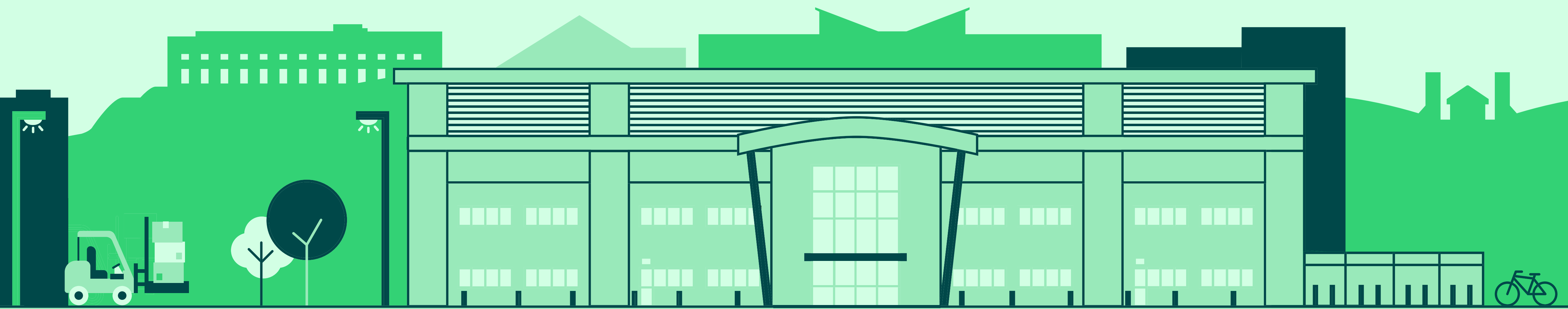


SUSTAINABILITY REPORT

2024

For a healthier, smarter and safer world



**SCIENTIFIC
LABORATORY
SUPPLIES**



CONTENTS

01	INTRODUCTION	3	04	ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE	19	05	SOCIAL PERFORMANCE	35
	A message from our Managing Director	5		Carbon Reduction	20		Employee wellbeing	36
	Highlights	6		Emissions we control (Scope 1)	21		Recruitment & retention	40
	Goals	6		Gas consumption	22		Health & safety	41
	Organisational profile	7		Emissions we control (Scope 2)	23		Diversity & inclusion	42
				Electricity consumption	24		Social value and SDG alignment	43
02	SUSTAINABILITY MANAGEMENT	8		Value chain emissions	25		External framework alignment	46
	What sustainability means to SLS	9		Scope 3 analysis	27			
	Governance structure for sustainability	10		Annual supplier assessment	28			
	Stakeholder engagement	10		Water usage	29	06	PRODUCT RESPONSIBILITY	47
	Customer engagement	11		Waste management	30		Product quality & safety	48
	Supplier engagement	12		Plastic and packaging	31		ISO Certification	48
	Employee engagement	12		Plastic to Purpose	32		Product sustainability	49
	Community engagement	13		Warehouse efficiency	33		Customer support	50
	Materiality assessment	14		Fairham	34		Organogram	51
							Reporting principles	52
03	ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE	16				07	CONCLUSION	53
	Financial overview	17						
	Economic contributions	18						

Introduction



INTRODUCTION

Scientific Laboratory Supplies (SLS) is steadfast in its commitment to operating in an environmentally responsible and socially ethical manner, all while contributing positively to economic growth. We continue to prioritise transparency in evaluating the impact of our operations, supply chain, and product portfolio, while actively investing in our sustainable activities to drive meaningful change. In this report, we present a comprehensive overview of our environmental and social performance over the past year, highlighting key initiatives and strategic activities. Recognising the importance of data-driven sustainability, we have also intensified our efforts to gather more robust and comprehensive data to better understand and communicate our progress. This report reflects our ongoing dedication to advancing our sustainability goals with greater clarity and accountability.



A MESSAGE FROM OUR MANAGING DIRECTOR

This year has marked a transformative chapter for Scientific Laboratory Supplies (SLS) as we successfully relocated from our previous site to our new, state-of-the-art facility at Fairham. This move represents a significant investment in our future with the new site spanning over 56,000 sq ft, including 12,000 sq ft of modern office space and 44,000 sq ft of advanced warehouse operations. By relocating just three miles from our old premises, we were able to minimise the environmental impact of the transition while greatly enhancing our operational capabilities. Order processing times have decreased to just 15 minutes, with capacity rising to 2,500 orders per day – a threefold increase, improving the efficiency with which our operations can serve our customers whilst reducing our environmental footprint.

Our new BREEAM-Excellent certified site reflects our deep commitment to sustainability. We have installed 860 solar panels covering 53% of our roof, with the capacity to generate up to 300 MWh of renewable energy annually and have already reduced operational emissions by 20%, with excess energy fed back into the grid. The site is also equipped with 12 EV charging points, supporting our continued shift towards greener transportation solutions. These investments form part of our ongoing carbon reduction plan, which remains central to our business strategy.

Beyond our operational achievements, I am proud to highlight our progress in diversity and leadership. Following the appointment of our first female board member in 2023, we have now welcomed a second, reinforcing our commitment to building a leadership team that reflects a wide range of perspectives and experiences.

As we look ahead, our focus remains steadfast: to operate responsibly, reduce our environmental footprint, and create long-term value for our customers, colleagues, and communities. This report details our progress and reaffirms our dedication to a sustainable future for SLS and the wider world.

Sincerely,

Ian Roulstone

Ian Roulstone
Managing Director

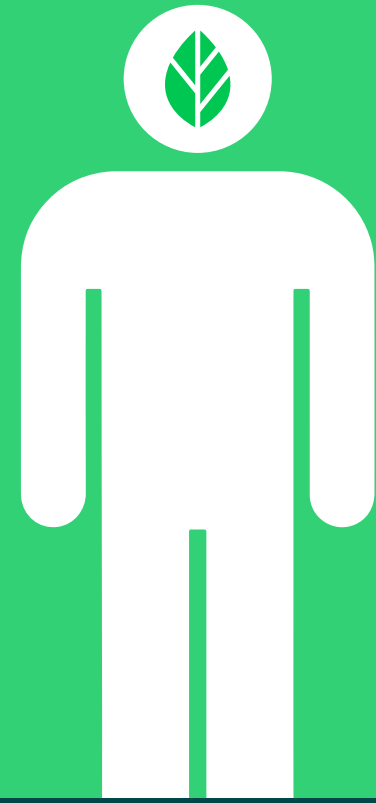
www.scientificlabs.co.uk



We planted



4022 trees



We appointed our second female board member



We collected 26.17 tonnes

of pipette tip boxes from customers thanks to our Plastic to Purpose scheme

We fully migrated to our Fairham site which was rated **EXCELLENT** by BREEAM



We achieved a GOLD EcoVadis Rating



WE RECYCLED 42 TONNES OF WASTE which was 58% of our total waste

The remainder was diverted through the Waste2Energy scheme

GOALS



Make significant progress aligning to our near-term carbon reduction targets for 2025



Continue to improve our data integrity for year on year reporting



Gain independent verification for carbon reduction targets

ORGANISATIONAL PROFILE



Company Overview

SLS is a distributor of high-quality laboratory equipment, consumables, and services to research institutions, universities, and industrial laboratories such as food and beverage, pharmaceuticals, and biotech.

We have a varied product offering which enables us to meet customer demands through a tailored, flexible, and reliable service.



Products & Services

Our product range includes cutting-edge laboratory equipment, chemicals, glassware, and research tools that enable advancements in various scientific fields from world-leading manufacturers.



Operational Locations

We operate across the UK, Ireland, and East Africa with our primary distribution centre based in Nottingham, with localised offices in Scotland, Yorkshire, Dublin, and Lisburn to serve our broad customer base.

Sustainability Management

WHAT SUSTAINABILITY MEANS TO SLS

We recognise that the term 'sustainable' can often be misleading, misunderstood, and perhaps misused when applied to business activity. However, due to its extensive use and recognition, we do not shy away from the term.

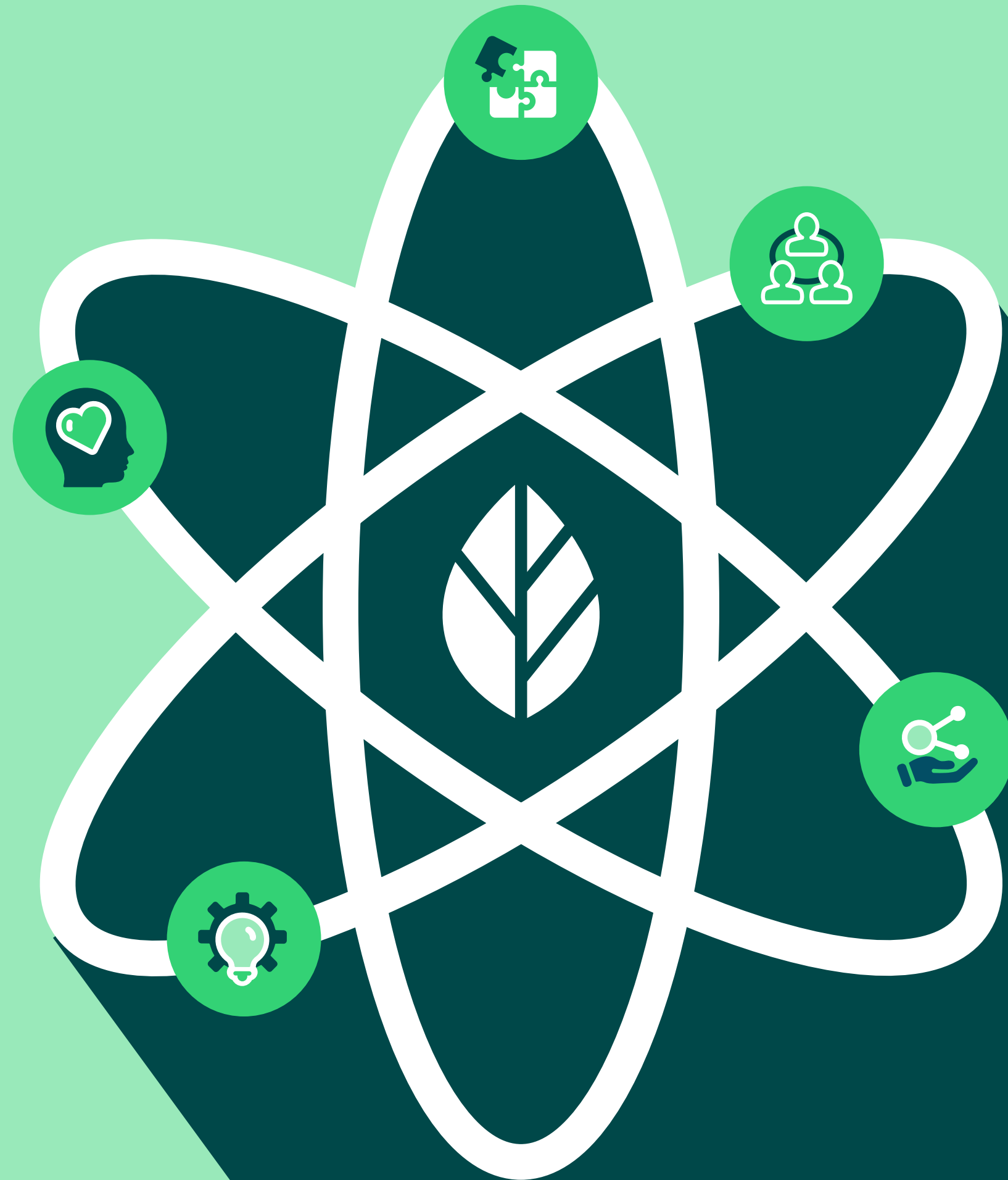
At SLS, we acknowledge that our vision to become 'the most sustainable distributor' requires us to be a force for accountability and progress. We use this phrase to distinguish ourselves as a conscientious business which embraces its moral responsibility to pursue improvement, and take action to do the best we can for the planet and its people.

