

Carbon Neutral & Climate Positive Policy

July 2025



Summary

This policy presents the actions that we will take as an organisation to minimise our environmental impact and contribute to the fight against climate change.

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Introduction

[Note, this policy should be read with our Climate Statement].

At Difference, we are committed to reducing our environmental impact and working towards carbon neutrality. As a small charity in North East England, we recognise our responsibility to measure, reduce, and offset our carbon emissions while continuing our vital work in the community. Over the past few months, Difference has been researching pathways to becoming both **carbon neutral** (balancing our emissions to net zero) and **climate positive** (removing more carbon than we emit).

Following engagement with land agents, the Woodland Trust, Forestry Commission, Great Northumberland Forest Initiative, Woodland Carbon Code, carbon accreditation organisations, and housing associations involved in retrofitting, we have identified the following approach:

We will focus on **reducing emissions at source** before considering **carbon capture** or **offsetting** for unavoidable emissions.

Our Reduction Strategy

We will take the following concrete actions:

- **Preventative measures** – Recycling, reusing, and reducing resource use to prevent carbon generation.
- **Conservation approaches** – Improving energy efficiency through insulation, building design, and operational practices.
- **Green energy procurement** – Purchasing renewable energy from sources such as wind, solar, and other low-carbon technologies.
- **Adoption of clean technologies** – Using electric vehicles, heat pumps, and other low-emission solutions.

- **Sustainable transport practices** – Encouraging walking, cycling, and public transport.

Tracking & Accountability

Difference will actively measure and monitor its emissions:

- **Individual staff tracking** – Each staff member's emissions will be captured monthly and annually, in kilograms of CO₂e.
- **Data collection** will cover work activities such as energy use, travel, technology use (including AI tools), and office activities.
- **Organisational carbon ledger** – Monthly data will be compiled into a single organisational footprint report, which determines the exact volume of carbon that needs to be offset to achieve carbon neutrality.

Offsetting Residual Emissions

For residual emissions that cannot be avoided, Difference will use **verified carbon capture solutions**, including:

- Tree planting, peatland restoration, and other accredited carbon sequestration projects under schemes such as the Woodland Carbon Code.
- Retrofitting domestic properties with green energy solutions and improved insulation, working in partnership with [HACT](#)

Implementation Commitments

- Prioritising virtual meetings to minimise travel emissions.
- Using energy-efficient technologies and switching to renewable energy sources wherever possible.
- When in-person activities are essential, offsetting associated emissions through verified conservation or carbon capture schemes.
- We will create a specific budget line for each project which will entirely devoted to carbon neutral and climate positive work.

- Publishing an annual carbon report showing emissions per staff member, organisational totals, and the offset activities undertaken to achieve carbon neutrality and progress towards climate positivity.

Consultation & Engagement Commitments

We will consult with our members via the North East Disabled Climate Action Forum about this policy and its commitments on an annual basis. This will ensure that our climate action will be directed by the needs and issues of our disabled membership.