



Department for  
Communities and  
Local Government

# Annual Sustainability Report 2013-14

(For the year ended 31 March 2014)

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# Introduction

- 1.1 The Department for Communities and Local Government is fully committed to operating an efficient estate and reducing the environmental impact of its operations and their associated costs. This is the fourth year that Department for Communities and Local Government has reported non-financial and financial indicators of its sustainability performance in its Annual Report and Accounts, following the HM Treasury guidance: 'Public Sector Sustainability Reporting' published at [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk). The department is reporting a full data set including its executive agencies and non-Departmental Public Bodies . Sustainability data and delivery plans are also reported more frequently to Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs and the Cabinet Office. A summary report has been published within the Annual Report and Accounts.

## Scope

- 1.2 This report seeks to align the Greening Government Commitments and the department's accounting boundaries. However, where differences exist, financial data has been aligned to the department's accounting boundary and non-financial data aligned to Greening Government Commitments. As such, non-financial data also includes information from Queen Elizabeth II Conferencing Centre.
- 1.3 Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre is primarily a non-office site and while included in the department's total water consumption data, it falls outside the office benchmark figures.
- 1.4 For greater transparency we voluntarily report the impact of our international business travel. This ensures greater transparency and supports the requirement to offset emissions from ministerial and official air travel.

# Targets and summary of 2013-14 performance

- 1.5 Overall, Department for Communities and Local Government has continued to make strong progress towards meeting the Greening Government Commitment targets, while also reducing associated financial costs. Performance is set out in the tables on the following pages. Where the department has already met a Greening Government Commitment target, further efficiencies will be sought if viable.
- 1.6 The department's sustainable operations delivery plans and targets are fully aligned to the Greening Government Commitment targets. Where the Greening Government Commitment framework has not set quantified targets for a specific area, the department has defined its own aspirational target, including a total estate water reduction target and a target recycling rate. These are detailed in relevant sections and in Table 1a.

**Table 1a: Non-financial 2013-14 performance against key Greening Government 2015 targets, measured against 2009-10 baseline**

	Reduce Greenhouse Gas (scope 1, 2 & 3 gross) Emissions by 25%	Reduce Total Estate Water Consumption by 25%	Reduce Total Waste Generation by 25%	Achieve Recycling Rate of 85%
Performance (2013-14 measured against 2009-10)	-54%	-50%	-68%	72%
Pan-government performance (2012-13 measured against 2009-10)*	-14%	-9%	-15%	N/A

\*Pan government 2013-14 performance not available at time of publication.

- 1.7 The department has made considerable financial savings following the reduction in energy, water, UK business travel and waste disposal; this despite an increase in their real cost. Expenditure has been reduced by £3.4 million in 2013-14 compared to 2009-10 levels, the largest saving coming from UK business travel amounting for a saving of £2.3 million.
- 1.8 The energy and water costs are derived from utility bills, waste disposal costs from monthly invoicing from the department's facilities management suppliers and travel costs combine staff travel claims and invoices from Department for Communities and Local Government's contracted travel service providers.

**Table 1b: Direct financial benefits of Department for Communities and Local Government's Greening Government programme**

	Energy	UK Business Travel	Waste Disposal	Water Use	Total £'000
2013-14 cost vs. 2009-10	-925	-2,280	-144	-13	-3,362
2013-14 cost vs. 2010-11	-325	-551	-131	9	-998
2013-14 cost vs. 2011-12	56	795	-123	12	740
2013-14 cost vs. 2012-13	303	1,193	3	33	1,532

# Greenhouse gas emissions

## 1.9 Targets for Greenhouse Gas emission reductions:

- reduce Greenhouse Gas emissions by 25% by 2015 from a 2009-10 baseline from the whole estate and business-related transport; and
- reduce domestic business travel flights by 20% by 2015 from a 2009-10 baseline.

**Table 2: Greenhouse gas emissions summary**

Greenhouse Gas Emissions		2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Non-Financial Indicators (tonnesCO <sub>2</sub> e)	Total Gross Emissions for Scopes 1 & 2.	18,999	16,123	12,219	11,642	9,356
	Gross emissions attributable to Scope 3 official business travel	4,801	3,869	2,131	2,360	1,544
	Number of domestic air travel flights	542	617	198	289	275
Related Energy Consumption (mWh)	Electricity: Non-Renewable	25,943	22,691	18,637	3,459	1,091
	Electricity: Renewable	1,695	2,525	1,031	14,556	14,284
	Gas	20,901	16,261	10,521	10,977	10,438
Financial Indicators (£'000)	Expenditure on Energy	2,944	2,344	1,963	1,716	2,019
	Carbon Reduction Commitment Licence Expenditure (2010 onwards)	N/A	N/A	1	85	98
	Expenditure on accredited offsets (e.g. Government Carbon Offsetting Fund)	1	1	1	1	1
	Expenditure on official business travel	6,160	4,431	3,085	2,687	3,880
	Expenditure on domestic air travel	270	97	22	23	65

\*The department will be offsetting emissions from ministerial and official business travel undertaken in 2013-14 during the current financial year.

