ACCREDITATION REPORT

608 Vet Practice

April 2025

Executive Summary

608 Vet Practice is a small animal-focused veterinary practice and part of the Linnaeus group, operating across three sites: a 24-hour main site in Solihull and two branch practices. The practice has been a member of Investors in the Environment (iiE) since 2022 and was last audited in November 2023. This audit covers the period from that date through to April 2025. The Green Champion prepared for this audit with the aim of re-accrediting at Bronze level. However, by exceeding Bronze standards and fully meeting the criteria for Silver, 608 Vet Practice has achieved Silver level accreditation.

The Green Champion should be commended for their hard work this year, having made strong progress in developing and embedding an effective EMS despite personal challenges and the competing focus for the practice of the Practice Standards Scheme assessment. They have also effectively inducted a new Green Champion, who will be providing their maternity cover and who has already demonstrated enthusiasm for the role.

Data management processes continue to improve, and strong performance analysis is in place, guiding action planning in line with targets. A focus on sustainable procurement, both in terms of waste reduction and reducing transport emissions, has been a particular highlight and projects alongside excellent lines of communication have improved engagement.

Infrastructure remains a key barrier to improving resource efficiency, as reflected in the rise in emissions from 2023 to 2024. Isoflurane has also been an area of underperformance. However, the recent introduction of a Humphrey ADE circuit is expected to support improvements. As such, efforts to improve the efficient use of high-emission resources, particularly isoflurane, should be a priority in the coming year. Additional support from the clinical team may be needed for isoflurane management, as this sits outside the usual remit of the Green Champion.

Highlights

- The former Green Champion has effectively inducted their replacement, ensuring they have been given sufficient handover training and have a full understanding of the role.
- Strong monthly datasets continue to be collated, with regular data reviews and good performance assessment processes that feedback into action plans and team updates.
- 608 Vet Practice has achieved a saving of approximately 3000 sheets of paper per year following digitising lab results.
- Excellent waste management processes are in place and include a focus on sustainable procurement.
- Project work has been a key highlight, with impact exceeding Silver requirements and covering all three project categories. Projects have included a sunflower growing competition, partnering with a local hedgehog rescue organisation, and volunteering for Worldwide Vets and Costa Rica rescue centres.

Improvements

- Ensure that the new Green Champion continues to be supported within their role, with access to protected time and training as appropriate, as well as additional support from clinical team members for review of clinical processes and resources, particularly anaesthesia.

- Old infrastructure remains a limitation for resource efficiency; develop an understanding of the improvements need to overcome these limitations and incorporate into refurbishments where possible.
- Closely monitor isoflurane data, using normalisation to understand efficiency, and implement action including review of processes and training to ensure that high usage is addressed.
- An increase of 33% has been seen in the carbon footprint from 2023 to 2024, primarily caused by the increases seen in most resources. Target reductions in high-emission resources that contribute to Scope 1 and 2 emissions.

Score

Investors in the Environment is pleased to confirm that, having recently completed the audit process, 608 Vet Practice has achieved the Silver level accreditation with a score of 78%.

To achieve Silver level accreditation, an organisation is required to continue to develop and implement their Environmental Management System, using the framework to put forward a range of projects that will support continual improvement in resource and carbon management or nature protection. The organisation will also need to implement a travel plan, improve upon waste management practices, and manage staff communication and engagement, and introduce performance reporting to key stakeholders.

About the audit

The Investors in the Environment (iiE) accreditation requires an organisation to provide evidence that it has met a range of pre-defined criteria, set targets to reduce its environmental impact and taken action to improve its performance whilst enhancing the community in which it operates. Evidence is presented at an annual audit and this report provides an evaluation of the organisation's performance as well as offers advice on the next steps for continued improvement.

The Investors in the Environment annual audit assesses five key areas of an organisation's Environmental Management System (EMS). These areas include:

- Environmental policy
- Resource management and monitoring
- Progress against targets
- Action planning including social/ environmental projects
- Communication

The purpose of the audit is to evaluate the organisation's EMS and make suggestions relating to its performance. Future opportunities and risks to the organisation's environmental practices may also be identified as a result.

The audit consisted of an examination of documentation evidence, and an interview with key personnel on 4th April 2025.

