



**Glasgow City Council**

**Net Zero and Climate Progress Monitoring  
City Policy Committee**

**Report by Executive Director of Glasgow Life**

**Contact: Isabel Brown, Head of Infrastructure Support  
Ext: 70998**

**Item 4**

**4th March 2025**

## **GLASGOW LIFE UPDATE ON NET ZERO**

### **Purpose of Report:**

To provide an update on the various environmental and sustainability developments, practices and approaches across Glasgow Life to support Glasgow's climate challenge of carbon neutrality by 2030.

### **Recommendations**

It is recommended Committee:

- Note the content of this paper.

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ✓

Local member(s) advised: Yes ☐ No ☐

consulted: Yes ☐ No ☐

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of the developments and strategic approaches undertaken to enhance Glasgow Life's environmental and sustainability practices. These efforts contribute to Glasgow's commitment to achieving carbon neutrality by 2030.

## 2. Background

- 2.1 Glasgow Life is a charitable organisation dedicated to promoting the life-changing benefits of culture and sport for the people of Glasgow. We manage museums, arts, and events while also delivering fitness and wellbeing programmes. Our work positions Glasgow as a world-class, welcoming city, generating employment and economic benefits through tourism and cultural engagement. Recognised as one of the world's most sustainable cities, Glasgow Life is committed to ensuring our buildings, events, and services operate sustainably.
- 2.2 Glasgow Life's Environmental and Sustainability Policy (2023) acknowledges the impacts of climate change and environmental degradation from local, national, and global perspectives. Climate Change Conferences, including COP26 and COP27, have reinforced the need for global political action and ambitious environmental policies. In response, Glasgow Life recognises its obligations under various legislative and policy frameworks, as well as the expectations of consumers, funders, and partners, to minimise environmental impact and enhance sustainability.
- 2.3 We continue to work towards elevating Glasgow's profile as a globally recognised, sustainable destination. As custodians of a diverse range of venues, services, and events, we are committed to embedding sustainability across all our operations.

## 3. Key Commitments and Initiatives

- 3.1 Glasgow Life has undertaken significant commitments to advance sustainability, including:
  - **Glasgow Events Strategy:** Our Events Strategy integrates best practices to minimise waste and environmental impact, reinforcing Glasgow's status as a leader in sustainability and accessibility.
  - **Events Action Plan 2024-2027:** Aims to support the delivery of the Glasgow's events strategy, focussing on 3 strategic priorities of 'The Right Events for Glasgow', 'Great to Do Business With' and 'Protect Today and Tomorrow'.
  - **Vision for Glasgow Libraries:** Glasgow Life aims to enhance accessibility, support lifelong learning and strengthen community connections by empowering communities and local partners in the development of resource-sharing hubs.
  - **Environmental and Sustainability Policy** (January 2023): This policy formalises our commitment to reducing carbon emissions, raising awareness, and embedding sustainability into our core activities and service planning.

- **Energy Plan** (2023): Supporting our Sustainability Strategy, this plan directs resources towards energy management, reducing CO2e emissions, lowering energy costs, and prioritising sustainable energy sources.
- **Environmental and Sustainability Action Plan** (In Development): This forthcoming plan will outline targeted actions across 11 key areas, including carbon reduction, biodiversity, communications, and transport.
- **Heating Strategy**: Establishing optimal temperature guidelines across our buildings, from sports centres and libraries to museums and historic properties, to improve energy efficiency and cost management.
- **Collaboration** with Glasgow City Council: We contribute to the city's Climate Plan and Carbon Management Plan, aligning with local and national emissions reduction targets and striving for net zero by 2030.
- **Green Tourism Accreditation**: Glasgow Convention Bureau was the first conference organisation to achieve accreditation and sign the Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency initiative. In 2025, it attained Gold in the Green Tourism accreditation.
- **Sustainable Recognition**: Glasgow Life currently holds 10 Green Tourism Awards, with Kelvin Hall and Riverside Museum achieving Gold.
- **Global Recognition**: Glasgow ranks 12th in the Global Destination Sustainability Movement's list of the most sustainable conference destinations.
- **Operational Enhancements**: We have implemented efficiency improvements across our properties, reducing energy consumption and operational costs.
- **Energy Awareness Campaigns**: Over 14 years, our campaigns have significantly reduced carbon emissions and engaged staff in sustainability initiatives. Since 2015, energy consumption has decreased by 27%, with a 46% reduction in carbon emissions.
- **Sustainability Champions**: We support a network of Sustainability Champions across all service areas.

