

TRANSFORMING TO A NEW SUSTAINABILITY IN CONTRACT CLEANING



A Guide for Facilities and
Procurement Managers

July 2019

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BACKGROUND - UK CONTRACT CLEANING RECOGNISES THE NEED FOR A TRANSFORMATIVE APPROACH

The UK contract cleaning industry has always faced major challenges in workforce management by virtue of having a dispersed and low paid employee base. The result is that outsourced cleaning contractors have often been an easy target for criticism as regards the way they treat their frontline staff.

Against this background, legislative pressures are steadily forcing up contractors' costs, obvious examples being auto enrolment pensions, the apprenticeship levy, and minimum wage increases. To these can now be added the ramifications of potential immigration policies post-Brexit. Whether because of points-based or salary-based access schemes, or because of wider government policy to control the immigration of lower-skilled workers, the traditional market for labour in the industry looks set to undergo a turbulent period.

Cleaning also faces a challenge when it comes to profit margins. Latest reports put the average net profit margin in UK contract cleaning at 2.79%, a substantial decrease from the 4% quoted as the industry norm only a couple of years ago. Despite there being a clear effort made on behalf of many contractors to differentiate themselves, years of replication and industry 'norms' have led to the cleaning industry becoming commoditised, with no perceived difference between one contractor's offer and another.

This, combined with aggressive competition has resulted in a 'race to the bottom' on price. Over-competitive bidding often takes place in the hope that, financially, things will somehow sort themselves out. However, the reality is that as margins are squeezed, standards are compromised, leading to reputational problems for contractors, the industry at large and of course for customers who suffer the consequences.

Only recently have the stakeholders on all sides of a cleaning contract woken up to the realisation that the best deal in the moment is not always the best outcome for the longer term. Corporate collapses, with their destabilising impact on contractors, staff and customers, have reminded us that sustainability is a wider concept than just environment, carbon footprint reduction, or recycling. It is about recognising the responsibility businesses have to 'do business' in a better way.

On a positive note, in the last few years cleaning has successfully emerged as an industry that can call itself technologically enabled. In the past we often heard the criticism that cleaning was too basic an industry to embrace technology. There was an argument that cleaning had remained in the dark ages, with low levels of professionalism in both frontline staff and management.

A closer look inside the profession paints a very different picture. Floors are being scrubbed by robotic machines; assets are tracked via the Internet of Things and, most importantly, management software has worked its way into every aspect of businesses. This includes contract management, time and attendance, quality auditing, employee training and e-trading. The welcome effect of this is that contractors now have the ability to control overheads more closely, deliver improved customer service and provide regular performance data, which in turn is causing customers to view contractors more professionally.

Amongst all the emerging technology, however, are the people who work on the front line, the unsung heroes of the industry who strive to deliver high standards despite turbulent and changing times. It is worth remembering that technology is most effective when its power is harnessed to the human element of service delivery.

Taking all these developments together, an opportunity is now emerging for enlightened employers in the industry to secure competitive advantage by thinking about their workforces differently and taking a new approach to the way they engage with staff in the day-to-day running of their operations.

WHY RE-DEFINE SUSTAINABILITY?

The cleaning industry is only too familiar with the concept of unsustainability in the business sense. We have felt the recent heartache of peers as they struggled with unsustainable contracts and we recognise the pressures that led to the eventual outcome.

To avoid recurrence of these events, we are now at a point where we need to look for a new sustainable model of cleaning that considers the environment, people, customers, society and financial viability in greater balance. In a manner that is far from being disruptive, we need to genuinely embrace change and unite to create a new narrative.

Sustainability has always had its wider definition, embracing the triple bottom line of environmental, social and economic sustainability, but this concept has seldom been implemented. Thankfully, business is now waking up to a new era, with an approach that broadens sustainability to include responsibility and purpose. It includes the motivation of a customer that wants to do more, to have more impact beyond driving a procurement saving. We are entering an era of intelligent procurement that looks at value beyond a simple number.

Emergence of B Corps – Businesses with purpose beyond profit

The emergence of the B Corp movement has given global expression to a new style of corporate conduct. B Corps are for-profit companies using the power of business to create a shared, durable prosperity for all. In 2019, more than 2,700 B Corps operate across 150 industries in 60 countries around the world. Examples of companies in the UK that have embraced the movement include Waitrose, Innocent Drinks and Havas Media.

