

**Better events**  
**nec group**

**Environmental, Social and Governance Plan  
2023**

**nec group**

# We bring live to life... We are the nec group

**We're in the business of live events.  
The experience creators and memory makers,  
with world-class facilities and services.**

**We know that nothing beats the power  
of face-to-face: seeing that inspiring  
keynote speech, cutting that deal or  
feeling music pulsing through your veins.  
Every year we bring millions of people  
together from all walks of life. We recognise  
that many of the experiences are special,  
creating memories that last a lifetime.**

**We're committed to acting in a  
socially responsible way, managing the  
environmental impact of our operations  
and regulating our practices.**

**We recognise that how we do business  
is just as important as what we do.**

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Over  
**750**  
events  
per year\*

based on 2022 figures



Over  
**7 Million**  
visitors  
each year\*

based on 2022 figures



**2,000**  
full time and  
casual employees

31st March 2023



Over  
**29,000**  
FTE jobs  
supported

**The NEC Group is the UK's leading live events business operating in exhibitions, conferences, music, sports, family entertainment and hospitality. We host over 750 events each year and welcome over seven million visitors to our five world-class venues.**

# Welcome



We are committed to minimising the impact we have on the environment. We have built a diverse and inclusive company that invests in learning and development to support career progression with a focus on the wellbeing of our staff. We do this whilst upholding high standards of corporate governance.

Our environmental, social and governance (ESG) work has never been a box-ticking exercise for us at the NEC Group ("Group"). It's something we believe passionately in, both as a company, but more importantly, as individuals. We also believe it's key to achieving long-term growth for both our customers and ourselves, which is why it's embedded in all our daily operations.

Since the opening of the NEC in 1976, the Group has been at the forefront of the live events industry. We understand the importance of our impact on the environment and our local community, so everything we do is underpinned by the fact that we're responsible, fair and honest.

As the UK leader in live events which operates over 223,000m<sup>2</sup> of space and service brands, we have the ambition to also be leaders in ESG best practice. This includes championing our industry's Net Zero Carbon Events initiative.

We are committed to:



**Protecting the environment, including the prevention of pollution;**



**Meeting, and where possible exceeding, all relevant legislation, industry standards and other environmental requirements to which the company subscribes;**



**Demonstrating continual improvement and enhancing environmental performance;**



**Providing safe, accessible and inclusive environments for customers, visitors, contractors and staff;**



**Giving back to the communities in which we operate;**



**Conducting our business in an honest, ethical and lawful manner.**

**Paul Thandi CBE DL**

NEC Group  
Chief Executive Officer

## Our stage Five leading venues, five thriving service brands





# Our Better Events strategy

**Our Better Events strategy has three interlocking pillars that are aligned to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. We focus on these key areas so that we can make the biggest difference.**

## 1. Better for the planet Environment

Build on environmental achievements to reduce our carbon footprint, actively managing our energy and water consumption, to meet or exceed our targets as a signatory of the Net Zero Carbon Events Pledge.

## 2. Better for everyone Social

Ensure that everyone who visits or works in our venues feels safe and welcome. Making a positive impact on our staff, stakeholders and local communities to ensure we leave a legacy we can be proud of in the future.

## 3. Better business Governance

Conduct all business in an honest, ethical and lawful manner. Our aim is to maintain an exemplary record of responsible corporate behaviour, with transparent and robust processes that minimise legislative, environmental and social risks.

# Our ESG plan

**Environmental and social challenges have never been greater. The events industry has a role to play in tackling these challenges. Whether that's minimising our impact on climate change or addressing social injustices.**

Following best available science on the impacts of climate change, we acknowledge that there is an urgent need to accelerate the transition towards net zero carbon, and for the events industry to play its part in helping to deliver the goals of the Paris Agreement and ensuring a just transition.

Our Better Events strategy sets out our environmental, social and governance goals, outlining our priority areas of focus, our key commitments and our progress.



