

How to write an Environmental Policy

An environmental policy outlines your organisation's commitment to reduce its impact on the environment, and provides a framework for setting objectives and targets to improve your environmental performance.

There is no standard format for an environmental policy. The policy should be specific to your organisation and relevant to its activities. It should be realistic, achievable and a serious commitment to reduce your environmental impact.

As a minimum your environmental policy should contain a commitment to:

- **Continually improve** your environmental performance by monitoring progress against targets and objectives on a regular basis
- **Prevent pollution** and reduce your impact on the environment
- **Comply with relevant environmental legislation**

You may also want to include commitments relating to:

- Efficient use of water and energy
- Efficient use of other natural resource
- Recycling
- Minimising waste
- Sustainable transport
- Responsible purchasing
- Minimising noise disturbance
- Use of non-toxic products (e.g. biodegradable cleaning products and VOC-free paints)
- Working with clients and suppliers to encourage high environmental standards.
- Raising awareness and training employees on environmental issue



Top tip...

Start your environmental policy with a brief outline of your organisation and its activities. Follow this with a general statement of your environmental aims and a list of your environmental objectives, including brief details of how these will be achieved.

Your policy should be:

- A maximum of one side of A4.
- Signed by management.
- Dated and reviewed annually.
- Communicated to all your staff.
- Made available to the public for example on your website or on the wall in reception.

If your business wants to bid for a contract to supply goods or services to the council, you will need to provide the council with your environmental policy and action plan. For detailed information on the council's requirements, download the 'Sustainable Procurement' workbook at www.haringey.gov.uk/support-to-business

For examples of environmental policies visit the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) website. All the organisations listed on the UK EMAS register on this site will have an environmental policy:
www.iema.net/ems/emas/ukregister

WRITING AN ACTION PLAN

How you will achieve the objectives in your Environmental Policy should be set out in a separate action plan.

Each objective could have several actions. For each of these actions assign a specific target. Make sure your targets are realistic, where possible measurable and have a specific deadline.

For example:

Objective in Environmental Policy	To reduce CO ₂ emissions
Action	To purchase recycled paper or paper from well managed forests, for example FSC certified paper.
Target	100% of paper purchased is recycled or from well managed forests.
Owner	The Office Manager (responsible for stationery purchasing).
Deadline	July 2010

Your targets should be updated regularly. Make sure the responsibility for monitoring progress against targets is assigned to a member of staff who is enthusiastic about environmental issues.

If you would like more information on how to green your business please visit www.haringey.gov.uk/greenbusiness or contact the Environmental Resources team at Haringey Council by emailing environmental.resources@haringey.gov.uk or calling 020 8489 3528.