

## Sustainable Working in the Voluntary Sector

### Introduction

Sustainable Development is a way of living and working that aims to ensure that people today meet their needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

The Charities FM Group is an informal network that aims to help charities get the best from their premises and facilities.

Our members are very interested in all aspects of sustainability, from energy conservation to ethical purchasing. We have found that many property managers in the voluntary sector want to work in a "greener" way, but sometimes don't have the internal support, or the tools, to do so.

We decided to draft a model policy for charities to adopt.

We were aiming to produce a policy that sets out a commitment to the principles of sustainable development.

We hope that charities will adopt this policy at board-level, so that we can see voluntary sector organisations start making a public commitment to address the issue of sustainability in the way they manage their facilities.

This in turn will give Facilities Managers the encouragement and support they need to implement sustainable policies in their organisations.

## Sustainable Development - Model Policy

### Sustainable Development

**Sustainable Development meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs**

1988 United Nations Brundtland Report on  
Environment and Development

#### Introduction

Our organisation accepts the challenge of an evolving social, political and technological environment by inviting and guiding change rather than reacting to it. Our Organisation is committed to leadership in order to achieve this goal.

Our organisation needs to be aware of the impact of all its activities on the environment and on communities. This Policy sets out our approach to managing and mitigating such impacts and a commitment to action through:

## **A) A Commitment to Educating our Communities:**

Our Organisation recognizes that sustainable development begins with, and can only be achieved if, all members of our organisation's community are educated about the Policy and the importance of accepting responsibility for putting it into practice.

We are committed to making sure all members of our community are made aware of the Policy and develop a clear understanding of how it applies to them individually.

## **B) Responsible Purchasing Policies:**

We recognize that environmentally responsible purchasing will help create and sustain markets for environmentally sensitive products.

We are committed to this goal by purchasing products with zero waste products, high recycled content, produced in an environmentally sustainable manner, which demonstrate maximum durability or biodegradability, repair-ability, energy-efficiency, non-toxicity, and recyclability.

We will take reasonable steps to assess suppliers' policies and practices, and will aim not to purchase goods or services from a supplier if supply chain employment conditions are found to be unacceptable and there is no demonstrable improvement plan.

### **C) Maximum energy efficiency and conservation:**

We are committed to maximizing energy efficiency in heating, cooling, lighting and water systems. The Organisation actively encourages staff participation in energy reduction measures.

We are committed to the long-range goal of maximum use of renewable-energy sources.

### **D) Elimination of solid waste; primarily through reduction, secondarily through reuse, and finally through recycling:**

The Organisation will follow the principles of ***Reduce, Reuse, Repair, Recycle*** in managing its environmental impact.

The Organisation is committed to waste source reduction.

Our charity is committed to reuse materials in order to maximize economic, environmental, and energy efficiency.

We are committed to comprehensive recycling as a last resort, and as a means to transform waste into a resource.

### **E) Sustainable design principles in land-use, landscape and building planning:**

We support landscaping and grounds maintenance practices which promote integrated pest management and use of native vegetation.

This policy implements all applicable European, national and local laws, regulations and executive orders.

## **F) Transport:**

The Organisation supports pedestrian travel, bicycle use and otherwise minimum environmental impact modes of transportation.

## **G) Implementation:**

The Organisation will set up a Sustainable Development Working Group, which shall be responsible for monitoring compliance with this policy.

The Sustainable Development working Group will compile a set of key performance indicators (KPIs) that will act as a guide as our organisation works towards implementing this policy. Each KPI will set a measurable target, and the charity will review its performance against these targets annually.

This policy statement shall be reviewed annually and updated as needed by the Sustainable Development Working Group.

---

For more about the Charities FM Group and our work to promote sustainable facilities management, visit the Charities FM Group homepage:

<http://www.upkeep.org.uk/cfm/index.htm>