

Voluntary Action Merthyr Tydfil

Your local county voluntary council



VOLUNTARY ACTION
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12. Climate change

12.11 Reduce your organisation or group's carbon footprint

What is a carbon footprint?

A 'carbon footprint' measures the total greenhouse gas emissions caused directly and indirectly by a person, organisation, event or product. It is measured in tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent.

Organisational carbon footprint

Your organisational carbon footprint includes emissions from all the activities across your organisation, including buildings' energy use, products you buy, electricity and gas and transport.

Find out more at www.carbontrust.co.uk/cut-carbon-reduce-costs/calculate/carbon-footprinting/pages/organisation-carbon-footprint.aspx

Measure your organisation's carbon footprint – Why?

There are many reasons for calculating an organisational carbon footprint. It will help you to:

- play a part in tackling climate change
- save money by cutting fuel bills and other costs
- satisfy new legislative and funder requirements on environmental performance
- improve your reputation with potential service users and supporters, who might be looking for 'green' credentials
- reduce your organisation's impact on climate change and on your beneficiaries
- prepare for operating in a low carbon future.
- manage and reduce emissions: reducing your business carbon footprint often results in cost savings.
- will help you to identify and prioritise areas for potential reduction.
- reporting -more and more organisations want to be able to demonstrate their carbon footprint for a variety of reasons.

How?

The Carbon Trust offers a range of advice and support including a Carbon footprint calculator - www.carbontrust.co.uk/cut-carbon-reduce-costs/calculate/footprint-calculator/pages/footprinting-tools.aspx

The basic carbon footprint indicator provides a rough estimate of your organisation's carbon emissions based on your company's energy bill and sector. The carbon footprint calculator gives a more detailed assessment of your organisation's carbon footprint.

There are various other websites listed below that offer Carbon Calculators but be aware that some of these only calculate personal footprints and may offer offsetting.

www.carbonfootprint.com/businesscarboncalculator.html

www.carbonindependent.org – personal footprint.

www.carboncalculator.direct.gov.uk - individual and household footprint.

www.carboncalculator.co.uk – personal footprint.

www.nef.org.uk/greencompany/co2calculator.htm

Remember if you are going to disclose your business carbon footprint publicly, then you need to make sure that it has been calculated properly. Most organisations follow the Greenhouse Gas Protocol Initiative and some even get the calculation independently verified. Find more information at www.ghgprotocol.org.

How to reduce your organisation's carbon footprint

- **Reducing water use**

Being water efficient not only helps to reduce water wastage but as an organisation, you pay for all the water that passes through your meter - so it makes good financial sense to ensure you are not letting any of it go to waste. Taking simple inexpensive measures can typically reduce your water consumption by up to 50%.

Saving water is also good for the environment and will help to reduce the carbon footprint of your organisation. Cleaning and treating water uses valuable energy and resources, and if water levels fall, the wildlife in wetland habitats may suffer. Also, if you are heating your water prior to use, any reduction in water consumption will also have a positive impact on your energy bills. Simple, quick measures include installing water-saving tap and low-flush or dual-flush toilets.

Why not take the water audit at www.unitedutilities.com/waterwise.aspx

Read more about the carbon footprint of processing water at:

- www.treehugger.com/files/2007/08/carbon_footprin_1.php
- <http://oco-carbon.com/2010/07/18/the-carbon-footprint-of-tap-water/>

- **Travel**

There are lots of things we can do to change the way we travel to make it more sustainable - leave the car on the drive and catch a bus or train, or try cycling or walking once a week instead.

Sustrans makes smarter travel choices possible and desirable. A leading UK charity working with families, communities, policy-makers and partner organisations so that people are able to choose healthier, cleaner and cheaper journeys, with better places and spaces to move through and live in. Their project Connect2 is enabling millions of people to make everyday, local journeys by foot or by bike – Read all the latest at www.sustrans.org.uk/what-we-do/connect2

www.sustrans.org.uk

The Community Transport Association aims to shape the voluntary and community transport network. Visit the site for information sheets, training and advice - www.ctauk.org/in-your-area/wales.aspx

Think about how staff, volunteers, supporters, beneficiaries or others have to travel to access your organisation. Try to ensure that new offices or premises, meeting places and conferences are easily accessible by public transport.

