

# FIRST FIX. FUTURE FIRST.





“ Our responsibility for every colleague’s safety and welfare whilst operating an ethical, sustainable business, is ingrained in every decision we make ”

**With our primary market in heating and employing over 3,000 people, we take our ESG strategy very seriously.**

Our responsibility for every colleague’s safety and welfare, whilst operating an ethical, sustainable business is ingrained in every decision we make, and in every policy and process we introduce.

Adopting ESG priorities ensures we are building today an environment fit for tomorrow. Here we outline our goals and priorities to achieve this.

We are putting things in place to address environmental concerns on carbon use and waste, whilst using our influence with our suppliers to do the same.

We are further supporting the heating industry in its transition to renewable energy.

Creating a considerate, inclusive working environment is a key goal, extending our time and resources to give back to deserved causes is something we have been doing for years.

Our leadership team is ensuring everything that needs putting in place to guarantee transparency and compliance is happening now.

**Robbie Bell**  
CFO and Chair of Highbourne Group ESG Steering Group



## WHO WE ARE

Highbourne Group is the UK industry leader in plumbing, heating and renewable energy technology, with a brand portfolio that includes some of the sector’s most known and respected names.

**With 360 branches and over 3,000 employees, Highbourne Group aims to be the partner of choice for tomorrow, as well as today.**

As a merchant group driving change in the UK’s energy transition, our businesses support customers across the breadth of the industry. From plumbing, heating and electrical installers to public limited companies, major contractors and social housing providers.

As a result of the Government’s Net Zero agenda, the industry must be ready to embrace the changes ahead. At Highbourne Group, we have over a decade of experience in renewables and sustainable plumbing, heating and electrical solutions.

Our growth strategy is driven by sustainability and diversification, with an ongoing acquisition plan that ensures new businesses joining the group benefit from our strengths in procurement, supply chain and digital.

As we grow and diversify customer focus, technological developments and the sustainability agenda will remain at the forefront. This ensures expansions to our portfolio enhance the overall customer experience.

### OUR BUSINESSES

Operating online and across 360 branches throughout the UK, our businesses serve the trade, contractor and consumer markets.

They combine a rich history of experience, knowledge, and customer loyalty with a focus on becoming the go-to partner for renewable energy technologies.



Trusted plumbing and heating suppliers with over 360 branches across the UK



The UK’s biggest and most renowned online bathroom retailer



Bathroom Showroom experts inspiring consumers and selling to the trade



Award winning supplier of underfloor heating



Leading online supplier of plumbing and heating products, since 2007



The UK’s largest dedicated heating spares supplier



The UK’s most trusted supplier of shower spare parts

VISION, VALUES AND CULTURE

**Our goal is to be a vibrant, sustainable and future-facing business which welcomes everyone, is safe for all, and provides outstanding customer service.**

This means we will:

- Behave in a way that makes it safe for everyone
- Be the customer’s choice with outstanding service, value and expertise
- Grow stronger together through shared goals
- Create the future by embracing technology and innovation
- Put the environment first as we all strive to reach Net Zero goals

What makes us stand out is our people. We want everybody to grow with us, feel like they belong with us and be energised and passionate in their work. That means creating an environment in which colleagues feel comfortable, welcomed and included – where they are supported and empowered.

Our aim is to have the best and most motivated team in the sector, thanks to a culture in which everyone feels able to innovate and succeed.

**OUR COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY**

Being an inclusive business is an important part of who we are and what we stand for. With an inclusive welcoming environment in which everyone feels safe to be themselves. When people feel safe they bring the best of themselves into our branches, warehouses and offices.

We operate in an industry in which there is a need to break down the biases and perceptions which prevent some people believing the sector is for them. We are determined to do that by being an ally and champion for diversity and inclusion, in our business and the wider sector.




OUR ESG AMBITIONS - CREATING A POSITIVE IMPACT

Our ESG focus is supported by a commitment to good corporate governance and strong foundations for policies, procedures and initiatives which include: responsible sourcing, employee welfare, charity partnerships and certified Environmental and Quality Management Systems (ISO 14001: 2015 and ISO 9001: 2015) verified by an accredited 3rd party.

We have set relevant targets with regards to SASB and ISSB protocols, and are aligning our ESG activity with the UN Sustainable Development Goals.


Aligning the most relevant UN SDGs with our business plan provides us with a framework to address sustainability challenges, whilst contributing to a more sustainable and equitable future.

