

Friends of Evington Environmental Policy

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1. Introduction

1.1 The Friends of Evington's environmental objects (aims) are 'To promote for the benefit of the public the conservation protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment in the Evington suburb of Leicester and the surrounding area'.

1.2 Friends of Evington's constitution is available to view on-line at www.evingtonecho.uk or by requesting a copy. We summarise our charitable objects (aims) within our vision as follows:

1.3 Vision: Friends of Evington seeks to inspire a healthy community in Evington through bringing environmental and educational projects to life, providing solutions that benefit local people and protect the planet.

1.4 This policy sets out how Friends of Evington will fulfil its statutory duties and responsibilities effectively, both within its own organisation, and for the affiliated groups and members that help with Friends of Evington's charitable vision and objectives.

2. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to control the impact of our work on the local environment. To ensure partner organisation and the local community understand our commitment to improve the environment and to encourage others to use high standards of environmental management.

The Friends of Evington acts as an umbrella body for associated projects that meet our aims and objectives. These include Evington Echo, Evington in Bloom, Evington Park House, and other supported groups and activities that provide environmental benefit.

3. Policy Actions

2.1 We will Use renewable, recycled and recyclable products wherever possible. Composting on the sites where we work in Evington Village will

2.2 We will not use peat in any planting schemes and wherever possible, purchase plants that are grown in peat free composts.

2.3 We will only use timber that is obtained from sustainable sources.

2.4 We will minimise waste production, and where waste is created we will ensure it is disposed of in compliance with the relevant environmental legislation; re-use materials on site where practical and use composting techniques

2.5 We will prevent or minimise air, water and land pollution.

2.6 We will minimise the use of chemicals.

We will use local suppliers where practical.

This policy will apply to all aspects of the Friends of Evington's activities, including all projects, and will be promoted to our partners and contracted organisations.

4. Environmental Concerns

4.1. Friends of Evington, a dedicated charity based in Leicester, is committed to fostering a sustainable and vibrant Evington area through community-led initiatives and projects. Our environmental policy outlines the core environmental concerns that underpin all our activities, reflecting our commitment to environmental stewardship, sustainability, and the well-being of our community. This policy serves as a guiding framework for our actions, ensuring they contribute positively to Evington's environmental health and resilience.

4.2. **Carbon-Neutral Practice:** Recognising the urgent need to address climate change, we are committed to adopting and promoting practices that aim to achieve carbon neutrality. This includes reducing greenhouse gas emissions through energy efficiency, sustainable transport, and supporting renewable energy projects within the Evington area.

Biodiversity: Evington's natural habitats and green spaces are vital to our community's health and biodiversity. We will protect and enhance these areas through conservation projects, habitat restoration, and encouraging native flora and fauna, aiming to increase biodiversity and provide resilient ecosystems.

4.3 **Climate Change Impact:** Acknowledging the impacts of climate change on our local environment, our projects will focus on enhancing the area's resilience to climate-related

challenges. This includes promoting sustainable land use, flood risk management, and the development of green spaces to mitigate the urban heat island effect.

4.4 Public Accessibility: Ensuring equitable access to green spaces and environmental resources is fundamental to our mission. We will advocate for and implement projects that improve public access to natural areas, promoting health, well-being, and environmental awareness within the community.

4.5 Active Stewardship: Fostering a sense of responsibility and stewardship for the environment among Evington's residents is essential. We will engage the community through educational programmes, volunteering opportunities, and partnerships, empowering individuals to take active roles in environmental conservation and sustainability efforts.

4.6 Waste Minimisation: Reducing waste and promoting recycling and sustainable resource use are key to our environmental strategy. We will support initiatives that minimise waste generation, encourage the reuse of materials, and facilitate recycling to reduce the environmental footprint of our community activities.

4.7 Other Related Factors: We are also mindful of the interconnectedness of environmental health with issues such as air and water quality, soil health, and sustainable development. Our projects will consider these factors to ensure a holistic approach to environmental stewardship in Evington.

5. Public Education for Environmental Awareness

In addition to the principal environmental concerns outlined above, Friends of Evington places a high priority on public education for environmental awareness. We believe that informed and engaged communities are pivotal in driving sustainable change. To this end, our charity will develop and implement educational programmes aimed at all age groups within the Evington area, focusing on the importance of environmental stewardship, the challenges posed by climate change, and the role individuals can play in mitigating these issues.

