



ENGINEERING THE FUTURE

ESG Report

Our commitment to sustainable success.





**Our people,
engineering the future,
building a legacy.**

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Introduction

Founded in 1992, Designer Group has spent the past 30 years building a leading brand, now synonymous with our commitment to delivering ambitious, innovative and sustainable engineering solutions. We are a trusted MEP partner for clients on an international scale, across Ireland, the UK, Europe, Africa and North America, servicing over 14 sectors, including data centres, life sciences, industrial, manufacturing, commercial, infrastructure and energy. It is our outstanding people, combined with the quality of our delivery, that has built our longstanding reputation in the industry.

In today's rapidly evolving world, the construction industry holds a significant position in shaping our built environment and driving economic growth. As one of the largest employers internationally, it plays an indispensable role in every economy.

However, the scale of operations in this industry also results in a substantial environmental impact. With construction accounting for over 40% of global emissions, it is crucial for players within the industry to step up and actively contribute to adopting more sustainable practices.

As an international engineering contractor, we bear responsibility and recognise the urgent need to address these environmental challenges and take decisive action to mitigate our carbon footprint. Our business model is underpinned by a strong commitment to sustainability, which is integrated across all aspects of our operations, from procurement to project delivery.

As part of this commitment, we have embraced the concept of transparency and actively seek to communicate our environmental, social, and governance (ESG) performance in an accountable manner. This year we have produced our first Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) Standards report, serving as a comprehensive overview of our sustainability commitments, actions, and progress to date.

We are pleased to share within this document a summary of this report, and within these pages you will find valuable insights into how we are minimising our environmental impact, enhancing social wellbeing, and upholding robust governance practices.



The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) represent a transformative global agenda, addressing pressing social, economic, and environmental challenges the world faces, and was adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015.

Encompassing 17 goals, the SDGs interconnect sustainable development and span a wide range of critical areas. Each goal is accompanied by specific targets and indicators, which are benchmarks to track progress and ensure accountability. These goals emphasise the importance of collaboration and collective action, recognising that the challenges we face are complex and require comprehensive solutions.

Designer Group recognises it is not feasible to commit to all UN SDGs. Therefore we have conducted detailed internal assessments to identify and carefully map out specific areas to ensure our efforts are focused on the goals where we can make a meaningful difference, leveraging our strengths and resources effectively for maximum impact. These SDGs have been integrated into our strategies and operations and are outlined below.



Our values

Our company values not only shape the identity of our organisation, they are the guiding principles for our people. We firmly believe that our core values are the driving force behind sustainability. We embrace the challenge of building a safe world for future generations by fostering trust and respect in every aspect of our operations.

By aligning our actions with these values, we aim to deliver sustainable solutions that not only meet the needs of the present but also safeguard the future. Through innovative practices and responsible decision-making, we are committed to leaving a positive impact on the environment, society, and the economy.



Our values are
who we are, what we stand for,
and how we behave.

Our commitments

Our core values have been instrumental in shaping and defining our sustainability commitments. We have established clear Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) objectives that support our contribution to the UN SDGs and drive our efforts in reducing our environmental impact, and protecting human prosperity and biodiversity.

- ✓ We commit to publicly reporting on our sustainability performance and targets with complete transparency.
- ✓ We will help to combat climate change by achieving net zero emissions by 2035 – scope 1 & 2.
- ✓ We will protect our environment by sending zero waste to landfill from 2026.
- ✓ We will protect biodiversity by practicing responsible material procurement, demonstrating year-on-year improvements from a 2022 baseline.
- ✓ We will prioritise our people and improve our employee welfare performance against KPI targets (inc. diversity and inclusion initiatives), demonstrating year-on-year improvements from our baseline.
- ✓ We will safeguard the world's resources by improving our water conservation, by 50% reduction in sourcing by 2028, against our baseline.



Materiality analysis

Extensive materiality analysis played a crucial role in defining our sustainability commitments. We identified the most significant economic, environmental, and social issues that directly impact our business. Both internal and external stakeholders were engaged in in-depth conversations to ensure our research was comprehensive and their valuable perspectives and insights have since shaped our approach to sustainability.

Issues were then prioritised based on the topics that matter most to our customers, employees, and other stakeholders and subsequently, presented to, and approved by, our Board of Directors.

By focusing on these material issues, our commitments are meaningful and targeted, addressing our most significant challenges and opportunities and providing the foundation for building our 2035 roadmap toward achieving net zero emissions.

Sustainability management system

To operationalise these commitments effectively, we have established a robust sustainability management system. This system ensures the seamless integration of environmental, social, and governance (ESG) considerations into our decision-making processes. Furthermore, it enables us to set measurable targets and report on our performance.

In line with international best practices, we adhere to standards such as ISO 14001 for environmental management, ISO 45001 for occupational health and safety and ISO 90001 for quality management. These certifications testify to our dedication to excellence and align our practices with globally recognised benchmarks for monitoring progress, fostering collaboration, and ensuring that sustainability goals are met across all areas of our business.



Celebrating our sustainability success

**Implemented new
Sustainability Policy**

 **Committed to
Net Zero Carbon 2035**



 **Established ambitious
ESG goals**

**Calculated
baseline
emissions
accurately**

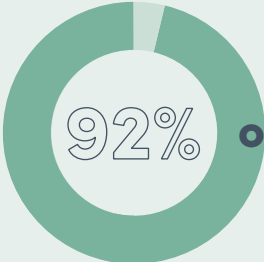
**Launched valuable
energy savings
guidance**

**Produced comprehensive
waste management plan**

 **Introduced innovative
digital business cards**

**Our website is
carbon neutral**

 **Identified efficient
carbon offsetting
programmes**

 **92% of our people agree we have a
strong H&S culture**



Led
impactful workshops
for support services



Engaged and educated
our supply chain
effectively



Invested in improved
performance management

Appointed dedicated
ESG Coordinator

Achieved
AFR: 0.0
(Accident Frequency Rate)

AFR

Embraced diversity: employing
22+ nationalities



Two time winners of the
NISO Supreme Safety Award




Transformed 400 young lives through
youth empowerment



Published our
first comprehensive
ESG Report





We understand that our success is intertwined with the health of the communities we serve. We aim to empower and uplift local communities, nurturing a brighter and more equitable future for all.



