



Environmental and Sustainability policy

Policy review lead	CEO/SLT
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Consultation	SLT
Policy required for	Recruitment of Staff, Trustees and Volunteers

Environmental and Sustainability Policy

1. Introduction

Mind in Tower Hamlets, Newham and Redbridge (MindTHNR) recognises its responsibility to behave in an environmentally conscious and sustainable way. We recognise that we are facing a climate change emergency and that the ambition to reduce emissions to net zero needs to be accelerated and achieved before 2050.

We are aware that through our activities, we have an impact on the environment and contribute to climate change. We acknowledge the connection between the climate and other environmental crises and the threat of current and future homelessness, disease, food and water shortages and poverty for millions of people around the world, as well as the major damage being caused to our natural eco-systems.

We recognise that we all have a responsibility to reduce any negative impacts, promote positive action and address climate change. There are significant challenges for us all which will require extra effort and commitment in making positive changes and responsible choices to tackle our patterns of behaviour, and decisions.

Mind in Tower Hamlets, Newham and Redbridge therefore formally commits itself towards becoming an Environmentally Responsible Charity. To take this forward it commits to the following actions:

2. Management

- The Board of Trustees of Mind in Tower Hamlets, Newham and Redbridge mandates the Chief Executive to take responsibility for taking forward and implementing the organisation's commitment.
 - They are also requested to report annually on progress made, including statistical information on MindTHNR's annual energy carbon footprint, electricity, water, transport fuel and gas usage, total waste production, percentage of waste recycled, vegetarian meals provided, recycled paper and of renewable energy used and any other relevant environmental criteria.
 - This annual environmental report will also cover any positive progress made in helping its staff, clients and wider community improve their environmental performance.
- The organisation's annual impact statement will include a summary of this annual environmental audit of the charity.
- Progress on improvement of MindTHNR 'Environmental performance will be a standard item at senior management meetings.
- We will engage the whole organisation in environmental responsibility. All staff contracts will include a clause stating that staff will be expected to help MindTHNR in carrying out its aim of being an environmentally responsible organisation, in how they carry out their day-to-day duties.

- Induction procedures for new staff will include information on the charity's environmental practices.
- MindTHNR will ask all its current and future suppliers for their environmental policies and for evidence of implementation of such policies and indicate that such performance will be used as criteria for supplier selection.
- MindTHNR will seek to have relevant environmental clauses included in any future contracts agreed with outside bodies.
- MindTHNR will include environmental responsibility training in future staff training programmes, especially for those involved in providing advice to clients.
- MindTHNR will seek to make its premises as energy/water efficient as practical by reducing energy consumption and improving energy efficiency across our sites.
- MindTHNR will observe environmental legislation as a minimum standard and seek to out-perform current legislative requirements where practical.
- MindTHNR will develop and maintain a sustainable transport policy for their staff members and clients. We will seek to reduce unnecessary travel through hybrid arrangements and making the transport that is necessary as sustainable as possible. We will monitor progress annually.
- As part of this process, we will continue to engage and communicate with colleagues on our approach and our policies through training, internal communications and staff. We will also share and build on our experiences and knowledge by engaging with other organisations and our audiences.

3. Legislation applicable to this policy:

- Companies Act 2006
- Climate Change Act 2008
- Environment Act 2021

4. Scope

- This policy and guidance applies to all Kettering Minds services and operational activities within all locations.
- This policy and guidance is applicable to all employees, casual workers, trustees, volunteers, individuals that access Kettering Mind services and all visitors including those contracted to undertake work on behalf of the organisation.

5. Green Purchasing

MindTHNR commits itself to green purchasing that requires staff to judge any purchasing decisions on the basis of a green purchasing hierarchy:

- Eliminate:** Avoid producing waste in the first place
- Reduce:** MindTHNR will firstly question whether a purchase is strictly necessary and if it is, whether the amounts required could be reduced.
- Re-use:** MindTHNR will seek to buy re-used items in preference to new items where practical.
- Recycle:** If new items have to be purchased, will seek whether there is a feasible option of buying products made locally or from recycled materials or a more energy efficient model.
- Dispose:** Dispose of what's left in a responsible way

6. Our Commitments

Section 1 - Materials and Resources.

