


*12 COMMITMENTS TO PEOPLE AND PLANET*

# THE KIND SOCIETY



**MAKING FASHION A FORCE FOR GOOD**  
**by River Island**

*SUSTAINABILITY UPDATE REPORT 2022*





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# Letter from the Chair of our Sustainability Board

Dear Reader,

Thank you for taking the time to read our annual sustainability report. As a high street retailer, we understand the importance of the work set out in these pages. The need for change at scale remains pressing and demands action and collaboration across our entire industry.

At River Island in 2022, ultimate responsibility for human rights and environmental issues sat with our CEO and with the Sustainability Board. Together they define the strategy and actions we take.

We remain focused on our 12 commitments for people and planet, aligned to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, and set out in our sustainability strategy in 2020. Despite significant global challenges, these remain integral to how we operate as a business, and we have continued to progress over the past year.

This year, we launched our Kind Society initiative, which forms a vitally important part of our ambitions regarding sustainability: to help make fashion a force for good. While our overall strategy was already in place, The Kind Society is a way for us to effectively communicate our journey, progress and challenges, to our customer: encouraging and enabling them to make more sustainable choices in their day-to-day lives.

Supporting our Islanders has been a specific focus over the past 12 months, as the cost-of-living crisis continues to challenge so many in our community and beyond. Our people make River Island the business that it is today, and I am proud that we have been able to offer support to help offset rising costs. The entire Operating Board would like to reiterate their appreciation and thanks to every Islander for their continued resilience and dedication as we navigate these difficulties together.

We have made progress in several key areas since our last report. We have mapped and assessed our scope 1, 2 and 3 carbon emissions and developed Science-Based Targets to help us achieve our goal of Net Zero carbon emissions by 2040. There is still a great deal of work to be done before we meet this goal, but these steps are an important milestone, helping to develop and refine our roadmap for the journey ahead.

Elsewhere, we have placed particular emphasis on improving the processes of our products this year. Our denim teams have worked closely with our suppliers to implement new laundry guidance aiming to reduce water and chemicals used in manufacturing. So far this has reduced the water impact of our denim from 24, to 16 litres. In reflection of the ever-changing nature of fashion and retail, we are updating our targets to reflect the movement and progress we have made in key areas, to help us focus our efforts over the coming years.

As we reach the end date of many of our initial targets this year, we plan to fully update our strategy for the next phase of change.

We hope to share more on this in our next Sustainability Report. While we are proud of the progress we have made as a business, and of the incredible effort and imagination from our teams in implementing change, we know these actions are only the beginning of a long journey. In the face of challenging global conditions, our commitment to improvement remains absolute. No doubt there will be obstacles, but we look forward to continuing our work helping make fashion a force for good.

**Daniel Raymond**  
General counsel and Chair of the sustainability board





SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS			12 COMMITMENTS TO PEOPLE AND PLANET	
<div> <div>1 NO POVERTY</div> <div>3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING</div> <div>5 GENDER EQUALITY</div> <div>8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH</div> <div>10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES</div> </div>	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. SOCIAL IMPACT	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
<div> <div>6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION</div> <div>7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY</div> <div>9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE</div> <div>11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES</div> <div>12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION</div> <div>13 CLIMATE ACTION</div> <div>14 LIFE BELOW WATER</div> <div>15 LIFE ON LAND</div> </div>	PLANET		5. SUSTAINABLE MATERIALS	Design more sustainable products, support responsible production practices and improve new and current products to reduce waste
			6. GREEN CHEMISTRY	Eliminate all hazardous chemicals from our products and meet the highest industry standard
			7. WATER	Integrate sustainable water stewardship throughout our value chain
			8. CIRCULARITY	Developing more sustainable products through circular design, eliminating waste, re-using or recycling products and supporting nature regeneration
			9. CLIMATE CHANGE	Take action to reduce our carbon footprint through Science-Based Targets to achieve net zero carbon emissions
<div> <div>16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS</div> <div>17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS</div> </div>	PRINCIPLES		10. TRANSPARENCY	Attain full transparency through the business and 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.