## 4. Policy Development

4.1 Glasgow Life published its Environmental and Sustainability Policy in 2023, with key commitments including:

- Reducing carbon emissions and improving energy efficiency across venues, programmes, and activities.
- Raising awareness and embedding environmental sustainability into service planning through internal communications and training.
- Promoting sustainable and active travel.
- Minimising waste and ensuring responsible waste disposal.
- Enhancing sustainable procurement by working with suppliers and partners to reduce climate impact and promote a circular economy through:
  - Whole-life costing in procurement evaluations.
  - Reuse, repair, and recycling of goods and materials.

This policy, in conjunction with our broader sustainability strategies and action plans, forms a comprehensive framework for meaningful environmental impact.

## 5. Tourism and Conventions

- 5.1 Glasgow Life's Tourism and Conventions team has updated the *VisitGlasgow Sustainability Plan for Tourism and Conventions 2023-25* to solidify Glasgow's position as a sustainable and responsible tourism and conference destination. The plan is structured around three strategic objectives:
- Building a Sustainable Tourism Sector
  - Developing Glasgow's Sustainable City Offer
  - Showcasing Glasgow as a Sustainable Destination
- 5.2 Key actions include working with the Greater Glasgow Hoteliers Association to increase the number of hotels with Green Tourism accreditation and maintaining the city's sustainable credentials.
- 5.3 Glasgow is already recognised as a leading sustainable tourism and conference destination and holds the highest ranking of all UK Cities, placing 12<sup>th</sup> in the world on the Global Destination Sustainability Index.
- 5.4 The Glasgow Convention Bureau actively promotes sustainable options to conference organisers and collaborates with industry stakeholders to encourage environmentally responsible business practices. The *VisitGlasgow* website provides extensive resources and links to organisations supporting a strong, sustainable tourism sector.
- 5.5 The *Go Greener in Glasgow* initiative supports conference organisers in hosting more sustainable meetings. This programme aligns with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) and provides practical guidance through interactive workshops for planners and professional conference organisers.

## 6. Events

- 6.1 Glasgow Life Events team is committed to the delivery of sustainable events and is working with colleagues across Glasgow Life, Glasgow City Council and industry partners to align events sustainability work with the wider GL and GCC policy and ambitions.
- 6.2 The ambition to widen the reach and impact of sustainability through events, was rewarded last year when the **World Athletics Indoor Championships 2024** became the first ever event to be awarded Platinum Status by World Athletics. Their Athletics for a Better World is their social responsibility programme and the Championships were recognised for its sustainable and inclusive approach to event design and delivery. This work aligned and contributed to the development of the Glasgow Events Strategy and Sustainability Plan to embed learnings and continue the positive legacies.
- 6.3 The **Glasgow's Events Strategy 2035** was launched in November 2024 and sets out the vision - "*Our events make Glasgow a better place to live in and visit*". The strategy aims to enhance Glasgow's reputation as a leading events destination and focuses on delivering a diverse range of events that benefit the city's economy,

culture, and communities. It emphasises inclusivity, sustainability, and innovation, ensuring events are accessible and environmentally responsible.

6.4 A three-year Action Plan is in place to support the delivery of the Glasgow Events Strategy and key actions to contribute to GL and GCC sustainability and net zero ambitions include:

- Development of a sustainability plan for the delivery of city events (see update below).
- Creation of a sustainability toolkit for organisers (led by GCC for Biodiversity and Parks Action Plan, with GL contributing).
- Producing Case Studies on sustainable events to showcase best practise and assist in inspiring and educating event organisers and promoting these on the Visit Glasgow B2B website for event organisers.
- Delivery of the Biodiversity and Sustainability in Parks Action Plan (led by GCC, with GL responsible for delivering actions through its events).
- Development of a sustainability action plan for GL venues and associated venue hire agreements (priority placed on major event venues).
- Working with GCC and partners to explore the opportunity for integrated ticketing with transport and enhancing the service provision around events.