## Better for the planet

# Achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2040

2023



**Complete analysis of Scope 3 emissions**



**Publish full roadmap to net zero carbon**



**Provide and encourage the use of sustainable transport options for visitors, including development of one of Europe's largest electric vehicle charging hubs, opening in 2023**

2025



**Continue zero waste to landfill and further improve waste management practices**



**Provide sustainability reports post event to organisers to measure the event impact and help identify opportunities for improvement**

2030



**Reduce energy consumption (of non-renewables) at venues by 50%**



**Eliminate single-use plastic from our venues**



**Reduce food waste by 50%**



## Better for everyone

# Leave a legacy we can be proud of in the future



**Proactively manage health and safety, to keep staff, customers, service partners and all visitors to our sites safe**



**Take decisive action to create more opportunities to build an inclusive and diverse future**



**Continue to invest in facilities, services and support to ensure accessibility to our venues for visitors, customers and staff including the provision of mental health first aiders and annual audits of websites**



**Champion practices that support economic growth, welfare and wellbeing and learning and development to ensure that we attract, retain and develop talent**



**Support organisations and individuals in our communities, donating c.£30,000 p.a. to good causes selected by our staff**



**Provide career opportunities for future generations and showcase the attractiveness and variety of careers in the live events industry**

# Our commitments

# 1. Better for the planet

## Environment

At the NEC Group, we are committed to ensuring that through the work and events we deliver, we are as sustainable as possible. Whether we are looking at energy, waste or food miles, we want to limit the impact of our presence on the environment.

Our all-encompassing environmental sustainability programme is constantly growing and adapting to meet the needs of our changing world. We're not ones to just shout about the hot environmental topic of the moment – over the last decade we've gone above and beyond the standard, looking at ways to make positive change and ultimately prevent wastage.

Now it's time to take a more strategic approach to our activity and set short and long term targets that will help us ultimately achieve net-zero.

**It is a long road to net zero but we are committed to doing everything we can, as soon as we can. There is still a lot of work for us to do, but we are proud of our achievements to date.**

## Energy

### We're full of bright ideas

LEDs, smart meters, carbon off-setting are just some of the ways we're tackling our energy usage. Operating large venues like ours undoubtedly uses a lot of energy, but with our comprehensive plan of creative initiatives this is minimised as much as possible.



**Exterior venue lighting set to daylight saving times**  
Unoccupied office lighting sensors



**Team hotline, for the quick reporting of any energy efficiency improvements that could be made**



**Building management systems**  
**LED light replacement programme**

Majority of public/back of house spaces now on **LED lighting with PIR/ motion detection**

Best energy saving practices in kitchens; turning off ovens etc.

Smarter BMS Programming

**£4 million investment**

To help us monitor energy use, provide close control of environmental conditions and help reduce our carbon footprint

Combined Heat and Power Unit



We use smart metres, inverters and CHP generators across our venues

Built an NEC Group Energy Saving Tracker



Reduced recycle flow on NEC Campus fountain by 20% saving 80% of the energy it uses

Part of Birmingham City Council's Waste to Energy Scheme



# Transport

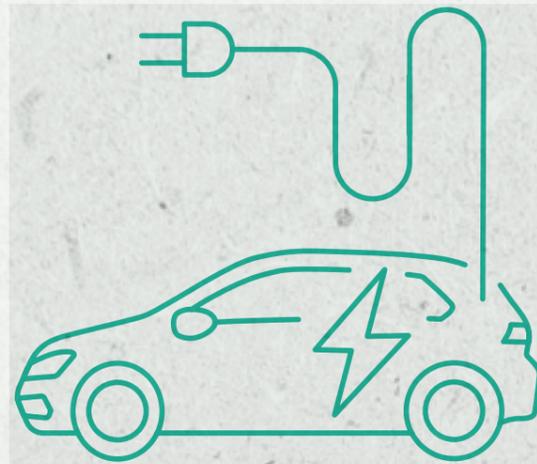
## A hub of activity

At the heart of the UK transport network it's easy to reach us by road, rail or air. We support visitors and organisers in thinking about more sustainable ways of travelling to us by looking at how we can drive change through our own practices.



