
Business Operations Environmental Report 2011-16

Summary Report

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Report information**Title:** Environmental Policy Reporting 2011-2016**Version:** Final**Client:** Sustainability West Midlands**Funders:** Sustainability West Midlands**Project Manager:** Anna Bright**Project Contributors:** Sian Thomas SWM, Jodie Rogers Staffordshire University, Oluyemi Jegede, Warwick University, Rachael Biggs**Report checked by:** Anna Bright**Proof read by:** Anna Bright**Disclaimer:** This report represents the independent advice commissioned by Sustainability West Midlands, and not necessarily that of the funders.**Copyright:** This report may be freely distributed and used for public benefit and non-commercial use. If information is used from this report it must reference the source which is "*Environmental Policy Reporting 2011-2016*".**About Sustainability West Midlands**

We are the sustainability adviser for the leaders of the West Midlands. We are also the regional sustainability champion body for the West Midlands, designated by government. We are a not-for-profit company that works with our members in the business, public and voluntary sectors. Our Board is well led and has cross-sector representation; they are supported by our team of staff and associates.

Our vision is that by 2020 businesses and communities are thriving in a West Midlands that is environmentally sustainable and socially just.

Our role is to act as a catalyst for change through our advice to leaders, to develop practical solutions with our members and share success through our communications.

www.sustainabilitywestmidlands.org.uk

Registered company No.04390508

1 Introduction

The aim of this summary is to demonstrate good practice as a small business by producing an annual environmental report that covers the main impacts we have, how we are managing them and securing any potential costs savings or other benefits.

2 Our environmental impacts

Our business employs three staff (2.2 FTE) and uses several associates, volunteers, non-executive board members, and membership organisations to directly deliver our business of sustainability research, advice and events.

We lease office space within the Groundwork UK building in Birmingham. Our landlord operates an environmental management system across the whole of the building which covers waste collection and recycling, procurement of office supplies, and gas and electricity supply.

We are located near good public transport links, with cycle storage, showers and no free car parking. As a result, all our employees regularly commute by cycle or public transport. Many of our visitors also come by public transport.

Therefore, our main environmental impacts are business travel, energy used to heat and light our office space, use and disposal of paper, stationery and IT equipment. Of these the most significant impacts are the greenhouse gases associated with travel and office energy use. This is often referred to as 'carbon emissions'.

3 Our influence

We have chosen our location, building and landlord to support our environmental performance. However, in terms of our daily business operations the only direct influence we can have is in the mode of business travel and how we use the energy in our office space.

4 Our progress

We have worked with our landlord to update the environmental action plan for the building which included installing a new boiler and which, in turn, has dramatically cut gas use and improved recycling, leading to a 14% reduction in waste to landfill.

For our own operations we have introduced a cycle mileage policy for business travel, joined the cycle to work scheme and updated our HR and IT policies to allow flexible working from our office, home or other sites.

In addition, when we have cause to update any of our IT equipment, we have used energy usage as one of the selection criteria.

5 Our benefits

The only cost benefit from our actions is reducing or managing our need for business travel as our office running costs are fixed through our annual fee to our landlord.

However the other benefits include being more resilient to travel or weather disruption, and improved productivity by allowing staff some flexibility in working away from the office at times. Also our well connected location to public transport is proving popular with clients in terms of visiting us and then hot-desking if they have additional meetings near us.

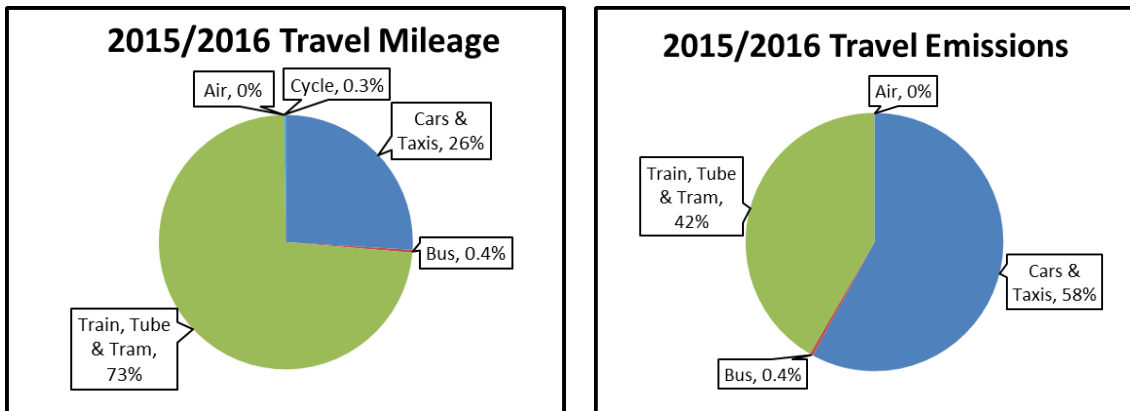
6 Our future actions for 2016/17

- Continue implementing good practice and annual reporting.
- Investigate with the landlord about the ability to manually switch lights on and off in the office as currently on a motion sensor not a light sensor.
- Investigate with the landlord about installing radiator panels/boosters to increase the efficiency of radiators in the office.
- Further increase the use of public transport and cycling for business meetings etc to avoid the use of cars and taxis.

