

Lesson 3: Activity sheet 3

My city's ecological footprint

One way to think about a city's footprint is to visualise what area of Britain would be needed to produce all the resources it uses and to dispose of its waste. In reality, it is not just land in Britain that is used. Your city's footprint is measured in global hectares (gha), so the area is spread all around the world. (This activity used Birmingham as an example. If you live in Birmingham choose another city.)

Your task

1. Find your city's footprint (if you don't live in a city, find the nearest one to where you live), measured by gha, on

Information sheet 3. This is the area required to support one person living in that city (for example, Birmingham's footprint is 5.22 gha). Record this on **Activity sheet 4.**

Find the population of your city. Try **Weblink 1** – www.citymayors.com/gratis/uk_top_cities.html (Birmingham's population is 1,020,589, for example). Add this to **Activity sheet 4.**

3. Work out the total footprint of your city in global hectares by multiplying its footprint by its population (for example, Birmingham's footprint calculation is $5.22 \times 1,020,589 = 5,327,474$ ha). Record this on **Activity sheet 4**
4. Mark your city on the map of Britain on **Activity sheet 4.** Then, shade the area of its footprint around it. Birmingham's footprint is shaded on this map as an example, it covers 53 squares. Each square on the map represents $1,000 \text{ km}^2$, or 100,000 hectares.

5. In Britain, most of us live in cities. Imagine if you tried to shade the footprint of every British city onto the map. What would happen? What does that tell you about how sustainable cities are?

