



Through
Technology

Beyond Net Zero

The Through Technology Environmental Impact Plan

15 November 2021

Introduction

Climate change is a significant issue and a challenge that we take seriously. This document describes in plain English our commitment to fighting climate change and how we go about achieving that outcome.

Our intent is to be an exemplar for organisations of our size, significantly exceeding any national targets that are set for us and applying common sense to ensure the measures we take are proportionate, sustainable, practical and effective for an organisation of our scale and scope.

We are also mindful of “greenwashing” and therefore explain clearly and exactly what we are doing and how.

We welcome comment on advice on how the measures outlined in this document can be improved (via email to sustainability@throughtechnology.uk)

What is environmental impact plan?

We are committed to protecting the environment through how we operate our business and by promoting environmental consideration with our partners, suppliers, customers and people.

Our Environmental impact plan (this document) sets out our ambition, plans and progress in fighting climate change. The plan will:

- Explain what we see as our role in fighting climate change;
- Explain what we have done so far and “how we got here” in terms of developing our approach and minimising environmental impact.
- Define the scope of our environmental impact
- Set out our plans and process to further minimise our environmental impact.
- Explain our current and estimated future environmental impact and emissions.
- Provide a defined commitment from our business to these measures, now and in future.

We have developed this plan to:

- Drive continual improvement in our environmental performance
- Transparently communicate our environmental ambition and priorities to our stakeholders, including our colleagues
- Nurture an environmental culture which places environmental sustainability at the heart of our business decisions
- Develop the baseline against which to set targets for our environmental performance. Track and measure progress both effectively and accurately
- Help demonstrate the environmental benefits of what we do

Our role in fighting climate change

Promoting and providing sustainable IT Services

Through Technology is a UK Small Business that works with large government departments and their enterprise-scale IT suppliers.

We therefore have a larger role to play in promoting and exemplifying sustainable IT services and practices than our company size would suggest.

We must ensure that environmental impact is a key consideration in solutions that we deliver. We must also help our customers to define requirements, evaluate bids and assure solutions and delivery to ensure that they meet or exceed the required standards and contribute meaningfully toward goals for Net Zero and beyond.

Optimising and Operating our business to minimise impact

As with every business, we have a responsibility to minimise our environmental impact.

Increasingly this is becoming not only a moral obligation, but a requirement of doing business with UK Government and other environmentally-conscious customers.

To this end, we must *continually* look to reduce Through Technology's impact of the environment, looking first to minimise emissions and secondly to offset those that we cannot entirely remove.

Where climate change is already happening and will continue to do so. We must also ensure our services to customers are not adversely effected by changes and adverse weather events.

Collective Effort

.By definition, climate change is a global problem requiring collective solutions.

We must also therefore do our share in contributing toward national targets and the global effort to reduce climate change.

We will do this by publicising and explaining the measures that we take as a business. Aiming to exceed the targets and expectations of a company our size and encouraging open and direct conversations with our customers, suppliers, staff, partners and peers.

How we got here

A good head start

Through Technology was originally set up to be a modern internet-based business. Our goal was to use cloud collaboration tools (Microsoft 365) for our internal systems and processes and work either remotely or side-by-side with customers on their sites.

While giving us a huge competitive advantage over more traditional IT firms, this approach is also naturally low carbon, since we use efficient cloud computing services and have no datacentres, no vehicles, no offices and no manufacturing of our own.

Asking the Experts

In 2020, we started to look seriously at calculating and reducing or offsetting our carbon footprint. This started by talking to experts, looking for specialists that could guide us through the process. Everyone we spoke to, wanted to charge 5-figure consultancy fees to help us with this problem. All of these would result in a plan to get us to net zero and a badge for our website. But precisely £0.00 of those fees would actually benefit the environment.

How we got here

Defining our own approach

“Keep It Simple, Stupid” (or KISS) is a common teaching in business. Investing thousands with a consultancy did not seem to meet our objective of ensuring we had a significant impact proportionate to the scale of our business.

We therefore decided to define our own approach based upon referenceable best practice and review it annually as our business grows, changes and the national and global positions on climate change evolve.

That approach is published in the remainder of this document and we invite comment from anyone with material views on how it can be improved. Our approach to this problem will be reviewed annually based upon changes in best practice, company scale and practices and changes in the environment itself.