- 1.10 Department for Communities for Local Government has continued to reduce its total in-scope gross Greenhouse Gas emissions through 2013-14, achieving a total 54% reduction since the 2009-10 baseline year. This is in addition to meeting the previous Administration's Sustainable Operations on the Government Estate carbon targets and exceeding the Prime Minister's target to reduce carbon emissions from offices by 10% over 12 months from May 2010, achieving a 19% reduction.

## Estate emissions

- 1.11 The most significant aspects of Department for Communities and Local Government's emissions are from electricity use and fuel consumption by gas boilers; delivery plans have consequently focused on these areas.
- 1.12 Emissions reductions from energy use have largely been realised through low and no cost energy efficiency measures, estate rationalisation (by using space more efficiently and co-locating with other organisations), and by operating our remaining buildings even more efficiently.
- 1.13 The core department's electricity is purchased via the Crown Commercial Service energy framework from renewable sources, and is therefore Climate Change Levy exempt.
- 1.14 Although the department has met the Greening Government Commitments Greenhouse Gases commitment, the department is committed to continual improvement and delivery plans are regularly reviewed to identify further opportunities for cost-effective Greenhouse Gases reductions. This helps ensure that Department for Communities and Local Government's own operational emissions remain on track for meeting the targets set out in the Climate Change Act 2008.
- 1.15 In 2013-14 the department introduced thin client devices, which should deliver substantial savings as well as smarter, more flexible working practices. In 2012-13, the department achieved the Carbon Saver Gold Standard, which provides independent assessment of the department's commitment to carbon management in order to make year on year carbon reductions, and was also ranked first in central government in the Carbon Reduction Commitment Energy Efficiency Scheme performance league table.

## Domestic business travel

- 1.16 Expenditure on domestic travel significantly increased by £1.2m this year compared to 2012-13, attributed to better management information from the Homes and Communities Agency and their suppliers.



**Table 3: Domestic business travel**

Domestic Travel Mode		2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Non Financial Indicators (Tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> e)	Car	3,908	3,149	2,172	1,970	1,161
	Rail	843	679	447	356	351
	Taxi	18	15	28	7	7
	Other (bus, tube, tram)	1	1	17	4	2
	Domestic Flights	32	26	25	24	22
	Total	4,802	3,870	2,689	2,361	1,544

1.17 The department has worked hard to reduce the amount of business travel and ensuring that where travel is necessary, this is undertaken by the most sustainable mode of transport. By replacing the need for travel, utilising information communication technology solutions for communications and meetings, the department has been able to demonstrate that good environmental governance also results in cost saving and value for money. This approach has seen a 68% reduction in carbon emissions from Department for Communities and Local Government's domestic business travel.

1.18 The number of domestic air travel flights has been reduced by 49%, largely due to the department's non-Departmental Public Bodies and Executive Agencies introducing a requirement for Director-level authorisation before booking any domestic air travel. Tighter spending controls have influenced overall travel behaviour, along with a conscious emphasis on behaviour change and a focus on technology to support travel avoidance, such as teleconferencing, is assisting in achieving this reduction.

## International business travel

1.19 From 2012-13, the department has chosen to publish its Greenhouse Gas emissions from international business travel as part of its transparency commitment. While air travel remains a necessary mode for international travel, since 2009-10 the department has significantly reduced its total international travel, which can be attributed to smarter working practices, spending controls and better use of information communication technology solutions. The significant reduction in international rail travel is attributed to the closure of the Audit Commission. The commission was accountable for the vast majority of all international rail travel since 2009-10.

