

# SOCIAL VALUE IMPACT PLAN

2023-24

The **acc** Liverpool Group







DIABETES UK 2023

# CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	➔
OUR PLAN	➔
FRAMEWORKS	➔
HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2023-24	➔
BE A THOUGHTFUL AND INCLUSIVE EMPLOYER	➔
BECOME MORE ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE	➔
USE OUR INFLUENCE	➔
BECOME INTEGRAL TO AND LOVED BY OUR COMMUNITY	➔
2024-25 COMMITMENTS	➔
AIM: TO BE A THOUGHTFUL, INCLUSIVE EMPLOYER	➔
AIM: TO BECOME MORE ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE	➔
AIM: INDUSTRY INFLUENCE	➔
AIM: COMMUNITY	➔
2024-25 PLANS AT A GLANCE	➔



M&S BANK  
ARENA







# INTRODUCTION

ACC Liverpool Group has put social value front and centre over the last two years, considering our role in the city and how we can maximise our positive impact on our local area and beyond, through the four key strands of people, sustainability, industry influence and community.

This year has been characterised by embedding social value across the organisation, turning new initiatives into policy and processes that become second nature. We've invested time and resources into collecting data so that we can set appropriate targets for future years.

As we have recently established new strategic objectives with our shareholder, Liverpool City Council, playing an active role in supporting and developing the city will only become more important for us.



**PHOTOGRAPHER:** OLIVIA HERRING  
ALZHEIMER'S RESEARCH UK PUBLIC EVENT AT LIVERPOOL'S CENTRAL LIBRARY





# OUR PLAN

Our Social Value Impact plan for 2023-24 was focused around four main aims:

- Be a thoughtful, inclusive and progressive employer
- Become more environmentally sustainable
- Use our influence to evolve the industry including our clients, partners and stakeholders
- Become integral to and loved by our community

These remain the focus areas for the coming year, however, we have prioritised some areas that we believe to be particularly important including our environmental sustainability strategy, maximising the legacy of major events and ensuring our estate is as accessible as possible. As in last year's report, there are four key areas of focus for each aim, though these have changed slightly to reflect this year's ambitions.





# FRAMEWORKS

This year we have been embedding the TOMs framework, working with the Social Value Portal to establish a baseline of data enabling us to put a verified value to our activity and provide benchmarks for future initiatives.

Using 2022-23 as baseline data, we are currently collecting data for the financial year just ended 31 March 24 (2023-24). We are planning to set financial targets for 2024-25 and beyond to drive targeted improvements.

We will use TOMS data to map our activity against the UN sustainable development goals.



## TOMS

**TOMS** will be our main social value monitoring tool, which will provide an organisation-wide framework



## UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

**UN sustainable development goals** will map our activity against the UN SDG





# OUR ACHIEVEMENTS





# HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2023-24

This year has been transformative. We have embedded social value throughout the organisation and seen great progress in key areas such as sustainability and legacy.

Through TOMs and the Social Value Portal we have collected key information to give us a more holistic picture of our social value impact on our local area.

Our social value in 2022-23 equated to more than £5.3m

In 2023-24 our contribution grew to more than £6.4m

This report details the work we have done from January 2023 to March 2024 against the four overarching aims, and the associated key focus areas, that we identified at the start of the year.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- ✓ Achieved carbon neutral status
- ✓ Created an informed net-zero carbon roadmap to 2030
- ✓ Launched our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion workplace strategy
- ✓ Achieved Green Meetings silver accreditation
- ✓ Set up a Legacy Champions network
- ✓ Developed a Supplier Charter
- ✓ Published an Accessibility Strategy and co-created a city-wide accessibility forum





# BE A THOUGHTFUL, INCLUSIVE AND PROGRESSIVE EMPLOYER



**EQUALITY**



**JOBS**



**WELLBEING**



**ENGAGEMENT**





# KEY INITIATIVES IN 2023-24

In 2023 we launched our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I) workplace strategy, recognising that we are committed to creating an inclusive workplace, where we all have a sense of belonging and can bring our true selves to work. While we recognise there is still a way to go in this area, we have already achieved a number of milestones such as gaining accreditation to the Liverpool City Region Fair Employment Charter, becoming a disability confident employer, delivering Diversity & Inclusion e-learning modules and introducing Let's Talk Inclusivity posts on our intranet. Our gender pay report was voluntarily published and can be found on [accliverpool.com](https://accliverpool.com).

