

Sykes Holiday Cottages Impact Report 2024

Creating lasting holiday memories with
a positive impact on people and the planet.

 | **SYKES** HOLIDAY COTTAGES

Certified

Corporation

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Welcome

Providing a snapshot of our efforts to create a positive and lasting impact on our communities and the wider world

We've set the standard for delivering positive impact in the short stay industry, with committed and continuous progress towards our environmental and social goals over the last few years, which culminated in last year's B Corp certification.

This report is a summary of everything we've accomplished together through FY24 and I'm proud of each and every person who's got involved. That includes colleagues donating their time to worthy causes in the community, staff taking part in one of our many charity fundraising initiatives and property owners generously donating free holidays to families that really need them.

As an organisation, last year we made huge strides with developing our people and supporting diversity, including the launch of our inaugural Forging Future Leaders programme. This aims to nurture the next generation of leadership talent at Sykes, with our first 12 graduates completing the programme in 2024.

I've been at the helm of the business for eight years now, and Sykes has grown and evolved so much in that time. I have no doubt that we'll continue to drive that change, and our commitment to being a business with purpose will endure.

Over the last 12 months, we've made significant progress, but we're not going to stop there. One of our core values is to 'learn, grow and innovate', and that's exactly what we'll do with our impact efforts. Whether it's continuing our work fostering opportunities for all or taking steps to help our guests holiday more sustainably, I'm looking forward to what's to come in the years ahead.



Graham Donoghue,
CEO, Forge Holiday Group

"One of our values is to 'learn, grow and innovate', and that's exactly what we'll do with our impact efforts."



Our impact mission

Sykes' aim is to create lasting holiday memories while delivering a positive social and environmental impact

Our profit with purpose strategy first launched in 2021 and we've had a laser focus on this – and our six long-term environmental and social pledges – ever since.

At Sykes, having a positive contribution on people and the planet is central to our operations, and these ambitions influence the business' activities and day-to-day decision-making.

In FY24 we celebrated our one-year anniversary of achieving B Corp status. Throughout the year, we made significant progress against each of our environmental and social goals and have a clear vision for the future, with clarity on the steps needed to get there. We know that more needs to be done and will continue to develop our strategy to ensure our efforts remain focused in the right places.

Our mission is aligned with five of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):



In FY24, we created happy holiday memories for 2.5 million guests at our 22,500 holiday homes in the UK and Ireland – all while ensuring a positive impact on our people, local communities and the wider world.



Proud to be B Corp

We're a B Corp business – but what does it mean?

B Corp is a certification awarded to companies that meet the highest standards of social and environmental performance, accountability and transparency.

Sykes was made a B Corp in 2023, demonstrating our commitment to operating responsibly and making a positive impact on the wider community.

The certification alongside our Impact commitments show our colleagues, customers, partners and other stakeholders that we're a business that's doing good.



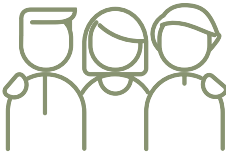
A collective of travel companies collaborating and sharing knowledge to drive sustainable and ethical travel forward.



We're also one of 3,000 organisations calling on the Government to ensure companies are held legally accountable for their environmental and societal impact – supporting a cleaner, greener, fairer future for all.



Our purpose strategy continues to be underpinned by four key values. We expect colleagues to:



Be one team

We believe in what we do and we do it together as one team



Own it

We care about our business as if it were our own



Communicate honestly

We communicate openly to ensure we all deliver against our goals



Learn, grow and innovate

We are a place where nothing stays still

Our environmental goals

What we’re doing to cut carbon emissions, remove plastic and support biodiversity

Our three key environmental targets remain unchanged, but we’ve made significant progress towards these throughout FY24, summarised in the following table.

All goals remain under review, including evaluation against best practice, to ensure we’re continuing to deliver impact in the right areas.

Summary of targets	Progress since 2023 report	Plan for FY25
Reduce carbon emissions by at least 50% by 2030 and reach Net Zero by 2050	Reduced our carbon intensity (tCO2e/£m) for Scope 1 and 2 by 30.6% vs. baseline and our Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions by 46%. For the first time, we have measured the carbon emissions related to guest travel.	Continue to work on data collection and improve the quality of data. Develop and launch a bespoke training module on carbon literacy and sustainability for every Sykes colleague, to be available on our training platform. Implement four key actions from our Environmental Action Plan.
Support 20 biodiversity projects each year across the regions where we operate	Supported 10 biodiversity projects with funding and another 10 through colleague volunteering. Extended flagship partnerships with Chester Zoo and National Parks UK for a further three years to continue investing in initiatives aimed at protecting UK wildlife and biodiversity. Agreed a new partnership with Cotswold Lakes Trust to help with conservation of the Cotswold Water Park. Joined Ecologi’s Restoring Wildflowers, Wetlands and Wildlife scheme – a grassland habitat restoration project in Scotland – alongside our existing tree planting initiatives.	Continue to support existing projects while also identifying new initiatives where we can contribute both volunteering time and funding. Raise awareness of biodiversity loss and ways to support wildlife among our customers, including creating a digital wildlife champions workbook with Chester Zoo.
Achieve a single-use plastic free business accreditation by 2024	Plastic audit carried out with three key items identified for removal. Ending the use of single-use coffee cups across the business. Became a Plastic Free Taskforce Flagship Employer with Plastic Free Cheshire.	Contribute to and collaborate with the Plastic Free Taskforce steering group. Share our single-use plastic reduction and removal plans with colleagues and continue to remove and replace single-use items. This includes making further progress encouraging other stakeholders, including guests, to switch to plastic free and reusables.



