

The Jisc logo is an orange square with the word "Jisc" in white, sans-serif font.

# Annual sustainability report 2024

November 2024



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# Foreword



**I am pleased to be sharing this year's annual sustainability report framed around the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These address environmental, social and economic challenges to achieve a more sustainable and equitable world for current and future generations.**



At Jisc, we are on a mission to improve lives through the digital transformation of education and research. Sustainability is at the core of our values and strategy, through reducing

our environmental impact, adding social value and creating a culture of strong ethics and inclusivity. As an organisation driving digital transformation we recognise our impact on the environment through our use of data centres, networks, supply chains and technology products (including AI). We also aim to deliver sustainability through innovation in the products, services and solutions we provide.

Our annual sustainability report brings together our work across the SDGs from the past year and details our greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions for our reporting year, 1 August 2023 to 31 July 2024. We'll also share this information in our trustees' report and financial statements each year, as required by the Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting policy.

We are still early in our more focused sustainability activity but continue to make steady progress against our priority SDGs. This year we have

undertaken the discovery phase of our new sustainability impact and monitoring programme, leading to the development of a new sustainability strategy that will be published in early 2025. Reflecting on last year's targets, we are beginning to adopt an environmental management system, with a gap analysis identifying our next steps. We have continued to collaborate with the further education (FE) and higher education (HE) sectors on projects to understand the environmental impact of digital in their operations and supply chain. We've embedded sustainability into our advisory activities, including launching a new FE and Skills Digital Sustainability Community.

This year we have re-baselined our GHG emissions to include scope 3 emissions from procurement. This ensures we have the most accurate picture of our emissions and can now begin work to reduce the impact of our supply chain. We have also expanded our data collection to include scope 1 emissions from refrigerant gases and scope 3 emissions from all our leased data centres.

**Heidi Fraser-Krauss**  
Chief executive officer



# Commitments and aims



We've made the commitment to reach net zero across our operational emissions by 2040, ten years ahead of the national target. This includes emission sources of gases, grid electricity, business travel and staff commuting. We plan to cut our scope 1 and scope 2 emissions by over half by 2030 and be net zero across our remaining scope 3 emissions ('net zero plus', which includes our supply chain, transport and distribution, waste and electrical use of our leased assets) by at least 2050. We are continuing to work towards the actions set out by our net zero roadmap.

Across the next year we aim to achieve the following.

## Externally as a sector body:

- Offer new digital sustainability workshops to the sector
- Publish a digital sustainability e-learning model for our members
- Continue to promote and showcase best practice sustainability initiatives alongside industry and the FE and HE sectors

## Internally as an organisation:

- Deliver our new sustainability programme, including publishing our new sustainability strategy
- Develop an environmental management system aligned to our existing quality and information management systems
- Profile and forecast our energy consumption and plan for reducing emissions across all our offices
- Verify our carbon data to ISO14064 standard
- Create a methodology to calculate the GHG emissions and sustainability impact of our key products and services
- Assess our climate risks and opportunities
- Complete a supply chain analysis to identify top products/suppliers for GHG emission contribution
- Develop a travel plan

# Sustainability in numbers



689

volunteering days taken by Jisc employees

14,481 <sup>kwh</sup>

of solar energy generated from Aug 23 – July 24

14.5%

reduction in natural gas and electricity usage in Portwall Lane

83%

of business travel journeys done by rail

59%

of commuting done by public transport or active travel

1,315

pieces of IT kit recycled

1,255

old pieces renewed for new life

835

New Jisc Digital Sustainability newsletter read by 835 readers per month on average

78 <sup>members</sup>

across 59 institutions in our new FE and Skills Digital Sustainability Community

79%

of staff believe Jisc's commitment to social responsibility is genuine (up from 71% in 2022, 60% in 2021)\*

\*Staff survey results

# Sustainability impact



The **17 UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** were adopted by world leaders in 2016 to set out a framework for building a better world. The SDGs are interconnected and progress towards one will help achieve others. We've chosen nine key goals that link closely to our work externally in the sector and internally as an organisation, while delivering our charitable objectives.<sup>1</sup> Our progress towards each goal is outlined below with examples of projects undertaken across 2023/24. Our existing work against each goal can be found in last year's sustainability report.

