

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY FRAMEWORK 2023-2029

Date: May 2023



SUMMARY

If you just have a few minutes, this page summarises our ambitions over the next 6 years.

OUR GOALS

1. Minimise the environmental impact of our activities.
2. Communicate effectively about our environmental responsibility.

Our Framework was developed with insights from Eight Versa, ideas generated by the museums' cross-departmental Sustainability Working Group and our Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation plan.

WHERE WE ARE:

- We're a Carbon Measured organisation with a 2019 Carbon Baseline Report.
- Our Scope 1-3 emissions for the 2019 reporting year are 908.5 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO₂e). That's about 177 homes' electricity use for one year.
- We have a cross-departmental Sustainability Working Group spearheading our activity.

WHERE WE WANT TO BE:

- We want to achieve Net Zero emissions by 2040.
- We want to reduce dependency on natural resources and our overall impact, from increasing biodiversity on our sites to reducing waste.
- We want our staff and volunteers to be confident communicating about our environmental responsibility and clear about their roles in achieving our goals.
- We want robust data collection and analysis, from greener procurement to better use of existing systems.
- We want our vision funded and resourced so we can meet our goals.

HOW WILL WE GET THERE?

We will follow a Framework and Action Plan across 4 areas of impact:

- **Place:** changes to our operation, from our buildings to our digital outputs
- **People:** how our staff and volunteers are supported and will work
- **Programme:** how we communicate about our environmental responsibility with staff, stakeholders and visitors
- **Process:** how we understand and measure impact, remain accountable and resource our progress.

Read on to find out more.

INTRODUCTION

This document sets out the museum’s strategy for Environmental Sustainability over the next 6 years, delivering against the objectives of our Forward Plan for 2023-29.

There are 2 goals:

1. Minimise the environmental impact of our activities.
2. Communicate effectively about our environmental responsibility.

We aim to take a holistic approach, which balances meaningful reduction of our impact with our power as an organisation with significant reach to communicate about our environmental responsibility. However, we recognise that decarbonisation of our activities will require the most resource and is where we can have the greatest impact.

Activities have been categorised into 4 areas of impact: **place, people, programming** and **process**.

We’ve created this Framework to help everyone understand our goals, but there may be some terms and concepts that need more explanation. That’s why we’ve provided definitions for key terms and concepts to help you understand this document on **page 10**.



WHERE WE ARE NOW

WIDER CONTEXT

United Kingdom Climate Change Act

The UK Climate Change Act of 2008 committed the country to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 80% by 2050 compared to 1990 levels. The target was later made more ambitious in 2019, with the UK committing to achieving net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. The Act formalised the UK's approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change.

Camden Climate Action Plan 2020-2025

The plan aims to achieve net-zero carbon in Camden by 2030 through a five-year program. It includes projects centered on People, Buildings, Places, and Organisations and delivers on 17 Citizens' Assembly recommendations. All organisations in Camden are expected to operate responsibly, embedding efforts to tackle the climate crisis.

Islington Vision 2030 Strategy

In November 2020 the council set out its Vision 2030 strategy to reach net zero, which includes plans for buildings, transport, sustainable and affordable energy supply, green economy and planning, and natural environment and waste. The council also signed the UK100 Net Zero pledge, meaning it will work with other councils to draw more support from the government to meet climate crisis ambitions.

Arts Council England

ACE expects cultural organisations they support, including The Postal Museum, to strengthen their commitment to environmental responsibility over the next decade. This includes reducing impact, reporting on progress, and taking an environmentally responsible approach to running businesses and buildings. This includes lowering carbon emissions, increasing recycling, reducing plastic use, and cutting water consumption. They should also promote the need for environmental responsibility in the communities they work with.

UK Climate Change Risk Assessment

Cultural heritage has been assessed in the latest UK Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA) Technical Report. It found the risks to cultural heritage caused by climate change are increasing and overall are medium rising to high risk for the UK. The main current risks to cultural heritage are extreme weather fluctuations, flooding, coastal processes, and unintended negative effects on the preservation of cultural heritage caused by climate mitigation and adaptation measures.

WHERE WE ARE NOW – continued

OUR SITES

We operate in 3 sites. Our primary location (The Postal Museum and Mail Rail buildings) spans both Camden and Islington, on opposite sides of the road. We also operate a storage space in Essex and a small element of an attraction in Shropshire.

