

**SUSTAINABILITY POLICY**

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**DOCUMENT CONTROLS**

Version 0.1		Original document
Version 0.2	24.06.2025	Draft revision of Sustainability Policy
Version 0.3	30.09.2025	Final version, approved at Sustainability Committee Meeting

**SECTION 1: BACKGROUND**

The natural world is intrinsically precious, and the biodiversity of animals, plants, habitats and people must be sustained and protected. Global biodiversity is under unprecedented threat posed by human activities. Climate change and the over-consumption of natural resources threaten both wildlife and humanity. In response, the UK government has set a target for the country to become net zero by 2050 (Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener 1) and has ambitious plans to lead the way globally.

In 2015, as part of a new sustainable agenda, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted a set of 17 goals, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), set to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity for all. The goals provide a universal framework and a call to action to build an inclusive, sustainable and resilient future for both people and planet by 2030.

This Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) roadmap hopes to articulate a common approach for how Zoos and Aquaria can maximize their potential to contribute to helping achieve the critical UN Sustainable Development Goal agenda.



Delivering on the SDGs requires action from all of us; governments, businesses, organisations, charities and people.

Acting sustainably means meeting society’s needs today without compromising the ability of future populations to meet their own needs. Colchester Zoological Society (CZS) recognises its activities can have a significant impact on local and global environments and has a responsibility and opportunity to both lead by example and to engage the public in a vital and timely dialogue. CZS is able to employ sustainable processes, techniques and equipment within its operations, and also to engage visitors and the wider community on the broader challenges of achieving a more sustainable society.

## SECTION 2: SUSTAINABILITY POLICY PURPOSE

The Colchester Zoological Society Sustainability Policy outlines how CZS aims to actively contribute towards environmental sustainability. It is intended for use by Colchester Zoological Society, Colchester Zoo Ltd and all respective employees, visitors, suppliers and those who have a responsibility for sustainability activities.

## SECTION 3: SUSTAINABILITY POLICY OBJECTIVES

Colchester Zoological Society has the following commitments:

- To comply with relevant environmental legislation
- To protect and enhance the natural environment by minimising its environmental impact
- To commit to relevant standards (FSC timber, sustainable palm oil, MSC fish etc)
- To strive for continual improvement via the development and advancement of practices and habits for responsible use of resources and sustainable procurement
- To foster a culture where employees and visitors care about sustainability and continuously improve their own and collective practices

The objectives shall be achieved through implementing and maintaining strategies, which will be subject to regular review of operation, to ensure compliance with the Policy and to continue to improve environmental performance. The CZS Sustainability Policy identifies six key areas upon which to focus efforts to improve sustainability and induce positive change:

- Energy
- Water
- Waste Minimisation
- Education for Sustainability
- Sustainable Procurement
- Sustainable Travel

## SECTION 4: ENERGY

### Aims:

- 1) To reduce the need for energy
- 2) To introduce energy efficiency measures
- 3) To encourage and promote the use of energy from renewable / sustainable sources.
- 4) To ensure any continuing use of fossil fuel is clean and efficient
- 5) To incorporate energy efficient systems in new buildings, and when redeveloping old buildings, where possible

### Actions:

- To identify set parameters which can be subject to measuring and control, and carry out an audit to set benchmark levels, during both off peak and peak visitor levels.
- To initiate energy use profiling using smart meters or energy management software.
- To set and formalise objectives and targets for energy performance where possible.
- To optimise energy efficiency using both construction and technological solutions.
- To invest in energy efficient products as identified by energy performance rating and eco-labels, especially in heating, ventilation, air conditioning, pumping and lighting.
- To reduce use of fossil fuels via alternative sustainable fuel sources, such as biomass, renewable energy.

## SECTION 5: WATER

### Aims:

- 1) To reduce use and wastage of clean water
- 2) To increase reuse and recycling of grey water

### Actions:

- Use metering to set benchmarks for reduction in water use and apply technological and operational solutions to achieve these.
- Use metering to identify leaks, set benchmarks and monitor changes in usage.
- Reduce, reuse or recycle wherever possible (e.g. re-use greywater, harvest and use rainwater, improve filtration systems and substrate use to reduce the volume of water required for aquatic exhibits, review reverse osmosis water production processes, replace old style toilets with new more water-efficient designs, add minimising controls to taps and hoses and use plant species which require low water levels).
- Aim to treat water onsite rather than have waste water removed.
- Ensure the likelihood of water pollution is minimised.

