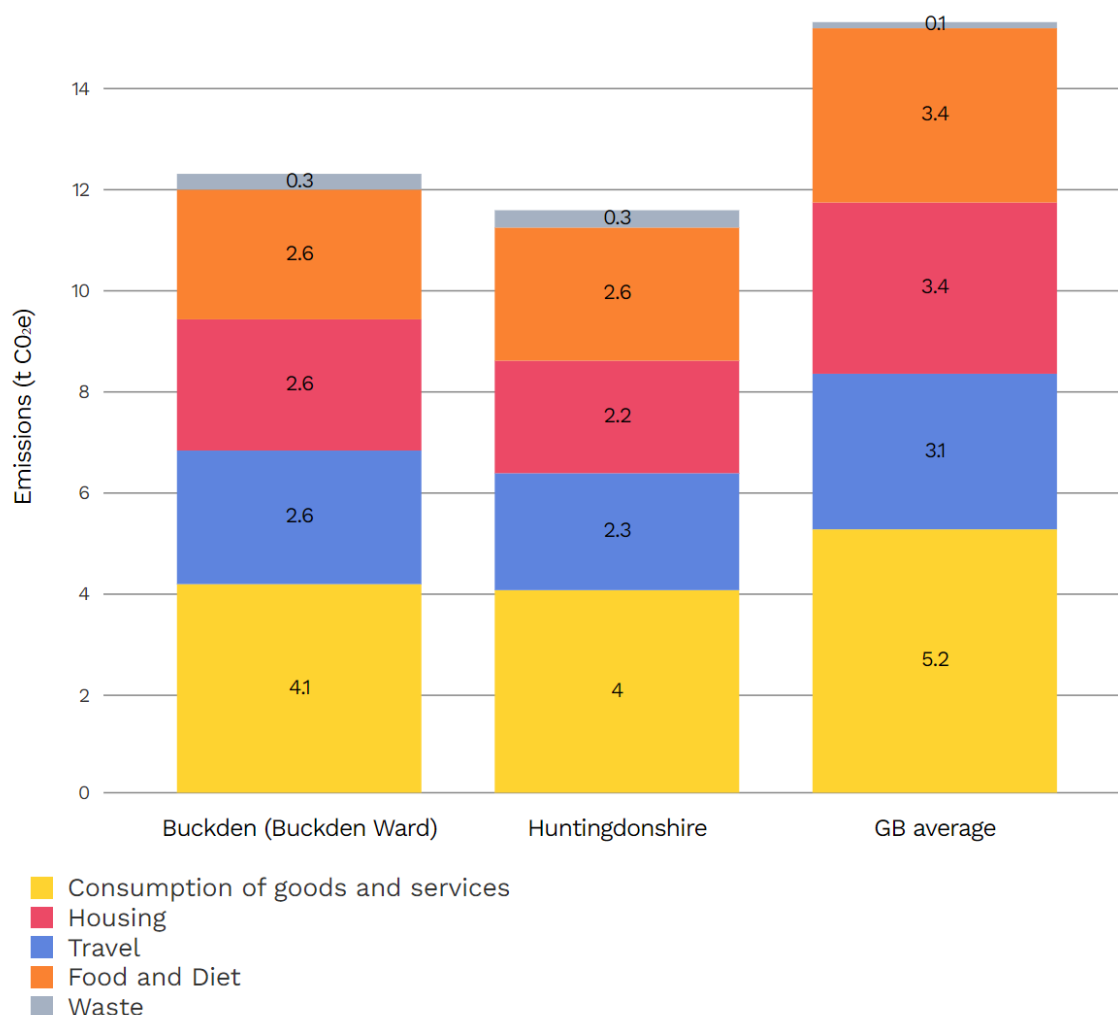


Update to Buckden Village Carbon Footprint

Great News: the Impact website has new data and our village footprint per household has apparently gone down by a huge amount. This is very encouraging. Since 2022 the average emissions for Buckden have gone down from 20.2 tonnes CO₂e per household to 12.2 tonnes CO₂e i.e. a 40% reduction. As can be seen we are still ahead of the average household footprint for the district but the gap is narrowing.