Becoming a B Corp is not just about achieving a certification or seal of approval. It’s about joining a community of other businesses dedicated to the same vision and goal. B Corps are committed to improving their practices and increasing their impact. It is about understanding that there is a way to do business differently and a way for business to be a force for good.

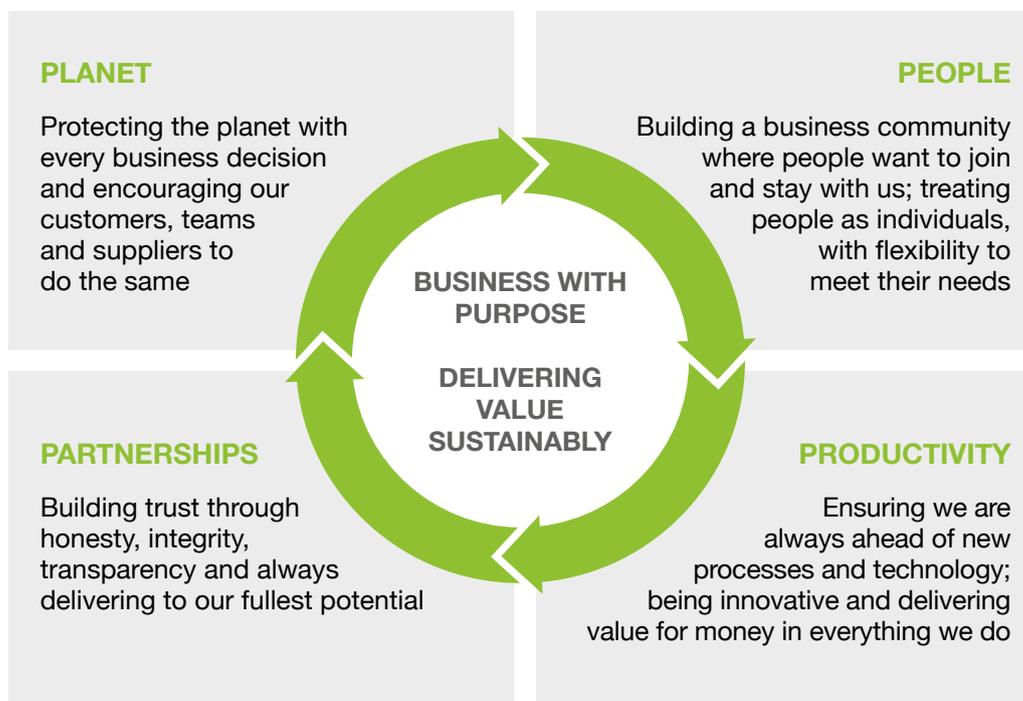
Wherever you see the B Corp certification, it recognises an organisation doing things differently. It is a framework rooted in social impact, environmental consciousness and purpose beyond profit.

#reinventingbusiness #bthechange

BUSINESS PURPOSE AND SUSTAINABILITY

Purpose beyond profit and sustainability have the same foundation. At Greenzest we recognise that to drive a sustainable operation for our customers and to do business in the right way, we need a framework for managing our activity. That framework consists of four key elements **Planet, People, Partnership and Productivity** - all of whose needs must be balanced. At the centre of our framework is **Purpose**. Long term sustainability is the objective of all our business initiatives, with purpose and our customers at the centre of everything we deliver.

Business with purpose



PLANET

A sustainable cleaning contractor will do their best to understand their customers' environmental strategy and align their own activity towards it. As a committed partner, they should be able to work alongside you to write the environmental aspects of your next cleaning RFI and support you in achieving it through a united approach.

What should cleaning contractors be doing?

There are three areas your cleaning contractor should be focusing on to reduce the environmental impact of cleaning:

Land and Life

- Managing hazardous waste disposal
- Maximising paperless processes
- Reducing chemical use

Water

- Monitoring and managing water use

Air and Climate

- Managing energy use
- Monitoring greenhouse gas emissions
- Offsetting a percentage of greenhouse gas emissions
- Monitoring and reporting of non-hazardous waste

Focusing in more detail, key activities include:

Reduction in chemical use

Minimising the use of environmentally unfriendly cleaning agents is one of the key ways a contractor can reduce their environmental impact. There is a lot of hype, or 'green washing' in the industry, in terms of what constitutes a 'green' or sustainable product, some of which is completely misleading. Quite simply, it comes down to what impact the product has on the planet, and biodegradability.

