



WINEGB

WINES OF GREAT BRITAIN

2024 Sustainability Impact Report

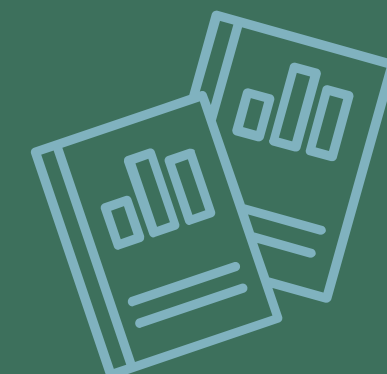
Environment



People



Business

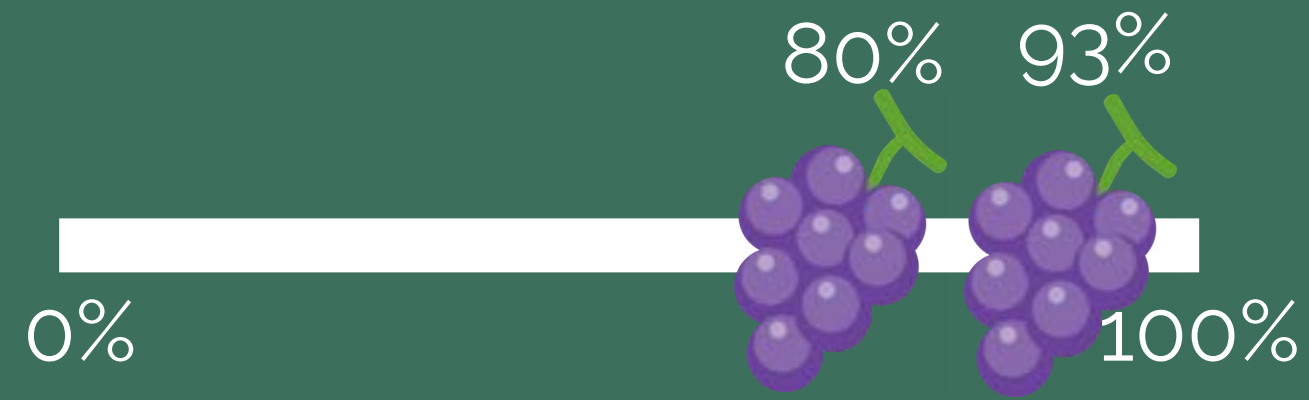


Contents

Report Summary	pg 3	The People	pg 42
Introduction	pg 4	People – Employees	pg 43
An Introduction From WineGB Board Chair	pg 5	Seasonal and Casual Workers	pg 44
WineGB	pg 8	Protected Characteristics	pg 47
Sustainability at WineGB	pg 9	Accessibility	pg 48
Sustainable Wines of Great Britain	pg 11	Community Engagement	pg 50
Carbon Calculator	pg 14	Business/ Governance	pg 52
Toolkits	pg 16	Awards and Certificates	pg 53
Articulating The Collective Voice	pg 19	Publishing Statistics	pg 55
This Report	pg 23	Opinions & Understanding	pg 56
What is this report?	pg 24	Heard on the Grape Vine	pg 61
Why have we published this report?	pg 25	Conclusions	pg 62
The data set for this report	pg 26	Learning From New Zealand	pg 63
The Environment	pg 27	GB Just Getting Started	pg 64
Climate Change – The Effects	pg 28	What's Next?	pg 65
Net Zero	pg 30	2024 Industry Snapshot	pg 66
The Vineyard: A Snapshot	pg 32	Thank You	pg 67
Biodiversity	pg 34		
The Winery: A Snapshot	pg 36		
Transport – Visitors	pg 40		



Summary of this report

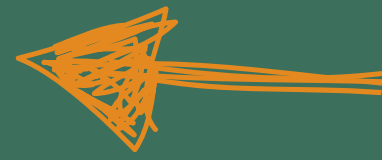


80%-93% of producers are implementing key sustainability goals in the vineyard



40%-62% of producers are implementing key sustainability goals in the winery

22%
of businesses are measuring employee protected characteristics



44% of vineyards are accessible by public transport



86%
use seasonal workers

42%
The data used in this report is from producers responsible for 42% of UK annual bottle production

14%
are publicly publishing environmental and/or people statistics



30%
of producers have a target to achieve Net Zero



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Section 1: Introduction



Introduction - Sam Linter WineGB Board Chair

As Chair of WineGB and also Director of Wine at Plumpton College, I am very aware of our commitment to the next generation.

The climate emergency is affecting wine regions around the world, and we are not exempt. The UK is a cool climate wine region that has grown with the increasingly variable climate, and from the start of our modern sector, we have been conscious of the impact of climate change. Our production has had to respond and WineGB has been supporting the industry to take the most sustainable approach to viticulture to ensure our resilience.

Sustainability is a wide topic. We have championed measures to support the environment, to protect and inspire all our people, and to ensure that businesses are fit for purpose to drive a future that is also financially sustainable.



I am incredibly proud of the progress we've made towards embedding sustainability within the fabric of the UK wine industry. With the dedicated leadership of our Sustainability Team – Emma Rix, our Sustainability Executive, Anne Jones, our Sustainability Ambassador, and the wider Sustainability Council – WineGB has been at the forefront of promoting environmental responsibility and championing best practices across the sector.

The SWGB scheme

Our role as an industry body is multifaceted, supporting our members through the Sustainable Wines of Great Britain (SWGB) initiative, providing tools such as the carbon calculator, and advocating for policy changes at a national level. The initiative was launched by the highly knowledgeable and passionate Chris Foss, with support from the founding members and the dedicated leadership of Laura Tattam and Nick Wenman. We are here to identify the needs of our members, offer support beyond sustainability –such as safeguarding guidance – and push the Government to ensure the wine sector's future remains both competitive and green.

Section 1: Introduction

In just four short years, it has already made a tremendous impact. With 43% of the sector involved, the scheme enables producers to measure and improve their carbon footprint and sustainability efforts in both vineyard and winery operations. SWGB's influence is leading to significant production changes, a measurable lowering of carbon emissions, and is helping producers effectively communicate these sustainability stories to consumers.

Carbon Calculator

Our carbon calculator is a vital tool for members to track and assess their carbon output. To date, 189 WineGB members are registered users, which constitutes 52% of our producer membership, and 157 reports have already been created helping members to take action. Most promisingly, 7% of users are now engaging in year-on-year reporting, building a long-term view of their environmental impact.



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The tool is intentionally easy to use, making it accessible to all sizes of producers while giving valuable insights into areas where they can reduce carbon emissions.

Wider Insight

Beyond specific tailored support, we also ensure that we provide guidance and advice, with toolkits and case studies to promote sustainable production. This October, we have launched our first toolkit to protect our people, and over the coming years, we have plans for a series that practically helps members to make the best choices.

This Report

This report captures not only these achievements but also includes feedback from a survey of our wider membership. This survey allows us to understand how producers are engaging with sustainability and what further support they need from WineGB.

As we look ahead, our goal is to continue developing resources that go beyond SWGB and the carbon calculator, particularly as we anticipate new laws and Government initiatives, such as safeguarding and Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)/Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) regulations.

Report Findings

The findings from this report are incredibly encouraging. Here are just a few of the highlights:

- 91% of our data set are intentionally prioritising sustainable vineyard floor management by utilising cover crops, animal integration, avoidance of herbicides where possible, avoidance of tilling, and reduced mowing.
- SWGB membership covers 1,791ha, which represents over 40% of the English and Welsh wine industry.
- 52% of WineGB producer members have signed up to use our free carbon calculator.

However, while we are clearly making strides, it is also evident that we are on a journey. This is not only about creating an environmentally responsible wine sector, but also about supporting people and governance systems that ensure lasting change. Understanding where we are today is the critical first step to enacting the changes needed for tomorrow.

Our Call to Government



Our success as a sector cannot be achieved without stronger Government support. WineGB has a clear role to play in galvanising our members and pushing for timely Government action across environmental sustainability and people.

Sustainable Farming Initiative (SFI): We urge the Government to provide clearer guidance and increased financial support for the wine sector within the SFI framework. The incentives need to match the environmental and financial pressures our industry faces, ensuring that viticulture and winemaking are included in any agricultural support schemes.

Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) and Deposit Return Scheme (DRS): We welcome these initiatives in principle, but we must highlight that the schemes are not yet fully developed to accommodate the specific challenges of the wine sector. More time and consultation are needed to ensure that these regulations can be implemented effectively without overburdening smaller producers.

Recognising Winemaking and Viticulture

Expertise in the Visa System: While we focus on developing domestic talent, we call for winemaking and viticulture expertise to be explicitly recognised in the visa system. This will allow English and Welsh wine businesses to access overseas talent when necessary, ensuring that they can meet their skills demands as the industry grows, without being hindered by the current limitations in workforce availability.

Improved Access to Seasonal Labor and

Support for Rising Vineyard Costs: We urge the Government to improve access to seasonal labor for vineyard work, which is vital for the success of our industry.

We are excited about the future, but it is clear that with the right support from our Government, we can accelerate the progress we are already making. Together, we can build a sustainable, thriving, and resilient UK wine industry.

Sam Linter

Chair of WineGB and Director of Wine at Plumpton College

Section 2: WineGB



Image: WineGB



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Sustainability at WineGB

WineGB supports a culture of environmental responsibility and innovation among winemakers. By providing tools and resources, such as a free carbon calculator and access to the Sustainable Wines of Great Britain Scheme, we encourage vineyards to adopt sustainable practices that reduce carbon footprints, measure their impact, and set targets for improvement. This not only empowers and informs our members about their sustainability choices, but also supports them with advice and reporting, enabling them to be transparent with shareholders and stakeholders.

