North Devon Council

Report Date: Monday, 4 November 2024

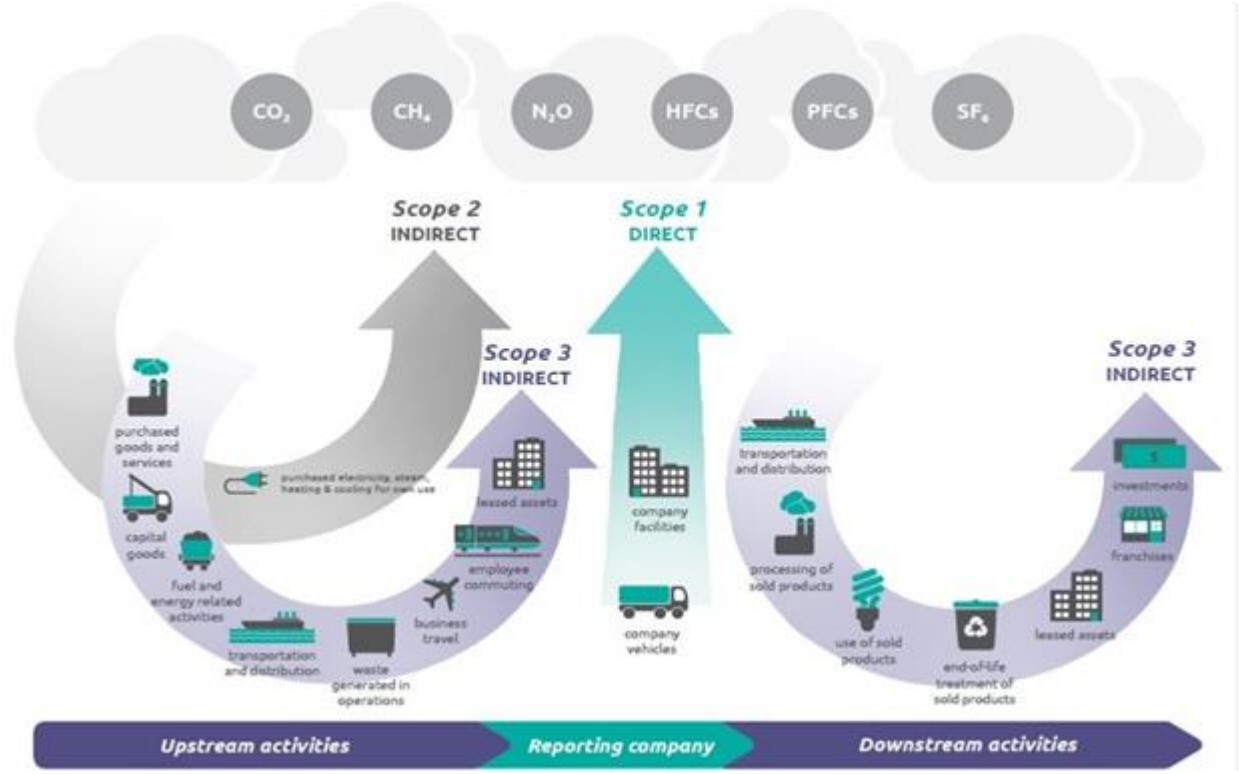
Topic: North Devon Council Carbon Footprint Report 2023 2024

Report by: Donna Sibley, Sustainability and Climate Officer

1. INTRODUCTION
   1.1. North Devon Council declared a climate emergency in 2019 and pledged to make the Council carbon neutral by 2030.

   1.2. We are committed to publishing an annual update to our carbon footprint using HM Government – Environmental Reporting Guidelines (updated March 2019) in order to provide a sound basis to measure our progress against this target. This approach is consistent with the UN Greenhouse Gas Protocol.

   1.3. Our carbon footprint includes scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions.



2. RECOMMENDATIONS
   2.1. That the results of the carbon audit be noted.
   2.2. That the options for reducing these emissions be noted.
   2.3. That this report provides a basis for discussion for members on our way forward.