The Postal Museum

Housing offices, the museum exhibitions, archive, repository, learning spaces, café and shop. This purpose-built building was opened in 2017.

Mail Rail

This is a retrofitted heritage building and comprises the Mail Rail ride, 1.2km of underground tunnels, exhibition space, a shop, play space and a catering kitchen.

Debden

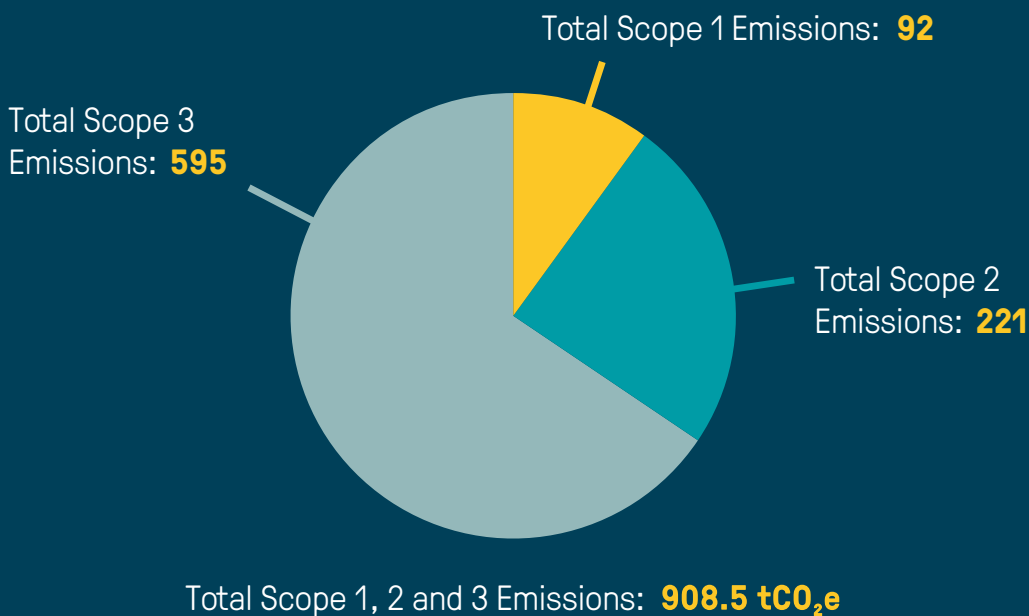
This large warehouse houses much of the museum's collection. The Postal Museum rents this space from Royal Mail.

Ironbridge

The Postal Museum runs a small display within the Ironbridge attraction.

SUMMARY OF OUR CARBON FOOTPRINT

The Postal Museum is a Carbon Measured organisation and is using 2019 as a baseline:



Tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent, or (tCO₂e) for short, is a unit used to measure the total amount of greenhouse gases released into the atmosphere. It takes into account the different types of gases produced and calculates the amount of carbon dioxide that would have the same warming effect as all those gases combined. This helps us compare and understand the impact of different greenhouse gases on the environment.

WHERE WE ARE NOW – continued

CONTEXT:

- The Postal Museum's gas and electricity consumption are below good practice benchmarks for UK offices – a significant achievement given that this building holds far more than office space.
- Mail Rail is above the good practice benchmarks for a UK museum for both gas and electricity, most significantly for electricity use in part due to the requirements of the Mail Rail ride.

FACT:

The Postal Museum's total Carbon Footprint for 2019 is equivalent to **2,327,702 miles** driven by an average gas-powered car or **177 homes'** electricity use for one year.

Or...

The emissions generated by powering approximately **101 million** lava lamps for one year or the carbon footprint of producing about **563 million** rolls of toilet paper!



WHERE WE WANT TO BE

The Postal Museum recognises the urgent need to take action to combat the climate emergency. We aim to make meaningful changes to our operation and be making tracked progress towards Net Zero emissions by 2040. We want to embed environmental responsibility within all aspects of our work and ensure everyone understands their role in supporting delivery.

GOALS:

1. Minimise the environmental impact of our activities.
2. Communicate effectively about our environmental responsibility.