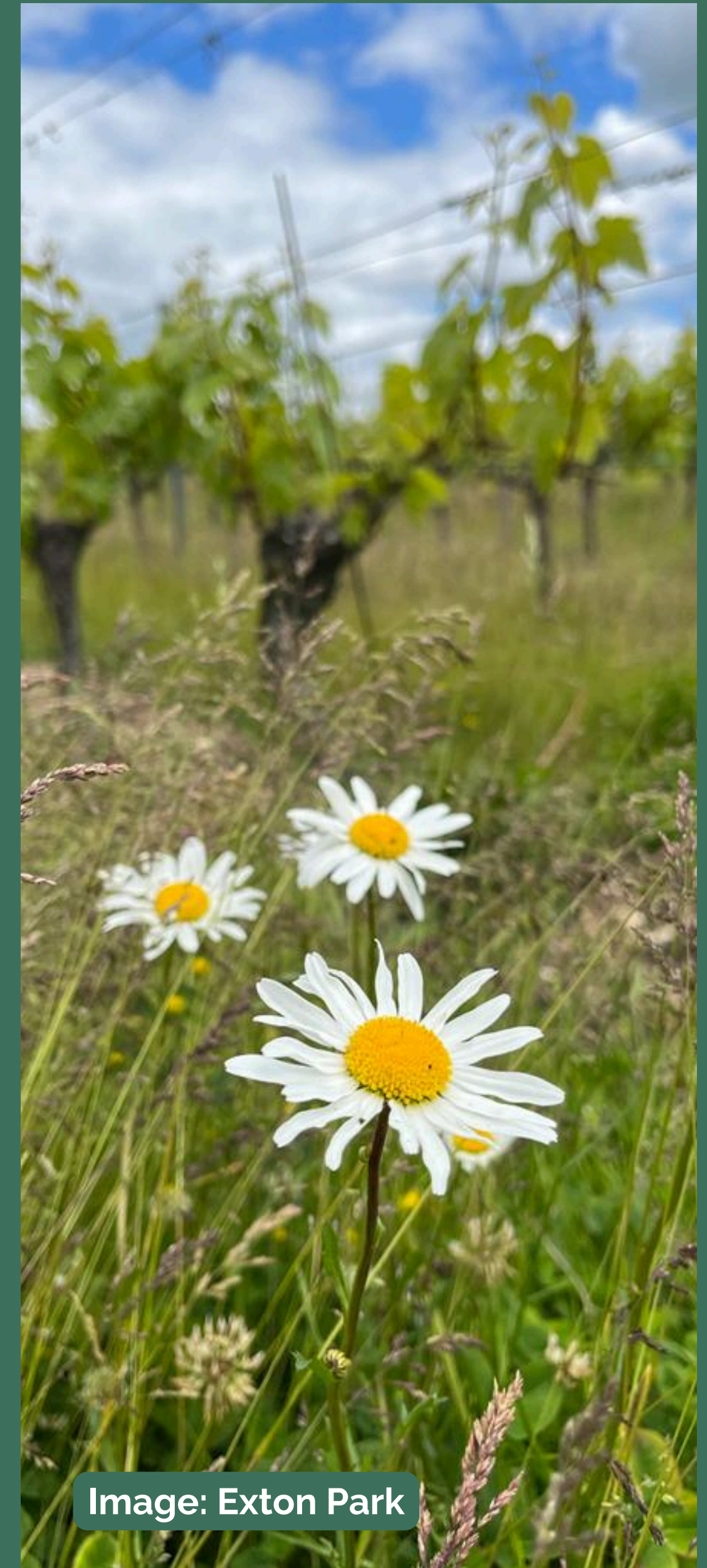
As a result, the industry is positioned to lead by example, showcasing how traditional practices can harmoniously blend with modern sustainability efforts. This commitment to sustainability not only protects the environment but also ensures the long-term viability and success of the English and Welsh wine industry. This report will inspire positive change in the industry.



Image: Simpsons

Our Sustainability Team

- Emma Rix: As Sustainability Executive, she coordinates sustainability initiatives in the UK wine sector and manages the Sustainable Wines of Great Britain Scheme, ensuring compliance and guiding members.
- Anne Jones: Our Sustainability Ambassador, she advises WineGB on sustainable practices and raises awareness of sustainability's significance in wine production.
- Sustainability Council: Oversees WineGB's sustainability strategies, aligning with global standards and setting long-term environmental, social, and economic goals.
- Working Groups:
 - Winemaking: Focuses on sustainable winery practices to reduce resource use.
 - Viticulture: Develops environmentally friendly vineyard management for soil health and biodiversity.
 - People: Ensures ethical labor practices and worker welfare.
- Partners and Patrons: WineGB collaborates with stakeholders for support and expertise in sustainability strategies within the wine industry.



Sustainable Wines of Great Britain

Launched in 2020, the Sustainable Wines of Great Britain Scheme (SWGB) is a sustainability initiative owned and managed by WineGB. Members of WineGB have the chance to enrol in SWGB, which is designed to promote environmentally sustainable best practice, to support members to identify areas of action, and to tell the story to consumers.



SWGB membership covers 1,791ha, which represents over 40% of the English and Welsh wine industry.



There are **79** members.

- 31 are currently green certified (have completed their first independent audit)
- 13 are gold certified (have passed more than one audit)
- The rest are collecting data ready for their first audit.

The SWGB Scheme includes standards regarding:

In the vineyard



Soil Health



Carbon Footprint



Biodiversity

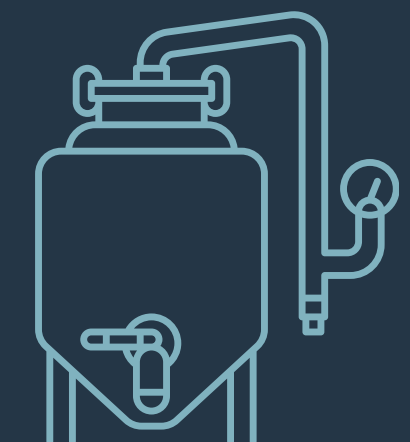
In the winery



Wastewater Disposal



Energy Usage



Winery Design



Image: Laurel Vines

Sustainable Wines of Great Britain: Being a Member

Members undergo anonymous audits every three years by third-party auditors to maintain the scheme's credibility. In the initial audit, members must meet all minimum certification standards. From the second audit onwards, they are required to demonstrate best practices and provide evidence of evaluation, improvement, and planning. In-person site audits have now been introduced. The SWGB process not only helps members identify areas for improvement, but is also crucial for marketing, as it supports sales and helps convey commitment to quality and sustainability to consumers.

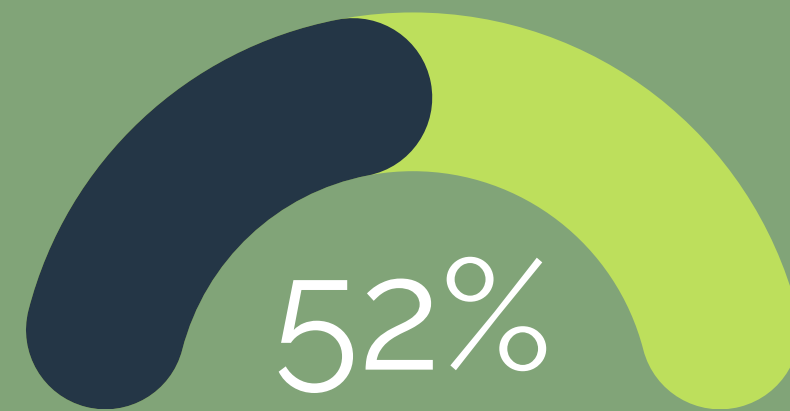
Our members enjoy:

- Opportunities to participate in sustainability-focused working groups and councils to drive change within the scheme and the broader industry
- Access to webinars, seminars, and events centred on sustainability
- Enhanced access to markets such as M&S and Systembolaget (the international alcohol monopoly), which recognises SWGB as an approved sustainability certification.

SWGB and The Environment

WineGB collaborated with The Farm Carbon Toolkit to develop a free-to-use carbon calculator, specifically designed for its members to assess their carbon footprint. This tool enables vineyards to track both their carbon output and carbon sequestration efforts, such as through hedgerows and on-site forestry.

Members using our
carbon calculator



189 registered users, 52% of WineGB members
157 reports created
7% using for year-on-year reporting

For members who are also part of Sustainable Wines of Great Britain (SWGB), using the calculator is a requirement to measure and document their carbon emissions and mitigation strategies. SWGB members must submit this data during their sustainability audit, ensuring transparency and accountability in their environmental impact efforts.



WineGB Carbon Calculator

In association with:



Farm
Carbon
Calculator



The Carbon Calculator

A carbon calculator, like the one used by WineGB members, is a tool that helps vineyards and wineries measure their carbon emissions across different aspects of their operations. This includes everything from energy usage, water consumption, and transportation to soil health and agricultural inputs in the vineyard. By tracking these metrics, producers can identify their biggest sources of emissions and make informed decisions on how to reduce their environmental impact.



Why are carbon calculators useful?

- **Data-Driven Decision-Making:** Carbon calculators provide measurable data, allowing producers to make more informed choices about where to implement changes for maximum environmental benefit.
- **Year-on-Year Tracking:** Tools like the Farm Carbon Calculator enable wineries to track their emissions over time, helping them monitor the effectiveness of their sustainability strategies.
- **Consumer Transparency:** Using a carbon calculator allows producers to demonstrate their commitment to sustainability, which can be a valuable story to share with consumers increasingly concerned about environmental impact.

Toolkits: The Plan

Our goal is to empower our members with a wealth of information, training resources, policy templates, and much more related to environmental issues, social matters, and business sustainability. Below is our proposed toolkit release schedule for the next three years:

YEAR 1 (2025)

Governance: SFI and grants

Understanding what's available, where to find it, support on how to apply and access

Environment: Packaging

Decarbonisation of glass, recycled labels, recycling of crowns and bidules, policy support for sustained improvement, tools for measurement, reuse/ recycle/ formats, Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)

Environment: Waste

Monitoring and improving waste/ recycling, including water, energy, packaging, grape marc, grass cuttings etc.

People: Inclusive hiring and removing barriers to the industry

Policies, guidelines, signposting to existing support, grants, training

Environment: Climate Mitigation

Understanding upcoming risks of extreme weather, carbon sequestration and measurement, tools for monitoring and predicting climate changes, precision viti (tech and innovation)

YEAR 2 (2026)

Environment: Regen

Main practices of RV – keeping living roots, not having bare soil, animal integration in the vineyard, biodiversity, having sheep in the vineyard, herbicide vs. mechanical weeding

People: Health and Safety

Supporting companies of different sizes with their health and safety

Environment: Carbon accounting and Net Zero

What is Net Zero, current legislation and expectations, software/ tools/ 3rd parties, policy and commitments, guidance on sequestration

Environment: Pest and Disease

Sustainable strategies for combating diseases (Integrated Pest Management [IPM], alternatives to copper, etc.), understanding how disease pressure will change with climate change, how to measure and record, relevant research, PIWIs

People: Accessibility

Access support for visitors, making work accessible, understanding accessibility, tools and resources for training and support

YEAR 3 (2027)

Governance: Legislation, reporting (Governmental and impact reports)

Current and upcoming legislation, reporting techniques and mechanisms, tools to support reporting, templates for impact reports and questionnaire examples

People: Mental Health

Policy, training, signposting to existing support, examples, mental health first aiders, posters etc.

Environment: Biodiversity

Options for measuring and improving across vineyards and other habitats

Governance: other certifications

B Corp, Leaf, SALSA, Soil Association, Demeter, Regenified, ROC, etc.

Responsibility campaign and toolkit

WineGB's Safeguarding and Wellbeing Toolkit

In response to Queena Wong's 2023 survey and upcoming legal changes regarding sexual harassment and workplace responsibility, we developed a safeguarding and welfare toolkit. Her survey revealed significant issues in the industry related to safeguarding, particularly for women. The toolkit includes policy guidance, training materials, and resources to help workplaces tackle harassment, abuse, and neglect. This initiative aims to foster a safer, respectful environment for all workers, promoting zero tolerance for misconduct and supporting welfare efforts at both individual and business levels.



The toolkit has been introduced ahead of the 26 October 2024 law change concerning sexual harassment under the Worker Protection Act. UK employers must now take proactive steps to prevent harassment, shifting from reactive to preventive measures. The Equality and Human Rights Commission offers compliance guidance, highlighting the importance of workplace culture, training, and reporting channels to eliminate harassment.