Evidence submitted included:

- Updated EMS Reporting Pack
- Travel Plan
- Various resource measurement sheets
- Environmental Action Plan
- Environmental Policy
- Communication examples

Summary Results Table

Audit category	Score
Section 1 - Leadership and Governance (Policy)	90%
Section 2 - Resource Use, Data, & Monitoring	100%
Section 3 - Performance, Action, & Targets	70%
Section 4 - Carbon Management	50%
Section 5 - Waste Management & Materials	100%
Section 6 – Transport & Travel Planning	67%
Section 7 - Environmental & Social Projects	100%
Section 8 – Communication & Engagement	83%
Overall Score	**78%**

Audit Scoring

Each section of the organisation's Environmental Management System (EMS) is scored as detailed below. Full reference to scoring can be found separately in the organisation's audit sheet upon request, including auditor comments against specific criteria.

Fail	**0 Points**: A failing score means that this criterion has not been met nor is any progress demonstrated. *No progress or commitment has been made in this area.*
Action Needed	**1 point:** Action is needed to improve and should be considered in alignment with the auditor's comments and an appropriate timeline. These will be discussed during quarterly support calls to help improve. *The organisation is considering developing this area, but no formal process has been established or meaningful progress has not been made.*
Pass / Compliant	**2 points**: The criteria have been met, though there may also be suggestions to improve. *The organisation is beginning or improving this area, is broadly compliant with the iiE criteria, and may be showing processes that support improvements.*
Outstanding	**3 points**: This criterion has been exceeded as measured against the basic iiE criteria and may demonstrate a significant improvement since the previous year or may highlight best practice. *The organisation is succeeding with supportive target achievement and may be leading or supporting others in their sector or influence to achieve improvements.*

Leadership & Governance (Environmental Policy)   90%

The process of developing an environmental policy includes a review of the environmental aspects of an organisation and the impacts these have on the wider environment. This should consider material use and consumption, energy use, water management, waste minimisation, etc.

The policy is the main driver for environmental performance improvements and needs to be led by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). It should be reviewed annually, alongside environmental performance updates.

In time, wider strategies and long-term objectives should be considered by the organisation and used to inform the commitments outlined in the policy. The policy should be communicated to staff and made available for all to review, both internally and publicly.

Strengths

- A good Environmental Policy remains in place and 608 Vet Practice continues to demonstrate commitment to its environmental goals as outlined within this.
- The new Green Champion has been well inducted into the role to ensure that they can effectively maintain 608 Vet Practice's progress over the upcoming year. They have been supported through their handover training by the former Green Champion and have engaged with the iiE Green Champion course.
- There is clear top-level support for 608 Vet Practice's sustainability initiative and SLT are actively involved with the Green Team. SLT focus this year has primarily been on ensuring that the practice's planned refurbishment aligns with its environmental goals.
- Sustainability is incorporated into KPIs for Green Team members.
- Consideration of procurement and travel is evidenced throughout the EMS.

Actions for review

- SLT should ensure that the new Green Champion has ongoing support whilst they adapt to their new role and that they are allocated protected time within their rota to work on the practice's sustainability initiative.
- Update the Environmental Policy – it should identify the new Green Champion.
- Consider extending the incorporation of sustainability into appraisals for all practice staff to promote engagement and the embedment of sustainability as an integral part of all roles.

Resource Use & Data Monitoring

100%

Resource use and data monitoring is pivotal for any organisation to ensure good management of performance. Within this section of the EMS, an organisation is required to develop robust data recording procedures and set a process for data revision that aligns with general performance reviews – which could be monthly, quarterly, or even half yearly, depending on the measured resource and planned activity.

To support the monitoring of data, a review of operations and processes across the organisation needs to be carried out to understand how and why resources are used and where opportunities for improvement exist.

As part of resource management, prioritisation is key, to ensure activities and resources focused on efficiency gains are deployed in areas which can have the biggest impact.

Strengths

- The former Green Champion demonstrated strong understanding of resource usage, management and scope for improvement at audit. This is well captured within the EMS.
- Strong monthly datasets continue to be collated, and utility data is collected from meter reads where possible (the waste meter is inaccessible). This earns a score of 'Outstanding' at Silver.
- All data is reviewed quarterly, except gas which is reviewed seasonally, earning a score of 'Outstanding' at Silver. The new Green Champion has been trained on data review processes.

- Water data has improved and an accurate baseline is now in place.

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Actions for review

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- Old infrastructure remains a challenge for efficiency. The refurbishment may provide an opportunity to address these challenges and improve building efficiency. Develop an understanding of the improvements needed to overcome these limitations and incorporate into refurbishments where possible.
- Baseline data should run from January to December in line with Linnaeus guidance. Restructure datasets accordingly.
- Rebaseline clinical waste data to 2023 in line with Linnaeus guidance following the change of waste contractor.
- Ensure data review frequency is maintained following the change in Green Champion and that resource performance continues to be regularly discussed within Green Team to gain insights across sites and teams. It may be useful to prebook data reviews into the calendar and to make sure time is allocated for this within rotas.

