

POLICY AND PROCEDURE



SoLO
Life
Opportunities

38 Walnut Close
Chelmsley Wood
Birmingham
B37 7PU

Charity No. 1102297
England Company No.
5025939

Environmental

Category: Health & Safety

Introduction

At SoLO we recognise our responsibility to protect and preserve the environment for future generations and we are resolved to provide a service of quality in a manner that ensures a safe and healthy workplace for our employees. In doing so, we are committed to minimizing our overall impact on the environment while encouraging environmentally responsible behaviour among our staff.

We will achieve this by operating in compliance with all relevant environmental legislation and striving to use environmental best practices in all we do.

1. Policy Statement

We believe that SoLO Life Opportunities has a direct responsibility for the health of the immediate environment. We will seek to carry out our activities as responsible stewards of the environment and deliver our services in a manner that leaves it healthy and safe.

We recognise that this is a long term commitment and we will continually update our practices and monitor our performance as circumstances change.

We will foster a positive attitude towards the environment by staff, volunteers, members and visitors to the organisation.

2. Legislative Framework

This policy is guided by the Environmental Responsibility For Charities Guidance from The Charity Commission and the recommendations and best practices suggested by the Environment Agency (this list is not exhaustive).

3. Aim

The aim of this policy is to contribute to an organisation ensuring that it is environmentally responsible. This approach contributes to a service of quality while continually carrying out all reasonably practicable measures to continually improve its environmental commitment and performance.

This will be achieved by:

- Integrating the consideration of environmental concerns and impacts into our daily decision making and activities
- Minimising our waste and then reuse or recycle as much of it as it is possible.
- Minimising energy and water use within our building and activities in order to minimise the consumption of natural resources
- As far as is possible, purchasing products and services that do least damage to the environment.
- Training, educating and informing our staff about environmental issues that may affect their work.
- Promoting environmental awareness among our staff and encourage them to work in an environmentally responsible manner.
- Engage and inspire staff, visitors, family of user members, the public or any other interested parties to make positive impacts on the environment encouraging them to support our environmental commitment.

4. Responsibilities

4.1 Organisational Responsibility

SoLO is responsible for continually demonstrating its commitment to providing a quality service while minimising the potential impact on the environment in its employment practices and activities. This includes promoting environmentally responsible practices and compliance with all relevant environmental legislation throughout the organisation and the community in which we operate.

To achieve this SoLO must:

- Ensure the incorporation of this policy's principles into other SoLO policies, procedures and practices.
- Identify priorities and set environmental objectives
- The Board will delegate responsibility for implementation of this policy to the CEO who will ensure that employment practices are compliant with environmental legislation

4.2 Line Manager Responsibility

All Line Managers must set an appropriate lead by example and encourage that those they manage adhere to the policy and promote our aims and objectives with regard to environmental friendly practices.

To achieve this Line Managers should:

- Communicate to their staff that concern for the environment is a top priority at SoLO, promoting and encouraging an environmentally responsible behaviour on their staff.
- Ensure that their staff are given appropriate training on environmental awareness and best practices.
- Each Line Manager will be asked how they will improve their environmental performance.

4.3 Individual Responsibility

- SoLO expects all staff members to act in accordance with this policy and to behave in an environmentally responsible way in the normal course of their duties while encouraging an environmentally responsible behaviour among other staff members and users.
- All staff should be guided, by their line managers, on appropriate practice in relation to the environment.

5. Scope and procedure of this policy

- 4.1 This policy applies to all activities undertaken by SoLO and extends to staff, volunteers and third parties related to the organisation.
- 4.2 We will monitor, measure and report upon our progress and any financial savings which result, where appropriate.
- 4.3 All staff, volunteers and users of the Organisation will be educated about the reasons for the Environmental Policy and our progress with the implementation.
- 4.4 This policy must be reviewed in light of our current and planned future activities at regular intervals to ensure it remains in line with environmental legislation and best practices and SoLo's organisational principles and values

6. Environmental focus areas

6.1 Green Housekeeping

- We will practise what we preach, by utilising the buildings we use (where applicable) showing practical demonstrations of good environmental housekeeping.
- Where elements of the control over the buildings are outside of our remit (e.g. where we are leasing a building, or hiring rooms) we will seek to positively control those areas that we can – for example, turning heating down rather than opening a window, recycling waste as far as possible, using equipment in a respectful manner.

