



# ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

## Watford Harriers Athletics Club

A practical framework for lower-carbon, nature-positive and resilient athletics

**Lead by example. Enable people power. Protect the places where we train and compete.**

**01**

**Lower-carbon athletics**

**02**

**Nature-positive places**

**03**

**Responsible resource use**

**04**

**A climate-resilient club**

**Fast track to your personal best**

[watfordharriers.org.uk](http://watfordharriers.org.uk)



## Policy at a glance

### POLICY STATEMENT

Watford Harriers Athletics Club recognises that athletics depends on healthy people, clean air, resilient facilities, accessible transport and well-managed natural places. We will reduce the environmental impacts of our activities, protect and improve the places where we train and compete, and use our influence to support a lower-carbon, resource-efficient and climate-resilient Watford.

Environmental action will be integrated with safety, safeguarding, inclusion, sporting integrity, affordability and the practical capacity of a volunteer-led club. Where the club controls a decision, we will act; where control is shared, we will collaborate; and where we mainly influence, we will inform, encourage and make the sustainable choice easier.

### Where we act

We will be ambitious but honest about the difference between direct control and influence. The strongest action will be taken where the club controls the decision; collaboration and encouragement will be used where responsibility is shared.

#### CONTROL

Club policies, purchases, communications, meetings, club-managed spaces and club-promoted events.

#### SHARED CONTROL

Venue energy, water, waste, facilities, land management and event services delivered with owners, operators or partners.

#### INFLUENCE

Member and spectator travel, supplier practice, personal choices, sponsors and the wider athletics community.

### Document control

|                           |                                                              |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Policy owner</b>       | Club Committee                                               |
| <b>Operational lead</b>   | Nominated Environment and Sustainability Lead                |
| <b>Approval authority</b> | Club Committee                                               |
| <b>Effective from</b>     | On approval                                                  |
| <b>Review cycle</b>       | At least every two years, and sooner after a material change |
| <b>Version</b>            | 1.0                                                          |
| <b>Publication</b>        | Club website and internal policy library                     |



## Purpose, scope and principles

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set a clear, consistent and practical basis for reducing environmental harm, improving resilience and supporting positive environmental outcomes through club decisions, operations, training, competitions, events and partnerships.

### Scope

- Applies to all activities organised, managed, funded or formally represented by Watford Harriers Athletics Club, including training, competitions, meetings, communications, purchases, travel arrangements, club-managed spaces and club-promoted events.
- Applies to committee members, coaches, officials, team managers, volunteers and anyone acting on behalf of the club. Members, parents, carers, visitors and spectators are expected to support relevant site and event measures.
- Extends to activities at third-party venues and on land managed by others. The club will follow the owner or operator requirements and seek practical collaboration where the environmental impact is not under the club's direct control.
- Covers energy and emissions, travel, facilities, events, waste, water, materials and chemicals, food and drink, procurement, biodiversity, habitat, air quality, pollution prevention, engagement and climate resilience.

#### SAFETY AND INCLUSION TAKE PRIORITY

Nothing in this policy reduces drinking-water provision, lighting, transport, staffing, accessibility or other arrangements below what is required for safety, safeguarding, disability access, competition rules, permits or landowner and venue conditions. Environmental choices must be safe, fair and practical.

### Operating principles

- **Lead by example and enable people power.** The club will improve its own practice and help members, volunteers, suppliers and partners take positive action.
- **Match action to control and impact.** We will focus effort where the potential benefit is greatest and be transparent where responsibility is shared.
- **Prevent and reduce first.** Avoided demand is preferred to efficiency, reuse is preferred to recycling, and disposal is a last resort.
- **Use whole-life value.** Decisions will consider durability, energy, maintenance, packaging, repair, local value and end-of-life, not purchase price alone.
- **Protect nature and prevent pollution.** Activities will be planned to avoid damage to habitats, soils, water, air quality and neighbourhood amenity.
- **Be inclusive and proportionate.** Measures will reflect safety, accessibility, cost, volunteer capacity and the scale of environmental risk.
- **Measure, learn and improve.** The club will use proportionate evidence, report progress, test improvements and act on lessons.

