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Environment and Sustainability Report February 2023.

Review of targets set in 2020.

Covid and the effects on the Global supply chain over the last couple of years have been challenging and as things now begin to settle down we have time to review and to set new targets based on what we have learned over the last few years.

We remain committed to promoting and encouraging engagement around Environmental and Sustainable issues and have seen significant improvements in all areas.

Personal responsibility.

The company no longer supplies single use plastics for use in the office. Staff are encouraged to bring their own and reusable glasses were supplied by the company. Thermal flasks are supplied for hot and cold drinks.

Staff members identified a lot of plastics in takeaway lunch packaging. People have brought in gadgets to enable more lunches to be prepared in the kitchen. Eg. Toastie & Omelette makers.

Paperless working continues to be challenging in some areas where documents are an important part of the work, dual screens have reduced a lot of the need for printing documents, but more work can be done in this area moving forwards. Staff are encouraged to cycle to work and in cooperation with the building managers have a new state of the art cycle facility with showers and lockers.

Office Areas.

The building now actively takes recycling for Food waste, Paper and Cardboard, and makes it very easy. Furniture is offered to charity for reuse. Working IT equipment offered for use by charitable organisations. Printing cartridges are recycled.

Non-working IT equipment, using Recycle IT for data security, hard drive destruction and recycling of equipment.

Confidential Paper storage is very much reduced now and is stored on-site for periodical shredding and recycling by external company.

We have regular updates on the recycling targets.

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Vehicles & Travel.

We no longer supply Company vehicles. For travel staff are encouraged to use public transport, mainly trains, where this is absolutely not possible then we will authorise car hire specifically for that journey. Train travel is recommended where it is feasible, and conference calls / office based meetings are encouraged. We cannot underestimate the value of face to face meetings with our customers and suppliers, travel dates should make full use of the day with as many appointments as possible fitted into the schedule to avoid unnecessary travel. International travel again should make clear plans for consolidation of appointments to avoid additional trips. Eg, FE Office visits planned at same time as Group Conference. Customer visits planned when training sessions are organised. This has been successful this year with fewer International trips arranged.

Due to Covid restrictions International Travel has been kept to a minimum, where it has been arranged it has been arranged with maximum appointments to make best use of the time.

There are workplace initiatives with the local public transport to encourage use in partnership with RLB management team CBRE.

External Influences.

Clients.

We have continued to work hard on consolidated services that add value as well as being more environmentally sound. For the most part consolidation is more economical than shipping separately, so it has not been too difficult to achieve engagement from our clients. We have reviewed all client services this year to see if we can see any better options for routing cargo over rail services for example. We have now started successfully moving cargo over rail rather than truck and will be expanding this service.

Some of our clients have agreed to fortnightly or monthly shipping to certain destinations to improve consolidation benefits both financially and environmentally friendly.

We will also consider, and offer methods of shipping that will be more expensive, but reduce carbon emissions for the customer. This is still in an early stage.

We offer a service where we can offer carbon calculations for customers for individual shipments up to annual reporting.

We are also investigating Carbon Credit schemes to be able to offer Carbon offsetting to our customers.

Unfortunately many of these schemes, after further investigation are not really providing the service that they advertise, for example selling carbon credits to “save” forests that were never planned to be destroyed. We have set up our Green Supply Chain Project to look at this and other environmental issues. Traditional gifts and promotional items have been in keeping with sustainability, for example reusable stainless steel straws, stainless steel flasks for drinks.

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Suppliers.

Meetings with Suppliers over the last year have discussed sustainability issues. We have advised everyone that we expect minimum standards and hope that they will also consider exceeding minimum standards with their own initiatives within their workplaces.

New suppliers are provided with and expected to adhere to our own Supplier Code of Conduct.

Work related supply of warehousing and Transport. For the most part we are governed by the requirements of individual warehouses.

Where permitted we will mix titles on pallets to reduce pallet and shrink-wrap numbers used.

We share vehicle space with other hauliers to have fuller trucks and reduce the amount of trucks being used. Vehicles within our direct contractors' care are regularly serviced and kept to a high standard of operation. Clean Fuels and Oils are used as standard in the vehicles.

They have their own supplier code of conduct that shared vehicles are expected to work towards.

We have been working on various Environment projects this year with our main haulier.

Bio-Degradable shrink-wrapping. – after further investigation it was found that these products are not fully bio-degradable and although better than standard shrink-wrap they are five times more expensive. We would expect to use 25-30 pallets per TEU so the cost far out ways the benefit at this point in time. But it is something we are reviewing annually.

In the meantime we are using a stronger wrap, which is more expensive, but uses less product to keep the cartons secure. This has been a case of trial and error to get the balance right and the pallets are wrapped manually to maintain control.

Pallet Exchange – We do a limited amount of pallet exchange. The problem with pallet exchange is the warehouse having enough empty pallets available for us to collect that makes it worthwhile collecting before it becomes environmentally unfriendly to use the fuel to transport them back to the store. It only works on nearby warehouses and when they are fully committed to the programme.

Plastic pallets, have the same problems as exchange, plus the ones we have tested have not been strong enough for books.

We use and reuse good quality pallets for our book deliveries that comply with the Grade A standard. We will recycle these as much as possible until they are not fit for our needs when they will be used for other products or recycled.

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Green Supply Chain Project.

At the end of 2022 we launched our Green Supply Chain Project. By engaging staff in the investigation of how things can be done in a better way we have set up a committee internally to investigate the supply chain. Although in its early stages, this includes items such as....

- Carbon Credits

- Measuring and reporting of emissions

- Reviewing Shipping lines, their policies and commitment to the global environment

- Routing, and methods of transport, Air, Rail, Sea, Truck

- Packaging, plastics, cardboard cartons, wooden pallets

This will provide information to our customers regularly and give them opportunities for reducing their carbon footprint.

Staff Policies

Since our last review the main policy changes have been to introduce hybrid working within the workplace.

Following Covid lockdowns in 2020, 2021, and 2022 we went through a period of bringing people back into the office with various updates and changes in core working times and physical attendance at Royal Liver Building.

This settled, and in September 2022 we introduced hybrid working for the workforce.

We recognised that it was important for our business to collaborate and share information, ideas and talk through their work in a way that wasn't working through online and telephone calls.

However we also recognised that there were also benefits to staff being able to settle into tasks quietly at home and they reduced their travelling time.

By making working from home accessible, staff members who were suffering from infectious illness and were too poorly to attend the office due to straightforward coughs and colds were well enough to work from home,

All staff have received and reviewed Company Policies for reminder and review January 2023.

Sue Kelly

Operations Director

February 2023

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