We accept the sustainability challenges that come with operating within the laboratory market and recognise that this is a journey, and one which may not always be linear. We strive to be proactive in reducing emissions across our value chain, be transparent about our environmental and social impact, whilst ensuring that we are responsible in the way that we market products to our customers.

“

our vision to become 'the most sustainable distributor' requires us to be a force for accountability and progress

”



GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE FOR SUSTAINABILITY

Our Sustainability Manager oversees the integration of sustainability into our business operations. This position engages frequently with the management team and board of directors to ensure that sustainability considerations are embedded in our decision-making processes.

We continue to operate with sustainability at the core of our strategic, board-level objectives.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

We take a proactive approach to engaging with stakeholders, including customers, employees, suppliers, and local communities, to understand their concerns and expectations related to sustainability.

CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT

We endeavour to build solid long-term relationships with our customers and aim to deliver excellent industry-leading customer service. We take pride in learning from our customer feedback, and their comments are invaluable in improving relationships and communications.

We seek to better understand our customers' sustainability goals and align activity and/or provide advice to support those goals wherever possible. We strive to provide customers with sufficient information to help them make well-informed decisions around product-level sustainability.

Our Sustainability Manager is also frequently in front of customers to offer guidance, discuss overarching goals or frameworks, and gain insight into how SLS can support with these. This approach provides us with primary market intelligence directly from our customers and enables us to assess how the market is evolving, communicate this upstream to our suppliers, manage expectations, and encourage research and development.

**We provided
120+ hours** of dedicated sustainability support and guidance to our customers in 2024*

*through direct one-to-one calls, online or in-person workshops/training, or face-to-face meetings



SUPPLIER ENGAGEMENT

We have begun a more centralised and comprehensive approach to supplier engagement, specifically focused on sustainability topics material to SLS, and we have started to collect primary data from key suppliers. This approach is enabling us to benchmark where our supply chain currently is with respect to key sustainability issues for SLS, with the aim to educate, nurture suppliers, and track progress over time.

Due to the size and diversity of our supply base, we continue to explore centralised software solutions to assist with the collection of supply chain sustainability and compliance data, to further enhance our ability to engage suppliers on a multitude of topics at pace and scale.

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT



Through our open-door policy and dedicated time in the calendar, all staff are encouraged to engage with the board of directors to foster social dialogue - share their views and voice feedback on all company matters, including management, operations, well-being, incentive schemes, pay and conditions, and general business improvement.

We use the online platform WorkVivo to drive employee communication and collaboration. With many staff working remotely or hybrid, this tool provides new levels of engagement in the workplace, enabling teams to continue to communicate quickly, strengthen productivity, foster knowledge exchange, and preserve our work ethic and culture.

Our WorkVivo platform saw over
644,000
impressions
in 2024

61%
of employees
responded to staff
surveys in
2024

We have an employee engagement plan in place developed by our Marketing and IT functions to increase value added and boost staff satisfaction.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

We recognise our responsibility to be conscientious, supportive, and ethically engaged neighbours, and we strive to build long-lasting relationships with our communities. We are committed to supporting and collaborating with communities to achieve their sustainability goals. The company supports several charities with fundraising, promoting awareness, and actively encourages all employees to be involved and engaged with these causes. This is further supplemented by all staff being encouraged to take one day's paid leave per annum to volunteer and to give support to their local community without having to give up a day's pay.

110+
hours of social
value added

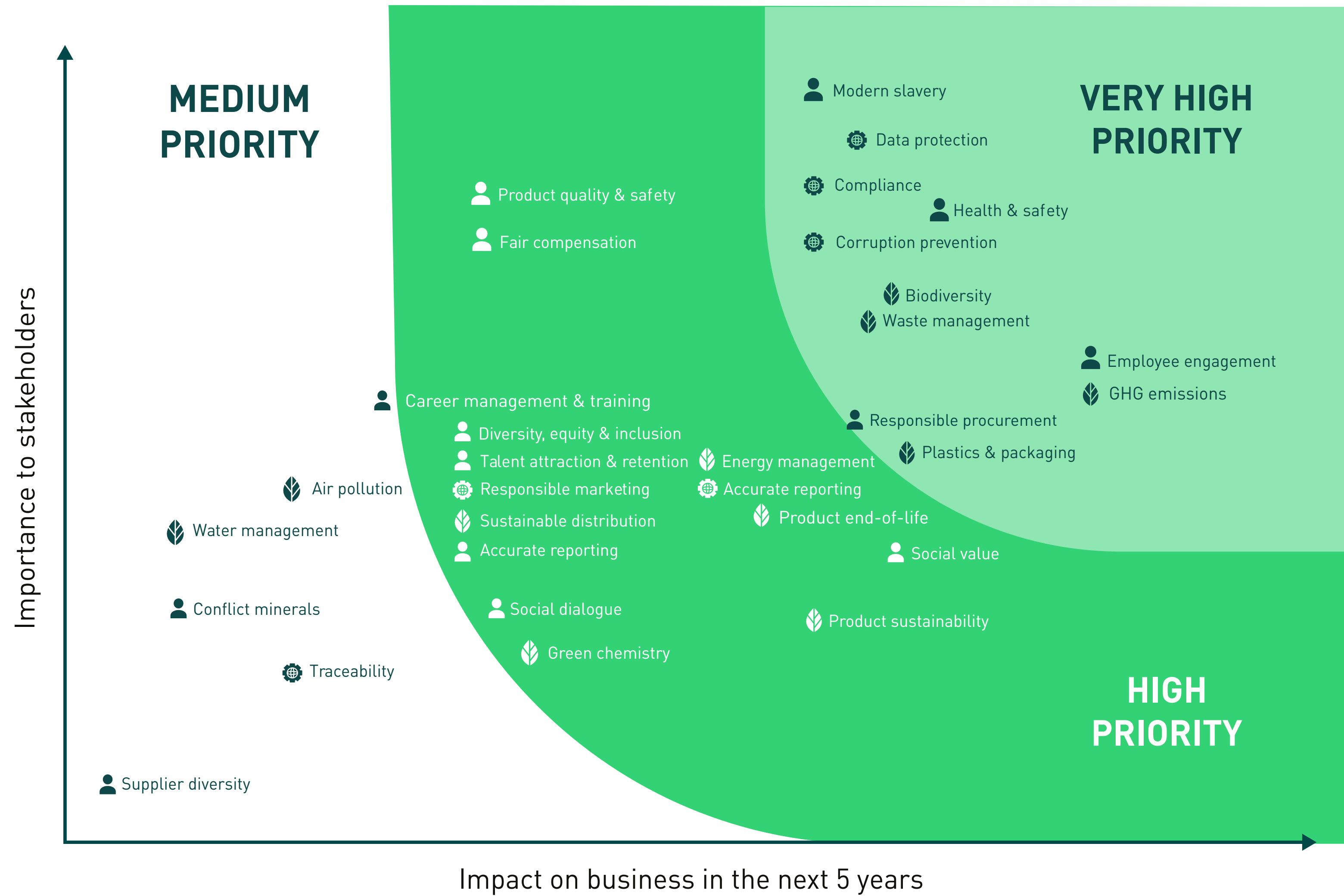
In 2024, staff from a range of departments took the opportunity to choose charities or causes to support for a day.

MATERIALITY ASSESSMENT

SLS conducted a materiality assessment with the aim of developing a more well-informed sustainability strategy blueprint going forward. It offered a democratic approach to identifying strategic and reporting priorities within the context of environmental, social, and governance (ESG) issues. Prior to stakeholder involvement, over 30 ESG topics were researched and identified as issues of material importance to SLS and its stakeholders within the next decade. This included industry-specific hot topics, identified trends from customer enquiries and tenders, as well as local authority and community priorities. The list was also reflective of the latest global risk report, relevant certifications, frameworks, and standardisation organisations, alongside current and emerging ESG legislation.

An internal risk assessment was then carried out for each of these topics to assess potential impact on the business over the next 5 years. Multiple stakeholder groups including staff, local council representatives and customers were then invited to rank these issues by level of importance to them, their role, or their organisation.

This materiality assessment will be repeated and the associated risks reassessed in 2027.



-  ENVIRONMENTAL
-  SOCIAL
-  GOVERNANCE

The materiality assessment results enable us to identify key issues ranked by priority and therefore embed these priorities into decision-making processes across the business. For example, we know that from a supply chain perspective, we want to be regularly engaging suppliers, collecting data, and nurturing innovation for topics such as GHG emissions, plastics and packaging, waste management, biodiversity, modern slavery, and product sustainability.

A supplier-level assessment was developed to ensure that going forward we are tracking our supply chain performance on issues which are important to SLS.

Economic Performance

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

In 2024, our turnover was
£83million

We remain committed to serving our core markets with a broad, complete, and market leading product portfolio coupled with first-class customer service. We continue to seek new markets, and new product offerings to complement our existing portfolio.

