

# **Sustainability:** Annual Report 2024-25

July 2025



The Welsh Parliament is the democratically elected body that represents the interests of Wales and its people. Commonly known as the Senedd, it makes laws for Wales, agrees Welsh taxes and holds the Welsh Government to account.

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# **Sustainability:** Annual Report 2024-25

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## Introduction

The stabilised sustainability metrics we reported on the past two years have changed and this year we have an increase in much of our carbon figures.

In the build-up to an election year, and one in which the size and shape of the Senedd will change, we have been preparing the estate and seeing an increase in business travel. These have generated carbon emissions which push us over one of our interim annual targets for the first time. It's abundantly clear that much of the quick wins and efficiency savings conducted in previous years have been successful but reached their limit, and that decisions on capital projects will need to be made alongside those around the future of the estate.



**Manon Antoniazzi**

Chief Executive and  
Clerk of the Senedd



**Janet Finch-  
Saunders MS**

Commissioner  
for Sustainable  
Development

This year we have been able to make some further investment in the estate, including converting some remaining areas to LED lights. Measures, alongside other efficiency improvements, which see electricity consumption drop again this year.

Our Scope 3 carbon reporting is also improving and we have a clear path for generating more accurate supplier data now. Working in areas of greatest potential improvement

to start with, one of our Ymlaen interns is already on the case. As a key public sector customer, our supplier relationships should be mutually beneficial, so whilst we specify sustainability metrics and encourage more data submission, we are also keen to help suppliers improve their reporting which in turn will assist them.

## Summary of Performance

This year we report our core carbon footprint- one of our KPIs- as being above target for the first time. The ever-decreasing annual target towards the 2030 goal we set ourselves in our carbon neutral strategy, Goodbye Carbon, was always going to get more difficult to meet.

This year, with adjustments to ensure everyone on our estate is as comfortable as practicably possible, and in a period when the estate has been slightly busier than last year, we have seen an increase in heating demand. We have also seen an increase in travel - both by Members, their staff and Commission staff. Some of this has been abroad and the resultant flying emissions have impacted our carbon footprint.

We continue to seek further efficiency measures, on top of the extensive interventions taken in previous years, to target progress towards our goal. Following last year's reduction in capital works due to pressures on funding, this year we have been able to conduct some, including lifecycle replacement with more efficient technology, and the replacement of more lights with LED units. Some improvements have been made in parts of our carbon footprint; we see an electricity figure a few percent lower than last year, whilst having a slight increase in use of the estate by all stakeholders.



We continue to plan ahead however; for example, by considering further lifecycle replacement projects alongside key decision points in the Bay 32 project, as well as options to reduce those travel emissions.

The carbon footprint we are calculating now includes wider scope 3 emissions, but we will continue to report our core carbon footprint in this report for consistency. We also publish a wide range of other metrics, including financial figures, all contained in the data tables following. Further information is published in the main Sustainability Annual Report, available separately on our website.

We continue to operate a certified environmental management system, which includes an annual audit by a UKAS-accredited body against the requirements of ISO14001.

