



Carbon Reduction Plan 2023/4

Supplier name: Opinion Research Services Ltd

Publication date: October 2024

Commitment to achieving Net Zero

Opinion Research Services (ORS) is a social research agency based in Swansea with a multi-disciplinary team of colleagues covering the full range of social studies disciplines. We focus on building strong and collaborative partnerships based on open and honest working relationships that respond to our clients' needs, and develop their trust in our capabilities, flexibility, and responsiveness.

ORS is wholly committed to sustainable practice and achieving Net Zero emissions by 2050. We aim to achieve Net Zero through reducing our CO₂ emissions where possible (rather than offsetting) and will publish annual reports of our progress.

As an organisation, ORS has signed up to the to Market Research Society (MRS) Climate Pledge: www.mrs.org.uk/resources/climate-pledge

We are committed to using the four pillars of climate action as an annual framework to move towards net zero as soon as we reasonably can. This includes

- Tracking – recording our carbon emissions
- Reduction – making tangible changes that result in year-on-year reductions (per head)
- Transparency – reporting our emissions including to the MRS Annual Tracking Survey
- Collaboration – supporting internal and external conversations to share best practice

Baseline Emissions Footprint

Baseline emissions are a record of the greenhouse gases that have been produced in the past and were produced prior to the introduction of any strategies to reduce emissions.

Baseline emissions are the reference point against which emissions reduction can be measured.

Baseline Year: 2019/20 (reporting period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020)		
Additional Details relating to the Baseline Emissions calculations.		
ORS has used 2019/20 emissions data as our baseline year. This period provides the most appropriate period for assessing our typical annual carbon footprint from which to measure progress.		
Baseline year emissions: 2019/20		
EMISSIONS	TOTAL (tCO₂e)	
Scope 1	16.71 tCO₂e Scope 1 is based on emissions that are made directly. ORS is a service provider only with a Head Office and a separate Call Centre that are both in leased premises. Direct emissions result from running gas boilers at both premises and from operating one company pool car.	
Scope 2	18.24 tCO₂e Scope 2 is based on emissions that are made indirectly. Indirect emissions result only from electricity used at both office premises.	
Scope 3 Included Sources	119.69 tCO₂e Scope 3 is based on emissions that ORS is indirectly responsible for. ORS is reporting on the following five key elements.	
	Scope	Comment
	4. Upstream transportation and distribution	ORS is a service provider and does not incur transportations and distribution costs
	5. Waste generated in operations	Our only eligible waste reported is confidential paper shredding
	6. Business travel	This includes all business travel, including miles in private car, public transport and hotel stays
	7. Employee commuting	Based on staff survey data
	9. Downstream transportation and distribution	ORS is a service provider and does not incur transportations and distribution costs
Total Emissions	154.64 tCO₂e	

