

# ESG Report

Environmental Social Governance

July 2026

Do you need to  
print me?  
- could you print me  
double-sided...?





# Table of Contents

|                                    | Page      |
|------------------------------------|-----------|
| Introduction                       | 3         |
| Executive Summary                  | 4         |
| <b>Environment</b>                 | <b>5</b>  |
| Planet Mark Business Certification | 6         |
| Planet Mark Measurement Report     | 7         |
| Renewable Energy Transition        | 9         |
| Electricity Consumption            | 10        |
| Improving Recycling                | 11        |
| Water Efficiency                   | 12        |
| Peat-Free Commitment               | 13        |
| Conscious Sourcing                 | 14        |
| Green Initiatives                  | 15        |
| <b>Social</b>                      | <b>16</b> |
| Charity Partners                   | 17        |
| Social Value                       | 18        |
| Community Engagement               | 19        |
| <b>Governance</b>                  | <b>20</b> |
| Our People                         | 21        |
| Packaging Regulations              | 22        |
| <b>Future Steps</b>                | <b>23</b> |
| Action Plan Progress               | 24        |
| New Recommendations                | 25        |

# Introduction

This report provides a comprehensive overview of Grovewell Garden Centres Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) impacts, setting the stage for future goals and ambitions.

Grovewell Garden Centres embarked on its journey towards ESG responsibility in February 2022. We are committed to contributing to the transition towards a sustainable future.

We have partnered with Planet Mark to independently verify our emissions measurement. We are currently within our 5<sup>th</sup> reporting cycle. By partnering with Planet Mark, Grovewell Garden Centres has established a robust framework to measure, engage and communicate on our environmental impact. Prioritising accurate measurement enables benchmarking and goal setting tailored to Grovewell's specific needs.

## Reporting boundaries

Unless otherwise stated, this report relates to the whole Grovewell group, encompassing Tenterden Garden Centre, Canterbury Garden Centre, Folkestone Garden Centre, Hamstreet Garden Centre, and Head Office.

The reporting period is 1<sup>st</sup> February 2025 – 31<sup>st</sup> January 2026. There are some exceptions to this, which are noted in the report.

## Our Ethos

**At the heart of Grovewell Garden Centre's approach to sustainability is transparency, accountability and a commitment to continuous improvement.**

**By setting ambitious targets and regularly benchmarking our progress, we strive to drive sustainable change.**

**We believe in cultivating strong relationships with our customers and local communities. By sharing our journey, challenges, and successes, we aim to inspire and empower others to adopt more sustainable practices at any level.**

**Nurturing Nature, One Garden at a Time**



# Executive Summary

## Emissions Reduction & Planet Mark Certification

This reporting period saw our overall **scope 1 and 2 emissions reduce by 7.1%\***. This is during a period where the business grew and turnover increased. When taking account of this growth, our **emissions fell by 21.3%\* per £m turnover**. This can be considered a significant drop.

The majority of our emissions come from the electricity we use. We saw a decline in the amount of electricity we have used, which has resulted in a drop of 9.6% emissions from electricity\*.

We have worked hard this year to improve the quality of the data we have recorded and reported. We achieved a data quality score of 89.4%, which is considered excellent, increasing from 82.5%.

## Recent Changes at Grovewell

Since the last ESG report, Grovewell has made changes which will impact the emissions we produce.

Hamstreet Garden Centre has undergone a significant development, which has more than doubled the internal floor size. The expanded shop opened in early 2025, and in Autumn 2025 an expanded restaurant opened. The restaurant and kitchens moved into a new and much larger space, going from around 60 covers to around 200. Twelve 11kW electric vehicle chargers were installed in the carpark for public use.

These changes will be reflected in our energy usage going forwards. As part of the development, Hamstreet Garden Centre have installed a 30kWh solar array mounted on the warehouse building. These go some way towards supplying the additional electricity now required, with 100% of the energy produced from these panels used by the centre.

## Ongoing Change at Grovewell

Since the end of this reporting period, we have made further changes which will reduce our emissions going forwards, but which will not be reflected in this report. These include:

- Switching from diesel to HVO fuel for our onsite forklifts. This produces up to 90% less emissions.
- Hamstreet Garden Centre and Head Office have switched to fully REGO certified green electricity, with the other centres due to switch in October 2026.
- Increased recycling streams at all centres with an aim to reduce the quantity of general waste produced.



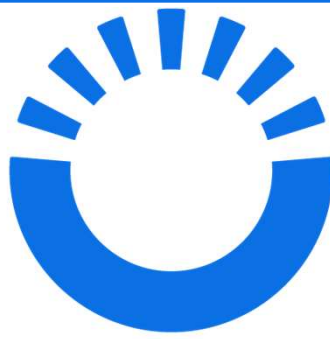
# Environment

Grovewell Garden Centres recognises its responsibility to conduct business in an environmentally responsible manner and to reduce the carbon emissions associated with our business operations. As part of our ongoing sustainability efforts, we are working with Planet Mark to measure our carbon emissions, engage stakeholders and transparently communicate our sustainability journey. We have made the following commitments to ensure we continue to reduce our associated carbon emissions:

- Annually measure and report our Scope 1 and 2 emissions in addition to a number of core Scope 3 categories easily under organisational control.
- Commit to growing our reporting boundary to include all emissions material to Grovewell Garden Centres over the next 5 years.
- Target a 5% reduction in Scope 1 and 2 emissions in comparison to our previous reporting year, with an aim to eventually reach a net zero baseline

## Our Environmental Focused Initiatives

|                                                                                                                                                                         |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Comply with all environmental laws and regulations that apply to our organisational boundaries.                                                                         |
| Work towards the conservation of energy, water and resources in all our operations.                                                                                     |
| Strive to better understand both the direct and indirect impact that our practices may have on the environment.                                                         |
| Work with our supply chain in order to gain mutual benefits of incorporating environmentally sustainable goals into everyday business.                                  |
| Lessen our environmental impact by purchasing more sustainable products and services.<br>Promote environmental awareness throughout all operations of our organisation. |
| Strive to raise awareness in the community, encourage participation and train employees in environmental and social matters.                                            |



# PlanetMark

## Business Certification

We have measured our carbon footprint with Planet Mark for 4 years. Throughout the year we collect data relating to our operations, which we then pass to Planet Mark. They then independently analyse this data to calculate our Co2 emissions.

Their methodology is aligned with the GHG Protocol (Greenhouse Gas Protocol), which breaks down emissions into the following scopes:

- **Scope 1:** Direct GHG emissions from operations due to owned or controlled site and vehicle fuel consumption e.g. company facilities gas, fuel or refrigerants and / or company vehicles.
- **Scope 2:** The indirect GHG emissions from the generation of purchased electricity and steam, and are produced outside a company's direct control e.g. Electricity, district heating and steam.
- **Scope 3:** Indirect sources of GHG emissions that are within a company's value chain, such as employee commuting, waste generated by the company's operation, production and transportation of raw materials and the use and disposal of products and services by customers.