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

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<sup>1</sup> Our charitable objects are:

- > promoting the adoption and use of information technology in all its forms, including but not limited to digital infrastructure, applications, cloud services, data, security, content, discovery
- > enriching the educational experience and improving the quality of research
- > thought leadership
- > conducting and supporting careers advice and student services.

## Good health and wellbeing



In line with our strategic pillar 'Be a force for good', this year we have supported our chosen charity partner, Young Lives vs Cancer. The charity supports young people from the age of 0 to 25 years by providing a variety of support to families living with childhood cancer, from financial to social care, to helping families prepare for death if a terminal prognosis is given. Our fundraising events have included bake sales, raffles, craft shops and miles challenges throughout the year. Several of our teams at Jisc have taken on fundraising challenges to run and cycle huge distances across cities and virtually. The charity has also been using our Bristol office throughout the year for its own events. In total this year, Jisc staff have raised £9,344 for the charity. This year we also achieved the Payroll Giving silver award in recognition of our culture of giving and the amount colleagues across Jisc have donated to charity via Payroll Giving.

In July we introduced new mental health and wellbeing support for our staff, including unlimited free counselling sessions. Staff also now have access to 24/7 support from a mental health team and access to preventative care including mental health coaching. We've taken part in mental health awareness week, posting a range of blog posts on employee lived experiences of mental health issues and tips and ideas to stay active for our minds. Our mental health first aiders are trained to support anyone who's dealing with mental health challenges, including managers who want to help their teams.

## Quality education



We focus on the needs of HE, FE, skills and research by prioritising our investment, and the development of products and services, on the needs of our members, their staff and students. This year we launched a new service designed to guide universities towards digital transformation using the latest insights, frameworks and tools, as well as advice from sector experts. Our new digital transformation consultancy service offers universities flexible, targeted solutions and support to ensure their readiness for a digital future.

This year we have continued to support our members in good practice in the use of AI to support quality education, learning and teaching. In response to the increasing interest in AI, we have developed our engagement with the sector through events, working groups, publications, training and AI pilots. We have published numerous resources, reports and guidance for FE and HE, including our new AI maturity toolkit, which provides advice and guidance, helping education leaders plan their organisation's AI journey. We've run training and webinars around AI literacy and ethics, with 3,859 participants accessing our training resources and 2,217 attendees across 24 webinars. Our AI community of practice has engaged with 1,823 individuals over 386 FE and HE institutions through monthly meetings. We have also had six active working groups from the community working with us to develop resources in areas such as generative AI literacy, assessment in an AI world and generative AI copyright and intellectual property. We advocate for the responsible use of AI and continue to raise awareness of the growing environmental impact of AI, including its high energy and water use. We urge our members to consider whether AI is the right tool for the job at hand and to use AI responsibly and only when necessary.



## Gender equality



This year, the proportion of women in post at Jisc has increased, from 41.3% at the end of July 2023 to 43.5% at the end of July 2024. Both our median and mean gender pay gaps have reduced by 1% each to 15.6% and 13.2% respectively. This year we have worked with Close the Gap to better understand what's driving our gender pay gap and what action we must take. Gendered pay inequalities continue to exist within Jisc, although our workforce is progressively becoming more balanced, and the pay gap is narrowing. We have a woman CEO and a nearly gender balanced executive leadership team. However, the overrepresentation of women in lower pay roles across Jisc and within job families persists. The tendency of women to be found in the lower deciles of the organisation, and the overrepresentation of male staff in the highest, combined with the wide salary range within the highest deciles, is likely to be a key driver of our gender pay gap.