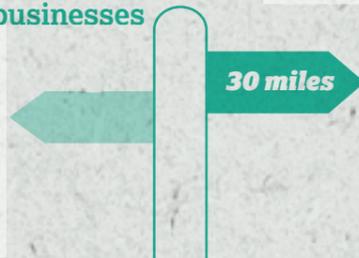
**Development of Teams capabilities** for meetings to reduce unnecessary travel between our venues

The **NEC** was one of the **first places** in the UK to see **electric, driverless vehicles** take to its roads as part of ground-breaking trials



**22 slow charging EV charging points** have so far been installed across three NEC car parks. We will be adding another 180+ charging points at the NEC Campus in Summer 2023- one of Europe's largest charging hubs

Our policy is that waste should not travel more than **30 miles from site**, minimising carbon emissions and supporting local businesses



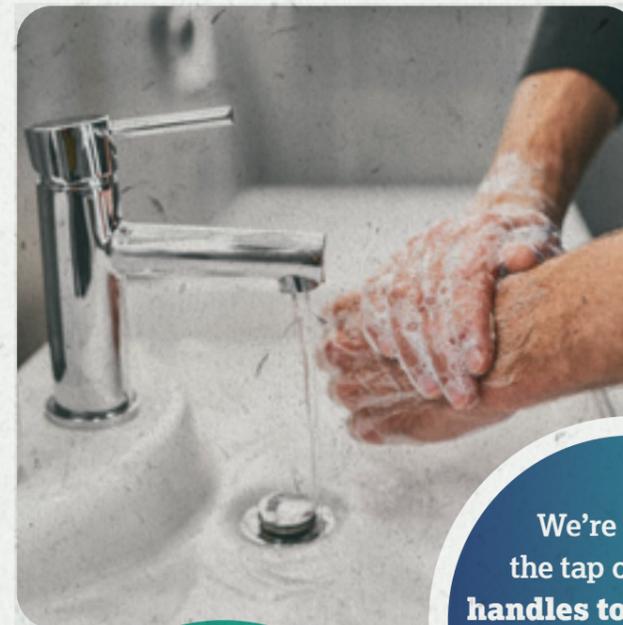
**Fleet of waste vehicles on site** - reducing unnecessary travelling and minimising emissions



# Water

## Making waves with H2O savings

We saved over a billion litres of water in ten years at the NEC alone! With hundreds of toilets and taps across our venue portfolio water saving continues to be an important initiative.



We're turning the tap on regular handles to **automatic**, so water isn't wasted after handwashing

**Washroom upgrades:** Ureco urinals, sensor taps, sensor hand dryers



## Hydration Stations



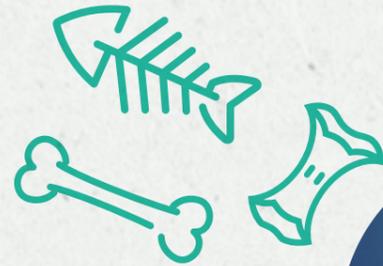
**Water cooler machines** have been installed in organiser offices



# Waste

## Waste not, Want not

We're all about prevention, making sure that as little waste as possible gets back into the environment. For the bits that do, we are constantly looking at alternative and more environmentally friendly management methods.



**80% recycling rate**

Event Energy Reports



Food waste is separated on site and goes to Cannock to Biffa's AD plant, which powers a local supermarket

Waste/environment information is collected for customers. This helps us to build our energy management records

From our work with waste management company Biffa, we have reduced carbon emissions by 222 tonnes per annum- that's the equivalent to over 550,000 miles travelled in an average family car or enough carbon to charge nearly 27 million mobile phones



Mixed recycling goes to a local plant in Tipton where it undergoes further sorting, grading, is bulked and enters the commodities market

**Zero to landfill**

Fleet of waste vehicles on site - reducing unnecessary travelling and minimising emissions



**Stopped 5,799 meals** from going to waste at the ICC venue in 2022



## Tackling food waste with Winnow

Amadeus leads the way when it comes to using technology to help resolve industry-wide challenges. As a technologically innovative business, the team use various methods to reduce the environmental impact where possible. Regarding food waste, Amadeus tackles this head-on and was the first catering company in the events sector to partner with food waste pioneers Winnow.

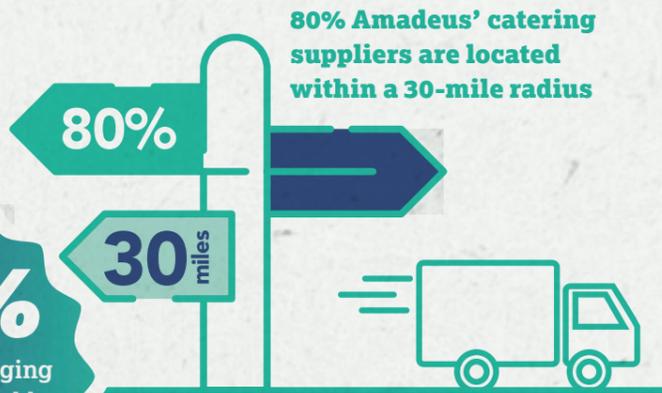
# Food Sourcing

## Responsible tastes even better

Our in-house caterer, Amadeus, brings quality produce to the table. We believe in sourcing food responsibly.