**Carbon Neutral  
in our direct  
emissions by 2030**

**At least 50% of  
our garments to  
be sustainability  
attributed by end  
of 2023**

**100% of our  
Tier 1 suppliers  
submitting Factory  
Environmental  
Modules (FEMs)  
by end of 2023**

**Zero Waste to  
landfill from our  
operating sites by  
end 2023**

**20% of suppliers  
on Higg Index  
Factory Social &  
Labour Module  
(FSLM)  
by end 2023**

**Visibility of our  
product supply  
chain to Tier 4 by  
end 2023**

**Reduce water  
use by 50% in  
our products'  
manufacturing  
process by 2030**

**50% of our  
synthetics will be  
recycled by 2025**

**Net Zero carbon  
emissions  
by end 2040**





# Our Key Successes.

Mapped and assessed River Island's direct and indirect carbon emissions to help achieve Net Zero by 2040

Submitted our Net Zero targets to the Science-Based Targets initiative for validation

Launched our Suicide Awareness and Response programme

Introduced care packages in the form of financial aid, distributed to all our employees

Created the Beyond Audit Trial Programme to help strengthen our Supplier's internal ethical programmes

All Tier 1 suppliers enrolled onto the Segura platform, increasing transparency to lower supply chain tiers

Disclosed our Tier 2 suppliers, as part of our Transparency Pledge

Launched carrier bags and ecommerce post bags made from 100% UK plastic waste, including our own

Successfully implemented sustainable denim laundry guidance for suppliers, to help drive reduction in water and chemical usage







## Commitment 1: Equality, Diversity, Inclusivity (EDI)

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

Our people make us what we are. Our goal is to place diversity and wellbeing at the heart of River Island's culture: educating and inspiring our community to help make our world fairer and more sustainable.

One of our original EDI targets was to improve representation of people with diverse backgrounds at Senior Leadership and Operating Board level, and we continue our commitment to this target as part of our long term EDI strategy. We currently have a senior leadership team that is 59% female, which represents an 8% increase compared to 2021. We're also proud that members of the LGBTQ+, disability and social mobility communities are all represented within this team. We are always working to improve access to our leadership team, by offering opportunities for mentoring and coaching. Through our diverse board initiatives, we support Islanders with the opportunity to plan their own careers, and to thrive whilst being their authentic selves.

Celebrating the diversity of our leaders has also been an important initiative over the past year. Our Islanders have explored this through a series of panel discussions, on topics such as Black History Month, Women in Leadership and International Men's Day, encouraging all our Islanders to learn and be curious about the cultural differences and perspectives across River Island. Each of these events has been positively received by people across our community. Looking ahead, in 2023 we will introduce our leadership and management EDI education workshops, to help further support positive cultures that are inclusive, welcoming and help our Islanders to thrive.

Our second recent target aims to promote the recruitment of candidates from diverse social backgrounds, something we have continued over the past year. In 2022 we successfully trialled anonymised hiring, and we will introduce two subsequent trials in 2023 to help further our fair and transparent recruitment processes. We have also introduced Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) statements to all our career opportunities, which can be seen below:

***"Our Island is made up of a diverse community, where we all belong and feel part of something bigger. We are committed to equality of opportunity and welcome applications from individuals, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, socio-economic background, religion and/or belief. We will consider flexible working requests for all roles, unless operational requirements prevent otherwise."***

Understanding the EDI needs of our Islanders is also a vital focus for us, and we are partnering with the Retail Trust to launch the 'Better You' survey this year. The results from this survey will help us to understand our EDI challenges, and to see more clearly where we are making progress.

We also continue to strengthen our partnership with the British Retail Consortium, the trade association for UK retail businesses. Their purpose is to make a positive difference to the retail industry and its customers, today and in the future. We have signed the BRC D&I charter and continue to work on achieving all aspects of the charter commitments, supported by insights and expertise from the BRC.

Last year we launched the YOUR ID D&I action group in the Island, and we have organised a series of opportunities for groups to provide feedback to our leaders, which has acted as a vital first step in better informing our thinking from an EDI perspective, tailoring our actions to the needs of our Islanders. You can read more about the activity from YOUR ID on [River Island's Editorial pages](#).

We are also in the process of redesigning our careers website, adding in a greater focus on D&I and sharing what Life on the Island is like: celebrating the diversity we already have and encouraging more applicants from diverse backgrounds.

Like many retailers, our workforce is predominantly comprised of women, and at River Island, 81% of our employees identify as female. **7**





As such, we know the importance of offering support if our employees choose to start a family. This year we introduced support for new and growing families: whatever that may look like for our Islanders. We have introduced enhanced maternity pay and improved our family leave offering, and we continue to work with our parents and carers community to support all types of family. More details on these projects can be found [on our Editorial pages](#).

In May 2022 we introduced ethnicity, gender, disability, pronoun and sexual orientation data collection and reporting to support our EDI plans and policies. While we had previously planned to invest in systems that allow for better data collection and reporting, this process was delayed in 2021 because of the time taken to establish requirements. As we move away from this target we will focus on specific data collection to ensure we fully support our EDI plans.