6.2 Working areas

- We will ensure that our working areas are used in such a way that supports good management of waste, energy and resources. For example, where we are the sole occupant of a building (i.e. our head office base, or the Fire Station) we will put in place systems to manage waste, economise on energy and generally keep the place in good order (clear of litter, graffiti etc.)

6.3 Energy

- Save energy by practices such as minimising artificial lighting and make use of natural light, when possible, keeping doors and windows closed, switching off unwanted lights, only used required lights, electrical equipment and heaters ensuring radiators are not blocked with furniture
- We will use low energy bulbs for lighting.
- We will encourage staff to take responsibility for managing the energy expended within their work station – e.g. turning off monitors and computers when leaving for a significant amount of time – when going to meetings or leaving for home.
- We will monitor room temperatures and agree a mutually acceptable level and encourage staff to take personal responsibility for their own comfort (wearing suitable clothing if cold etc.)
- When we are involved in any ‘new builds’ we will ensure that all of the work complies with the best practice in energy saving – for example thermostatically controlled radiators, motion sensor lighting.
- Heating will be adjusted with energy consumption in mind and controlled by time clocks to ensure that we are not heating buildings unnecessarily. Avoid heating unused spaces such as corridors

- Consider the use of natural energy sources for example Solar Panels
- We will monitor energy use and the savings achieved on a regular basis
- We will invest, when possible, in new technologies and systems that enhance energy conservation
- If possible, energy management will be included as an integral part of planning for future projects to reduce the consumption of energy.

6.4 Waste

- We will seek to reduce the production of waste as much as possible, for example, we will have signage on all monitors encouraging people to 'think before they print' or if necessary, we will print double-sided or re-using paper
- We will use emails, text messaging and website to communicate as much as possible, reducing reliance on paper and postage.
- We will dispose of waste conscientiously following "reduce/reuse/recycle".
- We will re-use waste materials where possible
- We will maximise on the opportunities for wastes to be separated and recycled and look at ways in which we can increase this (for instance, if we move to offices with garden opportunities we can then introduce composting waste within the office)
- We will recycle paper, plastic, print cartridges, glass and will seek to add to the recycling offer as opportunities arise (for example – batteries)
- We will seek to reduce the use of plastics by using paper straws and cups rather than plastic ones where possible
- We will ensure all wastes are stored and disposed of safely

6.5 Purchasing/Procurement

- We will evaluate if renting/sharing is an option before purchasing equipment.
- The energy consumption, efficiency of new products and environmental impact will be taken into account when purchasing as well as assessing the environmental credential of our suppliers
- We will seek to use environmentally friendly products wherever possible, in particular:
 - biodegradable cleaning products
 - recycled paper products

- We will look to purchase materials in a joined up way that minimises on waste and we will try to use local and green energy suppliers when possible, to reduce travel costs and carbon emissions.
- Work in partnership with our suppliers and contractors to minimise the environmental impact of goods and services
- We will use websites such as freecycle and providers such as In-Kind as first choice before searching new product providers.

6.6 Resources

- We will follow practices that minimise the waste of resources such as food.
- We will encourage healthy eating by providing fruit as an alternative to sweet snacks at meetings and on project.
- We will educate our members, by example, by choosing healthy options.

6.7 Water

- We will seek to reduce the amount of water used as much as possible, for example by avoiding leaving a tap dripping.
- We will invest, when possible, in new technologies and systems that enhance water conservation.
- If possible, water management will be included as an integral part of planning for future projects to reduce the consumption of energy.

6.8 Transportation

- We will promote the use of travel alternatives such as e-mail or video/phone conferencing, when possible.
- We will favour 'green' vehicles and maintain them rigorously to ensure ongoing efficiency
- Reduce unnecessary vehicle use by staff and learning disabled members of the organisation; by encouraging sharing of vehicles, and use of public transport.
- Where possible, we will provide the opportunity for staff, volunteers and learning disabled members to use alternative forms of energy saving transport (e.g. bikes) by providing places to safely store their vehicles and also a place to change and store their clothes.

6.9 Local environment

- We will co-operate in reducing litter in the neighbourhood.
- We will join and support environmental organisations, locally and nationally as appropriate.

6.10 Maintenance and cleaning

- Cleaning materials used and materials used in office refurbishment will be as environmentally friendly as possible.
- We will try to use licenced and appropriate organisations to dispose of waste.

7. Related Policies

- Health and Safety
- Reimbursement of Travel and Other Costs.