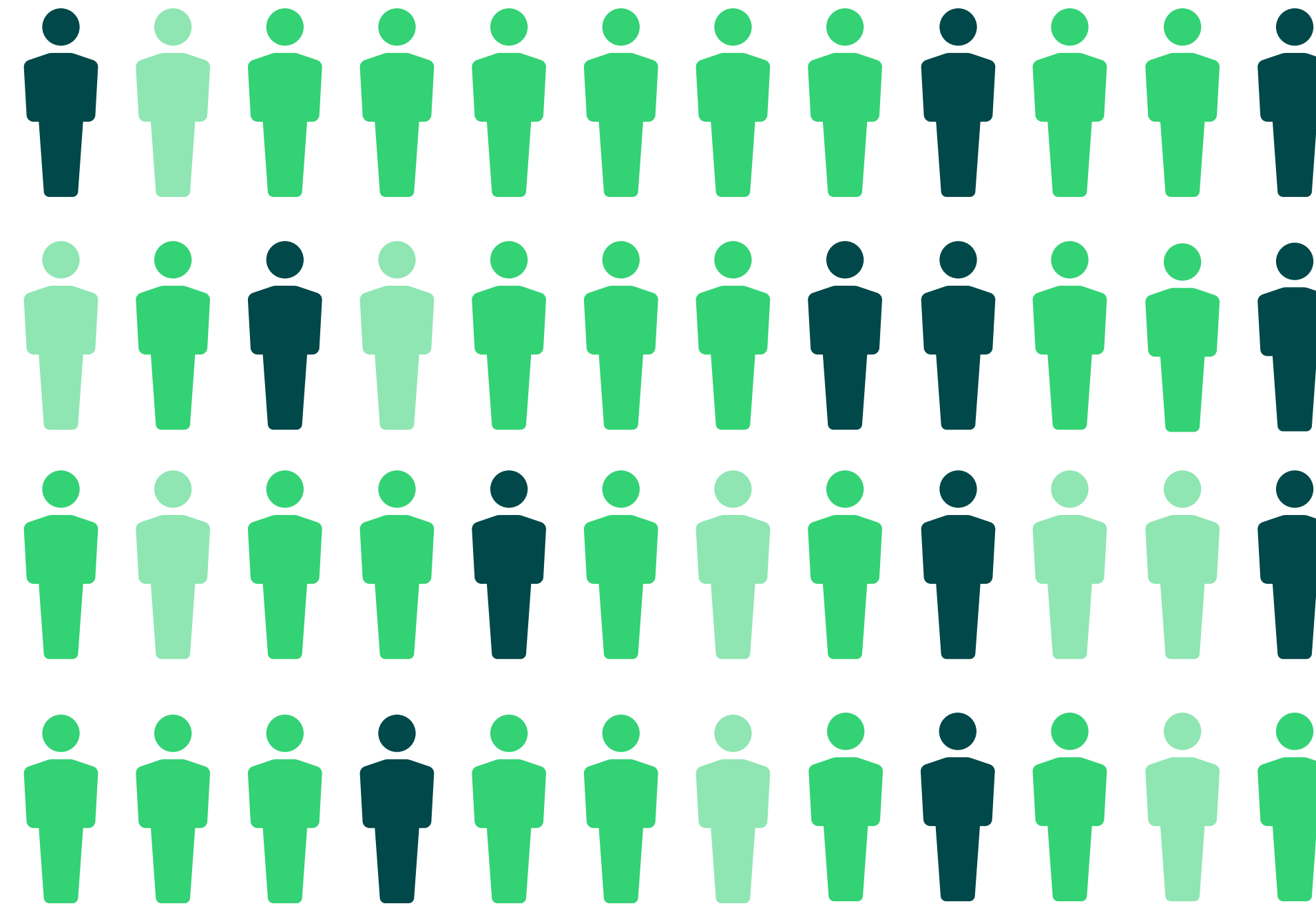
During 2024, the company completed the move to its new National Distribution Centre (NDC) in Nottingham. The office staff completed the relocation to the premises in early 2024 with the migration of all distribution activities taking place throughout Q1 and completed by the end of Q2. The Directors were pleased that the company met its internal timetable and budget for this transition.

The move to the NDC was completed during a time of increased competition which put pressure on sales and margin. However, the investment in automation and systems will allow for improved efficiencies in the future.



ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTIONS

As we did in 2023, we continue to invest in people to position the business for the future, support job creation and economic growth. We made 48 net new hires - resulting in 8 organic net new hires - a 3.39% increase in headcount since 2023.



48 new starters in 2024

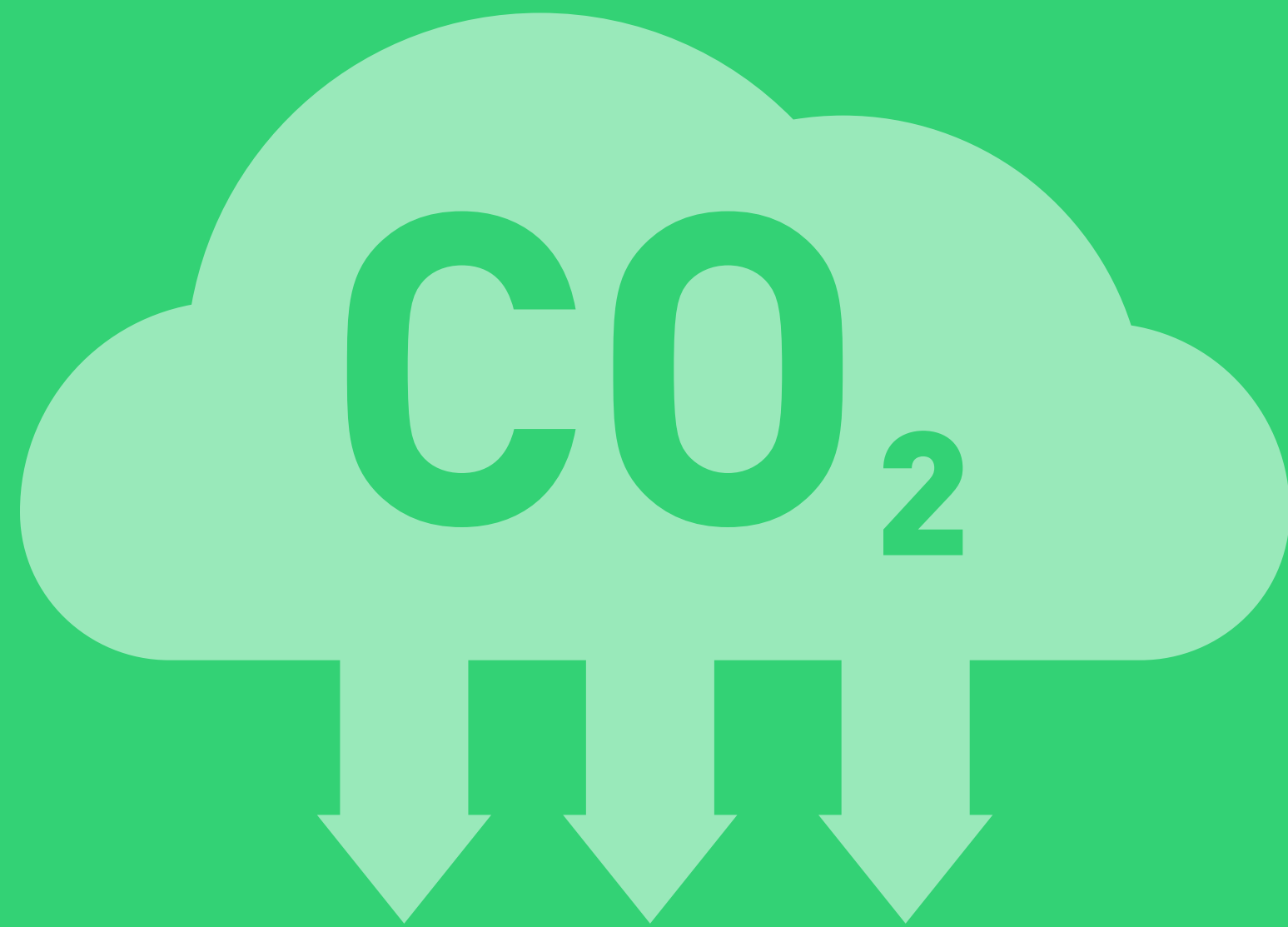
The competitive challenges in the market remain. This, coupled with some significant supplier price inflation in the early part of the year, has continued to put a squeeze on margins. The company has adopted strategies to mitigate these cost challenges and as a result, margins improved in the latter half of the year, and overall remain in line with expectations.

Throughout the year, we invested heavily in our new National Distribution Centre, and remain keenly focused on the importance of our employees to the business.

Environmental Performance

The background features a dark teal color with large, semi-transparent numbers '0' and '4' in a lighter shade of teal. A thin white horizontal line spans the width of the page, ending in a small white circle on the right side.

CARBON REDUCTION PLAN



In 2023, we published a carbon reduction plan and have adopted the following greenhouse gas reduction targets as part of a progressive plan to achieve net-zero emissions by 2045. We plan to obtain approval from the Science Based Target initiative (SBTi) in the next two years.

01

OVERALL NET-ZERO TARGET:

SLS commits to **reach net-zero greenhouse gas emissions across the entire value chain by 2045.**

02

NEAR-TERM TARGET:

SLS commits to reduce absolute Scope 1 and 2 emissions by 20% and 30% respectively by 2025, from a 2020 baseline year. SLS also commits that the top 90% of its suppliers by spend will have science-aligned carbon reduction plans by 2025.

03

MID-TERM TARGET:

SLS commits to reduce absolute Scope 1 and 2 emissions by 50% by 2030, and to reduce absolute Scope 3 emissions by 43% by 2030.

04

LONG-TERM TARGET:

SLS commits to reduce absolute total emissions across all scopes by 90% by 2045, from a 2020 baseline year (2022 for Scope 3).

EMISSIONS WE CONTROL (SCOPE 1)

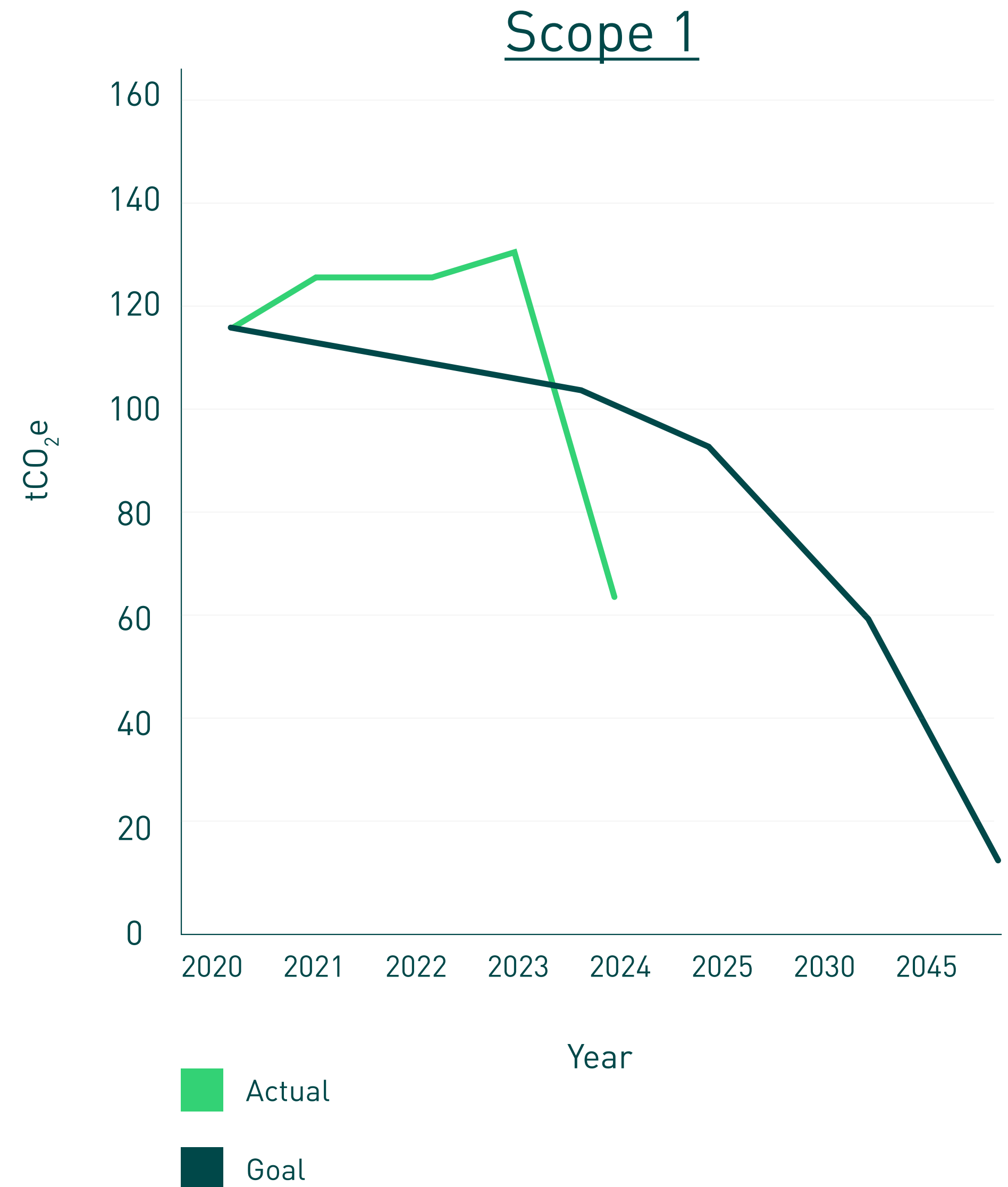
For SLS, Scope 1 mainly includes natural gas and company-owned vans and cars. We have amended our company car policy so that company cars must be 50gCO₂e/km or below. Our vans are an area for improvement where we are constantly looking for industry developments and innovations.

