



NBS

part of the  **BYGGFAKTA**
GROUP



NBS Sustainability Statement

2022

September 2023



Introduction



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At NBS, we aid the construction industry to specify sustainable outcomes on projects through our industry-leading platforms [NBS Chorus](#) and [NBS Source](#). More information on specifying sustainable outcomes can be found [here](#). In addition to improving the environmental impact that our industry has on the planet, we also view the operational impact of conducting our own day-to-day business with great importance.

2022 marks the fourth year that we have measured our carbon emissions. We calculate our operational emissions against the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) protocol scopes 1, 2 and selected scope 3 emissions. Over the past two years specifically, we have embarked upon several measures to decarbonize our operations. Notably, these include moving our platforms entirely to the cloud; implementing a new travel policy; reducing our fleet; and switching our premises to 100% renewable energy. 2022 was the first year since measurements began on which our HQ – the Old Post Office in Newcastle-upon-Tyne – was run entirely on 100% renewable electricity. Whilst we acknowledge that we can decarbonize further, our current strategy has reduced our operational emissions by 55%. In addition to this reduction and through the purchase of VCS carbon credits, NBS is also certified as carbon-neutral against PAS 2060: the international standard for the demonstration of carbon neutrality. Carbon-neutral status was initially awarded in 2022, in recognition of our 2021 emissions, and was renewed in 2023 against our 2022 emissions. The certification is provided by Centre for Assessment, a UKAS-accredited third-party certification body. It will be renewed annually through the same processes as part of our carbon-neutral pledge.



We are committed to demonstrating to the industry that we can all make a positive impact. If anyone wishes to discuss our platforms (and how they can aid sustainability within your projects) or our experiences of achieving carbon neutrality status, we encourage you to contact us at info@thenbs.com.

About this sustainability statement

This statement relates to the period 01st January 2022 to 31st December 2022, for the company 'NBS Enterprises Ltd', registered in England and Wales under company number 978271. Registered office at The Old Post Office, St Nicholas Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 1RH.

Aligning to the RIBA's Sustainable Outcomes

The [RIBA Sustainable Outcomes Guide](#) provides eight sustainable outcomes that correspond to key UN Sustainable Development Goals. The guide is designed to aid the design and specification of low environmental impact architecture. As a business with a considerable presence within the construction sector (and due to our long-standing relationship with the RIBA), our own sustainable goals have been aligned closely. Details of these are below:

Sustainable Outcome	2022 activity	2023 plan
Net Zero Operational Carbon	2022 marked the fourth year that NBS has captured the metrics of annual operational emissions. The result has been a decline in total emissions year on year, equating to 62% total reduction. However, we must continue to achieve any possible reductions moving forward. The pandemic had a positive impact on travel emissions; however, as things have been returning to normal, an expected increase in emissions from flights and trains (specifically) has occurred.	Continue to assess areas for potential further reductions in emissions, specifically in relation to travel. In 2023, we will begin to measure emissions from our upstream supply chain and address an emissions reduction strategy for that area.
Net Zero Embodied Carbon	Our office was refurbished in 2016. In response to the need for improved premises aligned to business growth, refurbishment was chosen over new build – in part to reduce embodied carbon. Our Facilities team ensures that the building is maintained to a high standard, with predictive maintenance assisting to lower the requirement for replacement fixtures.	Continue supply chain assessment and update any assets at the point of renewal within the NBS HQ with more sustainable alternatives.
Sustainable Water Cycle	We measure our water usage; however, in line with PAS 2060 requirements, we do not report on these as they are far below 1% of our total emissions count. Our appliances within the office are water-efficient.	At the point of renewal, we will evaluate all sanitaryware to ensure that we are using low-flow volume products.
Sustainable Connectivity & Transport	51% of NBS employees commuting to the office use public transport, and 28% choose to walk or cycle into work. Our location within the city centre helps promote these methods. We provide assistance to our employees procuring travel cards for the local metro. We actively encourage a healthy lifestyle, and we provide indoor storage for bicycles.	Continue ongoing benefits and promotion of low/ zero carbon travel.

