



Oxwash – on demand laundry services made simple and sustainable

Oxwash are an Oxford based, sustainable laundry and dry cleaning business which was founded with the primary goal of washing clothes and textiles with no net impact on our ecosystems and communities. Their ambition is to become the first truly sustainable, net-zero impact washing company in the world.

Oxwash's sustainability associate, Molly, tells us how their story began "In 2018 Kyle Grant, our CEO, was fed up with the constantly broken washing machines in his college laundry, so armed with just his bike and backpack he cycled around Oxford collecting and washing clothes for his fellow students. And from there it grew so quickly, there was just more and more demand. Kyle's aim was to build an eco laundry company operating with a significantly lower impact than the existing industry. He succeeded. Just four years later we're a fully operational, sustainable laundry business with three processing hubs, referred to by us as ' lagoons', in Oxford, Cambridge and London. Our bikes are now a familiar part of the streetscape across these cities, which is so exciting."



As a county Oxfordshire's green economy is thriving and technical innovations are making sustainable business increasingly mainstream. Oxwash is a great example of this. "As a company Oxwash are all about re-engineering the laundry process from the ground up. So that might be from our

innovative water reclamation system in Oxford and our non-toxic cleaning products right through to our zero emissions delivery, as we use e-bikes and for longer distances electric vans. Everything we do has the environment at its core." Molly explains.

A full cycle of support from OxLEP Business

The connection with OxLEP Business started in 2019. Being both an innovative and sustainable business, Oxwash were able to benefit from two of OxLEP's business support programmes; Innovation Support for Business (ISfB) and eScalate.

According to Molly, OxLEP grant funding was extremely important in the early stages. "The relationship with OxLEP goes right back to the start. They have been on this journey with us. In the early days any kind of financial support was an incredible help to Kyle and the team. Being a new start up with lots of ambition, funding was always going to be crucial. "

“ The grants from OxLEP allowed Oxwash to get ready for growth by helping purchase equipment, grow the team and support our marketing. ”

"We have been through different levels of support with OxLEP, obviously the funding was hugely helpful, but we're now thinking more about our impact rather than just getting financial support. You move to different stages in a business and we're now thinking more broadly. OxLEP not only offer funding but so much more than that. The one-to-one support, networking groups and signposting is very helpful. When we don't know where to start with something, we know they will!"

Becoming Bcorp and giving back to the community



A really exciting step in the Oxwash journey is their recently awarded status as a Certified B Corporation – due to their high standards of social and environmental performance. Molly elaborates “We are

super excited to now be a Certified B Corporation, it’s a huge step in our journey towards net zero.”

“Part of being a Certified B Corporation means you have a social impact. You have a mission and you fulfil that mission to be of benefit to the community. We reached out to OxLEP for a one-to-one meeting with one of their social impact experts through the eScalate programme. During the consultation we brainstormed ideas on how to engage with the local community and essentially be of benefit to both the planet and the people. Their advice was invaluable and has led us to join the Economic Growth Board at Oxford City Council, be part of environmental round tables and build connections with other businesses that share our vision. We now really feel like we’re part of the community and are continuing to build our community projects, which is really exciting.

Oxwash continue to scale-up

From one man, a bike and a backpack, to now a hundred strong, Certified B Corporation, working across three major cities in the UK, Oxwash are a true example of small business success in Oxfordshire.

Molly outlines their future aspirations “Our team has doubled in the last year, which is crazy. We’ve outgrown our fairly small lagoons, especially in Oxford, so we’re looking for larger processing plants. We also plan to expand into more cities and build on our B2B client base. Another exciting venture is our partnerships within the circular fashion industry. So, it’s not just about washing clothes in a sustainable way, it’s how you can make clothes last longer. We’ve partnered with a clothes rental company in London to provide them with a sustainable solution to the washing of their clothes. Circular fashion is going to continue to grow and we’re looking forward to being a big part of that.”



Oxwash’s relationship with OxLEP Business is now in year four and Molly explains the important part they played in their success story. “The team at OxLEP have been there to give us support when we were first starting out and not sure of our direction. They’re that external source to guide you on which direction to take. And, the support varies at different stages of your business, they have supported us throughout our journey, from the early stage right through to the expansion phase. A big part of OxLEP that I don’t think is highlighted enough is the community aspect and how they link you up with incredible resources. They helped connect us with other like-minded businesses and really be in touch with our local city. We highly recommend their support and look forward to continuing our relationship with them as the Oxwash story continues.”

OXWASH

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON OXWASH
PLEASE VISIT THEIR WEBSITE: oxwash.com

Find out more about OxLEP’s eScalate programme:

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