

GROUNDWORK'S RESPONSE TO THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY

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@GWKNEWY



PUBLISHED: SEPTEMBER 2019



Climate change is moving faster than we are...

If we do not change course by 2020, we risk missing the point where we can avoid runaway climate change, with disastrous consequences for people and all the natural systems that sustain us.

UN Secretary General 2018



Groundwork's Response To The Climate Emergency



Groundwork recognises that we are in the midst of a climate emergency and we all need to act now to reduce carbon emissions and keep global warming under a 1.5 C rise.

Across the UK, many of our Local Enterprise Partnerships recognise that the move to a low carbon economy presents an economic growth opportunity for former industrial areas.

As of July 2019, over 50% of UK Local Authorities have declared a Climate Emergency and are developing plans to reduce carbon emissions or achieve carbon neutrality ahead of the UK's Clean Growth Strategy target of 80% reduction by 2050.

Without action from us all global temperature rises will result in loss of species and a rise in extreme weather events - both of these compounding to make food insecurity a significant issue. Growing air pollution levels will impact on human health and rising temperatures will cause a health crisis for the vulnerable in our society.

For the last 30 years Groundwork has been tackling environmental issues in our communities. We want to empower people to make positive changes which enable them to reduce their environmental impact but also ensure that they are better equipped to deal with the impacts of climate change.

It is a stark reality that global environmental challenges impact first and worst on those people and communities that have least. In order to address these challenges successfully it will require people everywhere to learn to live differently.

We help people and organisations to make choices and changes that deliver practical benefits now, as well as sow the seeds for a more sustainable future.



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1. Tackling Carbon Emissions In The Home



Homes account for 13% of the UK's carbon emissions. This rises to 22% when electricity use is included (BEIS 2017). The Clean Growth Strategy sets targets for improving the private rented and fuel poor housing stock up to Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) Band C by 2030, where practical and cost effective.

Improving the efficiency of a home not only cuts costs and carbon, it also has substantial health benefits when people are no longer living in cold, damp homes.

Our **Green Doctor** service offers practical support to people - often those most at risk of fuel poverty - by helping them to make their homes more energy efficient and cheaper to run.

Green Doctors are independent, impartial and qualified experts who provide home energy checks and EPC assessments alongside comprehensive energy saving advice. They also provide kit that keeps people warm, identify financial support when needed, assist with switching suppliers, dealing with fuel debt and fit energy saving equipment in the home.

Being in the home of the most vulnerable means the Green Doctors see the big picture, often allowing them to provide access to grants and referrals to other organisations that can help with finances, health or home safety.

We also provide emergency heating in winter, water saving advice and in the summer months provide support to the vulnerable in times of heatwaves.

We know we need to keep evolving the service to ensure that we support the vulnerable with rising fuel costs, extreme weather events and help to tackle poor quality housing stock in our communities.

Policy in this sector is always changing and we need to ensure the fuel poor aren't left behind.

In 2018 Groundwork supported 65,000 households across the UK to improve their energy and water efficiency with 4.8 million kilograms of CO2 emissions saved. Households on average saved £200 through switching providers and installing energy saving measures.



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THE IMPACT OF
GREEN DOCTORS
ACROSS YORKSHIRE
IN THE FIRST 6 MONTHS
OF 2019

 **524**
HOME VISITS

WARM HOMES
DISCOUNT
SAVING
£4,900

£36,180
SAVED FROM
TARIFF SWITCHES

£69 
AVERAGE SAVE
THROUGH TARIFF SWITCHES

2,376 
BASIC
ENERGY SAVING
MEASURES
INSTALLED

 **£3,738**
IN SAVINGS
FROM WATER
ADVICE

PEOPLE PLACED ON THE
PRIORITY SERVICES
REGISTER

256



GREEN DOCTOR  TM

 0808 1683547


CHANGING PLACES
CHANGING LIVES

The Green Doctor service is **FREE** of charge, subject to eligibility criteria

>> 2. Supporting Businesses To Reduce Their Carbon Emissions



25% of all UK emissions come from businesses and industry, and over 50% of all electricity is used in this sector (BEIS 2017). Changes to productivity and efficiency can make a dramatic impact on a company's carbon emissions as well as reduce their operating costs. 15% of all emissions come from how we use natural resources, and through reducing waste and recycling we can have a significant impact on lowering this.

Whilst large scale initiatives are needed to make this transition, small to medium sized businesses, social enterprises and micro businesses are lacking the same access to finance and advice to make changes themselves.

Our **Green Dragon** scheme has already supported over 1000 businesses in Wales during the last 18 years, helping them to implement Environmental Management Systems and work towards managing their environmental impact and establishing a continuous improvement programme. We are keen to roll out this approach in Yorkshire and the North East, to help businesses here to make financial savings and improvement to their environmental performance.