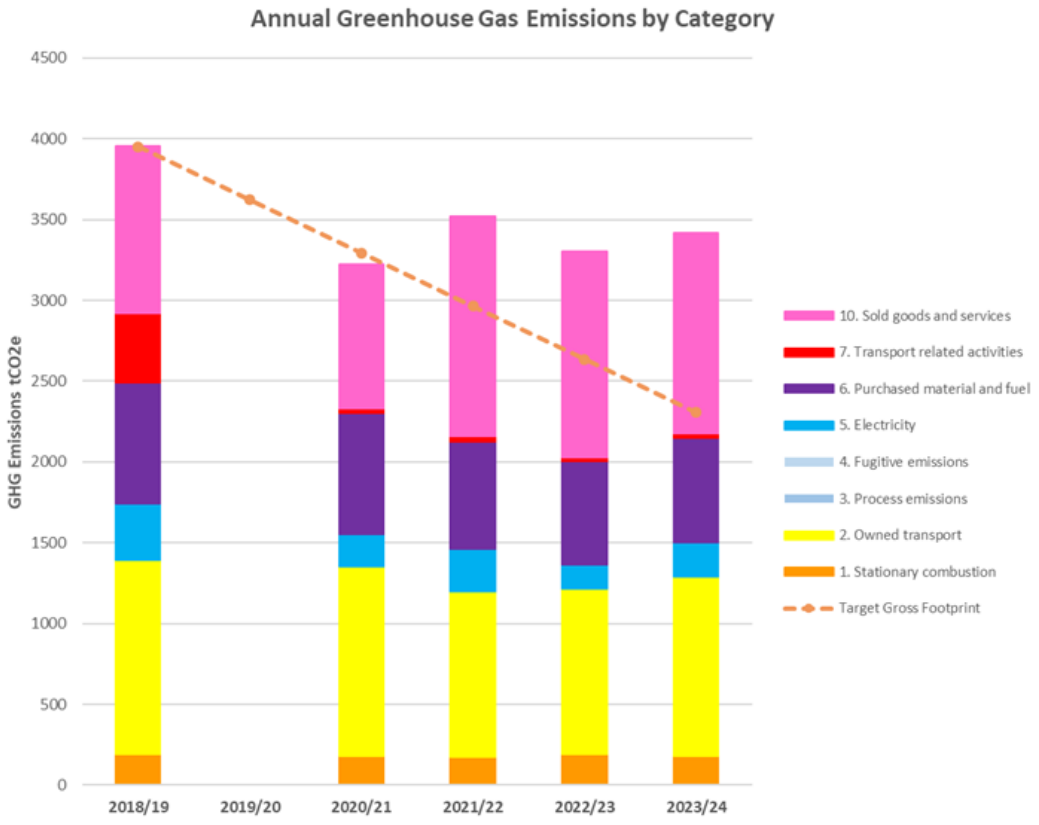
2.4. To consider the outcomes of the Equality Impact Assessment as summarised in paragraph 6 of the report.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1. To enable members to ensure North Devon Council reduces its carbon emissions in line with its Climate Emergency Declaration.

4. REPORT

4.1. The latest carbon footprint calculation shows our footprint for 2023/2024 is 3425 tonnes carbon dioxide equivalent. The graph below shows progress to date in meeting our 2030 carbon neutral target.



4.2. The table below shows the same carbon footprint for 2018/19 (our baseline year) and 2023/24, in tonnes CO2 equivalent.

4.3. Notes on each element of the carbon footprint, and how these can be reduced, come after the table.

Scope	Category	2018/19	2023/24
1	1. Stationary combustion	191	184
1	2. Owned transport	1202	1109
1	3. Process emissions	0	0
1	4. Fugitive emissions	0	0
2	5. Electricity	351	212
3	6. Purchased material and fuel	748	646
3	7. Transport related activities	426	26
3	8. Waste disposal	0	3
3	9. Purchased services	0	0
3	10. Sold goods and services	1034	1245
	11. Offset	0	0
	Gross Footprint	3951	3425
	Net Footprint	3951	3425
	Target Gross Footprint	3951.47	2305.02

4.4. Scope 1 emissions are direct emissions, ie they come from fuels we burn on site or in our vehicles.

4.5. Stationary combustion (shown in orange) are emissions from the gas we use at the Crematorium, North Devon Museum and Barnstaple Bus Station; and the gas oil we use at BEC. These emissions can only be reduced by replacing boilers with more efficient boilers (small impact) or heat pumps (significant impact). To date, we have not been successful in obtaining Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme funding for boiler replacement projects.

4.6. Owned transport (shown in yellow) are emissions from the fuel we use in our owned/leased vehicles. The majority of these emissions come from diesel HGVs used in our Waste & Recycling (W&R) operations. Emissions can only be reduced by investing in lower emission vehicles (very small impact) or electric vehicles (small impact as only practicable for cars and vans at present) or low carbon fuels such as HVO (significant impact).

4.7. We trialled an electric HGV in our W&R operation to assess if EVs could replace diesel in our fleet. Whilst the vehicle was able to cope with the shorter rounds in urban areas it was not able to collect waste from all properties on our longer, rural rounds. We would need to remodel all our collection rounds in order to purchase a vehicle(s) solely for urban use.

4.8. Process emissions are emissions from industrial processes. North Devon Council has no such processes.

4.9. Fugitive emissions are emissions associated with refrigerant leaks from cooling equipment. North Devon Council serviced a number of cooling systems, none of which required topping up, and so has been taken as zero in the footprint.

