

***ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY***  
***2024/5 - YEAR 1 REVIEW***  
***2025/6 - PLAN***

# ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY: 2024/5

## YEAR 1 REVIEW

The first year of our sustainability strategy has seen a whirlwind of activity both 'in house' at British Rowing and in the community.

No sooner had we launched the focus on the Thames' dirty water and sewage pollution came to the forefront of press attention around The Boat Race, which catapulted the issue into the public domain. We had already published our 'Guidance for Rowing When Water Quality is Poor' offering reassurance to rowers and clubs that we support their continued participation in the sport they love—while emphasising a few essential hygiene precautions.

Later in the year, we launched our Thriving Waters Scheme, which drew a diverse range of applications. These have since evolved into independent projects within clubs, schools, and universities across the country.

None of this would be possible without our incredibly engaged partners - The Rivers Trust, River Action and Delphis Eco.

We had a few challenges measuring our own carbon emissions due to structural changes in British Rowing, however we have measured our Scope 1 and 2 emissions.

Our first year has taught us a lot and we've imparted some of our learnings in a series of webinars that over 200 club members have attended. This webinar series will continue this year and is a great way to collaborate and share best practice and learnings.

Towards the end of 2025, we held a fascinating brainstorm session with our Clean Water Partners. This year, we will be embarking on a new programme this year which starts to look at flooding and what we can do with natural solutions.

Last and not least - several environmental and sustainability awards were won in 2024. Stratford upon Avon Boat Club won our own, new Environmental Sustainability Award. Imogen Grant won two awards - the IOC Climate Action Award and the BBC Green Sports Awards Athlete of the Year award, and we won the British Association of Sport Leadership Award. What a great springboard into 2025!

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SUSTAINABILITY LEAD, BRITISH ROWING

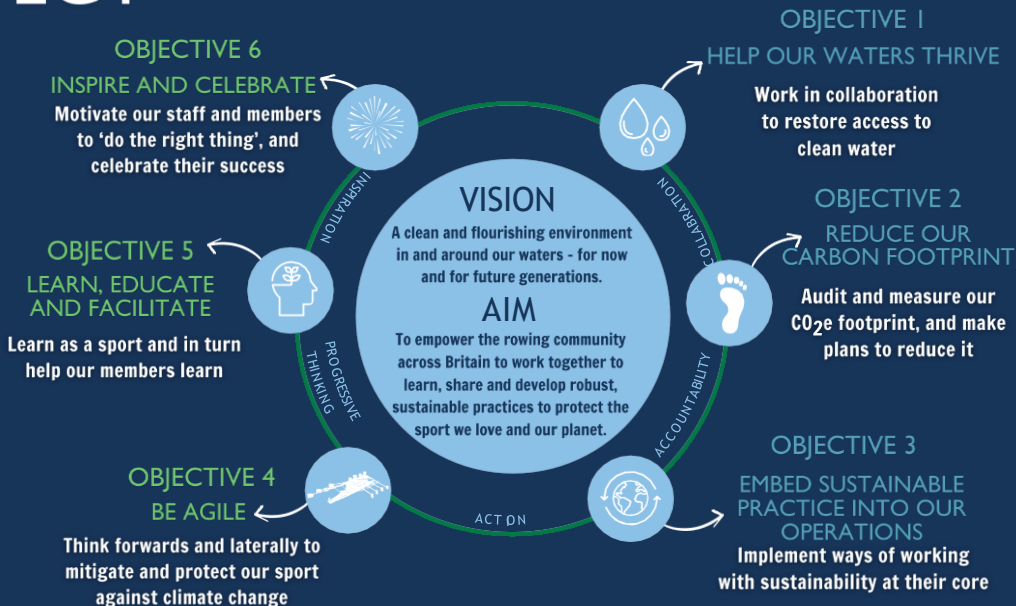
# STRATEGY

KEY

CONTROL

INFLUENCE

VALUE



# OBJECTIVE 1: HELP OUR WATERS THRIVE

## CLEAN WATER

- Launched the Thriving Water Scheme which is helping 10 environmental projects
- 15 clubs tested their waters, as well as the GB Rowing Team
- Became a founding member of the Clean Water Sports Alliance
- Published 128 posts across British Rowing digital channels since 2024
- Took part in 12 face-to-face meetings with government ministers and senior officials at Water UK and other water companies

## RESTORING A NATURAL HABITAT and Access to Our Waters

- New Delphis Eco partnership formed
- Appointed a part time Floating Pennywort Officer
- Created a suite of invasive species materials for clubs
- 'Check, Clean, Dry' messaging and boat cleaning at two British Rowing events
- Started to work with the National Water Sports Centre to tackle blue green algae



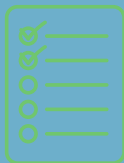
# OBJECTIVE 2: REDUCE OUR CARBON FOOTPRINT



## MEASURE

We reported on Scope 1 and 2 for 2022-23 and 2023-24 and reduced our emissions by 12%

We were unable to report on Scope 3 due to other internal pressures



## PLAN

We started on a plan to reduce our emissions in both Caversham and Hammersmith for the 2024/25 year through a series of initiatives involving behaviour changes, infrastructure changes and utility changes



## PLEDGE

We have not yet signed up to the UN Sports for Climate Action Framework as our plan wasn't finalised



