

Chester FC

Net Zero Roadmap 2023



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Foreword

In 2023, we partnered with Positive Planet to measure our carbon footprint for the first time. This carbon footprint measurement has helped us gain valuable insight into our emissions hotspots and has allowed us to prioritise actions for the year ahead.

We started to measure the carbon impacts of our business operations, including our travel, homeworking, equipment and goods transportation as well as the impacts of fan travel and our merchandise. Some of these emissions were measured using spend-based data due to a lack of higher quality data, but although completing our first measurement has not been without its challenges, we are committed to measuring emissions each year and improving the accuracy of the results each time.

As well as measuring our impact, we have also committed to some Science Based Targets (SBTs), including a commitment to **reach Net Zero by 2040**.

In this document, you can find our full carbon footprint measurement results, methodology, our carbon reduction plan and our near- and long-term targets.

In their most recent report, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) concluded that human activities have increased global surface temperatures by 1.1°C above 1850–1990 levels (IPCC, 2023). This increase in temperature is already having adverse effects in regions across the globe, disproportionately affecting vulnerable communities that have historically contributed the least to global greenhouse gas emissions. These adverse effects are responsible for the displacement of communities, water and food scarcity, negative human health impacts and damage to ecosystems.

It has been estimated that the global sports industry is responsible for the emissions of 300–350 million tonnes of CO₂e annually (Rapid Transition Alliance, 2020). This presents us with an opportunity to have a significant and positive impact on the future through our commitment to sustainability and reducing emissions.

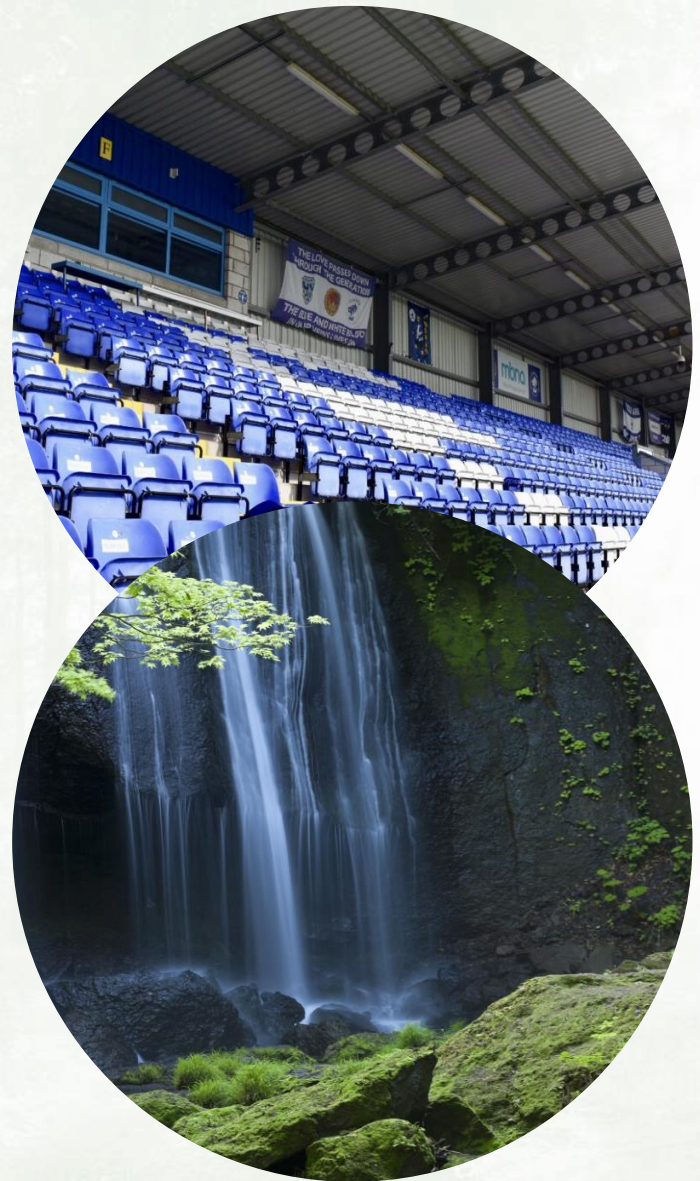
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Our Carbon Footprint

How we measure our footprint...