Our most recent Planet Mark measurement report was published in June 2026. This covers the period 01 February 2025 – 31 January 2026.

### Extract from Planet Mark Report Published June 2026

#### Boundary and key figures

**Reporting period**  
01 February 2025 to 31 January 2026

**Organisational boundary**  
5 UK Sites and Fleet Vehicles

**Operational boundary**  
**Scope 1:**  
Stationary Fuels, Fugitive Emissions, Mobile Fuels  
**Scope 2:**  
Electricity, Renewables  
**Scope 3:**  
Category 3: Fuel- and Energy-related Activities  
Category 5: Waste  
Category 6: Business Travel

Grovewell Garden Centres has been measuring its carbon footprint with Planet Mark for 4 years.

The Planet Mark measurement methodology is fully aligned to Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Protocol and all data is checked against evidence provided by Grovewell Garden Centres.

Grovewell Garden Centres' highest emitting category was Scope 2 Electricity at 62.8% of their total market-based footprint followed by Scope 1 Stationary Fuels at 15.8% of their total market-based footprint. Electricity has seen the largest decrease in emissions, reducing by 28.9 tCO<sub>2</sub>e since 2025.

All Scope 2 emissions are reported using the market-based methodology unless stated otherwise.

This report compares this year's (YE2026) emissions to baseline year's (YE2025) emissions.

Grovewell Garden Centres has expanded its boundary this year in the following categories: Fuel- and Energy-Related Activities, Business Travel and accordingly comparisons throughout this report are presented using data that has been normalised to exclude any emissions that were reported for the first time this year. For transparency, non-normalised data comparisons are also shown in the data tables.

#### Key Figures

|   |                          |                                                                         |
|---|--------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| > | -7.1 %                   | Comparison of Scope 1 & 2 emissions vs previous year                    |
| > | -6.8 %                   | Comparison of absolute measured emissions vs 2025 baseline (normalised) |
| > | 435.5 tCO <sub>2</sub> e | Measured carbon footprint (market-based)                                |
| > | 3.5 tCO <sub>2</sub> e   | Measured carbon footprint per FTE (market-based)                        |
| > | 89.4 %                   | Data Quality Score                                                      |
| > | 100.0 %                  | Organisational Boundary Score                                           |
| > | 52.9 %                   | Operational Boundary Score                                              |

# Measurement Report

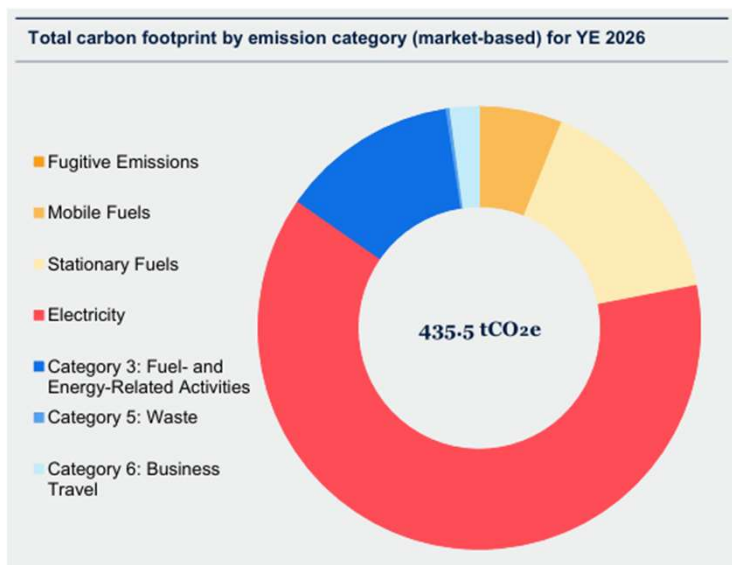
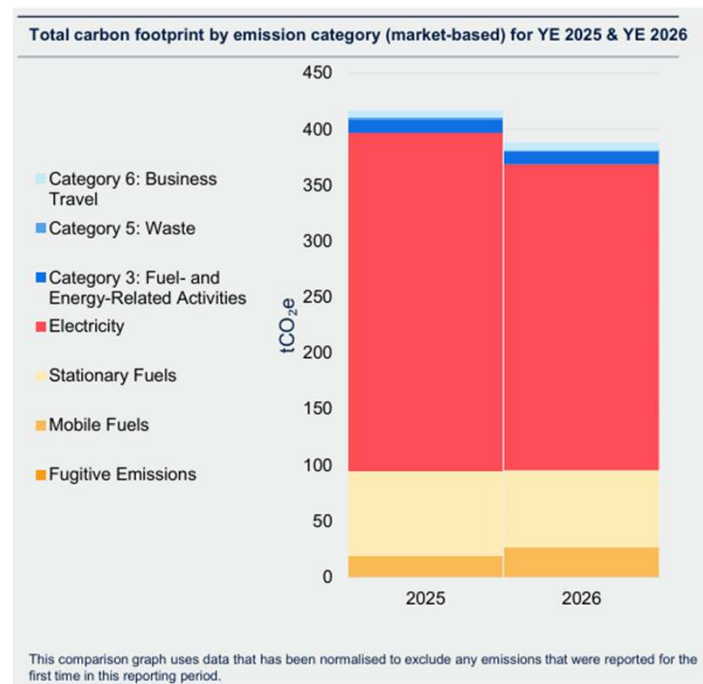
## Key Takeaways

The report shows that our Scope 1 and 2 **total emissions dropped by 7.1%\***. (\*Market-based and based on normalised data)

Scope 1 and 2 emissions are those which a company has the most control over so are used to measure progress.

This total drop in emissions doesn't consider the growth of the business since the previous reporting period.

The report shows a **drop in our emissions of 21.3% per £1m turnover\***. (\*Market-based)



Most of our emissions come from the electricity we use, which has seen a decrease in usage since the previous period. This resulted in a **drop of 9.6% emissions from electricity** (market based).

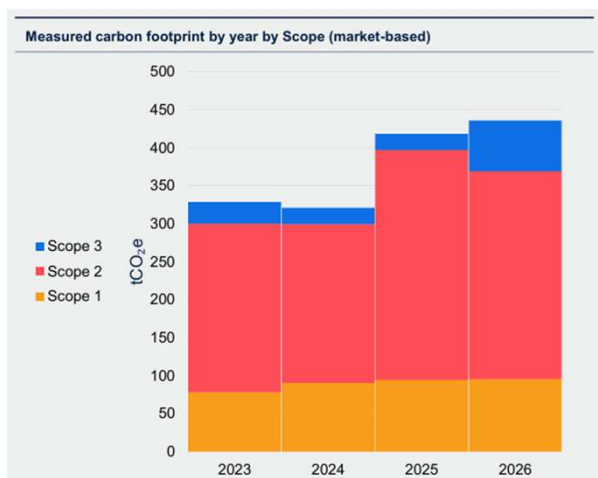
Our next biggest source of emissions comes from 'stationary fuel', such as the gas we use for heating and cooking. This has remained stable for now, but may change with increased customer numbers to the expanded restaurant at Hamstreet.

