

SUSTAINABILITY AND CSR CONFERENCE – 10 SEPTEMBER 2026, DERBY

08:00am	Registration, teas/coffees/cookies and exhibitors
09:00am (10mins)	Welcome – Dr Cham Kang, President, East Midlands Chamber (Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire Leicestershire)
09:10am (10mins)	Welcome - Susan Ambler, Chief Financial and Infrastructure Officer, University of Derby
09:20am (20mins)	Overview of 2026 Green Growth Trends – Dr Polina Baranova, Associate Professor of Strategy and Sustainability Year 11 of ongoing research in to how the East Midlands Business community engage with the green growth agenda
09:40am (20mins)	Net Zero Doesn't Have to Cost the Earth - Torben Starkey, Carbon & Procurement Specialist, and Julie Adams, Client Relationship Manager, Auditel (U.K.) Limited How can organisations balance growth, profitability, and sustainability in today's challenging economic climate? This session explores how businesses can reduce their carbon footprint without compromising financial performance. With rising costs across energy, fuel, logistics, and employment placing increasing pressure on cash flow, many organisations feel forced to choose between cost control and climate action. Auditel will demonstrate why that trade-off is no longer necessary. Drawing on real-world case studies, this session will highlight how a strategic approach to procurement and carbon reduction can unlock efficiencies, reduce costs, and accelerate progress towards net zero—delivering both environmental and commercial value.
10:00am (20mins)	Lifting the Lid on Power Purchase Agreements (PPA): Driving Decarbonisation While Managing Energy Costs – Kat Auckland - Communications and Projects Director, Geo Green Power As businesses battle rising energy price volatility and increasing pressure to meet Net Zero commitments solar PV becomes an obvious choice to reduce scope 2 emissions, lower energy bills and increase long-term energy security; but is a PPA the right way to fund it? James will shine the spotlight on PPAs, explaining how they are structured, what the benefits are and what you need to be aware of to help you decide if they are the right option for your business.
10:20am (15mins)	Pay now or pay more later: The real economics of sustainability – Richard Smith, Director, PS:Planet We often hear that “sustainability must pay.” But the reality is: sustainability will be paid for, one way or another. The real questions are who picks up the bill, how large it will be, and what we stand to lose if we leave it too late.
10:35am (30mins)	Break – Refreshments, networking and exhibitors

11:05am (25 mins)	PANEL: Driving forward sustainable business practices and supporting decarbonisation in the current political and economic climate Chair: Rick Blackmore, Director of External Affairs, East Midlands Chamber (Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire) Panellists • Kat Auckland - Communications and Projects Director, Geo Green Power • Richard Smith, Director, PS:Planet • Sally-Anne Hurn, Assurance Director and Head of Sustainability, Duncan & Toplis • Julie Adams, Client Relationship Manager, Auditel (U.K.) Limited
11:30am (5mins)	Interactive delegate engagement via Mentimeter – in relation to CSR activity
11:35am (45mins)	Beyond CSR: Building shared value – Dr Barbara Tomasella, University of Derby, Dr Elaine Conway, Loughborough University Overview and insights of most recent research undertaken via the East Midlands Chamber Quarterly Economic Survey, exploring how businesses develop their CSR strategies and will provide insights as to how to ensure best value for all parties (15mins) Then move to panel and Q&A Discussion, importance of building sustainable links between business and the community. Chair: Scott Knowles, Chief Executive Officer, East Midlands Chamber (Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire) (30mins) Panellists • Caroline Killeavy, Chief Executive, Our Dementia Choir • Richard Cohen, Chief Operating Officer, Neurotherapeutics Ltd • Dr Barbara Tomasella, Senior Lecturer in Marketing, University of Derby • Georgiana Bristol, Chief Executive, Jobs Foundation
12:20pm (10mins)	Interactive delegate engagement via Mentimeter before the main presentation finish and delegates head to Workshops
12:30pm (40mins)	Workshop #1 – choose one of four: • Room N108: Beyond CSR - Building shared value, Better together: For-profits and non-profits for impact - Drawing on research undertaken via the East Midlands Chamber Quarterly Economic Survey this session will explore how businesses develop their CSR strategies and will provide insights as to how to ensure best value for all parties - <i>Dr Elaine Conway, Loughborough University Business School and Dr Barbara Tomasella, University of Derby</i> • Room OL2: SMEs delivering value and impact – Accountability in relation to ESG, compliance and priorities in the current economic environment – In this session, Sally will look to highlight compliance in this area and consider why businesses should still have ESG on the agenda, even when the economy is impacting businesses in so many other ways. She will cover why Duncan & Toplis are driving forward with sustainability and why good governance is the key to success, summarise their progress to date. She hopes to engage with local businesses to share best practice and ideas on how to incorporate sustainability into your future plans - <i>Sally-Anne Hurn, Assurance Director and Head of Sustainability, Duncan & Toplis</i> • Room HEAP: Corporate Social Responsibility in Sweet Perfect Harmony - Through real world examples and practical insights, this session invites conference delegates to join the conversation, get involved and explore how people focussed CSR can shape their own organisational approach. Attendees will be encouraged to reflect on the social impact their

