

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY STATEMENT

The mission of the Society is to improve the environment by supporting and promoting ecological building practices and sustainable communities. This is enshrined in the Memorandum of the Society which states that we must pursue “in carrying on any business or other activity, ecological policies to protect or enhance the environment in accordance with the principles of sustainable development”.

Therefore, a commitment to reduce our environmental impact and continually improve our environmental performance is at the core of our operations. We promote sustainability and environmental awareness at all levels of decision-making, and through and with our members and customers. We also encourage our suppliers and all business associates to do the same.

Our main policy commitments are set out below:

Our activities

- Pursue credit provision activities that result in positive environmental outcomes and promote sustainable development as elaborated in our lending policy
- Support the advancement of ecological building practices and the growth of sustainable housing stock
- Avoid the use of counterparties that have a record of irresponsible lending which damages the environment
- Contribute to the environmental, economic and social sustainability of communities, including consideration of how our activities align with the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Our wider influence

- Demonstrate the commercial viability of ecologically focussed lending
- Support the preservation and growth of sustainable building methods and skills
- Promote the adoption of energy-efficient and environmentally positive buildings and lifestyles
- Provide support to and active participation in initiatives by civil society groups designed to influence government to adopt policies that address wider manifestations of the ecological crisis, in particular the climate emergency.

Our organisation (staff, premises and equipment)

- Comply with or exceed the requirements of all relevant environmental legislation and codes of practice
- Seek to minimise our waste, and then reuse or recycle as much of it as possible
- Minimise energy and water usage in our headquarters, and promote efficient use of resources in all areas of business activity in order to reduce our consumption of natural resources, particularly where they are non-renewable
- Promote biodiversity within our headquarters site
- Minimise travel requirements as far as reasonably practical and encourage the use of appropriate means of transport
- As far as possible pursue procurement policies that represent the least damage to the environment including purchasing locally where possible
- Assess the environmental impact of any new processes or products we intend to introduce
- Develop and implement a long-term strategy underpinned by meaningful, achievable targets that allow our colleagues and members to share in generating a positive environmental and social impact on the planet.

Monitoring and improvement

- Provide training and awareness for our staff and directors to enable them both to fully understand our environmental policy and make improvements to reduce the environmental impacts of their work activities
- Ensure that our policy along with improvements made and future targets are published in our Annual Report and on our website
- Commit to regular external scrutiny of our progress and continuous review of our procedures for managing our environmental impact

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- Develop a set of KPIs to monitor our environmental impact and contribution to combatting the climate emergency
- Publicise our impact of our business operations on the environment with particular reference to our lending activity
- Our policy commitments are monitored by our appointed Environmental Champion, Chris Rickerby.

The Environmental Policy Statement of the Society was last reviewed by the Board on 28 June 2019.

Paul Ellis

Chief Executive

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