

Livery Companies and their members can help directly to combat climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions relating to their own transport and travel, and by influencing others to do likewise.

Our obligations under the City of London Corporation Climate Action Strategy

Company vehicles will need to reach net-zero emissions by 2027; business travel, employee commuting and transport of purchased goods and services will need to achieve net zero by 2040. The Livery Climate Action Group proposes that members' and guests' travel in connection with Company activities is also included in the 2040 target.

The emissions from all these forms of travel will need to be measured and reported periodically against interim targets as well as the ultimate net-zero goal.

Companies have a choice whether to try to influence their members and others to lower and eventually eradicate emissions from travel that is unrelated to Company activities.

City of London Transport Strategy

The City has committed to achieving net-zero greenhouse gas emissions from transport by 2040, covering travel of all people and goods within and to/from the City (known as scope 3 emissions).

Its [strategy](#) seeks to provide an attractive, healthy and safe environment, reducing congestion and improving air quality by reducing motor traffic for both people and goods, by seeking the most efficient means of transport, and by prioritising walking and cycling. There is a [Pedestrian Priority Programme](#) across the Square Mile to enhance the comfort and safety of people walking. Two other publications: [City of London Air Quality Strategy](#) and [Improving Air Quality](#), refer to the reduction of pollution.

E-scooters are being trialled by Transport for London, with a hire scheme in restricted areas of Greater London and in the City in 2021. The City supports electrification of transport including rail, bus, delivery vehicles, heavy-goods vehicles, and supports charging points for electric vehicles. Hydrogen power is seen as a potential complementary approach to electrically powered buses. Use of the river is also encouraged.

Consolidation centres will work to enable the combining of deliveries by zero-emissions vehicles, and even by pedestrian porters. An [Amazon hub](#) has also been launched in 2021.

In order to support this transport strategy, there will need to be local upgrades to the electricity distribution system, particularly for fast-charging of vehicles.

CO₂ emissions from transport – the magnitude of the challenge

Nationally in the UK in 2019 some 37% of greenhouse gas emissions came from [transport](#) and 90% of these from road traffic.

Travel in London differs markedly from the UK average, with greater use of public transport and less use of cars and vans. But transport emissions remain stubbornly high, requiring far-reaching change to meet net-zero targets. Reducing private car ownership and use would make a big difference: Londoners travel 35% less per head per car, than the UK average, but own just 5% fewer cars.

Net zero transport options

We can all reduce our carbon footprint from travel, by, (in order of preference and impact):

- Reducing our travel (e.g. making use of conference calls instead)
- Walking, cycling, using public transport instead of a car, or where appropriate travelling by train instead of by plane
- Substituting renewable biofuels, where available, for petrol and diesel
- Switching from internal combustion engines to electric or hydrogen-powered vehicles.

Companies can “nudge” their members towards lower-emissions choices by, for example:

- Operating virtually where possible, as has been done successfully during lockdowns. A side benefit is that online presentations can reach a wider audience.
- Combining meetings and other events on a single day.
- Continuing our long tradition of face-to-face meetings and events, but relying more on hybrid meetings, encouraging staff, members, guests and visitors to consider “virtual attendance” where appropriate.
- When setting dates and times for events, ensuring they start and finish at times convenient to those using the train, avoiding rush hour where possible.
- Where there is the option, encouraging the least carbon-intensive form of travel.
- Inviting members to share rides by car/Uber/taxi from and to railway stations.
- Providing secure cycle storage.
- Providing more changing space in Livery halls.
- Thinking carefully about the “last mile” to a Livery hall, for goods as well as people.
- Writing sustainability criteria into contracts with caterers and suppliers.
- Where possible, selecting suppliers that source food, flowers and other supplies locally.
- Including sustainability as a key element in our education and outreach programmes.

Practical steps

Livery Companies, like other companies, need to plan and set targets for the progressive reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, including from their supply chains, with the aim of eliminating these entirely.

A first step is to establish a baseline for emissions from travel and transport of goods. Then, options for reduction and elimination of emissions can be considered and targets set. Progress can then be measured and reported at intervals, ideally annually (in absolute numbers and in percentages).

People

Gather data from staff and members who are commuting, travelling on company business and visiting halls. Where practicable, that could be extended to guests and visitors for specific events. Using this baseline, think of ways of reducing their carbon footprint. Progress against targets should be measured annually, increasing ambition with time.

In all cases the emphasis should be on simplicity rather than precision. For example, comparative estimates of CO₂ per person kilometre could be used for different modes of transport. But measurement and reporting needs to be [standardised](#) across the City. This could introduce a degree of friendly competition, with peer pressure actively encouraging Companies to step up their reduction of carbon emissions.

Goods

Similarly, suppliers will need to provide data about the transport of goods from source to halls and be encouraged to reduce their own carbon footprint. Companies can make a commitment to, and progress towards using net zero as a supply-chain requirement, encouraging suppliers to use zero-emission vehicles for deliveries, minimising numbers of journeys through use of consolidation centres and using [cargo bikes](#) or perhaps [autonomous electric vehicles](#) for “last mile” delivery. That might not be suitable, however, for catering deliveries to halls.



Fact checked by:

