



World Earth Day 2021

How Doughty Street Chambers are working together to Restore our Earth (and how you can do so, too)

We have taken urgent action to mitigate as far as possible our impact on the environment, and to adapt to a more sustainable model of working in recognition of the climate emergency and biodiversity crisis. One of Doughty Street's [key values](#) is to act in an environmentally responsible way and we have taken the following steps to bring this value to life:

The Doughty Street Green Team

Established in 2019, the Doughty Street **Green Team** is a collective of members and staff motivated to act on the climate and ecological emergencies. Chaired by Ben Cooper QC, the Team's primary aim is to get our own house in order, by helping Chambers respond to the climate emergency. We're doing this first by getting to grips with Chambers' environmental impact and then taking steps to minimise it. The Team is also a forum for the exchange of ideas on environmental legal challenges.

The Bar Sustainability Network

Doughty Street Chambers are founding members of the [Bar Sustainability Network](#) (BSN) recently launched by [The Bar Council of England and Wales](#). We all face the same challenges in minimising our carbon footprint and the idea behind the Network was to provide support to eliminate any unnecessary emissions from Chambers' working practices. For instance, the Network helps making changes towards carbon reductions easy and quick to do, and

ensures Chambers use supplies that are sustainable.

The overarching objective of this network is to try to make sure we don't all have to do the same research and the same due diligence on the same processes of switching to sustainable companies, and can help advise each other on:

- which renewable energy to switch to;
- which stationary supplier to use for recycled paper; and
- which supplier to use for sustainable cleaning products for Chambers.

Chambers initiatives to reduce emissions

Doughty Street Chambers has started measuring its carbon footprint in compliance with the DEFRA's Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Conversion Factors on an annual basis. We are calculating our carbon footprint (including purchased energy) in tonnes of CO2 equivalent with the aim of reaching net zero carbon.

To ensure we keep track of our emission, the Head of Facilities is responsible for reviewing energy consumption and cost data as available from utility bills, meter readings and energy suppliers, and for reporting to the Green Team and the Management Board. An Energy Use and Performance Report and carbon footprint data is to be reviewed annually. Together, the Green Team and Facilities Team are also devising a system for monitoring water consumption, paper usage, waste and travel. The Green Team then ultimately reports back to the Management Board on the implementation and affordability of the measures.

In order to become carbon neutral, so far we have:

1. Switched our energy provider from British Gas to Good Energy, thereby ensuring all our electricity is from renewable sources.
 - Although the Bar Sustainability Network carbon pledge invites members to make the switch by 2024, that is to cater for chambers tied into long term

contracts. Otherwise, we would propose switching at the end of your current contract.

2. We have secured a grant from Camden Council to cover 50% of the cost of installing solar power on our Chambers' buildings. As we will use all of the energy throughout the day it will save us about £1000 per year thereby giving a short return on the installation cost.
3. All paper in Chambers now derives from recycled paper instead of paper from sustainably managed forests.
4. We have approved a switch to a sustainable office supplier for everything from stationary to cleaning products.
5. We stopped buying water and started bottling our own still and sparkling water eliminating deliveries of water and plastics.
6. We increased the number of recycling bins for paper across all floors and introduced hard plastic recycling bins and even crisp packet recycling which is quite niche.
7. Catering is vegetarian, and we have eliminated all single-use plastics and reviewed all purchased catering items in terms of sustainability of supply.
8. We have started this year offsetting some of our carbon output from overseas court hearings by contributing to tree planting in London in high pollution spots where the trees can help lower pollution levels as well as sequester carbon. We contributed a Chambers charitable donation towards 1300 trees that were planted in February 2021 in Camden using a local community-based charity called Dream for Trees (dreamfortrees.com) which other chambers and law firms and local businesses can use. Please contact b.cooper@doughtystreet.co.uk for further details or to volunteer for our planting new sites in London, Manchester and across the country.

The Doughty Street Chambers Carbon Audit Experience

Doughty Street Chambers decided the only way to really be in control of our pledge to achieve our carbon neutral goal was to hire the Achill Management group and use its carbon calculator tools to conduct a proper carbon audit. This is a necessary step because data and the process help gather everything together and helps you focus on the bigger picture and make the biggest reductions.

Chambers can be idiosyncratic businesses in terms of decision making. A carbon audit helps a chambers sustainability team make its case when it comes to financial decisions. You also need chambers to adopt a clear sustainability policy – which we can share – and then set a target. But to realise that target you need the audit.

We have not completed our audit yet, but so far it is clear that our biggest emissions come from our energy use from our buildings and transport from flights and driving.

Chambers may not naturally record such data so it may be helpful to prepare a survey for to better understand travel.

If barristers and staff are working from home then it is important to take that into account and encourage people to switch to a renewable energy supplier at home. Good Energy offers an incentive to do so.

Camden Sustainability alliance and Camden Climate fund

Many chambers are based in Camden which has formed a Climate Change Alliance. Camden also offers business funds for the installation of renewable energy.

- Local businesses and institutions account for 66% of Camden's carbon emissions, it is therefore important they take the lead in reducing their energy consumption. The Camden Climate Fund supports small to medium business and third sector organisations across the borough cut their carbon emissions and lower fuel bills.

- The business should be a member of the [Camden Climate Change Alliance](#). Basic membership is free to join.
- The Camden Climate Fund provides funding of up to £10,000 towards the installation costs of renewable technologies and/or energy efficiency improvements. Such measures include solar panels, lighting and lower carbon heating upgrades. Successful applicants are required to match-fund 50% of costs, plus any additional over the maximum allowance.

Contact

If you would like any further information on any of the updates or initiatives in this document, please contact dscgreenteam@doughtystreet.co.uk

Ben Cooper QC

Doughty Street Chambers

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