In devising a carbon reduction plan with the goal of achieving net zero it is critical that we first understand where our emissions come from. To support this, we have partnered with Positive Planet to measure our emissions.

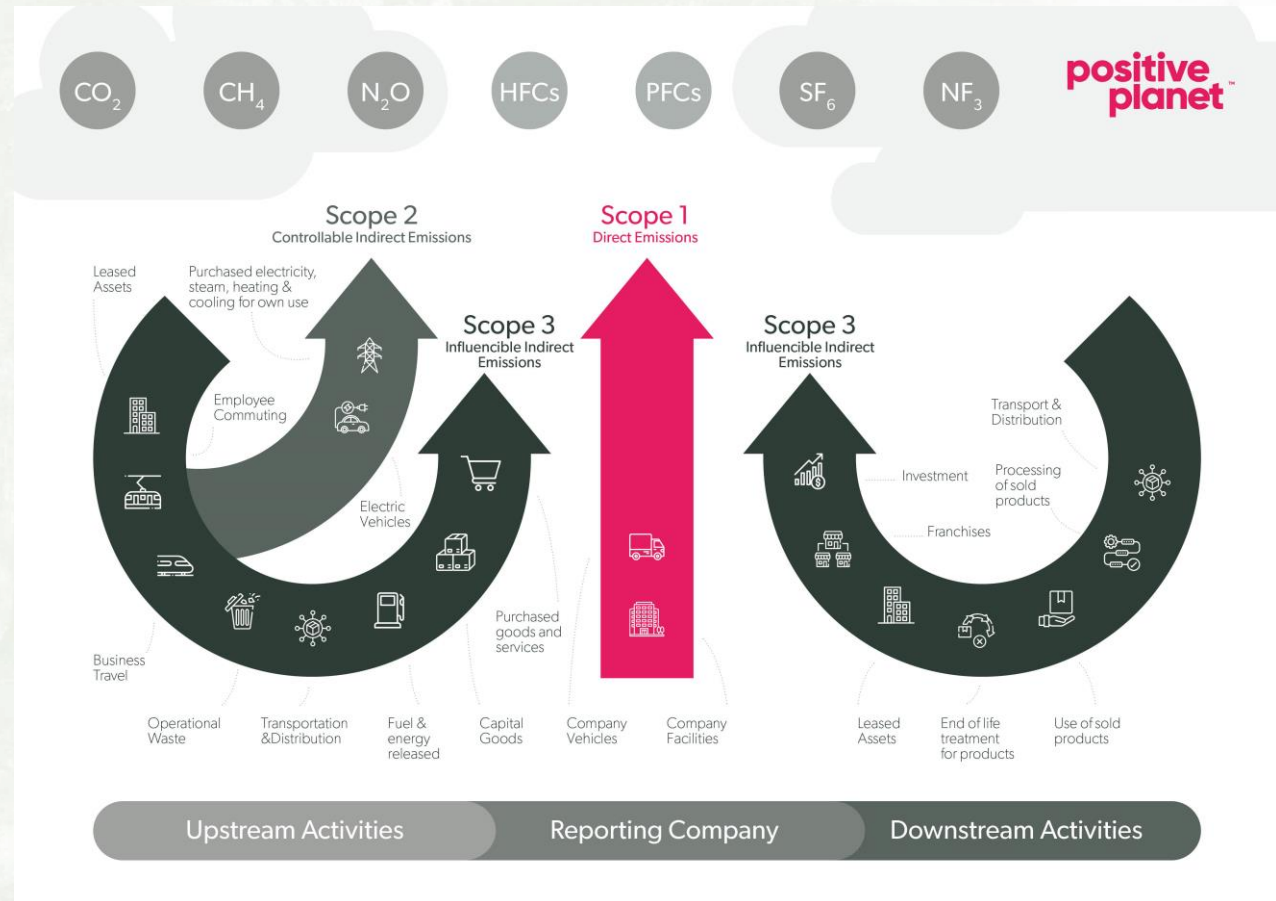
How our carbon footprint is calculated

Our carbon footprint has been measured using principles from The Greenhouse Gas Protocol: A Corporate Accounting and Reporting Standard

Six Greenhouse Gases are calculated as part of this emissions report, known as the six Kyoto Protocol GHGs. For the purposes of emissions reporting, these gases are simplified and measured in the units of tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO₂e).

We sorted our business activities into the scopes and categories outlined by The GHG Protocol and reported all direct and upstream indirect activities.

We have not yet quantified our downstream end-of-life activities.