We have seen a 53% decrease in our Scope 1 emissions in 2024 from 2023, largely due to our move to a brand-new BREEAM-Excellent facility for our new NDC, eliminating gas usage from this site. There is further information on gas usage on the next page.

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Scope 1 Emissions, tCO ₂ e	123	308	133.17	138.32	64.33

SCOPE 1 EMISSIONS

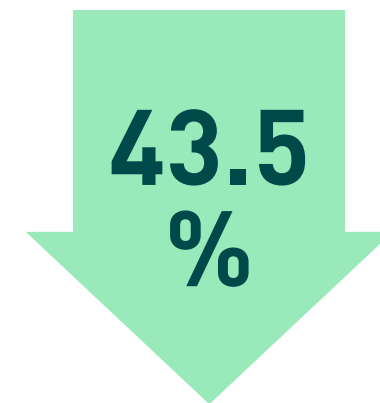
64.33tCO₂e



GAS CONSUMPTION

In 2024, SLS's total gas consumption was

100,581 kWh



decrease
from 2023

well above our 2%
reduction target



We also predict that from 2025 reporting and onwards (the first full year after the migration between distribution centres), that our gas consumption will have fallen significantly due to the shift to **100% electric at our new Fairham facility.**

91.7% of our gas consumption will be eliminated in forthcoming 2025 reporting figures (Based on 2023 metrics).

This equates to approximately **30tCO₂e removed** from our operational carbon footprint (20% of our current worldwide operational footprint). The shift away from gas in our operations not only supports but paves the way for SLS's net zero future as per our carbon reduction plan.

Our electricity and gas consumption data has been collected via invoices directly from our supplier, and supported by meter readings taken on the last day of every month and converted from m³ to kWh. In addition to this, we now use SolarEdge software to track our energy balance; therefore, we are able to visualise daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly production and consumption metrics linked to our new Fairham facility.



EMISSIONS WE CONTROL (SCOPE 2)

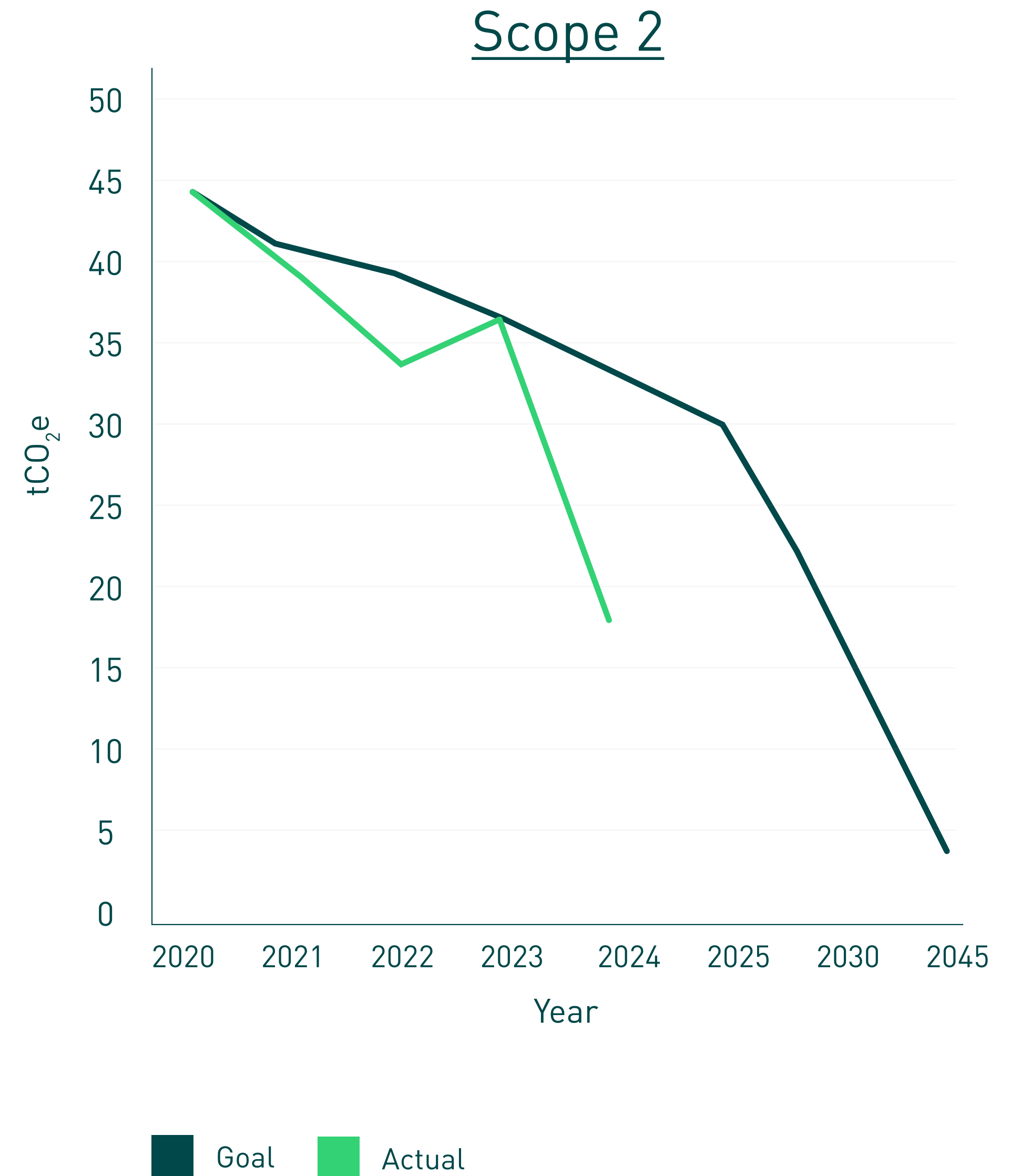
SLS's worldwide market-based Scope 2 emissions are 0.14tCO₂e, as we source 100% renewable energy in the UK and Ireland, with the exception of our Kenyan offices which are sourced by 90% renewable energy. Our location-based (and therefore consumption-based) emissions are below, and on track to reach our targets of a 30% reduction by 2025 from our 2020 benchmark.

Scope 2 Emissions tCO ₂ e	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Location-based	45	40	34.35	37.16	20.3
Market-based	45	0	0	0.14	0.14

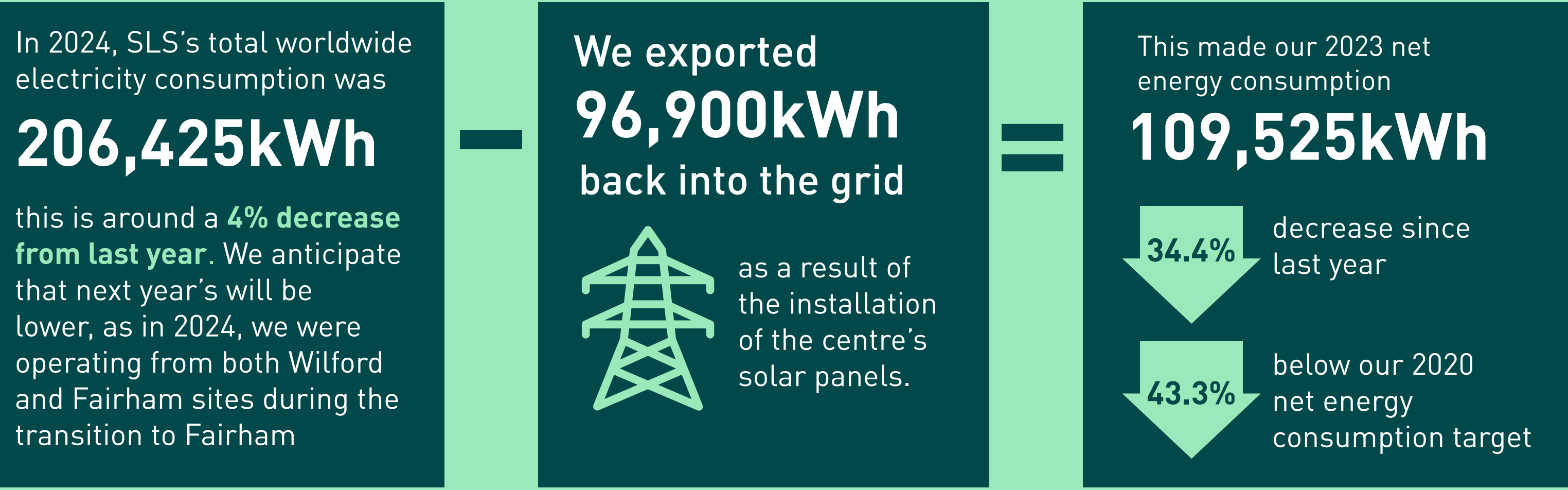
SCOPE 2 EMISSIONS

Location-based **20.3tCO₂e**

Market-based **0.14tCO₂e**



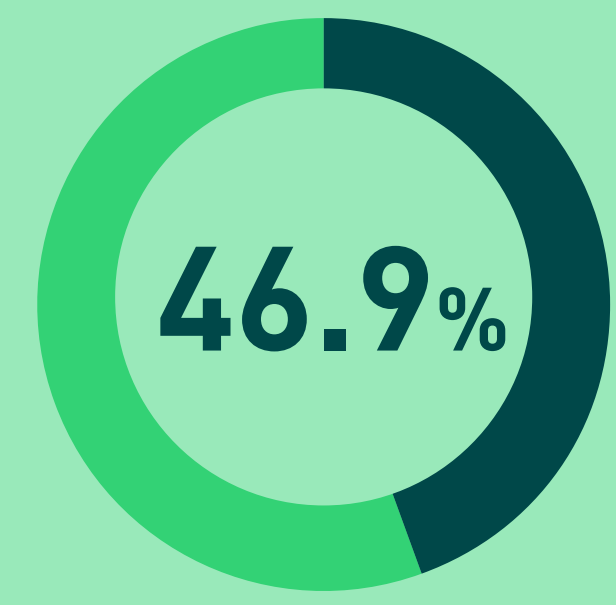
ELECTRICITY CONSUMPTION



We source **100%** renewable energy

in the UK and Republic of Ireland (with REGO certificates made available on our website to support this).

