

Environmental Policy

June 2023

Healthwatch Cornwall acknowledges 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, therefore, recognise our responsibility to reduce our carbon and environmental footprint. We formally commit to being an environmentally responsible organisation and to complying with all current environmental regulations in our day-to-day work.

Responsibilities

Environmental protection is the responsibility of everyone and Healthwatch Cornwall expects staff, directors and volunteers to take individual responsibility for their part in reducing the impact of our business.

The **CEO** will have specific responsibility, working with the Board of Directors, to ensure that Healthwatch Cornwall meets statutory responsibilities and targets.

The **Board of Directors** will review our environmental performance annually.



The **Green Team** will create and manage the progress of the **Environmental Action Plan** meeting bimonthly to review performance and report to the Senior Management Team.

Reducing our environmental impact and improving our sustainability

Our approach to sustainability dictates that minimising all types of resource use should underpin everything that we do.

To that end, we are committed to:

- Introduce a Waste Hierarchy System to:
 - Eliminate producing waste in the first place
 - Reduce the amount of waste you do produce
 - Re-Use items as many times as possible
 - Recycle what you can only after you have re-used it, and
 - Dispose of what's left in a responsible way.
- Replacing existing IT and other office equipment with energy efficient models when it is 5 years old or breaks;
- Minimising the number of journeys made by car through the use of teleconferencing in preference to meetings;
- Persuading staff to use public transport or active travel where possible;
- Encouraging home working where appropriate in order to minimise home-office travel;
- Encouraging staff to car-share;
- Selecting rental cars on the basis of minimum emissions;
- Encouraging staff to cycle to work and to provide secure bike storage solutions wherever practicable;



- Using email and electronic media for internal communication wherever possible, thereby minimising the use of paper-based methods of communication;
- Recycling paper, glass, cardboard, plastic, print cartridges, other consumables and IT and telephonic equipment;
- Fitting low energy fluorescent light bulbs in all offices wherever practicable; and
- We encourage employees to help with litter picking by hosting events and providing equipment and time off. Engaging in this activity offers a multitude of advantages, including enhancing both mental and physical well-being, promoting environmental betterment, and fostering a sense of teamwork as well as purchasing environmentally friendly merchandise and reducing plastic bottles at events.

Financial implications of implementation

There will be costs involved in implementing the policy, in auditing and monitoring and in some of the changes that may follow. These costs will be offset through improved efficiency from reduced travel, heating and electricity costs.

What are we going to do?

There are four main areas of work to implement this policy and make Healthwatch Cornwall as sustainable as possible. These are:

- Travel
- Energy
- Waste
- Purchasing Policy

Environmental Action Plan



Travel

Active travel has many health benefits for individuals, as well as being better for the planet. However, we recognise that some of the actions below may be challenging, given the geography and infrastructure of Cornwall.

We encourage staff, directors and volunteers to think creatively about each journey they make and first ask the question, "Is this really necessary?" and then plan travel as environmentally friendly as possible.

Action	By whom	Mitigation already in place? (Yes/No/Partial)	To be in place by
Hold meetings via Teams or other teleconferencing facilities where practicable, to avoid unnecessary travel	All	Yes	Immediate
Only arrange physical meetings if it is possible to get to them by sustainable transport or walking/cycling or no alternatives are available.	All	Partial	Immediate
Encourage travel by public transport when organising meetings and conferences, choosing venues with good public transport access.	All	Partial	Immediate



Action	By whom	Mitigation already in place? (Yes/No/Partial)	To be in place by
Encourage staff to car share when travelling to events wherever possible.	All	Yes – incentive payment on mileage to car share.	Immediate
Travel by air is a last resort, which requires the permission of the CEO if no other credible alternative is available.	All		Immediate
Support home working where practical to reduce miles driven to work.	All	Yes	Immediate
Encourage staff to walk or cycle to work or meetings/events.	All	No	Immediate

Energy



Action	By whom	Mitigation already in place? (Yes/No/Partial)	When
Draw up a checklist on energy efficiency measures in the office (see Appendix 1), conduct audit and circulate results to all staff, directors and volunteers.	Green Team		By September 2023
Turn off all electrical appliances when not in use. Do not leave devices in standby mode.	All		Immediate
Place "Please turn off" reminders on switches where appropriate			
Use low energy light bulbs and reduce the use of lights in areas with a lot of natural lighting.	All		As Replaced
Use energy saving measures on PCs and purchase low energy models for replacement as due.	All		Ongoing
Work with the landlord towards long term	All		Ongoing



