

Corporate & Social Responsibility Policy

Purpose:

To ensure that the Company and its employees are aware of, and comply with, the need for Corporate and Social Responsibility

Scope of the Policy:

All areas of, and employees of, the Company

Procedure:

Corporate & Social Responsibility (CSR)

The Vineyard Group is committed to green initiatives that help protect the environment around us and have appointed a CSR committee to this end. This committee is in place to analyse, communicate and action initiatives that support our CSR goals and policies. These include, but are not limited to monitoring and reducing consumption and energy levels, implementing environmental efforts that reduce costs and in turn generate revenue for the group and to communicate effectively our CSR policy to all stakeholders of the business. The CSR committee is made up of representatives from each business unit i.e. The Vineyard at Stockcross, Donnington Valley Hotel & Spa, Donnington Valley Golf Club and The Vineyard Cellars who all assist in identifying and implementing eco-friendly as well as socially responsible policies.

"If tackling climate change represents the greatest of challenges for the world, it is also the greatest of opportunities for Britain ... we now have the opportunity to play a leading role in taking the world towards a low carbon future." Former Prime Minister Gordon Brown

What is Corporate Social Responsibility?

Approaching your business aims responsibly, with an awareness of your surrounding social and environmental needs, in order to fulfill stakeholder demands, achieve a profit and remain competitive. The hospitality industry covers many areas where we as a group affect the environment around us as well as the guests and customers we serve along with our employees. The industry as a whole should be addressing these issues in order to become more socially responsible. These include Ethics, Human Rights, Community, Environment and Employee Relations. The government defines CSR as "how business takes account of its economic, social and environmental impacts in the way it operates – maximising the benefits and minimising the downsides."

The Business Case for CSR: What are the benefits?

The potential benefits of employing an effective and comprehensive CSR policy are far reaching. This includes enhanced reputation, competitive edge, better risk management and a more committed and efficient work force; all of which could have a considerable effect on profits. Practising greater responsibility could also have a positive impact on wider society and the environment.

The CSR Policy of The Vineyard Group is communicated to all employees and stakeholders of the business units who in turn are obliged to uphold, maintain and implement its contents.

Statements of intent:

1. We aim to protect the environment and community around us whilst looking after our own competitive interests and those interests of the wider society.
2. We aim to continually monitor and reduce our use of energy along with our contribution to the production of green house gases.
3. We aim to recycle all materials and waste where it is economically and environmentally viable.
4. We aim to support the local community around us through working with local charities and educational establishments.

ACCESS FOR ALL

The Vineyard Group is committed to providing the highest standards of customer care to every guest no matter what their different needs may be. We aim to make our hotel facilities available and accessible to all of our guests equally. To ensure our facilities may be enjoyed by all we offer:

- Designated car parking including easy access parking for those with disabilities
- Accessible entrances including ramps where possible
- Elevators and stair lifts
- Guide Dogs are always welcome

THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

The Vineyard Group plays an active role in the local community, both economically and environmentally. We provide support to local community projects as well as local charities in the form of fundraising and prize donations. One example is our award winning 'Pink Pelican Campaign' which supports the Pelican Cancer Foundation, a local charity who specialise in improving the delivery of precision surgery for bowel, liver and prostate cancer along with Breast Cancer Care and the Little Princess Trust.

All activities, donations and sponsorships raised by customers, suppliers and staff will contribute to the company's objective of supporting the local community.

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

This forms a large part of our CSR policy. The way we conduct ourselves in business not only impacts our environment here and now but can have repercussions for generations to come.

We adhere to all government regulations and legal requirements across the group. CSR involves meeting these requirements and going above and beyond that to what we can also do on a voluntary basis. This involves minimising any negative impacts we as a business have on the environment.

The Vineyard Group commits to the following:



- ✓ The CSR Committee will assess and monitor the impact we have on our environment.
- ✓ All business decisions will take into account environmental factors and the outcome that those decisions may have.
- ✓ Stakeholders including customers are made aware of our CSR policy and its contents and that this information is readily available.
- ✓ Continuous effort is made to reduce our use of energy and the production of waste from the businesses.
- ✓ We encourage suppliers to have their own CSR policy and take this into consideration when selecting the suppliers that we work with.
- ✓ We encourage our customers to reduce their carbon footprint and provide them the means to do so by supplying products that are environmentally responsible in their use.
- ✓ Where possible we source local materials and food products.

Included below are some examples of practices in place.

Recycling & Waste

- We purchase all of our copier and printer paper from sustainable sources.
- Mixed recycling waste collection are now in place at Donnington Valley Hotel and Donnington Valley Golf Club which has led to a reduction of over ½ million litres of landfill each year.
- We use the grey rain water on site at Donnington Valley which is in turn used for irrigation of the golf course.
- We recycle cooking oil from all kitchens through the use of a local contractor.

Energy Saving

- Intelligent heating and air cooling systems are in place at Donnington Valley Hotel & Spa, minimising energy consumption.

Working Practices

- Policy in place to educate all of our staff on environmentally safe work practices and this policy document.
- We knowingly only work with where possible those suppliers with their own CSR policy or ethically sound working practices.

Food Purchasing

- Food is locally sourced as a preference in order to minimise the food miles that are produce accumulates.

Local Community

- Support for local charities, including the provision of prize vouchers and monetary donations from our own fundraising efforts.
- The Vineyard Group welcomes employees from all over the country and indeed the world. However we do also work closely with local educational establishments to train and provide work experience to the local community.

