



# Net Zero Action Plan

Camera Obscura and World Of Illusions

31.03.2026

TOTAL EMISSIONS

182.33 tCO<sub>2</sub>e

NET ZERO BY

2045

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# Introduction

Camera Obscura & World of Illusions is Edinburgh's oldest purpose-built visitor attraction, a popular observatory and Museum of Science and Art, established 1835 and on this site since 1853. It is situated at the top of the Royal Mile. This 5-star rated visitor attraction is composed of an historic Victorian Camera Obscura, rooftop terrace and 4 floors of interactive exhibits, plus reception area and Gift Shop. A 'must-visit' for visitors of all ages, we attract c.320,000 visitor's pa (2025). Due to our enduring popularity, we have the longest opening hours of any attraction in Edinburgh.

Camera Obscura is part of a family business, Visitor Centres Ltd, based in Carrbridge, Inverness-shire. The other elements are Landmark Forest Adventure Park, Inveraray Jail and Landmark Press (tourism publishing).

Camera Obscura's premises are comprised of two historic buildings, joined together. The Tower is Grade A listed, formerly two three-storey tenement houses built in 1620, with two further floors added in 1850. Next door we have a Grade B Listed building, a former 'Ragged School' for poor children built in 1849, now housing exhibitions, gift shop and basement workshop and store.

We preserve these historic buildings, doing many repairs with our in-house technical team.

Our exhibitions are largely hands-on, probably the toughest exhibition environment as things get 'hammered', but also the most engaging and fun, hence our enduring popularity. Exhibits are mostly unique: designed, built, maintained, repaired, and often repurposed internally. We repair and reuse as a matter of course, recycling only where necessary. This highly unusual approach runs right through our organisation. It significantly reduces downtime, extends product lifecycles and is central to our way of operating sustainably.

# Vision

As a private enterprise established in 1835, adapting to change has been central to our survival. The Climate Crisis threatens the whole of society. We aim to do our part in tackling it, by being a zero-carbon, zero-waste visitor attraction that inspires climate-positive behaviour, through both our operations and our visitor experience.

We will do this by

1. Operating sustainably (cutting emissions to near zero)
2. Influence visitors (by building our local market and making sustainability more visible and engaging)
3. Leading locally (setting the benchmark for Edinburgh and Scottish attractions)

Sir Patrick Geddes, a previous owner, considered education to be the main driver of change. He helped people to see their place in the world in order to act to improve it. As a learning organisation, we are educating ourselves about climate change to better inform our climate action. We are following Geddes' maxim to 'think global, act local'. Both Scotland and Edinburgh have net zero targets and we are part of the community actively driving change to reach these targets.

# Summary

## NET ZERO

Scotland has set an ambitious target to reach Net Zero by 2045. Our commitment is to reach Net Zero by 2045. Our strategy follows the principles of the Greenhouse Gas Protocol.

Our baseline emissions were calculated as 182.33 (tCO<sub>2</sub>e) for the year 2024-25 and included Scope 1, Scope 2 and what was relevant of Scope 3.

Our scope 1 emissions accounted for 1%, scope 2 accounted for 20% and our included scope 3 accounted for 79%.

Our net zero lead is Phillipa Lumsden. This strategy document will be updated annually in March to reflect the action and progress made.

# Emissions Boundary

## Emissions Boundary for year 2024-25 Carbon Footprint

Our operational boundary has been created in line with the principles of the Greenhouse Gas Protocol. We have included Scope 1 and 2 emission sources and have chosen what is “reasonable” and “relevant” from Scope 3.

