



Social and Sustainability Promise

Annual Report 2022/2023

wave-utilities.co.uk/sustainability



Contents

Foreword from our CEO	2
Executive Summary	3
Our Social and Sustainability Promise	4
Governance and Ownership	5
Our Company	6
Our People	10
Our Planet	14
Our Customers and Communities	18

Foreword from our CEO

From its formation in 2017, I always wanted Wave to act, do and be different. To be focussed not just on standard business drivers such as making profit, but to also drive positive change within the industry and the wider communities in which our customers and employees live.

The world we live in is changing and we're facing ever increasing pressures and demands, and now more than ever I believe businesses need to stand up and be counted. Whether that's responding to the climate emergency, helping to build a fairer society or simply safeguarding the mental and emotional wellbeing of employees and their loved ones.

2022 has been an incredibly significant year for Wave and I'm extremely proud of being able to introduce our Social and Sustainability Promise.

The Promise outlines Wave's ambition and commitment towards making a positive difference to our society and the environment, whilst aligning to key UN Sustainability Goals.



Lucy Darch
CEO



Photo: Corporate volunteering day at Tees Barrage

Executive Summary

Wave has always had a strong drive to make a positive difference to our customers and the wider communities that we're a part of. In 2022/2023 we've been able to harness that drive and focus it into the creation of our Social and Sustainability Promise, an enduring expression of our CSR goals, built up of four key themes; Our Company, Our People, Our Planet and Our Customers and Communities with clear objectives under each.

We haven't just been working on planning this year though, we're extremely proud to have begun to put lots of initiatives into action. The below figures represent just a few of our key achievements:



2.9 million m3
of water saved



320 trees
planted



6 award
nominations



427 volunteering
hours donated



200 tonnes
of CO2e offset



3 volunteer
events with customers



114,542 sheets
of paper saved

Our Social and Sustainability Promise

The four pillars of our Social and Sustainability Promise represent core, cross-functional themes where Wave can exert influence to have a positive impact.



Governance and Ownership

We're proud of our Promise and the ownership that sits with it. Each pillar of the Social and Sustainability Promise is owned by a member of our **Wave Leadership Team** and supported by a wider **steering group**. The steering group helps set the strategic direction and continuously reviews the objectives to ensure we're delivering maximum benefit for society and the environment.

Our Social Value and Sustainability working groups that sit under the steering group deliver against the objectives and measures through participation by employees across the business.

