

**Finchley Progressive Synagogue Environmental
Stewardship Policy
May 2026**



Review cycle: Annually (next review: May 2027)

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Approval: Reviewed and ratified by FPS Council

1. Purpose:

As a Progressive Jewish community, we recognise our responsibility to care for the Earth, rooted in the principle of 'tikkun olam' (repairing the world).

Our environmental commitments are grounded in core teachings from the Torah and other Jewish sacred texts including:

Genesis 2:15: Humanity is placed in the world "to work it and to guard it," establishing a dual responsibility to use resources wisely while protecting them.

Genesis 1:29: And God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food".

Deut. 20:19–20: Bal Tashchit - the prohibition against needless destruction guides us to minimise waste and avoid unnecessary environmental harm.

Ex. 23:10–11: Shmita - the sabbatical year teaches sustainable land use, rest, and regeneration.

Midrash Kohelet Rabbah 7:13: We are reminded not to "spoil or destroy" the world, as no one will repair it after us.

Building on the strengths of our refurbished, energy-efficient home, we are committed to further reducing our environmental impact both at the synagogue and beyond.

This policy outlines our priorities and actions across key environmental themes.

2. Scope:

This policy applies to:

- All synagogue operations, facilities, and events
- Staff, clergy, volunteers, and contractors
- Decision-making by the Council and relevant committees
- Community activities conducted under the synagogue's auspices

3. Our Environmental Commitment:

As well as complying with all relevant statutory and regulatory requirements, we will aim to also become compliant with the following areas. This will happen over time, when possible and practical:

Energy use

We will:

- Operate our building efficiently to minimise unnecessary use of heating, lighting, and electrical systems.
- Monitor energy consumption and identify opportunities for reduction.
- Transition to renewable or low-carbon energy solutions where feasible (e.g. solar panels).
- Use a green energy supplier wherever possible.

Travel & Transport

We will:

- Encourage sustainable travel to services and events, including walking, cycling, public transport, and car sharing.
- Provide clear information about public transport routes and local cycling facilities.
- Consider accessibility needs while promoting low-carbon travel options.

Waste & Resources

We will:

- Reduce waste, with a particular focus on eliminating single-use plastics.
- Promote and facilitate recycling at all synagogue activities and events.
- Minimise paper use by prioritising digital communication wherever appropriate.
- Encourage responsible purchasing, favouring reusable, recyclable, and durable materials.
- Improve water efficiency, including reducing consumption and collecting rainwater.

Food and Catering

We will:

- Prioritise vegetarian and, where possible, locally sourced and seasonal food for communal events.
- Minimise food waste through careful planning, portion management, and redistribution where possible.

- Reduce packaging and avoid unnecessary single-use items.

Biodiversity and Outdoor Spaces

We will:

- Enhance biodiversity within our synagogue grounds.
- Introduce planting schemes that support pollinators and local wildlife.
- Provide habitats such as insect-friendly areas and natural planting zones.

Promoting environmentalism through our living Judaism

We will:

- Incorporate Jewish teachings on environmental responsibility into services, religious school, and synagogue programming.
- Support and inspire members to make sustainable choices in their homes and workplaces.
- Collaborate with external partners, including EcoSynagogue and other faith organisations, to promote environmental action locally and more widely.
- Support environmental charities and initiatives where appropriate.

4. Monitoring & Review

We will:

- Review progress against this policy annually at Council meetings.
- Include environmental sustainability as a standing item on Council agendas.
- Establish an 'Eco-Team', comprising members from across the community (including different age groups) to:
 - support implementation of this policy
 - propose new initiatives
 - help hold the Council accountable
- Lead by example, with the Council demonstrating environmentally responsible practices.
- Celebrate environmental achievements and regularly communicate progress to the congregation.