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Charities use green tactics to fight VAT increase

The VAT rise on overhead costs will hit London charities hard in the coming year. But they can fight back with greener practices, says Global Action Plan.

A recent report by The City Bridge Trust and nef consulting confirmed that charities who received green advice and support can achieve an average 13% reduction in their electricity use, and an average 10% savings on their gas bills. The charities participating in the study saved an average £1190 per year on their electricity, gas and water bills.¹

Global Action Plan was one of three companies that performed eco-audits of the charities to determine potential savings, funded by the City of London's City Bridge Trust. They worked with the UK's largest homeless charity, Depaul UK, to reduce their electricity use by 16.4% and their water use by 18.2%.

For Depaul, going green is already paying dividends when it comes to tender applications.

"I can now give far better answers on tender applications. And we will be scoring higher for our environmental policies because we've had the audit done." said Naomi Trenear, Senior Services Administrator, Depaul UK.

"As specialists in behaviour change, we're not surprised that the greatest impact of the eco-audits has been in getting staff and volunteers to take simple actions to reduce costs and environmental impact. 56% of the charities surveyed gave or some or most of the credit for changes at work to the eco-audit." said Trewin Restorick, CEO, Global Action Plan

"This study shows there are clearly savings to be made – even in a short time and without huge investment. There is a growing risk for charities in ignoring environmental practices, particularly as government procurement becomes more focussed on green performance. Next year is sure to be challenging for the sector, and charities will need to do everything they can to protect themselves against rising costs." said Clare Thomas, Chief Grants Officer, City Bridge Trust

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¹ nef consulting for the City Bridge Trust, 2010, Greening the Third Sector Initiative: Eco-audit Evaluation

NOTES TO EDITORS:

To arrange an interview or for further information, please contact the Global Action Plan marketing team: Stephanie Walker, Stephanie.walker@globalactionplan.org.uk, tel: 020 7420 4443.

About Global Action Plan's work with charities

Global Action Plan provides advice and support to help large and small charities to help lower their costs and reduce their environmental impact.

We are able to provide London charities with a free eco-audit and support to green your business through our SmartWorks programme, funded by the European Regional Development Fund.

Email business.support@globalactionplan.org.uk or call 020 7420 4439 to find out more about our services, or to check your charity's eligibility for free support.

About Global Action Plan

[Global Action Plan](#) is an environmental charity specialising in behaviour change and, since 1993, has helped businesses, schools, and communities reduce their carbon footprint to positively impact on the environment and climate change.

Global Action Plan runs a variety of programmes including SmartWorks, EMS Easy, Climate Change Champions, the EcoDriving Simulator, the Carbon Gym and the Energy Bike. Global Action Plan is the only charity in the UK to be supported by the United Nations Environment Programme.

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