

MAKING FASHION A FORCE FOR GOOD

# RIVER ISLAND

SUSTAINABILITY UPDATE REPORT 2021

12 COMMITMENTS FOR PEOPLE AND PLANET

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## A LETTER FROM THE CEO

Dear Reader,

First of all, thank you for taking an interest in how we at River Island are approaching sustainability across our business. As the board member responsible for human rights and environmental issues in the business, the ultimate decision making power over these fundamental issues sits with myself. I am helped by our Sustainability board that brings together people from all areas of the business, who assist me in defining and structuring the strategy.

We have been spreading the joy of fashion as River Island for over 30 years now. Fashion is our world; it's who we are, it's what we do and it's what we believe in. We believe that fashion can be a force for good, and that belief forms the foundations of our sustainability work: at River Island, sustainability is now a key ingredient in our business.

To keep us focussed and grounded on our sustainability journey, we established our 12 Commitments for People and Planet, aligned to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Over the past year, we have been working hard to deliver on the commitments that we have made, and I am proud of how much change we have been able to drive forward. In particular:

- We have launched our Take Back scheme in partnership with Reskinned which allows customers to return unwanted clothing to our stores and online in return for River Island gift vouchers. We are starting with 25 locations and will roll it out across all our stores by the end of 2022.
- Since the summer of 2021, all the cotton in our jeans has been responsibly sourced.
- Wellbeing has come into focus more than ever and we have trained our line managers to spot the signs and symptoms of stress, create positive cultures around mental health and initiate conversations about mental health and wellbeing. We have launched our Manage With Care training programme, and as of February 2022, we have trained 277 line managers.

There is still much more to do and we remain committed to our targets. Over the coming year, we will continue to focus on improving transparency throughout our global supply chain. This will promote the ethical treatment of workers and better improve the sustainable attributes of our products. In 2022 we will integrate the use of our Supplier Scorecard into the buying process, which will grade suppliers in four categories: Sustainability, Product, Quality and Supply Chain

Other areas to build will be establishing robust water and chemical programmes. We know these are great challenges we can't face alone which is why we're proudly engaged with ZDHC. We will continue to collaborate, to seek partnerships, to share our journey and be transparent about our challenges as well as our successes.

Lastly, I want to say a heartfelt thank you to all our Islanders. As the Covid-19 global pandemic continued to be a challenge and we continued to adapt to the new ways of working driven by the pandemic, we worked flexibly with our suppliers to combat the difficulties that arose during 2021, from forced lockdowns to absenteeism.

We have been working hard to change the way we make clothes, and with each year our staff drive us forward more and more. We stand together for a brighter future for all who want fashion to be a force for good.

WILL KERNAN, CEO

"WE HAVE BEEN WORKING HARD TO CHANGE THE WAY WE MAKE CLOTHES, AND WITH EACH YEAR OUR STAFF DRIVE US FORWARD MORE AND MORE. WE STAND TOGETHER FOR A BRIGHTER FUTURE FOR ALL WHO WANT FASHION TO BE A FORCE FOR GOOD."

WILL KERNAN, CEO



PEOPLE		1. EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSIVITY	Cultivate a diverse and inclusive workplace, across all areas of our business
		2. WELLBEING	Foster a culture centred on people's wellbeing
		3. ETHICAL WORKING	Continuously improve working standards for our own employees and for those in our supply chains, underpinned by a commitment to eliminate Modern Slavery
		4. COMMUNITY	Give back to our communities; to those who help make our products, our colleagues that create and deliver our brand and to those who wear them
PLANET		5. SUSTAINABLE MATERIALS	Design more sustainable products, support responsible production practices and improve new and current products to reduce waste
		6. CHEMICALS	Eliminate all hazardous chemicals from our products and meet the highest industry standard
		7. WATER	Integrate sustainable water stewardship throughout our value chain
		8. WASTE & RECYCLING	Eliminate waste to landfill from all of our operations, and increase recycling
		9. CLIMATE CHANGE	Take action to reduce our carbon footprint through Science Based Targets to achieve net zero carbon emissions
PRINCIPLES		10. TRANSPARENCY	Attain full transparency through the business & supply chain in order to measure and deliver our commitments
		11. ADVOCACY	Engage transparently with our customers, employees and stakeholders, sharing our journey to drive positive change
		12. PARTNERSHIPS	Collaborate through partnerships to validate our ideas and develop solutions for our material issues that require scale

# Our Key Targets.

ACTIVELY PROMOTE THE RECRUITMENT OF CANDIDATES FROM DIVERSE SOCIAL BACKGROUNDS

ACQUIRE FULL VISIBILITY UP TO TIER 4 IN OUR PRODUCTS' SUPPLY CHAIN BY 2023

AT LEAST 50% OF OUR GARMENTS SUSTAINABLY ATTRIBUTED BY 2023

ADOPTION OF AN MRSL BY TOP 50 SUPPLIERS BY 2023

REDUCE WATER USE IN OUR PRODUCTS' MANUFACTURING PROCESS IN 50% BY 2030

ZERO WASTE TO LANDFILL FROM ALL UK OPERATIONS BY 2023

ZERO WASTE TO LANDFILL FROM OUR PRODUCTS' MANUFACTURING PROCESS BY 2025

50% OF OUR SYNTHETICS WILL BE RECYCLED BY 2025

INTRODUCE PRODUCTS' END-OF-LIFE SOLUTION FOR CUSTOMERS BY 2022

NET-ZERO CARBON EMISSIONS BY END 2040



# Our Key Successes.

ELIMINATED SINGLE USE PLASTIC FROM OUR PACKAGING	100% TRACEABILITY AND AUDITING OF TIER 1 SUPPLY CHAIN AND 40% FROM OUR TIER 2 DOWNWARDS	OVER £1.6M SPENT IN 2021 PARTNERING WITH CHARITIES & SOCIAL ENTERPRISES IN THEIR PURPOSES
ALL THE COTTON IN OUR JEANS IS RESPONSIBLY SOURCED	OVER 850,000 GARMENTS REUSED OR RECYCLED THROUGH NEWLIFE PARTNERSHIP IN 2021	1 IN 4 OF OUR PRODUCTS CURRENTLY SUSTAINABLY ATTRIBUTED
PLASTIC AND CARDBOARD SAVING	100% GREEN ENERGY USED IN ALL OUR STORES, HEAD OFFICE AND DISTRIBUTION CENTRE	LAUNCH OF OUR TAKE BACK SCHEME IN 2022





# Do Good...

for people and society. We believe it's our people that make us what we are. Our aim is to place diversity and wellbeing at the heart of the River Island culture while educating and inspiring our community to help make our world fairer and more sustainable.



# People.





## Commitment 1: Equality, Diversity, Inclusivity

Our community is always open

In order to create an inclusive environment where diversity is celebrated, last year River Island launched “Your I.D. (Inclusion and Diversity)”. Your I.D. is a group of Islanders who are passionate about creating change and transparency for all on issues surrounding Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity. They are there to listen, act and adapt to changes necessary for a diverse and inclusive culture at River Island. Their job is to influence a culture of inclusivity - from small business-wide changes to a culture where people feel included.

We believe it's our people that make us what we are - a passionate, diverse community of individuals bound together by a real love of fashion. Everyone's welcome. We celebrate differences and embrace unity and we do not tolerate judgement or discrimination.

Our aim is to be an inclusive employer that proactively supports our people in building a culture that values diversity and celebrates the cultures, personalities and preferences of our people. Along with other leading retailers, we have signed the British Retail Consortium's Better Jobs Diversity and Inclusion Charter which commits us to take decisive action to improve diversity practices across the retail industry, focussing on oversight, recruitment, progression, reporting, inclusivity and responsibility.

We are proud to have a workforce that is 73% female, and a senior leadership team that is 56% female. In 2021 we appointed 7 new female 'Director of' roles out of 11 vacancies, supported by an emerging leaders' programme to develop board and leadership skills for future board succession. Throughout 2021 there was an 8.1% median gender pay gap versus the UK average of 15.5%, but encouragingly, there was no gender pay gap for women in like for like roles. .

In 2021 we partnered with the Amos Bursary; an organisation that ensures talented people of African and Caribbean descent have the opportunity to excel in education and beyond.

They bring together universities and businesses looking to diversify their student intake and workforce, with a pool of exceptional talent. The intent is to transform lives and change negative perceptions of young black men and women and normalise success.

But there is more to do and our ongoing partnership with Blueprint for all (formerly the Stephen Lawrence Charitable Trust) is designed to help us audit, review and evolve the business' policies and activity around equality, diversity and inclusion. It is crucial that every member of River Island's workforce is heard, represented, and feels proud to work for a brand that is truly dedicated to unity. Some of our planned initiatives for 2022 include unconscious bias training for all, leadership programmes for employees in under-represented groups and our largest ever entry-level apprenticeship programme to help improve the diversity and socio-economic diversity within our workforce.

