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# Sustainability in Practice: A Pathway for Venues



# Foreword

### VisitBritain Business Events is delighted to partner with isla on the production of this guide: **Sustainability in Practice:** A Pathway for Venues

The UK Government has legislated to achieve a 50% emission reduction by 2030 and Net Zero by 2050 in line with the Paris Climate Agreement.

The events industry has a critical role to play to drive behavioural, operational and policy adoption, led by our fantastic event venues across the UK.





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Each journey to Net Zero is different but wholly dependent upon ambition, collaboration and interdependence to implement the changes needed across direct to promote and distribute this framework and indirect supply chains. Many venues have to their memberships. Our thanks to the already demonstrated excellent progress towards energy conservation, the transition to renewables, reducing or eliminating waste beam. sent to landfill and local sourcing operations. We need to continue to deepen and accelerate wider adoption during this decade.

We are delighted isla continues to provide leadership and excellent resources to the UK events industry to support us on our journey to Net Zero. This Pathway will support event venues' focus on key areas to address and then implement, with indicative markers across this critical journey.

Alongside growing cross-industry collaboration, we are hugely appreciative of the support of our industry associations Association of Event Venues (AEV), the Meetings Industry Association (mia) and

Together we can help shape the future of events.



Paul Black Head of Business Events, VisitBritain





# About this guide

### Net Zero might seem overwhelming, but it's a catalyst for transformation. Business as usual is no longer working, so it's time to fix it!

This guide is exactly that. A guide.

It's something to refer to over and over again to help you familiarise yourself with your destination (Net Zero) and plan your journey (your pathway), with the unmissable "see and do's" (your progress markers) along the way.

It's not a detailed journey planner as there are lots of different ways to get from A to Z. You'll need to find the solutions that work for you, but with this guide in hand you'll know if you're heading in the right direction and stopping off at the key sights along the way.

Across this guide we provide indicative markers of progress. These are plotted out in an approximate 'reasonable' timeframe which is balanced between

the capability for change within complex infrastructures (it's slow!) and our global need for rapid adaptation.

This guide also serves as a good basis for working towards sustainability accreditations or certifications. Many of the objectives outlined will be expectations in schemes that award progressive businesses and venues.

Each venue has different needs and resources available to them, so each journey will progress differently. We actively encourage venues to push themselves in their ambitions and always strive for progress and the 'next' level of success.

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### This guide is divided into five sections:

pany Operations	$\rightarrow$
mitments & Communications	$\rightarrow$
t Deliveries	$\rightarrow$
surement & Reporting	$\rightarrow$
e Chain Engagement	$\rightarrow$



Examples of what you might have achieved or undertaken within your venue are included at the beginning of each section under this heading, to give an idea of what genuine progress looks like.

### **Baseline** / **Basic** / **Better** / **Brilliant...**

Progress is indicated across these four areas, showing what you might undertake at the start of the journey (baseline) through to being a leader in the industry (brilliant).

### **Case Studies**

Case studies of venues who are progressing in their journey towards Net Zero and a transformed UK events industry can be found at the rear of the guide.

### Supplementary information

A glossary is provided to support you with any terms that may be unfamiliar.



# What You're Aiming For

### **Commitments & Communications**

Regularly renewed commitments are turned into action and recognised through awards, certifications and/or accreditations with consistent climate communications that support the Net Zero transition.

### **Company Operations**

Low emission facilities with a Senior Leadership team in place that is accountable for progressing forward Net Zero goals.



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### **Event Deliveries**

Working actively with clients, contractors and the supply chain to deliver events with low environmental impact across energy use, production, travel and F&B.

### **Measurement & Reporting**

A public annual report disclosing progress towards Net Zero, transparently reporting on carbon and waste, and demonstrating absolute carbon reductions over time..

### Value Chain Engagement

Using your influence to actively engage and collaborate with industry to accelerate behavioural, infrastructure and overall sector transformation.





# **Company Operations**

The journey to Net Zero starts at home – getting your house in order and taking an overarching view of your company operations.

Starting small and keeping your ambitions big will help to ensure a manageable transition for your venue towards a climate-resilient future.

### What you're aiming for:

Low emission facilities with a Senior Leadership team in place that is accountable for progressing forward Net Zero goals.



### What might genuine progress look like?





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You are fully resourced across the business with budget, people and time allocated to delivering your Net Zero commitment and working in-line with your progressive sustainability policy.

### Inspiration



Infrastructure and/or technical improvements have been implemented that support lowemission and circular economy practices with regular review, focusing on further opportunities to innovate.



Active engagement and alignment with local authority sustainability and climate action plans is embedded in strategy, positioning the venue as an enabler of transformation within the local area.



Senior Leadership have environmental KPIs with fixed timelines and outcomes, and are held accountable for delivering these.





