

The City of London Corporation has set out a Climate Action Strategy that commits to achieving net-zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in its own operations by 2027 and net zero in its full value chain and across the Square Mile by 2040. The strategy will also help to achieve greater climate resilience of City buildings, public spaces and infrastructure.

Net-zero GHG emissions, or net zero, is the mechanism whereby greenhouse gas emissions are balanced by their removal from the atmosphere. The gases responsible for global warming include carbon dioxide (80%), methane, nitrous oxide and fluorinated gases. Heat is the largest emitter of GHG emissions in the UK.

The process of decarbonisation can include transitioning to renewable energy resources, the greening of the City, reforestation and carbon capture.

Recognising their role as an integral part of the City, some Livery Companies are drafting their own climate-action plans in support of the City's ambitions. Two plans can be viewed on the LCAG website: [The Water Conservators' \(liverycag.org.uk\)](https://liverycag.org.uk) and [The Constructors' \(liverycag.org.uk\)](https://liverycag.org.uk).

This guidance note suggests the stages and process that a Livery Company, wishing to build its own climate-action strategy, might follow. The advice applies whether the Company has a hall or not.

Stage One: Join the Livery Climate Action Group (LCAG)

LCAG was established by Alderman Alison Gowman in 2021 to assist the City of London Livery Companies and Guilds in managing their impact on climate change and the environment by reducing carbon emissions and making responsible use of resources.

To support this effort, the Group has created a series of [guidance notes \(liverycag.org.uk\)](https://liverycag.org.uk) and other associated resources, drawing from the wide expertise within London's Livery Companies, as part of its ambition to be an invaluable support for Companies on their journey towards a net-zero emissions target.

LCAG facilitates mutual self-help for Livery Companies to grow their knowledge and expertise in the practical measures they can take towards a sustainable, adaptable and resilient future. It also provides educational materials to help Companies engage with schools and in their other outreach activities.

Court approval to join will be needed, as will a single point of contact for liaison with LCAG. Once these are obtained, the Company will be formally admitted to LCAG and can move towards preparing a climate-action plan.

Stage Two: Establish a Climate-Action Committee

This will bring together interested members of your Livery Company and can start by considering your Company's aims and objectives. These will vary depending on whether you are a hall-owning Company or a peripatetic one, and on the nature and extent of your investments.

Stage Three: Set the Objectives

The climate-action committee needs to agree on your Livery Company's aims. For instance, these may be to support the City of London's Climate Action Strategy, to reduce your Company's direct and indirect carbon emissions, and/or to engage your Livemen in these aims so that they can become ambassadors in their own businesses for climate-friendly initiatives. These objectives need to be something your Livery Company can embrace, and is prepared to measure, and will represent positive steps towards net zero.

Stage Four: Meeting Your Livery Company's Objectives

This stage is about identifying those areas of your Livery Company's work where you can best meet your objectives.

The principal areas for your focus might include:

- your Company's base-line data and carbon footprint. LCAG has published a [draft guidance note \(liverycag.org.uk\)](https://www.liverycag.org.uk) on how to establish this using the footprint calculators available free on the internet
- your property assets e.g. halls, offices. Where a Livery Company maintains a hall, a property review will need to be conducted which may need to include external qualified professionals who can conduct the assessments needed to reduce emissions and resource consumption
- occupation of those assets, air quality, heating and so on
- catering and other purchasing events, whether you are a hall-owning company or not
- your Company's investments, property, stocks and shares
- bio-diversity
- transport, water and waste
- your activities and behaviours

You may have other, better, ideas which you can share with us.

Examples of commitments, that are aligned with the City of London's Climate Action Strategy, are set out in Appendix A, arranged progressively as those actions suitable for all Companies; those actions suitable for Companies who wish to influence allied trades and professions or schools and colleges; and those Companies with Halls or Property. These are not exhaustive, but should help point to ways in which you can reduce your direct and indirect carbon emissions. The following notes expand on these commitments:

