



Environmental Policy

Revision: 002

Date: May 2020

Introduction

– from Ecocabs Managing Director Matthew Kirkby

“Environmental sustainability has been one of our core operating principles at Ecocabs ever since we set up the business back in 2006.

The environmental challenges we now face around the world have grown since 2006, and my commitment is even stronger now than it was in 2006. I hope this can be seen clearly in our current Sustainability Pledge.

Ecocabs Sustainability Pledge

Since our inception in 2006 one of ecocabs’ core principles has been to run the business in an environmentally responsible way.

From the start we have challenged ourselves to do things differently, and to be early adopters of new technologies and working practices that support long term environmental sustainability.

We were one of the first companies to run our fleet on biodiesel. We started our transition to emission free electric vehicles back in 2012 with the purchase of our hybrid minibuses. This year we are the first company in the UK to take delivery of a hybrid minibus with the recent arrival of our first Ford Transit Tourneo Custom.

As a private sector business our environmental sustainability has to sit alongside commercial sustainability; but within this framework we never stop challenging ourselves to find new creative ways to reduce any negative impacts on our environment.

Our booking, administration and accounting systems are all paperless. We use refillable containers across all areas of the business from our vehicle workshops to our offices and toilets. Our office heating is provided by wood from a local fully renewable source.

As a local community-centric company we want to support and encourage those around us to appreciate the importance of sustainability. Interaction with those around us can also provide us with ideas and inspiration. We therefore work actively alongside local organisations like Tyne Rivers Trust, Northumberland Rivers Trust and Queens Hall to help benefit our whole community.

Looking forward we have the ambition to move to a fully electric fleet of vehicles by 2025, charged with electricity we have generated renewably on site. We want our office and workshops to be powered by our own electricity too.

We believe this ambition is realistic and we believe we have the passion and drive to take the necessary steps over the next five years to reach this goal.

This is our pledge to our customers, to our community, and to ourselves.



The purpose of this Environmental Policy is much more than to ensure we meet our legal and statutory obligations. The overriding purpose of the policy is to define the actions that we are taking to help us meet our Sustainability Pledge.

The following sections describe how each area of our business currently operates, and what our future plans are.”

M Kirkby

Matthew Kirkby, Managing Director

Fleet

We have a fleet of vehicles comprising diesel minibuses, PHEV hybrid minibuses, diesel cars, HEV hybrid cars and electric cars.

Our larger vehicles are diesel powered, and we have always chosen models that are amongst the most fuel efficiency in their class.

We run the HEV hybrid cars using unleaded petrol purchased from BP Filling Stations.

We charge the PHEV vehicles at charging points in the yard.

Fleet Management is done using a digital paperless platform . This also records the day to day fuel economy that we achieve in each vehicle and this data is visible to our Drivers.

Vehicles are maintained to a high standard to keep them running as efficiently as possible and to maximise the working life of each vehicle (and thereby minimise the vehicle whole life energy/resource use) .

In future all new vehicles will be either PHEV or Fully Electric Vehicles where these are available on the market

In 2014 we retro fitted a hybrid system to one of our larger vehicles, however, this turned out to not be a feasible option. This is due to the fact that there is no hybrid system on the market designed specifically for larger minibuses and, unfortunately, despite the suppliers best efforts to adapt it, it failed on several occasions. In addition, it was not able to provide the expected improved fuel economy or the planned reduction in emissions.

Office

We operate from a single office building located next to the yard.

The energy use within the building is minimised in the following ways:

- The building is heated by a wood burning stove using timber from a local fully renewablesource.
- The lighting is low energy/LED throughout.
- The electricity is purchased 100% green supplier
- We have solar energy / battery system running our computer system / server which runs 24hours a day.

We continually review our use of paper and how we can minimise this. We have almost achieved a paperless environment within the office by the introduction of the following systems:

- Quotations are issued digitally.
- Our dispatch system is paperless. It includes real time vehicle location display and trackingso the controllers can assign jobs in the sequence that minimises vehicle road miles.
- All our invoices are issued digitally and our supplier invoices are received digitally.

Refillable containers are used for office supplies such as soap and cleaning materials, and biodegradable materials are selected for office supplies wherever available.

Tea bags and coffee powder are provided in the kitchen and these are from environmentally friendly suppliers, all plastic free.

All items that need to be disposed of are sorted and recycled to minimise the amount of rubbish going to landfill. This includes the rubbish bins being filtered before they are emptied to maximise the recycled volume. This is also recorded so we know our ratio to land fill.

We are investigating options for generating our own electricity on site in the future to power the office.

We are investigation options for developing our own local facilities to allow us to recycle more of our materials ourselves “on site” to remove the impact of transporting materials to remote recycling facilities.

Workshop / Depot / Yard

We operate our own vehicle maintenance and repair facilities. This allows us to ensure that this work is carried out in the most environmentally friendly way.

We purchase as many consumables as possible in bulk in combination with reusable containers. This includes engine oil, antifreeze, screen wash, and vehicle wash.

Used engine oil is disposed of via a local company which then recycles it through their supplier, which is accredited by ISO 14001.

We are investigating options for generating our own electricity on site in future to charge the PHEV and Electric Vehicles in our fleet.

Staff

Our staff are an integral part of ecocabs. They actively generate ideas and contribute to decisions relating to our environmental policy.

Are trained in eco driving with ongoing assessments/training and tool box talks and they are incentivised via regular awards for most economic driver.

Our MD is qualified in business sustainability management through The University of Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership (CISL)

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All staff have a copy of this policy and work in accordance with the policy.

Community

We are a community-centric business. We want to play an active part in the promotion of environmental best practice in our local community and in our region.

We provide financial support to the following local bodies through membership / subscriptions:

Northumberland Wildlife Trust

Tyne Rivers Trust

Woodland Trust

Queens Hall Art Cafe

Our staff get directly involved in the activities of the following local bodies:

Northumberland Wildlife Trust

Tyne Rivers Trust

Note on Carbon Offsetting

We have chosen to focus our efforts on the direct practical actions that we can take as a business to reduce our carbon emissions. Rather than spend money on supporting a carbon offsetting project in another part of the world we use that money to support the adoption of new and innovative measures within the business which directly reduce our carbon footprint within our local community and our local region.

Policy Review

This policy is reviewed by the Managing Director of ecocabs at least once every six months.