

Resources for Business in Wiltshire

This document provides a list of useful resources for businesses in the Wiltshire region, across the UK and worldwide. It has been created during 2022 as part of the WCA's Business Research Project.

Due to the vast range and wide scope of different types of 'help for business' that exist in this busy workspace, the list can never be viewed as a 'complete guide'. New information and updates are being added on a continual basis, so the author can take no responsibility for the accuracy of each item OR for those schemes which have since ceased to be operated or funded.

However, the list does offer a useful starting point to anybody tasked with making environmental improvements to their company, business or other organisation. So, it is a useful place to begin taking significant steps towards a more sustainable future for your firm.

Our Top-Tip

In the opinion of the Business Engagement Team, the most comprehensive and simplest-to-use online guide for Small and Medium businesses is:

'Zero Carbon Business' - <https://zerocarbonbusiness.uk/>

This site covers all aspects of the subject for small business managers with a very simple, but logical, structure to the website. The 'sector specific guides' have been tailor-made for most common types of business and represent an excellent starting point. We would recommend that you begin your journey here: <https://zerocarbonbusiness.uk/become-a-net-zero-business/>

The Zero Carbon Business site includes: – Guides to funding & training; explanations of key terms; long list of 'How To' guides; inspiring case studies and links to events; and more....

[Top-tip as dated: February 2023]

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Grants/ funding schemes

Target 2030

- Free energy-saving support and grant-funding for SMEs across Swindon and Wiltshire
- Includes a business energy survey, detailed report, recommendations and 30% grant funding for subsidising the cost of these improvements.
- This is run by [Severn Wye](#), a charity across the South West that invest in activities and services to make a positive impact on the world.
- Website warns that 'funding is very limited' – Feb 2023.

Community solar installation

- Bath and West Community Energy are offering free installation for businesses, schools and community buildings, if they meet set of criteria.
 - BWCE raises the money, installs the system, owns and maintains it. You can get cheaper power, slash your carbon emissions and donate surplus income to community projects
- <https://www.bwce.coop/what-we-do/>

Bristol Avon Catchment Market

- Opportunity for Businesses to access Environmental Credits by signing up to help restore natural land areas and increase biodiversity (Note: check your catchment area is covered) .
 - Application process via expression of interest form
- <https://bristolavoncatchmentmarket.uk/buyer-eoi>

Climate Perks

- Scheme for employers to give staff 'low-carbon' travel days by exchanging flights for rail or low-carbon travel options.
 - Website here:
- <https://www.climateperks.com/>

Business Networks

*Check your local area to see if they have a **Chamber of Commerce**, there are various across Wiltshire that operate independently. Or these business networks may have their own chamber:*

Swindon & Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership

- Private sector led partnership between local businesses, Swindon borough council, Wiltshire council, the military and education sector.

- Run a [Growth Hub](#) for businesses of Swindon and Wiltshire, with impartial business support and advice. This also provides access to events, specialist programmes and funding for your business.

[Business West](#)

- A not-for-profit company that supports businesses and lobbies government on their behalf.
- Gain access to business guides, monthly business news, tips and opportunities, events, training and workshops.
- Offer support for starting a business, growing your business, innovating your business, exporting overseas and campaigns for change.
- Useful series of online webinars on key issues for SMEs – for example 'Greenwashing' <https://www.businesswest.co.uk/events/lunch-and-learn-green-washing>

Also the gateway to enter local South West Chambers of Commerce groups is here - <https://www.businesswest.co.uk/chambers>

Benefits are: Wiltshire Chamber members enjoy a number of benefits including:

- o Raise your profile online, in the press and among your peers.
- o Opportunities to find new business and advance your sales pipeline.
- o Network with experienced and influential business leaders in the local area and beyond.
- o Have your views represented at a local and national level to decision makers who listen.
- o Gain preferential access to training, advice and support services to help your business grow.

[Bath and West Community Energy](#)

- A community benefit society owned and run by members for the benefit of the community. Focus is on developing clean local energy (see grant section above).
- Have run several projects for renewable energy installation and now looking to get people on board for a project on managing energy demand.

