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Version 1

rethink.org

Environmental Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to promote sustainable environmental practices across Rethink Mental Illness, recognising the strong connection between environmental well-being and mental health. By minimising our environmental impact, conserving resources, and fostering healthy, green spaces, we aim to create environments that support both individual mental well-being and community resilience. This policy guides our commitment to environmental responsibility, aligning our activities with practices that enhance the health of both people and the planet.

Scope

This policy applies to all activities, services, premises, and operations conducted by Rethink Mental Illness including offices, outreach programs, events, and digital platforms. It is relevant to all employees, volunteers, Trustees, contractors, and partners who work with or on behalf of the charity.

Although our core mission is to support mental health and wellbeing, we recognise that environmental sustainability is closely linked to public health and social responsibility.

Therefore, this policy guides how we manage our environmental impacts as we deliver our services and engage with the community.

This policy covers:

- Energy and water usage in our buildings and facilities
- Office and event-related waste reduction and recycling
- Sustainable sourcing of supplies and printed materials
- Travel and transportation choices for staff and volunteers
- Environmental impact of digital operations (e.g., data storage, device use)
- Awareness-raising about the connections between environmental issues and mental wellbeing

By integrating environmentally responsible practices into our daily operations, we aim to reduce our carbon footprint, protect natural resources, and model sustainability in line with our values of care, integrity, and community wellbeing.

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Policy Statement

At Rethink Mental Illness we are committed to reducing our environmental impact as part of our mission to support mental health and wellbeing. We recognise that a healthy environment is essential for healthy lives.

We aim to:

- Use energy and resources responsibly
- Reduce waste and increase recycling
- Encourage sustainable travel and working practices
- Work with eco-conscious partners and suppliers
- Raise awareness of the links between the environment and mental health

We will comply with environmental laws and strive for continuous improvement in our sustainability efforts.

Procedure

To implement and maintain our Environmental Policy, Rethink Mental Illness will follow the procedures outlined below:

1. Roles and Responsibilities

- Senior leadership will oversee the implementation of the policy and ensure adequate resources are provided.
- Our Environmental Lead will coordinate activities, monitor progress, and report on performance.
- All staff and volunteers are responsible for following environmentally responsible practices in their roles.

2. Training and Awareness

- Staff and volunteers will receive regular guidance on sustainable practices, such as reducing waste, conserving energy, and making eco-friendly choices.
- Environmental considerations will be included in inductions and team meetings as appropriate.

3. Sustainable Operations

- Offices and service locations will adopt energy-efficient measures (e.g., turning off lights and devices, using efficient appliances).

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- Digital operations will aim to minimise energy use (e.g., reducing unnecessary data storage or printing).
- Events and outreach programs will follow low-waste, low-impact planning guidelines.

4. Travel and Transport

- Staff and volunteers are encouraged to use public transport, cycle, walk, or car-share where practical.
- Remote working and virtual meetings will be used where appropriate to reduce travel-related emissions.
- We offer an electric vehicle salary sacrifice scheme through Octopus Electric Vehicles, enabling employees to reduce their carbon footprint while benefiting from savings on the cost of an EV, including insurance, maintenance, and charging offers.

5. Procurement and Suppliers

- Preference will be given to ethical and environmentally responsible suppliers.
- Eco-friendly products (e.g., recycled paper, non-toxic cleaning supplies) will be prioritised.

6. Monitoring and Review

- Environmental practices will be monitored regularly by the Estates Team..
- An annual review of the policy and procedures will be conducted to assess progress and identify areas for improvement.
- Feedback from staff, volunteers, and stakeholders will be encouraged and used to inform improvements.

Related Rethink Mental Illness documents:

Environmental, Social and Governance Strategy

Carbon Reduction Plan

Procurement Policy

Expenses and Travel Policy

Health and Safety Policy

Equality Impact Assessment

The content of the policy does not adversely affect any group with protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010.



Authorised by:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M. Winstanley".

Chief Executive

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