Worldwide, 98.2% of our electricity is renewable, and we aim to increase this to be 100% by 2030



of our energy consumed on-site was self generated, the remaining was procured through a REGO contract.

Migration was completed in August 2024, so the baseline for our operations in Fairham will be further developed in 2025, where we expect a further reduction of electricity consumption, as we no longer use our former Wilford site.

VALUE CHAIN EMISSIONS

CALCULATION METHODOLOGY

In 2022, our first Scope 3 reporting year, we conducted a spend-based analysis using the GHG Protocol Evaluator tool to provide us with the first year of reporting data for Scope 3. This initial approach was used primarily to determine the extent of our Scope 3 impact (particularly that of our supply chain) compared to our Scope 1 and 2 emissions and help us identify areas of our value chain that we should prioritise for primary data collection. This exercise of initially scoping out rough estimates of value chain emission categories provided a sense of significance for each category, enabling us to determine carbon 'hot spots', and begin working towards getting a higher level of data integrity for those areas.

We were able to determine that Scope 3 emissions represented much more than 40% of emissions across all scopes – in reality, it was over 90% for 2022 – and that would therefore inform how our carbon reduction plan should be developed.



Capital goods **cat. 2** and business travel **cat.6** were calculated based on spend, whilst fuel and energy related activity **cat.3** and waste **cat. 5** were average-based calculations. Upstream transportation **cat.4** was calculated by a mixture of hybrid data where available, supplemented by spend data. Employee commuting **cat.7** was calculated using the distance-based method.

We do not currently have sufficient data available to provide emissions calculations for two other relevant categories – use of sold products **cat. 11** and end of life treatment of sold products **cat.12**. All other categories are not applicable to SLS's value chain.

04 ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE

For 2023 and 2024, with improved data integrity in mind, our approach to calculating Scope 3 emissions changed in favour of collecting more primary data from suppliers. We conducted an assessment with our top 90% of suppliers by spend to gain insight into their sustainability maturity and carbon accountability, alongside gathering insights into some key material topics. We used these insights, supplemented with spend-based data, to improve our data integrity for our highest category of impact as a distributor: purchased goods and services **cat.1**.

TOTAL GHG EMISSIONS



44920.13tCO₂e
(market-based)



44940.43tCO₂e
(location-based)

	2023 Emissions, in tCO ₂ e	2024 Emissions, tCO ₂ e
Purchased goods and services (cat. 1)	43480.49	43479.99
Capital goods (cat. 2)	1463.94	536.84
Fuel and energy related activity (cat. 3)	5.4	15.76
Upstream transportation and distribution (cat. 4)	367.83	599.78
Waste generated in operations (cat. 5)	0.28	0.48
Business travel (cat. 6)	188.78	135.25
Employee commuting (cat. 7)	68.9	87.70
Upstream leased assets (cat. 8)	N/A	Insufficient data
Downstream transportation and distribution (cat. 9)	N/A	Insufficient data
Processing of sold products (cat. 10)	N/A	N/A
Use of sold products (cat. 11)	Insufficient data	Insufficient data
End of life treatment of sold products (cat. 12)	Insufficient data	Insufficient data
Leased assets (cat.13)	N/A	N/A
Franchises (cat.14)	N/A	N/A
Investments (cat.15)	N/A	N/A
TOTAL SCOPE 3 EMISSIONS	45575.62	44855.80

SCOPE 3 ANALYSIS

Our Scope 3 emissions have remained mostly similar compared to 2023. Purchased goods and services continue to be an emission hotspot for SLS, as is the case for most businesses. We will continue to work with our supply chain to reduce the carbon footprint of products that we buy, and we will continue to transition from a spend-based approach to enable the decoupling of our emissions from our spend. We will aim to begin product-level analyses where possible to capture our progress.

As anticipated, capital goods emissions were an anomaly and have **decreased by 927.1 tonnes CO₂e.**

We have seen a slight spike in emissions from upstream transport, partly due to increased availability of data. Going forwards, this will be a key area of interest to support our transition to net zero.



ANNUAL SUPPLIER ASSESSMENT

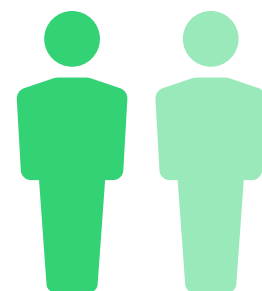
Each year, we ask our top 90% suppliers to complete a supplier assessment. We have seen a **13% increase** in responses to our annual supplier questionnaire from 2023 to 2024, showing more engagement from suppliers on sustainability topics. For our 2025 questionnaire, we aim for a further 5% engagement increase.



ENERGY: Suppliers' usage of renewable energy throughout their operations has remained about the same. We will engage further on this topic to encourage an increase in renewable energy usage and more efficient usage.



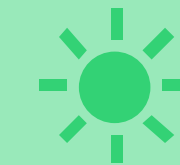
MODERN SLAVERY: We aim to engage more with our suppliers on modern slavery. Currently, around half track and report initiatives which support their modern slavery statement.



SOCIAL VALUE: In 2023, 56% of our suppliers had a social value policy. In 2024, this has **increased to 60%**.



CONFLICT MINERALS: **6% more suppliers** have a conflict minerals policy, and **43% of these track the actions or initiatives in support of their policy.** This is an area that we plan to engage with our suppliers to improve monitoring and reporting.



BIODIVERSITY: Biodiversity action within our supply chain is a key area for improvement, with **26%** of our suppliers confirming that they have a **biodiversity policy.**

Given biodiversity is key to climate action, we will engage more with stakeholders on this topic to showcase its importance to climate mitigation.



CARBON REDUCTION: The proportion of suppliers with a carbon reduction plan aligned with science has **increased by 4%**.



WATER USAGE

In 2024, SLS's total water consumption was

1090m³

compared to

925m³ (2023)

431m³ (2022)

396m³ (2021)

In 2022, we exceeded our target by 9%, and again in 2023 by 80%. This was due to an internal leakage at our Wilford site which was identified and quickly solved. In 2024, our consumption was up due to operating two sites concurrently while migration to the new site was taking place.

We anticipate that the trend in our water consumption at the new site will be slightly higher due to operating out of a larger facility.



In 2025, we will review our water consumption to eliminate unnecessary usage. We will also review our target to ensure it is both ambitious and achievable.



Our aim once again was to maintain water usage to 2021 levels due to the adoption of a hybrid working practice amongst some employees.

Our water consumption data has been collected from meter readings taken on the last day of every month (or as close as possible).

As part of our new facility's BREEAM building certification, we have a building management system in place, which enables us to set the daily usage rate for water. If this is exceeded, an alarm goes off. In each area with a water outlet, the systems are fitted with an electronic valve which, like the lighting, is connected to passive infrared (PIR) sensors. Also fitted to the building is a leak detection system which will mitigate the risk of water leaks in future.

Because of the new facility running on completely different systems to our old distribution centre, our annual water consumption targets may need to be recalibrated to suit what is realistic for our new building. At the end of 2025, we will be in a better position to set more achievable reduction targets for collective water consumption across our operational sites. This will include any seasonal variation analysis.

WASTE MANAGEMENT



Our waste in 2024 was **72 tonnes**



of diverted waste was **recycled**

100% of this waste was diverted from landfill

The **remainder was converted into energy** through a dedicated waste-to-energy supplier



We also produced **450kg** of WEEE (Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment) in 2024, a **decrease from the 1,880kg in 2023**. Since 2020, **SLS have reduced our WEEE by 45%**



PLASTIC AND PACKAGING

As a distributor, we often do not have direct influence over the packaging of products, and we are working with our suppliers to better understand the weight, material, and recycled content of packaging that comes through SLS.

All plastic packaging that SLS purchases contains **30%+** RECYCLED PLASTIC

We aim to reuse our packaging as much as possible. Where this is not possible, for example where product integrity could be compromised, we recycle all cardboard and plastic packaging.



...CAN PRODUCE



retail baskets annually

Plastic to PURPOSE

Due to the linear nature of many laboratory products, waste is a key problem in the industry. We recognise our responsibility to take our customers' potential waste into consideration.

Our Plastic to Purpose initiative makes it easy to recycle previously hard-to-recycle lab plastic. Our customers' waste is recycled and turned into a variety of useful products such as retail food baskets, street furniture, building materials, and roadside kerbs.

We offer this service for free to customers on a case-by-case basis.

In 2024, approximately
26.17 tonnes
 of plastic waste was collected from our customers' sites -
 a **12.46% increase** from the previous year

2023 = 23.27 tonnes
 2022 = 1.96 tonnes

As predicted, as new customers are added to the scheme, the volume of lab plastic collected and recycled continues to increase



WAREHOUSE RESOURCE EFFICIENCY MEASURES

In our warehouse, we continue to prioritise the reuse of any non-damaged supplier boxes and pallet boxes with which to dispatch orders above newly purchased packaging. We also collect and reuse polystyrene cold storage boxes and ice packs from customers to avoid further waste on their part.

We make consolidated efforts to minimise our plastic use and promote reuse wherever logistically possible. All stretch wrap and plastic packaging purchased is at least 30% recycled plastic. Where possible, we use paper box fillers rather than non-recyclable plastic pillows. In the few instances where this isn't possible, we reuse the plastic pillows as much as we can.

In addition to this, all warehouse employees are trained to pack in a way that maximises the use of space, resulting in less packaging material being used in general.

We continue to explore how we can be more efficient with resources and investigate the use of any new innovations that may suit our operations.

All stretch wrap and plastic packaging purchased is

30%+
RECYCLED

FAIRHAM

Our new state-of-the-art National Distribution Centre came online in 2023, with the full migration completed in 2024. The new site is just three miles from our previous location, helping to lessen the environmental impact of the move and make the transition as seamless as possible.



Ordering processing times have decreased to just

15 mins



Capacity has risen to

2,500

orders per day - a threefold increase



Reduced operational emissions by 20%

with excess energy fed back into the grid

We've optimised our range of

600,000 products

from world-leading brands, to ensure the right products are available when you need them

www.scientificlabs.co.uk

The SLS national distribution centre building has been designed with sustainability at the forefront, with a **BREEAM** rating of 'Excellent'. There is a big focus on more sustainable transport; including 12 EV charging stations, a bike shelter to hold 20 bikes, as well as being just a few minutes walk from the local tram stop. Further sustainable features include greater energy conservation that comes from modern builds, operating exclusively on electricity, with solar panels fitted to the roof.

