VIY Carbon Reduction Plan

Document	Carbon Reduction Plan
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Introduction

VIY (Volunteer It Yourself) teaches young people trade skills by helping them to renovate community buildings; places like youth clubs, community centres, sports clubs and supported housing.

We recognise the need for urgent climate action and are committed to playing our part in reducing carbon emissions.

This plan sets out our baseline understanding, initial targets and actions to reduce our carbon emissions and align with wider climate goals.

It can be read alongside our Retrofit and Green Skill Offer (internal document) and our Environmental Sustainability Policy.

Baseline and scope

As of summer 2026, VIY is at an early stage of carbon measurement. Our first priority is to understand our baseline emissions across the following scopes:

- Scope 1: Direct emissions from any vehicles or fuel use on sites (currently minimal)

- Scope 2: Indirect emissions from energy used in our occasional use of our Birmingham/Bristol offices
- Scope 3: Indirect emissions including staff travel (regional travel to project sites), procurement (materials and tools), waste disposal, and use of donated goods (i.e. tools and materials)

We will work with an external consultant or tool (e.g. NCVO/Small99 guidance, Future Leap or a tool like Zellar or Compare Your Footprint) to estimate our 2026–27 emissions baseline by early 2027

Carbon reduction targets

These targets are intentionally provisional until baseline data is confirmed, but we are aligning with science-based targets and the UK's national net zero commitments:

- 2026: Establish baseline and reporting framework
- 2027: Reduce organisational carbon intensity by 10% (from baseline)
- 2030: Reduce absolute emissions by 50%
- 2045: Achieve Net Zero across all scopes

Key action areas

A. Travel and Transport
- Promote public transport, cycling and car sharing for national/regional teams - Explore low-emission vehicle (EV) hire for mentors/site managers where feasible - Continue to use digital meetings where practical to reduce inter-regional travel - Create a travel log system to track transport emissions per project

B. Energy use (offices)
- Minimise heating and lighting use in our Birmingham/Bristol offices, recognising that these are coworking environments
- Use energy from renewable sources where possible (directly or through tariffs)
- Introduce low-energy policies for office equipment and devices
-Develop a digital emissions policy for high emission activities like attachments, and a specific policy for the use of AI (recognising it is resource-intensive)

C. Project delivery
- Encourage re-use and donation of materials with low embodied carbon

- Promote tools and techniques with low environmental impact (e.g. manual over power tools where suitable)
- Trial sustainability assessments or checklists for each project site
- Reduce reliance on single-use plastics and non-recyclables on site

D. Procurement and materials
- Favour suppliers with published environmental credentials
- Where possible, use reclaimed, recycled, or FSC-certified materials - Develop a sustainable procurement guide for mentors and project teams - Where tools/materials are donated, work with partners where carbon reduction is a priority

E. Education and culture
- Train all staff and mentors in carbon awareness and reduction
- Include relevant content on carbon emissions for youth participants -
Report regularly to staff and Advisory Board on carbon reduction progress

Monitoring and governance

- Nominate a Carbon Lead to oversee implementation and reporting -
Review progress quarterly with input from SLT and delivery partners -
Publish annual carbon summary as part of wider Impact Report

Offsetting and nature-based solutions

While our focus is on reduction, we will in future explore ethical and transparent carbon offsetting for unavoidable emissions, prioritising UK-based or community-led nature restoration projects.

Partnerships and resources

- Collaborate with other relevant organisations to share data and learning - Seek funding to support emissions measurement and wider sustainability measures (e.g. through our Retrofit and Green Skills work)
- Align our work with local authority climate strategies and community action plans