**100%** of disposable packaging spend is on sustainable products - recyclable, biodegradable or compostable



**Catering** Our policy is that waste should not travel more than 30 miles from site, minimising carbon emissions and supporting local businesses



Amadeus won the 2019 and 2020 Midas Sustainability Awards for work around local sourcing and developing menus with local provenance



### Signed the European Chicken Commitment

We only serve free range, whole eggs and want to ensure this is replicated in all products containing egg by the end of 2021



Source meat from Grade A British Retail Consortium approved suppliers



**9,974kg CO<sub>2</sub> emissions** were also saved

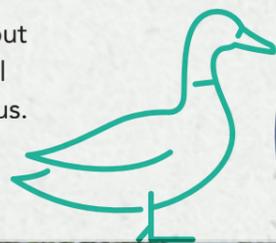
Stuart Coetzee, Business Development Manager at Winnow Solutions, said:

**“The ICC and Amadeus teams were impressive from day one, and it was wonderful to watch the enthusiasm with which they tackled the project. The cultural change on waste that the team were able to adopt based on the Winnow data and the resulting reductions have set an outstanding benchmark for other events kitchens to follow.”**

# Green Fingers

## Wild at Heart

We're passionate about protecting the natural environment around us.



**Bikenhill Plantation, 59 acres of managed woodland right on our doorsteps**



**40 metres green 'living wall'**



**Pendigo Lake**, originally built to drain surface water has become a focal point of the **NEC Campus**

Home to the famous NEC geese it now features a **'beach'** coupled with a **lakeside garden**, transforming the landscape of the NEC's front door



It offers the millions who visit the Campus every year a **unique outdoor experience**



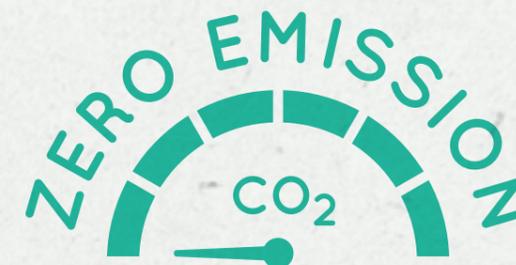
# Engaging Stakeholders

## Sustainability Champions

Sustainability is something we believe passionately in, both as a venue, but more importantly as individuals. We also believe it is key to achieving long-term growth for both our customers and ourselves, which is why it is embedded into all our daily operations.



**Increased audience and promoter engagement**, encouraging them to make greener choices



**Signed the Net Zero Carbon Events Pledge**

Led by the Joint Meetings Industry Council (JMIC) this aims to bring events industry stakeholders together and adopt a collaborative approach to driving the industry towards net zero by 2050

**Working closely with industry organisations** (NAA Facilities Group & LIVE Green) sharing best practice/ common goals and aspirations



**Onsite Starbucks / catering units across the NEC offer discounts to customers who bring their own cups**



**ICC accredited ISO14001** in environmental management systems for 10 years

**A member of the AEV Sustainability Working Group**



**Group induction workshops** - understanding environmental policy

**Energy Champions** across the NEC Campus



**A majority of our events now accept mobile tickets** - reducing the amount of paper, print & postage

**Amadeus won the 2019 and 2020 Midas Sustainability Awards** for work around local sourcing and developing menus with local provenance



**Pledged to keep reducing plastic waste.** Our water is supplied by Princes Gate – their water bottles are made from 100% rPET (guaranteed to be from UK, post-consumer recycled bottles)



# 2. Better for everyone

## Social impact

Live events reflect our local communities which are rich and diverse. To deliver the best events, the Group needs to continue championing for greater diversity and inclusion. The key to this is innovating our thinking, pushing for greater representation of our audiences in our workforce and creating a thriving and inclusive workplace for the future where everyone feels valued and respected.

Bringing live to life through our community is also a passion of ours and as a major business in the West Midlands, it's only right that we should support the local community and businesses around us, whilst also showcasing what job prospects our industry has to offer.

