Communications and Publications Policy

Introduction

The Communications and Publications sub-Committee (the sub-committee) has delegated authority from the Main Committee to manage the communications and publications (content) from the Society (i.e., the British Hydrological Society). All content produced by the Society must adhere to its object as stated in the Statutes:

“To promote interest, scholarship, education, and good practice in hydrology and to foster the involvement of its members in activities directed at promoting, advancing, and building esteem of hydrology.”

This policy outlines the processes used by the sub-committee , including how it handles content submitted by members.

General Principles

Any content published by the Society must:

- align with the Society’s object.
- be of relevance and interest to the membership.
- not contain anything illegal.
- not contain anything libellous.
- not contain anything that could be considered harassment, bullying, or discriminatory.
- not contain anything that might bring the Society into disrepute.
- not contain misinformation.
- comply with the Society’s Privacy Policy, including use of images.
- comply with copyrights or licenses for third-party content used.
- comply with the Society’s EDI policies and guidance.
- consider wider issues of inclusion and accessibility.

Roles and responsibilities

To enact its duties and comply with this policy, the sub-committee will need to designate the following roles:

- Chair (must be a trustee).
- Secretary (must be a trustee).

- Editor of *Circulation*.
- Social Media Officer.
- Web Officer.
- Mailbase Officer.
- Advertising Officer.
- Media Officer.

An individual may be designated multiple roles. Where there is no designated person, the role defaults to the Chair. These roles should be reviewed annually following the Society's AGM.

This policy covers the following areas:

- Publishing content from members.
- BHS Mailbase.
- Social Media Channels.
- BHS Website.
- *Circulation*.
- Ad hoc Publications.
- Advertising.
- Media Enquiries.

Publishing content from members

The Society provides five routes for publication for content submitted by members:

1. BHS Mailbase at BHS-HYDROLOGY@JISCMAIL.AC.UK.
2. Social media channels, including Twitter/X and LinkedIn.
3. The Society website at www.hydrology.org.uk.
4. Articles in *Circulation*, the Society's magazine/newsletter.
5. Letters in *Circulation*, the Society's magazine/newsletter.

The flow chart in Figure 1 shows the most appropriate publication route for different types of content submitted by members. The flow chart should be used for guidance and where there is doubt, the sub-committee should be consulted. The flow chart can also provide guidance on the appropriate form of publication for content produced by the Society itself.