Sustainable Land Use & Ecology	We have invested heavily in forestation projects in the local area, funding the planting of circa 7000 trees split between Jon's wood, Crook, County Durham and Doddington North, Northumberland. These forestation projects promote improved ecology and sustainable land use.	Promote volunteer days for our employees to support environmental projects.
Sustainable Communities & Social Value		Continue to work with local schools and colleges on existing initiatives, and connect volunteer days with sustainability initiatives. We will encourage our staff to conduct and promote good sustainable practice.
Good Health & Wellbeing	NBS has an in-office gym kitted out with the latest fitness equipment for all of our employees to use. Keeping the equipment in our gym up to date helps attract and retain the use of the facilities by our employees. We regularly run schemes in relation to physical and mental wellbeing, all of which are shared on our intranet.	Continue our HR initiatives on good health and wellbeing.
Sustainable Life Cycle Cost	NBS' Facilities team (headed by the facilities manager) log all details in relation to the operation of our offices. Maintenance is predicted and aligned to the details within the net zero embodied carbon section above. This ensures that the building is maintained efficiently – and with as little impact on the environment – as possible.	Ongoing FM.

NBS carbon emissions 2022

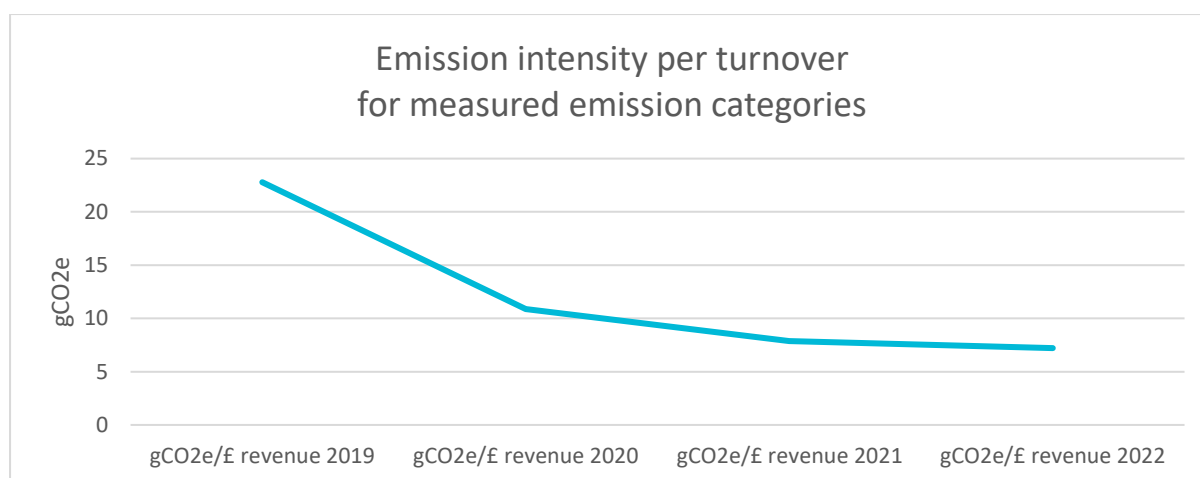
NBS total emissions

GHG Scope	Category	2019 Tn/Co2e	2020 Tn/Co2e	2021 Tn/Co2e	2022 Tn/Co2e
1	Fleet	37.81	11.76	7.22	7.07
1	Gas	81.24	46.51	88.36	81.05
2	Electric	36.64	48.74	23.46	0.00
3	Flights	296.90	70.60	14.93	38.66
3	rail	18.31	3.56	1.03	4.66
3	Empl.Commuting (Est)	44.80	11.05	10.20	9.63
3	Data centres (Est)	0.09	0.23	0.37	0.40
3	WFH (Est)	11.27	86.53	85.44	97.58
	Company total	527.08	279.00	231.01	239.05
	Base Year Comparison	100%	<47%	<56%	<55%

NBS emissions by GHG Scope

	2019 Tn/Co2e	2020 Tn/Co2e	2021 Tn/Co2e	2022 Tn/Co2e
Scope 1 total	119.06	58.27	95.58	88.12
Scope 2 total	36.64	48.74	23.46	0.00
Scope 3 total	371.38	171.99	111.97	150.93

Since measuring base year emissions figures from 2019, NBS has seen a strong decline in its total operational emissions. 2022 figures were 55% lower than 2019's, and whilst the absolute emissions are 1% higher than the prior year, due to considerable company growth, our emissions intensity per revenue has continued to decline.



