National Survivor User Network

Policy name	Environmental Policy
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Associated policies	Health and Safety Policy Ethical Policy
Privacy	External

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1. Introduction

1.1 NSUN acknowledges the urgent threat the climate and biodiversity emergency present to human life. We recognise we have a collective duty to act now to mitigate the impact of this crisis. We acknowledge that the negative impacts of climate change and biodiversity decline are disproportionately borne by persons and communities already in disadvantaged situations. This is because of geography, poverty, gender, age, disability, cultural or ethnic background. There are inextricable links between climate change and economic inequality.

1.2 As a remote organisation, NSUN has significantly lower environmental impact due to reduced travel and digital events than many office based/face-to face organisations. We are also able to eliminate the energy consumption that is normally associated with the running and upkeep of an office building. However, this means that our collective energy consumption is shifted into our individual homes, and into the venues we hire for staff meetings and other in-person work. It is recognised that everyone will address climate change in different ways and to different extents, depending on their personal circumstances. Where possible NSUN will support its staff and trustees to make choices that have less impact on the environment. This policy aims to set out some suggestions about how to achieve this.

1.3 Ultimate responsibility for NSUN's environmental performance is with the Head of Operations and Finance although all staff, trustees and volunteers are responsible for following this policy on a day-to-day basis. The Head of Operations and Finance and will make sure this policy is:

1.3.1 Documented, implemented and maintained.

1.3.2 Communicated to all involved.

1.3.3 Reviewed regular in light of best practice guidance.

2. Purpose

2.1 NSUN aims to continuously improve our environmental performance by ensuring we comply with UK environmental legislation. Where possible we will go further than these regulations and increase staff and volunteer awareness by providing support to ensure NSUN reduces it carbon footprint where possible.

2.2 The following guidelines will help to achieve the overall aims of the policy.

3. Home working

3.1 Energy consumption

We consume large amounts of gas and electricity, which is both expensive and uses up non-renewable natural resources. All our staff work from home or remotely as we don't have our own office space. Within the parameters of health and safety, we will encourage staff to minimise the use of energy, in their own homes. This can be done through a range of practical common-sense measures, including:

3.1.1 Switch off lights and other appliances (e.g. fans, printers) if they are not needed.

3.1.2 Use low energy bulbs wherever possible.

3.1.3 Adjust radiators via the thermostatic valves to produce a comfortable temperature.

3.1.4   Turn off computers when not in use.

3.1.5   Fill the kettle with the required amount of water rather than to the maximum (if this is not needed).

3.1.6   Consider a green energy supplier where possible.

3.2   **Communication**

We live and work in a world where we communicate using lots of different methods. These have an impact on the environment as energy is used to varying degrees. We will question:

3.2.1   Can we send an email instead of printed hard copies (unless required for access reasons)?

3.2.2   If we print hard copies, we should use recycled paper and print double-sided to reduce paper use.

3.2.3   Don't discard unused paper which can be used as scrap (if it doesn't contain confidential or sensitive data which must be destroyed).

3.3   NSUN encourages our staff to share any other top tips for reducing energy consumption and communication when working from home.

4.   Reduce, reuse, recycle

4.1   NSUN aims, where possible, to follow a green purchasing policy that requires staff to judge any purchasing decisions based on a green purchasing hierarchy, which is:

4.1.1   **Reduce**: we will question whether a purchase is strictly necessary and if it is, whether the amounts required could be reduced.

4.1.2   **Re-use**: we will seek to buy re-used items in preference to new items where practical.

4.1.3   **Recycle**: if new items have to be purchased, we will see whether there is a feasible option of buying products made locally from recycled materials or a more energy efficient supplier.

5.   Suppliers and consumables

5.1   We will consider the environmental policies of suppliers, alongside value and accessibility requirements, when we make purchases, decide on new suppliers and review existing suppliers. This will include financial products where possible. We will do this by:

5.1.1   Making sure potential purchases are planned in advance to enable time to source more sustainable options.

5.1.2   Requesting the environmental policies of regular suppliers and seeking to find suppliers whose environmental policy aligns with that of NSUN.

5.1.3   Considering if the purchase is necessary in the first place, could the quantity be reduced (e.g shared between staff) and could a reusable version be purchased (e.g. refillable printer cartridges).

5.1.4   Considering what the purchase is made from (e.g. could the item be sourced locally, purchased second hand or made out of recycled materials).

5.1.5   Considering the quality of the product and whether it is fit for purpose and likely to last.

5.1.6   Considering end of use of the product where applicable and how it might be reused of recycled.

5.2   When a product is no longer in use, we will consider the most environmentally way to dispose of the item. This may include redistributing it to another member of staff or arranging for it to be recycled where possible.

6.   Meeting externally and catering

6.1   Although most of our activity is online, staff, members, trustees and volunteers may occasionally attend meetings, projects and activities externally. When sourcing and booking venues, we will consider the following, alongside value and accessibility requirements:

6.1.1   Green meeting spaces.

6.1.2   Taking reusable mugs and water bottles.

6.2   When arranging catering and/or making food purchases for meeting externally, we will consider the following, alongside value and accessibility requirements:

6.2.1   Using caterers who use minimal or recyclable packaging where possible.

6.2.2   Using local suppliers.

6.2.3   Avoid over catering and ensuring that leftovers can be taken home.

6.2.4   Ensuring that those wishing to reduce their environmental impact around their food choices are catered for e.g. vegan food available and alternative milks for teas and coffee offered.

7.   Travel

7.1   Although most of our activity is online, staff, members, trustees and volunteers may occasionally travel to our meetings, projects and activities. In order to minimise our environmental impact, we will encourage staff and trustees to consider the most environmentally friendly option for travel based on their circumstances. We recognise that this will be different for different people. These options might include using public transport, walking, sharing car journeys and using electric/hybrid taxis.

7.2   Where the most environmentally friendly option is more expensive than another form of transport then we will consider this on a case-by-case basis.

8.   Grants

8.1   NSUN recognises that for many of the user-led groups we fund, accessibility and value for money will be vital considerations. Over the course of the year, we will seek to build environmental considerations into the information we provide for grant applicants and will consider more expensive estimates of costs for items with a lower environmental impact when considering applications.