## Other Figures from the Planet Mark Report

- **Waste emissions down 39.3%** - this is largely attributed to better data quality for both waste collected, and for water treatment which is included in this category.
- **Business travel emissions up 11.7%**. This reflects the head office team travelling to the centres more frequently to better engage with and support the teams, as well as an increase in visits to suppliers. This increase in travel is to be expected as the business grows.
- Emissions from our fleet remained stable, with a **drop in fleet fuel emissions of 1.7%**. Our fleet vehicles consist of a van and a forklift based at each centre.

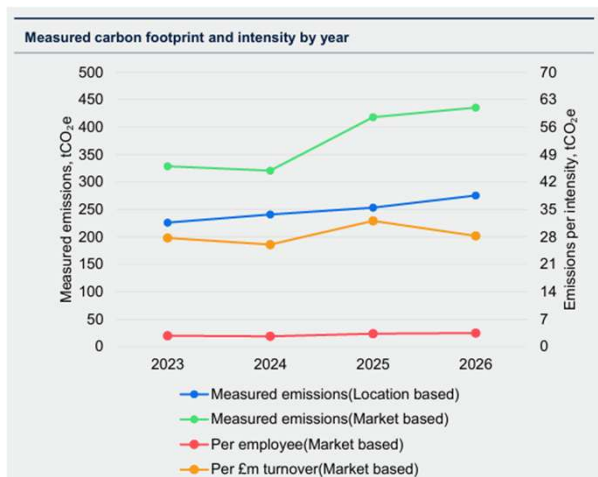
# Measurement Report

## Carbon Footprint Evolution

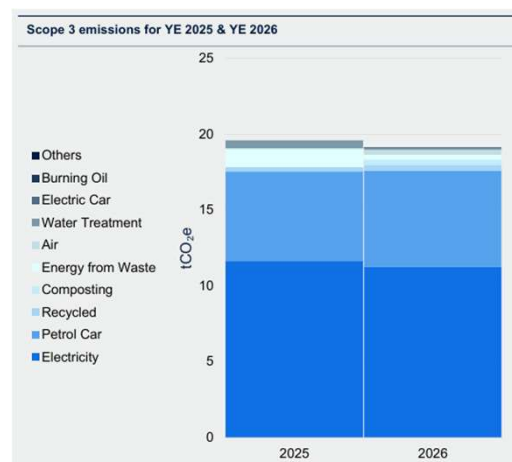


The charts to the left show our emissions over the years Planet Mark have been measuring for us. Following a significant rise in emissions last year, this year has seen a stabilisation. Our certification is based only on Scope 1 and 2 emissions, as we have less control over Scope 3 emissions as a company. This chart is not normalised, so includes emissions not measured previously.

Scope 3 emissions have shown a significant rise this year. This is due to Planet Mark changing the way these are measured.



The chart to the right shows the scope 3 emissions normalised, to exclude emissions not measured previously. This shows a drop of 2.3%.



## Boundary and Quality Assessment

**100.0 % Organisational Boundary Score** Grovewell Garden Centres carbon footprint for this year represents its full organisational boundary.

**52.9 % Operational Boundary Score** Grovewell Garden Centres carbon footprint for this year does not represent its full operational boundary. To recertify next year as a Planet Mark Certified Business this score needs to improve by a minimum of 6%.

**89.4 % Data Quality Score** A data quality score in this range is High, meaning the organisation has excellent data quality which is reliable for decision-making and an accurate carbon footprint. To be eligible for any level of Planet Mark certification a data quality score of at least 30% must be achieved.

## Recommendations to Improve Data Quality

- Provide electricity data and evidence covering the whole reporting year. There were a couple of months missing where extrapolation had to be applied. (This data was unavailable at the time of submission due to supplier change)
- Collate the vehicle size, as well as fuel type, from employees who claim mileage expenses.
- Measure an additional Scope 3 category next year to re-certify.

# Renewable Energy Transition



In 2015, Grovewell installed its first 30kWh on-site solar photovoltaic array at Canterbury Garden Centre. This was followed by another 30kWh array at Tenterden Garden Centre and an additional 15kWh array also at Tenterden Centre. Our latest 25kWh Solar Array at Hamstreet Garden Centre came online in 2025, which brings our total solar generation capacity up to 100kWh.

**We made 66,266kWh of electricity from Solar in 2025**

We are likely to add additional Solar Arrays in the future. As well as providing us with direct Green Energy, this helps to reduce our reliance on the grid.

For the rest of the electricity we use, we have committed to using 100% REGO certified green energy. Hamstreet Garden Centre transitioned from 1<sup>st</sup> February 2026 (outside this reporting period), with our other centres transitioning by October 2026.

We have joined a buying consortium through Sustainable Energy First, who purchase entirely from UK based Solar, Wind and Hydro installations.

We are continuing to switch to LED lighting using a mixture of timers and sensors across all four centres, aiding energy efficiency and reducing electricity consumption.

We use propane powered heaters in parts of Canterbury, Hamstreet and Folkestone sites. Propane is also used for cooking in the kitchens. The use of propane hasn't increased in this reporting period, but may go forwards due to the expanded restaurant at Hamstreet.

## Partner Highlight



B-Corp Energy consultants creating sustainable energy opportunities for the UK's most prominent organisations



## EV Chargers at Hamstreet

As part of the Hamstreet development in 2025 we installed 12 EV charge points at Hamstreet Garden Centre, with plans for more at this centre and others in the future. These public chargers are powered by fully green energy making them an attractive offer for our eco-minded customers.

# Electricity Consumption

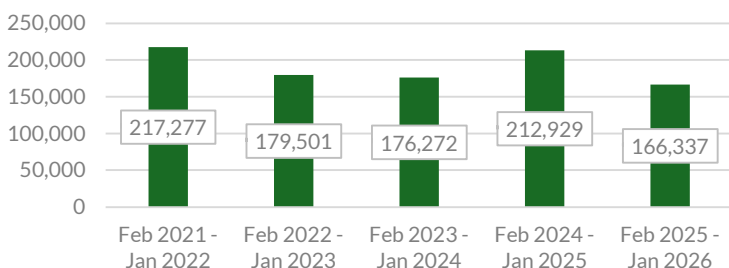
## Key Points This Reporting Period

- Rise in electricity used across the business from 664,393kWh to 673,628kWh
- Rise in electricity produced from on-site solar from 28,750kWh to 66,663kWh\*
- Drop in purchased electricity from 634,637kWh to 606,965kWh – leading to drop in emissions

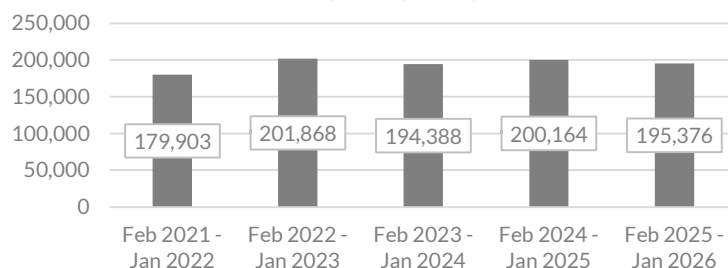
## Purchased Electricity, by Centre

Tenterden, Canterbury and Folkestone Centres saw a decrease in electricity purchased. Tenterden Centre saw the most significant decrease, with their lowest usage over the 5 years of available data.