[Inspirebiz](#)

- A network of business with several strategic partners, such as Wiltshire Council.
- Focus is on external services and advice for SME's
- The aim of this network is to help your business grow, either through funding or access to the features listed below.
- Inspire will:
 - o Offer valuable advice for your business strategy.
 - o Connect you with experts and resources.
 - o Enable knowledge sharing between business owners.

[WESSEX Chambers of Commerce](#)

- Network of local businesses who meet regularly to exchange ideas and provide collaborative support to managers – across both private and public sectors.
- Wessex Chambers of Commerce has expertise as a delivery partner for national and local Government programmes supporting SMEs (Small and medium-sized enterprises). Examples include acting as the lead delivery partner for the Swindon and Wiltshire Growth Hub, a local authority funded contract to support start-up and established businesses, a contract to support rural businesses and military leavers through the Rural Growth Network and European Structural Investment Fund programmes.
- <https://www.wessexchambers.org.uk/>

[The Enterprise Network](#)

- TEN nurtures new and growing businesses in Swindon and Wiltshire, in partnership with Wiltshire Council, Swindon Borough Council and other business networks.
- Have six Enterprise Centres with an extensive network of partners, all helping businesses to start, grow and prosper.
- This provides affordable working space, access to professional network, networking opportunities and advice on grants and funding.

[Business Women in...](#)

- A network specifically for women in business, with a group for Wiltshire.
- Groups are inclusive, supportive and informative and aim to enable women to support one another.
- BWi host networking meet-ups (online or in-person) and larger events to help you network, gain clients and learn from expert speakers.

[Federation of small businesses](#)

- Set up to help smaller businesses achieve their ambitions.
- Offer a range a business services including advice, financial expertise, support and a powerful voice heard in government.
- As well as supporting members, the organisation is a business campaigner, which has led to them influencing policies in government.

The Climate Group

- Network of 300 businesses in 140 markets worldwide, with the mission of driving climate action, fast.
- They power networks to act, focus on action quickly and collaborate to achieve together.
- Work is focused on systems with highest emissions, including energy, transport, built environment and industry.
- International Business group – see here :
<https://www.theclimategroup.org/about-us>

Business Improvement District – BID

Salisbury BID

- A business led, not-for-profit organisation formed to improve a defined commercial area, in this case Salisbury. The organisation is funded by businesses, for their benefit.
- The BID enables coordinated investment into the area and delivers projects and services, in addition to those provided by the council.
- Their priorities in Salisbury:
 - o Welcoming and enhancing
 - o Promoting and supporting
 - o Representing and influencing

Other BIDS

- Other town centres in the South West have been awarded BID status – (e.g. Bath; Cheltenham; Dorchester) – see index of all UK BIDs here -
<https://britishbids.info/services/bid-index>

Certifications & Pledges

United Nations SDG's - <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

- The **Sustainable Development Goals** are a collection of 17 interlinked global goals designed to be a "blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all". The SDGs were set up in 2015 by the United Nations General Assembly and is intended to be achieved by 2030.
- Probably the Highest Level of Goal and Target-setting standards in the World.

- Cornerstone foundation & excellent starting point for any medium sized organisation to start their sustainability journey.
- Ensures your own company strategy is anchored to the global challenge.
- The annual SDG Progress reports are a MUST READ item for anybody with concern about the 'progress' towards a sustainable future, (unfortunately they make depressing reading).
- https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/29858SG_SDG_Progress_Report_2022.pdf
- The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is the United Nations body for **assessing the science** related to climate change. Annual reports are becoming increasingly worrying and demanding URGENT policy change by governments. <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/sixth-assessment-report-working-group-3/>
- April 2022 report – very sternly worded warnings from the world's scientists. <https://youtu.be/7yHcXQoR1zA>

B Corporation

- Certified B corps are businesses that balance purpose and profit. They are legally required to consider the impact of their decisions on workers, customers, suppliers, the community and the environment.
- There are 3,720 companies currently certified across 150 industries. Big names include Innocent Smoothies, Patagonia and Body Shop
- Being certified means you are part of a community, using business as a force for good.