Over the last ten years, three developments have increasingly made the reduction in cleaning agents a more easily achievable aim. These are: -

- microfibre technology
- steam
- enzyme-based cleaning

Microfibre

In microfibre cloths and mops, the microfibrils are naturally statically charged and, because they are so small, they can reach into invisible crevices in surfaces that are inaccessible to conventional cleaning materials. Dirt clings to the fibres because of electrostatic attraction, capillary action, or a combination of the two. This results in the materials having a strong 'suction effect', i.e. they can collect a significant amount of dirt in just one wipe. Microfibre cloths and mops are designed to be used dry or dampened with water only.

Concerns about microfibre posing a threat to marine life by releasing microscopic plastic fibres when microfibre products are washed have now been addressed with the introduction of ultra-microfibre that is proven to produce little or no plastic emissions.

Steam

Steam cleaning is a totally different way of cleaning. It uses superheated dry steam delivered under pressure, at greater than 140°C, to loosen dirt, grease and sticky oils from surfaces. The high temperature of the steam kills micro-organisms (thermal disinfection) and, because the steam cleaning machines incorporate vacuum extraction (and some have integrated microfibre tools), all dirt, water and contaminants are removed from the area being cleaned.

Laboratory tests have confirmed that steam cleaning on each of the following surfaces – laminate work surface, stainless steel, floor tiles (smooth vinyl and textured safety flooring), vinyl coverings and curtain textiles – completely removes common micro-organisms and completely disinfects the cleaned surface. Steam cleaning is also well suited to deep restorative cleaning of heavily contaminated surfaces and crevices.

The only drawback of steam cleaning is that it is an intensive, time-consuming activity, frequently using large equipment. The presence of electric cables and steam hoses can also present a health and safety issue. It is therefore ideally suited to periodic deep-cleansing treatments rather than daily use.

Enzyme-based cleaning

Notwithstanding the emergence of 'EU Eco flower' accredited, low impact chemical products, there is now a growing demand for purely biological cleaning products. These are generally considered to be products that use good bacteria, and the enzymes they produce, as cleaning agents. These friendly bacteria can also produce other actives including acids, polymers and other cleaning agents. The process works in practice because the different dirt sources, such as fats, oils, food debris, body fat and body waste are a good source of food for the bacteria which, once removed and digested, produce natural enzymes to help them break down the waste, creating their own biofilm to continue to protect and clean for up to 80 hours thanks to residual cleaning. The process can be likened to humans producing saliva to help us breakdown and digest our food.

The challenge being addressed by companies in this field is to develop practical, biological products for 'real world' cleaning challenges and compete like for like on costs with the major chemical brands available today.

Taken together, the use of microfibre, steam and enzyme-based products brings benefits not just in the form of reduced chemical use, but in health and safety for staff, as fewer harmful chemicals are needed. It also reduces the volume of chemicals needing to be delivered, limiting the number of delivery miles required in the process.

Recycling

The internal recycling of waste in a building can have a massive impact on a Facility Manager's own waste reduction targets. However, effective segregation is necessary to make it happen, which requires close cooperation between customer and contractor. Good contractors will work alongside you to help your own staff segregate properly. That includes clamping down on single use plastics.

Use of IT to introduce paperless processes and reduce road miles

In contract cleaning, eliminating paper-based operational support processes can give contractors a real competitive edge, not just by



“We will need to look at improved ways of cleaning which reduce infection rates, but are also kinder to the environment.”

Facilities Manager - Healthcare



EXAMPLES OF CLIENT ORGANISATIONS WHO ARE FULFILLING THE SUSTAINABILITY AGENDA:

Havas
(registered
B-Corp)

No paper cups,
no sugar sachets
in their offices.

Waitrose
(registered
B-Corp)

No single use
plastic bags in
stores from April
2019.

saving on paper purchase, but by reducing the overall amount of time spent on administration and its associated resource requirement - filing cabinets, office space and your back office headcount itself. It goes without saying that because administration also takes place out in the field, any paperless solution implemented will also streamline that part of a contractor's business too.

The electronic management – with no requirement to print - of key procedures such as new contract set-up, staff onboarding, timesheets, staff communication, ordering of materials or consumables, quality auditing, helpdesk, client billing, and supplier payment is now all very much within reach for cleaning/FM contractors who are willing to invest in any one of a number of software systems designed specifically for our industry.