[Click here to read more about the upcoming legal change and EHRC's guidance for employers](#)



Equality and Human Rights Commission

Articulating The Collective Voice



We've completed this report, in order to provide evidence of what we require from the Government in relation to sustainability; environmental, people, and business-wise.

Environmental

SWGB helps members improve and measure carbon mitigation and biodiversity but currently, it only covers 21% of annual bottle production and 43% of hecterage. To extend this influence, increased Government support is needed for sustainable viticulture and winemaking tools, and practical changes such as improved curbside recycling methods.



Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

The wine industry is 50% female, which is commendable, but underrepresented minority groups still need support. This female representation also isn't reflected in leadership roles. To reduce barriers to entry in English wine, there should be increased financial aid for education, broader outreach, more teaching opportunities, and greater visibility of available jobs and the sector as a whole.



Tourism

44% of our vineyards are accessible via public transport. We need investment in rural infrastructure to ensure more visitors can access our producers by bus and train. This would not only make vineyards more accessible but also promote sustainable tourism by reducing the reliance on cars.



Workforce

86% of vineyards use seasonal workers and our industry will support 30,000 jobs by 2040. We need the Future Winemakers' Scheme to be a permanent, annual funding stream to provide our workers with the education and skills required to support this growth.

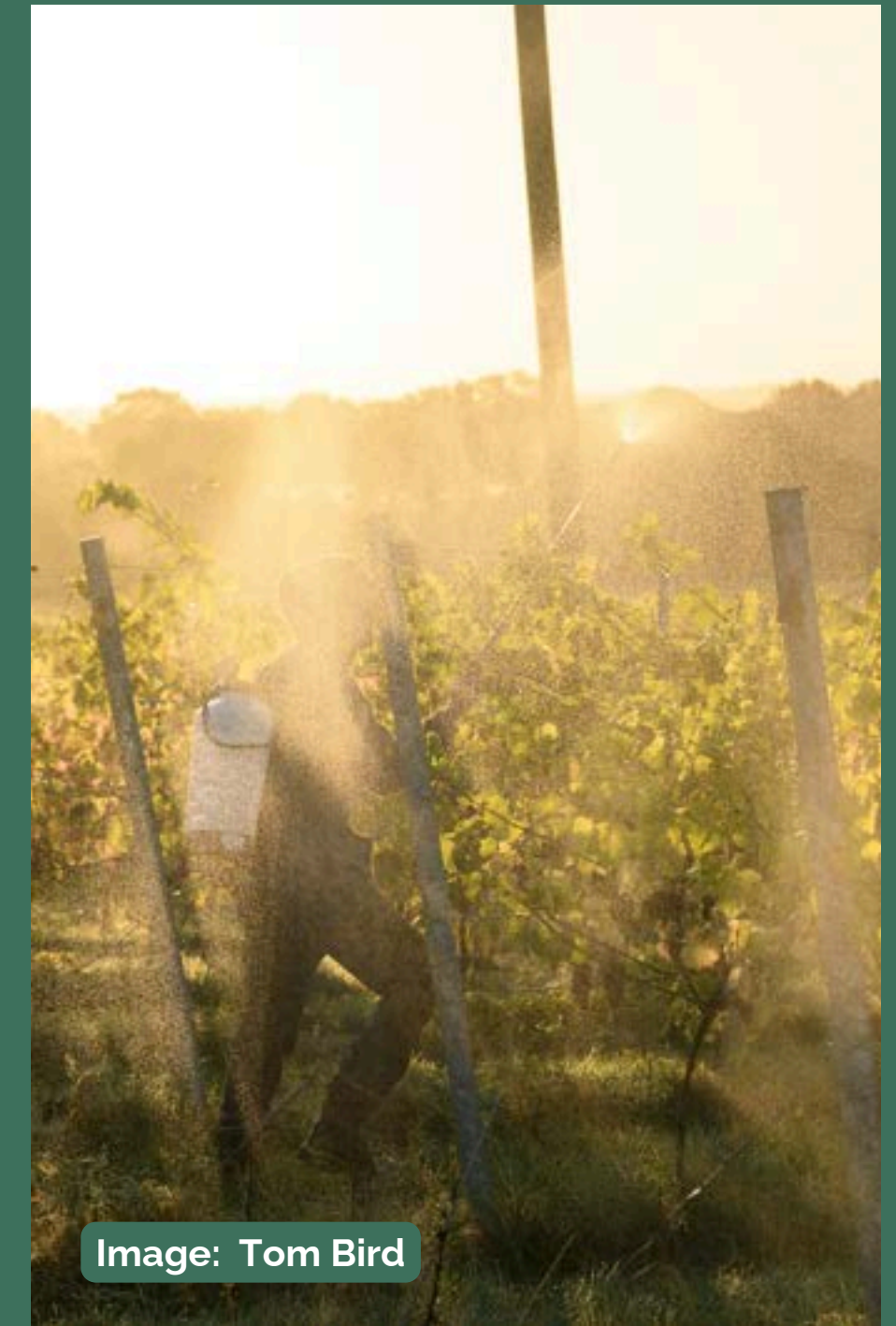


Image: WineGB

Sustainable Farming Initiative

The Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI), part of the UK's Environmental Land Management scheme, promotes eco-friendly farming practices starting in 2024. Key features include:

- 10% increase in average payment rates
- Introduction of around 50 new actions and updates
- A "pick and mix" approach for farmers to select actions based on their circumstances
- Support for practices that align with national environmental goals like maintaining hedgerows and reducing pesticide use.



SFI does not explicitly mention viticulture, however, its objectives and associated programmes are increasingly relevant to the wine sector. For more details on the SFI and related initiatives [visit the UK Government's official site](#).

[Click here for information on the 2024 offer.](#)

Based on the feedback of this area of the survey, WineGB will be working to create a useful toolkit for members on SFI and applying for this and other related Government support.



Section 3: This Report





Image: Balfour

What Is This Report?

This report is based on data captured by our WineGB carbon calculator and the SWGB data hub, as well as two member surveys: a detailed version gathering both qualitative and quantitative data on environmental, social, and governance efforts, and a shorter one with key yes/no questions relating to those topics.

This report summarises the findings, providing an industry snapshot that allows comparison with other sustainability-conscious wine regions globally. It will also serve as a benchmarking tool for WineGB members, helping them measure their performance against industry averages and their peers.

We will review our findings in 2025 to track our collective progress.

Why Have We Published This Report?

This report delves into WineGB members' performance in environmental, social, and governance areas to:

- Benchmark for improvement: measure progress over time, compare with global standards, and identify development areas.
- Identify gaps: highlight industry shortcomings to focus resources on reducing emissions, improving diversity, and strengthening governance.
- Enhance transparency and trust: share data publicly to build trust with stakeholders and demonstrate commitment to sustainability.
- Drive informed decision-making: use data to guide sustainability investments and align strategies with long-term goals.
- Setting a baseline: understand data requirements and additional reporting needs to improve the effectiveness of this report in the future.



The Data Set For This Report

The data from this report comes from producers who...



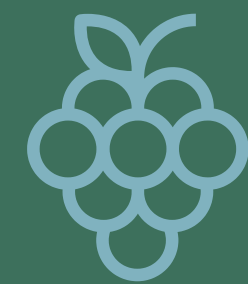
21%



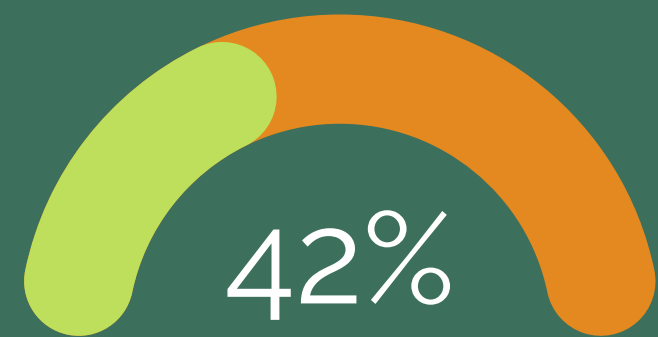
Represents 21% of WineGB producer members



35%



Accounts for 35% of UK hectarage under vine



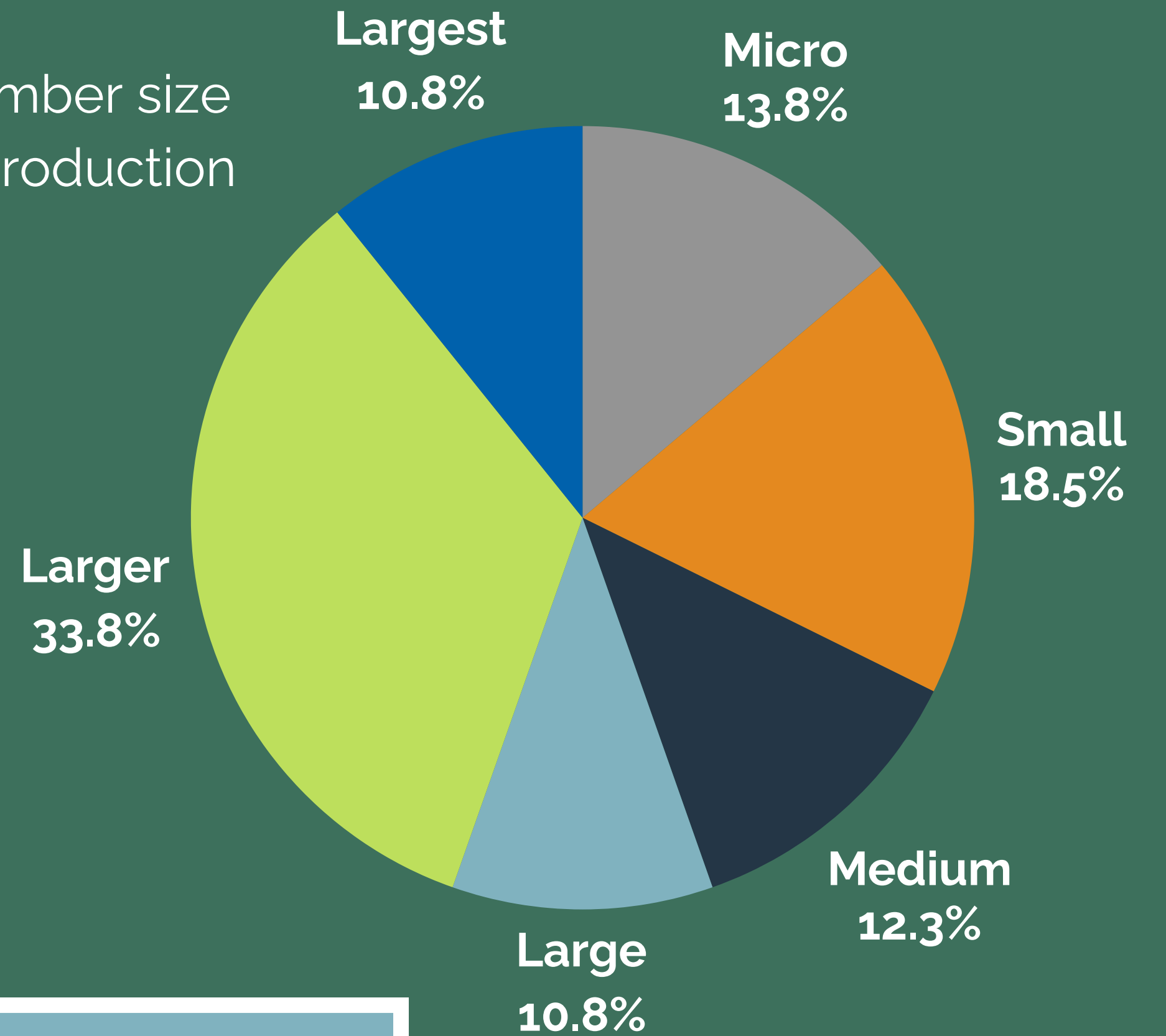
42%



Responsible for 42% of UK annual bottle production

Section 3: The Report

Breakdown of member size by annual bottle production



Micro	<4,499
Small	4,500 - 10,000
Medium	10,001 - 25,000
Large	25,001 - 55,000
Larger	55,001 - 375,000
Largest	> 375,001



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Section 4: The Environment

Image: Denbies



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Image: Ridgeview

Climate Change – How is it affecting the vineyard?

