



The Worshipful Company of Plumbers

Climate Action Plan 2025

Introduction

The Plumbers' Company joined the Livery Climate Action Group (LCAG) in April 2023. Alongside many other Livery companies, we aim to lessen our greenhouse gas emissions, reduce water use, introduce sustainable operating practices and promote biodiversity.

Furthermore, our role as thought leaders in our industry puts us in the front line in the heating and water supply 'revolution'; we have a unique platform to promote change in the years ahead.

Our Climate Action Plan (CAP) will continuously evolve over time to remain relevant and effective. We will need to be pragmatic in our approach to ensure our plans are achievable, measurable, easily communicated and impactful.

Goals

Many people are beginning to understand the impact that global warming, water pollution and the loss of biodiversity are having on our day-to-day lives, but it can feel overwhelming.

If the Plumbers' Company can demonstrate that it is possible to introduce a variety of small but impactful changes to the way we operate, we will motivate our Court, our members, our industry, our training partners, and our suppliers to be advocates within their own wider networks. Our goal must be to spread the knowledge and confidence to make a difference.

Our approach

Each of the Plumbers' six committees – Freedom & Livery (F&L), Finance, Investment, Education & Technical, Social, Membership – has a climate change representative to coordinate and communicate specific actions within the areas of activity that their committee undertakes.

This document collates the ideas generated by the various committees over the past year into a summary of our intentions. Each committee has then created their own implementation plan for the specific climate-friendly activities they are able to undertake, under the guiding principle of "Reduce, Re-use, Recycle", either directly ourselves or through the influence and encouragement of others to do the same.

The independent trustees of the Plumbers' Charity have also contributed to the development of this plan, and have subsequently created their own version based upon it to implement.

Areas for Action

The committees have identified the following areas for action:

1. Travel
2. Event catering and management
3. Use of paper and plastics
4. Procurement of goods and services
5. Investment strategy
6. Communication and education
7. Influence
8. Overall governance

For each, there will be some actions we can take immediately, and some for which we state an intent and a pathway to achieve them over a given timescale.

1. Travel

All company meetings should have an option for virtual attendance.

All other company events including social gatherings and the Master's Break should be planned to allow for attendance by public transport. Exceptionally, where no public transport options exist, we should promote car sharing or coach/minibus travel. If car travel is unavoidable, we should facilitate carbon offsetting.

2. Event catering and management

Our company is founded on fellowship and fraternity, and we must ensure our food and drink at events is of a high standard and offers value for money.

We should provide our guidelines to venues or caterers to encourage improvements in sustainability. Our choice of venues should be influenced by their suppliers' environmental policies. We must ensure suppliers have a recycling policy and help them to meet it when involved in 'clear up'.

We should not utilise single-use plastics and request suppliers use sustainable, re-usable alternatives. Where other plastics are unavoidable, we should engage with suppliers to minimise the amount of wasted and promote reuse and recycling.

Menu choices can be seasonal and locally sourced and should avoid ingredients that are known to be climate intensive and/or ecologically unsustainable. With caterers we use regularly, we can work with them to plan varied more sustainable menus across different venues and events.

We should eliminate the use of bottled water from all events.

3. Use of paper and plastics

Beyond event catering, we must continue to reduce the use of paper and single use plastic within the organisation.

Where meetings are attended in person, participants should use devices, rather than print-outs. The company may wish to have spare chargers and cables on hand to facilitate.

If printed materials are necessary at events, we should ensure that there are recycling bins at exits and that venues will handle waste correctly. We should cost in using 100% recycled paper stock.

We should ensure our office waste management adheres to best practice and review procedures and suppliers on a yearly basis.

4. Procurement of goods and services

We will create a simple Plumbers' climate and sustainability checklist to provide to potential suppliers as part of any potential agreement. This can also be used internally to rate an organisation where the degree of interaction is limited e.g. utility suppliers.

5. Investment strategy

Whilst our portfolio is not currently a dedicated ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) investment, our holdings are, bar two, are part of a sustainable investment category. We will offload non-compliant holdings over time to mitigate any capital gains charges and will guide our investment company to establish a binding set of criteria for future investments.

Responsibility for investments by the Company's charity lies solely with the charity trustees, however we understand that they will be evaluating their own holdings and undertaking a similar exercise.

6. Communication and Education

We must set out a clear, achievable agenda for how we communicate our climate intent to both internal and external audiences. Where we are taking specific actions that might challenge long-standing expectations, we should be bold in offering clear explanations on why we have taken these actions.

We should actively publicise the positive initiatives we undertake on water, CO₂, sustainability, biodiversity, and pollution across our digital, social media and other platforms.

We should promote the LCAG and other relevant organisations (e.g. Pollinating London Together) across the membership and provide Liverymen with the resources to promote sustainability within their own organisations. We should explain our climate initiatives and goals to potential new members when recruiting and in interviews and pre-joining discussions.

In our strong links to Further Education colleges and trade groups offering apprenticeship programmes, we should take the opportunity to share and promote our positive environmental goals.

We know there is strong interest in climate action among younger generations who are highly aware of the human impact on the environment and their futures. We will engage with them to better understand their concerns and priorities, to help us shape our own strategies. We should incorporate elements of sustainability best practice into our awards and bursaries. We should promote environmental awareness as part of our teaching and mentoring programmes within the Plumbing Professionals Development Scheme (PPDS). We should also include such aims in initiatives to promote 'licence to practice' and national training and syllabus design for plumbing and heating apprentices.

Through our association with our Navy, Army and Air Force Cadet Groups, we should encourage mindfulness about climate change, and regularly share our CAP with such affiliates.

7. Influence

As an organisation with many links to the heating and plumbing industry, the City of London, and charitable organisations, we should take those key opportunities to champion our climate change agenda, as part of our industry convenor and thought leader roles.

When opportunities arise to engage with other organisations and interest groups we should share resources, knowledge and tactics.

We should reach out to our affiliates, industry partners and others to understand what is already going on in the industry, to explore gaps, and to see what the Company can do to amplify green plumbing initiatives.

8. Overall governance

We will incorporate our climate aims into our risk register and add climate change goals into the Terms of Reference for each committee.

We will encourage nominees for Court membership, committee chairmanship and committee membership to support our CAP and its implementation.

Conclusion

This Climate Action Plan 2025 framework describes our intentions to become a more sustainable and climate-aware organisation. It will further evolve as it gains support within the Company and new ideas and initiatives are generated. As such, it will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis subject to agreement from the F&L committee and the Court.

Using these intentions, each committee can now implement its own 2025 plan, including specific measurable actions.

Charles Brooks

Master

15 March 2025