Please refer to the electricity production section of this report for metrics on the self-generated energy attributed to the building's solar panels.

We are still collating data for energy usage and export of surplus electric, records for energy usage started August 2024. We are currently exploring ways to reduce our energy usage.



Social Performance

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EMPLOYEE WELLBEING

We prioritise the wellbeing of our employees and conduct an annual survey to ensure our employees feel their views are heard, and that any suggestions for improvement are taken into consideration by our board of directors and senior management team. We keep up to date with all new employment legislation and have a robust grievance procedure.

Average satisfaction rate

7.57

SOCIAL DIALOGUE

Our directors offer an open-door policy at all times to all staff to promote social dialogue. In 2024, they also provided all staff with 16 hours of dedicated time for board-employee interaction (with all members of the board present).



NEW STARTERS

We appreciate that when a new employee joins the business, it has become more difficult to assimilate due to remote or hybrid working. As a result, we have introduced a new induction process for new starters. We are flexible in our approach to inductions and our HR department works closely with line managers to develop a tailored induction for each individual and role. This includes cross-departmental engagement, company training, and a plan of action for on-the-job training.

This is diarised with line managers and new starters with

4-, 8-, and 12- week reviews (and more if required)

Alongside this induction process, all new employees are invited to join the first part of the next board meeting so that they can meet all our directors personally and ask any questions they may have.

“...the most welcoming and supportive induction I have ever had”

“everyone is so friendly!”



HYBRID WORKING

In 2024, we continued to support our staff with the hybrid working model and reviewed how we can improve working conditions for our staff to achieve a healthy work-life balance.

DSE assessments have been conducted to ensure that all home setups are correct, meet legislative and health and safety requirements, and the company has invested in providing the necessary furniture and IT equipment to employees.

OPEN COMMUNICATION

We are ever mindful of what it means to have effective cross-departmental communication, particularly for hybrid and remote employees. With many of SLS staff working remotely or hybrid, we use the online platform WorkVivo; this tool provides new levels of engagement in the workplace, enabling teams to continue to communicate quickly, strengthen productivity, foster knowledge exchange, and preserve our work ethic and culture.

IN 2024...



**592
POSTS**



**2931
COMMENTS**



**14,848
REACTIONS**

Company-wide, employees have created posts sharing good news, company updates or documents, shout-outs to fellow employees, work anniversaries, birthdays, achievements, and celebrations.

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644,000+ impressions - many a social interaction!

97.82% of employees use WorkVivo





THE AWARDS

- Business Support Excellence
- Customer Service Administrative & Select Education Excellence
- Customer Service Northern Ireland and Scotland Excellence
- Customer Service Nottingham Excellence
- Export & International Excellence
- Finance & Accounts Excellence
- Key Accounts Excellence
- Marketing Excellence
- Procurement Excellence
- Operations Excellence (Drivers, Goods In, and Pick & Pack)
- Business Intelligence, Pricing, and Quotes & Tenders Excellence
- Best Newcomer Award
- Extra Mile Award
- Golden Smile Award
- Paul Smith Team of the Year Award

EMPLOYEE REWARDS

We have introduced an annual SLS Summer Awards evening, which offers employees a way to celebrate achievement across all departments. Employees are invited to put their colleagues forward for a multitude of internal awards, offering a democratic approach to celebration and business-wide recognition.

RECRUITMENT AND STAFF RETENTION

For 2024, **our annual attrition rate was 15.26%**. We hired a total of 48 new hires, 8 of them net organic hires, bringing the total number of Full Time Equivalents (FTE) to 244.

We take our social responsibility very seriously. We believe in investing in people, and are also aware of the rising cost of living. We choose to go beyond the government minimum or even the National Living Wage to ensure our staff are always paid a wage that covers the cost of living. As such, **SLS has been a real Living Wage Employer since May 2021, accredited by the Living Wage Foundation.** This includes 100% of employees, contractors, and agency workers. For example, we employ contracted cleaners and ensure they are employed at the real Living Wage.

The real Living Wage is the only wage rate calculated based on the true cost of living; it applies to all workers 18 and over, and is independently calculated and updated annually each November.



EMPLOYEE TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Mandatory training courses and subsequent assessments on the iHasco platform include:

MANUAL HANDLING ✓	FIRE AWARENESS ✓	EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION ✓
GDPR UK ✓	CYBER SECURITY AWARENESS ✓	ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS ✓
HEALTH AND SAFETY ESSENTIALS ✓	MENOPAUSE AWARENESS ✓	DISPLAY SCREEN EQUIPMENT ✓
MODERN SLAVERY ✓	MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS ✓	SEXUAL HARRASSMENT AWARENESS ✓

1278 training courses were completed by SLS employees

Annually, this equates to an average of **5.5 hours**

We look to expand these wherever necessary to ensure staff get the learning and development required to progress personally, and to support a positive work environment and growing business.

HEALTH AND SAFETY:

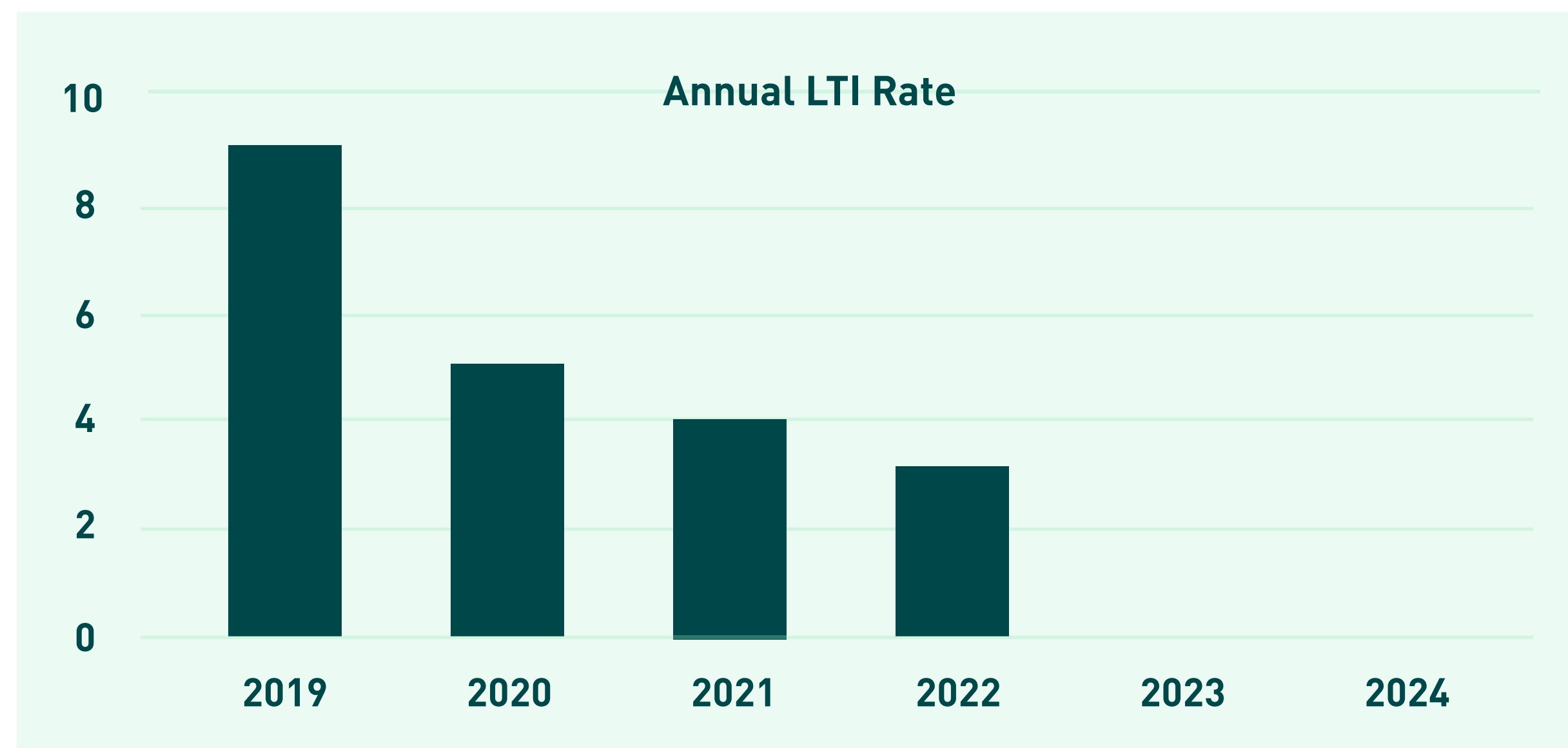
The lost time injury (LTI) frequency and severity rates for the SLS workforce (both direct and temporary) in 2024 were 0, continuing our success from 2023.

No days were lost to work-related injuries, fatalities, or ill health – and there were no fatalities as a result of work-related injuries and ill health.

Number of work-related accidents = 0

Number of work-related ill health cases = 0

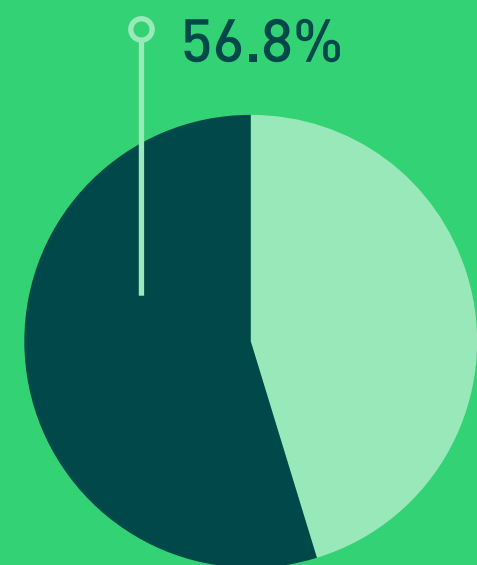
Total number of hours worked in 2024: 466,498.5



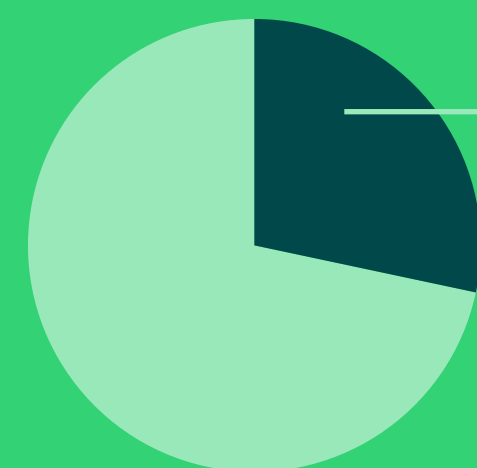
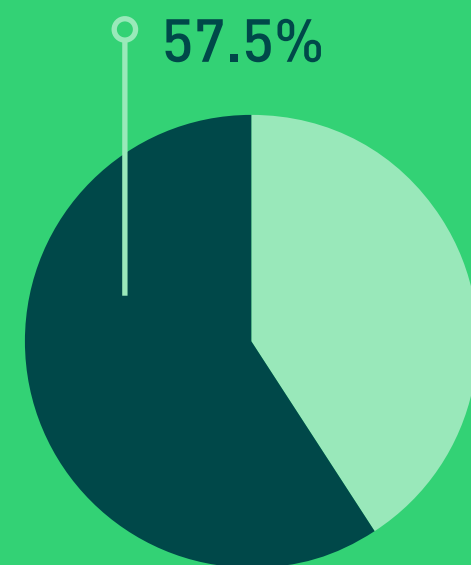
DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

SLS continues to be committed to fostering a culture of diversity, equality, and inclusion that embraces the unique perspectives and backgrounds of our employees, partners, and stakeholders. We firmly believe that a diverse and inclusive workforce drives innovation, enhances collaboration, and strengthens our ability to address the complex challenges of our industry.

