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# SUSTAINABLE HOME WORKING

A FU<sup>+</sup>UREPLUS GUIDE



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# THE 'WHY'

**COVID-19 has dramatically changed the way we work - potentially for the long-term – with many more people working from home for at least part of the week than was the case pre-pandemic.**

Considering the impact of your home-working teams as part of the overall impact of your business is therefore hugely important.

Not only do greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions produced by employees working from home make up part of an organisation's [scope 3 emissions](#), but the individual choices made by employees working from home can also incrementally have a significant environmental and social impact.



# EMISSIONS

**Communication is key when it comes to educating teams on why cutting emissions at home is important.** We can provide a sustainability training module if you would like to incorporate sustainability impact training into your existing training and development programmes – please ask if you would like more information: [team@future-plus.co.uk](mailto:team@future-plus.co.uk)

**Turning the heating thermostat down by just 1°C can save around 310kg of carbon dioxide a year for typical households in the UK.** [The Energy Saving Trust](#) has some useful tips and guidance on saving energy at home, including how to reduce heat loss.



# REDUCTIONS

**Emissions don't just come from heating and cooling our homes. We could also be considering:**

- Filling the kettle appropriately and only boiling what is needed.
- Reducing our waste as much as possible, including food waste.
- Cutting down on printing or going paperless.
- Running dishwashers and washing machines on eco-cycles.
- Switching off lights and appliances when not in use.
- Replacing conventional light bulbs with LEDs and end-of-life electrical equipment with more energy efficient models.
- Cutting down our digital carbon footprint (clearing out our inbox and subscription list; using links instead of attachments etc.).



# SCOPE 3

According to the [GHG Protocol](#), emissions from homeworking are classed as Scope 3 emissions, i.e. they occur as a consequence of an organisation's actions, but are not owned or controlled by the organisation.

Reporting on Scope 3 emissions is currently voluntary for UK companies, including those qualifying to report under the UK Government's [Streamlined Energy & Carbon Reporting framework](#) (SECR), but companies are encouraged to go beyond the minimum requirements and voluntarily include scope 3 emissions where possible.

These voluntary requirements are [highly likely to become increasingly mandatory over time](#), so staying ahead of the curve will be beneficial.



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# IMPACT

**Small actions at home can aggregate to make bigger and more positive environmental and social impact. Small 'wins' include:**

- Opting for plastic-free tea bags and/or Fair Trade coffee & sugar.
- Cutting down on waste.
- Avoiding excessive packaging and single use plastics.
- Separating waste and recycling wherever possible.
- Installing a water butt and compost bin if outdoor space allows.
- Using eco-friendly cleaning products.
- Supporting small, local businesses.
- Joining local community groups to share, swap or donate food, equipment, furniture, skills or tools.



# COMMUTING

**On the days employees travel to the office, encourage them to consider the environmental impact of their commute.** Travel has a range of environmental impacts, the principal of which is greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

Steps to reduce emissions caused by employee commuting should challenge the need, frequency and mode of travel, and may include setting up a 'Cycle to Work' or electric car scheme, travel blending, or planning work-related travel to avoid congestion.

Are there any [changes](#) employees could make that would reduce their emissions footprint, such as walking, cycling, using public transport, or car-sharing?



# ENVIRONMENTAL FOOTPRINTING

The WWF has a great free tool for calculating [environmental footprint](#).

Measuring your footprint can be a good way of understanding any areas where you might be able to make incremental changes and can often provide some interesting talking points. There's also a free app you could check out called [Giki](#), which looks more specifically at your carbon footprint and offers suggestions and tips on how to lower it.

If you would like any further help with sustainable home working practices and measurements, please get in touch: [team@future-plus.co.uk](mailto:team@future-plus.co.uk)