

# SPS Environmental and Sustainability Policy

*We are an ECO Synagogue*



## 1. Introduction

At Southgate Progressive Synagogue (hereafter referred to as SPS), we recognise the pressing need to address environmental challenges for the well-being of our planet and future generations beyond legal and regulatory requirements.

As a UK-based not-for-profit religious charity, we are committed to reducing our ecological impact, continually improving our environmental performance, promoting sustainability, and actively participating in conservation efforts as an integral part of our operating strategy and processes.

This Environmental and Sustainability Policy outlines our commitment, goals, and actions to contribute more positively to the environment.

## 2. ECOjudaism

We are affiliated to ECOjudaism, a cross denominational registered charity set up 'to provide a practical and simple roadmap for synagogues' and have achieved the Bronze ECOSYNAGOGUE Award for our commitment and initial steps on our environmental journey. We pledge to work towards the silver and gold awards in the future.

## 3. Responsibility

The SPS Chair, Executive and Council - our Trustees - are nominally responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented, however, we all have responsibility in whatever roles we have within SPS to ensure that the aims and objectives of this policy are met.

## 4. Aims

In SPS we endeavour to:

- Comply with all relevant statutory and regulatory requirements;
- Continually monitor and improve our environmental performance;
- Continually improve and reduce our environmental impacts;
- Incorporate environmental and sustainability factors into all our operational decisions;
- Increase employee, volunteer, and member awareness and training in environmental and sustainability issues.

## 5. Objectives

*Our environmental and sustainability policy intends to:*

**5.1. Reduce Carbon Emissions:** We will strive to minimize our carbon footprint by adopting energy-efficient practices, promoting renewable energy sources, and encouraging our staff, volunteers, stakeholders, and community members to use sustainable transportation options.

**5.2. Waste Reduction and Recycling:** We are dedicated to reducing waste generation, promoting, and increasing recycling practices, and minimizing the use of single-use plastics and non-recyclable materials in all our operations.

**5.3. Biodiversity Conservation:** We will support biodiversity by advocating for the protection of local ecosystems, promoting wildlife conservation, and incorporating nature-friendly practices in our projects.

**5.4. Resource Efficiency:** We are committed to using resources efficiently and responsibly, aiming to minimise energy, water, office supplies and paper consumption and promote sustainable procurement practices.

**5.5. Education and Advocacy:** In the context of both adult and religion school (Ruach) education, we will seek to incorporate environmental issues and encourage those organising events and courses to adopt eco-friendly practices and promote environmental sustainability.

## 6. Implementation

*Consciously having environmental and sustainability principles always at the forefront of our minds when making decisions:*

**6.1. Energy:** SPS will monitor and reduce energy consumption in our buildings, offices, and facilities, including (where finances allow) to invest in energy-efficient technologies - such as using low-energy light bulbs. When appropriate to do so, we will facilitate on-line meetings and prioritise the use of renewable energy sources.

**6.2. Waste Management:** SPS will implement a comprehensive waste management system, including recycling programs and responsible disposal of hazardous waste. We will work to minimize packaging waste and encourage reusability.

**6.3. Transportation:** SPS will encourage our staff, volunteers, and community members to use public transportation, carpooling, cycle, or walk whenever possible. As finances and our site allows, futures improvements will consider the possibility of bike racks and changing facilities to support sustainable transportation choices.

**6.4. Procurement:** SPS will prioritise purchasing products and services that have a lower environmental impact, such as those made from sustainable materials, and support local suppliers to reduce unnecessary transportation-related emissions.

**6.5. Biodiversity and Conservation:** SPS will support projects that contribute to local biodiversity, such as tree planting, habitat restoration, and wildlife protection initiatives. We will also collaborate with relevant organisations and experts in the field, as and when appropriate.

**6.6. Education and Outreach:** SPS will publicise workshops, seminars, and awareness campaigns being organised by ECOJudaism and other appropriate environmental organisations about environmental issues and encourage our members to adopt sustainable practices both on site and in their daily lives.

**6.7. Monitoring and Reporting:** SPS will liaise with ECOJudaism to regularly assess our environmental performance, and how we might make improvements in the future

## **7. Compliance and Continuous Improvement**

Our environmental policy will be regularly reviewed to ensure its relevance and effectiveness. We commit to complying with all relevant environmental laws and regulations and strive for continuous improvement in our environmental performance.

Through our collective efforts, SPS is dedicated to making a positive impact on the environment and setting an example for others to follow.

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**Date:** 4<sup>th</sup> October 2023

**Review Date:** October 2026

**Signature:** *Mark Howard Shaw*

**Printed Name:** Mark H Shaw

SPS Chair on behalf of SPS Executive and Council

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***This policy will be communicated to all staff, volunteers, stakeholders, and community members and will be available on our website.***

**Some facts to reflect on:**

- ***On average, each person in the UK throws away their own body weight in rubbish every 7 weeks!***
- ***Up to 80% of the contents of our dustbins could be easily recycled or composted!***
- ***Around 13 billion plastic bottles are disposed of each year!***
- ***It takes 75% less energy to make a plastic bottle from recycled plastic compared with using 'virgin' raw materials!***