

# Environmental advice for charitable organisations

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# For communities and the planet

Quartet Community Foundation recognises the growing climate emergency and the need to take positive climate action at a local level. So, we are taking steps to reduce our own carbon footprint and provide the organisations we work with guidance to reduce their own.

We can't tell you what is and isn't possible within your own organisations, but we hope the following suggestions and links to further advice will be helpful.



# Providing positive guidance

## Reducing Travel

- Virtual meetings rather than travelling for in-person meetings.
- Use video conferencing or other online collaboration facilities. Online tools offer the bonus of increasing accessibility (taking care to note any digital exclusion issues of those you are working with).
- If you are booking in-person events or meetings, use venues that can be easily reached by walking, cycling or public transport.
- Encourage staff and volunteers to lift-share, use car clubs, walk, or cycle.
- If your organisation uses transport, consider buying or hiring electric vehicles.

### Helpful Resources

[Sustrans has information on the National Cycling Network](#)  
[Better by Bike has resources that information to enable people to cycle](#)  
[Travelwest provides useful information to help you plan journeys using public transport](#)  
[Travelwest has a map where you can find your nearest car club](#)

## Protecting the natural environment

- Plant native flowering species, pollinators and trees plants that provide food for birds. Avoid non-native species and those that have not been grown in the UK.
- Install wildlife features like bug-hotels, bird/bat boxes or hedgehog holes in fences.
- Leave grass uncut over spring and summer to help insects, birds, and small animals. Consider taking part in [No Mow May](#)
- Use peat-free soil, composts and avoid harmful chemicals like weedkillers and pesticides.
- Encourage active participation in the maintenance and growth of outside space. This pursuit is linked to positive mental health as well as being positive for the environment.

### Helpful Resources

[The Avon Wildlife Trust provides lots of practical help with enhancing wildlife.](#)  
[The Soil Association provide a nature friendly gardening guide.](#)  
[The West of England Nature Partnership highlights the importance of nature recovery](#)

# Providing positive guidance

## Office Property and Equipment

- Re-use items, recycling materials and source pre-loved items where possible. Recycling centres often sell recycled and good quality items.
- Review the efficiency of the electrical equipment you use.
- Where possible, prepare for extreme weather like flooding, cold or heat.
- When purchasing new equipment, check that it can be recycled at the end of its' life. Be sure to check it can't be fixed before you dispose of it.

### Helpful Resources

[Find your nearest Repair Café and download repair guides](#)

[Bristol Wood Recycling](#)

[Somerset Wood Recycling](#)

[The Sofa Project](#)

## Building Works

- Plan and design building work to reduce any environmental impact.
- Conduct an energy audit to improve the building's energy efficiency.
- Use sustainable and low-carbon materials, e.g. sustainably sourced wood.
- Re-use existing facilities and materials where possible.
- Use heating controls effectively. Simple steps can help improve a building's efficiency and cut fuel costs. Insulating buildings and ensuring the efficient use of heating and cooling systems can help.
- Encourage your staff to think about their own energy efficiency, both in and out of the office.
- Use renewable energy suppliers.

### Helpful Resources

[The Centre for Sustainable Energy has information on how to save energy in your community building.](#)

[The Green Register has information on reliable and environmentally-minded building-related contractors.](#)

# Providing positive guidance

## Food Consumption

- Use locally produced and seasonal food, which has a lower carbon footprint.
- Reduce your environmental impact by serving less meat.
- Share leftover food and compost any food that cannot be eaten. Try to avoid single use cutlery and plates when catering.
- If you are catering events, consider vegetarian or vegan food.

### Helpful Resources

[Love Food Hate Waste](#) provides advice on reducing food waste.

[Better Health North Somerset](#) has a guide to sustainable diets.

[Bristol Food Network](#), informs and connects individuals and community projects, who share a vision to transform Bristol into a sustainable food city



# Meeting the future needs of our communities

## Implementing a policy of strategy

One of the most significant things that charities and community groups can do is educate, encourage, and enable the people they work with to act. The most vulnerable and disadvantaged people in our society are those who will experience the impacts most and find it most difficult to adapt. Your organisation may be well placed to identify solutions that work for them and share them with the communities you support.

Once you have thought through the environmental improvements you can make, consider adopting an overall environmental policy or strategy. This document will ideally be created with input from those who manage, deliver, and receive help from your services. Having a policy and showing the positive actions taken to support it, is a fantastic demonstration of your organisation's commitment to reducing climate change.



# Ideas and Resources

## Tools

- [Britain Talks Climate](#) is an evidence-based toolkit designed to support any organisation that wants to engage the British public on climate change
- [The World Wildlife Fund \(WWF\)](#) provide a carbon footprint calculator to help individuals understand their own carbon footprint
- [The Centre for Sustainable Energy](#) has created a community carbon calculator to help people and organisations understand their community's carbon footprint

## Funders

- [The West of England Combined Authority](#) provides grants for small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) making 'green' changes.
- [National Lottery Communities Fund](#) - View a list of funders supporting action on climate change
- [Bristol City Leap Community Energy Fund](#) supports and enables community-led energy projects through a combination of grants and loans.

## Networks

- [Fit for the Future](#) - An environmental sustainability network for charities, heritage organisations and cultural venues including inspiring case studies
- [The Environmental Funders Network](#) is a membership body bringing together trusts and foundations with an interest in funding environmental sustainability.

## Additional sources of information

- [Carbon Copy](#) provides a unique collection of inspiring climate action stories told by 1,000 different organisations across the UK
- [The Centre for Sustainable Energy](#) has information for groups interested in being more energy efficient
- [The South Gloucestershire Council Climate Team](#) provide useful links, resources, and social media packs to help organisations.
- [Plastic Free July](#) provide information and resources on reducing plastic use
- [South Gloucestershire Council's Climate Team](#) offers a free 45-minute online training course that you and your staff can use to learn about climate change issues and what action you can take.
- [The Bristol Climate and Nature Partnership](#) has a Climate Action Programme that aims to support organisations to reduce their carbon emissions, as part of Bristol's efforts to tackle the climate crisis
- [The Bristol Climate and Nature Partnership](#) has resources to support and inspire communities embarking on their community climate action journey
- [The Heritage Lottery Fund](#) - Detailed guidance on environmental sustainability considerations for projects