### **Company Operations**

	START NOW	WITHIN 6 MONTHS
Leadership	<b>BASELINE</b> Senior Leadership ackn of your <u>Net Zero Pledge</u> for delivering a Net Zero	e, accountability
Team	Le	BASELINE Key representatives across all departments and seniority, including eadership, have received c sustainability training.
Finance		This • a • u b • s
	а	BASELINE Budget for the next financial year or sooner llows for a FT dedicated cainability Lead role and training for all staff.
Facilities	waste management and the elimination of single-use catering serveware are basic sustainability measures.	BASELINE ainability measures have been implemented.
isla.		recyclin segregated rec

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WITHIN

**3 YEARS** 

### WITHIN 1 YEAR

hability Lead is ind supported o deliver or operations.

f have received nability training nt to their reams.

### BETTER

Your Sustainability Lead is part of the Senior Leadership Team and is accountable for setting sustainability strategy, company KPIs and regularly reporting on progress.

### BRILLIANT

WITHIN

2 YEARS

Carbon and waste emission reduction KPIs are in place for Senior Leadership and bonuses and/or salaries are tied into achieving these targets.

BETTER

Sustainability responsibilities are included in all job descriptions for new hires, and existing job descriptions have been revised to include this.

### BRILLIANT

All performance reviews consider contribution towards company sustainability objectives; and for staff members with targets or key responsibilities, performance is assessed against these.

### night include:

 $\mathbf{O}$ 

- location for on-site renewable lergy generation ogrades or improvements to uilding infrastructure
- aff training and development

### BASIC

There is dedicated annual budget for Net Zero initiatives and investments.

### BETTER

Green incentives form a part of your staff benefits package. This could include initiatives like the Cycle2Work scheme.

K

### BRILLIANT

Investment into local sustainability infrastructure and initiatives is part of annual budgeting considerations and strategy.

### BASIC

working with your waste ent partners to improve ling solutions, including ecycling and food waste.

### BETTER

Experts are instructed to advise on which transformative infrastructure improvements are needed to enable Net Zero ambitions and budget for this investment is ring-fenced.

Examples include facilitating a full transition away from gas via on-site energy generation

### BRILLIANT

Improvements to building infrastructure and equipment which drive energy and water efficiency, and waste reduction, are part of routine maintenance.





# **Commitments &** Communications

We can't change what we don't acknowledge, so it's crucial that venues make a firm commitment to implementing sustainable measures across all areas of their business.

### Inspiration



### What you're aiming for:

Regularly renewed commitments are turned into action and recognised through awards, certifications and/or accreditations with consistent climate communications that support the Net Zero transition.



### **COMMITMENTS & COMMUNICATIONS**

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### What might genuine progress look like?

All external marketing and communications show you are backing up intent with concrete, measurable, action. This is also demonstrated in internal comms, culture, learning and development.



You are able to demonstrate overall carbon reductions in line with your commitment to Net Zero and a 50% reduction by 2030.



You are recognised for your progress through awards, certifications or accreditations that confirm your transformational business practices.



You are investing a fixed percentage of your profits into climate-positive projects (both locally and internationally) as well as investing in peer-to-peer education within the venue industry. These investments are embedded in strategy.







### **Commitments & Communications**

COMPANY OPERATIONS

START NOW

### Pledges

Internal Comms

Sales

### BASELINE

You have a publicly announced Net Zero Pledge, committing to reduce venue emissions by 50% by 2030 and 90-95% by 2050, at the latest.

Refer to Event Deliveries and Measurement & Reporting' for ideas on what kind of objectives you can set - these are all specific, measurable! and give you a timeframe!

WITHIN

**6 MONTHS** 

A public-fac aligned wi and witl publis Leadership

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### BASELINE

A Sustainability Lead is hired, or named from within the business, and endorsed by Senior Leadership.

Your Sustainability is resourced to dev company-wide sustain policy reflective of you Zero Pledge and th endorsed and promo Senior Leadership to a

### BASELINE

Sales teams are encouraged to prioritise clients with Net Zero commitments.

Workshop the company vision for sustainability with all departments and then build a 'green squad' with representatives from each department, including senior leadership, who meet regularly to review policy progress, generate ideas and take learnings and suggestions back into their teams.

### BASELINE

All client and supplier communications, including contracts, include detail on your Net Zero Pledge and sustainability policy.

Marketing









	/ITHIN <b>YEAR</b>	WITHIN <b>2 YEARS</b>		WITHIN 3 YEARS
<b>BASIC</b> public-facing sustainability policy aligned with your Net Zero Pledge and with SMART goals has been published, endorsed by Senior eadership and promoted across al departments	, sustaina developed in with	<b>BETTER</b> ur Net Zero Pledge and ability policy have been nto a Net Zero Strategy science-based targets.	Net Zero, Se progress agains annual basis, adapt and operations a	<b>BRILLIANT</b> tum towards achieving enior Leadership review it your Strategy on a bi- ing business strategies accordingly to maintain ent with commitment.
BASIC stainability Lead ced to develop a de sustainability ctive of your Net dge and they are nd promoted by ership to all staff.	<b>BETTER</b> Key stakeholders within and wider business are t delivering against SMAF your sustainability policy	tasked with RT goals within		<b>BRILLIANT</b> Your Net Zero Strategy has b integrated into departmenta business plans and activity is reported on during AGMs, Board and other relevant Set Leadership meetings.
Consider str SPIN selling the glossary information BASIC Sales teams are fully train suite of sales strategies th to identify clients who are sustainability first.	- refer to for further ed in a nat help	BETTER Outbound sales activity focuses on bids for clients who are actively working towards Net Zero and you communicate this externally as a business development opportunity.	fro demo towa teams a	<b>BRILLIANT</b> onger bid for business om clients that cannot onstrate their progress rds Net Zero and sales are empowered to de-
BASIC You leverage your sustainability successes to win/retain clients, regularly featuring business/ client sustainability case studies in marketing collateral and campaigns.	You are a and su and	BETTER actively influencing apporting suppliers clients to help you your and their Net Zero goals.	not align You have achie sustainability aw certifications that	ise business that does n with your company's Net Zero ambitions. BRILLIANT eved sector-recognised vards, accreditations or demonstrate progress ro/venue sustainability.



