

GREENBANK CHURCH: ETHICAL PROCUREMENT POLICY

‘Where your treasure is, there will be your heart also’ Matthew 6:21

Introduction

This document is designed to set out Greenbank’s requirements and commitments in the area of purchasing/procurement and sustainability. Eco congregations are concerned to act wisely in the responsible stewarding of the earth’s natural resources. Church expenditure in this framework needs to be in line with Christian ethical values and due concern for the environment.

Obviously, occasions will arise where strict adherence to the policy is not practical. In such circumstances a “best endeavours” basis should be adopted.

Ethical Procurement Policy

This policy will cover all areas of procurement and have a clear set of standards to which suppliers are expected to adhere including :

- Comply with the law in all areas of their operation
- Comply with the Modern Slavery Act 2015
- Respect human rights, including non-discrimination in employment for reasons of gender, race or religion
- Provide a safe and healthy working environment
- Provide acceptable working conditions and clear terms of employment
- Pay a living wage
- Respect the right to join trade unions and bargain collectively
- In business practice, pay invoices promptly
- Comply with relevant tax regimes and anti-bribery legislation
- Comply with environmental regulations.

This policy will be communicated effectively to all staff and church organisations. Any other organisation making use of church premises will be encouraged to view and comply if appropriate. It will be published as part of church literature and made available via the church website. The church’s regular and major suppliers will be engaged to ensure compliance with the policy. This will be undertaken at the time of next order when a copy of the supplier’s ethical procedures and supply chain will be requested. A register of approved contractors will be created.

Ethical Procurement in Practice

The in-house policy for purchasing can be divided into a number of categories –

- Equipment and furnishings
- Office, kitchen and non-food consumables
- Food
- Clothing
- Flowers
- Utilities
- Travel

In the Equipment and Furnishings Area

- Wooden goods should be sourced from either recycled or FSC certified sources of timber wherever possible. Plastics should be avoided but where no option exists then recycled plastic should be chosen where possible.
- Major equipment purchases will be the subject of supplier checks set out above, to ensure ethical origins in materials and manufacture.
- Carpets, curtains and surface finishings such as paint and varnish will be assessed for environmentally friendly components and materials.
- All electrical equipment and appliances purchased will be of A+ energy rating and all light bulbs will be LED or low energy specification.

In Respect of Office and Kitchen Supplies

- The guiding procurement principle will be to consume only environmentally friendly products which are sourced locally where possible.
- ethicalsuperstore.com and thegreenoffice.co.uk will be the default enquiry sources for supplies for goods in this category if financially viable.
- Paper and printing supplies are already obtained from sustainable sources from the church's equipment supplier, Kyocera.
- Ecover cleaning products will be used, or any similar environmentally friendly range of cleaning products.

In Food Procurement

The Church will aspire to meet **LOAF** principles, ensuring that purchases are

- **Locally produced**, so as to support local producers, boost the local economy and lower carbon emissions.
- **Organically grown**, preventing the loss of bio diversity, soil depletion, and pollution and agro-chemical resistance caused by industrial farming.
- **Animal friendly**, using only free-range eggs, meat from outdoor reared animals, and using a higher proportion of vegetarian and vegan products in catering.
- **Fairtrade based**, especially for products which are imported from abroad. Tea and coffee are already bought in this way, but sugar and other consumables will also be covered.
Fairtrade communion wine and grape juice will be used in communion services.

In the Use of Flowers

- The use of imported cut flowers will be reduced and eliminated in due course so that pesticide and fertiliser use will be limited and fuel use and climate change gas generation diminished.
- Locally produced flowers and/or garden flowers will be used for church flowers along with pot plants which can be redistributed and sent to other beneficiaries. Pots to be returned where possible.

Utilities and Energy

- The church energy contracts already ensure the purchase of renewable energy, but these will be kept under annual review to ensure ethical supplier standards and cost effectiveness.
- A major review of energy use and related equipment, to ensure, over time, the removal of the church's reliance on gas supplies will be initiated. This will be done in conjunction with longer term premises renewal and refurbishment plans, and the need to radically improve insulation and local energy generating potential. A move to renewable electricity consumption, installing our own solar panels and using heat pump or other energy efficient solutions to replace gas for heating and cooking will be programmed in due course where the financial implications are considered reasonable and technological advances in these areas allow.
- Water consumption will be reduced and measures to re-use rainwater for garden and planter watering put in place.

Travel and Communication

- Individuals on church business are encouraged to walk, cycle, use public transport or car share (in this order) before using a private car on journeys necessary to fulfil church services and activities. Electric or hybrid vehicle use is preferred.
- As a general rule, written communication should be by electronic means, and the use of paper and other consumables minimised.

Closing the Loop

A key feature of this policy is also to maximise the scope for recycling and re-use. Church goods and equipment no longer needed will be disposed of for re-use by others, or recycled to ensure that their content is not lost.

The Church will –

- Create a local freecycle scheme to allow church members to recycle their goods in the local community, to include a 'green corner' for goods exchange and an electronic register of available donations and requests. Alternatively, Greenbank Eco-Forum is on Facebook where items can be advertised.
- Collect spectacles for redirection to developing countries.
- Continue to collect postage stamps for charitable purposes.
- Operate a tool collection service to assist charities tool refurbishing projects.
- Create a tool lending scheme within the Congregation if storage space allows.
- Establish composting arrangements to ensure that food waste and other materials is safely and hygienically re – used in the church and other gardens if needed.
- Church groups will be encouraged to direct funds raised from donations to promote ethical purchase of supplies, support selected charities and consider carbon offsetting initiatives.
- Packaging associated with purchases will be minimised and recycled where possible.