



## REVIEW OF THE MERCHANT TAYLORS' COMPANY CLIMATE ACTION PROGRESS

Meeting – 10.30am, 30<sup>th</sup> January 2024 at Merchant Taylors' Hall

### Present

Alderman Alison Gowman  
John Clink, Clerk, Merchant Taylors' Company  
Rob Casey, Past Master, Water Conservators Company

### Introduction

This review was carried out by LCAG Core Group members Alderman Alison Gowman and WCWC PM Rob Casey at the request of John Clink, Clerk of Merchant Taylors' Company. The review is based on a questionnaire from the Climate Action Toolkit (<https://theheartofthecity.com/climate/>) produced by "Heart of City". They run a Climate Action Course for SMEs in the City sponsored by the Lord Mayor and City Corporation together with the Bank of England.

The Merchant Taylors' Company has made significant strides to reduce its carbon footprint, primarily at the Hall. The 2012 carbon footprint from Scope 1 and 2 Emissions has been reduced from 431 tCO<sub>2</sub>e to 126 tCO<sub>2</sub>e. This has been achieved by installing condensing boilers and LED lights, installing power optimisers, switching to certified renewable energy, and fitting solar panels. The Company has set objectives to adopt the Greenhouse Gas Protocol and achieve Net Zero Carbon Emissions by 2027, with a goal of achieving Zero Carbon Emissions by 2050.

Based on the "Heart of City" questionnaire the review is broken down into achievements/next steps in terms of Scope 1, 2 and 3 Emissions.

### Scope 1

On site electricity generation – Merchant Taylors have installed a large array of solar panels on the roof out of public view. These are regularly cleaned to maintain efficiency. They are considering installing batteries to extend the power use.

Gas Heating – Gas boilers have been replaced with condensing boilers in 2016 to improve efficiency. Key boiler pipes have been lagged. Boilers have automatic timers but there is a 18-20 hour working day plus also it takes time to reheat large spaces. Heating is generally controlled to 18 degrees in corridors and 21 degrees in offices.

Double Glazing – this is being considered for offices and possibly the hall. There are some minor draughts through some windows but there needs to be a balance to maintain adequate ventilation.

Air Conditioning – Only the Clerk's office has Air Conditioning. As parts of the building get very hot in summer, they currently use blinds and are considering photochromatic film to reduce heating by the sun.

Catering Equipment – Currently a gas fired range.

## **Scope 2**

Energy Supplier – Merchant Taylors have switched to a certified renewable energy supplier and installed a power optimiser to reduce power consumption.

Lighting – LED lights have been installed to reduce consumption. Lighting control is generally manual, Beadle will switch off lights at night, Company considering installing more automatic controls to switch off lights when a room is empty.

Electronic equipment – Generally left on standby overnight for software updates.

Water Heating – Water heaters left on overnight to avoid any issues with Legionnaires disease.

## **Scope 3**

Employee Commuting and Business Travel – Most employees and members use cycle or train. Company has introduced an EV purchase scheme to encourage any remaining car travel to switch to electric.

Video Conferencing – Encouraged for many committees to reduce travel.

Overnight Accommodation – Any possibilities to consider earlier finishes to evening events?

Water Use – Urinals on a 12 hour flush and hand sensors fitted on taps to reduce consumption.

Waste Paper – Paper and printing wastage reduced by encouraging members to use laptops/I-pads for meetings. Company supplies some emergency I-Pads to prevent printing papers.

Disposable Items – Do not use plastic cups or cutlery, paper towels or bottled water. 76% of general waste is recycled. Recycling bins available and identified.

Food Waste – Food suppliers do not use plastic packaging. Food waste used for staff meals and fruit bowls provided for staff.

Food General - Food sourced from sustainable local suppliers wherever possible.

Materials – Old materials and IT items are donated for further use wherever possible.

## **Scope 3 – Investments**

Rathbones are the investment management company used by Merchant Taylors. John Clink gave us a copy of a brochure highlighting their responsible investment management strategy. They adopt best practice in managing environmental, social, and governance risks. By addressing ESG issues, a responsible investment approach not only serves to protect the planet and people, but also preserves wealth and generates returns.

Merchant Taylors have separate investment policies for the company and their charity, but they are currently the same. They don't currently measure ESG content or negatively screen out certain investments but rely on their investment managers to do this. Currently the key benchmarks for their investments are primarily financial. However, most of their investments are used to support charitable causes, education and social investment. They regularly review Rathbones' performance.

Merchant Taylors don't currently require their investment managers to report against the Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI), the Task force on Climate-related Financial Disclosure (TCFD) and the Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosure (TNFD) but rely on Rathbones to follow best practice.

## **Feedback on Questionnaire**

John gave us some helpful feedback on the questionnaire regards the wording of some parts of the "Heart of City" questionnaire, also noting that there were no questions about insulation, heat recovery or the cooking facilities.

## Conclusions

The Merchant Taylors' Company has made significant strides to reduce its Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions to minimum levels and is considering offsetting its remaining footprint to become Net Zero. John and his in-house surveyor are exemplary leaders in the work that they are spearheading, and they are encouraging personal behavioural changes as well as structural works to the building and operations.

The long-term ambition is to eliminate Scope 1 and 2 emissions by stopping the use of natural gas and installing suitable equipment that uses certified green electricity. The timing of this needs careful consideration and collaborative working with UK Power Networks for an enhanced grid supply and also with Heritage England and the City Corporation regarding Planning and Scheduled Monument Consent.

LCAG would be happy at some point to work with John and his team to help them with an estimate of their Scope 3 footprint to compare this with Scope 1 and 2.



**Rooftop Solar Panels At Merchant Taylors' Hall**