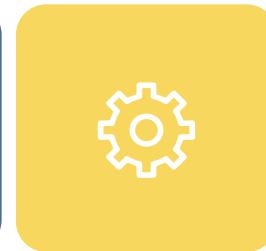
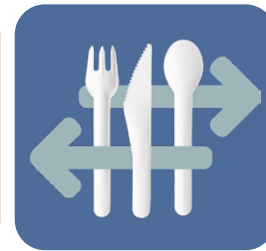




IMPACT REPORT

THIRD EDITION





Vegware is a global specialist in plant-based compostable foodservice packaging. Our award-winning catering products are made from plants, using renewable or recycled materials, and can all be commercially composted with food waste where accepted.

We're part of the Novolex® family of brands, a company with sustainable goals at its very core. Our shared ambitions include reducing environmental impacts, managing waste and growing recycling.

As a brand, Vegware delivers on a solution that is proven to work. Our message is simple and our products do exactly what they say. We divert food waste from landfill to create compost. Our environmental experts take foodservice providers on a journey to zero waste, providing support every step of the way.

We are proud of our product range, and proud to support our customers with expert advice, excellent products and solutions and services for waste collections and composting.

Vegware is based in Edinburgh and operates from the UK, EU and USA. Our products are sold worldwide.



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It's hard to believe a year has gone by since the last Impact Report was published. I am delighted and proud to be introducing our third edition.

2023 was a year of legislative and economic challenges across continental Europe. Whilst our team work hard to navigate and address impacts and opportunities to our brand and our customers, it's key that we also reflect on the impact that we make as a business in the wider context.

We have continued to work on creating innovative products, delivering value-added services and consultancy. We have also taken on the mantle of thought leadership, providing education and advice for our customers, particularly in our campaign to divert food waste to composting.

Being part of the Novolex® family of brands, we are mission-driven to create value and show leadership, and working with our parent company has provided new opportunities for product innovation and collaboration.

This report is a celebration of our people, our 2023 successes and a reflection on what we have achieved, as well as a recognition of the work still to be done. It shares our approach to continually improving our business. Delivering a positive impact for our staff, our customers and our environment remains at the forefront of what we do.

Perhaps our biggest achievement in 2023 was our B Corporation certification. We joined the B Corporation movement because we believe in its ethos. We want to be a business that is a force for good.

Going through the certification process has shown us that our approach to our people, supply base and communities, as well as our commitment to making a positive environmental impact, are all creating a positive effect. The process has also allowed us to reflect on what we can do better, which we are looking forward to implementing in 2024.



Helen Mathieson
Managing Director
Vegware

Certified



Corporation

We were delighted to become a B Corp certified business in 2023.

The certification marks the end of a rigorous two-year assessment process. Positive impact has always been at the forefront of our motivations. In fact, it is one of our company goals. Whether that's through our Community Fund, in helping customers compost, or any other facet of our business, we have always been about more than profit. We're delighted to have that independently verified by the team at B Lab.



The certification process to become a B Corporation was incredibly valuable; working with different departments in the company to form a clear picture of our social and environmental impact and highlighting areas for improvement. In 2023, we achieved certification with a score of **82.6**. The process has encouraged us to view the brand and our practices holistically.

With this understanding, we are building a comprehensive improvement strategy which will inform decision making across the company.

We may have only just become a B Corp but the journey to recertification starts straight away. We are aiming even higher for our next assessment score in 2026.

JOURNEY TO CERTIFICATION



CLOSE THE LOOP

Composting with **vegware**[™]

Close the Loop rebrand

We launched a rebrand of our environmental value proposition. Close the Loop, originally just the name of our trade waste collections for central belt Scotland, now encompasses all our environmental services.



Brand employer of the year

We were thrilled to be shortlisted for the Marketing Society Scotland's [Brand Employer of the Year Award](#).



Make the switch

In 2023, we surveyed UK businesses, asking if they were ready for the UK's Single Use plastics legislation on foodservice packaging.

The survey results prompted us to launch Make the Switch. The campaign aimed to educate businesses and the public on how the bans differed in the devolved administrations of the UK and promote the transition to compliant products.



We visited the National Trust for Scotland at their Glencoe National Nature Reserve.

The Trust invited us so that we could see first-hand the work they do. The visit also provided ample inspiration in designing their new range of custom branded Vegware products.

This marked the start of what we're sure will be a fantastic partnership.

