

CWGC ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY REPORT 2023



DISCOVER LEARN REMEMBER



FOREWORD

Welcome to our second annual Environmental Sustainability Report. In last year's report, I wrote that the announcement of our net-zero greenhouse gas emission target by 2050 marked a very significant milestone for the Commission. The baseline data for our carbon footprint had only just begun to be calculated and the scale of our ambition was still rather uncertain. I am delighted, therefore, with the considerable progress made over the last 12 months to calculate our carbon emissions across our global operation. I commend the efforts of so many people in the Commission in their collective work to achieve this, not only in their commitment to gathering the data but also in their enthusiasm and sharing of knowledge and best practice. This has been really encouraging to see as only by working together can we face and tackle the huge challenges ahead of us with a rapidly changing climate.

As custodians of a global estate with a commitment across more than 150 countries, we are already seeing the effects of a changing climate. We are adapting ways of working and how we care for our cemeteries and memorials but approaching change in a considered and careful manner, recognising our role as custodians of an important historic estate.

While there is much to do, I am encouraged at the willingness of colleagues to embrace new ways of working, with changes to our horticultural practices and planting schemes to encourage biodiversity and seeking to use planting appropriate to the climate. There have also been significant efforts made to measure and reduce water use in our cemeteries.

I am pleased to see the number of initiatives and changes to reduce our own negative environmental impact as an organisation, with several coming from ideas put forward by members of staff. Some of these projects have been funded by a special Sustainable Innovation Fund, as outlined within this Report. Of particular note is the significant step to completely cease the purchase of ammonia-based biocides for the cleaning of our 1.1 million headstones, a step which would have been unthinkable for the Commission just a few years ago.

This Report is therefore an opportunity to note our progress, reflect on the work that has been done over the past 12 months and to restate our shared commitment to our planet and our 2050 target.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Claire Horton'.

Claire Horton CBE
Director General
Commonwealth War Graves Commission

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GLOSSARY

CO₂e	Carbon dioxide equivalent – a measurement unit used to express the global warming potential of various greenhouse gases, stated in terms of the global warming potential of one unit of carbon dioxide
CWGC	Commonwealth War Graves Commission
EV	Electric vehicle
FY	Financial year
GHG	Greenhouse gases
HO	Head Office
kWh	Kilowatt hour (a unit of energy)
LEDs	Light-emitting diodes
Plan	Environmental Sustainability Plan





1. ABOUT THIS REPORT

In October 2022, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) published its first annual [Environmental Sustainability Report](#). Within this, we stated our commitment to transitioning to more sustainable ways of working and we introduced the three key drivers shaping our sustainability agenda, which are combatting climate change, protecting biodiversity and promoting a circular economy. We explained our objectives for 2025, the progress achieved towards these objectives during our 2021/2022 financial year (FY 2021/22) and our next steps.

In this second annual Environmental Sustainability Report, our aim is two-fold. Firstly, we will provide an overview of the greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) associated with our activities in FY 2022/23¹, together with a breakdown showing the relative contributions that different activities make to these emissions (e.g. fleet vehicles, electricity consumption, business travel). This inventory of GHG emissions establishes a necessary baseline against which future progress in meeting our 2050 net-zero target and forthcoming near-term, science-based reduction targets will be assessed. The inventory will also inform the

development of the GHG emission reduction strategy needed to meet these targets.

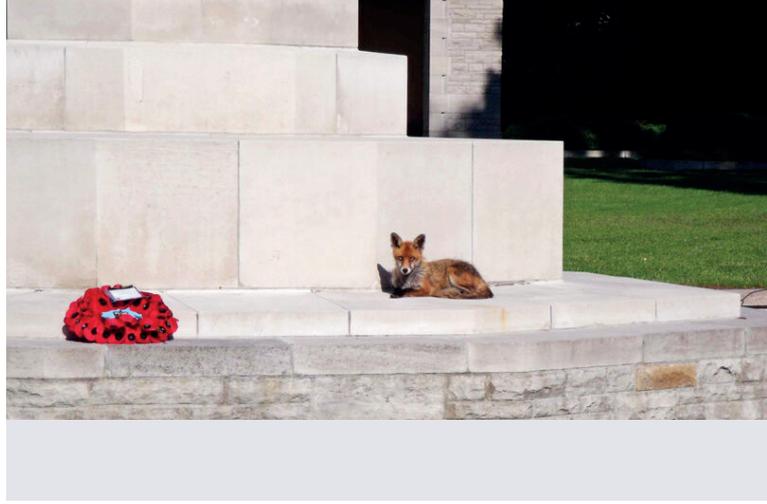
The second aim of this report is to provide an update against our sustainability objectives, both in terms of our progress and our next steps. The success of our sustainability transition, as driven by our Environmental Sustainability Plan, will be measured (in part) by our ability to meet the short, medium and long-term targets we have set ourselves. As demonstrated in Section 3, we are making good progress against our key objectives. Our employees around the world are embracing and delivering against our sustainability agenda. This annual report also serves to recognise and celebrate our collective achievements and to encourage us all to maintain the pace of change.

¹1st April 2022 – 31st March 2023

Sustainability drivers	Sustainability principles
Combating climate change	Reduce greenhouse gas emissions Promote carbon sequestration Adapt to climate change
Protecting biodiversity	Actively enhance biodiversity Reduce impacts on biodiversity
Promoting a circular economy approach	Reduce resource consumption Reduce waste

For an organisational overview of CWGC and a discussion on what has shaped our sustainability agenda, please refer to our 2022 [Environmental Sustainability Report](#).