## Policy framework and alignment

The policy is based on the England Athletics sustainability approach, including the principle of acting through both control and influence, and the environmental themes of energy and emissions, waste, water, materials and chemicals, transport, food and drink, biodiversity and air quality, procurement, engagement, events and facilities. It also supports Watford Borough Council's emphasis on leading by example, people power, lower-carbon action, ecological restoration, responsible resource use and adaptation.

### Alignment at a glance

This policy translates the direction of Watford Borough Council and England Athletics into proportionate actions for a volunteer-led athletics club.

| Watford direction                          | England Athletics focus                                     | Watford Harriers response                                                                                                                                                      |
|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Leading by example and people power</b> | Control and influence; engagement and education             | Committee leadership, clear responsibilities, practical member guidance and partnership working.                                                                               |
| <b>Achieving net zero</b>                  | Energy and emissions; transport and travel; facilities      | Reduce avoidable energy use and journeys, promote lower-carbon travel and work with venue partners on efficient facilities. Car-share and Group travel arrangements for events |
| <b>Nature and ecological restoration</b>   | Biodiversity, habitats, air quality; water and effluents    | Protect routes and venues, prevent pollution, reduce idling and support nature-positive action with land managers.                                                             |
| <b>Responsible resource use</b>            | Waste; materials and chemicals; food and drink; procurement | Apply the waste hierarchy, keep kit and equipment in use, buy for whole-life value and set proportionate supplier expectations.                                                |
| <b>Adapting to change</b>                  | Safe, sustainable and resilient facilities and events       | Include heat, storms, flooding, air quality and resource disruption in risk assessments, event plans and continuity arrangements.                                              |

### How this supports our club values

#### TRUST

Act transparently, comply with requirements and take responsibility for our impacts.

#### COMMUNITY

Work locally, share learning and protect the places that support athletics and wellbeing.

#### SPORTING EXCELLENCE

Build efficient, well-run and resilient activities that can thrive over the long term.

#### FOR ALL

Make environmental choices safe, accessible, affordable and fair.

## Our environmental commitments

### A. Lead by example and enable people power

- Integrate environmental impacts and opportunities into major plans, budgets, event approvals, contracts and partnership decisions.
- Nominate an Environment and Sustainability Lead, or a small working group, and maintain a rolling action plan with clear owners and review points.
- Provide practical, positive and accessible guidance to members, coaches, volunteers, parents, carers, visitors and suppliers, avoiding blame and recognising that people have different travel, cost and access options.
- Work with venue operators, landowners, Watford Borough Council, England Athletics, event partners, sponsors, suppliers and local organisations to address shared impacts.
- Invite ideas, respond to environmental concerns and share progress and lessons with the club community at least annually.

### B. Achieving lower-carbon athletics

#### Energy and emissions

- Avoid unnecessary heating, lighting and equipment use in club-controlled spaces; switch off safely when not required and select efficient equipment when items are replaced.
- Work with venue owners and operators to understand energy performance where information is available and support practical improvements such as effective controls, efficient lighting, metering, maintenance and appropriate renewable energy.
- Consider energy use, embodied impacts and transport in purchases, projects and event decisions. Avoid and reduce emissions before considering any credible measure for residual impacts.
- Use digital administration, entries, briefings and results where effective and accessible, while retaining alternatives for people who need them.

#### Transport and travel

- Publish clear public transport, walking and cycling information for major club activities and events where these options are reasonably available.
- Encourage safe car sharing, coordinated team travel and fuller vehicles for away fixtures and events, while respecting safeguarding, disability, caring responsibilities, personal safety, equipment and timing needs.
- Choose venues, event times and meeting formats that make lower-impact travel practical where the club controls the decision; use online meetings for suitable administration.
- Consolidate deliveries and collections where practical and ask drivers not to idle unnecessarily at training or events.
- Use proportionate travel surveys or samples to understand the main impacts of larger events and identify realistic improvements.

