

Review of Carbon Footprint Calculators:

As a result of discussions from previous Cabinet Panels on the Environment, a range of carbon footprint calculators have been reviewed by the Policy Team. Comments from the Cabinet Panel have been considered and a range of other factors have been taken into account. Considerations include user-friendliness, level of detail, consistency with other calculators and what, if any, positive action users are encouraged to take upon completion.

It is recognised that the key aims of promoting a carbon calculator through the council would be to raise awareness of each individual's impact on the environment, as well as encouraging residents to take action to reduce their overall carbon footprint. Therefore, carbon footprint calculators that are user-friendly and provide personalised carbon-reduction actions upon completion have been prioritised.

Having reviewed over 15 different carbon calculators, the WWF calculator has been assessed as the most user-friendly, whilst still covering the four key areas that contribute to carbon emissions: transport; housing; food; goods, services and leisure. It is therefore recommended that the WWF Carbon Calculator be promoted through council communications as it is likely to be the most engaging for residents.

It is recognised that the WWF calculator does not allow in-depth answers in the same way that some other calculators do. This is primarily due to its multi-choice questions. It is therefore proposed that an additional calculator with more in-depth detail is also promoted alongside this, so that residents that are keen to gain a more detailed insight into their carbon emissions are provided with this option.

The Resurgence Calculator has been included to give a more in-depth calculation with regards to individuals' transport, housing, and food. However, it is worth noting that goods, services and leisure are simply calculated by an individual's income and therefore this does not take into account individual shopping habits and spending patterns. However, this has been chosen as the calculator of choice for those that may want a more in-depth calculation as it provides various options for an individual to calculate their housing and transport emissions in detail and is based on UK data. This calculator does not provide personalised suggestions as to how residents can reduce their emissions and is therefore proposed to be shared as an addition to the WWF calculator.

The Cambridge Carbon Footprint Calculator was also taken into consideration; however it was felt that the WWF's multi-choice options and clear information given with each question made the WWF carbon calculator more user friendly and therefore, more likely to be completed by users.

RECOMMENDED: WWF Footprint Calculator: <https://footprint.wwf.org.uk/#/>

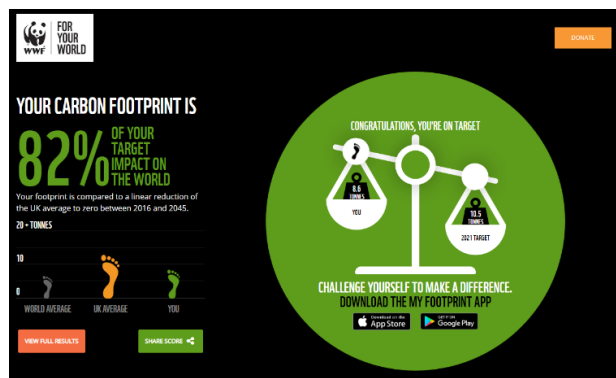
Summary: User friendly and covers the four key categories for carbon emissions: Transport; Housing; Food; Goods, Services & Leisure

Pros:

- User-friendly including simple, multi-choice questions that are easy to complete.
- Each question gives information about what is being asked as a 'did you know' or a 'hint'. This ensures that users understand what is being asked and why.
- Users' carbon footprint is shown in comparison with the UK government's target for carbon emissions per person and therefore allows a contextual comparison.
- Tips on how to improve your carbon footprint are provided.
- An option to download the WWF app gives the opportunity for individuals take further action.
- This calculator is intended for UK residents.

Cons:

- Multiple choice and simplicity mean the answers given are less precise.



The Resurgence Carbon Dioxide Calculator:

<https://www.resurgence.org/resources/carbon-calculator.html>

Summary: This Carbon Calculator requires very detailed input from users and therefore may be suitable for those that wish to spend more time entering detailed information in order to receive a more precise estimate.

Covers three key categories in detail: Housing, Transport and Food.

Pros:

- Contains an 'Accurate Calculator' which requires your energy bills and MOT certificate to provide more precise results
- The calculator is based on UK data

Cons:

- Not as user-friendly as the WWF calculator
- Does not give detailed options for Goods, Leisure and Services and estimates; this based on annual income rather than individual shopping habits

Other:

- Does not provide personalised actions to reduce carbon emissions but does provide a link to 'The Guide to Low Carbon Lifestyles'