The more we collaborate and value our differences the closer we get to living in a truly inclusive and creative world.

**Above all else, we want everyone who visits or works in our venues to feel safe and welcome. Our ever-developing social programme is designed to ensure that as we grow our business we continue to put people at the heart of what we do.**

## Accessibility

### Venues for Everyone

We are committed to ensuring that our venues and services are available to people of all ability.



As well as visitors to our venues, we encourage an **inclusive and values led company culture** for staff and our recruitment processes ensure equal opportunities to people with disabilities and hidden disabilities

**Set up a full management system of allergens,** to protect our customers and staff



**We work closely with AccessAble**



**Assistance dog care at events**

**Changing places toilets** at the NEC and our two arenas



**Wheelchair hire available at the NEC**

**BSL/Audio described performances** at our arenas



**Level 1 accessibility training for frontline staff**



**Working in partnership with Attitude is Everything** to improve the experience of live music for people with disabilities



**Wudu facilities**



**Introduced a free disabled booking line** in collaboration with Nimbus Disability who operate the National Access Card

# Diversity and Inclusivity

## We're richer because of our differences

Diversity is about recognising and valuing the different knowledge, skills, backgrounds and perspectives that people bring. We are focused on creating an inclusive and values led culture for our people, that reflects the rich diversity of our wider community and ensuring that our venues and services are appealing and available to all. We know that businesses have a vital role to play in championing and building a more equal society. We are working to create a more balanced, diverse and inclusive workforce.



**Your Voice -**  
People Forum encouraging feedback and ideas



**21% Female Representation on Operating Board and 40% female representation at senior management level**



### Annual pay gap reporting.

This provides us with clear metrics for how well we are truly doing as a business and what action is required to make any necessary change happen

**Staff awareness campaigns** in support of key national and religious celebrations and events

### Annual pay gap reporting.

#### DEI Working Group.

In 2022 we established a cross department working group to focus on all areas of diversity, equality and inclusivity

**Equal Opportunities Policy.** NEC Group is committed to eliminating direct and indirect forms of discrimination

**We have an on site interfaith chaplaincy**

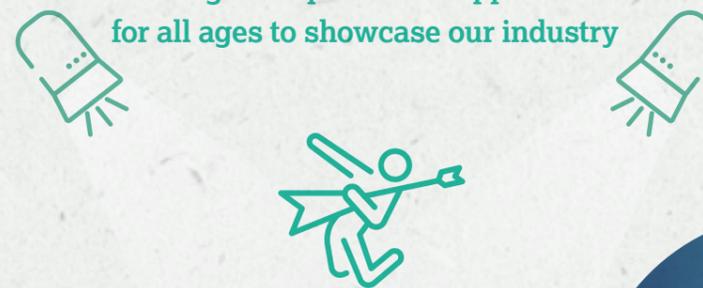


# Supporting Education

## Next Generation

We want to inspire the next generation of Live Events professionals and help young people find rewarding jobs.

**Enthusiating the Next Generation:** Providing work placement opportunities for all ages to showcase our industry



**Work with cross-industry bodies:** Representatives sit on a number of boards and associations to provide leadership, direction and build working relationships



**New to business apprenticeships:** Working with colleges and universities we employ new apprentices every year



**Events Week Live:** Our annual programme offers degree-level students work experience and industry networking opportunities



**Cornerstone employer:** Connecting with some of the most under-represented demographics in our area through visits and developing class modules



# Supporting Charities

## Proud to Give Back

Creating a legacy we can be proud of by supporting organisations and individuals in our communities.



NEC Group Charity:

**£30,000+**

donated each year to our Group charity. Our charity is elected by our staff

### Charity of the Year

The NEC Group encourages staff to have fun while at the same time raising money for great causes. Each year, employees vote for their Charity of the Year and spend time fundraising in innovative ways