This year, we have continued our work with the Amos Bursary scheme, 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, as well as normalise success.

In 2022, we hosted a "Careers in Fashion" workshop for bursary applicants, sharing insights into who we are as a business, as well as advice on what a career path in the fashion industry could look like. As part of this, we shared River Island's history and culture, as well as an overview of different career functions in retail stores and head office, before answering questions and offering advice on CV writing, LinkedIn and interview preparation. We're committed to making sure River Island, and the fashion industry as a whole, are welcoming for all, and we're proud to continue to support the partnership through mentoring, workshops and work experience.

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## Our Successes.

- Our senior leadership team is 59% female, an 8% increase since 2021
- LGBTQ+, disability and social mobility communities are all represented in the senior leadership team
- Introduced ethnicity, gender, disability, pronoun and sexual orientation data collection and reporting, to support our EDI plans and policies

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## Our Targets.

- Diversity and inclusion workshops for leaders and managers launched by end 2023
- 'Better you' survey results shared, and action plans generated by end 2023
- YOUR ID to continue to drive knowledge and education of inclusion across the Island

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## Our Partnerships.





Selection of feedback from Islanders on Care Packages and cost of living support measures:

*"WOW WHAT A LOVELY GESTURE – IT'S SUCH A SPECIAL THING TO DO"*

*"THIS WILL REALLY SUPPORT ME WITH CHRISTMAS THIS YEAR"*

*"THE TIMING OF THIS COULDN'T HAVE BEEN BETTER, THANK YOU SO MUCH"*



## Commitment 2: Wellbeing

### FOSTER A CULTURE CENTRED ON PEOPLE'S WELLBEING

At River Island, we're proud to say that our community is always open, and we are dedicated to supporting our teams wherever possible. Over the past year, this has taken on a renewed significance for all our Islanders.

As we work to increase the reach and scope of our wellbeing workshops, in 2022 we launched our Suicide Awareness and Response Programme. This initiative is designed to equip our teams with the knowledge they need to recognise suicidal feelings, and educate them on how to respond if the need arises, through support and signposting. We recognise that mental health challenges and suicide can impact anyone, and we are dedicated to helping any Islander in need. Whatever the circumstances, all Islanders can feel safe, secure, supported and able to return to a compassionate, accommodating workplace.

Elsewhere in 2022, having recognised the impact domestic abuse may have on our Islanders, we took action to ensure we were able to support if needed. We have introduced a domestic abuse policy, as well as toolkits and workshops for those impacted. Additionally, working alongside the Retail Trust, we have accredited eight of our Mental Health Allies to ensure they are ready to support and signpost anyone experiencing domestic violence if needed.

To ensure our workforce is supported at every stage of life, we also launched menopause awareness workshops and education in October 2022. We produced podcasts, information for anyone experiencing the menopause, and held awareness workshops for our Islanders to join and ask questions. In addition, we have started "Take a Pause" our menopause community, to provide a safe place for people experiencing the menopause to discuss their experiences with others in similar situations.

Our Mental Health Allies and EDI & Wellbeing Leads provide regular feedback to our leaders, sharing key themes that they see are impacting our Islander. [You can read more about our Allies on the Editorial pages.](#) Through this process, we identified a significant need to support Islanders in dealing with the impact of the cost of living crisis.

In response, we launched "Care Packages" in November 2022, combining a series of initiatives to help ease the burden of the situation where we can. We gave our stores the opportunity to stock their kindness cupboards with hygiene products, food and refreshments of their choice; as well as providing hygiene packs, free lunches and breakfasts in our HQ. Finally, Islanders received two cost of living support payments, made in December 2022 and January 2023 to help with bills and other costs. In addition, in 2023 we are partnering with the Retail Trust to set up our own hardship fund, to make sure we continue to be there for our Islanders wherever we can.

#### Our Successes.

- Launched our Suicide Awareness and Response Programme, designed to help our teams to recognise suicidal feelings and respond with support and signposting
- Supported our Islanders by providing care packages to offer extra help with living costs, as the cost of living crisis continues
- Partnering with the Retail Trust to set up our own hardship fund. As an employee led business, we continue to be there for our Islanders wherever we can

#### Our Targets.

- Increase the reach and scope of our wellbeing workshops
- Conduct an employee survey at least annually, collecting information on the physical, emotional and social wellbeing, and report on action-based results

#### Our Partnerships.







## Commitment 3: Social Impact

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

We are committed to continuously improving working standards for our own employees and for those in our supply chains, underpinned by a commitment to eliminate modern slavery.

