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Environmental sustainability and health at the BMA



We are an environmentally responsible association. Find out more about what we are doing to further reduce our carbon footprint.

Location: UK Audience: All doctors Updated: Thursday 21 April 2022

Climate change and health

The BMA has advocated for the link between climate change and health to be recognised since 1983. Doctors and medical students have a vital role in supporting and advocating for better approaches to tackling climate change that protect and promote public health. As an association, the BMA is also striving to contribute positively to wider society and the environment. We have taken major steps to reduce our environmental impact and embed carbon reduction in the future for the BMA.

Reducing our carbon footprint

We are committed to reducing our environmental impact and are constantly re-evaluating our practices to reduce our carbon footprint further.

We have complied with mandatory legislative SECR (Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting) policy since 2020, reporting our energy use and carbon emissions related to electricity, gas and transport. Our SECR reporting is informed by data collected from BMA House in London, and our offices in Edinburgh, Belfast and Cardiff, as well as mileage claimed by BMA staff and committee members.

BMA House

Refurbishment of BMA House is ongoing, and our procurement of contractors focuses on using sustainable methods and materials. We have repurposed BMA House furniture when fitting out our new workspaces, refurbishing where appropriate in order to extend its economic and environmental life. Furniture we cannot repurpose is sent for community use in schools via the Business2Schools charity. We have streamlined workspaces by using smaller desks and removing storage rooms from work areas, thus making energy use on working floors more efficient.

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where possible, we have implemented a 'dead band' at BMA House. This sets heating to 25 degrees and cooling to 19 degrees. In addition, we have installed low-energy LED lighting fitted with motion sensors; use a 100% renewable energy power supply, and have fitted water saving devices increasing efficiency by reducing water use by 5.4 million litres a year.

In the BMA House restaurant, we have removed beef from the menus recognising the detrimental impact its production has on the environment. Our seasonal menus are now around 20% vegan and we have set buffet menus for specific days. This reduces the food waste that occurs when offering multiple, differing buffets on the same day.

BMA Northern Ireland

Since September 2021, our BMA Northern Ireland staff have worked from a serviced office. The move to this office was influenced by the building's lower environmental impact and has resulted in many environmental resource use improvements. The current office is much smaller than the old building, meaning we have a smaller space to heat and light. Staff continue to reduce paper use and have increased virtual meetings with members. Fully reusable cups, crockery and other items are provided in the office space for day-to-day use. Importantly, the office is located adjacent to public transport hubs, encouraging more staff members to use public transport.

BMA Scotland

In Edinburgh, we are in the process of draught-proofing and double-glazing windows, as well as converting lighting to lower energy LED lighting. We are also transitioning from heating the building with gas to using air source heat pumps and green-electric heaters.

To regulate temperature settings, we have implemented the 'dead band' in our Edinburgh office too.

BMA Wales

Our office in Cardiff is now in a serviced building which uses an electricity-powered air conditioning system for heating and is a smaller space to light.

Workplace initiatives

The BMA corporate sustainability and health group aims to inspire staff to uphold our values on sustainability.

The group looks at practical ways of reducing our carbon footprint and is comprised of like-minded colleagues who are passionate about sustainability and health.

Through the group:

- ✔ we participate annually in Earth Day and have created an annual sustainability and health week to raise awareness and initiate discussions on environmental and health topics
- ✔ we organise sustainability initiatives throughout the year to help embed sustainability practices such as implementing new recycling processes or reducing our use of single-use items.

Recycling



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We recycle an increasing proportion of the waste we generate, and BMA House has achieved zero-to-landfill status: all waste produced is either recycled or recovered.

Recycling and waste facilities have replaced personal desk bins in all BMA offices, improving access to recycling waste for all office-based staff. Staff are now able to recycle paper, cardboard, cans, plastics and food waste.

In September 2022, we started sending new members our redesigned membership packs, which are printed on recycled material, produced in a carbon-neutral environment, and fully recyclable.

