



Environmental



Social



Governance

So what's been going on at S&P regarding ESG since our last newsletter?

### S&P Group Carbon Footprint Update

Having calculated our carbon footprint for the 2019/20 tax year to be 101.12 tCO<sub>2</sub>e (metric tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent), we then set about what we could do to offset this amount. With the 2020/21 tax year being a bit "different" from normal, we have decided to concentrate on the 2019/20 tax year, and we will then assess the current year after the end of the tax year.

It is important to plant trees within the UK to help reforest some of our own woodlands. At the same time, we hope to offset our carbon footprint. We know that planting a tree won't immediately offset carbon dioxide already released into the air, as it takes years for a tree to become mature enough to absorb enough CO<sub>2</sub> to counterbalance it. So, in addition to planting 101 trees in the UK, we will offset our carbon footprint by contributing to projects in the Brazillian Amazon rain forest that prevent the further destruction of trees in that area.

[https://www.carbonfootprint.com/cikel\\_offset\\_brazil\\_redd.html](https://www.carbonfootprint.com/cikel_offset_brazil_redd.html)

Of course, the best approach to take with our carbon footprints is to reduce them before they happen, whether you are at work or home. So, turning off unnecessary lights and turning down your room thermostat in favour of putting on a jumper is not only every parent's dream - but it can help to save the planet too!



### Think Bike

We've noticed that the warmer spring/summer weather has made it possible for more staff to use their bikes for their journeys to and from work, cutting down on their carbon footprints, as well as getting some much-needed vitamin D and exercise along the way. Our staff are able to make use of our cycle scheme to purchase a new bike if needed.



## Paper Usage

Do we really need to print a document out? We advised in our last newsletter that S&P Financial Services had changed from using general, non-report paper produced from sugar-cane waste; if we could all stop using paper unnecessarily, that would be even better. With other options, such as the sharing of documents electronically by the Personal Finance Portal being available, as well as more resource-consciousness from clients, there are more reasons than ever to try to avoid printing out a hard copy wherever possible. A page printed in colour costs ten times as much as a page printed in greyscale, so we can all do our bit to save the environment if we think before we press 'print'.



## DocuSign

Since S&P Financial Services started using DocuSign, they advise that we have saved the following:



It is easy to see how effective this is as, not just a way of saving the planet's resources, but also it makes the whole signing process quick and easy for our clients and us. Therefore, we'd like to use DocuSign where we can.

## The Plight of the Humble Bee

While many of us may be familiar with the honeybee and one or two bumblebee species, there are actually over 200 species of bees found in the British Isles - and roughly 20,000 species found around the world.

They may be small, but bees play a huge role in our ecosystem. They are one of our key pollinators - a group of insects responsible for the production of one-third of all the food we eat. As a result, the work they do is worth £200 million to the British economy, and the retail value of what they pollinate is closer to £1 billion!

Britain's bees are in trouble, especially wild, solitary bees. Bumblebees are in serious decline worldwide. In the UK, we have already lost 13 species and, another 35 species are currently at risk.

Here are some of the reasons they are in trouble:



## Habitat loss

Changes in our land use, including insensitive urban development and intensive farming, have caused significant losses and fragmentation of pollinator-friendly habitats. As a result, bees lose out on the diverse food sources they need for a healthy diet. Bees must have enough flowers to forage - and safe places to use for nesting, among vegetation, the soil, and hedges. But since the Second World War, we've lost 97% of our wildflower meadows, leaving our bees with little natural habitat.

## Climate change

As winters become warmer and wetter, there are signs that some wild species may be in the wrong place at the wrong time. Scientists are starting to detect that climate change may be disrupting bee nesting behaviour and their emergence after winter. Climate change may also be an issue as it affects the timing of the flowering of plants that bees rely on for food.

## Pesticides

Even when applied correctly, pesticides can negatively impact bees by reducing their breeding success and resistance to disease. Scientists have found that exposure to pesticides can impair honeybees' ability to navigate, bumblebees' ability to reproduce, and solitary bees' ability to reproduce any young at all. As well as pesticides, the use of herbicides in parks, streets, and on roadside verges reduces the availability of forage plants that bees and other pollinating insects seek out for food at different times of the year.



So, how are we helping at S&P?

- Our ESG team is implementing many changes to the company to reduce our impact on the planet.
- Following a suggestion made at the Staff Forum, we are creating wild areas in our Norwich grounds to attract bees and other insects.

You can also do your bit to encourage bees to visit your gardens by planting flowering plants in any suitable areas you may have at home. And by gently ushering them outside should they come indoors, rather than smashing them against the window with a newspaper.



### Carbon footprints - Did you know?

An email has a carbon footprint, based on electricity used to store and send it.

Generally, an email has a carbon footprint of around 4gCO<sub>2</sub>e, but with a fairly large attachment, this can easily increase to 50gCO<sub>2</sub>e\*. This can be multiplied by the number of recipients that are copied into the email and suddenly, and email's carbon footprint is not much better than physically posting a letter. So, to reduce your carbon footprint significantly, send a link to documents instead of attaching them to the email when possible. Or better yet, message people and send documents through Teams.



\*<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/green-living-blog/2010/oct/21/carbon-footprint-email>

### Carbon footprints - Did you know?

A car journey from Aylsham to our head office and back generates approx. 2520 gCO<sub>2</sub>\*, and that on hour of video conferencing only generates between 150g to 1000gCO<sub>2</sub>\*\* - and switching off video can reduce it further by up to 96%. So, if you are able to continue to carry out client meetings online, you are really doing your bit for the planet.

\*CO<sub>2</sub> emissions calculated by RAC website for a 22 mile journey from Aylsham to NR3 2RY and back, assuming best case of 40mpg achieved throughout in a medium-sized car.

\*\*<https://www.purdue.edu/newsroom/releases/2021/Q1/turn-off-that-camera-during-virtual-meetings,-environmental-study-says.html>