Our social goals

Making a meaningful difference in the communities where we operate and beyond

At the heart of our mission is a deep commitment to driving positive social change. Through our continued efforts to empower our people, support communities and champion meaningful causes, we strive to make a lasting difference.

Here we highlight the progress we've made in 2024 and share our ambitious plans for even greater impact next year.

Our social impact goals

Summary of targets	Progress since 2023 report	Plan for FY25
Inspire and enable 100% of our team to volunteer every year	In FY24, our team volunteered for a total of 516 days, supporting more than 40 charitable organisations.	Moving forward, we will continue to raise awareness about volunteering opportunities, while organising monthly team volunteering events. We will also do more to highlight the personal impact of staff volunteering internally via case studies.
Support our people to be the best they can be 365 days a year and maintain our industry-leading employee engagement score	Maintaining a strong employee engagement score by continuing to source input from colleagues and focusing on activity and initiatives that matter most to them. We continued to invest in our Leadership Development programme, Forging Future Leaders, and in April 2024, we became members of WiHTL. Additionally, we launched comprehensive training for our Managers through Management Fundamentals, which covers crucial topics such as unconscious bias.	Looking ahead, we aim to build on this momentum, focusing on new initiatives to continue fostering engagement, wellbeing and growth for every team member. This includes enhancing our maternity and paternity leave, as well as our annual leave policy, to offer colleagues additional holidays based on length of service.
Enable 100 disadvantaged families to go on holiday every year	We helped 80 families experience a well-deserved break through our Time Away partnership in FY24. This included 183 adults, 164 children and 19 dogs. Since the launch of the initiative, we've supported a total of 200 families.	In FY25, we aim to facilitate more family holidays with Time Away, with the goal of increasing the number of families supported in line with our annual target.
Positively impact at least 10 community and charity initiatives	Last year, we supported 12 community initiatives through grants and funding, in addition to backing 24 charitable causes with fundraising and donations.	Our plans for FY25 include continuing to fund and support a diverse range of community-driven projects and initiatives, while also empowering our team to lead and participate in fundraising efforts. We plan to move to two-year charity partnerships to ensure we're delivering long-term impact.



This year's highlights

There were a number of milestone moments and initiatives that stood out for us during FY24. This timeline shows a year of impact against our social and environmental goals

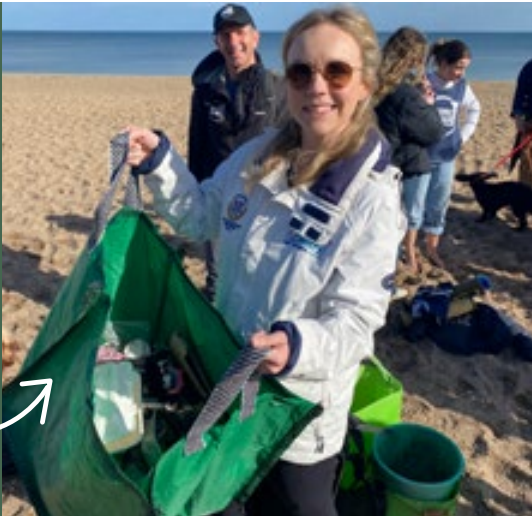
February 2024

More than 80 colleagues braved hot coals for our fire walk, raising nearly **£40,000** in sponsorship (with match funding) for our charity partners.



June 2024

26 colleagues across five Sykes and Regional teams took part in the 'Million Mile Clean' mass litter pick, collecting more than 30 bags of rubbish in total.



August 2024

Arranged a charity football match, Sykes Aid, with teams raising more than **£8,300** (with match-funding) for The Stroke Association and Hospice of the Good Shepherd.



October 2023

Agreed a **three-year partnership** with Chester Zoo to support its Networks for Nature biodiversity project – a collaboration to restore native habitat in North West Cheshire.



May 2024

Marked our **1st anniversary** of becoming a certified B Corp.



August 2024

The **200th** family living with life-changing illness enjoyed a free holiday, thanks to our Time Away partnership and owners' generosity.



September 2024

1,640 days – or 12,300 hours – of volunteering time donated since the launch of Sykes' volunteering initiative three years ago.



April 2024

As an ongoing National Parks 'Parks Protector', we made a commitment to support six additional biodiversity projects across the **three-year partnership**.



July 2024

Plastic audit conducted at our Head Office with removal of single-use coffee cups, blue roll and plastic washing up bottles introduced as a result and further changes planned.

Cutting our carbon emissions

We have a clear and measurable commitment to reducing carbon emissions across our operations

We've pledged to at least halve our Scope 1 and 2 emissions by 2030 and achieve Net Zero as soon as possible before 2050.

To cut carbon, we must first have an understanding of the scale and source of our carbon footprint – and we've made significant strides in both tracking our emissions and taking targeted actions to mitigate them.