Science based targets Initiative

- SBTi's provide companies with a clearly-defined path to reduce emissions in line with Paris Agreement goals.
- You can set your emissions reduction target in line with SBTi's criteria, they will validate these as an official target and you will then disclose your information, reporting on company-wide emissions.
- Your progress will be tracked against your target annually.
- More than 1,000 companies around the world have set these targets (e.g. BMW, McKinsey)

Useful set of guides here -

<https://sciencebasedtargets.org/resources/?tab=commit#resource>

For example - <https://sciencebasedtargets.org/resources/files/SBTi-How-To-Guide.pdf>

And useful industry / business sector guides - <https://sciencebasedtargets.org/sectors>

We mean business coalition

- This includes a full range of different commitments businesses can make to support the transition to a zero-carbon economy.

- Commitments range from natural climate solutions to creating a zero-carbon energy system.

Race to Zero

- This is a global campaign where all members are committed to the same goal, achieving net zero emissions by 2050 at the very latest.
- So far includes, 1397 companies, 569 universities and 74 investors.
- You can see on the website what type of pledges to join, depending on your organisation type.

Reporting standards – Regulated UK & EU

SECR – Streamlined Energy & Carbon Reporting: latest UK government regulations (April 2019).

- carbon reporting which quoted Plc's and 'large' Limited / LLP (partnerships) **MUST** carry out every year.
- UK Gov guidance for SECR is found here: – (Note : very detailed guidance document (152 pages) , so hard to follow): -
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/environmental-reporting-guidelines-including-mandatory-greenhouse-gas-emissions-reporting-guidance>
- This **Carbon Trust explanation** gives better clarity on size of business covered and what they must report. <https://www.carbontrust.com/news-and-events/insights/secr-explained-streamlined-energy-carbon-reporting-framework-for-uk>
- **HINT** – check your company size versus definition of 'large' firm.

European Business Reporting regulations – wider reporting scope and extended scale of businesses included in the E.U. Directive agreed in March 2022.

- Details explained here - https://finance.ec.europa.eu/publications/sustainable-finance-package_en
- This will probably impact on UK firms who are part of pan-European holding groups or even with significant operating sites in EU member states.
- Good explanation here - https://www.ey.com/en_gl/assurance/how-the-eu-s-new-sustainability-directive-will-be-a-game-changer

Reporting standards – Commercially Available / Not Legal Requirement

[Greenhouse gas protocol](#)

- GHG Protocol supplies the world's most widely used greenhouse gas accounting standards.
- GHG provides global standards (free downloads), frameworks, guidance, tools and training courses for businesses and governments to measure and manage emissions.
- Often referred to by UK businesses in their SECR annual reports as the 'goto' standardized methodology for carbon reporting.

[Carbon disclosure project](#)

- CDP is the gold standard for corporate environmental reporting. Sets out detailed approach for reporting environmental and climate change information.
- Designed to help organisations prepare and present environmental information in mainstream reports for the benefit of investor.
- Often used by larger organisations with resources and skills to do a thorough analysis and reporting task.
- Aligned with the recommendations of the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures.
- All registered firms have their scores visible here - <https://www.cdp.net/en/companies/companies-scores>

[GRI](#) Global Reporting Initiative

- Mission is to enable organizations to be transparent and take responsibility for their impacts, through standards for sustainability reporting.
- GRI standards are a very comprehensive set covering many types of business organisations.
- Can join as a member or download the set of standards for free to use yourself.
- Good set of training resources for managers tasked with delivering better reporting across GHG; SDGs; ESG needs of larger businesses.
- Link to downloads <https://www.globalreporting.org/how-to-use-the-gri-standards/gri-standards-english-language/>

[Partnership for carbon accounting financials](#)

- This is specifically for financial institutions. It enables them to disclose greenhouse gas emissions of loans and investments.
- This is a partnership between financial institutions to work together to develop a harmonised process, which is in line with the Paris Agreement.

- Measuring financed emissions is important for creating transparency and accountability, and managing risk associated with greenhouse gas emissions.
- 107 financial institutions are already taking part (e.g. Deutsche Bank).