### Our Successes.

- 56% OF SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM IS FEMALE
- IN 2021 WE APPOINTED 7 NEW FEMALE 'DIRECTOR OF' ROLES
- NO GENDER PAY GAP FOR PEOPLE IN LIKE FOR LIKE ROLES
- CONDUCTED OUR FIRST INTERNAL DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION SURVEY
- CONDUCTED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH BLUEPRINT FOR ALL A DIVERSITY & INCLUSIVITY AUDIT
- HELD A SERIES OF WORKSHOPS ON DIVERSITY CONFIDENCE WITH THE OPERATING BOARD
- LAUNCHED OUR INTERNAL APPROACH TO DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION WITH A FOCUS ON 'OUR COMMUNITY IS ALWAYS OPEN' AND INTRODUCED THE DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION HUB VIA SHAREPOINT
- INTRODUCED 'YOUR I.D.' ACTION GROUP
- PINPOINT BLIND RECRUITMENT TOOL

### Our Targets.

- IMPROVE REPRESENTATION OF PEOPLE WITH DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS AT SENIOR LEADERSHIP AND OPERATING BOARD LEVEL
- ACTIVELY PROMOTE THE RECRUITMENT OF CANDIDATES FROM DIVERSE SOCIAL BACKGROUNDS
- INVEST IN SYSTEMS THAT ALLOW FOR BETTER DATA COLLECTION AND REPORTING ON ED&I BY 2023. THIS WAS DELAYED IN 2021 DUE TO THE TIME IT'S TAKING TO ESTABLISH THE TYPES OF REQUIREMENTS WE HAVE FOR A SYSTEM

### Our Partnerships.



#### OUR COMMITMENT

CULTIVATE A DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE, ACROSS ALL AREAS OF OUR BUSINESS

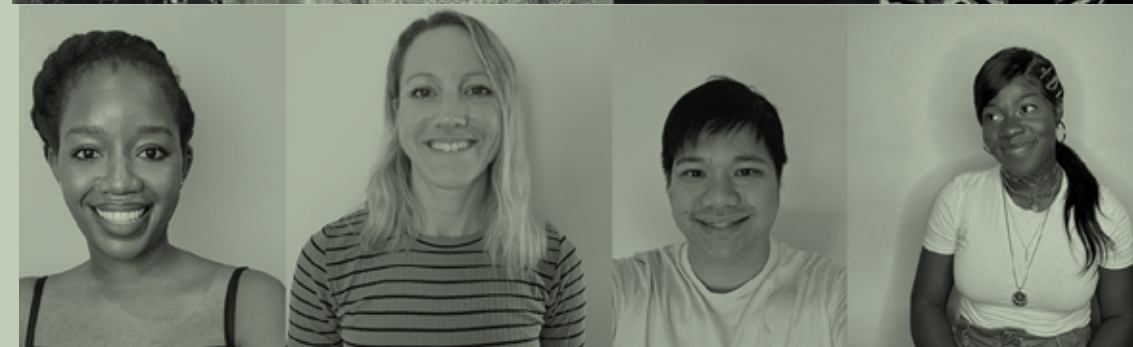




In 2021 we partnered with the Amos Bursary; an organisation that ensures talented people of African and Caribbean descent have the opportunity to excel in education and beyond.

They bring together universities and businesses looking to diversify their student intake and workforce, with a pool of exceptional talent. The intent is to transform lives and change negative perceptions of young black men and women and normalise success.

We identified eight leaders from across different areas of the business to mentor students; creating a trusting, long term relationship to support them through their journey to a successful career. The mentors offer advice, introduce alternatives, challenge, motivate and encourage students to follow their dreams. They will help to create a non-judgmental relationship in which each student can explore and realise their vision of what they want to achieve in life.



#### Diversity and Inclusion Hub

In 2021 the Diversity and Inclusion Hub gave Islanders access to resources and better support around diversity and inclusion. In October we celebrated Black History Month on the Hub, with some of our amazing islanders sharing their experiences and an Instagram live where we spoke about what black history means in today's society, why we are celebrating it and how we can continue to show our support to the Black Community on the island and beyond.

Throughout the year we celebrated a number of cultural events such as Diwali, Hanukkah, and Lunar New Year. We provide a spotlight on people across the business to talk about their culture.





## Commitment 2: Wellbeing

### Care, Detect, Promote

We are lucky to have such hugely passionate employees who truly love River Island. Inevitably, work makes up a huge part of our life and overall wellbeing and to this end, we want to ensure our Islanders feel as supported as possible through their work in all areas of wellbeing.

Throughout 2021 we ran a series of different events and workshops to support our Islanders in all areas of their mental health and wellbeing – from sleep schools and resilience months to financial wellbeing guidance. We're pleased that 65% of our employees said they were aware of the programmes on offer, but we hope to increase that even further.

As COVID-19 persisted, and poor mental health in the workplace became increasingly common, our focus continued to be on the mental wellbeing of our Islanders. Over the past year, 79% of employees described experiencing some form of stress-related illness or absence and 91% of employees stated that feeling stressed or anxious is a daily occurrence.

According to our Health and Safety Executive, 59% of employees stated that their workload was the main cause of stress or anxiety in 2021. When they were surveyed in December 2021, 42% of our Islanders said that their resilience was good. This is something we need to address. As a family-owned business, we are focused on supporting our colleagues and fostering a culture centred on people's wellbeing.

In line with these findings, and with our ethos as a business, we are introducing additional measures to ensure managers are equipped to support the wellbeing of their teams. In our 2021 survey, 32% of our teams said their line managers affected their mental wellbeing, and in response to this, we have launched our Manage With Care training programme. This scheme aims to provide line managers with the skills they need to spot signs and symptoms of stress, create positive cultures around mental health and initiate conversations about mental health and wellbeing. We have trained 277 line managers since we launched the programme in May 2021. In addition, managers have access to the [Manage With Care](#) playbook and we've supported line managers to complete wellness action plans.

Also this year, we hosted a Resilience Panel discussion with over 150 Islanders who listened to a male's perspective on resilience. Our panel shared their personal mental health journeys from positive mental health to burnout, talked about their coping techniques and encouraged everyone to look after their mental health and wellbeing as a priority.

In January 2021, we launched our mental health allies across head office and retail in order to provide a safe and confidential space for Islanders to talk about mental health. Our allies are volunteers from existing staff who have a variety of lived experiences in mental health and we have provided them with more formal training. Encouragingly, In December 2021, 70% of our employees stated that they were aware of our mental health ally program and know how to contact them.

Additionally, our ongoing Employee Assistance Programme, a partnership with the Retail Trust, gives confidential access to support services outside of River Island.

Our future focus is on gathering the right information and data to truly understand our employees' wellbeing and extending that support beyond the head office into our retail estate. That will allow us to identify the opportunities for us to improve and start reporting on our progress. Disclosure also remains at the forefront, empowering our line managers to spot the signs and have the right conversations are some of the most effective ways to relieve mental health in the workplace - training is paramount.

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### Our Successes.

- INTRODUCED NEW STRATEGY OF MANAGE WITH CARE TO SUPPORT MENTAL WELLBEING IN THE WORKPLACE
- LAUNCHED OUR EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME GIVING CONFIDENTIAL ACCESS TO MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT SERVICES OUTSIDE RIVER ISLAND
- SET UP MENTAL HEALTH ALLIES ACROSS HEAD OFFICE AND RETAIL

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### Our Targets.

- INCREASE THE REACH AND SCOPE OF OUR WELLBEING WORKSHOPS
- CONDUCT AN EMPLOYEE SURVEY AT LEAST ANNUALLY, COLLECTING INFORMATION ON THE PHYSICAL, EMOTIONAL, FINANCIAL, AND SOCIAL WELLBEING, AND REPORT ON ACTIONS BASED ON RESULTS.

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### Our Partnerships.



### OUR COMMITMENT

FOSTER A CULTURE  
CENTRED ON PEOPLE'S  
WELLBEING



## Commitment 3: Ethical Working

### Safe and fair work for all

River Island has a steadfast commitment to protecting human rights and the dignity of all persons within our global supply chain. As members of the Ethical Trade Initiative (ETI), we work continuously to eliminate modern slavery, improve working conditions and promote decent work for all in our supply chains.

In 2021, River Island employed around 7,500 people in UK owned operations and approximately 315,000 workers in our main (Tier 1) factories. We use the internationally recognised ETI Base Code as the minimum standard that should apply to workers in our supply chain, striving to keep workers free from exploitation and improving the lives of workers worldwide. This base code is founded on the conventions of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and is an internationally recognised code of good labour practice. Please find a copy of the code in your local language on the below link:

<https://www.ethicaltrade.org/resources/eti-base-code>

River Island recognises that many ethical and trading issues are complex and cannot be solved overnight. However, we strongly believe significant change is achievable and that we can better influence change through wider collaboration.

It's not about walking away from "bad" factories - that doesn't solve our collective challenge in ethical working. It is important for us to help support, encourage and reward those factories that are willing and proactive in addressing issues. Traditionally our factory ratings have only incorporated issues that arise but we are moving to a model that looks at rewarding good behaviour in remediating problems, too.

