Establishing a carbon baseline and decarbonisation approach for our investments

05/06/2024

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This report reviews the Heritage Fund's grant portfolio carbon footprint and recommends an approach to minimise the environmental impacts of our funding.

Attachment	Size
PDF View Carbon Baseline and Decarbonisation Report Exec Summary as PDF(179.21 KB)	179.21 KB
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We're committed to reaching net zero greenhouse gas emissions for our operations by 2030, and for our grant portfolio by 2050.

In 2021, we quantified the carbon footprint of our operations. In 2023, we commissioned 3ADAPT to measure the carbon footprint of our investments.

The aims of this research were to:

- understand the pros and cons of different approaches for estimating our carbon impacts
- understand the process for collecting new data
- estimate the annual carbon footprint of the projects we fund
- understand the long-term environmental impact our investments

A baseline year of 2019–20 was chosen and a desk study was carried out to establish the level of data already available for assessing the carbon emissions associated with projects.

Key findings

The report identifies likely sources of carbon emissions across a variety of projects – the three most significant are:

- travel (visitor and volunteer)
- purchased goods and services
- capital works (embodied carbon from capital goods and energy consumption)

It also suggests methods for assessing the carbon impacts: survey/interview-based analysis provides the most complete assessment of emissions sources. It can also consider the positive impacts, such as reduced energy consumption.

Recommendations

While the report offers valuable insights it also shows that there's more for us to do. It recommends six next steps:

1. categorise our portfolio and expand the baseline sample
2. establish data collection processes
3. explore the use of software to reduce burden on grantees
4. establish a suite of case studies
5. revisit decarbonisation pathways and net zero target
6. explore the introduction of environmental performance standards

Find out more

Download the PDF attached to this page to explore the executive summary of our carbon baseline and decarbonisation report. It includes information on the methodology, quantification approach, target setting and an overview of recommendations and next steps. The full report is available on request.

The Heritage Fund is committed to supporting environmentally sustainable projects that help the UK meet its nature recovery targets and mitigate the impact of climate change on heritage. Explore our Heritage 2033 investment principles to see what we can do together and what we want to achieve.

Our research and evaluation

We regularly conduct research to discover what is happening in the heritage sector, and we evaluate our work to better understand the change we are making. Read more of our insight.