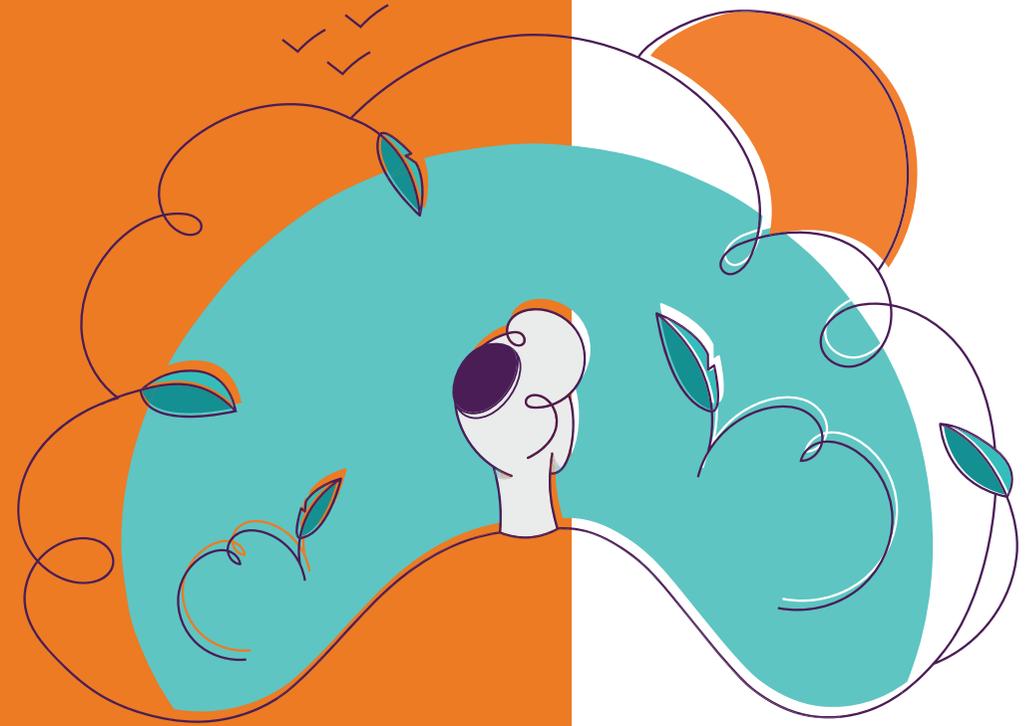




# BEALE & CO: A CARBON NEUTRAL PLEDGE

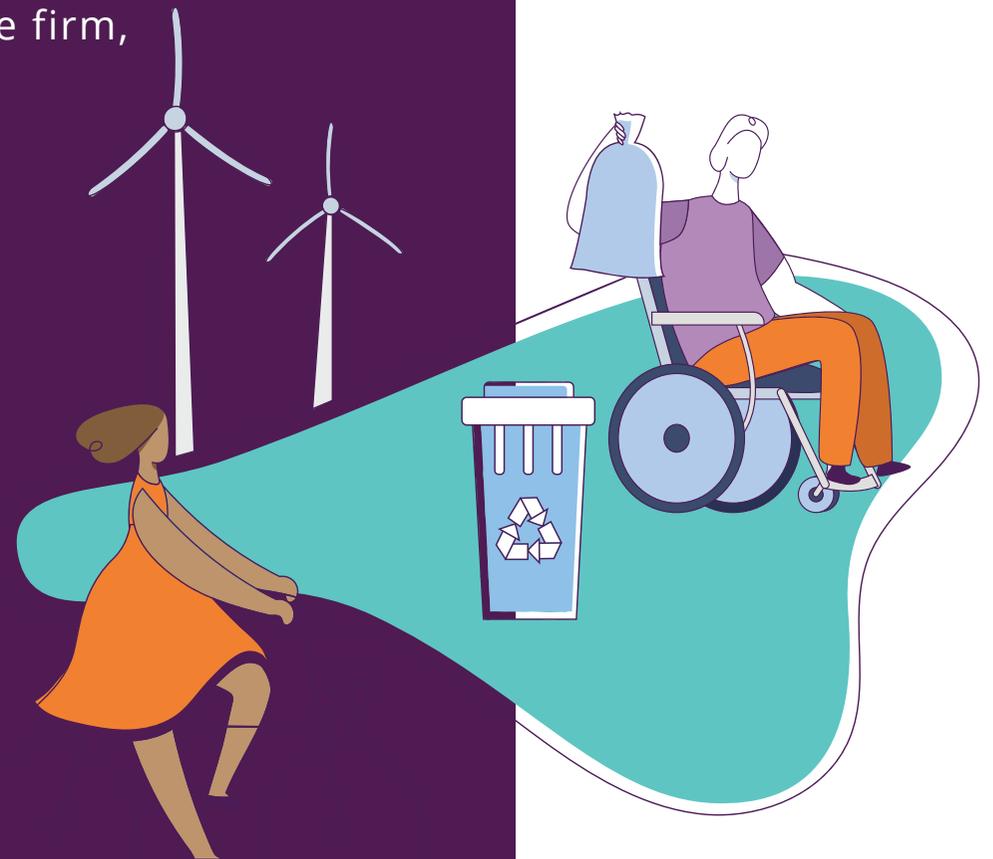


BEALE&CO

# BEALE & CO: A CARBON NEUTRAL PLEDGE

*The climate for SMEs: 4 steps to action toolkit helps SMEs to understand their carbon footprint and take action to reduce it with the goal of achieving net zero emissions. Our case studies highlight SMEs at different stages on their journey to net zero.*

Beale & Co is an SME international law firm with offices in London, Bristol, Dublin and Dubai that recently pledged to become a carbon neutral business. Nathan Modell, a Partner at the firm, shared how they're approaching this challenge.



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Updated in October 2021*

# MAKING THE COMMITMENT

We've been a member of Heart of the City since 2018 and over the past three years made great strides in developing our responsible business practices. We've introduced successful community programmes and employee focused initiatives across our UK and international offices. Looking at our environmental processes was the obvious next step. With COP26 around the corner and an increasing number of clients asking about our environmental impact we knew it was time to demonstrate what we were doing as a business to monitor and reduce our carbon footprints. So, on Earth Day 2021 we were delighted to announce publicly that we were being certified as a carbon neutral business.

Our first task in this process was to work out what our current carbon emissions were, and we knew we needed support to do that. Along with one of our partners in our Dublin office, our Facilities Manager worked with a sustainability consultant, taking us through the steps we needed to produce an accurate, clear and accredited calculation of our carbon emissions. From here we could identify where our biggest emissions were coming from and set out short-term and long-term plans to reduce and offset them.



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# REDUCING & OFFSETTING

Having two offices outside the UK, partners and other staff would sometimes need to travel for internal and external meetings. This activity contributed largely to the Scope 3 carbon emissions we produce in a normal year. However, like everyone else, the pandemic has forced us to move these meetings online. This has saved time, money and most importantly, it's reduced our emissions significantly so it's something we'll actively be looking to maintain where possible in the future.