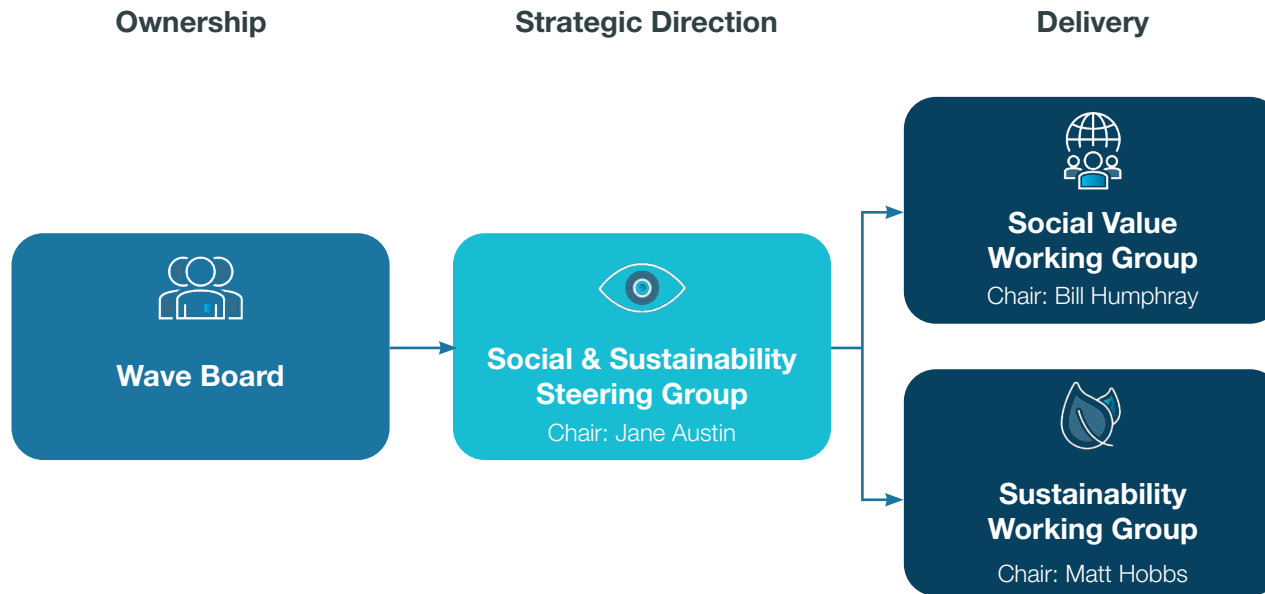


Photo: Corporate volunteering day at Washington Wetlands Centre



Our Company

As a business, we're proud to go above and beyond. It's important to us that we always act fairly, responsibly and with integrity in everything we do. That's why we're committed to building strong and long-lasting relationships and key partnerships to help drive our business forward. We want to be a brand our employees, suppliers and partners are proud to align themselves with.



Nigel Corfield
Industrial & Commercial
Customer Director

Supporting UN Sustainable Development Goals



Photo: Corporate volunteering day at Washington Wetlands Centre



“Wave has done a fantastic job of implementing Alaya by Benevity as a wider part of their thriving CSR programme. This has resulted in an increase in employee volunteering with local charities that employees are passionate about. Employees are further engaged through the platform to focus on actions that positively impact the environment, their mindset and their physical wellbeing.”

Heather Mungin, Customer Success Manager at Alaya by Benevity

Objectives

- ◆ Treat people and organisations equally and fairly
- ◆ Make a positive difference to people, the environment and society
- ◆ Build influential, responsible and sustainable partnerships

Key Achievements

- ◆ Maintained our **ISO9001:2015**, **ISO45001:2018** and **ISO14001:2015** accreditations for Quality, Health and Safety, and Environmental Management
- ◆ Supported and encouraged our employees to make a difference by giving an extra **day off for volunteering** each year
- ◆ Helped tech start-ups to gain valuable access to end customers through our **Customer Innovation Forums**
- ◆ Launched **Alaya**, a platform for good which helped us engage our employees in social and sustainability practices at home and at work. The platform measures positive impacts and in the **12 months to April 2023**, we achieved:



427

volunteering hours



1,156

challenges completed



£480

in donations



1,299 kg

of CO2 saved



210,254 litres

of water saved



What's next?

- ◆ Continue to promote a sustainability-focussed culture, embed Alaya into business operation to empower our employees to do good
- ◆ Achieve an internationally recognised sustainability rating
- ◆ Complete scoping for internationally recognised accreditations to underline commitment
- ◆ Develop and launch our Partnership Charter

Sustainable partnership working with Ciconi

As a water retailer, issuing customer bills is one of our core activities but sending out thousands and thousands of paper bills a month is also a significant impact on the environment.

Although Wave strives to move customers to electronic billing, there are still a large number of customers on paper billing.

Driving down our Scope 3 emissions

In the first 6 months with Ciconi we sent more than 642,000 items out to customers, but thanks to Ciconi's initiatives, our environmental impact was offset.

Ciconi's paper is FSC and PEFC accredited, and the environmental impact of the paper used was offset with the Carbon Capture programme, which focuses on mitigating CO2 emissions and creating native woodland in the UK.

As well as Ciconi's 'greener' paper sourcing, their RISO printers use vegetable-based ink and maintain a much smaller environmental footprint than toner-based printers. They use less power, require fewer replacement parts, have lower emissions, and use ink cartridges made from partially recycled components.