A workforce that cycles is not only fitter for its tasks and less prone to illness, but also impacts positively on the local community and environment. Cycle Training Wales is Wales's leading independent provider of cycle training services. A not-for-profit social enterprise which aims to promote well-being and the environmental benefits of cycling through education and skills training.

www.cycletrainingwales.org.uk/

Ideally, workplaces should have secure storage areas for bikes, and showers available for cyclists.

Check out public transport options at www.traveline-cymru.info - the public transport information service for Wales, offering a “one stop shop” for travel information in Wales to include bus, coach, rail, air, ferry. They also aim to help if you want to use your car, walk or cycle all or part of your journey.

Why not encourage staff to try car sharing to travel to work and to meetings. This can save money on fuel and parking, cut journey times and improve the environment. Find out more at

www.carsharewales.com or www.carshare2cardiff.com

Others ways of reducing travel and saving time and money include teleconferencing, videoconferencing and homeworking. Allowing staff to work at home on either a full or part-time basis can bring a range of business benefits - from increased productivity and greater staff motivation to more effective use of your premises. Home working also widens the base from which you can recruit, boosting your chances of recruiting successfully. Find out more at

<http://business.wales.gov.uk/bdotg/action/layer?r.i=1074447233&r.l1=1073858787&r.l2=1073858926&r.l3=1074446319&r.s=m&r.t=RESOURCES&site=230&topicId=1074446319>

- www.03talk.com/
- www.conferencegenie.co.uk/
- www.powwownow.co.uk/
- www.skype.com

- **Recycling**

74% of the municipal solid waste produced by Wales can be recycled or composted through current processes, by taking part in recycling you can help to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill. Recycling reduces the demand for raw materials. By recovering materials from old products we are removing or reducing the need to extract yet more raw materials from the earth. You will need to contact your Local Authority to find out what your organisation can recycle and where. Many offer facilities for recycling paper, cardboard, plastics and food.

You might also need to think about how you recycle cartridges, computers, office furniture and equipment. For information on all types of recycling please contact your Local Authority or

www.wasteawarenesswales.org.uk

www.cylch.org

www.wrap.org.uk/index.html

- Paper
- Computers

www.eerecycling.co.uk

www.computer-recycle-wales.co.uk

www.recycledit.co.uk

www.recom.org.uk/computers_for_charity/Home.htm

www.digitalgrowth.co.uk

www.computeraid.org

- Cartridges

Several charities now offer recycling facilities for printer cartridges which help them raise money. Similarly many printer companies offer a recycling scheme so just contact the company supplying your printers/photocopiers to see what's on offer.

- Office furniture and equipment

List unwanted items at:

www.3to3.org.uk/index

<http://uk.freecycle.org/>

www.recycle.co.uk/

- **Reduce Energy Usage**

There are a number of steps you could take to reduce your energy use.

- Educate staff to 'Switch Off' all non essential equipment whenever practical; including monitors, light switches and air conditioning units.
- Ensure windows and doors are closed when heating or cooling systems are in use and only operate one system at a time, do not heat and cool simultaneously.
- Ensure you only use the system when people are in the building, using any controls you have to match operation to occupancy.
- Take regular meter readings
- Compare suppliers
- Install insulation if possible
- Turn the temperature down
- Replace inefficient boilers

Find out more at:

www.carbontrust.co.uk/cut-carbon-reduce-costs/products-services/sector-advice/pages/office-based-business.aspx

www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/Take-action/Grants-and-savings/Stop-wasting-energy-and-cut-your-bills

Using the Energy Advice Line to change your business electricity or business gas supplier is free and simple.

www.energyadvice.org.uk/

Most energy suppliers offer 'green' electricity tariffs. These seek to support renewable energy. The two main types of offering are green supply tariffs and green funds. A green supply tariff means that some or all of the electricity you buy is 'matched' by purchases of renewable energy that your energy supplier makes on your behalf. A green fund usually involves paying a premium to contribute to a fund that will be used to support new renewable energy developments.