Sustainability drivers & principles



2. ESTABLISHING OUR GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS BASELINE

METHODOLOGY

Explanation of scope 1, 2 & 3 emissions: The sources of GHG emissions that have been quantified in order to establish our FY 2022/23 baseline have been categorised in accordance with the approach set out in the Greenhouse Gas Protocol¹, whereby 3 'scopes' are used for accounting and reporting emissions. As defined in this Protocol and illustrated below:

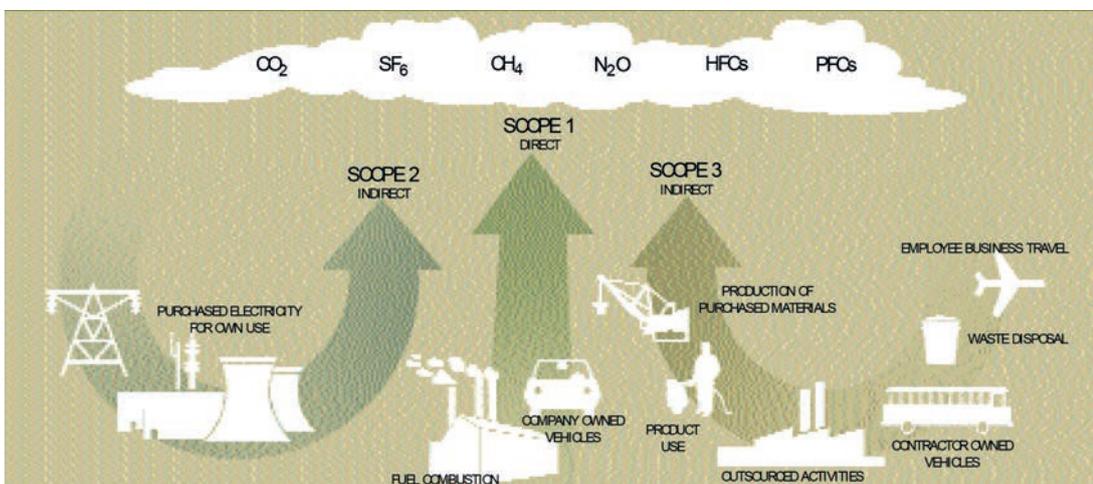
- **Scope 1 emissions** are direct GHG emissions that occur from sources that are owned or controlled by us.
- **Scope 2 emissions** are indirect GHG emissions that arise from the generation of purchased electricity consumed by us.
- **Scope 3 emissions** are other indirect GHG emissions that arise as a consequence of our activities, through our value chain. These emissions occur from sources not owned or directly controlled by us.

The emission sources quantified for FY 2022/23 are listed in Table 1.

The Greenhouse Gas Protocol establishes 15 categories of scope 3 emissions, as shown in Table 2. It was decided that 4 out of the 15 scope 3 emission categories would be quantified for FY 2022/23, with one additional emission category being partially determined, and these categories were those for which we could currently derive a reasonable estimate. These encompassed business travel, employee commuting, waste generated in operations and fuel- and energy-related related activities (not included in scope 1 or 2).

The 11 scope 3 categories yet to be determined fall into two camps – they are either expected to be relatively minor or not applicable (e.g. emissions from the use of sold products) or they will require further research to establish the optimum approach to their quantification (e.g. emissions associated with the purchase of goods and services). The approach to calculating the remaining scope 3 categories will be developed over the next few years.

¹ <https://ghgprotocol.org/standards>



(Key: The GHGs encompassed by this standard are those covered by the Kyoto Protocol: CO₂ - carbon dioxide; CH₄ - methane; N₂O - nitrous oxide; HFCs - hydrofluorocarbons; SF₆ - sulphur hexafluoride; PFCs - perfluorocarbons)

Overview of scopes and emissions across a value chain (Ref: The Greenhouse Gas Protocol, A Corporate Accounting and Reporting Standard)

Data collection: In order to determine the GHG emissions, data on the relevant underlying activities generating the emissions was required (e.g. amount of electricity consumed, distance travelled by fleet vehicles, business travel details). This activity data was collected from across our global operations.

Emission calculations: Using the activity data collected, the associated GHG emissions were calculated in accordance with the approach contained within the Greenhouse Gas Protocol. It

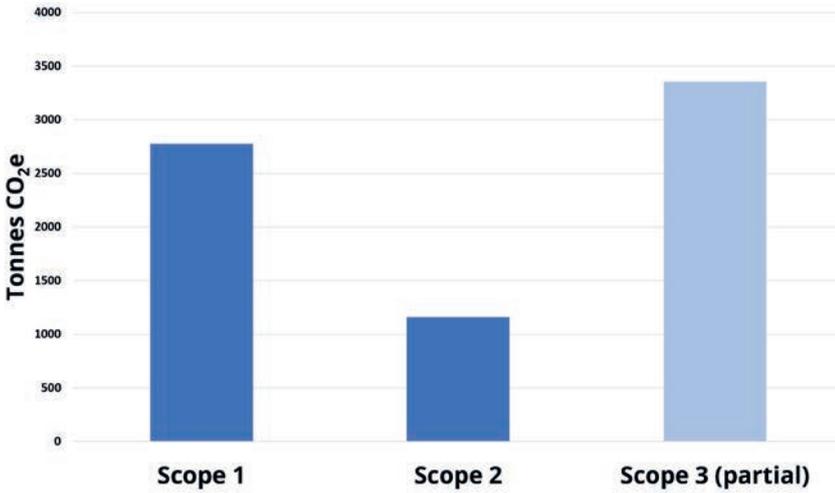
is acknowledged that there are numerous factors which impact on the certainty of the FY 2022/23 emissions calculated, such as the completeness of the dataset and the applicability of the emission factors applied to each activity (e.g. given the multitude of countries involved). We recognise the valuable contributions made by so many colleagues towards the establishment of our global greenhouse gas emissions for the first time – it has taken a considerable effort and we recognise that on-going work will be required to embed our new systems of data collation.

