

Challenges:

CEF established its Sustainability and Social Value Strategy in 2022 and appointed a Director of ESG to lead a team including a Head of Environment, Head of Supply Chain Sustainability and Social Value, and Health & Safety Manager. The goal of the strategy is to be a leader in our sector, and a force for good, with a focus on people, planet and communities. Under the Strategy there are three strategic themes of Nurture our People, Protect the World and Enhance Communities.

Following a company restructure in May 2024, City Electrical Factors Limited now also includes its in-house manufacturing and distribution operations. The biggest challenges over the last 12 months have been around establishing a co-ordinated approach to the Sustainability and Social Value Strategy, developing priority commitments and creating awareness internally and externally, all underpinned by strong governance and reporting.

City Electrical Factors Limited has established four key commitments which it is working towards:

1. 80 percent of supplier partners by spend to be EcoVadis rated
2. Achieving EcoVadis Gold in 2026
3. Becoming a net-zero business by 2040, with a near-term reduction target of 63 percent by 2033
4. Securing Science Based Targets Initiative approval for near and long-term net-zero targets by the February of 2025

Impact:

City Electrical Factors Limited is progressing well with each of the commitments and is planning to publish an Impact Report for FY25 outlining the status as well as covering the rest of the strategic themes.

At the end of FY25, 71 percent of supplier partners by spend were EcoVadis rated.

As part of the supplier engagement programme, City Electrical Factors Limited has referenced the Supply Chain Sustainability School as a key learning resource to build knowledge and capability and help supplier partners improve their rating year on year.

City Electrical Factors Limited is currently Silver medal rated on EcoVadis in 2025 with a score of 73, improving from 68 the previous year. Being a member of the Supply Chain Sustainability School has supported this activity using resources to assess maturity and access aligned learning.

Fact box



Company

City Electrical Factors Limited

No of employees

4,000+

HQ

Kenilworth

Website

<https://www.cef.co.uk/>

Main contact

Nathalie Ritchie

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Services

City Electrical Factors Limited offers an extensive range of products from more than 300 leading supplier partners, including lighting, cable, switchgear, heating, ventilation, and renewable energy products. The organisation supplies a wide range of customer sectors, from small to large electrical contractors.

About

City Electrical Factors Limited is a private limited company established in 1951 and is the UK's leading multi-channel electrical distributor. The business operates almost 400 branch locations, supported by in-house manufacturing and distribution operations, and reports an annual turnover of £1.483bn. City Electrical Factors Limited acts as the essential link between product manufacturers and the electricians and electrical contractors who install them.

Case Study: City Electrical Factors Limited

Many customers are Supply Chain Sustainability School partners and City Electrical Factors Limited has completed key learning pathways assigned by them.

City Electrical Factors Limited is also well on its way to achieving its net-zero commitments and has submitted its net-zero carbon reduction plan to the Science Based Targets Initiative for verification. Scope 3 remains a significant part of the footprint and Supply Chain Sustainability School resources have been promoted to supplier partners to support delivery of net-zero commitments.

Value gained:

Membership of the Supply Chain Sustainability School has been important for City Electrical Factors Limited in helping validate its Sustainability and Social Value Strategy and providing access to resources and knowledge across a broad range of topics. The platform has also been used as a resource that supplier partners can be directed to, rather than developing bespoke content internally, with the free access to resources being particularly valuable.

Many customers are partner members of the Supply Chain Sustainability School and promote use of the platform, with engagement often referenced within commercial tender processes. Being an active member is positively recognised and validates City Electrical Factors Limited's commitment to sustainability.

City Electrical Factors Limited has also attended webinars, face-to-face events, and the Supply Chain Sustainability Summit, which have been beneficial for networking, building knowledge, and validating strategic priorities. Maturity assessments, action plans, and e-learning modules have helped identify areas for improvement, confirm progress, and support recognition through customer learning pathways.

Future proofing:

City Electrical Factors Limited has considered partner membership of the Supply Chain Sustainability School and plans to continue making best use of the resources while extending engagement across the business. The organisation also plans to develop topic-led engagement campaigns with supplier partners and promote key Supply Chain Sustainability School resources as part of this activity.