



ESG report 2023-24

Whey Nutrition Division

ESG report

2023-24

At Volac, we are passionate about unlocking the power of whey and the nutritional benefits that dairy brings to the population. We are also committed to playing our part in creating a sustainable future for this sector and take our responsibility in this area extremely seriously.

As you will see in this report, our ESG strategy is far reaching. We have already undertaken significant investment to address sustainability in all corners of our business and from this strong base we are now able to set ourselves ambitious targets to 2030 with an aim to be Net Zero by 2045. While we are already doing a great deal, there is still much more to do, with carbon footprint and water management being key areas to address.



We believe in being open and honest about our progress with customers and consumers. Not one of us knows all the answers or how exactly we will get over the finish line. What's important is that we keep moving forward and keep focussed on our targets, working with our suppliers to reduce emissions from dairy across the UK and Ireland. I am hugely proud of what we have achieved so far in all aspects of ESG and very much hope you find this report both informative and inspiring.

Richard Jones

Managing Director - Whey Nutrition

A summary of ESG at Volac

With our Whey Nutrition manufacturing site located in the British Isles and raw materials sourced from around the globe, the scope of our ESG strategy is far reaching. Our key areas of focus are set out below:

Environmental

Measuring and reducing our impact on the world we share



Our focus:

- Measuring and reducing our carbon footprint as we establish a comprehensive roadmap towards Net Zero
- Further transitioning to renewable energy sources
- Minimising resource utilisation including water
- Working with industry experts to set targets on plastic and waste reduction
- Ensuring that our work supports our customers' sustainability targets

Social

Providing opportunities and support to all through our People strategy



- Building a safe, sustainable, fair and flexible workplace.
- Safeguarding human rights throughout our business, including through our supply chain
- Supporting local communities around our sites and wherever we have an impact
- Approaching sourcing ethically to minimise our impact

Governance

Doing business in the right way



Ensuring we are clear about how we operate

- Delivering accounting integrity and transparency
- Appropriate corporate structures to ensure legal and ethical compliance
- Responsible Sourcing Code
 - Sourcing policies for our key raw materials (palm oil, whey, wood)

Ensuring the business is being run for the good of all stakeholders

- Avoiding conflicts of interest
- Managing risk proactively
- Independent internal auditing
- Ensuring our employees feel safe to be themselves



Company values



Performance



Ambition



Collaboration



Trust

Our company values of **Performance**, **Ambition**, **Collaboration** and **Trust** underpin everything that we do and our approach to sustainability follows the same principles.

This means we strive to do business in the right way, whilst having a positive impact on our employees, customers, suppliers and wider society.

Unlocking the power of whey

Here at Volac, we believe that dairy nutrition is critical to health and wellbeing. Our whey ingredients support the health of people by providing high quality nutrition and functional ingredients.

Our ingredients can be found in food products that people enjoy around the world. By unlocking the power of whey, we also support farmers and their ability to prosper in the future.

Our whey protein concentrates and isolates are highly nutritious and can be found in a broad array of food products that support consumer's performance and active lifestyles, from powdered shakes to protein bars and more.

The latest addition to our ingredients range, Volactive Pro2O, is a whey protein isolate that allows manufacturers and consumers to explore a broad range of fruity taste experiences, without compromising on nutritional benefits.



