

RISE

Retrofit information,
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Advice Pack

Carbon Literacy for the Supply Chain

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www.riseretrofit.org.uk

Overview

The transition to net zero is a key priority for business, driven by growing expectations from government, employees and customers alike. Organisations across sectors are under increasing pressure to take meaningful action to reduce their carbon emissions and improve their environmental impact. By integrating sustainable practices into operations, companies are better able to contribute to the environment, strengthen their reputation, attract top talent and build customer loyalty. One such meaningful action is becoming certified Carbon Literate.

Carbon Literacy® refers to the understanding of climate change and the environmental impacts of our daily activities. While the term has appeared sporadically in scientific literature and everyday conversations, it is now specifically linked to the [Carbon Literacy Project](#).

What is Carbon Literacy?

‘An awareness of the carbon costs and impacts of everyday activities and the ability and motivation to reduce emissions, on an individual, community and organisational basis.’ – The Carbon Literacy Project.

The Carbon Literacy Project is a globally recognised charity dedicated to educating and empowering individuals to minimise their personal carbon footprints and drive broader efforts to reduce carbon emissions. The Carbon Literacy Project facilitates training and certification of Carbon Literacy courses.

Carbon Literacy goes beyond traditional training by providing up-to-date insights into climate science and encourages learners to think critically about their role in the transition to a low-carbon society. Rather than simply delivering information, Carbon Literacy equips individuals with the knowledge, confidence and tools to take meaningful climate action in ways that align with their personal and professional contexts.

Key Concepts of Carbon Literacy

Carbon Literacy covers several fundamental topics to help individuals understand and address climate change. These key concepts include:

- **Carbon footprint:** Understanding the carbon footprint of an entity, individual or community and how it contributes to global emissions.
- **The science of global warming:** Learning the scientific basis of global warming and how it impacts the planet.
- **The politics of climate change:** Exploring the political landscape surrounding climate action and the roles governments play in addressing the crisis.
- **Legislation and support:** Examining the laws and frameworks designed to support carbon reduction and climate resilience.

- **Geographical and health effects:** Understanding how climate change affects different regions and the health consequences it may bring.

The main aim of Carbon Literacy is to teach the basics of climate change science while raising awareness of its global and local status. The training emphasises how individual actions can have a direct impact on the environment. Participants gain a good working understanding of the scientific findings behind climate change, engaging in active discussions on relevant topics. They are encouraged to develop practical solutions, which are further explored and refined to maximise their effectiveness.

What benefits can Carbon Literacy provide to retrofit?

- 1. Reduce carbon emissions and costs:** According to the Carbon Literacy Project, simple behavioural changes, such as switching off unused equipment and improving efficiency can reduce energy consumption by 5 – 20%, cutting both emissions and costs. Carbon Literate employees are well-equipped to drive these changes, achieving carbon savings of 5 – 15% per person.
- 2. Increase competitive advantage:** Sustainability and environmental credentials are powerful differentiators in today's market. Achieving Carbon Literacy certification provides tangible proof of commitment to climate action, enhancing brand reputation, customer loyalty and potentially improving profitability.
- 3. Building resilience against regulatory changes:** As sustainability becomes an increasingly important factor in regulatory frameworks, Carbon Literacy certification helps organisations stay ahead of evolving standards. It is also becoming a common requirement in government-funded projects, ensuring businesses are well-positioned for future compliance.
- 4. Develop skills and strengthen business resilience:** Carbon Literacy training enhances skills in risk management, compliance and innovation, helping businesses adapt to climate-related challenges. Employees with sustainability knowledge can identify efficiencies, optimise operations and develop new environmentally sound solutions.
- 5. Educating for the future:** Investing in Carbon Literacy training benefits your company today and prepares it for a sustainable future. By equipping your team with climate knowledge, you empower individuals to make impactful changes both personally and professionally, contributing to a more sustainable world.
- 6. Engaged and motivated workforce:** Employees who feel their work aligns with meaningful environmental action are more engaged, motivated and productive. Carbon Literacy training fosters a sense of purpose by equipping staff with the knowledge and confidence to contribute to sustainability goals, creating a positive workplace culture where individuals feel valued and empowered.
- 7. Informed and satisfied residents:** Transparency and education are key to retrofit uptake. When residents understand the environmental benefits, they are more

likely to accept measures, reducing drop-outs. Some measures, like heat pumps and moving away from gas, can be challenging if alternatives are unclear.

How you can implement Carbon Literacy in retrofit

Integrating Carbon Literacy into retrofit projects ensures that sustainability is embedded at every stage, from workforce training to resident engagement. By incorporating climate awareness into daily operations, organisations can maximise the environmental and social impact of retrofit initiatives.

- 1. Equip staff with Carbon Literacy training:** Providing Carbon Literacy training to employees ensures that they understand the environmental impact of retrofit projects and can confidently communicate sustainability benefits. A well-informed workforce can drive meaningful change by embedding low-carbon practices into their work.
- 2. Engage residents through sustainability messaging:** Incorporating carbon awareness into resident communications helps build understanding and support for retrofit measures. Clear and engaging messaging on energy efficiency, emissions reductions and long-term benefits can encourage sustainable behaviour changes.
- 3. Incorporate carbon awareness in installation handover:** During installation handovers, highlighting the environmental benefits of upgrades helps residents see the positive impacts of retrofit measures. Providing simple guidance on maximising energy efficiency ensures that the improvements deliver lasting carbon savings.
- 4. Acknowledge carbon savings in completion notes:** Sending installation completion notes that highlight the carbon savings achieved reinforces the impact of retrofit work. Recognising residents' contributions to sustainability fosters engagement and encourages continued energy-efficient behaviour.
- 5. Measure and report impact:** Tracking and reporting on the carbon savings from retrofit projects demonstrates progress towards sustainability goals. Regular impact reporting helps organisations showcase achievements, refine strategies and communicate success to stakeholders.

Useful links

- You can access the Carbon Literacy Project's website [here](#).
- You can view upcoming Carbon Literacy events [here](#).
- You can find more information on Carbon Literacy for social housing [here](#).
- You can find research on Carbon Literacy [here](#).



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