



Wales Co-operative Centre
Canolfan Cydweithredol Cymru

2020

Environment Report



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Foreword from the Chief Executive



Dear Reader

The Wales Co-operative Centre is a co-operative that works with people, communities and enterprises to improve their lives and livelihoods.

We are working for a fairer economy, and we are helping build a better future for everyone in Wales. This commitment includes not only what we do as an organisation, but how we do it. We want to ensure that our business has the lowest possible impact on the environment, so that we can protect our world for future generations.

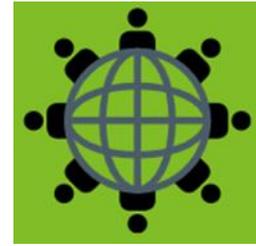
We take our commitment to understanding and managing our environmental impact seriously and are proud to have held Green Dragon accreditation for many years.

This report describes our environmental performance during 2020 and outlines our current environmental priorities.



Derek Walker
Chief Executive
January 2021

About our Business



The Wales Co-operative Centre is the UK's largest co-operative development agency, providing business support for social businesses and co-operatives, including growth and new start businesses; social care co-ops, housing co-ops, and community-owned facilities.

We also work with organisations to improve the use of digital technology for health and well-being, and help communities develop businesses or projects which value people and the environment as much as profit.

In addition, we influence, inform and respond to Welsh public policy.

Our turnover to 31st March 2020 was £5.3 million. We employ approximately 100 people, who provide services across the whole of Wales.

Our Head office is in Caerphilly, and we have a smaller office in Swansea. During 2020 we opted to vacate our office in Bangor in favour of a variety of more flexible working spaces across North Wales, a model which has worked well for us in Carmarthen and mid Wales.

Since the end of March 2020, all our employees have been working from home, and all but the most essential business travel has been suspended. As an agile organisation with a modern IT infrastructure, we were able to make this transition with relative ease. Now that the initial change is embedded, we are keen to capture the many benefits of more flexible working practices and increased technology, with environmental performance being high on the agenda.

Environmental Performance 2020



During 2020, we recorded the following information in relation to our environmental performance:

Waste

Year	Recyclable Waste	Landfilled Waste
2019	292 (55%)	235 (45%)
2020	69 (54%)	59 (46%)

Electricity

Year	KwH consumed	Defra Conversion Factor	Carbon Dioxide Equivalent (Kg CO²e)
2019	33751	0.2556	8627
2020	41979	0.23314	9787

Business Travel*

Year	Miles	Defra Conversion Factor	Carbon Dioxide Equivalent (Kg CO²e)
2019	168045	0.28502	47896
2020	57293	0.27584	15804

NB: Our response to the Coronavirus pandemic has significantly impacted the energy usage and waste production at our offices, as well as our annual business mileage. Consequently, we recognise that these figures are disproportionately low in relation to 2019. Nevertheless, we are committed to improving our working practices which will support real term improvements in the future.

Other Environmental Achievements 2020



During 2020, we also:

- Published our updated business strategy which clearly states our commitment to championing a fairer, greener society.
- Transformed our entire business to deliver services to clients virtually, with all staff working from home since March 2020 in response to the Coronavirus pandemic.
- Led "TechFest", a week long virtual festival to celebrate and showcase how digital technology can help to deliver the Well-being of Future Generations Act.
- Communicated our commitment to the Well-being of Future Generations Act and our expectations from potential suppliers via our procurement documentation.
- Donated to the Size of Wales programme to plant 1000 fruit trees in Uganda to help tackle climate change and improve the livelihoods of families.
- Communicated relevant environmental issues to staff via our intranet and newsletter.
- Welcomed several staff led suggestions for simple ways of supporting the natural environment such as promoting plastic free products for use at home, promoting Fair Trade Fortnight and planting flowers.
- Provided all staff with a packet of seeds for planting in their gardens at home.
- Launched an e-learning platform which includes a comprehensive Environmental Awareness module.

Environmental Priorities 2021



Due to the size and nature of our business, we believe that the risk to the environment from pollution or operational activities is relatively low. However, we believe that the preservation of the natural world is important, and we are keen to ensure that where impacts do exist, that they are reduced as far as possible.

The key environmental impacts which arise from our human and operational activities have been identified as disposal of waste to landfill and business travel. In addition, we would like to reduce our impacts associated with consumption of electricity. As such, we have set the following objectives and targets for 2021:

Objective	Target
Reduce Centre's carbon footprint	Reduce annual waste to landfill by 5%*
	Reduce electricity consumption by 5%*
	Reduce annual business travel by 5%*
Maintain effective management on ongoing improvement of the EMS	To move from Level 2 to Level 3 under the Green Dragon Environmental Standard
Promote environmental awareness amongst staff	All staff to understand the Centre's environmental commitments

*As compared with 2019

In support of continuous environmental improvement, our objectives and targets will be reviewed and amended as necessary to reflect changes within our Environmental Management System or achievements made.

In addition, we commit to reviewing our legislative and voluntary obligations, reviewing the impact that our human and business activities have on the natural environment, and reviewing our pollution prevention measures to ensure that everything is up to date, thorough and sufficient to protect the natural world.

This report will also be subject to review and will be updated accordingly on an annual basis.



Environmental Statement/Report Validation

The information contained within this Environmental Statement/Report has been sampled and validated by the Green Dragon auditor and found to be a fair and accurate assessment of the organisations activities and environmental performance over the past year within the organisations defined scope.

Lead Auditor	Bethan Harries
Auditing Organisation	Green Business Centre <i>(on behalf of Groundwork Wales)</i>
Date of Audit	13/01/2021
Valid until	12/01/2022

Validation of the Environmental Statement/Report does not confirm certification of the organisations Environmental Management System to the Green Dragon Standard. Confirmation of certification can be made by obtaining a copy of the organisations valid Green Dragon certificate or visiting the Green Dragon website at www.greendragonems.com