The four key benefits of this paper-free system are that contractors can:

- significantly reduce the workload of their office admin team and promote agile working
- greatly speed up the processing of documents, whilst simultaneously freeing up field managers to spend more time focusing on staff and clients
- reduce their carbon footprint due to less paper usage and fewer miles travelled to attend meetings, either at their own office or with clients
- simplify business continuity in the event that a disaster strikes at an office.

Carbon footprint reduction

The carbon footprint of cleaning contractors is driven by two main activities: energy use in offices and vehicle fuel used by field managers when visiting staff and customers. In order to measure carbon footprint, contractors should use one of the ready reckoners available, or engage a consultant to perform this task on their behalf, putting together a reduction strategy and looking at carbon offsetting. A carbon reduction plan should set out a clear plan to limit the use of energy and fuel. Committed contractors will usually incorporate their carbon reduction plan in their ISO14001 Environmental Management System, where they should record their performance against target.

Going one step further, they will invite their own suppliers to demonstrate that they too have undertaken similar initiatives. This may form part of a sustainable procurement policy which requires the company to appoint, where practicable, suppliers who are either close to the contractor's cleaning locations (in the case of deliveries to site), or have developed other beneficial environmental procedures and processes.

PEOPLE

The cleaning industry faces challenges due to the very nature of the tasks its employees are commonly required to undertake and the stigmatised views of the industry that this generates amongst the wider public.

Against this background there are now 23% of employees in the cleaning industry who do not originate from the UK. This brings an interesting dynamic to the workplace, as well as an opportunity to embrace and maximise on diversity. However, it also means the industry is about to enter an uncertain phase where the cost of labour may increase due to supply shortage.

This makes it all the more important for contractors to be able to motivate their workforces successfully through a combination of sustainable employment practices and by helping to create a sense of purpose in their work. It is well recognised that people perform better when they are united by a sense of purpose, just as it is untrue that people in lower paid work cannot have an individual sense of purpose. Staff retention in this shrinking labour market will be a key success factor for those organisations that recognise this risk and seek to mitigate it through effective employee engagement.

What should cleaning contractors be doing?

Staff motivation

A happier workforce is a more effective workforce and staff who remain in post longer are more likely to produce a consistent standard of work. Enlightened contractors will be able to demonstrate ways of motivating staff, empowering their work, offering flexibility, providing first class development opportunities and developing inclusive activities that ensure staff remain part of the bigger picture.

Communications

Access to data, information and effective communication is essential, not just because we are in a turbulent time politically, but because it is the right thing to do.

At the very minimum, contractors should have in place an effective method of communicating with staff and disseminating information to them that does not involve them having to call the office or wait until their line manager visits.

They should receive regular updates on company news and other initiatives via portals accessible through their smartphones, as well as through magazines or newsletters, or simply a conversation.

If a contractor is good at keeping staff up to date with where the company stands on environmental and social issues, and is seen to follow through on initiatives, staff are more likely to want to stay in its employment.

Social impact and creating a legacy

The Olympic Committee of the 2012 Games was tasked with ensuring that local people were not only employed during the Games, but were actively recruited to jobs on the new infrastructure after the Games finished.

This follows the philosophy of B Corps that organisations should aim to have an impact on their community and wider society. Supporting disadvantaged groups to enter employment and build self-confidence is one way to achieve that impact. In the cleaning industry this can come through partnering with charitable institutions to create opportunities for people. It can involve them working alongside existing team members, receiving training, and either being offered employment, or at the very least benefitting from an employment springboard to which they wouldn't otherwise have had access.

Training

Training and people development are areas of the cleaning industry where a lot is promised, but not always delivered.

There are three main reasons for this: firstly, the sheer number of staff that need training, exacerbated by high staff turnover; secondly, the fact that staff are spread far and wide across a wide number of locations; and thirdly because cleaning is a labour-intensive industry where, for every £ of revenue earned, companies employ seven times as many staff as the average UK firm. With challenging margins, this means training budgets can become severely stretched.

Notwithstanding these challenges, staff need to be trained over and above basic health and safety induction. They need proper skills training, as well as refresher training as cleaning techniques are updated, or when poor standards suggest a performance problem needs addressing. It is incumbent on contractors to come up with a method of training their workforces to serve the purpose of the customer and the contractor.

The aim for contractors should be to make training accessible, manageable and impactful. It is not good enough to simply say that because of high turnover effective staff training is too difficult.

