

Bristol u3a: Environmental Policy

| Created Author/Date | Reviewed/Updated Author/Date | Approved By Exec. Comte. | Review Date |
|---------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------|
| PLH21/10/22 | PLH24/3/23 | 7/02/2023 | Feb 2025 |
| | | | |
| | | | |

Purpose

In November 2018, Bristol became the first city in the UK to declare a climate emergency. North Somerset, Bath and North East Somerset, and South Gloucestershire all followed suit within eight months. In February 2020 Bristol was again the first city to declare an ecological emergency, to be followed by the aforementioned neighbouring local authorities shortly afterwards.

This policy aims to encourage all members of Bristol u3a to consider the impact of their u3a, and wider, related activities on the environment, and to minimise these impacts so far as is reasonably practicable. By doing so we will contribute as an organisation and individuals, to the ambitious goals set out in our area's climate and ecological emergency strategies.

Aims of this policy

The aims of this policy are:

- To support the Executive Committee and members to ensure that Bristol u3a is run in a sustainable way that limits its impact on the environment.
- For members of Bristol u3a to take opportunities to inform themselves about environmental issues and the ways in which human activities affect the environment.
- To support the aims of the climate and ecological emergencies that have been declared in our area.

Rationale

This policy has been drawn up to provide guidance on how Bristol u3a and its members should consider environmental issues within their activities in order to make a positive contribution to sustainability and the environment, and also to help mitigate climate change. More specifically, the measures listed below can help Bristol u3a to:

- recognise that many, or perhaps most, people are concerned about the impacts of climate change and so address the concerns of its members and wider society with regard to climate change and other environmental issues such as waste and biodiversity loss.

- encourage communication and dialogue on environmental issues within our u3a.
- encourage a culture of awareness and a sense of responsibility within the membership with respect to sustainability and environmental issues.
- provide information to members on how we might reduce our adverse impact on the environment.
- minimise the environmental impact of organised u3a activities.

Practical Measures

- We will seek, and appoint, a member to act as an Environmental Officer, to monitor environmental issues arising within the u3a and to encourage and monitor progress with this policy.
- We will seek speakers on environmental topics to talk at our monthly meetings.
- Wherever possible and relevant, we will incorporate environmental concerns into planning and decision making, including reviewing the amount of printed material that we produce and use, and where reasonably possible replace this with online material.
- We will be aware that even electronic communications can have environmental impacts. Globally, in 2019, emails accounted for about 0.3% of the world's carbon footprint. Therefore, we will encourage committee and general members to think before sending an email and discourage the blanket use of the 'cc' facility.
- We will encourage and nurture climate and environmental groups within Bristol u3a, and raise awareness of environmental issues amongst our general membership when and wherever possible.
- To reduce travel related environmental impacts, we will encourage groups to meet online where possible and appropriate,
- Where members attend meetings in person, we will encourage travel by walking, cycling, public transport and/or car sharing where possible.
- We will endeavour to use venues that operate environmentally responsible policies such as using 'green energy' for heating or lighting.
- We will consider the impact of activities which take place in the open-air e.g., walking and nature groups, on the environment, and how to minimise these impacts.
- Ensure as far as possible that refreshments are served in an environmentally friendly manner e.g., using crockery rather than disposable cups and plates.
- We will make this policy available on our website and draw our members attention to it.