Michael Stone, Founder and Group CEO

Governance

Designer Group has established a governance structure that fosters the integration of sustainability principles at all levels of our organisation. This structure ensures that sustainability is not just an isolated objective but a fundamental aspect of our overall strategy. It is firmly guided by our commitment to the UN SDGs and the principles of the UN Global Compact.

Our Board of Directors is responsible for overseeing our sustainability strategy and monitoring our performance. They provide guidance and strategic direction to ensure that sustainability remains a core consideration in our decision-making processes.

Sustainability management system

To drive and facilitate sustainability initiatives, we have put in place our Sustainability Committee, a dedicated group of individuals united by a common goal: driving sustainable change within our organisation.

Comprised of senior business leaders and subject experts, the committee brings together a wealth of expertise and perspectives. Their collective efforts focus on developing and implementing strategies to enhance our environmental stewardship, social responsibility, and economic sustainability. The Sustainability Committee plays a vital role in promoting innovative initiatives, and ensuring our business remains at the forefront of sustainable practices.

Our robust governance structure ensures that sustainability is embedded in our DNA. With collective efforts from our Board of Directors and Sustainability Committee, we aim to achieve objectives and improve performance aligned with best practices and stakeholder expectations.



Michael Stone
Founder and Group CEO



Paul Nicholls
Ireland & International
Managing Director



Ronan Cullen
ESG Coordinator



Dympna Mullally
Company Secretary



Paul Waugh
UK Managing Director



Dan Aspeling
Group Head of Sustainability



Shona Boyne
Chief People Officer



Stakeholder engagement

We value the perspectives and contributions of our stakeholders, recognising the critical role they play in shaping our journey. We actively engage with stakeholders to foster open dialogue, understand their unique needs, address concerns, and meet their expectations effectively.

We are equally passionate about the wellbeing and involvement of our people. They are at the heart of our organisation, and their dedication and expertise are integral to our sustainability efforts. We prioritise their welfare, provide a supportive work environment, and actively seek their input in shaping our sustainability initiatives.

Our strong stakeholder engagement strategies help to govern our strategy and their knowledge and ideas are instrumental in driving positive change within our organisation and beyond.



Our sustainability policy and strategy

Designer Group puts sustainability at the heart of our business strategy through our market leadership role, our operations and the services we provide to our valued clients. We have adopted a public corporate sustainability strategy that is fully aligned with our commercial objectives, enabling us to grow and create value, and is central to the long-term development of our business. Our strategy is backed by our sustainability policy and our leadership is responsible for enabling employees to contribute to our environmental objectives.

Our vision

Our vision of a sustainable future is concentrated on operating in a sustainable manner for our clients, employees, and the wider community. Our partnership with stakeholders is based on mutual respect, doing no harm and protecting human welfare. Our activities are based on avoiding and mitigating harm to our common environment, through climate change or the destruction of biodiversity.



Our strategic pillars

Developed through examining our activities and informed by our policy and vision, we have identified three pillars into which all our activities and impacts can be brought together.

These three groups allow us to focus our strategic implementation on recognisable and manageable topics. We use these pillars in our materiality assessment for the purposes of reporting in accordance with the Global Reporting Initiative, they are:

People - A society for our future

— inspiring the next generation; supporting our communities; developing sustainability knowledge and skills; and creating a healthy, safe and inclusive workplace.

Planet - An environment with a future

— supporting a low carbon economy; demonstrating respect for the environment through resource efficiency and preventing pollution; and protecting and improving ecosystems.

Performance - A business of the future

— influencing and supporting sustainable economic growth with strong governance, integrity and accountability; being part of an international business while recognising the responsibility and the importance of providing local services without compromising our future.



People

Client Commitments

- Ethics
- Quality
- Cost
- Time

Employee Experience

- H&S
- Welfare
- Pay
- CPD

Human Rights

- Exploitation
- Modern slavery
- Discrimination
- Equality

Sustainable Investing

- Mining
- Fossil fuels
- Human rights
- Biodiversity

Community & Social

- Poverty
- Consultation
- Charity
- Engagement

Professional Bodies

- Advisory
- Lobbying
- Standards
- Governance



Planet Planet

Materials

Timber

Plastic

Hazardous

Lifecycle

Recycle

Energy

Emissions

Intensity

Distance

Renewable

Management

Water

Source

Use

Reuse

Quality

Transport

Emissions

Modes

Distance

Maintenance

Disposal

Waste

Management

Recycling

Reducing

Disposal



Performance

Working Environment

- HVAC
- Energy
- Lighting
- IT
- Comfort

Travel & Commute

- Emissions
- Time
- Parking
- Locations

Health & Safety

- Regulations
- Supervision
- Awareness
- Equipment
- Certification

Responsible Design

- Design for prefabrication
- Life cycle design
- Materials
- Energy intensity
- Design for manufacture

Environmental Protection

- Standards
- Emergency response
- Equipment
- Compliance
- Monitoring

Supply Chain

- Ethical sourcing
- Materials
- Compliance
- GHG scope



Making sustainability the easiest, most inclusive and practical choice is essential to ensure global industry adapts for a greener future. As an industry leader it is our responsibility to drive this.



Ronan Cullen, ESG Coordinator

Supply chain & procurement

Designer Group has a diverse supply chain, primarily collaborating with wholesalers and manufacturers of electrical and mechanical equipment. Our supply chain has experienced significant growth as we recently took on several large international projects. This diversification has allowed us to collaborate with international suppliers and contractors specialised in data centre and energy infrastructure, meeting the unique demands of these cutting-edge facilities.

Our commitment to sustainability is evident in how we engage with suppliers who share our values and uphold strong environmental and social practices. Transparent partnerships are essential in minimising the environmental impact of our supply chain and promoting responsible sourcing.

To ensure project success and deliver value to our clients, we implement robust procurement processes, quality control measures, and supply chain optimisation strategies. Material validity and quality are of utmost importance, as we recognise their roles in safety, durability, and sustainability. We carefully select suppliers and materials, verifying their authenticity and compliance with project specifications through thorough inspections, quality checks and the collection of EPDs (Environmental, Product Declarations).