Giving back to the community

As one of Ciconi's largest customers, we were able to donate £1,606 to our local charity of choice, Magpas Air Ambulance. This was made possible through the CiconiMail® scheme, which allows their customers to give back to the community, by way of donation. For every 1,000 items mailed, £2.50 is donated to a charity of the customer's choice.

"We know climate change is real, and as a business, we're keen to ensure that all of our clients are producing their mailings with the environment in mind. Working with clients that care about their carbon footprint, like Wave, allows Ciconi to identify, quantify and continually improve the company's environmental impact, such as introducing smarter paper sourcing and adding environmentally efficient equipment to our plant list. With the addition of our CiconiMail® scheme that saw us donate over £10,000 to charities across the UK in our last financial year, we're proud that we can also get our clients involved in giving a little back to those that do amazing work for people in need."

Erin Walker-Williams, Business Development Manager at Ciconi

Photo: Corporate volunteering day at Washington Wetlands Centre



Our People

It may sound trite, but Wave's greatest asset is our people. As a retailer, our success is driven by the strength of our employees and therefore taking care of their wellbeing is not only the right thing to do, but also effective management one of our greatest risks.

Ever since becoming HR Director of Wave, my ambition has been to put wellbeing at the centre of Wave and our culture.



Jane Austin
Director of HR

Supporting UN Sustainable Development Goals



Photo: Wave employees make pledges as part of Not a Drop to Waste campaign



Objectives

- ◆ Ensure healthy lives and provide wellbeing and development
- ◆ Enhance belief and potential
- ◆ Be recognised as leaders in the wellbeing arena

Key Achievements

- ◆ Improved wellbeing support to employees both at home in the work place, through:
 - The creation of our **Menopause policy**, support group (The Hot Flashes) and employee talks from Sharon MacArthur (Miss Menopause)
 - Recognition of the importance of **Men's Health** launching a Health and Wellbeing group (Talking BS), and having guest speaker Rich Kentish to share his experiences around testicular cancer
 - Improvements to the way we listen to our employees with the implementation of **Rungway**, an online tool to enable confidential questions, feedback and to encourage peer support
 - Continued promotion of diversity and inclusion by providing speakers during **Pride month** and guest speaker Alex Manners who spoke about **autism**
 - Addressed the impact of the cost-of-living crisis and provided **financial wellbeing support** through Wealth at Work who gave talks on future planning, budgeting and financial management
 - Invited Eva Humphries, the Wholefood Warrior to present the benefits of a **wholefood diet**
- ◆ We had the pleasure of welcoming the 3 Dad's Walking to share their inspirational and heart felt story on **suicide awareness** in young people
- ◆ Each of the above have contributed to our success in being shortlisted and winning a number of **nationally recognised awards** including:



What's next?

- ◆ Promote and engage our employees with volunteering activities
- ◆ Launch of Companiions application
- ◆ Accredited to Better Health at Work awards

Support through Menopause



100% of women will experience menopause in mid to later life



90% of those will experience neurological and physical symptoms



10% of people who experience menopause will leave their jobs and careers due to severe symptoms



1 in 100 women will experience perimenopause in their 40s

Everyone's experience of menopause will be different. Some will sail through without even noticing or acknowledging it. Some will suffer extremely severe symptoms. It has been known to cause significant distress leading to things such as marriage breakdowns or decisions to take early retirement.

Wave has recognised the impact menopause can have on women in the work place and so has put in place comprehensive support for our people, including the launch of our Menopause Policy, provision of training for male and female colleagues from Sharon MacArthur ("Miss Menopause"). Wave has founded our own internal support group the "Hot Flashes" which aims to provide a safe and confidential space for support and advice to anyone who is affected by the menopause and for those who may have concerns or worries about symptoms, impact and treatment. This is not only for those who might experience symptoms, but for those who might have family, friends or colleagues that are struggling so they can develop an understanding of the subject, with a view to being better able to support them. Wave want to encourage our people to be able to have open conversations about such subjects that may have been ignored previously.