Our Baseline Emissions

Reporting Period

1st June 2022 – 31st May 2023

Total Footprint

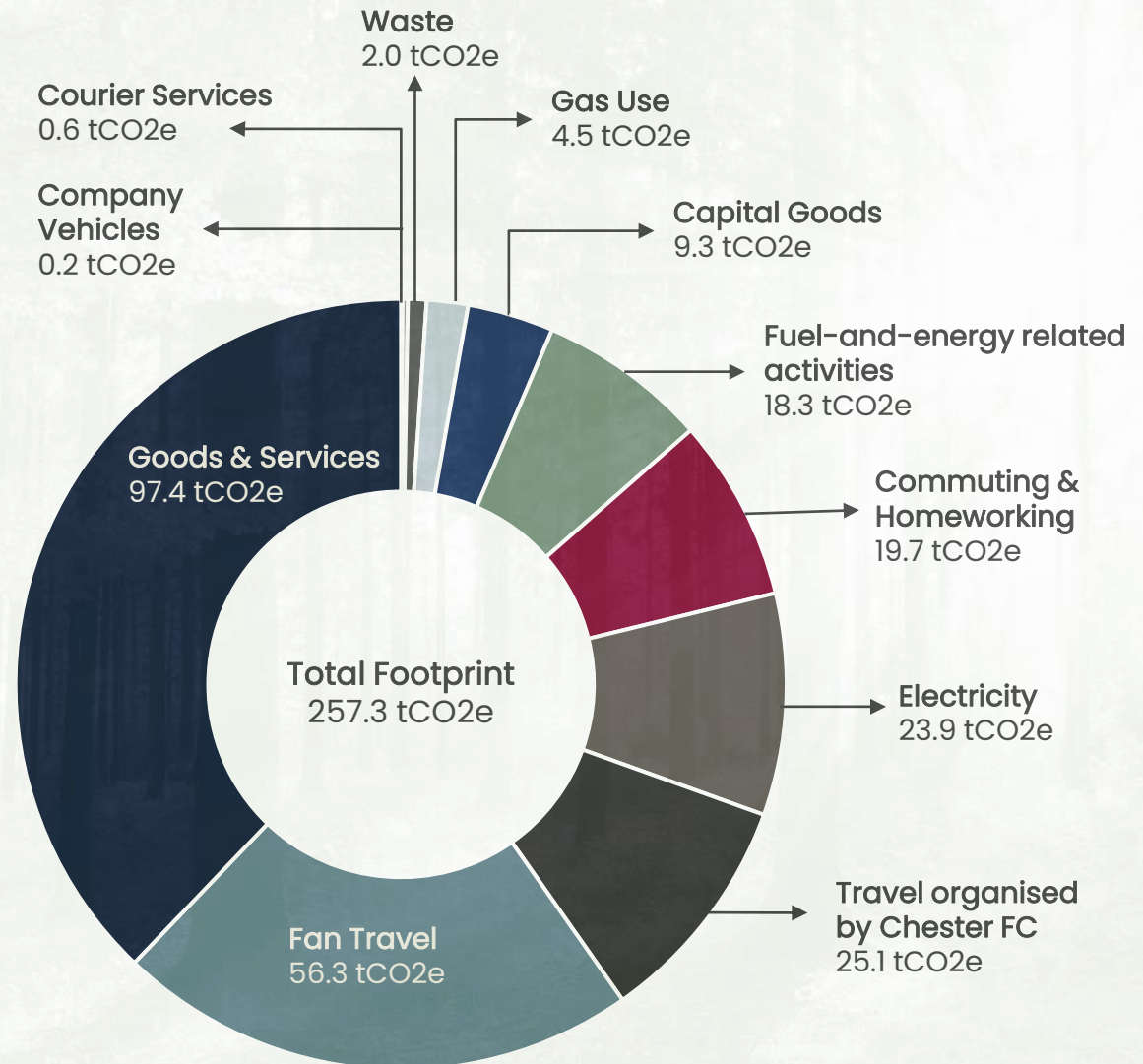
257.3

Carbon Intensity Per Employee

8.6 tCO₂e/employee

High Impact Activities

- Procurement (business expenses, vendors, merchandise)
- Fan & player travel
- Electricity usage



Breakdown of Procurement Emissions

Procurement emissions include those categorised under the scope 3 categories; Goods & Services (which includes both our business and match support goods and services, and our merchandise) and Capital Goods.

To estimate our procurement emissions, we multiplied our annual spend by relevant spend-based factors to estimate our emissions. These spend-based factors represent average emissions per £ spent in different categories rather than the emissions of the suppliers and vendors we used. Once these data becomes available, we hope to use it in our footprint instead of the spend based factors.

Breakdown of Procurement Emissions	
Scope 3 Category: Goods & Services	97.4 tCO2e
<i>Stadium, Match & Team Expenses</i>	<i>41.6 tCO2e</i>
<i>Merchandise</i>	<i>38.9 tCO2e</i>
<i>Business Support Goods & Services</i>	<i>16.9 tCO2e</i>
Scope 3: Capital Goods	9.3 tCO2e

What goods and services are included in each of these procurement categories?

- Stadium, Match & Team Expenses: Includes pitch maintenance, sports equipment, matchday vendor costs, matchday security, uniforms etc.
- Merchandise: Includes kits for sale in our Club Shop.
- Business Support Goods & Services: Includes insurance, pension contributions, IT services, office equipment, printing and publishing services, training etc.
- Capital goods: Includes floodlight upgrades, chairs, IT equipment and electricals.

Breakdown of Travel Emissions

There are a few different types of travel that have been measured in our footprint.

What is included in each of these travel categories?

- Company Vehicles: Travel in vehicles owned or leased by Chester FC – this includes mileage in our van.
- Travel Organised by Chester FC: This category includes all travel organised and paid for by Chester FC – it includes coach travel to away games for players and fans as well as business travel (where an employee is reimbursed for travel or stays in hotels).
- Employee & Player Commuting: Emissions that occur as a result of non-reimbursed travel to the stadium and from employees working from home. These emissions have been estimated using some survey results, but mainly Department for Transport averages.
- Fan Travel: Emissions that occur as a result of fans travelling to home games in private vehicles or via public transport. These emissions were calculated using average travel distances (estimated using season ticket holder postcodes), parking data, and the Department for Transport data for leisure purposes.

