

## Environmental and Sustainability Policy

We recognise that we have a responsibility to the environment and are committed to preventing pollution and to reducing our environmental impact and continually improving our environmental performance as an integral part of our business strategy and operating methods. We will encourage customers, suppliers and other stakeholders to do the same.

Our Group Operations Director is responsible for ensuring that the environmental policy is implemented. However, all employees have a responsibility in their area to ensure that the aims and objectives of the policy are met. We also encourage employees to implement good practices in their homes.

We endeavour to:

- Comply with and where possible exceed all relevant regulatory requirements.
- Continually improve and monitor environmental performance.
- Continually improve and reduce environmental impacts.
- Incorporate environmental factors into business decisions.
- Increase employee awareness and training.

### Paper

- We will minimise the use of paper in the office.
- We will reduce packaging as much as possible.
- We will seek to buy recycled and recyclable paper products.
- We will reuse and recycle all paper where possible.

### Energy and water

- We will seek to reduce the amount of energy used as much as possible.
- Lights and electrical equipment will be switched off when not in use.
- Heating will be adjusted with energy consumption in mind.
- The energy consumption and efficiency of new products will be taken into account when purchasing.
- We will seek to reduce our consumption of water.

### Office supplies

- We will evaluate if the need can be met in another way.
- We will evaluate if renting/sharing is an option before purchasing equipment.
- We will evaluate the environmental impact of any new products we intend to purchase.
- We will favour more environmentally friendly and efficient products wherever possible.
- We will reuse and recycle everything we are able to.

### Transport

- We will reduce the need to travel, restricting to necessary trips only.
- We will promote the use of travel alternatives such as e-mail or video/phone conferencing.
- We will make additional efforts to accommodate the needs of those using public transport or bicycles.

### Cleaning and waste disposal

- Cleaning materials used will be as environmentally friendly as possible.
- Materials used in office refurbishment will be as environmentally friendly as possible.
- We will only use licensed and appropriate organisations to dispose of waste.
- Our IT support company will recycle IT parts where possible and, where not, will dispose of all waste IT equipment through an Environment Agency accredited disposal company.

### Monitoring and improvement

- We will comply with and exceed all relevant regulatory requirements.
- We will continually improve and monitor environmental performance.
- We will continually improve and reduce environmental impacts.
- We will incorporate environmental factors into business decisions.

- We will increase employee awareness through training.
- We will review this policy and any related business issues at our regular management meetings.

## Culture

- We will involve staff in the implementation of this policy, for greater commitment and improved performance.
- We will update this policy at least annually in consultation with staff and other stakeholders where necessary.
- We will provide staff with relevant environmental training.
- As far as possible we will work with suppliers, contractors and sub-contractors to improve their environmental performance.
- We will use local labour and materials where available to reduce CO2 and help the community.

## Climate positive business

- As part of our commitment to doing business the right way and being a force for good, Social will offset 100% of its GHG emissions through the Ecologi carbon reduction scheme, which enables us to be a climate positive business.

## Home working

We will encourage our staff to adopt the following good practices when working from home:

- **Cut down on heating** – With staff working from home in houses that are normally empty by day, there will be an inevitable increase in carbon emissions from home heating. One of the easiest things to be aware of is not keeping the thermostat too high – each 1 degree reduction can lead to an 8% saving on your energy bill and carbon emissions (Carbon Trust). If you have TRVs (thermostatic radiator valves, the dials on the ends of radiators), you could use these to direct heating to rooms that are in use. Curtains and blinds are also a great way to keep heat in overnight, although if the sun comes out it's worth letting in as much as you can! Even a small draft can lead to a significant perceived reduction in thermal comfort, so consider simple draft proofing measures like draft excluders. Adhesive foam strips around ageing window seals can also be a 'quick win' to save energy (bearing in mind any existing condensation issues). Lastly, just wrap up warm! More guidance on energy saving at home can be found at <https://www.simpleenergyadvice.org.uk/> or <https://www.which.co.uk/reviews/cutting-your-energy-bills/article/how-to-save-on-your-energy-bill/10-ways-to-save-on-energy-bills>.
- **Minimise energy use** – While there's not much you can do to cut the electricity use of your computer, you can still make sure it's switched off when you finish for the day, and perhaps even set to 'sleep' or a low-power mode when on lunch breaks. If you're carrying out a DSE of your home workstation, you may also wish to consider the brightness of your screen. A screen which is too bright not only causes eye strain, but also uses more energy! One major draw on electricity is kettles for your morning cup of tea or coffee, particularly when just making one cup at a time. By filling the kettle using your mug, rather than from the tap, you can judge how much water you really need, speed up boiling time, and put a dent in your energy use.
- **Purchasing** – While you can reduce your energy use, another option to consider is switching to a green energy supplier. There are many comparison sites, a number of which will allow you to specify a green supplier only. Suppliers are required to report on their 'energy mix', stating where they source their energy from. If you've made that switch already, why not consider switching to an ethical bank?
- **Promoting biodiversity** – If you're stuck at home, there is evidence that workers who have views of nature felt less frustrated and more patient, and reported better health than those who did not have visual access to the outdoors (UK Green Building Council). A simple rearrangement of your desk to view the outdoors is one thing, however even better could be spending breaks or evenings, or even your normal commuting time, getting outdoors and enjoying nature. If you have a garden or even a small outdoor space at home, why not consider taking a break to try out one of the biodiversity improvement projects at [RSPB.org](https://www.rspb.org.uk).

- **Cutting waste and recycling** – By spending more time at home you're likely to be generating more waste, and disposing of it via your home waste collections rather than at work. It's therefore worth using this as a chance to familiarise yourself with your [local council recycling guidance](#). It could also be a chance to cut down on disposable or takeaway packaging by making home-cooked food, ideally using up leftovers.
- **Sustainable food** – On the topic of home cooking, if you have a little extra time in the evening thanks to a reduction in commuting time, you could use it as an opportunity to try out some new meals. One of the most significant actions an individual can take to minimise their carbon footprint is to reduce meat consumption, so why not explore some meat-free recipes?
- **Re-booking holidays** – While many will be disappointed at having to cancel holiday and travel plans, this could be a chance to think about the carbon footprint of your trips, which for many people is one of the [top contributors to their carbon footprint](#). Holidaying in the UK could be a lower-carbon option, but to go the extra mile if you've had to cancel hotel or accommodation, why not consider booking a green option? [Green Tourism](#) offers a search function for accredited accommodation.

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