

**INVESTORS
IN THE
ENVIRONMENT**



ACCREDITATION REPORT

**Shearbridge Veterinary
Centre**

April 2023



Executive Summary

Shearbridge Veterinary Centre (Shearbridge Vets) has maintained a good Environmental Management System (EMS) and achieved excellent reductions in most resources (namely electricity, natural gas, water, isoflurane, and general waste). The practice has also implemented a good data review process to monitor progress against targets which feeds into the practice's action plans. Shearbridge Vets has also created its first Travel Plan and begun to measure commuter mileage in order to understand and manage its environmental impact associated with travel.

To work towards Green level accreditation, Shearbridge Vets should continue to build on this great work such as including further stakeholders within the scope of the practice's Travel Plan, and identify further actions to encourage sustainable transport.

Highlights

- The team at Shearbridge Vets has maintained a good EMS and driven down emissions in many key areas as demonstrated in the 'Key Results' graphic (right).
- The practice has demonstrated good understanding of resource use and analysis to achieve current year targets as well as set future targets supported by action plans.
- Shearbridge Vets has undertaken several projects to enhance the environment and support the local community such as a Christmas pet food and supplies collection for a local charity. This helped to raise the profile of the local charity within the community, as well as foster high staff and client engagement.
- The practice has created Shearbridge Vets' first Travel Plan, established a baseline for commuter travel and undertaken a staff survey to identify actions to encourage sustainable transport.

Improvements

- Consider re-baselining resource use to 2022/2023 once a whole year's worth of data is available as this year is more representative of the practice's working practices going forwards.
- As the practice continues to grow and focus shifts to behaviour changes as many easy-win actions have been undertaken, consider normalising resource use in order to understand efficiency gains.
- Review Shearbridge Vets' Travel Plan and identify further actions to encourage the use of sustainable forms of transport.

Score

Investors in the Environment is pleased to confirm that, having recently completed that process, Shearbridge Vets has achieved the Silver level accreditation with a score of **80%**.



KEY RESULTS

Carbon Footprint



Electricity Use



Gas Use (Queensbury Only)



Water Use



Isoflurane Use



General Waste



Recycling



Healthcare Waste



Shearbridge Vets has achieved Silver Level certification as the practice has demonstrated good understanding of resource use and data analysis in order to achieve current year targets and identify challenges and solutions for achieving future targets. The practice has also started to measure commuter mileage and implemented a Travel Plan to outline Shearbridge Vets' travel requirements, travel targets and initiatives to encourage low-carbon travel.

About the audit

The Investors in the Environment (iiE) accreditation requires an organisation to provide evidence that it has met a range of pre-defined criteria, set targets to reduce its environmental impact and taken action to improve its performance whilst enhancing the community in which it operates. Evidence is presented at an annual audit and this report provides an evaluation of the organisation's performance as well as offers advice on the next steps for continued improvement.

The Investors in the Environment annual audit assesses five key areas of an organisation's Environmental Management System (EMS). These areas include:

- Environmental policy
- Resource management and monitoring
- Progress against targets
- Action planning including social/ environmental projects
- Communication

The purpose of the audit is to evaluate the organisation's EMS (including the main site Queensbury and Hipperholme) and make suggestions relating to its performance. Future opportunities and risks to the organisation's environmental practices may also be identified as a result.

The audit consisted of an examination of documentation evidence, and an interview with key personnel on 27th March 2023.