PRIORITIES:

PLACE

We will make meaningful changes to our operation and achieve Net Zero emissions by 2040. This means investing in changes to our buildings and the places we operate in. Alongside this, we need to work in new ways with our suppliers to understand their impacts and work to reduce these. We recognise that environmental sustainability is not just about carbon reduction and will invest time and resources to reduce our dependency on natural resources and the impact we have on our environment, from increasing biodiversity to reducing waste.

PEOPLE

If we want to influence change, we need to be clear on what environmental responsibility means for us. This starts with our staff and volunteers. We will support people to be confident championing our environmental responsibility across all activities through training, support networks and embedding individuals goals in annual planning and objectives. Alongside this, we aim to provide staff and volunteers with good choices from support to travel sustainably to the employment benefits we offer.

PROGRAMME

Our vision is to inspire meaningful connections through good communication. We will talk about the urgent need for change and how we are progressing as an organisation through all our channels. This includes using our collection to connect with audiences through learning and community programmes, our onsite content and our online presence. We will work with partners that share our vision and with experts who can help us look at collections, buildings and stories in new ways.

PROCESS

Achieving real impact requires robust processes and realistic resources. We will significantly improve the quality of our data collection and analysis, from greener procurement to better use of existing systems. We will measure emissions annually and improve our governance, with leadership from our Trustees. They will take an active and accountable role in monitoring our progress. We will seek funders and partners that can support us to realise our goals, ensuring that actions are prioritised with both time and budget internally.

WHERE WE WANT TO BE - continued

CARBON REDUCTION PATHWAY

The graph shows our estimated greenhouse gas emissions until 2040 (scope 1-3), compared to our 2019 baseline emissions. We have identified ways to reduce our emissions through our Carbon Reduction Plan, and the model suggests that we can achieve an 83% reduction in Scope 1 and 2 emissions by 2040, and a 65% reduction by 2030. This trajectory means we would be exceeding science-aligned reduction targets that are required by 2030.

The Scope 1-3 modelled reduction pathway suggests that we can achieve a 57% reduction by 2040. We would have a Net Zero 'Gap to Target' of 304 tCO₂e in 2040 (meaning an additional 304 tCO₂e would need to be reduced by 2040 to achieve Net Zero).

Whilst this gap may seem high, the current modelled pathway does not quantify reduction across Scope 3 categories, and it is not possible to do so at this stage. We need to gain greater understanding of supplier's emissions (Scope 3). Once we have achieved this further modelling can be developed.