**Alzheimer's Research UK**

Make breakthroughs possible

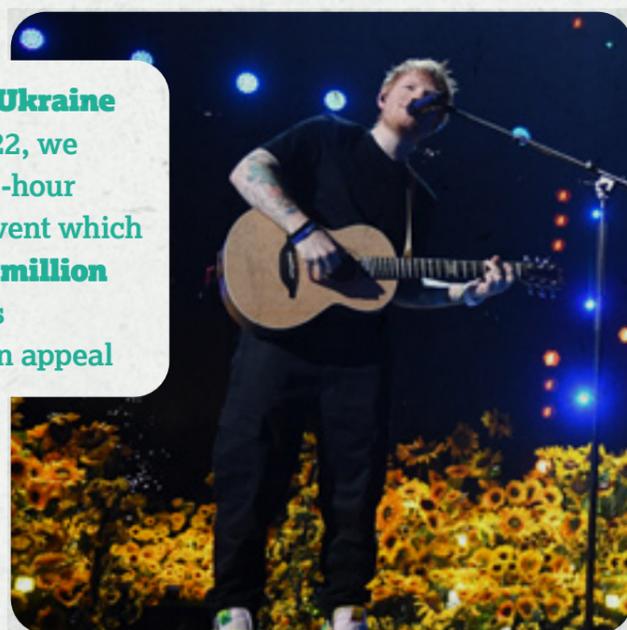


### Charitable Activities:

Supporting organisations and individuals in our communities

### Concert for Ukraine

In March 2022, we hosted a two-hour fundraiser event which raised **£13.4 million** for the DEC's humanitarian appeal



### Reducing Waste and Hunger:

We use Olio to share surplus food with our community

# Welfare and Safety

## The welfare and safety of everyone at our venues is our top priority

As a responsible venue operator, the NEC Group is committed to providing safe venues with robust security, medical and welfare regimes in place.



**Staff Welfare:** Focused on health and safety and wellbeing

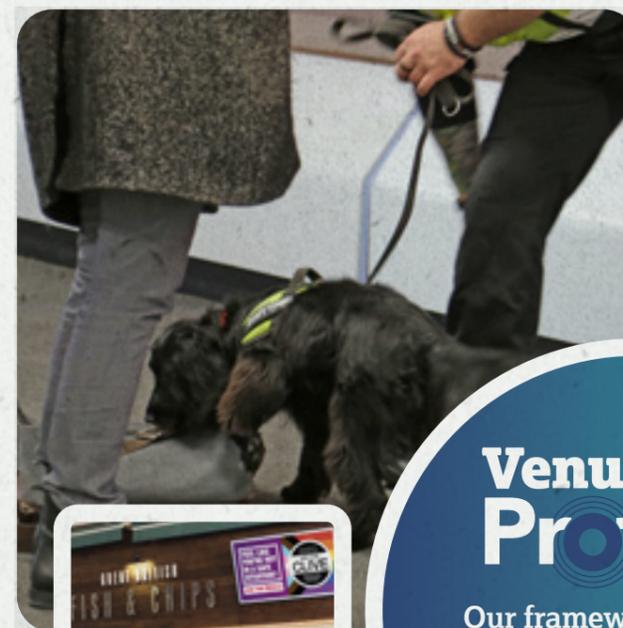
24/7 Online wellbeing centre



**Employee assistance support**

**Venue Protect**

Our framework designed for running organised gatherings in safe and controlled environments



### 'Ask for Clive' and 'Ask For Angela' initiatives

to ensure we have welcoming environments for the LGBTQ+ community and support should anyone feel unsafe

### Hazard app

to report potential health and safety issues instantly

**Onsite Occupational Health**



**Quiet spaces (Zen garden and rooms at ICC)**



**Fully trained mental health first aiders**



# Staff Engagement

## Reward & Recognition

Everyone at the NEC Group is united by a common purpose. 'We bring live to life'. This purpose unites us in our goal to create the best experiences for everyone who comes to our venue. We also want to ensure our staff are recognised and rewarded for everything they do in helping us to deliver unforgettable live experiences.



**Competitive benefits package -**  
A good rewards package is so much more than just a salary. We understand that different people value different benefits which is why we offer a range, so you can find the right balance between the work you love and the things you love

**Staff wellbeing campaigns** Time to Talk Day; Mental Health Awareness Week; Eventwell Week; etc.



**7.8 / 10**

**staff would recommend NEC Group as a good place to work (Speak Up survey, 2022)**

A rewarding Work Environment:  
**A Great Place to Work**



**'3-2 Week'**



**Flexible working** where staff can work up to two days remotely, supporting a healthy work-life balance whilst maintaining team working and collaboration



