



Image Furnishings Sustainability Strategy



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Image Furnishings Sustainability Framework

Our Values

This year, Image Furnishings have been in business for 20 years. Using our core values; we plan to continue to shape our business so that our future operations will continue to have a positive impact on our stakeholders (customers, suppliers, and employees) as well as the environment, while fostering a strong social impact on society. Our goal is to sustain a culture where everyone we do business with feels empowered.

Our Core Values:



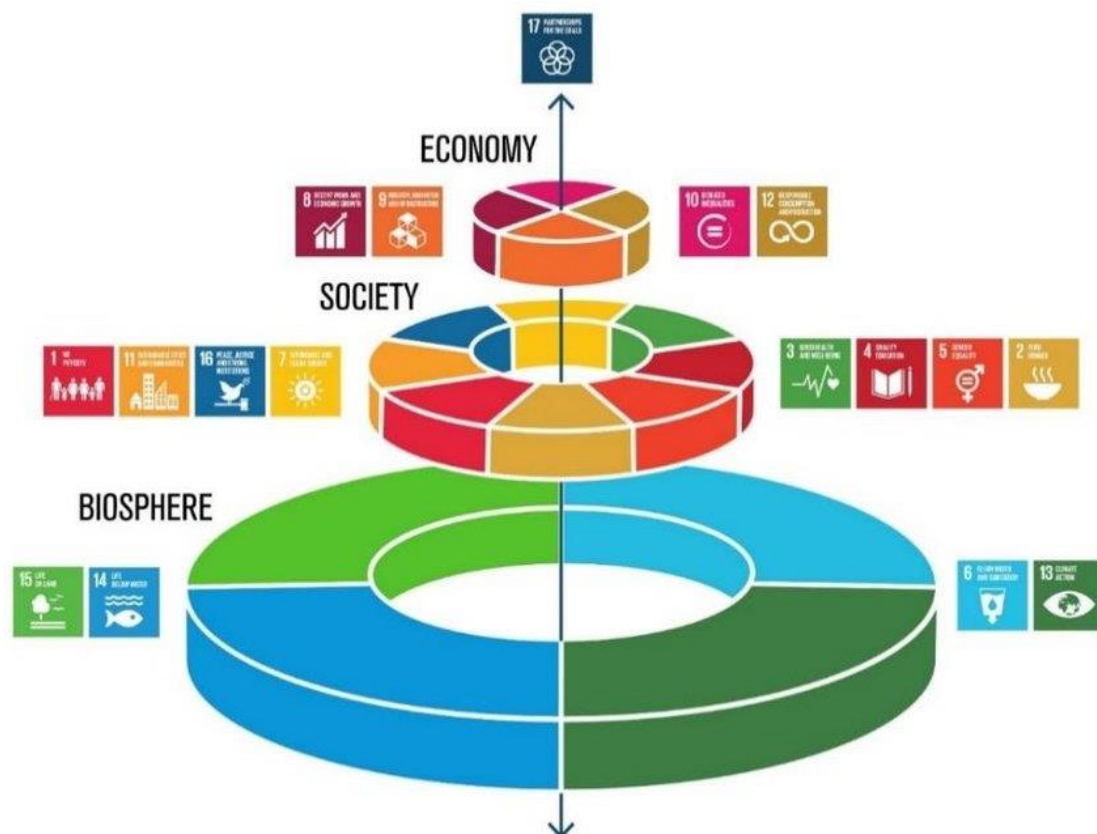
Introduction

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were established by the United Nations to create a plan to achieve sustainable development by 2030. The agenda outlines 17 Sustainable Development Goals, or SDGs, that the UN hopes to achieve by 2030, aiming to take action to end poverty, protect the planet, ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity and enable sustainable development by 2030 ([United Nations](#)).

At Image Furnishings, we are focusing on seven of the UN SDGs because they reflect the areas in which we can make the greatest possible impact on our internal stakeholders, the wider community, and our planet.

The SDG Wedding Cake illustrates the interconnectedness and importance of social, economic, and ecological systems to achieving these global goals. Image Furnishings has adopted this model to help guide and demonstrate our sustainability goals and show the interlinks between our social, economic, and ecological initiatives.