For the first time we have estimated the carbon emissions of guest travel, to and from their holiday, as we want to understand the scale of the impact. We'll continue to track this and look at how we can collect 'real time' data to give us a more accurate view for future measurements.

Our carbon footprint for Scopes 1, 2 and 3 is in the table, compared against our baseline year (April 2019 – March 2020). As a growing business, we also calculate

carbon intensity – our emissions per £m turnover – to be able to better evaluate progress.

Our absolute carbon footprint has increased annually in line with business growth, including through acquisitions. Since the baseline year, we've acquired Northumbria Coast and Country, Lyme Bay Holidays, LHH Scotland and UKCaravans4Hire, amongst others.

However, we've reduced our carbon intensity (tCO2e/£m) for Scope 1 and 2 by 30.6% vs. baseline and our Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions by 46%. We're pleased with our progress and will continue to develop our carbon reduction strategy to ensure we are on track to halve Scope 1 and 2 emissions by 2030 and reach Net Zero by 2050.

Our carbon footprint

tCO2e	Baseline	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
Scope 1* – office heating	45.7	82.4	63.8	111.5	127.3
Scope 2 – office electricity	143.6	135.3	143.2	163.9	142.9
Scope 3**	6116.4	8089.7	7862.6	7306.6	6733.7
Carbon Intensity tCO2e/£m turnover					
Scope 1 & 2	2.6	2.1	1.5	1.8	1.8
Scope 1, 2 & 3	87.1	79.9	56.9	50.7	47

We've applied current emissions factors to our baseline year data to enable a like-for-like comparison with our FY24 emissions and accurately track our reduction progress.

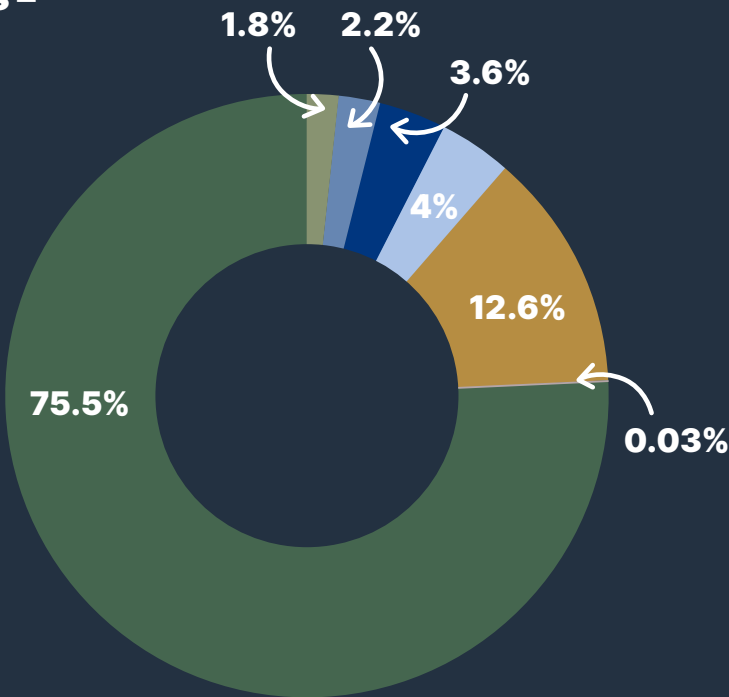
*Scope 1 emissions - segregated data on cooling refrigerants was unavailable. We are working to improve the gaps in data for future measurements.

**Scope 3 emissions include waste, water use and treatment, business travel and hotel stays, employee commuting and homeworking and spend of other products and services.

Baseline year reporting period, April 2019 – March 2020
Financial Year (FY) reporting period, October – September
Carbon emissions for Sykes Holiday Cottages, Bachcare and UKCaravans4Hire

Cutting our carbon emissions

Our full FY24 emissions – split by named source:



Source	tCO2e	% of total
Office heating & cooling	127.3	1.8%
Office electricity	155.5	2.2%
Homeworking	251.3	3.6%
Business travel	289.0	4.0%
Employee commuting	885.1	12.6%
Waste	2.4	0.03%
Other products & services	5293.2	75.5%
Total	7003.9	100%

Business travel and commuting made up 16.61% of emissions in FY24, compared with 39.42% in our baseline year. Staff working to meeting guidelines, that aim to reduce unnecessary business travel and encourage online meetings where possible, has reduced business travel emissions by 75.5%. Our hybrid working model has cut commuting and, as a result, emissions from staff commuting have decreased by 34.4%.

While homeworking emissions have increased, the net reduction for commuting and homeworking emissions is 419.72 tCO2e – that’s the same as the annual average carbon footprint of 33 people in the UK.



Our guests travel an estimated 223 million miles to and from their holiday cottage with carbon emissions of 58,672 tCO2e.