In 2018 we worked alongside fashion brands and retailers, public bodies, NGOs and other groups to create the Apparel and General Merchandise Public-Private Protocol, which commits signatories to work together to raise awareness in the UK to prevent worker exploitation, protect vulnerable and exploited workers and disrupt exploitative practices and help bring criminals to justice.

We have continued this work during 2021 with the hope of creating industry lead improvement in working conditions in both the garment and general merchandise sectors in the UK. Working alongside Government Agencies, Trade Unions and leading industry bodies.

Our focus on Ethical Working is ongoing. As supply chains become more transparent, more challenges are uncovered. Our membership alliances allow us to collaboratively influence long term change as well as manage new issues as they arise. We continue to work hard and lead the way in these areas.

### Our Successes.

- 292 SITES USED TO PRODUCE OUR PRODUCTS WERE VISITED DURING 2020/21 AND AUDITED BY OUR IN-COUNTRY TEAMS AND 152 BY INDEPENDENT 3RD PARTY AUDITORS
- 100% TRACEABILITY AND AUDITING OF TIER 1 SUPPLY CHAIN (AND LIST PUBLISHED ON OUR WEBSITE)
- WE UNCOVERED 18 INSTANCES OF SUBCONTRACTING WHICH LEAD TO REMEDIATION WITH 13 SUPPLIERS (18 PRODUCTION SITES) IN 2021

### Our Targets.

- INTRODUCE A BEYOND AUDIT PROCESS TO HELP FACTORIES IMPROVE THEIR SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL PRACTICES
- ENSURE 40% OF OUR TIER 1 SUPPLIERS SUBMIT TO THE HIGG FACTORY SOCIAL & LABOUR MODULE (FSLM) BY 2023
- ACHIEVE FULL VISIBILITY OF OUR SUPPLY CHAIN DOWN TO TIER 4 (YARN LEVEL) BY 2023

### Our Partnerships.



### OUR COMMITMENT

CONTINUOUSLY IMPROVE WORKING STANDARDS FOR OUR OWN EMPLOYEES AND FOR THOSE IN OUR SUPPLY CHAINS, UNDERPINNED BY A COMMITMENT TO ELIMINATE MODERN SLAVERY

1.

EMPLOYMENT IS  
FREELY CHOSEN

2.

FREEDOM OF  
ASSOCIATION  
& THE RIGHT  
TO COLLECTIVE  
BARGAINING  
ARE RESPECTED

3.

WORKING  
CONDITIONS  
ARE SAFE  
AND HYGIENIC

4.

CHILD LABOUR  
SHALL NOT BE  
USED

5.

LIVING WAGES  
ARE PAID

6.

WORKING  
HOURS ARE  
NOT EXCESSIVE

7.

NO  
DISCRIMINATION  
IS PRACTICED

8.

REGULAR  
EMPLOYMENT  
IS PROVIDED

9.

NO HARSH  
OR INHUMANE  
TREATMENT IS  
ALLOWED





## Segura.

During 2021, as part of our commitment to increasing supply chain transparency, River Island partnered with Segura. They are UK based company, founded in 2015, combining digital expertise with a detailed knowledge of global supply chains, in order to create a simple-to-use business solution. Segura delivers market leading solutions to retailers and brands, focused on helping them to achieve ethical, sustainable, and compliant multi-tiered supply chains.

During the initial trial period in early 2021 River Island on-boarded 34 of our key suppliers and captured details of our products directly onto Segura. Through Segura our suppliers are able to report at purchase order level and give a 'live' update of where our products and their components are being sourced. As well as a clear picture of all the production processes used to manufacture the products. The key to this methodology is the ability for our lower tier suppliers to confirm that they are supplying the component or process, directly within Segura providing us with the transparency and visibility required. Due to the success of the trial, in late 2021, we adopted Segura as part of our standard working practices and will be on-boarding all of our suppliers during 2022.

As part of River Islands ongoing sustainable strategy we have committed to delivering 100% transparency of tiers 1-4 by the end of 2023, and we see Segura as a key software tool in helping us achieve this goal."Segura provides us with a complete solution, incorporating all of our supply chain management and transparency requirements, with the ability for us to expand the remit as our business needs develop. Through the platform we can extract detailed reports, requesting information from suppliers directly and validating it. It will allow us to identify opportunities to improve performance, and drive cost and time efficiencies across the business. Our customers expect products that are safe, sustainable, and responsibly sourced and we are committed to ensuring that is exactly what we can offer."

**Jose Arguedas - Head Of Sustainability.**



## ETHICAL WORKING PROJECTS

### SUPPLIER RELATIONS

OUR STRATEGIC SUPPLIER PROGRAMME IS IN PLACE WITH TEN KEY SUPPLIERS (APPROXIMATELY 40% OF OUR BUSINESS AT COST VALUE), WITH AN INCREASED FOCUS ON RESPONSIBLE SOURCING AND INNOVATION. EACH RECEIVES ACCESS TO PERSONALISED STRATEGIC SUPPLIER INFORMATION OUTLINING RIVER ISLAND'S COMMITMENT TO CLOSER COLLABORATION, SHARED VISIBILITY AND PLANNING, AND IMPROVED WAYS OF WORKING. IT DEFINES THE EXPECTATIONS AND BENEFITS FOR BOTH PARTIES. SO FAR WE HAVE BENEFITED FROM IMPROVED VISIBILITY OF STRATEGY AND PLANNING, AND GREATER OPENNESS TO JOINTLY DISCUSS COST CHALLENGES AND INITIATIVES.

### PURCHASING PRACTICES

WE CONTINUE TO PUSH TO MAKE IMPROVEMENTS IN OUR WAYS OF WORKING WITH OUR SUPPLIERS AND AS PART OF THIS PROCESS, WE EXAMINE HOW OUR ACTIONS CAN AFFECT SUPPLIERS, FACTORIES, AND THE WORKERS WITHIN THE FACTORIES. AS PART OF THE ONBOARDING PROCESS, WE ISSUE OUR RIVER ISLAND ETHICAL POLICY BOOKLET TO ALL NEW SUPPLIERS. THIS POLICY BOOKLET DEFINES THE SHARED ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES BETWEEN SUPPLIERS AND RIVER ISLAND BUYERS AND ENABLES THE SUPPLIER TO UNDERSTAND WHAT IS EXPECTED OF THEM WHEN WORKING WITH RIVER ISLAND, BUT ALSO IMPORTANTLY WHAT THEY CAN EXPECT FROM US IN TERMS OF OUR WORKING RELATIONSHIP. WE WILL CONTINUE TO BUILD ON THESE PRINCIPLES GOING FORWARD AND LOOK AT WAYS IN WHICH WE CAN WORK MORE CLOSELY WITH OUR SUPPLIERS TO ENSURE THAT WE CAN CONTINUE TO BUILD STRONG LONG-TERM RELATIONSHIPS.

IN 2021 WE CARRIED OUT A PURCHASING PRACTISES SURVEY TO UNDERSTAND WHERE WE ARE STRONG AND WEAK AND IDENTIFY KEY AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT. WE ARE HOPING TO FOLLOW THIS UP WITH TRAINING FOR OUR BUYING TEAMS DURING 2022.

### LIVING WAGE

WE ARE COMMITTED TO THE PRINCIPLE THAT WORKERS MANUFACTURING OUR PRODUCTS SHOULD BE PAID A FAIR LIVING WAGE. WE ALSO RECOGNISE THAT THIS IS NOT A STRAIGHTFORWARD PROCESS, AND THAT COLLABORATION WITH OTHERS IN THE INDUSTRY AND WITH GOVERNMENTS IS ESSENTIAL TO DRIVE SIGNIFICANT SYSTEMIC CHANGE. WE ALSO SEE THAT MAINTAINING A GOOD DIALOGUE AND RESPECTING WORKERS' RIGHTS AND THEIR ABILITY TO ORGANISE AND BARGAIN COLLECTIVELY WITH THEIR EMPLOYERS OR INDUSTRY, ARE ALSO SIGNIFICANT COMPONENTS. AT RIVER ISLAND, WE ARE IN CONVERSATIONS WITH OTHERS IN OUR INDUSTRY TO UNDERSTAND PROGRESS MADE IN THIS AREA AND EXPLORE WHERE WE CAN MAKE A SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS THIS GOAL. METHODOLOGY TO CORRECT ISSUES AND IMPROVE TRANSPARENCY. ALL HEALTH AND SAFETY CHECKS NOW INCLUDE COVID PROTECTIVE MEASURES AND PROCEDURES WITHIN OUR SITES.