Evidence submitted included:

- Audit Pack which acts as an EMS Manual
- Resource Use Data
- Shearbridge Vets Travel Plan
- iiE Carbon Calculator

Summary Results Table

Audit category	Percentage
Section 1 - Leadership and Governance (Policy)	86%
Section 2 - Resource Use, Data, & Monitoring	86%
Section 3 - Performance, Action, & Targets	76%
Section 4 - Carbon Management	82%
Section 5 - Waste Management & Materials	88%
Section 6 – Transport & Travel Planning	67%
Section 7 - Environmental & Social Projects	80%
Section 8 – Communication & Engagement	67%
Overall Score	80%

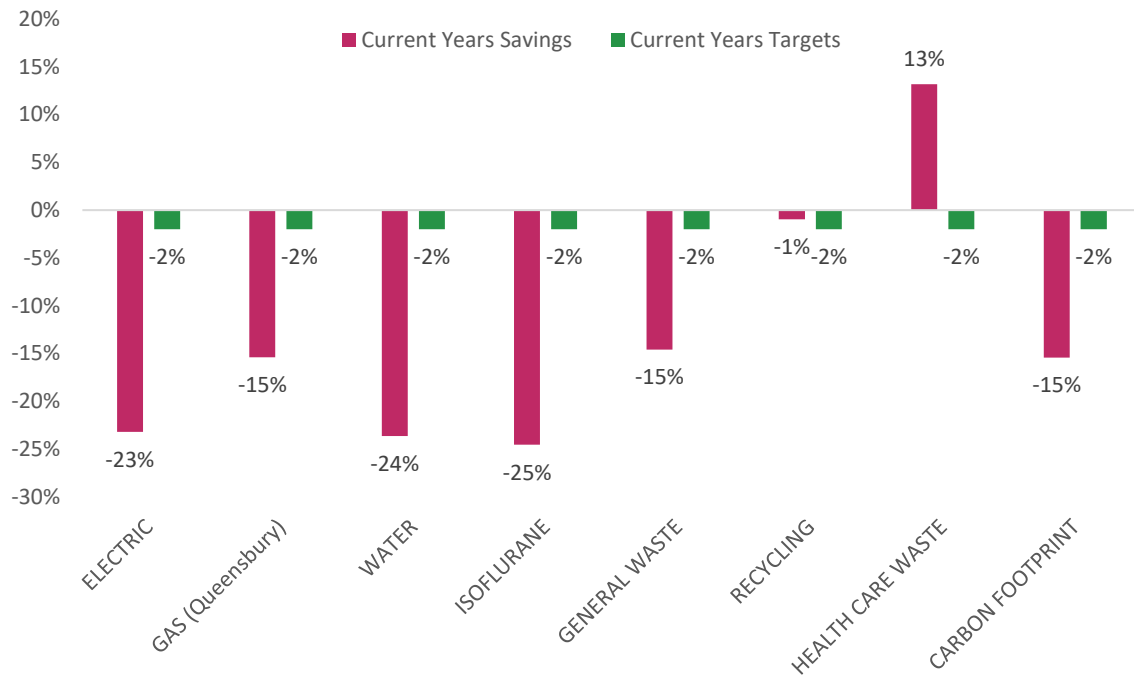
Audit Scoring

Each section of the organisation's Environmental Management System (EMS) is scored as detailed below. Full reference to scoring can be found separately in the organisation's audit sheet upon request, including auditor comments against specific criteria.

Fail	<p>0 Points: A failing score means that this criterion has not been met nor is any progress demonstrated.</p> <p><i>No progress or commitment has been made in this area.</i></p>
Action Needed	<p>1 point: Action is needed to improve and should be considered in alignment with the auditor's comments and an appropriate timeline. These will be discussed during quarterly support calls to help improve.</p> <p><i>The organisation is considering developing this area, but no formal process has been established or meaningful progress has not been made.</i></p>
Pass / Compliant	<p>2 points: The criteria have been met, though there may also be suggestions to improve.</p> <p><i>The organisation is beginning or improving this area, is broadly compliant with the iiE criteria, and may be showing processes that support improvements.</i></p>
Outstanding	<p>3 points: This criterion has been exceeded as measured against the basic iiE criteria and may demonstrate a significant improvement since the previous year or may highlight best practice.</p> <p><i>The organisation is succeeding with supportive target achievement and may be leading or supporting others in their sector or influence to achieve improvements.</i></p>