The SDG Wedding Cake:



(Source: [ResearchGate](#))

1. Biosphere



SDG 13: Climate Action

Climate change is caused by human emissions of greenhouse gases associated with electricity and heat production, industry, buildings, transport, and land use ([UNglobalcompact.org](https://www.unglobalcompact.org)). Image Furnishings long-term goal is to significantly reduce emissions linked to supply chain operations over the next few years.

The company is looking at switching to hydrogenated vegetable oil (HVO) to fuel its Irish fleet by 2025. HVO is a renewable, low carbon, low emission, and fossil-free sustainable alternative to diesel. Our delivery trucks travel an average 200,000 km per year which equates to approx. 280.7 tonnes of CO₂ emissions per annum. The shift to HVO fuel will result in a up to 90% reduction in carbon emissions when compared to diesel fuel, therefore reducing Co₂ emissions by 253 tonnes.



SDG 15: Life on Land

The aim of SDG 15 is to “protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss” ([UNglobalcompact.org](https://www.unglobalcompact.org)). In line with this goal; Image Furnishings are have taken steps to contribute to reforestation efforts by planting trees locally, ensuring a greener future for the next generation. Our partnership with the Native Woodland Trust has enabled us to plant over 1,500 trees across the county in the past three years.



2. Society



SDG 4: Affordable and Clean Energy

We recognise that organisations have a responsibility to adopt energy efficiency practices as well as source energy from clean sources. As a result, Image Furnishings have set out the following objectives to enhance the use of clean energy as well as become more energy efficient:

- Reduce our carbon footprint as part of a carbon management strategy.
- Optimise energy efficiency and conservation in all operations.

Solar PV System

We have installed a solar panel system - 11kwp Solar PV installation in the new distribution centre which will result in a significant amount of the on-site energy used being generated from a renewable energy source. As a result, 40 percent of the total energy used in the distribution centre will be generated by a renewable source of energy.

Motion Censored LED lighting

To increase energy efficiency; LED high bay lighting has been installed with occupancy sensors and light sensors. The use of LED lighting provides a clean and efficient source of light in the office and distribution centre. LED lighting requires as much as 75% less energy to deliver the same amount of light than conventional lighting ([Energy.gov](https://www.energy.gov)).



SDG 3: Good Health & Well-being

Companies have a responsibility to monitor and improve the health of its key stakeholders. Image Furnishings has a strong commitment to its employee’s health and well-being as we recognise this is key for long-term business success.

Company Coaching Culture

We promote the idea of embracing challenges and failures as opportunities for learning and growth and encourage our staff to seek feedback and take calculated risks. By cultivating a growth mindset in our employees, we have created a culture of learning and development. We have invested a significant amount of time and effort in educating and growing our team through our internal academy. We call it the “Sofa Academy.” The academy has been our commitment to training and developing everyone from our warehouse operatives, our design team, administrators, sales managers, and our future leaders.

Employee Well-being Programmes

Our company’s well-being programme aims to improve the overall health of employees, focusing on physical, mental, social, and nutritional health. The company’s human resources team arranges a variety of activities throughout the year to ensure employees’ health and well-being are prioritised.

Some of our well-being initiatives include:

Mental Health Challenges	Wellness Tips
Our Annual Walking Challenge	12 Days of Christmas Kindness Challenge
Bike to Work Scheme	Walk & Talk Meetings
Team Building Activities	Company Social Events
Friday Lunches	Professional & Personal Development

These initiatives drive the company’s commitment on having a positive influence on the health and well-being of its employees. These programs also help promote a culture of well-being within the company which brings our teams together, creates a positive work environment and builds on good employee morale throughout the company.



SDG 11: Sustainable Cities & Communities

Image Furnishings are always looking for ways that we can support the communities around us; our company invests 1% of our annual profits in supporting various local, national, and international charities. We take great pride in being able to give back to the communities where we work and live, as well as supporting our production partners in Asia. Our commitment to charitable giving is a core part of our company values, and we are grateful for the opportunity to make a positive impact in the world.

We believe in the importance of giving back and supporting efforts that will benefit our local community. We encourage our team to nominate worthy causes that mean something to them. We have continued to grow the In Motion charitable foundation and run several annual fundraising events to support these worthy causes.