Our employee networks have continued to provide safe spaces for people to meet, share and learn together. This year, network membership has risen from 557 to 1,199 members. Our networks have put on events for employees throughout the year, such as a Women at Jisc visibility workshop, and a Men's health awareness session. Our CEO has also held numerous listening lunches with all our diversity and inclusion networks throughout the year, to hear lived experiences and answer questions from staff.

## Decent work and economic growth



We support the education and research sector to deliver economic growth across the UK. Internally, we have a range of staff policies in place to ensure we act on our commitment to eradicate modern slavery and do business ethically, including dignity at work, anti-bribery and corruption, gifts and hospitality, anti-fraud and whistleblowing. This year we updated our annual supplier check programme to include reviewing our supplier's modern slavery statements and have continued to roll out our self-assessment questionnaire to all high-risk suppliers. We've also maintained our affiliate membership of Electronics Watch, a monitoring organisation that audits the supply chain of technology components.

To support decent work for early careers, we have supported 18 graduates, 24 apprentices and seven interns to kickstart, pivot or progress their careers since 2021. As an accredited living wage employer, our graduate programme balances our business needs and our graduates' needs to ensure we are developing a highly skilled workforce with future skills in mind while fostering their career aspirations and goals. Our apprenticeship programme connects Jisc with industry-leading service providers and a high-potential talent pool to support apprenticeships from Level 3 to Level 7 across roles in HR, procurement, finance, legal, IT, marketing, project management and business change.

We also support our existing colleagues to pursue apprenticeships as part of their career development, with numerous colleagues enrolled in programmes such as senior leadership, HR consultancy and project management. This year we held a virtual careers fair where colleagues from across Jisc came together to share insight about what they do, make new connections and help inspire career development. We encourage staff to allocate 10% of their time to learning and development and, this year, our leadership development programme was a finalist for the 'most innovation institute approve programme award' by the Institute of Leadership and Management.



## Industry, innovation and infrastructure

9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE



In April this year we launched extending eduroam alongside technology partners Cradlepoint and Sky Business. Extending eduroam uses 4G and 5G cellular technology to transform the learning experience in locations where internet connections are unavailable, unreliable or unauthenticated. It provides safe, authenticated access to digital learning and education by making seamless wifi connectivity available in off-campus locations such as public libraries, student accommodation, hospitals or even public transport. One model in the range, which is small enough to fit into a rucksack, provides cellular connectivity for up to five users in student accommodation, small study spaces or remote locations, such as on a field trip. This is a step forward for digital equity across UK education and research, delivering free access to educational resources for students who struggle with expensive data roaming charges.

We've also worked with BT and Fortinet this year to use new SD-WAN technology to supply emergency connectivity to schools during the RAAC emergency. When more than 150 schools across the country were forced to close due to the crumbling concrete crisis, we worked with Aston Manor Academy to pilot new technology. The SD-WAN technology involves a firewall device that is managed centrally to enable filtering to meet safeguarding requirements, making it ideal for schools urgently in need. This enabled the school to quickly move staff and students into a new building, ready to learn.

In March, our annual Digifest event brought together those working in the HE and FE sectors to explore innovation to change education and research for the better. Digifest welcomed speakers from industry, education and public policy to deliver 65 sessions through lightning talks, keynote speeches and workshops. The three-day event showcased how innovative digital solutions, such as virtual reality, machine learning and immersive classrooms, can improve learning experiences, aid educators and even help students prepare for future careers.



## Reduced inequalities



In line with our 'always inclusive' guiding principle, in early 2024 we released our new anti-racism manifesto, developed alongside members of our anti-racism and racial equality employee network. The manifesto presents common experiences and barriers to addressing racism and outlines our commitment, expectations and next steps to becoming an actively anti-racist organisation. Delivering against our manifesto pledge to increase representation of Black, Asian and minority ethnic colleagues in senior leadership roles, this year we launched RISE, a leadership development programme designed specifically for colleagues of colour. We also launched a 'conscious inclusion for leaders' programme, a bespoke designed programme from Jisc and Emerge, for executive leaders and their direct reports.

