

GM Freeze Sustainability Policy



VERSION 1

Adopted 11 May 2016

1. Introduction

Sustainability is “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. It means improving the quality of life for people today, as well as thinking about those who will live after us. A key component of this is the urgent need to consider and reduce the climate change impact of everything we do. The purpose of this policy is to set out the goals to which GM Freeze aspires in terms of environmental, economic and community sustainability, both locally and globally. Furthermore, it will affirm our commitment to take all reasonable measures to reduce any contribution to climate change.

2. Procurement of supplies

GM Freeze staff, Management Committee members and volunteers will consider a range of sustainability issues in all procurement decisions. They will make every effort to minimise any negative impacts whilst also bearing in mind the needs of the organisation and financial constraints.

- 2.1 We will place the highest priority on avoiding the purchase of any item in which genetically modified crops have formed part of the supply chain. This will have a particular impact on the provision of catering and fabrics.
- 2.2 We will support Fairtrade, organic, recycled (eg paper), reusable (eg refillable ink cartridges) and sustainably sourced items, favouring accredited products over those which make unsubstantiated claims.
- 2.3 When we produce items (eg promotional materials) we will consider the impact of all aspects of production (eg inks as well as paper) and the impact of disposal (eg ensuring that all paper products can be recycled by end users).
- 2.4 We will take particular care to choose food and drinks that have been produced responsibly, fairly and sustainably, bearing in the mind the often disproportionate impacts of intensively produced meat and dairy products.
- 2.5 We will favour local suppliers, seek to avoid imported goods and consider issues of waste.
- 2.6 We will consider the longevity, repair-ability and energy efficiency of appliances and equipment, considering the benefits of re-conditioned equipment where available.
- 2.7 We will favour furniture and other major purchases that are recycled, refurbished or certified as created from sustainable sources.
- 2.8 We will avoid purchasing single-use, disposable items or those that appear to cause harm to the environment wherever practical alternatives exist.

3. Waste Reduction

Staff, Management Committee members and volunteers will make every effort to minimise waste by applying the “reduce, reuse and recycle” model. For example:

- 3.1 We will choose products with less packaging when these are available and meet our needs.
- 3.2 We will provide tap water instead of bottled water.
- 3.3 We will ask providers of unwanted mail to remove us from their databases.
- 3.4 We will use e-mail rather than paper communication where practical, and only print out e-mails when necessary.
- 3.5 We will print documents only when absolutely necessary and proof read on screen where practical.
- 3.6 We will use washable plates, cups and cutlery providing food/refreshments. If it is absolutely necessary to use disposables we will favour compostable or recyclable items and ensure these are disposed of appropriately.
- 3.7 We will give away or sell unwanted office equipment where possible; consider recycling as a second best option and only dispose of via landfill if absolutely necessary.
- 3.8 We will use local facilities to recycle used paper, plastic, glass, metal, cardboard, printer cartridges and food waste.
- 3.9 We will reuse paper which has only been used on one side and reuse envelopes, unless doing so constitutes a breach of security or confidentiality.

4. Energy efficiency

GM Freeze staff, Management Committee members and volunteers will aim to conserve energy wherever practical and take measures to reduce the climate change impact of our work. For example:

- 4.1 We will reduce unnecessary heating and lighting, especially when work or meeting spaces are left unattended.
- 4.2 We will take particular care in our use of electrical equipment. This means:
 - We will use energy-efficient modes, for example changing default settings to ‘draft’, ‘economy’ printing options, double sided printing, black and white, Toner Save mode, low dpi and narrow page margins, ‘eco’ power saving mode, lower screen brightness or similar options.
 - We will switch off computers, monitors and printers if they are to be left unattended for periods of longer than 1 hour.
 - We will avoid using non-rechargeable batteries.
 - We will reduce the number of appliances left on ‘stand-by’.
 - When using kettles, we will boil only the amount of water needed at the time.

5. Transport

GM Freeze staff, Management Committee members and volunteers will aim to travel by the most sustainable, low carbon methods practical and to avoid unnecessary travel.

- 5.1 GM Freeze does not have an office, and most work is done from home. This reduces the impact of commuting but increases the amount of travel undertaken to facilitate meetings. The sustainability impact of the location of candidates for staff posts, the Management Committee and other roles will be considered, alongside a range of other factors, when making appointments.
- 5.2 We will encourage staff, Management Committee members and volunteers to walk, cycle or use land-based public transport rather than drive. To support this, private car mileage will be paid for journeys necessarily taken in this way but at a lower rate than the Inland Revenue maximum. Bicycle mileage will be paid at the Inland Revenue maximum rate.
- 5.3 We will only use air travel where no practical alternative exists. Air travel must be agreed in advance with the Management Committee. GM Freeze will organise virtual links to events where practical and effective.

6. GM Freeze's place in the local community

While the remit for GM Freeze's work is national, we aim to contribute to the local communities in which our staff, Management Committee members and volunteers are based. This means:

- 6.1 We will use local services wherever practical.
- 6.2 We will continue to function as a resource base for our member organisations, other civil society bodies and the general public.
- 6.3 We will work in partnership with local organisations where appropriate.

7. Promoting sustainability

GM Freeze staff, Management Committee members and volunteers will encourage the use of sustainable practices amongst our stakeholders, supporters and local communities. For example:

- 7.1 We will publicise our commitment to sustainability through our website, social media channels and other communications.
- 7.2 We will favour suppliers with a commitment to sustainable practices.
- 7.3 We will encourage sustainable practices among partners and other stakeholders, for example, through partnership agreements.

8. Responsibility

The Director is responsible for ensuring that this policy is effectively implemented. All staff, Management Committee members and volunteers are encouraged to raise concerns about matters covered by this policy which are being insufficiently addressed and to suggest matters not covered by this policy which could be included in future revised versions.

9. Review

This policy will be reviewed and updated at least every three years.