Our apprentice programme has developed and we have recruited a further four apprentices, giving opportunities to people starting out in the industry. A number of team members have successfully completed their apprenticeships and we were delighted to be able to offer two of them new roles in our organisation. We are keen to support the sector, showing how attractive a career in events can be.

Colleague wellbeing has been a key focus for us this year, and we have continued to support our people through the cost of living crisis including offering free hot lunches over the winter months.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- ✓ Launched our ED&I workplace strategy
- ✓ Voluntarily published a gender pay report
- ✓ Expanded our apprentice programme
- ✓ Focused on colleague wellbeing





Our internal wellbeing and engagement forum has provided a focus for activities and improvements in this area, with representatives developing events and initiatives to address wellbeing across the organisation. This year we have identified a number of house tickets for every show so that our people can experience the events we host.

Through our employee experience programme, we have developed new company values that have been co-created with colleagues. The values, which include honesty, collaboration, enjoyment, respect and growth, represent a joint commitment by our workforce to continue to build and maintain an inclusive and positive workplace.

This year we have launched a reward platform, Centrestage, which encourages colleagues to recognise team members when they best demonstrate these new values, and succeed in other key achievements. Every member of the team undertook in person Dignity at Work training this year, setting a clear standard for how we interact with each other, nurturing a respectful and open culture.