Table 1 GHG emission sources quantified for FY 2022/23	
Scope 1	Combustion of fuels by fleet vehicles, on-site vehicles & machinery Combustion of fuels to heat/cool buildings or power processes Refrigerant leakage from air-conditioning units Composting of green waste on CWGC sites
Scope 2	Electricity consumed by the CWGC estate (e.g. base sites, offices, workshops, visitor centres, irrigation systems, machinery, electric vehicles charged using CWGC charge points)
Scope 3	<p>Category 1 - Purchased goods & services (partially quantified) Water consumed by the CWGC estate (e.g. offices, base sites, workshops, visitor centres, irrigation systems)</p> <p>Category 3 – Fuel & energy-related activities not included in scope 1 or 2 Upstream emissions of purchased fuels & purchased electricity; transmission & distribution losses associated with electricity</p> <p>Category 5 – Waste generated in operations Emissions associated with the off-site recycling, composting, combustion & landfilling of the waste generated</p> <p>Category 6 – Business travel Emissions from business travel encompassing journeys by plane, rail, bus, taxi, ferry, short-term hire vehicles & personal cars</p> <p>Category 7 – Commuting Emissions from employee travel to work, based on 2023 commuter survey.</p>

Table 2 Scope 3 categories as defined by the Greenhouse Gas Protocol	
Upstream or downstream	Scope 3 category
Upstream scope 3 emissions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Purchased goods and services 2. Capital goods 3. Fuel-and energy-related activities (not included in scope 1 or scope 2) 4. Upstream transportation and distribution 5. Waste generated in operations 6. Business travel 7. Employee commuting 8. Upstream leased assets
Downstream scope 3 emissions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Downstream transportation and distribution 10. Processing of sold products 11. Use of sold products 12. End-of-life treatment of sold products 13. Downstream leased assets 14. Franchises 15. Investments

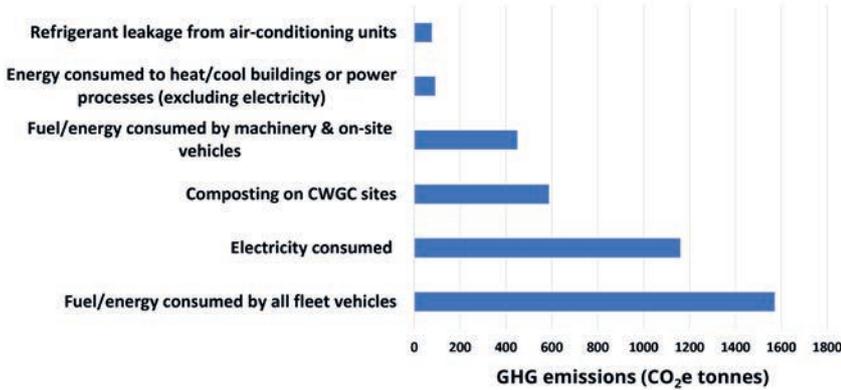
FINDINGS

Figure 1: Baseline GHG emissions for FY 2022/23



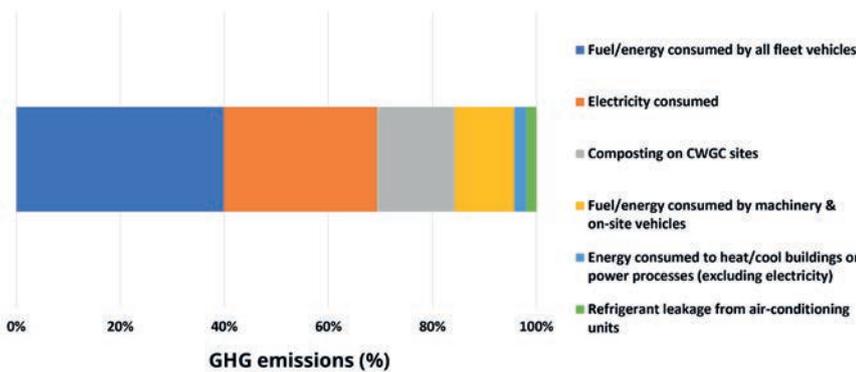
Baseline GHG emissions for FY 2022/23: The baseline scope 1, scope 2 and scope 3 (partial) emissions calculated are illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 2: Breakdown of global scope 1 & 2 GHG emissions (CO₂e tonnes)



Scope 1 and scope 2 emissions: In order to understand the contribution that each of the underlying emission sources makes to the combined total for the scope 1 and scope 2 emissions, a breakdown showing the relative magnitude of these emission sources is provided in Figures 2 and 3. Figure 2 presents the emissions in tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e tonnes) and Figure 3 presents each of the emission sources as a % of the overall scope 1 and scope 2 emission value.

Figure 3: Breakdown of global scope 1 & 2 GHG emissions (%)



The two main contributors to the overall scope 1 and scope 2 emissions can be seen to come from the fuel consumed by fleet vehicles and electricity consumption, which contribute approximately 40% and 30% respectively.

Figure 4: Breakdown of global scope 3 GHG emissions (CO₂e tonnes)

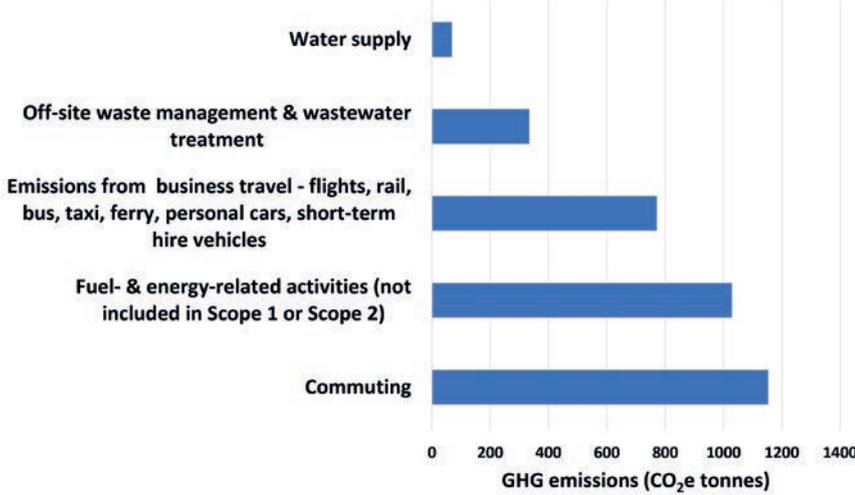


Figure 5: Breakdown of global scope 3 GHG emissions (measured to date)