### MONITORING & REMEDIATION

WE HAVE ETHICAL TEAMS BASED IN FIVE KEY MANUFACTURING COUNTRIES WHO TRAVEL REGIONALLY TO CONDUCT REGULAR AUDITS/VISITS TO FACTORIES. THEY FOLLOW UP ON 3RD-PARTY AUDITS, MONITOR CORRECTIVE ACTION PLANS AND SUPPORT WITH ISSUE RESOLUTION. DUE TO THE COVID PANDEMIC, OUR ABILITY TO CARRY OUT UNANNOUNCED AUDITS BECAME DIFFICULT IN 2021 DUE TO ISSUES AROUND COVID OUTBREAKS AND WORKER SAFETY AS SO MANY FACTORY VISITS WERE REDUCED TO SEMI-ANNOUNCED GIVING FACTORIES A 4-6 WEEK WINDOW. THEY WERE ALSO ENCOURAGED TO ADVISE IF ANY OUTBREAKS OF COVID HAD OCCURRED TO ENSURE WE COULD BE FLEXIBLE TO WORK AROUND THE ISSUES THAT THIS MAY HAVE CAUSED AND REARRANGE VISITS WHERE REQUIRED. WE AIM TO WORK PRO-ACTIVELY WHEN ISSUES ARE FOUND, AND WE ASK THAT SUPPLIERS AND FACTORIES WORK WITH US BASED ON A CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME METHODOLOGY TO CORRECT ISSUES AND IMPROVE TRANSPARENCY. ALL HEALTH AND SAFETY CHECKS NOW INCLUDE COVID PROTECTIVE MEASURES AND PROCEDURES WITHIN OUR SITES.

### MODERN SLAVERY

WE TAKE THE ELIMINATION OF [MODERN SLAVERY](#) VERY SERIOUSLY AND WE HAVE INCORPORATED THIS OBJECTIVE INTO OUR ETHICAL TRADE POLICY AND PROGRAMME. WE ARE COMMITTED TO WORKING COLLABORATIVELY WITH KEY STAKEHOLDERS SUCH AS THE ETHICAL TRADING INITIATIVE (ETI) AND ITS MEMBERS, GOVERNMENT BODIES, NGOS, LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND OTHER PARTNERS, IN ORDER TO TACKLE THIS GLOBAL CHALLENGE. IN LATE 2021 WE ENGAGED WITH SLAVE FREE ALLIANCE AND WILL BE PARTNERING WITH THEM IN 2022 TO UPDATE OUR MODERN SLAVERY RISK ASSESSMENT OF THE BUSINESS AND DEVELOP A TIME-BOUND PLAN TO TACKLE ANY AREAS WHERE WORK IS REQUIRED. TO LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR EFFORTS, PLEASE READ OUR MODERN SLAVERY STATEMENT ONLINE.

### COVID-19

THE COVID-19 GLOBAL PANDEMIC CONTINUED TO BE A CHALLENGE IN 2021 AND WE FURTHER ADAPTED TO THE NEW WAYS OF WORKING DRIVEN BY THE PANDEMIC. WE CONTINUED TO WORK FLEXIBLY WITH OUR SUPPLIERS TO COMBAT THE DIFFICULTIES THAT AROSE DURING 2021 FROM FORCED LOCKDOWNS AND ABSENTEEISM. FROM THE START, WE KNEW THAT THE PANDEMIC HAD THE MAKINGS FOR BEING A SIGNIFICANT DISRUPTION FOR OUR INDUSTRY AND OUR SUPPLIERS ACROSS MARKETS, SO THROUGHOUT THESE CHALLENGING TIMES WE MAINTAINED AN OPEN DIALOGUE WITH OUR SUPPLIERS TO FIND THE BEST SOLUTIONS FOR OUR EMPLOYEES AND FOR THE WORKERS WHO MADE OUR GARMENTS. WE PARTNERED WITH AN INDEPENDENT THIRD-PARTY SOCIAL AUDIT ORGANISATION AND SUPPORTED FACTORIES FROM OUR TOP 20 SUPPLIERS (OVER HALF OF THE VOLUME), WITH COVID-19 RESILIENCY GUIDELINES AND CHECKS TO ENSURE WORKERS WERE PROVIDED WITH A SAFE ENVIRONMENT. WE ALSO MADE SURE THAT SUPPLIERS WERE PAID FULLY AND ON TIME AND ORDERS THAT HAD BEEN SUSPENDED OR CANCELLED WERE PROMPTLY REISSUED, CAUSING AS LITTLE DISRUPTION AS POSSIBLE.



## Commitment 4: Community

### Giving back

With over 300 stores and a global supply chain that spans 20 countries, River Island has a place in the hearts' of communities across the world and we're proud to support charities and organisations that strive to improve these communities.

Our longest standing charity partnership is with Newlife, a charity we helped establish in 1991. As well as directly donating 100% of our UK carrier bag levy money to support families with disabled and terminally ill children, we also partner with Newlife for all our terminal stock, which is either sold to raise further money for charity or broken down for recycling. In 2021 over £400,000 was given to Newlife from our carrier bag levy.

Other key charities in 2021 included our long-standing partnership with the Fashion Targets Breast Cancer campaign, and a new partnership with Mind, the mental health charity, on our "Comfort Layers" campaign aiming to break down the stigmas of mental health. Mind also formed part of our Covid Community Partnership alongside The Prince's Trust and Place2Be.

River Island provides a Give As You Earn (GAYE) scheme which offers employees the opportunity to make tax-efficient donations to registered charities. Through this scheme Islanders can make donations to their favourite charities direct from their gross pay and the charity will receive the income tax that would otherwise have been payable on that amount. River Island holds the Silver Award for companies that have engaged 5-10% of employees into their scheme. Giver Island has provided some match-funding to help support staff to engage in this scheme and in 2021 staff donations through GAYE together with GI matching totalled over £48,000.

We have established a Community Investment Steering Group, made up of Islanders from across the business, to help develop our Community Strategy for the business. The strategy has been developed in alignment with our core values and our social purpose, with the vision to focus long term on the areas where River is best placed to deliver meaningful impact and results.

In 2022 we will aim at identifying the right partnerships to support our focus areas and establish the long term plans to have a meaningful impact. We will also work to update our current Giver Island programme to make it even easier for Islanders to support the initiatives they care for and the communities they serve.

### Our Successes.

- OVER £1.6M SPENT IN 2021 PARTNERING WITH CHARITIES & SOCIAL ENTERPRISES IN THEIR PURPOSES.
- OVER 100K DONATED THROUGH OUR INTERNAL PROGRAMMES INCLUDING GIVER ISLAND.
- £30K DONATED VIA GIVER ISLAND MATCH FUNDING, £25K VIA INDIVIDUAL STAFF FUNDRAISING PLUS £40K DONATED VIA PAYROLL GIVING SCHEME.
- IN THE LAST 2 YEARS DONATED £130K VIA OUR PAYROLL GIVING SCHEME, AND RETAINED SILVER AWARD STATUS.
- STARTED A NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH PRINCE'S TRUST AND LAUNCHED A SUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGN WITH MIND

### Our Targets.

- ESTABLISHING THE FOCUS AREAS AND STRATEGY FOR COMMUNITY INVESTMENT BY END OF 2022.
- LAUNCH RIVER ISLAND INTERNATIONAL INVESTMENT INITIATIVE FOR OUR SUPPLY CHAIN COMMUNITIES BY 2023.

### Our Partnerships.



Improving children's mental health

### OUR COMMITMENT

GIVE BACK TO OUR COMMUNITIES; TO THOSE WHO HELP MAKE OUR PRODUCTS, OUR COLLEAGUES THAT CREATE AND DELIVER OUR BRAND AND TO THOSE WHO WEAR THEM

## RI STORIES



We've been able to help hundreds of colleagues support hundreds of different charities.

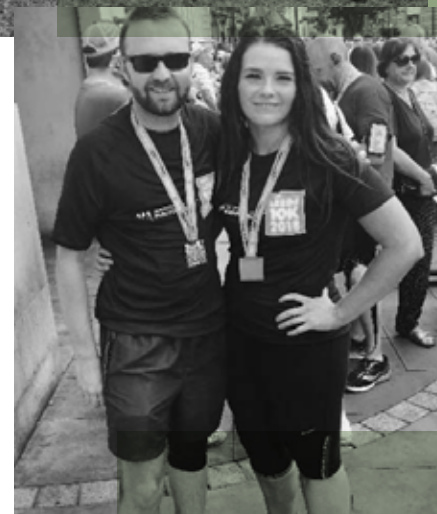
The Giver Island match-funding scheme was established in 2012 with the simple aim of helping River Island colleagues support the causes that are closest to them. The scheme's motto is: "If it's important to you then it's important to us". And with this approach we've been able to help hundreds of colleagues support hundreds of different charities.

So far, the fund has provided over £30,000 for colleagues to add to their own fundraising totals. Cancer Research UK has been the most supported charity every year, with Macmillan and Alzheimer's Society also receiving consistently strong support. In addition, we've been very happy to add to support for the smaller 'hidden' charities, and perhaps this reflects the real value of Giver Island. Fundraising for smaller unknown charities is hard work but people build a connection for all sorts of very personal reasons. For these colleagues, the chance to donate a sum that has been enhanced by match-funding is a huge boost because they know the impact this will have on a small charity. One of the team in our Kings Lynn store experienced bereavement when her sister died and she and her brothers were referred to local bereavement charity Nelson's Journey. Concerned that normal fundraising events were not available to the charity due to Covid, she organised a raffle raising £574 - Giver Island then matched the amount raised

Often, applications for support are accompanied by the deeply personal stories that inspired the fundraising effort and we've been delighted to help colleagues make their stories feel just a little more positive, even if it's just for a moment.