**Table 4: International business travel**

International Business Travel		2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Non Financial Indicators (tonnesCO <sub>2</sub> e)	Flights	47	14	6	9	35.4
	Rail	283	206	99	31	1.3
	Total	330	220	105	40	36.7

# Waste management

## 1.20 Targets for waste management:

- reduce the amount of waste generated by 25% from a 2009-10 baseline by 2015;
- cut paper use by 10% in 2011-12;
- implement a closed loop<sup>1</sup> recycled paper service;
- ensure that redundant information communications technology equipment is reused (within government, the public sector or wider society) or recycled responsibly; and
- recycle 85% of waste by 2015 (internal Department for Communities and Local Government target).

Waste		2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	
Non-Financial Indicators (tonnes)	Total waste [Minimum Requirement]	2,103	2,631	1,414	1,268	681	
	Hazardous waste	Total	1	2	3	2	2
		Non-hazardous waste	Landfill	351	350	220	194
	Reused/Recycled		1,606	1,972	1,075	905	423
	Composted/Bio-digestion		109	116	77	60	44
	Total information communications technology waste	Reused				2	
		Recycled	1	1	24	5	25
	Report if possible	Incinerated/energy from waste	189	359	154	101	70
Paper Procured	Total Reams	87,486	52,925	40,188	28,854	30,966	
Financial Indicators (£'000)	Total disposal cost [Minimum Requirement]	252	239	231	105	108	
	Non-hazardous waste - Total disposal cost	Landfill	7	7	10	nk	nk
		Reused / Recycled	168	319	187	nk	nk
		Composted	1	1	1	nk	nk
Paper Procured	Total Spend	202	174	136	97	85	

**Table 5: Waste disposal summary**

1.21 The department has reversed the upward trend in waste risings of 2010-11, reporting a total waste reduction of 68% against 2009-10 levels, largely due to the introduction of multi-functional devices for printing and copying, more efficient working practices, and providing reusable cups and containers instead of disposables. A review of the department's magazine subscriptions also identified opportunities to cancel unnecessary subscriptions, and to switch to digital versions where possible. A significant proportion of this year's reduction in waste is attributed

<sup>1</sup> Closed loop system involves recycling confidential and non-confidential waste paper, and that very same paper having been recycled is supplied back to the department at a lower cost than standard recycled paper supplies.

to the closure of the Audit Commission in 2012, who accounted for approximately 300 tonnes in previous years.

- 1.22 The department has a recycling rate of 72%, which includes reused, recycled and composted materials. This is supported by a policy of redeploying equipment where possible instead of disposing, and reusing or recycling all redundant information communication technology equipment.
- 1.23 The department has been working with its facilities management contractor to improve waste and recycling services, data accuracy, and consistency in terms of office recycling facilities across our property portfolio. Further awareness campaigns will run throughout 2014-15 to help achieve additional waste reductions, and also to increase recycling rates.
- 1.24 The department adopted the cross-government closed loop paper recycling and supply framework in the summer of 2012, signed up to the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs / Waste and Resources Action Programme voluntary food waste agreement, and is now developing waste management plans to help increase recycling rates and further reduce waste impacts.
- 1.25 The overall paper reduction achieved by the department in 2011-12 was 52%. Whilst this commitment has passed we continue to ensure this significant reduction can be sustained. The department has employed a combination of operational approaches – including deploying multi functioning devices, reducing the number of printers, using default printer settings and better control of stationery purchasing – and staff engagement and awareness to maintain this reduction. Achieving a 65% reduction in 2013-14 compared to 2009-10.

# Finite resource consumption – water

1.26 Water efficiency targets include an internal target to reduce total consumption by 25% by 2015 from a 2009-10 baseline, and to report on office water use against the following Greening Government Commitment benchmarks:

- $\geq 6 \text{ m}^3$  water consumption per full time equivalent employee – poor practice;
- $4 \text{ m}^3$  to  $6 \text{ m}^3$  per full time equivalent employee – good practice;
- $\leq 4 \text{ m}^3$  per full time equivalent employee – best practice; and
- percentage of offices meeting the best/good/poor practice benchmark.

**Table 6: Water consumption summary**

Consumption - Water			2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Non-Financial Indicators ( $\text{M}^3$ )	Water Consumption	Office Estate	62,710	56,840	46,383	39,602	33,227
		per full time equivalent employee	7.8	6.9	7.2	5.3	4.6
		Whole Estate	99,358	75,919	71,568	62,168	49,521
Financial Indicators (£'000)	Water Supply & Sewage Costs		122	100	97	76	109

**Table 7: Percentage of offices meeting water efficiency benchmarks**

	Performance	
	2009-10	2013-14
Best Practice (less than or equal to $4 \text{ m}^3$ water per full time equivalent employee per annum)	13.6%	46.7%
Good Practice ( $4 \text{ m}^3$ to $6 \text{ m}^3$ water per full time equivalent employee per annum)	13.6%	26.6%
Poor Practice (greater or equal to $6 \text{ m}^3$ water per full time equivalent employee per annum)	72.7%	26.7%

1.27 The main impacts are from water use from washroom facilities, restaurants and tea points and heating ventilation and air conditioning systems.