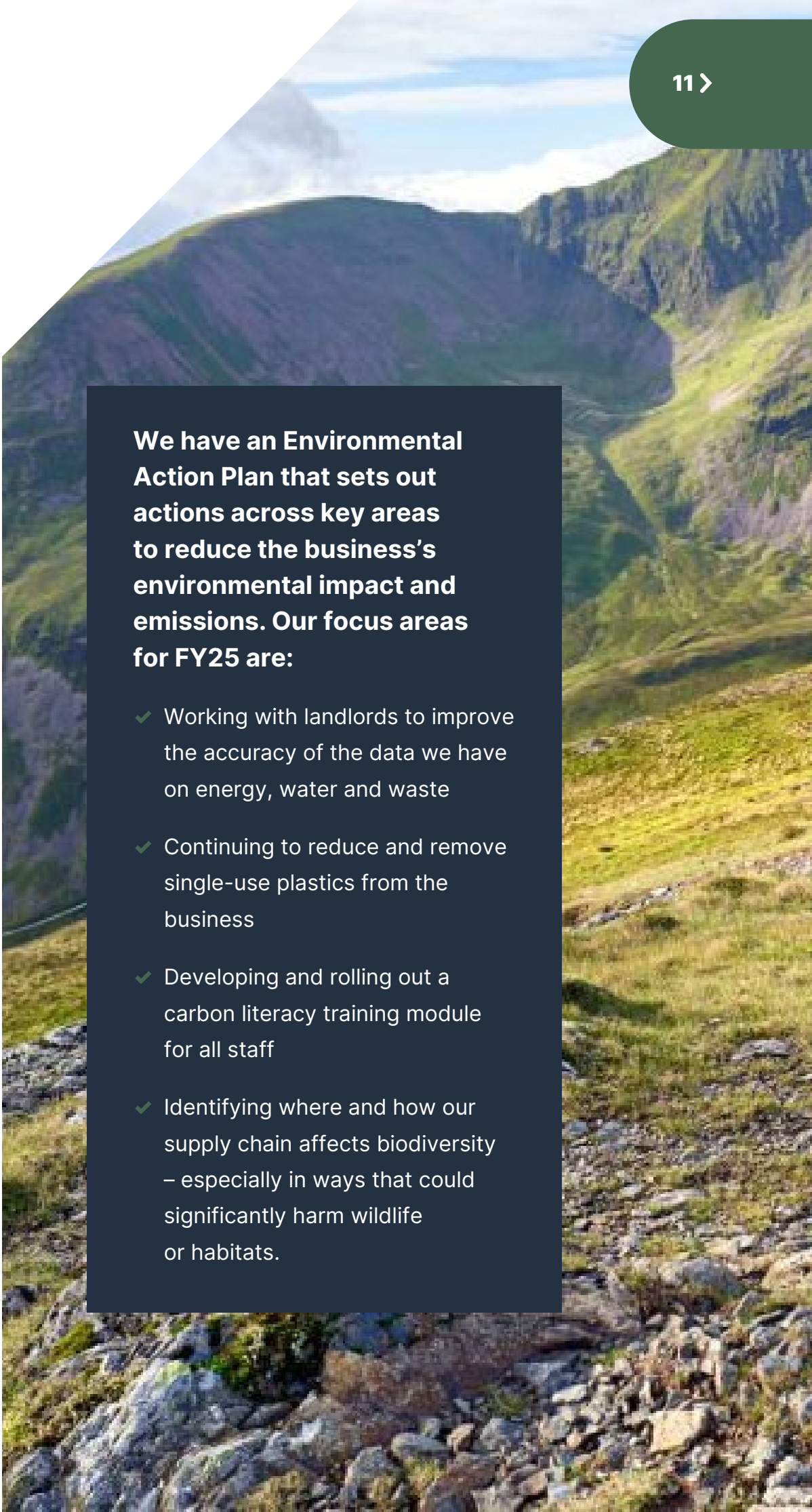
Cutting our carbon emissions

Here is a summary of our plans for FY25 onwards to reduce carbon emissions:

Plans to reach carbon targets	Plan for FY25 and beyond
Develop a 2030 carbon reduction strategy	We're working on our 2030 Carbon reduction strategy – focusing on the quality of our data to make informed decisions on the strategy.
Set annual carbon reduction targets for FY24 onwards	Refining our understanding of emissions from guest travel and holiday lets, aiming to include more accurate data in our Scope 3 footprint. While we've used estimates for guest travel in FY24, we're exploring ways to gather real-world data in future years, with the support of property owners and guests, - moving to real over estimated data.
Share our carbon footprint analysis and plans with staff, owners and customers and encourage them to reduce their personal emissions	Developing and rolling out carbon literacy training for all staff. Sharing blogs and insights to empower customers and owners to make informed decisions and reduce their environmental impact.
Complete a fully-costed Environmental Action Plan to achieve our reduction targets, which we'll review and update every year	We have an Environmental Action Plan which sets out key activity to be progressed. Information about our environmental and social sustainability efforts is communicated within our statutory financial accounts.
Introduce sustainable staff travel initiatives including car sharing	An updated travel policy was issued in March 2025, which encourages colleagues to consider their carbon footprint when making travel decisions.
Reduce the amount of waste that goes to landfill and water usage by at least 5%, based on our FY22 measurement	<p>Moving forwards, we'll continue to work with our landlords on effective waste management solutions.</p> <p>There has been a 28.6% reduction in office waste since our baseline carbon footprint measurement.</p>

We have an Environmental Action Plan that sets out actions across key areas to reduce the business's environmental impact and emissions. Our focus areas for FY25 are:

- ✓ Working with landlords to improve the accuracy of the data we have on energy, water and waste
- ✓ Continuing to reduce and remove single-use plastics from the business
- ✓ Developing and rolling out a carbon literacy training module for all staff
- ✓ Identifying where and how our supply chain affects biodiversity – especially in ways that could significantly harm wildlife or habitats.