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# **Event Deliveries**

As the impact you will have on the planet will largely centre on the events that go on within your venue, event deliveries play a focal role in your strategy and influence your sustainability policy.



### What you're aiming for:

Working actively with clients, contractors and the supply chain to deliver events with low environmental impact across energy use, production, travel and F&B.





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### What might genuine progress look like?

Events with a low environmental footprint that conserve resources, produce little waste and low emissions are the norm within your venue. Event sustainability plans are embedded as part of event design and planning, are actually delivered during build, live and de-rig and impact is reflected in post-event reporting.

### Inspiration

Leveraging existing resources and the brilliant brains within the organisation, you have clear objectives for improving your event deliveries across energy, waste, catering and travel (whenever relevant) and you measure and report on your progress towards these. Find out more about how you can achieve progress in these areas with proseed.



Client engagement plays a focal role in helping you achieve your objectives and you provide Best Practice Guidelines for clients which enables their own sustainability progress.



You collaborate with peer venues to share learnings and insights. Wherever, and as far as possible, you work with peer venues to align best practice, making it easier for clients, suppliers and contractors to deliver consistently across venues.



### **Event Deliveries**



beam

### COMMITMENTS & COMMUNICATIONS

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WITHIN

**3 YEARS** 

WITHIN **1YEAR** 

### **BASIC**

The production of postevent reports is standard practice for completed events to track progress against Net Zero Strategy.

### BASIC

Clients are asked to share their plans and approach to delivering a more sustainable event within your venue, including looking at energy conservation, waste prevention and reduction and greener catering choices.

### BETTER

Senior Leadership empower Event Management Teams to challenge clients' plans if this is not aligned with Net Zero ambitions and/or Best Practice event guidelines.

### BRILLIANT

Senior Leaders are accountable for ensuring the annual review of Best Practice Event Guidelines in order that these remain up to date with Net Zero Strategy and Operations.

### BETTER

Production of post-event reports that incorporate energy, food, production and waste impacts and performance against Best Practice event guidelines is standard for every event.

Reports should consider what was using energy and how much, catering and serveware choices and waste impact (including food waste), how much general waste was produced/ recycled/repurposed - including waste from production materials, and wherever possible water and travel impacts from event staff (client and in-house).

WITHIN

2 YEARS

### BETTER

To promote more sustainable events within your venue in line with Best Practice Event Guidelines, sustainability plan templates are provided to clients to help them

You can refer to templates available from isla - check out proseed.

BRILLIANT Adhering to Best Practice event guidelines is

mandatory for clients and sustainability plans are requested alongside H&S plans.

### BRILLIANT

Suppliers are required to include sustainable event plans that include projections on how they will further ambitions on carbon and waste reduction efforts.

### BETTER

Event supply chain partners are required to provide plans for how they will minimise event carbon emission and waste generation.

### BASIC

Best Practice Event Guidelines are provided to partners within the event supply chain and a clear expectation is set that they will adhere to these during the provision of event services.

### BRILLIANT

Post-event reports include KPIs for furthering ambitions on energy, food, production and waste impacts and performance, particularly those that support zero waste/circular economy practices.



# **Measurement & Reporting**

In order to differentiate where we are now from where we want to be, venue professionals will need to adopt the measurement, measurement, measurement mantra. This will help to give a complete, and more importantly accurate picture, across the key measurement areas.

### Inspiration



### What you're aiming for:

A public annual report disclosing progress towards Net Zero, transparently reporting on carbon and waste, and demonstrating absolute carbon reductions over time.



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### What might genuine progress look like?

Measurement and reporting is a core activity across your operations and event deliveries and you have clear boundaries and strategy in place for measuring Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions. Measurement is aligned with your Net Zero Strategy (see Commitments & Communications: Pledges) and reporting is against science-based targets.



Teams have gone through carbon literacy training and all teams understand how they contribute to the measurement and reporting of emissions and waste, moving this from a 'one person' job to a 'whole company' approach.



You consider audience travel as part of your Scope 3 reporting requirements.



You can demonstrate reductions in emissions across Scopes 1, 2 and 3.