Maintaining transparency and accountability, clear documentation, and traceability of materials are upheld throughout the construction process. Leveraging advanced tools like Building Information Modelling (BIM) and digital design, we make sustainable decisions by simulating and analysing different design alternatives to optimise energy performance and identify energy-saving opportunities.

With the acquisition of One Click LCA, a powerful software tool, we enhance our sustainability efforts through detailed Life Cycle Assessments (LCAs). This enables us to evaluate the environmental impact of our buildings throughout their entire life cycle, setting sustainability targets and making informed decisions to reduce carbon emissions, energy consumption, and resource depletion.

Our clients and projects also benefit from our diligent procurement processes and advanced technology, as we strive to fulfil our responsibility to create a better world for generations to come.



Energy and emissions

Designer Group places significant importance on sustainable energy usage and management, striving to minimise environmental impact by reducing energy consumption across all operations. In response to the ongoing European energy crisis and mounting concerns about greenhouse gas emissions and climate change, proactive measures are essential to curb energy consumption and emissions. In addressing these challenges, sustainable energy practices and carbon footprint reduction remain imperative.

Designer Group operates four permanent office and training facilities in the UK and Ireland and recognises their significant influence on our energy consumption and emissions. By implementing energy-saving measures and sustainable practices, we minimise energy usage and explore innovative solutions like smart building technologies, and the adoption of renewable energy sources. This presents a unique opportunity to inspire employees and stakeholders through education, awareness campaigns, and active engagement. Together, we create a culture of energy consciousness and contribute to our sustainability goals.

- 1 **Clyde House**
IDA Blanchardstown Business & Technology Park
Snugborough Road, Ireland
- 2 **Training Academy**
52 Nore Road, Dublin Industrial Estate
Dublin, Ireland
- 3 **Watford Office**
Egale 1, 80 St Albans Road
Watford, England
- 4 **The Minories**
150 The Minories,
London, England



To facilitate this commitment, a comprehensive data collection and recording system for energy usage has been implemented. Establishing a baseline in 2019 allows for accurate assessment, even amidst the unique circumstances of reduced energy consumption during the pandemic. Armed with this data, we are empowered to develop targeted strategies to effectively address these critical issues.

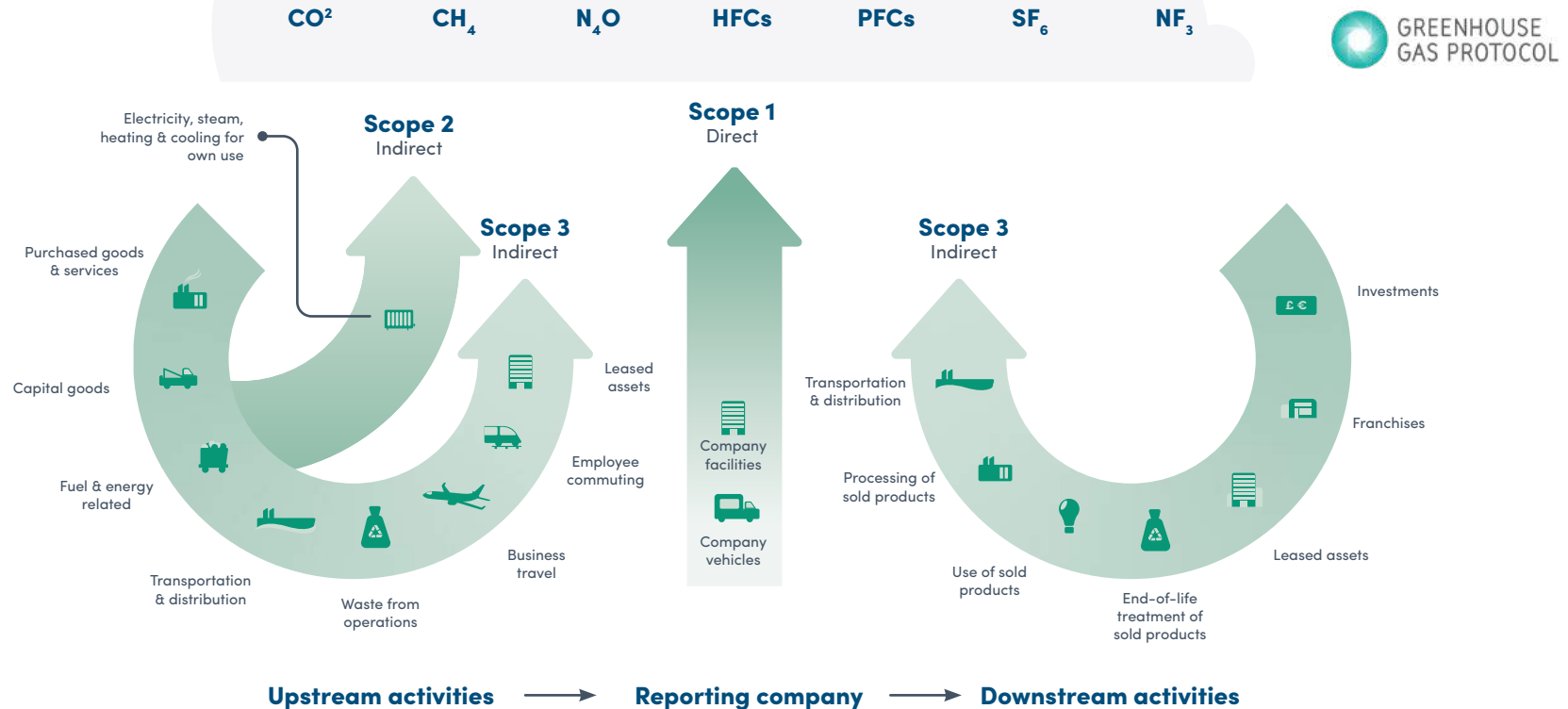
**Total reduction in electricity consumption
across all facilities from 2019 – 2022: 5.84%**

Embracing a holistic approach, and our pivotal role in contributing to collective efforts we have provided guidance and support to our staff and colleagues in their own energy-saving efforts. We developed a bespoke “Energy Savings Booklet” that was issued to our people and subcontractors. This resource equips our team with the foundational knowledge to manage energy usage effectively in the workplace and offers practical tips and tricks for reducing energy bills at home.