1.28 Total water consumption has been reduced by 50% since 2009-10, primarily through leak reduction work and adopting more water efficient behaviours, with particular focus on water use in tea points, canteens and toilets, and cooling plant. This year a further 13% reduction has been achieved through reducing cistern flush volumes, installing flow controlling valves to taps, installed waterless urinals and reviewed cleaning practices.

- 1.29 The number of offices falling within good and best practice benchmarks has increased from 28% to 73% since 2009-10.
- 1.30 Total office water consumption per full time equivalent employee has also reduced this year as the department has sub-let more office space to other organisations, meaning essential water use (e.g. for cooling) is apportioned to a greater number of full time equivalent employees.
- 1.31 The department is keen to further increase the number of its own office buildings falling within good and best practice benchmarks, having already made good progress since the baseline year. To support this, the department ran a water efficiency campaign through 2013-14, conducted water audits at all key sites and is currently trialling a number of water efficiency devices, before introducing these across the estate.
- 1.32 Further work is required to ensure the department brings all of its offices in line with good and best practice water benchmarks. This is the department's top Greening Government Commitment priority, and additional governance structures have been implemented to oversee delivery of a Water Efficiency Action Plan to support delivery of this target. Efforts will focus on fitting efficiency devices, undertaking leak detection and running staff engagement campaigns.

# Sustainable procurement

- 1.33 The department has also been working with its suppliers to reduce the emissions of their goods and services. Sustainability clauses are being incorporated into all new contracts, where appropriate, to help ensure suppliers are meeting the Government Buying Standards and supporting the department's efficiency work. In particular, extensive sustainability requirements have been embedded into Department for Communities and Local Government's new facilities management and information communication technology contracts.
- 1.34 New entrants to the department receive induction training which includes sustainable operations and procurement. All new procurement staff are provided with relevant training and sustainable procurement personal objectives are also adopted where relevant.
- 1.35 Department for Communities and Local Government's Procurement Strategy contains specific sections on approach, Government Buying Standards, delivery workstreams, people (including training and objectives), strategy and communication, supplier engagement and measurement; and Department for Communities and Local Government's Procurement Practitioner's Handbook also addresses Sustainable Procurement.
- 1.36 In addition, the department has developed a suite of templates which cover the entire procurement process which contain drafting notes and prompts to remind our buyers to address sustainability at all stages, with particular emphasis included within the business case, procurement strategy, specification and evaluation stages.
- 1.37 Department for Communities and Local Government continues to self-assess against the Sustainable Procurement Flexible Framework with a view to achieve Level five by the end of the current parliament. We were amongst the first departments to require our travel contractor to provide us with regular management information which showed CO<sub>2</sub> emissions on an individual journey basis.
- 1.38 Department for Communities and Local Government will be adopting the Government Procurement Service pan-government supplier information database tool SID4Gov to report on our supply chain impacts. The tool will enable the department to engage with suppliers, identify hot spots and potential risk areas in our supply chain and put processes in place to begin to address them. This tool supports the on-going work Department for Communities and Local Government has undertaken with key suppliers to improve and publish data on our supply chain impacts – setting detailed baselines for reducing these impacts.

# Transparency commitments

1.39 The department is also required to report against a number of transparency commitments as part of the Greening Government Commitment framework. Progress is summarised in Table 8.

