

Environmental, Social and Governance Policy

Summary

DEBRA is taking responsibility for identifying and managing the environmental, social and governance (ESG) issues that affect our charitable activities and those that relate to our use of suppliers and the services we provide our members, staff, supporters, and communities.

Our approach to ESG aims to reduce any potential risks to our membership, staff, supporters and communities. It will promote the charity as an attractive workplace and supports our brand and reputation. Each year, the SMT supported by the Board will put into place an ESG Action Plan, which will define the specific goals and targets we will pursue in that year to make progress towards our ESG objectives and the best practice that we will follow to shape the way we operate.

Here, we set out the underlying principles and commitments that will drive our dedicated approach to ESG management across all charitable functions. We are working hard to improve our performance and become a more sustainable and environmentally friendly organisation, in everything we do.

Document control

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Purpose

DEBRA is committed to sustainable development (meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs) as a guiding principle within our work. Social conscientiousness and concern for the environment are integral and fundamental parts of this commitment. Our aim is to reduce the impact of our operations on the environment and on society, ensuring the highest ethical standards, and considering environmental sustainability and social responsibility in all that we do.

We will seek to drive compliance with the relevant laws and regulations and promote best practice in all operations and activities, considering environmental protection, public health and safety, human rights, anti-bribery and corruption, and labour and anti-slavery practices. We will also seek to ensure sustainable investments.

Related Documents

- Modern Slavery Policy
- EDI Policy
- Procurement Policy
- ESOS Report
- GDPR Policy
- Financial Regulations
- Scheme of Delegation
- Charity Governance Code for Large Charities
- Compliments & Complaints Policy

Policy Aims & Objectives

All DEBRA employees and volunteers have a responsibility to work towards meeting the aims and objectives of our policy. The policy will, necessarily, be implemented in different ways and to different degrees within the various activities and sites which DEBRA manages to the extent that is feasible or possible. It is acknowledged that not all DEBRA activities can follow all the aims described in this policy. However, the aim is to continuously improve wherever possible.

To develop our policy, we will endeavour to:

- Comply with all relevant regulatory requirements.
- Continually monitor and improve environmental performance.
- Promote responsibility for the environment within the organisation and communicate and implement this policy at all levels within the workforce.
- Reduce the use of energy, water and other resources.
- Minimise waste by reduction, re-use and recycling methods.
- Ensure that our policies and services are developed in a way that is complimentary to this policy.
- Identify and provide appropriate training, advice and information for staff and encourage them to develop new ideas and initiatives.
- Engage with contractors who share our ESG objectives.
- Provide appropriate resources to meet the commitments of this policy.
- Promote and encourage involvement in local environmental and social initiatives/schemes.

Action Plan

We will measure our impact in key areas and develop and improve our processes in order help us to reduce our impact on the world in which we live. We will use 2022 to create a baseline of information to enable us to set targets from 2023 onwards.

Environment

At DEBRA, environmental sustainability means minimising the environmental impact from all operations, charitable activities, and investment activities where feasibility possible:

People

We invest significantly in our people and their working environment, creating and maintaining a safe and healthy working environment and ensuring their ongoing professional and personal development. To communicate our commitment to sustainability and to encourage sustainable behaviour, DEBRA aims to:

- Introduce ESG training for all DEBRA employees and volunteers.
- Publish updates on store performance and potential improvements. This will include information to help address and improve issues such as energy efficiency, recycling, and sustainable transportation.

- Arrange information campaigns and events around sustainability issues and initiatives across the organisation.
- We will promote best practice in how we approach, handle and share information throughout the DEBRA estate.
- Our leadership will lead by example both in practice and behaviour.

