



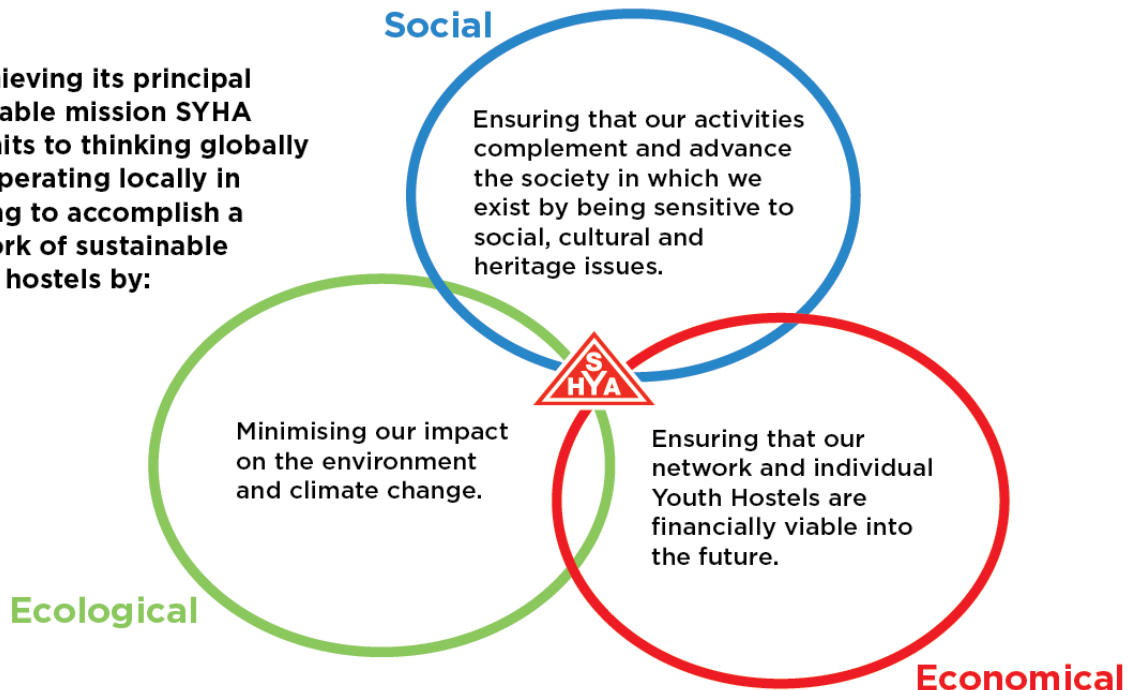
SUSTAINABILITY CHARTER

1. Principal Charitable Mission:

'The advancement of education, for the public benefit, by helping all, but especially young people, to experience and appreciate the Scottish countryside, environment, natural heritage and places of historic and cultural interest in Scotland, and through the promotion of their health, recreation and education, particularly by providing low cost accommodation for them on their travels'.

2. Sustainability Commitment:

In achieving its principal charitable mission SYHA commits to thinking globally and operating locally in striving to accomplish a network of sustainable youth hostels by:



SYHA will monitor and report its sustainability progress of all youth hostels by:

- Active participation in the Green Business Tourism Scheme, VisitScotland Quality Assurance and Hostelling International Quality Management (HI-Q) accreditation schemes.
- Including a section in the annual report highlighting sustainability practices.
- Appointing a Sustainable Advocate Employee.

3. Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria:

Sustainability, by definition, never ends, so SYHA will work continuously to reduce its impact on the environment and engage with our various communities and guests to promote sustainable practices. We will also ensure we are able to financially sustain the resources in achieving our principal charitable mission and ethos for the benefit of future generations. SYHA agrees to pursue the Global Partnership for Sustainable Tourism Criteria guidelines adapted to the circumstances of all SYHA youth hostels by aiming to:

- Demonstrate effective sustainable management.
- Maximising social and economic benefits to the local community and minimising negative impacts.
- Maximising benefits to cultural heritage and minimising negative impacts.
- Maximising benefits to the environment and minimising negative impacts.
- Conserving biodiversity, ecosystems and landscapes.

Scottish Youth Hostels Association (also known as SYHA or Hostelling Scotland) is a registered Scottish charity SC013138 and a company limited by guarantee, registered in Scotland, SC310841. Registered Office 7 Glebe Crescent, Stirling, FK8 2JA
Online: www.syha.org.uk Reservation: 0845 293 7373 Office: 01786 891 400