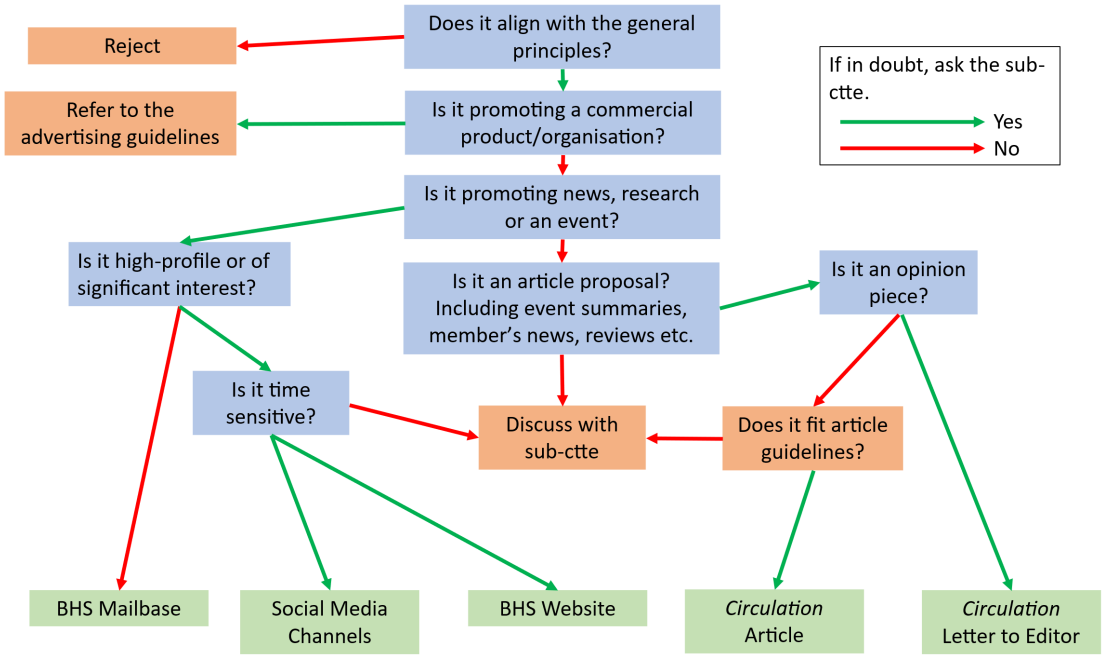


Figure 1 – Flow chart to be used by members of the Communications & Publications sub-committee to determine the appropriate publication route for content submitted by members.

In the past the Society has also published Occasional Papers. However, these have waned in popularity and regularity to the point that there is little value in continuing them. Consequently, these are no longer offered as a formal route, although the sub-committee may consider requests as an ad hoc publication (see Section 7).

The Society's publication routes should be used to share hydrology news and events with members and provide members a platform to share their own hydrology news and events. They should not be used to promote commercial products and these requests should be considered as advertising (see Section 8).

The publication routes are not intended to be a discussion forum or a platform for members to express their opinions on topics. Such activity would require a level of moderation greater than that the Society can resource.

BHS Mailbase

The Society maintains a Jiscmail-based mailbase that is openly available. You do not need to be a BHS member to subscribe and send posts. BHS members are automatically subscribed as part of the process of joining the Society. Subscribers may

send messages to the mailbase by directly emailing BHS-HYDROLOGY@JISCMAIL.AC.UK.
Moderation should be light touch and posts rejected under the following circumstances:

- Post does not align with the general principles of this policy.
- Post is promoting/advertising a commercial product or organisation.
- Post is advertising a job role.*
- Post is intended to encourage discussion via the mailbase or is a reply to a previous post.
- Post contains an attachment or is otherwise large.
- Post is spam and/or phishing.

*Note – PhD opportunities are not considered as job roles and are permitted to be advertised. The Mailbase Officer will also send a single post to the mailbase on behalf of recruiters for each paid-for job advert on the website.

When a post is rejected, the author should be messaged to explain why (unless it is spam). Where appropriate, the author should be signposted elsewhere, for example, if the post is advertising they should be referred instead to the Advertising Officer.
The designated Mailbase Officer has delegated approval from the sub-committee to manage the mailbase – they must adhere to this policy.

Social Media Channels

The Society uses its social media channels to broadcast information to members and to project the value of hydrology externally to build esteem. It can also be used to 'signal boost' content from members when it aligns with the Society's purpose.
The sub-committee will use the channels to share Society news, including:

- New items on the website and YouTube channel.
- Promoting BHS events and webinars.
- Promoting the latest issue of *Circulation.*
- Sharing content that promotes the value and esteem of hydrology.
- Periodic calls for people to join the Society.

Members are encouraged to request signal boosts of their own content. The preferred method is to tag the Society in content so it can be reshared by the sub-committee , or emailing links for content to shared to BHSCommsCommittee @gmail.com. Content from members will only be shared directly if the above is not possible.

All content posted directly by the Society should:

- Include an image to increase visibility.
- Include alt-text on all images used.

- Include capitalisation of first letters in all hashtags, e.g., #BritishHydrologicalSociety instead of #britishhydrologicalsociety.

The main purpose of the channels is to broadcast information, replies are not expected not be sent unless it is an easy-to-answer questions, e.g., “How do you join the society?”. If unsure, consult with the rest of the sub-committee.

The Society keeps accounts on Twitter/X, LinkedIn, BlueSky, Threads, and Instagram. It is not expected that all accounts will be active at the same time but they should be kept to maintain the handle for the Society. The sub-committee will decide which accounts to use. All content should be tailored for the tone and audience of each individual platform.

The designated Social Media Officer has delegated authority from the sub-committee for day-to-day updates and maintenance of all the Society’s social media channels – they must adhere to this policy. They are also encouraged to develop a social media strategy to further the purposes of the Society to cover the term of their role. It may contain actions and use of social media not included in this policy. This strategy should be agreed with the sub-committee .