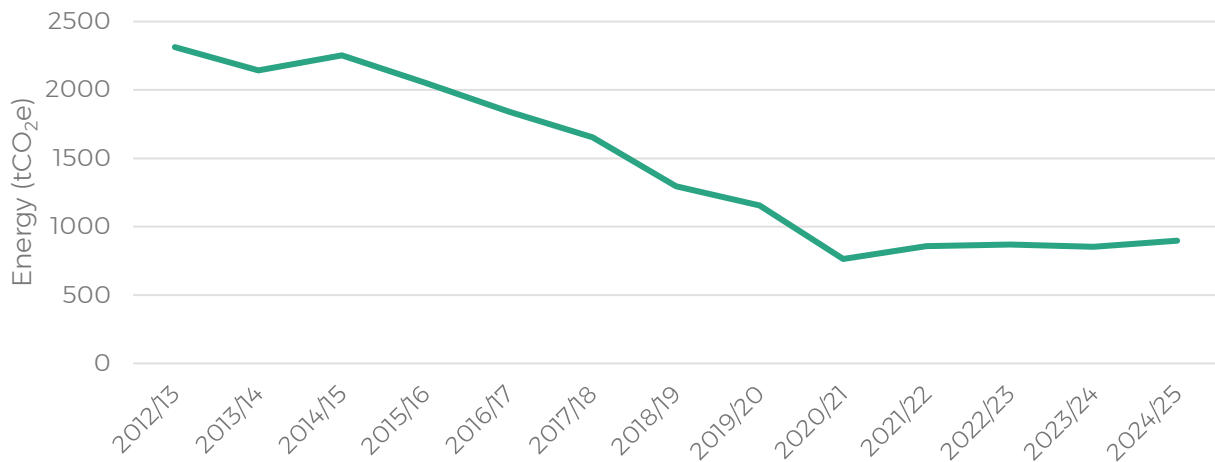
## Carbon

Our carbon footprint has increased this year. Scope 1 emissions - primarily gas use on the estate - rose slightly to levels very similar to two years ago and reflects the heating provision we had at that time. Last year, given the significantly increased unit prices we were paying, we had to make cuts to heating provision in particular.

Following feedback from stakeholders and a slightly busier estate, some of those measures were relaxed a little, although not to the same temperature levels we had in place three or four years ago, and we have still been able to show good financial reduction despite a colder winter than last year- about 10% according to the Degree Days data. We remain committed to the heat network being built around Cardiff, which will bring us lower carbon heat from a local source.

Travel is another component of our carbon footprint that has increased this year. Throughout the election cycle we see a mirrored cycle in travel claims, and this may be one cause of more activity this year. We have also continued our collaborative work with other parliaments abroad, and some of that work has required flying to create those in-person connections. These factors combined have had a material impact on our carbon footprint. We continue to promote low-carbon and healthy travel options wherever possible and will be targeting travel emissions over the next year with an aim to bring that figure back down.

Our work on Scope 3 emissions continues in earnest, and we now have an intern working with our suppliers to make this data as accurate as possible and help us look for savings opportunities. We now include carbon data questions as standard in our procurement exercises with suppliers and look forward to having that more accurate data to make more carbon-conscious purchasing decisions in the future.

**Total Emissions- Scopes 1, 2, & Business Travel (tCO<sub>2</sub>e)**

*Our core carbon footprint shows a slight increase this year, due to that increase in gas consumption*

**Scope 3**

Our wider Scope 3 carbon emissions have also increased this year. The aforementioned travel emissions have increased, and we've seen slight increases in our *working from home* and *commuting* calculations due to having slightly more staff.

Procurement is one area which has significantly increase this year. This is primarily due to preparing the Senedd estate for the 7<sup>th</sup> Senedd. The expansion of the Senedd includes more members, more support staff, and Commission staff. This change requires more furniture, much of which we have bought this year in preparation. Additional Members' offices are being constructed, utilising our existing office building to do so, but requiring reconfiguring works. The Senedd building itself will also change - the increase in Senedd Members meaning that additional desks are required in the debating chamber. Again, some of this work has been started already and the costs for the work done so far have affected the procurement figures for 2024/25.

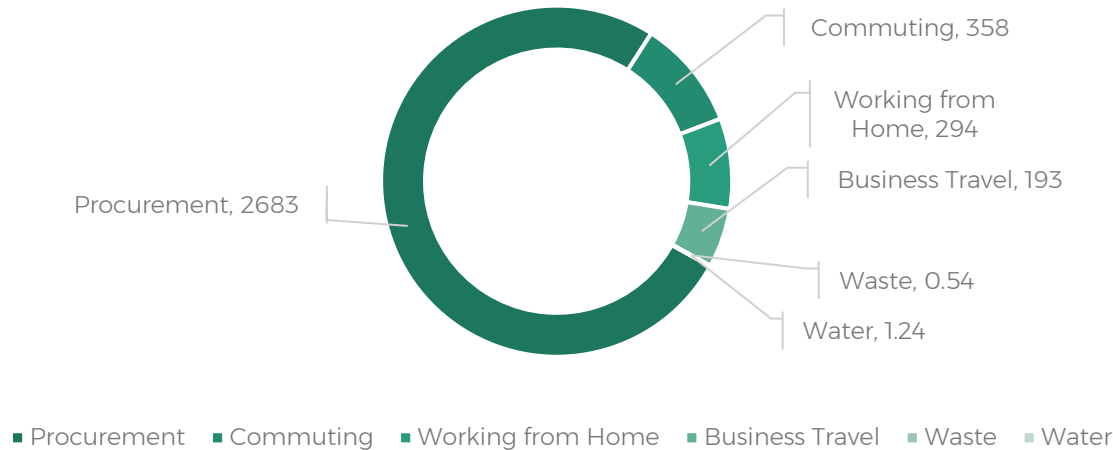
These workstreams include sustainability as an overarching principle for them, and we are ensuring sustainability criteria are included in the tender specifications for prospective contractors.