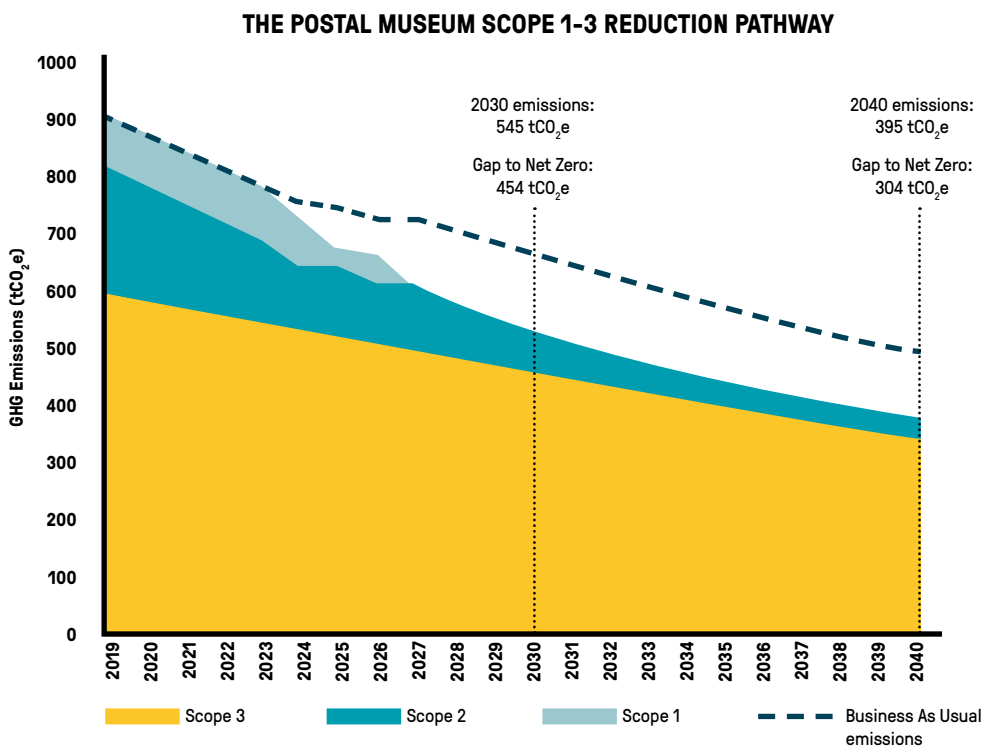


Figure 4: Scope 1-3 Reduction Pathway for TPM

To track progress towards Net Zero emissions and ensure reductions are science-aligned, we must achieve the following interim targets:

1. An absolute reduction in Scope 1 and 2 emissions of 4.2% per year, to be achieved by 2030 (equivalent of a 46% reduction).
2. Continue to measure and reduce Scope 3 emissions and target an overall 90% absolute reduction in Scope 3 emissions, to be achieved by 2040.

HOW WE WILL GET THERE

Over the next 3 years there are key actions the museum must deliver to keep on track. The actions in our Action Plan and Carbon Reduction Plan will guide this work.

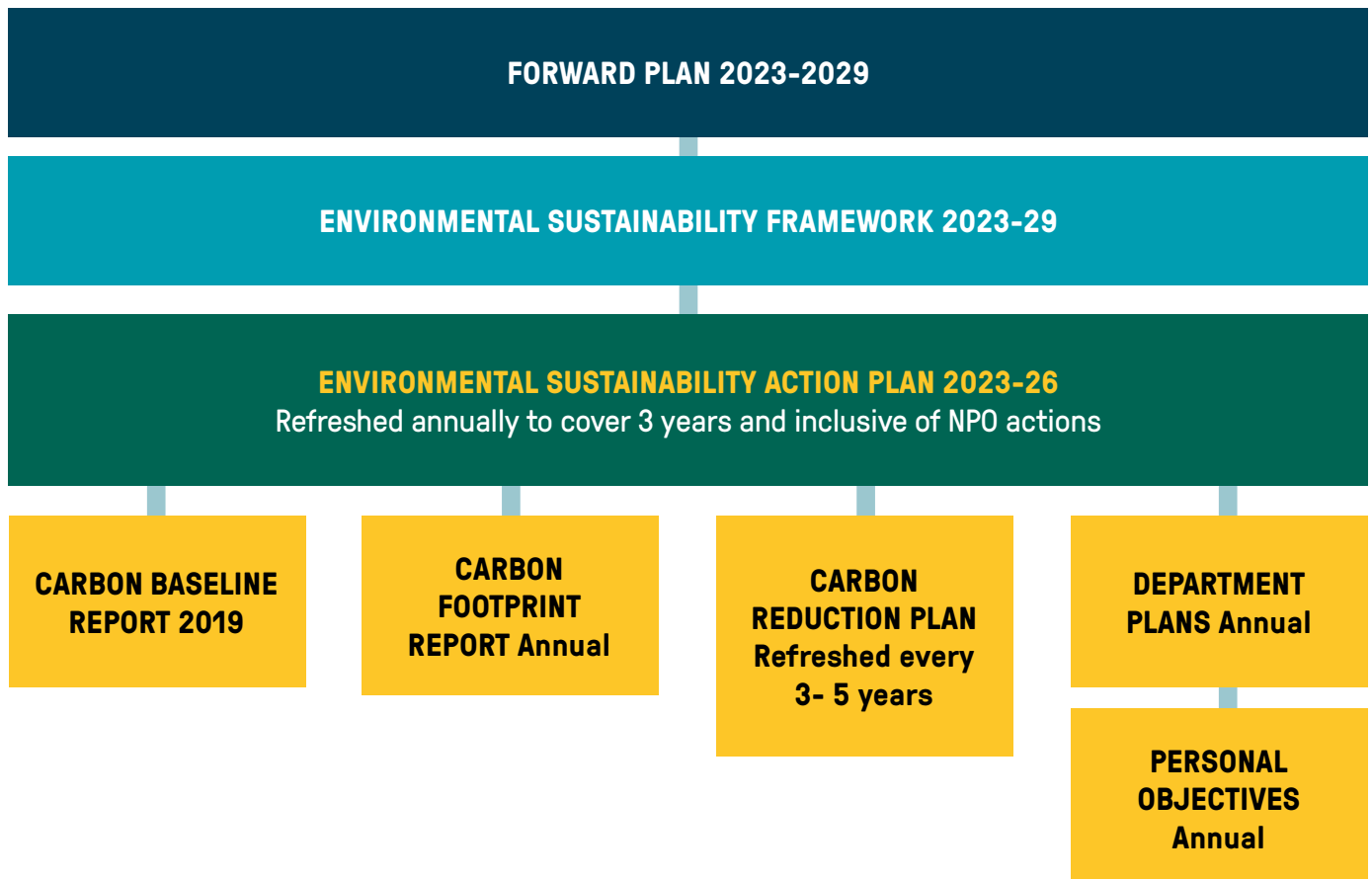
The Action Plan has been developed through work with our consultants Eight Versa and consultation with the Sustainability Working Group, who represent all museum teams, and will be approved by early July 2023.