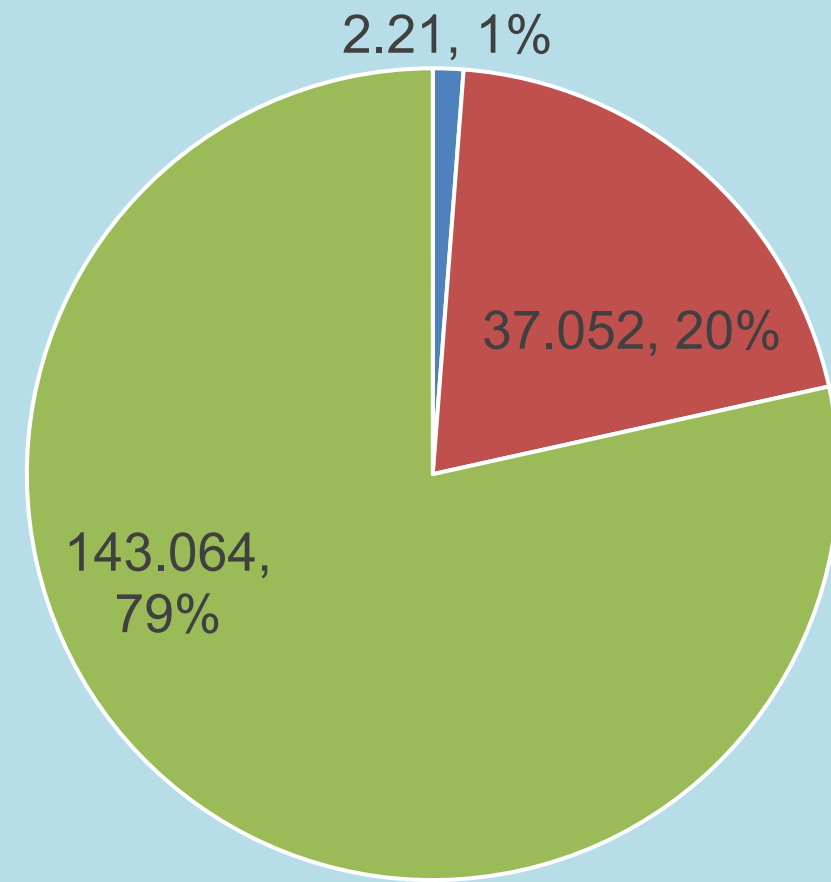
Our boundary will be reviewed and reset in year 2027 to include more emission sources. This is explored more in the ‘Action’ section of this document.

APPLICABLE AND INCLUDED	NOT INCLUDED
Scope 1 – single electric vehicle	Scope 3 – employee commuting – In the process of gathering data and will include in next years carbon footprint
Scope 2 – 100% renewable electricity	Scope 3 – Upstream transport and distribution - do not have the data available, will gather data for future carbon footprint
Scope 3 – rough overview of most purchased goods – planning to bring in recording structure that will allow easier data retrieval	Scope 3 – upstream leasing – a very small element, not included in 2024/25 footprint as we do not have data/relevant information but will be included in next year’s boundaries.
Scope 3 – business travel and hotel stays	Scope 3 – fuel and energy related activities – unsure how to gather data on production and transport of our renewable energy, for this so will research and include in future footprint calculations
Scope 3 – waste and water usage	Scope 3 – use of sold products – do not have the data for, so unsure what of impact on our footprint, will be researched and potentially added to future footprint
Scope 3 – rough overview of capital goods – planning to bring in recording structure that will allow easier data retrieval	Scope 3 – end-of-life treatment of sold products - do not have the data for, unsure of impact on our footprint, will be researched and potentially added to future footprint
	NOT RELEVANT (e.g. emission sources that do not exist in your organization)
	Scope 3 - Downstream transportation and distribution – we do not provide services to others
	Scope 3 - Investments – we do not invest in any other companies
	Scope 3 - Downstream Leased assets – we do not lease any property to others
	Scope 3 – Processing of sold products – we do not supply any product that needs processing