4. Demonstrate effective sustainable management by:

- a. Implementing a long-term sustainability management system that is suitable to its reality and scope, and which addresses environmental, social, cultural, economic, quality, health, and safety issues;
- b. Complying with all applicable local and international legislation and regulations (including, health, safety, labour, and environmental aspects);
- c. Ensuring that all personnel receive periodic guidance and training regarding their roles and responsibilities with respect to environmental, social, cultural, economic, quality, health, and safety issues;
- d. Ensuring that all our youth hostels meet minimum standards;
- e. Introducing an HI-Q or HI-Q recognized quality management system into all youth hostels;
- f. Measuring customer satisfaction, including sustainability aspects, and taking corrective action;
- g. Ensuring that promotional materials are accurate and complete with regard to the organization and its products and services, including sustainability claims and do not promise more than is being delivered;
- h. Ensuring planning, design, renovation, operation, demolition and construction of buildings and infrastructure comply with zoning requirements and with laws related to protected areas and heritage consideration;
- i. Respecting the natural and cultural heritage surroundings in planning, siting, design, and impact assessment;
- j. Using locally appropriate sustainable practices and materials;
- k. Providing access statements for all our youth hostels;
- l. Providing information about, and interpretation of, the natural surroundings, local culture, and cultural heritage to members and guests, as well as explaining appropriate behaviour while visiting natural areas, living cultures, and cultural heritage sites;
- m. Ensuring land and water rights, and property acquisition are legal, comply with local, communal and indigenous rights, including their free, prior and informed consent, and do not require involuntary resettlement.

5. Maximizing social and economic benefits to the local community and minimizing negative impacts by:

- a. Actively supporting initiatives for local infrastructure and social community development including, among others, education, training, health, and sanitation;
- b. Giving local residents equal opportunity for employment, including in management positions and ensuring all employees are equally offered regular training, experience and opportunities for advancement;
- c. Purchasing and offering local and fair-trade services and goods;
- d. Offering the means for local small entrepreneurs to develop and sell sustainable products that are based on the area's nature, history, and culture (including food and beverages, crafts, performance arts, agricultural products, etc.);
- e. Developing and implementing a documented code of conduct for activities in indigenous and local communities, with the consent of and in collaboration with the affected community;
- f. Implementing a policy against commercial, sexual or any other form of exploitation and harassment, particularly of children, adolescents, women and minorities;
- g. Offering equal employment opportunities to women, local minorities and others, including in management positions;

- h. Ensuring international or national legal protection of employees is respected, and employees are paid at least the national statutory wage;
- i. Ensuring that the activities of the organization do not jeopardize the provision of basic services, such as water, energy, healthcare or sanitation, to neighbouring communities;
- j. Ensuring that the activities of the organization do not adversely affect local access to livelihoods, including land and aquatic resource use, rights-of-way, transport and housing.

6. Maximizing benefits to cultural heritage and minimizing negative impacts by:

- a. Following established guidelines or a code of behaviour for visits to culturally or historically sensitive sites, in order to minimize visitor impact and maximize enjoyment;
- b. Contributing to the protection and preservation of local historical, archaeological, culturally and spiritually important properties and sites, whilst not impeding access to them by local residents;
- c. Incorporating elements of local art, architecture, or cultural heritage in its operations, design, decoration, food, or shops, while respecting the intellectual property rights of local communities.

7. Maximizing benefits to the environment and minimizing negative impacts by:

- a. Conserving resources by ensuring that:
 - (1) Purchasing policies favour locally appropriate and ecologically sustainable products, including building materials, capital goods, food, beverages and consumables;
 - (2) The purchase of disposable and consumable goods is measured, and the organization actively seeks ways to reduce their use;
 - (3) Energy consumption is measured, sources are indicated, and measures are adopted to minimize overall consumption, and encourage the use of renewable energy;
 - (4) Water consumption is measured, sources are indicated, and measures are adopted to minimize overall consumption;
 - (5) Water sourcing is sustainable, and does not adversely affect environmental flows.
- b. Reducing carbon pollution by ensuring that:
 - (1) Greenhouse gas emissions from all sources controlled by the organization are measured, procedures are implemented to minimize them, and offsetting remaining emissions is encouraged;
 - (2) Customers, staff, suppliers and members are encouraged to reduce transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions;
 - (3) Wastewater, including grey water, is treated effectively and is only reused or released safely, with no adverse effects to the local population and the environment;
 - (4) Waste is measured, mechanisms are in place to reduce waste, and where reduction is not feasible, to re-use or recycle it;
 - (5) Any residual waste disposal has no adverse effect on the local population and the environment;
 - (6) The use of harmful substances, including pesticides, paints, cleaning materials, is minimized, and substituted when available, by innocuous products or processes;
 - (7) All storage, use, handling, and disposal of chemicals is properly managed.
- c. Practices are implemented to minimize pollution from noise, light, run-off, erosion, ozone-depleting compounds, air, and water and soil contamination.

8. Conserving biodiversity, ecosystems, and landscapes by:

- a. Using native species for landscaping and restoration, wherever feasible, particularly in natural landscapes and measures are taken to avoid the introduction of invasive alien species;
- b. Supporting biodiversity conservation, including natural protected areas and areas of high biodiversity value;
- c. Ensuring that interactions with wildlife, taking into account cumulative impacts, do not produce adverse effects on the viability and behaviour of populations in the wild, and any disturbance of natural ecosystems is minimized, rehabilitated, and there is a compensatory contribution to conservation management;
- d. Ensuring that wildlife species are not harvested from the wild or consumed, displayed, sold, or internationally traded, except as part of a regulated activity that ensures that their utilization is sustainable and in compliance with local to international laws;
- e. Ensuring no captive wildlife is held, except for properly regulated activities, in compliance with local to international laws and living specimens of protected and wildlife species are only kept by those authorized and suitably equipped to house and care for them humanely.

Keith Legge
CEO SYHA Hostelling Scotland
1st August 2015

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