

Environment & Sustainability Committee

Neil Swanson

Supporting Statement:

It's probably the Wombles' fault. I've been environmentally minded since childhood and a long term supporter of various green groups ever since. I think Climate Change is the biggest issue of my lifetime. That's true across most issues we face, but there's a direct impact on the heart I'm most interested in. Increasing heat effects, noise pollution, nanoplastics and particulates in the air we breathe all have been shown to harm cardiovascular health. As an evidence-based doctor, I feel we have to react to these data with action. The BCS is now doing just that and I want to help.

I have served the BCS for ten years, including stints as Chair and then Vice President of the Clinical Standards and Guidelines committees. I feel my experience gives me skills to help the Society do its part to address the environmental challenges we and all our patients face. I think weaving improved sustainability into all the activities of the Society will make us more efficient and inspire others to follow our lead. I think the relationships I've made with colleagues throughout the Society will help the environment committee become as effective as possible.

As an interventional cardiologist I see plastic and other waste in huge quantities every time I'm in the lab. I think the BCS can work with our Industry partners to cut waste (and cost) in the products we use to help patients. We can then exchange ideas that work and publicise such incremental improvements that members can take to their own workplaces. It helps to break sometimes daunting sustainability challenges into something achievable.

I want to help the Society use its "Voice of UK Cardiology" to advocate for change in environmental practice in the UK, through our relationships with the Department of Health, our affiliated societies and with Industry partners.

Outside work, I like outdoor activities, especially running. Sometimes I combine this with my other daily habit of picking up litter, things that the everyday folks leave behind.