Scottish Information Commissioner

Statement on sustainable growth

2025–26

Introduction

1. The Commissioner is committed to supporting sustainable growth by improving the environmental sustainability of our operations. Under our Environmental Policy, we work to reduce pollution, use resources responsibly, lower our environmental impact and support biodiversity.

2. Under section 32(1)(a) of the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010, we must publish an annual statement setting out the steps taken to promote and increase sustainable growth through our functions. This document sets out how the Commissioner supports that duty through environmentally responsible operations and sustainable business practices during 2025-26.

3. The Commissioner's primary function is to enforce and promote Scotland's freedom of information legislation. As a small, single-site organisation, our direct influence on sustainable growth is modest, but we can still make a meaningful contribution by reducing our carbon footprint, using resources efficiently and embedding sustainability considerations in the way we work.

Carbon footprint

4. Since the 2007-08 baseline was established, our CO_2 emissions have shown a sustained downward trend, reflecting continued progress in reducing the environmental impact of our operations.

5. While our scale limits the extent of our direct impact, we remain committed to continuous improvement in managing and reducing our carbon footprint. We will continue to embed low-carbon and resource-efficient practices across our operations, including:

- maintain flexible hybrid working to support remote working
- maintain our paper free policy
- use telephone and video conferencing instead of in-person meetings where appropriate
- choose environmentally friendly cleaning products where possible
- include environmental considerations in procurement where practical
- encourage low energy IT practices, such as switching off unused equipment
- consider energy efficiency improvements in the building when maintenance or replacement is due
- monitor utility use to identify avoidable consumption

Summary of Performance 2025-26

Area	Performance 2025/26
Total CO_2 Emissions	Total CO_2 emissions have continued their long-term downward trend, demonstrating sustained progress in reducing the environmental impact of our operations. The organisation will seek to maintain operational CO_2 emissions at or below current levels while identifying opportunities for further reductions where practicable.
Building Energy	Emissions from gas and electricity consumption reduced slightly again this year, reflecting continued focus on energy efficiency despite increased staffing and greater in-person use of the building.
Business Transport and Travel	Business travel increased as more meetings and events took place in person. Train remained the main mode of transport, supporting our aim to prioritise lower-carbon travel wherever practical. Flights were limited to domestic and European journeys where no reasonable alternative was available, helping to keep travel-related emissions as low as possible.
Recycling (paper)	Paper consumption continued to decline. Paper waste sent for recycling increased slightly, reflecting a targeted records disposal exercise.

	Recycling facilities and signage were also improved to support effective waste segregation and reduce contamination.
Water (use and waste)	Water related emissions have remained unchanged reflecting stable water consumption levels and the relatively minor contribution of water use to the organisation's overall carbon footprint.

Key Metrics Comparison (Total CO_2 Emissions)

The total emissions target of 40.5 tonnes of CO_2 emissions was set in 2015 and has remained unchanged since then. Actual emissions have averaged approximately 20 tonnes over the last three years, consistently achieving levels around 50% below the target.

Area	2007-08 Baseline	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Building Energy (gas and electricity)	48.3	17.4	18.00	17.43
Business Transport and Travel	9.48	2.52	1.43	1.86
Recycling (paper)	0.59	0.63	0.63	0.89
Water (use and waste)	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12
Total CO2 emissions	**58.49**	**20.67**	**20.18**	**20.30**

Supporting Data Tables

The following tables provide the detailed data underpinning the headline performance summary and year-on-year comparison set out above.

Building Energy		**2007-08 Baseline**	**2023-24**	**2024-25**	**2025-26**
Emissions (tonnes CO2)	Gas	31.20	13.92	14.96	15.33
	Electricity	17.10	3.48	3.04	2.10
Energy consumption (kWh)	Gas	151214	6632	7172	6716
	Electricity	32772	14922	13026	11852

Business Transport and Travel		**2007-08 Baseline**	**2023-24**	**2024-25**	**2025-26**
Emissions (tonnes CO2)	Flights	7.23	2.16	0.64	1.09
	Bus	0.00	0	0	0.04
	Car	1.33	0.18	0.43	0.37
	Train	0.88	0.18	0.33	0.31
	Taxi	0.041	0	0.03	0.03
Mileage (Miles)	Flights	38024	17382	3987	8711
	Bus	0	29	25	206
	Car	4101	600	1477	1339
	Train	9169	3092	5548	5843
	Taxi	0	20	130	121

Recycling (paper)		2007-08 Baseline	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Emissions (tonnes CO2)	Paper waste	0.59	0.63	0.63	0.89
Paper Weight (kg)	Paper waste	465	500	500	705

Water (use and waste)	2007-08 Baseline	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Water use (tonnes CO2)	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06
Water Waste (tonnes CO2)	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06

Strategic Outlook and Priorities

The organisation remains committed to maintaining a low operational carbon footprint and to pursuing further reductions in emissions where these can be achieved in a proportionate and cost-effective manner. Performance will continue to be monitored through the annual reporting cycle, with due regard to operational priorities and external factors that may influence year-on-year results.

While greenhouse gas emissions increased marginally during the reporting period, this should be considered in the context of the organisation’s relatively small operational footprint, where modest changes in activity levels can have a proportionately greater effect on annual totals. The increase was primarily attributable to higher levels of business travel and increased occupancy of office space over the year. This does not indicate any diminution in the organisation’s commitment to environmental sustainability. The organisation will continue to monitor performance closely and to identify practical, proportionate opportunities to enhance resource efficiency and further reduce environmental impact.