



GKR Scaffolding

Equans expertise demystifies carbon reduction and reveals path to net zero for GKR Scaffolding.

GKR Scaffolding is an award-winning scaffolding and access specialist. Its track record of working on some of the most iconic construction projects in London and the South-East has secured its reputation as a company that invests in the future of the construction industry. Keen to enhance its environmental performance and maintain its competitive advantage in a construction market where sustainable commitments are increasingly important, GKR Scaffolding approached Equans for help in understanding and reducing its carbon footprint.

Consulting the carbon reduction specialists

The company had already implemented a number of sustainable initiatives but wanted to formalise its commitments and develop a more joined-up approach to eliminating carbon from across its operations. Equans proposed developing a net zero carbon roadmap that would set out clear evidence-based targets and measures to achieve the ultimate goal of carbon neutrality.

GKR Scaffolding shared information on its equipment and facilities, costs, procurement and operations so that Equans could assess current energy usage and carbon emissions across the company and identify areas for action.

Thomas Thackeray, Energy Engineer at Equans, says: "The company was already doing lots of good things, but needed a cohesive strategy to tie them all together. Our roadmap helped them to focus on the measures that would have the greatest impact on their carbon emissions and provide a connected strategy to achieve carbon neutrality by the company's target date of December 2023."



Practical measures to achieve net zero

Equans discovered that the vast majority of carbon emissions associated with GKR Scaffolding were Scope 1 and came from its vehicle use. By converting all of its vehicles from diesel to hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO) fuel, the company would eliminate almost 70% of its total carbon emissions. HVO can be used as a direct replacement for diesel and emits up to 93% less emissions. GKR Scaffolding had already investigated switching its leased vehicles to HVO, and Equans confirmed that this would be the most effective way to cut carbon emissions.

To achieve further carbon reductions, the company also switched to 100% renewable electricity supplies, helping to eliminate Scope 2 emissions associated with its energy consumption.

The company is aiming to reduce its remaining Scope 1 emissions further through evaluating a number of other options, including converting its gas heating systems to electric heat pumps, powered by its carbon-free renewable electricity. Whilst it is undergoing this evaluation and to demonstrate its commitment to carbon neutrality they are using accredited offsetting schemes at a relatively low annual cost, to achieve carbon neutrality.



Scope 3 emissions demand innovative solutions

Not content with carbon neutrality, the company aims to go further by achieving net zero emissions with no offsetting. This means addressing Scope 3 emissions in its supply chains, which includes the embedded carbon in its steel scaffolding tubes.

Equans is offering technical advice to GKR Scaffolding on sourcing scaffolding materials with lower embedded carbon. The options include sourcing second-hand materials or buying new, thinner tubes which contain less steel. These tubes not only have less embedded carbon, but are cheaper, stronger, and lighter, offering both cost-saving and safety benefits alongside sustainability improvements.

Construction sector demands sustainable suppliers

The two companies have built up an excellent working partnership, which is helping GKR Scaffolding to fulfil its sustainable ambitions and take a lead in the construction industry supply chain.

The company itself is responsible for Scope 3 emissions on the construction projects it supports – so reducing its own carbon footprint makes it a more attractive supplier to construction firms under pressure to improve their sustainability.

With the expertise of Equans behind it, GKR Scaffolding aims to become the leading sustainable supplier of scaffolding solutions to the UK construction industry.

“As a company we are serious about sustainability – acknowledging the impact our actions have on future generations. For us, it’s never a tick-box exercise, which is why we wanted to consult the leading carbon-reduction and sustainability specialists to inform our decisions.

“Equans came highly recommended and working with them has proved an extremely positive experience. It has enabled us to better understand our carbon emissions and the actions required to eliminate them effectively, both in the short term and as our business develops.”

**Paul Hersey, Commercial Director,
GKR Scaffolding**

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