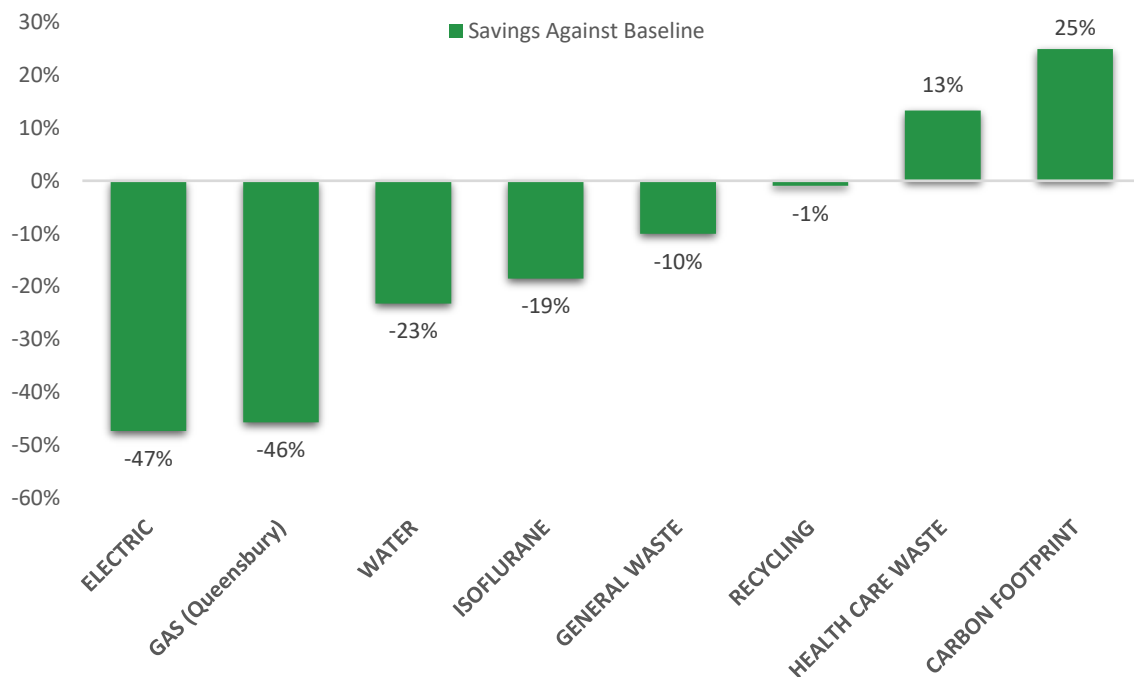
Performance graphs

Year on year performance



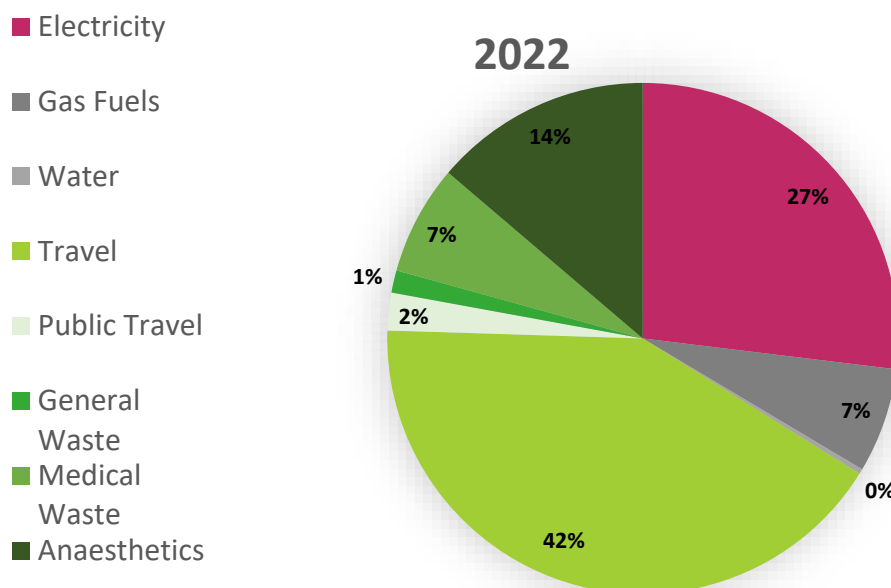
The graph depicts the percentage change in resource use from the previous year running 1st July 2021 – 1st July 2022 to the current year running 1st July 2022 – 1st July 2023 (extrapolated from 8 months of data).

