



Net Zero for Small Businesses

**SmartestEnergy
Business Customer
Help Guide**

*“Helping you to get
started on your
smartest journey to
net zero”*

Turning a new leaf with net zero

... which can be the hardest part. Looking at things from a different business perspective, **making that commitment to change**, coming up with a plan, and then of course sticking to it are all challenges that your business and employees will face.

That said, simply by reading this guide is a good start. We'll help you think about what net zero means to your business, breaking down the jargon and highlighting quick wins for carbon reduction.

An important point to note is that change won't happen over night, the right approach for your business takes time to figure out and put into action. It must also be sustainable in the long-term.

And remember, we're all in this together, no matter what industry/sector, size of business, etc, we all have a responsibility to change how we operate to reduce our impact on the climate.



“Climate change is ultimately a **mindset change...**”

Next > **Jargon Busting**

Reducing those jargon emissions

A recent YouGov survey of business decision makers found that **only 29% of UK businesses have a strategy for net zero**, with 42% feeling overwhelmed by what is required. What likely doesn't help is the jargon, it can sometimes be a bit confusing, so we've covered off the basics below to help you.

> Net Zero

When greenhouse gas emissions are reduced to as close to zero as possible, to the point where they can be balanced out by removing greenhouse gases from the atmosphere.

> Carbon Footprint

A measure of an individual, or in this case, a business or product carbon emissions. It covers all greenhouse gases expressed in tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent.

> Carbon Neutral

Reducing emissions to the point where a balance can be reached between the amount of carbon emitted and the amount being removed from the atmosphere, often referred to as net zero.

> Carbon Offsetting

Ways to offset unavoidable emissions, such as tree planting or environmental restoration, also includes emission-reducing schemes and renewable projects.

> Decarbonisation

Another term for the act of reducing Co2 and greenhouse gas emissions.

> Greenhouse Gases

There are six key greenhouse gases that are contributing to climate change through human activity including Carbon dioxide, Methane and Nitrous oxide.

> Scopes 1, 2, 3

These are the three scopes to categorise the different kinds of emissions a business creates in its own operations and in its wider 'value chain' (its suppliers and customers). **Scope 1** emissions cover sources that a business owns or controls directly – e.g. burning fuel in a fleet of vehicles. **Scope 2** are emissions that a business causes indirectly when the energy it purchases and uses is produced.

Scope 3 emissions are not produced by the business itself, instead those that it's indirectly responsible for, up and down its value chain.

Next > Making a Plan

Eat your vegetables, reduce your footprint

You'll need a plan to help you on your journey to net zero, initially it might be something simple like carrying out the quick wins in this net zero guide. But to build something sustainable, you'll need to be able to measure your emissions to understand your business footprint, identify emission hotspots and work out how to reduce them over time.

SmartestEnergy Business is developing it's own carbon footprint calculator for customers, but in the meantime, we can recommend using a tool developed by the Carbon Trust, specifically built for small & medium sized businesses.

The tool is not an extensive calculator but will help you measure emissions from your fuel and processes (Scope 1 emissions) and those emissions from electricity purchased to operate your business assets (Scope 2 emissions).



Carbon Footprint Calculator:

<https://www.carbontrust.com/resources/sme-carbon-footprint-calculator>

Next > **Quick Wins**

Renewable energy won't cost the earth

If you don't have time to work out your carbon footprint, no problem. We've some quick wins which are relatively straightforward to introduce that could even have a positive effect on your bottom line.

Net Zero Quick Wins



1. Switch to Renewable Energy

One of the simplest but most effective ways to reduce your carbon footprint. A business using 30,000 kWh of non renewable energy a year is the equivalent to over 8 tonnes of CO2 emissions. Plus, we break the misconception that renewable energy ultimately costs a lot more, when in reality it doesn't.

Learn more about our low cost, REGO (Renewable Energy Guarantees of Origin) backed energy products via our website:

<https://smartestenergybusiness.com>

Renewable energy won't cost the earth (cont.)

Net Zero Quick Wins



2. Reduce your Car Travel

Another positive step to cutting your emissions may be to consider your forms of transportation. The average petrol car on the road in the UK produces the equivalent of 180g of CO₂ every kilometre, while a diesel car produces 173g of CO₂/km.