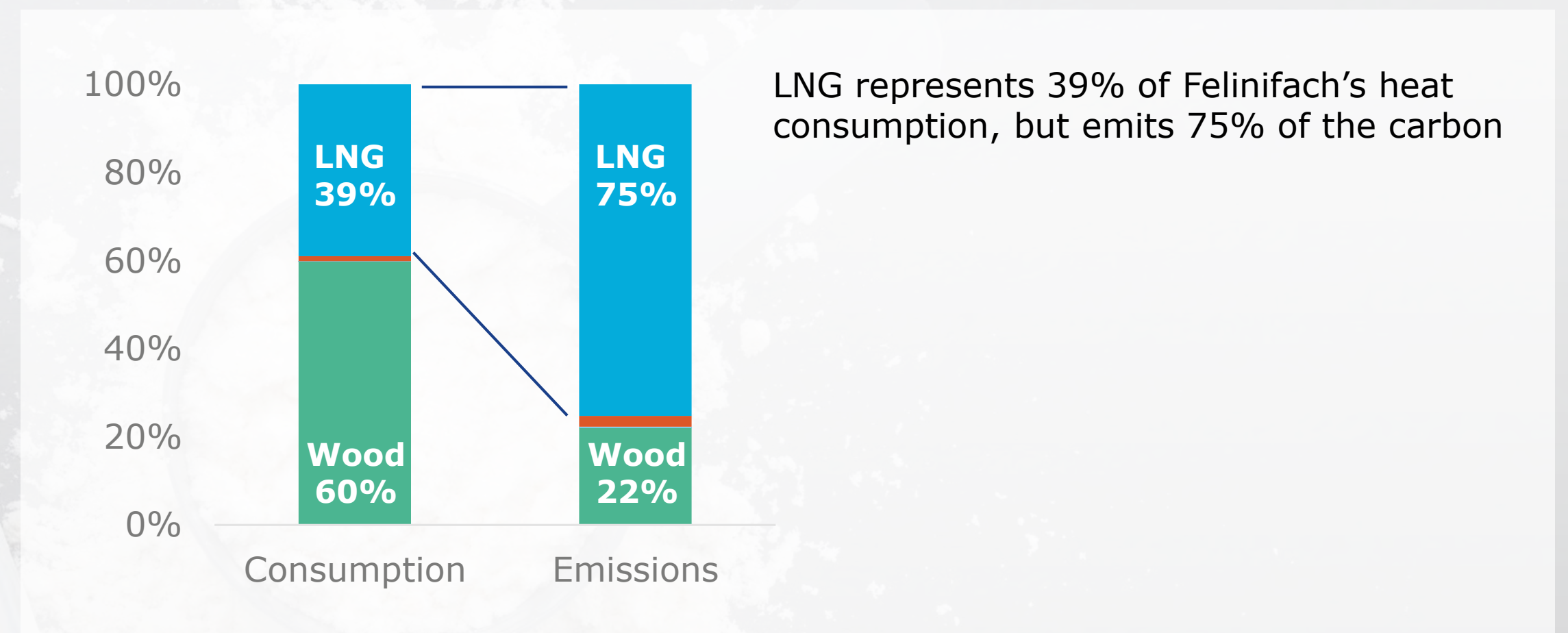
Environmental Strategy



Our progress

In our whey nutrition business, sustainability is embedded in how we do business and we are ambitious in our plans for the future. Reducing greenhouse emissions and water use sit alongside food safety and workforce health and safety as our top priorities for the business - we have done a lot already but know there is more to do to.

- At our Felinfach manufacturing site, we have made significant investment in renewable energy and water saving initiatives over the past decade but there is more we can do. Our next steps are to look at how we can reduce LNG as a fuel source by investing in further use of renewables such as wind, solar, hydrogen and heat pumps.
- In order to further reduce our carbon footprint, we are also currently carrying out a feasibility study into an AD plant fed solely by recycling factory waste into renewable energy for manufacturing.

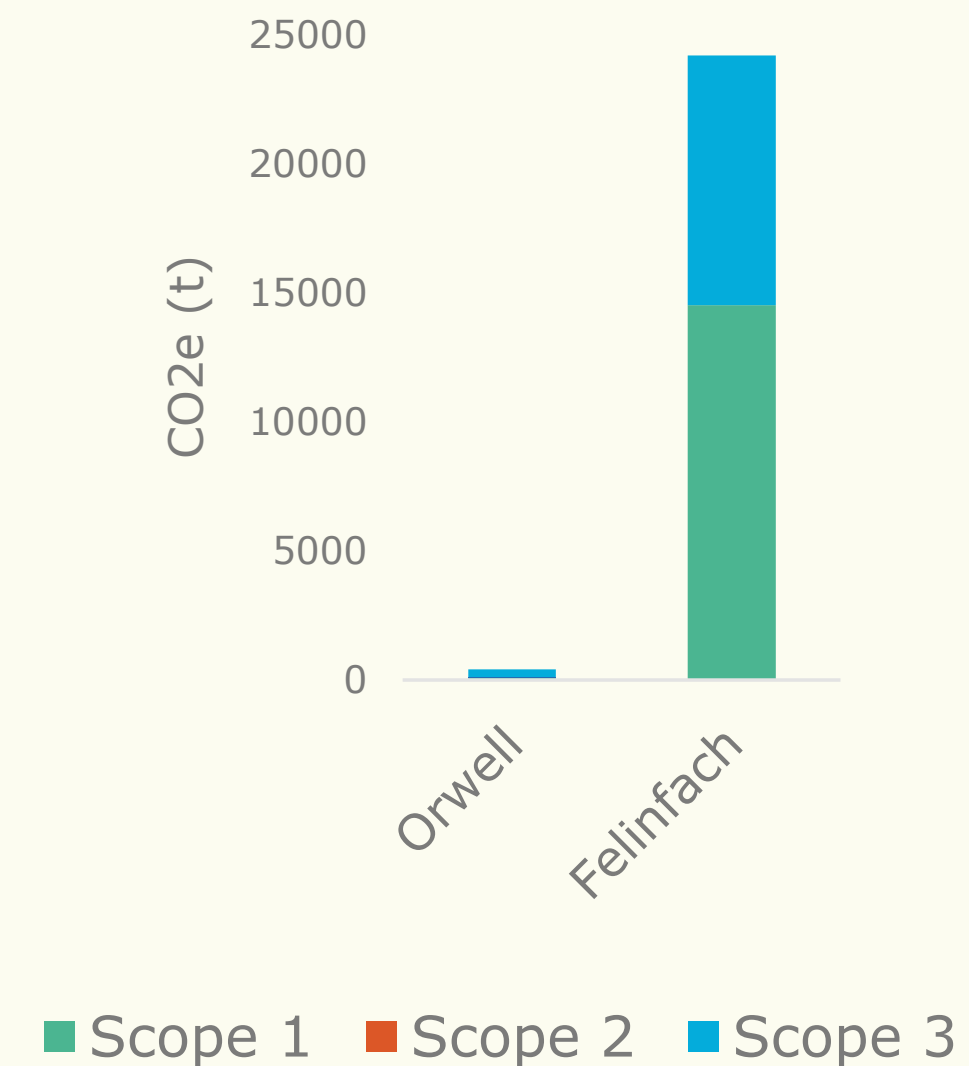


In 2022, we completed product footprints on a full **Life Cycle Assessment basis (LCA)** on a selection of our current whey nutrition products, and these have been positively received by our customers. Our next priority is to refine the Scope 3 emission data by obtaining primary data from our suppliers by Q1 2024, especially for our incoming whey supply, rather than using industry average figures.

Focus on emissions

Over the last year, ClimatePartner has completed an external assessment of the carbon emissions at our UK sites to produce a Corporate Carbon Footprint.

The results show that the majority of our Scope 1 and 2 emissions relate to our operation at Felinfach, due to the large amount of **direct emissions from heat** used at the site. Currently, 60% of the heat-related consumption at the site comes from sustainable biomass (accounting for just 22% of the emissions), with the remainder coming from the Liquified Natural Gas (LNG). It is therefore a priority for 2023 and beyond to look at options to reduce these Scope 1 emissions.