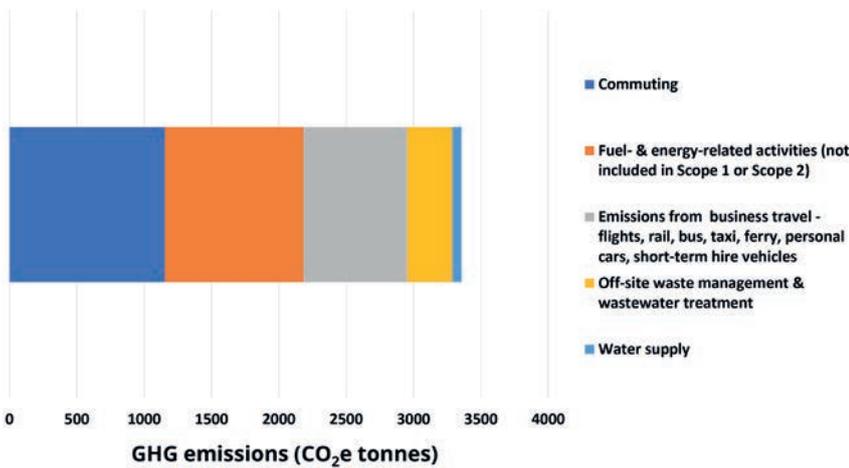
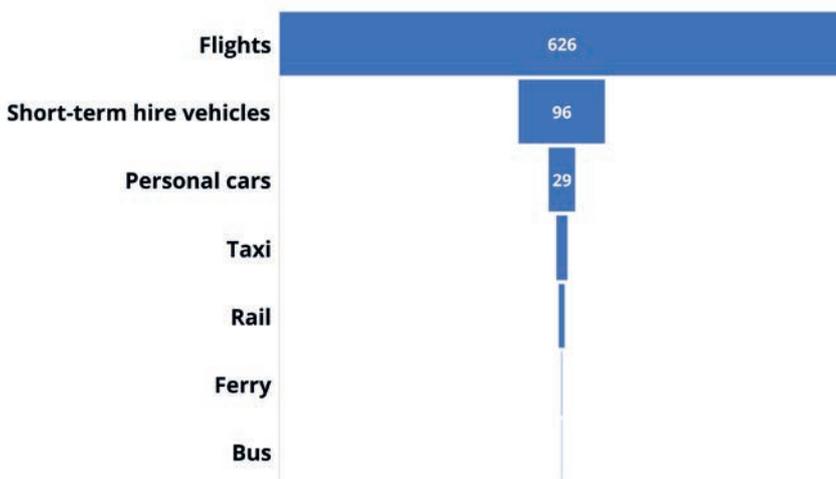


Figure 6: GHG emissions associated with business travel (CO₂e tonnes)

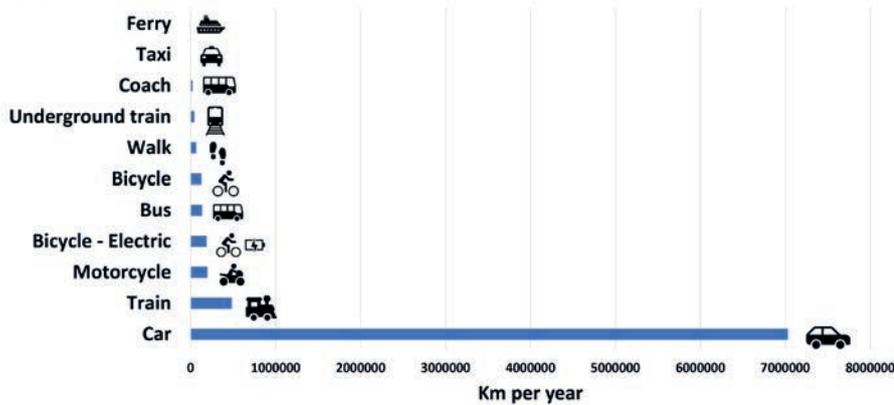


Scope 3 emissions: In order to understand the contribution that each of the selected scope 3 categories (as listed in Table 1) makes to the total scope 3 emissions calculated so far (Figure 1), a breakdown showing the relative magnitude of these emission sources is provided in Figures 4 and 5.

Significant contributors to the scope 3 emissions can be seen to come from commuting, fuel and energy-related activities (not included in scopes 1 and 2) and business travel.

A more detailed breakdown of business travel emissions by mode of travel (Figure 6) reveals that flights contribute 81% of emissions, with short-term hire vehicles contributing a further 12%.

Figure 7: How our workforce commutes to work



The commuter survey undertaken in February 2023 provided information on the myriad of ways our global workforce travel to work. Driving to work is the main mode of commuting, with cars being used for 85% of the distance travelled (Figure 7). In the main, drivers commute alone, with 88% of the distance travelled being in sole-occupancy vehicles.

Figure 8: Breakdown of global scope 1, 2 & 3 GHG emissions (CO₂e tonnes)

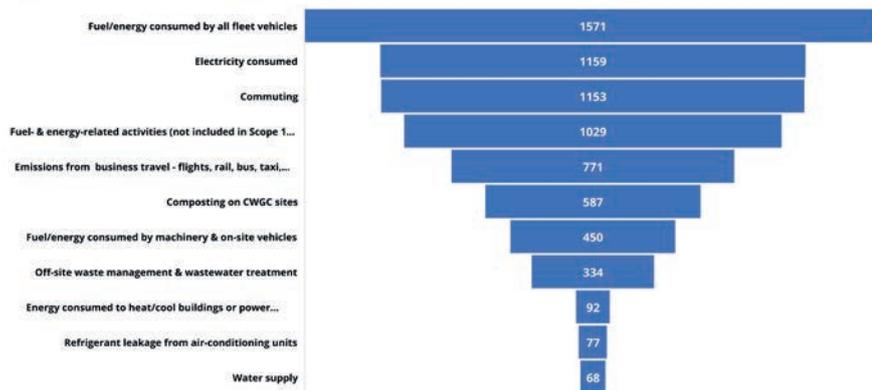


Figure 8 provides at a glance an overview of all the scope 1, 2 and 3 emission sources calculated, enabling a comparison to be made as to their relative magnitudes.

NEXT STEPS

We have committed to a net-zero GHG emissions target by 2050 and to reducing our emissions in line with climate science, as part of the global effort to prevent the most dangerous consequences of climate change by limiting global warming to 1.5°C.

As reported in this section, we have established our GHG emissions baseline for FY 2022/23, which encompasses scope 1, scope 2 and a sub-set of the scope 3 emission categories. We are now in the process of setting our near-term science-based reduction targets and formulating a decarbonisation plan to deliver emission reductions at the pace required.

