



Sustainability at Homme House

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Our Purpose: Wedding-Supported Conservation

Our purpose is simple - to conserve and nurture the place we call home by enabling the couples and guests we host to contribute to a wider conservation legacy.

Weddings represent a profound moment of mutual commitment in couples' lives. We give this moment a home, and hope to root the vows exchanged and love shared in a concrete and enduring wider legacy which makes a positive contribution to our beautiful corner of Herefordshire.

Ultimately, this means fostering a new approach to the weddings which take place at Homme - one which makes an incredibly special event even more so through the conscious choices made, and the legacy left.

Scope

As a venue we operate predominantly on a 'dry hire' basis, offering every couple as much flexibility as possible to realise their own vision for their wedding day, with external partners - recommended by us or sourced from further afield - for food and drink, as well as all the other aspects of a wedding day.

At this stage in our journey towards a more sustainable business our priority is the venue-centric actions we can take to lower our impact, with specific focus on Scope 1 and 2 emissions related to carbon emissions, water, energy and waste. These actions will seek to impact both our wedding and holiday let activity.

However, we recognise that much of the impact of our business activity lies in our supply chain, both upstream and downstream, and associated Scope 3 emissions. We are working to better understand and quantify these emissions (or estimate them where necessary), with the aim of auditing our supply chain to switch or exert influence where positive changes can be made.

Our expectation is that our total Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions per wedding should fall year-on-year. In the short to medium term we expect our Scope 3 emissions to rise as more sources are included in our reporting. We are committed to reducing those elements within our control or influence.

While the crisis we face is global, our focus is local. We seek to have the greatest possible positive impact on our immediate environs and community - the buildings and wider grounds at Homme, the parish of Much Marcle and the local Herefordshire countryside. In parallel to our sustainability actions we are undertaking a 10 year management plan for the 60 acres of woodland at Homme and a conservation grazing programme to restore, conserve and manage 110 acres of parkland grassland to make it as species rich as possible. Both projects seek to maximise benefits for biodiversity, and in doing so their carbon sequestration potential, as we seek to lower the net total footprint of activities at Homme.

This sustainability policy outlines our commitment to sustainable practices at Homme, led by Charlie on behalf of the family team. Our aims, short term (next 12 months) and longer term (next 24-48 months) actions are outlined.

Our Carbon Footprint

Our annual emissions data is displayed below.

Scope 1 emissions are quantified using actual supplier/supply data where possible (bioenergy represents an estimate of numbers of fires and weight of seasoned logs per fire).

Scope 2 emissions are quantified using meter readings.

Scope 3 team commuting emissions are quantified based on rota, vehicle type and travel distance. Waste disposal emissions are based on estimates of quantities composted, sent to recycling (open or closed loop) and landfill. Other Scope 3 emissions will be added as our supply chain is audited and emissions data available.

<i>Scope 1</i>	<i>Tonnes CO₂e</i>
Heating (Oil)	41.5
Cooking (LPG)	0.53
Bioenergy (Wood Fires)	0.16
Owned machinery (Diesel)	2.76
<i>Scope 2</i>	
Electricity	2.3
<i>Scope 3</i>	
Employee Commuting	1.71
Waste Disposal	1.17
<i>Total</i>	<i>50.13</i>

What is 1 tonne of Carbon?

The electricity to power a 40W lightbulb for almost 7 1/2 years.

Around 3,500 miles in a medium size petrol car.

A one way economy flight from London to Chicago.

Sustainability Objectives

Carbon Emissions

Our aim is to be net zero by 2035-40.

Our carbon footprint calculations show that our oil fired heating system accounts for more than 80% of our total Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions. Given the very high cost of replacing this system we estimate our net zero target date to be between 2035 and 2040. As a next we will draft a carbon reduction plan to better define the most ambitious target date possible, and investigate the pros and cons of a staged switchover from oil fired to renewable systems for individual buildings on the Estate in sequence.

In the meantime we will pursue other actions to reduce our emissions, and continue to limit the number of weddings we host each calendar year, and open our home across the period of the year in which the requirement for heating is minimised (Apr-Oct).

As part of our sustainability drive we have launched a sustainability focused midweek wedding offering specifically targeted at conscious couples aiming to make their weddings as planet-friendly as possible. We have also instigated a system to provide couples with inspiration and tips on lowering the emissions associated with their weddings.

