**North of Tyne Combined Authority Carbon Footprint Report - November 2022**

**Introduction**

**Company information**

North of Tyne Combined Authority (NTCA), The Lumen, St James Boulevard, Newcastle Helix, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE4 5BZ.

This carbon footprint report includes a proportion of emissions from our previous office at Quadrant West, as NTCA relocated to The Lumen in August 2021.

**Reporting Period**

1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022

**Background**

The North of Tyne Combined Authority (NTCA) was legally established in November 2018 with permanent staff recruited from this date. The area has a population of 839,500 and covers an area of 5209.3km, spanning the administrative boundaries of the three constituent Local Authority areas of Newcastle City Council, North Tyneside Council, Northumberland County Council.

All three constituent Local Authorities declared a climate emergency in 2019 and North of Tyne Mayor Driscoll declared a climate emergency during his first day in office on 7th May 2019. NTCA adds value to local authority efforts to address climate change by functioning as an investor, partner, convening authority and a means of collaborating more effectively to add value and secure the additional investment and powers that the region needs. Our [Zero Carbon, Zero Poverty: 5 Point Plan](https://www.northoftyne-ca.gov.uk/projects/zero-carbon-zero-poverty-our-5-point-plan/) summarises our approach to tackling the climate emergency.

**NTCA Carbon Footprint**

This is the North of Tyne Combined Authority’s second organisational greenhouse gas report. Our baseline year is our first financial year of operation (2019-2020) and this report covers our third year of operation between the period 2021-2022.

**Approach**

We have followed the guidance issued by [DEFRA](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/69282/pb13309-ghg-guidance-0909011.pdf) on how to measure and report

greenhouse gas emissions. We have used the [2022 Greenhouse Gas Reporting conversion factors](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/greenhouse-gas-reporting-conversion-factors-2022) published annually by the Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) to calculate organisational emissions.

**Organisational boundary**

NTCA reports on operational emissions that it can directly influence and reduce. NTCA employed 68 members of staff between April 1st 2021 and March 31st 2022 and occupies office space as a tenant, with access to pool cars via Newcastle City Council. Although NTCA is not obliged to report on operational emissions, NTCA accepts a responsibility to demonstrate leadership as well as the ability to influence and reduce staff energy and business-related transport emissions. We will seek to continually improve our performance, working in partnership with our staff, neighbours, constituent Local Authorities, and wider stakeholders.

**Geographical breakdown**

All emissions within the direct influence of NTCA are within the UK.

**Base year**

The baseline year for emissions reporting is 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020

**Operational scope**

NTCA’s Environment Policy sets out how NTCA intends to work towards becoming a net zero carbon organisation. It commits NTCA to publicly report the ‘auditable’ carbon footprint of our organisation on an annual basis – this will include emissions that we can directly account for via our energy bills and business travel.

Scope 1 greenhouse gas emissions are **direct emissions** from activities owned or controlled by your organisation that release emissions straight into the atmosphere. Examples include emissions from combustion in owned or controlled boilers, and vehicles.

Scope 2 greenhouse gas emissions are **indirect emissions** released into the atmosphere associated with the consumption of purchased electricity, heat, steam and cooling.

The NTCA Environment Policy commits NTCA to offset organisational Scope 1 and 2 emissions where we are unable to further reduce our organisational energy use and business mileage, using an accredited provider that only invests in verifiable offset projects in the UK. As far as possible, these will be geographically located in the North of Tyne.

Scope 3 greenhouse gas emissions are **other indirect emissions** that are a consequence of your actions, which occur at sources which you do not own or control and which are not classed as scope 2 emissions. Examples include business travel by means not owned or controlled by your organisation, waste disposal, or purchased materials or fuels.

NTCA Environment Policy commits us to regularly review options to monitor, report and reduce the embedded and indirect carbon emissions that arise from organisational activities but does not commit the organisation to offset Scope 3 emissions.

Issues relevant to note in relation to our baseline and annual carbon footprint reporting include:

* NTCA was established by an act of Parliament in November 2018 so the first full financial year of operation and the baseline year for reporting is April 2019 to March 2020.
* NTCA is a relatively small office and does not own building assets or fleet vehicles – in contrast to Local Authorities who are large employers that own significant assets and operate and commission a wide range of services across their local areas.
* There were no sub-meters for energy or water consumption in our offices at Quadrant West, so emissions have been calculated by sub-dividing the building scale energy consumption to a proportion based on NTCA occupancy of one floor of the building between April 2021 to July 2022 as NTCA relocated to the Lumen in August 2021. You can read The Lumen’s sustainability information [here](https://thelumennewcastle.co.uk/sustainability/).
* From 24th March 2020, NTCA staff worked from home as per government guidance so no business travel is included in the greenhouse gas emissions reporting for April 2020-March 2021 and our energy consumption while we were working from home has been estimated based on [average domestic energy consumption in 2018](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sub-national-electricity-and-gas-consumption-statistics-analysis-tool) for North of Tyne which was the latest available data at the time.
* NTCA relocated to The Lumen, in central Newcastle upon Tyne in August 2021 and since then has operated on a hybrid working model where staff have the option both to work from the office and/or continue to work from home. The [2022 BEIS Greenhouse Gas Reporting Conversion Factors](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/greenhouse-gas-reporting-conversion-factors-2022) now include calculations for homeworking, so we have updated our approach to ensure coherent reporting.

