



**HELPING
BUSINESSES
REACH NET ZERO**

**GRANT SUPPORT
PROGRAMMES**

OUR RECENT WORK
UPDATED AUGUST 2024



**SUSTAINABLE
BUSINESS**



Funded by
UK Government



Groundwork is a national charity which helps create a fair and green future in which people, places, and nature thrive.

Groundwork's Sustainable Business Consultants offer impartial, tailored sustainability advice to help businesses build a greener future.

In recent years we have worked in partnership with local authorities to help local businesses become more sustainable and progress towards the UK's Net Zero goal. This work is made possible thanks to funding from the UK government's Shared Prosperity Fund.

Groundwork's Sustainable Business Consultants are currently delivering projects in:

- Cheshire West & Chester
- Sefton
- Stoke-on-Trent
- Suffolk
- Warrington

In addition, Groundwork's Sustainable Business Consultants have been delivery partners in the VCSE Energy Efficiency Scheme.

This report summarises our work and outcomes.





Race to Zero

Cheshire West & Chester, North West England

February 2023 - March 2025



Cheshire West
and Chester




Energy audits & decarbonisation plans - Groundwork have been undertaking energy audits for businesses from a variety of sectors, in a mix of rural and urban areas within Cheshire West & Chester. Consultants assess the businesses building fabric, energy sources and processes. From here they produce a decarbonisation plan which outlines the most effective and suitable low and zero carbon technologies which the businesses can take forward. Since February 2023, 38 decarbonisation reports have been produced.

Grant management - Following receipt of their decarbonisation report, businesses are then encouraged to apply for grant funding for the installation of low carbon technologies. Consultants ensure businesses have all the evidence required for the grant panel to effectively distribute grants between the value of £13,000 and £16,000. Since February 2023, 16 grants, worth a total of £225,000 for low and zero carbon projects have been distributed, a total of £750,000 investment.

Low-carbon training - Recognising businesses in the area were low in confidence and short on skills relating to Net Zero, from October 2024 consultants will be providing training and mentoring to Cheshire West & Chester businesses, so they have the skills to progress actions identified in their decarbonisation plans.

Up to end of June 2024, Groundwork have identified 370 tCO₂e savings across the organisations, of which 183 tCO₂e will be immediately saved thanks to the new low-carbon technologies being installed.





CASE STUDY

Anderson Bevan

BACKGROUND

Anderson Bevan, based in Northwich, has provided office rental services since 2007 within the Grade 1 listed building at Winnington Hall. The company had previously invested in sustainability measures such as LED lighting and double glazing and had future plans for a boiler replacement. Facing increased energy costs post-Covid and due to energy crises, Anderson Bevan were exploring ground-mounted solar panels to mitigate expenses for the 40 businesses housed within the Hall.

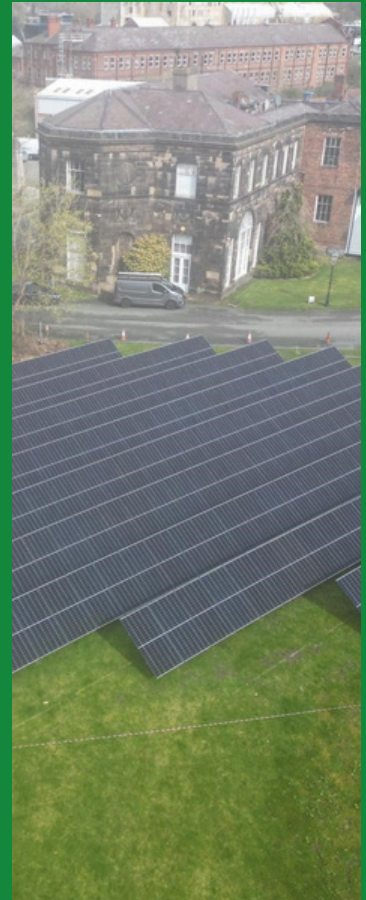
WHAT WE DID

- Conducted a site visit to review of all their energy consumption measures
- Calculated their carbon emissions, undertook a cost/benefit analysis
- Developed a Decarbonisation Plan and business case for investment
- Supported Anderson Bevan with the grant application process

OUTCOMES

Anderson Bevan took forward our suggestion to install ground mounted Solar Panels on their site, resulting in:

- £31,960 cost savings per year
- 21.21 tonnes of carbon saved per year





Sustainable Sefton

Sefton, North West England

October 2023 - March 2025

Sefton Council



Groundwork's Sustainability Consultants have been collaborating with businesses in the Sefton region, empowering small to medium enterprises to develop their sustainability knowledge and commitments.