- Baseline data should be established for your Livery Company emissions, with reduction targets setting out a road map and milestones for emissions against which to measure progress. [Calculating Your Company's Carbon Footprint \(liveryag.org.uk\)](https://liveryag.org.uk).
- Purchasing events should be reviewed, including dinners, merchandising and other activities, to identify opportunities for using fewer, more sustainable and less carbon-intensive products and services. Key catering suppliers should be required to propose low-carbon menu options, using seasonal and local food, with a focus on minimising the amount of food that is wasted. LCAG has an excellent note on food at [Food - Livery Climate Action Group \(liverycag.org.uk\)](https://liverycag.org.uk)
- The travel needs and modes of employees, members and visitors should be reviewed, while identifying more sustainable transport options. Use of public and low-emission transport is to be encouraged and unnecessary travel avoided by holding virtual meetings whenever appropriate. [Transport - Livery Climate Action Group \(liverycag.org.uk\)](https://liverycag.org.uk)
- Investments should meet ESG guidelines. LCAG's guidance note on investments [ESG investments - Livery Climate Action Group \(liverycag.org.uk\)](https://liverycag.org.uk) may help.
- Specific goals should be identified, such as reducing single-use plastic in Company activities, setting a target for reducing water used per person, reviewing your waste policies and practices so as to increase re-use and recycling with the aim of achieving zero waste to landfill. You may care to look at LCAG's guidance note on the circular economy [Circular economy - Livery Climate Action Group \(liverycag.org.uk\)](https://liverycag.org.uk)
- Targets may be set out to increase your Company's charitable engagement with schools, universities, colleges and other stakeholders to promote knowledge and research about sustainability and climate change
- Emissions from our buildings must be net zero by a specified date. The City Corporation is working towards 2027. LCAG has produced a series of guidance notes for property-owning Companies which can assist you in developing such a strategy. [Introduction to Guidance Notes - Livery Climate Action Group \(liverycag.org.uk\)](https://liverycag.org.uk)
- Bio-diversity should be included in Company plans. See the guidance note on how plants and green spaces can play a major role in climate adaptation [Value of green spaces - Livery Climate Action Group \(liverycag.org.uk\)](https://liverycag.org.uk)
- And finally, ideas can be canvassed to support your members in promoting sustainability within their own organisations and personal activities through a programme of online webinars that explores best practices for sustainable development and slowing climate change.

Stage Five: Upload your Climate Action Plan

Upload your action plan onto LCAG's website and report regularly to your Court and to LCAG on the progress you have made against your objectives.

COMMITMENT AND SUGGESTED AREAS OF OPPORTUNITY FOR A CLIMATE-ACTION PLAN

We, [NAME OF LIVERY COMPANY OR GUILD], support the Livery Climate Action Group in its aim of reducing our carbon emissions and our wider impact on the environment, and fostering a more responsible and sustainable approach to the use of the planet's scarce resources. Accordingly, our Company commits itself to having a Climate-Action Plan to work towards reducing its impact on the environment and will encourage its stakeholders and associated networks to do the same.

1. All Companies and Guilds can reduce (or manage) their impact by:

- Reducing their direct and indirect carbon emissions wherever possible, firstly by aiming to establish baseline data; then by setting out a road map and milestones for reductions; and then by regularly reviewing progress and sharing good practice within LCAG towards achieving them.
- Adopting proactive and continuous improvement in food supply chains, menu choices, and food waste management, leading to more sustainable and healthier Livery activities.
- Reviewing their waste policies and practices so as to increase re-use and recycling with the aim of achieving zero waste to landfill.
- Reducing their per capita water consumption and wastewater discharges.
- Taking into account the travel needs and modes of their employees, members and visitors and identifying sustainable transport modes.
- Reviewing their investment portfolio(s) considering Environmental, Social and Governance good practice and alignment with the Paris Agreement on climate change.

2. Companies and Guilds with allied professions and trades or affiliated schools, etc can make a positive impact by:

- Increasing their charitable engagement with schools, universities, colleges, and other stakeholders to promote knowledge and research about sustainability and climate change.
- Drawing on the expertise of their members to make publicly available learning and best practice on standards, tools, platforms and expertise to facilitate sustainable development.
- Encouraging and inspiring their members and networks to follow their lead within their own organisations and activities.

3. Companies who own Halls or other properties can reduce/manage their impact by:

- Strengthening their requirements on and engagement with their suppliers to build low-carbon, resilient and circular supply chains and embed principles of the circular economy and reuse of materials into construction, procurement, and operational activities.
- Assessing the energy efficiency of their buildings to identify how the demand for energy use can be reduced and efficiency improved.
- Identifying sustainable sources of energy and creating an energy management strategy.
- Reducing the carbon intensity of any capital projects or maintenance through life cycle carbon accounting applied to all stages from design through to demolition or anticipated re-purposing.
- Embedding resilience measures into ownership, occupation and upgrade plans for all their property.
- Reducing the risk of flooding through developing sustainable rain and surface-water management.
- Building climate resilience into all their decisions and activities by considering how to mitigate, and adapt to, the effects of climate change such as storms, temperature extremes and flooding.
- Valuing the importance of green spaces and urban greening as natural carbon sinks, and their contribution to biodiversity and overall wellbeing, by "greening" their premises where possible and by supporting other organisations to do so.