



Sustainability Policy

PURPOSE & VALUES

The Sustainable Wedding Alliance's mission is to drive change to create a more sustainable wedding industry. Raising awareness and tackling climate change and attitudes, by proactively encouraging businesses to develop future thinking strategies and make responsible decisions.

We believe that we are trustees of this planet and it's our duty to not only make sure it survives but thrives. We respect not only the planet in our care but all those that live on it.

As a purpose driven business, our values are such an important part of who we are and what we do.

- We act with integrity at all times
- We respect our planet and all that live on it
- We promote collaboration over competition
- We are open and honest in our communication
- We embrace change, new ideas and approaches
- We are continuously learning and improving
- We empower our communities, giving them the confidence and support they need to thrive

We acknowledge the three pillars of sustainability: social, economic and environmental and ensure that all business decisions made take all three into consideration.

Sustainability is at the core of each and every action and decision we make.

In addition:

- We will promote sustainable practices and encourage businesses to adopt them
- We will educate our members about sustainability and help them make informed choices
- We will be transparent about our own sustainability practices and strive to be a role model for other businesses
- We will work with other organisations to create a more sustainable wedding industry

We believe that these principles are essential to creating a more sustainable wedding industry. By working together, we can make a difference and help protect our planet for future generations.

Here are some specific examples of how the Sustainable Wedding Alliance uphold these principles:



- We provide resources to help wedding businesses reduce their environmental impact, such as templates, checklists, and workbooks.
- We offer training and an accreditation programme for wedding businesses that want to become more sustainable.
- We host events and workshops to raise awareness about sustainability in the wedding industry.
- We partner with other organisations to promote sustainable wedding practices.
- We advocate for policies that support sustainable businesses.

By taking these steps, the Sustainable Wedding Alliance can help to create a more sustainable wedding industry for everyone.

SCOPE

Sustainability is at the heart of the Sustainable Wedding Alliance. The business is a purpose driven business. The aim is for the business, and all its activities to be Net Zero by 2025.

In addition to this, we pay the living wage as a minimum and have open discussions with our team regarding wellbeing. We monitor our carbon emissions, and contribute to carbon capture projects and tree planting monthly, to be a climate positive business, putting more into the environment than we take. We also give back by supporting local, national and global initiatives to rewild, increase biodiversity and protect our planet.

We do this by supporting organisations like Client Earth, Greenpeace and Get Nature Positive.

As well as managing our own emissions, we strive to influence and lobby for change across the UK, working with organisations such as Business Declares to raise awareness and tackle climate change.

SUSTAINABLE OBJECTIVES

In line with our purpose and values, and to ensure the best possible chance of achieving our objective of being fully committed to sustainable development, across all aspects of the business, we will:

- integrate sustainability considerations into all our business decisions
- move towards working with businesses that have a sustainable policy in place
- ensure that products and services are responsibly sourced
- comply with, and exceed where practicable, all applicable legislation, regulations and codes of practice
- encourage staff and contractors to be advocates of sustainability

We have set our 2023 objectives for the business, and have broken them down into seven sections (the sustainable themes):



Carbon

- Achieve Net Zero by 2025 (detailed breakdown below)
- Invest in nature-based solutions as offset / carbon avoidance systems

Energy

- Install solar panels at home so that energy requirement from national grid is reduced. By March 2023
- Reduce energy emissions further through efficiency and switching of appliances when not in use. By December 2023.

Supply Chain & Procurement

- Put in place a sustainable procurement policy so that all staff are able to research new suppliers. By January 2023.
- Increase proportion of suppliers we work with locally (within 50 miles) and from underserved groups. By December 2023.
- Work with suppliers to raise awareness and encourage them to adopt more sustainable practices. Ongoing.
- Audit of suppliers completed and scored against sustainable criteria. By December 2023.
- In addition to following the principles of the Prompt Payment Code, in 2023 we will become signatories. By July 2023.
- Research business insurance providers and if possible, move to a more environmentally responsible insurer. If we stay with current provider, we will ensure that we do full due diligence on where our money is held/invested. December 2023.

Team & Community

- Launch carbon literacy training for wedding professionals (outside membership). By June 2023.
- Find new ways of working with industry colleagues to promote sustainability, form new partnerships and drive change. By December 2023
- Working with partners, develop a wedding carbon footprint calculator to allow couples to measure their wedding carbon footprint and guide them to making positive choices. By October 2023.
- Develop educational campaigns for couples to help them understand how their wedding can have a positive impact. By December 2023.
- Create a tracking document to include sustainable theme data from members to showcase impact and changes made as part of membership. By December 2023.
- Share customer satisfaction survey results publicly. By December 2023.