"I've worked with Wave now over a number of years which started pre-Covid. Wave were one of the first companies I worked with as they could really see how valuable menopause education would be for every single one of their employees, making them a real early adopter.

I've delivered an inclusive menopause programme which ensures people are aware of how to best support themselves, colleagues, friends and family. Where doing nothing shouldn't be an option if menopause is affecting the quality of anyone's life. Following the training they've developed a Menopause Policy to support employees and their managers but more importantly this is about making menopause business as usual for everyone.

The feedback the Wave team and I have received has been outstanding. It's so great to work in a culture where accountability and action go hand in hand with a big dash of fun. They are great bunch of brilliant people to work with. Showing how it should be done when you really care for your people."

Sharon MacArthur, Miss Menopause

Go with the flow



1 in 12 women will suffer with PMDD symptoms in their lifetime



12 years is the average time to receive an accurate diagnosis of PMDD



72% of those with PMDD report suicidal thoughts



34% of those with PMDD report having made a suicide attempt

Go with the Flow is a support group for all things relating to the menstrual cycle. Whilst the group covers a broad range of topics their current focus is on Pre Menstrual Dysphoric Disorder (PMDD).

PMDD has some similarities to Premenstrual Syndrome (PMS) but symptoms are more severe. PMDD is caused by the brains reaction to the normal fluctuations of hormones that occur throughout the monthly cycle. The onset of PMDD can be triggered by significant hormonal shifts such as menarche (the beginning of the menstrual cycle), pregnancy, post-partum, miscarriage and peri-menopause. It can also be triggered by trauma.

Symptoms can vary depending on the individual most commonly include; extreme mood swings, anxiety, depression, social withdrawal, suicidal thoughts, intrusive thoughts, manic behaviours, irritability, breast pain, joint pain, poor concentration, insomnia, fatigue, headaches, rejection sensitivity, disassociation and bowel issues.

Wave is raising awareness of this condition through the Go with the Flow support group, workshops and via an intranet page. The group provides a confidential space for support and an opportunity to share experiences.

“As someone who has recently been diagnosed with PMDD, it’s extremely important to me that Wave has recognised this condition. I feel extremely grateful to work for a company which has given me an opportunity to create a support group and spread awareness. As there is no cure for this condition, having the space to talk and share experiences has certainly helped me and the members of the group.”

Laura, Go with the Flow group member at Wave

Our Planet

Here at Wave, we recognise our responsibility towards the environment and the natural world around us. Our aim is to make a positive impact in safeguarding this for future generations by strengthening our Social and Sustainability Promise through 'Our Planet' commitments.

As well as minimising the environmental impact of our own operations, our ambition is to influence and inspire our customers and employees to preserve the natural world around them.



Tony March

Director of Public Sector and Industrial Customers

Supporting UN Sustainable Development Goals



Photo: Wave employees take part in beach clean



"At Waterwise our vision is that water will be used wisely every day, everywhere, by everyone, and we know we can only achieve this by working with organisations that are as passionate about this future as we are - Wave is one of those organisations. We're already running out of water right across Britain, so this work is really urgent, to make sure the taps keep running and that there is enough water left in the environment.

Whether it's their active role in our water efficiency networks, targeting and tackling leakage on their customer estates, or providing bespoke advice for SME businesses, Wave has been helping to raise the profile and make progress to reduce demand for water. We welcome this new sustainability report and their commitment to work with us with further training opportunities and implementing the Waterwise Checkmark for all their offices."