#### Events and facilities

- Prepare an environmental event plan proportionate to the scale and location of each club-promoted event, covering travel, energy, waste, water, purchasing, food, nature, pollution, weather, responsibilities and post-event learning.
- Use reusable signs, barriers, equipment and event materials where practical; avoid unnecessary giveaways and select durable or recycled options when items are needed.
- Plan drinking-water provision to meet safety and governing-body requirements while favouring mains, refill or bulk arrangements and minimising avoidable disposable packaging and over-supply.
- Provide clear waste points and signage, brief vendors and contractors, prevent litter and leave venues and routes clean and restored.

- Minimise unnecessary noise, lighting, generator use and neighbourhood disturbance, and report leaks, faults, spills or waste-service failures promptly to the responsible operator.

## C. Nature and ecological restoration

### Biodiversity and habitats

- Plan road, cross-country, trail and outdoor activities with landowners or venue managers to avoid sensitive habitats, trees, watercourses, wildlife and unsuitable ground conditions.
- Use established paths and managed event areas where appropriate, prevent unnecessary soil or vegetation damage and restore any affected area as agreed with the land manager.
- Do not undertake planting, vegetation clearance, pesticide use or habitat work without the required landowner permission, competence and maintenance plan.
- Support suitable nature-positive projects with local partners, such as litter picks, habitat enhancement or volunteering, where they are well planned, inclusive and capable of being maintained.

### Water and pollution prevention

- Use water efficiently, right-size event supply, report leaks and avoid unnecessary washing or discharge.
- Protect drains, soils and watercourses. Fuels, cleaning products and other chemicals must be stored, used and disposed of safely, with no unauthorised discharge.
- Include spill prevention and response in relevant event and facility plans; report incidents immediately to the organiser and venue or landowner and complete corrective action.
- Ensure toilets and wastewater arrangements are appropriate to event scale and managed through approved systems.

### Air quality and local amenity

- Reduce avoidable vehicle emissions through travel planning and no-idling messages, particularly near athletes, children and crowded areas.
- Consider current air-quality information, heat and pollution risks within session and event risk assessments, following relevant public guidance and existing welfare procedures.
- Manage public-address systems, lighting, deliveries and event timings to reduce unnecessary disturbance to neighbours and wildlife.

## D. Responsible resource use

### Waste and the circular economy

- Apply the waste hierarchy: prevent, reduce, reuse, repair, repurpose, share or donate, recycle, recover, and dispose only as a last resort.
- Phase out avoidable single-use items where a safe, practical and accessible reusable option exists. Choose recyclable or compostable items only where the correct collection route is available.
- Keep kit, event materials and equipment in use through maintenance, repair, sharing, swap or donation arrangements, and use approved routes for batteries, electrical items, chemicals and other specialist waste.
- Print only when it adds value or supports access; use recycled-content paper and efficient layouts where practical.
- Separate waste according to venue and local systems, use clear signs and record simple waste information for larger events where it can be obtained reliably.

### Procurement, materials and chemicals

- Apply the environmental decision screen to material purchases, contracts, sponsors and event suppliers in proportion to cost and impact.
- Buy for whole-life value: prioritise need, durability, repairability, efficiency, reduced packaging, recycled or recyclable content, responsible sourcing and an identified end-of-life route.



- Use local suppliers and small businesses where they can meet requirements and represent good whole-life value, supporting the local economy while reducing unnecessary transport.
- Choose the least harmful suitable cleaning, maintenance and event products; avoid unnecessary chemicals and ensure correct storage, instructions and disposal.
- Set proportionate environmental and ethical expectations for suppliers, vendors and partners, request evidence for significant claims and address material shortcomings before renewal where feasible.

### Food and drink

- Plan quantities to prevent waste, use suitable storage and redistribute sealed surplus food or drink through safe and appropriate routes where practical.
- When catering is provided, offer attractive plant-based and healthy choices and consider local, seasonal, high-welfare and environmentally responsible sourcing.
- Prioritise drinking-water refill and reusable serviceware. Use compostable packaging only where a suitable collection and treatment route exists.
- Ask caterers and vendors to manage packaging, waste, energy and water responsibly and to provide proportionate supply-chain information for higher-impact contracts.

