Expenses Policy

Introduction

This policy provides guidance on expenses incurred by BHS Trustees and Volunteers, including what costs can be paid as expenses, the process for seeking approval and making claims.

Expenses

The British Hydrological Society (BHS) can reimburse expenses necessarily incurred by Trustees and Volunteers to perform their role. This may include, for example, costs involved in travel and subsistence to attend meetings and purchases made on behalf of BHS. The following guidance shall apply.

- Expenses should be reasonable; they should not be excessive, and they should be properly incurred.
- Claims for travel should also follow the guidance in the Environmental and Sustainability Policy.
- The BHS encourages Trustees and Volunteers who are employed to seek support from their employers to cover costs of attending meetings where possible.
- Expenses are not Trustee benefits.

Seeking approval to commit and expenditure

Expenses incurred in attending Trustees' meetings do not require prior approval.

All other expenses must be approved prior to committing the expense. When seeking approval, a reasonable cost estimate must be submitted to the Treasurer for consideration by the finance sub-committee. Depending on the nature and extent of the cost, the finance sub-committee may refer the application to the main committee. In all cases the applicant will not be involved in the decision as to approve the expense. Re-imbursement may be approved subject to maximum cost limits.

In exceptional cases, a Trustee or Volunteer may request payment in advance where there is an unacceptable risk or burden to the payer (e.g. large expenses).

Claiming expenses

In all cases, Trustees and Volunteers should complete the BHS Expenses Claim Form, which is available on the shared file store or from the Treasurer, and submit it to the Treasurer for approval. In the case that the claimant is the Treasurer, approval should be sought from the President or other nominated officer of the society.

Appropriate evidence, such as receipts, must be provided as proof that the claimant met the cost they are claiming, except where this is impractical, for example, where very small amounts less than £10, are claimed. Where receipts are not provided the justification should be provided for consideration by the Treasurer.

If an advance payment has been made, and the amount approved is less than the advance, the claimant will be required to pay back the difference. If the expenditure is not justified, action will be taken to recover the advance.

Expense claims should be submitted as early as possible, and within three months at the latest.

If approved, an instruction will be issued to make the payment. Payment will be by Bankers' Automated Clearing System (BACS).

Payments must be made directly to the claimant’s personal bank account and cannot be made to a business, employer, or university.

If trustee expenses are excessive, unreasonable or false, a trustee may have to pay them back.

Regulatory Guidance

https://www.gov.uk/guidance/trustee-expenses-what-charities-can-pay

Change record

Date of change	Change by	Reason for change
January 2026	BHS Main Committee	Adopted