IMPACT AREA 1

THE VEGWARE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Vegware is a well-run business, and we can prove it!

We have worked hard to develop and implement a strong organisational management system, which incorporates the ISO 9001:2015 quality management and ISO 14001:2015 environmental management systems.

The Vegware management system (VMS to us) is vital to our ways of working, using the process approach and risk-based thinking to continually improve both the services and products that we offer our customers, as well as the relationships we have with our other stakeholders and interested parties.

Training the team

Every staff member is fully trained on the VMS: how the ISO standards are woven into every team, role, and aspect of the business and how, as individuals, their input is vital at every level. We strive to ensure all staff are engaged in the VMS and seek to empower them to consider and suggest improvement possibilities in every aspect of the business.

ISO 9001

The internationally-recognised ISO 9001:2015 standard is based on a number of quality management principles including a strong customer focus, the motivation and engagement of top management, the process approach and continual improvement. Using ISO 9001 helps ensure that customers get consistent, quality products and services, which in turn brings many business benefits.



ISO 14001

ISO 14001:2015 helps an organisation achieve the intended outcomes of its environmental management system, which provide value for the environment, the organisation itself and interested parties. Consistent with the organisation's environmental policy, the intended outcomes of an environmental management system include:

- enhancement of environmental performance
- fulfilment of compliance obligations
- achievement of environmental objectives





SAFETY

At Vegware and the wider Novolex® family, the health and safety of our colleagues remains of paramount importance. Last year we trained a company-record number of first aiders to support staff in our buildings. We also trained more fire wardens than ever before. Those dealing with movement of stock on a regular basis receive manual handling training to help keep them safe at work.

Everyone working with a laptop or monitor must complete a Workstation assessment every year – in all locations in which they may work. They are reminded of best practice at that time and any concerns raised are addressed and supported.

Our Edinburgh city centre buildings are comfortable, well-equipped, and maintained in line with all health and safety and electrical governing standards.

We want Vegware to be a safe place to work as well as a great place to work.



ETHICS

Ethical standards are communicated through our Employee Code of Conduct and our Supplier Code of Conduct, and the related policies, programmes and procedures outlined within.

We strive to uphold the highest ethical standards for business conduct throughout our organisation and within our supply chain.



DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

Vegware is proud to support and embody the Novolex Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DE&I) programme and pillars. Helen, our Managing Director, sits on the Novolex DE&I council, created as part of the leadership commitment and accountability pillar of the DE&I strategy. The council is comprised of leaders across Novolex, who provide governance, guidance, and support to DE&I initiatives and strategies.

In the last 12 months, Vegware employees have also undertaken diversity and inclusion training and unconscious bias training. All managers involved in recruitment must also be trained in unconscious bias. Vegware's Operational People group lead on DE&I and neurodiversity initiatives. They drive learning, understanding and the incorporation of neurodiverse support in the company.

Our recruitment process is based purely on skills and experience. Processes, structures and what candidates should expect are shared in advance.

In 2023 we reviewed and updated our brand messaging, clarifying our aims as a company. We continued to engage with stakeholder groups about our environmental progress: creating case studies with Close the Loop customers and working with Compostable Coalition UK on how compostable packaging can fit within existing UK waste infrastructure. Read more about Compostable Coalition UK’s work on page 20.

The vegware™ brand vision



Our smart compostable packaging delivers a great user experience and can minimise waste.



Composting is nature’s own recycling where leftover food is an ingredient, not contamination.



Vegware’s in-house waste experts have been helping our clients Close the Loop since 2011.

Our aims for 2024

In 2024, we will engage further with suppliers, government bodies, NGOs and the waste sector – staying true to our beginning of life principles whilst increasing end of life options for our products.

We will also review all roles to include elements of social or environmental mission-related expectations within them.

Understanding our impact

In 2024 we will continue work on reporting our product carbon footprint. This work is being undertaken as part of a unified, company-wide project tracking Scope 3 greenhouse gas emissions. More specifically for Vegware, this will include a product carbon footprint impact assessment. This will provide meaningful data for us and our customers. It means we can better understand both the impact of our products and decarbonisation opportunities in our value chain. This data will also inform our future product development process.

2023 IN NUMBERS

We provided grants to

31

different non-profits

We gave away

150

Vegware orders

We supported

180

different projects

GIVING BACK, SINCE 2009

Since 2009, the Vegware Community Fund has given monthly grants or free products to non-profit projects.

