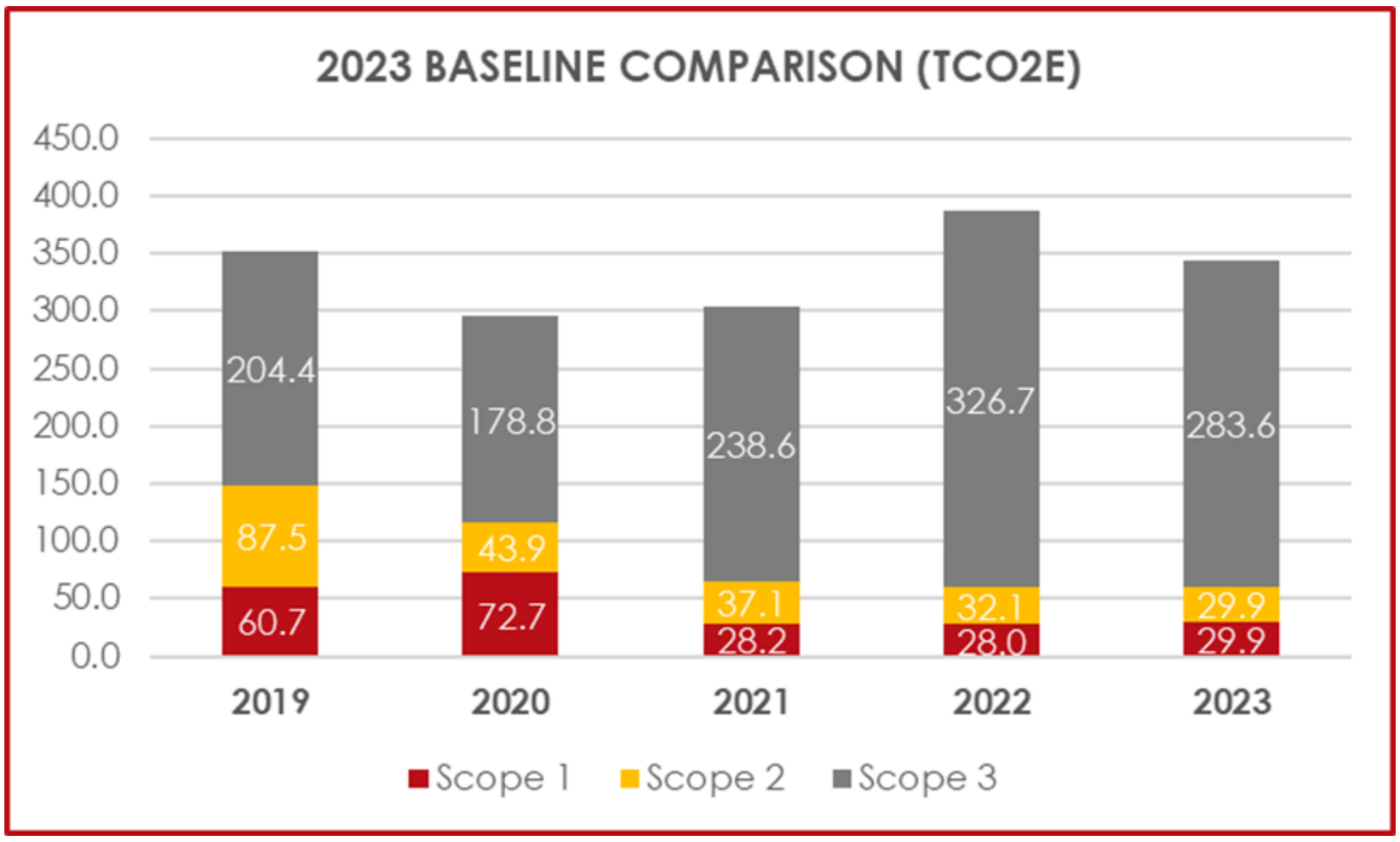
Pledge to Net Zero - Annual Report 2023

At BWB we are committed to embedding sustainability into all aspects of our operations and to cutting our greenhouse emissions, helping to tackle the main driver of climate change. In 2020 we signed up to the 'Pledge to Net Zero', committing to achieve net zero carbon emissions in our operations by 2050, with an interim target of a 30% reduction by 2025.

