

Meeting to Endorse the Devon Climate Declaration

Minutes of Meeting held to endorse the Devon Climate Declaration by The Empty Box Company

Held 1pm on 18th May 2021

Persons present: James Teague (Managing Director, founder) Giselle Hulme (Director, founder)

1. The Devon Climate Declaration was discussed at length by the directors
2. Areas of improvement were looked into, as to areas where The Empty Box Company can improve upon its current practices.
3. It was noted that as a small company, measuring our carbon emissions might prove challenging, but that we would try to do this.
4. Our carbon emissions have reduced by changing our Forklift truck to electric.
5. Our electricity is all green electricity and we generate our own electricity from solar panels, and we generate more than we use in the summer months, which is sold to the National grid, but we would like to increase our solar and green energy capacity where we can.
6. Point 6 in the declaration brought up issues we have achieved already, and ones we could do further. As a result a Decarbonising Plan document will be created.*
7. It was felt we should bring in our customers and suppliers on board with these measures and ways how to do this were discussed, including more social media posts to encourage other businesses, and highlighting our commitment to our environmental policy to our customers and suppliers to help them understand any changes required.
8. We will look out for any grants that might help small businesses decarbonise, as many of the actions outlined in our plan will cost money; a green premium, so any additional help would be welcome.

Meeting closed at 2pm

*Please see “Decarbonising & Green Environmental Plan for The Empty Box Company” document created below (pages 1-3 of this document).

Decarbonising and Green Environmental Plan for The Empty Box Company 2021

Measures that The Empty Box Company has already taken to minimise its global footprint.

1. The Devon workshop was purpose built using environmentally friendly materials wherever possible, such as locally sourced Cornish clay breeze blocks for the foundation, timber walls, & staircases, eco-friendly wall partitions, shredded newspaper insulation in the walls, air bricks, and Solar panels on the roof.
2. Manufacturing our product in the UK in our own workshop, rather than shipping products from afar.

3. Solar panels generating our electricity and ensuring we only buy green electricity
4. Using our own bore hole water
5. Sourcing our materials from Britain wherever possible, or from Europe, rather than shipping raw materials with many transport miles.
6. Being Waste Aware: Minimising our waste products wherever possible, or reusing, or recycling. Our preference is for some items to be reused locally in schools, art departments and scrap stores.



7. Utilising many 1000's of tonnes of recycled board per year.
8. Living next to the workshop for minimal travel to work
9. Encouraging & training staff to recycle and reuse where possible.
10. Using Eco friendly cleaning products throughout the workshop.
11. Keeping our outer packaging paper based.
12. Recruiting local employees for minimal journey to work traffic, and directors walking to work.

Recent measures taken in past 2 years

1. The electric lights have been rewired so that bays can be turned on in the workshop according to where someone is working.
2. Use of recycled fabric work rags and washing the glue off once used, rather than throwing away.
3. Changing our fork lift truck to electric (from green electricity supplier) instead of gas.
4. Utilising 3-4 employees who work from their home (and to potentially increase this)
5. Tree planting programme & rewilding project in 2021 of 120 trees/hedge plants
6. Closing our Westcott workshop in Surrey, in which has substantially reduced the travelling required by the directors. This has also saved resources, such as heating, lighting, electricity, by running one workshop instead of two.
7. Financially supporting local woodland projects & tree planting by The Woodland Trust in Devon, plus giving to carbon offset schemes.
8. Combining the collection of pallets, so that collection is for more than one pallet at any time.
9. Encourage staff to contribute to environmentally friendly ideas – continuous process
10. Mending or re-purposing machinery, & IT equipment, where possible to lengthen its usable life – continuous process.
11. Reusing any packaging sent to us if in perfect condition.

Further measures for May 2021 onwards

1. Transfer from plastic based tapes to paper based tapes.
2. Sourcing outer plastic bags that are environmentally friendly but strong enough and large enough to hold our product.

3. Encouraging our customers to order more than one item at a time, to save on courier transportation. We will also introduce a small surcharge to spend solely on tree planting to encourage this, for single item orders to offset the courier journey.
4. Supporting an environmentally friendly charity such as The Woodland Trust by creating a match funded giving scheme on our website.
5. Undertaking more of our own tree planting projects.
6. Encouraging and inspiring our customers and followers to embrace environmentally friendly companies on social media.
7. Look into replacing or reducing the use of our workshop gas heater with more eco friendly options such as air source heat pump or further solar panel or green energy solutions.
8. Using water butt water to flush the workshop toilets.
9. Further continuation of the scheme to combine the collection of our pallets, so that collection is for more than one pallet at any time.
10. Minimising out of hours work to save on heating, lighting, electricity.
11. Continue to mend or re-purpose machinery, & IT equipment, where possible to lengthen its usable life.
12. Request suppliers such as Avanti gas to combine deliveries to both tanks, less often.
13. Introducing a small recycling explanation leaflet, so that we can reuse more of the outer packaging enclosing items sent to us.