## E. Adapting to change

### Climate resilience and continuity

- Include heat, poor air quality, drought, heavy rain, flooding, storms, ground conditions and venue disruption in relevant risk assessments, emergency plans and participant communications.
- Adjust, postpone or cancel sessions and events when required to protect participants, volunteers, venues and the environment, using established safety and decision-making procedures.
- Consider future climate conditions when planning material facility improvements, equipment purchases, shade, water, drainage, storage and communications.
- Maintain proportionate continuity arrangements for essential records, communications, key contacts and critical equipment.
- Record lessons after significant weather disruption, environmental incidents and near misses, then update plans and responsibilities.

### FAIR AND PRACTICAL DELIVERY

Environmental action must not create avoidable barriers to participation or transfer unreasonable cost and workload to individuals. The club will offer practical alternatives, prioritise measures with clear benefits and use whole-life savings to support affordability wherever possible.

## Roles and responsibilities

Environmental performance is a shared responsibility, but accountability must be clear. Responsibilities may be combined with existing volunteer roles, provided ownership and reporting remain visible.

| Role                                                 | Core responsibilities                                                                                                                                                       |
|------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Club Committee                                       | Owns this policy; approves priorities and resources; considers environmental impacts in major plans, budgets, events and contracts; reviews progress and corrective action. |
| Environment and Sustainability Lead or working group | Coordinates the rolling action plan, supports organisers, gathers proportionate data, maintains links with partners and prepares progress updates.                          |



| Role                                                       | Core responsibilities                                                                                                                                                               |
|------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Event directors and organisers</b>                      | Prepare an environmental event plan proportionate to scale, brief volunteers and suppliers, monitor delivery, respond to incidents and record lessons after the event.              |
| <b>Coaches, team managers and officials</b>                | Apply the policy in sessions and team travel, support safe and inclusive choices, follow venue guidance and report leaks, waste, pollution or habitat concerns.                     |
| <b>Treasurer, purchasers and facility leads</b>            | Apply whole-life value and the environmental decision screen, retain relevant supplier information and seek utility or waste data where it is reasonably available.                 |
| <b>Members, parents, carers, volunteers and visitors</b>   | Follow site and event instructions, prevent litter, separate waste, use reusable items where practical, choose lower-impact travel when suitable and report environmental concerns. |
| <b>Venue operators, landowners, suppliers and partners</b> | Meet legal, contractual and site requirements; cooperate with agreed environmental measures; provide relevant information and address issues raised by the club.                    |

### WORKING WITH OTHERS

The club does not control every venue, utility, waste service, transport decision or land-management activity. It will communicate expectations early, seek data and improvements proportionate to its influence, record unresolved issues and escalate material risks through the relevant venue, landowner, event or governing-body route.

## Implementation, monitoring and review

### Rolling environmental action plan

The Environment and Sustainability Lead will coordinate a rolling action plan approved by the Committee. Priorities will be selected using environmental impact, level of control, legal and safety requirements, cost, whole-life value, feasibility, volunteer capacity and inclusion. The plan may contain quick wins, pilots and longer-term projects with named owners, resources, measures and review points.

- Establish simple baselines where the information is useful and proportionate, particularly for larger events, travel, waste, purchases and any utilities the club directly manages.
- Set specific, measurable and time-bound targets in the action plan rather than fixing them permanently in this policy.
- Test improvements on a manageable scale, review the result and extend successful approaches across club activities.
- Record environmental considerations for material purchases, projects, contracts and event changes so decisions are transparent and repeatable.

## Environmental decision screen

For material purchases, contracts, event changes and projects, the decision owner should record a proportionate answer to the following questions:

|   |                                                                                                    |
|---|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Is the purchase, journey or activity necessary, and can demand be reduced?                         |
| 2 | Can an existing item be shared, borrowed, repaired, reused or repurposed?                          |
| 3 | What are the whole-life impacts: energy, travel, water, packaging, maintenance and end-of-life?    |
| 4 | Is there a durable, repairable, local, recycled or lower-impact option that meets the need?        |
| 5 | Does the option remain safe, accessible, affordable and practical for volunteers and participants? |
| 6 | What evidence, owner and review point will show that the intended benefit was achieved?            |

## Measures and review points

The action plan will use the simplest reliable measures available. Targets will be specific and time-bound within the action plan, so this policy can remain current as priorities and data improve.