As a B Corp, Vegware is part of a global community of businesses that meet high standards of social and environmental impact.

Groups we supported in 2023 include...



The Yard



Children of Adam



Edinburgh Refugee Sponsorship Circle



Scottish Beekeepers Association



Groundswell Scotland



The Simon Community



Drylaw Neighbourhood Centre



Saffron Acres

Find out more at www.vegwarecommunityfund.org

IMPACT AREA 2

WHAT WE'VE DONE



Rob Standen as Sales Director

In September, we announced Rob Standen as our new Sales Director. Rob joined the business with a decade of experience in the packaging industry. His insight and experience will be invaluable as we enter our next phase of growth.



Kenzo Harper-Wang as Product & Supply Chain Director

Following eight years managing our Supply Chain team, Kenzo Harper-Wang joined the leadership team as Supply Chain and Product Director.

Personal development

We continued to offer training programmes and mentorship opportunities to help our team members grow both professionally and personally. Recent training has been wide ranging and includes:



Project management



Copyediting



Time management



An Introduction to Waste Management



89

employees

Headquarters:

Edinburgh, UK & Ridderkerk, The Netherlands

Parent company



Vegware offers equitable, comprehensive healthcare to all employees as well as discount gym memberships and a cycle to work scheme. All managers are trained mental health first aiders and all employees have received a mental health first aid awareness session. Our employee appraisal process includes a wellbeing conversation to allow managers to help, support, and signpost help if required. Quiet rooms have been introduced to support wellbeing, prayer and nursing.



Vitality is the private healthcare provider for Vegware, protecting the health and well-being of all our staff.

With Vitality, our employees are rewarded for practising healthy living. By tracking activity such as the number of steps walked, workouts completed and mindfulness minutes, employees can collect points. With these points staff can be rewarded with free coffee, cinema tickets, discounts and more. The scheme rewards our employees for prioritising their mental and physical wellbeing.

Further to this, our employees all have access to the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP). This provides 24/7 access to free and confidential resources such as counselling, financial and legal advice.



We are proud to be accredited by the Living Wage Foundation (LWF). We choose to pay employees based on the cost of living, not just on the government minimum.

Mental health first aid training

We are proud to have invested in mental health accreditations for our entire team in 2023. This includes ensuring all our managers are qualified and accredited Mental Health First Aiders. Vegware employees also all have access to private healthcare and the Employee Assistance Programme. Our appraisal system is both, conversational, and offers a confidential wellbeing chat three times a year.

vegware™ GIVING



Vegware offers every team member one paid day each year to volunteer for a local organisation.

Our team plan events with as many groups as possible, giving our employees a variety of volunteering opportunities to choose from. We also find opportunities through our Community Fund recipients for hands-on projects.

In 2023, our employees were involved with volunteering including time well spent at The Yard updating the outdoor play areas with paint, cleaning up leaves and putting down new mulch. We helped to plant native trees at Lauriston Farm, and to pack lunches with Empty Kitchens, Full Hearts.



Our aims for 2024

We look forward to supporting colleagues further in 2024. The coming year will see us further develop coaching techniques and project management methodology across the business. We will not stand still on our investment in people wellbeing and diversity. New staff will receive both mental health first aid accreditation and unconscious bias learning on joining the company.

We will continue to encourage our professionals to grow in their area of expertise, both through exposure to quality work and industry accreditations.

IMPACT AREA 3

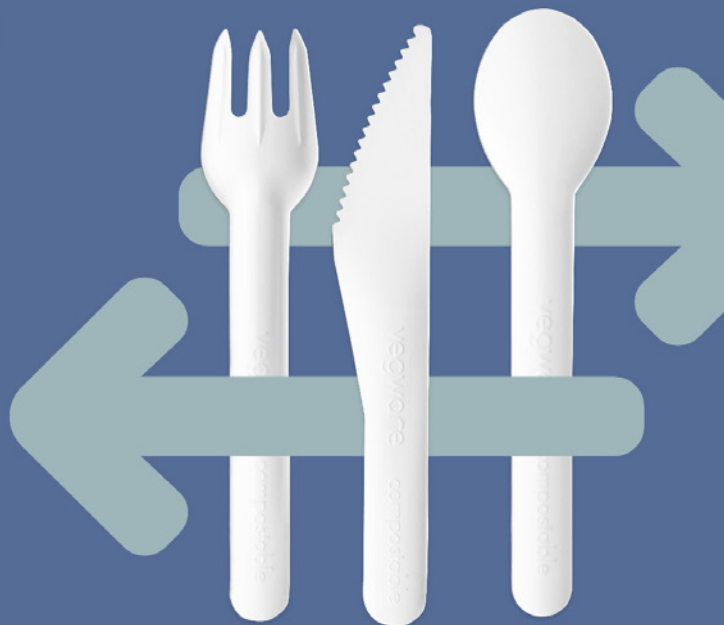
MAKE THE SWITCH with vegware™

WEBINAR - 21 JUNE 2023



LUCY FRANKEL
Environmental and
Communications Director

CALUM RICHARDSOM
The Bay Fish & Chips



Make the Switch

The Make the Switch campaign helped customers prepare for the UK's single-use plastics bans that came in October 2023. The campaign centred around a series of webinars designed to educate customers about the ban, helping them comply with the incoming legislation.

Each of the devolved administrations of the UK (England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland) took different approaches to the bans. To aid our customers, we provided [this guide](#).

73%

of respondents had little to no understanding of how the bans differed across the UK

RESPONSIBLE MARKETING

As demand for sustainable products grows, so too do claims around sustainability. At Vegware we recognise that trust comes with honesty. We readily share information with our customers on our product materials, and we make sure to avoid sweeping claims such as "free from".



Read our [blog post](#) on bioplastics, the materials we use and why we avoid claims such as 'plastic-free'.

EUROPE

HostMilano 2023

Our European Sales team attended HostMilano 2023. The exhibition is one of the major European foodservice and hospitality events and has become a key date for our European operations. It was an opportunity to connect with and support partners in Europe.



Italian composting kit

We bolstered our environmental support package for our Italian partners. The composting kit included: a five-step process to composting, engagement materials, videos, and bin signage to help Italian customers compost their used Vegware packaging and food waste. We hope to bring similar packages to other territories in 2024.

vegware 

AIUTACI A RICICLARE

Gli imballaggi compostabili



- 1 I tuoi cibi e bevande sono serviti in confezioni compostabili Vegware.
- 2 Sei pregato di gettare tutti gli imballaggi Vegware usati negli appositi contenitori per il materiale compostabile.
- 3 Gli imballaggi Vegware usati vengono raccolti per il compostaggio e trattati con microbi, umidità e calore.
- 4 In meno di 12 settimane si trasformano in compost di alta qualità, pronto per restituire le sostanze nutritive al terreno.

vegware.com | @vegware 

QUESTO LO

Compostiamo

NOI



Gettalo nel nostro contenitore ORGANICO

Prodotti monouso per la ristorazione di origine vegetale. Si trasformano in compost in 12 settimane, per arricchire il terreno e favorire la crescita delle piante.

vegware   @vegware



PFAS: What you need to know

Concerns about the use of PFAS in foodservice packaging were reported in the press in 2023. We offered guidance to our customers: explaining what PFAS are and providing a range of products with no intentionally added PFAS.

Our aims for 2024

The legislative landscape for foodservice packaging is constantly changing. Our aim for 2024 is to ensure our customers are prepared for when it does. Our Transparency Talks campaign gets underway in 2024. With these we can help customers better understand compostable packaging and how to market it responsibly.



IMPACT AREA 4

ENVIRONMENTAL OVERVIEW

Throughout 2023, composting coverage for regular collections remained strong across the UK. Our Environmental team maintained positive relationships with stakeholders across the waste industry. We developed relationships with new waste collectors, further expanding the suite of composting solutions available to our customers.

In Scotland, our in-house trade waste collection service had great success following an operational restructure. The service collects used Vegware packaging and food waste from foodservices in central belt Scotland for composting. As a result of the restructure, we reached a landmark figure by collecting 10,000 bins in a single year!

The headlines



Our in-house collection service reached a landmark 10,000 binloads for 2023 through Close the Loop in Scotland



We developed new relationships with waste collectors in London and the North West of England



Food waste and Vegware packaging composted through Close the Loop in Scotland

*2021 figures were impacted due to pandemic restrictions on foodservice.

COMPOSTING SUCCESSES

University of Roehampton

With a 54-acre parkland campus in Southwest London, the University of Roehampton is in a unique location. The campus is full of greenery and just a short distance from central London. It's an environment that lends itself perfectly to community and study. This isn't the only unique aspect of Roehampton's campus. In 2023, the university found an innovative closed loop solution for their used Vegware packaging and food waste – one that smells surprisingly good. We went to visit to find out.