Over the next few years, we will develop an approach to calculating the scope 3 emission categories that have yet to be determined.



3. TRANSITIONING TO MORE SUSTAINABLE WAYS OF WORKING

In our first annual Environmental Sustainability Report in 2022, we stated our commitment to transitioning to more sustainable ways of working and we set out what our sustainability objectives are for 2025. In this section, we provide an update on the progress achieved towards these objectives and our next

steps, taking the opportunity to celebrate the great diversity of sustainability initiatives that are underway. The update is presented under the headings of combatting climate change, protecting biodiversity and promoting a circular economy, which are our three key sustainability themes.

COMBATTING CLIMATE CHANGE

REDUCING GHG EMISSIONS

Establishing emission inventories & setting reduction targets

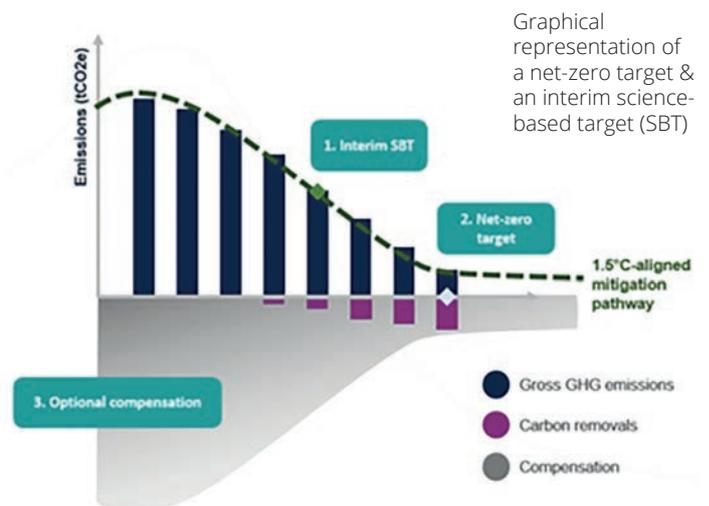
Objective: By 2025, we aim to have established systems in place for calculating annual GHG emissions associated with our direct activities and those of our wider value chain. A near-term emission reduction target (for scope 1 and 2 emissions and for selected categories of scope 3 emissions) will have been set and a decarbonisation pathway will have been developed to help us achieve this target.

Progress to date:

1. We have committed to a net-zero GHG emission target by 2050 and are committed to reducing our GHG emissions in line with climate science, as part of the global effort to prevent the most dangerous consequences of climate change by limiting global warming to 1.5°C.
2. We have, in line with our objectives, implemented a new Sustainability Reporting system across our global operations that has enabled us to establish our GHG emissions baseline for FY 2022/23, encompassing scope 1, scope 2 and a sub-set of the scope 3 emission categories.
3. We are in the process of setting our near-term science-based reduction targets and formulating a decarbonisation plan to deliver emission reductions at the pace required to meet these targets.

What's next? In FY 2023/24, we will:

1. Set our near-term science-based reduction targets and agree a decarbonisation plan to deliver emission reductions at the pace required to meet these targets.
2. Determine which of the currently unquantified scope 3 emission categories are considered to be relatively minor or not applicable to the Commission's operations (e.g. emissions from the use of sold products).



Ref: Science Based Targets initiative, (SBTi), Net-Zero Criteria Draft for Public Consultation, January 2021. The x-axis represents time.

Decarbonising our operations

Objective: By 2025, we aim to source at least 25% of purchased electricity from renewable electricity supplies and will have generated a timetable for transitioning to 100% renewable electricity by 2031 (where available by country). Through using electric vehicle (EV) pool cars and trialling small electric vans, we will have built-up experience and knowledge to help inform the 2024/25 feasibility study relating to our future wider transition to EVs and other ultra-low emission vehicles. By 2025, our transition towards the use of electrically powered machinery will be progressing steadily and the findings from the energy-efficiency audits undertaken at base sites and offices will be feeding into the programme of energy-saving measures being undertaken.



Progress to date:

1. We have introduced a new asset management system that enables us to generate annual statistics on the percentage of operational machinery in use that is electrically powered.
2. We have, in line with our objectives, introduced an EV pool car at each of our main offices in France and Belgium and at our UK Head Office, together with the installation of on-site charging points.
3. We have conducted two short trials of small electric vans in France and Belgium.
4. We have commenced a programme of energy-efficiency audits across offices and base sites which are highlighting potential energy-saving measures.
5. We have been working to convert lighting to LEDs.

What's next? In FY 2023/24, we will:

1. Continue to consider options for transitioning to renewable electricity supplies when energy contracts come up for renewal.
2. Continue to convert lighting to LEDs.
3. Continue to audit our base sites and offices to identify potential energy-efficiency opportunities.



Decarbonising our operations with battery-powered hedge trimmers, edgers and barrows





Driving our decarbonisation effort: an electric pool car out & about in Belgium (left) and opting to use electric taxis wherever possible in Nairobi



Generating renewable energy

via a photovoltaic installation at our Ieper office, (Belgium) (left) and via photovoltaic and solar thermal installations at a base site in the Middle East



Sustainable renovation – As part of making our offices and staff accommodation more sustainable at one of our base sites in the Middle East, we have:



- Installed solar photovoltaic panels and a battery storage system, which can store up to 5 kWh of electrical energy (which is invaluable with the frequent power cuts). We have also installed solar thermal panels to heat the water.
- Added new roof insulation to improve the thermal insulation of the buildings and provide a more stable temperature.
- Created an external pergola to provide shade during the heat of the day.
- Replaced all light bulbs with LEDs (which are more energy-efficient).
- Swapped external lights with solar lights.
- Installed a new dual flush toilet, to reduce water consumption.

PROMOTING CARBON SEQUESTRATION

Objective: By 2025, we will know how many specimen trees there are on our estate following the adoption of our new tree management software. We will also have started to collate data on tree groups and woodland areas. In addition to taking all reasonable measures to protect and nurture our existing trees, we will have reviewed 150 sites to identify where missing trees can be replaced or additional trees can be planted.