Local & National Organisations & Charities:

- [The Jack & Jill Children's Foundation](#)

The Jack and Jill Children's Foundation offers a child and family-centred care service and believes that families should be supported to care for their children in their own homes. We decided to give back to our community by donating €1000 on your behalf to the Jack & Jill Foundation to become 'County Champions' (link [here](#)), supporting a local family care for their child at home. This is an amazing charity that provides specialist home nursing and end of life care for a child with complex needs. It also supports the family by allowing exhausted parents a much-needed break and an opportunity to the things most of us take for granted, such as a weekly grocery shop or catching up on much-needed sleep.

- Children's Health Foundation

Children's Health Foundation raises vital funds to support sick children and their families in Children's Health Ireland (CHI) hospitals and urgent care centres in Crumlin, Temple Street, Tallaght and Connolly - from funding vital life-saving equipment and providing essential patient and parental supports to making ground-breaking, paediatric research possible. Image Furnishing's has donated its Milano beanbags to the two children's hospitals. This will hopefully offer some comfortable seating for the children here.

- Roscommon Women's Network (RWN) textile Upcycling social enterprise

We work with the Roscommon Women's Network, a local social enterprise that runs a CycleUp Textiles project. CycleUp, is an environmental and training social enterprise which addresses the issue of textile waste through a community development approach to environmental protection, supporting the hardest to reach women and families to engage (RWN.ie). We send all our surplus fabric swatches to this project and they then upcycle it into products – this helps us minimise our waste while contributing to a local social enterprise. Last year, the CycleUp volunteers upcycled our leftover fabric for our corporate gifting; Christmas gnomes. This created a triple win for our company, the local community and the environment.

- Roscommon LGFA U14 Team

Image Furnishing are proud sponsors of the Roscommon under 14's girls' football team. This sponsorship included training gear for the underage girls. As a company we are delighted to support women in sport and showing this support through our sponsorship.

3. Economy



SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production

Responsible consumption and production are fundamental to sustainable development ([UNglobalcompact.org](https://unglobalcompact.org)). Image Furnishings operates in the furniture industry and aims to produce more sustainable products and packaging in line with this SDG goal.

Design & Adopt More Circular Business Model

We recognise the need to shift away from the traditional linear economy by designing and adopting circular business models so we have started a pilot product circular design and circular business model research projects. These projects will provide a framework to develop new circular products and circular business models aimed at increasing the value, use and life of materials, products and assets and designing out waste from production and consumption in the textile upholstery sector.

Circular Economy Product Design

The design stage is a crucial part of eliminating waste throughout the product's life cycle, in fact, "over 70 percent of a product's life-cycle costs and environmental footprint is determined during its design phase" ([EllenMacArthurFoundation](https://ellenmacarthurfoundation.org)).

Image Furnishing's objective is to reconfigure the way our products are designed so waste can be reduced. Therefore, we are working on a project with TU Dublin (Technological University Dublin) as part of the Innovation Voucher Programme by Enterprise Ireland in order to redesign the Brandon chair with a circular design focus. The Brandon chair is one of our best-selling chairs and this will serve as a pilot design in order to build a product portfolio of a more circular designed furniture range.

Working with designers from this University is an invaluable opportunity in offering a new perspective on how the chair can be re-developed, so it is easy to assemble and disassemble, as well as other design possibilities.

Circular Economy Business Model Research

Companies must engage in circular activities to develop more sustainable business models as this is becoming more important than ever before because of the severity of climate change, resource scarcity, European legislation along with consumer trends. We have partnered with TU Dublin on a circular business research project. This project involves working with a student to address a real business sustainability challenge; in our company's case the challenge is to see how engaging in a circular economy model can contribute and to the overall long-term business strategy. The commissioned research guides our company on solutions to implementing circular economy initiatives.

The project sets out to analyse the current situation relating to disposal of end-of-life sofas and the possibility to implement circular initiatives which will help prolong the lifespan of sofa products and in turn reduce the environmental impact of the products.

The research conducted addresses both the potential and challenges for other revenue streams such as repair, spare parts, resale etc. in terms of a circular business model. Moreover, in this collaborative approach, we aim to not only make a positive contribution to Image Furnishings but also the wider Irish furniture industry.