Jisc is committed to ensuring that our colleagues who have a disability, a physical or mental health condition, or who are neurodivergent are not disadvantaged or discriminated against, either directly or indirectly. This year we launched a new reasonable adjustment process for staff, along with an updated equality, diversity and inclusion policy that reflects our ambitions in making Jisc a truly inclusive place to work and progressing inclusion for groups beyond those outlined in the Equality Act (2010). We've introduced neurodiversity champions – staff across the business who are passionate about driving inclusive change – to be a first point of contact for neuro inclusion. We also hosted neurodiversity awareness training for line managers and all staff, which was attended by nearly 400 colleagues.

## Responsible production and consumption



We have continued to embed sustainability into our external events across the year. We work with venues who use low carbon energy sources, waste reduction initiatives and environmental management systems. Catering for our events is locally sourced and plant based where possible; otherwise we seek to opt for low impact foods and reduce the amount of red meat in menus. We use digital messaging and signage for our events to reduce printed materials, and our lanyards, when used, are made of bamboo and biodegradable PET materials. This year we measured the GHG emissions of our core events, such as Digifest and Networkshop, to identify our main sources of emissions and further improvements.

All our old IT equipment and old network hardware is wiped and sold for reuse in the first instance. If it can't be reused, it is recycled, resulting in zero waste to landfill. This year we recycled 1,315 pieces of IT kit and kept 1,255 old pieces in circulation for a new life. Our hub offices now have free sustainable period product dispensers for staff and visitors. We've chosen to work with Organic Mondays, which has a sustainable, plastic-free ethos and is active in promoting period dignity.

## Climate action



We have continued to work closely with our members to raise awareness of sustainability and equip them with the tools they need to meet their goals around sustainability and net zero. We launched a new monthly Digital Sustainability newsletter sharing the latest news, trends and articles in this space. In May, we published digital sustainability in tertiary education: trends, challenges and sector insights, a report exploring the fundamentals of digital sustainability, using both existing literature and direct engagements with our members to identify key trends and challenges within the sector.

Our use of gas and electricity in our main Portwall Lane office has continued to decrease this year. We have recently undertaken an energy audit in the office, helping us identify next steps to move to net zero across our scope 1 and 2 emissions. As part of our new sustainability programme, we aim to develop a new energy strategy and a plan for reducing emissions across our leased offices as well as our main office. This year we've also worked to reduce the environmental impact of our own digital storage across our emails, One Drive and SharePoint systems. We ran a campaign encouraging staff to clear out their unneeded data, including a spring clean day in March. This enabled us to reduce Jisc's digital carbon footprint and reduced our digital storage by 20.6TB.

Our staff have used their volunteering days this year to support climate action by maintaining wildlife gardens, enhancing natural habitats, picking litter and cleaning up beaches. 689 volunteering days were taken by employees this year, totalling 4,873 hours, with teams across the business having planted trees in Bristol, gardened in Gloucestershire and maintained green wildlife corridors in York.

## Partnerships for the goals



This year we launched Jisc's FE and Skills Digital Sustainability Community, a collaborative community space for those working in FE and skills to share ideas and resources around digital sustainability initiatives and strategies on a bi-monthly basis. These bi-monthly meetings not only encourage partnership across the FE and skills sectors, but also aim to create a nexus point between those working in education and sustainability experts from a broad range of industries.

Our sustainability team has continued to engage with the wider sector and stakeholders at numerous conferences and events across the year, raising awareness of digital sustainability and working in partnership with other organisations. For example, at the EAUC and UCISA conferences we explored the benefits and challenges of ICT and digital innovation, weighing up the carbon footprint of new technologies vs the enhancement to education and learning. This year we've also coordinated a new sustainability special interest group with GEANT to help develop other NRENs' sustainability ambitions and measure the sustainability impact of the networks. We hosted a session at this year's TNC conference to open the discussion on sustainability of networks.