Greenhouse Gas Protocol (GGP)

The Greenhouse Gas Protocol is a widely recognised and respected international accounting tool for measuring, managing, and reporting greenhouse gas emissions. Developed by the World Resources Institute and the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) the Protocol provides guidelines and standards for organisations to measure and report.

This has become an essential tool for Designer Group in our efforts to manage our environmental impact and to take proactive steps towards achieving our ambitious 2035 carbon neutrality goal. Our sustainability team collects data on energy consumption, transportation, and waste management and reports these emissions annually to ensure transparency for stakeholders. The GGP also helps us to establish targets for future reductions.



Emissions - scope 1, 2 and 3

Scope 1 emissions encompass direct greenhouse gas emissions originating from sources owned or controlled by a company.

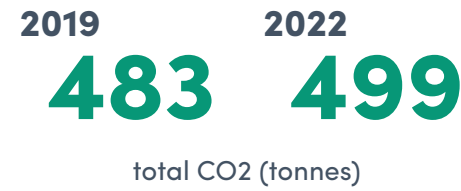
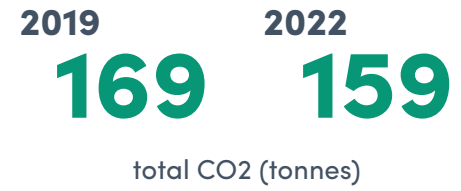
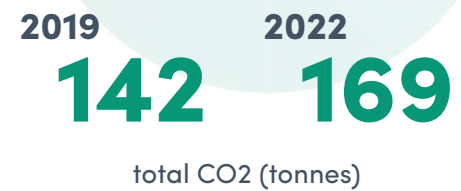
These emissions are within Designer Group's direct control and result from our operations, such as energy consumption for heating, cooling, and transportation and are categorised as stationary, mobile and fugitive. Our energy conservation efforts will have the greatest impact on our scope 1 emissions.

Scope 2 emissions are classified as indirect emissions resulting from the consumption of purchased electricity, steam, heat, or cooling by an organisation.

Unlike scope 1 emissions, Designer Group does not have direct control, instead our emissions arise from the production of electricity or other energy carriers by third-party entities. It is however vital that we monitor and report our scope 2 emissions, as they are crucial for assessing our carbon footprint.

Scope 3 emissions encompass the indirect emissions arising from a company's value chain, originating from sources beyond its ownership or control. Stemming from activities such as raw material extraction, production, transportation, and product disposal.

We appreciate that these emissions typically constitute the largest portion of a company's carbon footprint and present challenges in tracking and reporting due to involvement with multiple third parties. This is why we are 100% committed to monitoring this data and reporting transparently, with the goal of reducing our scope 3 emissions being vital for fostering sustainable and responsible business practices.



Our net zero carbon commitment

Designer Group has set an ambitious target to achieve Net Zero carbon emissions by 2035, across both Scope 1 and Scope 2 emission categories. Our commitment to this is in recognition of the urgent need to address the pressing challenges of climate change and its impact on our planet.

To do this we need to significantly reduce our direct emissions (Scope 1) from our operations and the indirect emissions (Scope 2) generated from purchased electricity and heat. We understand that transitioning to a Net Zero carbon future is a complex journey, but we are dedicated to implementing innovative solutions, adopting sustainable practices, and investing in renewable energy sources to fulfil this commitment.

In the next section of this report we explore the existing data we have worked hard to collect, recognise the improvements we have made so far, and look at how we plan to use this data to make better decisions and drive responsible carbon reduction moving forward.

Mobile combustion

Taking a leap towards carbon neutrality, we have been investing in advanced electric vehicles and installing electric charging points at our office facilities. These additions to our fleet maintain our outstanding service and competence for innovation while exploring new approaches for moving our people and goods.

88% of our vehicles in the Nordics are
100% electric



Electric mobility not only reduces our greenhouse gas emissions but contributes to cleaner air and a healthier environment for everyone on our projects.

By monitoring our fuel usage we can understand which vehicles produce higher emissions and make impactful plans for the future of our fleet.

Stationary combustion

Given the significant contribution to greenhouse gas emissions and climate change from fuel types such as natural gas, coal, oil, and waste it is crucial that we understand our energy consumption habits and their impact.

Our baseline for data has helped to initiate energy-saving programmes in our office facilities, which will contribute to large reductions in emissions in the future.

Already our Clyde House office has seen a dramatic

11.5% reduction

in stationary emissions from 2019–2022

Following our responsible practice guidance through our energy savings booklet, our employees are consciously turning equipment and lights off at the end of the day, and when not needed, and utilising remote conference style meetings where possible.

Monitoring energy use on our sites is more challenging as subcontractors are typically bound by the clients' regulations. However, where we can take a leadership role, we have implemented an energy monitoring process specifically for our welfare facilities on our data centre projects.



At the heart of our business lies a deep respect for the planet and its resources.



Paul Nicholls Ireland & International Managing Director

Green energy providers

We take pride in being customers of Ireland's leading wind power generator, at both our permanent premises in Ireland. Dedication to environmental responsibility has earned them the title of '2022 Green Energy Provider' by the Green Awards. Over the next 12 months, we will be researching green energy providers for our UK permanent facilities, and plan to take advantage of responsible partnership opportunities.

Air travel

Air travel is a significant contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, but is also an essential part of managing our expanding international projects, making it a crucial component of our Scope 3 emissions. Although our net zero commitment focuses on our scope 1 & 2 emissions, due to its environmental impact, and our recent increase in air travel, we are prioritising addressing this issue within our sustainability strategy.

The number one place to start is to provide accurate data on our emissions. To achieve this we have developed a customised, internal system to track and monitor our travel activities. This data enables us promote awareness and encourage our teams to be mindful when flying between projects.

Where appropriate, we have researched carbon-offsetting initiatives and encouraged our employees to choose more sustainable modes of transportation.

We've used **358*** tonnes of CO2...

...which is **1,806,963** total KM travelled...

...equating to **45** times around the world...