- **Disease Pressure:** Warmer, wetter conditions are ideal for diseases like botrytis and mildew. Higher humidity and fluctuating temperatures exacerbate fungal infections, leading to crop damage, reduced yields, higher costs for disease management, and unpredictable timings.
- **Pests:** Shifting climates enable pests to survive longer or migrate to new regions, threatening vines more frequently, becoming less predictable, and intensifying pest management efforts.
- **Unpredictable Weather:**
 - Late and frequent frosts damage early growth stages, leading to significant crop loss.
 - Long rain spells increase disease risk, hinder flowering, and cause uneven ripening.
 - Intermittent warm and sunny days disrupt phenological cycles, affecting fruit quality and harvest timing, making vineyard management unpredictable.

What Does This Mean For Wine?

Changes in Successful Wine Regions

Traditional wine-growing areas may become too hot or dry, pushing production to cooler regions, such as parts of northern Europe or higher altitudes.

Unpredictable Harvests

Climate change causes erratic ripening, forcing winemakers to adjust harvest times quickly, often compromising grape quality.

Changing Growing Seasons

Heat accumulation speeds up ripening, which can lead to wines with higher alcohol levels and less complexity or phenolic ripeness. Longer cold spells slows down the ripening process. 2024 has been a solid example of this.

Stricter Regulation

New regulations may make it harder for smaller and emerging wineries to enter the market, stifling growth and innovation within the industry. For example, carbon reporting requirements and packing regulation and taxes.

Altered Grape Flavours

Warmer temperatures and irregular ripening can shift grape characteristics, affecting acidity, sugar levels, and aromas, leading to a change in the wine's flavour profile.

Higher Costs

As vineyards face more disease and pest pressure, treatments and labour costs increase, along with energy costs for irrigation in some regions and climate control, making production more expensive.

Net Zero

Net Zero can be seen as the balancing of greenhouse gas emissions against their removal or mitigation. Achieving it involves reducing gross emissions. Agricultural business can mitigate impact through carbon sequestration (e.g. permanent maintenance of soil carbon through regenerative practices).



30% of producers have a Net Zero target



Of those with a Net Zero target, 75% have committed to a date by which to achieve it



Image: Llanerch

Case Study: Roebuck Estates' Journey to Reducing Carbon Using the WineGB Carbon Calculator

Roebuck is Gold SWGB Certified. This means it has displayed best practice in its data collection, and had six years of data audited. It has also set itself the goal of reaching Net Zero by the year 2030.

Below is an analysis of Roebuck's use of the WineGB Carbon Calculator.

In its first year, Roebuck's total emissions were 197.70 tonnes of CO₂e, and its sequestration efforts captured 195.29 tonnes, resulting in a net carbon balance of 2.41 tonnes CO₂e. This translates to a carbon balance per hectare of 0.03 tonnes and 0.01 tonnes per tonne of grapes. Major sources of emissions included 0.7174 tonnes CO₂e per hectare from fuel and 1.4172 tonnes CO₂e from fertilisers, while water usage stood at 2.2731 m³ per tonne of grapes.



Image: Roebuck

In Year 2, Roebuck achieved notable improvements, lowering total emissions to 177.40 tonnes CO₂e and slightly increasing sequestration to 185.87 tonnes CO₂e, resulting in a negative carbon balance of -8.47 tonnes CO₂e. The carbon balance per hectare decreased to -0.11 tonnes, and per tonne of grapes to -0.0227 tonnes CO₂e. Fuel emissions fell to 0.6386 tonnes CO₂e per hectare, fertiliser emissions to 1.2328 tonnes CO₂e, and water usage to 1.3405 m³ per tonne of grapes.

In Year 3, Roebuck significantly reduced its carbon footprint, achieving emissions of 190.40 tonnes CO₂e and sequestering -248.69 tonnes CO₂e, resulting in a net carbon balance of -58.29 tonnes CO₂e. The carbon balance improved to -0.74 tonnes per hectare and -0.1273 tonnes per tonne of grapes. While fuel and fertiliser emissions stayed steady, water use decreased to 1.3100 m³ per tonne of grapes.

Using the WineGB Carbon Calculator, Roebuck shifted from positive emissions in Year 1 to carbon negative by Year 3, reflecting its commitment to sustainability in viticulture.

Year 1

Carbon Balance / hectare:	Carbon Balance / tonne:	Fuel / hectare:
0.03 tonnes CO ₂ e/hectare/year	0.0100 tonnes CO ₂ e/tonne of product	0.7174 tonnes CO ₂ e/hectare from fuel
Fertiliser emissions:	Water:	
1.4172 tonnes CO ₂ e per ha from fertilisers	2.2731 m ³ water per tonne of product	

Year 2

Carbon Balance / hectare:	Carbon Balance / tonne:	Fuel / hectare:
-0.11 tonnes CO ₂ e/hectare/year	-0.0227 tonnes CO ₂ e/tonne of product	0.6386 tonnes CO ₂ e/hectare from fuel
Fertiliser emissions:	Water:	Carbon Income:
1.2328 tonnes CO ₂ e per ha from fertilisers	1.3405 m ³ water per tonne of product	£0.00 carbon income (£)

Year 3

Carbon Balance / hectare:	Carbon Balance / tonne:	Fuel / hectare:
-0.74 tonnes CO ₂ e/hectare/year	-0.1273 tonnes CO ₂ e/tonne of product	0.7032 tonnes CO ₂ e/hectare from fuel
Fertiliser emissions:	Water:	Carbon Income:
1.2621 tonnes CO ₂ e per ha from fertilisers	1.3100 m ³ water per tonne of product	£0.00 carbon income (£)



Image: Denbies

Case Study – Denbies Wine Estate: Achieving Net Zero in UK Wine Production

Denbies Wine Estate is the first UK vineyard and winery to achieve Net Zero status under the UK Carbon Code of Conduct (UKCCC). In just under two and a half years, Denbies surpassed its initial five-year Net Zero goal set in 2022. Covering 154 hectares, with 107 under vine, Denbies integrates sustainability by preserving 4ha for biodiversity and generating green energy. By 2023, the estate sequestered 96 tonnes of CO₂ more than it emitted, confirming its Net Zero status. This achievement was independently certified by Beyond Zero, which measured emissions across the entire wine production process, ensuring compliance with global standards.

The Vineyard: A Snapshot

Soil Health



80% of the data set are consistently monitoring and recording soil health measures

Floor Management



91% utilise at least one of the following: cover crops, animal integration, avoidance of herbicides where possible, avoidance of tilling, and reduced mowing

Synthetic Chemicals



86% of members in the study completely avoid or minimise the use of synthetic chemicals wherever possible in the vineyard

Biodiversity



84% either measure and improve, or have a plan to actively improve biodiversity and local habitats on their vineyards.

Case study – Gusbourne: Pioneering Cover Crops for Sustainable Vineyard Floor Management

Gusbourne is participating in an Innovate UK project to explore sustainable vineyard floor management through the use of cover crops. The study is testing different crops, including perennials like clovers and fescues, and annuals such as phacelia and fava beans. These crops help capture and recycle nutrients, improve soil health, support water management, and promote biodiversity. By increasing the variety of plant life, Gusbourne aims to enhance the symbiotic relationship between soil fungi and vine roots, aiding nutrient uptake.

Although the trial is still in its early stages, the approach aligns with Gusbourne's commitment to low-intervention, nature-focused farming.