## OUR VALUES



**ENJOYMENT**



**HONESTY**



**COLLABORATION**



**RESPECT**



**GROWTH**





# BECOME MORE ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE



**CARBON**



**ENERGY**



**WASTE**



**WATER**





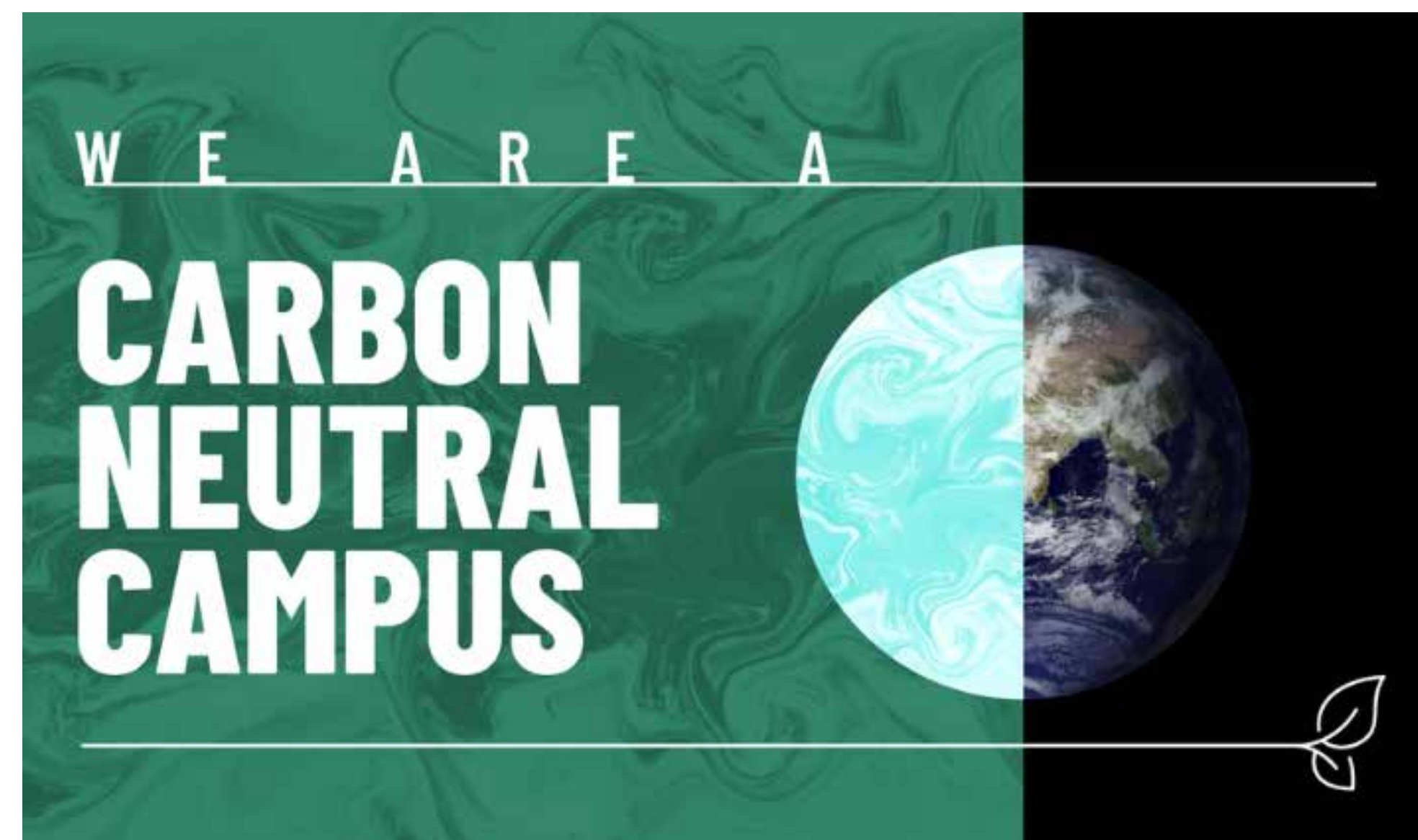
# KEY INITIATIVES IN 2023-24

We have placed much emphasis on environmental sustainability this year, with the city's target to be carbon zero by 2030 sharpening our focus. We were delighted to become a certified carbon neutral campus in September 2023, just in time for Global Goals Week which is focused on highlighting the importance of the UN's sustainable development goals. Working with leading sustainability organisation Carbon Neutral Britain, we measured our total organisational emissions and developed a carbon reduction plan that provides a roadmap to 2030. To support this, we're working towards ISO 50001, which will ensure we are managing energy as efficiently as possible.

We play an active role in the sustainability task force for Liverpool's visitor economy, and as part of this we sponsored and took part in a day-long conference focused on how the sector responds to the climate emergency. Liverpool 2023: From Sustainable to Regenerative Tourism marked Global Goals Week. Speakers included Visit England's Sustainability Lead Rachel McCaffrey, Scott Maclean from Green Tourism, and partners from the city region, all focused on sharing best practice.

To deliver against our roadmap to 2030, we are currently replacing gas fired hot water boilers in the arena and convention centre with air sourced heat pumps, after we successfully supported our landlord and shareholder, Liverpool City Council, in bidding for £1.4m of funding from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme. We're expecting to save more than 4,200 tonnes of carbon over the lifetime of the project. We've also completed a project to transition all our lighting to LED, making further energy efficiencies.

We were awarded the Green Meetings Silver accreditation by Green Tourism, following an assessment that examined all areas of our business that are involved with delivering conferences and exhibitions. We also became the first large-scale conference venue in the UK to join Isla - an independent industry body created to support the event sector's transition to a carbon net-zero future.







Working with our partners Sodexo Live!, we have made great strides to ensure our catering operation is more environmentally sustainable. We have reduced plastic in the arena by introducing a biodegradable cup for soft drinks, canned water and wine, and compostable crisp packets. We've partnered with Klimato to calculate the carbon footprint of all dishes served onsite. This carbon labelling serves as an educational tool, encouraging clients and delegates to make informed sustainable choices. 83% of our new conference & events menu is rated low carbon or below, and 46% of the menu is now plant-based, up from 33% from the previous year.

Across the campus we have been working on streamlining the way we manage waste through our waste strategy. We have an onsite cardboard bailer, and to address food waste we have implemented a food composter that turns food waste into liquid, as well as partnering with Liverpool Zero Food Waste Community who collect suitable surplus food and redistribute it to the local community, with the aim to save it from landfill and help promote local food dignity.

