



Bridging the Gap (Manchester) Environmental Policy

Registered Charity Number: 1170952

This policy and procedure will be reviewed annually. This will ensure this document remains current and fit for purpose.

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1. Purpose

Bridging the Gap (BTG) aims to be environmentally friendly. The purpose of this policy is to set out BTG's commitment and the responsibilities of those who work for the organisation in regards to observing and upholding our environmental commitments.

The policy also acts as a source of information and guidance for those working for BTG. It helps them recognise environmental issues and take actions, as well as understand their responsibilities within the local climate change agendas.

2. Introduction

BTG operates its service within the Greater Manchester region; an area that wants to reach a climate neutral state by 2038.

As an organisation operating within this region, BTG recognises that a healthy environment is fundamental to the prosperity and wellbeing of the local community. Furthermore, BTG acknowledges that, whilst our activities may have adverse effects on the environment, steps can be taken to minimise those impacts.

BTG acknowledges that the environment is important and will therefore comply with and, where possible, exceed all environmental regulations, laws and codes of practice, as applicable.

BTG aims to make a positive contribution to environmental growth by protecting and enhancing the local and global environment.

3. Aims of the Policy

The aims of the BTG's environmental policy are to: -

- make the most efficient use of all resources it uses
- encourage all staff and volunteers to develop a sustainable approach to their work
- minimise carbon emissions from business travel by avoiding unnecessary travel or to travel by public transport unless there are reasons why this is not practicable or efficient
- encourage staff and volunteers to use sustainable modes of transport to reach work
- identify and implement cost-effective energy and water conservation measures at BTG's office and warehouse base and at all other premises from where BTH operates a service
- reduce the amount of waste generated and disposed to landfill through a waste minimisation and recycling programme

- consider where BTG can reduce the mileage in its supply chain by buying locally, where possible
- consider whether BTG can contribute to carbon capture through workplace or workforce action
- encourage and support the environment to flourish across the neighbourhoods that BTG works within, so as to benefit the local community
- promote the importance and value of a quality environment, and to support local people in their enjoyment of it
- carry out its work in an efficient way that minimises or eliminates its adverse impact on the environment
- promote the development of a 'circular economy' [see section 4.8 below].

4. Our commitments

BTG understands the effects of climate change are potentially damaging to the local community and commits to minimising its own impact by undertaking appropriate measures. It will do this by: -

4.1 Climate Change

- encouraging staff and volunteers to switch off electrical equipment and unnecessary lights when not in use
- encouraging staff and volunteers to close windows and external doors when heating is on
- encouraging staff and volunteers to minimise the use of electric heaters and fans
- promoting the phased replacement of LED bulbs within rooms and warehousing space that BTG occupies
- introducing phased replacement of electrical equipment used within BTG's projects with products of maximum energy efficiency rating
- encouraging BTG's landlords to switch to 100% renewable energy tariffs for electricity
- investing in electric hybrid vehicles
- encouraging landlords to retrofit buildings with energy saving measures (such as: double glazing, roof insulation, solar panels etc)
- encouraging natural climate change solutions (such as tree planting and rewilding) within the local community.

4.2 Nature & Wildlife

BTG is committed to increasing opportunities for nature to thrive in the areas it works within. Environmental growth will be achieved by:

- Exploring opportunities and activities to encourage the environment to flourish within BTG's areas of operation.

4.3 Sustainable Travel

BTG acknowledges that the use of vehicles contributes to air pollution. In order to limit and minimise its impact BTG will: -

- promote and support modern working practices, such as remote working, amongst staff, where practical
- encourage staff and volunteers to car-share, where possible
- promote and support the use of cycling, public footpaths and public transport
- ensure all BTG vehicles are serviced and maintained to a high standard
- explore the use of electric-powered vehicles where this is a workable alternative

4.4 Water Management

BTG is committed to responsible water management and conservation throughout its operations. It will do this by: -

- encouraging staff and volunteers to use water efficiently on any BTG premises its service is operating from
- ensuring staff, volunteers and users are aware of which waste materials can be disposed of in water.

4.5 Waste & Recycling

BTG recognises that by the nature of its work waste materials are produced. It will therefore strive to:

- keep waste to a minimum by preventing, reusing and recycling
- ensure waste is sorted, stored and disposed of appropriately
- work towards a reduction in the use of single-use plastics
- recycle all recyclable waste generated
- promote and encourage recycling across all of the sites from which it operates

- minimise the amount of printing to reduce the amount of waste paper
- utilise electronic communications wherever applicable

4.6 Responsible & Sustainable Procurement

BTG will:

- source materials and services locally, as long as the requirements for value for money and quality are met
- ensure that procurement of goods and services are weighted appropriately to encourage local suppliers and thereby promote the 'circular economy' [see section 4.8 below].

4.7 Awareness, Lobbying & Partnerships

BTG will: -

- promote awareness of, and information about, environmental issues within the community
- support, and act as a voice for, environmental concerns within the community, when necessary
- ensure that all individuals involved with BTG (including contractors) are aware of their responsibilities in implementing this environmental policy
- work with partners, where appropriate, to encourage a flourishing environment within BTG areas of activity.

4.8 Circular Economy

A 'circular economy' is an economic system based on a model of production and consumption that aims to reuse materials or products. This may involve sharing, leasing, reusing, repairing, refurbishing or recycling existing materials and products for as long as possible. In other words ways of operating an organisation should be sought that minimise waste.

BTG will undertake to: -

- conduct an audit of the materials and services it uses
- develop policies that encourage the development of a 'circular economy' within the local community
- promote and encourage the use of local suppliers in its procurement processes.

5. Review

This policy and its application will be subject to annual review to ensure that it continues to reflect the aims and objectives of BTG and promotes continuous environmental improvement throughout BTG's operations.