...or **2.35** times to the moon and back

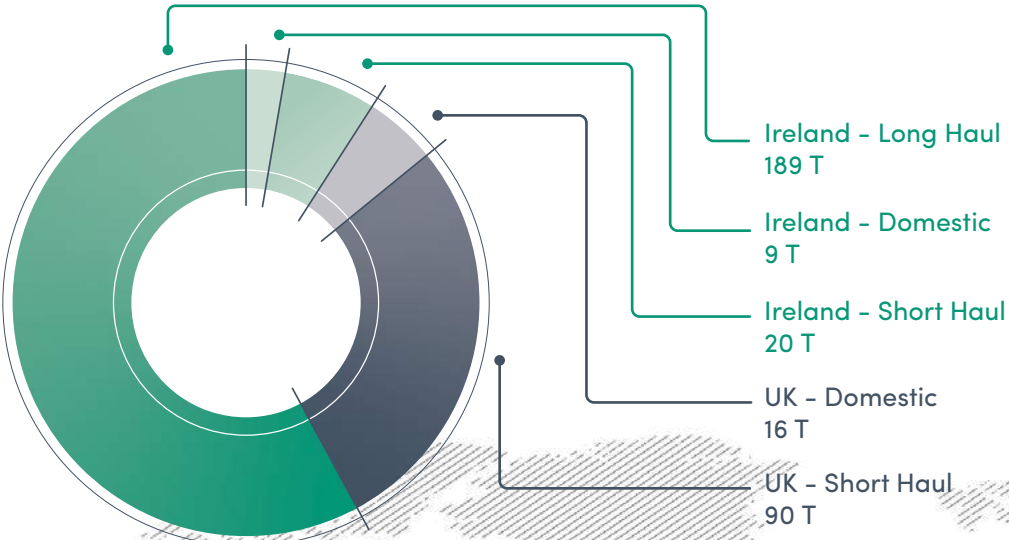
**10% contingency added*

Data correct as at: December 2022



Our flight carbon footprint in 2022

Flight CO2 emissions for UK and Ireland in tonnes



Flight emissions are categorised based on distance travelled into three main types: domestic, covering shorter distances within a country or region with a lower carbon footprint; short-haul, covering intermediate distances with a higher carbon footprint compared to domestic; and long-haul, covering significant distances with the highest carbon footprint due to extended travel and longer duration. Understanding these distinctions helps manage the environmental impact of air travel and promotes more sustainable practices.

Scope	Impact	Criteria
UK & Ireland flights	Domestic	less than 500km
	Short Haul	500 - 1500km
	Long Haul	more than 1500km

Credit: Greenhouse Gas Protocol



Commuter travel

Another large contributor to our scope 3 emissions are those generated when our employees travel to and from work.

We have chosen to adopt an average data methodology, utilising census data in the public domain, to inform our strategic decisions. We are proud to offer facilities that encourage sustainable modes of transportation, such as cycle parking, showers and electric charge points.

Average distance travelled to work **12.4km**

12% of employees travel by foot to work

5% use a bicycle **over 15%** use public transport



Water and effluents

Designer Group places a high value on water conservation and the responsible management of water resources. We are prioritising minimising water consumption, reducing effluent generation, and promoting efficient water use across all our operations. To ensure transparency, we align our reporting with the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) Universal Standards 2021, providing clear information on our water management efforts.

Our focus is on three key areas; water conservation, wastewater treatment, and stakeholder engagement. Through this holistic approach, we contribute to broader water security initiatives that benefit the communities in which we operate.

Waste

Designer Group understands the importance of reducing waste and its impact on the environment. At all our office premises we have a strict waste management and monitoring process that prioritises waste separation, ensuring that all waste is properly sorted to maximise recycling and minimise landfill. Additionally, we have embraced the waste hierarchy approach, which guides our decision-making to prioritise waste reduction, reuse, recycling, and responsible disposal.

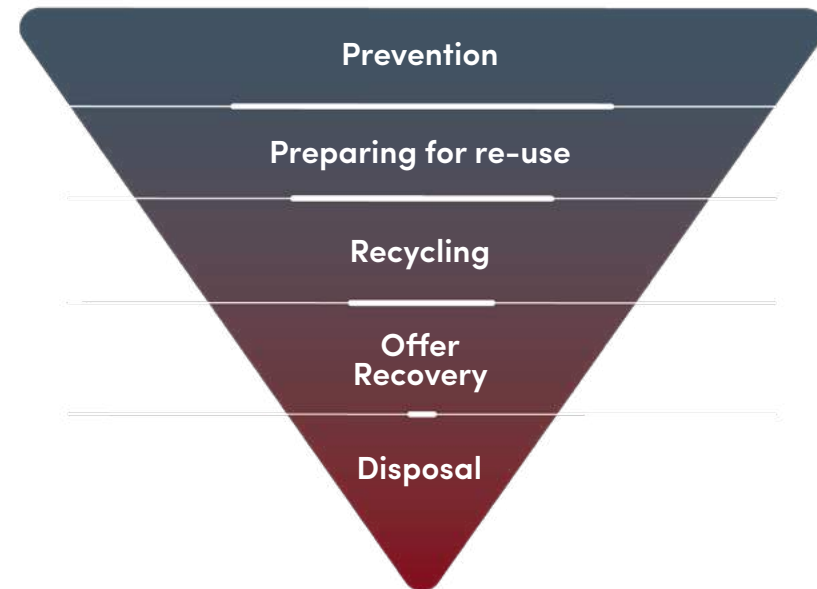
In addition, our specialist ESG Coordinator has drafted a comprehensive waste management plan to minimise waste generation and implement a circular economy approach to our operations. When implemented in 2023/2024, this will reduce the amount of waste produced in our processes and ultimately contribute to a more sustainable future for all.

Our determined target is for

zero waste to
landfill **by 2026**

We have set ambitious targets to
reduce our water consumption by

50% by 2028



In 2022 we introduced a strict policy requiring all cups containing hot liquids to have lids when taken onto the office floors. This measure ensures the safety of our employees while also reducing the potential for waste. In line with this effort we were delighted to partner with Monkey Cups, a local Irish sustainable brand. As part of this partnership, where practicable, we have provided each of our employees with a reusable keep cup, reducing reliance on single-use cups and encouraging sustainable practices.

In tackling paper waste, we have engaged in multiple different schemes to offset our emissions, including establishing a collaboration with 'Printreleaf'. Through this partnership, we contribute financially for every page we print, promoting conscious paper usage and encouraging a shift towards digital alternatives. This financial contribution is then reinvested into responsible offsetting initiatives, such as tree planting.