We are working with some of our top suppliers from the procurement part of the Scope 3 footprint to more accurately calculate their emissions, before looking to reduce them in the future. As part of our exciting Ymlaen internship scheme, we have one new recruit working on this topic as part of their role - work that will provide them with valuable experience for what is a growing field and provide us with valuable data to improve with.

Currently, estimating Scope 3 emissions using a spend-based conversion, any increase in costs by suppliers, due, for example, to inflation or materials costs, is reflected as an

increase in carbon. In working with suppliers to generate more accurate data, we are also looking to remove these consequential effects on our reports.

**Scope 3 Emissions (tCO2e)**



*Our Scope 3 carbon emissions for 2024/25*

**Carbon Reduction Strategy – Progress**

We have continued our progress with the measures outlined in the ‘Goodbye Carbon’ strategy document. Resources were available for some capital works, allowing us to switch some of the remaining light fittings over to LEDs. Our Facilities team remains committed to the district heating scheme in Cardiff and continues to work with Cardiff Council and their contractor to prepare our estate for connection. The electric vehicle (EV) salary sacrifice scheme is now operational and available to staff, helping them choose a more sustainable method where car travel is necessary

During 2025-26, we plan to commission a feasibility study for lifecycle replacement of the air-handling units (AHUs) listed in the Strategy, which would deliver sustainability benefits. Further capital projects outlined in the roadmap are being considered alongside key decision points in the Ways of Working programme which includes the review of our Cardiff Bay estate.









**SHORT TERM TARGET:  
(2021-2023)**



Behavioural change and  
good housekeeping

**100**

**2023:** 100% complete



BMS improvements  
(three buildings)

**59**

**2023:** 50% complete



Monitoring- additional  
meters and software

**52**

**2023:** 100% complete



LED lighting: continued  
replacement and review of  
controls

**30**

**2024:** 90% complete



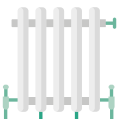
**= 241 TONNES OF CARBON  
SAVED PER YEAR**

**MEDIUM TERM TARGET:  
(2023-2026)**



Refurbishment of  
AHUs (air-handling units)

**42**



Connect to district heating  
network

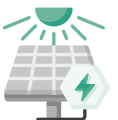
**132**

**2024:** 80% complete



Revert Ty Hywel to passive  
ventilation

**97**



Install solar PV  
(Senedd and Ty Hywel)