Breakdown of Travel Emissions	
Scope 1: Company Vehicles	0.2 tCO₂e
Scope 3: Travel Organised by Chester FC	25.1 tCO₂e
<i>Fan Away Game Coaches</i>	<i>17.0 tCO₂e</i>
<i>Player Away Game Coaches</i>	<i>5.2 tCO₂e</i>
<i>Employee Business Travel</i>	<i>2.3 tCO₂e</i>
<i>Hotel Stays</i>	<i>0.6 tCO₂e</i>
Scope 3: Employee & Player Commuting	19.7 tCO₂e
<i>Commuting</i>	<i>17.1 tCO₂e</i>
<i>Homeworking</i>	<i>2.6 tCO₂e</i>
Scope 3: Fan Travel	56.4 tCO₂e

Breakdown of All Other Emissions

Utilities

Utility emissions include those related to our gas use (scope 1), electricity use (scope 2), water use and the disposal of waste (scope 3). We were able to use high-quality data to estimate all utility emissions.

Breakdown of Utility Emissions

Scope 1: Gas Use	4.5 tCO ₂ e
Scope 2: Electricity (Market-based*)	23.9 tCO ₂ e
Scope 3: Waste & Water	2.0 tCO ₂ e

*Electricity emissions can be measured in two ways: the location-based method and the market-based method. The location-based method reflects the emissions of the electricity purchased based on the fuel mix (i.e. split of fossil fuels, renewables and nuclear) of the national grid, whilst the market-based method reflects the emissions of the electricity purchased based on the fuel mix of the specific supplier and tariff used by Chester FC.

The location-based results were lower than the market-based results at 20.2 tCO₂e. This is because our tariff has a lower % of renewables than the national grid average. As market-based results more accurately reflect our choices, we use these results in our final reporting figures and when target setting. We will, however, continue to report our location-based results and reduce these where we can.

Fuel- and Energy-Related Activities

This category includes all of the upstream emissions that occur as a result of our direct (scope 1) and upstream indirect (scope 2, upstream scope 3) energy use, it includes well-to-tank emissions, and transmissions and distribution loss generation emissions. For example, in scope 1 – gas use, we are only measuring the emissions that occur as a result of the combustion of the gas, but in this category, we account for the other emissions e.g. mining and transportation, that occur upstream.

Courier Services

Here we have estimated the emissions associated with our use of courier services (shipping of merchandise, programs and tickets) using spend. Emissions were estimated to be 0.6 tCO₂e.



Our Net Zero Targets

What does Net Zero mean?

To achieve Net Zero, we will be aiming to reduce emissions in line with the latest science-based targets (SBTs). SBTs are greenhouse gas reduction goals set by organisations. They are defined as “science-based” when they align with the scale of reductions required to keep global temperature increases well below 2°C, and ideally below the 1.5°C agreed in the Paris Agreement, compared to pre-industrial temperatures. SBTs provide organisations with pathways to sustainable transformational change to accelerate the transition to a low-carbon economy.

Current guidance from the Science Based Targets Initiative (SBTi) states that for most businesses, this means a **total reduction in emissions across all scopes by 90%** by 2050 at the latest. Carbon removals should then be used to **neutralise the residual emissions**.

We will review our targets with the release of any new guidance from the SBTi.

What's the difference?

Net zero

When a business has reduced its Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions by as much as possible, leaving only ‘residual’ emissions, which cannot be removed. Current guidance from the SBTi states that for most businesses, this means a total reduction in emissions across all scopes by ~90%. Carbon removals should then be used to neutralise the residual emissions.

Carbon neutral

A carbon-neutral business has committed to reducing emissions, and in the meantime balances its remaining emissions through carbon removal/ offsetting schemes.

Zero emissions

When no carbon is produced directly from a particular activity, product or service (such as the running of an electric van or an electric cooker on electricity produced through solar power).