Additionally, we have invested in innovative, digital business card technology for our people, eradicating the need to print cards. Last year we proudly achieved carbon neutrality for our corporate website, another powerful carbon offsetting strategy. At our latest recording in 2022, we have already made significant progress in reducing paper waste.

As a part of our strategy to increase efficiency and reduce waste in the next 12 months, we will be investing in a new online expense system. The new system will digitally automate our entire expense process using Concur Expense, a product developed by SAP, one of the world's leading producers of software for the management of business processes. It will help us to drive policy compliance, gain better visibility of spending and reduce paper waste, whilst eliminating the storage of paper receipts. The new online system will be a big step forward for Designer Group's innovation and sustainability agenda.



printreleaf.



Doorway



Standard pages offset **240,572**

79 trees planted with Doorway and Printreleaf

We advocate for collective action in achieving
a sustainable world and an equitable society.



Dan Aspeling, Group Head of Sustainability

Our people

2022 was a busy year for Designer Group, during which we made significant efforts to strengthen our employee experience. We worked towards creating a safe and inclusive work environment, improving employee engagement and satisfaction, and promoting diversity and equality in the workplace. In this section of our report, we highlight our achievements and progress in this area, as well as outline our ongoing commitment to continuous improvement.

Health and Safety

Our world-class Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) programme is driven by our Board of Directors, implemented through senior management, and supported by a culture that empowers employees to prioritise health and safety. Together, we are united in our mission to create the safest work practices for our people, projects, and clients.

We firmly believe that all accidents, injuries, and incidents can be prevented. Guided by our 'Zero Harm' strategy, we go above and beyond our statutory OHS and welfare obligations. Our embedded culture of reporting near-miss and unsafe observations is crucial.

In early 2021 we introduced a new near-miss league campaign in the UK. Since its launch unsafe observation records have improved by 213%. The same campaign launched in Ireland in Summer of 2023 and we are excited to see the positive difference it will make. Our data shows a very strong correlation between the increase in near-miss reporting and the decrease in accidents.

We believe in positive reinforcement as a cultural driver and take pride in championing and celebrating employees who demonstrate exemplary HSE behaviours. Our people are recognised in our internal staff publications and rewarded through our monthly positive HSE Incentive Scheme.

89% of our people agree our leaders take responsibility for developing and promoting a positive HSE culture

213% increase

in near-miss observations through 2021 and 2022

Total accidents down by

47% in 2022

0.0 reportable Accident Frequency Rate

92% of our people agree we have a strong H&S culture

72% increase

in green cards issued



We also actively promote annual health and safety events, including The Construction Industry Federation's Construction Safety Week, the European Week for Safety and Health in the workplace, and World Mental Health Day. A very significant H&S achievement was being announced winner of the National Irish Safety Organisation's (NISO) 'Supreme Safety Award', the highest accolade presented annually, 2 years running (2021 and 2022). We also received the Excellence in Safety Award for consistently achieving a high standard safety award, for more than 15 years running. These awards are highly valued and regarded among health and safety professionals and recognition of the continuous improvement of our work in this area.



“The Supreme Safety Award is presented to the organisation that has shown consistently good or continuously improving health and safety performance over a number of years and an outstanding contribution to occupational safety, healthy and welfare during the previous year.” – NISO

Learning & development

Recognising the importance of providing comprehensive support to our staff, graduates, and trainees, we hired specialists in talent and development and introduced a new mentoring scheme specifically designed for young talent, providing valuable support and guidance specially to employees in the early stages of their careers.

To nurture our highest young performers, we launched our 'Emerging Talent' and 'Springboard' programmes. Each delegate receives dedicated

training in values-based behaviour, gaining invaluable experience across a wide range of topics relevant to their career progression. This year we saw **100% of our delegates graduate with exceptional achievements.** We also concluded our Leadership Academy Programme – 'Leading Our Way' – a comprehensive initiative that provided intensive training to participants, empowering them with the skills and knowledge they need to become leadership role models.

In parallel, we launched our new Performance Excellence programme, focused on providing feedback, targeted training, and development opportunities that empower our employees to excel, by investing in their continuous growth and learning. All our training programmes ensure our workforce is well-equipped to drive our growth and success.

76% of our people say that there is someone at work who encourages their development

Our investment in employee development in 2022 led to a record **49 internal promotions in 2022**, demonstrating our commitment to creating opportunities for career growth and development.

As part of our comprehensive approach, all our Tradespeople participate



in our in-house Training Academy, where we deliver both statutory and customised training courses. We place great emphasis on mentoring and support, ensuring that each employee has a tailored training plan to continuously improve their skills, maximise their capabilities, comply with legislation and site rules, and foster long-term career development.

In 2022 alone, we dedicated over 35,000 hours to health and safety training, underscoring our commitment to ongoing education and skill enhancement.

90% of our people agree we provide good safety training

In 2022, not only did our Training Academy win 'Training Facility of the Year' at the Irish Electrical Awards, but Brian Riordan, our 4th-year Electrical Apprentice, beat fierce competition across Ireland, to take home the top national title of 'Apprentice of the Year' from 187 entries.

Our Apprenticeship programme is noted as one of the best in the industry, delivered at our fit-for-purpose facilities by experienced trainers who are passionate about providing best-in-class training.

60 Apprentices started throughout 2022

16 Apprentices fully qualified in 2022

In 2023 we look forward to welcoming a new tranche of Apprentices including mature candidates, each bringing life experience and unique perspectives to our organisation, proving that age is never a barrier to personal and professional growth.