6.5 The Glasgow Events Strategy 2035 aligns with the **National Events Strategy – Scotland the Perfect Stage**. Glasgow Life is taking an active role in contributing to and supporting the delivery of the national strategy action plan to influence and align with city ambitions as well as leverage opportunities. It also supports the Glasgow 2030 Tourism Strategy by growing the events sector to boost tourism and economic value. It emphasises inclusivity, collaboration between public and private sectors, and community engagement in tourism development.

6.6 Glasgow Life Events team have also produced A **GL Events Sustainability Plan** for the events directly delivered by Glasgow Life, including the Glasgow Mela, Merchant City Festival, World Pipe Band Championships and Winter Events. The plan focused on people, place and the reduction of waste, building a sustainable client journeys through the full lifecycle of planning through to delivery. Focusing on our supply chain, procurement and our customer journey, as well as the physical and mental welfare of our workforce, the plan builds towards a more sustainable future for events. Integrated transport options will be explored through the strategy, as we look to embed key learnings from the large, one-off events into the year core events, and with city partners who deliver commercial events in the city.

6.7 The strategies, actions and overall approach outlined above provide a powerful narrative around the ambition, commitment and role of Glasgow Life and the city in leading and enabling the delivery of sustainable events. The commitment to sustainability is also a key policy driver for event owners and funding partners, who seek to work together with cities to accelerate their sustainability ambitions for events, such as World and European Championships. This will ensure Glasgow continues to be an innovative and attractive event host and remains competitive amongst cities who are also building their sustainability plans.

## **7. Venues and Investment**

- 7.1 Glasgow Life manages some of the most prestigious buildings in the UK as well as some of the most challenging in terms of their carbon footprint, our swimming pools, heritage buildings and air-conditioned gyms all pose particular challenges, dealing with porous fabric and ageing plant in many of our venues can prove difficult.
- 7.2 Glasgow Life has invested £8.6 million since 2010/11 in a wide range of energy projects including: the installation of efficient heating plant, variable speed drives, combined heat and power systems, pool covers, insulation, voltage optimisation and LED lighting. Funding sources are as follows:
- Glasgow Life external funding £1.3m
  - Glasgow Life £3.4m
  - Glasgow Life Salix £3.9m
- 7.3 The cumulative energy and carbon savings from energy projects completed between 2011 and 2025 has been 46 million kWh and 10,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>, see appendix 2.
- 7.4 Sustainability is a focus on every venue related project that Glasgow Life undertakes whether it is an opportunity to increase insulation to pipework or to consider more wide-ranging initiatives. The most recent capital development of the Category A listed Burrell Collection incorporated sustainability into every facet of the project from re-use of materials to improving the thermal envelope, installation of intelligent controls and solar panels. The Burrell achieved a BREEAM rating of Excellent, putting the building in the top 10% of energy efficient buildings in the UK.
- 7.5 Glasgow Life was successful in its bid to the Salix Decarbonisation Fund for Glasgow Museums Resource Centre and were awarded over £1.5m to support replacement of boilers with air source heat pumps, installation of solar panels, upgrading of controls and fabric improvements to reduce heat loss. The works are estimated to save 156 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> annually.
- 7.6 We are supporting the city's rollout of the ambitious plan for the installation of photovoltaics (PV) across many areas of the city. The installation of 1,000 panels is currently underway at Kelvin Hall, which will be the largest roof mounted array in Scotland.

## **8. Staff Engagement**

- 8.1 To support our initiatives and ongoing commitment to carbon reduction, structures are in place to ensure awareness within Glasgow Life remains high and that all staff are involved in supporting our carbon reduction targets and identifying opportunities. This includes having a network of over 80 Sustainability Champions across all our venues and service areas who work on a number of topic areas including energy, biodiversity, water, lighting and repairs to identify opportunities to be more

sustainable, to raise awareness within their teams and with our visitors and customers, and to highlight ways where we can be more energy efficient.

- 8.2 Glasgow Life's Sustainability Workstream comprises representatives from all service areas and corporate functions. This group meets regularly to discuss staff engagement strategies and to provide support to our Sustainability Champions. Through site visits and collaborative discussions, the Workstream fosters the development of initiatives that enhance awareness of sustainability and energy conservation across the organisation.
- 8.3 Glasgow Life is actively working to broaden the scope of the Sustainability Champions' original remit, which initially focused on building-related energy reduction. Future plans will extend their responsibilities to encompass biodiversity, recycling, active travel, and other sustainability initiatives aligned with the development of Glasgow Life's Sustainability Action Plan. This expanded approach will further integrate sustainable practices into all aspects of service delivery, reinforcing our commitment to environmental responsibility.

