

Highlights

Zero-carbon, circular Borrow-Use-Return fashion/clothes model that reduces waste and pollution, while providing retailers with additional revenue.

Assisting retailer partners with garment repair, so that items can be resold.

As a result of measures put in place over the last few years, ACS has achieved: zero waste from ACS to landfill, 40% reduction in water consumption, 20% reduction in energy consumption from heating, 40% reduction in CO2e emissions.

Certified as being a Circular Operation and Climate Neutral.

Use of 100% renewable energy.



ACS Clothing Ltd

ACS is Europe's largest fashion rental and renewal fulfilment centre, working in partnership with brands and retailers, to offer a circular fashion model: providing rental clothing, resale clothing and the processing of damaged returns. Day-to-day operations at ACS range from servicing baby clothing and womenswear subscriptions to reviving pre-loved items to ensure they are fit for resale

The fashion industry is considered the second largest polluter in the world, one of the reasons for this being the "fast fashion" model, according to which consumers are encouraged to buy cheap clothing items, wear them just for a short while, and then discard them. As an alternative to this very polluting Buy-Wear-Replace approach, ACS proposes a circular Borrow-Use-Return model. With this approach, waste and pollution are reduced, while providing retailers with an alternative source of revenue to that of selling multiple cheap clothing items.

ACS acts as a fulfilment centre for companies renting out or reselling clothes. Their customers - fashion retailers and brands – only have to provide the garments, and ACS does the rest. In their distribution centre in the Central Belt, close to Glasgow, with state-of-the-art inventory and garment care systems, they carry out sanitisation, cleaning, repairing clothing that have been returned damaged, and shipping, on behalf of their partners.

ACS is a certified Circular Operation (confirmed externally by the Ellen MacArthur Foundation), and has reached the Carbon Neutral milestone on their journey to Net Zero by 2025. In addition, ACS has completed the application to become a B Corporation and is awaiting approval.

ACS has reduced water consumption by 40% per year, by reusing waste laundry water and by using an ozonated laundry system.

In terms of energy use, ACS has transitioned to 100% renewable energy, and has installed a solar roof which meets 10% of their needs. Prior to this, they took a number of energy-saving measures:

- LED lighting throughout the business;
- Ozonated laundry system;
- Smart thermostats and timers for the central heating;
- Introducing a special compound in the heating system with which they are achieving a 20% reduction in energy consumption in the office heating.

In terms of waste minimisation, no waste from ACS ends up in landfill. For example, 30% of those clothes received that are not fit for hiring to customers are reused, and the remainder are recycled in the UK.

ACS have eight electric car-pods, Electric Vehicle Salary-Sacrifice and two pool electric vehicles, all contributing to changing staff transport behaviours.

During lockdown, ACS partnered with Home Energy Scotland and delivered workshops to help staff reduce their energy consumption and waste at home. The company also trained Green Champions with Zero Waste Scotland and achieved the silver pledge.

Delivering clean growth is at the heart of this case study with increases in productivity, additional revenues and creating green jobs whilst protecting the climate and supporting the local community.

