

British Infection Association Sustainability Strategy 2025-2030

Version History	
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Purpose/Background

The British Infection Association recognises there is a global climate emergency and that this has adverse impacts on individual and population health. This is of concern to our members, our patients and the wider population. The diagnosis, management and control of infection are associated with carbon emissions and our association has a role to play in supporting the NHS net zero 2045 target through research, policy development, education and advocacy.

The British Infection Association is committed to support and promote environmental sustainability across all aspects of its operations. To facilitate this, the association will target net zero carbon emissions by 2040, with an interim reduction of 50% by 2030. This includes our direct carbon emissions and those of our suppliers.

This report outlines sets a sustainability strategy for 2025-2030 Our strategy focuses on 5 key areas:

- Measure and reduce the carbon emissions associated with our operations, targeting net zero 2040
- Consider environmental impact in our decision making through sustainability impact assessments
- Improve the sustainability of events, focusing on low carbon travel, catering and venue choices
- Develop and implement a green procurement policy
- Work to divest our financial interests from fossil fuel producers where feasible
- Promote carbon literacy and sustainable practice amongst members and trainees through education and guidance

The adaptation and implementation of this strategy holds benefits for the association through improved efficiency, membership engagement and growth. Reducing the carbon emissions of our association whilst continuing to deliver our strategic priorities carries benefits to our members, patients and the wider population through improved efficiency, wellbeing and health outcomes.

Internal Operations and Events

This section focuses on the activities the association will perform to reduce carbon emissions of internal operations and events. These actions will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and demonstrate climate leadership to members and the public.

We will set a net zero target for direct and indirect (scope 1-3) carbon emissions by 2040 with an interim target of 50% reduction by 2030, compared to a 2023/4 baseline. To track progress towards this, we will commission an independent company to measure our association's direct and indirect carbon footprint on a 5-yearly basis.

We recognize that policy decisions made by the association have climate impacts; we aim to consider these by developing and implementing environmental impact assessment tools for major organizational decisions.

The association hosts several meetings and events including trainee education days and scientific meetings. These have good attendance and are an important networking opportunity for our members. The organisation will aim to minimise the carbon footprint of these events by adopting an environmental sustainability framework for event planning, with a particular focus on low carbon delegate travel, catering and venue choice.

We will update our business travel policy to encourage use of low carbon transport where this is possible. Additionally, we will encourage the use of ground transport over short haul flights. Where flights are necessary, we will offset emissions using direct air-capture carbon offsetting.

We will develop and implement a green procurement policy to encourage and incentivise our suppliers to measure, report and reduce their carbon emissions.

Finance

This section focuses on the investments and financial activities of the association. We recognise the importance of diverting our financial assets from fossil fuels, including coal, petroleum, natural gas, oil shales, bitumen, tar sands, and heavy oils, to low carbon investments to support the green transition. By 2027, we will:

- Transition to daily banking to an institution that has an ethical investment policy and does not finance companies opening new fossil fuel reserves.
- Assess the feasibility of divesting endowment investments in companies generating 20% or more of their income from fossil fuels, favoring investments which focus on sustainability
- Publish a list of major endowment holdings equating to at least 80% of the fund value at our AGM on an annual basis

Education, Research and Policy

The association recognises the role of education in building a climate-resilient health sector. Climate-informed health professionals can engage in public health promotion in addition to integrating sustainable practice into their workplaces. We will promote climate literacy amongst members by incorporating this into training curriculum and through deployment of education events and online learning resources.

The association recognizes the importance of standards in infection practice including the development of guidelines. We will work to consider the environmental impacts of recommendations in clinical guidelines through use of sustainability impact assessments in guideline development. We will additionally work with partner organizations to develop policies which improve the environmental sustainability of infection diagnosis, management and control.

Implementation, audit and reporting

This strategy will be implemented over a 5-year period. Implementation will be coordinated by a sustainability secretary, with support from across the association. A report of progress against this strategy will be delivered on an annual basis to the chair. This will be made publicly available via the annual report.