Progress to date:

1. We have, in line with our objective, already reviewed over 50 sites to identify where missing trees can be replaced or additional trees can be planted. This has informed our emergent tree planting programme. As well as promoting carbon sequestration, additional trees will enhance biodiversity and provide extra shade.
2. We have developed and delivered a tree design workshop to support the design and installation of new trees into our landscaped sites. Topics included species selection, site requirements and the establishment needs of trees to maximise success. This is the start of further training that will support the management of our tree stock throughout the global estate.

3. We have introduced new tree management software that will enable us to establish the total number of specimen trees and areas of woodland that we have.

What's next? In FY 2023/24, we will:

1. Review further sites to establish tree planting opportunities and expand our tree planting programme.
2. Start to derive information on the existing carbon sequestration potential of our estate, as calculated by our tree management software. Once details of all our trees have been recorded using this software, we should be able to derive the total carbon sequestration potential of the trees on our estate at that time. This baseline can then be used to track changes in the carbon sequestration potential of our estate over the years ahead.
3. Estimate, via an independent study, the additional carbon sequestration potential that could be delivered by future tree planting across our estate.



Planting trees at Zouave Valley Cemetery (left) and Rocquigny Equancourt Road Cemetery (France)

ADAPTING TO CLIMATE CHANGE

Objective: By 2025, we will better understand the current and future potential impacts of climate change on our sites. The requirement for project design to consider risks presented by changing climatic conditions will be embedded within the organisation. By 2025, we will have collated 5 years of data on extreme weather events impacting on our sites and we will have systems in place for logging observed changes in weather patterns. We will have identified which sites are vulnerable to flooding and we will be working to address this risk.

Progress to date:

1. We continue to record extreme weather events and changing climatic conditions impacting on our sites (e.g., repeat flooding events, high winds, unusual drought conditions).

2. We now require the design of new horticultural and structural projects to take into consideration the risks presented by changing climatic conditions (e.g. are proposed tree species suitable given the projected changes in climate for the area).
3. Through the work of our Sustainability Research Volunteers, we have gained a better understanding of the ways in which climate change is predicted to impact our sites in Europe and parts of Asia. Specific projects have investigated future flood risks for sites in Belgium and the Netherlands,

What's next? In FY 2023/24, we will:

1. Improve our understanding of the ways in which climate change is predicted to impact our sites in Africa.



Storm damage next to Dar Es Salaam War Cemetery (Tanzania) (left) and at Imphal Indian Army War Cemetery (India)



Flooding at Ferme Buterne Military Cemetery (France) (left), Madras War Cemetery (India) (centre) and Suda Bay War Cemetery (Greece)

PROTECTING BIODIVERSITY

ACTIVELY ENHANCING BIODIVERSITY

Objective: By 2025, we will have gained valuable experience on how best to enhance biodiversity on our sites; both through a well-embedded concept of biodiversity net gain for projects (whereby we take the opportunity whilst undertaking projects on sites to improve their biodiversity potential) and through the implementation of further biodiversity-enhancing measures at over 100 sites. By 2025, working to improve biodiversity will be an accepted part of our responsibilities.

Progress to date:

1. We have developed and introduced the concept of biodiversity net gain for structural and horticultural projects. In order to meet the biodiversity net gain criteria, a certain number of biodiversity enhancements will need to be introduced by qualifying projects.
2. We have generated guidance and criteria for the active enhancement of biodiversity on our estate.
3. We are encouraging volunteers and employees to record their biodiversity observations, using a selected app. Recorded observations will help us to select the most appropriate biodiversity enhancements and to monitor the spread of invasive plants and pests.
4. Numerous sites across our estate have already introduced measures to enhance biodiversity.

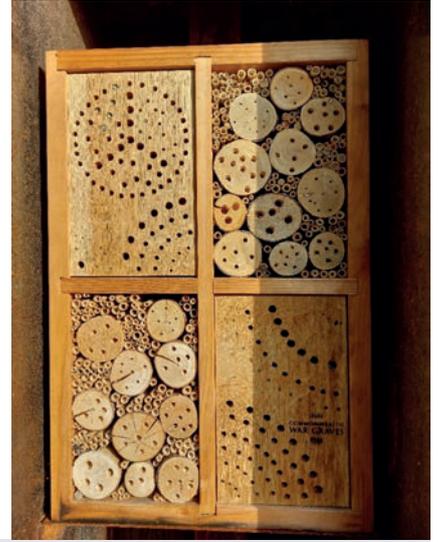
What's next? In FY 2023/24, we will:

1. Continue to embed the concept of biodiversity net gain for projects.
2. Increase the number of sites at which biodiversity-enhancing measures are implemented.



Welcoming wildlife: lizard at Kranji War Cemetery (Singapore), frog at Mazargues War Cemetery (France), bird's nest at Choloy War Cemetery (France), pollinators at Becourt Military Cemetery & Banneville la Campagne War Cemetery (France), tortoise at Phaleron War Cemetery (Greece).





Enhancing habitats with a bird nesting box at Brookwood Military Cemetery (UK), a log pile at Yokohama War Cemetery (Japan) and a bee hotel at Leopoldsburg War Cemetery (Belgium)



Recycling bamboo canes into bee hotels - Our horticultural team in Italy have come up with an innovative use for bamboo canes cut down during maintenance work at Gradara War Cemetery. They have bundled, dried and cut the canes into sections that now serve as bee hotels on our sites in the region.



Wildflowers at Ranville War Cemetery (France) (top left), Ambon War Cemetery (Indonesia) (top middle), Mierlo War Cemetery (The Netherlands) (left) and Hospital Farm Cemetery (Belgium)



Variable grass management at (top to bottom, left to right) Orvieto War Cemetery (Italy), Hill 62 Zillebeke (Belgium), St. Manvieu War Cemetery (France), Ambon War Cemetery (Indonesia), Banneville La Campagne War Cemetery (France), Fontenay-le-Pesnel War Cemetery (France) and Vailly British Cemetery (France). Areas of longer grass will provide shelter, food and connectivity for wildlife.



Planting indigenous species at Durban Stellawood Cemetery (South Africa)

REDUCING IMPACTS ON BIODIVERSITY

Objective: By 2025, our usage of pesticides, herbicides and biocides will have been effectively reduced to minimal levels, as driven by a move to more Integrated Pest and Weed Management approaches and legislative changes across Europe.

