

Roots *and* Shoots

Environment and Sustainability Policy

Last Updated: 25 Sept 2023

Walnut Tree Walk, Kennington, SE11 6DN
Charity number: 1064070

Environment and Sustainability Policy

Roots and Shoots is an independent, award-winning educational and environmental charity based in Kennington, South London. From a derelict site in 1982, it has grown to become a well-established and respected training organisation with biodiverse wildlife gardens, providing a safe haven for both people and nature to flourish.

Environmental Charitable Aim

Roots and Shoots recognizes the urgency of change required to tackle climate change, habitat loss and extreme declining biodiversity. We aim to exhibit good practice across the whole organisation, illustrating that a greener future for people and nature together is possible.

As an educational environmental charity, one of our two charitable aims is to protect the environment for urban wildlife, and provide environmental education for all. Our Environmental Charitable Aim is achieved by the following of this policy's guidelines.

This policy applies to all aspects of Roots and Shoots' activities including vocational training, venue hire, all projects, buildings, green spaces, events, machinery and transportation.

Activities to Achieve the Objectives

Roots and Shoots shall:

- Communicate the Environmental Policy within the organisation and to other relevant parties and provide training where necessary to ensure the effective implementation of the policy.
- Monitor the implementation of the policy by carrying out periodic audits of compliance with the policy.
- Prepare, implement and monitor action plans following audits to improve performance.
- Report the results of audits and subsequent actions identified to the Trustees
- Review the environmental policy on a two yearly basis or as and when required.

Commitment to Biodiversity

Since 1982 Roots and Shoots has provided a sanctuary for nature across our unique one-acre site in central London. Our green spaces have been designed and are maintained to enrich biodiversity in the urban environment. We intend this sanctuary to continue in perpetuity for the benefit of wildlife and local people.

Roots and Shoots shall:

- Maintain the Wild Garden and other green spaces onsite primarily for the benefit of wildlife, with a focus on pollinating insects and aquatic life.
- Continue to implement habitat management techniques and provide a range of habitats for wildlife including a wildflower meadow, flower borders, dead hedges, bird and bat boxes, and a pond of at least 20m2.
- Continually research new ways of gardening and managing green spaces to support the widest possible range and density of native wildlife at Roots and Shoots.
- Ban the use of pesticides, herbicides and insecticides on site and for all offsite projects.
- Ban the cutting down of trees older than 15 years on site and for all offsite projects unless they potentially pose a danger.
- Collaborate with relevant wildlife charities to support wildlife onsite and elsewhere.

Commitment to Environmental Education for All

Our site is an excellent environmental education resource. Our immediate local communities are ethnically diverse and characterised by areas of social deprivation and lack of access to green space, and so access to nature for local people is extremely important to us.

As part of our environmental education initiative, Roots and Shoots shall:

- Offer horticultural and floristry training as part of our Vocational Training Programmes to young SEND Londoners.
- Provide access to green space for disadvantaged local people who would otherwise have little access to nature.
- Provide biannual open day community events with a focus on environmental education and access to nature.
- Collaborate with local organisations and nature-focused charities to deliver education sessions and events to local people.
- Continue to explore the expansion of environmental education at Roots and Shoots

Use of Resources

Across the organisation, Roots and Shoots shall:

- Maintain respect for natural resources by ensuring the most efficient use of materials and by using renewable, recycled and recyclable products wherever possible.
- Reduce the use of printing and paper usage. We use Google Suite for administrative and training provider tasks.
- Reduce the use of plastic.
- Minimise, where possible, the creation of waste, especially hazardous waste via the recycling and reusing of materials; dispose of all waste through safe and responsible methods in compliance with the relevant environmental legislation.
- Recycle all green waste via composting techniques (shredded paper, cardboard, organic waste and kitchen scraps) and dead hedges (green waste including branches, prunings, etc).
- Ban the use of environmentally exploitative and damaging products such as peat, pesticides, herbicides and insecticides.
- Ensure the responsible use of energy throughout the organisation by conserving energy, improving energy efficiency, seeking to utilise safer energy sources and giving preference to renewable over finite energy resources wherever possible. Our electricity is solar generated, with any money generated going back to benefitting our charitable aims. Additional electricity comes from the renewable energy supplier Good Energy.
- Minimise the effects of atmospheric pollution from vehicles used by the organisation by seeking to use the most sustainable means of transport suitable for the groups purposes for example by using public transport, cycling or minibus.
- Reduce our use of water where possible. We collect rainwater from the roofs of every building to utilise across the site. In the Main Building, rainwater is used to flush the toilets. In the New Roots Building, rainwater is used to water raised beds and flowering borders. In the greenhouse, rainwater is diverted into the Wild Garden pond.