**Table 8 Transparency commitments**

<p><b>Climate Change Adaptation:</b> steps taken to adapt the estate to a changing climate</p>	<p>Sites located within flood risk areas are all registered with the Environment Agency for flood warnings in the event of any risk of flooding.</p>
	<p>Sustainable operations policies include considering Climate Change Adaptation in decision making – reviewed in response to Greening Government Commitments.</p>
	<p>Robust business continuity plans in place to manage occurrences of extreme weather events.</p>
	<p>Climate resilient designs are incorporated in retrofit projects and new builds: rain water harvesting, green roof, heat recovery heating and ventilation systems.</p>
	<p>Partake in annual Carbon Offsetting auctions to offset against the departments required travel.</p>
	<p>Pledges support and involvement in Climate Week and other related campaigns.</p>
	<p>Feed-in to a cross-government National Adaption Plan published every five years (published July 2013). The plan sets out how the risks of future extreme weather events will be managed in relation to communities, built environment, businesses and local government.</p>
<p><b>Biodiversity and Natural Environment:</b> including action taken to promote, conserve and enhance biodiversity, including use of Biodiversity Action Plans or equivalent and the management of Sites of Special Scientific Interest</p>	<p>Sustainability toolkits have been produced to use as a method for recording information related to project work and to assess the sustainable impacts of any given piece of work. These toolkits form a fundamental part of any project start up and completion.</p>
	<p>Department for Communities and Local Government operates within a closed loop recycling system which effectively means we recycle and reuse our own paper products reducing the need for use of natural resources, energy and water consumption, and in CO2 emissions, and reducing the requirement to use virgin materials for paper products.</p>
	<p>As Department for Communities and Local Government plans to relocate from Eland House to 2 Marsham Street, plans are in place to ensure that all furniture which is fit for use is redistributed for use across other sites, other departments or externally - we have a furniture strategy in place which identifies the processes and options available.</p>

<p><b>Procurement of food and catering services:</b> including action taken within the context of overarching priorities of value for money and streamlining procurement, to encourage the procurement of food that meets British or equivalent production standards where this does not lead to an overall increase in costs; and to reduce the environmental impacts of food and catering services and support a healthy balanced diet</p>	All food supplied is produced to UK or equivalent standards.
	All dairy products are Farm Assured and from UK sources.
	All shell eggs are Lion Branded and are sourced from enriched conventional cages as a minimum.
	British Farm Assured Red Tractor Accredited fresh meat and poultry. The Red Tractor range includes 39 individual fresh meat and poultry products and covers food safety, animal welfare, environmental protection, food origin, traceability and is an independent scheme.
	Menus are designed to reflect in-season produce and purchased locally where feasible to do so.
	All fish is Marine Stewardship Council eco-labelled.
	Over 50% of tea and coffee is either Rainforest Alliance or Fairtrade sourced or part of an ethical trade initiative. Coffee supplied by Department for Communities and Local Government's contractors is ethically sourced.
	Produce locally sourced where possible to reduce food miles and to assist in supporting our local suppliers
	Food standards maintained through Service Level Agreements and Key Performance Indicators.
<p><b>Sustainable Construction:</b> including the management of construction waste to best practice standards, the application of Building Research Establishment's Environmental Assessment Methodology</p>	<p>The department has developed a project sustainability toolkit which will be applied to all projects moving forward to ensure sustainability is integrated from the start. The toolkit will ensure any new build or major refurbishment valued over £500,000 meets British Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Methodology ratings of 'excellent' for new builds and 'very good' for major refurbishments.</p> <p>Where minor refurbishment work has been carried out complete Site Waste Management Plans are produced to detail all waste removed and recycled.</p>



<p><b>People:</b> including for example, reporting on social and environmental assessment of office re-locations, and action taken to promote staff wellbeing</p>	<p>Sustainability Impact Assessments are undertaken to establish the benefits of major office relocations.</p> <p>The department encourages all staff to complete an annual staff survey to gauge an understanding of staff wellbeing and morale, the survey results are internally published and senior management use the information to implement changes where it is highlighted improvements could be made.</p> <p>Office re-locations enable Homes and Communities Agency to rationalise their estate and reduce costs. Prior to implementation equalities assessment are undertaken with the examination of the social and environmental implications, for example mapping staff home postcodes against current and future locations. More generally, staff wellbeing is supported through an employee assistance programme, free health screening and a cycle to work scheme incorporating an interest free bike loan.</p>
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# Governance and data validation

- 1.40 The department continually monitors its Greening Government Commitment performance through monthly reports which feed into quarterly dashboards submitted to the senior management team. These dashboards highlight progress, risks and proposed mitigation. An independent audit of the department's governance and procedures, methodology for capturing information, data processes and checks on the data and calculations of quarterly Greening Government Commitment returns were carried out on Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs behalf by Carbon Smart. The report praised the department, citing many examples of good practice.
- 1.41 The vast majority of this report has been compiled using accurately measured data, verified through internal controls. This includes checking samples of automatically generated meter reading data with manual meter reads, and periodic audits of data gathering processes conducted by the department's Internal Audit Services team undertaking. Where complete data sets have not been available, (for example through lack of granularity, or due to landlord service charges), internal benchmark figures have been applied based on known parameters and data sets.