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## WHSmith launches new five-year sustainability action plan

WHSmith announces the launch of its new sustainability action plan titled **‘Our Journey to a Better Business’**. The plan is designed around three core areas: protecting the planet, looking after our people and supporting the communities we serve.

‘Our Journey to a Better Business’ reflects on the progress that WHSmith has made since its first sustainability report was published in 2006, while recognising that there is more work to be done to address current environmental challenges and tackle social injustice. The action plan includes a series of aims and objectives across eight main topics including climate change, plastics and packaging, diversity and inclusion, workers’ rights and children’s literacy.

Carl Cowling, Group Chief Executive comments, *“We are committed to playing our part to protect the future of our planet and to building on our long-track record of supporting children’s literacy and education. I am immensely proud of how much we have achieved to date, and our new ambitions for 2025 will enable us to focus on delivering even more activity in those areas where we can make the biggest difference to society.”*

WHSmith has reduced absolute carbon emissions from its UK estate by 45% since 2006. It’s journey to Net Zero continues with the objective of reducing operational emissions to zero by 2025 predominantly through a combination of energy efficiency schemes and a switch to renewable electricity procurement. As a final step, any residual emissions that cannot be eliminated will be neutralised through investment in certified carbon removal schemes. The Company has also committed to tackling Scope 3 emissions and will start by engaging with suppliers to agree pathways to achieve net zero emissions by 2040.

The action plan also builds on a long legacy of investment in children’s literacy programmes. Over the past decade, WHSmith has directly helped over 75,000 children to improve their reading and writing skills, through book giveaways, investments in school libraries and its work with the National Literacy Trust. There is still more to be done, however, to bridge the gap in literacy levels between disadvantaged children and their peers, and WHSmith is committing to continue its work in this area with further book giveaways and partnership support for thousands more children and young people who need it most over the next five years.

Nicki Woodhead, Head of Sustainability comments, *“We have made some great progress over the past 15 years, but there is much more that we can help to deliver. We must play our part in achieving a net zero economy, in addressing social inequalities in our society and in using our commercial activities as a force for good.”*

Further information on WHSmith’s sustainability action plan can be found in the 2020 Sustainability Report at: <https://www.whsmithplc.co.uk/investors/results-reports-and-presentations/annual-sustainability-reports>

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**Notes to Editors:**

**About WHSmith**

WHSmith is a leading global retailer in news, books and convenience for the world’s travelling customer. With more than 1,700 stores across over 30 countries worldwide, WHSmith offers

customers a wide range of books, newspapers & magazines, travel and digital accessories and food and drink.

The Company has a growing international business with over 580 stores primarily across the world's leading airports. In November 2018, WHSmith acquired InMotion, a leading digital accessories retailer in US airports, with over 115 stores. In December 2019, WHSmith acquired Marshall Retail Group, a leading and fast-growing US travel retailer with over 170 stores.

WHSmith's High Street business comprises over 560 stores across the UK and customers can shop online 24/7 at [www.whsmith.co.uk](http://www.whsmith.co.uk).