



# Overview of the PSS Environmental Sustainability Standards

# What do we know so far?

## Healthcare and climate change

WILDLIFE & BIODIVERSITY

### How climate change has pushed the koala towards 'Endangered' status

The Australian bushfire season of 2019-20 killed thousands of the marsupials and could have hastened the drop in their numbers



ACCORDING TO A 2019 BVA SURVEY

**89% of vets** said that they would like to play a more active role in the UK sustainability agenda.

#GreenTeamVet

A cartoon illustration of a green, tree-like character with arms and legs, sitting on the ground under a large green tree. The tree has the hashtag #GreenTeamVet written on its canopy. There are other smaller trees and a small green animal in the background.

**BVA**  
British Veterinary Association

NEWS

### Drug pollution is threatening the water quality of the world's rivers

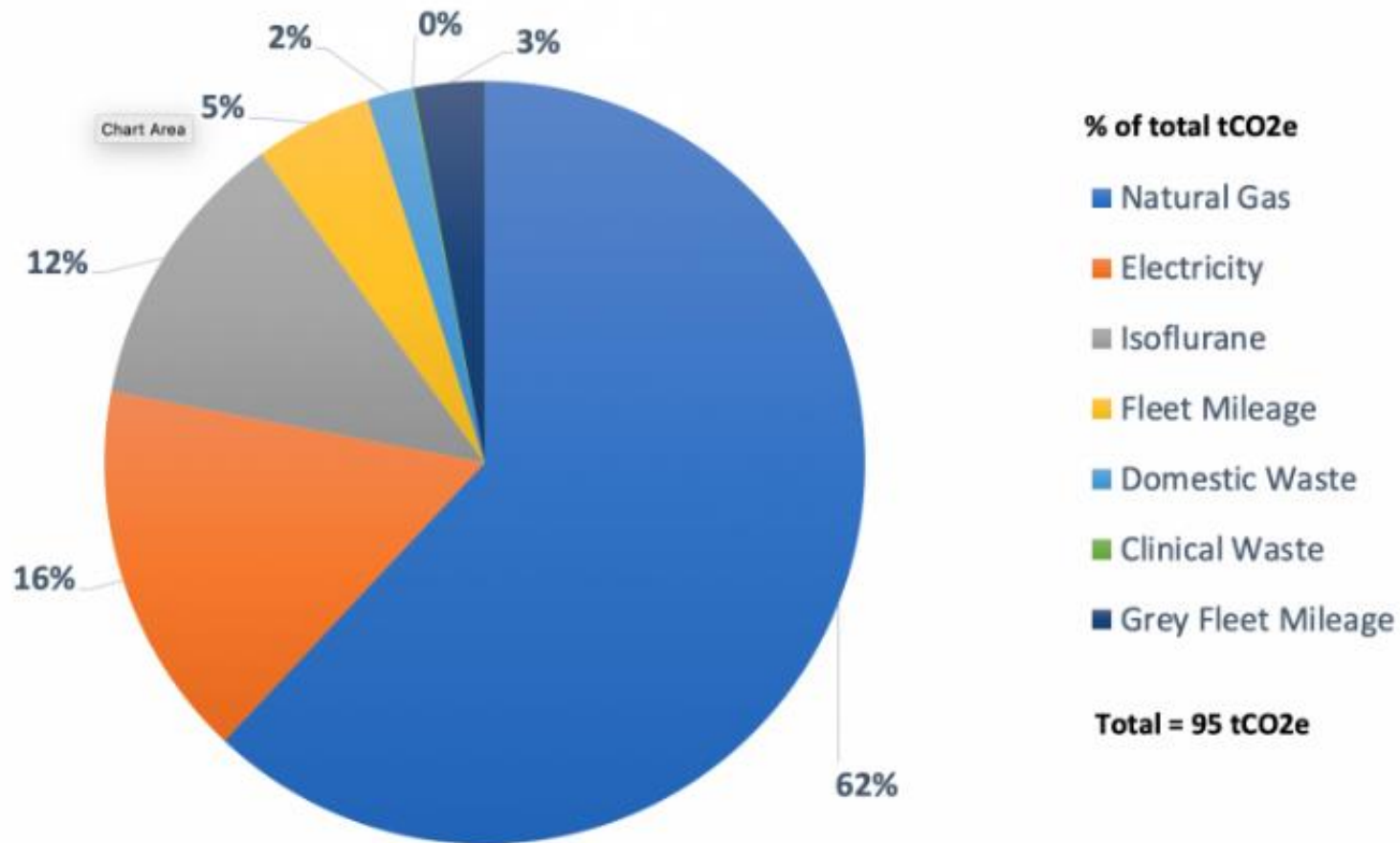
By James Ashworth  
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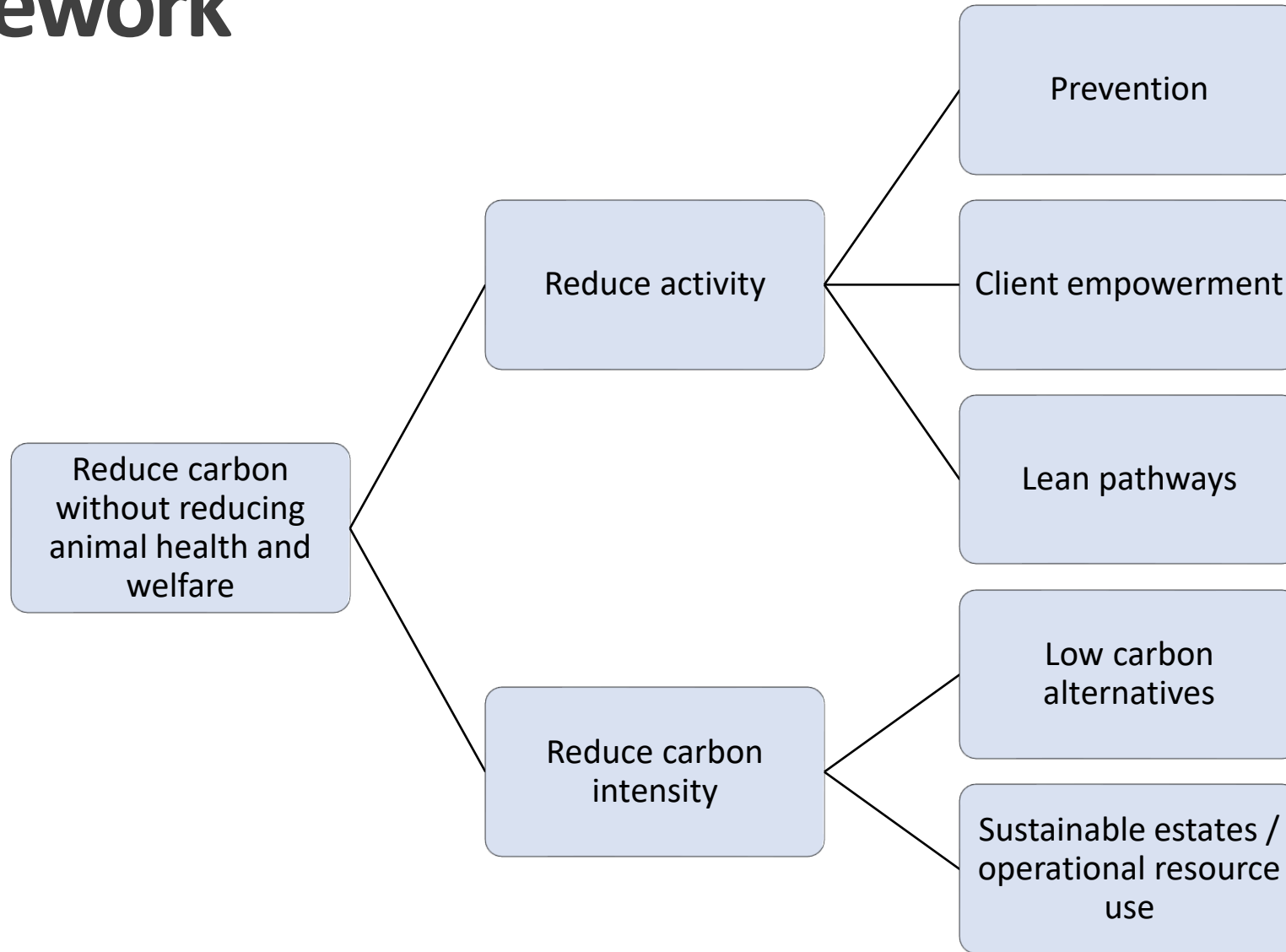
“