In Huntingdonshire there has been a 28% reduction whilst over the country as a whole, this value is only 3%. This will have occurred due to a number of factors including the way the statistics are calculated. The process has been refined to make the parish level data more accurate/representative. However, I would like to think that our efforts to publicise ways in which to reduce energy consumption have had some influence and will be writing a new document to put in the roundabout which shows what has been achieved and will hopefully encourage everyone to keep going.

2023 summary



Consumption of Goods and Services was by far the greatest contributor to the footprint in 2022 but has been significantly reduced (37%) in 2023. This might have been expected due to the tougher economic climate. It is made up from three components:

- Goods – all household goods (not food), including homeware, toiletries, medicines, furnishings, electronic goods, appliances, & large items such as cars. (Figures here should be treated with caution since they are likely to be artificially low. It is current policy to “off-shore” carbon emissions for imported goods.)
- Services – use of services, including the maintenance and repair of home, vehicles and other equipment, banking and insurance, medical services, treatments, education costs, communications (e.g. TV, internet and phone contracts), and other fees and subscriptions.
- Other – leisure, entertainment, sporting or social activities.

The purchase of goods went up as a percentage of the consumption figures whilst spending on leisure, etc., went down. Again, indicative of “belt-tightening”. Services would be expected to remain relatively constant since these are “essential” activities to maintain a household.

Travel: saw a 47.5% reduction from 2022. The number of private journeys was reduced by 39%, which is very encouraging. Flights went down by 50%. The latter may again reflect that there was less disposable income to support spending on holidays abroad. Values for public transport also fell but the percentage of the footprint (14%) remained around the same as in 2022 (17%). This again appears to reflect the lack of suitable public transport in this rural area.

Housing: The data here are for the emissions related to heating homes. Reduction in energy usage is exciting but may have been influenced by weather patterns alongside efforts by householders to reduce their energy consumption. Nonetheless a 52% is a very large figure and economy measures undertaken by householders will have made a significant contribution to this. Possibly encouraged by the massive increase in energy bills last year. There has been a slight reduction in emissions as a result of electricity (perhaps we need to encourage people to shift to green tariffs) and a slight increase in those from the use of natural gas with a corresponding decrease in oil and LPG usage.

Food and Diet: This sector shows a 34% reduction since 2022. 69% of the emissions related to food and diet come from the consumption of meat and fish, the other 31% is made up of other foodstuffs and drink. In 2022 the corresponding figures were 53% and 47%. On first evaluation it would appear that the percentage increase in the consumption of meat and fish possibly reflects the decreased purchase of non-essentials such as alcohol, sweet treats and so on. However, it is obvious that we need to reinforce the message about how damaging to the environment a meat/fish heavy diet can be as well as the need to try to buy locally grown produce where possible.

Waste: The figures for emissions due to waste have increased across the country due to changes in the method of calculation. Waste sent to landfill creates a much higher carbon footprint than that incinerated by a factor of 20.

Gaining a better understanding of the per household carbon footprint in Buckden.

Alongside the work being done in each advisory group and over the Parish Council as a whole to reduce our impact on the environment we should also be looking at what is happening in households across the Parish. In that way we may gain a better understanding of any issues which are leading to increased emissions and thus what we can do to help advise, householders, businesses, etc. on sensible strategies to reduce these.

A recently developed online tool <https://greatcollaboration.uk/the-toolkit/> is a questionnaire which can be used to create a local picture of the actions, aspirations and needs of our local community. In turn, this anonymised information will help us to formulate directly relevant policies for a more sustainable future. I would be very grateful if you could take the time to investigate this tool and to record the actions you have already taken/intend to take/are unable to make at this time. I am including the link in the carbon footprint article for next month's Roundabout so your feedback will be very helpful. The toolkit suggests that you aim initially for a 20% uptake and the more people that use it, the better our baseline data will be.