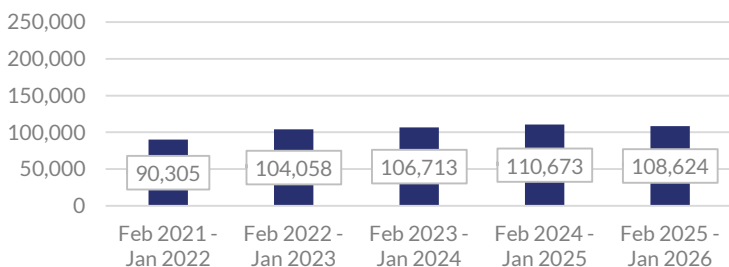
Tenterden Yearly kWh purchased



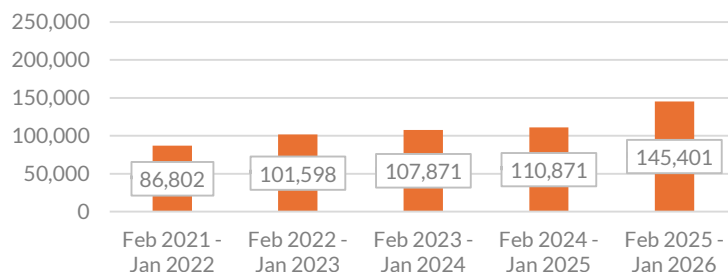
Canterbury Yearly kWh purchased



Folkestone Yearly kWh purchased

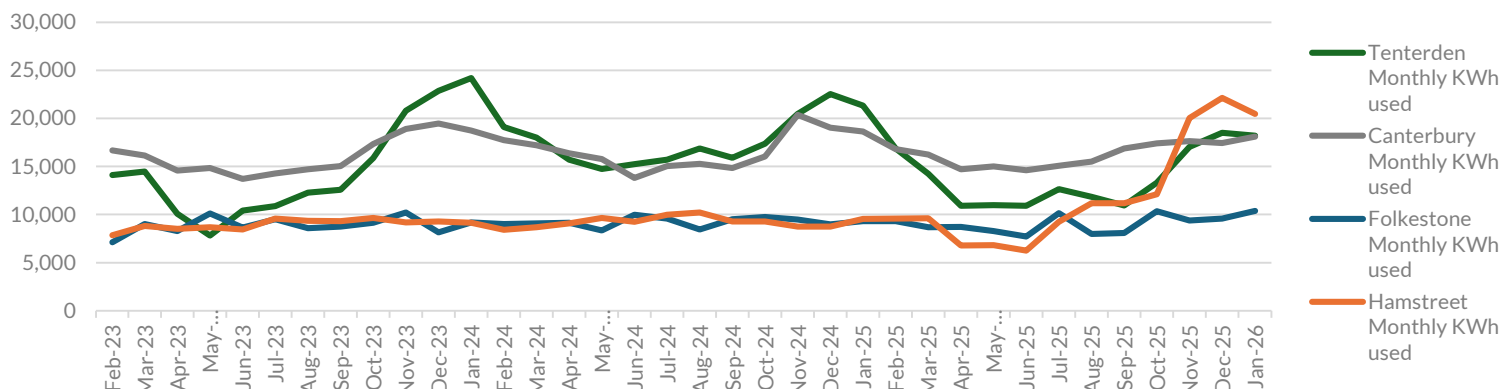


Hamstreet Yearly kWh purchased



Hamstreet saw a significant rise in usage, which was to be expected following the expansion. The below chart shows how the new restaurant opening in October 2025 aligns with a marked increase in electricity purchased. We may see a further increase in usage at Hamstreet next year, once there is a full year of data with the new restaurant open. However, this may be offset in part by the Solar panels.

Monthly kWh electricity purchased



\*Based on partially estimated data for Hamstreet solar

# Improving Recycling

We have been working to increase our recycling streams, and by the end of 2026 hope to be recycling as much of our waste as possible.

In this reporting period we recycled all card and paper, glass, and a proportion of plastic waste. Our food waste is taken to an anaerobic digestion facility, and our remaining general waste is sent to an energy recovery facility, meaning that **100% of our waste is diverted from landfill.**

We have implemented a system where waste electrical items are recycled through a charity partner, and toner cartridges are recycled through our stationary supplier.

**For customers** in 2025 we added battery recycling, which has been very well utilised. We plan to look at adding more recycling points for customers in store.

Each centre has a designated area at the exit where we offer cardboard boxes and plant trays for re-use by our customers.

We also offer used coffee grounds from our restaurants for customers to add to their home compost.

## Circular Economy

Our waste cooking oil is recycled into ISCC compliant Biodiesel. The waste oil is collected at the same time as delivery to minimise carbon emissions. We have consolidated our restaurant orders as much as possible to further reduce or emissions from delivery.

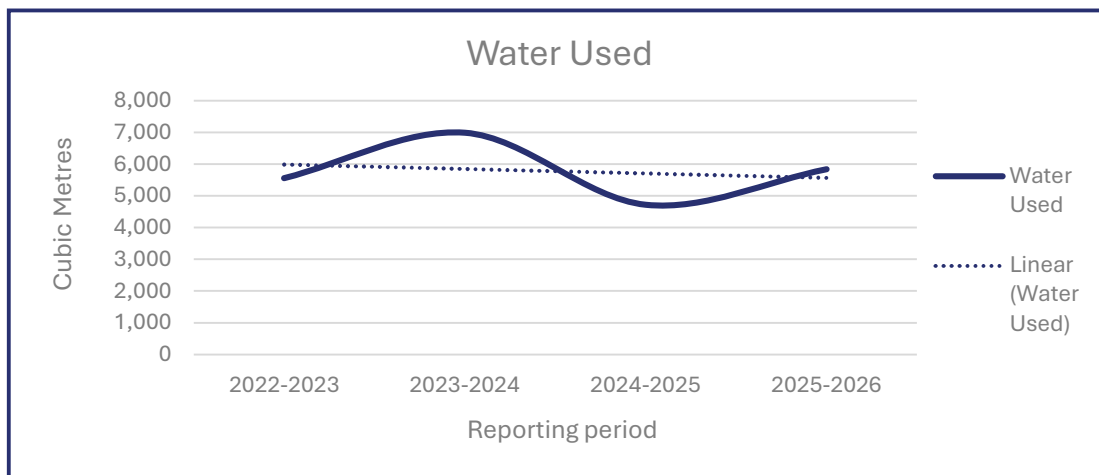
From 2026 we have started to use HVO (Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil)\* for our on-site forklifts, where we previously used diesel. It is a direct replacement fuel for diesel, with up to a 90% reduction in CO2 emissions. It is made from waste oils and animal fats, making it a far more sustainable alternative to traditional diesel.