## INSPIRE

We aimed to model sustainable behaviours in our office environments and when we are out on the water

## Additionally for 2025

- We will report on Scope 1, 2 and 3 for 2023-24 and sign up to the UN Sports for Climate Action Framework
- Explore an electric launch partnership for clubs
- Continue exploring the feasibility of water-sourced energy at the GB Rowing Team's National Training Centre in Caversham

# OBJECTIVE 3: EMBED SUSTAINABLE PRACTICE IN OUR OPERATIONS



## POLICY

We have not yet adopted a sustainable procurement policy, due to changes in the operations department



## REPORT

Two events (the British Rowing Masters Championships and the British Rowing Club Championships) now have volunteer sustainability managers who lead and report on a range of measures and initiatives



## PLAN

Some old GB Rowing Team kit has found new homes

Further work is required on helping clubs with kit and equipment recycling

### Additionally for 2025

- Sustainability to be embedded into procurement policy
- Scope a national recycling partner for kit and equipment

# OBJECTIVE 4: BE AGILE



## ANTICIPATE

A mapping exercise is in progress to assess club locations and flooding risks, identifying key areas for focus



## SPOTLIGHT

Share learnings and case studies from clubs who have successfully implemented flooding measures



## GUIDE

Guidance on strategic planning and contingencies for clubs will be developed. While this has not yet begun, some existing flood guidance is already available



## COLLABORATE

We held a day's focus group and are working with The Rivers Trust and WWF on a plan

## Additionally for 2025

- ☐ Scope natural drainage solutions flood prevention with partners. Will start with education programme in year 1

# OBJECTIVE 5: LEARN, EDUCATE AND FACILITATE



## LEARN

Delivered a sustainability presentation at two British Rowing staff away days

Staff attended four training courses over the year

Developed resources, such as Sustainability Officer guides for clubs and events



## EDUCATE

The 'Dirty Waters' session at the British Rowing Coaching Conference in January 2025 was recognised by attendees as a key takeaway.



## FACILITATE

5 webinars held with over 200 attendees registered:

- Launch
- Clean Water
- Invasive Species
- Events
- Floating Pennywort



## SHARE

New sustainability Page on the British Rowing website

Sustainability Spotlight produced monthly as part of membership newsletter

Case studies available regarding 'water quality', 'local environment and plastics', 'club energy use' and 'flooding'.

## Additionally for 2025

- Continue the webinar series, featuring competitions, adaptability, tools, and coach education



# OBJECTIVE 6: INSPIRE AND CELEBRATE



## LEAD

British Rowing won the BASIS Leadership in Sustainability Award

Imogen Grant won the IOC Climate Action Award and the BBC Green Sports Awards Athlete of the Year award



## INSPIRE

Ambassadors of the GB Rowing Team, Imogen Grant, Graeme Thomas and Gregg Stevenson, spoke to media about clean water and invasive species



## AWARD

Environmental Sustainability Award launched for the 2024 British Rowing Awards

## Additionally for 2025

- We will appoint club and new GB Rowing Team ambassadors

# MEDIA PLAN - 2025

## WORLD WATER DAY

22 MARCH

- Water Cleanliness
- Focus on eco-guidance for rowing when water quality is poor

## GREAT RIVER WATCH AND WATERBLITZ

25 APRIL - 1 MAY

- In partnership with The Rivers Trust and Freshwater Watch
- The first weekend focuses on river testing, with a link to guidance available on our sustainability page
- During the week, encourage clubs to look for visual clues in their waters

## INVASIVE SPECIES WEEK

12-18 MAY

- Highlighting invasive species rowers can look out for
- Promote 'Check, Clean, Dry' messaging on 13 May
- Link to website to request materials

## CLEAN WATER CAMPAIGN

OCTOBER

- Inspired by the GB Rowing Team - currently in development

## PLASTICBLITZ

31 MAY - 15 JUNE

- Webinars for clubs hosted by Thames 21
- Feature at the British Rowing Masters Championships
- Encourage clubs to take part and join with another group in their local river community

## GENERAL

- Focus on video
- 'SuDS not Floods' education programme in second half of year
- Sustainability Spotlight and monthly messaging to members

# PROGRESS CHART

## THRIVING WATERS



This area will be a key focus in 2024, with strong partnerships expanding our reach into clubs. The Thriving Waters Scheme further enhances these efforts.

## CO2e



Some objectives have been achieved, particularly in influencing behaviour and basic measurement. However, further progress (such as Scope 3 measurement) has been delayed. This can be addressed, and we anticipate that such measurement will become mandatory in the coming years

## SUSTAINABLE PRACTICE IN OPERATIONS



Some progress has been made, particularly in events. Developing a robust sustainable procurement policy, where we have the most control and influence to reduce our carbon footprint, will be a key focus for 2025

## BE AGILE



This will now be an addition to the programme for 2025 by working with The Rivers Trust and World Rowing's partner, WWF

## LEARN, EDUCATE AND FACILITATE



British Rowing has made considerable progress in this area with staff education, webinars for clubs and a session at the British Rowing coaching conference

## INSPIRE



There has been good progress with GB Rowing Team ambassadors, as well as sustainability awards won and created. In 2025, we will be working on acquiring more club ambassadors.