Over the course of 18 months, 60 businesses in Sefton's town centres will benefit from fully funded on-site **sustainability audits** conducted by the Groundwork team. Following these audits, each business will partner with Groundwork's consultants to create a bespoke **sustainability action plan**. These plans will outline short and long-term strategies to reduce carbon emissions and associated costs.

Groundwork Consultants provide specialised advice on a range of sustainability issues, including waste and recycling, energy and carbon management, travel, training and awareness, nature and biodiversity, and community support.

Key recommendations so far have included replacing inefficient lighting with LED bulbs and installing lighting sensors to minimise electricity consumption. Businesses have been encouraged to install flow regulator taps and shower fittings to conserve water, and to consider thermostatic radiator valves (TRVs) for better heating control. Additionally, procurement processes were assessed to incorporate environmentally friendly and locally sourced cleaning products and food and beverages. In some cases, the installation of Solar PV panels and battery storage was advised as a longer-term strategic investment to reduce electricity demand.

To date, the team has successfully completed 25 audits and developed 25 bespoke sustainability action plans.



CASE STUDY

Sunnyside B&B

BACKGROUND

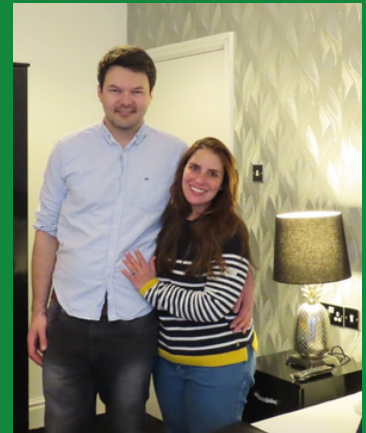
Sunnyside BnB is an accommodation business in Southport known for its charming atmosphere. The owners had already taken significant strides in integrating sustainable practices across their delivery but had reached their limitations based on their own knowledge.

WHAT WE DID

- Conducted a site visit to review of all their operations and processes
- Created a sustainability action plan with recommendations related to:
 - Energy Consumption and Emissions Reduction
 - Renewable Energy Generation
 - Waste Management
 - Water Conservation
 - Biodiversity Enhancement

OUTCOMES

Groundwork's audit and recommendations have helped Sunnyside BnB excel in their sustainability efforts. Following the visit they have formalised their sustainable practices, enhanced their emissions monitoring, improved energy efficiency, and strengthened their water conservation efforts.





Sustainable Ventures

Stoke-on-Trent, West Midlands, England

October 2023 - March 2025




Energy Assessments and Carbon Reduction Plans - Groundwork have been undertaking energy assessments and developing carbon reduction plans for SMEs and charities in Stoke-on-Trent, so that they have the tools to reduce their operational costs and carbon emissions. By the end of March 2025, 65 energy assessments will have been undertaken within the city region.

Grant Management

Following the energy assessment, SMEs and charities are supported to put the actions identified in their carbon reduction plan into practice, with small grants totalling £15,000 made available throughout the course of the programme.

Environmental Training

Groundwork's Sustainability Consultants are hosting a number of training events across Stoke-on-Trent, which help boost SMEs and charities confidence and knowledge about the environment, carbon and energy.



CASE STUDY

The Dudson Centre

BACKGROUND

The managing tenant of the Dudson Centre, VAST, operate a grade 2 listed, multiple use building in the heart of Stoke-on-Trent. The building includes multiple office spaces, meeting rooms, a cafe and a museum in the old pot bank, which is situated at the centre of the building's courtyard. VAST were looking to find ways through which they could lower the emissions and energy costs of the site.

WHAT WE DID

- Conducted an on-site visit for the Dudson Centre and VAST's office space
- Produced an energy assessment report, carbon reduction plan and net-zero pathway
- Identified potential for an LED lighting with occupancy sensor project

OUTCOMES

By following all recommendations in the report, the Dudson Centre could yield savings of £5,000 and 7.1 tCO₂e per year. A grant of £2,500 was provided through the Sustainable Ventures programme to support with the LED lighting and occupancy sensor project for the building's communal areas.