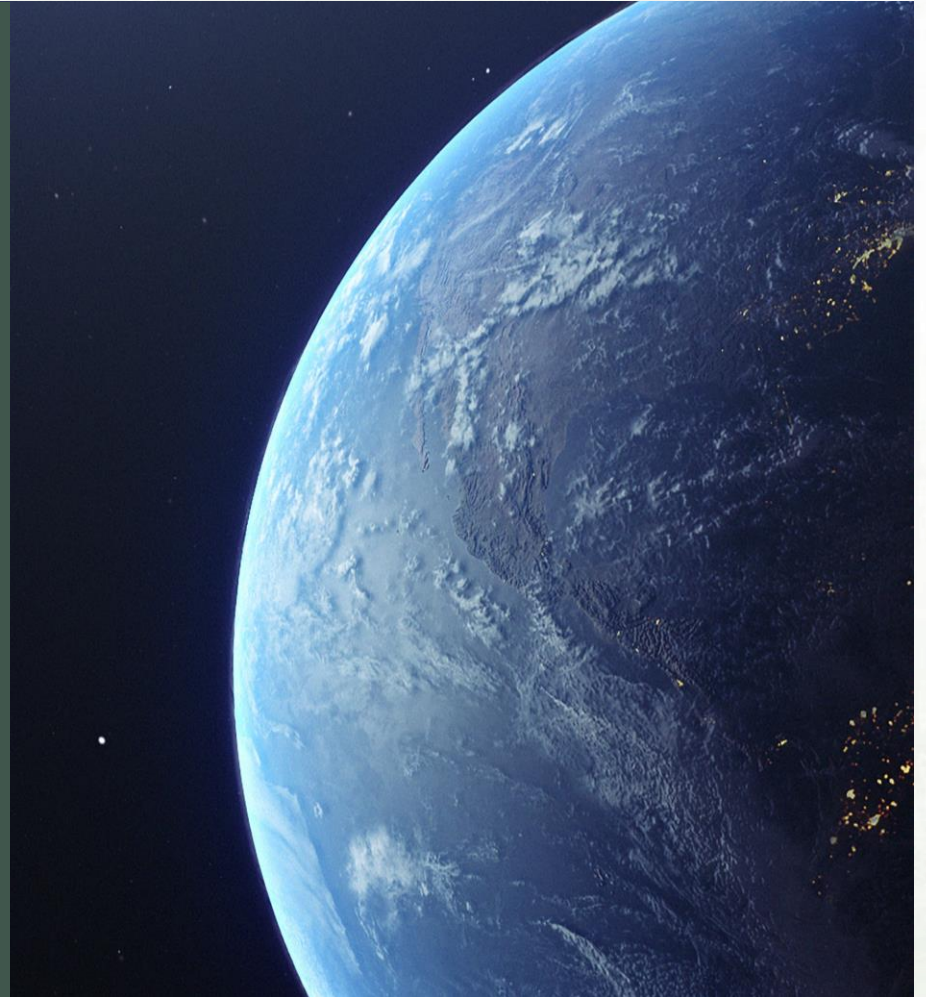
Our Net Zero targets

Chester FC is committed to reaching **Net Zero** by 2040.

We have also committed to the following near-term targets:

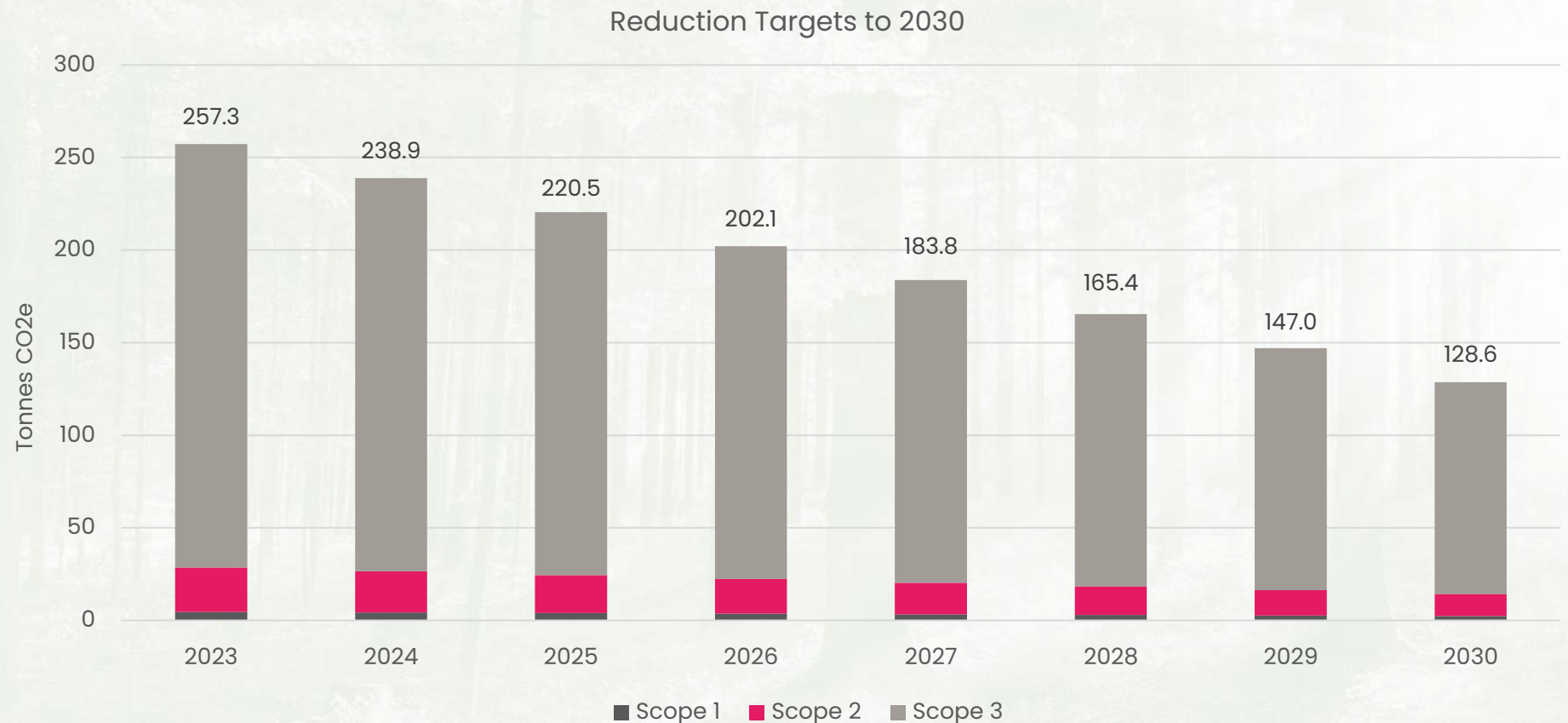
- Reduce our absolute scope 1, market-based scope 2 and scope 3 emissions by 50% by 2030.
- Measure all downstream impacts by 2025.

We will review our targets with the release of any new guidance from the SBTi.



Targeted Annual Reduction

To align our reduction targets with current SBTi guidance, we are setting absolute carbon reduction targets. Our target is to reduce scope 1, market-based scope 2, and scope 3 emissions by 50% from our baseline year by 2030. To achieve this, we will need to reduce our scope 1 emissions by 0.3 tCO₂e each year, our market-based scope 2 emissions by 1.7 tCO₂e each year and our scope 3 emissions by 16.3 tCO₂e each year.





Our Priorities for the Year Ahead

Actions already underway

Carbon Literacy Training

Four of our staff members attended a day's worth of Carbon Literacy training with Positive Planet in June 2023, all getting certified as Carbon Literate by the Carbon Literacy Project shortly after.

Site Upgrades

We are exploring ways in which we can improve our site to reduce both direct and indirect emissions. We have already conducted a site assessment for EV charge point installation and are in the early stages of exploring renewable energy technologies.

Waste Management

We have partnered with a new waste manager, Veolia, and will be providing both general waste and recycling bins in the stands for supporters to use.