Transport

- Research purchasing an electric vehicle for the company. By 2025.
- Increase amount of public transport used for events – research event locations based on transport available. By October 2023.



- Encourage attendees to SWA events (members and non-members) to reduce travel emissions to events and consider offsetting emissions. By December 2023.

Waste

In 2022, we're proud to have achieved our target of sending zero waste to landfill. We have done this by applying the waste hierarchy to all purchasing decisions.

In 2023 our focus is on inspiring and educating businesses we work with to also remove single use plastic from their operations.

- Continue to monitor and measure waste and send zero waste to landfill. By December 2023.

Water

As the office is a home office, there are no toilets, taps or appliances owned by the business. However, there are elements of water use in the business.

- In 2021 we installed a water butt to collect rain water from home office building, however due to the number of plants we require a second during dry months so we will install a second. By December 2023.
- All water for watering plants to be provided by collected rain water. By December 2023.
- Monitor water usage as a business. By December 2023.

NET ZERO PLEDGE

In 2020 we made a commitment to be carbon neutral by the end 2021, and we were delighted to achieve it through carbon reduction strategies and offsetting unavoidable emissions.

In 2021 we joined the UN Race to Zero, pledging to be Net Zero by 2025, including scopes 1, 2 and 3.

2022 Recorded Emissions = 4.84 tons CO₂e

In 2022 we moved to measuring our footprint using Ecologi Zero. We also partner with Ecologi to offset unavoidable emissions and have offset 7.51 tons CO₂e up to end December 2022. We invest in tree planting and carbon reduction projects including renewables, carbon capture technology, wetland restoration and forestry.

We are on track to become a Net Zero business by 2025.

As 2022 was our first operational year for membership and accreditation, we expected our emissions to be higher, despite putting in place many carbon reduction strategies. 2022 will be our base line year moving forward. We plan to continue to use Ecologi Zero as our measurement tool to ensure consistency of measurements.

Previous to 2022, we had used the SME Climate Hub's recommended measurement tool Normative. In 2021 our total emissions were measured at 3.61 tons CO₂e.



In 2020 we made a commitment to be carbon neutral by the end 2021. We are delighted that we achieved this in 2021, and are on track to become net zero by 2030. In 2021 we measured our carbon footprint as 3.61 tonnes CO₂e (Scope 1, 2 and 3). The carbon that we have been unable to remove was then offset through our chosen partners, Ecologi.

In December 2022, we set out new targets for the coming year as follows, these include::

- Travel to and from meetings and events in a hybrid vehicle and offset any mileage done using the petrol element of the vehicle. See our Sustainable Travel Policy for more info.
- Avoid unnecessary travel by making use of video calls and conferencing, telephone and email. When using video conferencing software we consider the ethical merits of the provider.
- Offset any unavoidable emissions investing in carbon capture projects in the UK and worldwide, using Gold Standard credits.
- In order to increase the measurement accuracy of our energy usage, we will be installing a smart meter to the office by the end of 2023.

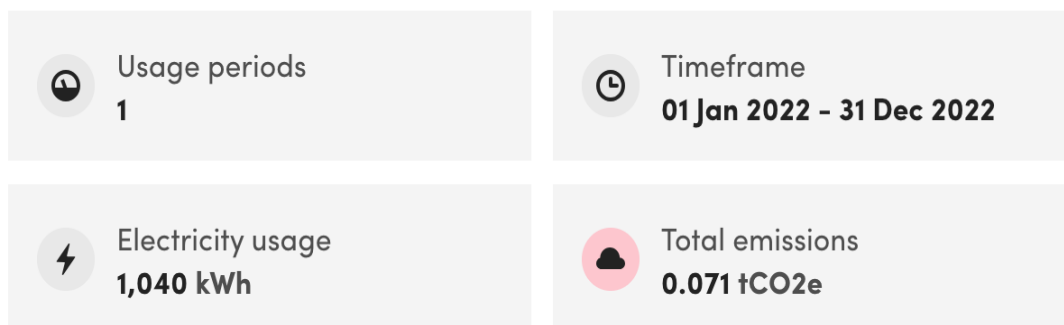
Additional targets have been set that relate to all areas of the business, see Sustainable Objectives for full list.

Scope 1 – Direct Emissions | 0 tons CO₂e

As a small business that has one home office with no heating/cooling system, and no company owned vehicles.

