



WORKING FROM HOME SUSTAINABLY



Working from home sustainably

The Covid-19 pandemic has hugely impacted the way we work in. With dispersed and remote workforces, businesses have changed their approach to challenges and tasks, including the way they talk about and focus on sustainability. And it's likely we'll be working in this way for the foreseeable future. So, we're having a look at how you can encourage your teams to work more sustainably and what individuals can do to reduce their carbon emissions when working from home.

Sustainable home working is great for employee engagement and supports your good business initiatives. There's a strong business case for embedding sustainable working practices: attracting and keeping people who want to work for a responsible business, cost savings from energy bills, gaining a competitive edge from your peers and being able to demonstrate your commitment to green initiatives.





Engaging your employees

So how can you support your employees to work sustainably, even when they're working at home? Follow our six tips:

1. Develop a policy for energy efficiency

With employees working from home and winter energy bills increasing, businesses will see an indirect impact on their carbon footprint. To reduce this, you could help your employees to reduce their energy bills through switching to a renewable energy provider.

2. Communicate your longer-term goals

Tell people your plans to reduce your carbon footprint and achieve net zero - and showcase to them how they're contributing to that. When reviewing these goals, consider how greater levels of working from home will impact your carbon calculations.

3. Look at your equipment

Is what you initially provided fit for purpose in the longer term? Can energy efficient equipment help your teams to work more effectively? Ask people to update their settings to energy saving modes for laptops, computers and printers. Finally, encourage

your teams to work ergonomically by providing desks and chairs – this will support people’s health when they’re working from home.

4. Maintain a culture of sustainability

Engage with your people through virtual workshops and events by sharing ideas and initiatives to get people thinking about sustainable working. You could:

- Launch a team steps competition to encourage people to use transport less often
- Run a meat-free MasterChef-style lunch online
- Host a monthly ‘ugly jumper’ day to encourage people to turn down the heating - and you can keep it social by sharing photos!

5. Tell powerful stories about what your business is doing

This’ll give your employees a nice boost! To get people engaged, you could run a [Do Nation Campaign](#). If you focus it on homes you’ll indirectly reduce your company’s carbon footprint.



Saving and reducing

Make sure your teams know how they could be saving and reducing! Let people know how they could decrease personal carbon emissions and save money by:

- Claiming a tax relief of up to £26 per month if they work from home
- Eating less meat
- Reducing waste and reusing and recycling products
- Washing clothes in cold water and air drying them
- Turning off appliances fully instead of leaving them on standby
- Using LED lightbulbs
- Cycling or walking to the shops
- Drafr proofing their homes to save £4 a year
- Adding loft insulation to save £135 a year
- Installing a new boiler to save £220 a year
- Turning down the heating thermostat by one degree to save up to £90 a year

Further resources

Heart of the City resources

For when you're in your workplace, you'll find some of our other resources useful: [environmental baseline and action survey](#), [how to improve air quality](#), [sustainable office tips](#) and [developing a green transport policy](#).

Carbon footprint calculator

You can complete [WWF's carbon footprint calculator](#) to measure your personal carbon footprint.

Treeapp

[Plant one tree for free every day with this app](#). Make your own global impact in less than 60 seconds and offset your personal carbon emissions.

*Updated in May 2023 by Heart of the City
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