We are continuously monitoring our operations from an ESG perspective and are working to contribute to the Byggfakta Group emissions target of net zero operational carbon by 2030. Since our base year metrics, the three key areas where our operations have significant impact remain business travel, energy consumption and homeworking emissions. Details of these are outlined below.

Business travel

Through our carbon reduction strategy, we recognized that travel emissions would increase in 2022 as the impact of the global pandemic eased. Overall, 2022 saw travel restrictions almost entirely lifted across the globe. By default, our employees began to travel again. Notably, flights resumed at a level not witnessed during the pandemic; however, they have remained considerably lower in number than our base year figures. This is likely due to new expectations for online meetings, but also because of the company travel policy – which adopts a 'digital-first' approach to meetings.

One area where we have increased reduction is via our company fleet. As a result of restructuring, we have been able to reduce the fleet by 66% since 2019, with 81% less emissions as a result of fewer cars and less travel from those that remain. Our fleet requirements are constantly reviewed, and they have been reduced to a minimum since carbon measurements began. Throughout 2023, our company fleet position will again be reviewed.

Energy consumption

Energy consumption has remained one of NBS' largest contributors to carbon emissions. In 2022, we saw our first year of 100% renewable energy use. In a location-based scenario, the energy we use is mainly from a mixed supply from the grid. However, purposely choosing renewable-only certified tariffs allows the measured reduction in our electricity use to zero emissions from a market-based approach.

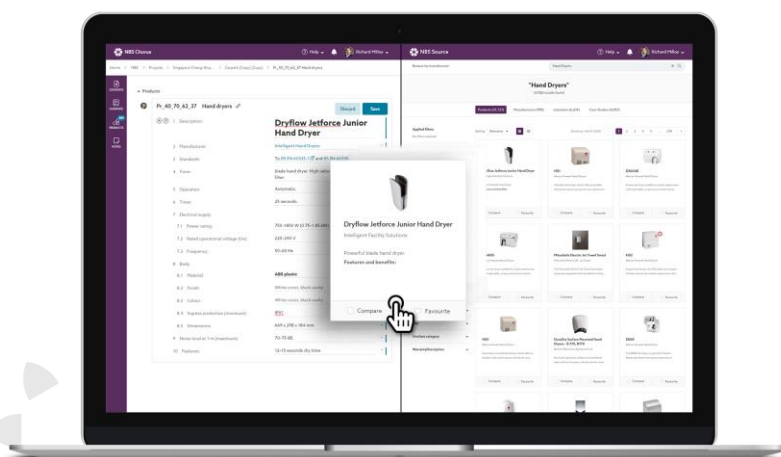
The dilemma remains in our reliance on natural gas for heating our Grade II listed refurbished office. As part of the Byggfakta Group's aim of net zero by 2030, we are currently looking into options for alternative heat provision.



Home worker emissions reduced in 2022 when compared to the prior year, though they remain higher than the base year. The year-on-year reduction has been a result of the pandemic easing, and the company's decision to allow flexible working arrangements for all staff. Any increase in WFH emissions is reflected by a reduction in employee commuting emissions.

NBS platforms

Usage of NBS Chorus and NBS Source continues to grow. In 2022, we published our [Sustainable Futures Report](#) – our most downloaded report to date, which has received publicity domestically from UK architectural journals and internationally from Fortune magazine in the US. The report detailed the responses to NBS' survey on sustainable outcomes within the construction industry. From the responses, we developed a roadmap of key functions that have been, and continue to be, developed within the platforms.



Both NBS Source and NBS Chorus use Amazon Web Services (AWS) to surface data within the platforms. By default, the way in which the energy that powers those data centres is sourced plays a part in our total emissions impact. AWS has stated that it aims for all its web server services to use renewable energy by 2025. Today, AWS provides all its customers with a carbon calculation tool, and much of the energy used is already renewably sourced. In 2022, NBS' emissions from web services were less than 0.4 metric tons of CO₂e.