Performance, Action & Targets
70%

Setting targets provides an opportunity to measure performance against planned activities. Where performance is falling short of achieving targets, future or underway activity or project plans can be refined to ensure set out goals are achieved.

Targets can be set against activity metrics to analyse how annual changes to business activity have affected performance, with the aim to always improve efficiency where absolute reductions are not achievable.

Clear, relevant and well managed action plans should record intended activities and support the review of performance, with the aim to achieving the set targets.

Strengths

- Quarterly data and performance reviews are captured within Action Plans and strong target analysis is evidenced with clear links between action and impact. SLT and wider practice staff are informed of performance review outcomes.
- Following increases in isoflurane, the Green Champion reviewed usage with clinicians and SLT to understand the causal factors.
- A new boiler has been installed at the Solihull site and the improvement in efficiency should be evident within gas data for 2025.
- 608 Vet Practice has achieved a saving of approximately 3000 sheets of paper per year following digitising lab results.
- Good Action Plans are in place for electricity, gas, water, waste, and projects/communications/further actions. These are well managed and evidence progress.

Actions for review

- Consider normalising datasets to allow further insights into efficiency of resource use. Choose the intensity metric most appropriate for the resource analysed,

suggested metrics are listed below, and further guidance can be found within the [iiE Target Setting](#) resource:
- o Electricity, water and other resources: business activity/FTE/turnover
- o Gas: Heating Degree Days data
- o Isoflurane: number of operations/surgical hours/number of general anaesthetics
- Develop a dedicated Action Plan for isoflurane.
- A significant increase of 91% has been seen in isoflurane usage when comparing with 2023. This is a resource with high environmental impact and so should be an area of priority for action. Prolonged and more frequent surgeries, larger breed dogs and less experienced staff have been highlighted as underlying causes. Consider the following action to address anaesthesia usage:
  - o Auditing current anaesthesia processes
  - o Ensure all staff have received low flow training, including the [Linnaeus webinar and written resources](#).
  - o Implement compulsory low flow refresher training.
  - o Identify opportunity for uses of pre-medications. regional anaesthesia and blocks to reduce isoflurane requirements.
  - o Display guidance on low flow techniques within theatres.
- The new Green Champion requires additional support for implementing sustainability within clinical processes and resources, in particular for isoflurane. Consider appointing a clinical Green Team member as the lead for sustainable anaesthesia.

Carbon Management

50%

With increased focus on working towards Net Zero and the importance of Climate Action, carbon management is a key element of the iiE accreditation process. Organisations are required to calculate their footprint starting at buildings level (energy consumed within the buildings), then water, travel, and finally including additional aspects of business activity, such as waste, etc.

Carbon Management provides an opportunity for an organisation to consider which resources or operations need to be prioritised to decarbonise as quickly as possible, in line with Climate Science. The output from a carbon footprint calculation should be used to inform these decisions, which is another reason data capture and accurate data reporting is necessary.

In accordance with the [GHG Protocol](#), iiE encourages the dual reporting of an organisation's carbon footprint, which results in the provision of two outputs for those organisations on a renewable energy tariff, a 'location-based' and a 'market-based' carbon footprint.
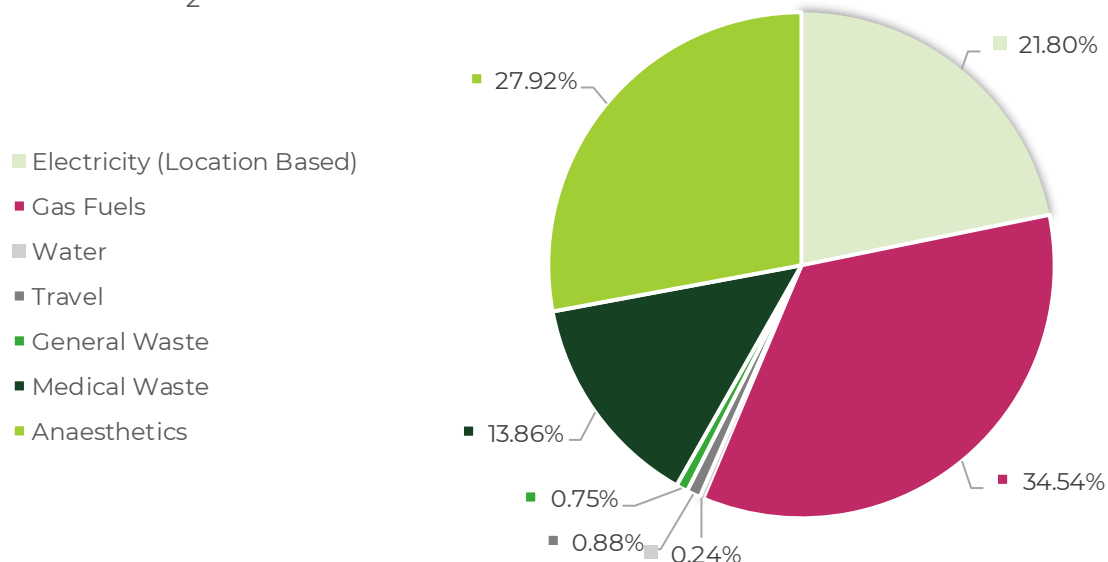
The 'location-based' method reflects the impact of electricity drawn from the grid, using the UK grid's average emission factor, regardless of the tariff to which an organisation has signed up.