	business can create — and consider how small, purposeful actions and meaningful partnerships can strengthen their CSR strategy and deliver lasting value for employees, customers and communities - <i>Caroline Killeavy, Chief Executive, Our Dementia Choir and Kathryn Hague, Group Head of Marketing, World of Sweets</i> • Room N112: Find out what solar would look like on YOUR roof - Let the Geo Green Power team design a solar PV system for your business on the day! Receive an Indicative Cost: identify your premises and our team will produce an indicative layout, generation and quote for your business Facilitated by members of the Geo Green Power creating indicative quotes "while you wait - within a few minutes they can provide an indicative proposal for your business that will show you: ○ the size of the system you can accommodate ○ the amount of energy this will generate ○ an indicative cost to install ○ estimated cost savings and payback period All you need is your address, and details of your energy usage from your latest bill (if you have it) and you can go away with an outline of your perfect scheme.
1:10pm	Return to auditorium for lunch/networking/exhibitors (5mins)
1:15pm	Lunch (45mins)
2:00pm (40mins)	Workshop #2 – choose one of three: • Room N108: Business 4 Nature: making Nature-Based Solutions business mainstream Nature-based solutions (NBS) is a next frontier of CSR and successful green growth strategies for businesses. This workshop showcases Business4Nature project – a collaborative initiative of Derbyshire Wildlife Trust (DWT), University of Derby and the Chamber – that supports an uptake of NBSs by the regional businesses - <i>Dr Claire Roe, Associate Lecturer at Derby International Business School, and Hollie Fisher, Head of Consultancy at Derbyshire Wildlife Trust</i> • Room OL2: DNS – detail to follow • Room HEAP: Making the change - and making it stick. Top tips for encouraging sustainable behaviour This session will help you understand why behaviour change is so difficult - why we behave the way we do, what influences our decisions, and what we can do to influence others to change their behaviour. Using tried-and-tested behaviour-change techniques and examples of where this has been used effectively, we will explore the challenges and how to overcome them and look at ways you can make new behaviours stick - <i>Dr Alison Lawson, Subject Lead for Marketing and Operations, Derby International Business School, University of Derby, Dr Jenny Lunt, Lecturer in Health Psychology and Dr Barbara Tomasella, Senior Lecturer in Marketing</i> • Room N112: Student-led projects to support sustainability in your business This session is showcasing student-led projects that support delivery of the environmental outcomes across variety of businesses, NGOs and public sector organisations. These projects are designed and delivered to support development of the green skills of our graduates whilst delivering real-world and tangible benefits for the host organisations. Businesses who are interested in working with our students and staff on suitability initiatives will be provided with guidance on initial steps and available resourcing - <i>Orla Kelleher from Derby International Business School and Eleanor Atkins from the College of Science and Engineering, University of Derby</i>
2:40pm	Close/depart