**Staff recognition programme -**  
We know how important it is to celebrate and reward the people that work in our business and live our values. Our 'Stars' programme is designed to recognise individuals who go above and beyond to deliver extraordinary service



**rockstar**



**superstar**

**megastar**

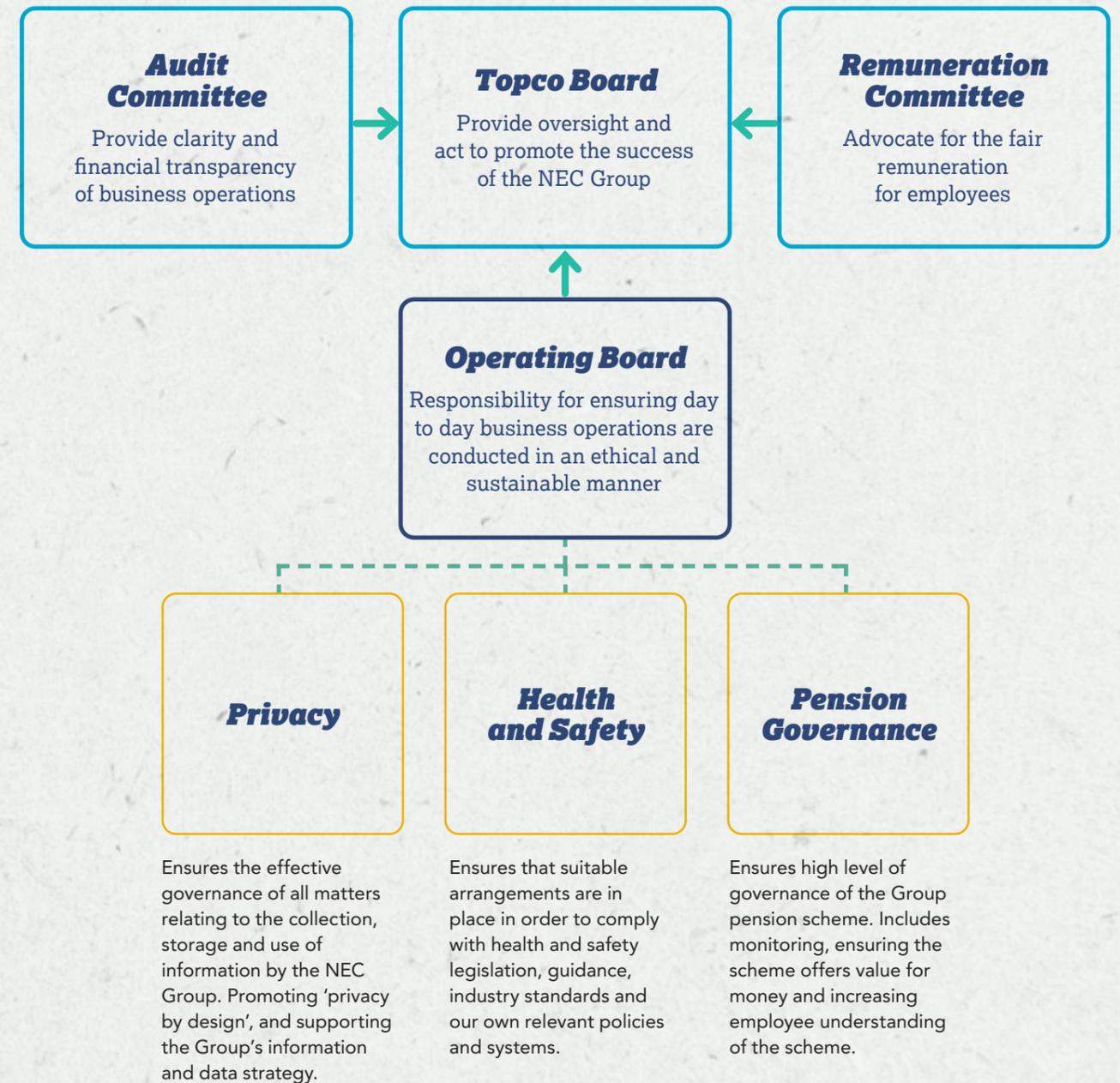


# 3. Better business

## Governance

At the NEC Group, we conduct all business in an honest, ethical and lawful manner. Covering a wide range of topics, our aim is to maintain an exemplary record of responsible corporate behaviour, with transparent and robust processes that minimise legislative, environmental and social risks.

