

# Calling all companies: How do you exploit the green dividend?

Did you know you could use your employee benefits to help fight the battle against climate change? Let's talk green benefits, writes Steph Butcher, Director of EBCam.

For many it may be hard to comprehend that the benefits you offer your employees can play a positive part in the fight against climate change, but they can.

EBCam Employee Benefits, a local employee benefits and financial advisory specialist, recently launched a campaign with clients to help them better understand how they can utilise their employee benefit spend to ensure it is having a positive impact on the environment. Here are some of the key areas you should consider if you want to use your employee benefits to drive positive change.

## Your pension

Did you know the average UK pension fund (£87,947\*) finances 23 tonnes\* of CO2 emissions each year. To counteract this, you would need to recycle for 19 years or plant 30 acres of new forest (\*research provided by Cushon). Reviewing your default investment fund and educating your employees on this is the simplest way for employees to counteract the impact their carbon footprint is having. Yet many employees and indeed employers, are not aware of the impact their pensions are having on our planet.

## Cycle to work scheme

By your employees using a bike to cycle to work, or to the train station, they too are helping have a positive impact. We

have all noticed we are doing much less travelling currently but this has already started to increase and will do so considerably now the national lock downs have ended. Even if you are allowing employees to work a hybrid model, offering them the ability to purchase a traditional bike (or even electric!) to cycle to work is another way in which you can make a positive change.

## Electric cars

We appreciate that cycling to work won't be possible for every employee. As such, offering a salary sacrifice car scheme that either entirely limits to – or actively promotes – electric cars is another benefit you can offer to ensure you are playing your part.

## Carbon Offsetting

While not a charitable donation, and as such not a qualifying salary sacrifice benefit, you can now offer your employees the ability to purchase carbon credits from their pay. This allows employees to pay from as little as £4 per month to purchase carbon credits. This money is used to plant trees and reduce their own carbon footprint. It includes a carbon footprint calculator, and employees who sign up are also entered into a prize draw. You may also have a strong CSR policy and decide that rather than make this partly or wholly voluntary, you could fund some of this cost to help employees offset their carbon footprint.

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