Integrated Mechanical, Electrical & Plumbing Services

watkins

2024 - 2027

Sustainability Plan

1. Introduction

According to the World Green Building Council, buildings are responsible for 39% of global energy related carbon emissions. As leading mechanical, electrical and plumbing contractors, we therefore have a responsibility to decarbonise our own operations.

This Sustainability Plan sets out our commitments to move towards more sustainable business practices. It details our current performance and the steps we will take to reduce our carbon emissions, reduce waste, monitor sustainability data, and take positive actions towards reducing the overall impact of our industry.

Watkins is committed to reaching Net Zero by 2050. We will continuously monitor, improve and publish our own performance to support our customers, partners and shareholders.

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2. Carbon: Our performance

In 2023 we measured our carbon footprint for the first time. This assessment focused on scopes 1, 2, and a reduced subsection of scope 3 emissions.

Watkins Carbon Footprint April 2022 - March 2023

Category	Emissions (tCO_2e)
Scope 1	**78.012**
Scope 2	**20.253**
Scope 3 (total)	**275.405**
4. Upstream transportation and distribution	27.594
5. Waste generated in operations	0.702
6. Business travel	172.342
7. Employee commuting	74.767
9. Downstream transportation and distribution	0*

This subsection of scope 3 categories was chosen in accordance with the Cabinet Office guidance for PPN 06/21 Carbon Reduction Plans. When assessing the next reporting period we will undertake a full assessment that includes all scope 3 categories.

These figures were calculated in accordance with the GHG Protocol Corporate Standard.

3. Carbon: Actions

Based on the results of our carbon assessment, we have identified the following actions as steps to take which will reduce our overall footprint.

1. We will measure our footprint every year to monitor and track our progress. Future assessments will measure across all scope 3 emissions categories, accounting for the carbon cost of the materials and services we use. Once a full assessment has been made, we will assess the possibility of bringing our net zero target forwards.

2. Many of our measured emissions relate to the use of petrol and diesel fleet vehicles. To reduce these emissions, we will change our fleet to electric vehicles between now and 2035. We aim to reduce the percentage of fossil fuel vehicles in our fleet by 10% per year, starting in 2025.

3. To reduce our scope 1 emissions we will install a heat pump. Heat pumps use electricity to capture heat from the outside air and can reduce heating-associated carbon emissions by up to 44% every year compared to a conventional gas boiler.

4. In order to analyse our carbon footprint more accurately, we are implementing new data tracking processes to capture high quality carbon data from our operations. This will include data on the distance, weight, and transport mode of goods we receive, granular waste data including the type of waste and method of disposal, and employee commuting and business travel data on the length and mode of each journey.

5. We will implement an ISO14001 Environmental Management System (EMS) to help us gain a clearer understanding of the wider impacts of our operations.

6. Senior members of staff will undertake accredited carbon literacy training to ensure we have the required skills and knowledge to reduce our carbon footprint. This training will be delivered by the Carbon Literacy Project, a UN-recognised charity that delivers carbon-focused training sessions.

7. As a large proportion of our measured scope 3 emissions related to business travel, we will implement a Sustainable Business Travel policy to reduce unnecessary trips. This policy will dictate the circumstances under which our employees can travel and will prioritise sustainable modes of transport such as trains and buses wherever possible.

4. Waste: Our performance

Currently, data on waste is limited due to the use of shared waste receptacles on client sites. Data for waste on client sites is not available due to the waste treatment being undertaken by unaffiliated third parties. As such, current data is only associated with a limited subsection of the waste we generate. This waste is treated by our waste partner who provides us with comprehensive waste reports.

Between April 2022 and March 2023, our waste partner diverted 96% of our waste from landfill to recycling. This significantly lowers our carbon footprint and improves our environmental impact by reducing resource extraction.

5. Waste: Actions

We will take the following steps to reduce our waste impact:

1. We will implement a policy to record the type and amount of waste that is deposited in shared receptacles on client sites. We will work with our clients to share waste data and prioritise sustainable methods of waste disposal. This will improve our understanding of our own waste impact and encourage others in the industry to improve their own processes.

2. Although a majority of our waste is already recycled, recycling still has an environmental cost. We will seek to reduce the total amount of waste we create by prioritising long-lasting goods and materials with a low proportion of packaging and by efficient ordering practices to minimise the purchase of excess quantities of materials. We will continue to engage with our waste partner to ensure that recycling is prioritised for any waste which is created.

3. We will continue to prioritise the installation of high-quality systems with long life cycles. This will increase the value of our services to our clients and limit our environmental impact by reducing the need for future maintenance and disposal.

6. Industry and value chain

Scope 3 emissions are emissions associated with our value chain. Our scope 3 emissions are 73.3% of our total emissions footprint. It is therefore important that we find ways to actively engage with our suppliers and partners to find ways to reduce this.

We will undertake the following actions to help reduce our scope 3 emissions and contribute to wider improvements in our industry.

1. We will develop a comprehensive supplier engagement strategy. This will set out the ways in which we engage with current and potential suppliers to ensure that the organisations we work with are committed to reaching net zero emissions and have the capacity to provide us with high quality emissions data on their services. This will also allow us to understand the industry-specific challenges facing our suppliers in the context of obtaining data and reducing emissions.

2. Following supplier engagement, we will create a sustainable procurement policy that dictates a minimum level of emissions reduction commitments and carbon data availability for any suppliers we engage with. This will ensure we remain on track to meet our net zero commitment.

3. In addition to decarbonising our own value chain, we will engage with industry-specific sustainability initiatives such as the **Copper Sustainability Partnership**, the **Alliance for Sustainable Building Products**, and the **Reducing Plastics in Construction Group**. This will allow us to push for improvements in the wider construction industry and support sustainable building practices.

7. Governing sustainability

We want sustainability to be at the heart of our organisation. We will take the following steps to ensure that our sustainability plans are prioritised and can adapt to changing internal and external circumstances.

1. We will remain committed to continuously monitoring and improving our sustainability performance. In addition to measuring our carbon footprint on a yearly basis, we will reassess and update this sustainability plan every 3 years at a minimum. We will also make interim adjustments based on any large changes to our organisation.

2. To ensure that this Sustainability Plan is integrated into our business operations, we will hold quarterly reviews of our progress. If necessary, we will meet more regularly to ensure that key targets are achieved.

3. We will delegate ownership of sustainability to a senior member of staff.

4. We will champion transparency concerning our sustainability performance by publishing our annual carbon footprint and our progress against the actions outlined in this plan.

8. Social sustainability

We are proud to be in partnership with both Mates in Mind and The Prince's Trust as part of our commitments to helping better the industry and wellbeing of our community.

Mates in Mind is a leading UK charity raising awareness and addressing the stigma of poor mental health. The Prince's Trust is a youth charity that helps young people aged 11 to 30 get into jobs, education and training.

We will continue to find ways to improve the wellbeing of the communities we work with.

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