## 9. Reporting

- 9.1 The Companies (Directors' Report) and Limited Liability Partnerships (Energy and Carbon Report) Regulations 2018, stipulate that energy and carbon information is to be included within annual reports. Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting (SECR) completed by Glasgow Life provides the information as required by these regulations.
- 9.2 The SECR report states the annual gross quantity of emissions (in tonnes) of carbon dioxide, utilising the Government emission conversion factors for greenhouse gas company reporting. The scope of the reporting is in three sections:
- **Scope 1: Direct GHG emissions** - includes emissions from activities that release emissions into the atmosphere, e.g. emissions from combustion in boilers and vehicles.
  - **Scope 2: Energy indirect emissions** - includes emissions from our consumption of purchased electricity, heat, steam and cooling.
  - **Scope 3: Other indirect emissions** – includes emissions as a consequence of our actions, but where the source is not owned or controlled by Glasgow Life, e.g. business travel and waste.
  - See appendix 3 for the 2023/24 SECR report
- 9.3. Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) play a large part of our communications across Glasgow Life. The targets and results are discussed monthly with each service area, and this facilitates opportunities to discuss where improvements can be made. The KPI meetings really make a difference by highlighting problems or issues within our estate at an early stage, suggesting measures to implement and resolve issues, or recommending the development of action plans to tackle more complex situations.
- 9.5 Glasgow Life continues to contract with specialist Built Environment Analysts to work on areas of our estate where we cannot readily identify where energy is being used or plant operating inefficiently from our own investigations. This approach has resulted in numerous savings and efficiencies across the estate. An example is the

ongoing monitoring of the performance of the Burrell Museum against the design stage estimates. The identification of issues and their remediation has resulted in energy consumption being 3% lower than the original estimates for the last two quarters.

## 10. Conclusion

10.1 Glasgow Life recognises that across all service areas we have a wide range of activities supporting sustainability and carbon reduction and that these activities need to be captured to enable effective reporting and to share opportunities and ideas.

10.2 We will do this by implementing our Environmental and Sustainability Policy which was approved by Glasgow Life's Board on 25 January 2023. The policy commitments made within the document necessitate the development of an action plan which is already under development utilising the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals will have the following key features:

- specific, measurable, achievable and realistic approaches to meeting commitments.
- clear outcome and impact measurements based on a robust baseline measures and targets.
- reviewing and reporting progress annually.

10.3 Glasgow Life remains committed to working with Glasgow City Council in the delivery of the Carbon Management Action Plan.

10.4 Glasgow Life continues with its ambitions to improve the efficiency and sustainability of our facilities and services, engaging with all our employees and customers to support our sustainability agenda.

## 11. Resource Implications

### Resource Implications:

#### *Financial:*

Some of the projects highlighted require funding, however many also offer the opportunity to make financial savings as reduced consumption reduces expenditure on energy. Consideration will need to be given on spend to save projects, and how to fill the financial gap required to ensure delivery.

#### *Legal:*

Emissions reduction targets do not currently carry legal risk.

#### *Personnel:*

Ongoing staff input is required to ensure delivery of policy and strategy commitments.

*Procurement:* Individual projects have procurement requirements, which are managed on a case-by-case basis

**Council Strategic Plan:** The plan is supportive of Grand Challenge 2: Mission 2, Grand Challenge 3: Mission 1 and 2, Grand Challenge 4: Mission 2 and 3.

**Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:**

*Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2021-25? Please specify.* Not directly. However, reducing utility costs and liability may free up financial resources that could be focused on equality objectives.

*What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report?* No significant impact.

*Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio-economic disadvantage.* Not directly. However, reducing utility costs and liability may free up financial resources that could be focused on socio-economic objectives.

**Climate Impacts:**

*Does the proposal support any Climate Plan actions? Please specify:* This work will deliver a significant positive environmental impact. Reducing utility consumption directly reduces the Council's environmental impact through the avoidance of CO2 emissions.

*What are the potential climate impacts as a result of this proposal?* Positive climate impacts are expected as emissions from the estate reduce in pursuit of the net zero target.

*Will the proposal contribute to Glasgow's net zero carbon target?* The projects outlined contribute directly to delivery of the City's net zero carbon target.