The 'market-based' method uses an emission factor which is either specific to the electricity tariff to which the reporting organisation has signed up, or a generic 'UK

renewable energy' factor, which allows electricity from renewables or low carbon sources to be reported with lower emissions than those generated through the burning of fossil fuels. An energy provider should be able to provide the emission factor for any of its tariffs.

Any electricity purchased and distributed through the National Grid is generated from a variety of sources and will always have a carbon footprint as a result. Location-based reporting demonstrates the organisation's awareness of the overall impact Grid sourced electricity contributes towards climate change. Direct carbon reduction using location-based reporting can only be achieved through the installation of solar or other renewable technologies. However, the market-based reporting provides an opportunity to demonstrate an organisation's commitment to support the reduction of emissions through its purchasing decisions.

Total tCO$_2$e 2024 91.54

- Electricity (Location Based)
- Gas Fuels
- Water
- Travel
- General Waste
- Medical Waste
- Anaesthetics

21.80%
27.92%
13.86%
0.75%
0.88%
0.24%
34.54%

608 Vet Practice's carbon footprint has been calculated by the auditor based on datasets for electricity, gas, water, grey fleet travel, medical waste, business waste, anaesthetic gas and fugitive gas. The location-based carbon footprint for 2024 was 91.54 tCO$_2$e.

Strengths

- As the practice is on a renewable energy tariff, in line with Linnaeus guidance, its market-based carbon footprint for 2024 was 71.58 tCO$_2$e.

Actions for review

- An increase of 33% has been seen in the carbon footprint from 2023 to 2024. Whilst this is partially due to the inclusion of grey fleet mileage data it is primarily caused by the increases seen in most resources. Target reductions in high-emission resources that contribute to Scope 1 and 2 emissions.
- If fleet emission data can be obtained, capture this within the carbon footprint as it contributes to Scope 1 emissions.
- Consider including commuter mileage estimates within the carbon footprint calculation to expand the Scope 3 emissions captured.

Waste Management & Materials

100%

Organisations are required to review and improve upon waste management. This should start with how waste is managed on site and ultimately disposed of to ensure the correct processes are followed.

From Silver level onwards, thought should be given to procurement and how waste is generated on site, from the materials purchased that end up in the waste stream, through to the activities on site that create waste.

Finally, circular economy concepts and thinking should be introduced, with the waste hierarchy leading to decision making, opting for elimination as the priority, followed by choosing products that can be reused or repaired.

Strengths

- Consideration of sustainable procurement is evidenced within Action Plans and the EMS, and the Linnaeus Green List is utilised to guide procurement decisions.
- Multiple streams of recycling are in place and the practice continues to successfully engage with the MARS pet food recycling scheme.
- The number of recycling bins has been increased, with positive impacts on compliance noted: the percentage of total waste recycled has increased by 14% since 2023.
- Informal bin checks occur frequently alongside periodic full waste audits (although these were paused recently).
- Waste amounts are shared in the monthly newsletter along with hints and tips on how to reduce further.

Actions for review

- A target to increase recycling waste by 5% has been set. Change this instead to increase recycling as a percentage proportion of total waste.
- Start to track clinical waste data by category and focus on reductions in high emission streams: i.e. hazardous/infectious waste and pharmaceuticals.
- Resume waste audits and ensure outcomes are captured and evidenced for audit.

Transport & Travel Planning

67%

A travel plan must consider the travel needs for an organisation, including access, availability of public services, and safety of travel where relevant. Travel is the single largest contributor to UK Greenhouse Gas Emissions, and can be a challenging area to manage, given the need for transport within any operation.

The plan should aim to remove barriers for individuals to choose active/shared transport over single car occupancy, and then to consider electrification of vehicles over internal combustion engines.