Jo Osborn, Policy & Projects Manager at Waterwise

Objectives

- ◆ Use our influence to respond to the Climate Emergency:
 - Helping our customers save 9.4 million m³ of water by the end of our current business planning period of 2026 (that's enough to keep Niagara Falls flowing for over 1 hour!)
 - In doing so, we will save 4 million kg CO₂e in carbon emissions (equivalent to taking 870 cars off the road)
- ◆ Be a role model for sustainability in everything we do:
 - Achieve the Waterwise checkmark for all of our offices by 2024
 - Achieve Net Zero carbon by 2030
 - Achieve zero waste to landfill by 2030
- ◆ Promote an environmentally focused culture:
 - Introduce mandatory water efficiency training for all our employees
 - Support and encourage employees to act more sustainably at work and at home

Key Achievements

- ◆ Developed automated High Consumption Alerts for our customers which has helped them collectively **save over 1.3million m³ of water** and **941,000 kg CO₂e** of carbon emissions.
- ◆ Partnered with sustainability experts SaveMoneyCutCarbon, to launch **free Carbon Mentor calls** to support our customers with their journey to net-zero
- ◆ Introduced optional Water Efficiency Services online **training** to help our employees to confidently promote water efficiency and water efficiency solutions to customers
- ◆ Offset **200 tonnes CO₂e** through the planting of trees and creating woodland in partnership with Carbon Footprint and Pacajai Redd+ Project in Brazil
- ◆ Supported **Sustainable September**, raising awareness of and promoting sustainable practises both at home and within our offices
- ◆ Continued our support of Waterwise and active promotion of **Water Saving Week**
- ◆ Motivated by the statistics that 25% of water consumption by business could be leakage, we've launched our enduring **Not a Drop to Waste** water efficiency campaign focussing our efforts in empowering customers to join the battle to reduce water wastage



What's next?

- ◆ Finalise our carbon road map to net zero including an assessment of our capability to bring forward our carbon net zero target date
- ◆ Introduce mandatory water efficiency training for all our employees
- ◆ Continue to deliver greater water efficiency savings for our customers

Leak detection nets £30,000 savings

We alerted London Borough of Redbridge Council to high consumption at Redbridge Football Ground Complex. The site showed an increase in water use from 15m³ to 71m³ – that's an extra 56,000 litres.

Our Water Efficiency Services team attended Redbridge Football Ground Complex and found that the main revenue meter was recording a constant water flow and a leak was found under a nearby railway bridge. A fracture to a main pipe was fixed immediately with a repair clamp. The main pipe was recharged and the meter checked to confirm there was no longer any leaks.

Thanks to our High Consumption Alert service, we were able to investigate and repair the leak for the council quickly, resulting in an impressive annual cost saving of £29,919 which returned the club back to its normal water use.



"The service we received was excellent! The work was done in a timely way and the technicians were professional, polite, friendly and informative. A nasty leak ended in a great experience!"

London Borough of Redbridge Council

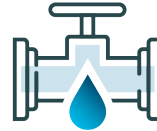
Not a Drop to Waste campaign



By 2050 we might not have enough water to go round



33% of all water supplied in the UK is used by businesses



25% of business water usage is likely to be leakage



3.4 billion extra litres of water will be needed each day if we don't make changes



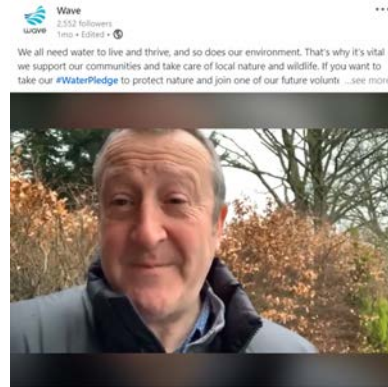
3 billion litres of water are wasted each day in England

The UK is facing a significant water shortage within the next 20-30 years. As it stands today, it's expected that by 2050, we'll need an extra 3.4 billion litres of water each day to meet demand.

Businesses are responsible for around a third of all the water used across the country, so influencing them to reduce their demand will help reduce this supply vs demand deficit for future generations.

