



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 other opportunities of taking action to reduce their emissions for businesses, such as cost savings from reducing energy use and waste, future proofing and brand development.

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.

What is the Charter?

This Charter provides Forest of Dean district based businesses and other organisations with the opportunity to declare and respond to the Climate Emergency. Businesses that commit to the Charter agree to start taking action 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.

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 addressing climate change.

The Charter 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.

What are the benefits of signing up?

When your business signs up to the Charter it will be 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 any businesses or other organisation based in the Forest of Dean district. Enterprises can be 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
- Use a simple free carbon footprint tool to calculate your business's emissions from its fuel and electricity consumption (scope 1 and 2 emissions).
- Publish your emissions on your business's website (if applicable) each year in order to track your progress.
- Commit to taking 2 or more actions to reduce your emissions over the next 12 months.
- Encourage other businesses to do the same! Tell three other businesses about what you're doing.

Calculating your carbon footprint

If you're an SME, we recommend using the [Carbon Trusts SME Carbon Footprint Calculator](#) to calculate your emissions from fuel and electricity consumption (Scope 1 & 2 emissions). Alternatively, the Greenhouse Gas Protocol have produced a free, excel-based [GHG Emissions Calculation Tool](#) for businesses.

If you would also like to get an understanding and take action to reduce your emissions from other sources, such as those from waste, business travel or goods and services you buy (Scope 3 emissions), we recommend using the Greenhouse Gas Protocol's [Scope 3 Evaluator](#).

Suggested actions for reducing carbon emissions

- Directors managers or responsible staff to undergo climate literacy training
- 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.