Understanding our Scope 3 data

Scope 3 emissions are always the most difficult to accurately determine and to influence, as they are not directly within the control of the business. At this stage, it has not been possible to assess any downstream Scope 3 emissions (such as onward transportation, use of sold products, etc.) and we have not included upstream calculations for raw materials, capital goods, transportation and distribution of raw materials and leased assets. In future years, we want to increase the reach of our assessment into these additional Scope 3 areas to get a more complete picture of our carbon impact and we'll share this in future sustainability reports.

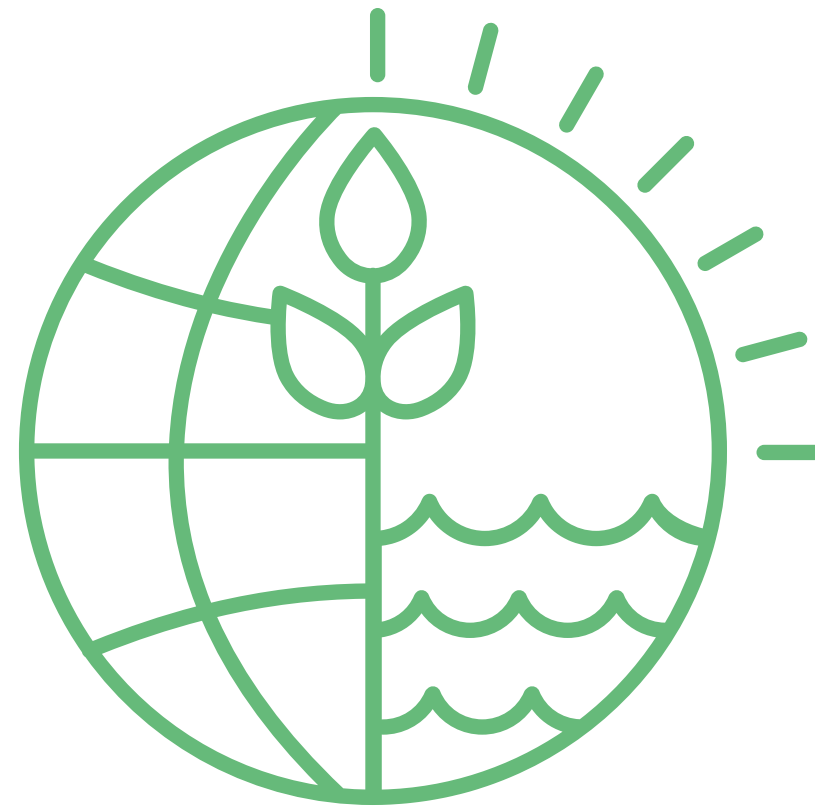
This includes understanding the emissions of our whey supply base. Here, most of the work we have done so far has used 'database' numbers. While these numbers are globally-recognised, we would prefer to use primary data from the specific whey suppliers we work with. We are currently working together with our suppliers to understand the carbon footprints of these supply chains and operations and hope to complete this work by the end of 2023.



Environmental strategy - key highlights

2013

Removed heavy fuel oil from Felinfach site, through converting to Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG), with some Kerosene usage, removing circa 9000t of Carbon*



2014

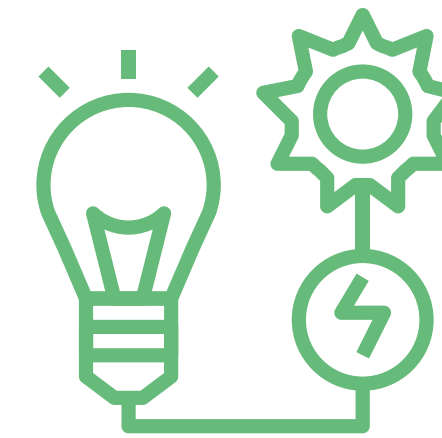
ISO50001 introduced pan-business to ensure tracking and external verification of energy usage.

2016

Biomass combined heat and power plant - Felinfach⁺

2017

Reverse osmosis plant - Felinfach⁺



2018

Solar park - Felinfach⁺

2020

Green electric purchasing programme implemented across business

2022

Carbon footprinting project commenced
Group Energy and Environment Manager position created and filled