Short term

We will:

- Use Ecologi to offset emissions in the short term
- Define a carbon reduction plan & report annually
- Calculate the carbon footprint of a typical Homme wedding as a reference point for sustainability actions
- Investigate how to improve the thermal performance of the Main House, Coach House and Tower with better insulation where possible

Longer term

We will:

- Confirm a deadline for our journey to net zero (once our emissions and carbon reduction pathway are better quantified)
- Retire our LPG boiler and connect the hot water supply to an (existing) immersion tank system
- Upgrade our LPG catering kitchen oven to an electric induction oven
- Introduce a zoned heating system in the Coach House
- Replace oil fired boilers with low carbon/renewable heating & energy system (heat pump & solar)
- Undertake conservation actions on site where possible to support biodiversity and drive carbon sequestration, including conservation grazing led meadow restoration across the parkland
- Roll out a lower impact wedding offering for all weddings at Homme, including weekends

Waste

Our aim is to make as efficient use of resources as possible, minimising waste to landfill wherever possible

We have audited our housekeeping supplies and switched to more planet-friendly alternatives where appropriate, including WGAC toilet paper, a refill system for cleaning products and toiletries, and higher concentrated bio cleaning and washing products to minimise packaging waste.

We have instigated a paper-free wedding management system, and eliminated all single use plastics where possible. Refillable glass water bottles are provided in all bedrooms. We offer a list of equipment couples can borrow for their weddings, adding to it with donated items over time. We use leftover food waste for in house staff meals where possible. Unclaimed lost property is donated to local charities at the end of each wedding season as appropriate.

Our apple harvest from the Walled Garden is pressed locally (c. 3 miles away) to provide 'Homme Pommes' breakfast juice for overnight guests. We have planted herb and perennial cutting gardens to provide ingredients and blooms for use on site.

We segregate all waste for (mixed) recycling, food waste composting, green waste composting and landfill. We have invested in a hot composting system for the disposal of on site food waste (the compost is used in the garden).

Short term

We will:

- Set up an additional waste channel for plastics which can be recycled at large supermarkets
- Instigate a system to quantify our waste to landfill to track & report it as we seek to minimise waste to landfill
- Upgrade signage for our bin system to minimise contamination
- Instigate a bin liner-free system for all guest bins
- Discourage single use decor/prop items for weddings, and encourage use of hired, secondhand or recycled & recyclable items
- Encourage & facilitate gifting/reuse of leftover flowers, food and drink

Longer term

We will:

- Instigate a blacklist for certain items (e.g. flip flops, glow sticks, single use cameras)
- Develop ways for wedding leftovers/waste to be reused or given extended life e.g. flower drying & arrangement service, wine vinegars

Energy

Our aim is to minimise our energy use and decarbonise where possible

We have quantified our energy-related Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions across domestic heating oil, biofuel, LPG and electricity.

We have switched Coach House and Tower energy tariffs to a supplier with 100% renewable energy plan. Lightbulb use across all buildings has been audited and inventoried, and switched to LED where possible.

We use the natural ventilation/cooling/heating systems (cellars/shutter/windows) designed into the historic buildings as much as possible. We host events in April-October only to minimise the requirement for lighting and heating, and switch off lights and heating systems when not hosting. We switch off oil fired aga in warmer months to minimise oil use.

Short term

We will:

- Switch our Main House electricity tariffs to an eco supplier
- Upgrade our signage to encourage guests to adopt energy saving behaviours while at Homme
- Conduct a digital audit and make changes to minimise our digital footprint - ideas include green hosting, using google drive instead of email attachments, minimising email signature file size and using a greater proportion of local rather than cloud storage

Longer term

We will:

- Upgrade to more energy efficient appliances at end of life
- Electrify grounds machinery when machinery is replaced
- Introduce sensor systems for communal lighting areas
- Investigate energy generation options at Homme (e.g. solar)

Transport

Our aim is to minimise the impact of transport and travel for the purposes of Estate maintenance & event gatherings.

We live and work at Homme as a family team, with the support of a wonderful small team of four who live locally in Ledbury. We have quantified their annual emissions for the purpose of working at Homme.

Homme's rural location means it is poorly served by public transport. In terms of minimising the impact of travel for weddings we host, we have no minimum number of guests, are lucky enough to have a church on the edge of our grounds as well as a civil licence, provide on site accommodation for up to 34, and recommend both accommodation providers in the vicinity and local suppliers.

We have instigated a visual kite mark system in our supplier directory to indicate local suppliers based under 20 miles from Homme.