Performance against baseline



The graph depicts the percentage change in resource use from the baseline year (1st July 2020 – 1st July 2021) to the current year (1st July 2022 – 1st July 2023).

Carbon footprint



The pie chart depicts the carbon footprint for Shearbridge Vets for the year running 1st July 2022 – 1st July 2023 (utilising extrapolated data) broken down by emission source. The total estimated carbon footprint for Shearbridge Vets is **23.07 tonnes of CO₂e**. The largest contributor to the practice's carbon footprint is commuter travel by car (petrol and diesel) accounting for 7.5 tCO₂e.

As water accounts for 0.06 tCO₂e (0.32%) of Shearbridge Vet's carbon footprint, it is represented as 0% within the pie chart above.

Next steps

To continue to develop sustainability within the organisation and work towards the next level, the practice should consider the following next steps below.

Leadership & Governance (Environmental Policy)



86%

Strengths

- Shearbridge Vets' Green Champion is the practice's Clinical Director, demonstrating top level commitment to improving the practice's environmental performance.
- The Environmental Policy identifies the key aspects of the organisation that impact the environment including: the consumption of electricity, gas, and water; use of anaesthetic gases; waste production and disposal; paper usage; transport; medicine usage and disposal; and procurement of goods and services.
- The practice's objectives and commitments are clearly informed by Shearbridge Vets' identified environmental aspects.
- The Environmental Policy is available on the practice's website and contains an email for any stakeholder to send questions, ideas or feedback.

Actions for review

- As Environmental Policies are evolving documents, consider capturing annual reviews and subsequent changes within a revisions table.
- Consider formally including the Environmental Policy and introduction to key sustainability initiatives as part of the practice's induction process.
- Consider implementing a process to capture that new and existing staff have read and understood the Environmental Policy, particularly if any changes are made after an annual review e.g. a short quiz and/or read receipts.
- As Shearbridge Vets works towards Green accreditation, consider including sustainability as part of the practice's appraisal process, particularly for key members of the team. This will enable staff to shape how their role feeds into the practice's environmental work and goals.
- Environmental training could be an area of focus over the next year to empower staff and support them in defining how their role can further sustainability within the organisation. The newly launched [iiE Green Champion course](#) (to which Shearbridge Vets is entitled to 2 free spaces) provides an overview of sustainability and environmental management, and also contributes to the sustainability training requirements of the RCVS Practice Standards Scheme. iiE also delivers IEMA courses including the Foundation Certificate in Environmental Management, Environmental Sustainability Skills for the Workforce and Pathways to Net Zero.

Resource Use & Data Monitoring



86%

Strengths

- Shearbridge Vets has provided a good explanation of how resources are used and measured within the practice's EMS Pack. The practice has also included good analysis of data.
- Electricity, natural gas, isoflurane, general waste, healthcare waste and recycling are measured monthly, earning a score of 'Outstanding' at Silver level. Direct meter readings are also taken to measure electricity use.
- Quarterly resource use reviews are undertaken by the Green Champion. Findings are communicated to the team during practice meetings in order to celebrate resource reductions and give reminders if increases are experienced.