Digital Season Tickets

We have launched our 2024/25 Season Tickets for the year ahead; and for the first time ever, we have a digital-first policy, providing physical Season Ticket cards on request only for an additional fee of £2.



Our Priorities for the Year Ahead

We have identified some areas of focus for the year ahead that will help us to progress towards our reduction targets.

1. Explore opportunities to reduce energy use emissions – We will explore opportunities for us to install energy-saving technologies and will also consider renewable options for our electricity tariff.
2. Explore opportunities to use electric coaches for fan and player away travel – Electric coach hire is not yet widely available, but when booking coaches, we are committed to exploring all available options and choosing electric when possible.
3. Writing a Sustainable Procurement Policy and building sustainability into our procurement process – We are looking to get to a place in the future where all suppliers are working to reduce emissions and can provide emissions data. This may not be possible immediately, but we will take some initial steps towards this by outlining our preferences for new suppliers in a Sustainable Procurement Policy and we will look at our procurement process to identify the best way to begin collecting and storing suppliers and vendor sustainability data.
4. Writing a Sustainable Travel Policy and looking into ways to incentivise low emissions commuting and business travel – We will look to engage with staff and volunteers to find out how we may best support low-emissions travel. We will explore schemes such as cycle-to-work and EV salary sacrifice, incentives, travel reimbursement rates, and changes to the site e.g. bike racks or charging points etc.
5. Creating a Sustainability page for our website – We will create a page on our website where fans can view our Net Zero reports and stay up to date with sustainability-related news.



Reaching Net Zero

What does Net Zero look like for us?

For each part of our footprint, we have identified the changes required if we are to reach Net Zero.

- **Company Vehicles:** We will need to operate using an electric fleet, charged at facilities backed by renewable energy tariffs or self-generated electricity.
- **Utilities:** Electricity will need to be purchased through a renewable tariff or generated onsite via renewable energy technologies, we will need to substitute gas heating with electricity or a gas alternative, and 100% of waste will need to be recycled via a waste management supplier that has also reached Net Zero.
- **Goods & Services/Capital Goods:** All goods and services (including subcontractor services) to be purchased from organisations that have reached or are close to reaching Net Zero.
- **Business Travel:** Essential company business travel will need to take place via public transport or in electrified private vehicles.
- **Commuting and Fan Travel:** Staff members and fans will need to commute via active transport, public transport or electrified vehicles, and have a renewable energy supply to their homes.

Reaching Net Zero will require collaboration between business and government. Governments will need to introduce policies that support climate action, equally pressure from businesses can stimulate government action.

Current SBTi guidance allows for up to 10% of baseline emissions to remain under the Net Zero definition. It is important to remember that some residual emissions are expected, so a full 100% reduction is not expected in all areas, unless possible.

Risks and opportunities

Embracing sustainable practices isn't just a response to warnings of the worsening state of our climate. Many actions that are required to reduce emissions are expected to have a positive impact on other areas of our business. It is also important for the success of our business that we consider the challenges that we may face to sustain stakeholder confidence in our business.

Opportunities

- Attract and retain talent and customers
- Decrease insurance costs
- Optimise efficiencies and therefore reduce costs
- Increased resilience to change
- Reputability

Risks

- Event cancellation
- Pitch/stadium damage
- Supply chain disruption
- Staff and player health issues
- Rapidly changing regulations
- Increased insurance costs
- Increased heating and cooling costs
- Reputational risks





Summary

We are proud of our progress to date and our ambitious decarbonisation targets as we aim to become Net Zero by 2040. Making a positive impact is part of our company culture and our roadmap provides feasible steps to help us protect our planet at pace. Engagement is an extremely vital piece of our climate puzzle, and we remain committed to engaging, educating, and inspiring change amongst our colleagues, suppliers, clients, and wider networks.

Whilst we reflect on our accomplishments to date, we look to the future and are excited by further opportunities to instigate change that will benefit our planet and people for generations to come.

in partnership with **positive
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