\*This started after the end of this reporting period



# Water Efficiency

In this reporting period, we recorded 5,843 Cubic Metres of water used. As can be seen in the chart below, whilst our water use varies year on year, it remains consistent over time. There is a slight dip in the trend line, but more years of data would be needed to see if this is a consistent trend.



Due to the nature of our business, we expect there to be variation in water usage year on year depending on weather patterns, particularly in light of the effects of climate change. We would also expect to see a rise in water use as the business expands.

All of our Garden Centres have **rainwater harvesting tanks**. Supply from these is used to water the plants. This gives us resilience in times of drought, such as those experienced in 2025. By using our own private supply, we also help to ease pressure on the public system.

Other systems in place to maintain and improve water use efficiency include waterless urinals and mixer sensor taps at Tenterden, Canterbury and Hamstreet. Waterless urinals have the potential to **save up to 100,000 litres of water** per urinal annually. At Folkestone, we have self closing taps in the toilets.

**For our customers**, as well as providing water saving advice, we stock various products to assist with saving water in the garden, and for houseplants. This includes water butts, micro irrigation systems, water saving crystals, capillary matting and Westland Boost compost containing moisture lock technology.



# Peat-Free Commitment

79% of our compost range is now peat free and several of our growers have already removed or reduced peat in their growing media.

Wherever you see our peat symbol in-store you can be sure the product is either free from, has reduced levels of or has been grown without the use of peat. As an industry we are researching sustainable alternatives to peat whilst committing to its removal from sale by 2028.

To assist our customers with the transition to Peat Free, we offer advice in store about how to get the best out of the alternatives.

Over 88% of our plant lines are grown in the UK and we work with UK nurseries who are committed to reducing peat content in their growing material, and to planting into recyclable pots.



**PEAT FREE**

Our peat-free products are marked with this icon

## Why Go Peat Free

To preserve peatlands, which store more carbon than all of the worlds forests combined

To aid conservation of rare wildlife that rely on peatland habitats

Peat is an unsustainable resource - 10cm of peat takes 100 years to form

Legislation is coming to ban peat use in garden compost

## Product Highlight

### Rocketgro

Organic approved British compost. Peat-free, coir-free, sustainably produced



# Conscious Sourcing

For the services we use and the products we stock, we collaborate with sustainability-focused organisations to mutually enhance our positive impact.

When sourcing products and services we are mindful of the credentials of the companies we work with, and the products they produce. Some of the values we look out for include:

- Natural materials and ingredients
- Use of recycled and recyclable materials
- Sustainably sourced timber
- UK made, and small businesses
- Peat free
- Organic and fairtrade
- Credentials such as B-Corp Certified, or Planet Mark Certified

In our Restaurants, when sourcing ingredients we prioritise Red Tractor Certified and / or RSPCA assured meats and MSC certified sustainable fish and seafood.

## Partner Highlight



Replacing harmful, non-renewable cleaning chemicals with environmental biotech alternatives that improve human and environmental health

We use Biohygiene products throughout our Centres and Restaurants.

## Partner Highlight



Grovewell sources all the coffee we serve in all our restaurants from Puro.

Puro is ethically sourced, rainforest-friendly coffee, fairtrade and carbon balanced.

Our Coffee sales to date have led to the purchase and protection of 341,530 m<sup>2</sup> of rainforest – that's 20,491 trees protected, and 450 tonnes of carbon stored.

In the current reporting period, we have saved 43,923 m<sup>2</sup> of rainforest

Puro offset all remaining CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from cultivation, milling, road haulage, ocean shipping and roasting by protecting standing forests through partnership with World Land Trust.

To help our customers find products with strong environmental credentials we display icons on our signage



**SUSTAINABLY  
SOURCED  
TIMBER**



**PEAT FREE**



**100%  
NATURAL**



**MADE FROM  
RECYCLED  
MATERIALS**



**SUITABLE FOR  
ORGANIC  
GARDENING**



**SOLAR  
POWER**



**RECYCLED  
PACKAGING**



**BUTTERFLY &  
BEE FRIENDLY**

# Green Initiatives



In 2025 Grovewell made a **Cycle To Work Scheme** available to all our employees. This salary sacrifice scheme provides funding for staff to purchase cycle equipment, which is paid back through their wages. The nature of the scheme means savings are made in tax and national insurance as well as spreading the payments making it more affordable.

**Digitalisation** plays a key role in our sustainability strategy. The continuing development of the Grovewell Gold app enhances customer communication, engagement and rewards, helping us to evolve alongside a changing world. This is reducing paper leaflets and vouchers printed.



We have launched the **Grovewell Hub**, which is an online platform where staff can access updates, policies and documents, reducing the need for printing. When we do print, we use zero carbon paper from sustainable sources



We are conscious of the materials used in our **Own Branded Products**.

Our Grovewell paper bags and the packaging for our Caddy Bag Liners is from fully sustainable sources. Our Grovewell Spray Bottle is made from recycled plastic, and has no additional packaging.

In 2023, Grovewell Garden Centres introduced **Sustainability Champions** at all four centres to implement universal uptake of environmental initiatives.

Due to changes in staff and other pressures, this initiative hasn't had the impact hoped for, however a revitalisation is due in 2026.





# Social

At Grovewell Garden Centres we understand our responsibilities to contribute positively to the world around us. We will drive social impact through inclusive policies, employee well-being and community engagement. We have made the following commitments to ensure we continue to demonstrate our dedication to social responsibility across our organisation:

- Support community engagement development through volunteering efforts, charitable contributions, and partnerships with local organisations
- Continuously comply with key legislations, such as the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and Bribery Act 2010

## Our Socially Focused Initiatives

Integrate diverse and inclusive practices across all areas of the organisation, including diversity across all levels of the organisation and inclusive hiring practices.

Move towards an ethical and environmentally resilient supply chain, including fair trade practices, that ensures our business partners and suppliers adhere to ethical labour and environmental standards.

Engage with stakeholders, including local organisations, communities, industry and government to identify meaningful, positive opportunities. For example, upskilling and training local workers.

# Charity Partners

Grovewell aims to create diverse social value across various areas through donations, sponsorships and ongoing support to charities. These include charities benefiting gardening, wildlife, health & social care, climate action and education. This holistic approach allows Grovewell's impact to reach a wider variety of causes, whilst also making a positive impact on our local community.