**60**

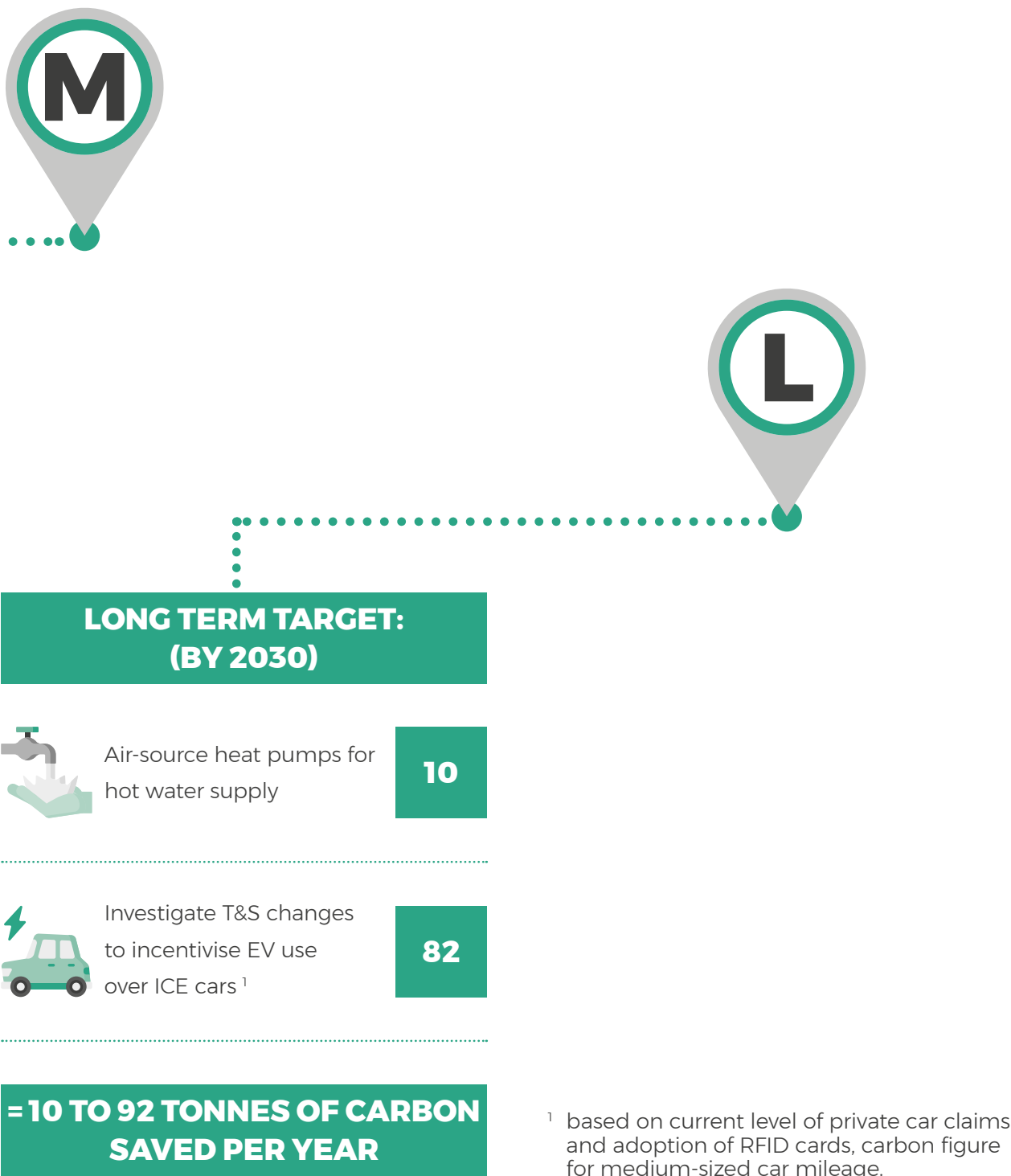
**= 331 TONNES OF CARBON  
SAVED PER YEAR**

# Carbon reduction

Below is a summary of the key milestones in our Carbon Neutral Strategy 2021-2030.

Progress against our short term targets has been updated for 2025.

The full Strategy is available on our website: [www.senedd.wales](http://www.senedd.wales)



## Energy

Last year we reported a significant increase in energy costs, given the volatility in the global market. This year our prices have come down, and some of the measures we took to significantly reduce gas consumption have been relaxed slightly.

This was in response to increased use of the estate and feedback from stakeholders. This has meant gas use increased slightly this year, but our expenditure was still able to be cut.

Electricity consumption is something we continue to target; looking for efficiency measures across the estate. Our team meets monthly to discuss consumption and propose reduction measures in a continued bid to drive down this largest part of our core carbon footprint.

Measures we have implemented this year to reduce energy consumption on the estate include remaining LED lighting upgrades in Tŷ Hywel, more efficient CCTV cameras, and feasibility studies for new air-handling units (AHUs) and a replacement building management system (BMS) both of which will cut consumption. Almost all our office areas are now running on LEDs, meaning a little less maintenance as well as electricity savings.

We continue to purchase our energy via a government framework, and now do so over a long purchasing window. This offers economies of scale as we buy alongside much of the rest of the public sector, and the purchasing strategy irons out fluctuations in the market; allowing us to more accurately forecast spend.