This paper reports on progress made in the 2023 calendar year against our baseline assessment undertaken in 2019.



Summary

Compared to our 2019 baseline:

- Scope 1 emissions from our company fleet and air conditioning systems have reduced by 51%.
- Scope 2 emissions associated with energy use in our offices have reduced by 66%.
- Scope 3 emissions, other indirect emissions associated with our activities, have increased by 39%.

We have made substantial progress in reducing our scope 1 and scope 2 emissions which have decreased by 60% since 2019, indicating we are well on track to exceed our interim target of a 30% reduction by 2025 for these scope areas.

Due to significant business growth and expansion of our scope 3 inventory we have experienced an increase in our scope 3 emissions over the same period, however they have decreased by 13% since 2022. This has resulted in our total greenhouse gas emissions for 2023 falling below 2019 levels again, following an increase in 2022, and they are now 3% lower than in 2019. The carbon intensity per employee is also down 30% compared to our 2019 baseline with an estimated 0.96 tCO2e per employee in 2023 (based on average annual staff numbers), compared to 1.38 tCO2e per employee in 2019. We have also seen a 12% reduction in carbon intensity compared to 2022.

Scope 1 & 2

The considerable reduction in our scope 1 and 2 emissions has been achieved by investing in our company fleet, switching to certified green energy tariffs in two of our offices, and reducing our leased office space in London and Birmingham. Since 2019 we have switched all but one of our company vehicles to hybrid or full electric models and we continue to look at options for transitioning our remaining diesel van to a greener alternative.
We are working with our landlords to encourage a switch to renewable energy supplies where they are not already in place, and to implement energy saving measures across all our offices as we strive to maintain the downward trajectory in our scope 1 and 2 emissions. For example, within the last year the lighting in our Birmingham office has been upgraded to LED lighting and the windows have been replaced to improve energy efficiency.