* Based on EU ETS update 2013 – 2018 data

⁺ See individual case studies in report

Investing in renewables

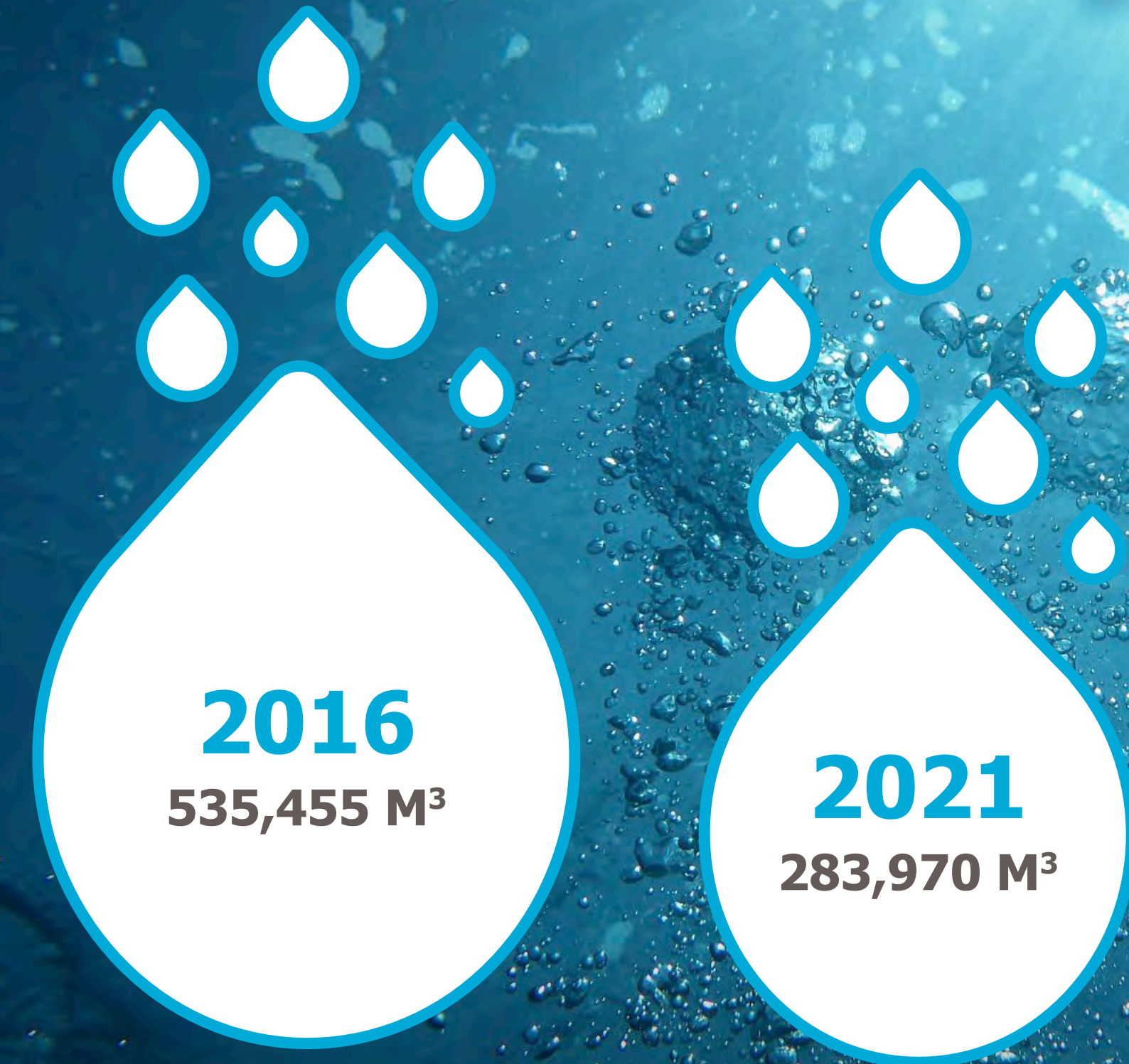
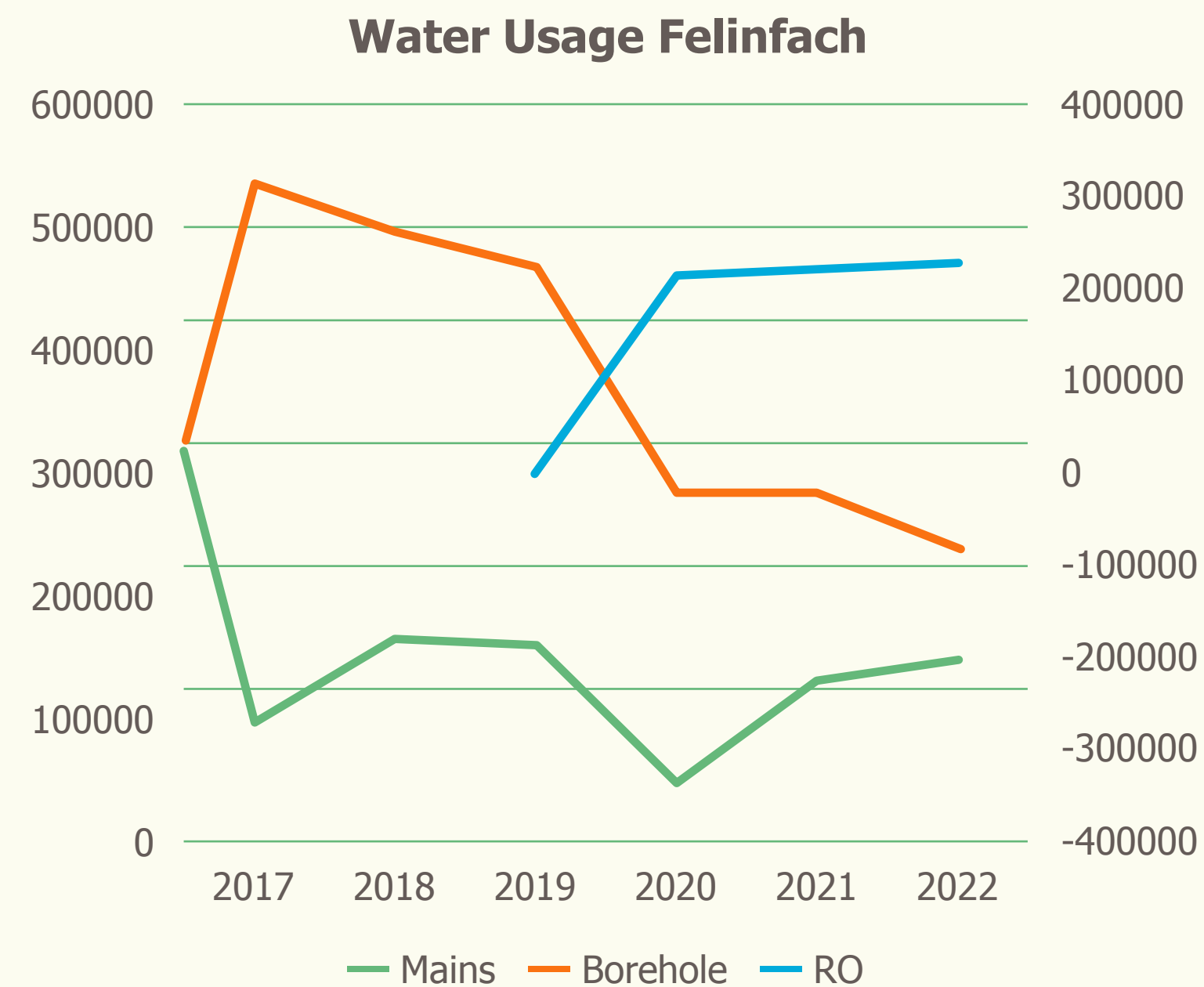
Our 20 megawatt biomass plant at Felinfach was officially opened in 2017 by HRH Prince of Wales (now King Charles III). The energy it produces is exported to the adjacent Volac dairy plant which consumes 100% of the Biomass plant output. The plant uses wood as a fuel which is sourced from sustainably-managed forests.