Scope 2 - Includes all our indirect emissions | 0.071 tons CO₂e

The business is run from a home office. All appliances in the office are electric. The household energy is supplied by Octopus Energy through their Octopus Go tariff, meaning the electricity is from 100% renewable sources.



Scope 3 – all other emissions | 4.76 tons CO₂e

This includes all activities from assets not owned or controlled by the company. Our Scope 3 breakdown by sector is:

- Land transport (business travel) - 4%



- Professional services inc. educational and training – 63%
- Media, marketing and advertising – 12%
- Environmental and waste – 5%
- Banking and financial services – 4%
- Subscriptions, memberships and other services - 7%
- Food/hospitality - 2%
- Technology and communications - 1.5%
- Energy – 1.5%

Offsetting

In total we produced 4.84 tons CO₂e in 2022. As a temporary solution, we have chosen to offset these emissions, as our focus is to bring down emissions as low as possible as opposed to simply offsetting. For 2022 we have offset 5 tons CO₂e through carbon avoidance projects managed by Ecologi

Our goal is to become carbon positive, whereby we are taking out more carbon in the environment than we are emitting. In total, since partnering with Ecologi in 2021, we have contributed to 12.51 tons of carbon being avoided.



In addition to offsetting, we work with partners, [Future Forest Company](#) to plant native trees in the UK, to further develop biodiversity. We plant one (traceable) tree for every member that joins the SWA.

As well as managing our own emissions, we strive to influence and lobby for change across the UK, working with organisations to raise awareness and tackle climate change.



We support campaigns inc. Business Declares, Better Business Act and Client Earth and will continue to in 2023.

In 2023 we also plan to join 1% for the planet, align with new charitable partners and our B Corporation Assessment is being submitted next month – with the plan to be certified by the end of 2023.

BEING A SUSTAINABILITY ADVOCATE

Part of our mission is to raise awareness and tackle climate change and attitudes, by proactively encouraging businesses to develop future thinking strategies and make responsible decisions.

In order to do this, it's important that we work with all stakeholders that are advocates of sustainability, and that we lead the way.

Some examples of advocacy include:

- Being part of the Council of Representatives for the UK Wedding Taskforce, working closely with the All Party Parliamentary Group to raise awareness
- Taking part in APPG discussions, included other organisations like BEIS
- Speaking at industry events to raise awareness of sustainability
- Working with partners to showcase businesses that are working sustainably – encouraging them to add filters on supplier directories to make it easier for couples to search for sustainable suppliers.
- Signing petitions for environmentally damaging policies, including Global Ocean Treaty, No new oil [#stoprosebank](#) and to fix the plastic waste crisis
- Being a supporter of [Business Declares](#)
- Being a coalition member of the Better Business Act
- Donating monthly to ClientEarth, who: Hold governments to account over climate inaction, take big polluters to court and stand up for people affected by climate change

ADVANCING SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE

We love working with others to bring about change and believe that collaboration is the key to unlock behaviour change.

In 2022 we worked on a cooperative initiative with Small99 to develop a tool to help wedding businesses reduce their carbon emissions through a series of practical actions as well as track and communicate their progress towards net zero.

In addition we have given feedback as part of a beta launch of Ecologi's new carbon footprint software, Ecologi Zero.



We provide regular advice and guidance to both couples and businesses through our blogs and social media. These are available publicly. This includes our Sustainable Policy workbook, which aims to encourage businesses to develop a policy.

For our members, we have a dedicated online membership platform that includes many tools and resources to help them develop a sustainable business. These are added to regularly alongside a training schedule.

We publish the results of our public surveys so that other organisations researching data on the wedding industry have free access to it.

We participate in panel presentations, podcasts and other public forums on social and environmental topics, including:

- [Where Ideas Launch podcast](#)
- [Judging the Marie Claire Sustainability Awards](#)
- [Wonder Women interview with University of Oxford](#)
- 2022/23 Hostlogy Roadshow
- [RSA House 'Weddings without compromise' panel discussion](#)
- [RSVP Spring Symposium](#)
- [Small Business Saturday Facebook Live interview](#)
- [Guides for Brides Podcast: How to achieve a sustainable wedding](#)

We also comment and provide quotes on articles published by the NY Times, Independent, Brides, Glam, Luxury London and Green Union.

WHO DOES THIS POLICY APPLY TO?

This policy applies to all staff, contractors and temporary staff.

POLICY COMPLIANCE

We expect the business to be able to fully comply with the policy within 6 months of the date of publishing so that the actions required to enable compliance are completed.

POLICY ADMINISTRATION

The Director is responsible for maintaining and updating this Policy. The Policy will be reviewed annually as part of the continuous improvement cycle.

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