Action	By whom	Mitigation already in place? (Yes/No/Partial)	When
improvement of building insulation			
Thermostats to be set between 18°C and 21°C	All		Immediate
Turn off lights when not needed and when leaving the room.	All		Immediate
Shut doors and windows to retain heat.	All		Immediate
Use Renewable energy tariffs for utilities, wherever possible	All		Ongoing
Use Renewable heating sources wherever possible	All		Ongoing

Waste



Action	By whom	Mitigation already in place? (Yes/No/Partial)	When
<p>Ensure staff put no recyclables into the black bags.</p> <p>Monitor the amount of copy paper used in a year and ensure that this does not grow.</p> <p>Increasing use of e-mail and data storage should enable cuts in paper use to be made.</p> <p>All waste to be disposed of with a licenced waste carrier and processor</p>	Green Team/All		Immediate
<p>Recycle paper, cardboard, plastic, glass, printer cartridges, computers, toner, drinks cans, bottles and magazines. All waste to be disposed of with a licenced waste carrier and processor</p>	All		Immediate



Action	By whom	Mitigation already in place? (Yes/No/Partial)	When
Send e-mails, not letters, wherever practicable	All		Immediate
Print on both sides of copy paper.	All		Immediate
Use China mugs and plates instead of disposables in offices. Where disposable options need to be considered, e.g., for events, purchase environmentally friendly, biodegradable options and provide recycling sorting options.	All		Immediate
Ask staff to send in their ideas for reducing waste. Collate and distribute to all offices.	Green Team		April Annually
Reduce purchasing of single use plastic wherever practicable	All		Immediate
Disposal of disinfectant for biosecurity measures to be	All		Immediate



Action	By whom	Mitigation already in place? (Yes/No/Partial)	When
disposed of in line with manufacturer's instructions			

Purchasing Policy

Action	By whom	Mitigation already in place? (Yes/No/Partial)	When
Buy what is best for the environment.	All		Immediate
"Close the Loop" by purchasing recycled materials wherever possible.	All		Immediate
Print all promotional material on recycled paper.	All		Immediate
Minimise use of printers and print in draft and greyscale unless vital.	All		Immediate
Purchase local food for events to reduce food miles	All		Immediate



Action	By whom	Mitigation already in place? (Yes/No/Partial)	When
and support local producers.			
Purchase environmentally friendly cleaning products in offices.	All		Immediate

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Appendix 1 – Environmental audit checklist

Checklist Questions:			
POLICY/ GOVERNANCE/ RESPONSIBILITIES	Completed Y/N	Comments/Evidence	Info
Appoint a Green Team			
Senior management commitment to sustainability.			
Sustainability is an agenda item at SMT and Board meetings			
We are aware of the legal responsibilities associated with our work			
We annually review our			



environmental management arrangements			
Sustainability is included in job descriptions as standard			
RESOURCES	Completed Y/N	Comments	Info
Green Team reviews needs for staff training/skills for sustainability			
INDUCTION PROCESS	Completed Y/N	Comments / Evidence	Info
Sustainability included in new staff, volunteer and director inductions.			
Records are kept of induction training completion			Training records
WASTE	Completed Y/N	Comments	Info



We provide appropriate bins for rubbish and recycling.			
Correct bins bags in bins.			
Bins collected by the cleaners and/or taken to the correct main waste disposal point.			
Collection point for used toner cartridges which are reused/ recycled by the supplier.			
All electronic waste is recycled including; batteries, portable and non-portable electrical items.			



ENERGY	Completed Y/N	Comments	Info
Controls are in place to ensure items are switched off when not in use:			
•Computers			
•Lights			
•Heating/cooling			
•Equipment			
•Kitchen Equipment			
Portable Heaters are not used			
WATER	Completed Y/N	Comments	Info
Controls are in place to ensure water using items are switched off when not in use. This could be stickers, posters etc.			



Free standing water bottle coolers, which require deliveries, are not used			
PROCUREMENT	Completed Y/N	Comments	Info
Sustainable suppliers are used for purchases and services			
We purchase copy paper which is 100% recycled content			
We consolidate orders for stationery supplies			
We buy cleaning products that have the EU Ecolabel or Cradle to Cradle label.			



FOOD	Completed Y/N	Comments	Info
We buy catering for events from local suppliers			
For events, disposable items are not used			
All tea, coffee and sugar purchased for offices is Fairtrade			
TRAVEL	Completed Y/N	Comments	Info
We promote public transport usage by staff, volunteers and directors.			
Teleconference facilities available, promoted and used			
Cycling and active travel is supported			



EVENTS	Completed Y/N	Comments	Info
Risk assessments for events consider sustainability			