Note: The Society also maintains a YouTube channel. The Events & Meetings sub-committee has delegated authority from the Main Committee to maintain this.

BHS Website

The Society’s website is www.hydrology.org.uk. It contains a wealth of information about the Society, including its history, governance structures and documents, information for members, and updates of news and events.
The website contains content for the following user groups:

- Prospective members seeking information about the Society, benefits of membership, and how to join.
- Current members seeking information on news, events, and member services including travel grants and *Circulation*.
- People interested in learning more about hydrology out of either general interest or for a purpose, e.g., to prepare teaching materials.
- Members of the media seeking an expert opinion or commentary regarding hydrology.

This information remains largely unchanged and is only updated when a change is required.

The News section of the website can be used to communicate information too time-sensitive for printed media to members, where:

- It is shared as a social media post but needs extra information and context that is not hosted elsewhere.
- It would normally be an article or letter in *Circulation* but needs to be published before the next issue is due.

Any item posted to the News section should also be signposted to using the social media channels.

The designated Web Officer is responsible for the day-to-day updates and maintenance of the website and has delegated authority from the sub-committee to do so – changes must adhere to this policy. Where they feel major changes are required, these require prior approval from the sub-committee and may be escalated to the Main Committee . Any major refresh of the website will require a Task and Finish Group, chaired by a Trustee with the Web Officer as a member.

Members of other sub-committee s may also be given delegated authority to maintain pages of the website relevant to their sub-committee . In these cases they must follow this policy.

Circulation

Circulation acts as the Society's magazine and newsletter. It Is provided as a print copy to all members and subscribers, and a digital version is freely available on the website. The Editor of *Circulation* has delegated authority from the sub-committee to determine content for *Circulation* and to produce and publish it – they must adhere to this policy.

Publication process

Circulation is published quarterly, with issues in February, May, August, and November. The process of publication is delegated to the Editor of *Circulation.* To build resilience and continuity, they are encouraged to document the processes they use.
If the Editor is unable to produce an issue they should make the sub-committee aware as soon as possible so that alternative arrangements can be made.
The copy for any issue must be reviewed for alignment with the general principles by the sub-committee (including at least one trustee) before being published.

Typical content

The Editor will determine the length and format of each issue, including the use appropriate and accessible fonts. To break up text and to make it more visually appealing, a target of at least one image per two-page spread should be aimed for.
Each issue should contain, in order, the following items:

- Cover image with Circulation, issue number and date, and "The Newsletter of the British Hydrological Society" (1 page).
- Contents, disclaimer, deadline for copy for the next issue, new members update (2 pages).
- President's Perspective. Item written by the President (2 pages).
- Back cover (1 page).

The following items should be provided first refusal for space in each issue*:

- Executive Committee update – news from the executive committee (2 page*).
- Events and Meetings update – item from the Events & Meetings sub-committee (2 pages).
- Publications and Communications update – item from the Publications & Communications sub-committee (2 pages).
- Education and Careers update – item from the Education & Careers sub-committee (2 pages).
- Early Career update – item from the Early Careers sub-committee (2 pages).
- Update provided by UKCEH, usually the Hydrological Bulletin (4 pages).
- UK Flood Hydrology Roadmap update – update provided by the UKFHR board (2 pages).
- Obituaries (2 pages each).
- Adverts (1 page each).

*Note – these are guaranteed minimum page space. More space can be provided at the discretion of the Editor.
Additional space can be filled with the following items:

- Articles (4 pages each).
- Letters to the Editor (1 page each).
- Member profiles (2 pages each).

(All page numbers are maximum limits and items may take up less space).
Occasionally, the content of a single issue may vary to cover events and occasions. This may be proposed by anyone but must be agreed by the sub-committee .

Member's submissions to Circulation

Members are encouraged to submit content for publication in *Circulation*. To do so they should first contact the Editor with a brief description of their proposal. The Editor will

then decide whether their proposal is suitable for *Circulation*, and whether it should be an article or a Letter to the Editor.