- Installation of recycling bins in our offices and/or at events.
- When ordering stationery, fundraising resources etc, we will do so in bulk. It costs less and reduces transport costs.
- Where practicable we will buy products manufactured from recycled waste.
- For fundraising, we will aim to buy items such as running vests made from recycled material and poly bags that are biodegradable and;
- Rather than printing leaflets, posters, fundraiser packs, etc we will create digital versions - not only are these more eco-friendly, these are also easier to share and cost less.
- Find eco-friendly suppliers, like the [Green Providers Directory](#).
- Find charity specific suppliers, for advice, try the [Charity Eco Hub Face Book page](#).
- Unused or single copied paper should be recycled as scrap paper. For sensitive or confidential information, use a cross cut shredder, then recycle it.
- Double sided printing and back to back photocopying should be undertaken where practicable.
- 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.
- Make use of e-mail in preference to hard copy mail. For example, for distribution of minutes of meetings. This not only avoids wasting resources, but is cheaper and quicker.
- Encourage the use of water in jugs at meetings rather than plastic water bottles. Make our own 'posh water' by adding slices of orange, lemon, cucumber, strawberry.
- If you need a water bottle for car/train journeys, the gym etc make it a re-usable one.
- Where possible we encourage the use of fair-trade tea and coffee, and other products.
- If it is practicable rechargeable batteries should be used, this is both economical and is far better for the environment.
- Not buy fruit/vegetables pre-packed – it's more expensive and creates plastic waste.

- When buying loose fruit/vegetables, leave them loose and don't use plastic bags.
- 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.
- If you do need to use disposable plates/cutlery at an event, buy cardboard, not plastic.

Section 2 - Managing Waste.

- Where cost effective, every effort should be made to recycle waste, such as cardboard, glass, paper and plastics.
- The Hippo 'Grants Up for Grabs' scheme awards free waste disposal help to applications from UK charities and community groups.
- Mobile phone, and toner and cartridge recycling can generate some income.
- Include energy efficiency in the purchasing of electronic equipment - you'll use less energy, when you use them, and less waste when you dispose of them.
- Encourage the use of battery recycling boxes to dump old batteries into and waste sites for electronic items.
- 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.
- Encourage the use of effective environmentally friendly cleaning products and other products such as e-cloths.
- A guide to minimising water waste in your office.

Section 3 - Energy Use.

- When we next review our utilities, consider purchasing renewable energy.
- Ensure that staff are aware of the benefits of energy efficient systems including benefits to themselves in their own homes
- Use of energy efficient lighting to replace any tungsten bulbs.
- We encourage you 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, heating should be turned down or off in unoccupied rooms or areas, with heating reduced to 'frost protection' levels when unoccupied; eg Christmas.
- Ensure that doors and windows are not left open after work to save on heating costs and improve security.
- 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.

Section 4 - Water Use.

- Turn off or repair dripping taps, which can waste up to 10,000 litres of water a year.
- We will aim to cut down on the amount of water in toilet cisterns by placing a water-filled bottle in there or a bag filled with stones.
- In hot weather turning the tap on to gain access to colder water can be wasteful; therefore we encourage all staff to use jugs of the water.

Section 5 - Emissions and Transport.

- We encourage drivers to not hard accelerate and brake, which wastes petrol. Cruising saves fuel and you get to your destination less stressed.
- 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 and where possible make use of online meetings to minimise travel.

7. Charity Environmental Regulation & Responsibilities

You can find the official guidance in Charity Commission RS17 (Charities And Environmental Responsibilities). There is also legislation governing waste and the environment, such as the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) and Energy Performance Of Buildings regulations.

The Environmental and Sustainable Policy shall be reviewed every three years.

Relevant Information:

2. Further information around carbon reduction and net-zero strategy can be found here:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/net-zero-strategy>