

# Net zero sustainability strategy

Five steps to reduce your organisation's carbon emissions



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# Power up your carbon reduction plans to reduce your business' carbon emissions.

The UK is committed to achieving net zero by 2050 and around 18% of UK carbon emissions come from UK businesses<sup>1</sup>. Improving and embedding sustainable working practices across your business operations will play an important role in achieving your sustainability targets.

Wherever you might be in your sustainability journey, clearly defined targets will help your business to reduce its environmental impact to reduce Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions<sup>2</sup>.

We can support you with:

- conducting a carbon evaluation of your operations
- developing a comprehensive sustainability strategy
- communicating your sustainability plans to employees
- communicating your sustainability credentials to customers

## >>Find out more

### Measure



### Plan



### Act



1. [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/972583/2020\\_Provisional\\_emissions\\_statistics\\_report.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/972583/2020_Provisional_emissions_statistics_report.pdf)

2. <https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/how-to-measure-your-organisations-carbon-footprint/>

## What is net zero?

We've all heard about a 'net zero' target for cutting the carbon emissions that cause climate change. But what does 'net zero' actually mean? And what can we do as organisations to achieve it? 'Net zero' means achieving a balance between the carbon emitted into the atmosphere, and the carbon removed from it.

If you think of the atmosphere like a bath, you can balance the level of water by either turning down the taps (carbon emissions) or draining out the same amount of water down the plughole (carbon removal).

To reach 'net zero', emissions from homes, transport, farming and industry will need to be cut. Using the bath analogy, the taps will have to be turned off. But in some sectors, like aviation, it will be too complex or expensive to cut emissions altogether.

These 'residual' emissions will need to 'go down the plug' and get removed from the atmosphere: either by changing how we use our land so it can absorb more carbon dioxide, or by being extracted directly through a range of technologies known as carbon capture, usage and storage.

Reaching net zero by 2050 is the only way to avoid the disastrous effects of climate change. That's why the phrase "net zero" has become increasingly important.



## Step one: measure

Your first step will need to be the measurement of all your emissions. It's essential to do this so you can create benchmarks for new science-based targets to reduce your carbon emissions.

Once you've catalogued your scope 1-3 emissions across all of your organisation's inventory, you'll need to decide on a timeframe. It goes without saying that the sooner you reduce your carbon emissions and move to renewable energy, the more you'll save in the long run.

Many companies have committed their net zero ambitions to be complete within the next decade.

How much could you realistically reduce your emissions before 2030?

**Tip: Add insights by working with our energy experts to research and identify the best sustainability practice in your sector via materiality workshops.**



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### Emissions

Direct emissions: owned controlled

#### Essential

Source: combustion (e.g. boilers, cars)

Indirect emissions: purchased energy

#### Essential

Source: purchased electricity and heat

Indirect emissions: products and services

#### Optional

Source: office (e.g. IT, paper, travel, water, waste)



All sites & premises



Fleet vehicles



Tangible assets



Purchased goods and services



Courier services



Business travel



Employee commuting



Work from home



Software services



Investments



## Step two: plan

Now that you've done your measurements, you need to create a sustainability strategy to implement your carbon reductions.

- Update company policies and standard operating procedures (SOPs) that align with your reduction projects.
- Develop a set of criteria that has specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely (SMART) targets and objectives.
- Set up planning dashboards and implement a monitoring framework to review your progress.
- Plan exactly what your carbon reduction practices are going to be across your Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions.
- Plan your communications with employees and customers, highlighting the largest carbon contributors and sharing any success.

Once you've integrated your planning with your business strategy, you can move to action.

**Carbon accounting**

**SMART goals**



**Tip: We can help you plan your strategy with our effective carbon accounting tool and expert consultancy.**



## Step three: act

Bringing all of your research, staff, goals and ambitions from the screen into reality is no mean feat, but it's an important one if your organisation is to be part of a greener future. It's now time to implement actions and begin reducing your organisation's carbon emissions and increasing your energy efficiency.

- Implement actions and develop an action plan, covering company policies, business strategy, SOPs and practices, carbon reduction projects, offsetting and insetting.
- Meet increasing requirements from disclosure schemes, supply chain and customer focus on sustainable practices.
- Provide compelling and verified data to communicate your sustainability credentials.

Continuous measurement of your sustainability strategy via a dashboard will allow you to consistently monitor and evaluate your carbon reduction against the targets you set. By using this evaluation framework, you will be able to highlight and share your success with staff, stakeholders and customers.

## Tools for acting on climate change



**Risks**  
Thresholds  
and triggers



**Planning tools**  
Monitoring  
and evaluation  
framework



**Account manager**  
Support calls



**Communication**  
Internal and  
external buy-in

**Tip: Use the input and recommendations from Energy Saving Trust's specialists to reduce carbon emissions, energy usage and improve your communications.**



## Step four: monitoring and evaluation

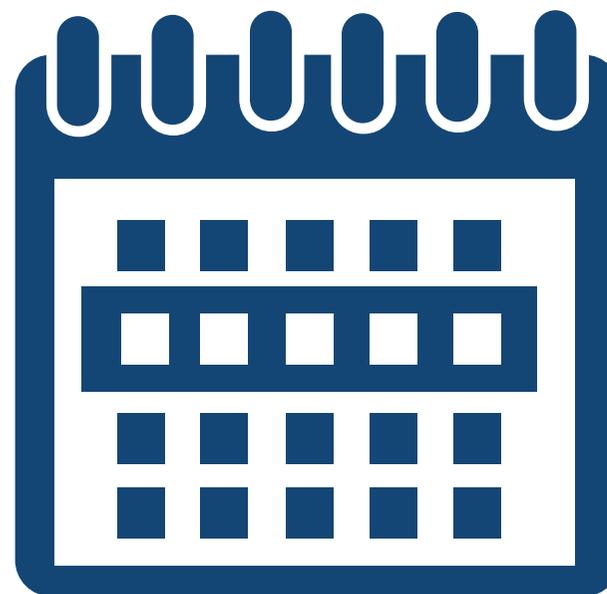
It's important to monitor and evaluate all your sustainability and carbon reduction activities, not only to adjust benchmarks, but to understand how you're achieving your goals and objectives.