## Each of our Garden Centres support a charity local to them

- Tenterden Garden Centre support Big Wrap Tenterden & St Michaels – Helping local families in need.
- Hamstreet Garden Centre support RNLI Dungeness Lifeboat Station
- Canterbury Garden Centre support New Hope Animal Rescue Sanctuary
- Folkestone Garden Centre support National Coastwatch Institution Folkestone

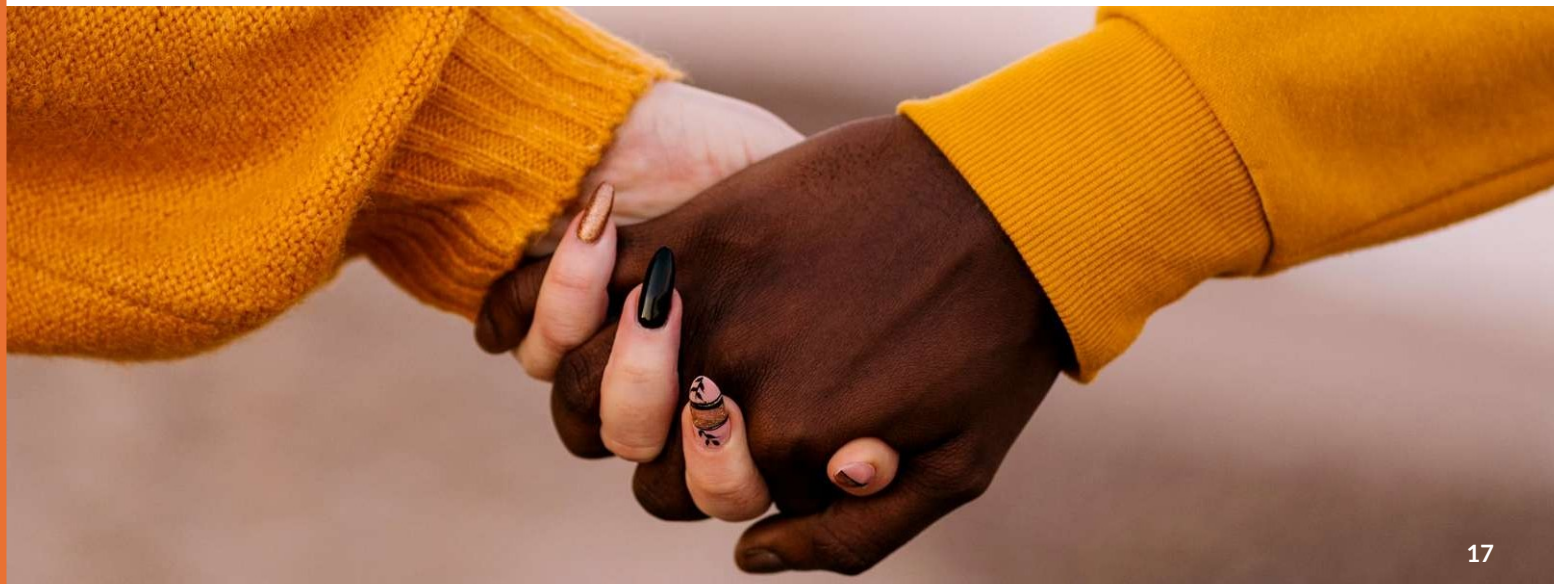
## Ongoing support to local and national charities

- Kent Wildlife Trust
- Macmillan Cancer Support
- Guide Dogs
- Demelza Hospice Care for Children
- Kent Sussex and Surrey Air Ambulance
- RSPB
- Tenterden Lions Club
- Folkestone, Hythe and District Lions Club
- Whitstable, Herne Bay and Canterbury Lions' Club
- Eden project – Inspiring sustainable living

## Charities at Christmas

We support Pilgrims Hospice Christmas Tree recycling, which is an environmentally friendly service, raising vital funds for end-of-life care across Ashford, Canterbury and Thanet. All our real Christmas Trees are sold with a tag with information about how customers can use the scheme to recycle their tree. We also provide the information via leaflets at the tills and via aftercare / sales emails.

We donate toys to children in the William Harvey Hospital NICU and Padua (children's) Ward. We also donate a Christmas Tree to the ICU every year.



# Social Value

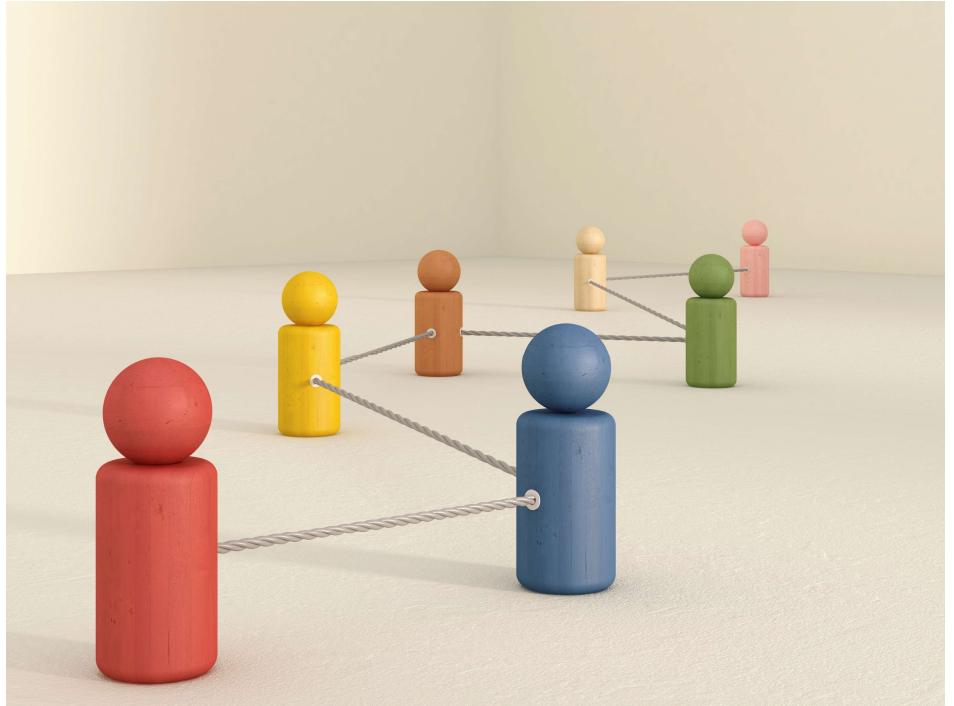
## Voucher Donation Scheme

In 2025 we focused once again on supporting small-scale projects through our voucher donation scheme.

We increased our voucher donations by 25%.

These vouchers predominately go to local causes and are given to be used as prizes in raffles and prize draws etc.

They therefore are potentially worth more than their monetary value to the charities and other causes we donate to.



