



Green Apple Award for Victoria Leeds Shopping Centre

West Yorkshire, UK



"We are dedicated to sustainability here at Victoria Leeds. Our innovative team are always looking for ways to be kinder to our environment, and are also focused on how our efforts can benefit the wider community. I'm very proud of our achievements so far and we continue to explore more ideas to make a real positive impact."

Victoria Leeds is home to 85 retailers and major department stores. It is Yorkshire's premier shopping destination and features Victoria Quarter and Victoria Gate. ABM's partnership with the centre was a key factor in winning a Green Apple Award for sustainable and ESG achievements.

CHALLENGE

Providing sustainable solutions that ensure a benefit to the community and asset owners takes collaboration and the courage to implement innovation across the whole lifecycle of the asset and the services provided. Through sustainable collaboration, the Victoria Leeds team were able to implement different sustainability initiatives across the site which achieved the overall goal; while consistency and perseverance contributed towards winning the Green Apple Award.

SOLUTION

- Installed in 2018, two large solar panels on the roof of Victoria Gate and the car park roofs generates energy and CO2 savings.
- A waste coffee grounds initiative, that has now been running for five years, diverts waste and reuses the grounds as a soil enricher for the centre's plants.
- A food digester was replaced with the ReFood Service allowing the centres food waste to be composted and subsequently used as fertiliser on local farmland.
- Appointing a 'waste champion', who for the last five years has checked for bin contamination on a daily basis and then correctly segregated the waste.
- Upskilling the in-house team for all landscaping requirements such as the upkeep and maintenance of real plants on both sites.



- ABM collaborated historically to design and implement a Bug Hotel as a Gate Guardian to the centre car park, providing a biodiversity focal point to the shopping centre entrance. Since then, ABM have refreshed the surrounding flora and fauna with an award-winning display. This display was created by Sonja Kalksmidt, and it was the Best in Show Duchess of Rutland Cup Winner.
- Sponsorship of a guide dog, Victoria, who is now just over one year old and is soon to become a fully trained guide dog supporting the local community.
- A partnership with a local employment charity helped people in the community to find work with ABM and become valuable members of the team.
- Offering work experience at ABM for young people to prepare themselves for future careers.

SUSTAINABILITY BENEFITS

Environmental

- The solar panels have now generated 210,493kwh since acquisition, which has offset the same CO2 as planting 464 trees and so far, saved 34.9 tonnes of CO2 eq emissions.
- The coffee grounds initiative has diverted over 21 tonnes away from waste streams in the last five years.
- Introducing ReFood bins means that the site's food waste is now 100% recycled.

Economic

- Replacing the site's food digester with ReFood bins resulted in operations savings of over £7,000 per annum, with those savings contributing to the centre's service charge.
- The 'waste champion's' influence across retailers lowered contamination which in turn, lowered year-on-year operating costs.
- An initial quote for flora came in at £7,000 from a national supplier. Choosing instead to source locally, resulted in a saving of 90 per cent, with the cost from Brian's flowers coming in at just under £700.
- Sonja Kalksmidt installed an array of award-winning flowers, enhanced the landscaping goals and installed her 2021 Duchess of Rutland cup Best in Show flowers all at zero cost to the site.

Social

- The variety of initiatives put in place at Victoria Leeds resulted in national recognition and a Green Apple award.
- The site's 'waste champion' challenges and educates retailers on how to identify the correct waste bins for each stream, lowering contamination across the centre.
- Upskilling ABM team members in sourcing, planting and maintaining plants is an innovative approach meaning ABM are able to self-deliver something that was previously sub-contracted.
- Flora was provided by a local flower stall, Brian's Flowers, which was then designed and planted by the ABM team alongside the Knight Frank management team, meaning no external supplier was needed.
- ABM's partnership with a local employment charity provided the opportunity for a 42-year-old male, who had been unemployed for some time, to join the ABM team where he is now a very valuable member.
- By offering work experience placements, ABM has supported the local community, helping young people prepare themselves for leaving school and finding careers.