Check out the Green Energy Supply website, here you can find UK electricity tariffs that have been independently checked, and meet the energy regulator Ofgem's Green Energy Supply Guidelines.

<http://greenenergyscheme.org/index.php>

- **Procurement**

It is important to take social economic and environmental factors into consideration alongside financial factors in making procurement decisions. Looking beyond the traditional economic parameters has implications for society and the environment. Using local suppliers where possible offers the potential to reduce travel costs and carbon emissions. Consider taking other organisations' environmental approaches into account, when choosing suppliers or partners.

The Welsh Government produce a guide that offers advice on the different approaches that procurers are encouraged to take to deliver added value by the inclusion of community benefits in their procurement activities.

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/improvingservices/better/vfm/publications/commbenguide/?lang=en>

Areas in which you could consider sustainable procurement include

- **Food**

Fork2Fork - www.fork2fork.org.uk

Fair trade - www.fairtradewales.org.uk

Organic - www.organicwales.com

- **Office supplies**

www.nigelsecostore.com/acatalog/eco-office.html

<http://thegreenoffice.co.uk/>

www.greenstat.co.uk

www.memorandum.co.uk/

www.remarkable.co.uk

- **Using local services**

3to3 - www.3to3.org.uk

Sustainable Wales has also set up a 'community businesses' called [SUSSED](http://www.sussed.co.uk) which is a retail company focused on 'fair trade, eco-friendly and Welsh products' <http://www.sustainablewales.org.uk/sussed/>

- **Time banking**

www.timebankingwales.org.uk

www.justaddspice.org

- **Outside space & Managing Land**

For many people there are links between their local environment and the steps they are taking to conserve and protect it and seemingly abstract global issues like climate change. Environmental project work can help to mitigate the impact of climate change on threatened habitats and landscapes.

"In an increasingly interdependent world, our society faces huge challenges; climate change is one of the biggest. BTCV helps people to tackle climate change: "We will help people to conserve carbon sinks such as woodlands and peatlands, manage wetlands and watercourses to mitigate flood risk. By enhancing urban green spaces, we will reduce heat islands and dissipate heavy rainwater run-off." - Investing in Sustainable Futures - BTCV Strategic Plan 2009 – 2013.

www2.btcv.org.uk/display/btcv_wales

Plant Trees with Coed Cadw:

www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/en/moretrees-moregood/Pages/home.aspx

www.ccg.gov.uk/landscape--wildlife/managing-land-and-sea.aspx

www.wasteawarenesswales.org.uk/reduce/homecomposting.html

- **Generating energy**

Microgeneration means generating low or zero carbon energy (which produces low or no carbon emissions) or renewable energy on a small scale. There are different types of renewable energy sources available to us: wind, solar, biomass, hydro and marine, all have their part to play both at large scale and at the micro-generation level. More and more communities and organisations use this as a means of generating energy, saving money and helping the climate.

Find out more from the Welsh Government and the Energy Savings Trust

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/environmentcountryside/energy/renewable/microgeneration/?lang=en>

www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/wales/Generate-your-own-energy

Community Energy Wales is a network of and for communities working on energy in Wales. www.cynnalcymru.com/community-energy-wales

Ynni'r Fro – support & funding for community scale renewable energy projects

www.est.org.uk/ynnirfro

When you generate your own energy, you don't just save money by not having to buy that energy - you can also get paid for the energy you produce.

www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/wales/Generate-your-own-energy/Financial-incentives

www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/meeting_energy/Renewable_ener/feedin_tariff/feedin_tariff.aspx

For further general information

www.wcva-ids.org.uk/wcva/2029

www.charitycommission.gov.uk/publications/rs17.aspx

www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/advice-support/climate-change/act-sustainably

CAT's free information service offers advice and information on all aspects of sustainable living which can help you choose what measures are the most useful for you to take to reduce your environmental impact and lower your carbon footprint. There are also a range of information sheets to download on topics such as Energy Efficiency, Renewable energy and Transport and Travel – www.cat.org.uk

Disclaimer

The information provided in this sheet is intended for guidance only. It is not a substitute for professional advice and we cannot accept any responsibility for loss occasioned as a result of any person acting or refraining from acting upon it.

For further information contact

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