*The International Sustainability Standards Board (ISSB) of the IFRS Foundation assumed responsibility for the Sustainability Accounting Standards Board (SASB) standards and kept the name 'SASB standards' despite the change.*




- Continuously improve our environmental impact
- Play a leading role in the UK's energy transition
- Use our commercial relationships to influence change

**ENVIRONMENTAL**



- Make lives better for our colleagues
- Support local communities across our network
- Offer resource and fundraising to charitable causes

**SOCIAL**



- Be known as an ethical business of the highest standard
- Ensure transparent accountability
- Operate within a secure and compliant digital environment

**GOVERNANCE**

// We are committed to actions and plans to meet our ESG targets //



UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

There are 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals which promote prosperity whilst protecting the planet. They address a range of social needs, tackle climate change and promote protection of the environment.

Six of these pillars form our current framework of our and corporate responsibility plan. They will shape our journey to a more sustainable business, with further pillars added as our plan evolves.



“ Our corporate priorities are aligned to the United Nations SDGs ”

OUR APPROACH TO ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL AND GOVERNANCE

ENVIRONMENTAL	SOCIAL	GOVERNANCE
Reduce our carbon footprint	Promote health, safety, wellbeing and development	Uphold first class business ethics and responsible sourcing
Improve waste management	Support and contribute to local communities	Deliver transparency of business policies
Accelerate the transition to renewables	Embrace diversity, equality and inclusion	Continuously monitor digital security



“ ESG is a long term commitment and at the core of everything we do. We believe in making homes, businesses and lives better ”



## REDUCE OUR CARBON FOOTPRINT

### OUR GOAL

To have a comprehensive carbon reduction plan that supports a universal commitment to Net Zero by 2050, which covers our fleet, branch estate, offices and distribution centre.

### HOW WE ACHIEVE THIS

Track our businesswide footprint to identify areas of energy and carbon reduction.

Use this data to make informed decisions on investment and operations needed for best results.

Work with our suppliers on best practices to support further reductions.

## IMPROVE WASTE MANAGEMENT

### OUR GOAL

Significantly reduce packaging and waste.

Reach ambitious targets in plastic reduction in our 'own brand' packaging.

Be leaders in industry recycling.

### HOW WE ACHIEVE THIS

Implement company directives for general waste reduction.

Make research and procurement of sustainable packaging a priority.

Create robust internal recycling policies and lead recycling initiatives that support our customers.

## ACCELERATE THE TRANSITION TO RENEWABLES

### OUR GOAL

Provide a complete solution for the building industry in renewable technologies.

Support our customers in the transition to alternative heating.

### HOW WE ACHIEVE THIS

Stock/supply the most up to date products. Continue to strengthen our renewable proposition in design, cost efficiency and training.

Work with our suppliers to develop further innovation in this area.

## OUR COMMITMENTS ARE:

- Implement energy management strategies across our estate and fleet
- Monitor our Scope 1 and 2 emissions with a target reduction of 54% by 2030
- Monitor our Scope 3 emissions with a target reduction of 45% by 2030\*
- Our Carbon Reduction Plan is in line with the Science Based Target protocol, supported by fully developed initiatives and we will continue to work to find ways to exceed these targets

*\*Based on our operational carbon footprint.*

- Eliminate landfill waste by 2030
- Increase the percentage of sustainable packaging used, with a focus on own brand products by:
  - Eliminating non-recyclable packaging
  - Achieving a year on year reduction of plastic packaging
  - Ensuring any remaining plastic packaging has at least 30% recycled content
- Responsible product sourcing with risk based factory audits and online risk assessments
- Support customers to recycle electrical products (WEEE)

- Increase the proportion of total revenue from renewable products from 6% in 2024 to 25% by 2030
- Provide all Highbourne Group colleagues with training in the latest renewable products and technologies
- Expand our renewable training facilities, with a goal of training over 200 customers per year being trained
- Open more Energy Efficiency Centres, that offer training and showcase the latest technologies



## APPROACH – ENVIRONMENTAL



We have made a Commitment to Net Zero by 2050, with interim targets to achieve at least 54% reduction in Scope 1 & 2, and 45% in Scope 3 by 2030.

Our baseline 2023 carbon footprint includes all measurable Scope 1, 2, & 3 emissions, with 64% from Scope 3 and 36% from Scope 1 & 2 emissions.

### Our Carbon Reduction Plan:

conforms to the requirements of Procurement Policy Note PPN06/21; "Taking Account of Carbon Reduction Plans in the procurement of major government contracts", PAS2060:2014 "Specification for the demonstration of Carbon Neutrality" and ISO14064-1.

Meets the requirements for the Global Reporting Initiative, the Carbon Disclosure Project, and the National Health Service Evergreen criteria and is in line with Science Based Targets.

