

# Sustainability

CFDG operates in a society where the threat of climate change is a real and present concern to every individual and every organisation. Sustainable development has been defined by the UN as living and working in way that does not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their needs. We believe that it is our responsibility to address our environmental impact and mitigate it wherever possible, as an umbrella body CFDG also has a duty to raise this as an issue in the charitable sector, and to support and promote best practise in the work of our members in this area.

Much of the work of sustainable development is centred on minimising our greenhouse gas emissions and our use of natural resources. Reducing the amount of resources we use is the most effective method of reducing the greenhouse gases (GHGs) we produce, and reduction is followed by reusing and recycling. Since the effects of climate change will effect the world's poor hardest and worst, sustainable development is also linked to social justice and so to the mission of many or most charities in the UK and around the world.

## Sustainability at CFDG

Acting sustainably dictates addressing every area where we have an environmental impact, and addressing the human behaviour and decisions that lie behind those impacts. CFDG have adopted a [One Planet Living®](#) (OPL) strategy based on the 10 One Planet Living principles of sustainability developed by BioRegional Development Group and WWF UK. One Planet Living aims to promote a holistic understanding of sustainability.

In pursuit of One Planet Living CFDG developed a detailed [Sustainability Management Plan](#) for 2007-09, which is based on the BioRegional's OPL [Sustainability Action Plan for Businesses](#). The plan incorporates deadlines for actions we're undertaking and introduces ongoing measurement of resources in order to improve our reduction targets over time. As well as looking at our impacts from our day to day work in the office, our SAP looks at the impacts arising from our charitable mission. Some of these overlap with office impacts, such as mailings to our members, we must therefore first and foremost be committed to our [charitable mission](#), but there are areas in which we can continue or improve our services to members whilst simultaneously reducing our environmental impact.

The 2007 - 09 plan is now complete, and we have published our first [Sustainability Report](#) in the Trustees Annual Report in our 2009-10 Annual Report and Accounts. We have recently reviewed with staff and completed our 2009-11 Sustainability Plan ([link](#)).

Successful areas of action in our SAP include:

- monitoring, and working to reduce our use of materials and transport;
- reducing our office energy use with more efficient equipment and more sustainable behaviour;
- promoting cycling to work by introducing bicycle loans for staff and advertising the mileage rate for cycling;
- improving the rates of paper, cardboard, plastics, tins, cans and glass in the office;

- looking at how human resources policies fit in with the 'social' principles of OPL;
- improving procurement in all areas:
  - purchasing 100% recycled (post-consumer waste) copier paper, envelopes and business cards
  - introducing recycled paper in all our mailings, publications and delegate packs wherever possible (and encouraging paperless distribution)
  - buying more vegetarian food for internal meetings, since the manufacture of meat products has a heavy carbon footprint

Unfortunately, since the CFDG office is located in a shared building we have little control over the building itself, and we are unable to work on areas like the energy efficiency of our building and the kind of energy we use. However, CAN Mezzanine who run the building already have good environmental standards in place, including recycling facilities and providing Fairtrade tea, coffee and organic milk in the kitchens.

The [Third Sector Declaration on Climate Change](#) is "a statement of intent from Third Sector organisations to tackle the issue of climate change by taking action in our organisations and in our communities." CFDG has signed up to the Declaration and is fully committed to the pledges within Declaration, many of which are part of our ongoing sustainability work.

## **Sustainability Reporting**

CFDG have also been looking outwards at sustainability and sustainability reporting in the charity sector. Charities are dedicated to public benefit through their charitable missions, which often have social and/ or environmental objectives at their core. Charities play a critical role in promoting social and environmental sustainability in society, and they have started to act on their internal sustainability.

CFDG has published guidance for charity finance directors on a) how to tackle sustainability in charities, and b) how and where to report action on sustainability. The report, [Sustainability in Practice](#), is available to purchase or online (for CFDG members).

If you have any questions about this project, or would like to be involved, please contact the Policy Team.