Like our Kings Lynn staff member shared:

**"THANKS TO THEM I WAS ABLE TO PROCESS THE GRIEF, WORK THROUGH HOW I FELT AND IT'S TRUE WHEN THEY SAY THEY BRING BACK SMILES TO BEREAVED CHILDREN. I TRULY BELIEVE WITHOUT THEM I WOULDN'T BE WHO I AM TODAY."**





# Do Good...

for the planet. That thing about us only having one? It's true! We love fashion and we want to make sure we are part of the solution. From climate change to sustainable materials and recycling, we're on a journey to address the impact our business has on the environment.



- 6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION
- 7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY
- 9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
- 11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES
- 12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION
- 13 CLIMATE ACTION
- 14 LIFE BELOW WATER
- 15 LIFE ON LAND

## Planet.



## Commitment 5: Materials

Enhancing quality through sustainability

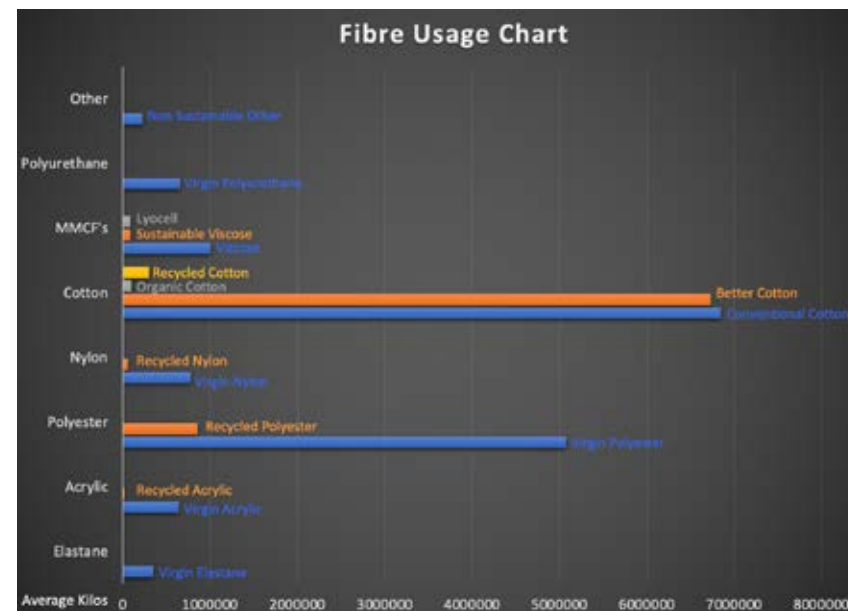
River Island is committed to improving the sustainability credentials of all clothing and accessories. Our goal is for at least 50% of garments to be made using sustainable materials by 2023.

To get there, we are constantly improving our sourcing approach, to ensure we select materials with the lightest footprint possible. Our Sustainable Materials Framework outlines how we evaluate and validate materials. Any claims you see on products meet that framework. The framework sets the minimum sustainable material mixes needed for a 'sustainable' claim. These must be accredited with relevant standards, for example the Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS), Better Cotton, or the Global Recycled Standard (GRS).

River Island is a proud member of Better Cotton. Better Cotton is sourced via a system of mass balance and is not physically traceable to end products.

We're committed to sourcing 100% of our cotton as 'more sustainable cotton': which includes Better Cotton, recycled cotton and organic cotton.

Following the creation of our Sustainable Materials Framework in 2020, we have trained all product teams and suppliers on the use of sustainable materials. Subsequently, we have increased use of sustainable materials, with 25% of products containing 50% or more sustainable materials. Our aim is for 30% of products to be sustainably attributed by the end of the year. To assist with this we have collated our total fibre usage for the business.



This chart shows the main fibres and materials used in products and our progress in converting to sustainable materials. This was achieved in just one year and we look forward to shifting to use more sustainable alternatives in the coming year.

We have launched three sustainable collections: RI One, Nushu and Kind Society. These use responsibly sourced cotton, recycled cotton and recycled polyester.

### OUR COMMITMENT

DESIGN MORE SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTS, SUPPORT RESPONSIBLE PRODUCTION PRACTICES AND IMPROVE NEW AND CURRENT PRODUCTS TO REDUCE WASTE

We are proud to announce our commitment to The Microfibre 2030 Commitment led by The Microfibre Consortium (TMC). We are pleased to be collaborating with pioneering experts in this field. The commitment brings the global textile sector together, working to significantly reduce fibre fragmentation impact from textiles by 2030.

Animal Welfare is a key consideration in the selection of our materials. River Island supports the Five Freedoms for Animal Welfare, which affirms every living being's right to humane treatment. For products containing animal-derived components, all suppliers sign an Animal Welfare declaration to confirm materials are sourced as by-products of the meat industry.

Leather and viscose are the two main causes of biodiversity loss related to fashion materials, causing deforestation. We have committed to reduce our risk of sourcing from ancient and endangered forests via our partnership with Canopy. Read more about our commitment to protect forests through our paper, packaging and fabric choices [here](#), and our commitments to [canopy here](#).

Leather is a very small percentage of our fibre usage, but due to the risks to biodiversity, we are committed to understanding our supply chain better. We are working to gain more transparency of our leather supply chain: mapping our current sources to help define our sourcing strategy going forward to reduce the impact on the environment.

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## Our Successes.

- OVER 1 IN 4 OF OUR PRODUCTS CURRENTLY SUSTAINABLY ATTRIBUTED
- PROUDLY ENGAGED WITH THE MICROFIBRE 2030 COMMITMENT
- 40% OF OUR COTTON USAGE IS FROM 'MORE SUSTAINABLE COTTON' - BETTER COTTON ORGANIC COTTON AND RECYCLED COTTON SOURCES

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## Our Targets.

- AT LEAST 50% OF OUR GARMENTS WILL BE SUSTAINABLY ATTRIBUTED 2023
- 100% RESPONSIBLY SOURCED COTTON BY THE END OF 2023
- 50% OF OUR SYNTHETICS WILL BE RECYCLED BY 2025
- COMMITTED TO NO VISCOSE BEING SOURCED FROM ANCIENT AND ENDANGERED FORESTS.
- WORK TOWARDS A SIGNIFICANT REDUCTION IN FIBRE FRAGMENTATION FROM TEXTILES BY 2030 WITH THE MICROFIBRE CONSORTIUM (TMC)
- 20% OF OUR PRODUCTS TO BE UPLOADED TO THE HIGG MATERIALS SUSTAINABILITY INDEX

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## Our Partnerships.





# A New Leaf

We are committed to making the world a greener place, one consciously-made mom, straight and skinny at a time. We know that when it comes to being more sustainable, we've all got to start somewhere - and for us, it's the fabric in our jeans.

Stitch by stitch, we're using denim to do better which is why we now only use responsibly sourced cotton in our jeans - and that's just the start of it.





## Commitment 6: Chemicals

### Eliminating the baddies

River Island is committed to ensuring that our products (including fabrics, dyes, prints, components and trims etc.) are manufactured in safe working conditions and that workers are not exposed to any chemicals that are classified as hazardous or harmful. This includes chemicals that may have a known detrimental impact on the environment.

We also have an obligation to our customers to ensure all the products we sell are safe and do not contain any chemicals that may cause harm to them or the environment. The River Island Restricted Substances List details chemicals that are either restricted by legislation or due to industry best practices. Each chemical has a maximum limit that must not be exceeded in the finished product so that we meet the requirements of all our intended markets. This limit is reviewed annually.

River Island's Restricted Substances List has been communicated to all suppliers. They must comply with this as part of our chemical policy, and use independent laboratories to verify our products. As part of our internal due diligence process, we test for restricted heavy metals on our products in our Distribution Centre. We use an XRF analyser to check components on clothing, bags, footwear and more. Since introduction, we have scanned thousands of products.

The XRF analyser is used for targeted due diligence on our RSL, covering all suppliers on rotation. We are proud to say our pass rate in 2021 was 98%, but we can always do better. Following its success, we increased the number of products tested, and maintained our 98% pass rate. Using XRF provides the due diligence for [packaging, product](#) and [beauty RSL](#).

River Island is also pleased to announce its role in the ZDHC Roadmap to Zero Programme and its status as a ZDHC Contributor. We will support the programme's vision for the widespread implementation of safer chemistry and best practices in the textile and footwear industries. By doing so, we can play a key role in helping to protect consumers, workers and the environment. We will be part of a collaboration that's designed to transform the global value chain. It will work alongside other members of the ZDHC Community towards the milestones set out in the Programme. As part of this, River Island will actively engage with many different stakeholders, including other brands, retailers and suppliers.

River Island is proud to join a growing ZDHC Community of over 160 leading brands, value chain affiliates and associates. The organisation will work, plan and innovate alongside fellow community members to drive responsible chemical management worldwide. By working in a collaborative, open manner, River Island will help to transform and future proof the industry.