Supporting biodiversity in the UK and overseas

Our efforts to protect biodiversity at home and abroad saw us grow existing relationships and create important new ones

As a business, biodiversity is something we're particularly passionate about. We want to protect the UK's stunning landscapes and native wildlife so holidaymakers can enjoy them for generations to come.

Over the past 12 months, we achieved our goal of supporting 20 biodiversity projects – providing funding and grants to 10 initiatives and supporting another 10 with invaluable volunteering.

In FY24, we strengthened existing partnerships with the likes of Chester Zoo, National Parks UK and Ecologi, while building important new relationships.

Chester Zoo partnership and Networks for Nature project

We extended our flagship partnership with Chester Zoo for a further three years. This includes sponsorship of its Networks for Nature initiative, a community collaboration which aims to support nature recovery and accessibility in 60 square miles of North West Cheshire.

Our wider support also saw 19 volunteers help out with the set-up and running of the zoo's Wildlife Connections family festival. More than 100 colleagues also helped with preparing animal feed for browsing animals like rhinos and giraffes and essential zoo maintenance.

Growing our relationship with National Parks UK

Over the next three years, funding from Sykes will help National Parks deliver a series of projects to restore and create habitats across the country and connect more people with nature.

Sykes' funding is supporting tree planting efforts in the South Downs National Park, the UK national park with the most woodland. Farmers, landowners and community groups have already planted over 60,000 trees across more than 100 different sites across the National Park. Our donations also helped fund an automated irrigation system at Exmoor National Park's tree nursery. This aims to produce 10,000 trees annually for its temperate rainforest, nature recovery and community initiatives across the area.

Restoring wildflowers, wetlands and wildlife with Ecologi

Alongside our tree-planting initiatives, we also worked with Ecologi on its Restoring Wildflowers, Wetlands and Wildlife scheme. Funding aims to restore and protect wildflower meadows, wetlands, heathland and woodland in Scotland that can support high levels of biodiversity.

We sponsored the planting of a further 1,200 trees in the Mau Region of Kenya with our tree-planting partners. Since 2022, our funding has helped to plant a total of 8,100 trees globally.



"Sykes' funding is doing wonders for nature across several sites in Scotland. As an example, Sticky Catchfly is one of the UK's rarest plants – with fewer than 18 populations – but is now thriving at Dumyat. With continued support, focus and hard work, we expect lots more Scottish biodiversity success stories in the years ahead."

Sean Earp, Associate Account Director at Ecologi





More examples of biodiversity projects we supported in FY24 – either through sponsorship or volunteering:

- ✓ **Buckley's Bees in Cheshire** – sponsoring seven colonies of home-bred honeybees throughout the Cheshire area.
- ✓ **Platt's Wood Community Woodland in Derbyshire** – supporting the group's Planting for Pollinators project for the second year running. This included funding the planting of 17 different types of plants to encourage pollinators, such as bees and butterflies, at the five-acre site.
Five Sykes volunteers also helped with planting bulbs, wildflowers and ferns, and installing new bat, bird and barn owl boxes (also funded by the business).
- ✓ **Cornwall Beaver Trust** – continued sponsorship of the project for a second year to support the endangered native species in Cornwall.
- ✓ **SeaWilding Sea Grass project in Argyll and Bute** – ongoing sponsorship with money donated towards ongoing restoration of the sea grass beds on the west coast of Scotland.
- ✓ **Eryri National Park in North Wales** – a team of eight volunteered in Eryri National Park to help clear invasive plant species and maintain footpaths.
- ✓ **Cotswold Lakes Trust** – to kick off our new partnership, we sponsored a new birdwatching screen on the Cotswold Water Park nature reserve.

Reducing and removing single-use plastic

We're taking steps to reduce single-use products and packaging across the business – with more in the works

Actions taken to ban single-use items after our audit

We conducted our first plastic audit in FY24 and actions taken as a result will remove thousands of single-use items from across the business. This includes:

- Rolling out reusable coffee cups at our head office, removing 52,000 disposable coffee cups from circulation each year
- Replacing blue roll with a plastic-free alternative
- Moving to refillable washing up liquid bottles, eliminating single use plastic bottles