Scope of our Emissions

Infrastructure and Supply Chain (Indirect emissions)

SCOPE 1

- Cloud Computing Supplier Services, including datacentres and IT Infrastructure.
- Partner Products & Services

SCOPE 2

- Working from home (staff)
- Staff travel
- Consumables

Through Technology Operations (Direct Emissions)

SCOPE 3

- Operational Emissions, currently:
 - No buildings
 - No product manufacture
 - No vehicles
- Business practices

Customer Infrastructure, Digital & Technology Services (Indirect emissions)

SCOPE 4

- Customer Digital & Technology Services
 - That we provide
 - That we help procure
 - That we assure
 - That we support
 - That we integrate
- Customer sites & business practices

Upstream Activity

Through Technology

Downstream Activity

We have categorised our emissions into discrete scopes based upon direct/indirect, upstream/downstream and finally, based upon our capability as a small business to influence upstream organisations and individuals.

Scope 1 – Upstream, Indirect, Large Suppliers & Partners

Ambition

Influence our supply chain to manage their operations and products in a manner that positively contributes to UK or Global Climate change targets.

How will this be reached?

We recognise our limited capability to influence large “enterprise-scale” organisations based upon our own scale and purchasing power. These organisations will also typically have their own mature approaches to corporate social value and environmental responsibility.

We will therefore seek to:

- Learn from and share best practice;
- Purchase new services with consideration of supplier eco-credentials.
- Help partners achieve and demonstrate compliance with the environmental standards, targets and procurement assessments of our HMG customers and the Crown Commercial Service.

Example Organisations

Microsoft
Archive360 (Partner)

How will it be monitored?

Specific tests as part of Through Technology Playbook “How we purchase services” & “How we assure solutions”.

Results and feedback from submitting or red-teaming bids with our various partners.

Scope 2 – Upstream, Indirect, Staff and Small Suppliers

Ambition

Where we have little direct emissions, this is by far our largest scope.

Our ambition therefore is to **actively manage** this scope. With the goal to rapidly reach a Carbon Negative position (beyond Net Zero).

As we grow larger, we will seek to **provide staff opportunities** to reduce personal/household emissions.

How will this be reached?

We will ascribe the emissions from homeworking staff and associates to our business and actively seek to minimise them through our business processes and communications, through:

- Minimising travel through hybrid working and online collaboration
- Using public transport wherever practical.

We will re-calculate our emissions annually or more frequently should we choose. We will then annually offset double our residual carbon footprint such that our business rapidly achieves a **Carbon Negative** position.

Example Organisations

Through Technology Employees
Through Technology Associates
Small/Medium business partners

How will it be monitored?

- Annual recalculation of carbon emissions and annual offsetting. Charges/certificates;
- Minuted AGM and SMT discussion of strategy.
- Communication of policies and best practices via the Through Technology Playbook & internal blogs.

Scope 3 – Direct, Through Technology Operations

Ambition

Maintain an optimal carbon footprint as our business grows, and changes to both provide and require new services.

How will this be reached?

With no premises, vehicles, internal IT infrastructure (other than cloud services) and no product manufacture, Scope 3 is exceptionally limited and therefore considered fairly optimal.

We will seek to maintain this position by:

- Ensuring that climate change impact is factored into all decisions for the procurement of new facilities, buildings, services and assets.
- Ensuring climate change is considered as part of our bids for new services or customers.

In Scope organisations

Through Technology

How will it be monitored?

Specific steps in the Through Technology Playbook “How we purchase Services and Assets”.

Scope 4 – Indirect, Through Technology Customer Operations

Ambition

Support our customers to achieve their own standards and requirements for reducing carbon emissions.

How will this be reached?

In our role as leaders and influencers of customer digital and technology programmes and strategy, we have significant ability to support them in achieving the targets set out by HM Government.

We will do this by:

- Helping define requirements and assess other supplier's solutions and bids based upon a clear understanding of best practice and extant HMG Guidance.
- Ensuring climate change impact is considered in our design, delivery and assurance activity on behalf of customers.
- Communicating openly, directly and effectively with our customers and their suppliers on climate change standards, best practice and expectations.

In Scope organisations

Through Technology

How will it be monitored?

- Specific steps in the Through Technology Playbook "How we assure designs".
- Frequent internal briefing of our teams;

Planning for Climate Change

Climate change is happening now with [1.5C change](#) now considered to be inevitable. Businesses must therefore plan for the impact of climate change and ensure resilience in their operations and delivery to customers.