Our recycling processes are regularly reviewed to ensure that we continue to reduce our carbon footprint.

Sustainable technology

The technology services team has also changed its working practices to help reduce the BMA's energy consumption.

- ✔ We use Office 365, allowing us to save and archive files and folders to the cloud, reducing the number of machines we use and our energy consumption.
- ✔ We have rationalised our data requirements and moved to specialist data providers where economies of scale and economies of environmental impact are maximised.
- ✔ We use our assets as much as possible to extend the life of equipment and only replace when needed.
- ✔ We have invested in our technology to support virtual meetings, ensuring that 50% take place online and the remainder are hybrid.

BMA House awards

BMA House has received numerous awards in recognition of our sustainability work. As BMA House's environmental journey continues, we are constantly looking not just for new ways to increase our sustainability, but also new ways to demonstrate it.

BMA House was first awarded Green Tourism's gold accreditation in 2017. This is the largest and most established sustainable grading programme. In addition to maintaining our gold for Green Tourism, BMA House was among the first venues in the world to be awarded Greengage's ECOsmart platinum accreditation in 2022, which we retained in 2023. Platinum venues are described as having an outstanding approach with the highest possible standard of environmental sustainability applied. BMA House was highlighted as a leader in hospitality and sustainability in all aspects of our business.

At the London Venue & Catering Awards 2022, the BMA venues team were shortlisted for 'The Sustainability Award' and took home the trophy for 'Best Venue for Hybrid Events'. These awards recognise the excellence, creativity and dedication needed to deliver outstanding

service and expertise to customers.

Other sustainability awards include 'Greenest Venue' by Hire Space in 2018 and 2019, 'Most Sustainable Venue' by the London Summer Event Show in 2019 and a silver award for 'Best CSR or Sustainability Initiative' at the 2019 London Venues Awards. Most recently, the venues team were awarded with 'Best Accommodation & Meetings Sustainability Initiative' at the Greengage Insights and 2023 Sustainability Awards, and received a silver award for 'COOLest Sustainable Events Venue' with Prestige Events.

Sustainable events

We have partnered with the Cross River Partnership to promote a 'Clean Air Walking Route' from Kings Cross, providing delegates with a 'cleaner' journey to BMA House. This route takes guests off the busy Euston Road onto back streets where air pollution is 57% lower.

We also monitor our delegates' carbon footprints. And although delegate numbers increased pre-pandemic, our carbon balance reduced from 9kg per delegate (2014) to 2.8kg (2018).

In terms of suppliers, we only choose those who can show the same level of commitment to reducing their carbon emissions as we do. We work closely with our catering partner Company of Cooks to ensure menus include a wide range of sustainable options including locally sourced ingredients and meat-free options. In particular, we have paid specific attention to the removal of high-carbon meats from our menus.

In 2022, we sponsored the Sustainable Event Buyer's Guide and hosted their Breakfast Briefing Launch in 2022 and 2023 showcasing BMA House as a green venue to other event professionals.

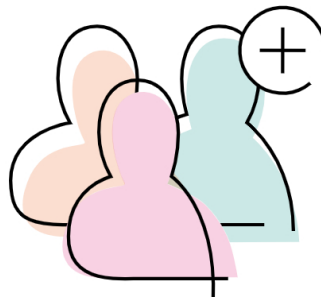
In March 2023, on the basis of our sustainability achievements we were chosen to host 'Reimagine: how to design a truly sustainable event.' Our team sat on the panel as industry experts and we saw many like-minded event professionals attend. All of this activity has helped to raise our profile as a leading sustainable venue in London.

Plus, each year we play host to the Global Good Awards, the most sustainable sustainability awards ceremony in the UK. It's a huge honour to be repeatedly chosen to host. These awards recognise international businesses, NGOs, charities and social enterprises big and small for blazing a trail in purpose-driven sustainability and ethical leadership.

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