To date, we have implemented a Restricted Substance List (RSL) to achieve our commitment to our customers to ensure all the products are safe for our customers and do not contain harmful chemicals. By joining ZDHC Roadmap to Zero Programme we are progressing our commitment further giving us access to the tool of a recognised standard for implementing a Manufacturers Restricted Substance List (MRSL) within our supply chain in the next 24 months. 'The unique partnership model that ZDHC offers, bringing Brands and Retailers together with Suppliers and Chemical Manufacturers, has made the decision to join the logical next step in our Sustainability journey. We are looking forward to learning from other members and to contributing as much as we can in support of improving our industry's chemical footprint'. Jose Arguedas - Head of CSR.

In the first Quarter of 2022, we worked with our Top 50 Suppliers and our Testing Houses to implement the [MRSL](#) and get our suppliers up and running on the ZDHC Gateway. We're looking forward to updating you further as this project progresses.

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### Our Successes.

- INTRODUCED AN RSL (RESTRICTED SUBSTANCES LIST) TO ALL SUPPLIERS IN 2020
- ANNUAL TRAINING PROVIDED TO SUPPLIERS TO ENSURE THAT STANDARDS ARE MAINTAINED
- THIS YEAR WE COLLECTED HIGG FEM'S FROM 40% OF OUR TIER 1 SUPPLIERS

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### Our Targets.

- ADOPTION OF AN MRSL BY TOP 50 SUPPLIERS BY 2023 THAT WILL APPLY TO APPROXIMATELY 80% OF OUR PRODUCTS
- 100% OF SUPPLIERS TO RESPOND THE HIGG FACILITY ENVIRONMENTAL MODULE (FEM) BY 2023

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### Our Partnerships.



#### OUR COMMITMENT

ELIMINATE ALL HAZARDOUS CHEMICALS FROM OUR PRODUCTS AND MEET THE HIGHEST INDUSTRY STANDARD



## Commitment 7: Water

### Building our stewardship

Water is one of the key natural resources impacted by the fashion industry and it's a human right that everyone should have access to it. Our ambition is to both reduce the amount of water used in our processes and to minimise the wastewater produced.

Our water programme is still in its infancy. Currently, we reduce water consumption at the farm level through our partnership with Better Cotton. Better Cotton farmers use 20% less water than conventional cotton farmers in their production methods. We also harvest rainwater at our Distribution Centre used for the toilets and gardens.

We are proud at RI to say all of the cotton in our jeans is responsibly sourced, meaning that it either comes from our partnership with Better Cotton, Organic Cotton or recycled cotton sources. Over half of a pair of jeans' water usage comes from the material, therefore we are really proud to make progress in reducing our water footprint. We can't stop there though, so at the start of this year we have started work on a project to develop Laundry Guidelines for our denim suppliers, with the aim to reduce our water usage further. To allow us to do this we are working with Jeanologia's EIM Score assessment. EIM stands for Environmental Impact measurement and it assesses the environmental influences that come into effecting industrial washing and the results are represented using a traffic light system. The assessment categories are water, energy, chemicals and worker health. Currently, our denim has an average score of Amber but with the introduction of the Laundry guidelines, we want all our denim to have a green score. Supporting our teams with a good understanding of the sustainable laundry processes to enable them to develop better denim with the suppliers whilst being mindful of any cost or environmental implications. We will share more data with you as we work through our journey on this project.

### OUR COMMITMENT

INTEGRATE SUSTAINABLE  
WATER STEWARDSHIP  
THROUGHOUT OUR  
VALUE CHAIN

But there is still a lot to do, particularly playing a more active role in water conservation. We have set ambitious targets to reduce our water usage by 25% in 2023 and 50% in 2030. Our future work is twofold: 1) we are working towards treatment and safe disposal/discharge of water programmes, and 2) increasing the conservation of water through our supply chain more generally.

The implementation of ZDHC's Waste Water Stewardship programme will be key to achieving our targets. It delves deeper than just testing the finished product and looks at what goes into the product/facility and controls the outputs from it. We are in the early stages of implementation, but want to move quickly to implement this work across our supply base. The good news is that many of our Tier 1 suppliers have a strong record in their water treatment. The majority of our denim suppliers, in particular, have built-in water management systems to manage wastewater and are already monitoring, recapturing and recycling the water they use. We are working towards transparency through our Tier 2 and 3 supply chains and in particular our dyeing houses where water impact is the largest.

### Our Successes.

- JOINED ZDHC (ZERO DISCHARGE OF HAZARDOUS CHEMICALS) TO USE THEIR WATER STEWARDSHIP PROGRAMME
- WORKING TO REDUCE THE WATER IMPACT OF OUR DENIM VIA THE LAUNDRY PROCESS

### Our Targets.

- REDUCE WATER USE IN OUR PRODUCTS MANUFACTURING PROCESS BY 50% BY 2030
- ALL DENIM TO HAVE A WATER USAGE OF 22 LITRES AND BELOW BY 2023.
- INTEGRATE WATER STEWARDSHIP AND CONSERVATION PROGRAMME BY 2023.

### Our Partnerships.





## Commitment 8: Waste & Recycling

### Saying goodbye to landfill

Our goal is to eliminate waste to landfill generated by the manufacturing of our products through our entire supply chain by 2025. Our current focus is on eliminating the waste we produce directly through our owned operation. Our Distribution Centre (DC) is already zero waste to landfill, with everything that comes through the DC either recycled or reused, from plastic garment bags to cardboard shipping boxes. Food and general waste is also either recycled or reused - either via green incineration to generate fuel or broken down to make asphalt, oil.

In April 2022 we are pleased to be able to start offering our customers the opportunity to return their old and unwanted clothes to us in-store and online via our Take Back scheme. Working in partnership with Reskinned, we will find the clothes new homes and the customer will receive a voucher to redeem in store. Watch this space for further details.

When it comes to product waste, we sell nearly all of our clothing. Any items we don't sell are either broken down for recycling or sold through charities or other third parties. We do not incinerate any of our clothes. Last year we reused or recycled over 850,000 garments through our partnership with Newlife. Additionally, we have been donating all the fabric and sample scraps from our design room to the Watford Recycling Arts Program for the last 15 years, where it gets used by the local community in art projects.

The incineration of textile released carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, which exacerbate global warming. Incineration of clothes made from synthetic fibres may release plastic microfibres into the atmosphere. That's why at River Island we only send our product waste to be broken down for recycling or sold through charities or other third parties. This applies to our post and re-production products.

In store, we are working hard on our packaging and in-store collateral - all of our carrier bags and shipping bags are made from recycled materials and are recyclable, and we have converted all our core swing tickets to FSC/PEFC cardboard. We've switched our plastic gift cards to compostable versions and all the ink for our tills and lightbox graphics is recycled. Store plastic waste is now collated and sent back to the DC, where it is sent to a UK based supplier to turn into our carrier bags. This new initiative will launch in March 2022. We have been recycling this waste for some time but now we are able to keep it in circulation within our stores.

### OUR COMMITMENT

ELIMINATE WASTE TO LANDFILL FROM ALL OF OUR OPERATIONS, AND INCREASE RECYCLING

### Our Successes.

- THE LAUNCH OF OUR TAKE BACK SCHEME, AT 25 STORES AND ONLINE INITIALLY, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH RE-SKINNED
- OVER 850,000 GARMENTS REUSED OR RECYCLED THROUGH NEWLIFE PARTNERSHIP IN 2020 SAVING OVER 2290 TONNES OF CO2
- ZERO WASTE TO LANDFILL AT OUR DC - 1223 TONNES OF CARDBOARD AND 20 TONNES OF PLASTIC SAVED IN 2021
- ELIMINATED ALL SINGLE USE PLASTIC FROM OUR UK PACKAGING
- ALL OF OUR CARRIER BAGS & ECOM SHIPPING BAGS ARE MADE FROM RECYCLABLE MATERIALS, INCLUDING OUR OWN WASTE, AND ARE RECYCLABLE
- ALL CARE LABELS NOW PRODUCED USING RECYCLED PLASTIC AND ALL CORE SWING TICKETS NOW PRODUCED USING FSC BOARD
- ALL RFID LABELS NOW PRODUCED USING RPET PLASTIC, MEANING THEY CAN NOW BE RECYCLED
- ALL ADULT GARMENTS HANGERS PRODUCED IN A CLOSED-LOOP SYSTEM USING RECYCLED PLASTIC
- SWITCHED TO COMPOSTABLE GIFT CARDS FROM PLASTIC CARDS, SAVING 3750KGS OF PVC PLASTIC AND 15,000 KGS OF CO2

### Our Targets.

- ZERO WASTE TO LANDFILL FROM ALL UK OPERATIONS BY 2023
- ZERO WASTE TO LANDFILL FROM OUR PRODUCTS' MANUFACTURING PROCESS BY 2025
- ELIMINATING ALL SINGLE USE PLASTICS FROM OUR UK OPERATIONS BY 2023

### Our Partnerships.





## Introducing RI Take Back, in partnership with Reskinned: finding your old clothes a new home.

### How it works

You bring in your unwanted clothes, we find them a new home, and you receive a River Island gift card. Simple.