**Privacy and Data  
Protection Impacts:**

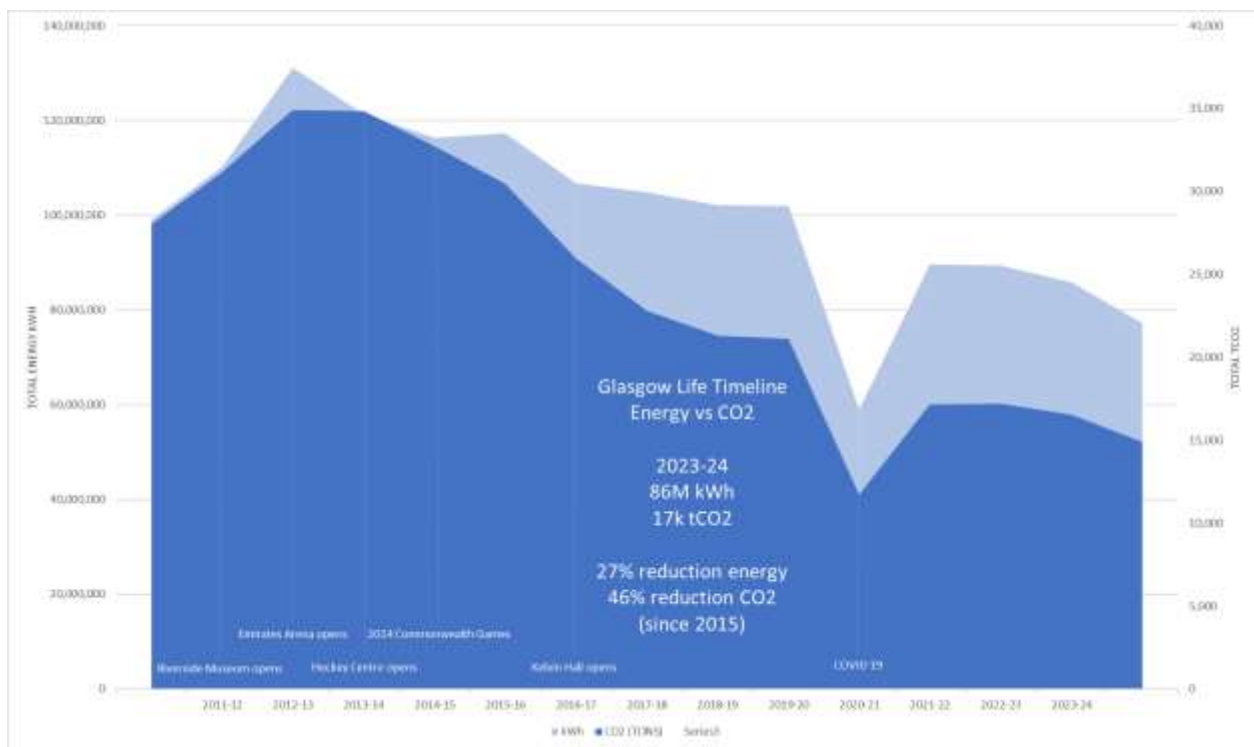
Are there any potential  
data protection impacts No  
as a result of this report  
Y/N

