



# **Example Job Description: Rowing Club Sustainability Officer**

**November 2024**



## Background

Sustainability is most often defined as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet theirs. Broadly speaking, sustainable practices help to reduce consumption of limited natural resources or finding alternative resources with lower environmental consequences, as well as considering the social and economic impacts of individuals, groups, corporations or government.

British Rowing launched its Sustainability Strategy in March 2024 based around six objectives, <https://www.britishrowing.org/sustainability/>. These are:

- Help our waters thrive
- Reduce our carbon footprint
- Embed sustainability into operations
- Be agile
- Learn, educate and facilitate
- Inspire and celebrate.

It is suggested that clubs might like to do the same, although this isn't, of course, mandatory and you might like to develop your own sustainability strategy for your club.

## Sustainability Officer Role

The sustainability officer should be part of the club's committee. They will work closely with the committee to agree the sustainable objectives and ensure that the objectives below are met as far as possible and weave into the committee's and then the club's operations.

The sustainability officer should work very closely with the coaches and in particular with the clubhouse management and any other stakeholders e.g. the local council to ensure that everyone is aligned and has a good awareness of their sustainability policies.

If any partners are proposed for the club it is essential that due diligence is undertaken on their sustainability credentials as part of the process.

Below are a few suggestions of initiatives that could be included in your strategy that you would lead – though we're sure that you'll want to tailor your own for the club.

## Help our Waters Thrive

1. Start to do some water quality testing – phosphate and nitrate testing is a good introduction. Freshwater Watch could help with this. <https://www.freshwaterwatch.org/>



2. Ensure that British Rowing safety practices around mitigating rowing in any unclean waters are known by all – liaise with your club’s Rowing Safety Advisor on communications. The guidance document is here:
  - <https://www.britishrowing.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Guidance-for-Rowing-When-Water-Quality-is-Poor-March-2024.pdf>
3. Help promote knowledge (with materials available from British Rowing) ‘Check, Clean, Dry’ messaging to prevent the spread of invasive species when taking your boats away from your home waters.. See below:
  - <https://www.britishrowing.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Invasive-Species-ID-booklet.pdf>. British Rowing has aluminium signs, A3 posters and Z-cards; please contact [sustainability@britishrowing.org](mailto:sustainability@britishrowing.org) if you’d like some for your club.
4. Encourage members, when washing down boats to:
  - If boats are not too dirty then to wash down boats only with water and out of buckets, not using hoses.
  - Use eco detergents – the best and most marine-friendly detergent is Delphis – British Rowing has a 10% discount on this – see below:
    - i. <https://www.britishrowing.org/2024/07/delphis-eco-gives-rowing-community-10-discount-on-eco-friendly-cleaning-products/>
  - Do this in areas where the water will not flow straight back into a water course (drain, river, sea etc.) but rather on grass/a hard standing area away from water.

## Reduce our Carbon Footprint

1. Speak to your energy provider to see if they can do an assessment of your club’s energy usage and give energy saving tips and can also advise on things like solar panel installation. Often they do this free or for a minimal fee.
2. Install electricity/gas smart meters, if you don’t have them already - it’s possible to ascertain when peak energy usage occurs and what uses it. It’s also very interesting to see how much energy is being generated by machines, fridges, etc. that are on 24/7. Incentives could be created to encourage members to help achieve a target energy reduction for the year in comparison to the previous year.
3. Is the water on a meter? Monitoring water consumption can also lead to significant savings, as can encouraging members to have shorter showers. (dare we say it!)
4. Could a vegan post training meal be served now and again in the club house?
5. Is there sufficient bike storage for members cycling to the club? Can more members be encouraged to cycle? (or use public transport if practical or lift share when feasible)
6. Think about measuring your own scope 1 and scope 2 emissions. This is mostly around your energy sources. We are a member of the British Association of Sustainability in Sport and we will let members know when they run webinars and courses. See here for the definition of scope 1 and scope 2:
  - **Scope 1 emissions**  
Scope 1 covers emissions from sources that an organisation owns or controls



directly – for example from burning fuel in our fleet of vehicles (if they're not electrically-powered).

- **Scope 2 emissions**

Scope 2 are emissions that a company causes indirectly and come from where the energy it purchases and uses is produced. For example, the emissions caused when generating the electricity that we use in our buildings would fall into this category.

## **Embed Sustainability into Operations**

1. Gain knowledge on the club/council's waste management systems. Is everyone in the club of where and how to dispose of their waste?
2. Review of printing, use of paper, and guidelines provided to reduce where possible. Print in black and white unless colour is required.
3. Check on policies/guidelines currently in place regarding pollutants (e.g. fuel) and disposal. Do launches have spill kits? (e.g. sand for any petrol spilled on lands and rags to clear it up) Ideally spills are then properly disposed of – this might mean liaising with the local council on how this is best done.
4. Are you able to find space to do some bee-friendly wild flower planting?
5. Club kit – what is it made from and how is it sourced?
6. Second hand kit stall – kit can be expensive and especially newcomers to the sport are likely to welcome some good quality but affordable kit.

## **Be Agile**

1. This relates to flooding – how can you, as a club, prevent more water going into the river/lake that your club produces – e.g. by getting some water butts (the water of which can be used for cleaning boats)
2. Do you have hard/softer surfaces around your boathouse, could some of the hardstanding change to gravel or another surface that absorbs water?

## **Learn, Educate and Facilitate**

1. As sustainability officer could you host a post training session on some of your sustainability initiatives?
2. Could you make everyone aware, at the club, of the webinars and resources that British Rowing has?
3. Can you mention any specific schemes in your club newsletter?
4. Can you include a 'sustainability corner' on your club noticeboard?
5. Please link to your local Rivers Trust who can help you with educational resources, tips on flood prevention, any invasive species work that's going on. Look here for the contact:
  - <https://theriverstrust.org/about-us/member-trusts>

## **Inspire and Celebrate**



1. Please shout about your successes to other club members and also to British Rowing. Link below to British Rowing's form to create some case studies:
  - <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSclJ4Z0sR00sm - QMapLXsFiWNJGriTekhZvjaPbtb74piug/viewform>
2. At your club dinner, if you have awards, perhaps think about introducing a 'sustainability champion of the year' award for an individual or group who are doing excellent work supporting your initiatives.

If you have any questions, please contact: [sustainability@britishrowing.org](mailto:sustainability@britishrowing.org)