Working to improve terms and conditions

Where a customer sanctions the payment to outsourced staff of the Living Wage Foundation (LWF) pay rates, contractors almost universally acknowledge that they experience financial benefits in terms of lower staff churn, which itself can filter through to higher productivity and higher standards. This offers the potential for a good customer/contractor partnership based on shared objectives. It can encourage investment in innovative if sometimes costly, labour saving equipment to improve productivity – an option that might not otherwise be explored if staff turnover is high due to payment of the minimum wage and margins are relentlessly being squeezed.

Provide safe environments

Frontline staff have a right to be protected from harmful products, or from overuse of mechanical machinery. It is not expensive for contractors to do the right thing by staff and ensure that health and safety systems are updated, that correct COSHH Data Sheets are easily accessible and that Toolbox Talks or other refresher training are provided on the safe use and handling of mechanical or electrical equipment.

Average hourly pay and pay range in the Industry - full time workers (2017)

INDUSTRY	AVERAGE PAY	ANNUAL % CHANGE	PAY RANGE
Combined facilities support activities	£13.19	7.3%	£7.89 - £18.89
Cleaning activities	£8.69	3.1%	£7.20 - £12.31
General cleaning of buildings	£8.30	2.6%	£7.20 - £11.52
Other building and industrial cleaning activities	£9.98	6.6%	£7.67 - £10.40
Other cleaning activities	£9.73	-1.4%	£7.20 - £13.55
Landscape service activities	£9.48	7.0%	£7.25 - £12.46
Industry (81)	£10.60	6.4%	£7.23 - £20.48

Source: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2017

PARTNERSHIPS

During the term of their contract, a cleaning provider should communicate constantly to their FM about what they are doing, innovate new techniques and show the value they are adding. It makes sense for cleaning contractors to support their FM customers in a professional and collaborative way, as they are essentially partners in the management of their customer's building.

What should cleaning contractors be doing?

Transparency

Transparency is often talked about, but in truth is not something the cleaning industry is well-known for.

Transparency's most important aspects are:

- 1. Bidding honestly against the specification issued.**

This can frequently be a problem area in cleaning when a contractor bids over competitively and then has no option but to underdeliver the service in order to achieve an operating margin. Despite the difficulties this can cause in the relationship, the contractor frequently gets away with this strategy. It is the root cause of so many soured business relationships.

- 2. Acknowledgement (by both parties) that service requirements will change as the contract evolves.**

In this scenario, both customer and contractor acknowledge that as the contract progresses, the demands of the service, and therefore the costs, will most probably change. This offers real opportunity to restructure both specification and costs as the contract matures. A typical agreement could see customer and contractor acknowledge that the price in year one is correct in terms of delivering the full specification, but both parties agree to review the specification and cost annually, with the contractor sharing verifiable management information each year to identify how costs are being disbursed and how much margin is actually being made. The contract also factors in legislative increases to wage rates, with the contractor knowing that they will be able to pay the legislative increases without worrying about the margin slipping.

In a positive development, contracts are now being negotiated, particularly by managing agents, where both parties are incentivised to drive operating costs down, with a view to reallocating savings either to increased service levels or to social impact initiatives.

The key to this of course is an open book approach, where both customer and contractor agree the veracity of the

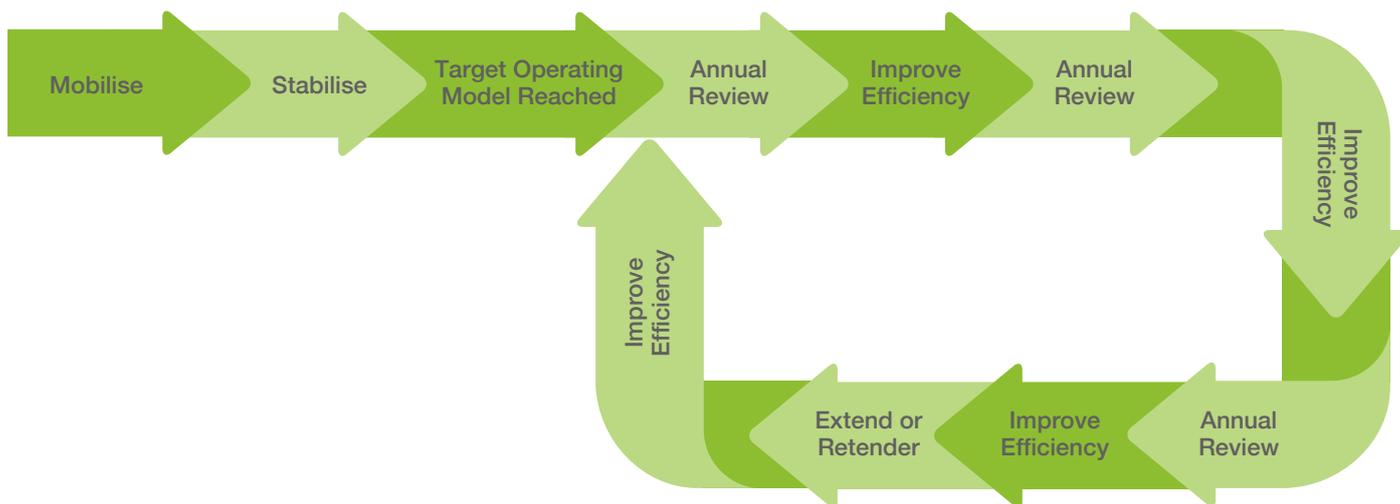
information presented by the contractor.