Our Felinfach solar park was acquired in 2018. It consists of 1,680 solar panels, each producing 260w, providing renewable electricity for our warehouse operations, while also exporting back to the national grid.



Case study: Water use

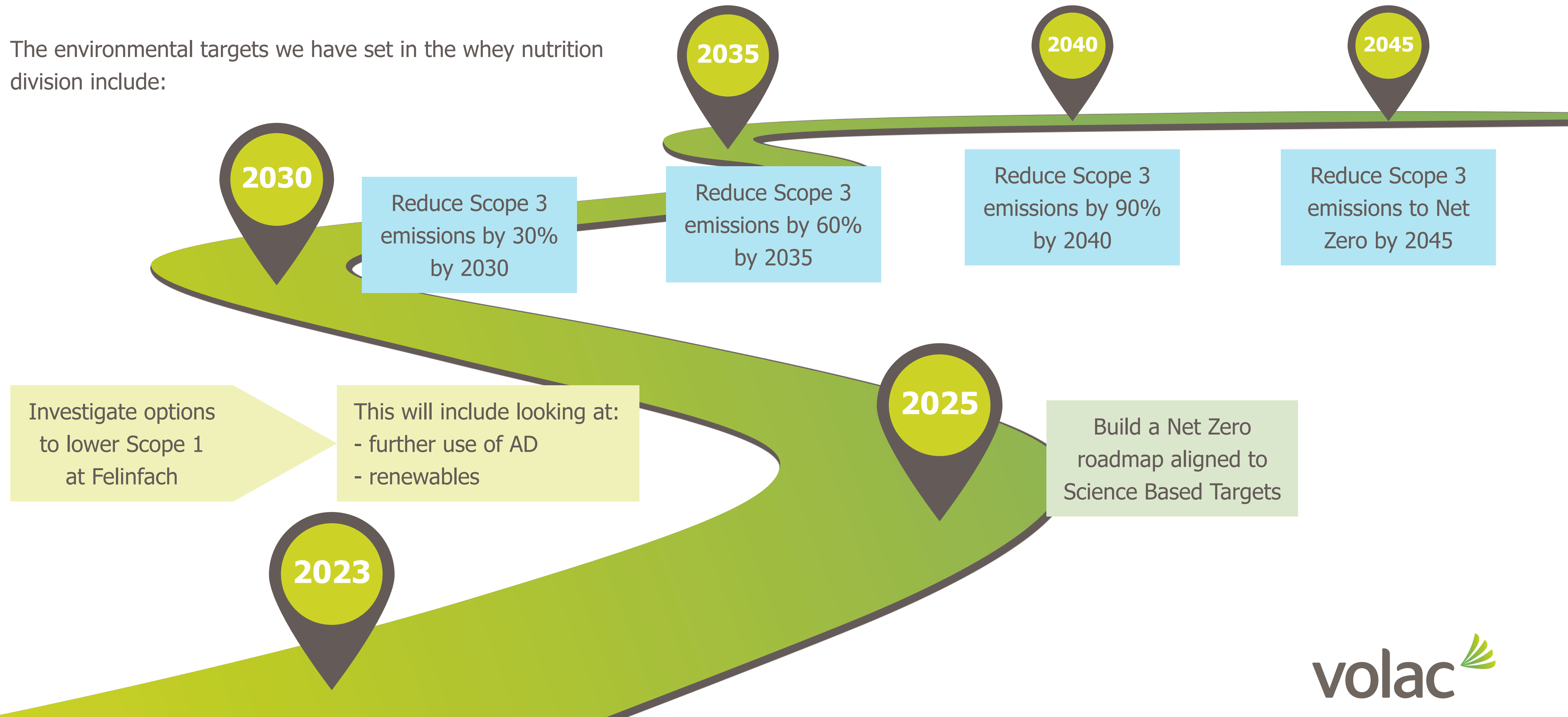
In 2017, we installed a reverse osmosis plant at our Felinfach wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) to recover water and return it back to use onsite. This has led to a 47% decrease in borehole water abstraction at the site from 2017 – 2021 and we continue to work on ways to reduce our use of mains water.