Carbon offsetting

In 2022, NBS procured 240 VCS credits, which were retired against three international renewable energy schemes in China, India and Turkey. The investment in renewable energy schemes was specifically chosen to provide a firm view of where the credits are being used. Investing in international grid decarbonization allows the immediate offsets which these credits offer to be supported by a physical understanding of their impact.

In addition to the immediate international offsets, NBS has also procured an equal amount of 240 VCS credits that have been used for our ongoing support of local forestation projects in the UK near to our headquarters. Aligning to the RIBA's sustainable outcomes, we place great importance on supporting local habitats and improving biodiversity in our local area. We have planted trees at Jon's Wood in Crook, County Durham and Doddington North, Northumberland. These two projects, supported in recognition of our emissions since 2019, have seen us plant approximately 7000 native tree species.

The carbon credits for 2022 can be viewed in the links below:

UK

[Markit Environmental Registry - Public Reports](#)

International

[Verra Registry](#)

[Verra Registry](#)

[Verra Registry](#)

[Verra Registry](#)

[Verra Registry](#)

[Verra Registry](#)

Forest Carbon is NBS' carbon offsetting partner, and works with many businesses to aid their carbon balancing. NBS, Kier and Foster + Partners are some examples from within the construction sector. To find out more about Forest Carbon, please visit [this link](#).

NBS and the United Nations' CNN initiative

NBS signed up to the United Nations' Climate Neutral Now initiative (UN CNN) back in 2021. This involved a declaration which mandates that we follow their four key principles.

2023 marks the second year in which NBS must submit annual reports against this scheme in relation to 2022's emissions. The UN CNN scheme holds a publicly visible domain where businesses like NBS must publish their findings, following their commitment. Signing up to the scheme is free of charge, but you must follow through on the pledges. We are delighted to have been awarded 'Gold' in the 'reduce' category and 'Silver' for 'measure' and 'contribute'. Throughout 2023, we intend to expand our scope 3 emissions counting to include our supply chain impacts, which will complete our scope 3 count. It is not possible to achieve 'Gold' in the 'measure' and 'contribute' categories until scope 3 has been fully measured and reported.

CLIMATE NEUTRAL NOW

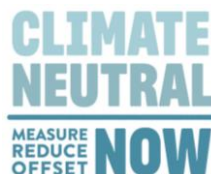
ACHIEVEMENT 2022	
MEASURE	 SILVER
REDUCE	 GOLD
CONTRIBUTE	 SILVER
JOINED 2021	

More information on the UN CNN scheme can be found [here](#), and NBS' page within the platform can be viewed [here](#).

What next?

NBS will retain its commitment to the reduction of operational emissions. 2023 will see an increase in metrics as our parent company, Byggfakta Group, sets in place procedures for the forthcoming CSRD regulation. This will also see us begin to focus on metrics from our supply chain, completing our scope 3 itinerary. We will closely monitor business travel, and work with our new corporate travel provider – with the aim of conducting travel (where it is required) as sustainably as possible. Our platforms will continue to develop, and focus will remain in place on environmental improvements through both the development of the platforms and the educational material presented to the industry in respect of those.

Feedback on how we can do better is always appreciated. Please email info@theNBS.com to pass on your suggestions to the internal NBS 'Sustainability' group.



Useful web links:

- **Forest Carbon**
<https://www.forestcarbon.co.uk/>
- **NBS: 'Using NBS to specify sustainable outcomes on projects'**
<https://www.thenbs.com/knowledge/using-nbs-to-specify-sustainable-outcomes-on-projects>
- **NBS: 'Sustainable Futures Report 2022'**
<https://www.thenbs.com/sustainable-futures-report-2022/>
- **The RIBA's 'Sustainable Outcomes Guide'**
<https://www.architecture.com/knowledge-and-resources/resources-landing-page/sustainable-outcomes-guide>
- **UN Sustainable Development Goals**
<https://sdgs.un.org/goals>
- **UN Climate Neutral Now**
<https://unfccc.int/climate-action/climate-neutral-now>