## Waste, Water and Other Resources

Waste production has risen this year- again a reflection of the increased use of the estate. Whilst we continue to not send any waste to landfill, we are cognisant of the need to recycle as much as possible and only use the energy recovery option where necessary.

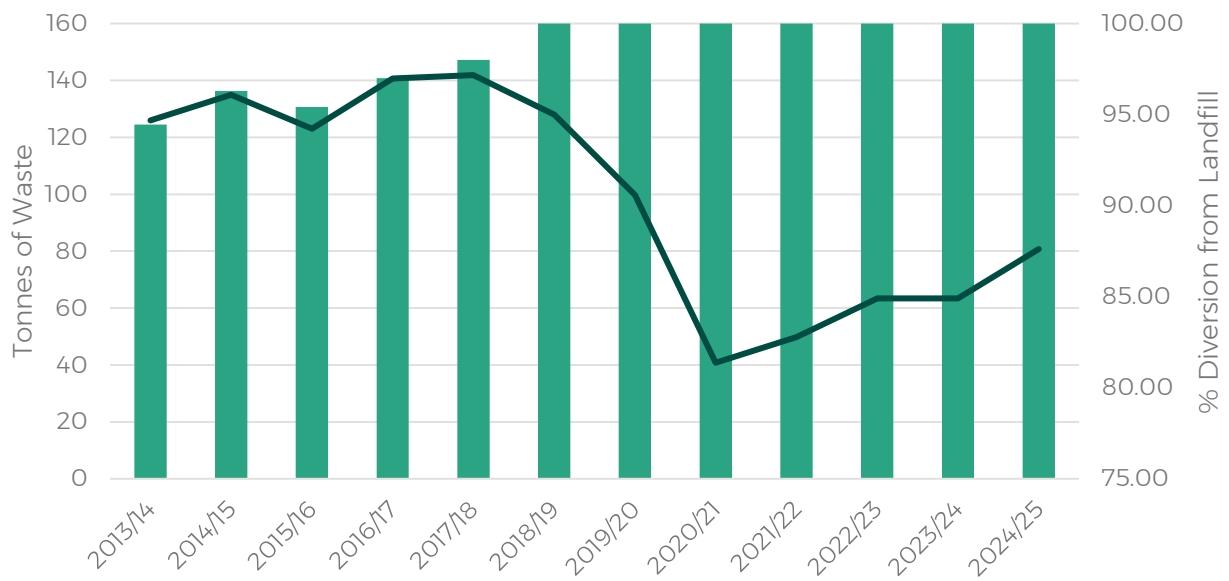
With a change in the requirements for workplace recycling early in 2024 and a scarcity of available waste containers in the market to accommodate the change, our recycling figures did drop initially as a percentage of overall production.

Over the forthcoming year, especially as we make changes to our estate in preparation for the changing Senedd, we will again review the availability and publicity of recycling bins around our buildings and encourage Members, staff and visitors to recycle as much as possible.

Water consumption was very similar to last year- down around 10% according to our manual meter reads, even though we had similar visitor numbers and a slight increase in staff occupancy of the offices. Costs for water supply and disposal are down a similar amount. Where new fixtures have been installed these are now water-saving by default, including automatic taps and motion-sensor urinals.