Contract management throughout the contract life cycle.

Seeing a contract in terms of a lifecycle helps a contractor to think ahead, put in place improvements, plan for longer term goals and focus on the key areas that are of importance at different points or periods in that lifecycle.

Focussing on delivering improvement throughout the contract also means that the contract will be up to date when the retender comes around, with a wealth of good information, data and examples of improvements made. This should also result in the customer seeing the contractor as the business partner they want to deal with in the future – one with inside knowledge, no need for a steep learning curve, lessons learnt, and suggestions for improvement already made and carried out.

Contract life cycle management



In the diagram above, mobilisation starts immediately following contract award and continues until three to four weeks into the contract whilst management systems are embedded, or until the customer is completely satisfied that the contract is meeting their needs.

At around 6 months the target operating model is reached where the contract has stabilised. At this stage an interim review is conducted with the FM Team and confirmation is sought that the contractor has delivered on promises.

Towards the end of the first year a formal review is undertaken, inviting input again from the FM Team and other nominated stakeholders. This will result in a plan for year 2 identifying potential improvements. The contractor should be working on a proactive programme designed to deliver improvement across the contract.

Towards the end of year 2 the process is repeated. As the contract progresses, conditions may be changing and certainly new cleaning technology will appear and need to be evaluated. By the time the contract is ready for re-tender, it may be different in shape to that on day one.

The point is that the partnership should be one of continuously learning, evolving and delivering.

Payment terms

Wages to frontline staff form over 80% of most cleaning contracts. In a new contract, the contractor will most likely have paid out the first month's wages before receiving payment of the first month's invoice. Not surprisingly, therefore, payment terms are an important part of a cleaning contractor's business model, particularly for smaller enterprises.

Co-operation and advice

Contractors need to be aware of what they can do to support the FM in their role and of course delivering what they promise is key. A contractor who uses their knowledge of specific cleaning techniques and challenges to strengthen the FM's impact on site is vital, especially where an FM is balancing a number of contractors and delivering against a number

of objectives. Knowing you have a partner that you can rely on is a significant contributor to success.

A partnering cleaning contractor should also be able to recommend other specialist contractors and suppliers within the industry who can undertake tasks outside the scope of the main cleaning contract. They may also be able to suggest revenue generating activity – an innovative current example being the installation of hand driers that feature video screens showing commercial advertising on behalf of the customer.

General alignment with customer values and objectives

All customer organisations have business objectives and a strong contractor will help them achieve those aspirations by performing activities of their own that align with the customer's ambition.

By sharing their organisation's SLEPT objectives (Social, Legal, Environmental, Political and Technological) with their cleaning contractor, an FM could expect to be presented with the following types of well-aligned support:

- a 'green' cleaning regime, including assistance with recycling to help meet environmental targets
- business continuity and risk mitigation strategy in the case of disaster in the building
- KPIs to measure things that are particularly important to the client (paper cups thrown away/ plastic bottles thrown away)
- demonstration of compliance in key areas such as building security or health and safety
- measurement of end user satisfaction
- alerting of maintenance issues
- promotion of brand image

PRODUCTIVITY

Office environments have changed significantly over the last few years, with flexible and agile working becoming more commonplace. Retail, logistics and hospitality buildings operate 24/7, with varied needs on different days and at different times of the day.

These developments challenge preconceptions of cleaning as a rigid service and instead require a flexible approach that meets the demands of the new workplaces.

What should cleaning contractors be doing?