You can drop off your unwanted clothing at 25 stores nationwide (excludes Ireland, N.Ireland, Jersey & Isle of Man), with plans to expand to all of our stores before the end of this year.

Reskinned\*\* then resell, repurpose or recycle\*\*\* your used garments through their circular sustainability programme. You can also donate your clothes online - we'll send a link and you just need to create the labels for the drop off.

Return three items of clothing and you'll receive a £5 gift card to spend at River Island with a minimum spend of £40.

### Who are Reskinned?

Reskinned are mixing over 20 years of recycling experience with modern tech solutions to find new lives for preloved clothes. Using their community of brands, recyclers, makers and individuals, they collect unwanted clothes and sort them by hand (it's the best way). Depending on their condition, they're then resold, repurposed or recycled.

### What happens to the clothes sent back?

All clothes are resold, repurposed or recycled. If they can be worn again, they will be. Reskinned will make any repairs and clean up anything before it hits their resale platform or pop-up events. Items that are good quality but not quite right for the UK market are sent to long-term partners in other markets, where they are sold to people who want them. Even fabrics and rags can be repurposed into things like dishcloths and stuffing for mattresses. There will always be zero waste to landfill.

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## Our Partnerships.







## Commitment 9: Climate Change

### Net Zero here we come

Climate change is the greatest threat facing our planet and River Island is committed to change. The signing of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change in 2015 saw an international commitment to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius compared with pre-industrialised levels. Aligned to the same goals as the Paris Agreement, River Island has committed to the British Retail Consortium's Climate Roadmap to net-zero emissions by 2040.

This net-zero commitment applies to both our owned operations and our entire supply chain. We are proud to be using 100% energy from renewable sources in all stores and head office. We get 10% of energy at HO and DC from solar, and since October 2020 we are 100% under a 'Green' tariff, with all energy used in stores and HO coming from renewables.

In 2021 we signed an agreement with The Carbon Trust. They have been commissioned to help collate our scopes 1 & 2 footprint and build a roadmap for mapping scope 3 in 2022, along with the setting of science-based targets which will be submitted with the SBT initiative for certification by the end of 2022. We will share our final targets for reduction and our roadmap to net zero in an update later in 2022. The Carbon Trust will also assist in developing a roadmap for net-zero emissions by 2040. Please see link to our [SECR emissions report](#) for 2021.

We want to reduce the environmental impact of our clothes and that doesn't stop after purchase. As of 2022, all our wash care will be 30 degrees. Washing clothes has a significant environmental impact – the average household does almost 400 loads of laundry every year, consuming about 60,000 litres of water. It takes a lot of energy to heat water and run drying cycles. As a result, we have taken the decision as a business to reduce the recommended temperature on our care labels to 30 degrees. We will test to a much higher temperature but want to empower our customers to reduce their carbon and water footprint.

As part of our collaborative effort to reduce the impact the textile industry has on the planet, and to reduce our combined greenhouse gas emissions, River Island has recently signed up as a signatory to Textiles 2030. Textiles 2030 is an ambitious voluntary agreement designed to limit the impact clothes and home textiles have on climate change, in line with the Paris Agreement and the UN Fashion Industry Charter for Climate Action.

By 2040 we will reduce our combined greenhouse gas emission in accordance with a 1.5 degree UN trajectory to reduce climate change. We will reduce carbon impact by 50%, reduce the water footprint of products sold by 30% and follow a roadmap to a more circular fashion future.

---

### Our Successes.

- 100% GREEN ENERGY IN ALL OUT STORES, HEAD OFFICE AND DISTRIBUTION CENTRE
- 10% OF ENERGY USED AT DC AND HO FROM SOLAR
- CONTINUE TO FIT ENERGY-EFFICIENT LIGHTING AND OTHER SYSTEMS THROUGHOUT OUR STORES
- SIGNED AN AGREEMENT WITH THE CARBON TRUST TO DEVELOP A ROADMAP FOR OUR TARGETS

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### Our Targets.

- MAP OUR CO2 EMISSIONS AND DEVELOP SCIENCE-BASED TARGETS (SBT) TO HELP REDUCE OUR FOOTPRINT BY 2023
- NET-ZERO CARBON EMISSIONS BY END OF 2040

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### Our Partnerships.



#### OUR COMMITMENT

TAKE ACTION TO REDUCE OUR CARBON FOOTPRINT THROUGH SCIENCE BASED TARGETS TO ACHIEVE NET ZERO CARBON EMISSIONS



## Do Good...

when it comes to what we stand for. Transparency is a word we hear a lot in fashion - and for good reason. We intend to reach full transparency throughout our supply chain by forging positive partnerships and being true advocates for the things that matter most.



## Principles.





## Commitment 10: Transparency

### Honesty is a good look

Traditional fashion supply chains are complex, even for relatively small fashion businesses, so attaining transparency is a key commitment across the industry.

River Island works hard to define, report and audit our supply chain network. Our Tier 1 supplier (manufacturers) list is now regularly published on our website, and in 2021 we conducted 342 factory audits and 257 ethical site visits. In 2022 we will integrate the use of our Supplier Scorecard into the buying process, this will grade suppliers in four categories: Sustainability, Product, Quality and Supply Chain. This will be used by our team to help with their decision making.

In 2020 River Island joined the Sustainable Apparel Coalition (SAC). Via this partnership we are committed to evaluating the social and environmental impact of our supply chain, using the SAC's sustainable measuring tool; the Higg Index. Earlier this year we completed the Brand and Retail Module, which evaluated every aspect of our business on Social and Environmental impact.

Here is a link to the results of the [BRM](#).

We commit to full supply chain transparency, including Tier 4 suppliers (fibre producers) by the end of 2023. We are excited to be piloting a blockchain technology this year in order to better our transparency work.

In 2021, as part of our commitment to increasing supply chain transparency, River Island partnered with Segura. A UK based company, founded in 2015, combining digital expertise with a detailed knowledge of global supply chains, in order to create a simple-to-use business solution. Segura delivers market-leading solutions to retailers and brands, focused on helping them to achieve ethical, sustainable and compliant multi-tiered supply chains.

### OUR COMMITMENT

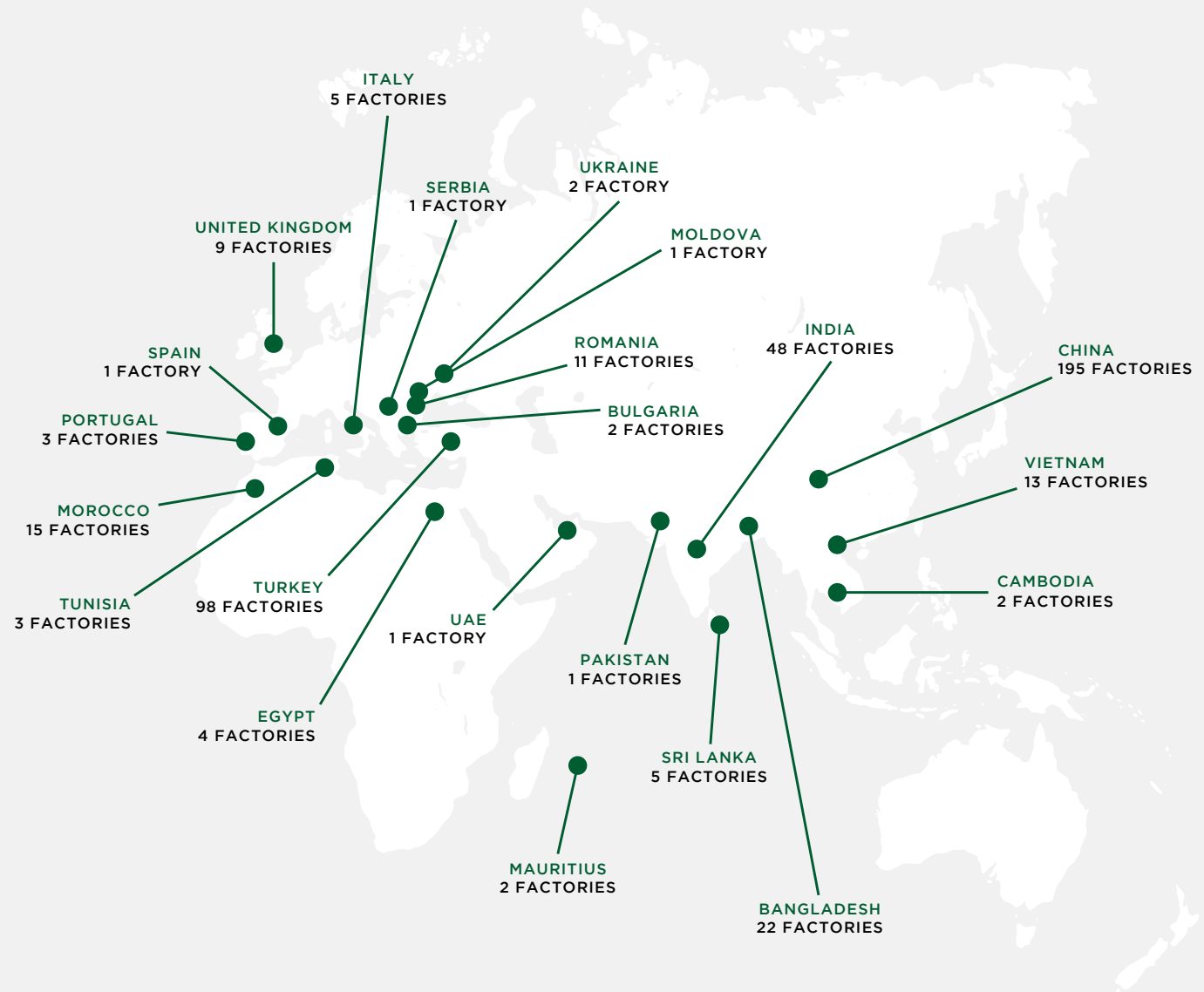
ATTAIN FULL TRANSPARENCY  
THROUGH THE BUSINESS &  
SUPPLY CHAIN ORDER TO  
MEASURE AND DELIVER  
OUR COMMITMENTS





## Transparency Pledge

We are proud to have signed the transparency pledge in 2020, committing to publishing a list of our approved Tier 1 factories on our website. This is an important step in driving greater transparency within the fashion industry, in order to ensure fair and safe working conditions in factories worldwide. It also enables industry collaboration to prevent serious global issues such as Modern Slavery.