Materials

- **Paper:**
 - We will aim to contact our members and supporters by email whenever possible, or if using paper ensure it is from a sustainable source. For example, when we thank supporters for a donation or send newsletters.
 - We will aim to minimise the use of paper and will measure how much paper we order and use year on year.
 - We will review the origin, manufacturing, and logistics methods of our existing paper products to ensure they are as environmentally friendly and as carbon neutral as possible, seeking to purchase recycled paper products and recycled paper when possible.
 - By will ensure that our existing paper-based resources are available online to be more accessible and to reduce the need for paper-based resources in the future.
 - We will aim to reduce the amount of printing and default settings will be set to double sided and black and white on all printers.
 - Packaging will be recycled and reduced, and where possible we will seek alternatives to plastic packaging.

We will communicate clearly with our supporters and members to explain the rationale for a reduction in the use of paper-based resources and plastics.

- **Supplies & Cleaning**
 - When purchasing items, consideration will be given to items that are more environmentally friendly, such as ecological cleaning supplies and recyclable packaging.
 - We will aim to avoid the use of single use plastic across the organisation, and seek other more environmentally sustainable alternatives, such as biodegradable carrier bags, for example.
 - Items will be reused or recycled when possible.

Energy and water

- **Energy:**
 - We will purchase green energy when it is economically viable, ensuring that it is green from source as a preference.
 - We will measure and reduce energy and water usage where possible and utilise portals to understand usage and target high users.
 - We will ensure that lights and electrical equipment are switched off when not in use.
 - We will install LED lighting where possible to reduce energy consumption and replacement of light bulbs.
 - We will consider energy consumption and efficiency when purchasing new items.
- **Water:**
 - We will strive to minimise water consumption throughout our estate. We will work to continuously increase our water management efforts and identify new opportunities for water savings.
 - We will do this through measurement and monitoring of water use throughout our estate.
 - We will strive to prevent water contamination at all DEBRA managed properties. It is important to us that all our employees and members have access to safe, clean water sources.

Waste Management

Our main objectives in improving environmental sustainability are to divert as much waste from landfill through education of all stakeholders, and by working with partners and contractors to use and develop creative and innovative solutions to re-use products or dispose of them responsibly.

- We will strive to achieve best practices in waste management by following the 'reduce, reuse, recycle' waste hierarchy, avoiding the purchase of materials that are unable to be recycled or reused, and diverting as much waste from landfill as possible. This will include the review of single use, plastic refuse sacks.
- Only licensed and appropriate organisations will be used for waste disposal.
- All sites will have recycling and waste management plans in place, and we aim to increase the volume of materials recycled.

- We aim to complete waste audits for all our assets. By measuring and monitoring the waste produced by our assets, we will be able to manage and reduce waste more effectively. We aim to measure the tonnage of those items that are recycled and sent to landfill.
- Through our retail stores, we will seek to better understand and measure the positive impact we have on recycling and reuse from the resale of goods donated to DEBRA.

Travel

As a responsible organisation we must reduce our consumption, find renewable energy alternatives, look critically at our impact across our entire value chain and take action.

- The need to travel will be reduced by having an agile working policy and promoting the use of remote meetings when possible.
- We will identify the baseline for business mileage. We will aim to reduce this year on year. We will utilise 2019 as our base year for measurement purposes.
- We will promote our environmental credentials by promoting travel by train, car sharing and agile working.
- We will work towards reducing the emissions of our fleet such as our delivery vans in retail, where viably possible, and work closing with our logistics contractors to further decarbonise our operations.

Social

Social sustainability for DEBRA means actively considering how our key stakeholders are impacted by our charitable activities, including through company investment decisions. DEBRA aim to consider the interests of all our members, staff, volunteers, supporters, customers, and the local economy. We strive to always make a positive contribution, both internal and externally, creating jobs in the areas in which we operate and serve.

Communities, and our people:

- We aim for all staff to enjoy an equal opportunity workplace where all staff talent is given the chance to grow in the company as we invest in their professional development. Our staff will know they are valued and will be retained to build the company further.
- Adaptations in the workplace – If people have additional needs, e.g. technology to help a less able member of staff to perform their job role.
- We will involve our staff in company decisions on social policies.