Articles can cover a wide range of themes however they must be informative and evidence-based. All articles should be made up of a multiple of 250 words up to 1000 words and contain at least one image - authors should subtract 100 words from their word limit for each image. For example, a four page article with two images would be a maximum of 800 words. Examples of content suitable for articles includes:

- Reviews of research published elsewhere.
- Reviews of events, especially BHS or BHS-sponsored events, or events where the author was supported by a BHS travel grant.
- Short descriptions of new methods or analyses that are not better suited to peer-reviewed journals.
- News and updates from projects.
- Well-informed thought pieces and perspectives (at the Editor's discretion).

All other content can be considered for publication as a Letter to the Editor. Letters to the Editor should be no longer than 250 words and may not include an image. Examples of content suitable for Letters includes:

- Member's opinions and views on topics.
- Responses to previously published articles or Letters.

The following content may be considered as advertising and authors should be referred instead to the advertising guidelines:

- Reviews of products and services.
- Job postings.
- Promotions of upcoming events and training.

Ad hoc Publications

Occasionally the Society may decide to publish content that does not fall into any of the categories above. Due to their nature the responsibility for producing ad hoc publications may be ambiguous. For example, Proceedings may be produced to support meetings organised by the Society, including the Symposium, and responsibility for this may lay between both the sub-committee s for Communications & Publications and Events & Meetings. The development of educational materials, including lesson plans, may lay between the sub-committee s for Communications & Publications and Education & Careers.

Any proposal to publish anything on behalf of the Society should be discussed with the Chair of the Communications & Publications sub-committee . In most cases, delegated

authority will be provided and where support from the sub-committee is required then a Task and Finish Group can be established, chaired by a trustee and with at least one member of the sub-committee as a member.
In any case, anything published on behalf of the Society must adhere to this policy.

Advertising

The Society can support its members by providing advertising. This can include the promotion of goods, services, events, training, and job listings. Each will be handled by their own process. The costs of advertising will be set by the Finance sub-committee and shown on the website.

Advertising is provided as a service to members and others looking for hydrological support and advice. It does not represent any form of endorsement by the Society. Potential clients should satisfy themselves of the suitability of the offer within in each advert. The social media channels should never be used for advertisements.

Goods and Services.

Goods and services may be advertised in *Circulation* by purchasing advertising space. Adverts must comply with this policy and the Editor of *Circulation* may request changes. The Society maintains a Register of Consultants on its website that is free to join. The offer differs for different organisations:

- Companies may submit their name, a logo, up to 50 words describing their hydrology-related services, and a web address (no active link). This information will appear on the Register's page of the website.
- Sole traders may submit a single 2-page (A4) document. Their name will appear on the Register's page of the website and will include a hyperlink to the document.

Events and Training

Any request to promote an event or training course should be first checked to determine if it is commercial in nature. If it is, then it should instead be considered as a service (see above). If it is not commercial in nature it will not be considered advertising and can be promoted free of charge using appropriate routes (see Figure 1).

Job Listings

The Society will share adverts for jobs on the Job Listings page of the website.

The Advertising Officer has delegated authority to determine the nature of advertising requests – they must adhere to this policy and any adverts in *Circulation* must also have approval of the Editor.

Note: The Society may also offer opportunities to sponsor events and meetings. This will be covered by the Events & Meetings sub-committee .

Media Enquiries

The Society may be contacted by members of media requesting comments or expert opinion on matters relating to hydrology. These will be considered on a case-by-case basis but it is anticipated that most enquiries will lead to the following outcomes, as appropriate, and in order of desirability:

- Referral to a trustee with relevant expertise.
- Referral to a member with relevant expertise.
- A call out to members via the mailbase for someone able to fulfil the request.
- Referral to another professional body better suited for the enquiry.
- No action – unable to help.

The Press Officer has delegated authority to manage these requests on behalf of the Society. They are encouraged to develop a media strategy that would seek to build the value and esteem of the Society and hydrology to cover the term of their role. This strategy must be approved by the sub-committee .

Change record

Date of change	Change by	Reason for change
16/02/2024	BHS Main Committee	Adopted