**Currently, over two-thirds of UK practices are signed up to the PSS, which provides a unique opportunity to have a wide-reaching impact on the overall sustainability of the profession”**

# Veterinary practice carbon hotspots



# Framework



# Key changes – takeaways

## Environmental sustainability module for equine/small animal/farm

- Core requirements x 1
- GP requirements x 8

## Two new core requirements added to medicine module

- Requirement: the practice must be able to demonstrate that when using endoparasiticides it does so responsibly, and is accountable for the choices made in such use.
- Requirement: the practice must be able to demonstrate that when using ectoparasiticides it does so responsibly, and is accountable for the choices made in such use.

# Key changes – takeaways

- Focuses on environmental sustainability
- Provides practices with the tools and structure to reduce their environmental impact including reducing greenhouse gas emissions from both their clinical and non-clinical areas of practice.

# Bringing requirements to life

- Some requirements focus on laying the foundations for a practice's sustainability journey:
- The practice has a written environmental sustainability policy (core)
- The practice has appointed a sustainability champion or created a sustainability team (GP)
- The practice must have a system in place for team members to suggest sustainability ideas and improvements (GP)



# Requirement:

The practice has a written environmental sustainability policy (Core level)

## To achieve this

- The practice must have an environmental sustainability policy which shows senior commitment e.g. signed by practice manager/director.
- Policy should be available to view e.g. on website.
- Policy must be shared with all team members e.g. in staff meeting/via email.

## Key resource

Environmental sustainability policy template

# Requirement:

The practice has appointed a sustainability champion or created a sustainability team (GP level)

## To achieve this

The practice must have a named sustainability champion or a sustainability team/green group with clear named members.

*Assessors will want to see evidence such as:*

- Nominated sustainability champion in the sustainability policy.
- For solo vets, having a written sustainability policy is enough as it is assumed they are the sustainability champion.
- Green group that meet regularly e.g. once a quarter.

# Requirement:

The practice must have a system in place for team members to suggest sustainability ideas and improvements (GP level)

## To achieve this

The practices must have a system in place for team members to suggest sustainability ideas.

*Assessors will ask team members how they would raise a sustainability suggestion/idea plus evidence such as:*

- Suggestions board and /or box in staff room.
- Opportunity to add sustainability ideas to team meeting agenda.
- Raising suggestions through nominated sustainability champion/team.
- For solo vets, having a sustainability policy is enough.

# Requirement:

The practice communicates its sustainability achievements to its clients (GP level)

## To achieve this

The practice must have evidence that sustainability achievements have/are being communicated to clients.

*Assessors will want to see evidence such as:*

- Information on practice website
- Social media posts
- Waiting room displays
- Sustainability achievements included in newsletters

# Requirement:

## Routine appointments to and for clients are planned to reduce mileage (GP level)

### To achieve this

Practices must show awareness of how their mileage and/or clients mileage can be reduced through appointment planning.

*Assessors do not need physical evidence but will speak to team members to understand their awareness and how routine appointments are planned to avoid unnecessary mileage.*

- Small animal examples: consolidating appointments to avoid unnecessary journeys, medication checks at time of vaccines etc.
- Farm/equine examples: 'area days' for planned routine appointments, car share to planned appointments, telemedicine etc.

# Requirement:

The practice advises clients to return unused medications to the practice for appropriate safe disposal (GP level)

## To achieve this

The practice should show evidence of advising clients on returning unused medications to the practice for safe disposal.

*Assessors will want to see evidence e.g.*

- Posters in waiting room
- Email to clients, social media posts
- Team members informing clients when they pick up prescriptions
- Information on website



# Requirement:

The practice demonstrates that they employ techniques to minimise anaesthetic gas usage (GP level)

## To achieve this

Practices should be able to demonstrate awareness of the environmental impact of anaesthetic gases and highlight one way in which they are addressing it.

*Assessors will talk to team members to understand awareness with evidence of ways the practice is addressing anaesthetic gas usage e.g.*

- Using local/regional anaesthetic where appropriate: SOP for use
- Optimising flow rate: guidance/training on flow rates for practice team
- Reducing nitrous oxide usage, switch to sevoflurane from isoflurane: evidence of reduction in use or policy to stop/ reduce use.
- Increased use PIVA/TIVA where clinically appropriate: SOP/training

# Requirement:

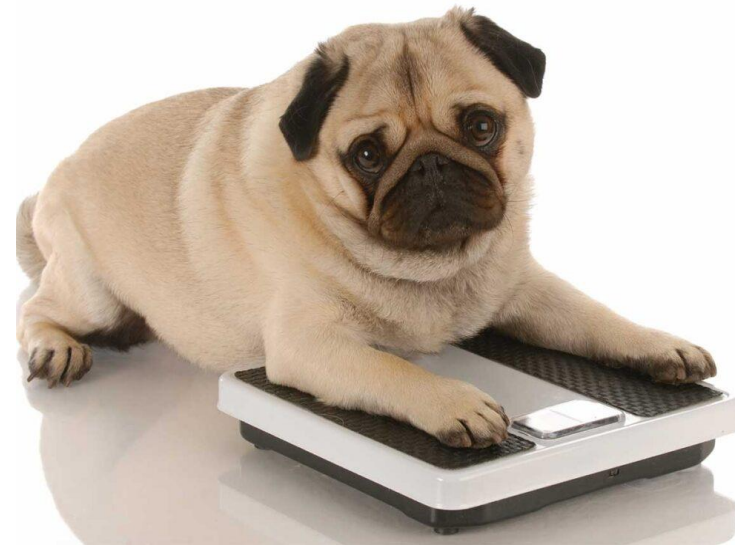
The practice provides resources on preventative healthcare (GP level)

## To achieve this

The practice should be able to show that they offer at least one resource on preventative healthcare.