Actions for review

- As 2020 and 2021 are impacted by Covid-19, consider re-baselining resource use to 2022/2023 once a whole year's worth of data is available as this year is likely more representative of the practice's working practices going forwards.
- To score additional points within resource measuring and monitoring, undertake further impact assessment to understand how resources are used within processes of the organisation and where heavy use of each resource exists. Include understanding of areas where physical changes can be made (control) or only behavioural changes can be made (manage).
- To score additional points within resource monitoring, capture the review process within action plan updates and/or meeting minutes.

Performance, Action & Targets



76%

Strengths

- Shearbridge Vets has surpassed its targets and achieved reductions over 5% for electricity, natural gas, water, isoflurane use, and general waste, which is outstanding at Silver level.
- Shearbridge Vets has experienced great engagement with the switch off campaign, but plans to investigate PIR or LUX sensors where appropriate depending on extension plans.
- The practice has identified the minimum iiE 2% reduction target for each resource as Shearbridge Vets feels this is a practical and achievable target as most easy-win actions have been implemented over the last few years.
- An Action Plan is in place for electricity, natural gas, water and isoflurane. Waste actions are captured within the Waste Management System and travel actions are captured within the practice's Travel Plan.
- All actions are assigned a completion date or review period as well as an individual or team responsible for the action's progress.

Actions for review

- An increase was experienced in healthcare waste which Shearbridge Vets identifies as a result of increased workload. In order to better understand resource use and gains in efficiency despite increases in absolute data, consider normalising resource use. Different intensity metrics can be used for each resource, for example the number of operations can be used to normalise anaesthetic gases, whilst the number of patients could be used to normalise healthcare waste.
- To reduce the environmental impact of natural gas use, consider switching to a green gas supplier such as [Ecotricity](#) (an iiE partner).
- To score additional points in target setting, consider setting more ambitious targets where possible. As Shearbridge Vets has identified that most easy-win actions have been implemented, thus focus has shifted to behaviour change, consider setting targets around key sustainability areas of focus beyond resource use such as percentage of staff with environmental training, number of products with an environmental accreditation etc.
- To further support EMS development, consider creating an action plan to capture actions to manage the EMS e.g. policy reviews, projects, communication etc.
- Although action plans are reviewed regularly and Shearbridge Vets has demonstrated good progress through the practice's action plans, consider capturing the review process (e.g. dates next to updates in the 'Notes/Outcomes' section) and evidencing progress through colour coding actions. Completed actions could be highlighted green, actions in progress could be yellow, and actions overdue could be highlighted in red. This can be helpful when multiple members of staff are feeding into action plans.
- As more members of staff support action plan development and progress, consider utilising an interactive action plan platform such as Trello.

Carbon Management



82%

Strengths

- Shearbridge Vets has calculated a carbon footprint for 2020, 2021 and 2022 using the iiE Carbon Calculator.
- Each carbon footprint calculation includes electricity, natural gas, water, general waste, recycling, healthcare waste and isoflurane. The carbon footprint for 2021 also includes grey fleet travel and 2022 includes commuter mileage.
- The practice is estimated to have achieved a reduction over 5% in both Scope 1 and 2 emissions from 2021 to 2022. However, it should be noted this is based on extrapolated data for 2022.

Actions for review

- Refrigerant gases from air conditioning units are considered a Scope 1 emission and have high Global Warming Potential (GWPs). Thus, refrigerant gas leakage from AC units should be included in future carbon footprint calculations. This information should be provided by a F-gas certificate when the AC units are serviced by an engineer.
- Consider including Scope 3 emissions associated with business travel to further understand Shearbridge Vets' carbon impact associated with travel.
- Consider offsetting Shearbridge Vets' carbon footprint as a project for next year using organisations such as [Forest Carbon](#) (an iiE partner) and the [UN Carbon Offset Platform](#)

Waste Management & Materials



88%

Strengths

- Shearbridge has a waste management system in place in which waste is separated into multiple streams including general waste, offensive, infectious, hazardous, pharmaceutical, cytotoxic, dry mixed recycling, PPE recycling, plastic packaging recycling, blister pack recycling, compost waste (Queensbury only), and batteries. Thus, earning a score of 'outstanding'.
- Shearbridge has undertaken several actions to reduce waste such as using refillable glass milk bottles, switching to eco-friendly products and installing a food compost bin.
- Bin checks are undertaken regularly and findings are updated to staff within practice meetings and informal conversations.