Electric cars are the lowest carbon – they emit around a third of the CO₂ of a petrol car in the UK. Government grants may be available to subsidise the cost of new electric vehicles.

If your business relies heavily on the use of transport, you may also want to seek advice from The Energy Saving Trust (EST). Through a Green Fleet Review they can help you identify opportunities to reduce emissions, fuel costs and expenditure.



3. Get Energy Efficient Lighting

Likely the most obvious but changing lighting across a building to more energy efficient options such as LED can make a big difference. Use of natural lighting and switching off where possible can also be a quick win,

Motion sensors and dimmable lights should also help reduce electricity usage and therefore costs

Renewable energy won't cost the earth (cont.)

Net Zero Quick Wins



4. Check Office Temperatures

Lots of energy can be wasted if heating and/or cooling systems are incorrectly set or not working in harmony. It might be worth installing a heating management system to control this. If your heating system is much simpler, ensure the setting on the thermostat reflects the desired temperature.

Also ensure staff are trained to avoid dramatic swings in temperature or even take away the ability to manually adjust the thermostat. Make sure your boiler is regularly serviced to ensure it is operating as efficiently as possible.

Window film that allows light in but reflects the heat back out during the summer is a relatively inexpensive option. This gives you the benefit of natural light whilst keeping the heat out in summer.



5. Reuse, Recycle and Reduce

Down to basics but empowering your workforce to reduce energy, water and paper consumption all helps to reduce your carbon footprint. Actions like going paperless and ensuring staff have reusable food and drinks containers can all help.

There are solutions everywhere to going digital and therefore cutdown on paper usage. If you can't go without it or need printed collateral, then weigh up the cost of using recycled paper.

Renewable energy won't cost the earth (cont.)

Net Zero Quick Wins

It's also essential that you have recycling bins for waste. Appointing a collector that recycles is a great way to ensure that more of your plastic, paper and metal can be used again.

One of the biggest waste areas still continues to be plastic, if your business uses a lot, research environmentally sound alternatives and start to encourage your suppliers do the same.



6. Decarbonise your Supply Chain

We mentioned earlier about the different scopes, your supply chain falls within Scope 3, which unfortunately is usually the hardest to reduce. It can take a lot of time to engage and also agree action with existing suppliers and their customers to reduce emissions.

Whilst this not necessarily a quick win, there is increasing pressure on suppliers to have sustainable credentials. Increasing awareness and new legislation is forcing businesses to evaluate their environmental impact. You might already find that many have their own plans to reduce carbon emissions.

Sharing and communicating your own plan is a critical step in involving suppliers in your sustainability efforts. In time you may even want to create a net zero code of practice to consult when engaging new suppliers or reviewing partnerships with existing ones. We are all in this together so the sooner you start having these conversations the better.

Next > **Further Reading**

Learn what it takes to become a bright spark

As with important matters such as climate change, carbon emission reduction and net zero, there is a wealth of information online. We appreciate you have a business to run, and there's so much to digest, that's why we've created this customer guide.

*That said it would be a worthy investment of your time to dig around and find out other sources that offer advice and support on the matter. As a starting point, we can recommend **the Net Zero for Businesses Guide** compiled by The Carbon Trust. It's available to download directly from their website link below.*



Further Net Zero Advice:

<https://www.carbontrust.com/resources/a-guide-to-net-zero-for-businesses>

Next > **Get In Touch**

Get In Touch

SmartestEnergy Business will keep you informed of any new products or services to help you on the journey to net zero.

If you have any questions regarding net zero, please get in touch with our dedicated Customer Services, they'll be happy to help.



 **Phone:** 01903 703400

 **Email:** customerservices.business@smartestenergy.com

 **Online:** smartweb.smartestenergy.com

Keep up-to-date and follow us:



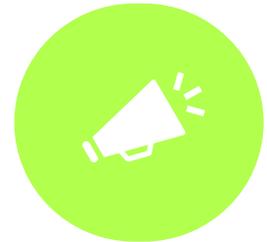
LinkedIn:

linkedin.com/company/smartestenergy



Twitter:

twitter.com/SmartestEnergy



Info Hub:

smartestenergybusiness.com