*Assessors will want to see evidence such as:*

- Information on the website with resources on preventative healthcare
- Offering diabetes/ obesity clinics





# Requirement:

**The practice undertakes a waste survey at least annually and can demonstrate that the results are analysed and, where appropriate, action has been taken as a result (GP level) (1)**

## To achieve this

- The practice should be able to show that a waste survey has been undertaken in the last year.
- The waste survey must show a review of the practices waste facilities, the results of the findings and any resulting actions.
- Assessors will discuss the waste survey results with practice team members to understand whether an action has been taken as a result.
- Assessors are not expected to look through bins to check for correct waste segregation.

# Requirement:

The practice undertakes a waste survey at least annually and can demonstrate that the results are analysed and, where appropriate, action has been taken as a result (GP level) (CONTINUED)

Example waste survey steps	Example survey actions
<p><u>Review your practices waste facilities.</u> Do you have enough recycling bins? Are bins labelled correctly?</p>	<p>More recycling bins. Recycling bins placed in a more accessible area.</p>
<p><u>Check correct segregation – domestic and recycling waste streams.</u> Wear appropriate PPE and have a look through the bins. Record the type of waste within them and identify the types of waste you have most/least of. Is there waste in the domestic bin that could be recycled? What are the most commonly disposed of items and could these be reduced?</p>	<p>If particular items that should be recycled end up in the domestic bin, consider labelling bins with what can/can't be disposed of.  Items that are frequently disposed of, could these items be reduced?</p>
<p><u>Check correct segregation - hazardous waste streams.</u> Talk to team members to understand what they are disposing of to ensure items such as packaging, are not being disposed of into hazardous waste streams that could go into domestic or recycling bins.</p>	<p>If particular items that should be recycled/put in domestic waste end up in the hazardous waste, consider labelling bins with what can/can't be disposed of.</p>
<p><u>Talk to practice team members</u> What improvements would they like to see?</p>	<p>Take action where appropriate.</p>

# Requirement:

The practice must be able to demonstrate that when using ectoparasiticides, it does so responsibly, and is accountable for the choices made in such use  
(MEDICINE MODULE – CORE LEVEL)

## To achieve this

*Assessors will talk to team members and want to see evidence such as:*

- Ectoparasiticides policy
- Guidance/use of a client decision making tool
- Waiting room poster
- Meeting notes where ectoparasiticides have been discussed

Resources for companion animals: <https://www.esccap.org/guidelines/>

[BVA, BSAVA BVZS POLICY POSITION ON PARASITICIDES](#)

[BCVA WEBSITE TO SUSTAINABILITY POLICY](#)

[BEVA WEBSITE RESPONSIBLE HORSE OWNER BOOKLETS /CLIENT INFORMATION SHEETS/SUSTAINABILITY IN EQUINE PRACTICE](#)

# Requirement:

The practice must be able to demonstrate that when using endoparasiticides, it does so responsibly, and is accountable for the choices made in such use  
(MEDICINE MODULE – CORE LEVEL)

## To achieve this

*Assessors will talk to team members and will want to see evidence e.g.*

- Endoparasiticides policy
- Guidance/use of a client decision making tool
- Waiting room poster
- Meeting notes where anthelmintics have been discussed

Resources for companion animals: <https://www.esccap.org/guidelines/>

Resources for farm: ALL AS PREVIOUS SLIDE

# How the new standards will be assessed as part of the PSS process

Requirement	Assessment
The practice communicates it's sustainability achievements to its clients (GP)	Evidence of sustainability achievements being communicated to clients e.g., on practice website, social media posts, posters in practice.
The practice has a written environmental sustainability policy (core)	Evidence of Sustainability policy supported by senior management
The practice undertakes a waste survey at least annually and can demonstrate that the results are analysed and, where appropriate, action has been taken as a result (GP)	<p>Evidence a waste survey has been undertaken in the last year.</p> <p>Survey must show a review of the practices waste facilities and the appropriate segregation of waste.</p> <p>Assessors are not expected to look through the bins and check for correct waste segregation.</p>
The practice demonstrates that they employ techniques to minimise anaesthetic gas usage (GP level)	Assessors will talk to team members to understand awareness as well as wanting to see evidence of one way in which the practice is addressing anaesthetic gas usage such as nitrous oxide reduction policy, SOP.

# Resources

- Vet Sustain - <https://vetsustain.org/>
- The Centre for Sustainable Healthcare - <https://sustainablehealthcare.org.uk/>