

GRCC Environment Policy

1. Introduction

GRCC recognises the aggregate effects of its activities, policies and procedures on the environment at a local, regional and global level and as a result of its impacts, GRCC has initiated an Environmental Policy with an associated Action Plan.

This policy provides guidance to GRCC employees, Trustees and other volunteers on how to reduce our impact on the environment and recognises that we must all - as individuals and teams- work together to reduce our environmental impact.

2. Environmental Impact

GRCC recognises its environmental impact:

- Greenhouse Gas increases and depletion of fossil fuel from heating and electricity use at Community House.
- Greenhouse Gas increases and depletion of fossil fuel, especially from car travel to and from work, meetings, other external activities plus cost of transporting materials for consumption as part of our work- from food to paper.
- Treated water use at Community House.
- Depletion of resources through, especially, paper use at Community House.
- Ozone Depletion by direct use of VOCs (Volatile Organic Compound(s)) found especially in photocopier ink toner used at Community House.
- Increase in waste products to landfill.

GRCC Trustees have devolved responsibility for driving forward this Environmental Policy and the Action Plan to the SLT, and expect them to be fully committed to the policy and action plan.

3. Mitigating Action

GRCC takes the following mitigating action to reduce its environmental impact:

Efficient Energy use

GRCC minimises energy use and achieves this by raising awareness of employees and volunteers regarding the energy efficiency measures that we can all implement in the buildings in which we work.

GRCC replaces older office equipment with more energy efficient products and technologies, through utilising best practice and by incorporating more stringent energy efficiency measures into future plans.

Efficient use of water at Community House

GRCC makes the most efficient use of water. We achieve this by raising awareness among employees and volunteers of water efficiency, and through use of more water efficient products and technologies (through best practice), and by following the relevant measures in our Action Plan.

Travel

GRCC recognises that the nature of its work with rural communities in a county with limitations to public transport availability inevitably requires a certain level of car use.

GRCC minimises the dual impact of fuel consumption and exhaust emissions by adopting measures to promote responsible transport use by employees and volunteers (including Trustees). These measures include use of public transport wherever practicable; car sharing between GRCC employees, volunteers and other partners with whom we work; multiple-destination journeys; and cycling / walking for local journeys. Flexibility to normal working hours enable use of public transport for the commute to work.

Minimising Waste and Recycling

GRCC promotes a strategy of managing its waste by adopting the process (in order) of refusal / reduction, re-use and repair, and finally recycling. Reduction includes minimising the amount of printing in favour of electronic versions of documents. The final option of recycling is achieved by having centres for recycling paper, cardboard, plastic, glass, cans and batteries at Community House, plus promoting use of similar centres in other venues.

Resource Consumption

GRCC adopts a responsible purchase and procurement policy which considers both the impact of the product on the environment, and the wider ethical concerns of goods and services that are purchased. GRCC encourages employees and volunteers to source locally produced food and drink for conference catering and to contract with local catering companies. GRCC employees consider energy efficiency when procuring new equipment and GRCC considers alternative energy suppliers when contracts are due to be negotiated. In addition, GRCC's work includes projects that encourage the circular economy, for example redistribution of local refurbished IT hardware.

Service Delivery

In delivering its own services GRCC considers potential environmental and social impact, e.g., when considering location of venues for events. GRCC leads by example by hiring community buildings for GRCC events, such as village and community halls, and venues which have good links to public transport, and through use of online meetings for service delivery.

GRCC promotes environmental awareness and individual and corporate responsibility through its work with stakeholders (both communities, and partner agencies). We

encourage stakeholders to adopt environmentally sensitive policies and practices, within the spirit of GRCC's own policy.

4. Monitoring and Delivery

- GRCC uses the [Green Impact](#) environmental quality toolkit, developed by the National Union of Students, as its framework for self-assessment of its environmental performance, and for driving forward continual improvement.
- GRCC is legally bound to meet all relevant environmental regulations and laws, and will regard this as the minimum standard of environmental performance.
- GRCC ensures that employees and volunteers are aware of this environmental policy; of their impact on the environment; and that environmental improvement requires the support of the whole team. This is achieved through the induction of staff and volunteers, through team meetings and through encouragement and demonstration of best practice across all levels of the organisation.
- Employees are also informed of amendments to practice and of achievements at Team Meetings, although environmental issues will also be discussed in the interim.

5. Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years to revise, update and amend wherever necessary and to check for implementation.