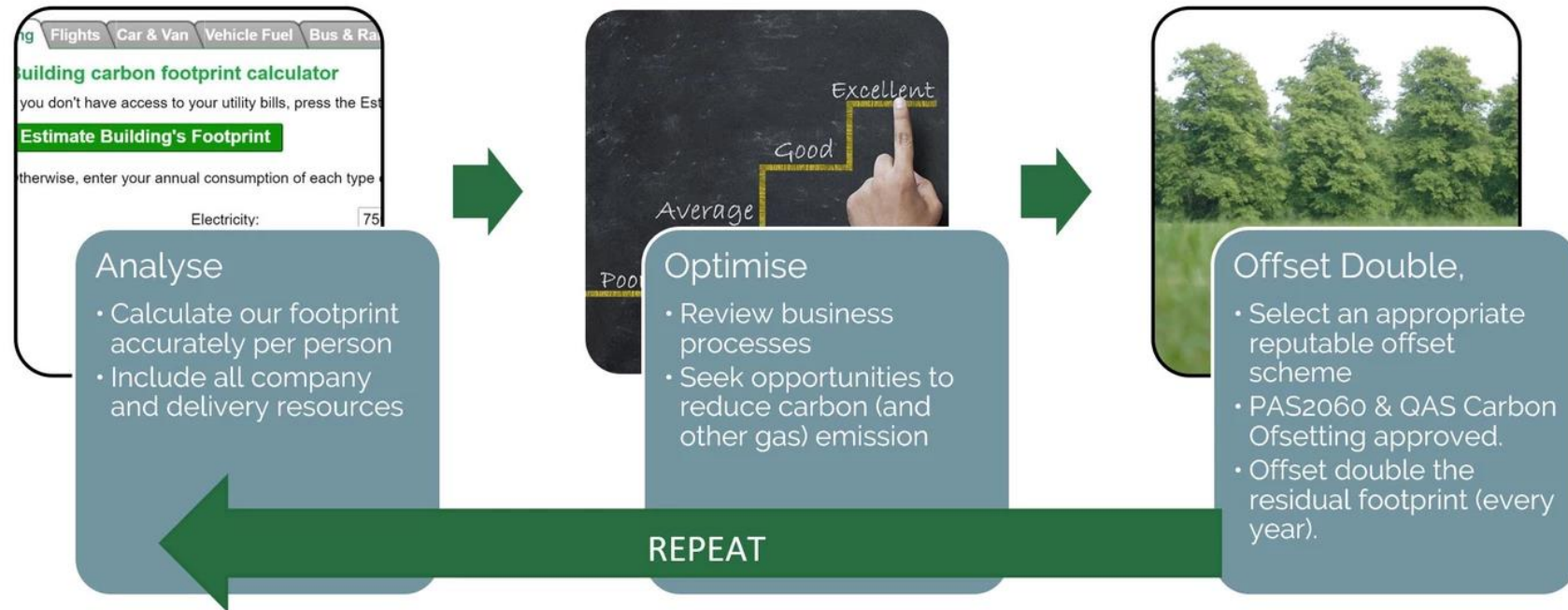
Through Technology's operating model is inherently resilient to climate change where:

- We operate Hybrid Working, with staff and associates working from homes, remote locations or client offices and using geo-geographically resilient cloud services.
- We do not have premises (except for on-demand London office provision) or a single geographic hub for the organisation.

At the time of writing, we do not foresee any immediate requirement to adapt our business for future climate change. This position will be reviewed annually.

Our Carbon Reduction Strategy

We will take a cyclical approach to environmental impact reduction. Where each year (September) we will analyse our carbon emissions and calculate our Carbon Footprint, review our business processes and progress, take any identified proportionate steps to further optimise our company's environmental impact.



Only once that impact has been minimised, will we then use accredited offsetting schemes to ensure the capture of our residual carbon footprint. Our initial plan is to offset double our residual carbon emissions using reputable, certified schemes that plant appropriate trees in appropriate locations in the UK. Targeting those regions identified by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) as suffering higher deprivation.