Current Emissions Reporting

Reporting Year: 2023/24 (reporting period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024)																				
EMISSIONS	TOTAL (tCO ₂ e)																			
Scope 1	6.89 tCO₂e Scope 1 is based on emissions that are made directly. ORS is a service provider only with a Head Office in leased premises. Our only direct emissions result from running a gas boiler at this premises.																			
Scope 2	13.28 tCO₂e Scope 2 is based on emissions that are made indirectly. Indirect emissions result only from electricity used at our office premises.																			
Scope 3 Included Sources	48.44 tCO₂e Scope 3 is based on emissions that ORS is indirectly responsible for. ORS is reporting on the following five key elements. <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Scope</th><th>Comment</th><th>tCO₂e</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>4. Upstream transportation and distribution</td><td>ORS is a service provider and does not incur transportations and distribution costs</td><td>0.00</td></tr> <tr> <td>5. Waste generated in operations</td><td>Our only eligible waste reported is confidential paper shredding</td><td>0.01</td></tr> <tr> <td>6. Business travel</td><td>This includes all business travel, including miles in private car, public transport and hotel stays</td><td>32.34</td></tr> <tr> <td>7. Employee commuting</td><td>Based on staff survey data</td><td>16.09</td></tr> <tr> <td>9. Downstream transportation and distribution</td><td>ORS is a service provider and does not incur transportations and distribution costs</td><td>0.00</td></tr> </tbody> </table>		Scope	Comment	tCO ₂ e	4. Upstream transportation and distribution	ORS is a service provider and does not incur transportations and distribution costs	0.00	5. Waste generated in operations	Our only eligible waste reported is confidential paper shredding	0.01	6. Business travel	This includes all business travel, including miles in private car, public transport and hotel stays	32.34	7. Employee commuting	Based on staff survey data	16.09	9. Downstream transportation and distribution	ORS is a service provider and does not incur transportations and distribution costs	0.00
Scope	Comment	tCO ₂ e																		
4. Upstream transportation and distribution	ORS is a service provider and does not incur transportations and distribution costs	0.00																		
5. Waste generated in operations	Our only eligible waste reported is confidential paper shredding	0.01																		
6. Business travel	This includes all business travel, including miles in private car, public transport and hotel stays	32.34																		
7. Employee commuting	Based on staff survey data	16.09																		
9. Downstream transportation and distribution	ORS is a service provider and does not incur transportations and distribution costs	0.00																		
Total Emissions	68.61 tCO₂e																			

Total emissions in the 2023/24 reporting year (68.61 tCO₂e) were 56% lower than in the baseline year (154.64 tCO₂e) with an overall reduction of 86.02 tCO₂e recorded.

Whilst this shows a significant reduction on the baseline year it represents an increase (23.34 tCO₂e) compared with 2022/23. This increase has primarily been driven by an increase in business travel (+14.01 tCO₂e) and employee commuting (+4.45 tCO₂e) when compared with last year.

Emissions reduction targets

The data confirms that our main areas of Carbon emissions are energy use in the office, business travel and employee commuting. Our carbon reduction targets consider each of these areas in turn.

We set an initial target to reduce emissions to 50 tCO₂e by 2026, which represents a reduction of around 67% from the baseline year.

Office energy use

ORS has a well-established environmental policy which includes a commitment to low energy usage. We have low energy lighting installed and routinely ensure that all new IT equipment and appliances have the highest level of efficiency.

Whilst the energy supplier for our Head Office is determined by our landlord, ORS seeks to influence the supplier as part of our landlord agreement.

Our aim is to reduce our energy use across Scope 1 and Scope 2 from the baseline of 34.95 tCO₂e to a **target of 15 tCO₂e** by 2026, a reduction of around 60%. Although we broadly achieved this in 2022/23 an increasing return to the office has resulted in an uplift in energy use to 20.17 tCO₂e in 2023/24.

Business travel

ORS has a longstanding policy that seeks to minimise business travel.

We now, by default, offer all client inception meetings, project updates and presentations as virtual meetings. This change in culture has been accelerated by the pandemic. We will now only attend a clients' office for meetings when this is absolutely necessary.

Our survey fieldwork often requires face-to-face work and we encourage interviewing staff to travel by public transport as much as possible.

A notable area of increased business travel in 2023/24 has been with our Gypsy and Traveller Needs Assessments. These require face-to-face fieldwork and the increased mileage and hotel stays has been driven by a number of contracts from further afield.

Our aim is to reduce business travel from the baseline of 83.73 tCO₂e to a **target of 20 tCO₂e** by 2026, a reduction of around 75%.

This factor can be hard to control or predict as we are dependent on additional factors such as clients wishing to return to face-to-face meetings as well as general business growth, which can lead to increased business travel.

Employee commuting

ORS recognises the benefits of flexible working. Whilst we encourage colleagues to collaborate and work together in the office on a regular basis, we also see the wide-ranging benefits of homeworking including the reduced need for employee commuting.