Our initiatives will include workshops, seminars, and interactive activities designed to foster a more in-depth understanding of environmental issues and inspire positive action. By collaborating with local schools, community centres, and other organisations, we aim to reach a wide audience and create a culture of environmental consciousness that permeates every aspect of community life.

Through these educational efforts, Friends of Evington aspires to empower residents with the knowledge and skills needed to make environmentally responsible decisions, contributing to the overall sustainability and resilience of our community. This commitment to public education for environmental awareness is integral to our mission and represents a key component of our environmental policy.

The Friends of Evington is committed to leading by example, demonstrating how community-led initiatives can make a significant and positive impact on the environment. Through our dedication to these environmental concerns, we aspire to contribute to the creation of a sustainable, resilient, and thriving Evington for current and future generations. This policy statement reflects our ongoing commitment to environmental stewardship and will guide our actions as we work towards a greener, more sustainable community.

6. Public Promotion and Reporting

6.1 Effective Communication Friends of Evington will use the Evington Echo and any associated online media platforms to promote responsible and sustainable environmental use and management, and will inform volunteers, trustees, stakeholders and residents of the consequences of established environmental management practices, and the benefits of any revised and updated practices.

Recognising the pivotal role of effective communication in fostering environmental awareness and action, Friends of Evington is committed to employing a diverse range of community communication techniques to engage and inform the residents of Evington. Our strategy focuses on using local community media platforms, such as the Evington Echo, along with digital and social media channels, to disseminate information, share stories, and highlight the achievements of environmental projects and initiatives within the Evington area.

6.2 Evington Echo

The Evington Echo stands at the heart of our communication strategy. It will serve as a primary platform for sharing insightful articles, success stories, and educational content related to environmental sustainability. By featuring the dedicated efforts of the Friends of Evington, alongside the impactful work of our partner organisations, members, and stakeholders, we aim to showcase the collective action being taken to enhance our local environment.

6.3 Extending the reach In parallel, we will harness the power of digital media to extend our reach and engage with a broader audience. Social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, will be utilised to share updates, engage in dialogue with community members, and promote environmental awareness and events. Our digital strategy will also include the creation of engaging multimedia content, including videos, infographics, and interactive posts, designed to educate, inspire, and mobilise community action on environmental issues.

6.4 Social Participation and Networking

Understanding the importance of two-way communication, Friends of Evington will encourage interactive engagement through these platforms. Community members will be invited to contribute their own stories, experiences, and ideas related to environmental sustainability. This participatory approach aims to foster a sense of ownership and involvement among residents, making environmental stewardship a shared community responsibility.

Moreover, our communication strategy emphasises collaboration with local schools, community groups, and businesses to co-create content that reflects the diverse perspectives and contributions of the Evington community. Networking events, public forums, and workshops will further provide opportunities for direct engagement, discussion, and feedback, strengthening the community's collective resolve to pursue a sustainable future.

Through a strategic and inclusive approach to community communication, Friends of Evington aims to create a vibrant, informed, and engaged community dedicated to environmental awareness and action. By effectively utilising the Evington Echo and associated media platforms, we will ensure that the message of environmental stewardship reaches every corner of Evington, inspiring positive change and fostering a deep-rooted culture of sustainability within our community.

6.5 Evington in Bloom

This competition organised by the Royal Horticultural Society/East Midlands in Bloom has the three pillars of Community, Environmental Responsibility and Gardening Achievement. By showcasing our urban area in Evington, we are able to negotiate which LCC land we wish to enhance in Evington. These are practical projects involved in working in partnership and getting site agreements and developing land in different ways for biodiversity: e.g perennial beds, annual meadows, biodiverse verges, areas with hand raking once or twice a year, Spring borders biodiverse grassland which is cut 6 times a year. East Midlands in Bloom hold competitions for schools, businesses, pubs and front gardens, which encourage different groups to get involved and receive recognition for their efforts. It all helps make our area look more cared for. For six years running Evington was the best urban area in the East Midlands, but the competition was more fierce last year (2023).

7. Monitoring and Review

Friends of Evington will monitor and evaluate the information that is appropriately collected in relation to our environmental responsibilities, and will make periodic reports to the Trustee Board, making recommendations for improvements and changes to the Friends of Evington's activities and communications.