



## Environmental & Sustainability Policy

### Document history

| Process              | Date          |
|----------------------|---------------|
| Author: Alison Heron | 16 March 2025 |
| Trustee Approval     | 16 March 2025 |
| Next review due      | 16 March 2026 |

**Policy statement:** This policy aims to outline measures Sew Positive will take to manage the environmental impacts of how we operate. This will include how we reduce, reuse and recycle

waste within the organisation, how we reduce our carbon footprint, and also our policy on purchasing.

### **Sew Positive will**

- Investigate becoming a Carbon Neutral charity by 2030
- Measure and reduce emissions to see progress and identify priorities
- Investigate investing in carbon offsetting, through regulated and verified schemes, to become carbon neutral
- Aim to minimise the use of all materials, supplies and energy used by the organisation
- Review the need for an Environmental Action Plan at the 2025 AGM
- Minimise waste produced in all areas of the organisation, reuse and recycle waste where possible, and aim for waste-free processes
- Investigate signing up to the Cambridge Climate Change Charter to record, share and reduce the organisation's carbon emissions
- Publicise our environmental position and encourage others we work with to adopt similar environmental policies
- Aim to include environmental and ethical considerations in purchasing
- Aim to only invest in ethical suppliers who work in a sustainable way. We will ask suppliers to provide their own sustainable strategy, policy or credentials to determine this
- Minimise the need to travel by car wherever possible.

### **Waste reduction**

- Use both sides of paper wherever possible
- Effective use of IT (including e-mail) to prevent unnecessary printing and duplication (adjusting font sizes and margins to allow documents to fit onto one piece of paper, print preview prior to printing, thorough proofing of large print-runs before printing)
- Provision of proper cutlery and crockery for use by volunteers and visitors in preference to disposables
- Minimise printing of meeting papers where possible
- Work towards becoming a paperless organisation.

### **Waste reuse**

- Purchase of second-hand furniture and similar items whenever feasible
- Saving and reusing envelopes where possible
- Printing draft documents on the back of paper which has already been used on one side.

### **Recycling**

- Recycling all materials where local facilities (free or otherwise) exist
- Use an eco-tank printer rather than disposable cartridges
- Recycling, gifting or repurposing furniture and other items as much as possible
- Donating unwanted fabrics, patterns or small haberdashery to other charities or community groups
- Educate participants, volunteers and suppliers on the Circular economy, textile waste and fast fashion.

## **Energy and water consumption**

- Use of low energy light bulbs
- Use of power-down features on electronic equipment
- Switching off equipment at the mains when not in use
- Turning off lights and heaters when not needed, and use of adequate insulation
- Use of primary fuels over secondary fuels
- Use of rechargeable batteries in preference to non-rechargeables
- Responsible use of water with minimal wastage
- Washing fabrics on eco machine settings and drying naturally where possible.

## **Purchasing**

- Purchase of products containing recycled material for office use
- Purchase of eco-tank refillable cartridges where possible
- Buying in bulk to reduce packaging waste
- Buying in returnable and refillable containers where possible and appropriate
- Specifying the use of proper crockery and cutlery, milk jugs rather than individual portions, and other reduction and reuse measures at events
- Purchase of environmentally friendlier goods where such information exists, for example avoidance of over-processed goods or those unnecessarily bleached or dyed
- Using environmentally friendly software where this is an option
- Using upcycled or donated fabrics for services wherever possible.

## **General working environment**

- Carrying out an annual office tidy-out and waste amnesty
- Regularly servicing all office equipment to maintain optimum operating efficiency and longevity
- Encourage energy saving methods in community venues such as turning the thermostat down a setting, unplugging devices, making the most of natural light and using energy saving light bulbs.

## **Green travel**

- Look at alternative ways of travelling to meetings such as car sharing
- Encourage volunteers and participants to choose lower-impact travel alternatives, like cycling and public transport
- Organise meetings/events in a central location accessible by different forms of transport
- Set up meetings in one location on same day to minimise travel and improve use of time
- Provide a mileage allowance for trustees and volunteers cycling on Sew Positive business.

## **Meetings**

- Minimise meetings to avoid travel
- Increase the number of online meetings and events.