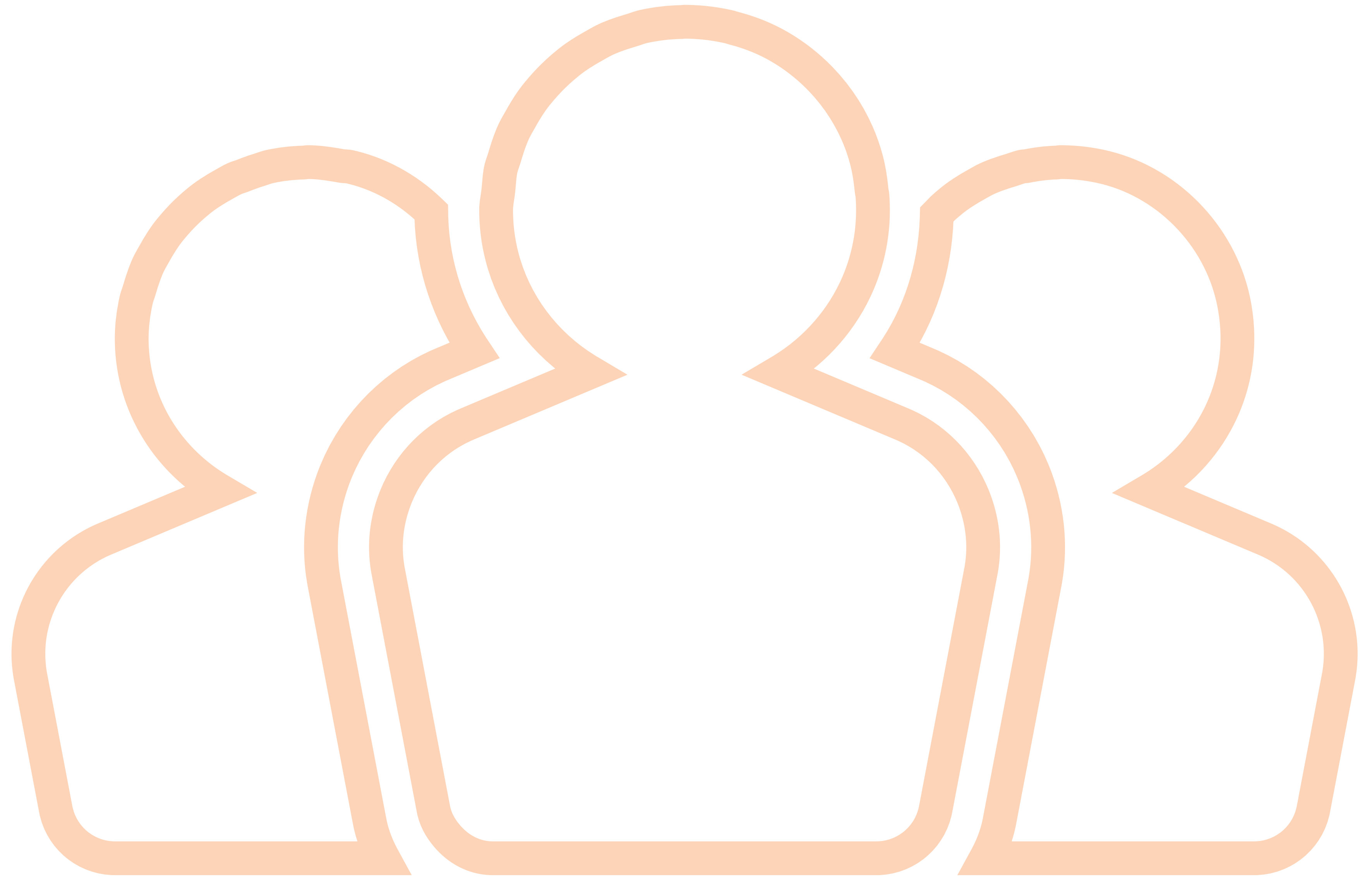
Reduction of 251,485 M³ abstracted water.

Whey nutrition targets - environmental

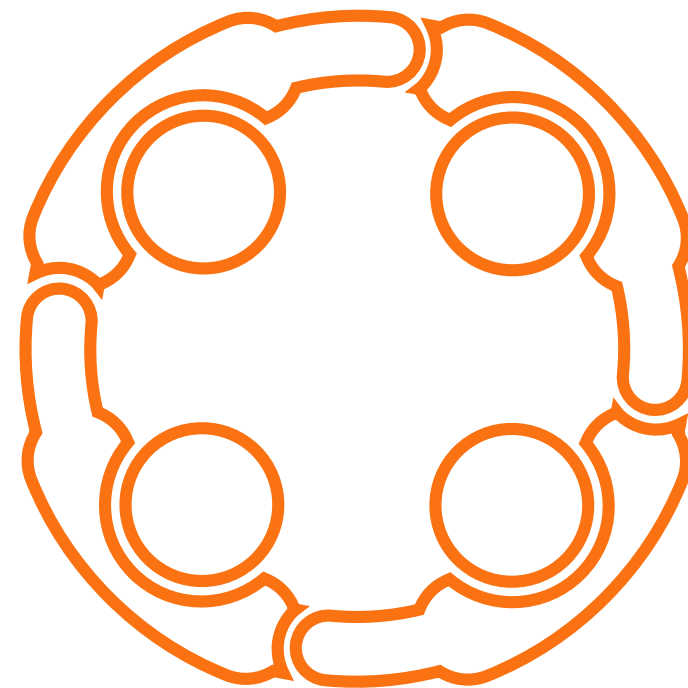
The environmental targets we have set in the whey nutrition division include:



Social Strategy



Our 2025 People Strategy commits us to delivering a sustainable workplace for our employees, where our staff enjoy and feel proud to work for Volac, and where we have a positive relationship with the communities in which we are based. Our family-run foundations are important to our colleagues and our focus is on creating an engaging work environment of mutual prosperity and a collaborative culture where information is readily shared, and teams learn together. We monitor and report a number of key performance indicators around our people strategy, including employee engagement, employee retention and gender pay.



Since the pandemic, health and wellbeing has become a key focus and we have worked hard to transform our business into one that promotes hybrid working and places strong importance on mental health. We have worked in the last few years to bring our values of Performance, Ambition, Collaboration and Trust to life, and we now run 'Town Hall' monthly online meetings, normally hosted by members from the Leadership Team. Despite operating in shift patterns, attendance at these is usually high with colleagues valuing this engagement opportunity with the senior team.