## SECTION 6: WASTE MINIMISATION

### Aims:

- 1) To reduce waste production and packaging, where possible
- 2) To increase use of recyclable resources
- 3) To reuse and recycle waste, where possible
- 4) To minimise the use of materials that are harmful to the environment

### Actions:

- Audit waste streams and take steps to minimise waste.
- Ensure all waste disposal is legally compliant and transferred to a registered waste company.
- Measure waste streams to enable baseline measurements to be set.
- Minimise waste generation by selecting/selling products with low levels of packaging or picking products that come in recyclable packaging.
- Recycle as much as possible on site or through a waste service provider.
- Explore options such as anaerobic digestion for biogas and energy from waste.
- Provide facilities for visitors to recycle.

## SECTION 7: EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABILITY

### Aims:

- 1) To encourage good environmental practice among staff, visitors and the wider community.
- 2) To increase participation in environmentally-sensitive initiatives.

### Actions:

- Ensure education for sustainability encompasses both internal & external audiences.
- Internal Audiences:
  - Offer sustainability leadership, motivation, skills and a plan to manage the change throughout CZS.
  - Identify sustainability champions within all sectors of CZS and create networks to encourage them to build relationships and mentor each other.

- Provide online space and visible management support to ensure those engaged in developing sustainable practices feel valued and motivated to educate others.
- External Audiences
  - Embed sustainability messaging in all mediums of education be this keepers talks, online platforms, formal and informal education.
  - Engage in wider sustainability campaigns.

## **SECTION 8: SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT**

### **Aims:**

- 1) To encourage investment in environmentally ethical companies and products
- 2) To consider environmental and ethical policies of companies providing funds and services

### **Actions:**

- Identify areas where procurement can be made more sustainable and develop a policy to support this.
- Review all products to be purchased and identify clear priority areas where negative environmental or social impacts can be reduced. This should include first identifying whether products are necessary to purchase in the first place.
- Create a sustainable procurement policy to include commitments, clear targets and timeframes for achieving these.
- Communicate the sustainable procurement policy and any targets to suppliers and also to contracted on-site companies.
- Embed sustainability into all procurement processes. Ensure that all relevant staff are aware of priority areas and include sustainability requirements in any procurement documentation.
- Monitor and measure successes and ongoing procurement projects, e.g. through audits to ensure that targets are being achieved.

## **SECTION 9: SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL**

### **Aim:**

- 1) To encourage staff and visitors to reduce environmental impacts of their travel habits

### **Actions:**

- Survey visitors and staff to evaluate the carbon emissions from associated travel and develop initiatives to reduce emissions.
- Carry out regular travel surveys on staff commuting and business travel and visitor travel.
- Publicise how visitors and staff can reach their site via public transport.
- Provide facilities for cyclists to store their bikes.
- Consider incentives for sustainable travellers.
- Encourage use of public transport for business travel whenever possible.
- Invest in video conferencing/skype facilities to enable staff to 'call in' to meetings rather than travelling in.

## **SECTION 10: RESPONSIBILITIES**

Sustainability is the responsibility of all CZS employees within their respective departments, under the management of their Team Leaders. The Sustainability Committee will be responsible for overseeing and monitoring the achievement of this strategy, made up of employees representative of all major zoo departments.

The Zoological Director will be responsible for coordinating the implementation of this strategy and reporting to CZS Senior Management. The Senior Management and Trustees will receive a bi-annual report on the Committee's progress towards an annual target action plan and this will also be published online.

## **SECTION 11: SUSTAINABILITY ACTION PLAN**

Detail of specific actions and timeframes are outlined in the CZS Sustainability Action Plan and Targets 2025-26.

## **SECTION 12: REFERENCES**

BIAZA Sustainability Resources available here:

[BIAZA - British and Irish Association of Zoos and Aquariums | BIAZA:](#)

- BIAZA Sustainability Policy 2023,
- BIAZA Sustainability Guides for Zoos and Aquaria 2021,
- BIAZA Quick Guide to Sustainability Policies 2017,
- Sustainable Development Goals - Guide for BIAZA Members 2018