Progress to date:

1. We continue to progressively reduce our usage of herbicides, pesticides and biocides. In FY 2022/23, we achieved an 87% reduction (by volume) in the use of these chemicals against a 2019 baseline.
2. We continue to expand the use of an enzyme-based, headstone cleaning product. This product is now in use throughout Belgium, the Netherlands, France and the UK.
3. We are steadily gaining experience in harnessing non-chemical approaches to control pests and weeds.

What's next? In FY 2023/24, we will:

1. Continue to set annual targets for progressively reducing our usage of herbicides, pesticides and biocides.
2. Embed the use of the enzyme-based, headstone cleaning product in France and the UK and provide further training on our headstone cleanliness policy to support the phase-out of biocides.
3. Conduct trials on further alternative stone cleaning products that have a reduced environmental impact.



Harnessing non-chemical approaches to the management of undesirable species:

introducing ladybirds at Harrogate (Stonefall) Cemetery (UK) to help control an aphid infestation in the headstone borders, and encouraging certain birds to nest at Prospect Hill Cemetery (France) to help control pine processionary moth caterpillars, which have hairs that can cause irritation to people and animals



PROMOTING A CIRCULAR ECONOMY

REDUCING RESOURCE CONSUMPTION

Objective: By 2025, we will be working to adhere to water-efficiency targets tailored to each irrigation system. In addition to annually monitoring water consumption, we will be 2 years in to our 5-year programme of water-efficiency audits for base sites that will have informed measures to save on water consumption. In addition to water, we will be reporting on the consumption of other key resources and will be engaging with our supply chain to promote improvements aligned with the principles of a circular economy. We will have derived and introduced procurement criteria for products and services that are aligned with our sustainability principles.

Progress to date:

1. We have been rolling-out a smart, software system that will enable us to better optimise and track the water consumed by our irrigation systems. This system was installed at 11 sites in FY 2022/23.
2. We collated water consumption data from across our estate for FY 2022/23, deriving information on how much water our global estate uses and where it is sourced from. This will serve as a baseline against which we will measure the success of our efforts to reduce water consumption.

What's next? In FY 2023/24, we will:

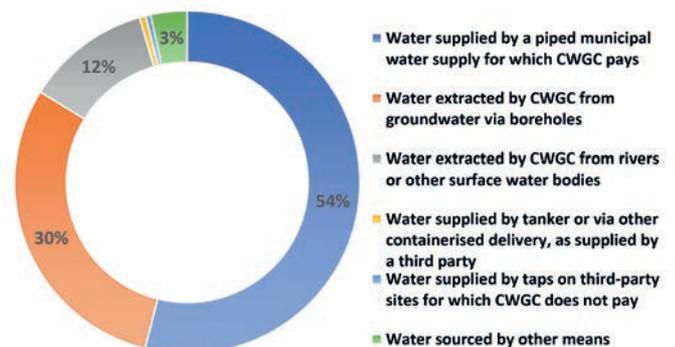
1. Undertake a technological pilot programme to monitor soil moisture, salinity and temperature in order to help optimise our irrigation systems.
2. Categorise our irrigated sites in terms of the potential that exists for reducing irrigation requirements through landscape changes.
3. Select a number of pioneer sites where we will explore the extent to which water consumption can be reduced whilst still meeting internal and external stakeholder expectations for standards of care.
4. Commence a programme of water-efficiency audits across offices and base sites.
5. Derive a first tranche of procurement criteria for products and services that are aligned with our sustainability principles.



Installing rainwater harvesting systems
at Serre base site (France) (left) and Harrogate (Stonefall) Cemetery (UK)



We used 786073 m³ of water in FY 2022/23. Where did it come from?



REDUCING WASTE GENERATION

Objective: By 2025, effective engagement with key suppliers and partners will have yielded reductions in waste generation at our sites via initiatives that design out wastage and promote repair, re-use and recycling. We will have set and be working towards progressively tighter targets for reducing waste quantities going to landfill. Internal collaboration between regions will enable best practice examples of a circular economy approach to be more widely adopted.

Progress to date:

1. We collated waste data from across our estate for FY 2022/23, deriving information on how much waste our global estate generates and how this waste is managed. This will serve as a baseline against which we will measure the success of our efforts to reduce waste generation and optimise re-use and recycling.
2. We improved arrangements for the segregation, re-use and recycling of waste at offices and base sites.
3. We improved our on-site composting capability at a number of sites.

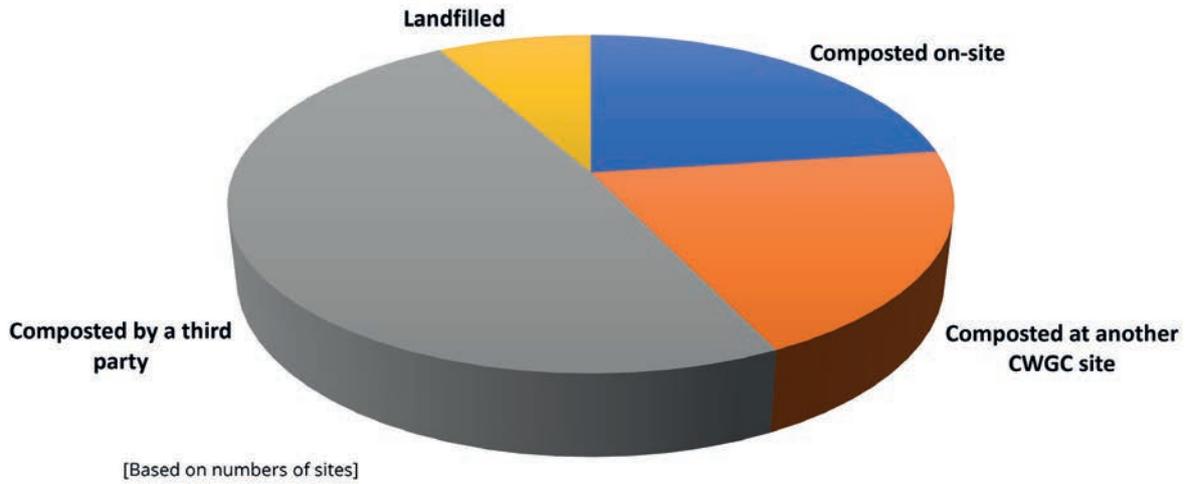
What's next? In FY 2023/24, we will:

1. Phase out the landfilling of green waste in 4 out of our 5 operational areas. Diverting green waste from landfill to composting facilities will result in an overall reduction in the associated greenhouse gas emissions.
2. Continue to improve our on-site composting capability at further sites.