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### Measurement & Reporting

	START NOW	WITHIN 6 MONTHS	WITHIN <b>1 year</b>		WITHIN 2 YEARS	WITHIN <b>3 YEARS</b>
Operations	<b>BASELINE</b> You use existing tools/ external carbon consultants to measure Scope 1 and 2 emissions.	measure Scope 3 ei	BASIC ng tools/consultants to missions for which you e direct access to data.	Strategies are in plac availability of Scope 3 d data from client even Refer to 'Event Deliveries: Event Management Team' for further reference to post-event reports.	ata, including	<b>BRILLIANT</b> You are collecting Scope 1, 2 and standard practice and regularly r your targets and reflecting on pro to adapt your reduction strategies regular basis.
Events	your cli	measure and provide dat ents with energy use transporta	<b>BASIC</b> vide clients with event a relating to travel and tion for your suppliers, aff and temporary staff (Scope 3).	To support yo reporting you ob data from clients o productions and and from your ven measurement sup as part of b	tain emission on their event staff travel to ue, or provide	BRILLIANT You are working collaboratively v clients to share event data to end accurate reporting on event cark and waste footprints to drive red strategies across your venue and client's future events.
Reporting		dev Strat	You have establishe Scope 3 emission ambitious and pro- including	ed a baseline for a Net 2 ns with the most ogressive venues yo audience travel. a 5 in 20 95% emiss	BETTER ave published Zero Strategy butlining how u will achieve 0% reduction emissions by 030 and a 90- breduction in sions by 2050, at the latest.	<b>BRILLIANT</b> You are auditing your emissions on a frequent basis and transparently reporting progress towards Net Zero. Success, learnings and strategy adaptation are included within this report to share with sector peers.
Offsetting		<b>BASELINE</b> You work with a dedicated carbon offsetting provider and balance 100% of your Scope 1 and 2 emissions.	carbon offs	BASIC ork with a dedicated setting provider and 0% of your Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions.	<b>BETTER</b> You remove a proportion of your Scope 1 2 emissions a	And And And And And a percentage of
isla.					offset your So	VOUR SCORE 5 WITH THE

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and 3 data as larly reviewing on progress itegies on a

ely with your/ o enable carbon e reduction e and for your



# Value Chain Engagement

This is all about extending your sphere of influence when it comes to sustainability beyond your own in-house operations to encompass all the companies within your value chain.

### What you're aiming for:

Using your influence to actively engage and collaborate with industry to accelerate behavioural, infrastructure and overall sector transformation.





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### What might genuine progress look like?

Using your position and influence to effect change amongst clients, stakeholders and supply chain partners so that their decisions support your Net Zero commitments.

### Inspiration



You are active in your local area, working across private and public sector initiatives designed to improve infrastructure, protect the environment and improve the lives of and opportunities available to local residents.



Your supply chain and partners are demonstrating their own successes in transition towards Net Zero operations and circular economy practices and you work together to find innovations and solutions for ongoing shared challenges.



You are actively divesting and/or disengaging from activities and/or clients that delay a Net Zero transition or create 'lock-in' effects (see glossary).





### Value Chain Engagement



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	MITHIN I <b>YEAR</b>	WITHIN 2 YEARS		WITHIN <b>3 YEARS</b>
qualifying iteria that reflect ons, before the oks off.	has bee your sustain Strategy. Nev and existin	<b>BETTER</b> hable procurement policy in developed aligned with ability poicy and Net Zero w suppliers adhere to this g suppliers have been re- ted in line with this policy.	towards part of con with	<b>BRILLIANT</b> eview supplier progress Net Zero as a standard tract reviews. Suppliers no strategy or plan are moved from the roster.
ese should be aligned h your Best Practice ent Guidelines to ensure hesion and a standard broach across all teams. banning exhibitions m providing physical (AG).	BASIC Sales & Event Management Teams routinely signpost clients to venue features or solutions that reduce carbon or waste emissions and actively pitch these during kick-	<b>BETTER</b> You influence client behaviours by providing carbon and waste footprint estimations at the start of projects, and post-event reports showing actual impacts with reduction recommendations.		BRILLIANT You host frequent client withat deliver peer-to-peer kinsharing, amplify Best Prace deliveries, showcase succe empower clients to trial min and concepts that promote behaviour change.
tainability per group ed in external ng activities to tart/build-on urneys.	off meetings.	<b>BETTER</b> Collaborative advantage is p DNA - you are part of a peer network in which you regula share data, insights and your decarbonisation strategy to and support sectoral transfo	r-to-peer arly meet to r ongoing promote	BRILLIANT You are active in peer-to-peer solution-finding for key areas, including conceptualising and trialling solutions that support decarbonisation and circular economy practices, and dedica time, budget and leadership to these activities.
nity- (LA) is on and N	BASIC understand local authority priorities for environment Net Zero and work actively he LA to support or enable these ambitions.	Time and/or buc is dedicated to infrastructure improvem and/or community projects and innovat	dget to adv local economisents with y-led in but tions re- ition, ctice	BRILLIANT tion with other local businesses vance decarbonisation, circular- ny practice and/or regeneration thin the local area is embedded usiness strategy, with dedicated esource and endorsed by Senior Leadership

### workshops r knowledge actice event cess and new ideas note audience





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**Value Chain Management** CASE STUDY



# Working Together, Thriving Together

As a new venue launched in 2019, sustainability was a high priority in the design and construction of ICC Wales which is committed to representing best practice in all areas of sustainable service delivery.