We are also able to provide businesses with opportunities to **carbon offset** their environmental impact where reductions cannot be made. This includes investment in transforming local green spaces, planting new woodlands, and funding improvements to properties in fuel poverty.

We have worked in partnership with the Environment Agency for the last 6 years tackling pollution incidents on Yorkshire's industrial estates and providing businesses with support to understand their legal responsibilities to waste management and storage, preventing pollution of Yorkshire's rivers.

In 2018 Groundwork supported 2,400 businesses to be more sustainable through reducing their environmental impact



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“The Environment Agency have been working in partnership with Groundwork over a number of years on a series of projects across Yorkshire to address problems caused by businesses failing to effectively manage their waste and drainage. Last year the focus was on the food businesses around Bradford Beck, and again Groundwork have successfully addressed chronic pollution problems by ensuring businesses connect to the right drainage network and improve their environmental management practices.”

ANTHONY DOWNING
PROJECT MANAGER
ENVIRONMENT AGENCY
(YORKSHIRE AREA)



3. Supporting Communities To Reduce Their Carbon Emissions



Young people deserve a healthy planet, a thriving economy and a bright future. It's important for young people to be involved in policy decisions which will impact their future.

Empowering our young people to be leaders in raising awareness and preparing local communities for climate change **Our Bright Future** programme provides them with practical and social skills, experience and confidence to lead on projects in their communities. Young people have identified and championed projects locally and become engaged via social media campaigns to transform spaces.

Groundwork has a **Youth Network** providing a national platform for young people to campaign and become actively involved in social and environmental issues that will have an impact on their future.

We deliver education activities in schools through our **Green Check** initiative, empowering staff and children to improve the schools environmental performance. They are encouraged to consider purchasing, where they source food from, transport to school as well as consider how the school grounds could positively benefit the local environment.

Across Yorkshire we provide opportunities for communities to learn about food growing and management of green spaces - from our **Growing St Andrews** project in Hull, to using allotments in Leeds and Wakefield to grow produce with people with dementia and memory loss, and our **Go Wild** programme to encourage communities to look after and create green spaces for local wildlife.

Groundwork also delivers **Snow Angels** in targeted areas, providing support to the vulnerable during extreme winter snow events. We provide a door to door service and support residents to be champions in their community, encouraging neighbours to check on the vulnerable and ensure they are able to cope in poor winter weather.

In 2018 Groundwork invested £88 million into communities and supported 24,000 community groups with 400,000 days of voluntary action by adults and young people



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PROJECT: Urban Rangers, Ardsley Reservoir

"We've been involved in the Urban Rangers project at Ardsley Reservoir for most of this year. The children have benefited massively from making a difference in their local area because the reservoir is a place where a lot of them spend their social time, such as dog walking. It's given them a good opportunity to see how much litter there is & they all enjoying doing the litter picking. They've learnt a lot about water from going to the water treatment plant, and they've learnt about the pipes getting blocked with wipes."

MR WHITE, HEADTEACHER
BLACKGATES PRIMARY ACADEMY SCHOOL
YORKSHIRE



4. Transforming Green Spaces And Providing Solutions To The Impacts Of Climate Change



Urban greenspaces are the main urban land use that can contribute to carbon storage. While community green spaces provide a valuable amenity asset, they are also important for ameliorating the impact of urban flooding and reducing the urban heat island effect.

Groundwork has been transforming derelict brownfield sites and improving green spaces since the early 1980s. We improve urban green networks and corridors, provide cycling and walking routes, and work with local communities to improve the quality of green spaces in their neighbourhoods.

By designing and building projects in harmony with the environment, we improve our local green infrastructure for the benefit of both people and biodiversity. Where possible, we link delivery to local supply chains and help partners to secure match funding to benefit the local economy.

We are involved in the Leeds Flood Alleviation Scheme, one of the largest in the country, set to protect more than 3000 homes, 500 businesses and 300 acres of land from future flooding.



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5. Our Own Business Commitment



Groundwork manages a number of buildings, community green spaces, country parks and amenity spaces, as well as leasing offices in community buildings for our projects.

We know we need to continue to transform the way we use resources and manage places to reduce our own carbon levels.

We have already moved to leasing vehicles across many of our teams to increase efficiency.

We recycle within our office spaces, encourage hot desking and have implemented local food growing outside of our offices.

Where possible we encourage staff to use public transport or cycle to travel to work and to meetings.

Where our existing buildings are inefficient we have started to make improvements, such as installing secondary glazing to deal with energy loss in a cost effective way.

Our landscape design team where possible specify for recycled materials on schemes and use local contractors.

We know we need to do more.

By 2025 as an organisation we commit to:

Review our Environmental Management System and seek to achieve ISO14001. We will engage staff in this process and ensure we have a 'bottom up approach' to identifying opportunities to improve through an action plan. This will include looking internally at improving our operations, building and site management as well as our procurement of goods and services.



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**TOGETHER WE CAN
MAKE A DIFFERENCE**

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