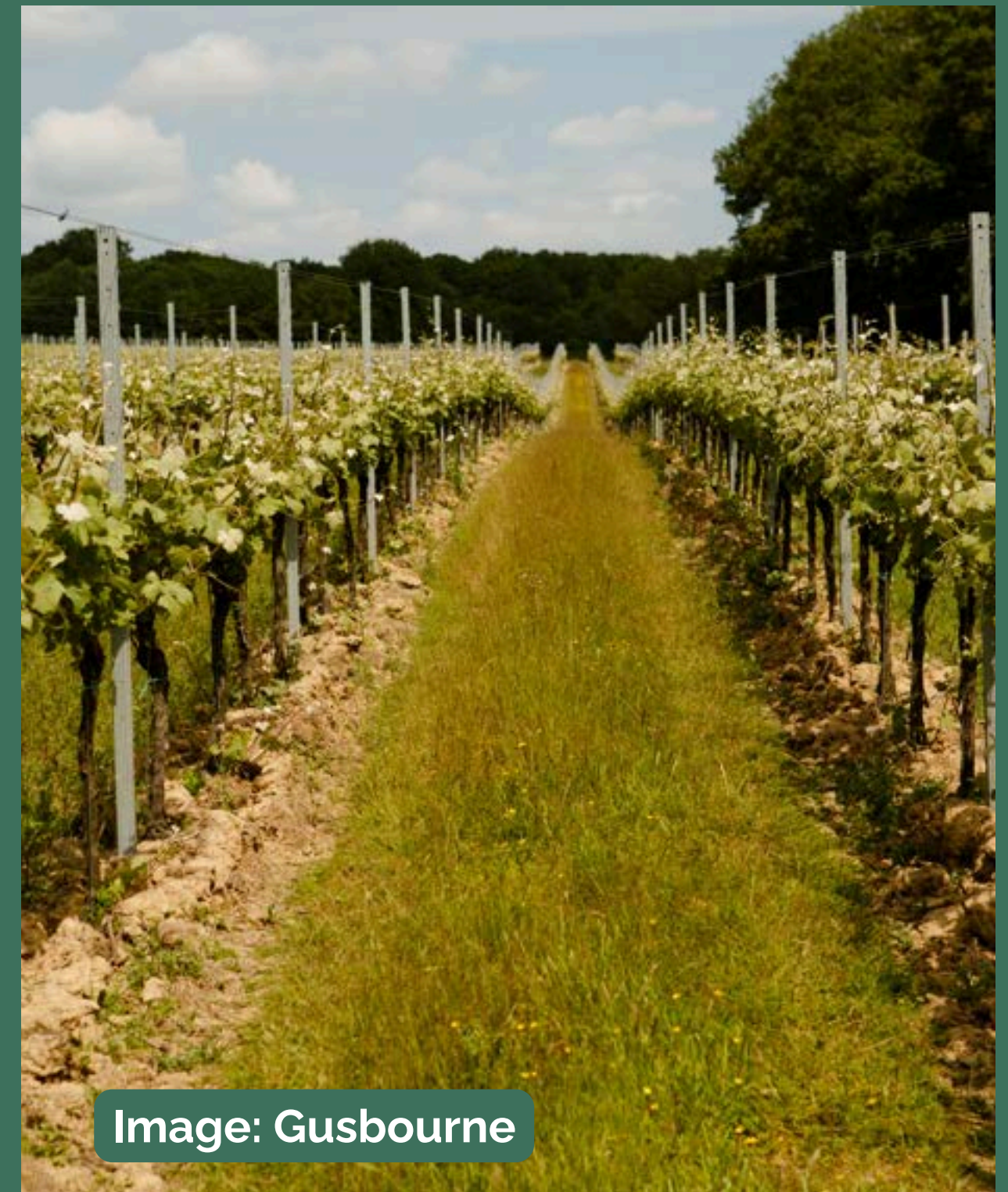


Image: Gusbourne

Biodiversity

Biodiversity is crucial for sustainability, representing the variety of living organisms and ecosystems. It includes diversity within and between species and is essential for maintaining resilient ecosystems that provide vital services like pollination and water purification. Protecting biodiversity is key to ensuring long-term environmental health and the natural processes that support all life, both above and below ground.



Image: St Martin's Vineyard



Image: Wildshark

Case Study – Wildshark Vineyard: Watercress and Wildflowers

UK vineyards are often excellent examples of efforts to improve biodiversity, and Wildshark Vineyard is one of them. It integrates wildflowers, native trees, and wildlife-friendly initiatives across its estate. Wildflowers planted between every other row of vines attract pollinators and enrich the soil, while supporting endangered insect species. The vineyard has planted native trees and hedgerows, has installed bird boxes to encourage declining bird populations, and has introduced bee hives to boost pollination. It has also restocked a lake with trout, provided habitats for various bird species, and revitalised old watercress beds, indicating clean water quality on the property.

The Winery: A Snapshot

Renewable Energy



62% of wineries from the data set use renewable energy sources to at least partly fuel their operations.

Winery Waste



60% of producers recycle the waste from their wineries. This can include; water, glass, crown caps, bidules, etc.

Grape Marc



60% have a secondary use for their grape marc (the residue remaining after the grapes have been pressed).

Energy Source



40% of wineries are at least partly fuelled by their own sources of energy such as solar panels.



Case Study – Defined Wine: Good Recycling Practices for Sustainability

Defined Wine has established a partnership with CountryStyle Recycling to enhance sustainability through effective recycling practices, focusing on the processing of winery waste such as crown caps and bidules. By collecting these materials for dedicated recycling rather than mixed streams, Defined maximises its recycling potential and reduces contamination. This collaboration exemplifies best practice in the wine industry, showcasing how dedicated recycling partnerships can significantly reduce waste and promote a more sustainable future in winemaking.

Case Study – Hundred Hills: Reducing Energy Needs with Natural Night Cooling

Hundred Hills Winery employs natural night cooling and temperature control systems for each wooden cask and steel tank to maintain optimal fermentation conditions while minimising energy consumption. By utilising well-insulated buildings, the winery takes advantage of cooler night time temperatures to lower the ambient temperature inside the winery, effectively reducing the need for energy-intensive cooling systems. This sustainable approach not only ensures precise temperature management during winemaking, but also significantly lowers energy requirements. This is a clear example of an environmentally responsible practice for winemaking operations.



Image: Hundred Hills

Case Study – Mallard Point: Revolutionising Wine Packaging

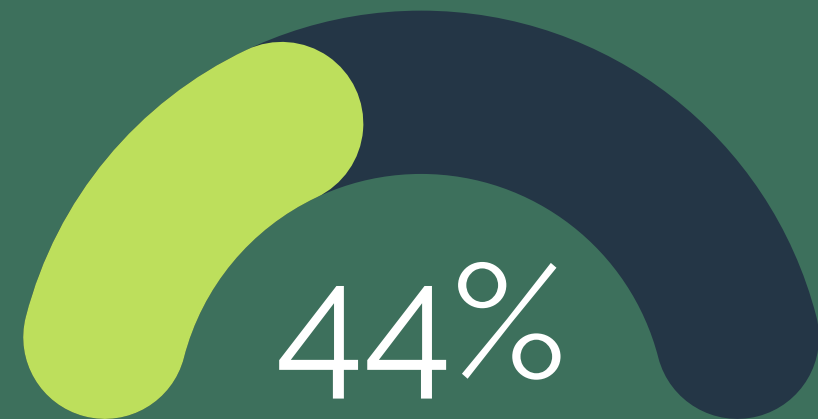
Glass is the biggest contributor of carbon in the wine industry and rates of recycling differ greatly throughout the country. Numerous producers and organisations are trying to find a way to reduce this impact through lightweighting, alternative packaging options, decarbonisation, and 'green light' glass.



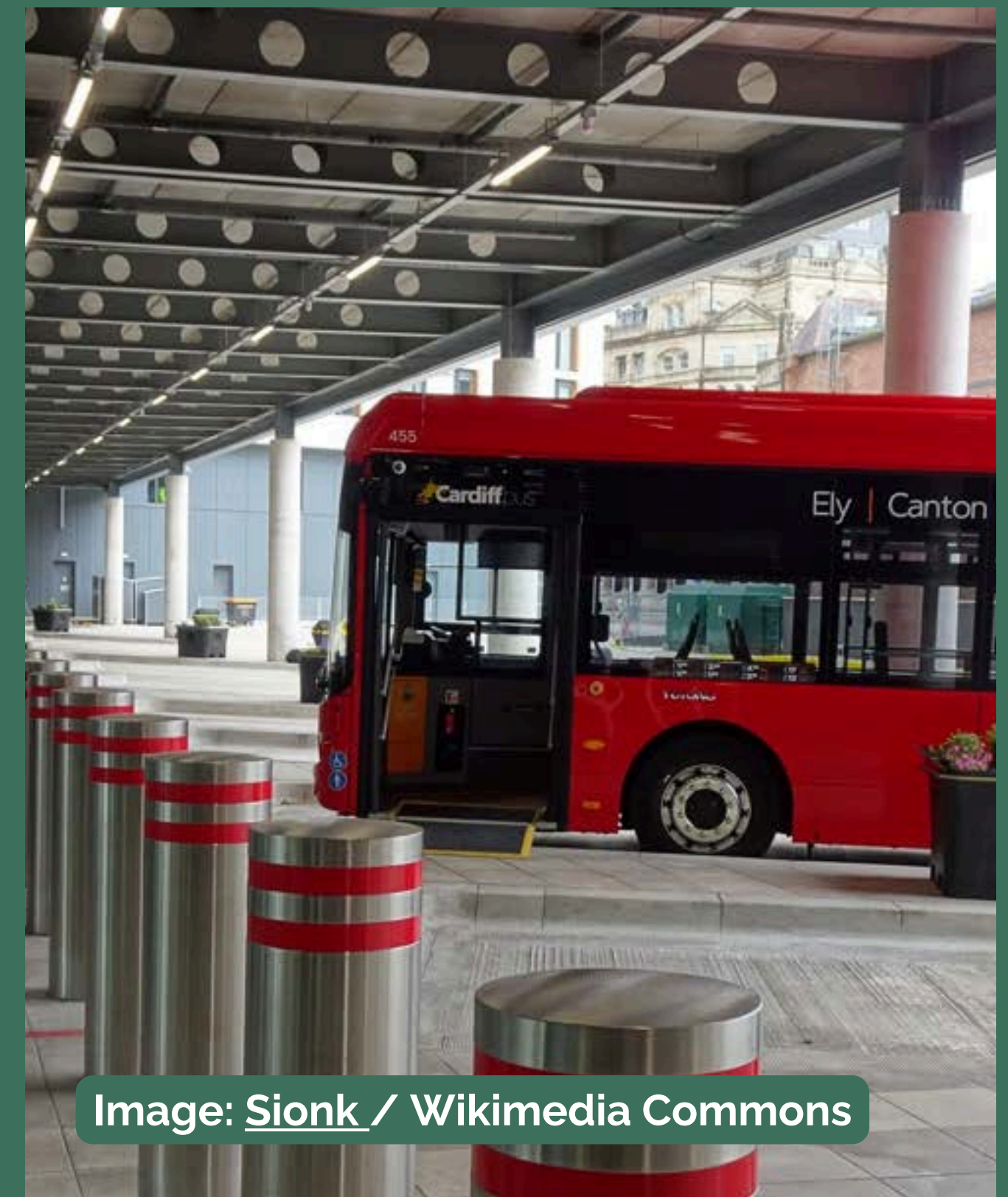
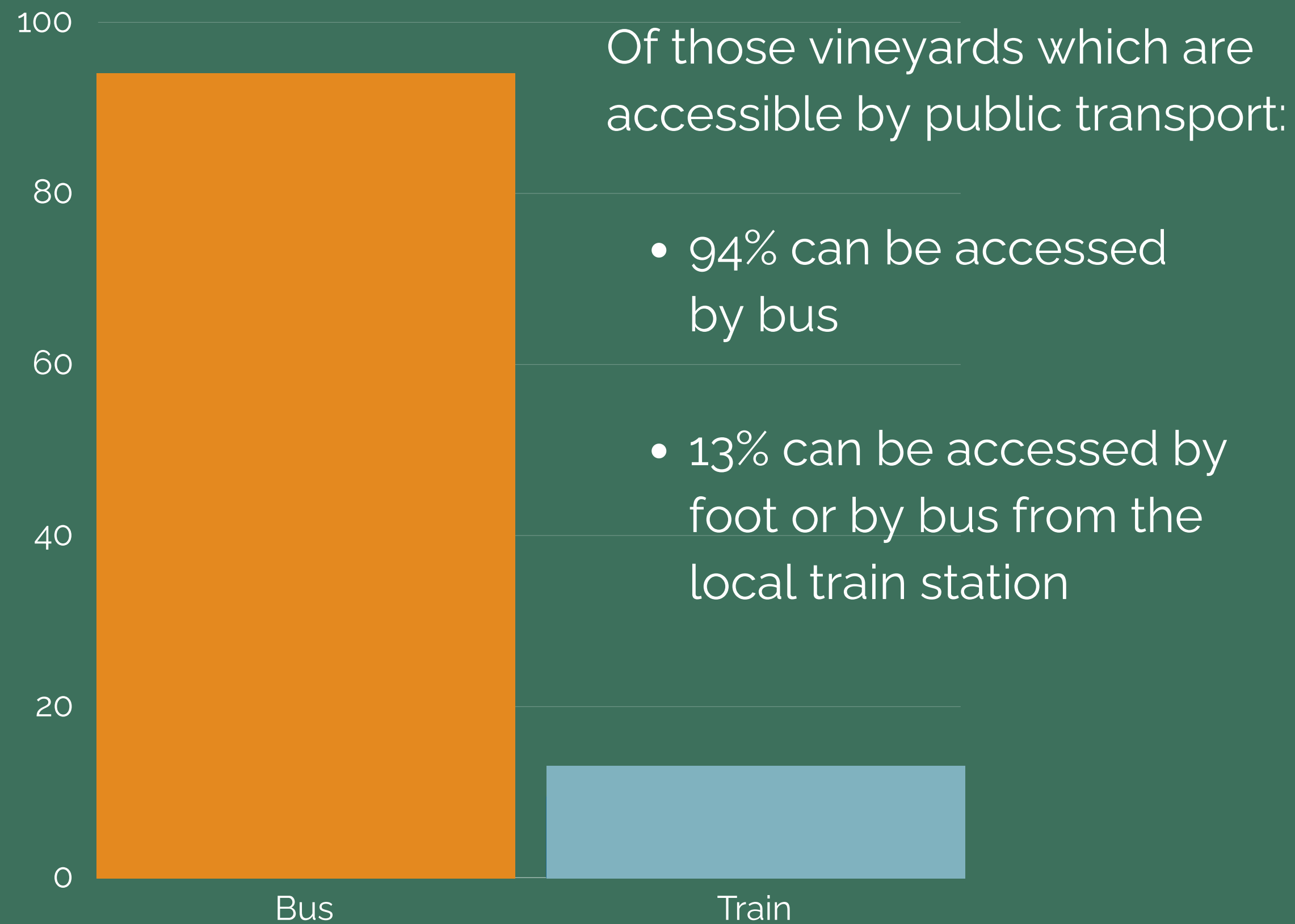
Image: Mallard Point