**Our corporate governance structure is designed for the safe and effective delivery of all NEC Group operations and to support staff welfare.**



## Data Protection and Cybersecurity

Using data is core to what we do. We appreciate how important our customer's privacy is and recognise that we are being trusted with protecting it. We want to be clear about how we collect and use data and the protections we put in place to ensure we keep it safe. We will only use data for legitimate business purposes and we have a range of policies, principles and processes in place to ensure this happens.

## Our commitment to our customers

We're serious when we say we're committed to protecting privacy. We want to earn and maintain our customer's trust, so we do not sell any personal data to any third party. Customers also only receive marketing communications from us if they have requested information, purchased products or services from us, or told us that we can contact them. They can opt out at any time.

Where we handle payment details, we ensure that we are fully compliant with Payment Card Industry Data Security Standards (PCI DSS).

**We are clear about how we collect and use data and the protections we put in place to ensure we keep it safe**

## Sharing of data and third-party assessment

If we need to share personal data with companies who play an essential part in enabling us to provide our products and services, such as payment providers and system administration providers, we require all third parties to respect the security of our data and to treat it in accordance with the law. We do not allow our third-party service providers to use personal data for their own purposes.

Sometimes we might need to transfer data to third-party processors outside the European Economic Area (EEA)– for example, this might be required to process payment details or provide support services. We will only do this if there are appropriate safeguards in place to make sure data receives the same protection as when it is being processed inside the EEA.

We conduct regular assurance on third parties to assess the quality of their data management capability.

## Stress testing

We have made significant additional investments in our infrastructure to guard against risk ranging from large scale data corruption, malware, ransomware and third-party failure.

We employ state-of-the-art technology to constantly interrogate our information stores and data flows to identify security risks and trigger additional safeguards as necessary. We continue to strengthen and regularly test comprehensive recovery plans to be used in the event of a service failure and this frequent testing helps us to refine our recovery mechanisms.

**We have made significant additional investments in our infrastructure to guard against risk**

## Employee training

Our employees are required to complete annual, mandatory, general data protection regulation (GDPR) training that focuses on principles and behaviours around data usage. Users with access to sensitive data are required to complete additional courses and subject to financial vetting.

To make sure we deliver on our promises we have appointed a Data Protection Officer (DPO) who is responsible for overseeing data usage and privacy across the group and who also chairs a quarterly Privacy Board meeting to ensure that we design good data governance into our business processes, with commitment at board level.



## Business relationships with suppliers, customers and others

Effective procurement practices focused on value for money, innovation, sustainability and health and safety enable us to create successful partnerships with our suppliers.

Corporate integrity, responsible sourcing and the safety and wellbeing of workers in our business and supply chains are of paramount importance to the NEC Group. These core principles are reflected in our contracting arrangements which make clear the minimum standards that must be met by any entity that supplies products or services to the NEC Group.



**Corporate integrity, responsible sourcing and the safety and wellbeing of workers in our business and supply chains are of paramount importance to the NEC Group.**

## Stakeholder Engagement

We elicit feedback from customers and visitors on a regular basis through our customer feedback programme. Results are aggregated into reports, showcasing trends across the year.

- **Event Organisers:** All organisers of exhibitions and conventions are asked to take part in a detailed telephone survey and results are circulated to the sales, operational and marketing teams who follow up on any issues highlighted and implement changes to address recurrent problems.
- **Visitors:** Online customer satisfaction surveys are sent out to visitors within 24 hours of attending an event. We endeavour to cover 100% of events, using data from ticket purchases and Wi-Fi sign ups. Reports showcase key areas of strength along with areas of dissatisfaction.
- **Ticket Buyers:** As we sell tickets for events taking place across the country, not just in our venues, we conduct online surveys to assess levels of satisfaction with the purchase journey.
- **Results of all customer satisfaction surveys** are circulated to the senior management teams and a summary included on monthly board reports.





With the environment in mind, we ask you not to print this document.  
If you do print it please use recycled paper.

For more information on the NEC Group please visit:

**[necgroup.co.uk](https://necgroup.co.uk)**

 **[@necgroupevents](https://www.instagram.com/necgroupevents)**  **[@thenecgroup](https://www.twitter.com/thenecgroup)**  **[NEC Group](https://www.linkedin.com/company/nec-group)**

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