## Donations to charities, local causes and other social or community ventures

Total donations year-on-year increased by £1,818 from 2024 to 2025

| 2023                   |               | 2024                   |               | 2025                   |               |
|------------------------|---------------|------------------------|---------------|------------------------|---------------|
| Vouchers donated       | £1,355        | Vouchers donated       | £1,650        | Vouchers donated       | £2,160        |
| The Big Wrap           | £1,500        | The Big Wrap           | £1,677        | The Big Wrap           | £2,185        |
| Other Donations        | £1,744        | Other Donations        | £2,100        | Other Donations        | £2,900        |
| <b>Total donations</b> | <b>£4,599</b> | <b>Total donations</b> | <b>£5,427</b> | <b>Total donations</b> | <b>£7,245</b> |

The reporting period for these donations runs by calendar year

## Other donations

We may offer donations of plants or other stock items where this is more appropriate to the cause.

# Community Engagement

## Engaging with Children and Families

Grovewell values community engagement, particularly with schools. Our engagement with children promotes environmental stewardship, self-sufficiency, and fosters a vital connection with nature from a young age.



We have previously hosted visits to our garden centres by groups of local primary students, and this is something we hope to revitalise this year. We conducted various activities, including cooking classes, origami seed packet making, cress head growing, recycled bird feeder construction, vegetable hulling, and seed saving and planting.

We host Family Fun Days throughout the year, with free activities for children who attend, including arts & crafts and an activity trail.

### *Product Highlight -*

#### **Solar Tommy**

Made or fulfilled by veterans and those with disabilities employed by their social enterprise, Britain's Bravest Manufacturing Company.

Each purchase assists in their mission to support the Armed Forces, people with disabilities and those who are unemployed.

## Some of the Groups and Events we supported in 2025

|                                                          |                                                        |                                            |
|----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Goldwyn School Nursery Hub                               | Royal British Legion                                   | RSPCA Ashford Garden Cattery               |
| Palmarsh Primary School Gardening Project                | Little Treacle's Nursery Fundraising Garden Renovation |                                            |
| Beltinge Garden Society Spring Show                      | Chislet Country Fair                                   | Canterbury Oast Trust                      |
| RNLI Littlestone                                         | High Halden CofE Charity Colour Run                    | Pilgrims Hospice Wing Walk                 |
| The Vine Inn – Air Ambulance                             | Folkestone Trawler Race                                | RNLI Littlestone Fun Dog Show              |
| Hurricanes Team Ashford Rugby Club                       | Pilgrims Way Canterbury Schools Gardening Initiative   |                                            |
| Limes Community Garden                                   | DEBRA fundraiser                                       | Headcorn Hawks Women's Football Tournament |
| Great Chart Primary Summer Fete                          | Friends of Selstead School                             | Temple Ewell Primary School                |
| Herne Junior School Plant Project                        | Southeast Coast Ambulance Service                      | Kent Coast Volunteering                    |
| Hamstreet Primary School                                 | Hawkinge Scarecrow Festival                            | Parkside Community Foundation Primary      |
| Elham Village Veterans Project                           | Hypo Hounds                                            | Herne Bay Infants School Sensory Garden    |
| Friends of St Marys Church Orlestone Flower Festival     | Homeless Service Ashford – Memory Garden               |                                            |
| Gingerly Green Youth Project – The Shed Urban Wilderness | Romney Marsh Ploughing Match                           |                                            |
| Stone-in-Oxney Cricket Club                              | Tenterden Social Hub                                   | Folkestone, Hythe & District Lions         |



# Governance

Governance is incorporated into Grovewell Garden Centres through the organisational structure. The management team are empowered to take ownership of their area of responsibility and ensure the proper governance procedures are followed. We are committed to ethical business practices and fair governance. Key aspects of our governance framework include:

- Trade Association Membership with Garden Centre Association (GCA) and Horticultural Trades Association (HTA)
- Regular comprehensive training is provided and required for all employees
- Commitment to providing equal opportunities for all employees and prohibiting discrimination in the workplace

## Our Governance Focused Initiatives

We have a suite of policies covering data protection, corruption, safeguarding, anti-slavery and human trafficking

Our Employee Handbook provides comprehensive information about company rules, policies, and procedures

We have committed to producing and publishing an annual ESG report to ensure that our ESG goals and metrics are consistently reviewed and measured to progress our environmental and social impact

We work with Planet Mark to measure our carbon footprint and maintain our commitment to Planet Mark's Certification Programme. This will include annual publication of our carbon emissions measurement and certification

# Our People

## Staff Training & Development

Grovewell Garden Centres understand the value of the people who work here. We provide full training to all staff, and any additional as required. To ensure staff keep their product knowledge up to date, as well as giving them the confidence to advise customers correctly, we regularly invite our suppliers to conduct training on their products.

We support staff who wish to move their career forward, often promoting from within our current workforce. Staff who show aptitude in particular areas are encouraged to pursue this further.

Grovewell supports employees completing NVQs to fund their qualification and career progression. In 2025 we supported 4 members of staff who studied either 'Hospitality Supervisor Level 3 NVQ' or 'Production Chef Level 2 NVQ'.

## Remuneration & Benefits

Remuneration is in line with industry standards, and above the National Living Wage for all employees. Yearly pay reviews are undertaken to ensure pay remains appropriate, consistent, and takes performance into account.

Staff have access to a 20% discount across all of our stores, a 50% food allowance when on shift and a monthly complimentary hot drink.

# Packaging Regulations

Over recent years successive Governments have brought in and refined legislation to shift the responsibility of packaging waste from taxpayers back to producers. This acknowledges that it is the producers who have control over the packaging and can effect change in making it more sustainable and easier to recycle.

The legislation is known as Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR), and a 'producer' in this context refers to a business who puts packaging waste into the UK market.



Any business who handles more than 25 tonnes of packaging waste a year must comply with EPR legislation. Grovewell Garden Centres is considered a large producer, due to handing over 50 tonnes of packaging waste a year. We have kept meticulous records of all packaging extended to consumers since 2022, including the material type and weight.

We partner with leading UK packaging compliance scheme, Clarity. They help us to correctly interpret the legislation as it evolves, and they validate our submissions to the Environment Agency (EA).

Through Clarity, we submit twice yearly declarations for applicable products. For us, those are products carrying Grovewell branding, and products we import directly.

Following our submission to the EA, we purchase Packaging Recovery Notes (PRNs) for the number of tonnes of packaging we put into the market. A PRN is a piece of certificated evidence that proves a tonne of packaging waste has been recovered and reprocessed, or exported for reprocessing.

In 2025 our obligated reporting was for 2.39 tonnes of packaging. The vast majority of this was for paper or card, and 10kg of flexible plastic waste.



## WEEE Regulations

Clarity also assist us with our Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Regulations (WEEE) submission.

