



City Plumbing - Our role in protecting the environment

The recent COP26 conference in Glasgow has helped many people across the world assess their actions and the impact that these may have on the climate crisis. City Plumbing truly recognises the importance of caring for our environment and right across our business we are doing some great work to minimise our carbon footprint.

First - let's look at what we are doing through our operations.

Packaging is a big issue for every retailer and merchant. We need to use packaging to protect products but we want to ensure that packaging is reduced and the packaging that we do use is recyclable. So - we are working with our suppliers to review the amount of packaging used and we've already seen a massive reduction in plastic packaging. We have reduced our packaging by at least 100 tonnes in total. A sizable amount - but obviously lots of room for improvement. But it is a start. And we are committed to continue the journey of leading by example by ensuring plastic packaging on our own branded products is recycled and recyclable by the end of 2023 and we are actively inspiring our branded suppliers to do the same.

We are also committed to increasing the level of recycling with zero landfill over the next few years. We are working on our strategy and objectives to exceed the Government's Net Zero targets and will be able to provide further details in due course. We are also asking our suppliers to confirm and commit to progressive targets to reduce the energy they use to manufacture the products we purchase and sell.

Across our business we are continually asking ourselves hard questions - for example - how we heat and light our sites and how we fuel our vehicles.

We are also considering solar energy (where we can) to offset our electrical consumption and reviewing our lighting solutions throughout the estate.

We have taken the decision to put a registered ISO 14001 environmental Management System in place meaning that everything we do on environmental matters will be audited by an accredited body - so we can be sure that our actions are making a difference and we are achieving required standards.

Now let's look at what we are doing for customers.

We've recently been running a trial to manage customer recycling - just in a single branch at the moment, and it's probably a bit too early to report on this in detail. But what we can say is that the backhauling of branch cardboard and plastic packaging for recycling will total about 1,000 Tonnes this year. To put this in context, we generate about 7,000 Tonnes of packaging a year - so this is a sizable amount of recycling and we will work hard to grow this.

We've had a dedicated and fabulous Energy and Renewables team in place for over 10 years who will be educating, communicating, and training colleagues and customers on the phasing out of fossil fuel heating systems and the transformation to low carbon heat sources. The team will be training our branches to ensure that we can give the best advice to customers on how to reduce their overall carbon footprint and emissions - by using the energy efficient products we sell.

The team is brilliant and are the best and most experienced in the industry and are leading experts on renewable heating technology but they can't do this alone. To truly see ourselves as the merchant of choice to support customers on the transfer of fossil fuels to alternative heat sources - we need to embrace the change as an organisation .

We will also be putting in place lots of work to support customers and end-users so that we take the headache out of buying renewable heating for the home. We're already working with some of the large National New Build Developers and Social Housing Clients on their decarbonisation programs and to install heat pumps at the point of build - and we fully expect this part of our business to increase over the coming years.

And in fleet and vehicles supporting the supply chain - we are very conscious of the big impact our operations have on the environment.

So - we are reviewing the delivery areas of each of our branches to ensure that drivers don't have to travel further than they need to or pass a branch that could deliver the order quicker, with fewer miles driven.

For deliveries to and from our distribution centre - we are looking at how we can increase the amount of stock per pallet to reduce road mileage and cut our haulage emissions.

In our fleet - we are looking at how our vans could move to an electric solution and we are reviewing our company cars and company car policy to offer low carbon impact cars - such as electrics or hybrids.

We are looking at innovative solutions such as rapid rise doors which would be installed with air curtains to reduce hot air leaving a building when the doors are open.

And with our manual handling equipment in Omega and branches we are looking at options to move to battery power, rather than using diesel. There really is loads going on and we are working hard to plan and implement what we can.

So - throughout City Plumbing and the Highbourne Group, we are putting lots of actions in place and considering lots more. We are taking our environmental responsibilities incredibly seriously.

It is one of our moral guiding principles to do the right thing for our environment.