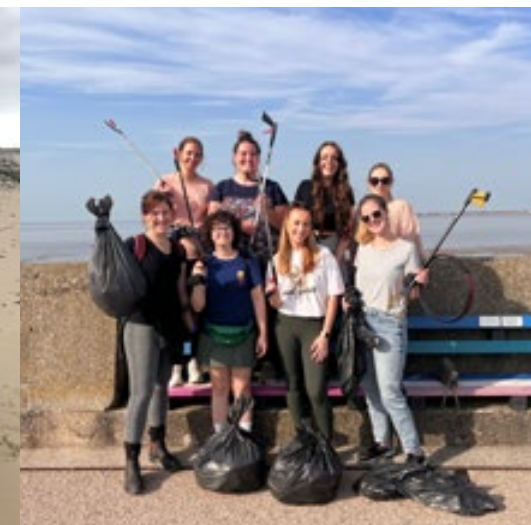
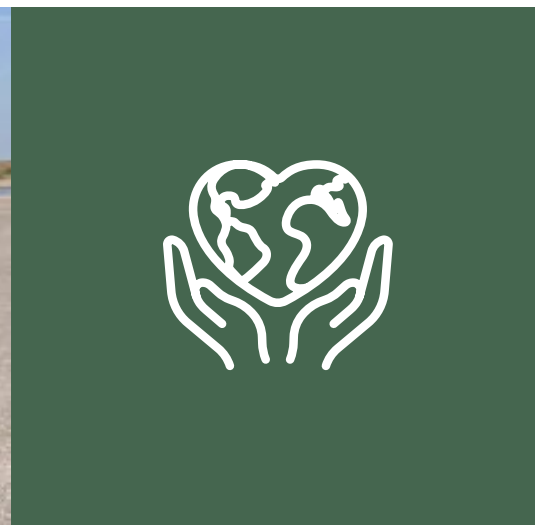
Moving forwards, we will roll out more changes to reduce and replace unnecessary plastic – including replacing plastic sponges with plastic-free, compostable alternatives and banning balloons. Instead, we will be providing plastic-free party kits for all offices to celebrate special occasions.

Collaborating with others to share best practice

We became a Plastic Free Taskforce Flagship Employer with Plastic Free Cheshire. This involves working with the Cheshire arm of the nationwide Surfers Against Sewage initiative to eliminate single-use items from the business by sharing best practice and learning from other organisations and individuals. We plan to further our role as a business ambassador for the taskforce in the years ahead.

Cleaning up the nation's beaches and beauty spots

Colleagues from across our regional brands supported the Surfers Against Sewage 'Million Mile Clean' to tackle plastic pollution along our coastlines, in our countryside and in town centres. This community event mobilised a million volunteers to clean over 10 million miles of UK landscape. In total, 26 Sykes volunteers took part in litter picks on New Brighton and Talacre beaches, along the South West Coast Path and in Oswestry town centre, amongst others.



A continued commitment to volunteering

By donating our colleagues’ time, we aim to positively impact the lives of others

Our culture of volunteering is well established, and colleagues are clear about our goal to ensure each and every one of them volunteer their time for good causes. In FY24, we achieved a 40% staff engagement rate, up from 37% in 2023.

In total, 206 staff members took part in at least one volunteering day, with 131 of them completing two or more days. Collectively, they dedicated 516 days or 3,870 hours of service in FY24. And we’re pleased to have supported 43 organisations through our collective efforts, with colleagues from all levels – including the exec team – getting involved.

Leah Warriner, who volunteered as one of Santa’s elves at the Gordale Garden Centre Grotto for the Hospice of the Good Shepherd, said:

“It is a highlight of my year, to be able to support the Hospice in this way but to also have so much fun at the same time. I love that the Hospice managed to raise so much money with the Grotto, and it’s nice to know I have contributed to that. I will definitely be going back every year to support them as a Santa’s elf from now on.”

At the Children’s Adventure Farm Trust, the team helped with Christmas events organised by the charity for children with medical and special educational needs. While at SHARE Chester, they helped to prepare meals, gave out warm clothing and supported the staff with sorting donations, and for the Hospice of the Good Shepherd’s Santa’s Grotto, they volunteered as Santa’s elves, assisting with queue management and ticketing. Their efforts contributed to raising £38,897.86 through grotto ticket sales and donations.

A group of 29 volunteers worked with local charities to spread cheer during the festive season, including the Children’s Adventure Farm Trust, SHARE Chester and Hospice of the Good Shepherd’s Santa’s Grotto.



Leah Warriner volunteered as one of Santa’s elves at the Gordale Garden Centre Grotto for the Hospice of the Good Shepherd.

A continued commitment to volunteering

Laying the foundations for future careers

Sykes volunteers participated in a Careers Carnival event, attended by more 300 schoolchildren. This aimed to spark their curiosity about future careers by engaging them through arts, crafts and hands-on holiday-booking simulations.

We also welcomed 15 Hoole Primary School students to our head office, where 10 volunteers led tours, hands-on activities and career-themed games to give them a real taste of working at Sykes.

Helping to revamp a community centre

Volunteers from across the group helped with maintenance at Koala North West's centre, with 15 colleagues tackling tasks like painting and general upkeep to enhance the charity's facilities. Koala North West is a charity dedicated to supporting families, focusing on the emotional wellbeing of parents while providing practical solutions for everyday childcare and parenting challenges.

Lending a hand to Changing Lives Together

Volunteers sorted donations for Changing Lives Together's annual Christmas charity event. Cheshire-based CLT provides community support, family assistance and sustainability initiatives, with programmes like food hubs, bike recycling and befriending.