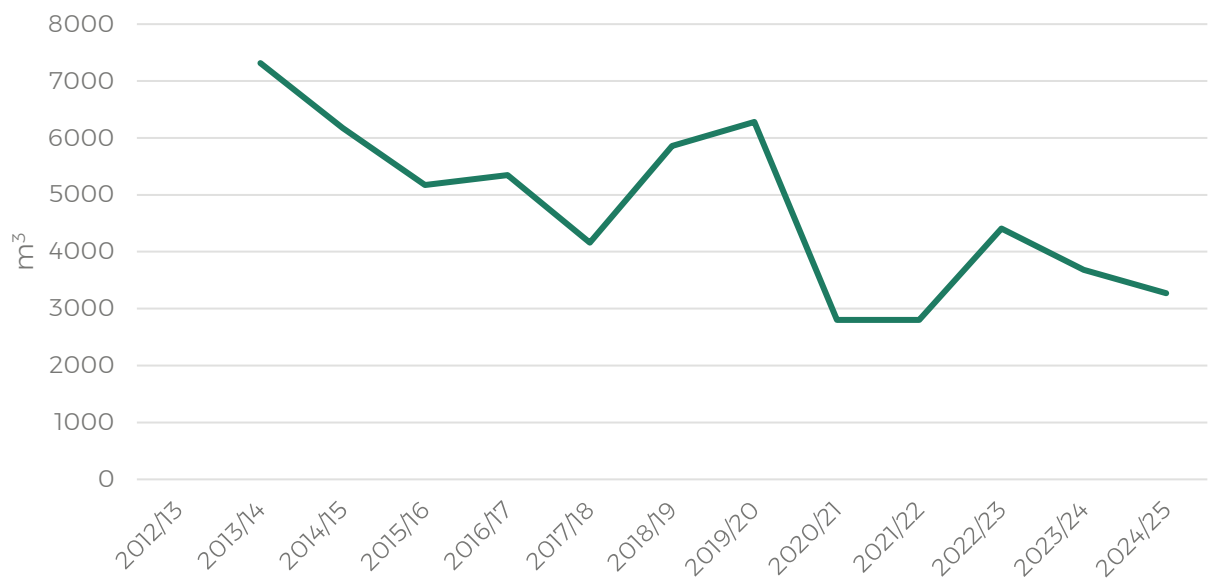
We continue to procure goods like stationery and our utilities through centrally-coordinated Welsh Government frameworks. Sustainability staff are involved in the development of specifications and tender reviews for all major contracts, ensuring standards such as Fair Trade and FSC are specified wherever relevant. We continue to request that new suppliers calculate the carbon footprint of goods where possible, in order to help us more accurately calculate our own footprint.

Total Waste and Diversion from Landfill



Waste tonnage has risen slightly, but we continue to divert all materials from landfill

Water Use (m3)



Water use has fluctuated over time in response to variables such as events, building occupancy, and maintenance, but continues to show a downward trend overall



## Travel

We operate one pool car, for business trips and engagement activities. This is a fully electric vehicle that not only reduces emissions in the areas we visit but also promotes this technology.

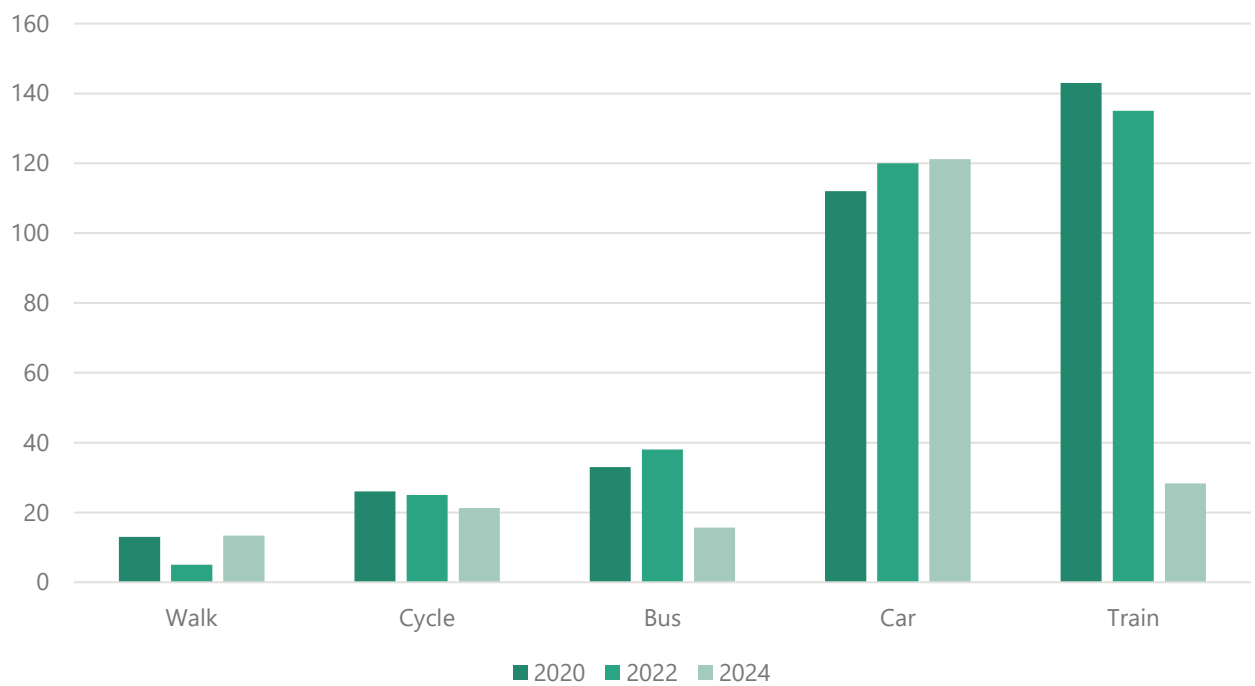
Electric vehicles (EVs) continue to grow in popularity amongst our staff, visitors and other key stakeholders. The charge points we have on site are often fully occupied on business days. The EV salary sacrifice scheme that we continue to operate is one source of these vehicles. This helps promote the financial savings an ultra-low emission vehicle can bring, not just to our staff, but especially Members, whose travel around their constituencies is able to be done in as clean and efficient a way as possible.

