

Whisky experts unbox for a green future

Whisky company removes presentation boxes to edge closer to net zero.

A family-owned spirits business has made a move to phase out its presentation boxes and cartons from its whisky in a major step towards it reaching net zero carbon emissions.

The commitment by Wemyss Family Spirits, which owns and operates Kingsbarns Distillery near St Andrews as well as Wemyss Malts, will save more than a tonne of carbon each year, as the independent business sets out to become one of the greenest in the sector.

William Wemyss, who founded the business in 2005, believes the move is a milestone in the company's journey towards true sustainability.

He said: "From day one we wanted to create a spirits business that acted with real stewardship and care for the environment.

"That came from an innate sense of responsibility. For instance, 100% of the electricity consumed at our Kingsbarns and Darnley's Gin distilleries and visitor centres come from our own hydro schemes.

"We also try to source our ingredients as locally as possible, from Fife Barley for our whisky to botanicals foraged from the East Neuk shoreline and grown in our expanded cottage garden.

"Removing cartons and boxes from our products will have a huge impact and was a logical next step for us to continue our green pathway.

“Consumers are rightly demanding more sustainable products so we’re hoping they’ll be receptive to the decision.”

Following an initial trial, 15% of sales went cartonless in 2023. This will be greatly expanded in 2024, with the shipping of its bottles being protected with recycled and recyclable card dividers.

The business’s broader sustainability strategy includes careful waste management, with by-products of the processes at Darnley’s and Kingsbarns distilleries, such as spent grains, repurposed for animal feed and other agricultural uses. More recently, its sales team has moved to 100% electric car use.

Wemyss Family Spirits is set for major expansion across 2024, with work to start on 12 bonded warehouses and a bottling plant in Glenrothes, Fife, with an increase in the bottling of whisky produced at Kingsbarns, which will celebrate its 10th anniversary later this year.

William added: “It’s a hugely exciting time for our spirits businesses. We are now applying real focus on the next steps with the aim of reaching net zero ahead of both industry and UK targets.

“We want to be recognised locally and internationally for being one of the world’s greenest spirits companies and we believe we’ve all the capabilities to be that.”

Wemyss Family Spirits is an independent, family-owned company with a long-standing history. It makes exceptional Scottish spirits with an ever-growing portfolio of award-winning single malts, blended malts and natural gins.

To find out more about Wemyss Family Spirits, visit <https://wemyssfamilyspirits.com/>



Pictured Isabella Wemyss and William Wemyss. (Photograph: MAVERICK PHOTO AGENCY)