In 2022 we partnered with the **Slave-Free Alliance**, to carry out a full Modern Slavery assessment across the whole business. This assessment helped us to understand where we could drive improvements and update processes to ensure we maintain a low risk of modern slavery occurring within our business and supply chain. Following this process, we will look to drive improvements further in 2023, with more in-depth assessments in areas of the business that were identified as higher risk. This work will include a further focus on our Distribution Centre in Milton Keynes and our internal procurements checks and processes.

Elsewhere, we have been proud members of the UK Fast Forward programme since 2015. This membership enables us to ensure we work with ethical factories in the UK. These factories work directly with us to ensure their workers have a safe, secure and compliant workplace, are paid a decent wage and are not mistreated or harassed at work. We are currently working with **Fast Forward** to ensure the integrity of the programme is maintained, by leading on the Brand Support Programme. This programme helps new and existing brands to understand the standards that should be upheld when auditing and following up on audits. It also guides brands on the best ways to develop good relationships with workers, factory owners and suppliers. Through this, we have provided training and support for other brands on the programme, working alongside the Fast Forward team.

We have also partnered with the **Fashion-Workers Advice Bureau - Leicester (FAB-L)**, to offer workers an independent group that can provide help and support in several areas. These include workers rights

and employment law, health, safety and injuries at work, benefits and welfare advice, form filling and letter writing, housing and living conditions, immigration and legal advice, financial hardship support, courses and training, domestic violence and harassment support. This group is based at the Highfields centre in Leicester and has already proved valuable for many workers in and around the area.

We are currently collaborating with the Sustainable Apparel Coalition, SAC and several UK Brands to increase visibility of our Tier 2 factories. We are aiming for 20% of our supply chain to have completed the Higg Factory Social and Labour Module (FSLM) by end 2023. We recognise that this is a tough challenge, but by collaborating with other brands we hope to gain greater transparency in this area.

In 2022, we worked with two key suppliers to trial our new **Beyond Audit** programme. One site had major issues with their ability to remain competitive in their relevant market, but had worked with River Island for many years, maintaining good ethical standards. We held several meetings with the supplier, discussing key issues around staffing, internal costs procedures and processes and examining how savings could be achieved and efficiencies gained. The supplier was very limited on product type, and sales had been decreasing in this area, so discussions were held on how this could be increased through minor diversification within the production site.

The key aim of the process was to ensure we continued to partner with a long standing, ethically sound factory and supplier. By the end of 2022, orders had increased with the site by over 70%, and new product was being produced that the factory would not have been capable of producing at the start of the year. The power of our buyers, ethical team, supplier and factory working together has proven to be a powerful tool in ensuring we have a great supplier working with us for the long term.

*"Slave-Free Alliance is pleased to partner with River Island, to support the business to improve its human rights initiatives in its goods and services not for resale operations and supply chain. To date, we have engaged with a wide range of River Island stakeholders including the CEO, sustainability, facilities management, procurement and distribution centre colleagues. River Island staff are highly engaged in our projects; keen to play their part to mitigate the human rights risks and we are looking forward to further engagements on these crucial initiatives."*

Marc Stanton, director, Slave-Free Alliance





We are committed to monitoring our ways of working with our suppliers to ensure that our Purchasing Practices do not have a negative impact on the workers within our supply chain. Following our internal buying survey in 2021, we surveyed our suppliers early in 2022 asking similar questions and identifying opportunities to improve our ways of working. With this knowledge we joined the multi-stakeholder initiative 'The Common Framework for Responsible Purchasing Practices', in partnership with the Ethical Trade Initiative. This group is a reference point for companies working to improve their purchasing practices. The group supports their member companies in implementing practical improvements in purchasing, to increase the scope for improved working conditions in supply chains. Through this programme, it is hoped that we can improve our practices, working alongside key suppliers and industry experts during 2023/24.

## Our Successes.

- Implementation of the **Beyond Audit Trial** to help suppliers build on their internal ethical programme, strengthen River Island's relationships with suppliers and factories, and improve ethical standards
- Funded work with two of our Bangladesh factories, partnering with the Ethical Trade Initiative on their **Gender Sensitive Workplace Programme**
- Partnered with **Slave Free Alliance** to carry out a full Modern Slavery assessment across the whole business, to help define change and improvement
- Partnered with the **Fashion-Workers Advice Bureau - Leicester (FAB-L)**, providing workers with an independent advisory group on worker rights and welfare support in Leicester
- Committing to work with the **Common Framework for Responsible Purchasing Practices**, to take action to improve purchasing practices and improve working conditions in the supply chain

## Our Targets.

- Review current Beyond Audit process and roll out to our top 10 Suppliers
- Full risk assessment of DC and procurement process to further reduce Modern Slavery risk within the business and supply chain
- 20% of Suppliers completing the Higg FSLM by end of 2023
- Examine ways to improve purchasing practices during 2023/24, working alongside the Common Framework for Responsible Purchasing Practices community and the Ethical Trade Initiative.

