Mental Health Foundation - Environmental Policy

With this organisation housing a substantial number of people, we acknowledge our activities have an environmental impact. This Environmental Policy expresses the commitment to sustainability within the organisation. An essential principle of our new strategy is commitment to sustainability in our practices from a people, financial and environmental perspective. Through managing the environmental impacts of our own activities, we aim to inspire and encourage our users to reduce their own adverse environmental impacts.

Impacts

MHF recognises our key environmental impacts to be:

- Emissions to the atmosphere from the use of carbon-based energy in the building
- Emissions to the atmosphere due to consumption of resources from the use of water, heat, and materials
- Consumption of fuels (staff, volunteers, visitors travel to building)
- Production of waste materials
- Procurement and the environmental performance of our suppliers

Objectives

- Establish carbon neutral operations through improved energy efficiency and purchase of renewable energy supply
- Minimise resource consumption and purchase goods which have the least environmental impact throughout their lifecycle
- Reduce waste at its source and re-use or recycle materials
- Perform purchasing decisions taking account of product and supplier environmental performance
- Comply with or exceed relevant legislative and regulatory requirements, applying best practices
- Continue our commitment to best practices in this area, by maintaining awareness of current developments and technical excellence, ensuring that our practices and advice to other organisations have the maximum positive impact
- Engage organisational staff in the training and awareness of best practices

Motivations

- *Moral obligation:* We are a third sector organisation with ethical values. It is important that we take responsibility for our impact on the environment, and its impact on people's health and wellbeing, in a climate and ecological emergency
- *Organisational:* An environmental policy can enhance our reputation within the community, and funders often now request to see one, as part of the grant proposal and approval process
- *Staff:* An environmental policy can improve staff welfare - physical and mental. Engaging in something worthwhile at work can extend to other aspects of daily life and at home. Some members of staff are experiencing eco-anxiety and it is important that they feel their workplace is taking the eco-crisis seriously
- *Saving Money:* Improving energy and resource management can achieve cost efficiency. Organisations can save considerable sums by moving to sustainable practices, although average savings tend to be around £1,200 per annum

Specific practices to undertake:

Energy

- Use renewable energy provider(s)
- Consider insulating, solar or wind power where possible
- Switch off IT equipment and appliances when not in use
- Buy energy efficient appliances and lighting
- Ensure there is an energy efficient heating/cooling system

Waste

- Provide enough recycling bin stations and remove desk bins
- Remove water machine and kettles and replace with hot and cold-water taps
- Install printing fob on printers to reduce paper waste
- Dispose of IT equipment correctly and recycle where possible

- Recycle printing cartridges and re-use where possible
- Encourage minimal printing and aim to go paper free
- Encourage electronic documents and e-signing of forms and in processes
- Replace paper towels with hand dryers in most instances
- Set printers to default double sided and black and white
- Minimise amount of printers
- Minimise use of paper and plastic at events

Water
- Install water meters to record water use
- Purchase water efficient appliances

Procurement
- Avoid the use of all single use items where possible, especially plastic, e.g. cups, crockery, bottled drinks, by sourcing reusable alternatives
- Procure stationary from an ethical stationary source
- Procure eco cleaning products e.g. Ecover, Method
- Place orders for materials in bulk to avoid excess packaging
- Avoid unethical companies where possible
- Source ethical food for meetings and events with limited or no plastic packaging
- Encourage procurement of mostly vegetarian or vegan food at meetings and events as much as possible

Travel
- Default no flying policy unless justified or if flying is the only reasonable option, and signed off by an applicable authoriser e.g. line manager, even if flying is cheaper
- Default to using technology systems for remote meetings instead of travelling
- Promote train season ticket and cycling scheme
- Provide facilities in offices to encourage environmentally beneficial modes of transport e.g. showers, bike park

Communication and reporting
- Present environmental policy to new starters in induction process
- Add environmental policy on staff intranet
- Communicate policy externally to funders, organisations, supporters and other stakeholders
- Provide appropriate signage in the office to encourage environmentally friendly behaviours
- Record carbon use, water, waste, how we travel to work. Present these findings quarterly or bi-annually to staff via email or on Intranet

Other
- To ensure that any banking, investment and pension arrangements are aligned with this policy

Commitments
To deliver this policy, MHF makes the following commitments:
- Continually improve our environmental performance through setting objectives with specific targets
- Ensure that the separate procurement and travel policies are aligned and consistent with the environmental policy
- Use internal resources and available sustainability agencies as needed to meet this commitment
- Review our progress in pursuing this Policy annually and report to all those involved

Signed: **Name/Position:**

Dated: **Date of Next Review:**