# Emissions



## Our reporting and commitments

We use the GHG Protocol as our reporting framework and use a financial control approach. Our emissions are reported in CO<sub>2</sub>e (carbon dioxide equivalent units). This enables the reporting of emissions from non-CO<sub>2</sub> sources which have different warming potentials. Our reporting year runs from 1 August to 31 July. The full methodology for calculating emissions can be found in the Annex.

We have made the commitment to be net zero by 2040. This includes emissions in scope, including natural gas, grid electricity, business travel and staff commuting. We will be net zero across our remaining scope 3 emissions by 2050, defined as 'net zero plus', including our supply chain, transport and distribution, waste and electrical use of our leased assets and by our customers. For transparency purposes, we have included emissions from home working in our reporting. However, these are classified as out of scope of our net zero targets as we cannot accurately measure and control them. We will put interim targets in place to ensure sufficient progress is made and will work towards aligning with the Science Based Target Initiative in future. We are currently working to get our carbon data verified to ISO14064 standard.

## 2023/24 emissions

### Scope 1 and 2

Scope 1 emissions are direct emissions within Jisc's control. Scope 2 emissions are the indirect emissions from electricity produced on Jisc's behalf. These emissions from natural gas (scope 1) and purchased electricity (scope 2) have decreased steadily since 2020/21. This year we have also measured emissions from refrigerant gases (scope 1), which are zero as our refrigerant gas has not been topped up during this reporting year.

### Scope 3

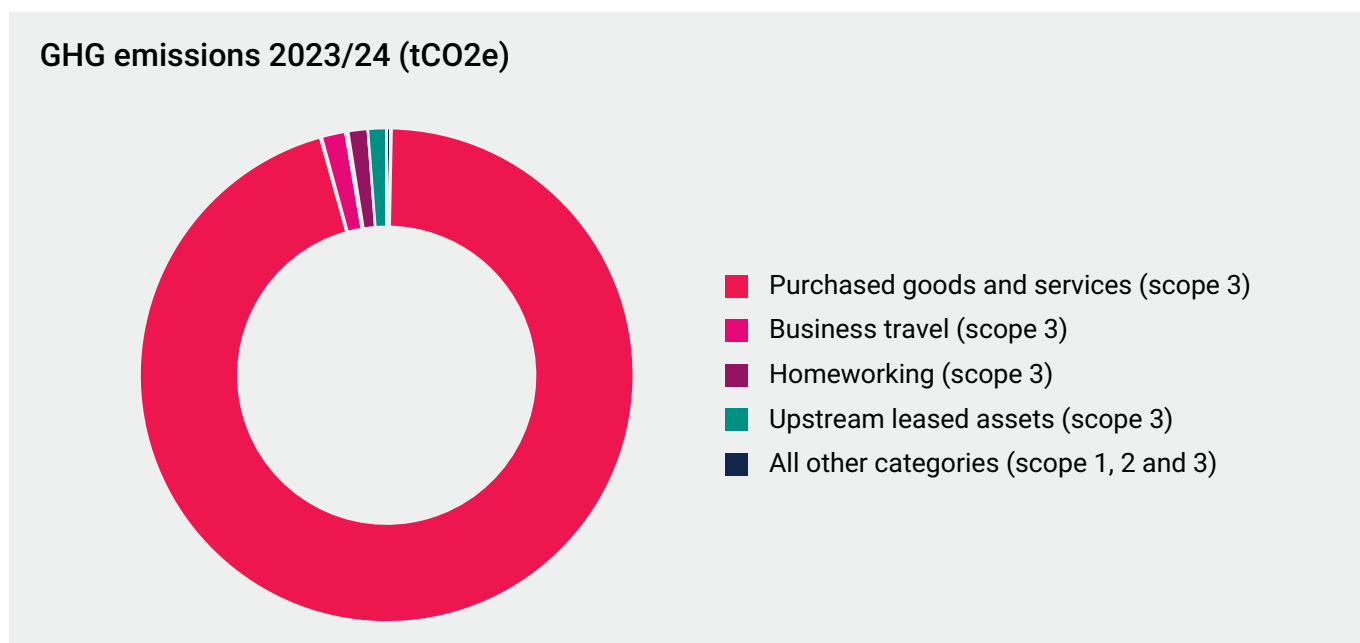
Scope 3 emissions include all other emissions resulting from our operations and supply chain.