In the run up to last year's Labour Party conference, we worked in partnership with Social Enterprise UK to identify and advocate for local social enterprises, providing an opportunity for them to showcase their products and services at the event. The event featured locally made pies from Homebaked; coffee from Change Please, who fund barista training for people experiencing homelessness; and goods from Spare Snacks, who use wonky produce to create tasty fruit snacks.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- ✓ Achieved carbon neutral status
- ✓ Created a carbon net-zero roadmap to 2030
- ✓ Replaced gas boilers with air sourced heat pumps
- ✓ Upgraded all lighting to LED
- ✓ Awarded Green Meetings Silver accreditation
- ✓ Introduced Klimato food labelling to inform sustainable food choices





# USE OUR INFLUENCE

TO EVOLVE THE INDUSTRY INCLUDING OUR CLIENTS, PARTNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS



TRAINING



LEGACY



COMMUNICATIONS



PROCUREMENT





# KEY INITIATIVES IN 2023-24

This year has been characterised by embedding sustainability and social value into the organisation, as well as providing clear, pragmatic advice and guidance to our clients. We believe that the earlier we have conversations with clients and organisers about sustainable choices, the better chance we have to reduce the negative footprint of an event. To that end, we have produced a series of toolkits that are housed in our newly redesigned content hub on [accliverpool.com](https://accliverpool.com).

We have focused on developing our legacy programme over the last 12 months, recognising that events that we bring to the city can have a significant impact on the people who live here, far beyond the initial economic impact. We see legacy programmes built into large entertainment and sport events at the bidding stage but less so currently for business events. Encouragingly, international associations and businesses are rethinking their models and approaches to live events. We believe deeper collaboration and stronger engagement with local communities will be at the heart of business events in the future and we're passionate about ensuring that Liverpool is at the forefront of this.

At the heart of our strategy is a network of specialists that work in a broad range of disciplines, these are our Legacy Champions who can help clients amplify their objectives. We held two events over the year, one to brief our Legacy Champions and one to bring clients and our Legacy Champions together to explore what event legacy might look like for them.



**PHOTOGRAPHER:** OLIVIA HERRING

**EVENT:** ALZHEIMER'S RESEARCH UK CONFERENCE IN MARCH









# BECOME INTEGRAL TO AND LOVED BY OUR COMMUNITY



**FUNDRAISING**



**STRATEGIC  
PARTNERSHIPS**



**CITY  
CONFIDENCE/PRIDE**



**ACCESS**





# KEY INITIATIVES IN 2023-24

Connections with the local community remain of the utmost importance to us and we have achieved stronger links this year through a focus on accessibility, volunteering, charities and fundraising.

We made a commitment this year to ensure that we are as welcoming as possible to as many different people as possible, this principle underpinned the development of our accessibility strategy. We partnered with AccessAble, the leading provider of access information in the UK, to better understand diverse access requirements across the campus, before publishing a detailed access guide developed for use by all visitors with accessible needs. We co-created a citywide accessibility forum in partnership with Liverpool ONE, where best practice and ideas are shared with a view to developing a full city approach to accessibility.

We've rolled out our volunteering policy and around 150 colleagues took part in a charity day, supporting the Comedy Trust. Teams were tasked with going out and about around Liverpool to undertake research for the National Lottery Funded "Laugh it off" project. We have also been working with other local charities to identify opportunities for volunteering in the future and have organised sessions helping out at local homeless charity, The Whitechapel.

We've continued to support charities in other ways, through giving away tickets for fundraising events, providing space free of charge and providing experiences for participants. Last year we gave away in the region of £2,000 in tickets and £60,000 in space. In terms of direct fundraising we have committed to increasing donations to the ACC Liverpool Foundation, and have relaunched our Charity Champs initiative with a year-long programme of events and activities.



ACC LIVERPOOL COLLEAGUES VOLUNTEERING AT THE WHITECHAPEL CENTRE







# 2024-25







# 2024-25 COMMITMENTS

Our four Social Value Impact plan aims remain broadly unchanged for 2024-25. It is worth noting that we have brought the planning and reporting for social value in line with our financial year to make it easier to support and resource activity in this area.

