

Sustainability Policy Statement

Overview

Aether is committed to promoting sustainability. Concern for the environment and promoting a broader sustainability agenda are integral to Aether's professional activities and the management of our company. We aim to follow and to promote good sustainability practice, to reduce the environmental impacts of all our activities and to help our clients and partners to do the same. Aether is an SME with its main office located in the centre of Oxford, which provides environmental consultancy services to national and international clients. We recognise that our main environmental impacts originate from business travel, resulting in emissions to air and have implemented a Low Carbon Travel Incentive Scheme since November 2011, offering a financial incentive to staff to choose low carbon-emitting modes of transport. It is our aim to continue to reduce the environmental impacts of our business and operate in an environmentally responsible manner.

We are a certified Carbon Neutral company, and have been since January 2012, offsetting our Scope 1 and Scope 2¹ emissions as well as emissions from staff commuting and business travel. These are verified by a tool that meets the criteria set by the Quality Assurance Scheme. This ensures the accurate calculation of emissions; use of high quality carbon credits, and cancellation of carbon credits used to offset at the end of each calendar year. We strive to positively affect our local environment and volunteer at local ecology centres.

Aether's Environmental Management System (EMS) has been certified by the Low Carbon Kent Hub to Gold Level of the STEM scheme². This higher level of certification acknowledges the further improvements made to the EMS in place at Aether, supporting our annual offsetting and the continuing management and improvement of our environmental performance.

Responsibility

This sustainability policy applies to all of our operations including management, office services and consultancy services. Katie King is responsible for ensuring that the policy is implemented. However, all members of staff have a responsibility in their own activities to ensure that the aims and objectives of the policy are met.

Objectives

We continually aim to:

- Reduce our waste and then reuse or recycle as much of it as is possible;
- As far as is possible, purchase products and services that do the least damage to the environment;
- Offset all of our CO₂ emissions that we have been unable to avoid;
- Enhance our local impact on the environment through volunteering programmes;
- Minimise energy and water use within our buildings and processes in order to conserve supplies and minimise the consumption of natural resources.

Targets

To achieve our aims, we have set ourselves the following targets:

- Continue to reduce company carbon footprint per head year on year;
- Ensure that our team is fully aware of our objectives to minimise our environmental impact and implement these within their work and their own journeys to maintain low carbon footprints;
- Evaluate any potential increase in energy efficiency at the home offices used by staff;
- Reduce the impact of our company meetings by reducing the amount of waste generated by choosing low packaging options.

Communication

If you wish to obtain further details about our environmental management system or would like to discuss our progress against our objectives, please telephone +44 (0)1865261466.

Katie King, Operations Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "K. King".

¹ Scope 1 and 2 emissions refer to the GHG Protocol definitions. Scope 1 refers to direct GHG emissions (emissions from sources that are owned or controlled by the reporting entity). Scope 2 refers to indirect emissions from the consumption of purchased electricity.

² <http://www.kent.gov.uk/business/Business-and-the-environment/steps-to-environmental-management-scheme-stem>