

AUTOMOTIVE

Bentley talks net zero targets, releases second sustainability report

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The brand is ahead of much of the competition in its decarbonization and electrification efforts. Image credit: Bentley

By ZACH JAMES

British automaker Bentley is pursuing excellence in craftsmanship parallel its journey toward carbon neutrality.

In the second annual [Bentley Sustainability Report](#), the company discusses the strides it is making to improve internal operations and prepare for its electric future. At the forefront is a focus on reaching net-zero emissions by 2030.

“The second annual Report reflects Bentley’s ongoing commitment to sustainability, a core element of our Beyond100 strategy in achieving carbon neutrality and the continuation of our journey to be leaders in sustainable luxury mobility,” said Jan-Henrik Lafrentz, member of the board for finance and IT at Bentley, in a statement.

“Thanks to the efforts of the Sustainability Council, together with our many talented colleagues and board, our customers who share our passion for extraordinary journeys and our suppliers who support our drive for a better world, I am confident we will make the critical shifts necessary to tackle our collective sustainability ambitions.”

Operational sustainability

Nearly all of the objectives listed by way of the manufacturer’s Beyond100 strategy were met with positive results in 2023.

Though Scope 1 and Scope 3 emissions both rose compared to the previous year’s levels, Bentley’s latest sustainability report reflects that it is on track to meet long-term goals.



The Beyond100 strategy remains steadfast at the automaker despite setbacks. Image credit: Bentley

Scope 1 emissions rose 12.7 percent year-over-year. The category, which represents direct greenhouse gas emissions from sources owned by Bentley Motors in the U.K., contributed just under 2,500 tonnes last year.

At the same time, Scope 3 emissions covering Bentley's business travel nearly tripled, up 221 percent compared to 2022 this outcome is most likely to return-to-work provisions and the resurgence of in-person meetings and events following 2020.

Meanwhile, Scope 2 emissions fell by 3 percent, not offsetting the other surges, but making a dent in the target to be end-to-end carbon neutral by 2030. The retail segment is seeing some movement in this area.

With an end goal for all members of the Bentley global retail network to reach a state of carbon neutrality by 2025, the company is said to remain on track. Across the company's 235 showrooms, 63 percent or around 150 retailers will be certified as carbon neutral by the end of April 2024; this follows a figure of 62 percent of the group reaching the certification in 2022.

This small increase in progress is uplifted by its North American retail operations reaching a net-zero certification last year ([see story](#)), joining the company's Crewe headquarters in the accomplishment, which it has held since 2019. The brand's home base received another commendation last year as well with the "Net Zero Plastic to Nature" accreditation from Swiss carbon finance consultancy South Pole ([see story](#)).

People progress

Emissions are not the only thing tracked in the report, as targets towards a more varied workforce also made progress.

By 2025, Bentley aims to have 30 percent of its senior management and leadership staff be diverse either in gender or ethnicity, moving away from a nearly completely male or caucasian workplace.



A sustainable and welcoming workplace are important to Beyond100's pillars. Image credit: Bentley

As of the end of 2023, a fifth of governing employees are women, a 3 percent jump from the previous year and close to the end goal of reaching 25 percent gender diversity in leading positions. Outside of senior management, more and more women are entering the company in low-ranking or non-management roles, with the male-to-female ratio leaning more towards the women's side, though still heavily favoring the men.

Ethnic diversity is also seeing slow progress, from not being tracked in 2022 to 3 percent of all senior management staff in 2023. A target of 5 percent racial diversity has been set, with no clear timetable set for that margin to be met.

Advancement in ESG goals has been relatively stagnant since the Bentley Sustainability Council came into play last year ([see story](#)), but the manufacturer asserts that it is on track to meet its deadlines set within the Beyond100 plan.



The company's sustainability council is made up of three industry experts. Image credit: Bentley

"It's great to be a part of a process that gives clarity, transparency and with quantified ambitious goals to get to a just and regenerative future for all the stakeholders in the Bentley journey," said Dr. Andrew Dent, member of the sustainability council at Bentley and EVP of materials research at Material ConneXion, in a statement.

"The report to me is a clear declaration about what is important to Bentley; to be the leader in sustainable luxury mobility," Dr. Dent said. "May others read and follow suit!"

A part of the group's long-term commitment to sustainability was introduced last year with the founding of the Bentley Environmental Foundation ([see story](#)), potentially leading to a greater impact as it looks beyond its 2030 deadline for decarbonization.

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