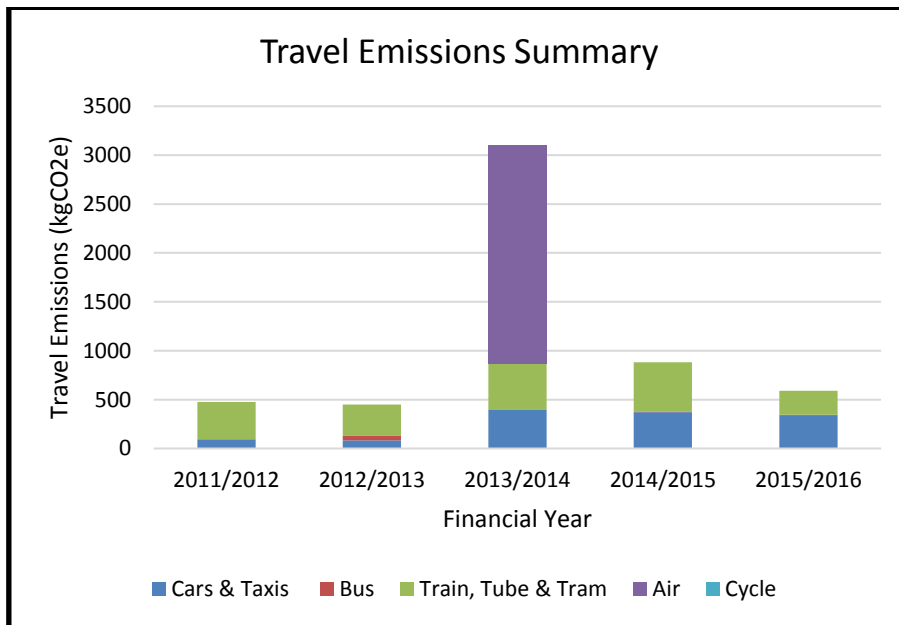
Once these cost-effective measures have been investigated and implemented, then in future years we will investigate measures to 'off-set' the remaining emissions through an appropriate scheme recommended by our members.

7 Appendix: Monitoring and Trend Information

The latest breakdown of the proportion of mileage and emissions by mode of travel for 2015/16 shows that most travel was via public transport whilst the majority of emissions were from cars and taxis. This is the first time that emissions from cars and taxis have outweighed emissions from train and tube journeys. Bus travel remains a low occurrence and is a low contributor to total emissions.

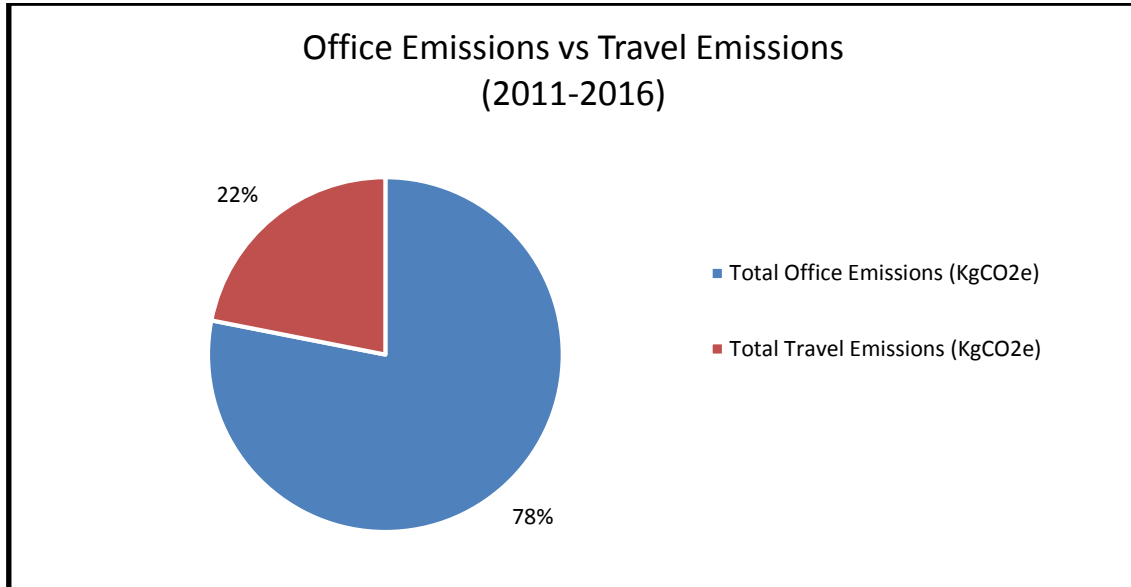


Total travel emissions from 2015/16 have reduced by 33 per cent from the previous year, returning to similar levels shown in 2011/12 and 2012/13.