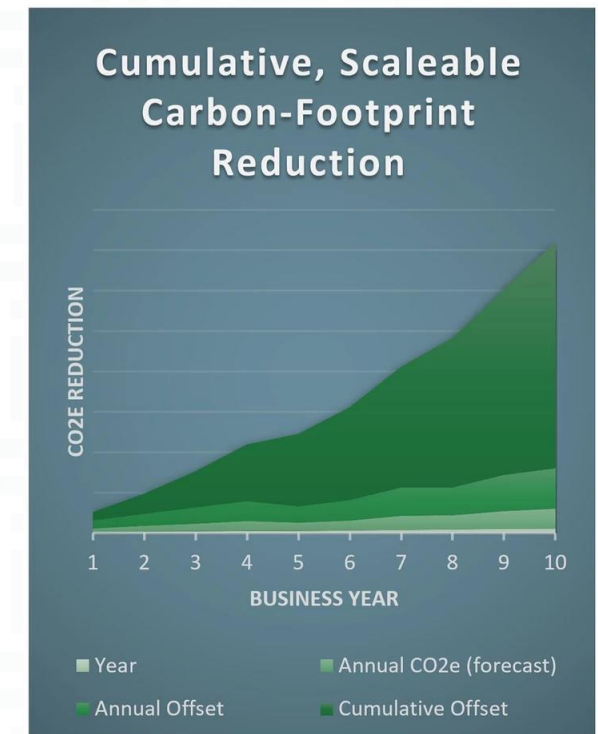
But Offsetting isn't cool...(ing)

As we write this plan, the COP26 Glasgow climate conference is in flight. Offsetting and tree planting schemes have hit the headlines, on the basis that they businesses can use them to appear “green” without actually changing their practices.

This is why offsetting is the final step in our carbon reduction cycle approach and used to address our residual carbon footprint *only after* we have calculated it and optimised wherever possible to minimise it. So we are consciously avoiding the trap of “Green Washing” for which these schemes are criticised.

Furthermore, our plan to offset double our residual carbon footprint is intended to achieve several outcomes:

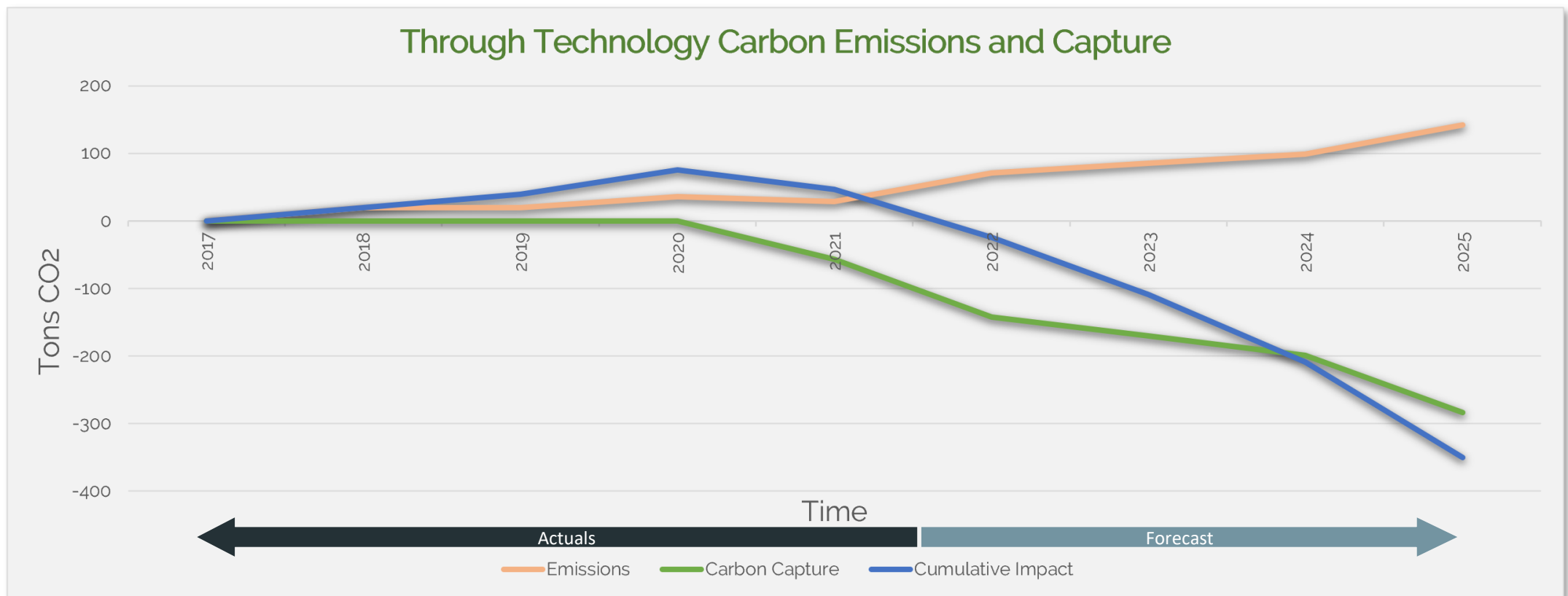
1. It ensures that our processes more than account for any lack of precision in our carbon calculations. Which when done in-house will include some degree of estimation.
2. Because trees last for many years, annually planting double our residual carbon footprint will result in an exponential growth in the impact of our carbon offsetting.
3. Basing offsetting (and its associated charges) against our actual emissions means that the cost of this activity will remain broadly proportionate to our business scale... And therefore, affordable now and in the long term.
4. It will ensure our business is increasingly **Carbon Negative** from day one of the plan and in perpetuity. A step beyond national and global targets for Carbon Neutrality and Net Zero.