**This means that NTCA data reported below is not directly comparable to the baseline year of April 2020-March 2021 as it is not a ‘like for like’ comparison**. **It is also plausible that emissions have been overestimated in previous years.**

* From next financial year, it will be possible to begin consistently reporting organisational emissions as The Lumen has sub-metered data so we can accurately monitor the actual CO2 emissions associated with organisational energy consumption.
* NTCA invested in woodland creation verified under the Woodland Carbon Code in 2021 as part of our strategy to reduce our corporate emissions. The Woodland Carbon Code is the voluntary standard for UK woodland creation projects where claims are made about the carbon dioxide they sequester. Independent validation and verification to this standard provides assurance and clarity about the carbon savings of these sustainably managed woodlands.
  + A **Woodland Carbon Unit (WCU)** is a tonne of CO2e which has been sequestered in a WCC-verified woodland. It has been independently verified, is guaranteed to be there, and can be used by companies to report against UK-based emissions or to use in claims of carbon neutrality or Net Zero emissions.
  + A **Pending Issuance Unit (PIU)** is effectively a ‘promise to deliver’ a Woodland Carbon Unit in future, based on predicted sequestration. It is not ‘guaranteed’ therefore cannot be used to report against UK-based emissions until verified. However, it allows organisations to plan to compensate for future UK-based emissions and make credible statements in support of woodland creation and Corporate Social Responsibility. When a project is verified, PIUs which have been confirmed as sequestered will be converted to WCUs and can be considered as full carbon ‘credits’, and as such be used/retired/reported.
* NTCA purchased 1146 Pending Issuance Units from Forest Carbon for woodland planted in Doddington North is new mixed woodland located in Wooler, Northumberland. Planting only concluded at this site in 2020 and so these units represent carbon capture that will occur in the future, as the woodland grows. There are no Woodland Carbon Code certified woodlands in the region mature enough yet to have delivered measurable carbon savings, which would be represented by verified Woodland Carbon Units. Forest Carbon develops woodland creation and peatland restoration projects for carbon capture and ecosystem services in the UK. The woodland schemes are certified by the Woodland Carbon Code and planting the ‘right tree in the right place’ is required through adherence to the Forestry Commission standards.
* NTCA understands that offsetting carbon emissions is not a replacement for changing organisational behaviour to reduce the emissions associated with our day-to-day business. NTCA has undertaken the following activities to help staff reduce their organisational energy consumption:
  + Pre-loved sofas were purchased for the staff common area
  + In early 2021 staff were provided with verbal and written information on domestic renewable energy tariffs.
  + In 2022 videos and transcripts on energy saving at home and at the office were shared with staff
  + The timings of the Building Management System (BMS) are under regular review and are adjusted seasonally, and also to reduce emissions where possible. For example, turning off heating at 5pm on the basis most staff do not work later than 6pm and there are individual temperature controls in the meeting rooms so the temperature could be turned up in one individual room rather than keeping the heating on for the whole floor when most staff have left the office
  + NTCA have piloted Carbon Literacy training, with 5 staff gaining Carbon Literacy accreditation. Pledges were focused on reducing organisational emissions, including some that are not monitored under our Corporate Environment Policy, for example:
    - Providing and promoting resources and expertise to help businesses reduce their carbon footprint
    - Encouraging businesses applying for grants to consider their climate impact and how this can be reduced
    - Proposing that NTCA lease or buy one or more electric bikes to enable staff to undertake short to medium length journeys for work and enable staff to transport materials.
    - Providing hybrid meetings to allow colleagues and stakeholders to work from home rather than travel to meetings – including narrative that the meetings are optional hybrid to reduce carbon emissions which will raise awareness of the issue.
    - Suggesting NTCA introduce a policy that for our events or events we co-host where we provide catering, we only serve low carbon food
* NTCA have set up a “Green Teams” channel for staff to share ideas, inspire and support each other to reduce our carbon footprint and live more sustainably
* The Lumen has beehives on the roof and tenants of the Lumen, including NTCA staff, were given the opportunity to undertake training in how to look after the bees – the spare honey produced is sold at reception, potentially reducing the carbon footprint of honey purchased as well as supporting urban biodiversity

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|  | **Tonnes of CO2e** | | |
|  | **2019-20** | **2020-21\*** | **2021-2022\*** |
| **Scope 1** | | | |
| Gas consumption | 46.78 | 100.14 | 13.1 (Quadrant West only) |
| **Scope 2** | | | |
| Electricity consumption | 49.65 | 32.04 | 11.8 (Quadrant West) plus 2.8 (Lumen) = 14.6 |
| Purchased heat, steam and cooling (Low Temperature Hot Water and Chilled Water Cooling from District Energy Centre) |  |  | 12.8 (Lumen only) |
| **Scope 3** | | | |
| Business mileage | 1.12 | 0 | 0.3 |
| Homeworking |  |  | 31.3 |
| **Offset emissions** | NTCA has not offset emissions but has invested in 1196 Pending Issuance Units representing tonnes of CO2 expected to be sequestered over a ten year period between 2019-2029\*\* | | |
| **Total annual net emissions (tonnes of CO2e)** | 97.55 | 132.18 | 72.1 |

\*please note that emissions for 2020-21 were estimated due to staff homeworking from 24th March 2020 as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. NTCA relocated to a new office in August 2021 and in 2022 BEIS produced conversion factors for homeworking which are calculated by FTE hours worked and classified as Scope 3 emissions so the method of calculating emissions from staff working from home have now been updated to the national approach.