In partnership with The Celtic Collection, we are looking to establish a sustainable DNA in everything we do. We also have an appetite to encourage and support our clients in creating and delivering sustainable events.

VENUE:	ICC Wales
LOCATION:	Newport, Wales
OPENED:	2019
SIZE:	26,000 sqm
CAPACITY:	5,000
SPECIAL FEATURES:	Woodland walking directly to the ven
FLAGSHIP EVENTS:	Green Party Autur Space Conference
AWARDS INCLUDE:	Gold – Best Tech-F M&IT Awards 2021 of Chartered Surve Awards Winner 20 category for Wale
<b>CERTIFICATIONS:</b>	Green Dragon Lev Government), Gree Green Key interna







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mn Conference; UK e; Cyber UK

Forward Venue, I; Royal Institution veyors Social Impact 020 (Commercial es).

vel 3 (Welsh en Tourism Gold ational standard.





# Working Together, Thriving Together

### Challenges

While many clients and supply chain partners are keen to join us on our sustainability journey, the biggest challenge is finding the time and money to invest in sustainable solutions.

As with most things in life, the best intentions are often overtaken by the most practical solutions when the cost or the time available becomes the most pressing priority. Sustainable alternatives usually offer cost efficiency in the long term – energy savings and waste reduction are just two examples – but it is sometimes difficult to persuade event organisers and suppliers to change their behaviours and make the original capital outlay to bring about these savings.

### Solutions

**Our new Energy and Sustainability** Manager, Fitzroy Hutchinson, has been working with our clients to understand what a sustainable event looks like to them and how we can work collaboratively to achieve those goals.

Some examples of how organisers make greener choices include:

- · Looking at sustainable travel options including working with Newport City Council to provide electric bus routes and discounted tickets for delegates on Great Western Railway
- The use of electronic signage and digital marketing (QR codes to avoid printouts)
- Use of our rehydration station (reusable and compostable cups provided)
- Encourage locally-sourced ingredients and plant-based menus
- Undertake a post-event review, to understand what went well and what, if anything, can be improved

Looking forward to 2023, we are working to formalise an agreement within our contracts which will ask exhibitors and organisers to be responsible for their own event waste and to educate them to have the mentality of reduce, reuse and recycle. There are a lot of organisers who already do this but, we want to encourage the entire industry to take on this approach.









**CASE STUDIES** 

### Impact

Working with like-minded suppliers and clients has helped us with a synergy of ideas to improve our own sustainability credentials. We are a new venue, but we work in close partnership with The Celtic **Collection of hotels and venues** which have reduced CO2 emissions by 25% since 2017 and saved 20 million litres of water annually.

Many of the sustainable elements, including natural ventilation and daylight and a sophisticated building management system, we factored into building ICC Wales bring huge cost efficiencies and energy savings which are particularly important as energy prices continue to rise.

Whilst no-one can say what the 'ultimate' sustainable event is, a good starting point

would be to look for suppliers, including a venue, which has a strong green offering and a similar ethos to your business goals. If you can't find a venue that ticks all of your boxes, it is about having an honest conversation and working collaboratively to understand what can be achieved. Don't be scared of the sustainable journey, just make small changes and build upon them over time."

### Fitzroy Hutchinson

Energy and Sustainability Manager ICC Wales







### **Company Operations** CASE STUDY



# From Carbon Neutrality to Net Zero

BDC became certified CarbonNeutral® in 2010, under the CarbonNeutral® Protocol.

Since then continuous reductions and improvements have been made in tackling the company's environmental impact, leading up to 2022, when the business launched its commitment to reaching <u>Net Zero before 2030</u> and submitted its initial assessment to B Corp.

VENUE:	<b>Business Design Centr</b>
LOCATION:	Islington, London
OPENED:	1986 (The former Roya Hall, opened in 1862)
SIZE:	6,000 sqm
CAPACITY:	5,300
SPECIAL FEATURES:	Grade II Listed Historic
FLAGSHIP EVENTS:	London Art Fair, New E Country Living Christn Design Show, HIX Ever and Devoxx
AWARDS INCLUDE:	Exhibition News Award 2016, CSR Award 2018, Award 2022, AEO Awar the Year 2019, 2020)
CERTIFICATIONS:	Certified CarbonNeutr Investors in People Go

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tre (BDC)

al Agricultural

cal Building

Designers, mas, Surface ent, Droidcon

rds: ECO Award , 2019, ESG ards (Venue of

ral® since 2010: old

# BUSINESS DESIGN CEN







## From Carbon Neutrality to Net Zero

### Challenges

BDC has been working on its environmental impact since 2008 when the company's first Sustainability Group was formed. Made up of BDC staff at all levels and suppliers, its key purpose was to make innovative changes and support clients and stakeholders on our sustainability goals.

Examples of this in practice include our event managers in delivering initiatives such as diverting reusable waste to our charity partners and ensuring the correct waste streams are available according to differing event needs.