Optimise their cleaning system to the customer's requirement

Every cleaning system should be based on a customer's requirement, but in the modern office environment at least, the default position is out-of-hours flow cleaning with a team of day cleaners operating in overlapping shifts for the entire duration of the working day. As well as saving energy, this combination keeps a customer's building in a safe and hygienic condition from the arrival of the first users in the morning until the last person leaves, or an evening event finishes.

Find contractors who are early adopters of new technology

Customers should look for contractors who can provide evidence of actually using innovative techniques and technology rather than just talking about them in tenders. In other words, if they say they're carrying out training, ask to see evidence of programmes and achievement.

Enjoyment is the key driver of productivity

The last five years have seen major research and development in terms of cleaning equipment and products. Robotic scrubber dryers can now follow a pre-determined path around a room, whilst the Internet of Things has made it possible for a soap dispenser to send alerts to staff when it is about to run out.

Many of these products have been designed to make a cleaner's work safer, healthier and more productive. A happy and healthy workforce is an efficient workforce, so it's worth asking a contractor what innovations they've introduced to other contracts to improve productivity in this way. Using technology will help clean more quickly as well as and being safer and more enjoyable for staff.

WHAT IS THE COST OF THE NEW SUSTAINABILITY?

When assessing the costs of a cleaning contract, it may be worth considering what might be called the hidden costs, in addition to the cost actually tendered. Hidden costs include:-

Compliance and wellbeing costs

It is easy to underestimate the full cost of managing, reviewing and checking compliance on a contract delivered in an unsatisfactory way, compared to a fully-costed, sustainable contract. Not only can poor standards and under-manning have a negative impact on the cleaning staff, who are having to work harder without being able to deliver a good outcome, but the occupants of the building themselves will not enjoy the working environment if standards of cleaning and hygiene are not being maintained.

Accepting an under-priced bid

If a contractor prices wrongly because they have not anticipated wage growth, or if they underbid with the intention of recouping their margin by under manning, it can put customers in the unpleasant position of having to either live with poor standards and an uncomfortable working relationship, or invoke default clauses, that's if these are written into the contract.

Sadly, these are not imaginary situations – they arise all too frequently. Procurement and Facilities Managers look at a specification and expect it to be delivered in full. The problem is that non-compliance with a cleaning specification is difficult to prove. It's not like fitting out an office with carpets and new furniture, where it is easy to see whether something has been completed to the standard specified.

Repeated tender processes

Finally, there is the cost of going out to tender earlier than expected because of poor supplier performance. Most FMs will agree this is significant, not just in tender preparation and management time, but in the aggravation of switching contractor.

GREENZEST

Since foundation in 2011, sustainability has been our objective. Our philosophy is that business should be carried out in a purposeful and ethical way that recognises the needs of all stakeholders and encourages our employees, suppliers and customers in balance to create the conditions necessary for long-lasting, sustainable contracts. We believe in business as a force for good.

In addition to reviewing and extending the individual initiatives set out below under each element of our sustainability framework, in 2019 we are set to become one of the first cleaning providers to achieve B Corp status.



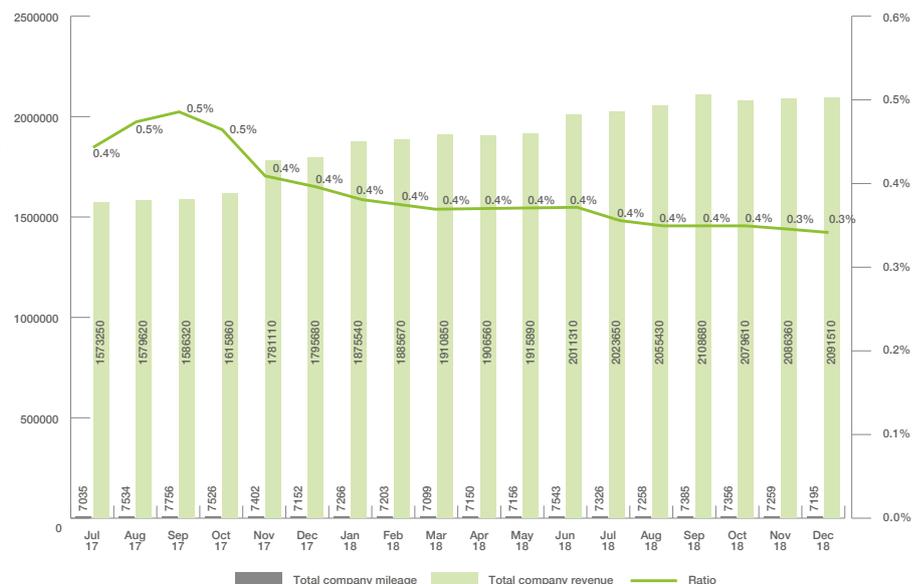
Planet

- Operating a fleet of hybrid vehicles (VW e-Golf).
- Measuring miles driven by company vehicles versus company turnover - showing a steady decline as efficient route planning and greater use of meeting technology have reduced travel.



