Environmental and Sustainability Policy

1. Policy Statement

Rutland Nursery is committed to operating in an environmentally responsible and sustainable manner across all areas of our business, We recognise our responsibility to minimise environmental impact, promote biodiversity, and support sustainable practices within our supply chain and local community.

This policy outlines our commitment to continual improvement in environmental performance, compliance with all relevant UK environmental legislation, and the promotion of sustainable choices for our customers and staff.

2. Objectives

We aim to:

- Reduce our carbon footprint and energy consumption
- Minimise waste and increase recycling and reuse through upcycling
- Promote sustainable and ethical sourcing
- Protect and enhance biodiversity
- Encourage environmentally responsible behaviour among staff, suppliers, and customers
- Continually monitor, review, and improve our environmental performance

3. Energy and Carbon Management

- Monitor and reduce energy consumption across all operations
- Use energy-efficient lighting (e.g. LED) and equipment
- Install and maintain energy-saving systems such as timers and smart controls
- Maximize the use of renewable energy where possible whilst investigating and developing future renewable energy sources.
- Reduce heating energy use in nursery areas through insulation, zoning, and efficient systems

4. Water Management

- Use water efficiently across nursery, bakery, and restaurant operations
- Harvest rainwater for irrigation where possible
- Regularly inspect systems to prevent leaks and waste
- Use water-efficient appliances, irrigation and sewage treatment systems

5. Waste Management

- Reduce waste generation wherever possible
- Reuse materials such as plant pots, trays, and packaging
- Provide recycling facilities for customers and staff
- Separate and dispose of food waste through recycling
- Work to eliminate single-use plastics where practical

6. Sustainable Sourcing

- Prioritise locally sourced plants, products, and food to reduce transport emissions
- Source peat-free or reduced-peat composts and promote these to customers
- Work with suppliers who demonstrate environmental responsibility
- Use sustainably sourced timber, packaging, and retail goods

7. Restaurant, Café and Bakery Sustainability

- Minimise food waste through careful stock control and menu planning
- Donate surplus food where possible or dispose of through organic recycling
- Offer seasonal, locally sourced, and sustainable menu options
- Reduce single-use items and promote reusable alternatives
- Source ethically produced food and beverages (e.g. fair trade, organic where possible)

8. Biodiversity and Environmental Protection

- Promote wildlife-friendly gardening practices
- Provide and sell plants that support pollinators and native species
- Maintain habitats on-site (e.g. wildflower areas, ponds, hedgerows)
- Avoid harmful pesticides and promote integrated pest management

9. Chemicals and Horticultural Practices

- Minimise the use of pesticides, herbicides, and fertilisers
- Promote environmentally friendly alternatives
- Ensure safe storage, handling, and disposal of all chemicals
- Train staff in responsible horticultural practices

10. Transport and Logistics

- Encourage sustainable travel options for staff and customers (e.g. cycling, public transport)
- Optimise delivery routes to reduce emissions
- Consider low-emission or electric vehicles for business use

11. Staff Engagement and Training

- Encourage staff to contribute ideas for improving sustainability
- Promote a culture of environmental responsibility

12. Customer Engagement

- Educate customers on sustainable gardening practices
- Clearly label eco-friendly products
- Promote peat-free composts and wildlife-friendly plants
- Encourage reusable bags and containers

13. Compliance and Monitoring

- Comply with all relevant environmental legislation and regulations
- Set measurable targets and review performance annually
- Monitor energy, water, and waste data
- Regularly review this policy and update as required

14. Continuous Improvement

We are committed to continually improving our environmental performance and integrating sustainability into all aspects of our operations.

15. Responsibility

This policy applies to all employees, contractors, and suppliers. Management is responsible for implementation, and all staff are expected to support and uphold the principles outlined.