Over the years that followed many of the changes we've made across the business and have had an early impact on the venue's carbon footprint and the Group has been central to steering this. From modifying lighting to low energy (both across the venue and for events) and removing/ reducing the size of general waste bins to adding motion sensors in common areas, it soon became a challenge to find impactful ways to continue reductions. This is particularly difficult in not being able to alter the fabric of a Grade II Listed building.

### Solutions

### Looking externally helped to expand on the venue's plans and in 2019 the BDC made the switch to renewable electricity.

We were motivated by knowing that this was the right next step for a business which is conscious of its environmental impact. We worked with a business energy supplier to explore our options in relation to cost, and with an understanding that this was a long-term investment that will support us in meeting our Net Zero target.

The BDC also took its environmental discussion to the top, with the Board discussing the next steps needed. This involved support from carbon consultants ecollective who measured our footprint and found areas to make the next large investments such as finding an alternative to the use of gas in the venue.

In terms of smaller-scale investments, the availability and costs of truly environmentally-friendly products is still a factor. Compostable or biodegradable products come at a premium and it's still taking time to source and get an affordable price on some products for our clients. Where

we have been successful in doing this, we have to factor in how we will transition to the use of these at a client level.

- targets included:
- compared to 4 previously)
- 10%
- Look into alternative ways to
- Build relationships with environmentally focused businesses such as isla to support our events on their journey to Net Zero
- the end of 2023

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In addition, while our impact has always been listed as a key corporate objective, this year for the first time, we published an ESG Strategy, Being the Change. 2022/23 environmental

Increase electric vehicle charging points in the car park and loading bay (we now have 20 points

 Increase recycling and composting to reduce waste sent to recovery by

generate our own energy on site

Deliver our route to Net Zero by

### Impact

### Opening the challenge up across the business has also seen more people actively participate in our sustainability journey.

Members of the team have come forward with ways to support and drive change in their own areas. For example our Property Team implemented crockery collection points around the venue for BDC residents to reduce the takeaway packaging required in the on-site restaurant.

Event organisers may have been initially attracted to our venue via big statements on sustainability such as the fact we're using 100% renewable electricity or sending nothing to landfill, but once with us we have been able to support them on smaller, but still significant, sustainability shifts, such as adopting vegetarian menus, diverting reusable items from waste to charity partners and using compostable cups or food packaging where needed to taking the dates off show branding to reuse again.



For those starting out on their venue's environmental impact journey, concentrate more on the steps that you are taking rather than worrying about getting it perfect. Open the challenge up to other members of the team, as it is not one easily faced or driven forward alone.

Most importantly engage with and take reassurance from other venues that are also striving to be better – everyone has to start from somewhere, the important thing is to start."

### **Kate Vandenburg**

Marketing and Communications Director Business Design Centre



**Commitment & Comms** CASE STUDY



# **Telling the Story of Sustainability**

At Manchester Central, we're committed to supporting our clients, customers, team members and stakeholders on their own sustainability journey, as we believe this is the key to making meaningful, collective progress as an industry.

Our sustainability strategy, <u>Our Central Future</u>, sets out our commitments, in line with the Net Zero Carbon Events Pledge, which includes reducing our emissions by 50% by 2030, collaborating with partners, suppliers and customers to drive change across the value chain, measuring and tracking our scope 1, 2 and 3 greenhouse gas emissions according to industry best practice, and reporting on our progress at least every two years. We believe having a committed and engaged workforce is the first step to achieve these commitments.









EVENT DELIVERIES

**CASE STUDIES** 

### **Manchester Central**

Grade II listed status, a former **Victorian Railway station** 

Housing, BIBA, CIPD, BSAVA, Political Party Conferences, Hyrox,

MIA Team of the Year 2022 (Events and Operations), Best Venue **Customer Service (Conference &** 

Real Living Wage Employer, **Disability Confident Committed** Employer, AIM accredited, Vegan & Vegetarian Society accredited



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## Manchester Telling the Story of Sustainability Central

### Challenges

With sustainability increasingly becoming a key theme, we recognised a need to 'take a reading' of where we are, as a business and an industry, to better understand areas for improvement and opportunities for progress.

Sustainability touches on every aspect of our businesses. It can be difficult to know where to start, to make sustainable gains at a personal level, within businesses and across the industry.

With teams operating in a variety of different roles, and on different shift patterns, some desk-based and many not, we needed to find creative ways to engage our people, if we were to achieve our commitments.

### Solutions

This year, we embarked on a research project with Mash Media to understand the current state of play for sustainability within the events sector, the challenges faced, and explore success stories we can all take inspiration from.

The work culminated in the <u>Shaping a Sustainable</u> Future whitepaper, sharing the key findings from the research that will help to shape both our collective and individual sustainability journeys. The areas for focus that have emerged from our findings are: Education and Training, Investment, Procurement and Governance and Guidance.

