

CiFA CLIMATE CHANGE

WHY WE SHOULD BE PRIORITISING ASSES

2050

Credit: ©Boy Anthony (Shutterstock)

WORKING GROUP: ASSESSING OUR CARBON FOOTPRINTS



Alex Llewellyn MClfA (4753), Head of Governance and Finance

Our profession has a responsibility like any other to ensure we are as sustainable as possible. In 2020 ClfA joined Climate Heritage Network and signed up to its Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). This MoU commits organisations to meeting the ambitions of the Paris Agreement and the aspirations to be net zero by 2050.

Amongst the key aspects of the Paris Agreement, ClfA can particularly promote the sharing of good practice and resources to support climate change education, training and implementation. Work on this has already begun through the Climate Change Working Group. The Group has been running various events to raise awareness of carbon reduction actions taking place across the industry and has produced a first version of the Carbon Reduction Guide Table, which provides diverse ways organisations can respond to the climate crisis. As a 'living document', this will be updated and reissued as our understanding of the often-complex issues around carbon reduction improve.

Why should we act now?

There are three main drivers towards net zero for organisations – legislative; compliance and financial; and ethical. Below we have highlighted some of the expectations for our profession related to these drivers.

Legislative

Via the UK Climate Change Act 2008, the UK government has a target commitment that requires the UK to bring all greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050.¹ This includes small to medium enterprises (SMEs) in the heritage sector.

These requirements are having knock-on implications through our supply chain.

We appreciate that many will already be somewhere along the path to assessing their carbon footprints. Responses from delegates at the ClfA conference session in April showed that 42 per cent of participants had a carbon reduction plan

for their organisation but that 58 per cent are still yet to have something in place.

Compliance and financial through our supply chains

Archaeological work is seeing increasing requirements to report emissions, and to demonstrate environmental sustainability and net zero commitments as part of tenders and planning-led contracts. Many clients are now asking for carbon reduction plans or net zero policies. For example, by 2027 National Highways will expect Tier 1 and Tier 2 suppliers to have certified carbon management systems.² By 2024, the Environment Agency will require all major suppliers to report on their emissions, to set a net zero target, and to report on progress annually as part of their plan to reach net zero by 2030.³ Organisations across construction and planning are prioritising environmental, social and governance (ESG) criteria and are increasingly requesting an organisation's environmental policy implementation

plan, including carbon reduction and carbon emissions reporting, as part of their pre-qualification assessment processes.

Ethical

Professional responsibility

ClfA's *environmental protection policy statement* acknowledges the responsibilities of ClfA accredited members and Registered Organisations to adhere to the highest standards of responsible and ethical behaviour in the conduct of archaeological affairs. Archaeological activities have the potential to affect any component of the environment and to create harmful emissions. ClfA recognises its members' ethical responsibilities to care for the environment and limit emissions and would encourage archaeological organisations to ensure they have a policy in place in line with ClfA's environmental protection policy, and to be working towards establishing a baseline for emissions and a carbon reduction plan.

ClfA recognises its members' ethical responsibilities to care for the environment and limit emissions...



Aerial view of busy construction site in morning sunlight close to Brighton, East Sussex, UK. Credit: P Babic (Shutterstock)

Revisions to ClfA standards and guidance are anticipated to include expectations that project designs and equivalents should contain or cover reference to the environmental protection policy (including carbon reduction plan) applying to an archaeological project. Changes to the standards and guidance would have implications for the requirements for individual accredited ClfA members and Registered Organisations.

What support is there?

Website pages

Through the Climate Change Working Group, ClfA has created a webpage (www.archaeologists.net/practices/archaeologists-and-climate-change) with information about carbon emissions and carbon reduction. This includes a **carbon reduction guide table** with ideas about how archaeological organisations can look to reduce their impact on the environment. The page also links to the Historic Environment Forum sustainability and net zero resources.

Carbon reduction network

ClfA has just launched a Carbon Reduction Network through the Historic England Knowledge Hub. This provides an informal online space to allow ClfA members and others to ask questions and share ideas and resources so that we can collectively improve our practices and respond to the climate crisis. You can request to join the Knowledge Hub at khub.net/group/cifa-carbon-reduction-network/group-home or email alex.llewellyn@archaeologists.net.

Training

The Climate Change Working Group has been running a series of sessions at the ClfA conference and Innovation Festival, as well as informal lunch-and-learn and discussion sessions. On 12 October as part of this year's Innovation Festival we are holding a joint session with FAME on *Navigating pathways to net zero in archaeology*, where we will bring together archaeologists to share insights, exchange ideas and explore practical strategies to build a net zero, decarbonised future for the sector.

Working with Historic England, we hope to soon be able to offer a series of carbon literacy training resources and carbon accounting advice.



Aerial view of Birmingham High Speed Rail 2 construction. Credit: UAV 4 (Shutterstock)

The Climate Change Working Group would encourage everyone to engage in these various opportunities for discussion and sharing of ideas and innovation.

¹ www.gov.uk/government/publications/net-zero-strategy

² <https://nationalhighways.co.uk/media/eispcjem/net-zero-highways-our-2030-2040-2050-plan.pdf> (nationalhighways.co.uk)

³ www.gov.uk/government/publications/environment-agency-reaching-net-zero-by-2030