Impact of the current plan

Our Carbon Reduction Strategy started in Summer 2021 and has almost halved the entire carbon emissions of our business so far. Projections for this policy with only moderate business growth show our business is already carbon negative across its entire lifetime and that we will have removed more than double our lifetime CO2 emissions from the atmosphere by 2025.

Our strategy means that faster business growth will also accelerate our positive impact on carbon emissions, meaning these targets are reached faster.



Our Environmental Commitment

Through Technology's Managing Partners commit....

1. To operating our business in a carbon-efficient manner, selecting partners who will do the same.
2. To annually calculate our business carbon footprint and seek each year to further reduce our environmental impact by optimising our systems and processes.
3. To grow increasingly *Carbon Negative* by annually offsetting double our residual carbon footprint using appropriately certified and reputable expert suppliers.
4. To openly discuss and encourage these and further measures within our business and with our customers, suppliers and staff.



Supplemental Material

The following information is provided as
appendices for use in Q&A .



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Appendices

Tools

After review of various options. Through Technology selected CarbonFootprint.com to calculate our carbon emissions and for Carbon Offsetting (tree-planting) scheme on the following basis:

1. **Reputation** - CarbonFootprint.com is used by our primary customer (Her Majesty's Government) to offset carbon emissions from ministerial travel. It is important to us to work with a reputable provider that our customers recognise.
2. **Independent Assessment and Compliance** – Carbonfootprint.com's calculation methodology is independently assured to the Quality Assurance Standard (QAS).
3. **Supporting Local Business**, CarbonFootPrint.com's team are based locally to our sustainability lead in Hampshire, UK.
4. **Appropriate & Regional Tree Planting**, CarbonFootprint.com's tree-planting schemes plant trees appropriate to the local ecology and gave us the option to select a specific UK geo-region. Through Technology's social value policy is to focus region-specific activity in areas identified by the [Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities](#) as having higher deprivation.

Estimation

Our Carbon Footprint has been calculated based upon the following per-person metrics for both employees and associate contractors. They are based upon rounded averages of our 2019 (pre-Covid19) travel and a broad estimate of 25% of average UK household energy consumption per home worker.

Item	Amount	Carbon (tonnes Co2E)	Rationale
Energy Consumption	750kwh/year	0.17	25% UK household consumption per home worker. CF.com figures for UK Energy:Carbon.
Car Commuting	1000 Litres Diesel	2.51	CF.com figures.
Public Transport	2000 miles national rail 1000 miles London Underground	0.16	CF.com figures
Totals		2.84 tCO2E per annum	

Appendices

Assumptions

The following assumptions have been made for impact forecasting.

1. **Further optimisation** – We believe our business practices are currently highly optimised to minimise carbon emissions. While we will seek new opportunities for this annually, we have not figured further optimisation into our forecasting.
2. **Growth of the business** – We have modelled based upon more conservative growth than our business is currently (and had historically achieved).. Greater growth will further increase our carbon capture annually and cumulatively with an overall positive environmental impact if other factors remain unchanged.
3. **Indirect Emissions** – The only indirect emissions factored into our Impact Forecast are those of staff and associates (contractors) working directly with Through Technology. Whilst we recognise we have a greater than average influence with larger customers and major partners/suppliers, we cannot claim their victories as our own.

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The forest image used in our eco-logo as part of our Environmental Commitment on page 14 was created by German Photographer and Mathematician Dietmar Rabich. Both the original and our logo version are licensed under the [BY-SA4.0 Creative Commons License](#).

References

IPCC – Global Warming of 1.5C Report - [Global Warming of 1.5 °C — \(ipcc.ch\)](#)

Carbon Footprint Calculators and Offsetting - [carbonfootprint.com - Home of Carbon Footprinting](#)

Procurement Policy Note 06/21 – Carbon Reduction - [Procurement Policy Note 06/21: Taking account of Carbon Reduction Plans in the procurement of major government contracts - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Through Technology Limited - [www.throughtechnology.uk](#)