| Priority                                | Examples of proportionate indicators                                                                                                                      | Review point                             |
|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| <b>Energy and emissions</b>             | Utility or meter information where available; efficiency actions completed; estimated energy or fuel for major events; avoidable printing reduced.        | Periodic review and annual summary       |
| <b>Travel and transport</b>             | Travel information published; sample travel-mode surveys; car-share or team-transport arrangements; delivery consolidation; idling concerns.              | After major events and periodic sampling |
| <b>Waste and resources</b>              | Single-use items purchased; items repaired or reused; waste bags or weights; recycling quality; paper use; kit or equipment redistributed.                | After major events and periodic review   |
| <b>Water</b>                            | Water ordered and unused; refill or bulk-water arrangements; leaks reported and resolved; water-efficiency actions with venue partners.                   | Event close-out and facility review      |
| <b>Procurement, food and drink</b>      | Material decisions screened; supplier commitments; local or lower-impact options selected; reusable serviceware; surplus food prevented or redistributed. | At purchase or contract review           |
| <b>Nature, pollution and resilience</b> | Litter, spill, habitat, noise or air-quality incidents; weather-related changes; restoration actions; partnership or volunteer nature projects.           | At incident close-out and event review   |
| <b>Engagement and governance</b>        | Guidance issued; briefings or volunteer activity; feedback received; action-plan completion; policy and risk-register updates.                            | Committee review and annual summary      |

## Reporting, concerns and corrective action

- The Committee will receive a progress summary at least annually, including completed actions, performance indicators, incidents, barriers, lessons and proposed priorities.
- An accessible summary of material progress will be shared with members through normal club communications or the website.
- Environmental incidents or concerns - including spills, pollution, habitat damage, significant waste failure or persistent nuisance - should be reported promptly to the event organiser, venue contact or nominated club lead through the club's published contact routes.
- Material incidents and missed commitments will be investigated proportionately, with corrective actions, owners and review points recorded. Learning will be shared without creating a blame culture.

## Policy review

- The Committee will review this policy at least every two years and sooner following material changes to law, governing-body guidance, source strategies, venue arrangements, club activities or environmental risk.
- The action plan will be reviewed more frequently and updated as priorities, evidence, resources and opportunities change.
- The controlled version will be approved by the Committee and published through the club's normal policy channels.

## Appendix: Environmental event checklist

Use this checklist for club-promoted events. The level of detail should match the scale, location and environmental risk of the event. It does not replace event safety, safeguarding, licensing, landowner or governing-body requirements.

| Stage         | Minimum environmental checks                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Owner / evidence / notes        |
|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>BEFORE</b> | Name an environmental lead. Confirm venue and landowner conditions. Publish public transport, walking, cycling and car-share information. Screen purchases and suppliers. Plan water, catering and waste routes. Check habitat, drainage, noise, lighting, heat, air quality and severe-weather risks. Brief volunteers, officials and contractors. Provide accessible alternatives. | Owner:<br><br>Evidence / notes: |
| <b>DURING</b> | Maintain safe drinking-water provision. Keep refill and waste points clear and signed. Prevent litter, spills and unnecessary idling. Protect sensitive ground and routes. Monitor weather, air quality and participant welfare. Keep reusable equipment and signage secure. Record simple data and any incidents or complaints.                                                     | Owner:<br><br>Evidence / notes: |
| <b>AFTER</b>  | Leave the venue or route clean and restore affected areas. Recover, store, repair or redistribute equipment and materials. Record waste, water, travel or supplier information where practical. Close out incidents. Thank and brief partners. Capture lessons, actions, owners and review points for the next event.                                                                | Owner:<br><br>Evidence / notes: |

## Reference framework and related documents

This policy has been developed with reference to the current published versions of the following documents and webpages. Where a source is updated, the club will consider the change at the next policy or action-plan review.

- [Watford Harriers Athletics Club - Vision and Values](#)
- [Watford Harriers Athletics Club - Club policies and codes of conduct](#)
- [England Athletics - Sustainability Strategy](#)
- [Watford Borough Council - Environmental Strategy](#)

Read alongside current club health and safety, safeguarding, inclusion, event, risk-assessment and venue requirements, together with applicable environmental law and statutory guidance.