We continue to support hybrid working and have extensive IT systems in place to do so, from hybrid meetings rooms to ever-improving virtual meeting technology. This year, however, we have seen an increase in travel, both total mileage and, when final year-end claims are submitted, we expect costs too. As mentioned, we have seen this in previous election cycles as in person engagement increases, but we will be aiming to reduce where possible.

We conducted our biennial travel survey of people working from our estate during 2024, which provides us with updated data to produce the commuting component of our carbon footprint, as well as useful feedback on the facilities we provide. The most recent survey showed some positives such as that around a third of commutes are now self-powered (walking, cycling, wheeling, running). The car is still the most popular mode of travel amongst respondents though, and since the pandemic we have seen a reduction in the use of public transport.

We continue to be a member of the Public Service Board (PSB) group for active travel and have achieved the Healthy Travel Employer charter mark. This reflects our extensive facilities for those walking and cycling to work, as well as facilities for EV drivers and e-bike users. Being part of this PSB group also helps maintain forward momentum as we share best practice in this field with other public sector organisations.

Average Weekly Commute by Mode (miles)



*Although overall we see a move to more efficient vehicles amongst our staff, since the pandemic the use of public transport has dropped significantly.*

## Biodiversity

With our small, urban, estate, we are limited by the impact we can have on the wider biodiversity of the area, but this hasn't stopped us making improvements where possible.

We continue to maintain a new larger garden strip in the Ty Hywel car park, including two small ponds and blossoming trees. We maintain the land alongside the Senedd building; reducing cuts of this grassland area to annual interventions has allowed it to produce a wide range of flora, including two varieties of orchids. As a result, the wildflower strip also now attracts a range of insects, including damsel flies and butterflies.

The Pierhead Bees project continues to run well and has been a catalyst for some of the biodiversity measures on the wider Cardiff Bay estate. We have actively planted pollinator-friendly plants in our garden area, and the project has helped to inspire some of the school groups who've visited the apiary and taken the enthusiasm back to their own gardens.

As a Commission, we have limited impact on biodiversity beyond our estate, but where we can make positive choices, such as the purchasing of Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified timber, this is always prioritised as part of our sustainability impact assessment (SIA) tool.

In response to the Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience Duty of the Environment (Wales) Act, we have listed some of our actions and progress with them in the table below. We will continue to publish this information annually as part of this report.