Although the broad aims remain the same for the coming year, we have prioritised some initiatives that we believe to be particularly important, including our environmental sustainability strategy, maximising the legacy of major events and ensuring our estate is as accessible as possible.

As in last year's report, there are four key areas of focus for each aim, these have evolved slightly to fulfil this year's ambitions.

## KEY AREAS OF FOCUS

**Aim:** Be a thoughtful, inclusive and progressive employer

**Focus areas:** Equality, jobs, wellbeing, engagement

**Aim:** Become more environmentally sustainable

**Focus areas:** Carbon, energy, waste, water

**Aim:** Use our influence to evolve the industry including our clients, partners and stakeholders.

**Focus areas:** Training, legacy, communications, procurement

**Aim:** Become integral to and loved by our community

**Focus areas:** Accessibility, volunteering, charities and fundraising





# BE A THOUGHTFUL, INCLUSIVE AND PROGRESSIVE EMPLOYER

As we go into a year where we are hyperfocused on delivering the best experience for our customers, we know that our people are key to the customer journey and we need to continue to nurture their talent. An employee charter will be developed to formalise our values and commitment to each other, developing a stronger proposition for prospective employees through a brand project that we will start this year.

We know that we need to embed our Equality, Diversity & Inclusion plan into everything we do to ensure we have a representative workforce that feels valued for what they bring. To do this, we must first set targets based on the demographics of our local community, before developing initiatives to address inequalities in our team. As part of this plan, we are working through our recruitment to remove any barriers to working with us.

We continue to focus on wellbeing through our internal Wellbeing and Engagement forum. We are using this vehicle to develop a programme of activity, finding innovative ways to engage with colleagues. This includes continuing to embed Centrestage, our reward platform, to encourage people to celebrate success and positive demonstration of our new values: respect, collaboration, enjoyment, honesty and growth.

We are rolling out mental health first aid training for around 30 colleagues to ensure we have a supportive and understanding environment.



ACC LIVERPOOL GUEST RELATIONS COLLEAGUES AT THE EUROVISION SONG CONTEST





# BECOME MORE ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE

Although we talk about sustainability, we don't want to just sustain, we want the environment around us to thrive. We have launched our sustainability strategy, which articulates the roadmap to carbon net-zero in 2030 and outlines the key initiatives that we are focusing on this year.

**See [ACCLiverpool.com](https://acc.liverpool.ac.uk) for more information**

As we continue to upgrade and enhance our facilities to improve sustainability and energy performance, ensuring targets in our 2030 roadmap are met, we plan to further upgrade our building systems to remove the use of fossil fuels and increase efficiencies. We have started work on ISO 50001, an energy management certification that will help us manage our energy more effectively.

To help organisers lower the carbon used during events, we are collaborating with industry body ICE to promote a free event carbon measurement tool called SAM, helping planners track the impact of their offsite activities. This, alongside our own venue reporting system which measures onsite activity, will mean that clients can make data driven decisions for future events.



NEW FLOWERS IN OUR WILDFLOWER MEADOW





We will be improving the biodiversity of our site by creating more green spaces and introducing two beehives. Our internal sustainability forum is driving a series of awareness raising activities including paperless days.

Working with our catering partner Sodexo Live!, we will continue to reduce plastics across the entire campus. We have introduced canned water and wine to the arena which works alongside our compostable glasses. There will be a focus on consumer education this year to ensure our arena customers understand and support our ongoing activity and we will develop a green rider to support our work in this area, with due consideration to the NAA Green Guide.

Having gained Silver Green Meeting accreditation last year, we will aim for Gold this year with an updated application, and we will explore accreditation options for the arena. We continue to champion a more sustainable approach to events, working with Isla and other industry bodies. We are considering ISO 20121, an event sustainability accreditation that will formalise our approach.

On waste, we will maintain our zero to landfill status and have ambitions to increase the percentage of recyclable waste to 75% by 2026 and 100% by 2030. We will do this by creating an onsite waste centre where we can sort waste streams at source. We'll continue to build on technologies like ORCA to reduce the carbon miles associated with waste transport.

When considering our carbon journey, we have initially focused on the scopes we have direct control over. However, we are conscious that delegate and audience travel is one of the largest contributors to carbon usage, and while we believe there is no substitute for gathering people together face to face, we will investigate potential offsetting options to mitigate the environmental impact of such travel needs.







