# Environmental and sustainability Policy

## Introduction

The British Hydrological Society (BHS) will aim to minimise the harmful environmental impacts resulting from all its operations and encourage its members and partners to do the same.

BHS will endeavour to do this without compromising its primary object - To advance education and research in both the scientific and the applied aspects of hydrology by promoting good practice in hydrology and by fostering the involvement of its members in activities directed at promoting, advancing, and building esteem of hydrology.

## Definition

Sustainability concerns meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

## Principles

BHS will adopt the following principles of sustainable development in all that it does.

- Reduce its use of energy, water and natural resources
- Re-use materials wherever possible to maximise the benefit gained from resources and to prolong their effective working life
- Recycle materials that can be recycled effectively
- Use products and materials that, wherever possible, originate from sustainably managed natural resources that cause minimal pollution of the air, soil and water through their full life cycles and from suppliers who operate to high environmental and ethical standards.
- Adopt practices and procedures that minimise waste and pollution.
- Avoid materials, products and practices where there is any reasonable doubt concerning their possible environmental impacts.
- Encourage members and other with whom the BHS interacts (e.g., suppliers, service providers, organisations) to adopt similar policies and principles.
- Our members play a role in the reduction of carbon emissions and the BHS aims to help the profession contribute towards the net zero carbon target and mitigate climate change.

## Implementing the policy

To ensure that the BHS adheres to these principles, a nominated member will lead on environmental and sustainability issues. This will include:

- Keeping up to date with changes in environmental management practices and update this BHS Environmental and Sustainability policy document, the Environmental Impact Assessment forms and the BHS website.
- Reviewing the BHS' environmental performance by assessing key themes including:
    - Circulation magazine – Undertake a review of current practices
    - Events – Analyse the data collected from the Environmental Impact Assessment forms
- Producing a short annual statement of the BHS environmental performance, which will feed into the BHS Annual Charity Report.

## Practical application of the policy

For all BHS events, the BHS will consider the following areas using the BHS Environmental Impact Assessment form:

- Energy – Where did the event take place? / Did the venue have recycling points?
- Transport – How did members travel to the event?
- Paper products – How were forms/flyers used?
- Non-paper products – How did members book onto the event?
- Food and drink – Which food vendors were used?
- Purchasing products
- Encouraging others – Which actions were taken?

For events being held at the Institution of Civil Engineers, the following Environmental Policy will be applied - https://www.ice.org.uk/download-centre/ice-sustainability-policy-statement.

## Energy

The BHS will aim to reduce the environmental impacts of its energy consumption by choosing energy efficient venues for meetings and events. This includes buildings that have been constructed or upgraded to get the most work out of the energy that is supplied to them by taking steps to reduce energy loss such as decreasing the loss of heat through the building envelope. This could include buildings that have green roofs, rainwater harvesting, energy-efficient lightning systems, alternative sources of energy such as solar and wind.

## Transport

The BHS will aim to reduce the environmental impacts of movement associated with its business activities by:

- Encouraging the use of public transport for attending meetings wherever it is feasible and cost-effective.
- When making travel plans, members, invited speakers and travel grant applicants should have due regard to minimising their carbon footprint and consider alternatives to air travel and shared travel.
- Travel Grants should not be used for domestic air travel within UK. If the alternative is significantly more expensive, a case should be made, and the capped amounts may be waived. Further information about travel grants can be found here - https://www.hydrology.org.uk/assets/BHS Travel Grants_04Jul24.pdf
- Where possible, holding meetings at locations that are easily accessible by public transport.
- Use web-conferencing technology whenever possible to reduce the need to travel.
- Publicising public transport access to conferences and workshops.

## Paper products

The BHS will:

- Encourage members to only print where necessary, accessing meeting papers electronically where possible.
- Print/photocopy all documents double sided where possible.
- Use paper from sustainable sources.
- Recycle all used paper and cardboard.

For Circulation magazine, BHS will undertake an assessment of the environmental impact of its printed copies:

- Investigate the use of recycled materials
- Can the number of copies be reduced
- Consider electronic copies for student and early-career members
- Investigate an option for members to opt out of receiving a paper copy.

## Non-paper products

The BHS will:

- Reduce the use and re-use small consumables and purchase recycled products where possible (e.g., pens)

- Minimise printing and especially colour printing to reduce the use of toners and fluid.
- Avoid packaging as far as possible and re-use or recycle that is acquired as far as practicably possible.

## Food and drink

The BHS will aim to adopt high ethical and environmental standards when providing food and drink to volunteers, members and visitors attending Society events:

- Purchase/request ‘fairtrade certified’ tea and coffee
- Use/request organic, fair trade, locally produced and predominately plant-based food and drink as far as practicably possible.
- Encouraging sustainably produced food purchase by outside catering services and providing individual choice to meet delegate preferences, for example, but not limited to, vegan, specified allergen free, vegetarian food options for all event attendees.
- Recycling food packaging wherever possible.
- Avoid waste through over-ordering and encourage donation of excess to charity/food banks.
- Endeavouring to work with sponsoring organisations that support our approach.
- Encouraging staff to recycle any packaging from food and drink consumed.

## Purchasing policy

Wherever practicable, the BHS, when purchasing goods or services, will endeavour to identify suppliers and contractors with a demonstrable and auditable commitment to environmental good practice.

For example, we will procure goods from suppliers who use minimal and biodegradable/ recyclable plastic packaging and use external printers who use environmentally- friendly practices wherever appropriate.

## Encouraging others

The BHS will encourage members and others with whom it comes into contact to adopt similar or equivalent policies and practices and to commit to reducing their effect on the environment and their carbon footprint.

The BHS will put this Environmental and Sustainability Policy prominently on its website and publish the outcomes of its monitoring of this environmental policy in the Annual Returns.

# Change record

| Date of change | Change by | Reason for change |
|---|---|---|
| 02/04/2025 | BHS Main Committee | Adopted |