Helping disadvantaged families make memories

At Sykes, we believe in the transformative power of a getaway – it's a chance to relax, recharge, and create lasting memories

Through the generosity of our property owners and our partnership with Time Away, we've been able to gift free stays to families caring for children with life-changing health conditions. Over 12 months, 183 adults, 164 children and 19 dogs, who may not have otherwise been able to, spent quality time together.

While our goal of helping 100 families in FY24 wasn't met, we're proud to have given 80 families a much-needed break away – and to have reached a milestone of 200 stays donated since the partnership began.

The Wee Lodge, Scotland – Owned by Heather Whyte, who donated a stay.

“Offering a free week is something I’ve enjoyed as it’s lovely to give something back. I’ve received wonderful thank-you letters and emails from families sharing how much the holiday meant to them. Some people don’t get the chance for a holiday due to financial difficulties or ill health, so I’m thrilled to help in this small way.”

Heather Whyte

A Special Getaway: The Foden Family

"The whole Time Away process is so easy. The break we had is something we definitely would not have been able to afford otherwise. It gave us time to relax with each other, away from 'home' life, in a beautiful setting that suited my daughter so much. The property and grounds were so gorgeous, peaceful, and calm – we lived in a little bubble for the week. It's an amazing thing for Sykes and its owners to offer families and we're really grateful."

The Foden Family



Empowering our colleagues and supporting diversity

The wellbeing and development of our people is so important, and we want to create the happiest and most diverse workplaces possible

We believe that personal and professional development should be deeply embedded in everything we do, underpinned by policies that empower every individual and wellbeing initiatives to help our people reach their full potential.

In FY23, we launched our new Equality, Diversity and Inclusion initiative and have continued to work on this, ensuring these values are woven into our culture and decision-making.

Commenting on the Ethnic Future Leaders Programme, Sayali Sonawane, Data Science Manager at Sykes, said:

“Over the past six months, the programme has been incredibly enriching. The workshops on personal branding and tackling limiting beliefs were particularly beneficial. Connecting with such a diverse group of industry experts and fellow participants has been a highlight of this journey, and I’m excited to apply these lessons as I move forward in my leadership development.”

The key actions taken in FY24 to help our people thrive are summarised below:

In April 2024, we became members of WiHTL, joining their mission to foster diverse and inclusive environments across the hospitality, travel, leisure and retail sectors. Sykes colleagues are part of several WiHTL committees, including Race & Ethnicity, Data & Insights, Accessibility, and Employee Network Groups, ensuring a meaningful impact on ED&I across the business and wider industry.

Two of our colleagues participated in the Ethnic Future Leaders Programme (EFL), an award-winning initiative aimed at improving ethnic diversity in leadership. This six-month programme enhanced their leadership skills, connected them with mentors, and expanded their network within the industry.



We’ve refreshed our induction process to include cultural training, covering ED&I, impact and religious celebration days right from the start of the employee journey.



The first 12 colleagues graduated from our Forging Future Leaders programme, which aims to cultivate the next generation of leadership talent at Sykes.



We introduced Management Fundamentals training for managers, focusing on key topics such as the Equality Act 2010 and unconscious bias, with plans for additional modules covering bullying and harassment, grievances and recruitment.



Through our Retail Trust membership, all staff now have access to Hapi Rewards, offering discounts at hundreds of retailers, including supermarkets, holidays, cinemas and more. We also reviewed our Virtual GP benefit and plan to introduce a new partner for this in FY25 to encourage uptake.

Empowering our colleagues and supporting diversity

In FY25, our focus will continue to be on fostering personal growth, creating a more inclusive culture and supporting colleague wellbeing.

Plans are already in motion to make the following changes next year:

- Enhancing our benefits, including paid parental leave. Colleagues will receive 24 weeks' maternity leave at 100% pay, and employees with more than five years' service will receive up to five additional annual leave days, bringing their total entitlement to 30 days, plus bank holidays.
- Renewing our Retail Trust membership for another year, ensuring all employees have continued access to wellbeing resources both inside and outside of work.
- Launching a new health cash plan in April, which will support the health and wellbeing of all staff members.
- Introducing the Trailblazers Programme – a leadership development initiative designed to identify and nurture high-potential individuals who aspire to become Heads of Department, empowering them to realise their leadership potential.
- Continuing to expand our partnership with WiHTL, including putting two team members forward for the UK&I Women Leaders Programme which aims to support women into C-suite positions.



Supporting communities and charity initiatives

Offering targeted grants, providing donations and encouraging colleagues to raise money for worthy causes

We're pleased to have supported a wide range of community and charity initiatives in FY24. In total, we raised more than £47,000 for charity in 2024. Colleagues raised £23,743.13 through sponsored activities and other fundraising, which Sykes matched. This is our largest annual fundraising total ever!

Activity included grants to community organisations, donations to those in need and fundraising events:

80 colleagues braved hot coals for our fire walk, raising almost £40,000 for charity partners.



Sponsored the Hoole Enrichment Club for a year, helping to create fun, engaging activities that boost creativity, build confidence, and spark kids' imaginations.

Hosted the Sykes Aid Football Tournament, raising £3,284 for Hospice of the Good Shepherd and £704 for the Stroke Association, with 41 players and 120 spectators in attendance.



