

Charities & the climate crisis

About me

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 - 4 years in the Charity sector, 7 in tech
 - Proud Geordie
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 - Love penguins
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Let's talk about charities and the climate
crisis

What is climate change?

The impact of climate change



Some of the results we're already feeling from climate change are:

- Shifts to the hydrological cycle
- Melting sea ice and glaciers
- Rising sea levels
- Ocean acidification
- Global greening
- More extreme weather

The impact of climate change



Some of the impacts caused by changes to our climate system, as detailed by the Met Office are:

- Risk to water supplies
- Conflict and climate migrants
- Localised flooding
- Extinction
- Damage to marine ecosystems
- Fisheries failing
- Loss of biodiversity
- Change in seasonality
- Drought and wildfires
- Habitable region of pests expands
- Forest mortality and increased risk of fires
- Damage to infrastructure
- Food insecurity

Why do charities need to get involved?

We as charities are often leaders.

People look to us for support, guidance, and moral advice.

Charities thus need to lead by example, showing others across the world how to take meaningful action on climate change.



How can charities help?

Develop a sustainability strategy

A sustainability strategy will help you **research, prepare, and define** the actions you need to take to make your charity sustainable.

Consider committing to an ESG strategy. Think of creating a ESG strategy as setting your organisation up to be sustainable financially, culturally, and ethically.



Update your policies



Charities should regularly review their policies to ensure they have the climate in mind.

Travel policy:

- Are you offering eco-friendly travel options?
- Are there incentives for staff willing to ditch cars and cycle?
- Are you offsetting emissions for international travel?
- Are you recompensing cycling at the same rate as car use?

Choose suppliers wisely

You need to ensure you have effective policies that scrutinise the climate actions of the people you work with.

Look into adding sustainability factors or considerations into your procurement processes.

As charities, cost is always a factor, but this should not be at the detriment of working with a supplier who is going against your own climate commitments.



Build awareness into your charity



While many charities want to do more to fight climate change, they aren't yet taking the steps to do so

Top tips:

- Ensuring staff to think before they print
- Shut computers down at the end of the day
- Switch lights off
- Unplug appliances
- Place recycling bins around the office

Think about your digital footprint

There are numerous tools and tips to help calculate and reduce your digital footprint:

- Reduce the number of clicks it takes to reach your most important/popular content
- Minimise the use of non-system fonts
- Look at the [Sustainable Web Manifesto](#) - a great starting place for charities looking to reduce their digital footprint
- Explore the OVO Energy 'Think before you thank' campaign and the carbon capper chrome plugin

If every Brit sent one less thank you email a day, we would **save 16,433 tonnes of carbon** a year!



E-waste is made up of discarded electronic devices that are no longer useful or functional.

Here's where you can reduce e-waste with the help of other charities:

- **WeeeCharity** collects electronic goods and resells or recycles them
- **Reuse Network** collects unwanted goods including IT equipment and resells it at low cost through a network of charity shops
- **Good Things Foundation's National Device Bank** refurbishes equipment and provides it free to community organisations
- **Computers for Charities** offers low-cost pre-owned computer equipment including software
- **Computers4charity** donates unwanted laptops, computers, and other IT equipment to charities
- **The Renewed Store** supplies refurbished computer hardware to the charity sector
- **ComputerAid** supplies very low cost refurbished IT for non-profits
- **Green Root Tech** offers free refurbished computers, IT hardware, and software services for UK charities

Reducing your e-waste



E-WASTE

Make your office green



Top tips

- Pick paper products certified by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)
- Switch energy providers to ensure you're using renewable resources
- Pop some plants in the office

Reduce, reuse, recycle

- Ensure there are recycling bins around the office, clearly marked for paper, plastic, and glass
- Ask staff to use glasses for water or a reusable water bottle to reduce single-use plastic
- Remind staff to consider the environment before pressing 'print'
- Consider donating office furniture and other items that you no longer need



Involve your trustees

In order to move the dial on how charities can address climate change, they must educate and involve their trustees in the process.

It's important that trustees are included in creating your sustainability strategy and have some influence on its direction to inform strategic and financial decisions.



Avoid greenwashing

‘Greenwashing’ is when an organisation makes green claims about their brand or a product that are not entirely true or could seem contradictory.

Going green should be like defining your organisational values. Values are only useful if they are supported and embraced by the whole organisation.



Show your commitment



ACEVO, the membership body for charity leaders, has put together a framework for charities to help them structure and direct their thinking on climate issues.

Charities can pledge their commitment and join a community where they can share learnings and work together towards a shared vision.

Share your learnings with the sector

Cool Earth - Cool Earth exists to give cash direct to rainforest communities, to fund projects that create choice, tackle the root causes of deforestation and protect vital carbon sinks

Clean Air Task Force - Pushes the technology and policy changes needed to achieve a zero-emissions, high-energy planet at an affordable cost

Ecological Continuity Trust – This is a small charity that supports long-term environmental experiments, including the Buxton Climate Change Field Experiment, which is the longest-running climate change manipulation experiment in the UK



Vital resources



The **UK Climate Risk** website hosts the outputs for the Climate Change Risk Assessment Evidence Report, from research projects through to summaries of the latest advice

Climate Change Resources offers lists of, among other things, books, podcasts, films, activities for parents, information on food waste, electric vehicles, new tech, and so much more

The UN Environmental Program's climate change webpages offer a range of information on the intersection of environmental issues and biosafety, gender, conflict and disaster, sports, and so on

Charity Digital: We have our own ultimate climate resource bank for charities on our climate hub

Looking ahead

"The best way to engage in meaningful action is to co-operate and communicate, working together to ensure that we take proper care of our planet."

Get in touch at www.charitydigital.org.uk





Thank you!
Any questions?

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