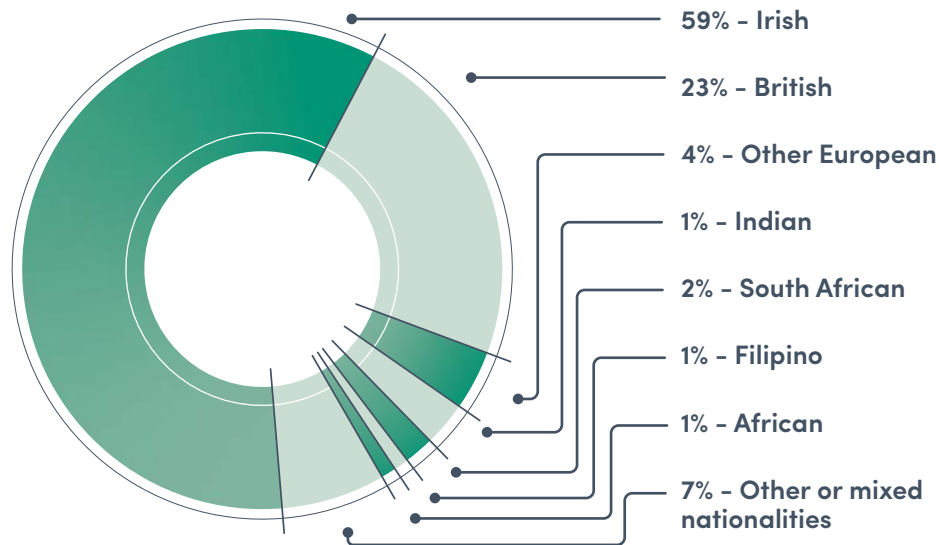
Diversity

The importance of diversity and inclusion in the workplace cannot be overstated. The sharing of languages, cultures and experiences leads to new and creative ideas for our business and our work environments.

At Designer Group, we are committed to providing equal opportunities for all, and this is reflected in how proudly diverse our employees are.

89% of our people agree they work in an environment where they feel comfortable being themselves

Designer Group strives to ensure that our employee profile is reflective of the local communities in which we operate and do business in. The breadth of cultural diversity is evident in our teams, and our engagement surveys have reflected a positive people experience in the area of diversity and inclusion.



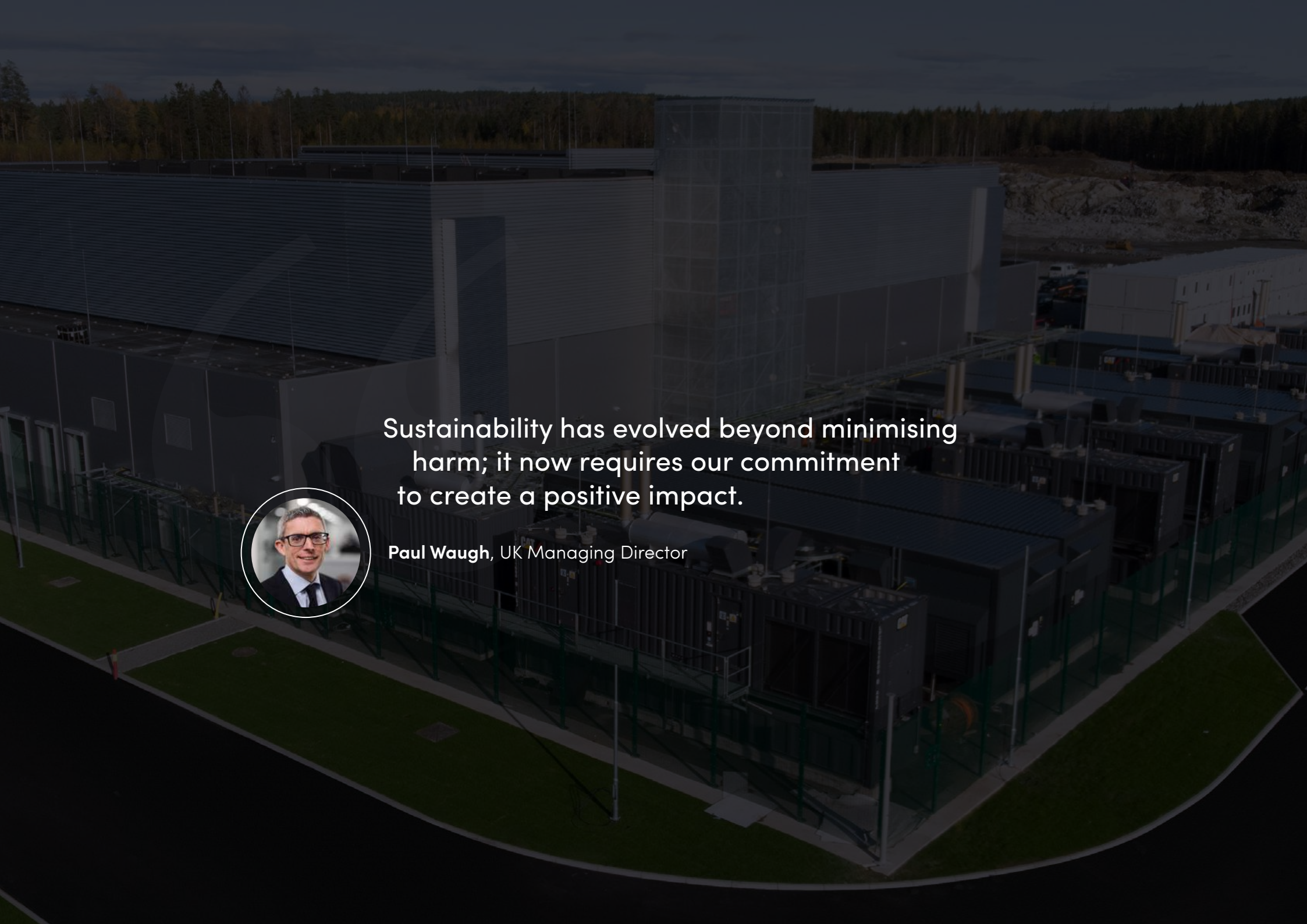
Our gender diversity statistics are promising, at more than 2% above the national average for the construction sector across the Group, and 8% above the national average in the UK alone. Whilst we are proud to be ahead of the national average, we strive to continue to create more opportunities for women in our workforce, actively engaging and supporting initiatives such as International Women's Day and encouraging women to join our apprenticeship programme.

We have a young and ambitious team with an average age of 39 in the UK and 33 in Ireland, giving us a generous mix of extensive experience. Inclusion and respect are a defining part of our identity, this is reflected in our core values.

We value the talent, time and contribution of everyone we work with. Our differences – when embraced – drive smarter decisions, stronger performance and increased innovation.

We employ **22+** different nationalities





Sustainability has evolved beyond minimising harm; it now requires our commitment to create a positive impact.