Net Zero Support

Suffolk, East of England

September 2023 to March 2025




Emissions calculations & decarbonisation plans - Groundwork established a programme of support to SMEs from a range of sectors across all Suffolk's local authority districts. Working remotely with businesses and social enterprises, our sustainability consultants provided bespoke net zero advice, and based on data provided by the business, were able to calculate carbon footprints for every organisation.

Having developed an understanding of each organisation's key services and activities, consultants went on to produce a decarbonisation plan outlining the costs and carbon savings of implementing key carbon reduction measures.

In the first year of delivery (to March 2024) Groundwork consultants supported 107 organisations with one-to-one net zero support across Suffolk, establishing 89 individual decarbonisation plans and identifying 5,117.5tCO₂e/year of potential carbon savings.

As a result of this support many organisations went on to secure grant funding outside of this programme towards implementation of the recommended measures.



CASE STUDY

Earsham Street Café

BACKGROUND

Earsham Street Café, nestled in the centre of Bungay, was one of the first businesses to receive a free carbon footprint and tailored decarbonisation plan as part of Groundworks' programme of net zero support. Once referred to the Net Zero Business Advisor Service, a Groundwork consultant, worked with cafe management to establish how energy is currently being used in the building, enabling them to identify key opportunities to improve the carbon footprint of the café.

WHAT WE DID

- Met with the business to understand key activities, energy and fuel use and ambitions
- Calculated an annual carbon footprint
- Undertook cost/benefit analysis of carbon reduction measures
- Developed a decarbonisation plan to support grant application process

OUTCOMES

If all of the key actions that the decarbonisation report highlighted are implemented, the business could avoid over 3 tonnes of carbon emissions per year, which equates to over a 25% reduction in Earsham Street Café's annual carbon footprint. Annual cost savings of around £1,695 could also be achieved.

“ This support enabled us to see the difference that the solar PV would make to our business and understand if we are eligible for an East Suffolk Council grant that we had heard about.

Mike Hennessey, Owner





Race to Zero


Warrington, North West England

April 2024 - March 2025



Energy audits & decarbonisation plans - Groundwork are undertaking energy audits for businesses across Warrington. Consultants assess the businesses building fabric, energy sources and processes. From here they produce a decarbonisation plan which outlines the most effective and suitable low and zero carbon technologies which the businesses can take forward. In a 12-month period 30 audits and decarbonisation plans will be produced.

Grant management - Following receipt of their decarbonisation report, businesses are then encouraged to apply for grant funding for the installation of low carbon technologies. Consultants ensure businesses have all the evidence required for the grant panel to effectively distribute grants with an average value of £5,000. Over a 12-month period £100,000 in grant funding will be distributed.





VCSE Energy Efficiency

England wide

April 2024 - March 2025




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Independent Energy Audits - Groundwork's Sustainability Consultants completed 18 energy audits for voluntary, community and social enterprises across England as part of the VCSE Energy Efficiency scheme, delivered in partnership with Groundwork.

Quality Assurance - Sustainability Consultants provided support to the project grant panel by quality checking independent energy audit calculations and assumptions. Consultants checked over 50 energy audit reports and supported the wider network of independent energy assessors to provide the cost and carbon saving information required by the grant panel.

Grant Panel - A number of Sustainability Consultants also assisted with panels allocating capital energy efficiency grants. Providing technical advice and guidance has supported the efficient distribution of grant funding and ensured energy efficiency projects were selected that were the most impactful.



CONCLUSION

Groundwork have extensive experience of designing, developing and delivering business support programmes. We pride ourselves on building trusted relationships with organisations from different sectors and of different sizes. Our qualified Sustainability Consultants deliver quality technical services which support organisations on their journey to Net Zero and ensure robust evidence is provided so that grant funding can be fairly distributed.

We are keen to scale up the work delivered through the UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund, working in partnership to ensure businesses are assisted to understand their environmental impact, are given the knowledge to reduce it, incentivised to take a lead, and financially supported to make real progress.

Please do get in touch if you would like a conversation about working with us to create a greener, stronger future.

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**SUSTAINABLE
BUSINESS**