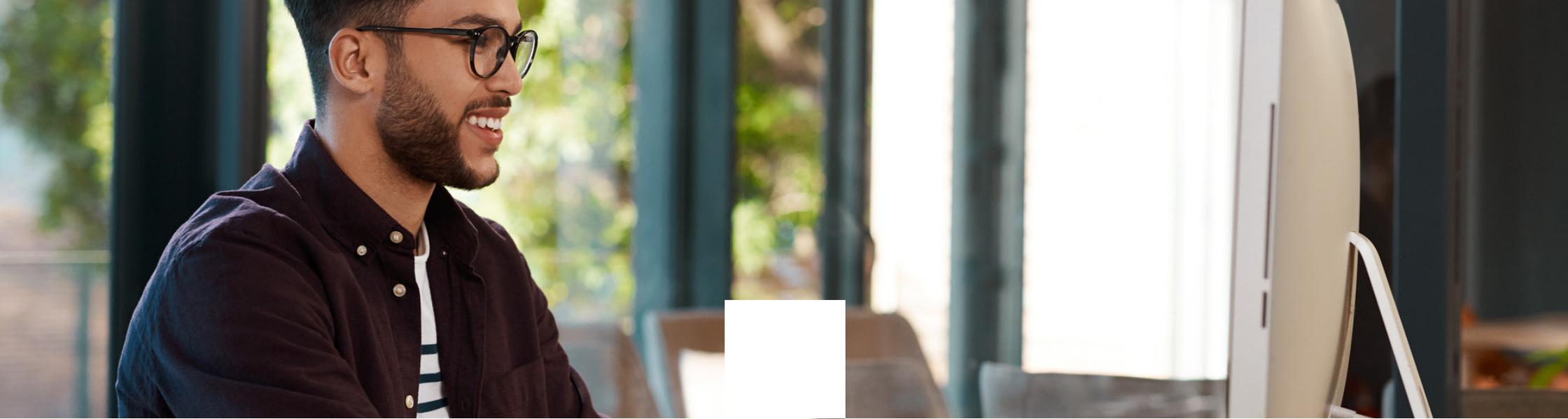
Whether reporting against targets or communicating benefits to customers, it's important to quantify the impact and benefits of your carbon reduction activities and calculate energy, carbon dioxide and financial savings.

Make sure to implement a monitoring framework and monitor throughout the year, highlighting the largest carbon contributors.

Evaluate your first year of carbon savings against targets with an evaluation framework to identify areas for improvement and creation of longer term sustainability goals, eventually reaching net zero.

**Tip: At Energy Saving Trust, we can evaluate your consumer and business initiatives, covering a range of activities such as energy efficiency, renewable technologies and transport.**





## Step five: engagement

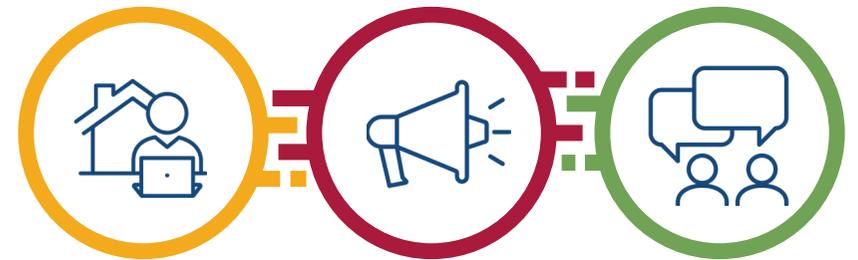
Most UK consumers look for sustainable and credible businesses to engage with, so it's important to encourage your employees to lead sustainable lifestyles at work and at home. This can help your organisation enhance its brand image to both customers and employees.

Engaging staff with internal processes to save energy and reduce carbon emissions will be a key step towards hitting your sustainability targets. You can also support employees opting for flexible and remote working, who may have concerns about increased energy bills.

With a mutual understanding of the benefits, you'll be able to influence and motivate sustainable behaviour change at all levels. This can also help you measure staff initiatives more closely for reporting purposes.

- Get together some energy and carbon savings facts and figures, and start building your internal sustainability campaign to employees. This will help fuel your customer engagement campaign too. Our **energy experts are available** to help you develop content and build campaigns.
- Develop and deliver staff engagement workshops and materials regarding organisational sustainability. Our business consultants are available to help develop bespoke engagement campaigns.

**Communications, workshops and content related to sustainability are important for engaging with staff and customers.**



**Tip: Engaging employees with **sustainable behaviour change** is a great way to get all of your team on the same page.**

**energy  
saving  
trust**

# Start your corporate sustainability journey today

Having a sustainable business strategy is more important than ever.

Get in touch with Energy Saving Trust to develop a bespoke sustainability strategy for your organisation. Our expertise includes:

- Knowledge across energy in buildings, operations, renewables and transport.
- Experience creating comprehensive and integrated plans from concept to delivery.
- Service delivery by our team of emission calculation and reduction specialists with over 10 years of experience.
- Access to our practical tools and services to support the implementation of your plan.

For more information about our sustainability services, contact us and a member of our team will be in touch.

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