Our latest People Strategy has the following focus areas:



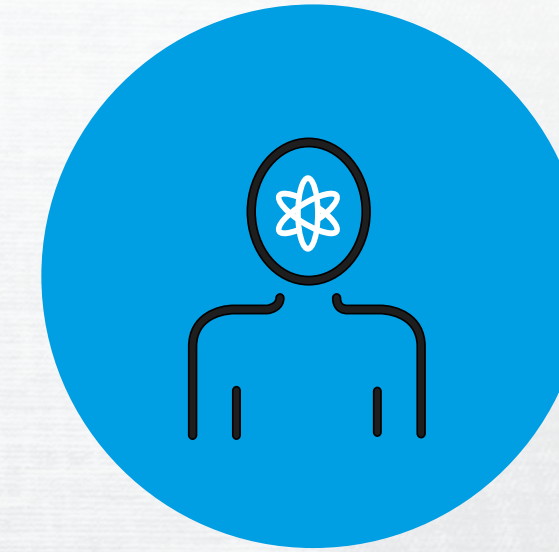
A sustainable and engaging workplace

This includes increased focus on inclusion and belonging, a strong focus on health and wellbeing, opportunities for volunteering, an improved Employer Value Proposition and ensuring our workplace environments are engaging across the business.



Building an efficient and effective organisation

Ensuring our organisation structures deliver for the business and for our colleagues.



Becoming a learning organisation

A long standing priority for the business, this ensures a comprehensive offering in terms of Performance and Development Reviews, e-learning and leadership programmes.

Our progress

What have we done?

2016

- Introduction of Employee Assistance Programme



2017

- Introduction of enhanced maternity and paternity pay
- Increase in holiday entitlement, including more loyalty days and days off for wedding/civil partnership
- Utilising Apprentice Levy for further education



2018

- Introduced a 'Talent Strategy' which resulted in an increased number of women in our succession pipelines
- First reporting of Gender Pay Gap

2019

- Introduction of Culture Amp engagement survey "Have Your Say"

2020

- Introduction of Mental Health First Aiders and Wellbeing focus
- Mental health drop-ins during the period of COVID



2021

- Introduction of Simply Health Cash Plan (UK)
- Introduction of US health insurance (Volac Inc.)

2022

- Improved US benefits offering for all in Volac Inc
- Felinfach recognition awards
- Hybrid working policy
- Degree apprenticeships
- Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging training completed by all line managers
- Cost of living payment and early payment of part of bonus
- Gender Pay Gap Report shows significant improvement: mean -5.27%
- Recognition by Healthy Working Awards Schemes (Wales)



2023

- Revised enhanced maternity and paternity pay
- Small Benefit Exemption (Ireland)
- "Volac Rewards" campaign
- Renewed focus on wellbeing
- Menopause policy
- Annual calendar of health and wellbeing related initiatives

Case study: Great Volac Milk Ride

This charity bike ride first took place in 1999 with colleagues cycling from our manufacturing facility in West Wales to the company's head office in Orwell near Cambridge. The business has now held this event ten times, pedalling between various Volac and customer sites throughout Europe, raising hundreds of thousands of pounds for Cancer Research UK. In 2022, 40 team members once again cycled the 250-mile route from Felinfach to Orwell, raising £32,000 in memory of former employee Alistair Sampson from Northern Ireland, who recently lost his battle with cancer.

Betty Lawes Foundation

The Betty Lawes Foundation was set up by the founder of Volac's wife to provide funding for a small number of selected charities which are connected to local Volac staff communities, and which make a real difference in terms of environmental, biodiversity, economic, health or social sustainability. Money raised by the 2022 Great Volac Milk Ride was match funded by the Foundation to give a grand total of £64,000.



Case study: Volac Leadership Programme

The Volac Leadership Programme (VLP) has been running since 2016 and aims to develop talented first line leaders across the business. 74 colleagues have now been through the course, which takes place over 3-4 months and comprises a series of multi-day workshops, including guest speakers from the Volac Senior leadership team, project work and 1:1 mentoring with a previous course participant. Throughout the programme, members are encouraged to:

- Understand their unique self and what they bring to the business
- Put this into practice within the context of Volac's values - Performance, Ambition, Collaboration and Trust.

The course culminates with each participant presenting their project to their peers, line managers and Volac Directors, sharing their leadership approach and what they bring to the business, plus a summary of their project results.

As well as personal development, the VLP enables participants to forge links with colleagues in other functions, understand more about the business as whole, and raise their profile within the organisation. The programme is now highly regarded, and staff are proud to be invited to participate. Our aim is that 30% of participants in Leadership Programmes take on new responsibilities at Volac within a year of completing a course.



Case study: Local community initiatives

We are proud of our strong links with the communities in which we operate.

At our Felinfach operation, we have a site-based CSR group who is actively engaged in the community and facilitates fundraising for local charities through a variety of events.

Other activities include:

- Sponsorship of the Lampeter under-10's football club
- Regular engagement with local educational institutions and students
- Sponsorship of Lampeter Women's rugby club kit



Our key targets - social



2025

**Mean Gender Pay Gap
to be at 0 +/-5%**



**Increased
score**

**in engagement sections
of survey from
2021 baseline**



**Every hire
stays**

**for at least two years
at Volac**



Zero leavers

**citing lack of flexibility/
working conditions as a
reason for leaving**

Governance Strategy



At Volac we believe in doing business in the right way.

This means ensuring we operate transparently and with integrity, running the business for the good of all stakeholders and creating a culture where everyone feels safe to be themselves. We welcome external scrutiny of our business including thorough statutory auditing, and a programme of independent internal auditing, and in 2018, introduced enhanced cyber security systems. We also engage with EcoVadis sustainability assessments to monitor our ongoing performance.

Responsible sourcing is something we take extremely seriously, launching our Responsible Sourcing Code in 2018. In 2019, we launched our Volac Employee Code of Conduct and formed our Sustainability Strategy Group in 2022.

