

# Brake's environmental policy



Nov 16, Mary Williams

## Statement

Brake recognises the primary importance of protecting the environment, and particularly reducing greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) to mitigate climate change.

The charity recognises and embraces its responsibility to reduce its own carbon and environmental footprints, particularly through our approach to transport (the focus of our charity) which contributes about a quarter of GHG emissions, but in other ways too.

Brake will observe environmental legislation as a minimum standard and seek to out-perform current legislative requirements where practical, in line with the below policies.

### **A Our environmental transport policy (as per our 'methods of transport' policy, contained in our staff handbook)**

- 1 Brake staff who work in Brake offices are required to live within a reasonable commuting distance, and journey to Brake by sustainable or active transport means (e.g. bus, train, walking, cycling) and not car, unless permission has been given for reasons specific to need.
- 2 Staff who need to travel to business meetings are also required, where possible, to use sustainable or active transport means as described above and in particular to endeavour, whenever possible, to organise meetings to take place at Brake premises (very accessible by public transport), or at other locations that are also accessible, reducing the need for taxis.

Additionally:

- Brake will not offer company car or car purchasing benefits, and will endeavour to engage, as practicable, in schemes that promote cycling / walking.
- Staff involved in international work will, on occasion, fly on behalf of the charity. When doing so, airlines with sustainability policies and programmes are selected (wherever possible).

### **B Our environmental office policy**

Brake requires an office through which to administer our operations. We recognise the environmental impact of the location and nature of our office, and work to mitigate this impact by:

- Ensuring our office is within short walking distance of a train station and cycle storage
- Using an office commensurate with our size of operation and no bigger
- Seeking to power, light and heat our offices from sustainable energy sources
- Ensuring equipment, lights and heat are switched off at night
- Enabling recycling
- Running a 'paperlite' policy, reducing printing needs
- Maintaining a shower room to encourage cycling and walking/running to work

### **C Our ethical investment strategy (contained within our investment strategy)**

Brake has a small amount of reserves at any given time and operates a cautious investment strategy. Consequently we rarely have opportunities for investment. Should we have the opportunity to invest, we have an investment strategy that requires the charity to invest ethically, inclusive of not investing in fossil fuels.

### **D Our environmental purchasing policy (contained within our procurement policy)**

Brake commits itself to purchasing decisions on the basis of a green purchasing hierarchy:

- Reduce: Brake will firstly question whether a purchase is strictly necessary and if it is, whether the amounts required could be reduced.
- Re-use: Secondly it will seek to buy re-used items in preference to new items where practical and complies with health and safety requirements.
- Recycle: If new items have to be purchased, will seek whether there is a feasible option of buying products made locally, from recycled materials or a more energy efficient model. Brake will only buy new sustainable wood products with FSC (forest stewardship council certification).

### **Monitoring of our environmental policy**

A short annual environmental impact report will be provided by the office manager to the chief executive, for presenting to the Board of Trustees, regarding aspects of performance relating to A-D as above. This will include presenting the following recorded items:

- any car travel (by miles) undertaken on behalf of the charity in personal cars by staff, comparing year on year (monitored from expense claims);
- number of taxi rides undertaken on behalf of the charity (monitored from expense receipts);
- any staff who drive to work and reasons why;
- airlines used by the charity and why and miles travelled;
- amount of energy used to power, heat and light our offices;
- percentage of energy from sustainable power sources;
- amount of photocopying paper used and type of paper;
- sustainable purchases by the charity of note, and commentary on changes in sustainable purchasing
- any additional, recordable items that emerge of relevance to this policy.