We also wanted to take an inclusive approach to choosing how we offset the emissions we do produce, so we decided to let our staff choose from a range of projects to support and to offset our emissions against. All the projects chosen are aligned to and support the UN Sustainable Development Goals, which is fantastic. We were even able to choose some renewable energy and construction related projects which tie into the work we do.



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# INCLUDING OUR EMPLOYEES

In addition to formal certified carbon offsetting we're also looking to partner with environmental projects close to our offices where our staff could use their paid volunteering day on activities such as tree planting and wild habitat restoration, which will have a further positive impact.

We felt it was important to include our employees in the decision we made, and we hope through this involvement and choosing environmental partners that are local to our offices, we'll get greater engagement in our carbon neutral pledge.



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# ENGAGING OUR SUPPLY CHAIN

The next task on our list is to engage with our supply chain. As part of this we circulate an annual questionnaire to suppliers and see this as a great opportunity to ask them about their environmental activities and to ensure we engage with suppliers which align with our responsible business goals. From this we can make more informed decisions on the companies we work with and, in time, it'll help us measure and reduce our Scope 3 emissions.



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# MOVING FORWARD

We're still at the start of our environmental journey, but it's been such a rewarding experience for the whole firm. Our carbon neutrality achievements will now be included in tender submissions and pitches for work and our actions will certainly help us to secure new business. The carbon neutral pledge has become part of Beale & Co's culture.

My key takeaways from this process would be to recognise where you need support. There are loads of great tools out there that can help SMEs get to grips with carbon emissions. Equally, a business needs senior-level engagement and backing to do it properly as well as employee engagement to ensure that everyone in the business is aware of what you're trying to do and why. Companies shouldn't be afraid to invest the time and money they need to get it right, as the long-term benefits to the business and the environment are immense.



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*Climate for SMEs: 4 Steps to Action is funded by the City of London Corporation in support of its Climate Action Strategy targets for a net zero and resilient Square Mile*