

SURVEYORS DECLARE

Practical Guide

to help you implement sustainable practices on your journey to sustainable surveying



What is Surveyors Declare all about?

Surveyors Declare is a public commitment by Surveyors to incorporate sustainable business practices in their day-to-day operations and encouraging and supporting clients and colleagues to instil these practices in their lives also.

The Surveyors Declare document is an important resource for Surveyors that have signed up in support of the Declaration which serves as a framework and a first step for Surveyors in tackling the climate change challenge within our practices and homes.

This practical guide is intended as an additional resource for Surveyors to assist in providing some examples of how Surveyors could seek to practically implement different actions under the five commitments listed in the Declaration (Energy, Waste, Surveying Activities, Water and Biodiversity).

This document has been prepared by the SCSi Sustainability Group. This is the first publication of this practical guide and it will be reviewed and amended going forward as appropriate.

Energy



- Engage with landlords and tenants to give them ownership in the review and improvement of energy practices.
- Make resource efficiency and monitoring an integral part of property and/or facilities management programme, whether in-house or outsourced, for example, through adopting ISO 50001 for energy and/or ISO 14001 for general resource consumption in operation.
- Encourage landlord or seller and colleagues involved in the sale or rental of a buildings to focus on whether there are any specific environmental issues affecting the property before signing contracts.
- Encourage tenants and landlords to adopt sustainable practices and to integrate sustainability information into their reporting cycle.
- Promote procurement and tendering practices that are in accordance with national policies and priorities on sustainability.
- Introduce operating procedures that minimise the use of energy and water or take advice from a specialist on how this can be done.
- Adopt a maintenance strategy that includes modern, energy efficient lighting fittings, motion-controlled lighting in common areas and low-flow water plumbing and taps.
- Adopt an overall Environmental Management System for all daily operations, setting out clear targets and key performance indicators to measure performance across different property portfolios.
- Improve your training and education on resource consumption, climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning.

- Invest in training and education of colleagues on resource consumption, climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning.
- Raise awareness about resource consumption issues by displaying energy and general resource consumption and/or carbon footprint information in areas frequented by tenants, colleagues, clients, and members of the public.
- Raise the idea with clients or client facing colleagues on the potential benefits to the investment value and the running costs of the property by improving the thermal value of the building. If possible, get a survey done as to how this could be best progressed.
- Organise for an annual energy audit as part of the PPM programme for the building.
- Speak to your suppliers, especially your M&E contractors to see if they can advise of any easy wins for you in terms of improving the energy efficiency of the building.
- Promote energy efficiency amongst tenant representatives and facility managers to work together and share the knowledge on how to improve the energy efficiency in your building.
- Only use 100% renewable energy suppliers when next putting your utility contracts out to tender.
- Practice what you preach! Do not be afraid to try some of the above suggestions at home where relevant.

Waste



- Avoid unnecessary waste from refurbishment at the time of vacating the premises at the end of a lease.
- Take practical steps to reduce daily waste from business activities within the building.
- Optimise resource consumption by capturing consumption data (Metering / BMS / BIM)
- Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning.
- Engage with tenants, landlords and colleagues to minimise waste generation and promote reduce, reuse and recycling in the workplace.

Surveying Activities



- As a starting point ask your suppliers what their environmental and sustainability policies are. If they are not able to provide information, switch supplier to one who is more engaged and has a policy that they action. Or commence dialogue with them to work together on how to improve their position.

- Examples of “environmental practices” include items generally mentioned in this document. It involves things like the sourcing of raw materials, use of recycled and recyclable materials (eliminate single use plastic in your business) etc.
- Think about the carbon footprint of delivery - try to use locally sourced materials.
- Adopt and implement a sustainability policy in your own business. The SCSi has made their policy available to members to use. It is on the website at www.scsi.ie.
- Be realistic – you will not be able to change everything you do in your business activities at once. Get a plan together that is achievable and start with step 1. “Stand up, take a step, repeat”.
- Ask your clients about their sustainability policy and if appropriate see how you might be able to combine your practices with theirs.
- Talk to other surveyors about it, learn from each other. Nobody needs to re-invent the wheel.
- Encourage clients to consider the possibility of brownfield rather than greenfield development.
- Choose responsibly sourced green construction materials to reduce the embodied impacts related to energy, waste, carbon, and water.
- Make sure your employees are aware of your sustainability policy and your support for the declaration of a climate and biodiversity emergency. Encourage each of them to embrace it and act accordingly.
- Consider additional services you could provide to your clients in relation to this topic and support training and upskilling within your team.
- Integrate environmental clauses into lease contracts (green leases/green clauses)
- Make environmental stewardship an integral part of your employee’s performance review structure. This will assist significantly in the actual implementation of your plan.
- Consider how you could improve your own working environment and that of people working with you – natural light, fresh air, green spaces, provision of showers to facilitate cycling or walking to work.
- Develop a diversity management strategy and promote diversity and gender equality within both your own business and amongst subcontractors.
- Consider joining and following the practices advocated by the Irish Green Building Council.

Water



- Consider if rainwater harvesting is an option for your office, home, or projects you are working on.
- In considering landscape design, use native plants that survive without extra watering and enhance biodiversity
- Do not use your hose to water your garden or wash your car.

Biodiversity



- Look at the existing projects you are working on, the buildings you occupy (professionally and personally) and consider is there an opportunity to improve the biodiversity within those projects.
- Are there potential hard landscaping spaces that could be used in a more biodiversity friendly way.
- Can you plant a tree – the best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago, the second-best time is now!
- Consider reducing mowing of grass in the summer to encourage more natural wildflower growth.
- Plant bee friendly plants
- Consider installing a beehive.
- Do not remove lawns or planted areas to be replaced with hard landscaping – or if you do ensure you include planters.
- For new projects you are involved with ask about the inclusion and consideration of biodiversity at the design stage.... or later if you are not involved early enough for design. It is never too late to ask a question, or “plant the seed” for an idea.

