

A man in a dark jacket is standing in a room, looking at a document he is holding. He is positioned in front of a window that looks out onto a brick building. On the windowsill, there is a blue cup and a white cup. To the left of the man, there is a white washing machine. The room has white walls and a white door frame.

**Improving environmental performance
in the third sector**

**West Midlands Funders Network
19 May 2022**

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with **PHIL BEARDMORE**

What I do

- I help organisations to develop decarbonisation strategies, implement them, and prove success
- Small businesses, non-profits, faith groups, householders, public bodies
- Mostly helping people who aren't sure where to begin, or aren't sure what to do next
- Environmental/energy performance audits, strategy formulation, training and mentoring, making the business case for environmental action, project development, bid-writing
- West Midlands based working nationally

Question

- How do you feel about windfall taxes for fossil fuel companies? Click on reactions
- Should these windfall taxes be used to fund Robin Hood type community level action on climate change? Click on reactions

WHAT ARE THE TOUCH POINTS DURING AN ORGANISATION'S LIFE CYCLE?

- Business and strategic planning
- Planning and launching new projects
- Refurbishing or extending a building
- Taking on a new building
- Asset transfer
- Changing patterns of work e.g. remote working

All of these touch points are opportunities to improve environmental performance, and may involve external funders

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GOOD EXAMPLES - JERICHO FOUNDATION

- CEO and board commitment to developing a low-carbon strategy over a two-year period across all buildings and operation
- Understanding their environmental impacts and quantifying them
- Short, medium and long-term plans to improve environmental performance
- Prioritising those actions with greatest impact and value for money carbon savings, instead of a shopping list of good ideas
- A plan to monitor the strategy and to demonstrate the carbon saving impacts

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Missed opportunities ...

- Business planning without putting sustainability in your mission
- Launching new projects without thinking of their environmental impact
- Refurbishing or extending a building can improve its environmental performance ... or potentially make it worse
- “Piecemeal” improvements instead of a whole-organisation strategy
- Moving to a new building can improve your environmental performance ... or make it worse.
- Partnership with community energy cooperatives

Good practice by non-environmental funders

- The Old Print Works, Birmingham
- Undertook an expansion programme with funding from various sources
- Included environmental improvements to the building as a core activity
- Insulation
- LED lighting and lighting controls
- Funders included GBSLEP as part of wider support for cultural outcomes



COMMON CHALLENGES AND OBJECTIONS

- Organisations that use other people's facilities
- Quick fixes such as carbon offsetting
- Mis-selling of energy saving measures
- Remote working
- "Free" services

All of these are in fact opportunities to change course and get it right.

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What might need to change?

- Growth opportunities should be seen as the right moment to look strategically and practically at environmental sustainability as a core part of their mission
- Better understanding of environmental performance by funders and grant recipients, how to action plan to improve it with baselines, milestones, and how to measure success.
- Action planning is best use of funders' money in my experience as it turns ideas into action.

What might need to change?

- Value of a place-based approach linked to a Doughnut Economics approach
- Environmental leadership including young people
- There is also a place for specific funds for environmental projects, as is the case in London and in the North-West



photos - Immy Kaur, Twitter

Question

- Do you feel that you know enough to set meaningful funding criteria around environmental performance, including baseline, action planning, milestones, measuring outcomes? Click on reactions
- What more do you need to know or do in order to be able to set meaningful criteria? Click on reactions or use the chat

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