Paul Waugh, UK Managing Director

Employee engagement

We recognise that employee engagement is crucial for sustainability. Engaged employees are more likely to be committed to our long-term goals and core values and are more motivated to contribute innovative ideas and take proactive measures to improve our environmental and social performance.

We have gone to great lengths to ensure our core values are embedded into our culture including having them visible in all our workspaces, woven into our performance reviews and built into our customised training programmes.

93% of our people are familiar with our core values



In a hugely competitive global talent market these values can be a differentiator that influences a candidate to join our team and stay with us.

In 2022 we had an average length of service across the group of over 3.5 years, with improving employee retention and loyalty, but we know there is room for improvement.

Last year we also conducted our first employee engagement survey to gain valuable insights into the satisfaction and engagement levels of its workforce. The survey aimed to understand employees' perceptions of the company, their job roles, and the overall work environment.

79% response rate resulting in

91% fully or partially engaged

The survey provided an opportunity for employees to express their opinions, share feedback, and contribute to shaping the future of the organisation. The insights gathered from the survey allowed us to identify areas of strength and areas that require attention, enabling us to implement targeted initiatives to enhance employee satisfaction, wellbeing, and engagement, increasing productivity and reducing turnover, promoting continuity and consistency in sustainable practices.

70% agree Designer Group inspires them to do their best work

As a result, we formed an employee engagement committee consisting of diverse perspectives, encouraging active participation, and creating a platform for employees to contribute ideas. The committee has already played a crucial role in driving initiatives that address the feedback, including new meeting and email protocols and leadership business updates that enhance even further open communication.

This engagement survey was also an opportunity to highlight our people strategy. It empowered our employees to take ownership of sustainable practices, encouraging innovative ideas, collaboration, and a shared sense of responsibility towards creating a more environmentally conscious workplace.

70% agree Designer Group has made a clear commitment to sustainability



Community engagement

Our commitment to community engagement extends beyond project completion.

To achieve this, we have launched and supported several initiatives and projects. These endeavours go beyond financial investments and focus on empowering communities and individuals to enhance their skills and livelihoods. By providing capacity-building programmes, we enable people to gain valuable knowledge and abilities that can lead to personal and professional growth.

Way2Work

In 2020, more than 600 children went into care for the first time across Ireland, many without any of their own belongings. Alongside Way2Work, Tusla Child and Family Agency, and Care For a - a safe and inclusive space for children, in December 2022, our Designer Group Training Academy was transformed into Santa's Workshop and our team spent the afternoon helping to put together care backpacks.

Over **1000** backpacks made by
50+ employees, who gave over
200 hours of their time



Access to Apprenticeship

Designer Group collaborates with the Access to Apprenticeship Programme to promote access, diversity, and inclusion in craft apprenticeships, supporting talented young people from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds to shape and plan their careers in skilled employment.

As one of the main sponsors since its inception in 2017, the students participate in hands-on skills workshops at our training facility in both mechanical & electrical workshops, throughout the 12-week programme, providing an immersive experience. We are delighted to have given 8 of these student's full-time apprenticeships in plumbing and electrical trades following the community access programme.



Self Help Africa

Designer Group's involvement in large-scale projects in Africa, specifically in Kenya and Uganda, has provided us with a deep understanding of the challenges faced by local communities in these regions. We recognise that a significant portion of the African population, approximately 250 million people, including farmers and their families, suffer from hunger, malnutrition, and extreme rural poverty. These individuals have been left behind despite the region's economic growth.

In response to these pressing issues, we have partnered with Self Help Africa, a reputable not-for-profit organisation dedicated to addressing poverty and improving the lives of local communities in Africa. The objective of the project is to create opportunities and transform lives by enhancing youth employment and self-employment opportunities through practical technical skills training.

Over a 3-year gender-inclusive programme, we have helped

400 young students

awarded **45 scholarships**

and appointed

30 youth ambassadors

Training has included electrical installation and maintenance, plant operations in mechanical engineering, welding & fabrication, masonry & plumbing, as well as group dynamics, financial literacy and entrepreneurial skills.



Blakestown School

Since 2021, Designer Group proudly joined hands with Blakestown Community School, Ireland, for the World of Work programme - a powerful initiative developed by Business in the Community.

This offers 2nd-year post-primary school students a valuable opportunity to explore the working world and discover careers available within their local community. So far, Designer Group has visited the school to conduct sessions on sustainability, presentation skills, and our unique work methodologies. A highlight of the initiative was a special visit to our Training Academy, where students experienced firsthand the technologies and training facilities available to them. This immersive experience aimed to provide these students with practical knowledge to prepare them for their future endeavours.

We intend to continue our work with Blakestown and hope to make a significant impact on the aspirations and dreams of these young individuals, fostering a strong connection between education and the workplace.

Looking ahead

Our journey towards sustainability is one that demands constant reflection, adaptation, and commitment. Looking back on the achievements of the past year, we recognise the significance of collective effort and shared vision. Our commitment to environmental preservation, social responsibility, and governance excellence has produced tangible results, fostering a culture of transparency and accountability within our business.

Having employed our dedicated ESG Coordinator in Summer 2022 and set up our Sustainability Committee in February of this year, we are delighted with the progress we have already made in such a short time period. Now we turn our attention towards the future, outlining our strategic focus for 2024 and beyond, as we continue to embrace our responsibility as leaders of positive change.

Our roadmap for 2024 focuses on three key pillars: Continual progress, innovation, and impactful collaboration.

Specifically, we will:

- Become a partner of the supply chain sustainability school and implement their strategies in 3 of our departments.
 - Operations
 - Procurement
 - Estimating
- Enhance our waste management and recycling practices on projects and premises where we have operational control.
- Produce commuting campaigns to advocate for our teams to use more sustainable modes of transport.
- Celebrate our diverse and inclusive workplace.

We acknowledge that our journey is far from over. We understand that challenges may arise, nevertheless, we remain steadfast in our dedication to transparency and open communication. We will continue to engage with our stakeholders, providing regular updates on our progress, and welcoming constructive feedback to drive our sustainable decisions.

“Together we can create a better world,
one that thrives on the principles of
sustainability and equality
and that reflects our deep sense of responsibility
towards the environment
and the communities we serve.”



