

Steps To Environmental Management for business (STEM)

Steps To Environmental Management (STEM) helps businesses to improve their environmental performance through a series of assessments and certificates (blue, silver and gold). STEM is developed and run by Kent County Council and the Low Carbon Across the South East (LoCASE) programme that ECC are a delivery partner. It is currently being refreshed and updated to include new modules and allow for a more effective online delivery. Read on to see the real value of signing up.

The STEM scheme can:

- enhance your green credentials
- help you achieve nationally recognised accreditations [such as ISO 14001](#)
- help you to comply with the law
- save your business money by removing inefficiencies.

STEM has 3 levels - blue, silver and gold.

Each level involves a workshop session and follow up time to complete and we estimate that businesses can reach gold level in around 12 months. Some businesses may be able to achieve this faster if they have already started on the journey to benchmarking and improving their environmental performance.

- **STEM Blue**

A business that has top management support for its environment programme and has carried out a baseline assessment of their current situation.

- **STEM Silver**

A business that has measured its carbon footprint and taken action to reduce it. The business has identified the resources, legal requirements, training, and communications needed for its environmental programme.

- **STEM Gold**

A business that is measuring and monitoring its environmental impacts and has taken action to reduce them. The business has reported its progress to [Low Carbon Kent](#) and other stakeholder.



SME Case Study: David Watson Transport

The opportunity

What attracted you to STEM?

We wanted to further prove that we are a professional organisation and seeking to improve. We are always keen to ensure we are meeting the standards required in the industry and we have already achieved various accreditations (FORS

Gold, Achilles, RISQS, etc.). We saw the value in achieving an environmental accreditation as we had been asked for ISO14001/environment considerations in some contract opportunities and expect more in the future.

As a transport business, we can't avoid a large amount of emissions currently, but we thought through STEM and ultimately



ISO14001 we can understand and minimise the risks within the rest of our organisation.

All of our activities and services are examined to identify any environmental aspects and impacts, along with appropriate controls and measures to prevent or reduce the impact to acceptable levels. If there are changes to our activities or services, then the environmental aspects and impacts are re-assessed, this, in particular, is something we gained from the STEM Workshops.

How did you find the process and workshops?

Brilliant, all good – I am keen to do more and waiting on the workshops happening again.

The results

How has this benefitted your business?

STEM helped us have a better understanding of our obligations for pollution, emissions, climate change, and environmental responsibility.

My time spent away from the office was beneficial. I could come back and start working towards our ISO14001:2015 implementation

We are expecting to achieve our ISO14001:2015 Accreditation by August 2021.

The workshops gave the company some of the skills and knowledge to implement environmental considerations right away and work towards 14001 without hesitation.

Although we are in the process of getting ISO14001 even with this we would still go to future workshops and I am happy to share our experience with other businesses.

STEM provided us with some key documents and templates that we have implemented in our business such as:

- Legal register
- Roles and responsibilities
- Interested parties register
- Issue log/non-conformance register.
- Sustainability Policy Statement
- Waste Transfer/disposal records processes
- COSHH register (in every depot updated yearly)
- Detailed COSHH risk assessments

Waste was a big thing we learned about and the importance of keeping notes and records of every transaction to have better control of waste disposal.

We have registered with our Waste collection provider so we can log on to their system and obtain waste notes, which in turn, reduces paper waste. All waste collected is returned to their Material Recycling Facility (MRF) where the waste is sorted into its various recyclables and processed accordingly.

Any residual waste that cannot be recycled is processed as Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF) and used to create energy.

The lessons learned

Would you advise others to do it?

Yes, I would recommend and am happy to share our experience of the program with our network. We are keen to continue with the updated workshops as it means a lot to us as a business and what we are doing for the environment. Since we have become more aware of the environment and our impacts, not only through STEM but the wider agenda, our commitment is to only procure new



vehicles that comply with the latest EC emission and noise specification.

To consider alternative fuels; with that said we currently have several electric hybrid vehicles in our fleet and will consider expanding the fleet as and when vehicles are due for replacement.

Case study based on interview held on April 2021.

Where can I find out more information about STEM?

- [Steps To Environmental Management Scheme \(STEM\) - Kent County Council](#)
- [LoCASE - Low Carbon Across the South East](#)

Environmental Performance and Social Value

As an employer your organisation can create social value when you improve your environmental performance. As a potential supplier to ECC you can include this as the social value offer when bidding for ECC contracts. You can measure the social value you offer using the Essex TOMs. There are several Measures related to environmental performance, e.g. ECC 21 covers savings from renewable energy measures, specifically asking you to record the tonnes of CO2 emissions saved.