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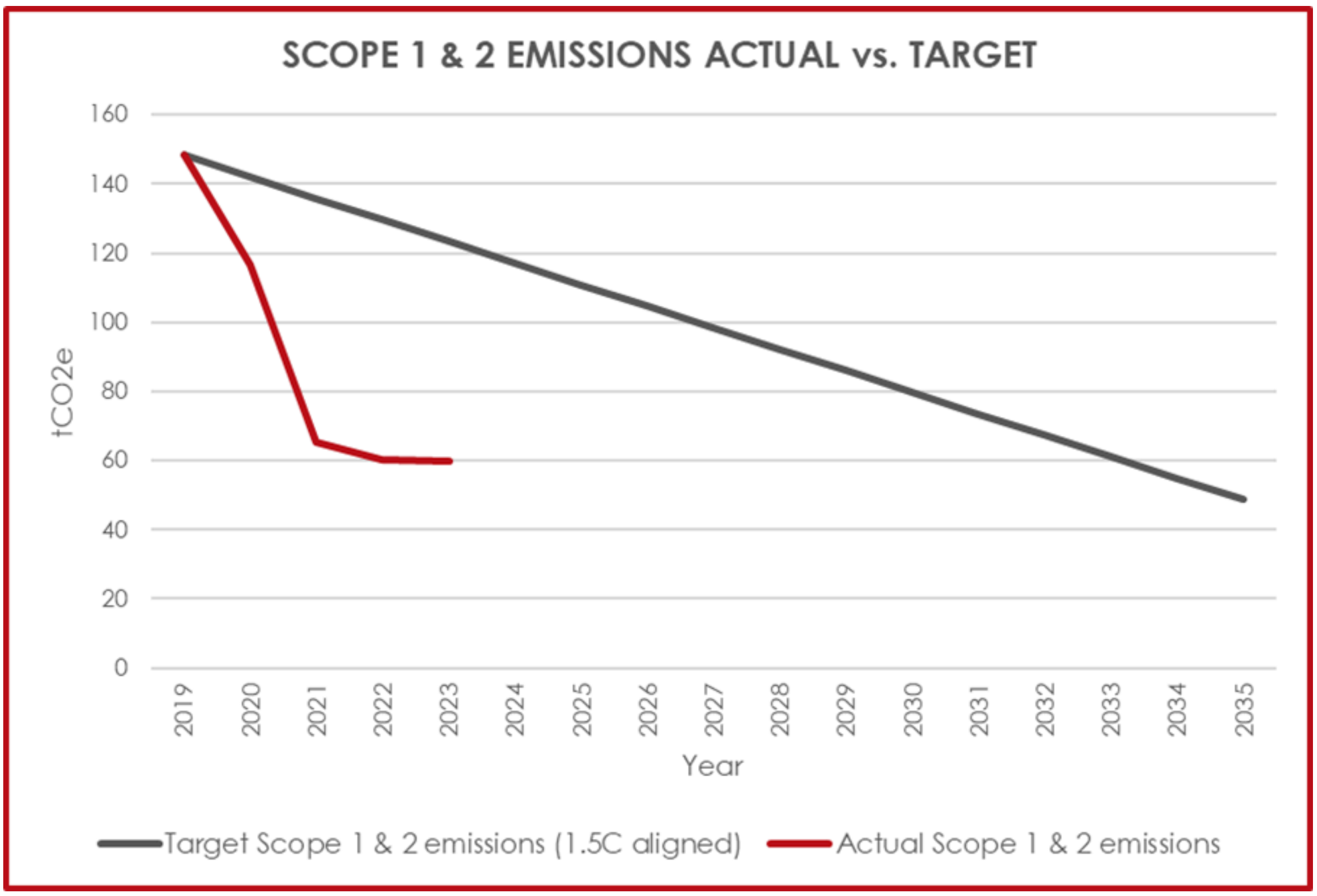
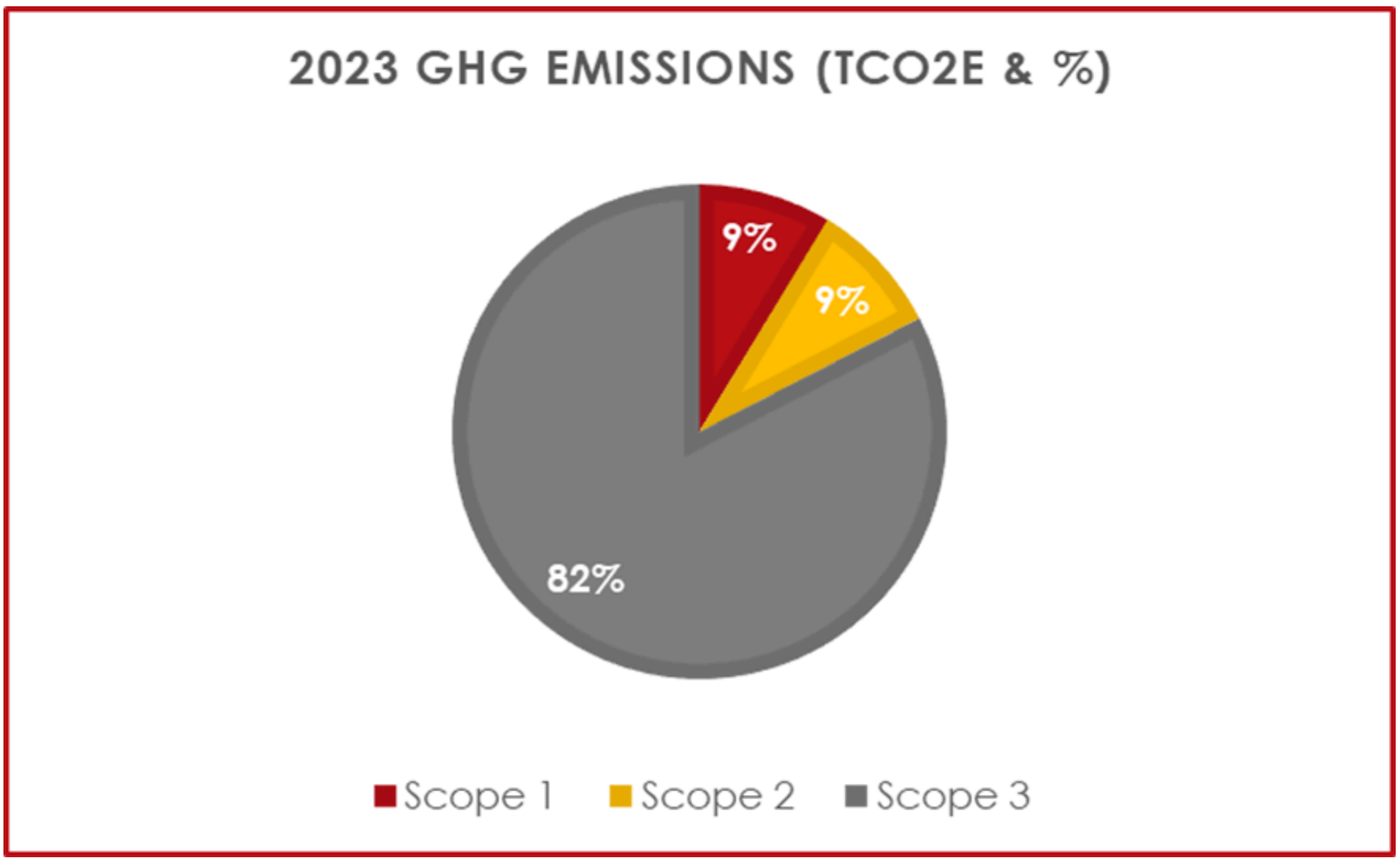