### Projects include:

Installation of EV chargers, LED lighting, renewable energy, and solar PV. Plus the purchase of 100% renewable electricity across our entire estate.

We further plan to remove gas heating from all our sites, decarbonise our fleet, expand solar PV, and encourage low-carbon commuting.

Various training modules and initiatives have been rolled out that promote behavioural change, encouraging sustainable travel and further energy savings through staff engagement.

Collaboration with our suppliers to set carbon reduction targets is ongoing.



## A WORD FROM OUR SUPPLIERS

### Inspired PLC

Following a recent competitive tender, Bryt Energy have been selected as City Plumbing's electricity supplier for the next three years until October 2027 (excluding Northern Ireland & Republic of Ireland).

Bryt are owned by Europe's largest renewable generator, Statkraft, and **only supply energy from 100% REGO backed natural energy sources**, made up of wind, solar and hydro. REGOs, (Renewable Energy Guarantees of Origin), are certificates which prove that the energy supplied to consumers was generated from a UK based approved renewable source.

All Bryt's supply products have been audited and verified by an independent third party, EcoAct, and all their clients are **able report their electricity consumption (Scope 2) as zero carbon, under the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Protocol market-based method.**

City Plumbing uses circa 14,000,000 kWh of energy across its estate each year, which based on the 2024 grid average carbon emission factors provided by the UK government, equates to 2,899 metric tonnes of CO2e. **By partnering with a provider guaranteeing REGO backed renewable energy City Plumbing can report these Scope 2 carbon emissions as zero under the GHG Protocol.**

This acts as a testimony to City Plumbing's commitment to maintain the highest standards in sustainability when selecting a supply partner.

*Inspired PLC are a market-leading commercial energy and sustainability advisory providing services to help clients achieve net-zero and thrive in the future low carbon global economy.*

*We have partnered with CP since 2021 working extensively across a range of services, including procurement, risk management, energy accounting and portfolio management.*

### Biffa

We offer comprehensive waste management solutions that help our partners achieve their sustainability goals.

With the 2024 introduction of external mixed recycling bins across the City Plumbing and PTS estate, we're taking significant steps to enhance on-site recycling and improve in-house waste segregation.

This initiative helps keep recyclable materials out of general waste, moving City Plumbing closer to their ambitious **goal of zero landfill waste by 2030.**

**PROMOTE HEALTH, SAFETY, WELLBEING AND DEVELOPMENT**

**OUR GOAL:** Provide a safe environment for colleagues, visitors and associates.

Offer workplace support for total wellbeing.

Ensure all colleagues have the opportunity to further their development.

**HOW WE ACHIEVE THIS**

Make health and safety a priority by working with business partners on HSE initiatives then use internal operations to deliver.

Create business wide support groups.

Provide listening platforms to assess feedback for improvements.

Have the best learning platforms and training programmes which enable personal goals and ambitions to be achieved.

**SUPPORT AND CONTRIBUTE TO LOCAL COMMUNITIES**

**OUR GOAL:** Offer equal employment opportunities throughout the UK.

Be part of our local communities.

Raise as much money as we can for our partner charities.

**HOW WE ACHIEVE THIS**

With an inclusive recruitment strategy plus increasing apprenticeships.

Encourage colleagues to take part in community events.

Provide resource, opportunity and time for charitable fundraising.

**EMBRACE DIVERSITY, EQUALITY AND INCLUSION**

**OUR GOAL:** Be an inclusive business which provides opportunities for everyone.

Celebrate diversity and put belonging at the heart of everything we do.

**HOW WE ACHIEVE THIS**

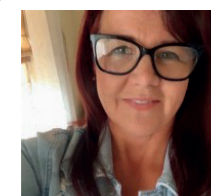
Create a culture in which all colleagues feel comfortable and confident to bring their best selves to work and feel valued for their contributions.

Promote a working environment that embraces and respects our diverse colleagues, customers and communities, with Colleague Networks (ERGs) providing a space for contributing to change in the business.

**APPROACH – SOCIAL**

**HEALTH, WELFARE, INCLUSION AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

Around the business great people are working hard to create a safe, inclusive and caring environment, so great, we have won awards for our D&I commitment. Out in the community our whole estate participates in fund raising for our charity partnership with Teenage Cancer Trust – with over £3.2million raised to date.



I have been a Mental Health First Aider for 5 years and it is my number one priority – alongside my main role as a PA to Regional Directors and their teams.

I drop everything for this role and support all colleagues across the business whenever they need us, even if it's just a chat, it's what we do.

To me Health, Safety and Welfare is our priority in the company, to protect each other no matter what, I am lucky that we are supported by the Operations Director and the Senior team to give this our full attention, we can reach out to them when we need them – Always here – 'Mental Health Matters'.