Full case study coming soon

City of York Council: working towards a circular city

York City Council started working with and composting their Vegware back in 2019. It has a partnership that has stood the test of time, as well as a global pandemic. Having successfully navigated these challenges, and with the council building back operating at full capacity, we went to visit to find out how they have made their Vegware composting collections a success.

Watch the video [here](#)





Hitting the right note: composting with the Royal Opera House

One of the highlights of 2023 was visiting the Royal Opera House in London’s Covent Garden. They had been working with our Environmental team to set up Vegware composting collections for their staff and artists’ restaurant.

Watch the video [here](#)

Cambridge Half Marathon

Sunday 5th March 2023 saw the latest Cambridge Half Marathon take place. As with previous years, the route took runners past historic landmarks, through the Cambridgeshire countryside and into the grounds of two of the city’s iconic colleges. For the 2023 edition, race organisers swapped the plastic bottle for Vegware packaging. The used Vegware cups were collected, composted 20 miles away and used on the grounds of Jesus College at the University of Cambridge.



Edinburgh Food festival

We partnered with Edinburgh Food Festival to provide a composting waste stream across the 10-day event. All food was served in our plant-based, compostable packaging and collected for composting as part of our Close the Loop service for central belt Scotland.

18 x 1100L
bins collected



GETTING PACKAGING INTO THE RIGHT BIN: OUR BEHAVIOUR CHANGE RESEARCH

As part of our work with Compostable Coalition UK, we worked with behavioural change experts from the University of Sheffield and Hubbub, plus recycling collectors Recorra. The project was to develop an intervention at three London workplaces to improve recycling rates of compostable packaging within a closed loop environment.

Developing the intervention

Gaining an understanding of the foodservice environments at these workplaces was critical in developing the intervention. The behaviour change experts conducted:

- Observations at workplaces
- Focus groups with 29 staff to identify barriers to appropriate disposal of packaging
- Developed an intervention using the Capability, Opportunity, Motivation-Behaviour model



Vegware's 'comprehensive' client support

As part of developing the interventions, the psychologists reviewed all the assorted posters, videos, training guides and project management templates Vegware has developed over a decade of helping clients set up composting schemes. Our team was delighted to receive this praise from the academics:

Vegware's onboarding process provides a comprehensive package of support to organisations and those working within them to start using and composting compostable packaging. It's great to see them working with behavioural scientists to improve this support further.

Professor Thomas Webb,
University of Sheffield

Barriers

Three barriers to effecting composting were identified in the development of the intervention:

1 Identifying compostable packaging

A mixture of compostable packaging suppliers as well as non-compostable products complicated organics waste diversion.

Having clear, uniform labelling was a key intervention in helping identify compostable packaging. This would help with both the disposal of compostable packaging and identifying contamination.

2 Identifying the correct bin for compostable packaging

Having clear signage that matched the colour of the compostable packaging labels helped individuals identify the correct bin.

3 Helping people understand the benefits of compostable packaging

With the experts' guidance, Vegware created a new motivational video for the sites to display throughout the workplaces and on their digital channels. These videos:

- Informed staff that Vegware packaging was being used onsite, indicating that the products are intended for compostables bins
- Highlighted the benefits of composting Vegware products



After 40 days, the stickers and videos were no longer used, and the intervention only consisted of the updated bin signage.

Results

The research's interventions saw the target material in the compostables bin – compostable packaging and food scraps – **rise from 56% to 91%**, on average across the three catered offices.

Conclusions

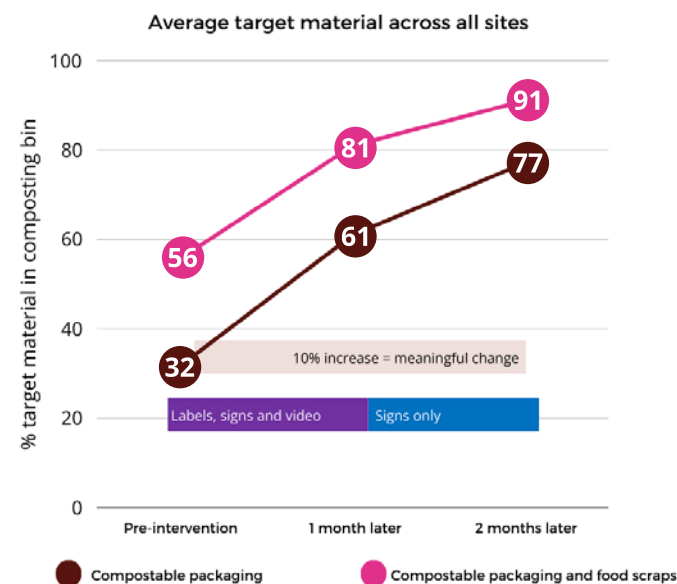
Here are the key recommendations from the experts at the University of Sheffield and Hubbub:

- Compostable (or recyclable) packaging producers should label packaging with a clear and distinctive uniform symbol to identify it as compostable (or recyclable) and specify how to dispose of it
- Workplaces should display clear signs that show which items are for the compost (or recycling) bins and position signs close to the bins where staff will be sorting and disposing of their waste
- Match the design of the bin signs with packaging labels (e.g. matched colour)
- Ensure compost (or recycling) bins are available in locations where people are disposing of compostable (or recyclable) packaging
- Ensure staff understand and engage with the benefits of composting (or recycling) this packaging

What did Vegware learn?

Our team gained many fascinating insights from working with the behaviour change experts. We were proud to hear that the support package we have developed over the years is 'comprehensive'. It was useful to learn from the consumer feedback and create new engaging behaviour change tools with the help of the psychologists.

Vegware is incorporating these improvements into our onboarding toolkit to help more clients implement effective waste diversion schemes.



FIND OUT MORE

Watch the webinar -

[The psychology of getting packaging into the right bin](#)



[in Compostable Coalition UK](#)
CompostableUK.info

OFFICE ENERGY CONSUMPTION

Our Edinburgh offices are part of a classical sandstone terrace built in 1814, with very high ceilings and traditional sash windows. Whilst a pleasure to work in, efficient heating is a challenge we continue to work on.

It is encouraging to see a reduction in office energy consumption although these figures are based on estimated readings from our suppliers. With the installation of smart meters, we are aiming to provide more accurate data in 2024 that illustrates a continuation of this trend.

		Consumption No. 39		Consumption No. 41		Combined consumption of No.39 & No.41			
Year	Quarter	Gas usage m ³	Electric usage kWh	Gas usage m ³	Electric usage kWh	Gas usage m ³	Reduction % from 2022	Electric usage kWh	Reduction % from 2022
2023	Q1	2330	4167	2174	3634	4504	-19%	7801	-9.2%
	Q2	1212	4034	1052	3764	2264	-1.7%	7798	-12%
	Q3	466	3905	251	3408	717	-32.2%	7313	-8.5%
	Q4	2087	3937	1843	4252	3930	-8.9%	8189	5.8%
2022	Q1	2139	4217	3419	4377	5558		8594	
	Q2	1255	4513	1048	4344	2303		8857	
	Q3	596	4286	462	3707	1058		7993	
	Q4	2424	4275	1891	3466	4315		7741	



GREEN TEAM

In 2023, our Green Team worked to ensure we could provide accurate data for office waste and energy usage. With this data we can make clearer judgements of where we are and, more importantly, where we need to improve. Here are some headlines from the Green Team's efforts in 2023:



Installation of an electricity smart meter at our Headquarters to provide accurate data on energy use.



Changed office waste collectors to a service that provides in-depth information on the amount of compostable waste we create, and our recycling rates.



Overhaul of our office's environmental objectives. Setting clearer targets for existing objectives and creating new ones too.

Where we could improve

External factors can have an impact on composting coverage. Due to a third-party strategic business decision, we lost a small portion of regular collection coverage in East Anglia. We continue to build resilience and increase the depth of solutions available to our customers. This will ensure we have alternative options available to mitigate against such changes.

Our aims for 2024


In 2024 we not only plan to retain existing composting solutions for Vegware packaging, but to expand on them. Growing the number of closed loop customers will help our collectors to increase the efficiency of their collection routes.

We will also engage with composting facilities to seek new opportunities to expand the range of solutions available to our customers.

With accurate baselines, our Green Team, formed of colleagues from across the company, are setting office waste and energy use targets for 2024. The team have also organised a calendar of events aimed at bringing everyone at Vegware together so that we can achieve our objectives.



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vegware  Part of the Novolex family



Certified



Corporation