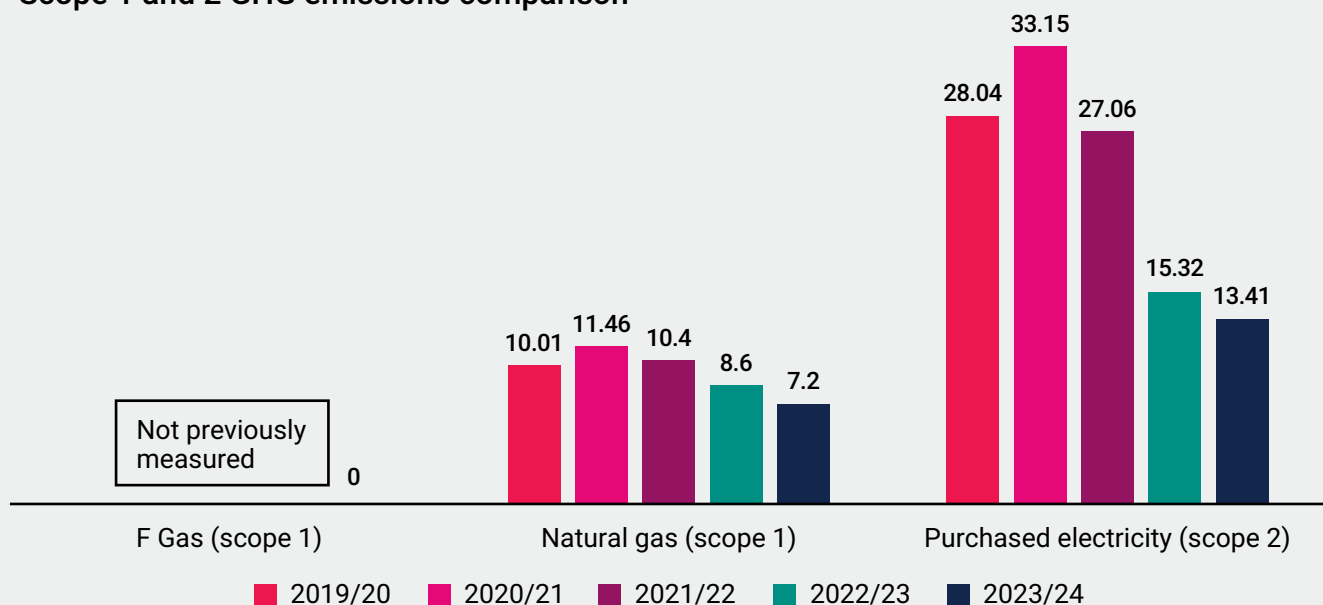
As part of our commitment to data accuracy and transparency, this year we have re-baselined our GHG emissions to include emissions from scope 3 category 1 purchased goods and services under the GHG Protocol. This allows us to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the full environmental impact of our supply chain, and where meaningful emission reductions can be made. These indirect emissions from our supply chain are by far the largest contributor to our carbon footprint, making up the majority of our emissions profile. In 2022/23 we used the HESCET tool to give us an estimated value of our supply chain emissions. We are currently working with an external carbon accounting platform to measure our 2023/24 emissions from our supply chain in a more accurate and detailed way. While this data is currently in review, we have used the previous year's data as an estimation.

We have also expanded our data collection to measure and report emissions from refrigerants (scope 1) and all the data centres in which we lease space (scope 3 upstream leased assets) Therefore, the increase in our reported emissions in these categories does not indicate a sharp rise in our environmental impact but rather a more accurate and transparent measurement of it.