- Awarded a Gold Certificate by Green Achiever, a leading independent environmental auditing organisation
- Managing our carbon footprint with a combination of no physical office, digitalisation of key procedures and use of hybrid vehicles.
- Using low impact cleaning methods - water, steam, microfibre. Fewer harmful cleaning products mean less packaging and a healthier environment.
- Using InnuScience products - non-chemical actives that produce an excellent cleaning result and deliver savings for our customers' cleaning budgets.
- Using Vikan ultra microfibre cleaning materials. Vikan is a value-driven Danish company majority-owned by a charitable family foundation.

Company mileage versus company revenue



People

- Reaching out to staff with Green Scene, a quarterly communication to update staff on company news, contract wins, employees of the month, health and safety, training and environmental progress.
- Training and engaging our staff with UhUb, a smartphone accessible app that means our entire workforce can receive training in a whole range of cleaning skills, access important documents about Right to Work, HMRC, Health & Safety and experience 2-way communication with the company. Greenzest was the first UhUb user to reach Gold Engaged status, meaning that 90% of staff had logged on to the system and completed both their induction and core skills modules.
- Paying staff Living Wage Foundation rates where possible, not minimum wage.
- Working with St Mungo's Homeless Charity to create opportunities for shadowing and working alongside Greenzest staff.





Partnerships

- Designing cleaning programmes to support customers' own sustainability strategies, e.g. energy-saving flow cleaning rather than zonal.
- Aligning our work with customer objectives to help reduce customer costs and adopt a 'whole lifecycle' approach to our contracts.
- Sourcing ethical suppliers, such as Vikan, through our Ethical Procurement Policy.
- Participating in ORB (Organisation for Responsible Businesses), a UK club of honest and ethical businesses.



Productivity

- Continually testing new equipment and cleaning methods to improve the cleaning productivity of our teams.
- Streamlining back-office systems to reduce overhead.
- Implementing flow cleaning at all sites as standard methodology. Higher productivity reduces costs, securing longer customer relationships and creating a secure future for our staff and company.

Key support a FM should expect from their cleaning contractor:

- Vetting and entry controls
- Training in building-specific tasks
- Use of smartphones to communicate with the FM Team
- Well-researched proposals for maintaining difficult floor types
- Disaster recovery planning
- Co-operation with other contractors
- Open book contract reviews
- KPIs and a formal log-book of contract improvements



THE BUSINESS CASE FOR SUSTAINABLE CLEANING

When you follow the sustainable route and select a contractor who on the surface may appear more expensive, but whose approach is more acceptable from a sustainability the point of view, it is about choosing a solution that works for all the stakeholders in the contract - customer, contractor, staff and the environment itself.

Happily, this approach is increasingly becoming a reality. On the one hand, the Living Wage Foundation (LWF) wage is gaining traction, with its well documented benefits in terms of reduced staff turnover and associated reduction in training, admin and vetting costs. On the other, FMs, maybe conscious of the different demands being placed on their buildings by a new type of employee working style, are warming to the idea that a partnership with an agile, collaborative and more sustainably motivated contractor will lead to a longer term, mutually beneficial relationship.

If you would like to talk to Greenzest about taking a new, sustainable approach to cleaning, please contact Iain Fraser-Jones or Vince Treadgold.

iain@greenzest.co.uk
vince@greenzest.co.uk

Reference Documents:

<https://bcorporation.net>
 IFMA Sustainability Guide to Green Cleaning
 British Cleaning Council Industry Trends 2017

GREENZEST FACTS AND FIGURES:

- Founded:** 2011
- Owners:** Iain Fraser-Jones, Vince Treadgold
- Location:** No physical office
- Turnover:** £3.1m (2019 est.)

Sustainability CV:

ISO 14001:2015, Green Achiever Gold Award, Organisation for Responsible Businesses, Alcumus Safecontractor. B Corp application in progress