**Emma Barry**



We are only as good as our people and we are committed to providing learning opportunities for everyone to grow to be their best.

We have 11 apprenticeship qualifications available for those colleagues who are new to our business and industry, right up through professional development in specialist functions like HR, to leadership level programmes.

Our in-house designed and delivered development programmes support aspiring branch managers and regional managers to reach their potential and create a pipeline of talent throughout our operations. Our People Team provides in person learning sessions that are supported with excellent online resources on our My Learning platform to suit different learning styles.

**Dax Murphy**



I've been working to create a Race At Work focused community, as a black woman working in this industry I don't come across many people who have similar backgrounds to me.

I strongly believe that everyone should be able to find people who are similar to them and eventually be able to look for this anywhere in the business; creating true diversity at all levels.

The long term vision for the group is for this to grow to include guest speakers, training opportunities and drive the business forward to being truly diverse in every sense of the word.

**Chimene Codner**



Making it safe for everyone means our culture where everyone feels protected, valued, and empowered to do the right thing.

We proactively commit to identifying risks, implementing solutions, and continuously improving standards.

By prioritising health, safety, and welfare in all aspects of what we do, we not only prevent harm but also build trust, promote well-being and inspire a culture of care and responsibility.

We don't stop until we make it safe for everyone.

**Dale Potter**



On behalf of all Teenage Cancer Trust's nurses, we'd like to say a huge and heartfelt thank you to Highbourn Group for all their fundraising.

The total raised means that we could provide over 100,000 hours of nursing care to young people with cancer, helping them to cope with the trauma of a diagnosis and making sure they are cared for during treatment.

Raising such a large sum of money is an incredible achievement and will make such a huge difference to so many

**Dr Louise Soanes, Chief Nurse, Teenage Cancer Trust**

**OUR COMMITMENTS ARE:**

- Ensure everything is in place to eliminate the risk of injuries at work
- Provide trained Mental Health First Aiders across our business
- Offer 24/7 access to free and confidential help and support on a number of issues, ranging from stress, pregnancy, bereavement and debt
- Continuously develop and expand our learning platform
- Annually canvas all colleagues for constructive feedback on workplace improvements

- Help identify community participation opportunities for colleagues
- Use our Apprenticeship Levy, especially in more disadvantaged areas of the country to create opportunities
- Encourage creative ways of fundraising, allowing time and resource for charity days and events



- Inclusive recruitment policies
- Flexibility towards personal and family commitments
- Modern family friendly policies
- Use our status as a founding member of the Construction Inclusion Coalition to drive positive changes across our industry





**UPHOLD FIRST CLASS  
BUSINESS ETHICS AND  
RESPONSIBLE SOURCING**

**OUR GOAL:** Deliver the highest standards of corporate governance and ethical business practices.

**HOW WE ACHIEVE THIS:**

Continually promote a culture of accountability.

Comply with all legislation, regulations and group policies.

**DELIVER TRANSPARENCY  
OF BUSINESS POLICIES**

**OUR GOAL:** Establish a framework that delivers the ESG ambition in line with our first Governance Goal.

**HOW WE ACHIEVE THIS:**

By senior leadership's commitment to continuous improvement for excellent governance in all areas, guided by our cross-functional ESG Steering Group.

**CONTINUOUSLY MONITOR  
DIGITAL SECURITY**

**OUR GOAL:** Operate a secure and compliant digital environment

Future-proof and protect our business systems.

**HOW WE ACHIEVE THIS:**

By maintaining appropriate privacy and data security frameworks, supported by colleague awareness and learning.

**OUR COMMITMENTS ARE:**

- Maintain a register of compliance policies that are reviewed at least once annually
- Uphold our commitment to tackle modern slavery
- Use our Supplier Commitments and Supplier Manual to raise awareness of our expectations around ethical and compliance standards

- Create an awareness programme for our employees of our ESG commitment and goals
- Operate a cross-functional ESG Steering Group, reporting to the Senior Leadership Team (with approved Terms of Reference)
- Horizon scanning for environmental trends, and changes in law in customer sentiments

- Create dedicated data privacy and cyber security teams
- Put controls in place to protect against cyber attacks
- Increase awareness and skills across our business, ensuring all colleagues are provided with learning on data protection and cyber security
- Implement robust, reviewed and tested Business Continuity Plans



**APPROACH – GOVERNANCE**

**MEMBERSHIPS, REGISTRATIONS AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION,**

Our approach to the Governance of Environmental and Social commitments and initiatives is part of our overarching commitment to good governance (underpinned by our adherence to our Vision and Values) in all that we do.

