SUSTAINABILITY POLICY

Policy owner: Executive Director
Approved by: Operations Committee
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1. Purpose

John Wesley's New Room is committed to operating in a way that minimises our environmental impact while supporting the long-term sustainability of our historic building, collections, organisation and community.

As a heritage and community charity, sustainability is an important part of how we care for the New Room and ensure that it can continue to serve communities and visitors for generations to come.

We recognise that our activities have an environmental impact, including through the use of energy and water, waste, purchasing, travel, catering, building maintenance and events. We will seek to reduce this impact wherever reasonably possible, while balancing environmental considerations with our responsibilities for the conservation of our historic buildings and collections, accessibility, financial sustainability and the needs of our visitors and communities.

We also will align with the work of The Methodist Church and their Action for Hope, which has three areas of focus - Assets, Wisdom and Lifestyle. Using the Six Steps to Net Zero guidance document, we will incorporate those actions into the work we do at the New Room.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all areas of John Wesley's New Room's work, including:

- the historic buildings and grounds;
- the museum, collections and exhibitions;
- the café and catering activities;
- events and venue hire;
- community and learning programmes;

- offices and other operational activities;
- staff, volunteers, contractors and suppliers where relevant.

The policy applies to decisions made by the Board of Trustees, staff and volunteers where those decisions have an environmental impact.

3. Our commitments

We will work towards the following commitments.

3.1 Energy and buildings

We will seek to reduce energy consumption and associated carbon emissions while maintaining appropriate conditions for people, the building and our collections.

We will:

- monitor energy use where practical and use this information to identify opportunities for reduction;
- avoid unnecessary heating, lighting and use of electrical equipment;
- use energy-efficient lighting and equipment when replacing or purchasing items;
- consider energy efficiency as part of building maintenance and capital projects;
- investigate appropriate renewable energy and low-carbon technologies where these are compatible with the historic character and conservation requirements of the site;
- maintain heating, ventilation and other building systems appropriately to ensure they operate efficiently;
- consider the environmental impact of building works and repairs alongside heritage and conservation requirements.

As an historic site, we recognise that some energy efficiency measures may not be appropriate or possible. Decisions will therefore consider the whole-life impact of proposed changes and the need to protect the significance and fabric of the building.

3.2 Waste and recycling

We will seek to reduce the amount of waste we produce and increase the proportion of waste that is reused or recycled.

We will:

- reduce unnecessary purchasing and avoid single-use items where practical;

- provide appropriate recycling facilities;
- encourage staff, volunteers and visitors to recycle correctly;
- reuse materials and equipment where possible;

- dispose of waste responsibly and in accordance with relevant legal requirements;
- consider opportunities to reduce food waste from the café and events;
- consider the environmental impact and packaging of products purchased for the shop and café.

We will follow the waste hierarchy wherever practical: **reduce, reuse, recycle, then dispose.**

3.3 Sustainable purchasing

We will consider environmental and ethical factors when purchasing goods and services, alongside quality, cost, accessibility and suitability.

Where practical, we will:

- purchase durable, repairable and reusable products;
- avoid unnecessary packaging;
- choose products with recycled or sustainably sourced content where appropriate;
- buy locally where this is practical and represents good value;
- consider suppliers' environmental and ethical practices;
- reduce unnecessary printing and paper use;
- consider whole-life costs rather than relying solely on the lowest purchase price.

Sustainability will be considered as one factor in procurement decisions rather than an automatic requirement that overrides all other organisational considerations.

3.4 Café and catering

Our café and catering activities will seek to minimise environmental impact while continuing to provide good-quality, affordable and appropriate food and drink.

We will:

- seek to reduce food waste;
- consider seasonal and locally sourced products where practical;
- consider the environmental impact of packaging and disposable items;

- reduce unnecessary single-use plastics;
- encourage recycling and appropriate disposal of food and packaging waste;
- review purchasing practices to identify opportunities for improvement.

3.5 Travel

We will encourage lower-carbon forms of travel where practical and appropriate.

We will:

- encourage walking, cycling and public transport for staff, volunteers and visitors where feasible;
- consider whether meetings can be held online where this avoids unnecessary travel;
- consider environmental impact when planning organisational travel;
- provide clear information about public transport and sustainable travel options where appropriate.