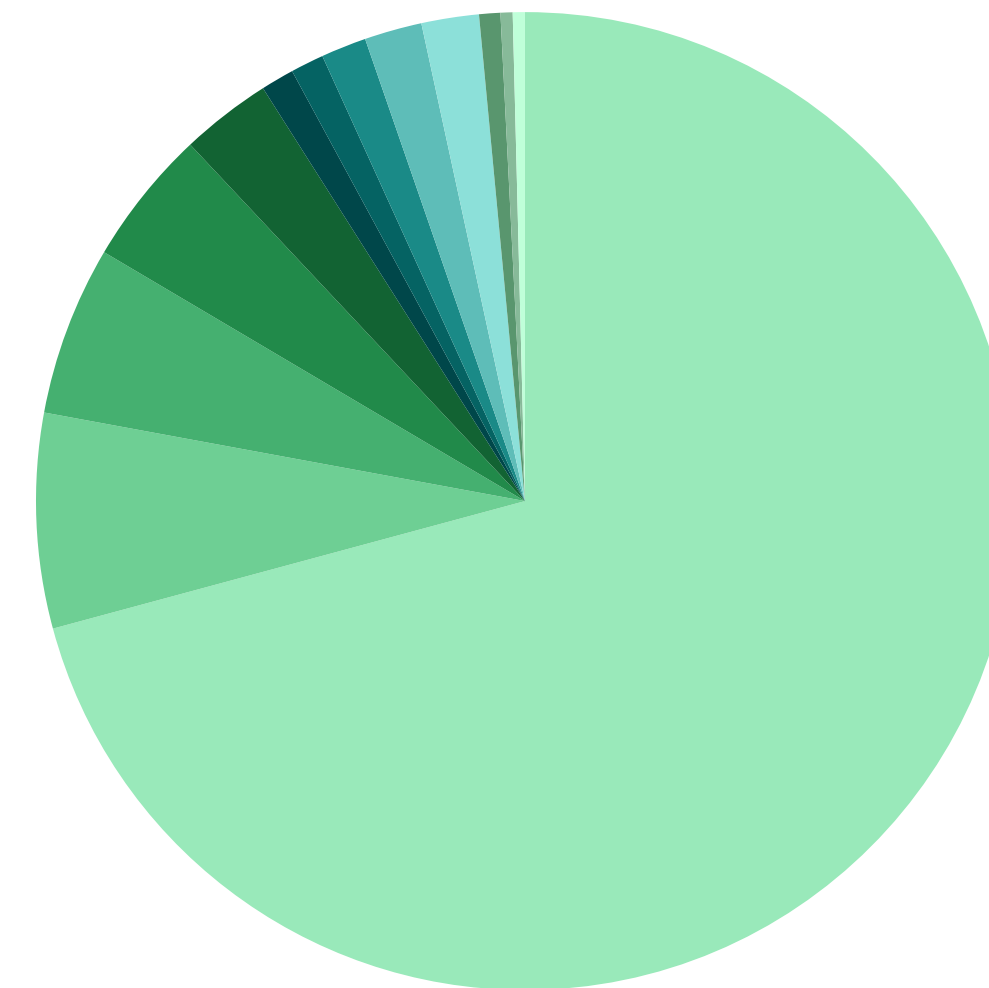
Percentage of women at SLS



Percentage of leadership positions held by women



29%
 Percentage of women on the board of directors
 This is an increase from 16% in 2023



- White British
- Mixed race
- Indian
- Black Caribbean
- Black African
- Bangladeshi
- Other Asian (non-Chinese)
- White Irish
- Other
- Not specified
- Black Other
- White Other
- Chinese

Since the start of 2022, we have made our recruitment process much more accessible with the use of inclusive language and made sure we are explicit in saying we welcome applications from people of all backgrounds. We have also been more proactive about attending recruitment fairs and as a result have seen a direct correlation between that activity and improvements in the diversity of our workforce (in all areas of the business).

We have gained a more holistic understanding of our workforce diversity. Our policy is not to request protected characteristic data from employees, and it is optional for them to share this information on our internal secure HR platform.

SOCIAL VALUE AND SDG ALIGNMENT

Over the course of the year SLS has donated **£1900+** to charity



SLS grants every member of staff the opportunity to have an extra day of paid leave each year for volunteering – for a cause of their choice. We want to help and support the local communities in which we work (and live) and demonstrate added value. This initiative is voluntary, and employees may decide whether they want to participate in any volunteering activity.

SLS staff have contributed

110+ hours of volunteering in 2024

SLS Staff have contributed over

40-50 hours of support and outreach activity each year to enable young people in STEM education.

At SLS, we strive to create meaningful social value through volunteering, philanthropic efforts, employee upskilling, and much more...

Each of these activities aligns with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), reinforcing our commitment to fostering positive social impact while driving more sustainable development. By connecting our actions with specific SDGs, we ensure that our contributions are not only impactful at a local level but also part of a broader global effort to create a more equitable and sustainable future.

		Activity	SDG
BENEVOLENT	STAFF VOLUNTEERING	Helping out at Carfest, a charitable festival that raises money for various children's charities - duties include anything and everything to make accessible campers stay as easy and as pleasant as possible.	3,10,16
		Working at the Rainbows charity shop, help unpack new items, as well as price and put out in the store. Cleaning of the garments etc.	1,10,12
		Cooking food for use in the charity's winter shelter for the homeless.	1,2,3,10,11,12
		Working with the Woodland trust to help put up Bird Boxes for the local Primary School in nearby woodland.	4,13,15
		Event Promoting physical and mental wellbeing in Children at a local primary school.	3,4,10
		Maintenance of paths and vegetation study. Repair of paths to ensure damage to surrounding healthland and fauna is minimized.	11,13,15
		Nottingham City Council (Nottingham Together Volunteering) Gardening project.	3,11,15
		Volunteering at a local foodbank - including: weighing food, packaging food, re-packing the warehouse, and conversations with the recipients.	1,2,3,10,12

- 1** No poverty
 - 2** Zero hunger
 - 3** Good health and well-being
 - 4** Quality education
 - 5** Gender equality
 - 6** Clean water and sanitation
 - 7** Affordable and clean energy
 - 8** Decent work and economic growth
 - 9** Industry, innovation and infrastructure
 - 10** Reduced inequalities
 - 11** Sustainable cities and communities
 - 12** Responsible consumption and production
 - 13** Climate action
 - 14** Life below water
 - 15** Life on land
 - 16** Peace, justice and strong institutions
 - 17** Partnerships for the goals
- 

SOCIAL VALUE AND SDG ALIGNMENT (CONTINUED)

		Activity	SDG
BENEVOLENT	CHARITABLE DONATIONS	Frequent donations of pre-loved items to Rainbows, an East Midlands children’s hospice - £615 donated to Rainbows in 2024	1, 2, 3, 5, 9, 17
		Raised £192 in aid of Breast Cancer - bake sale	3, 16
		Provided support and donations to local food banks	1, 2, 10, 11
		£1098 raised for Macmillan cancer support	1,3, 10
	SPONSORSHIPS	Official sponsors of a wheelchair basketball team (The Nottingham Jaguars)	3,10,11





		Activity	SDG
SOCIAL	UPSKILLING EMPLOYEES	All sales staff received live online sustainability training	4, 5, 8, 10, 17
		All staff receive 5.5 hours of online training each year	13, 15, 11, 17
		Mental health awareness training provided to employees via Aviva	3, 4, 5, 8, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17
		Stress and resilience training provided to employees via Aviva	13, 14, 15, 17
STAFF REWARDS AND BENEFITS		Annual staff awards	3, 8, 10

Refer to Section 5 of this report for employment and economic social value and SDG alignment, as well as our Section 4 for environmental processes and practices to reduce our impact.

EXTERNAL FRAMEWORK ALIGNMENT

SLS recognise that sustainability is a business imperative; we want to develop impactful strategies that deliver results and long-term value for not just the company but for the rest of society and the environment.

We are proud to be members of the UN Global Compact, working together with other organisations that share our commitment to accelerating progress and delivering change.

WE SUPPORT



WE SUPPORT THE MISSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GLOBAL COMPACT TO MOBILIZE A GLOBAL MOVEMENT OF SUSTAINABLE COMPANIES AND STAKEHOLDERS TO CREATE THE WORLD WE WANT.

#UnitingBusiness



Product Responsibility

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PRODUCT QUALITY & SAFETY

We believe that product quality and safety are integral components of our broader sustainability agenda, and we are committed to an ongoing process of improvement in both. We offer nationwide servicing to customers with the aim of extending product lifespan. By delivering reliable, long-lasting products, we contribute to reducing waste and resource consumption over time.

Feedback from our customers is invaluable in this journey – helping us identify opportunities for enhancement and innovation – and we are working on procedures to enable us to report in this area with greater ease.



ISO CERTIFIED

We are proud to have ISO 14001 and 9001 certifications.

ISO 14001 is an internationally recognised standard for environmental management systems (EMS) that supports our commitment to improving our environmental performance and reducing our environmental impact.

ISO 9001 is an international standard that specifies requirements for a quality management system. The certification supports our deep-rooted commitment to continuous improvement and to consistently provide products and services that meet customer and regulatory requirements.



PRODUCT SUSTAINABILITY

SLS takes pride in being genuine and as transparent as possible about the products we sell, and want to support our customers in making purchasing decisions which best align with their own sustainability goals. The more well-informed our customers are about products, the better.

Our sustainability attributes enable customers to understand more about the lifecycle of a product – in qualitative terms.

We collect primary product-level data from suppliers for nineteen different lifecycle criteria relating to raw materials, manufacturing, use, packaging and distribution, and disposal. This data enables us to not only highlight any sustainability attributes/features of products, to inform customers about what stage in the product lifecycle they occur.