Mallard Point has introduced a reusable aluminium bottle for both wine and spirits, aiming to reduce environmental impact. Unlike traditional glass bottles, which are often discarded after a single use, the aluminium bottle can be returned, cleaned, and reused multiple times, lowering energy consumption and carbon emissions. Lightweight, durable, and effective at temperature retention, the bottle also features a reusable swing-top closure that preserves the fizz in its Pét-Nat sparkling wine. To encourage returns, the box the bottle comes in can be turned inside out, with a prepaid postage label and a discount voucher for future purchases. This innovative approach not only reduces waste but also incentivises customers to participate in a more sustainable packaging cycle.

Transport – Visitors



44% of the producers who responded indicated that public transport is a viable option for visiting their vineyard.



Case Study – Balfour Winery: Easy Access, Less Carbon

Balfour Winery is committed to sustainability and accessibility by providing various public transport options for visitors, significantly reducing the need for cars. The winery offers free dedicated shuttle services from local train stations and encourages guests to use public transport by promoting easy access to the vineyard. This initiative not only helps lower carbon emissions associated with travel, but also makes the winery more accessible to a broader audience, enhancing the overall visitor experience while supporting environmentally responsible practices.



Image: Balfour



Section 5: The People

Image: Breaky Bottom



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Image: WineGB



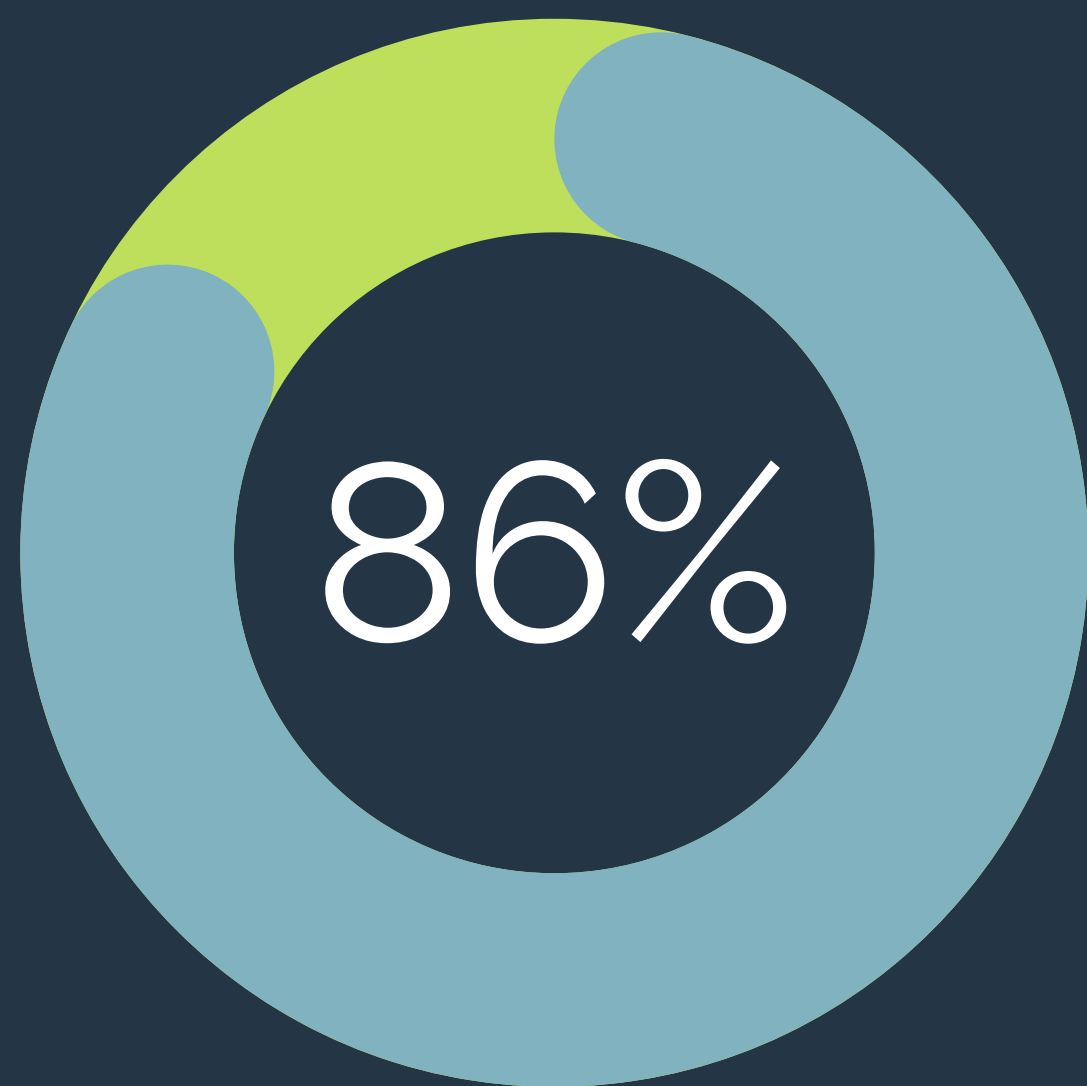
People – Employees

People are at the heart of the wine business. It is their passion, stories and vision that grow the UK wine industry. WineGB's 2023 Industry Report identified that 2,300 people are employed in the UK wine industry full-time, with a further 8,300 people in part time/seasonal work. This means that there are approximately 10,600 people working in English and Welsh wine. The gender split is 47% female and 52% male, with 0.4% self-identifying as other gender identities.

A further 50% growth rate in full-time equivalent positions is forecast by 2025, while it is estimated that the industry will require 30,000 workers by 2040.

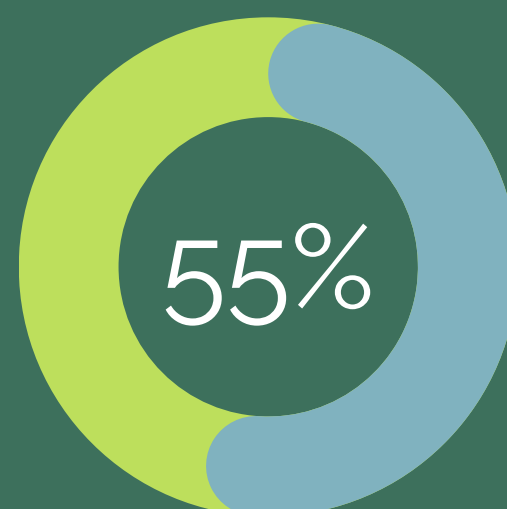
A 2021 South Downs National Park Report found that vineyards employ 17x more people than traditional farming. Wineries are vine to glass operations, with staff employed throughout the production process from vineyard management and winemaking to sales, marketing and hospitality.

Seasonal and Casual Workers



86% of producers hire seasonal and/or casual workers for harvest and in the cellar door during peak times such as summer and over the Christmas period.

Of those 86%...



Over half hire their seasonal and casual workers through local outreach and community-based hiring or volunteering.



42% hire through advertising online and on their company websites



32% utilise agencies and agency workers



31% use local labour and no agency workers



22% use job boards

Seasonal and Casual Workers

In the wine industry, we rely on seasonal, temporary, and casual workers for many purposes, such as:

- Harvest, for both the vineyard and the winery
- Pruning
- Christmas sales
- Peak summer hospitality
- Events



Ensuring fair pay, verifying the right to work, and prioritising the safety and welfare of seasonal and casual workers are crucial for creating a happy and healthy workforce. By treating volunteers with the same respect and care as paid workers – through safeguarding, proper training, and support – employers create an inclusive and secure environment.

These practices not only fulfil legal and ethical obligations, but also foster a positive workplace culture, essential for maintaining morale and encouraging repeat participation, which is vital for the industry's success.

Case Study – Camel Valley: Community Harvesting and Fair Wages



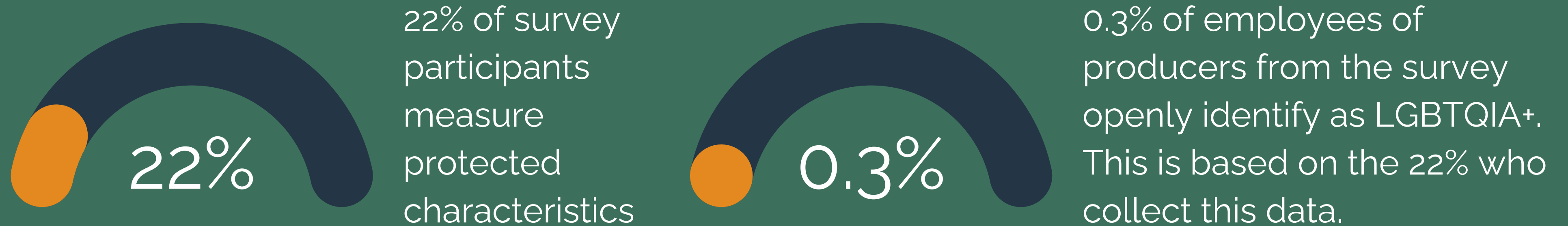
Image: Camel Valley

Camel Valley Vineyard in Cornwall showcases good seasonal hiring practices by focusing on the local community for harvest help. It uses social media to rally local temporary workers, and ensures everyone is paid a living wage. With half-day picking sessions, Camel Valley prevents staff from being overworked and keeps things manageable. The team also provides daily training on safety and quality.