We recognise that accessibility, personal circumstances, location and operational requirements mean that sustainable travel options will not always be available to everyone.

3.6 Water

We will seek to use water responsibly and avoid unnecessary consumption.

We will:

- monitor for leaks and address them promptly;
- use water-efficient equipment where practical;
- avoid unnecessary water use in cleaning and other activities;
- consider water efficiency when purchasing or replacing equipment.

3.7 Biodiversity and the environment

Where relevant to the site and our activities, we will seek to protect and enhance biodiversity.

We will consider opportunities to:

- support wildlife and biodiversity within any areas of land under our control;
- use environmentally responsible approaches to grounds maintenance;
- avoid unnecessary use of harmful chemicals;
- incorporate environmental considerations into future building, landscaping and capital projects.

3.8 Collections and heritage

We recognise that protecting our historic buildings and collections is itself a form of sustainability. Conserving existing buildings and objects can avoid the environmental impact associated with demolition, replacement and the production of new materials.

Environmental measures affecting the building or collections will therefore be considered alongside:

- conservation requirements;
- environmental conditions required for collections;
- the significance of the historic site;
- visitor and staff safety;
- accessibility;
- financial sustainability.

We will seek solutions that provide an appropriate balance between environmental responsibility and our duty to care for the heritage entrusted to us.

4. Staff and volunteer involvement

Sustainability is a shared responsibility.

We will encourage staff and volunteers to contribute ideas and practical improvements and will provide appropriate information to help people understand how their everyday activities can reduce environmental impact.

We will seek to build sustainability into relevant staff induction, operational procedures and team discussions.

5. Visitors, communities and partners

Where appropriate, we will use our position as a heritage and community organisation to encourage positive environmental behaviour among visitors, participants, hirers, partners and suppliers.

We will look for opportunities to connect our environmental work with our learning, community and heritage programmes, recognising that sustainability is not only about reducing our own impact but also about supporting communities to think about environmental responsibility and the future.

6. Legal and regulatory compliance

We will comply with relevant environmental legislation, regulations and contractual requirements applicable to our activities.

This includes requirements relating to areas such as waste disposal, hazardous substances, water, energy and building works.

Where appropriate, environmental considerations will be incorporated into our risk management and operational planning.

7. Measuring and improving our performance

We recognise that effective sustainability requires ongoing improvement rather than a one-off exercise.

Where practical, we will monitor relevant information such as:

- energy consumption;
- water consumption;
- waste and recycling;
- food waste;
- purchasing;
- travel;
- progress against agreed sustainability actions.

We will use this information to identify priorities and assess whether our actions are making a meaningful difference.

As our systems and resources develop, we will consider setting more specific targets and measures.

8. Responsibilities

Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees has overall responsibility for ensuring that sustainability is appropriately considered within the organisation's governance, strategy and decision-making.

Executive Director

The Executive Director is responsible for implementing this policy, ensuring that sustainability is incorporated into organisational planning and overseeing progress against agreed actions.

Managers and staff

Managers and staff are responsible for considering sustainability within their areas of work and for following relevant procedures and guidance.

Volunteers

Volunteers are encouraged to support the organisation's sustainability commitments and to raise ideas or concerns with a member of staff.

Contractors and suppliers

Where appropriate, contractors and suppliers will be expected to comply with relevant environmental requirements and to support our sustainability objectives.

9. Sustainability action plan

The organisation will maintain a practical sustainability action plan identifying priority actions, responsibilities and timescales.

The action plan will be proportionate to the size and resources of the organisation and will focus initially on areas where we can make the greatest difference.

Priorities may include:

1. understanding our current energy and waste consumption;
2. identifying opportunities to reduce energy use;

3. improving recycling and reducing waste;
4. reviewing sustainable purchasing;
5. reducing food waste and improving café sustainability;
6. considering sustainable travel;
7. incorporating sustainability into future building and capital projects.

10. Review

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years or sooner if there are significant changes to the organisation, its activities, relevant legislation or its environmental priorities.

Progress against the sustainability action plan will be reviewed regularly by the Executive Director and reported to the Board of Trustees as appropriate.

Approved by: *B J Roberts*

Date: 18 August, 2026

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