- We will consider the possibilities of contributing positive impact to the local community and participating in community or social development programs.
- We will strive to increase our first-time employer opportunities through local recruitment, development of volunteers, apprenticeship programmes, and work placements e.g., Kickstart.
- We will identify the potential risks and impact of our investment choices on all levels of society, stakeholders, and staff and take appropriate mitigating and management measures before making an investment. In measuring that impact we will consider societal living conditions, labour policies and regulations, supply chain practice involving the use of labour and the effects on the local community, health and safety working conditions, and human rights.
- We aim to ensure ethical investment across the organisation. We will review the provenance of donations to ensure that they meet with our commitments.

Suppliers and contractors:

- We will monitor and ensure our supply chain adheres to our business ethics, human rights, environmental product, and safety standards. In doing so we will review the policies of our partners and contractors where there is a direct link to our charitable activities.
- We will seek to integrate a supplier sustainability assessment into our formal selection process.
- Where possible, we will engage with local suppliers and service providers to stimulate local economies and foster job creation.

Governance and transparency

DEBRA acknowledges that strong corporate governance is critical to protecting our membership, supporters, employees and reputation. We achieve this through thorough and transparent governance of financials and data. DEBRA ensures that all its activities operate under a robust framework of policies and procedures. DEBRA is committed to ensuring rigorous governance in order to continue to operate successfully in the long-term.

Governance Processes

Our financial governance principles and goals include the following:

- All employees are expected to comply with the company employee handbook, financial regulations, and scheme of delegation.
- We constantly seek to ensure data security across the business.

- We will comply with, at a minimum, all the applicable local and national laws and regulations on transparency and corporate governance and promote the use of the UK Charity Governance Code for large charities.
- We will identify the potential governance- and law-related risks, impacts, and issues and appropriate mitigating and management measures before making an investment and during the investment monitoring process.
- We will apply high standards of business ethics, integrity, and honesty to the business and to the board of the company and ensure that no corruption, bribery, money laundering, or internal misconduct activities are taking place in the business. This is especially important when the business is considered to possess significant governance risks.
- We will deal with the relevant stakeholders, such as the regulators, tax authorities, and auditors, in an open and co-operative manner.
- We will clearly define the roles and responsibilities of the business shareholding and management structures.
- DEBRA will seek to ensure that its management structure is fit for purpose to best serve its membership. This will be reported annually to the Financial, Risk and Audit committee.
- We will report impact and issues on governance aspects that result from the operation of the business, with a particular emphasis on the ones that raise significant concerns and require higher attention.
- We will adopt practices and procedures that protect against fraud, bribery and corruption at all levels and will include anti-slavery protection.
- We will put a sustainable procurement policy in place to help us become more resource efficient. This aims to:
 - Review current contracts and identify efficiencies by implementing a centralised group purchasing process.
 - Carry out due diligence on suppliers to establish an organisation's impact both environmental and societal, to aid decision making when tendering for products and services.
 - Reduce the purchase of non-recyclable goods where cost permits.
 - Buy local, where possible. This will include the review of any catering partnerships or contracts at any DEBRA-led event, with a local and organic preference to catering, where possible.

- Ensure that all DEBRA suppliers have a Modern Slavery, EDI, Sustainability and Environmental, and Bribery policy in place, at a minimum. If such policies aren't available, then the supplier will be asked to use DEBRA policies.
- Follow the DEBRA GDPR policy with regular internal and external review of GRPR practices and compliance throughout the organisation to ensure that all customer and supporter data is protected.

Abbreviations

EDI	Equality Diversity & Inclusion
ESG	Environmental, Social and Governance
ESOS	Energy Savings Opportunity Scheme
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
SMT	Senior Management Team

Sign-off

Name	Date	Signature
Chantelle Milne	June 2022	
SMT	January 2023	