper and plastics.
2. Mobile phone, and toner and cartridge recycling can generate some income.
3. Include energy efficiency in your purchasing of electronic equipment - you'll use less energy, when you use them, and less waste when you dispose of them.
 1. Some supermarkets have battery recycling boxes you can dump your batteries into, and most waste sites will take you electronics.
4. Hazardous items, such as oils, chemicals, fluorescent tubes, batteries etc, and electrical items must be disposed of properly and not simply dumped in the bin.
5. Encourage the use of effective environmentally friendly cleaning products and other products.

Section 3 - Energy Use

1. When you next review your utilities, consider purchasing renewable energy. It probably not as costly as you think and, even if it cost a bit more, price isn't everything.
2. Ensure that staff are aware of the benefits of energy efficient systems including benefits to themselves in their own homes.
3. Energy efficient lighting should be used to replace any tungsten bulbs.
4. People should be encouraged 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.
5. Where practicable, heating should be turned down or off in unoccupied rooms or areas, with heating reduced to 'frost protection' levels when unoccupied, e.g., Christmas.
6. Ensure that doors and windows are not left open after cease work to save on heating costs and improve security.
7. Doors and windows should be draught proofed where practicable, loft spaces checked to ensure insulation is adequate, and pipes and hot water tanks should be properly lagged.
- 8.

Section 4 - Water Use

1. Turn off or repair dripping taps, which can waste up to 10,000 litres of water a year.
2. Cut down on the amount of water in toilet cisterns by placing a water-filled bottle in there or a bag filled with stones.
3. In hot weather turning the tap on to gain access to colder water can be wasteful; therefore, a jug of the water run should be filled and placed in the fridge.

Section 5 - Emissions and Transport

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

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.

Investment

We will review our investment policy, with the intention of moving to ethical funds wherever reasonable to do so, by following Charity Commission guidance on balancing ethical investment and financial return. Where reasonably feasible, we will not invest in assets that are particularly polluting or damaging to the environment.

Management

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

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

Communication

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

1. Induction and awareness courses.
2. Role definitions and appraisals.
3. Posters, newsletters etc.

Version Control - Approval and Review

Version No	Approved By	Approval Date	Main Changes	Review Period
1.0	Board	Apr 23		Annually