**OXFORD UNIVERSITY MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY**

**Environmental Responsibility Policy,**

**2024-2029**

Oxford University Museum of Natural History is committed to environmental responsibility and seeks to monitor and minimise its environmental impact as much as practicably possible. As a department of the University of Oxford, we commit to working towards the institution-wide targets for net zero carbon emissions and biodiversity net gain by 2035 as detailed in the [University’s Environmental Sustainability Strategy](https://sustainability.admin.ox.ac.uk/environmental-sustainability-strategy).

Following the successful implementation of the Museum’s first Environmental Responsibility Policy (2020-23), consultants 3Adapt were engaged to support the Museum in developing a carbon baseline and pathway to net zero carbon by 2035. The pathway was developed in consultation with Museum staff and wider University stakeholders.

We have identified key areas where we can work to minimise our environmental impact: travel, energy and waste, food and beverage, purchasing and retail. Together these areas account for 90% of the Museum’s baseline carbon footprint. In each of these areas, we have worked to pinpoint where action might be taken to improve our operational function with regard to sustainability. The resulting strategy suggests a pathway for change during the period of the Museum’s new strategic plan (August 2024 – July 2029).

Many of these actions will involve collaboration with and lobbying of University Estates and procurement, as well as sharing information and best practice with colleagues across the Gardens, Libraries and Museums (GLAM). The Museum will seek sources of funding (GLAM, internal University and external) where necessary to implement actions.

During the period of this policy, we will establish a biodiversity footprint and work with experts within the University of Oxford to develop a pathway to biodiversity net gain in 2035.



**Sustainable Travel**

**The Museum will minimise staff travel for work purposes to reduce energy use, particularly emissions from aviation, and will encourage visitors to use sustainable transport when visiting the Museum.**

## Enforce University-wide travel policy, avoiding travel through remote working; travel without flying; fly only when there are no alternatives, contribute through flight levies to the Oxford Sustainability Fund.

## Promote sustainable transport options and remote participation for Museum visitors.

## Promote sustainable commuting options for Museum staff.

## Switch to an electric vehicle.

**Sustainable Energy Use**

**The Museum will identify areas of inefficient use of energy and work with the University Estates department and all Museum staff to reduce energy wastage where possible.**

1. Monitor annual on-site energy consumption and set targets to reduce it.
2. Create a building users’ guide with information on energy efficient features and strategies, and ensure new appliances are selected according to their energy efficiency.
3. Work closely with Estates Services to facilitate their planning for alternative heating power source.
4. Retrofit lighting in display cases and public spaces with LEDs.
5. Build sustainable energy use into our plans about collections storage and display.
6. Work with Estates Services to improve insulation and minimise heat loss via windows.

**Sustainable Food**

**The Museum will minimise the environmental impact of catering in the Museum (café, catering for in-house and external events, food products in shop) and limit food and packaging waste.**

## Commit to ordering only vegetarian/vegan catering for all in-house meetings and events, and encourage external hirers to consider plant-based catering.

1. Put environmental sustainability and responsible sourcing at the heart of decisions about café provision and catering, with an emphasis on reduced air miles, seasonality, organic, Fairtrade, vegetarian/ vegan food, and animal welfare.
2. Reduce food waste and single-use crockery and cutlery.
3. Ensure food products for sale in Museum shop are produced in line with University’s Sustainable Food Policy.

**Sustainable Purchasing**

**The Museum will ensure that environmental sustainability and the Museum’s carbon footprint is a primary consideration in purchasing decisions.**

1. Ensure that environmental impact is central to purchasing choices.
2. Engage with key suppliers to understand their environmental goals, and ensure that carbon reduction pathway is a key factor in decisions around engaging new suppliers.
3. Ensure that University preferred suppliers fit Museum carbon goals, working closely with purchasing department.

**Sustainable Retail**

**The Museum will ensure that environmental sustainability and the Museum’s carbon footprint is a primary consideration in purchasing decisions and resource use.**

1. Ensure that environmental impact is central to selection of shop products.
2. Continue to reduce, reuse and recycle packaging material as much as possible.
3. Put environmental sustainability and responsible sourcing at the heart of decisions about shop stock.

**Public Engagement**

**The Museum will enable its audiences to reflect and take action on the climate crisis, and human impact on the environment and biodiversity in an informed, evidence-based manner.**

## 1. Create permanent displays, temporary exhibitions and event programming which present and discuss science related to climate change, biodiversity loss, and human impact on the environment.

## 2. Make the Museum’s Environmental Responsibility Policy available through the Museum website, and promote relevant aspects of the public programme and permanent and temporary exhibitions on the Museum’s social media channels.

**Implementation**

This Environmental Responsibility Policy was agreed by the Senior Leadership Team of the Museum of Natural History in August 2024. It will be reviewed on an annual basis for the lifetime of the policy and actions will be reviewed twice-yearly as part of the review of the Museum’s master implementation plan.

Implementation will be overseen by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), with advice and collaboration from GLAM Environmental Sustainability Manager.

Staff will be encouraged to attend training on sustainability issues relating to their area of work, and sustainable working practices will be included in inductions and induction packs.