We have to report any products which include electrical components which we put into the UK market – for us this consists of Christmas lights and other lit Christmas decorations.



# Future Steps

In our first ESG report, we published an Action Plan showing changes planned and initiatives in progress. As expected, some of these actions have been completed, some have been delayed and some are no longer considered business priorities.

These actions were primarily focused on the Environment, so we have expanded to see what else we could do within the 'Social' and 'Governance' spaces.

In addition to updates to previously published actions, additional recommendations have also been made.

## Future Focused Initiatives

|                                                                                                                        |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Environmental</b> - Continue move towards greener energy, reducing emissions and improving recycling practices      |
| <b>Social</b> - Consider how we contribute to charitable causes and our community, as well as how we support our staff |
| <b>Governance</b> - Review how we do business and how we procure products and services                                 |

# Action Plan Progress

## Current Situation / Progress Made

## Updated Recommendations

### Environmental: Renewable Energy Transition

Hamstreet and Head Office have fully renewable electricity supply

Tenterden 30kWh & 15kWh Solar Arrays; Canterbury 30kWh Solar Array; Hamstreet 30kWh Solar Array

Hamstreet has 12 public EV chargers

For electricity supply to be fully renewable at all centres. This is scheduled for the end of October 2026, once the current contracts expire.

Additional Solar to be considered for Folkestone Centre.

EV charging added at Tenterden, Folkestone & Canterbury.

### Environmental: Fleet Vehicles

We have transitioned to using HVO fuel in our on-site forklifts.

A report was produced\* to show the logistical and financial feasibility of using EVs for our fleet vans, which currently run on diesel. This showed initial outlay would be higher, then reduced running costs resulting in savings over the lifetime of the vehicles. A year of mileage for each current van was analysed, which showed that the distances travelled by our vans would be well within the limits of electric vans.

\*It should be noted this was produced prior to the ongoing Iran war. This has increased diesel prices, making the savings more significant.

As and when replacements are required, fleet vans replaced with electric vehicles. The first replacement can be transferred to Hamstreet to utilise the on-site EV charging already available.

### Environmental: Water Efficiency

As part of the Hamstreet development, 2 rainwater harvesting tanks were installed at Hamstreet. There are now tanks at each centre.

To review the waste-water disposal at Folkestone and Canterbury. Neither are currently on mains drainage and have waste collected from cess tanks twice weekly. The resulting costs and emissions associated with the collection of waste may make mains connection feasible now.

When development is undertaken, further rainwater tanks considered.

### Environmental: Electric Efficiency

Current gradual transition to LEDs across all centres.

Electricity use monitored monthly at all centres.

A plan for how to complete a comprehensive and meaningful energy audit to be created.

Review whether Voltage Optimisation Technology could be implemented. This would reduce the voltage supplied to our centres to that required by equipment, rather than the higher voltage supplied by the grid. This reduces energy consumption, and therefore bills.

Review whether Smart Plugs could be utilised to save energy.

### Environmental: Biodiversity

Organic chemical range available to encourage customers to transition their product choice and reduce contribution to the presence of synthetic chemicals in the environment.

Audit sites to identify areas which could be used for nature friendly planting, or which could be left to grow wild for nature.

Review the mowing, strimming and spraying currently undertaken at the garden centres, the environmental detriment and alternative management options.

### Environmental: Local Sourcing

Over 88% of our plant lines are grown in the UK.

Continue review of in-store signage, so customers are able to find products which are made in the UK more easily.

Consider sourcing our food and drink products from local suppliers.

Consider a local farm shop range at each centre supplied by local small businesses, to support community outreach and reduce import-related carbon footprint.

Continued

# Action Plan Progress Continued

| Current Situation / Progress Made                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |  | Updated Recommendations                                                                                                                                         |  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| Social: Charity and Donations                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |  |                                                                                                                                                                 |  |
| Our charity donations have fallen since last year, though the voucher donations increased.                                                                                                                                                                                             |  | Aim to increase total charitable donations year-on-year.                                                                                                        |  |
| Social: Community Engagement                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |  |                                                                                                                                                                 |  |
| Despite contacting local primary schools, we have not yet been successful in reinvigorating the school visits to the centres.                                                                                                                                                          |  | Raise school engagements and environmental stewardship initiatives for 2027.                                                                                    |  |
| Environmental: Environmental Stewardship                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |  |                                                                                                                                                                 |  |
| Published Grovewell's first ESG (environmental, social and governance) report in 2024.                                                                                                                                                                                                 |  | Continue to publish annual ESG reports, in line with the latest Planet Mark report being available around the middle of the year.                               |  |
| Appointed sustainability champions at each centre for individual feedback and implementation of sustainable strategies. Due to changes in staff and other pressures, the sustainability champions initiative hasn't had the impact hoped for, however a revitalisation is due in 2026. |  | Implement reusable cup scheme for restaurant customers buying takeaways, to encourage environmental responsibility.                                             |  |
| Battery recycling bins added for customer use at each centre.                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |  | Track commuting miles saved through work from home and carpooling efforts. Consider paying additional 5p per mile for employees carsharing for business travel. |  |

## New Recommendations

| Current Situation / Progress Made                                                                                                                                                                           |  | Updated Recommendations                                                                                                                           |  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| Environmental: Peat Free                                                                                                                                                                                    |  |                                                                                                                                                   |  |
| 79% of our compost range is now peat free                                                                                                                                                                   |  | Next season, increase the % of peat free compost we stock.                                                                                        |  |
| We know anecdotally that many of the growers we work with are reducing their peat use.                                                                                                                      |  | Start to record which plant stock is grown using peat. Aim to reduce this number once the baseline is established.                                |  |
| Environmental: On Site Composting                                                                                                                                                                           |  |                                                                                                                                                   |  |
| We don't currently have a consistent approach across the centres to manage green waste. This primarily consists of plant waste from maintaining our plant stock, and could also include some kitchen waste. |  | Start composting our on-site green waste.                                                                                                         |  |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                             |  | We would then be able to use the compost created to mulch planted areas around our garden centres.                                                |  |
| Social: People                                                                                                                                                                                              |  |                                                                                                                                                   |  |
| We would like to do more to look after our staff and improve their wellbeing.                                                                                                                               |  | Review our benefits package.                                                                                                                      |  |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                             |  | Implement ways to reward staff for individual performance, such as when we receive positive feedback from customers about specific staff members. |  |
| Governance: Procurement                                                                                                                                                                                     |  |                                                                                                                                                   |  |
| We are trying to be mindful of the companies we partner with and procure goods and services from.                                                                                                           |  | Review using greener companies, and companies with ethics at the forefront of their operations for our office supplies and other sundry items.    |  |
| Governance: Ethics                                                                                                                                                                                          |  |                                                                                                                                                   |  |
| We have not undertaken a review of how ethical our business practices are.                                                                                                                                  |  | Review the way that we do business from an ethical perspective and whether there are any changes or improvements to be made here.                 |  |