# Carbon footprint

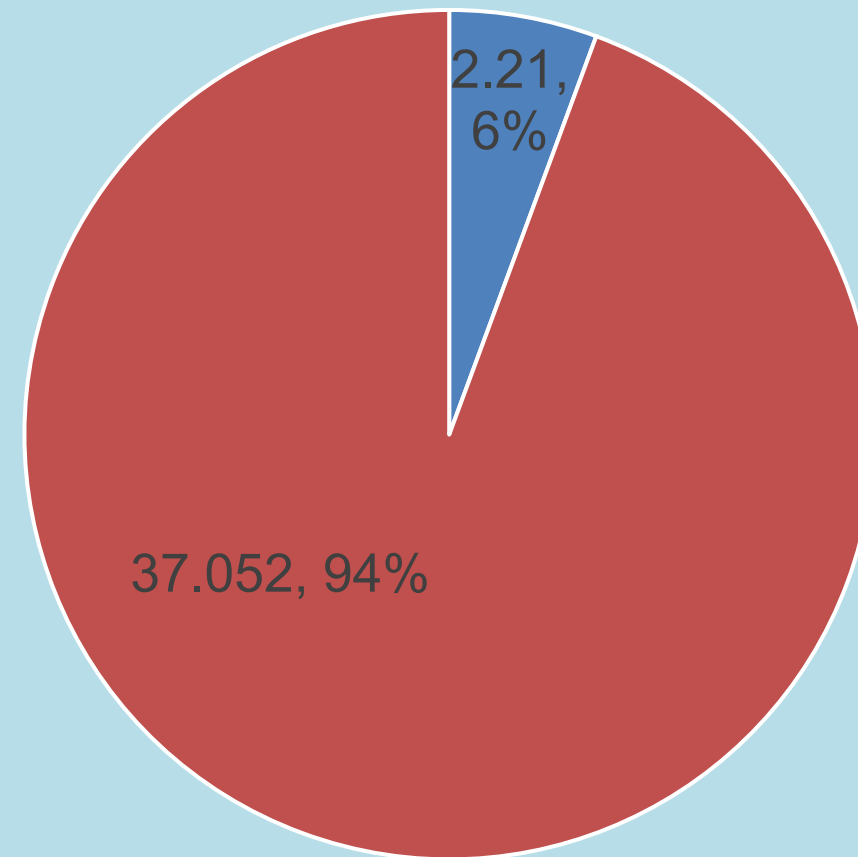
Carbon Planner to create your footprint:

[NatWest - Carbon Planner - Customer Portal - Home](#)



■ Scope 1   ■ Scope 2   ■ Scope 3

Total footprint



■ Scope 1   ■ Scope 2

Scope 1 and 2

The footprint shows that Scope 3 constitutes the highest portion of our carbon footprint at 79% with **Scope 2 (20%)** and **Scope 1 (1%)** representing the two next largest contributors.

Scope 3 includes all business travel and business stays, a rough overview of purchased goods and capital goods and all waste and water usage for the period of Nov 2024 – Nov 2025.

Scope 1 and 2: 39.262 tCO<sub>2</sub>e  
Overall Footprint: 182.33 tCO<sub>2</sub>e  
By metric Carbon Footprint: 2.57 tCO<sub>2</sub>e per employee  
0.09 kgCO<sub>2</sub>e per £ of revenue  
0.19 tCO<sub>2</sub>e per m<sup>2</sup>

# Net Zero Targets

To reach Net Zero by 2045 we have to set several nearer-term targets.

## LONG-TERM TARGET:

Net Zero by 2045 in line with Scotland's Net Zero targets.  
Reset boundary is 2027, 2028. Continuing to reset and add more each year until we have included 20% of 80% of our emissions. This will mostly focus on reducing Scope 3 emissions.

## SHORT-TERM TARGET:

30% reduction by 2030 of Scope 3

## YEARLY REDUCTION TARGET:

5% reduction of Scope 1 and 2 per year.  
*10% reduction Scope 3 per year.*

# Carbon Reduction Action

Our baseline indicates our emissions are 182.33 tCO<sub>2</sub>e. To reduce our emissions by 50% by 2035 – we will reduce our footprint by 95 tCO<sub>2</sub>e.

The footprint shows that Scope 3 constitutes the highest portion of our carbon footprint at 79% with Scope 2 (20%) and Scope 1 (1%) representing the two next largest contributors.

We have segmented our actions into 5 main categories.

It covers:

- Scope 2 Electricity
- Scope 3 Purchased goods and services
- Scope 3 Capital goods
- Scope 3 Waste
- Scope 3 Business Travel

## OVERVIEW OF PLANNED ACTIONS AND OUTCOMES:

We have already made large improvements to reduce our Scope 2 electricity usage.

Actions will include smaller steps to reduce drafts, update appliances to be more energy efficient and second-hand where feasible.

Larger long-term projects will include adding double/secondary glazing to windows.

The largest contributor to our carbon footprint are our Scope 3 – purchased goods. We will begin by auditing all suppliers. The next step will be communicating with suppliers to work together to be reduce our carbon.

# Year 1 Carbon Reduction Action Plans

## SCOPE 2: ELECTRICITY

Target: Reduce electricity consumption by 5% from **209159.6** kWh to **198701.62** kWh.