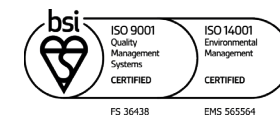
We work tirelessly to comply with evolving regulatory requirements and make sure we are members of advisory groups, authorities and industry councils that can offer best advice and help shape our ESG journey. Below are a selection of bodies we are members of, and where we have been awarded certifications.

We will uphold first class business ethics and be transparent in our approach. We already demonstrate that commitment by our membership of the following listed bodies and these certificates.

**MEMBERSHIPS**



**REGISTRATIONS**



**CUSTOMER SATISFACTION**



2021

- Sustainable new branch footprint

- Company Behaviours
- Mental First Aiders
- Colleague Networks
  - LGBTQ+
  - Ability

- ISO 9001 Quality Management Systems (QMS)
- Constructionline, Ecovardis and Supply Chain Sustainability School customer approvals

- Menopause Matters
- BMF D&I award win
- 62% increased performance in safety standards
- 193% increase in colleague risk identification with over 45% reduction in risk with key focus product handling

- ISO 14001 Environmental Management System Registration
- 100% rego
- New branches with EV chargers

2022

2023

- Removal of single use carrier bags and replace with sustainable paper bag
- All packaging across own brands having the OPRL recycling logo
- Car policy changed to move from 100% diesel to 80% electric (in 2 years)

- BMF Safety initiative award 2023

- ESG Governance framework established

2024

- Carbon Footprint Reporting established and Carbon Reduction Plan agreed
- Recycling facilities rolled out across all branches
- Achieved substantial plastic packaging reductions across our exclusive brands
- Joined Sedex for improved ethical assessment reporting

- Diversity and Inclusion in Merchanting award - BMA
- Colleague Networks - Race at Work
- Teenage Cancer Trust Signed 3 year extension

2025

- Progress Carbon Reduction initiatives targeting 54% reduction in Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions, and 45% reduction in Scope 3 (based on operational carbon footprint)
- Rollout of energy efficient LED lighting to a further 10 branches
- Use the bespoke Valpak sustainability dashboard with targets for the identification and reduction of packaging materials of concern

- Focus on Apprenticeship Levy usage
- Participate in the Construction Inclusion Coalition mentoring pilot (mentors and mentees)

- ESG working groups to develop the individual Environmental, Social and Governance agendas; reporting through to an overall ESG Steering Group
- Improved measurement and analysis of faulty product returns (covering all branch customer returns back-hauled to our Central Distribution warehouse for analysis)
- Launch a revised Supplier Online Risk Assessment, enhanced with supplier carbon footprint reporting and responsible sourcing requirements (in-line with our Sedex membership protocols)





SUMMARY – Commitments made in this first yearly report



ENVIRONMENTAL	Reduce our Carbon Footprint
	Monitor our scope 1 and 2 emissions with a target reduction <b>of 54% by 2030</b>
	Monitor our scope 3 emissions with a target reduction <b>of 45% by 2030</b>
	Improve Waste Management
	Eliminate landfill waste by 2030 – measured by using the BIFFA dashboard to track progress
	Increase the percentage of sustainable packaging with the main focus being on our own brand products by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Eliminate non-recyclable packaging</li><li>• Year on year reduction of plastic packaging</li><li>• All remaining plastic packaging to have <b>at least 30% recycled content</b></li><li>• Responsible product sourcing with risk based factory audits and online risk assessments, with all factories producing exclusive brands assessed every 2 years and <b>at least 50% of suppliers achieving GOLD status by 2030</b> (excluding Plumbworld)</li></ul>
	Accelerate the transition to renewables
SOCIAL	Track and report annually on the sales of renewable products
	Increase the proportion of total revenue from renewable products to <b>at least 25% by 2030</b>
	Community
	Support an increase in community projects year on year, by 2030 and report annually on progress, This will be done in part by helping colleagues identify community participation opportunities and supporting those opportunities.
GOVERNANCE	Use our Apprenticeship Levy, especially in more disadvantaged areas of the country to create opportunities.
	Inclusion and Diversity
	Be a positive influence in areas of industry change by 2030, by use of our status as a founding member of the Construction Inclusion Coalition.
	Report
GOVERNANCE	Accurately track and report on progress on all E and S targets
	Influence
	Use the Supplier Commitments document and Supplier Manual to raise awareness of our ethical and compliance standards.
	Comply
GOVERNANCE	Maintain a register of compliance policies that are reviewed at least once per annum and reporting on colleague review numbers – Measure take up of awareness programme for employees of our ESG commitments and goals with <b>a target of 95% completion by 2030</b>