Purchase of Goods and Services

When purchasing goods and services, Root and Shoots will:

- Use reclaimed or recycled materials wherever appropriate and possible.
- Buy only environmentally friendly products where possible, and buy only good-quality products which will last.
- Actively seek the purchase of materials locally and the appointment of local contractors whenever such materials and skills exist locally.
- Support and encourage partners, contractors and suppliers to minimise their impact on the environment through the communication of the environmental policy and strategic purchasing.
- Actively seek to influence others within our sphere of influence to adopt environmental policies and good environmental management.

Since the organisation, as a charity expending public funds, is also required to secure good value for money, purchasing decisions will take account of both environmental and value for money factors. Tenders will make clear what requirements are mandatory and which are desirable but discretionary.

Buildings

Sustainability is integrated into the buildings of Roots and Shoots.

The *Main Building* is clad in sustainably-sourced larch, fully insulated with three green roofs featuring flowering plants to support pollinating insects, and features solar panels providing electricity, with rainwater management systems in place.

The *New Roots Building* is made of sustainably-sourced cedar and fully insulated and fully electric with rainwater management systems in place.

Roots and Shoots shall ensure that:

- New buildings cannot be built on existing green spaces.
- The cutting down of trees aged 15+ years is not permitted to create space for new buildings.
- All new buildings must be built with sustainable materials and techniques, with long term energy efficiency in mind.

Horticultural Activities

Roots and Shoots is an environmentally-focused organisation, promoting urban gardening and nature for all, with excellent horticultural facilities.

As part of its horticultural activities, Roots and Shoots shall:

- Continually improve biodiversity across the site.
- Continue to manage the Wild Garden primarily for wildlife.
- Manage our green spaces using sustainable regenerative methods.
- Grow vegetables, fruit and herbs using the no-dig method.
- Grow the majority of our plants onsite from seed and cuttings.
- Grow the majority of plants to support wildlife food sources and habitat.
- Grow plants with long-term viability and climate change in mind.
- Garden chemical-free.
- Garden peat-free.
- Produce our own peat-free garden compost and mulch using green waste. and paper waste produced across the organisation.
- Use collected rainwater to water as much as possible
- Use our own wood and green waste to create “dead hedge” fencing
- Never cut down trees aged 15+ unless they pose a potential danger, with any fallen trees preserved on site for habitat conservation.
- Reuse plastic plant pots and trays.
- Reuse our brownfield site soil, sifting out debris (hardcore, concrete) to use as garden seating & habitat for wildlife in gabions across the site.
- Influence the surrounding community to improve biodiversity in their green spaces.
- Sell wildlife-beneficial plants to the local community at biannual community open day events.

Venue Hire

Roots and Shoots hires out our Hall and meeting rooms to charities and not-for-profit organisations as an affordable sustainable venue space in the heart of London. The income from this supports the work of our charity.

As part of our Venue Hire service, Roots and Shoots shall:

- Maintain a vegetarian and vegan venue, reducing emissions and other harm generated from animal farming.
- Grow our own organic vegetables and herbs on site which are used in our catering, reducing air mile emissions.
- Source organic produce wherever possible.
- Compost all raw food waste, which feeds our gardens.

- Give any safely leftover food to students and staff.
- Use ceramic and metal cutlery in our catering, as we are committed to reducing plastic waste and eliminating single use plastics.
- Only use non-plastic single-use cutlery is - eg. bamboo and paper and ensure it is appropriately recycled.

Staff Responsibilities

All Roots and Shoots employees, volunteers and trustees will:

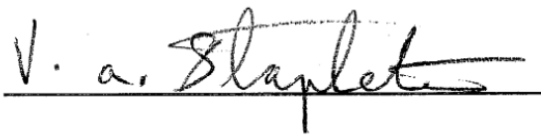
- Encourage other employees/members of the organisation to adopt and take responsibility for the implementation of the Environmental and Sustainability Policy.
- Encourage employees/volunteers/members of other organisations and the local community to adopt good practices so as to improve the environmental performance of their organisation and improve its impact upon the environment.
- Encourage the use of public transport and cycling to travel to and from Roots and Shoots.

Signed by the Director:



Date: 25/09/23

Signed by the Chair of Trustees:



Date: 25/09/23