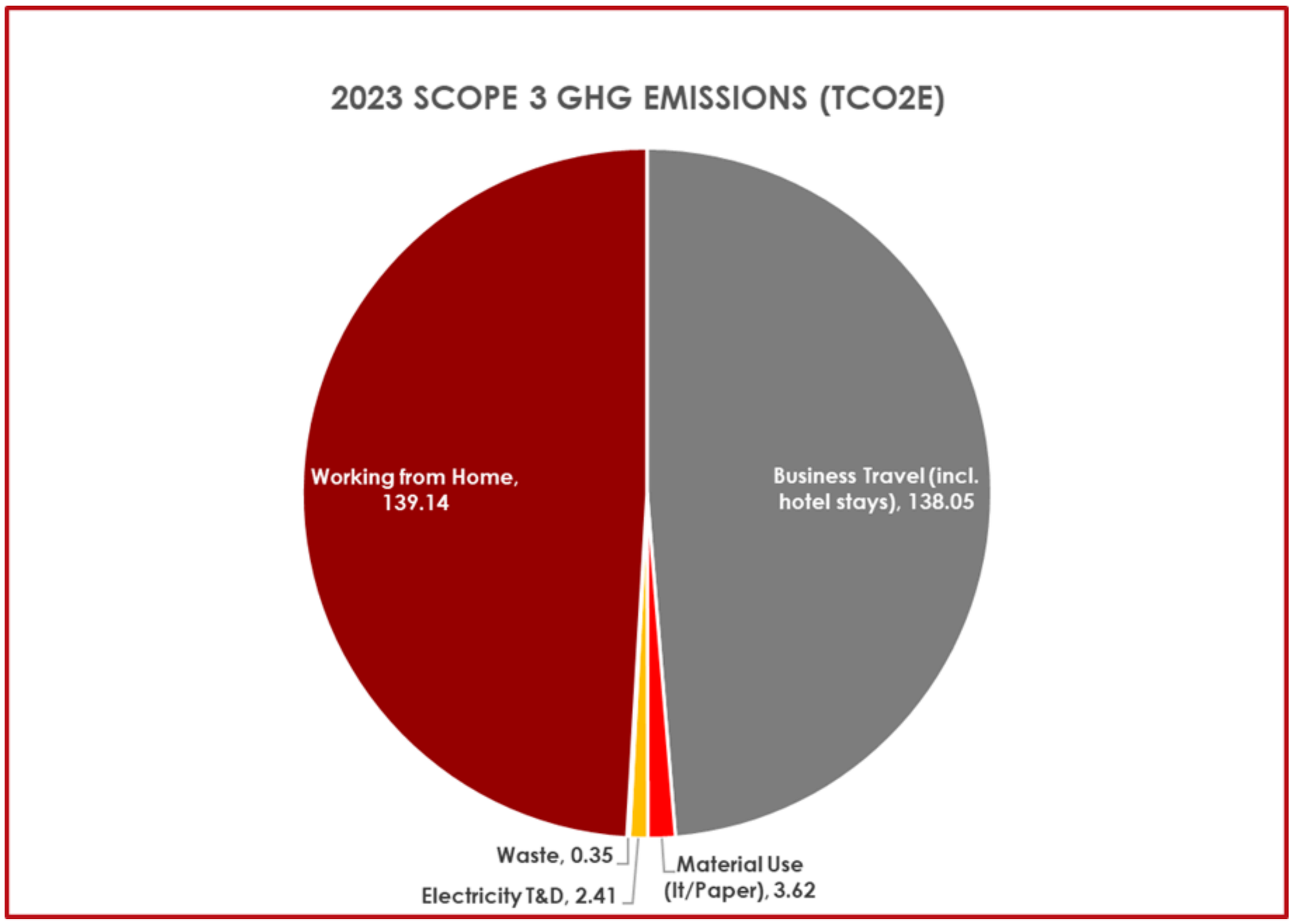
Scope 3

Our scope 3 emissions for 2023 are 39% higher than our 2019 baseline. This can be accounted for by the significant growth in the company over the last 4 years with a 39% increase in headcount since 2019. In addition, we have expanded our scope 3 inventory significantly over this period as more and better data has become available and we have sought to continually improve the quality and transparency of our emissions reporting and reduction efforts.

Our scope 3 emissions account for 82% of our total emissions and include electricity transmission and distribution, estimated energy consumption from working at home, IT and other large electrical equipment purchases and hotel stays which were not included in 2019. In 2023 we have included the emissions associated with our office waste streams for the first time, although this was not found to be significant, representing only 0.1% of our total emissions for the year.

Our largest sources of scope 3 emissions are those associated with energy use from working at home and business travel. Whilst business travel emissions have increased slightly from 2022 (up 3%) they are still 32% lower than in 2019, despite a significant increase in employee numbers over the same period. By continuing to use virtual meeting technology where appropriate and encouraging the use of public transport instead of driving we are managing to maintain some of the significant reductions that we saw in 2020 resulting from the pandemic lockdown measures. In 2023 we also launched a salary sacrifice electric vehicle scheme to incentivise people to switch to electric vehicles and support a reduction in the emissions associated with our grey fleet business mileage.

Whilst our overall scope 3 emissions have increased since 2019, we have seen a 13% reduction since 2022. This is predominantly due to a decrease in the purchase of electrical items in 2023, compared to 2022, and a reduction in the emissions associated with working at home due to a change in the method of calculation to align with government methodology.



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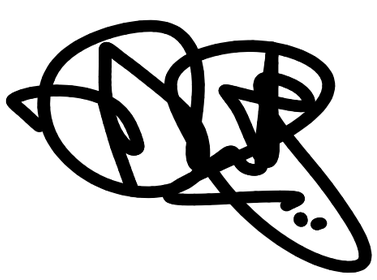
We continue to focus on understanding our full value chain emissions impact to improve our carbon reporting and enable us to target action at the greatest reduction opportunities. As a result, our scope 3 inventory is expected to expand further in 2024 to encompass other areas. For example, we are engaging with our key suppliers to better understand the carbon emissions associated with our supply chain to inform potential actions we can take in this area. We will also be carrying out a travel survey to gather information on our employees' commuting patterns and the associated carbon impact, and to inform the development of a travel plan for each of our offices.

Sustainable Design

In addition to reducing the emissions associated with our operations, as consultants we have a critical role to play in minimising environmental impact, delivering low carbon solutions for our clients and enabling the development projects our society requires for a sustainable future. In December 2022 we launched our Sustainable Design Action Plan, setting out our strategy for achieving this. We have made positive progress throughout 2023 in achieving the plan's objectives and are now consolidating our efforts into three pivotal service areas – Whole-Life Carbon, Climate Risk and Healthy Places. These areas are the bedrock upon which we will build our design initiatives, ensuring every action we take is calibrated for maximum sustainability impact.



Tim Loveridge
Executive Director