Short term

We will:

- Contract locally where possible, and offset the annual emissions of the team's travel
- Encourage the use of local suppliers to reduce the total supplier miles associated with Homme weddings
- Estimate the emissions associated with Homme wedding guests' travel
- Review our online ordering systems to seek opportunities to reduce deliveries to Homme

Longer term

We will:

- Install EV charging points at Homme
- Develop a system for coordinating transport sharing options for offsite guests

Water

Our aim is to minimise mains water use & wastage in buildings & grounds

Our mains water supply to all properties is currently not metered. We harvest rainwater in water butts for limited watering the garden (primarily pots).

Short term

We will:

- Expand rainwater harvesting for use in the gardens
- Build & supply no cloth reception tables to reduce the table linen washing requirement associated with wedding receptions
- Adapt toilets for low flush where possible using cistern inserts
- Install a mains water meter/sensor to measure total building water use

Longer term

We will:

- Install shower aspirator heads & low flow taps on bathroom upgrades, and replace baths with showers
- Install a rainwater harvesting reservoir for garden use
- Adapt garden planting for drought tolerance to minimise watering requirements

Supply Chain

Our aim is to optimise our use of on site resources to lower external sourcing where possible, and to audit our supply chain to switch or exert influence where positive changes can be made

We make as much as we can of the materials on site to minimise external sourcing and buying new. The house is furnished with antiques, secondhand furniture and objects collected over generations, which is gently renovated and renewed as required. Homme-grown timber was processed on site to build 18 wedding ceremony benches, while furniture in the Summerhouse, Coach House and Main House is reupholstered on site.

Short term

We will:

- Engage and partner with wedding suppliers to promote sustainable wedding practices (e.g. in supplier tips shared with booked couples)
- Audit our supply chain (using a cloud accounting export in the first instance) to research our areas of Scope 3 emissions and estimate/quantify them where possible
- Source locally through sustainable suppliers where possible (e.g. for fencing materials)
- Develop a more comprehensive local sustainable food and drink supplier list as an option for wedding couples and for produce offered at breakfast for overnight guests
- Increase the proportion of home made produce offered for overnight guests' breakfasts - granola, bread, jams, breakfast fruit from the walled garden, fruit compotes from frozen produce out of season

Longer term

We will:

- Evolve our recommendation basis for 'sustainable wedding suppliers' beyond travel distance only
- Instigate an incentive/reward system for couples to promote sustainable wedding choices
- Offer estate-grown culinary herbs/flowers for catering & cocktails
- Propagate garden plants & trees on site using a nursery area to offer for weddings

Team & Community

Our aims are to provide leadership and advocate for more sustainable wedding practices, and to invest in our community through the commercial activity at Homme

Homme is very much a shared endeavour - it is only through the support of couples who choose to host their weddings here that we are able to continue the work of conserving the buildings and grounds. We seek to stay in touch with our couples as members of a growing community who have contributed to the conservation of Homme, and are part of its history, and have recently instigated a commemorative conservation focused tree planting offer across the garden, parkland and woodlands.

While the crises we face are global, our focus is local. Through our holiday lets, weddings and other events we support the local hospitality economy, but aspire to better harness the positivity at the heart of weddings to make a more tangible positive impact at Homme and in the local area. We now have a relationship with Much Marcle Primary School, with whom we have partnered on two nature-based initiatives at Homme (meadow restoration and tree planting).

We have recently launched a sustainability-focused midweek wedding offering. Each wedding we hold will make a positive contribution to our local community by 5% of the total venue hire revenue being donated equally to Much Marcle Primary School and Much Marcle Community Shop Ltd, our local initiative to develop a sustainable shop, Post Office and café, as a vital services and friendly social hub for the local community.

We specifically recommend excellent wedding professionals local to us (under 20 miles). We are often contacted by new wedding professionals seeking relationships with venues, and have set up a dedicated suppliers page on our website signposting our sustainability journey and policy, encouraging those who share our ethos and passion to get in touch to discuss opportunities for collaboration on lower impact weddings.

We are supported by a lean, local team - a part time, self-employed groundsman/gardener and three part time, self-employed housekeepers. We are committed to paying above the Living Wage.

Short term

We will:

- Seek opportunities to learn more about sustainability initiatives through our affiliation with the Sustainable Wedding Alliance
- Establish a (local) network of sustainability focused wedding professionals to share ideas & best practice
- Develop an ongoing partnership with the local primary school for nature-based learning opportunities

Longer term

We will:

- Host sustainability themed Open Days

This policy will be updated annually at the end of each wedding season.

We welcome collaboration with like-minded people and businesses seeking to make a positive impact on people and planet. Feel free to email us at hello@hommehouse.co.uk.