ACTION	DEADLINE	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?
Reduce temperature on aircon units	June 2026	PL and RB
Retrain night staff to turn off lights when they aren't actively working there	June 2026	PL and ML
Install draft excluders on outer door	August 2026	RB and Maintenance
Replacing old storage heaters in the flat with aircon	October-November 2026	RB
Replace dishwasher with more energy efficient model, (new or secondhand)	September 2026	RB and PL

# Year 1 Carbon Reduction Action Plans

## SCOPE 3: Purchased Goods

Target: Reduce emissions produced purchased goods by 10% from 143.064 tCO<sub>2</sub>e to 128.7 tCO<sub>2</sub>e.

ACTION	DEADLINE	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?
Refreshing and re-releasing the Purchasing Protocol to make data collection easier	July 2026	Admin
Audit of all purchased goods	November 2026	Admin
Checking sustainability of current suppliers	January 2027	All departments
Moving away from unsustainable suppliers (such as Amazon) and condensing number of suppliers	March 2027	All departments

# Longer Term Action Timeline

ACTION	DATE
Finish and implement Net Zero Action Plan	March 2026
Implement structure within internal PO sheet to make retrieving purchased good and capital good data for future footprint calculations	November 2026
Reset boundary	April 2027
Structure plan for double/secondary glazing of windows	April 2028

# Progress to Date

## 1<sup>st</sup> key win

- All lighting replaced with LED where possible (2022); Green Tourism Gold (2023)

## 2<sup>nd</sup> key win

- Fully renewable electricity providers (2024); Climate Action Thistle Award Regional Winner, Central and East (2024).

## 3<sup>rd</sup> key win

- Moving cleaning suppliers has allowed the cleaning department to streamline the ordering process and reduce the number of deliveries needed from around 8 different suppliers down to 4. The new supplier HCI – located in Perth, reuse all 5 litre containers and recycle the gloves we provide visitors for the Mirror Maze. Non-recyclable waste reduced in total by 55% from 2023-25.

# Wider sustainability initiatives

- Using a hand soap tablet from Reefyll – not transporting water, zero plastic waste, and using only natural ingredients.
- Use SAO for cleaning the building, uses cold water to create Stabilised Aqueous Ozone which sanitises for 24 hours and is safe for the planet and the staff. The only harsh chemical we use is bleach and only when necessary.
- Company inclusion in national and regional discussions around Net Zero. Active involvement with HES on pilot for climate resilience in tourism. Participation in industry group of Edinburgh Visitor Economy Programme contributing to actions towards Edinburgh's strategy to become Net Zero.
- Previously unrecyclable single-use plastic gloves for Mirror Maze are now being recycled with the company which provides them, HCI – they also reuse all 5 litre containers, so these additionally are sent back, washed and reused.
- Reusing wood in maintenance – decommissioned promotional mirrors installed at St James Quarter were dismantled and wood reused in multiple new and refurbished exhibits.
- Staff volunteering in local ecological projects such as helping to clean oysters for the Restoration Forth project.
- One of our aims is to educate ourselves and others about what can be done to achieve positive climate action. To that end, for some years we have lobbied Capital Group, ASVA and board members of VisitScotland to organise more sharing of best practice from National Award Winners including Climate Action Award winners. This has resulted in events locally and nationally.
- Again, to share knowledge, lobbied Capital Group for knowledge sharing among Edinburgh's attraction, festivals and theatres re Green Tourism Scheme. This brings together everyone from places not yet involved to those with the Gold award, also forges relationships for continued conversations.
- Hyper locally, our Director chairs the Castlehill Partnership composed of Castle, Whisky Experience, Camera Obscura, Tattoo, Edinburgh Festival, Witchery Restaurant and rooms, Contini Cannonball Restaurant and Gold Brothers Retail. We regularly share re sustainability initiatives, most recently having most business to sign up to Change Waste to reduce traffic on Castlehill.
- Our Director has been involved in recent climate action at our sister Company, Landmark, including the recent installation of heat pumps which have significantly reduced energy use, also EV charging.

# Declaration

This Carbon Reduction Plan has been reviewed and signed off by the Chief Executive and Senior Leadership Team.

Name: Andrew Johnson, Director

Date: 31.3.26

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Andrew Johnson', written in a cursive style.

# Close and thank you

[www.camera-obscura.co.uk](http://www.camera-obscura.co.uk)

<https://www.camera-obscura.co.uk/our-green-credentials/>