As Jisc continues to grow in its support for the sector, our staff numbers have increased by 8% since July 2023, therefore increasing our emissions from business travel and homeworking. We have seen an increase in travel via all forms of transport, aside from car travel which decreased. Rail travel has increased by more than 40%, likely due to an increase in attendance of conferences, team meetings, training, workshops and other in person events. Emissions from homeworking have increased due to our increase in staff numbers. This figure is based on estimations of average office equipment and heating use by the UK government.



## Scope 1 and 2 GHG emissions comparison



	tCO2e (2021/22)	tO2e (2022/23)	tCO2e (2023/24 new baseline)
<b>Scope 1 total</b>	<b>10.40</b>	<b>8.60</b>	<b>7.20</b>
Natural gas	10.40	8.60	7.20
Refrigerants	Not reported	Not reported	0
<b>Scope 2 total</b>	<b>27.06</b>	<b>15.32</b>	<b>13.41</b>
Purchased electricity	27.06	15.32	13.41
<b>Scope 3 total</b>	<b>926.87</b>	<b>39,814.44</b>	<b>40,223.91</b>
Purchased goods and services	Not reported	38,465	38,465*
Transmission and distribution losses	20.02	24.46	44.77
Waste	0.22	0.33	0.17
Business travel+	245.36	508.87	632.16
Employee commuting	58.83	68.96	69.98
Homeworking	409.82	475.48	517.78
Upstream leased assets	191.81 (partial)	267.29 (partial)	487.04
Downstream transportation and distribution	0.81	4.05	7.01
<b>Total emissions</b>	<b>964.33 (partial)</b>	<b>39,838.36</b>	<b>40,244.51</b>

\*estimated using 2022/23 data – current year is still being calculated at time of reporting

+includes hotel stays

# Annex: data sources and methodology



Emissions category	Data sources and assumptions
<b>Scope 1</b> Natural gas	Location-based method kWh from invoices obtained by facilities UK Government conversion factor for UK natural gas used Average from previous months used on one month where there was inaccurate billing
Refrigerants	Location-based method Maintenance company confirmed no F-gas had been topped up during reporting year UK Government conversion factor for specific gas used
<b>Scope 2</b> Purchased electricity	Location-based method kWh from invoices obtained by facilities UK Government conversion factor for UK electricity used

Emissions category	Data sources and assumptions
Purchased goods and services	Spend-based method HESCET tool used to estimate emissions based on spend data 2023/24 data currently being calculated at the time of reporting, 2022/23 data has been used as an estimation
Transmission and distribution losses	Average data method Total kWh from invoices obtained by facilities UK Government conversion factor for UK electricity T&D used
Waste	Waste type specific method and average data method Mass of waste for each waste treatment method obtained by facilities from waste collection companies Data for Cheltenham, Oxford and London offices were not available Mass of WEEE waste from invoices obtained from WEEE recycling partner UK Government conversion factor for each waste type used Average from previous months used where data not available
<b>Scope 3</b> Business travel	Distance-based method Number of miles travelled via personal vehicle use, rail and air obtained from expenses system and our travel provider Hotel bookings obtained from our travel provider UK Government conversion factors for each mode of transport, haul length and booking class used. Conversion factors included indirect effects of flights Where country-specific hotel conversion factors were unavailable, nearest location geographically used
Employee commuting	Distance-based method Number of miles travelled by staff per transport type per month obtained from staff commuting survey UK Government conversion factors for each mode of transport used Emissions multiplied by 12 to establish emissions for the year. 44% survey response rate. Extrapolated for number of staff as of 31/7/24
Homeworking	Annual working hours based on 35-hour week and 39 days off annually UK Government conversion factors for homeworking (office equipment and heating) used Working from home estimated at 75%
Upstream leased assets	Asset specific method and average data method Energy usage from invoices obtained by facilities and data centre managers UK Government conversion factor for UK electricity used Average from previous months used where data not available Some data centres billed on minimum monthly contract so true usage not known
Downstream transportation and distribution	Spend-based method Spend on courier and freight services obtained from procurement Conversion factor for UK postal and courier services used via Climatiq



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