

Environmental Responsibility Policy

Optima Systems Consultancy
2023



Environmental Sustainability Policy

1. Introduction

This policy governs matters of policy concerning Sustainability and Environmental Management in the conduct of all Optima's business operations. It does not cover Sustainability activities that are focussed outside Optima's business operations for wider societal benefit, which come under the remit of the Corporate Social Responsibility policy.

Optima's business operations are intrinsically light on use of energy and materials. We are a provider of services, not physical products. The services we provide are in the form of professional consultancy in engineering, management and business, involving remote and on-site use of information technology, delivery of prepared documentation predominantly in electronic file formats, and occasionally as printed hard copies.

Optima operates from one office location, Heron House, Thornbury as well as from a variety of client sites and remotely when employees work from home.

The major areas requiring a level of analysis and control in order to minimise Environmental Sustainability impacts are Office energy efficiency, IT energy efficiency and Travel minimisation. Each of these is addressed in turn as below.

2. Office Energy Efficiency

Heron House is a modern cavity walled and roof insulated office building, leased by Optima in part since 2016 and fully since 2018. Whilst an Energy Performance Certificate for the building has not been formally produced, Optima have inspected the depth of ceiling insulation and central heating system inherited on commencement of the lease, which appear satisfactory.

A number of Thermostatic Radiator Valves have seemed defective, so Optima has replaced them all and rebalanced the system to ensure optimal configuration during 2019.

The main office lighting was provided by traditional strip lights. Optima have replaced these with LED flat panels throughout in 2 phases of works in 2019 and 2020.

Optima has swapped energy suppliers to Octopus. This supplier provides:

- 100% renewable electricity
- 100% carbon off-set gas



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3. IT Energy Efficiency

When procuring new IT equipment our policy is to buy energy efficient laptops and monitors with an A or A+ rating where available. We extend the life of our hardware where practical to do so, and once unusable we dispose of it in accordance with the WEEE directive.

We keep our server and connection hardware to absolute minimum to meet our business and information security needs, maximising our use of cloud-based services by preference with generally better energy efficiency and resilience than can be achieved with dedicated hardware. This also minimises material use through minimising the hardware footprint.

4. Travel Impact

As consultants, our staff do need to visit client and other stakeholder sites in order to conduct our business operations, and at times need to visit our offices. However we encourage a balance of face to face contact and remote working wherever possible to reduce the associated carbon footprint impact as well as lost productive time whilst travelling.

We have several measures that serve to minimise the need for travel:

- Largely travel minimisation is achieved through our IT systems, and those of our clients. Wherever feasible, cloud-based file sharing and email is used, together with remote login for shared data repositories and use of VPNs where needed to secure routes over the internet from an information security perspective.
- This is backed by use of internet based audio, video calls and collaboration software shared viewing and development of content remotely by multiple users. We also use advanced techniques for distributed workshop sessions, in place of traditional whiteboard/flipchart based co-located.
- In order to support and encourage working from home to a significant degree and provide the ergonomics related to the home working environment, by provisioning monitors, laptop stands, keyboards mice, office chairs and standing desks depending on the needs of the user.

Where staff do not need to travel to our office the following factors seek to minimise the impacts of such travel:

- Our Thornbury location is within feasible walking range for any staff resident in the town, and the considerable amenities of the town are readily accessible to all staff from the office.
- We provide shower facilities and bike maintenance tools to encourage cycling, which is feasible from North Bristol, Berkeley, Dursley, and Yate areas. We operate a tax-incentivised Cycle to Work scheme.
- We have installed 2 slow charging points for Electric Vehicles (240v 13Amp spurs). These are suitable for employees/visitors to top-up charge whilst visiting the office for a few hours.

Where staff need to travel to other sites, we seek to undertake contractual arrangements and working practices that allow for efficient use of on-site time, and seek a reasonable minimum to the frequency of journeys, interspersed with remote working. We also keep in mind the effect of travel when we are seeking contracts with clients, strongly preferring local work within our regional base if significant on-site work is needed.



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5. Resource Use

Our business uses few material resources – minimisation of material resource remains a core policy. The need for hard copy printing is minimised in all our operations, by extensive use of electronic document viewing and transmission. Where printing is necessary, default is to print double sided. Most business processes involving suppliers and clients are conducted online, so stationery use and postage services are minimised.

6. Waste

We segregate mixed recycling from general office waste for regular collection, with both categories being a small volume (roughly equivalent to a single household).

Electronic equipment at end of life is disposed of in accordance with the WEEE directive.

7. Development of further policy measures: Short term

Optima will develop a schedule of employee sustainability engagement interventions, to promote awareness and action on sustainability issues beyond the workplace.

Optima will review the published Carbon Reduction Plan annually and may identify further measures to help the business achieve net zero emissions by 2050.

8. Development of further policy measures: Long term

It is possible that development of, and potentially certification of, a full Environmental Management System may become warranted in the future. However, efficiency and control measures in accordance with policy are currently deemed sufficient and suitable given the level of impacts, without the need for further overhead activity.

It may be that some carbon off-setting measures become appropriate to achieve net carbon zero through the business carbon footprint.

9. Review

This policy and our progress will be reviewed annually. The last review was conducted in November 2023.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Lamb'.

Chris Lamb
Managing Director
Optima Systems Consultancy Limited



ABOUT OPTIMA

Optima Systems Consultancy is an independent Systems Engineering and business consultancy based in Thornbury, North Bristol.

We work with government departments, major industrial prime contractors, global security enterprises and specialist technical consultancies, offering in-depth technical expertise with broader Systems Thinking to scope and solve their complex problems.

We pride ourselves on delivering exceptional and bespoke solutions to our clients with sharp methodology, minimal red tape, and genuine drive for quality. In short, we enable client success.

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