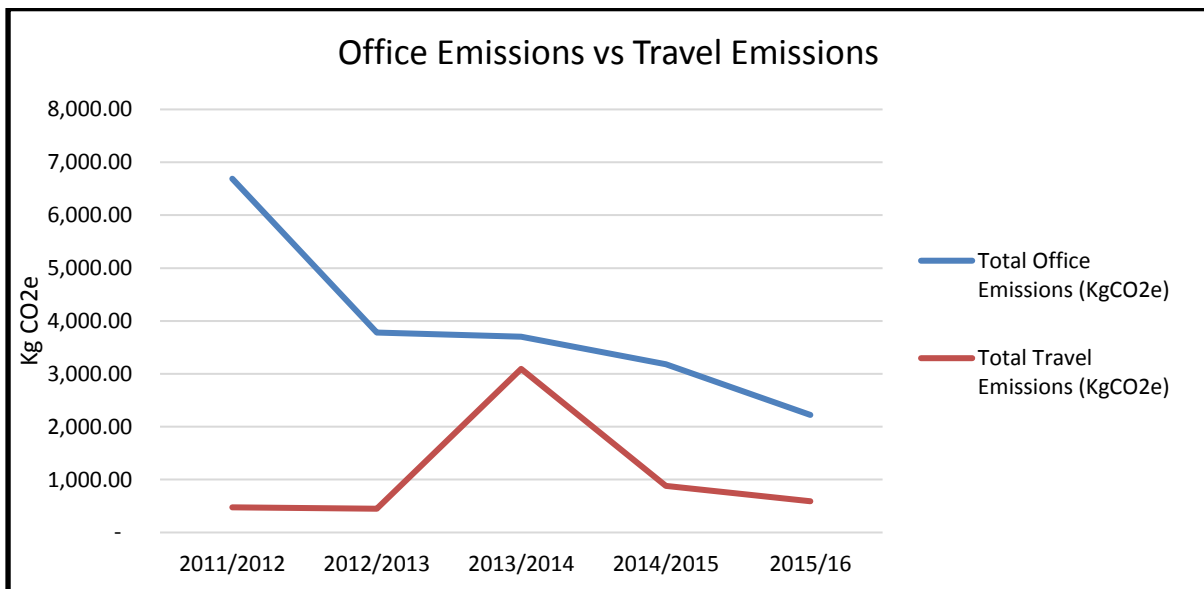


Office emissions have also reduced from the 2014/15 financial year by 957kgCO₂e to the lowest level within the reported period. This is due to a decreased energy use and improved energy efficiency within the office and the rest of the building.

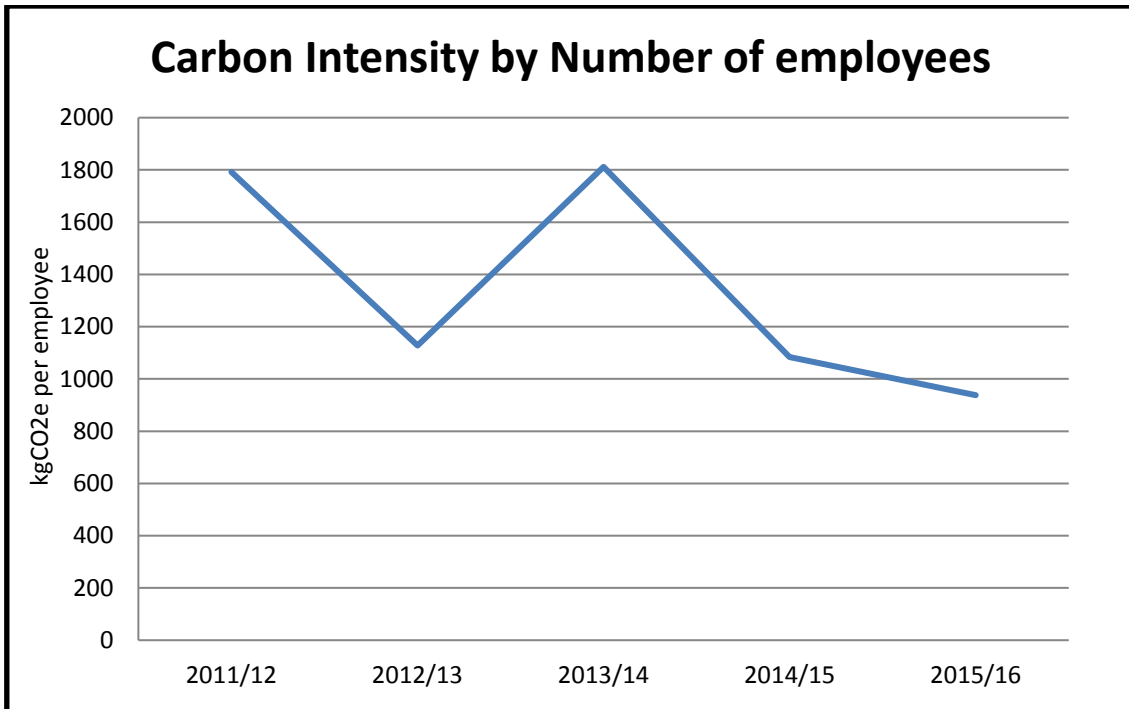
Our monitoring shows that our office energy use has the biggest impact on our total carbon emissions.