At the same time, we surveyed our people to gather insights and better understand how different people across different roles within the business prefer to receive information, to ensure we are reaching and engaging as many employees as possible, with the aim of achieving our sustainability goals. This resulted in a multi-channel marketing and communications approach, including:

- Monthly team briefings led by representatives from the sustainability steering group — which is made up of representatives from across the whole business from operational and business support staff to our service partners (the cleaning team and AV partners)
- Monthly staff e-newsletters
- Attention-grabbing noticeboards

One of the most significant takeaways from our research was the need for more training and a clarity of understanding across our workforces. Therefore we plan to further enhance sustainability knowledge and understanding across the business, via sustainability awareness training, and collaborate with our service partners, contractors and organisers to ensure sustainability is embedded into all day-to-day workplace activities. In addition, we continue to develop and implement a programme of ongoing internal

and external sustainability communications, utilising our staff portal, team meetings, and internal 'Central Times' newsletter, as well as it being a core theme across our social media output, stakeholder e-communications and a dedicated area on our website, to keep sustainability at the forefront of people's minds. We consistently seek feedback to help us refine our approach, and encourage new, innovative ideas to help us improve.

VALUE CHAIN ENGAGEMENT

**CASE STUDIES** 

### Impact

**bb** Whilst **Manchester** Central and many other venues have made significant sustainable

improvements, collaboration with all stakeholders is the key to ensure events are run as sustainably as possible.

There are several ways we can make small changes to the way we do things, which can make a huge difference, but these changes will only happen if we work together and pull in the same direction. Having an engaged workforce that feel empowered to bring solutions forward in a bid to achieve shared commitments, is critical to achieving success and this sits at the heart of everything we do."

### Lauren Hudson

Sustainability and Safety Advisor Manchester Central





### **Event Deliveries** CASE STUDY



# Making nature the main event

Each year we have thousands of delegates stay with us for two nights or more, and realised many didn't want their room cleaned/didn't request fresh linen daily.

We saw this as a huge opportunity to save energy and be more sustainable and as a result introduced our Room2Grow scheme in June 2022. This not only gave delegates choice in the above but also put back into the environment.

VENUE:	Wyboston Lakes Resor
LOCATION:	Bedfordshire, UK
OPENED:	1982
SIZE:	380 acres spread over 3 Hotel, The Willows Trai Woodlands Event Cent
CAPACITY:	Up to 620 theatre style
SPECIAL FEATURES:	An inclusive resort, wit building, 18-hole golf co serviced offices and co
FLAGSHIP EVENTS:	ASRA (Association for S Accommodation) Annu Holdings (Paddy & Scot Meeting
AWARDS INCLUDE:	MIA Best Sustainable V Service Award and Best Award, Eventwell; Best Champion and Best Me 43rd place in the UK's T Companies to Work For
<b>CERTIFICATIONS:</b>	Greengage EcoSmart P Gold and IACC Greenst







EVENT DELIVERIES

MEASUREMENT & REPORTING

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### rt

**3 venues: Waterfront** ining Centre and The tre

th nature reserve, team course, spa, health club, o-working

**Student Residential** ual Conference, Ambition ott's) Annual Strategy

Venue, IACC Community st Sustainable Innovation t Mental Health ental Health First Aider, Top 100 Best Large

Platinum, Green Tourism tar





### More Sustainability, No Apology

### Challenges

The challenge was in how to communicate this scheme - which aims to reduce energy usage and ultimately the carbon footprint of the resort – effectively. We wanted to opt everyone out of the nightly clean and just ask delegates to hang the room service hanger on the door when a clean was required. This is a change in behaviour from the norm. Usually by default a room will be serviced each day, and now we're saying we won't clean the room, unless you let us know.

We also didn't want delegates to view this as a way for us to save money, so we decided to plant trees on the resort instead.

### **Solutions**

It took two months for our Green **Team – made up of Senior Leadership** - to take the scheme from concept to reality, and it was officially launched in June 2022 with an ambitious target to plant 5,000 trees on the resort's 380 acres by the end of 2022.

We have plenty of space and are also keen to rewild a lot of the resort to nature.

We communicated to delegates prearrival, putting the scheme on the delegate information issued to them by the event booker. It was also communicated at check-in and we had plasma screens and light boxes in each venue also sharing this message.

The room information also told the delegate all about the scheme and door hangers with instructions were left on the pillow, so hopefully the comms were clear and we didn't disappoint our delegates in any way.











### Impact

Wyboston Lakes Resort will by far exceed its Room2Grow scheme target for 2022 as the total number of trees to be planted stands at 9,000 as of November 2022. Our staff are among those helping to plant trees, so it's a real team effort.

What's more, Room2Grow has become an award-winning sustainability initiative picking up the innovation award from the IACC (International Association of Conference Centres) at their 'IACC Europe Knowledge Festival' held in The Netherlands in September 2022 and the MIAList Award for Sustainability in November 2022.

Room2Grow is just one part of Wyboston Lakes Resort's approach to sustainability that makes the most of the resort's extensive natural resources. The resort has also launched several more environmental and wildlife enhancements. For example, with the decline in the bee population, the site welcomed four bee colonies in August 2022. These are being managed in an eco-friendly way by a keen beekeeper.

The resort is also home to a nature reserve with all kinds of flora and fauna and this is now being enhanced with the addition of a large wildflower meadow.

