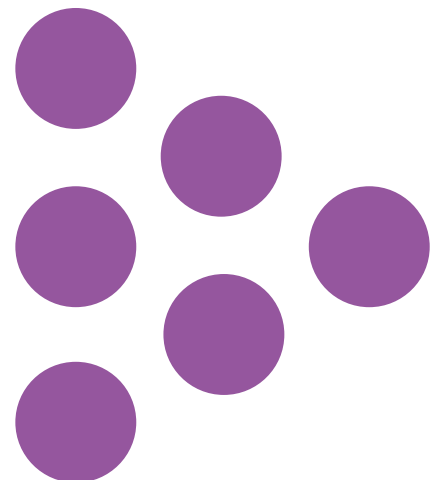

Safety, Health and Environment

Carbon Reduction Plan & Environmental Policy Statement

Public

Version:
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12 months



Contents

1	Introduction	3
2	Policy	3
3	Carbon footprint	4
4	Carbon reduction plan	4
5	Established arrangements	6

1 Introduction

For a number of years, NFER has reported carbon emissions within our statutory accounts. This reporting was limited solely to emissions related to our electricity and gas consumption. Starting in 2022, our carbon footprint measurement includes Scope 1 (gas and refrigerants), Scope 2 (electricity) and partial Scope 3 emissions (business travel, employee commuting, transportation, distribution and waste). We are reporting on more of our activities and so our carbon footprint has increased from the figures that were reported in our accounts.

Our first year of reporting on Scopes 1–3 is for the year April 2021 to March 2022. However, the year 2019-20 has been determined as a more appropriate fixed baseline from which to measure our carbon reductions, so we can compare with pre-pandemic operations.

Our reporting is now compliant with the minimum requirements of the Crown Commercial Services framework. However, so that we are reporting more fully on NFER activities we are planning to include third-party costs relating to the production and distribution of paper-based assessments from 2023-24, and we will seek to back-date this reporting where possible.

Additionally, work is underway to improve the quality of data being collected and the process for calculating our footprint will evolve. The impact of these future changes in the scope and methodology of our reporting will be highlighted, as and when this occurs, and means that the footprint measurement will fluctuate over time.



2 Policy

NFER seeks to protect our local environment and minimise the impact of our activities on the wider environment. As part of this, NFER is committed to achieving Net Zero by 2050 at the latest.

Our approach to environmental issues is included within our SHE (Safety, Health and Environment) plans and monitored by our SHE Committee on a regular basis.

3 Carbon footprint

Baseline Year: April 2019 to March 2020	
EMISSIONS	TOTAL (tCO ₂ e)
Scope 1	230.5
Scope 2	264.2
Scope 3 (partial)	382.9
Total Emissions	877.6

First year of reporting: April 2021 to March 2022	
EMISSIONS	TOTAL (tCO ₂ e)
Scope 1 ¹	142.5 tCO ₂ e
Scope 2	114.0 tCO ₂ e
Scope 3 (partial)	196.8 tCO ₂ e
Total Emissions	453.3 tCO₂e

The 2021-22 figures equate to a Carbon Intensity per employee of 1.86 tCO₂e based upon 243 employees during the measurement period. Full Scope 3 emissions are typically between 60-90% of the overall emissions. Our partial Scope 3 emissions reported account for 43% of overall emissions but this percentage is expected to increase as we add third party supplier emissions.

Benchmarking against other organisations is difficult because both business operations and methodologies vary widely.

4 Carbon reduction plan

4.1 Completed carbon reduction initiatives

¹ For the year 2021/22 our carbon emissions for gas and electricity were reported in the annual accounts as 210 metric tonnes. The Scope 1 measurement now includes refrigerants relating to air conditioning systems and is therefore higher.

COMPLETED REDUCTION INITIATIVES		
Activity	Complete Date	Scope
Digital payslips and new starter and induction processes moved online	April 2020	3
Single use plastic bottles removed from vending machines	August 2021	3
Proactive management of air conditioning	August 2021	2
NFER investments transferred to sustainable portfolios	July 2022	3
Increased composting of garden waste	August 2022	3
NFER Pension scheme moved to Standard Life, which is committed to net zero targets for its investment portfolios. The default fund has a responsible investment profile.	October 2022	3
Measurement of carbon footprint	December 2022	1,2,3
Building energy audit undertaken	January 2023	1,2
Digital contracting and paperwork and remote test administrator training introduced	February 2023	3

4.2 Future carbon reduction plans

REDUCTION PLANS			
Activity No.	Activity	Target Year	Scope
1	Carbon literacy training for 'champions' to provide guidance and support for carbon reduction planning and delivery.	2023	1,2,3
2	Identify opportunities to improve building energy efficiency and reduce consumption.	2023	1,2
3	Explore opportunities for waste reduction and improve recycling.	2023	3
4	Explore the development of a sustainable procurement strategy.	2024	3

5	Investigate the procurement of wholly renewable electricity tariffs for Slough Head Office once existing contracts expire in 2027.	2027	1,2
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5 Established arrangements

5.1 Recycling

NFER has well established recycling procedures for paper products, cardboard, fluorescent tubes, batteries, plastic bottles, and toner cartridges. Other items which are not produced in sufficient quantities to warrant a regular recycling scheme are arranged on an occasional basis. This includes metals and glass.

We also recycle office furniture by using community groups, schools and other end users to whom we may be able to offer unwanted equipment and extended life.

5.2 Energy management

NFER seeks, where possible, to reduce consumption of energy. This is achieved by a combination of the application of technical solutions, principally by exploiting our building management system to control environmental conditions within our buildings, and good consumer practice (i.e. “switch it off” campaigns). We are also investigating the potential cost benefit of generating our own electricity using solar panels on Milestone House.

5.3 Purchasing

NFER seeks to use products that have lower overall environmental impact such as the use of recycled paper or concentrated cleaning products that minimise transport impact. We also seek to source products locally where possible and use larger batch sizes to reduce the number of repeat visits by suppliers.

5.4 Landscape and biodiversity

The NFER Slough offices sit within a 5.5-acre site in a conservation area. In the last couple of decades, there has been some investment to improve the gardens. Alongside this we partnered with Slough Borough Council in their redevelopment of the adjacent public park by providing a visitors’ centre. Both employees and the wider neighbourhood have benefitted from this investment and the sites attract a wide variety of wildlife, including Muntjac deer and a wide range of birds.

Principles for grounds management across the NFER site include minimising water consumption, minimising waste, keeping use of chemicals to a minimum, purchasing sustainable products and taking positive steps to support wildlife and biodiversity.



5.5 Products and Services

NFER uses a carbon balanced supplier for printing all paper-based tests and this is promoted by the inclusion of a World Land Trust logo on all printed materials. NFER is investing significantly in developing e-assessment capabilities to reduce or remove the reliance on paper. NFER also undertakes research with schools on their uses of technology. We offer remote training for contingent workers contributing to contract delivery. Reducing reliance on plastics for holding and packing materials is being explored. All wrapping plastic used is 100% recyclable.

5.6 Travel

NFER seeks to reduce the impact of travel and transport. This includes the use of tele/video conferencing to eliminate some journeys, supporting working from home where appropriate and the use of public transport as our preferred mode to travel to business appointments.

NFER also promotes walking and cycling to work and provides facilities to encourage wider participation on both a regular and a casual basis.

6 Declaration and sign-off

This Carbon Reduction Plan has been completed, with the assistance of Positive Planet, 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 SECR requirements, and the required subset of Scope 3 emissions have been reported 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 approved by NFER Senior Management Team.

Richard Birkett, Commercial Director, 12 May 2023

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>

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