Surveys are a useful tool to engage with individuals around travel habits and to support identification and implementation of barrier removals, to improve good travel habits.

Strengths

- A Travel Survey has been implemented with insights guiding the focus for action on travel. There is limited scope for influencing commuter behaviour currently, due to the practice location, so efforts have instead been made to reduce travel emissions associated with procurement. Delivery frequency has been greatly decreased, and an oxygen concentrator has been purchased to avoid the need for cylinders to be delivered.
- A good Travel Plan is in place and has been shared with staff alongside the results of the Travel Survey. The plan has been developed with an understanding of travel need and outlines commuting and business travel requirements alongside setting commitments goals for improving sustainable travel.
- Action has been put in place to encourage sustainable travel, including online meetings, route planning and engaging with the Cycle 2 Work scheme.
- Grey fleet mileage is captured.

Actions for review

- 608 Vet Practice has a fleet vehicle, however mileage is not currently captured. Data for this may be available within the Linnaeus SharePoint, or from the vehicle's MOT records.
- Reflect 608 Vet Practice's focus on reducing procurement travel needs within the Travel Plan commitments.

Environmental & Social Projects
100%

All organisations need to consider their corporate responsibility, both for social, community and wellbeing impacts, and for environmental impacts through biodiversity or conservation efforts.

This section requires organisations to undertake a range of projects that not only aim to achieve impacts, but to also encourage individual participation and engagement – to raise conversation and encourage individuals to consider what they can do outside of the organisation as well.

It is strongly encouraged that organisations undertake projects in all three areas, Resource Efficiency, Biodiversity / Conservation, and Social / Community.

Strengths

- 608 Vet Practice has engaged with multiple projects with significant impact this audit cycle. The practice re-engaged with projects set up in prior years to further build impact and introduced a number of new projects.

- Projects saw engagement across all sites and covered all three project categories, and included a sunflower growing competition, partnering with a local hedgehog rescue organisation, and volunteering for Worldwide Vets and Costa Rica rescue centres.

Actions for review

- Consider engaging with projects to support staff well-being through nature connection – these could link in with the Wildlife Trusts' 'Stay Wild' campaign in June.

Communication & Engagement

83%

The scheme requires that active and engaged communication happens at all levels, as sustainability cannot only happen within the Senior Team or only happen at ground level but requires a collaborative approach. Regular and consistent communication and engagement is therefore pivotal to ensuring objectives are achieved.

In addition, regular reporting is necessary to highlight the success of activities and improvements achieved. These should be produced both for the SLT, but also for wider staff to celebrate success and recognise efforts they have made through participation.

In time, reports should be made available publicly alongside the environmental policy to further demonstrate the commitment and celebrate the achievements of the organisation.

Strengths

- SLT are provided with regular updates on progress and are part of the Green Team.
- Green Team engagement has improved and is now strong with regular catch ups in place.
- Wider staff are kept up to date with sustainability via a weekly email update, WhatsApp, quarterly newsletter, sustainability board and posters/signage.

Actions for review

- The Environmental Policy commits to publishing an annual organisational sustainability report and the Green Champion planned to develop this following the outcome of audit. The iiE Annual Sustainability Report Template is a useful resource for writing this. Consider sharing the report externally by publishing it on the practice website.
- 608 Vet Practice has performed well this year, evidencing progress towards embedding sustainability throughout the practice. Recognise its achievements by entering the 2025 iiE Awards: consider the Best Waste Reduction category.

Next steps

To continue to develop sustainability within the organisation, the business should consider and prioritise the following next steps below.

- SLT should ensure that the new Green Champion has ongoing support whilst they adapt to their new role and that they are allocated protected time within their rota to work on the practice's sustainability initiative.
- Update the Environmental Policy – it should identify the new Green Champion by name.
- Consider appointing a clinical Green Team member as the lead for sustainable anaesthesia to oversee performance monitoring, action development and compliance.
- Develop a dedicated Action Plan for isoflurane.
- Implement action to address increases in isoflurane usage, including ensuring staff have received appropriate training and are complying with low flow procedures.
- Baseline data should run from January to December in line with Linnaeus guidance. Restructure datasets accordingly.
- Rebaseline clinical waste data to 2023 in line with Linnaeus guidance following the change of waste contractor.
- Ensure data review frequency is maintained following the change in Green Champion - it may be useful to prebook data reviews into the calendar and to make sure time is allocated for this within rotas.
- Normalise datasets to better understand efficiency of resource usage, particularly isoflurane.
- If available, collate fleet mileage data and capture within the carbon footprint.

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