Goal	Action	Progress
Embedding biodiversity in decision-making	We continue to operate an ISO14001-certified environmental management system, including an action plan containing biodiversity measures.	Successfully audited in February 2025 against the requirements.
	Conduct sustainability risk assessments for large procurement contracts, including biodiversity considerations	Complete, ongoing. We continue to conduct these assessments and look for biodiversity relevant in new contracts.
	Modify sustainability impact assessment tool to include biodiversity considerations.	New. Target date July 2025.
	Galvanise biodiversity commitment in our Environmental Policy	Completed, March 2025. New Policy available on our website.
Safeguard important species	Installation of swift boxes on Ty Hywel	Completed, May 2019, though yet to be occupied.
	Installation of bug hotels to encourage solitary bees.	Complete, 2022. Now being well used in summer months.
Restore & create habitats	Change mowing regime for land alongside Senedd to annual cuts.	Complete, ongoing. By cutting only once a year we see a wide variety of insects and plants populating the area.
	Extend Ty Hywel garden strip and include pollinator-friendly plants and second pond.	Complete, ongoing. We maintain this new garden area and it is now thriving with planted and naturally-germinated plants.
Improve evidence & understanding	Recommence pollinator surveys of wildflower strip and garden area.	New. Target date July 2025.
	Investigate feasibility of providing climate literacy training to key staff.	New. Target date September 2025.

## Climate Change Adaptation and Other Impacts

Whilst the sphere of influence of our Members covers every part of the lives of people in Wales, the Senedd Commission's operations are relatively confined, primarily to our buildings in Cardiff Bay and a small office in North Wales.

We are currently protected from some of the worst climate change impacts but are preparing for a changing climate. For example, our Cardiff Bay estate is protected to some extent by the Cardiff Bay Barrage. Longer term, our Carbon Neutral Strategy includes measures such as solar panels which provide further protection against an uncertain future.

Our actions for this coming year include the following:

- Work with Cardiff Harbour Authority and other stakeholders to improve flood awareness and preparedness amongst our key staff.
- Conduct feasibility study for lifecycle replacement of the air-handling units which cool our main office building (Ty Hywel).
- Complete a drainage study of one of our buildings to assess preparedness for extreme rainfall events and use this as an example for further buildings.
- Promote climate literacy amongst key staff.
- Promote sustainable and self-supported travel options.



## Other Stakeholders

Our sustainability work is not always confined to the estate, Members, their Support Staff and Commission staff, but brings us into contact with other parties with a consideration for the environment.

We have worked with the Welsh Youth Parliament and continue to support engagement activities with many school groups and other young people. This includes work around the role of the Senedd, but also activities like visits to the Pierhead Bees to learn about pollinators and biodiversity.

We work closely with other public sector organisations to share best practice, especially the other UK parliaments. These forums help with consistency in responding to policy and staying ahead of the curve. Given overlaps in suppliers, it will also help ensure we are taking a consistent approach with the supply chain in tackling our scope 3 emissions in the future.

## Environmental Management

The Senedd Commission has maintained a formal environmental management system (EMS) for more than a decade.

We believe in transparency as well as setting the highest standards for ourselves, which is why we maintain an EMS which is externally-audited against the requirements of ISO14001. This management standard requires a range of measures to be demonstrated, including controls on key environmental impacts, compliance with legislation, and a programme of internal audits. We have a team of trained internal auditors checking the physical site and our operational controls to ensure continued compliance throughout the year. The auditors also check for pollution risk and look for efficiency savings where possible.

We continue to work with other public sector bodies in Wales, as well as the other UK parliaments, in order to share best practice in continual environmental improvement.



## Appendix A – Data Tables

Key Performance Indicators	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Total net greenhouse gas emissions scopes, 1, 2, 3 (business travel, water, waste) tCO <sub>2</sub> e	1,296	1,150	764	870	844	851	<b>897</b>
Total energy emissions, tCO <sub>2</sub> e	1,066	962	730	799	701	686	<b>703</b>
NEW- Total Scope 3 Emissions (travel, WfH, goods & services, commuting)					2,841	2,879	<b>3,530</b>
Total waste (tonnes)	128	100	41	50	63	63	<b>80</b>
Total water consumption, m <sup>3</sup>	6,064	6,281	2,802	3,191	4,408	4,227	<b>3,759</b>
Total business travel emissions, tCO <sub>2</sub> e	174	180	24	67	140	163	<b>193</b>
Paper Use (million sheets)	2.73	2.33	0.86	0.65	1.97	2.05	<b>1.97</b>

\* Excludes MS and MSSS travel January to March 2025 due to delayed reporting requirements. Previous years have been adjusted as final claims for those years have been processed.









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