

The Bridge Trust Environmental Policy

The Bridge Trust seeks to be an environmentally friendly organisation and we seek to demonstrate this through minimising the environmental impact of our operations. However, it must be acknowledged that as a charitable organisation, our stakeholders fund us to provide assistance to homeless people and this must be maintained as our prime objective. It therefore follows that we also have a responsibility to our supporters and funders to use our resources as effectively and efficiently as possible, not only to reduce our environmental impact but also to save money where practicable.

In addition, we have a duty of care to our residents and any decision affecting our environmental impact must take into consideration the wellbeing of our residents. For example, we would ideally want to remove immersion heaters where installed, but if this leaves the residents constantly without enough hot water, then either the heater will remain or an alternative will need to be found.

We will fulfil our environmental responsibility by:

- complying with all relevant legislation and regulations
- regularly reviewing the environmental impact of our activities in order to ensure we reduce our overall environmental impact and prevent excess waste
- involve employees, volunteers and residents in our environmental programme
- sustain a programme of continual improvement in environmental performance incorporating suitable measurement and monitoring
- improve resource efficiency.

1. Energy and Water

a) Recording and monitoring

- On-going records will be kept of all energy usage across all properties. This will include tariff prices, consumption and contract end dates
- Records will be checked quarterly to identify and react to any anomalies/increase in usage
- Gas and electric meters will be read for at least the quarterly bills to minimise the impact of estimated bills

b) Reducing Usage - Electric

- Lights and electrical equipment will be switched off when not in use
- Only low energy light bulbs (e.g LED's) will be used throughout our properties
- Electric heaters will not be used except in an emergency – e.g. if the gas central heating is not working
- The energy consumption and efficiency of new products will be taken into account in purchasing decisions, with only B or better energy rated appliances being bought
- The use of immersion heaters will be kept to a minimum and removed from our properties where it does not impact on the wellbeing of our residents

c) Reducing Usage - Gas

- Central heating controls will be adjusted with energy consumption in mind
- Heating controls (thermostats and timers) will be secured where possible/safe to do so and checked weekly where not

- The energy consumption and efficiency of new central heating boilers will be taken into account in purchasing decisions, with only A+ energy rated appliances being bought
- Existing boilers will be replaced if their annual check shows a less than 60% efficiency
- All radiators will be thermostatically controlled
- All pipework in areas that do not require heating will be adequately insulated
- Draft exclusion will be reviewed annually and measures taken to renew or improve areas identified as letting-in drafts
- Loft areas will be insulated to the approved thickness
- Doors will be UPVC and all windows double-glazed
- Cavity walls will be insulated
- Single thickness walls will be insulated where room sizes allow and costs are realistic
- Thermometers will be available to residents in each bedroom to promote the regulation of temperatures

d) Reducing Usage - Water

- Water meters will be installed where possible
- Water efficient (aerating) taps and shower heads will be installed throughout our properties where cost effective to do so
- Dripping taps, showers etc will be fixed immediately

2. Renewable Energy Sources

We will research and implement any renewable energy sources as appropriate, particularly the implementation of Photovoltaic (electricity generating) and or Solar Thermal (hot water generating) panels. However, this will only be pursued after a house has been assessed as being thermal efficient and we have received confirmation from an installer, accredited under the Microgeneration Certification Scheme, that such energy sources will be effective and efficient.

3. Waste

a) Paper

We will:

- Minimise the use of paper in the office wherever possible
- Reuse packaging as much as possible
- Seek to buy recycled and recyclable paper products
- Reuse and recycle all paper where economically feasible.

b) Office Supplies

We will:

- Assess whether renting/sharing is an option before purchasing equipment
- Assess the environmental impact of any new products we intend to purchase and favour more environmentally friendly and efficient products wherever possible
- Reuse and recycle everything we are able to.

4. Maintenance and Cleaning

Cleaning materials used will be as environmentally friendly as possible. Materials used in refurbishments will be as environmentally friendly as possible and we will only use licensed and appropriate organisations to dispose of waste.

5. General Measures

We will:

- Annually review the Environment Agency website (www.netregs.gov.uk) to ensure on-going compliance with regulations
- Conduct annual Environmental Compliance Assessments to ensure our on-going commitment to implementing and maintaining environment friendly measures
- Ensure our properties have an Energy Performance Certificate showing an Energy Efficiency rating of D or better and an Environmental Impact Rating of D or better
- Involve staff in the implementation of this policy, for greater commitment and improved performance
- Update this policy at least once annually in consultation with staff and other stakeholders where necessary
- Use local labour and materials where available to reduce CO2 and help the local community

6. Culture, Promotion and Awareness

We will:

- Update this policy at least annually in consultation with staff and other stakeholders where necessary
- Continually promote environmental issues and actions with staff and volunteers
- Continually promote environmental issues and actions with our residents and include such issues and actions as part of our residents' support

Policy Reviewed By	Date
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Policy Signed-off By	Date
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