

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE NET ZERO STRATEGY

“Climate change has not stopped for COVID19. Greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere are at record levels and continue to increase. Emissions are heading in the direction of pre-pandemic levels following a temporary decline caused by the lockdown and economic slowdown. The world is set to see its warmest five years on record ...”

United in Science Report, September 2020

WHAT WE WANT

For social enterprises in Scotland to play an inspirational and leading role in delivering Scotland’s NetZero transition by 2045 in a fair and just way.

Climate breakdown will not affect everyone to the same degree and we want an approach that champions social justice and the alleviation of poverty. At a pivotal moment for Scotland and the world, that recovery from COVID-19 is carried out in a way that not only helps tackle climate and environmental breakdown, but also social inequalities, and the need to improve long-term resilience,



WHY?

Because the social enterprise community care deeply about the future health of the planet and the well-being of its people, particularly those least able to mitigate the damaging effects of a warming planet.

Because the social enterprise community are ideally placed as a sector to play a leading role towards Net Zero in that we already consider the triple bottom line of social impact, environmental impact alongside economic impact.

Because social enterprises work in and with communities and therefore have the reach to make NetZero a reality for themselves and the benefit of communities they work with.

Because social enterprises recognise that 2020 has already demonstrated that business as usual is not an option: we are committed to supporting a well-being economy which measures progress in a sustainable way taking account of the limits of our planet.



HOW WILL WE ACHIEVE IT?

1. Building on the sector's impressive leadership and actively promoting approaches such as the circular economy and community energy programmes to show a high level of AMBITION to a NetZero future.

The sector has been at the forefront of initiatives focusing on the circular economy; community energy; community woodlands as evidenced in the work of [CRNS](#) and [Community Energy Scotland](#) and many more.

The breadth of organisations tackling these issues demonstrates the knowledge held within the sector and highlights the place the wider Social Enterprise sector could hold in shaping a NetZero future.

- Highlight and [regularly] remind ourselves of the impacts of climate change, particularly on poorer communities who will be most exposed to its effects.
- Conversely, highlight the positive benefits for communities committed to social justice, to well-being and the care of our communities and our planet.
- Identify and support SE NetZero exemplars.
- Financial & other support to SEs to deliver and showcase NetZero activities in preparation for, during and after COP26.
- COP26 SE NetZero Award(s) awarded during COP26.

2. Embed a commitment to NetZero into the STRATEGIES AND OPERATIONAL PLANS of all social enterprises

Reducing carbon and promoting sustainable use of resources is the core aim of many social enterprises. We want to expand that objective to *all* enterprises irrespective of what business area they cover.

- Embedding this commitment through Just Enterprise acting as a conduit to attract and offer to social enterprises a hybrid support of existing experts and Government funded support. Partnering with SENs and their members: essentially a Team Scotland approach to the challenge of achieving Net Zero
- Option to choose three or four sectors of social enterprise to focus on, some with strong track record and some where the impact on addressing NetZero is potentially high [but untapped]
- Explore potential for Matching & Mentoring Service – matching of social enterprises with knowledge and expertise with those needing support.
- Financial & other support SEs to appoint a staff/trustee to be a NetZero/COP26 Ambassador, who will lead in building climate issues into operations and for SEs to undertake a Green Audit to secure the NetZero commitment 'badge'.
- Link into existing support structures like ZWS Green Champion Programme.

3. Set specific TARGETS AND MILESTONES to assess and report on the journey towards Net Zero

Practical toolkits will be assessed and recommended to measure carbon footprint and to help social enterprise embed this commitment within policies and goal setting with the aim of expanding to other enterprises as the opportunity arises.

- Secure partnership with e.g. (Crichton Carbon Centre) to assess & recommend most appropriate toolkits for the SE sector.
- Embed and integrate toolkits and advice through Just Enterprise, engaging with SENs and their members and drawing in expertise as required from other Government funded support programmes to support enterprises through the practical steps.
- Collate baseline data on where the sector is vis-à-vis Climate Change and carbon emissions
- Set stretching and ambitious targets on where the sector wants to be to match the high level of ambition of the sector. As a sector we should be taking a leading role and 2045 may be too late to avoid ecosystem breakdown. We want to consult with a view to achieving net zero as a sector by 2035.

4. Stimulate INNOVATION AND INVESTMENT in support of Net Zero

While a start has been made, social enterprises – both emerging and existing – will require support to develop creative and innovate products and services to make a stronger contribution to Net Zero. Much of this will be collaborative.

- Embedding environmental impact alongside social impact across existing and new programmes, specifically targeting innovation in climate change and stronger contributions towards Net Zero.
- Develop new innovative forms of investment into R&D for early stage social enterprises.
- Develop Innovation Challenges focused on climate change and net zero.