Most staff have a settled hybrid work pattern with typically 2 days in the office. This pattern of working is expected to remain the norm within the business and is an important element in our Carbon Reduction Plan. Employee commuting carbon cost is now approximately a third of what it was in the base year.

However, we also recruited a number of new staff during the year who were usually expected to be in the office 4 days a week during their probationary period, alongside a line manager or peer to

support the onboarding process. This may have contributed to a small uplift in commuting emissions in 2023/4 compared with last year.

Our aim is to reduce employee commuting emissions from the baseline of 35.94 tCO₂e to a **target of 15 tCO₂e by 2026**, a reduction of around 60%.

Carbon Reduction Projects

Completed carbon reduction initiatives

Since the 2019/20 baseline reporting period, our carbon emissions have reduced from 154.64 tCO₂e to 68.61 tCO₂e in the current 2023/24 reporting year, an overall reduction of more than half (86.02 tCO₂e, 56%).

Since the baseline year, we have completed the following projects and introduced a range of environmental management measures that have helped to reduce our underlying emissions.

The following provides a summary of our recent activity and wider policies:

- We have reduced and consolidated our leased office space, with all staff now co-located at our Head Office with shared kitchen and other facilities.
- We have reconfigured our IT infrastructure with fewer physical servers in a single server room, with some equipment now relocated to secure shared space at an offsite network centre – this has reduced overall energy usage for the equipment and the associated air conditioning.
- We have refurbished our Head Office and all light fittings have now been changed to the latest low energy LED bulbs to minimise energy usage.
- We have replaced the previous air circulation system with a new heating and ventilation system with heat extraction and recovery to minimise heat loss.
- We have installed a zone-based temperature control system with electronic thermostats on all radiators which avoids any spaces being heated unnecessarily.
- We have increased the number of dedicated meeting rooms and fitted most meeting rooms with high quality videoconferencing facilities to support virtual meetings and minimise business travel.
- We no longer maintain a company pool car, given the increased use of virtual meetings and reduced need for business travel.
- We have introduced new permanent options for flexible hybrid working, which have reduced employee commuting.
- We participate in a Cycle to Work Scheme - employees can benefit from obtaining a tax-free bike and accessories, up to the value of £1,000. We also offer secure covered storage for bicycles and a changing room space to make cycling more accessible.
- We have clearly marked and separated recycling for paper, plastic and glass recycling. We explored and monitored our levels of food waste but our weekly volume was below the minimum level which would enable us to request food waste collections from our Landlord.

We will continue to review volumes periodically, particularly in the event of any increase in staff or office-based hours.

- We have added questions on Carbon Reduction Policies to our approved supplier process and will take this into consideration in selecting preferred suppliers.

We recognise that further initiatives are likely to be required if we are to meet the ambitious carbon reduction targets that we have established for 2026, and we are currently reviewing what further measures could be introduced.

We have also explored potential carbon offset schemes to help us achieve our net zero ambitions. However, we have experienced some difficulties identifying credible or certified offsetting schemes for small businesses.

Declaration and Sign Off


This Carbon Reduction Plan has been completed in accordance with PPN 06/21 and associated guidance and reporting standard for Carbon Reduction Plans.

Emissions have been reported and recorded in accordance with the published reporting standard for Carbon Reduction Plans and the GHG Reporting Protocol corporate standard¹ and uses the appropriate Government emission conversion factors for greenhouse gas company reporting².

Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions have been reported in accordance with SECR requirements, and the required subset of Scope 3 emissions have been reported in accordance with the published reporting standard for Carbon Reduction Plans and the Corporate Value Chain (Scope 3) Standard³.

This Carbon Reduction Plan has been reviewed and signed off by the board of directors (or equivalent management body).

Signed on behalf of the Supplier:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jonathan Lee', is written over a horizontal line.

JONATHAN LEE
Managing Director

Date: 8 October 2024

¹ <https://ghgprotocol.org/corporate-standard>

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/government-conversion-factors-for-company-reporting>

³ <https://ghgprotocol.org/standards/scope-3-standard>