Supplier Social Audits

To ensure our furniture products are ethically sourced, we ensure that all production facilities we work with adhere to social and ethical standards. We have designed and plan to implement a social audit checklist which is overseen by our QC team from our China office. This social audit is conducted if the supplier does not hold a valid third-party social audit report like the BSCI or SMETA social audit standards. It is of the utmost importance to us that we can guarantee that our furniture is ethically sourced this will be rolled out in 2023.

Eco Packaging

The company plans to work towards a more sustainable future and one key initiative includes making our packaging more environmentally friendly. Our designated team are continuously monitoring eco-packaging trends in the market to find more environmentally friendly solutions for our packaging.

Sustainable Cardboard

One element of our eco-packaging initiative is using only FSC-certified carton boxes for our packaging. This has become a production standard for our packaging. The switch to FSC-certified packaging only ensures that the materials used for packaging are sourced from sustainably managed forests. The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) is an international, non-governmental organisation dedicated to promoting responsible management of the world's forests. Since its foundation in 1994, FSC has grown to become the world's most respected and widespread forest certification system ([Forest Stewardship Council](#)).



Recycled Plastic

Another element of our eco-packaging initiative is using only GRS-certified recycled plastic for our packaging. Plastic bags used in our packaging will be made from 100% recycled plastic which will significantly reduce the use of virgin plastic in our entire packaging. We estimate that this will result in a 90% reduction in virgin plastic used in our overall packaging.

The Global Recycled Standard (GRS) is a full product standard to verify and track recycled raw materials through the supply chain. It also includes processing criteria to prevent the use of potentially hazardous chemicals and verifies positive social or environmental production at the facilities. The GRS uses the chain of custody requirements of the Content Claim Standard (CCS) ([Textile Exchange](#)).



Partnerships for the Goals



For the top tier of the SDG wedding cake; partnerships for the goals, Image Furnishings understands the importance of working together with suppliers, customers, governments, universities, and society to develop solutions and mobilise resources to support sustainable development. To promote SDG 17, organisations can act within their network through raising awareness, supporting international cooperation and development, and through a corporate social responsibility that considers business ethics.

Image Furnishings through its partnerships with other groups aims to form collaborations in order to create synergies to work towards the UN Agenda for 2030 building on the principles and values, with a shared vision and shared goals placing people and the planet at the centre.

Partnerships:

- **Suppliers**

Collaborating with suppliers is good for business; Image Furnishings have been working co-operatively with its suppliers for more than 20 years.

- **Customers**

The company proactively listens to customers' needs as well as monitors trends in the market. Through sharing and discussing sustainable projects happening in the market with our customers, we can work together in achieving sustainable furniture product development based on our customer's needs.

- **The Irish Furniture Industry**

The Circular Upholstery Textiles (CUT) project

Image Furnishings are working in partnership with The Irish Wood and Interiors Network (IWIN) and the Circular Design Institute on the CUT project. This project is being funded by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) under their Green

Enterprise Innovation for a Circular Economy Programme and will focus on the creation of partnerships to find new uses for industry by-products and waste over 18 months.

The project will provide a framework to develop new circular products and circular business models aimed at increasing the value, use and life of materials, products and assets and designing out waste from production and consumption in the textile upholstery sector. The project is focused on facilitating the sharing of resources and by-products, and finding circular solutions to upholstery textile waste. We are working collaboratively with other companies in the industry who are also keen to do better business for profit, the planet and people.

- **The Community**

We are incredibly proud of our accomplishments as a thriving business and as a significant employer in the Roscommon community. It brings us great joy to be able to contribute to the local community and help raise awareness about our wonderful area, not only within Ireland but on a global scale as well. Whether our customers come from the UK, mainland Europe, or any other part of the world, we take pride in welcoming them to Roscommon and showcasing all that our region has to offer.

Resources

Ellen Mac Arthur Foundation - link [here](#)

Energy.gov - link [here](#)

Forest Stewardship Council - link [here](#)

ResearchGate – link [here](#)

RWN.ie - link [here](#)

Textile Exchange – link [here](#)

UNglobalcompact.org – link [here](#)