Camel Valley works with the charity St. Petlocks to support marginalised individuals find work. This community-centred approach boosts camaraderie and creates a rewarding, inclusive experience for everyone involved.

Protected Characteristics

Protected characteristics are specific attributes safeguarded against discrimination under the Equality Act 2010. These include age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.



Measuring protected characteristics is essential for addressing diversity and inclusion issues in the workplace. Without tracking this data, it is difficult to identify gaps in representation or ensure that all groups have equal opportunities. Inclusive hiring practices aim to provide fair access to jobs, but when hiring is solely skills-based, it can inadvertently overlook candidates from underrepresented backgrounds who may not have had the same opportunities to develop those skills. By measuring protected characteristics, organisations can take active steps towards creating a more diverse workforce and fostering an environment where all individuals can thrive.



Image: Simpsons

Case Study – Simpsons: A Push Towards an Inclusive Workspace

Simpsons' Wine Estate demonstrates a strong commitment to gender balance and inclusivity, boasting 50% female staff, including in leadership positions. Women are involved across all areas of the business, from vineyard management to sales and marketing, creating a representative and equitable workplace culture.

To promote diversity in the wine industry, Simpsons actively engages with local schools through outreach visits, encouraging young people to explore careers in viticulture and wine. This initiative not only inspires the next generation but also helps cultivate a more inclusive industry. By prioritising diversity and community engagement, Simpsons sets a positive example, showcasing how an inclusive environment can drive success in the wine sector.

Accessibility

The 'purple pound', reflecting the spending power of the UK's 16 million disabled individuals, is about £274 billion annually. Improving accessibility is not only a moral duty but also a financial opportunity, tapping into an underserved market worth nearly £300 billion.

Some of those who completed the survey used the opportunity to explain what adjustments they have put in place in order to support staff and customers with different access requirements.

Examples of implemented adjustments:

- Seating during tours for visitors with mobility needs.
- Tours and tastings on flat, firm ground near the winery.
- Accessible entry with wide doorways and flat surfaces.
- Accessible toilets with emergency pull cords and grab rails.
- Accessible parking with EV charging.
- Flexible wine tastings that can be moved to accommodate accessibility needs.

VisitEngland has created a detailed toolkit on how to create an accessible and inclusive space, [click here if you want to know more.](#)



Image: Gusbourne

Case Study – Hennes: Inclusive and Accessible Tastings

Hennes offers an accessible and inclusive experience for its visitors. The site features disabled parking with EV charging, wide double doors for easy entry, and an accessible toilet on the ground floor. Tastings can be arranged on the ground floor and relocated as needed to accommodate accessibility needs. For individuals with reduced sight, neurodiversity, or learning difficulties, for example, tasting notes can be provided in advance. Customers are encouraged to inform the team of any specific requirements in advance to ensure all visitors have a comfortable experience.



Image: Hennes

Community Engagement Examples From Our Members

Employing casual workers from a local homeless charity allows them to reconnect with work and others in a supportive environment, free from any pressure or expectations.

Implementing a self-funded apprenticeship program for employees to facilitate career advancement within the wine industry.

Organising and hosting community events like picnics, fairs, and markets.

Contributing experiences and wine to community events.

Organising a village open evening allows locals to visit the vineyard, meet the team, and sample local wines.

Sponsoring musical, operatic and literary events.

Contribute financially to a range of charitable organisations, including soup kitchens and mental health services.

Establishing an internal committee focused on social engagement, community building, and fostering a positive culture with the goal of connecting with the local community.

Offering work experience opportunities to local schools.

Engaging with local community groups like the Horticultural Society and the Women's Institute.



Image: Chapel Down

Case Study – Chapel Down: Strengthening Sustainability Through Community Collaboration

Chapel Down showcases strong community collaboration and outreach, emphasising the importance of local engagement. It partners with two named local charities, while also considering additional local requests for support. Chapel Down actively engages with its community by hosting school and college visits, organising events for Barham village residents, and participating in initiatives like the Elham Christmas Market and the Canterbury Wine Festival. Their involvement with the local newspaper, The Courier, creates strong ties within the community.

Through these efforts, Chapel Down highlights the 'people' aspect of sustainability by fostering meaningful local connections and contributing to the wellbeing of the surrounding area.

Section 6: Business/Governance



Awards and Certificates



These are just a few of the examples of awards and certificates held by some of our members. They not only assure quality and safety, but also cover environmental sustainability, protection and care for people and planet, and good governance.

Certifications and awards provide consumers and the trade with proof of good practice and help producers tell their stories.



Case study – Ridgeview: B Corp

Ridgeview Wine Estate is a Certified B Corporation, highlighting its long-standing commitment to sustainability since its founding in 1995. This certification reflects Ridgeview's philosophy of balancing people, planet, and profit, aligning with its values of honesty, integrity, innovation, and collaboration. As 'custodians of their estate' in the South Downs National Park, the Ridgeview team views this milestone as a continuous journey towards a more sustainable future, emphasising its responsibility to protect the land and communities for future generations. By joining the B Corp community, Ridgeview not only enhances its environmental and social practices, but also reinforces its dedication to making a positive impact in the world.

Since becoming a B Corp, Ridgeview has seen increased involvement from younger, climate-conscious individuals and those connected to the B Corp movement, reflected in more product purchases and site visits from such individuals.

Publishing Statistics



14% of survey respondents said they publicly share their environmental and people statistics as well as information about their business. Some do so through their own impact reports, others through publishing policies on their websites or through clear mission statements.

Transparency in environmental and people policies supports good governance, as it enhances trust and accountability among stakeholders. By sharing impact and sustainability reports, organisations can showcase their commitment to ethical practices, enabling better tracking of progress and identifying areas for improvement. This openness not only enhances corporate reputation but also encourages stakeholder engagement, as consumers are increasingly drawn to businesses that align with their values. Ultimately, clear communication of policies and statistics supports sustainable governance, leading to positive outcomes for both companies and society.





Section 7: Opinions And Understanding



Understanding and Opinions

We asked our members to rate their understanding of certain statements out of 5, 1 meaning no understanding and 5 being good understanding. We also asked about their opinions, 1 reflecting strongly disagree and 5 being strongly agree.

Opinion

Statements and the average rating out of 5



“We think training our staff about sustainability is important”



4.3/5



“We think People/Social factors are just as important as Environment when it comes to sustainability efforts”



4/5

Opinion

Statements and the average rating out of 5



“We think a sustainability programme should include a section on social factors”



3.7/5



“We think it is important to keep up to date with sustainability news and protocols”



3.7/5

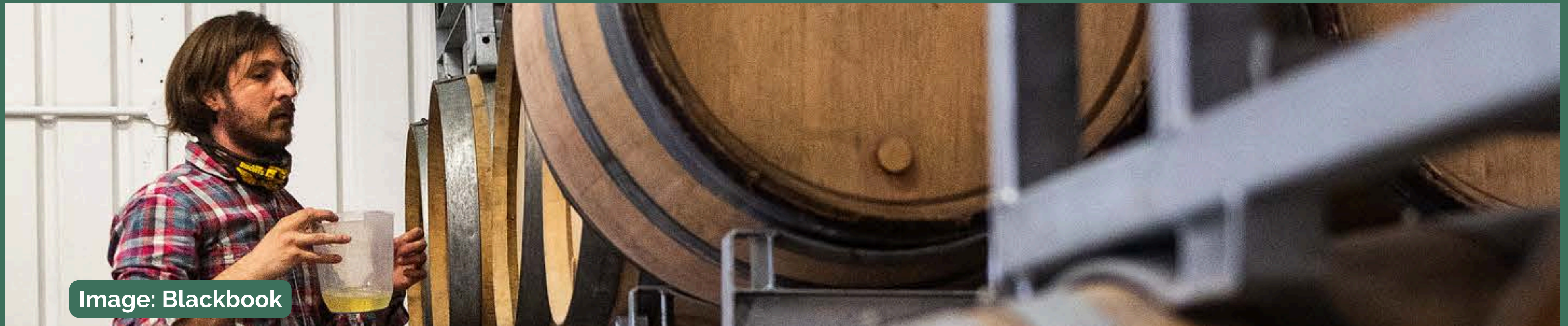


Image: Blackbook

Understanding

Statements and the average rating out of 5



“We understand the term sustainability”



4.2/5



“We understand our environmental impact as a company”



4/5



“Our staff understand their individual operational environmental impact”



3.7/5

Understanding

Statements and the average rating out of 5



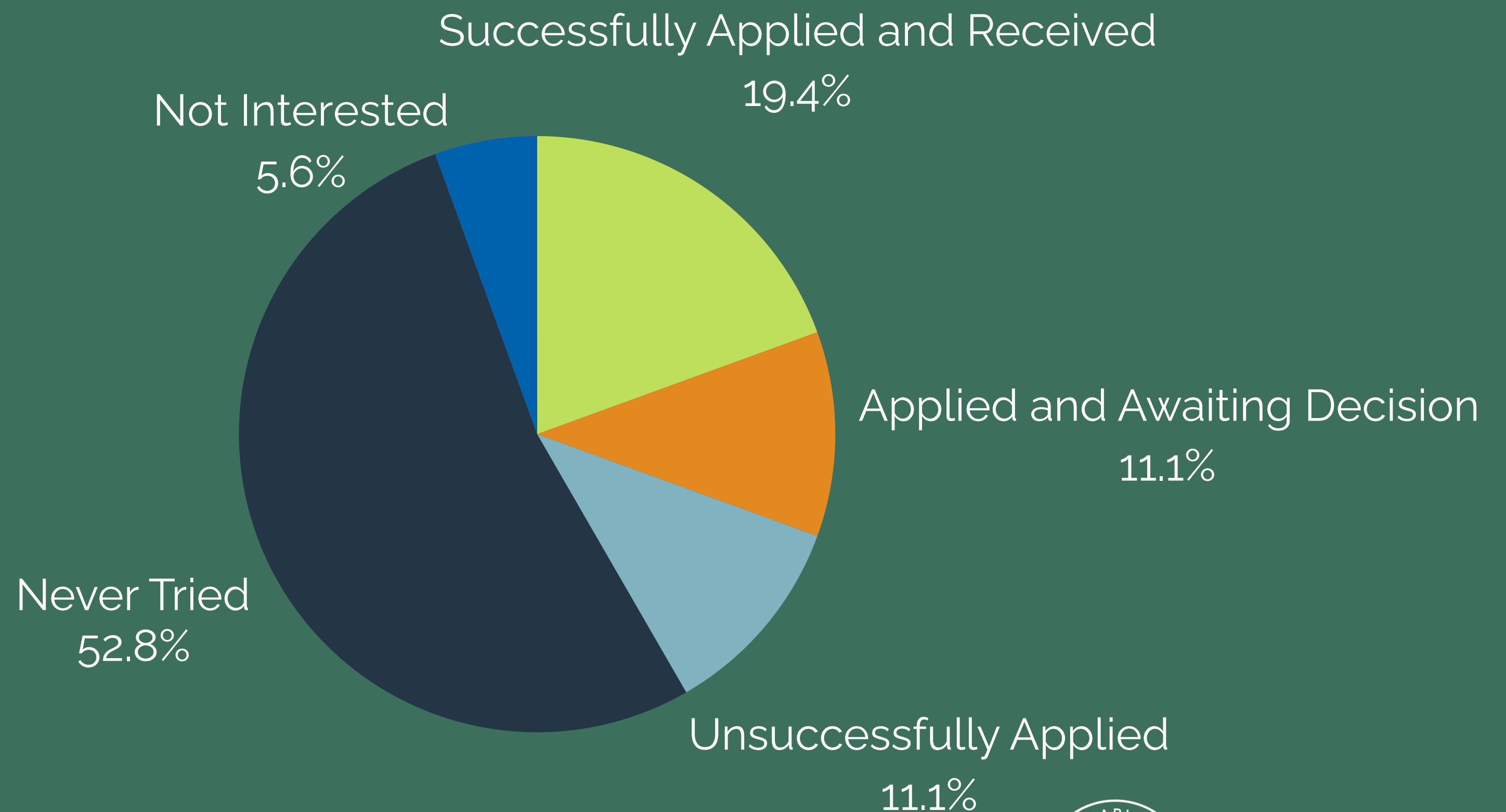
"We understand what Government sustainability support is available to us (such as SFI)"