This year we achieved our highest-ever annual fundraising total of £23,743.13 and exceeded a target of raising more than £75,000 for the Chester-based Hospice of the Good Shepherd over two years. As a result, Sykes became the charity's biggest-ever corporate fundraiser.



Supporting communities and charity initiatives

The Friends of MV Freedom charity provides accessible boat trips in Weymouth Harbour for disabled people. In FY24, Sykes contributed £1,000 to upgrade passenger seating, ensuring even more travellers can enjoy safe, comfortable experiences at sea in a popular tourist spot.



Codebar Norwich tackles underrepresentation in tech by offering free programming workshops to women, non-binary individuals, LGBTQ+ members and ethnic minorities. Since 2013, it has supported more than 18,300 learners globally, including 345 in Norwich. With Sykes' funding, 150 individuals attended workshops over eight months, gaining skills and opening up career opportunities in tech.



Donated 215 Easter eggs to Cheshire Young Carers and Passion for Learning, with the latter using them in its children's 'Wonka Experience'.



Donated £1,000 to The Zink Project's Happy Eating initiative, helping 386 people access nutritious meals over 20 weeks.



Colleagues donated 30 bags of goods to charity shops, supported multiple foodbanks, and contributed 30 Christmas gifts to children's charities.



Funded mental health first aid training for 10 volunteers at Phoenix Rising in Torquay, helping them to further support women overcoming abuse by offering guidance, facilitating support groups and organising art therapy sessions.

Funded the 2024/25 running costs for the Busy Bees Parent and Toddler Group in Dawlish Warren, ensuring sessions remain affordable for families.



Sykes teams took on the Chester and New York Marathons, raising over £3,000 for the Hospice of the Good Shepherd.

Impact in the regions

Our regional brands are committed to making a positive impact on local communities across the country

Sykes lets out more than 22,500 holiday homes throughout the UK, so it's only right that we support the communities where our guests holiday across the country.

We strive to support causes close to the hearts of our colleagues and customers. Teams from our regional offices joined in various charity events, contributed to fundraising initiatives and took part in hands-on volunteering:

Looking ahead to FY25, we're taking a hyper-localised approach to our charity partnerships, building new relationships that align with our regional brands. We're also committing to two-year partnerships to ensure we're driving long-term impact and sustained support.

Some of our valued charity partners for the year ahead include Cornwall Air Ambulance, Dartmoor Rescue, Windermere & District Foodbank, Age UK Cymru, East Anglia Children's Hospices and Sunflowers Suicide Support.

Manor Cottages volunteered manpower to coppicing and tree work in the reed beds at the Cotswold Lake Trust.



Colleagues from our Lakes brands completed a 21-mile hike from Coniston to Barrow-in-Furness in Cumbria, raising £360 for the Lake District Mountain Rescue.

John Bray Cornish Holidays sponsored the National Lobster Hatchery initiative and volunteered during the lobster release in July 2024. They also participated in the Wadebridge Food Bank's Christmas donation drive.



The team at Coast & Country Cottages hosted an appeal for art supplies and stationery for the Salcombe Youth Centre.



Six members of the Regional Marketing team dedicated a day to the Donkey Sanctuary, preparing food and bedding for the animals and cleaning the paddocks.



Staff from Helpful Holidays in the South West donated essential items to Margaret Green Animal Rescue, such as pet food, dog treats, toys and blankets.



Cornish Cottage Holidays' colleagues generously contributed to the Transformation CPR Food Bank's Christmas donation drive, donating £75 worth of food items.

Continued focus on people, places and the planet

At Sykes Holiday Cottages, we believe that our responsibility goes beyond providing exceptional holidays. It's about making a meaningful impact on the people and places that make our destinations special.

This year, we've dedicated valuable time to volunteering, supporting biodiversity projects in the UK and elsewhere, and empowering our colleagues – including our regional brands – to drive positive change within their communities.

FY24 saw us raise more money than ever before for our charitable partners and achieve a record employee engagement rate with volunteering.

But our journey doesn't stop here. In the years to come, we plan to find new ways to cut our carbon and plastic footprint, protect UK wildlife and landscapes, create more career opportunities and improve access to Britain's best holiday locations for disadvantaged groups.

We're proud of the progress we've made and are excited about the opportunities ahead.



About us


Sykes Holiday Cottages is a B Corp certified, holiday cottage rental agency with over 30 years' experience in the industry

Owned by parent company Forge Holiday Group, which manages over 30,000 accommodation units, Sykes now has more than 22,500 properties available across the UK and Ireland. Each year, more than 2.5 million people now enjoy holidays with Sykes to all regions of the UK and Ireland.

While the business has grown significantly over the years, our commitment to offering quality accommodation to our guests – and being the trusted choice for holiday home owners – remains unchanged. That's why we've been awarded 'Best Large UK Holiday Cottage Booking Company' at the British Travel Awards for 11 consecutive years.

Our head office is based in Chester, but the Sykes family spans regional brands with local offices throughout the UK and in New Zealand.

We're more focused than ever on being a force for good, creating a cleaner, greener and fairer future for everyone. And we want our colleagues, customers, partners and other stakeholders to know that.



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ABOUT US, SYKES HOLIDAY COTTAGES





www.sykescottages.co.uk

Certified



Corporation

This company meets high standards of social and environmental impact.