



Herts Vision Loss

Environmental Policy

1. General statement of intent

Herts Vision Loss recognises that it has a responsibility to do what it can to contribute to a healthy and sustainable environment. It will take positive steps to work towards addressing its adverse environmental impact through good management and sustainable operational practices within the constraints of its resources and its operating environment.

2. Responsibilities

The Board

The Board of Directors as Trustees is the employer and has overall and final responsibility for ensuring that HVL meets its responsibilities in relation to all relevant environmental legislation. Trustees will also ensure the development of a strategic commitment to the environment, which goes beyond adherence to minimum legal requirements. The Board of Trustees will review this policy annually.

Chief Executive Officer

The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for ensuring that this policy is put into practice. In particular the Chief Executive will ensure that:

- employees receive sufficient information and training to enable them to translate this policy into organisational culture.
- staff are aware of their responsibilities to their volunteers in relation to the environment and sustainability.
- there are arrangements in place to properly monitor this policy
- that managing our commitment to the environment is internally driven, from a sense of commitment by the organisation and its employees wherever they are based.
- those responsible for environmental issues have the resources to carry out their work effectively.

All trustees, paid staff and volunteers will be expected to play their part in making this policy work and to contribute to its ongoing development. HVL staff and volunteers should follow the good practice guidelines listed in this policy and contribute new ideas for consideration at staff meetings. Policy issues to be considered by the F&GP Committee.

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3. General Principles

These General Principles will apply to all areas of HVL's operations; but additional specific considerations will apply to the Hemel Centre and these are included at the end of this section.

3.1 Waste management

HVL will, where-ever possible, make efficient use of natural resources and adopt effective waste management procedures to minimise the volume of waste deposited to landfill. HVL will encourage the re-use and recycling of materials and will use facilities provided by the landlord to recycle paper. Ink and toner cartridges will be disposed of to organisations that are able to accept them for re-cycling purposes.

3.2 Energy use

HVL will reduce its energy use as much as possible.

3.3 Environmental purchasing

HVL will consider appropriate environmental criteria, if such information is available, when purchasing products and services including the selection of contractors and suppliers who can demonstrate environmental management and performance in line with this policy. If practicable, the energy consumption of new equipment will be assessed when making purchasing decisions, and wherever possible, Fairtrade considerations will be incorporated into procurement decisions. HVL will endeavour to purchase environment-friendly products such as organic, recycled, locally sourced or chemical free.

3.4 Water consumption

HVL will endeavour to use water efficiently and optimise our use of natural resources by encouraging employees, volunteers, and visitors to conserve water.

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3.5 Transport

HVL will continue to work to reduce the negative environmental impact of travel by encouraging staff who need to travel as an essential part of their role to plan their routes as efficiently as possible to reduce unnecessary journey's and/or mileage. It will also encourage, wherever possible, volunteers and visitors to consider other means of travelling such as use of public transport.

3.6 Partnership / raising awareness

HVL will co-operate with voluntary, private and statutory sector partners to raise awareness of environmental issues. The organisation will make this policy publicly available.

3.7 Training

HVL will ensure that our employees have an awareness of environmental issues, and that any with particular environmental responsibilities are provided with appropriate training. HVL will ensure that our environmental policy is an integral part of our induction and training programme.

3.8 Additional Issues for the Hemel Centre

As owners of the building, HVL will have direct accountabilities that are in addition to the duties we are under as lessees at the Woodside Centre. The Hemel Centre Committee (HCC) will endeavour to adopt the following principles relating to the running of the building:

Waste Management. The HCC will be encouraged to identify the best practicable environmental options for the disposal of waste and encourage the re-use and recycling of materials. Facilities to recycle glass, plastic, paper and ink cartridges to be provided where practicable.

Energy use. The HCC will be encouraged to ensure the buildings energy systems are run effectively and efficiently and that energy usage is monitored and reduced where possible.

Water consumption. If practicable, HVL will install water management systems.

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Building management and maintenance. Building improvement programmes will take into account environmental considerations, including sustainability, carbon management and the use of ethical supply chains. HVL will assess and measure the most significant environmental impacts and set realistic targets for improvement. HVL will monitor progress to reduce carbon emissions as we repair and replace features of our property.

Environmental Policy: Good practice guidelines for staff and volunteers

Use of Paper

- Staff and volunteers should use double sided options for printing and copying where possible, and should only print when necessary.
- Minutes of meetings and other internal documents should be distributed electronically, where ever practicable.
- Scrap paper should be used where practical and waste paper should be recycled in the bins provided.
- Staff should cancel junk mail wherever possible.

Energy Use

- The photocopier to be switched off by the last person to leave the office. Any other equipment not in use should be turned off at the end of the day.
- Lights should be switched off when not in use.
- Radiator thermostats should always be set to the minimum comfortable level.
- Computers energy saving settings should be set correctly, where available. Computers, computer monitors and printers should be switched off overnight or when not being used for a few hours.
- Staff should turn off and unplug stand-by appliances when not in use, including things like mobile phone chargers, fans and microwave ovens.
- Rechargeable batteries should be used where possible.
- Routine maintenance of small equipment should be undertaken, i.e. defrosting and cleaning of coils for fridge/freezers to make them work more effectively

General

- Use of plastic cups should be avoided and instead glasses and ceramic cups/mugs should be used.

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- Efficient use of office supplies is encouraged and they should not be disposed of until they have reached the end of their useful life.
- Staff and volunteers should reduce consumption and reuse or recycle where possible.
- Staff and volunteers should avoid unnecessary car use and wherever possible use other travel methods, such as public transport.
- Staff and volunteers should avoid unnecessary water consumption

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