We are proud to hold the following ISO certifications:

- **ISO 45001** - health and safety management (Group)
- **ISO 50001** - energy management (Group)
- **ISO 9001** - quality management (Group)
- **ISO 14001** - environmental management (Felinfach)



Case study: Risk Management

Cyber security prevention and education

Keeping our business safe online is a key priority both for us and our customers. To manage our risk in this area we self-assess our cyber security systems annually to National Cyber Security Centre standards and have these verified by an external assessor. We have a system in place to continuously monitor password vulnerabilities and undertake comprehensive training and testing, via our KnowBe4 training programme:



KnowBe4 training

All new users are added to our KnowBe4 platform and complete a proficiency assessment upon joining the company. In addition to this, ongoing security awareness training takes place across the business including:



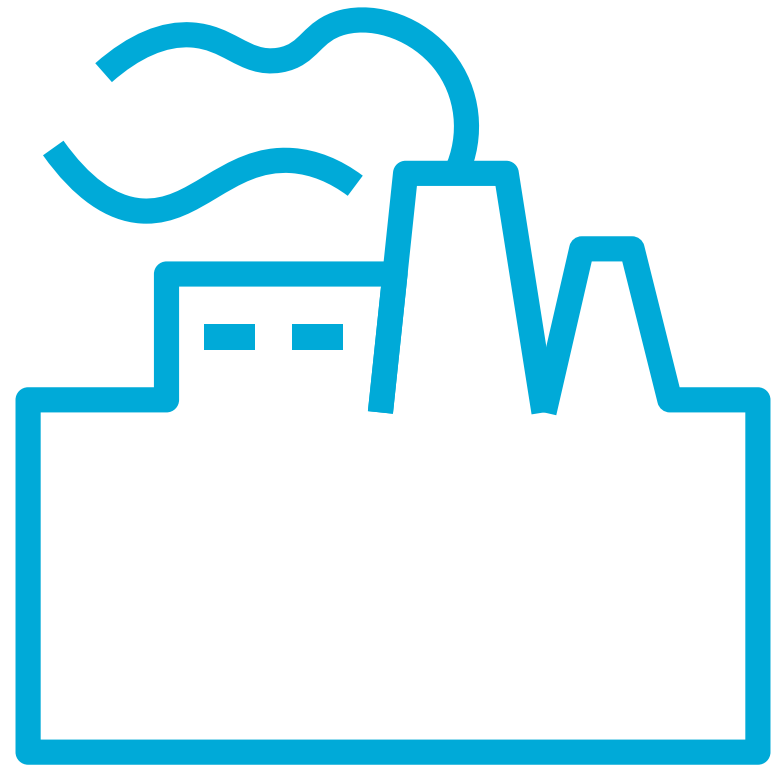
- 2 compulsory sessions per year for every employee and anybody that has access to our systems

- 1 security awareness proficiency assessment (SAPA) every year
- Controlled simulated phishing attacks with ongoing training for colleagues that click on simulated emails
- Cyber posters (Digital) regularly refreshed and displayed across all sites
- Physical USB sticks placed in company locations containing a friendly virus that alerts us if the device has been plugged in

We are seeing a steady improvement month-on-month in this area including:

- ✓ less clicks on simulated emails
- ✓ more phishing emails reported to IT (both simulated and non-simulated) reported
- ✓ all sites targeted with USB sticks have handed them in without plugging them into their laptop or pc first

Our targets - Governance



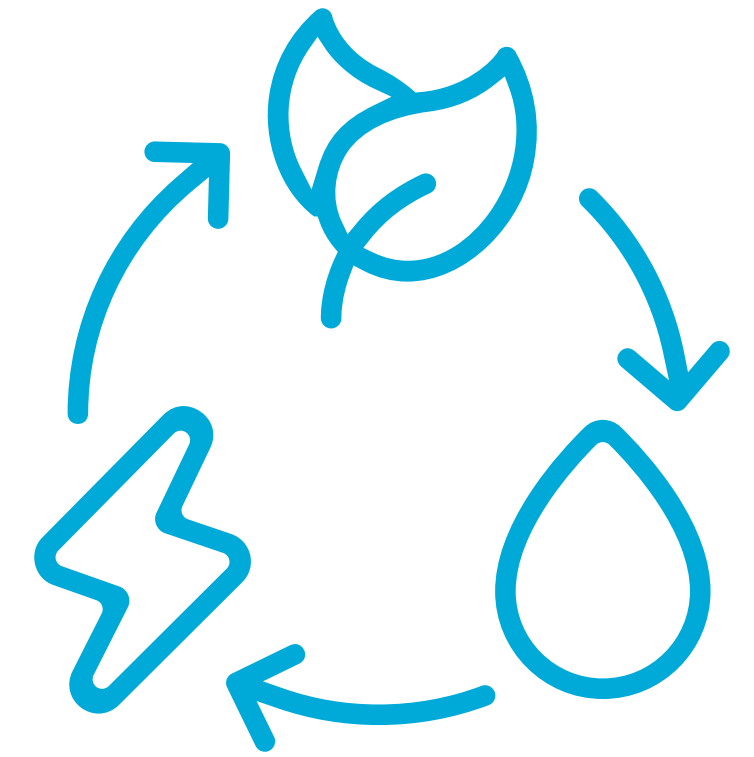
Maintain external factory, H&S, energy, environment **certifications** (ie ISO and Ecovadis)



Keep working to create **a diverse, inclusive environment** where everyone feels they belong



Continue commitment and focus on **risk management**



Embed **Sustainability Strategy Group** in the business

Conclusion

We know that there is a need for sustainable, long term change across our whole supply chain and this means taking action, sometimes without knowing all the answers.

We will have to commit to some goals without knowing how to reach them.

At Volac, we are well-placed to help lead on this journey and are confident that with the right commitment and drive, and through collaboration with the right partners, we will be successful.

Without doubt, we will need to adapt as we progress, adding new commitments as we move forward and encountering currently unforeseen challenges and ethical dilemmas along the way.

We will continue to report on our progress, as we work to provide sustainable dairy nutrition for a healthier world.