Actions for review

- Although bin infrastructure has greatly improved over Shearbridge Vets' sustainability journey, consider improving bin signage further e.g. signage with

more explanation, stickers could be laminated, pictures/videos accessed by QR code etc.

- As most actions to manage and reduce waste were completed in 2021, identify further actions to reduce waste e.g. procurement, waste training etc.
- To support Shearbridge Vets work around greening procurement and reducing waste, consider creating a procurement policy for which a template can be found on the 'iiE Resources' section of the website and auditing suppliers/products.
- Procurement could also be measured as an additional resource, for example measuring the number of suppliers that have an environmental/sustainability accreditation.
- Ensure the bin check process and evidence of communicating findings are captured within Shearbridge Vets' EMS pack.

Transport & Travel Planning



67%

Strengths

- Shearbridge Vets has created the practice's first Travel Plan to outline the practice's travel requirements, travel targets, and sustainable travel initiatives.
- The practice's Travel Plan scope includes business and commuter travel.
- Shearbridge Vets has undertaken its first Travel Survey to understand staff's current travel habits, identify actions to support low carbon transport, and measure commuter travel.

Actions for review

- To demonstrate the application of the travel hierarchy highlighted within the Travel Plan and support staff travel decisions, consider incorporating a travel decision tree in to the Travel Plan.
- To score additional points within travel, consider including the travel of clients and visitors with the Travel Plan as well as actions to encourage these stakeholders to utilise low carbon travel.
- To encourage staff and visitors to use sustainable forms of transport, include sustainable transport information and links within the Travel Plan e.g. bus times and apps for updates, map of cycle routes, etc.
- The practice can also find out more about creating a travel plan to understand and tackle travel related emissions at the iiE webinar entitled '[Cutting the Carbon Impact of Transport](#)'.

Environmental & Social Projects



80%

Strengths

- Shearbridge Vets has undertaken projects to enhance the environment and support communities including donating food and other supplies to a local charity, organising an annual Christmas Tree memorial with donations sent to Cinnamon Trust, installing a clothing bin to raise money for Cinnamon Trust, taking part in No Mow May, planting wild flowers and installing a wildlife log hotel.

Actions for review

- As Shearbridge Vets works towards Green level accreditation, the practice needs to undertake 3 significant environmental/social projects.
- As a potential project to enhance staff engagement, consider encouraging staff to calculate their individual carbon footprint using a non-technical calculator such as [Giki Zero](#), and awarding prizes to the individual, team or site that achieves the greatest reductions.

Communication & Engagement



67%

Strengths

- Sustainability updates are provided to staff and SMT in practice meetings which occur every few months, and staff can also share feedback, ideas and questions within these sessions. Staff are very engaged and share lots of ideas at practice meetings particularly with projects to support the community. Clients are also very engaged with this work.
- Resource use and sustainability updates are also provided to staff on the practice's noticeboard, and staff can share feedback within questionnaires.

Actions for review

- To score additional points in SMT communication, include evidence of wider SMT engagement within next year's audit submission such as meeting minutes or agendas, emails, additional members of SMT taking ownership of actions etc.
- The practice's Bronze award is displayed on Shearbridge Vets' noticeboard and website. To support this, consider creating an Annual Sustainability Report or Statement which could be shared on the practice's website.
- Continue communicating the practice's sustainability achievements and work with external stakeholders regularly e.g. on the practice website, social media and articles in newsletters.
- Make use of the iiE communication resources, including the social media graphics included with this report to communicate your iiE achievement.

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