**12. Recommendations**

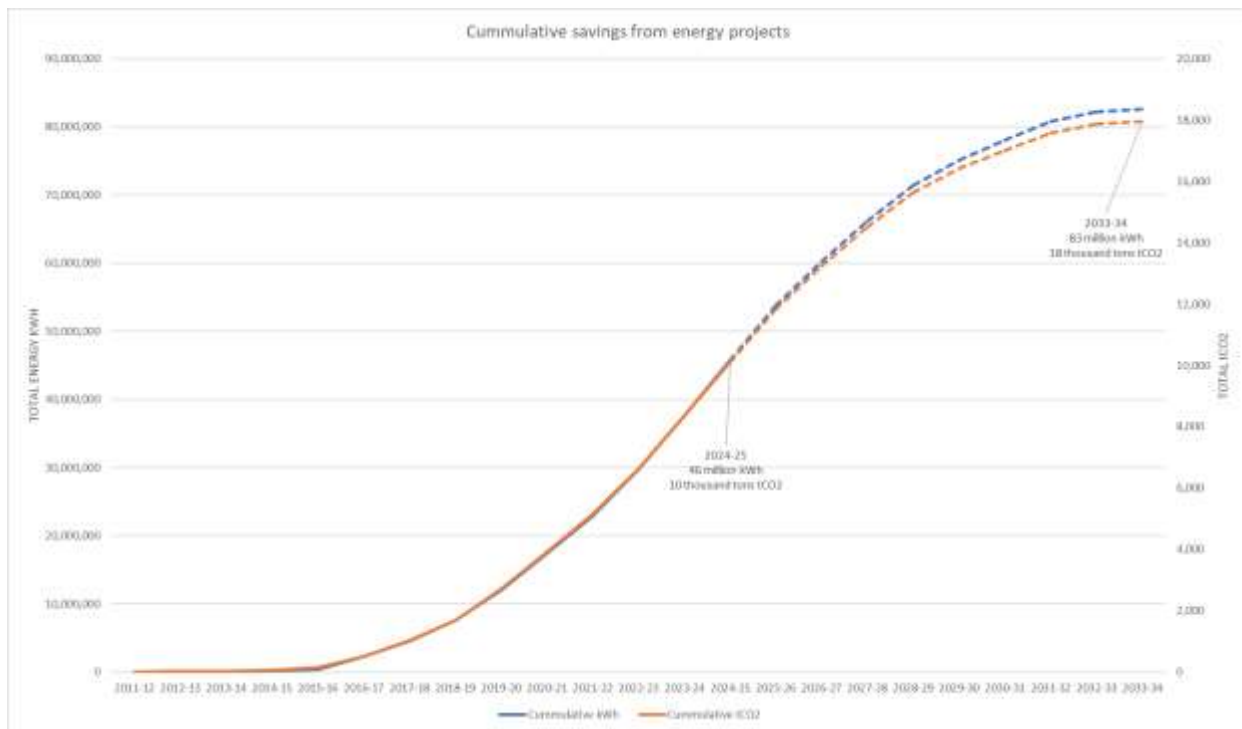
It is recommended Committee:

- Note the content of this paper.

## Appendix 1



## Appendix 2



Cumulative savings from energy projects completed between 2011 and 2025

- Yearly energy savings estimated at the time of project completion
- tCO2 calculated from conversion factors applied to estimated yearly energy savings

Assumes project will deliver estimated yearly energy savings for 10 years after completion

### Appendix 3: SECR Report 2023/2024

Scope	Energy Source	Consumption	Units	Scope	kg CO2e	tCO2e	Emissions Calculation
1. Gas	Gas – total kWh (kilowatt-hours) used for the year taken from gas bills	56,302,555.57	kWh	Scope 1	10,299,366.03	10,299.37	56,302,556 kWh * 0.18292893 (2023 fuels, natural gas conversion factor kWh (gross CV) to kg CO2e) = 10,299,366.03 kg CO2e = 10,299.37 tCO2e
2. Electricity	Electricity – total kWh (kilowatt-hours) used for the year taken from electricity bills	29,470,344.60	kWh	Scope 2	6,102,550.64	6,102.55	29,470,345 kWh * 0.20707429 (2023 fuels, electricity conversion factor kWh to kg CO2e) = 6,102,550.64 kg CO2e = 6,102.55 tCO2e
2. Indirect emissions	Indirect energy emissions (leased property). Electricity - total kWh (kilowatt-hours) used for the year taken from electricity recharge bills	27,062.00	kWh	Scope 2	5,603.84	5.60	27,062 kWh * 0.20707429 (2023 fuels, electricity conversion factor kWh to kg CO2e) = 5,603.84 kg CO2e = 5.60 tCO2e
3. Transmission/distribution	Indirect energy emissions - transmission and distribution (electricity). Total kWh (kilowatt-hours) used for the year taken from electricity bills	29,470,344.60	kWh	Scope 3	527,964.51	527.96	29,470,345 kWh * 0.01791511 (2023 transmission and distribution, electricity conversion factor kWh to kg CO2e) = 527,964.51 kg CO2e = 527.96 tCO2e
3. Transmission/distribution	Indirect energy emissions - transmission and distribution (district heating system). Total kWh (kilowatt-hours) used for the year taken from end of year statement	2,670,019.00	kWh	Scope 3	25,242.03	25.24	2,670,019 kWh * 0.00945388 (2023 transmission and distribution, district heat conversion factor kWh to kg CO2e) = 25,242.03 kg CO2e = 25.24 tCO2e
3. Water supply & treatment	Indirect energy emissions - water supply. Total annual m3 (cubic meters) used taken from water bills	184,918.00	m3	Scope 3	32,672.15	32.67	184,918 m3 * 0.17668455 (2023 water supply, conversion factor m3 to kg CO2e) = 32,672.15 kg CO2e = 32.67 tCO2e
3. Water supply & treatment	Indirect energy emissions - water treatment. Total annual m3 (cubic meters) used taken from water bills	165,883.15	m3	Scope 3	33,395.31	33.40	165,883 m3 * 0.20131829 (2023 water treatment, conversion factor m3 to kg CO2e) = 33,395.31 kg CO2e = 33.40 tCO2e