# INDUSTRY INFLUENCE

Our legacy programme has got off to a strong start and remains a key focus for this year. We believe by building a strong city network of passionate ambassadors we can ensure a lasting legacy for business events, for the benefit of both the client and the city. This year we will grow the number of our legacy champions and continue to engage with clients on creating a stronger and more meaningful connection to the city.

We will use our online content hub as a place to support organisers to make informed decisions about their events, publishing resources and case studies to share our expertise. We will also develop educational resources for our colleagues to understand social value issues, starting with a regular sustainability newsletter.

More broadly, we want to develop a customer charter to express how we work with clients to achieve excellence in events and continue to champion a more sustainable approach to event planning. Furthermore we will continue to leverage our position as a cornerstone venue to enact positive change in the city region, forming part of the Liverpool Visitor Economy Sustainability Taskforce.

We will continue building a sustainable supply chain, encouraging suppliers to engage with our social value plans and to develop initiatives of their own. With the introduction of new procurement regulations we will make it easier for people to understand our process and use case studies to demonstrate best practice in this area. We are in the process of working with our main suppliers to understand the provenance of products we use in the course of our business. We will work with them to lessen any negative impacts over the lifecycle of the products, ensuring they support our sustainability goals. We will investigate how we can use TOMs to assess the broader impact of our supply chain.



THE DIABETES UK TEAM AT AFRICA OYE





# COMMUNITY

We want to ensure our venue is welcoming to everyone through our Accessibility Strategy and through regular city wide accessibility forums run in partnership with Liverpool ONE. The accessibility strategy is aimed at promoting equality and fairness and this year our key tasks include publishing an accessibility guide in digital format, developing a site improvement plan based on recommendations from our partners AccessAble, and creating a new inclusivity and equality training plan for all staff and service partners.

We will seek to achieve the Gold Standard Accreditation with Attitude is Everything, the leading access body for the live events industry.

We have revamped our Charity Champs, the colleague-led group that raises money for charity through a range of activities. This year we've placed greater emphasis on raising funds for our own charitable foundation, which will have raised a total of £100,000 since its inception, so that we can issue more grants to more good causes. We have an annual programme of activities including bake off challenges, a mountain climb, a sponsored car wash and raffles.

Despite having our own charitable foundation, we do still work with other charities, particularly those that work to improve the lives of people living in and around Liverpool. We work with charities in lots of different ways – by providing tickets and experiences to raffles, through volunteering, and by offering a platform to raise awareness about good causes. This year we will look at any ad hoc requests we receive through the concept of Share the Experience.



AccessAble GUIDE TO OUR VENUES CAN BE FOUND ON [ACCLIVERPOOL.COM](https://www.accliverpool.com)





# PEOPLE

## THIS YEAR WE COMMIT TO:

- 🎯 Developing an employee charter
- 🎯 Embedding and delivering our ED&I strategy
- 🎯 Embedding our reward platform
- 🎯 Delivering the next phase of our wellbeing strategy
- 🎯 Engaging staff on the journey
- 🎯 Launch the city-wide accessibility charter

# INDUSTRY INFLUENCE

## THIS YEAR WE COMMIT TO:

- 🎯 Developing the content hub
- 🎯 Communicating our activities, to encourage behaviour change
- 🎯 Launching a new Customer Charter
- 🎯 Delivering our legacy strategy

# ENVIRONMENT

## THIS YEAR WE COMMIT TO:

- 🎯 Achieving ISO50001
- 🎯 Applying for Green Meetings Gold accreditation
- 🎯 Improving biodiversity across our site with two beehives
- 🎯 Developing a green rider
- 🎯 Creating and implementing a staged waste management plan
- 🎯 Completing the LED Conversion of campus
- 🎯 Installing air sourced heat pumps to replace gas boilers in the Arena and Convention Centre.

# COMMUNITY

## THIS YEAR WE COMMIT TO:

- 🎯 Achieving Gold in Attitude is Everything
- 🎯 Increasing donations to the ACC Liverpool Community Foundation