3.1/5

A breakdown of how the respondents of the survey answered the question:

'We have applied for Government grants to help us with our sustainability efforts':



Heard on the Grape Vine

The survey results highlight a need for more educational resources and a clear industry objective regarding sustainability. These concerns show that our members are eager for guidance and support to improve their sustainable practices. As WineGB, we can play a pivotal role in addressing these needs by providing targeted educational materials and setting clear, industry-wide sustainability goals to help drive progress.

Wider team understanding could be better.

Education is needed but would be easier if we had a cohesive industry objective.

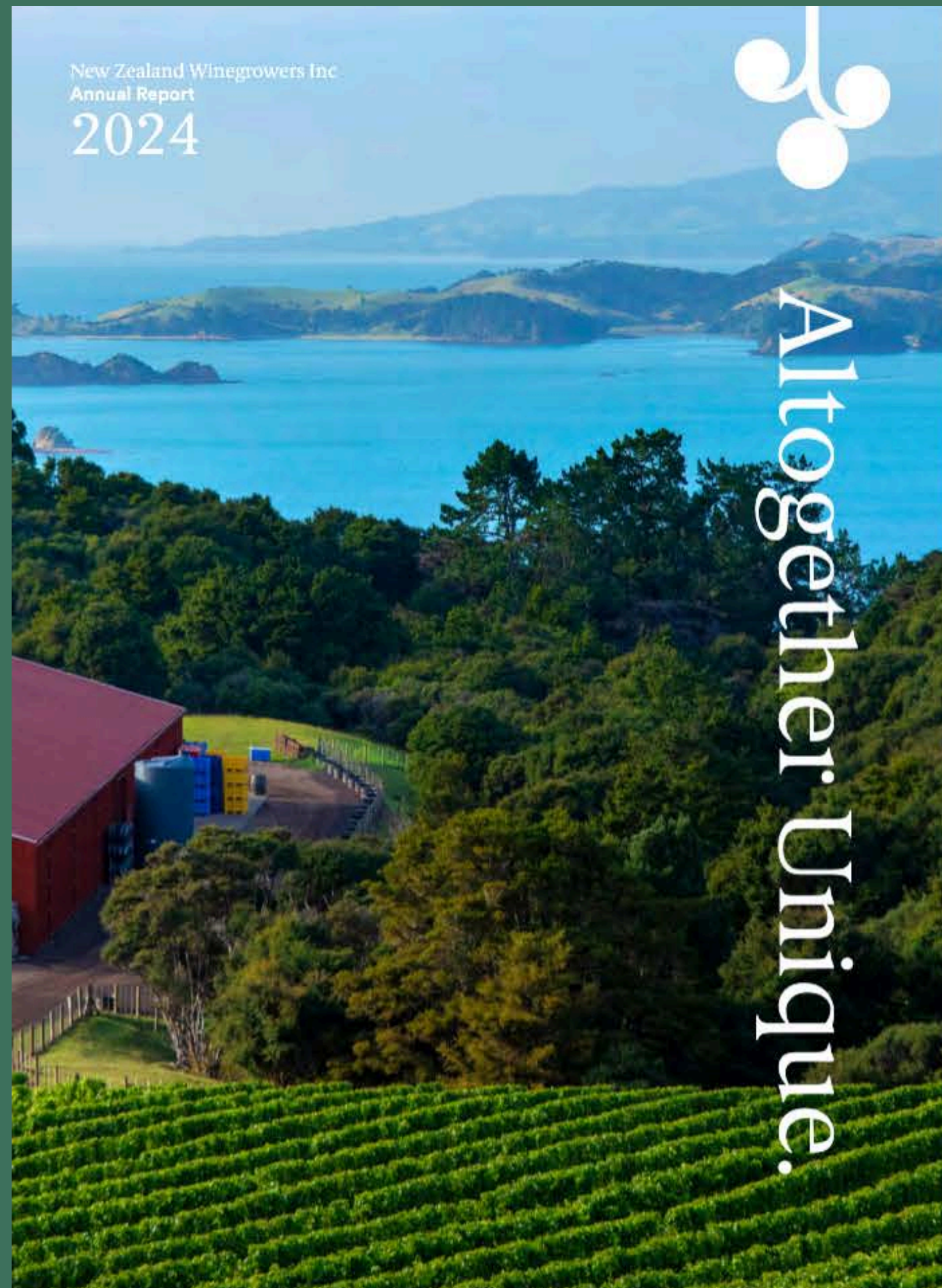
We have a clear understanding of sustainability but measuring the environmental impact is an area we are learning about and in the process of improving reporting.

Section 8: Conclusions



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Learning From New Zealand



New Zealand's wine industry has been recording its sustainability efforts since 2021. The country is advancing sustainability with key efforts highlighted in the 2024 annual report:

- Sustainability Leadership: Over 96% of vineyards are certified sustainable; 10% are organic.
- Carbon Neutral Target: Aiming for carbon neutrality by 2050, with emissions data collection starting in 2020/21 for 80% of production.
- Water Management: Adapting SWNZ to meet new freshwater planning requirements for better water efficiency.
- Climate Action: Hosting Climate Change Action Month to provide resources for emissions reduction.

These initiatives demonstrate New Zealand's commitment to a sustainable and respected wine industry. [Click here to read its 2024 Impact Report.](#)

Great Britain Is Just Getting Started

England and Wales are at the beginning of their sustainability journey in the wine industry, inspired by New Zealand's strong practices, where over 96% of vineyards are certified sustainable.

This report initiates data collection. Our aim is to certify more members through SWGB and enhance continuous improvement by fostering collaboration and sharing best practices throughout the WineGB membership and beyond. The focus is on reducing carbon footprints, minimising waste, enhancing biodiversity, and supporting local ecosystems.

Additionally, with rising consumer demand for sustainable products, the industry can lead in environmental stewardship while maintaining quality.

Workshops and resources will aid members in their sustainability efforts, striving for a profitable and sustainable future. The commitment to environmental, people, and business sustainability is a journey that aims to position England and Wales as leaders in sustainable winemaking now, and for future generations.



Image: Tuffon Hall

Section 8: Conclusions



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What's Next?

This report assesses WineGB members' environmental, social, and governance performance to set benchmarks for improvement, identify industry gaps, enhance transparency, and drive informed decision-making.



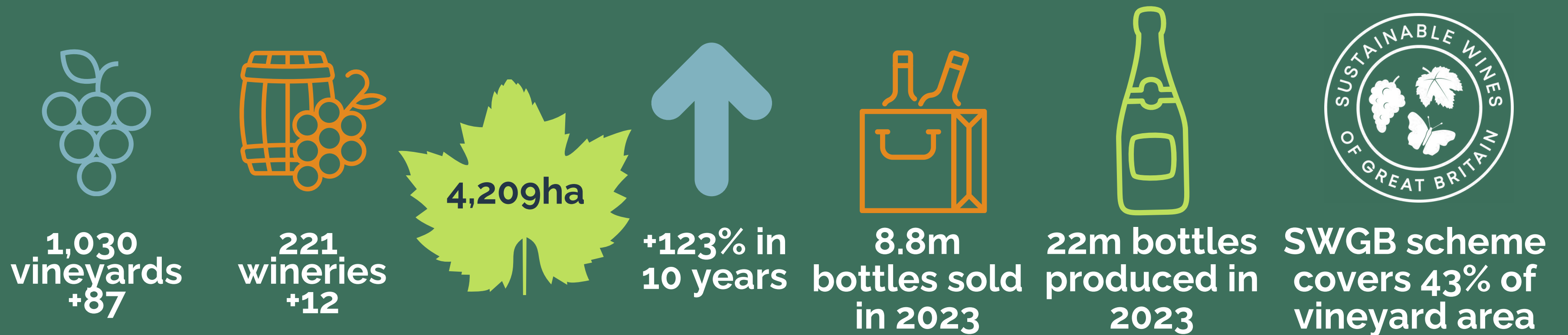
Image: Albury

The next steps highlighted by this report show:

- WineGB needs to focus on providing key educational resources to its members. This includes:
 - Guidance on applying for Government support
 - Measuring company impact
 - Understanding sustainability on individual and organisational levels.
- Emphasis should also be placed on the importance of the people and social aspects of sustainability, such as recording protected characteristics and promoting EDI (Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion) policies for better representation and diversity.
- Using the insights from this report, WineGB can help members understand their position within the industry and identify areas for improvement.

Snapshot of the industry in 2024

Overview



Grape varieties

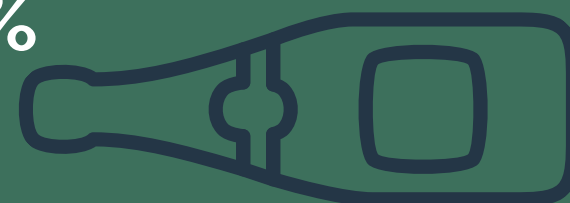


Sparkling VS Still

Sparkling (method)

Traditional Method: 91%
 Charmat Method: 7%
 Carbonation: 1.8%
 Other: 0.2%

76% sparkling



23% still

Still (colour)

White: 66%
 Rosé: 20%
 Red: 13%
 Other: 1%





Thank you!

A huge thank you to everyone that supported putting this report together, to all the producers who responded to our survey, and to the WineGB team especially Emma Rix Sustainability Executive and Report Writer, Anne Jones Sustainability Ambassador, Mark Laughton Research and Insights, and Phoebe French Communications Manager .

Section 8: Conclusions

If you have any questions or suggestions, please do get in touch with emma@winegb.co.uk