## Commitment 11: Advocacy

### Holding hands for change

Advocacy and communication are the bread and butter of driving sustainable change in our business. Whether directly with our supply chain, through our member associations and partners, internally with our leadership team and colleagues, or with our customers, we believe that education through the honest and transparent storytelling of our journey will help drive positive change. Listening and learning are equally important, and creating formal channels for all stakeholder voices is a key project for 2022.

We commit to regular voluntary public reporting on our progress in sustainability, at least on an annual basis.

And whilst we are still far from achieving our own goals at River Island, we cannot ignore the opportunity of using our voice to help drive behavioural change across our audience network. Collaboration and transparency are fundamental principles upon which our sustainability strategy is built, and that commitment extends right through to our customers. Working to find the right balance between commercial gain and sustainability progress is not easy, but it's a challenge we readily accept.

### OUR COMMITMENT

ENGAGE TRANSPARENTLY  
WITH OUR CUSTOMERS,  
EMPLOYEES AND  
STAKEHOLDERS, SHARING  
OUR JOURNEY TO DRIVE  
POSITIVE CHANGE





## Dragons Islanders' Den

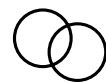
To mark the finale of our sustainability strategy launch and internal activity calendar, we launched the biggest competition the Island has ever seen. After spending four weeks filling in our Islanders on our strategy, our partnerships and our sustainability targets, we thought we would hand the baton over and see what they wanted to see us do as a business and listen to their ideas.

We launched a competition across the whole company to submit their sustainability pitches to the business and gave them an opportunity to present their idea to our Board and CEO, as well as have their idea implemented at River Island.

Three finalists were selected by our Head of Sustainability to spend a day at HQ, meeting the sustainability team, checking out the studio, being treated to some retail therapy and lunch, as well as some last-minute coaching before pitching their idea to our CEO. All finalists also received some eco prizes and an extra day of annual leave.

Following the pitches the board & CEO selected our winner, Tom Gurney, whose mission is to eliminate all plastic from the packaging we use in distribution/postal orders, not only in-store. Tom is now involved in the project team working on implementing his idea across River Island.





## Commitment 12: Partnerships

### Impact through collaboration

Much of the progress we achieved in 2021 is in no small part thanks to the many great partners we have supporting us along the way. This past year we continued to partner with Blueprint for All and with the Amos Bursary as part of building a more diverse and inclusive workplace. We also extended our partnership with Mind to further embed wellbeing in our ways of working. We engaged with the Prince's Trust to better support our communities, and began working with The Carbon Trust to develop a roadmap to achieving net zero Carbon emissions by 2040.

As proud as we are of the progress made in 2021 delivering on our commitments towards people and planet, we are aware that the impact our industry can have is broad and that solutions are challenging and complex. This is why we firmly believe that for our industry to become truly sustainable, we need to partner and collaborate with others to drive significant and meaningful change at scale.

To that effect, we are proud to have established new strategic partnerships in 2021, not only to help deliver on our individual commitments and targets, but also to become part of the necessary broader solution. In the past year, we became contributing members of ZDHC (Zero Discharge of Hazardous Chemicals) to drive the use of greener chemistry and improve water stewardship in our industry. We have also joined Wrap and other leading brands and retailers in the Textile 2030 initiative. This project leverages collective, expert knowledge to accelerate the fashion and textiles industry's move towards circularity and system change.

Additionally, we are joining Canopy as part of our biodiversity strategy, to protect the world's Ancient and Endangered Forests.

This year we also joined the Microfibre Consortium, working to reduce the impact on microfibres on the environment.

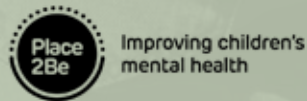
Looking ahead, we will continue to harness the experience and expertise of our great partners. Together, we will continue to integrate sustainability further into our operations, supporting the industry we all love and care for.

### OUR COMMITMENT

COLLABORATE THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS TO VALIDATE OUR IDEAS AND DEVELOP SOLUTIONS FOR OUR MATERIAL ISSUES THAT REQUIRE SCALE



## OUR PARTNERS





## VIEW OUR...

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1. Diversity and Inclusion Policy
2. Gender Pay Gap Report UK 2022
3. Gender Pay Gap Report ROI
4. Gender Pay Gap Report UK 2021
5. Anti-bullying and Anti-Harassment Policy
6. Ethical Trade Policy
7. Anti Slavery & Human Trafficking Policy
8. Anti-Bribery and Anti-Corruption Policy
9. Tier 1 Supplier List
10. Modern Slavery Statement
11. Animal Welfare Policy
12. Restricted Substances List
2. Tax Strategy

## A LETTER FROM OUR HEAD OF SUSTAINABILITY

One year after we shared our 2021 sustainability strategy and targets, I can sincerely express how proud I feel of the progress we have made. I know the road ahead is still long and challenging and that there is plenty more to be done, which is why we have been hard at work this year to ensure we deliver on our targets for People and Planet.

We have advanced our work in fostering a culture that not only embraces diversity but celebrates it through our strong beliefs of inclusivity and equality. Through our partnership with Blueprint for All, we aim to identify the opportunities for improvement in this area. We have also continued to place wellbeing at the heart of how we work and have conducted our first-ever wellbeing survey and extended the support available to us through our mental health allies. We successfully rolled out, in partnership with Segura Systems, a traceability tool that will provide us with greater visibility of our supply chain and enable our teams to better partner with our suppliers in support of respecting human rights and protecting our planet. We have also developed a Community Investment strategy that will help us to focus our efforts in the areas where we're best placed to have a meaningful impact, and in the past year, have significantly increased our contributions to our charity partners.

Additionally, we continue to accelerate our work towards our environmental targets and have advanced substantially in our efforts towards integrating more sustainable materials. In 2021 we are very pleased to be able to offer our customers 100% denim made with responsibly sourced cotton and are well on our way to at least 50% of our products being made with sustainable attributes by 2023. We have made great strides to advance in developing safer and cleaner processes through green chemistry and water stewardship and are very proud to have become contributing members of the Zero Discharge of Hazardous Chemicals (ZDHC) organisation, a partnership that will help us deliver on our targets.

At River Island, we feel particularly proud of delivering on our promise to offer customers an end-of-life solution for the products they loved but no longer need. This year we are introducing our Take-Back programme, extending the life of pre-loved items through re-commerce, or repurposing them into other useful materials, reducing carbon emissions and diverting a significant amount of clothing from ending up in landfills.



"I KNOW THE ROAD AHEAD IS STILL LONG AND CHALLENGING AND THAT THERE IS PLENTY MORE TO BE DONE, WHICH IS WHY WE HAVE BEEN HARD AT WORK THIS YEAR TO ENSURE WE DELIVER ON OUR TARGETS FOR PEOPLE AND PLANET." **JOSE ARGUEDAS, HEAD OF SUSTAINABILITY**

Climate Change remains one of our main priorities and to support the development of our roadmap to Net Zero, we have established a partnership with The Carbon Trust, a leading organisation in this field, to help us establish our reduction targets through Science Based Targets (SBT), which we will submit for validation with the Science Based Targets Initiative by the end of 2022.

Clearly, there is more we need to do to drive further the integration of sustainability into our business and we will continue to seek the partnerships that we feel can bring solutions to scale and drive overall improvements in our business and in our industry. We will continue to share our journey with all of our stakeholders in the spirit of transparency and be advocates of what we believe to be the right thing to do.

We look forward to sharing our next update and are always interested in your comments, which you can share with us at [sustainability@river-island.com](mailto:sustainability@river-island.com).

**BEST WISHES,  
JOSE ARGUEDAS  
HEAD OF SUSTAINABILITY**

MAKING FASHION A FORCE FOR GOOD

# RIVER ISLAND

SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

12 COMMITMENTS FOR PEOPLE AND PLANET