One Planet Standard

- OPS is a comprehensive set of metrics across climate and other environmental emissions to enable companies to rate their performance
<https://oneplanetstandard.org/>
- Based upon 5 ways of working to improve an organisation's influence on environmental and ecological impacts. Aim to make organisations operate within the bounds of 'one planet living'.
- External assessors work to rate firms on a Gold / Silver / Bronze award level
- <https://theoneplanetlife.com/one-planet-standard/> - the One Planet Centre at OnePlanetLife.com hosts the Standard on the Web.
- The headline standard can be downloaded free – very useful set of questions.

Bioregional Development – One Planet Living

- The One Planet Living framework is designed to support you to create a 'One Planet Action Plan' that acts as a route map towards a more sustainable future for your organisation. It comprises:
- Ten simple principles that cover all aspects of social, environmental and economic sustainability.
- Detailed goals and guidance documents – these provide advice and ideas on the goals, actions, targets and indicators you could set for your 'One Planet Action Plan' - this is your plan to achieve One Planet Living.
- Can give you support, tools and training to create a One Planet Action Plan, and we will endorse the best plans. <https://www.bioregional.com/one-planet-living/>

Other Useful Resources

Climate Outreach

- First British charity to focus exclusively on public engagement with climate change. They help people understand the complex issues in ways that resonate with them, building a social mandate for the topic.
- They provide articles, research, practical guides, events and fundraising initiatives.

Zero Carbon Britain / Centre for Alternative Technology -

- Useful set of guides for smaller firms, local authorities and community groups making the journey to lower carbon activities.
- Zero Carbon Britain provides an end-point net zero vision for the country. Find inspiration, tools, reports, guidance, training, webinars and more here, to improve and accelerate climate action. The content below is being constantly updated as we discover more great resources. <https://cat.org.uk/info-resources/zero-carbon-britain/>

Carbon Trust -

- Really useful resource for getting clear definitions on all the metrics, jargon and methods used to advance organisations to a Low Carbon future. Work with SBTi (see earlier) to ensure that good science is used to deliver positive change.
- Lots of useful [guidance](#) and toolkit downloads to help businesses follow a sustainable journey. For example – see the [Guide to Net Zero](#)
- <https://www.carbontrust.com/what-we-do>

UK Business Forums

- This is a central resource for small business knowledge, advice, debate and support.
- A place to go if you own your own business and are looking for guidance across various topics.
- You can sign up for the free forums or register as a member which gives access to business directories and other exclusives.

Doughnut Economics for Business Tool

- A useful set of explanatory reports and tool that enable a business's owners and managers to re-design the business according to the principles of doughnut economics.
- Workshop slides and training tools to guide a facilitated workshop approach to mapping out the business, with focus on key impacts and emissions across environmental and social spheres.
- (Note – requires a knowledge of the concept and thinking of Doughnut Economics, plus a buy-in and commitment for change / significant time & resources).
- Business entry point here - <https://doughnuteconomics.org/themes/2>

[IEMA – Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment](#)

- Professional membership for individuals and corporate members to help by providing resources and tools, research and knowledge sharing along with high-quality formal training and qualifications to meet the real-world needs of members.
- Plus, registration for a Quality Standard mark for firms.
<https://www.iema.net/about-us/what-we-do>

[Business Green](#)

- A website delivering news articles specifically related to businesses and with a green focus. They also run events and festivals within different industries.
- Operating a 'net zero now' campaign, with specific articles on this topic.

[Find a government select committee](#)

- Using this tool you can search for select committees which are established to investigate certain topics. Search for key words such as 'environment'.
- This may help in order to contact them and to stay up to date on activities which might impact your business.

APOLOGIES FOR ANYTHING WE HAVE MISSED!

THIS LIST OF USEFUL RESOURCES WAS CREATED DURING 2022.

THE WEBLINKS WERE CHECKED IN February 2023.

PLEASE NOTE: The internet changes every day, weblinks get modified, moved and deleted!

[Prepared by Volunteers of Wiltshire Climate Alliance:](#)

[Keith Freegard - Business Engagement Lead - 2022 / 2023](#)

[Tess Gorman - Youth Group / Social Media - 2021](#)

<https://www.wiltshireclimatealliance.org.uk/about-us>

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