We will follow a Framework and Action Plan across 4 areas of impact:

- **Place:** changes to our operation, from our buildings to our digital outputs
- **People:** how our staff and volunteers are supported and will work
- **Programme:** how we communicate about our environmental responsibility with staff, stakeholders and visitors
- **Process:** how we understand and measure impact, remain accountable and resource our progress.

This Action Plan will be revisited annually to assess progress and be updated to cover a 3-year period.

SUPPORTING PLANS AND STRATEGIES



GLOSSARY

We've created this Framework to help everyone understand our goals, but there may be some terms and concepts that need more explanation.

That's why we've provided definitions for key terms and concepts to help you navigate and understand this document.

Carbon Footprint

Our Carbon Footprint is the greenhouse gas emissions we produce. This includes gases like Carbon Dioxide (CO₂), Methane (CH₄), and Nitrous Oxide (N₂O). We also measure emissions of gases like Halocarbons, Nitrogen Trifluoride, hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), and Perfluorochemicals (PFCs). So it's much more than just Carbon.

Baseline Carbon Footprint

This refers to the total emissions from our activities in a given year. This is the starting point for measuring progress against. For The Postal Museum, the Baseline Carbon Footprint is for 2019.

Scope 1 Emissions

These are direct greenhouse gas emissions from buildings, sites, or vehicles that we own or operate.

Scope 2 Emissions

These are indirect greenhouse gas emissions linked to the generation and use of electricity, steam, heat, and cooling that we purchase and consume.

Scope 3 Emissions

These are emissions resulting from activities we don't own or control, but indirectly or directly impact. This includes emissions from items and services we buy, waste generated in our operations, emissions of spaces and items we rent, business travel, employee commuting, how customers disposal items they buy in the shop, and investments.

Tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO₂e)

Tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent, or (tCO₂e) for short, is a unit used to measure the total amount of greenhouse gases released into the atmosphere. It takes into account the different types of gases produced and calculates the amount of carbon dioxide that would have the same warming effect as all those gases combined. This helps us compare and understand the impact of different greenhouse gases on the environment.

Carbon Offsetting

Offsetting is the process of compensating for greenhouse gas emissions by funding projects that reduce or remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere elsewhere, such as renewable energy projects or planting trees.

GLOSSARY - continued

Carbon neutral

Being carbon neutral means that an organisation has achieved a net zero carbon footprint by a combination of emission reductions and carbon offsetting. It's an important goal for organisations committed to reducing their impact on the environment. It's an interim step before you reach net zero.

Net Zero

To achieve Net Zero emissions, Scope 1, 2, and 3 emissions must be reduced by 90% compared to our baseline carbon footprint. Once we've verified these reductions, the remaining emissions (10%) have to be offset using good quality carbon offsetting schemes.

Carbon Measured

We continuously measure and reduce our carbon footprint. We use the Natural Carbon Solutions Footprinting Protocol to demonstrate progress towards net zero by certifying each key milestone. We're currently Carbon Measured, which means we understand our baseline emissions from 2019 and can track progress against this.