Local Environment

- We aim to support a wide variety of wildlife throughout the grounds as well as encourage natural habitats to flourish.
- We aim to minimise our air and noise pollution across all business sites and to continually monitor and reduce this.

CASE STUDY – Water Recycling at Donnington Valley Hotel & Spa



In 2006 a £13 million development and extension to Donnington Valley Hotel & Spa was opened. During the planning of this, great debate was given to the “Green” issues of the new build especially on saving water which is taken from the local environment. Do we connect to the main sewerage at a cost of £100,000 or do we install our own sewerage treatment system at a cost of £900,000?

We decided to install our own sewerage treatment system and recycle all of our waste water from the new & existing hotel. This choice was made after taking into account various factors including the assessment of our impact on the local environment as well as the fact that waste water is available almost 24/7 e.g. flushing toilets and water from baths/showers. There were certain obstacles to overcome e.g. we couldn't pump chlorine water from the swimming pool straight to the sewerage treatment plant as this water would damage its ecological system. This problem was resolved by pumping the waste water from the pool into a holding tank where it is mixed with grey water taken from the hotel and pumped up to our reservoirs where we also harvest rain water.

To collect waste water from the hotel, new drains were laid from the new build to the existing hotel. The waste water is then stored in two large storage tanks and pumped by three large pumps up to the top of the golf course, approx one mile. It then passes through a state of the art sewerage treatment plant which gives the best level of suspended solids; it will then pass through four ultra violet filters before being gravity fed to a holding tank, where it is mixed with the back wash swimming pool water. The mix is then pumped approx two miles to our reservoirs on the golf course, which are planted with reeds and wild flowers, where it is aerated by three waterfalls which in turn sustains the local wildlife where moorhens, ducks, frogs etc thrive in this green environment.

As an example if a guest should have a bath using fifty gallons of water we would reclaim 49 gallons to irrigate the golf course. We recycle 95% of all waste water from the hotel.

The impact of this development is that we are now fully self sustainable on the golf course in terms of our irrigation whilst creating natural habitats and encouraging wildlife.

OFFSETTING OUR OWN AS WELL AS OUR GUESTS CARBON FOOTPRINT

The Vineyard Group is fully committed to offsetting and reducing our carbon footprint wherever possible. This is achieved by ensuring efficiency in all new building designs, the travel and transport that we use as well as the introduction of more efficient working practices. We also recognise the impact that our guests and customers have on the environment when they visit us e.g. the cost and impact of the petrol used should they be driving to our hotels. We offer all of our guests the opportunity to offset their carbon footprint by working with Climate Care (www.climatecare.org). Guests have the opportunity to offset their carbon emissions directly from our own website.

THE CARBON TRUST

As part of our commitment to reducing our energy use, The Vineyard Group works closely with the carbon trust in determining ways in which we as a company can



have lower energy consumption. At the beginning of 2007 the Carbon Trust undertook an assessment of Donnington Valley Hotel & Golf Club plus The Vineyard at Stockcross.

The report highlighted several areas in which we could influence and make changes to affect our energy consumption. The following is a summary of where actions have been taken.

1. Improvements in Energy Management

This area we have greatly improved upon with a more structured approach to education, training of staff and the implementation of procedures such as:

- As part of the housekeeping daily checklist, lights and air-conditioning are required to be turned off once the room has been serviced, as well as ensuring that TV's are no longer left on standby etc. The house-keeping supervisors have the responsibility to ensure that this is actioned daily and as such verify this during their inspections.
- Function Rooms are on the Duty Managers checklist to ensure that lights and air-conditioning are turned off after the event has finished.

2. Begin staff awareness program

This has been improved upon and a structured approach to educating our staff is now in place.

3. Insulate pipes and fitting on boiler plant

This was implemented during 2007.

4. Fit partition door between pool and reception in Vineyard

This was implemented in 2007.

5. Install more efficient lights

There is an ongoing program throughout the company to replace all 50w bulbs with 35w low energy and low heat bulbs. This includes corridors, bathrooms and bedrooms.

HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

We actively encourage a reduction in use of all hazardous substances and non degradable products. Where these products are absolutely necessary our staff are trained in their use and disposal. As part of our regular staff training and induction all employees receive COSHH training.

Detergents used for laundry are kept to a minimum and the implementation of giving guests at Donnington Valley Hotel & Spa the opportunity to reuse their towels rather than washing them every day should they wish is now in place.

ONGOING DEVELOPMENTS

The Vineyard Group continues to make improvements over and above the legal requirements. Current projects include:



- The introduction of a biodiesel fuel processor to recycle used cooking oil into diesel to run the vehicles and machinery on site.
- Limiting the hours that staff transport is available to encourage staff to use public transport.

USEFUL LINKS

www.carepar.com

This site specialises in providing carbon emission information specifically for the hotel industry

www.climatecare.org

This site contains information about carbon offsetting as well as a useful tool for calculating carbon emissions for a particular journey.

www.carbontrust.co.uk

Helps organisations to reduce carbon emissions and develop commercial low carbon technologies.

www.defra.gov.uk/environment/

The UK governments approach to delivering sustainable development.

www.energysavingtrust.org.uk

a non-profit organisation that provides free impartial advice tailored to save money and fight climate change by reducing carbon dioxide emissions.

Sir Peter Michael
The Collection