

Cost of Trading: Be Successful

With energy and fuel prices on the rise, becoming more environmentally conscious may feel like a luxury. But making such changes could also save you money.



Use online resources to conduct an energy audit



Simply reducing the amount of energy used is one of the easiest way to save money and lower your footprint. There are simple checklists that will guide you through assessing your current sources of energy use while highlighting opportunities for improvements. Actions might include behaviour changes, adjusting settings or upgrades with quick payback periods. For example sites with a condensing combi boiler may not be using the most efficient flow temperature. [The Heating Hub](#) suggests that flow temperatures may be set too high and 6-8% savings in gas can be achieved by simply adjusting this. Similarly, the [Carbon Planner](#) tool helps businesses understand the impact of their day-to-day activities on the environment.



Access government funding



Your business may qualify for a grant for an energy efficiency upgrade through Government schemes. There are a variety of schemes out there and it's worth seeing what's available in your local area. Use the list on the [BEIS website](#) or go directly to your Local Authority.



Shop around for energy suppliers



An energy broker will find and present the best deals for energy suppliers. Deals will be based on factors such as business size, energy capacity needed and the number of years you're looking to commit. Brokers will charge a commission per kWh, so it's worth reviewing directly with suppliers as well.



Use fleet monitoring systems



There are a variety of products in the market to help here. You can make fuel savings through systems that help with route planning or those that give feedback on driving performance like excessive acceleration or harsh braking. These tend to be low cost and give instant feedback on actions you can take.



Donate your old furniture and equipment



If you're moving office, or having a refurb, you can donate your old furniture to local organisations to use or to sell on. There is usually little to no cost, so it's a cheaper alternative to booking a waste collection. This contributes to a circular economy as items in good condition will avoid being sent to waste.





✔ Offer access to electric vehicles on the company benefit scheme

Under salary sacrifice schemes, there is a benefit to both employers and employees when offering electric vehicles. From April 2022, the benefit-in-kind tax on electric vehicles via salary sacrifice is 2% on the gross amount for which tax is due. This increases incrementally based on the emissions rating of the vehicle up to 37%. Employers will pay the lower rate for electric vehicles on National Insurance contributions and employees will pay lower rates on income tax. Other benefits include reduced costs to run if mileage is charged back to the company and avoiding congestion charges in cities.

✔ Review the opportunity for freight pooling

Pressures when shipping goods, such as increased cost and staff shortages, mean you sometimes have to be creative to ensure your customers get your products. Freight pooling or consolidation is an appealing option. This means, when you are sending goods which take up less than a full container or truckload, you can share transport with other businesses who use a similar route. This is usually offered through industry initiatives or through logistics organisations.

✔ Buy remanufactured IT equipment

When reviewing the life cycle emissions of electronic hardware, the greatest impact is the sourcing of materials and manufacturing, which are typically as high as 70-80% of embodied emissions. Buying items which have been remanufactured avoids most of those embodied emissions compared with buying new items. Using trusted suppliers means items will come with a warranty and will perform at a level comparable to buying new.

✔ Review options for cloud computing

Servers on your premises usually require a high amount of energy to run and cool the room they're in. By moving to a cloud hosting provider you could save money spent on running servers. You can also take the opportunity to conduct a review and consolidate your online usage. Wholegrain Digital produced a **Digital Declutter Toolkit** which suggests actions you can take to reduce your digital carbon footprint.

✔ Challenge business travel

The growth in remote working has shown that many businesses can work with less face to face interaction. Analyse your business travel - consider the purpose of journeys and look for ways to reduce costs of travel and accommodation. If you must travel, choose the mode wisely. Air travel has the highest environmental impact so, if you can replace any domestic or short flights with rail, there's a huge reduction in impact. For example, taking the train from London to France has 90% less emissions per journey when compared to flying!

References: Lower the flow temperature on your boiler to save 12% (theheatinghub.co.uk) | Electric vehicle finance | NatWest Bank | What Is The Carbon Footprint Of A Laptop? - Circular Computing™ | Digital Declutter Toolkit from Business Declares (wholegraindigital.com) | The greener way to go | Eurostar

Tax reliefs referred to are those applying under current legislation which may change. The availability and value of any tax reliefs will depend on your individual circumstances.

