



# SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY POLICY

Issue 1 Version 1

WHITESPACE GROUP

Corporate Social Responsibility

February 2023

## SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY POLICY

### INTRODUCTION TO CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (CSR)

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Whitespace Group recognises that its activities and services have a significant impact on the wider social, environmental, and economic well-being in the UK. By addressing these impacts, we can also improve the quality and performance of our core organisational processes and responsibilities. By embracing Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) we will actively look for opportunities to improve our environment and contribute to the well-being of the communities in which we operate. For the purposes of this policy, CSR is defined as the integration of social and environmental concerns into the business of our Company and the Company's interactions with its stakeholders

This policy should be followed and considered in tandem with our Environmental Sustainability Policy, which can be found on our website, The Staff Handbook and Sage HR

Whitespace Group is committed to ensuring that any business undertakings are conducted as ethically as possible by following the below principles

- Shared Responsibility – CSR involves everyone in our organisation, which means sharing the responsibilities of ownership as well as its rewards
- Openness and Accountability – we will communicate our CSR policies, objectives, and performance openly and honestly to our people, partners and other stakeholders. We will also seek their views and encourage them to communicate with us
- Continuous Improvement – we are committed to measuring and improving our CSR performance. We will develop and implement specific environmental and social policies and procedures, monitor our performance, set targets for improvement, and report our progress
- Demonstrate Compliance – as a minimum we will meet or exceed all relevant legislation. Where no legislation exists, we will seek to develop and implement our own appropriate standards.

### PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

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We recognise the need to deliver services in an environmentally sustainable way and to include concern for the environment in all our activities. Please see our Environmental Sustainability Policy for further information regarding our environmental efforts and commitments.

### EMPLOYEE WELLBEING

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Whitespace Group commits to respecting our staff and encouraging their development and training. We aim to promote and maintain equality and to have constant regard for the happiness of our people, including their welfare, health and safety, empowerment, and communication.

- We are an Equal Opportunities Employer as per the Human Rights Act 2010, and fully comply with the Modern Slavery Act 2015.
- As part of our Onboarding process, all staff are required to undertake training in the following areas:
  - Sustainability,
  - Health & Safety
  - Diversity & Inclusion.

These training modules are available in a wide range of language to facilitate easier comprehension across all staff members.

- We have annual appraisals where staff are encouraged to create personal and professional development plans with the support of their line manager.
- We have an online training platform, Go1, which enables staff to learn and develop their personal and professional skills. Training covers everything from presenting to yoga and carpentry. These courses can be accessed in a wide range of languages
- All our policies and procedures are always available via the Staff Handbook.
- We use Sage HR to make internal communicated accessible and simple.
- We meet and exceed the National and London Living wages.
- Our pension provider is NEST where staff can choose how and with whom their pensions are invested
- We have a Menopause policy in place and offer free period products to all staff as part of the 'Period Dignity at Work' initiative.
- We are a Time to Test Employer, meaning we fully support any staff who require time off for medical testing.
- We offer private health insurance with Vitality which provides incentives for staff to keep active
- We have a medical cashback scheme with Medicash
- We offer an EAP
- We offer a Cycle to Work Scheme
- We have improved Maternity and Paternity policies
- Regular staff socials and team building exercises
- Season Ticket Salary Sacrifice
- We will cover the cost of a railcard for eligible staff.
- We make a conscious effort to reinvest back into the office environment and facilities
- Budget for staff charitable causes or sponsorship
- To encourage and promote team-working and the sharing of skills and knowledge, whilst recognising outstanding individual contribution and rewarding our people fairly.

## SUPPLIERS' STANDARDS

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Whitespace Group acknowledges that we are only as good as the companies we work with. We make sure our suppliers meet a minimum ethical benchmark before we enter any partnership: We pledge to deliver our vision through developing strong relationships with our partners, other external organisations and individuals, which are conducted with integrity and courtesy, and by ensuring that we honour our commitments

- We have introduced a Sustainable Purchasing Policy and sustainable purchasing guide.
- Suppliers must show evidence that they adhere to the Modern Slavery Act 2015
- Suppliers must provide a copy of their Sustainability/Environmental Statement
- It is within our wider policy to ensure local suppliers and those with diverse ownership are considered for all contracts
- We are committed to paying our suppliers in line with agreed payment terms in all instances.
- Being committed to clear communication with suppliers.

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

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We pledge to build relationships with our service users, and the local communities which we serve, and to support local social businesses who share our aims. We want to encourage our people, and those acting on our behalf, to consider the needs of others in our day-to-day business. We are proud to be a part of our local community and give back where we can. We support the below organisations the following ways

- Tooting Community Kitchen – annual monetary donation along with quarterly donations to their foodbank based in Tooting. This is made up of both staff and company contributions
- Wimbledon Guild – annual monetary donation and donation of ex-rental furniture and appliances
- Mitcham Park FC – Sponsorship of the U13 Colts Football Team
- Deen City Farm – annual animal sponsorship chosen by staff members
- We actively recruit in our local area.
- We stock our showroom with food and drink from local or London-based suppliers
- We purchase from local suppliers wherever possible for office and production needs.

## REPORTING

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At the conclusion of each calendar year, The CSR Manager shall publish a CSR for the Managing Director on the following:

- Donation budget and allocation
- Organisational updates
- Partnership updates and opportunities
- Budget review and strategy for following year

## RESPONSIBILITY AND REVIEW

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This Social Sustainability Policy is the responsibility of the Corporate Social Responsibility Manager.

We expect all Whitespace Group staff to understand and fully comply with this policy at all times.

This policy was last updated February 2023 and will be reviewed January 2024.

Signed:



**Alya Khalidi**

Corporate Social Responsibility  
Manager

Signed:



**Mary Cole**

Managing Director