
Carbon Reduction Plan

2023/24

How we are addressing Climate Change

We are building new international connections and partnerships between the UK and countries worldwide that harness the power of arts, culture and education to address climate change.

Since 2020 we have connected with more than 7,600 partners globally, reached 441 million people in 200+ countries and territories and engaged with more than 3.4 million young people. This includes participation at COP26, 27 and most recently COP28.

Our work is focussed in the following areas:

- **We build skills and knowledge to tackle climate change**, equipping climate leaders, embedding climate into education systems, boosting green skills, providing relevant assessment, and enriching English learning.
- **We support artistic and cultural responses to climate change** across the world and protect cultural heritage at risk from climate impacts.
- **We support and bring new insights and analysis to the global climate debate** through research and evaluation that inform policy and practice.
- **We deliver all our work in an environmentally responsible way.**

Committing to Net Zero by 2040

We are committed to net-zero emissions by 2040 at the latest.

Carbon Emissions targets to 2025

Our interim and global 2025 targets are set out below. By 2025/26 (financial year) we are targeting a 33% reduction in scope 1, scope 2 and scope 3 emissions against the 2017/18 baseline¹. Total emissions will decrease from 50,338 tCO₂e in 2017/18 to 33,725 tCO₂e in 2025 and then to net zero carbon emissions by 2040 at the latest.

¹ A 2017/18 baseline has been chosen to align with HMG reporting and Greening Government Commitments

(All figures are in tCO₂e)

	Baseline Year 2017/18	Interim target 2025/26	% Net reduction
Scope 1 emissions Direct Greenhouse Gas emissions occur from sources that are owned or controlled by the British Council, e.g. from boilers, generators or vehicles	1,321	885	33%
Scope 2 emissions Indirect Greenhouse Gas emissions are from the generation of purchased electricity and heat consumed by the British Council	15,316	10,260	33%
Scope 3 emissions All other indirect emissions occurring at sources we do not own or control across the entire value chain	33,701	22,580	33%
TOTAL	50,338	33,725	33%

We have been managing our own environmental performance and reporting our carbon footprint for over 10 years but recently we have refocused our efforts to accelerate new, more environmental ways of working.

In 2022/2023 we focussed on the following areas:

Initiatives to reduce our carbon footprint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transformed our UK offices to reduce our footprint by using space more efficiently. Accelerated our digital operations to reduce the need to travel among our customers and partners, including computer-based testing, learning English online and new arts platforms for digital collaborations.
Improved management of our carbon footprint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved data collection methodologies, including estimates for missing data.
Leadership and engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruited a new Global Head of Environment to lead, oversee and further develop our Environment Strategy across programmes and operations. Maintained a network of regional and country environmental co-ordinators to support collection and analysis of our carbon footprint data.

Priorities for 2023/24

As set out in our Corporate Plan we are prioritising the following actions:

- Update our Climate Strategy bringing together our customer facing programmes with our ambitions to reduce our operational carbon footprint.
- Share our experiences on our journey towards net zero and carbon reduction as part of our participation at COP28 in Dubai.
- Improve understanding of our global carbon footprint to develop plans to reduce our carbon footprint in priority areas to 2030, working towards our 2040 net-zero ambition. As part of this, we will be undertaking work to map carbon emissions from our major suppliers (scope 3). We will also be piloting a carbon budgeting approach to manage our travel decisions.
- Develop a detailed plan to deliver our 2025/26 carbon, waste and water reduction targets focusing on those countries with the highest environmental impact.

Additional Data: Baselines and Performance

Baseline emissions

	Baseline Year 2017/18 (tCO₂e)	UK emissions (tCO₂e)	Rest of the World emissions (tCO₂e)
Scope 1 emissions	1,321	304	1,017
Scope 2 emissions	15,315	727	14,588
Scope 3 emissions	33,701	9,906	23,795
TOTAL	50,338	10,938	39,400

2022/23 Latest Emissions Reporting

	2022/23 1 April – 31 March (tCO2e)	UK emissions (tCO2e)	Rest of the World emissions (tCO2e)
Scope 1 emissions	918	104	814
Scope 2 emissions	11,060	220	10,840
Scope 3 emissions	8,065	1,101	6,964
TOTAL	20,043	1,425	18,618

- The 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018 baseline aligns to Greening Government Commitments.
- Carbon emissions are reported for the global estate and calculated using the operational control approach in line with GHG Protocol. Data collected includes electricity and natural gas usage at locations, water usage, waste water, waste generated, as well as travel for business purposes. Data has been estimated for missing electricity, water and waste data. Gas and travel data was not estimated due to the variable nature of these data elements.
- Exclusions to scope: Scope 1 emissions – fugitive emissions of refrigerant gases. Scope 3 emissions - all purchased goods & services (revenue) except materials (paper) & water supply which are reported, purchased goods & services (capital), upstream emissions of fuels and electricity, employee commuting, employee homeworking.
- Estimation methodology: For base year estimates for missing electricity data, the average kwh per meter squared was calculated for the entire estate in the base year and used to determine estimates for missing electricity data. For water the missing data was estimated using m2 per FTE average and waste estimated using kg of waste per FTE average.
- Carbon calculation: Defra/BEIS conversion factors used for the appropriate reporting year, IEA conversion factors for electricity use outside of the UK. Scope 3 includes 'Transmission and Distribution' from electricity consumed and natural gas 'Well to Tank' emissions.
- Baseline recalculation policy is set at significant changes to the organisation over and above 5% variance. This has not yet been required.


Declaration and Sign Off

This Carbon Reduction Plan has been completed in accordance with PPN 06/21 and associated guidance and reporting standard for Carbon Reduction Plans.

Emissions have been reported and recorded in accordance with the published reporting standard for Carbon Reduction Plans and the GHG Reporting Protocol corporate standard² and uses the appropriate Government emission conversion factors for greenhouse gas company reporting³.

Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions have been reported in accordance with Greening Government Commitments, and the required subset of Scope 3 emissions have been reported, where data is available, in accordance with the published reporting standard for Carbon Reduction Plans and the Corporate Value Chain (Scope 3) Standard⁴.

This Carbon Reduction Plan has been reviewed and agreed with our Executive team.

Signed: 

Andy Williams: Chief Operating Officer

Date: 19/01/24

²<https://ghgprotocol.org/corporate-standard>
³<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/government-conversion-factors-for-company-reporting>
⁴<https://ghgprotocol.org/standards/scope-3-standard>