In 2022 Wave launched its Not a Drop to Waste Campaign, aimed at raising awareness of the need to reduce business water consumption and to focus customers on targeting the 25% of business demand that could be wastage.

Across the year the campaign has published various social media and print collateral and has reached over 19,000 people.



Our Customers and Communities

Here at Wave, we recognise that making positive sustainable change cannot be achieved by one business alone. Businesses, customers, and communities need to work together to lead on positive change, and at Wave we've set off on this journey and are committed to achieving this. We promise to inspire and influence sustainable change. We're not a multinational business, so the biggest impact we can achieve is to inspire our customers and communities to protect our world.



Lissa Balmer
Director of SME
Customers

Supporting UN Sustainable Development Goals



Photo: Corporate volunteering day at Standedge Tunnel

Objectives

- ◆ Be trusted as a positive and active influencer by customers and communities
- ◆ Inspire and support sustainable consumption
- ◆ Engage our customers in live events to promote our social and sustainability promise

Key Achievements

- ◆ Multiple corporate **volunteering events** held, bringing together Wave and our customers to make a positive difference in partnership with Canal & River Trust, Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust and PECT
- ◆ Implemented and conducted **employee volunteering days** - Beach cleans, habitat building and supporting local charities
- ◆ Continued to be active members of the **Major Energy Users Council** (MEUC), supporting multiple virtual and in person events to demonstrate thought leadership and promote the need for greater water efficiency to some of the country's biggest water users
- ◆ **Careers support day** – session delivered by Wave employees at Marden High School
- ◆ Supported the **Boys Network M10** with Wave employees giving up an hour per month to mentor young men and prepare them for the world of work
- ◆ Attendance at **Big Bang event** reviewing designs produced by engineers of the future



What's next?

- ◆ Delivering more social value events across the country
- ◆ Development of water efficiency offering across the public sector
- ◆ Volunteering at Big Bang event in June 2023

Volunteering day at Tees Barrage

Wave, launched its Social and Social Sustainability Promise with a Corporate Volunteering Day at the Tees Barrage, Stockton on Tees.

The event, organised in partnership with North East Procurement Organisation (NEPO), aimed to inspire people to make a positive difference in their communities.

The Wave team, along with NEPO staff and eight North East local authorities, supported the Canal & River Trust by removing litter from the local waterway, planting bulbs and shrub and path maintenance. The event, was opened by Cllr Bob Cook, leader of Stockton on Tees Borough Council.

“We were delighted to join Wave at the Tees Barrage, and get involved in improving the waterway. As procurement professionals we talk about social value every day and events like this really bring to life the positive impact our work can have.”

Nicola Shelley, Managing Director at NEPO



Photo: Corporate volunteering day at Tees Barrage

Support young people through M10

Wave recognises that today's young people are tomorrow's leaders and believe whole heartedly in helping them prepare for the future.

We're proud supporters of M10, a registered charity dedicated to preparing today's youth for tomorrow's opportunities.

Across the year Wave has supported much of M10's work through providing employees to act as business mentors through The Boys Network. This offers schools the chance to participate in a lasting 10 month programme, giving students regular opportunities to build on their understanding of attitudes, skills and mind sets needed to be successful in employment.

We've also supported M10 with more targeted support such as delivering a careers session at Marden High School with our HR Director and Health, Safety and Quality Manager. Over 150 pupils were given advice on how to build up evidence that would be needed for an interview for a work experience placement, a weekend job and full-time employment and supported through role play interview exercises.

"Events like this are so important to the culture of our school and enabling students to see links to what they're doing now and to the wider world of work. Jane and Carly's session was a real hit with the students."

Karen Robson, Deputy Headteacher at Marden High School

Photo: Wave delivers careers session at Marden High School





Get in touch



0333 207 9283



socialandsustainability@wave-utilities.co.uk



wave-utilities.co.uk/sustainability