Scope	Energy Source	Consumption	Units	Scope	kg CO2e	tCO2e	Emissions Calculation
3. Waste	Indirect energy emissions - waste. Total annual tonnes calculated from waste bills. Assumes 71% of all waste is treated via the GRREC (estimate provided by NRS)	4,403.90	Tonnes	Scope 3	517,903.97	517.90	Total waste 4,404 tonnes = 517,903.97 kg CO2e = 517.90 tCO2e (see breakdown below)
	DMR - recycled	757.76	Tonnes	Scope 3	16,125.76	16.13	758 tonnes * 21.28080724 (2023 waste, commercial and industrial waste closed loop conversion factor tonnes to kg CO2e) = 16,125.76 kg CO2e = 16.13 tCO2e
	DMR - landfill	309.51	Tonnes	Scope 3	2,749.71	2.75	310 tonnes * 8.88413013 (2023 waste, commercial and industrial waste landfill conversion factor tonnes to kg CO2e) = 2,749.71 kg CO2e = 2.75 tCO2e
	Food - recycled	32.01	Tonnes	Scope 3	285.31	0.29	32 tonnes * 8.91242171 (2023 waste, organic food and drink anaerobic digestion waste conversion factor tonnes to kg CO2e) = 285.31 kg CO2e = .29 tCO2e
	Food - landfill	13.08	Tonnes	Scope 3	9,155.61	9.16	13 tonnes * 700.20988175 (2023 waste, organic food and drink landfill waste conversion factor tonnes to kg CO2e) = 9,155.61 kg CO2e = 9.16 tCO2e
	Glass - recycled	142.08	Tonnes	Scope 3	3,023.68	3.02	142 tonnes * 21.28080724 (2023 waste, glass closed loop waste conversion factor tonnes to kg CO2e) = 3,023.68 kg CO2e = 3.02 tCO2e
	Glass - landfill	58.03	Tonnes	Scope 3	515.59	0.52	58 tonnes * 8.88413013 (2023 waste, glass landfill waste conversion factor tonnes to kg CO2e) = 515.59 kg CO2e = .52 tCO2e
	Residual - processed	2,194.91	Tonnes	Scope 3	19,561.95	19.56	2,195 tonnes * 8.91242171 (2023 waste, waste combustion conversion factor tonnes to kg CO2e) = 19,561.95 kg CO2e = 19.56 tCO2e
	Residual - landfill	896.51	Tonnes	Scope 3	466,486.36	466.49	897 tonnes * 520.33474346 (2023 waste, commercial and industrial waste landfill conversion factor tonnes to kg CO2e) = 466,486.36 kg CO2e = 466.49 tCO2e
3. Transport	Transport – total mileage for fuel costs reimbursed from staff claims = 47,570.00	47,570.00	Miles	Scope 3	12,756.73	12.76	47,570 miles 0.2681675 (2023 managed assets vehicles, average car conversion factor miles to kgCO2e, unknown fuel)= 12,756.73 kgCO2e = 12.76 tCO2e
	Total						17,557,455 kg CO2e 17,557 tCO2e
	Intensity ratio	Emissions data (tCO2e) compared with an appropriate business activity (staff numbers as per end of 2023-24, full time equivalent)					17,557 tCO2e / 1780.45 Staff = 10.15 tCO2e per capita
Energy efficiency measures		In 2023-24, Glasgow Life invested £1,839,845 in energy projects including LED lighting, lighting controls, variable speed drives, BMS upgrades and water saving devices. Energy savings are estimated to be 1,051,942 kWh per year, with a carbon reduction of approximately 263 tCO2e per year.					