



FOREST

ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP

Delivering a thriving economy

CIC Number: 12262533

Forest Business Climate Charter

Context

In 2018 the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released the Special Report on the impacts of Global warming of 1.5°C. The report showed that risks rose significantly between 1.5°C and 2°C in terms of damage to the ecosystems vital to humans and wildlife, and extreme weather events resulting in impacts such as flooding, droughts and wildfires. Such impacts are projected to increase risks to human health, livelihoods, food security, water supply and economic growth with the risk further increasing with global warming of 2°C and above. To continue as we are puts us all at even greater peril.

33.5% of the Forest of Dean district's CO₂ emissions from energy come from industry and commercial sources. We know there's appetite from people within businesses and organisations to transition to carbon neutrality, but many find it difficult to know where to begin. This Charter aims to help to start address this barrier.

Reducing emissions often comes with an upfront cost, but the cost and impact of not reducing emissions will be much higher. There are also plenty of opportunities for businesses of reducing emissions, such as cost savings from reducing energy use and waste, future proofing and brand development.

What is the Charter?

This Charter provides Forest based businesses and other organisations with the opportunity to declare and respond to the Climate Emergency. Businesses that commit to the Charter agree to take action immediately towards reducing their emissions and to become carbon neutral by 2030. The actions in the Charter are intended to be a minimum level of commitment – your business is encouraged to take even bolder and faster action where it can.

The Charter allows businesses to choose from and commit to three levels of action – Bronze: Just starting out; Silver: Getting greener; and Gold: Going the extra mile. It

will also be accompanied by an online advice library (currently in development), containing practical information on how businesses can go about reducing their carbon footprint. Your business will be designated a Climate Superstar once it has achieved carbon neutrality.

Why 2030?

We only have a short window to drastically reduce emissions if we want to limit global heating to 1.5 degrees. By setting an ambitious target of 2030, businesses in the Forest of Dean can lead the way in helping UK business play its role in halting climate change.

What are the benefits of signing up?

When your business signs up to the Charter, it will be added to the Business Climate Leaders database and listed on a dedicated web page which residents and other businesses can visit to find local enterprises that are taking action to fight climate change.

You will also get access to the Charter's logo and branding to use on your website and a certificate and window sticker for your premises. Additionally, you will also be encouraged to attend regularly organised events to learn from the experiences of other Forest based businesses, as well as share learning from your own journey to carbon neutral.

Who is it for?

The Charter is open to Forest of Dean based businesses and any other types of enterprise or organisation, of any size, operating in any sector, for-profit or not-for-profit, whether you are at the start of your journey to carbon neutral or already several steps down the line. The only qualifying criteria is that you are ready to make a public commitment to join us on the most important journey of our lifetime.

No matter how small your business or what industry you're in, your commitment could make a real difference – to the planet, to your customers and to your running costs! Even the smallest businesses produce carbon emissions – it could be through your building, your vehicles or your supply chain.

The Commitment

- Publicly declare a Climate Emergency and commit to becoming carbon neutral by 2030
- Directors or managers undergo climate literacy training or demonstrate existing knowledge
- Measure your business's carbon footprint
- Set short and medium term targets for reducing your emissions
- Choose and commit to one of the three levels of action: Bronze, Silver or Gold (page 3).
- Report your progress on a yearly basis
- Encourage other businesses to do the same! Tell three other businesses about what you're doing.

What is carbon neutral?

When a business's net greenhouse gas emissions (measured in terms of their carbon dioxide equivalence) are equal to zero. Emissions are reduced as much as possible and then those that cannot be eliminated are offset.

What is carbon offsetting?

A way to compensate for your emissions by funding an equivalent carbon dioxide saving elsewhere for example through tree planting schemes or investing in renewable energy projects. Offsetting is reserved for mitigating the most stubborn of emissions, with the priority being eliminating emissions wherever possible.

We also encourage businesses to join the UK Government's Together for Our Planet campaign through the [UK Business Climate Hub](#),

which has various useful [tools for taking action](#). Those who make a net zero commitment via the Hub will also be recognised by the United Nations Race to Zero campaign.

Three levels of action

Bronze: Just starting out

- **Use a simple free carbon footprint tool to calculate your business's emissions from its fuel and electricity consumption (scope 1 and 2 emissions).** If you're an SME, we recommend using the [Carbon Trusts SME Carbon Footprint Calculator](#). Alternatively, the Greenhouse Gas Protocol have produced a free, excel-based [GHG Emissions Calculation Tool](#) for businesses.
- **Publish your emissions** on your business's website each year in order to track your progress.
- **Commit to taking 2 or more** of the **actions** listed on page 4 over the next 12 months.

Silver: Getting greener

- **Use a simple free carbon footprint tool to calculate your business's emissions from its fuel and electricity consumption (scope 1 and 2 emissions), plus its other indirect emissions (scope 3).** If you're an SME, we recommend using the [Carbon Trusts SME Carbon Footprint Calculator](#) to calculate your scope 1 and 2 emissions. Alternatively, the Greenhouse Gas Protocol have produced a free, excel-based [GHG Emissions Calculation Tool](#) for businesses. To get an approximate calculation of your business's scope 3 emissions, we recommend using the Greenhouse Gas Protocol's [Scope 3 Evaluator](#).
- **Publish an annual greenhouse gas emissions progress report** on your business's website tracking your progress to carbon neutral. We have put together a short template [HERE](#). DEFRA have also produced a [small business user guide](#) on how to measure and report your greenhouse gas emissions as well as further guidance [here](#).
- **Commit to taking 4 or more** of the **actions** listed on page 4 over the next 12 months.

Gold: Going the extra mile

- **Undertake a full environmental audit, including a detailed greenhouse gas assessment.** Specialised consultancies can help you do this for a fee and it will usually include a thorough review of your operational processes in order to gain a good understanding of your business's emissions and other environmental impacts. Speak to the [Growth Hub](#) for help finding a consultancy.
- **Publish an annual greenhouse gas emissions progress report and action plan** on your business's website tracking your progress to carbon neutral. We have put together a short template [HERE](#), however a consultancy may be able to help you with environmental reporting as well. DEFRA have also produced a [small business user guide](#) on how to measure and report your greenhouse gas emissions as well as further guidance [here](#).

- **Commit to taking ambitious, measurable and time limited actions, as identified in your action plan.**

Actions for reducing carbon emissions

- Appoint and support a Climate Champion(s) from within our organisation
- Reduce our electricity consumption, e.g. through energy efficient appliances and LED lighting
- Reduce our gas consumption e.g. through insulating our premises and turning down the thermostat
- Switch to a green energy supplier
- Invest in on-site renewable energy generation e.g. solar panels or heat pumps
- Reduce how far our supplies travel e.g. prioritise Forest based suppliers
- Source products and services from low carbon suppliers
- Cut down on our waste
- Create a travel plan and encourage more sustainable travel
- Replace fleet vehicles with electric or hybrid models

We encourage you to not be limited just to the above actions. If you identify other actions that can help you reduce your carbon footprint, please tell us about them and include them on your [sign up form](#).

Developed in collaboration with Forest of Dean District Council.