Composting green waste: shredding mixed leaf and twiggy waste (Nairobi), and vermi-composting at Delhi War Cemetery (India)

What do our sites do with their green waste?



Promoting improved waste segregation and recycling across France

Reducing plastic waste by sourcing plants grown in a biodegradable mesh (right-hand image) as opposed to plastic pots (France)



Re-purposing stone off-cuts in Belgium

As well as using stone off-cuts for internal training purposes (e.g. developing engraving skills), our Works Team have come up with the following innovative ways to put accumulated stone off-cuts to good use:

- Stone has been donated to a local art school to support their students' work.
- An engraving workshop during the Open Monuments Day in the Netherlands gave members of the public the opportunity to engrave their initials on stone pieces.
- A limited edition of paper weights, engraved with either the Menin Gate or CWGC logo, have been produced in-house from a range of stone types (Hopten Wood, Portland, Saint Maxime and Massangis). Presented in recycled cardboard packaging, these paper weights will be available for sale during the 2023 Armistice commemorations in Ieper, with the money raised going to the Commonwealth War Graves Foundation



4. MANAGING OUR SUSTAINABILITY TRANSITION

GOVERNANCE

The success of our sustainability transition will depend on the on-going efforts of many across our organisation, who are delivering the improvements needed and reporting the information required so that we can track our collective progress. To help ensure the focus on sustainability is secured across the various geographical areas and work functions, key elements of the Environmental Sustainability Plan are now incorporated as objectives within our new organisation-wide strategy, issued in 2023.

There are 3 central components to the governance of our sustainability transition:

1. Sustainability Transition Project Board – This Project Board (comprised of the Head of Environmental Sustainability, the Director of Operations, the Director of Estates, the Director of Horticulture, the Director of Finance, Head of Marketing and Communications and Internal Communications Manager) meets every 3 to 4 weeks. It provides oversight of the implementation of the Environmental Sustainability Plan and associated sustainability initiatives, such as the Sustainable Innovation Fund. The Project Board's main function is to identify and act to resolve any difficulties or constraints identified, thereby helping to drive the pace at which progress is achieved. Given the members of the Project Board, it also serves as an effective way of (a) feeding in sustainability-related questions, viewpoints and requests from across the organisation, and (b) generating ideas for internal and external communications that will support and explain our sustainability transition.

2. Environmental Sustainability Steering Committee – The Environmental Sustainability Plan applies to all geographical areas and work functions and this Committee serves to reflect that through its diverse membership. The Committee meets on a quarterly basis and is comprised of 17 members drawn from each of the 5 geographical areas and a range of key HO teams. The Committee is kept up to date with the implementation of the Plan and provides another form of oversight for our sustainability transition. The Committee facilitates the on-going feedback from across CWGC on how things are progressing and whether there are any issues that need resolving. The Committee also provides a forum for highlighting examples of change and innovation taking place across the geographical areas and work functions.

3. Innovation Hub – Given the strategic significance of the sustainability agenda for CWGC, the implementation of the Environmental Sustainability Plan was initially designated as a Major Project under the organisation's project management system. Now that our sustainability transition is permeating effectively through the organisation, it has progressed from a Major Project footing to a business-as-usual status. Additional oversight is now provided by the Innovation Hub, which includes the Director General of CWGC and other members of the Executive Leadership Team.



Overview of the governance arrangements relating to our sustainability transition

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

To complement the implementation of our Environmental Sustainability Plan, we set up Green Teams for each of our 5 geographical areas and HO in early 2022. These Green Teams have proved to be an effective way of eliciting and reviewing ideas from employees on how we can work more sustainably, and to then developing and implementing selected ideas. By harnessing local knowledge, the Green Teams are generating initiatives that are tailored to the context of different sites and regions, and which reflect what is a priority for these localities.

A Sustainable Innovation Fund ring-fences money to assist, primarily, with the development and implementation of sustainability initiatives put forward by the Green Teams. This Fund has supported a variety of initiatives such as the installation of electric vehicle chargers; a project to characterise the biodiversity present in French coastal, woodland, urban and rural sites; a project to trial an Integrated Pest Management approach to the control of oak processionary moth caterpillars in Belgium; the installation of advanced irrigation control systems in a variety of countries to promote reductions in water use; and the installation of photovoltaic systems in Turkey and India.

Since August 2022, we have been publishing a regular, internal Green Fingers newsletter which captures examples of how our employees around the world are embracing and delivering against our sustainability agenda. The aim of these newsletters is to celebrate our achievements and to inform and inspire us all to act as agents of change.

SUSTAINABILITY RESEARCH PROGRAMME & VOLUNTEERS

As part of enabling our sustainability transition, we have identified subject areas where we need to know more, in order to better inform decision-making and optimise progress. To assist with deriving the information we are seeking, we generated an initial list of potential research projects in 2022 that constitutes our Sustainability Research Programme. The research projects within this Programme are being steadily undertaken by our Sustainability Research Volunteers.

We are grateful to all the Sustainability Research Volunteers. Their valuable research is contributing to our knowledge base, which will in turn support our efforts to combat climate change, protect biodiversity and promote a circular economy.

REPORTING AGAINST OUR SUSTAINABILITY AGENDA

This report constitutes the second in what will be a series of annual reports, providing regular progress updates on our sustainability transition. In this second report, we have provided quantitative data on our baseline greenhouse gas emissions and on other key metrics such as water consumption. Now that our Sustainability Reporting System is in use across our global operations, we will continue to collate quantitative data that will be used to track progress against our sustainability objectives in future annual reports.



**MORE
INFORMATION**

**ENVIRONMENTAL
SUSTAINABILITY REPORT**
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