4.10. Scope 2 emissions are indirect emissions, they come from electricity generation off-site.

4.11. Electricity (shown in blue) is used in our properties. For several years this element of our footprint has decreased as the national grid has decarbonised by investing in renewable energy. In 2023 the proportion of gas used to generate electricity increased and so emissions increased. Whilst we have invested in energy efficiency at five of our offices and there has been a decrease in electricity usage, this isn't apparent from our carbon footprint. These emissions can be reduced by improving energy efficiency (LED lighting, movement controls, heating controls etc) and by replacing grid electricity with on-site renewable electricity generation. Replacement of gas/oil boilers with heat pumps will increase our electricity consumption unless on-site renewable generation is installed at the same time.

4.12. Scope 3 emissions are all other indirect emissions. This includes emissions relating to the goods and services we buy, to transport (commuting, business travel and 'grey fleet' mileage) and to the goods and services we sell. Note reporting of scope 3 emissions is difficult to do accurately and this element of our carbon footprint is massively under-reported.

4.13. Purchased material and fuel (shown in purple) are the embedded emissions from the manufacture of the goods we buy. We only report emissions associated with water supply to our buildings, and the 'Well to Tank' emissions associated with the fuels we either burn on site (stationary combustion) or in our vehicles (owned transport), with electricity generation, with business travel and with sold goods and services. We do not include the embedded emissions from the other goods we purchase.

4.14. These emissions can be reduced by decarbonising our scope 1 and 2 emissions (see 1. Stationary combustion, 2. Owned transport and 5. Electricity) or our sold goods and services (see 10. Sold Goods and Services). The calculation I use for business travel will not record reductions in emissions from a switch to low/no carbon vehicles (see 7. Transport related activities for explanation).

4.15. Transport related activities (shown in red) are the emissions from our ‘grey fleet’ mileage, where staff use their own vehicles for business travel. We do not record vehicle details for individual members of staff and so this calculation uses a carbon conversion factor for an average-sized car with unknown fuel. We do not report other emissions from business travel as we do not record journey length for rail/air/sea travel. We do not report commuting emissions as we do not have any information on how staff travel to work, and for how many miles.

4.16. These emissions can be reduced by better journey planning (where possible) or switching to low/no emission vehicles. Improvements from switching to low/no emission vehicles won’t be captured by my calculation as we use the ‘average-sized car unknown fuel’ factor for the mileage calculation.

4.17. Waste disposal are the emissions associated with disposal of the Council's own waste e.g. from its offices. We only report emissions associated with wastewater disposal from our buildings. These are too small to show on the graph. We do not report other waste as we do not hold information about the types of waste and weight we dispose of. These emissions can be reduced by improvements in water efficiency.

4.18. Purchased services are the emissions associated with the services we buy. No information was available regarding these emissions and so they have been excluded from the footprint.

4.19. Sold goods and services (shown in pink) are the emissions from anything we sell as a Council. We sell red diesel at Ilfracombe Harbour and emissions from this is included in our footprint. This is an important service for harbour users and these emissions can only be reduced by reduced demand for diesel on site. Some users are switching to electric pleasure craft, and the Council is hoping to install a charging point at the Harbour in the short to mid-term. Commercial users will continue to use diesel. It is highly unlikely that demand for red diesel at the Harbour will cease before 2030.

4.20. Offset emissions are the emissions from any renewable electricity that is generated and exported, and any purchased carbon offset credits. We do not generate any renewable electricity to export, and we do not purchase carbon offset credits. The woodland carbon credits associated with the Yeo Valley Community Woodland extension will be included here once we get Pending Issuance Units from the site. There are a lack of other appropriate offsetting mechanisms available to the Council at present.

4.21. Strategy and Resources Committee need to acknowledge that it will be extremely difficult for the Council to be carbon neutral by 2030.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1. No additional resource is required to calculate our carbon footprint at present.

5.2. Additional resources may be required to reduce emissions; these will be identified at project level.

6. EQUALITIES ASSESSMENT

6.1. There are no equalities implications anticipated as a result of this report.

7. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

7.1. This report is neutral with respect to the environment, but it does provide the baseline data on which to act and report.

8. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

8.1. What impact, positive or negative, does the subject of this report have on:

8.1.1. The commercialisation agenda: the Council's desire to reduce its carbon footprint may affect its commercialisation decisions.

8.1.2. Improving customer focus: n/a

8.1.3. Regeneration or economic development: the Council's desire to reduce its carbon footprint may affect its regeneration or economic development decisions.

9. CONSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

9.1. The decision in respect of the recommendations in this report can be made by this Committee pursuant to delegated powers provided in Part 3 Annexe 1 paragraph 1.

10. STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

This report contains no confidential information or exempt information under the provisions of Schedule 12A of 1972 Act.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report: North Devon Council Carbon, Environment & Biodiversity Plan 2024 (The background papers are available for inspection and kept by the author of the report).

12. STATEMENT OF INTERNAL ADVICE

The author (below) confirms that advice has been taken from all appropriate Councillors and Officers: Donna Sibley, Sustainability & Climate Officer