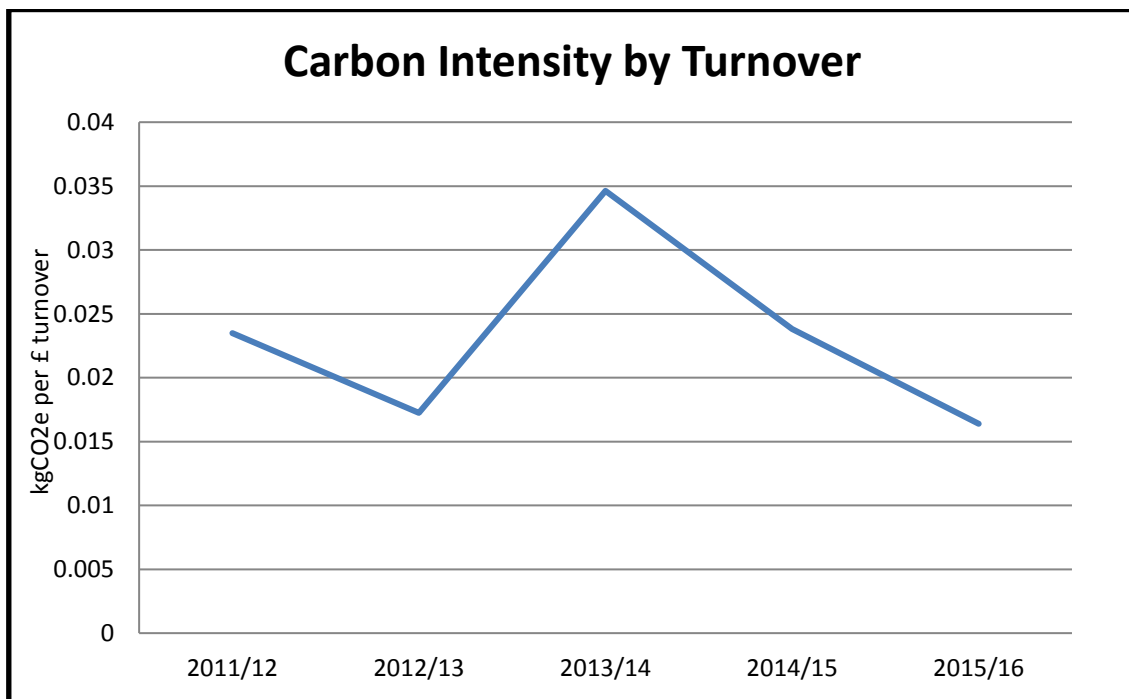
The impact of upgrading the boiler can be seen in 2012/13 and a flight to deliver a conference in China can be seen in 2013/14. It is evident that 2015/16 was a good year in terms of reducing carbon emissions from previous years from both office and travel sources.



For SWM, it is most appropriate to measure carbon intensity by number of employees and turnover to normalise the data for a useful comparison over time. The number of employees has decreased gradually over this time, from four in 2011/12 to three in 2015/16. The carbon footprint per employee is at its lowest for the 2015/16 year, below 1000kgCO₂e, indicating an improvement in our energy efficiency.



Annual turnover saw a marked decline from 2011 to 2015 but improved in the 2015/16 financial year. It is encouraging to see the recent reduction in emissions alongside an increase in turnover.



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