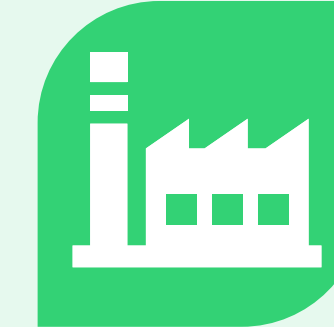
Click or scan QR code to head to our sustainability page to learn more about our attributes

SUSTAINABLE RAW MATERIALS AWARD



- Made using more than 80% recycled or renewable material
- Made using material with a reduced environmental impact, e.g. a refrigerant with a low GWP (Global Warming Potential)
- Designed to reduce the use of raw materials

SUSTAINABLE PRODUCT MANUFACTURING AWARD



- Made in a facility which runs on more than 90% renewable energy
- Measures were in place during the manufacture of this product to reduce energy consumption, generate less waste, or reduce water usage
- Aligns with the principles of green chemistry

SUSTAINABLE PACKAGING & DISTRIBUTION AWARD



- Manufactured in the UK or Ireland
- Country of origin has an Environmental Performance Index (EPI) greater than 60
- Plastic-free packaging
- Reduces the need for packaging
- Packaging return scheme offered for this product

SUSTAINABLE USE AWARD



- Product contributes to a reduced energy consumption or reduced water consumption
- Product reduces or replaces the need for consumables
- Built to last – minimum 5-year warranty, and spare parts/servicing available

SUSTAINABLE DISPOSAL AWARD



- Product is recyclable (excludes packaging), a recycling or repurposing scheme is offered for this product
- A feature of this product enhances its biodegradability

Our sustainability attributes align to the following principles:

- Specific to individual products
- Evidence-based using primary data from our suppliers
- Aims to include as much information as possible about the entire product life cycle

CUSTOMER SUPPORT

At SLS, we pride ourselves on the level and quality of customer service we provide.

In 2024, SLS's Customer Service and KAM teams dedicate approximately

97,666

hours to supporting our customers*

ensuring high rates of customer satisfaction and maximum benefit from our products. We have developed more KPIs in this area, so going forward we will be able to report our alignment to customer confidence rate goals year on year.

*metrics calculated by number of staff hours

WHAT DOES OUR CUSTOMER SERVICE DEPARTMENT DO?

Triage customer enquiries via calls, emails, and website	Action customer requests	Prepare and send quotations	Process orders
Progress orders and provide delivery updates	Arrange installations	Daily/weekly reporting	Action aftersales issues



Our Customer Service teams have an average of 3000 touchpoints with customers and internal departments per day.

FEEDBACK

Here is a collection of feedback from our clients about their experiences with the customer service team.

“I would just like to express my thanks to the lady I spoke to last week [...] she was amazing”

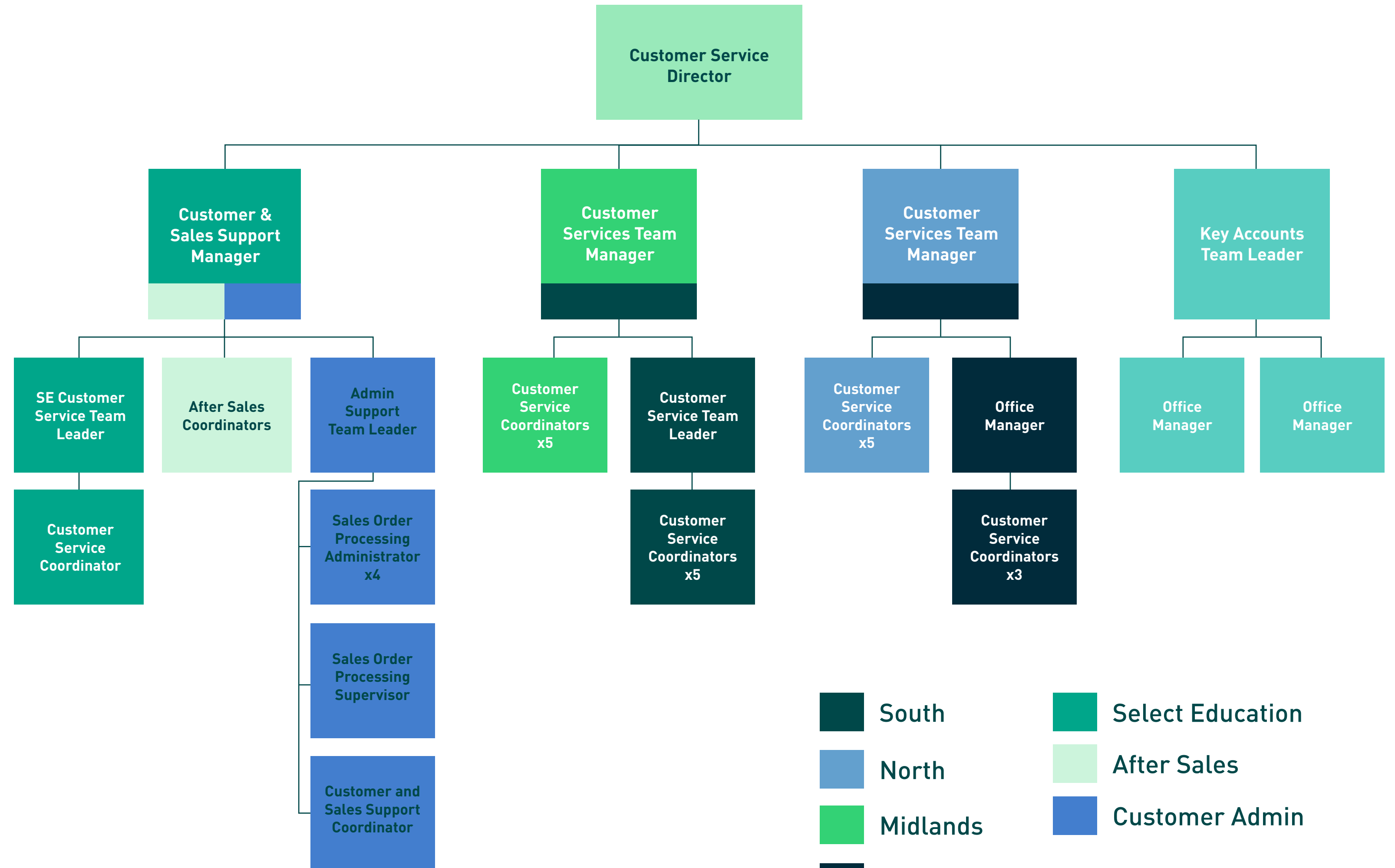
“I appreciate the care that you have for your customers”

“Your customer service was amazing, very kind and patient”

“Some of the best customer service I’ve had”

“Absolutely brilliant service from you [...] cannot thank you enough”

ORGANOGRAM



- South
- North
- Midlands
- Ireland
- Scotland
- Select Education
- After Sales
- Customer Admin

REPORTING PRINCIPLES

We want our sustainability reports to provide sufficient information to enable readers to make informed assessments and decisions about SLS's impact and its contribution to sustainable development.

SLS confirms that the information presented in this report is correct, as complete as possible, and sufficiently detailed to allow an assessment of SLS's impact during the reporting period. We aim to report information in an unbiased way and provide a fair representation of our negative and positive impacts. We have strived to ensure that the information presented is as assessable as possible and easy to understand. We have (where possible) selected and compiled information to enable an analysis of changes in our impact over time.



Conclusion

07

CONCLUSION

Overall, in 2024, we have made great improvements to our environmental impact through the transition to our new national distribution centre. The move demonstrates our long-term commitment to sustainability - almost half of our energy is self-generated by solar panels, and we have facilitated low-carbon commuting by installing bicycle sheds and EV charging points. We are also extremely proud of our EcoVadis Gold rating, placing us in the **top 5% of all rated businesses.**

Looking ahead, we will be defining a long-term sustainability strategy to help us deliver against our targets and provide clear focus areas. We aim to continuously improve our reporting to demonstrate our ongoing commitment to transparency and continuous improvement.



Reducing, reusing and recycling where possible; making conscious choices to reduce what goes to landfill, reusing and recycling what we have and to make informed decisions regarding the carbon footprint when purchasing products.

Reduce, reuse, rethink, and reborn through design

Thinking carefully about how we use everything around us, and reusing / recycling wherever possible!

Waste is wasteful!

Sustainability means making choices that protect our environment, support communities, and ensure a better future for all.

Making purchasing and consumption decisions that have been considered beyond convenience.

Make conscious choices that reduce harm, preserve resources, and foster a balanced, resilient world where people and nature can thrive, ensuring a sustainable future for our children.

Protecting the environment for tomorrows generation.

Protecting our planet for now and the future

It's the future - just like in the 80's when the future was Garlic Bread. We now need to focus on how we manage our planet's resources, so the kids and grandkids can enjoy it!

Using our natural resources wisely, carefully and in ways that are not detrimental to our world currently or in the future-reduce-reuse and recycle.

I see it as our responsibility to pursue every improvement wherever we can to behave more responsibly to the earth and all its people - and that path (I hope) leads to a place where we take no more from nature than what we can replace.

Being mindful about practices that could affect the ecological state of the planet both positively and negatively.

Restoring the negative impact that humans have had on earth. Making a cleaner and fruitful environment for the next generations to come.

Fulfilling the needs of today, without compromising those of future generations.

Reducing (pref zero) non recyclable waste, recycling where possible, being respectful, responsible and protecting your surroundings and the environment.

WHAT SUSTAINABILITY MEANS TO US

Working together today to protect our tomorrows

Thinking about the impact of our choices on the environment and taking responsible actions towards a better future. Small steps can pave the way to big changes, so we should act accordingly.

Leaving no damage to the environment around us, ensuring future generations are left with a planet that can still be called home.

Treating Mother Earth with the respect she deserves.

To not destroy our natural environment (resources). To ensure human & animal life in the future. Consumerism - Making & using products that last ! Quality - Reusable.

May the forest be with you.

Ethical and local sourcing of environmentally friendly products and their component parts for the good of future generations.

Setting up a new status-quo that can stand the test of time and keep the planet in a healthy balance, making the best use of resources and not squandering it.

Actively thinking about our actions day to day to make more eco-friendly choices, that fit within the demands of a hectic schedule.

We all need to be accountable to make the difference for the future generations.

Being respectful of the beautiful planet we live on, understanding that its resources that we take for granted are finite and allowing the earth to repair.

Everyone's responsibility in every aspect of our lives, every small action counts and consistency is key.

Mindfulness and meaningful action that makes a measurable difference.

Sustainability is about making sure there is a future for all things on this little ball of rock, hurtling through space. We need to take of it, it is the only place we know has chocolate.

I know I am not perfect all the time when it comes to being as sustainable as possible. However, when an opportunity arises where I can make a positive contribution to reduce my carbon impact, I take it and encourage others near me to do the same.

Demonstrating concern, consideration and conscientiousness before making decisions.

Caring about the environment and future generations.

Ensuring what we do today does not come at the expense of future generations!

Making better use of renewable resources, minimising our environmental / CO2 footprint, preserving the Earth and its resources for future generations, combating climate change.

Re-use, recycle, re-purpose. Everything we buy has a purpose and we all have to take responsibility.

Thank you to everyone involved in the development of this report.

Designer: Issy Bradford
Sustainability Manager: Sarah Tobin



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