Here at Wyboston Lakes Resort sustainability gives us the opportunity to bring our diverse efforts under one umbrella and create a culture of conscience in what we do, and how

we do it. Our slogan is quite simply, 'More Sustainability, No Apology'. But bringing this to life wouldn't be possible without setting clear objectives. These have included reducing our 2022 energy usage per £100k of revenue by 7.5%, ensuring we have a plan to generate our own renewable energy and eradicating all food waste taken from site by 100%. It's also important to continually look forward and we are always searching for ways to level up on ambition for all areas across the resort including event deliveries.

We hope that venues reading this guide can take inspiration from our approach and the approach of many other venues."

### Louisa Watson

Director of Marketing Wyboston Lakes Resort



# Glossary

### Carbon balancing/offsetting

Carbon Balancing is where the carbon impacts of a product or service have been estimated and an equivalent amount of carbon dioxide is either prevented from being released into, or is absorbed from, the atmosphere. Preventative measures include renewable energy financing and energy efficiency improvements (e.g. lighting upgrades, insulation, heat pump technology). Carbon sequestering projects include those which protect existing natural habitats/ecosystems from destruction, and rewilding projects to restore or create new natural habitats/ecosystems.

### **Carbon Neutral**

When the total amount of carbon emissions produced are balanced by an equal number of carbon offsets. There are specific parameters around certifying carbon neutral (the best standard is PAS 2060) and an effort to reduce emissions, before offsetting, must be demonstrated.

### **Circular Economy**

The circular economy is a model of production and consumption, which involves sharing, leasing, reusing, repairing, refurbishing and recycling existing materials and products as long as possible. In this way, the life cycle of products is extended. In practice, it implies reducing waste to a minimum. When a product reaches the end of its life, its materials are kept within the economy wherever possible. These can be productively used again and again, thereby creating further value.

### **KPIs**

Key (K) Performance (P) Indicators (I). These are quantifiable measures of how successful an organisation has been at performing a particular activity/ies.

### Lock-in effects

These are essentially stop-gap activities that don't support transformation. Instead they make things 'less bad', for example waste to energy (WtE) prevents wasteto-landfill, which is good, but it doesn't encourage producing less waste in the first place (see circular economy).

### Net Zero

Reducing the greenhouse gas emissions of your organisation's entire value chain to as close to zero as possible, whilst offsetting any remaining unavoidable emissions. To achieve Net Zero, companies will need to reduce 90%-95% of their emissions by 2050 at the latest, with an interim reduction target of 50% by 2030. These science-based targets are designed to limit global warming to within 1.5°C. It is not possible to achieve Net Zero without assessing and reducing Scope 3 emissions the majority of your organisation's impact.

### Scope 1 Emissions

**Direct emissions** - the actual burning of fossil fuels in facilities or assets you own or control.









### COMMITMENTS & COMMUNICATIONS

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### Scope 2 Emissions

Indirect emissions - associated with the purchase of electricity, steam, heat or cooling for your owned or controlled assets.

### Scope 3 Emissions

Everything else!

- Emissions from vehicles which are used as a result of your organisation's activities, but not owned or controlled by your company. Including: supplier transport, shipping/deliveries, crew travel, delegate travel, your staff journeys via personal vehicles, your staff journeys via public transport (buses, trains, planes).
- Energy consumption as a result of your organisation's activities, but occurs in facilities not owned or controlled by your company. Including energy used in: external permanent venues, temporary venues/ structures, hotels/accommodation, and your staff working from home.
- Production emissions from all supplier materials and catering ingredients which are used as a result of your organisation's activities.
- Emissions from all waste generated as a result of your activity - including: incineration, landfill and recycling

### **SPIN Selling**

A sales technique that uses questions under four categories: Situation, Problem, Implication, Need-Payoff to guide customer conversations.

### **SMART**

A set of goals that are **S**pecific, **M**easurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-Bound.

### SWAG

Something We All Get - Branded event merchandise in the form of bags, stationery, coupons, samples and more given away to event attendees.

### Value Chain Engagement

This looks at the way organisations share knowledge and expertise with key external stakeholders, including suppliers and clients, working to foster engagement, trust and mutual growth.

### Zero Waste

The conservation of all resources by means of responsible production, consumption, reuse, and recovery of products, packaging, and materials without burning and with no discharges to land, water, or air that threaten the environment or human health.

In practice this means diverting 90% of waste from landfill and/or incineration - which is also known as waste to energy (WtE). Most waste in the UK does not go to landfill but is incinerated. This is not Zero Waste. Diversion from landfill is a good thing, but WtE does not constitute Zero Waste.







# Thank you

### Many thanks for your partnership!

The UK events industry is not just an industry, but a network and community of passionate, committed and hardworking people. We thrive on a challenge and we pull together to deliver world-leading experiences (and we manage a few laughs along the way!).

Transforming our sector requires that same kind of passion, commitment and hard work. Plus a good dose of resilience something we demonstrate daily and in abundance.

Anna Aldelnoor

Anna Abdelnoor isla CEO & Co-Founder



For more information please contact our team weareisla.co.uk • hello@weareisla.co.uk