## Our Partnerships.





# River Island Base Code For Suppliers.

<b>1.</b> Employment is freely chosen	<b>2.</b> Freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining are respected	<b>3.</b> Working conditions are safe and hygienic
<b>4.</b> Child labour shall not be used	<b>5.</b> Living wages are paid	<b>6.</b> Working hours are not excessive
<b>7.</b> No discrimination is practiced	<b>8.</b> Regular employment is provided	<b>9.</b> No harsh or inhumane treatment is allowed





# 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

At River Island we are committed to monitoring our ways of working with suppliers to ensure purchasing practices do not have a negative impact on workers in our supply chain. After an internal buying survey in 2021, we surveyed our suppliers in 2022 to identify opportunities to improve our ways of working. We then joined the Multi Stake-Holder Initiative '[The Common Framework for Responsible Purchasing Practices](#)' in partnership with the Ethical Trade Initiative. This group is a reference point for companies working to improve their purchasing practices, and for multi-stakeholder initiatives supporting their member companies in implementing practical improvements in purchasing, to increase the scope for improved working conditions in supply chains. Through this programme we hope to improve our practices, working alongside key suppliers and industry experts during 2023/24.

## Living Wage

We are committed to the principle that workers manufacturing our products should be paid a fair living wage. We recognise that this is not a straightforward process, and collaboration across the industry and with governments is essential to drive change. Maintaining a good dialogue, respecting workers' rights, and the ability to organise and bargain collectively with employers or industry, are also significant. We are in conversations with others in our industry to understand progress in this area and explore where we can make a significant contribution towards this goal. All health and safety checks now include covid protective measures and procedures within our sites.

## Monitoring & Remediation

We have Ethical Teams based around the globe who regularly conduct audits at our key sites in China, India, Turkey, Europe, UK and Morocco along with other surrounding countries and regions. The teams conduct audits, create and review corrective action plans and support with issue resolution. We have seen a reduction of Covid-19 in all regions during 2022, apart from in China. This delayed, rather than stopped, us visiting any of our key China sites due to local lockdowns in several regions of the country. We do not expect any major issues to be caused by Covid-19 as we move into 2023. During 2022 we also trialed our Beyond Audit programme with two key sites in India and China and hope to roll this out to more sites during 2023.

## Modern Slavery

We continue to see modern slavery as a key risk for our business, both internally and within our supply chain. We are committed to working collaboratively with our key stakeholders to tackle the issue. During 2022, we carried out a full risk assessment of our business and supply chain monitoring process. To do this work we partnered with Slave Free Alliance and this work has enabled us to target potential areas of improvement that may be required. We are currently working closely with our distribution centre, procurement and facilities teams to ensure that current processes are robust and make improvements where we feel they are required to ensure we reduce any modern slavery risk across these departments.

## Safe And Fair Work For All

Protecting human rights and the dignity of all employees and workers in our business and supply chains continues to be a steadfast commitment for River Island. As members of the ETI we continue to use the ETI Base Code as our ethical code of code of conduct, around which our supplier code of practice is based. Working alongside our in-country teams we continue to ensure that we keep all employees and workers in our supply chain free from exploitation and to help to improve their lives through the work we do <https://www.ethicaltrade.org/resources/eti-base-code>





## Commitment 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**

We are immensely proud that through our collaboration and donations, we raised almost £1.6m for various charities over the course of last year.

As part of our targets in 2022, we reviewed the focus of our community partnerships to strengthen the impact of our engagement. In 2023 we will work to further strengthen some of our existing partnerships, with charities including **Mind** and **Newlife**, as well as building new partnerships. These will support a common agenda where we feel best place to have positive impact in our communities. For example, we are building a new partnership with the charity **Smart Works**, to offer critical support to women out of work, as they seek to secure a job that can provide financial relief for themselves and their families. As we progress each project, we will constantly evaluate our community engagement strategy, to ensure we maximise the impact our efforts have in our communities. Over the previous year our community on the Island, and our customers, have provided incredible support to several key charities and partners.

Over the previous year our community on the Island, and our customers, have provided incredible support to several key charities and partners. Helping our customers to make a difference is vitally important to us, across human and environmental causes. As part of this focus, for every person that signed up to River Island's mailing list in September, we committed to planting a tree. As a result of our customers' participation in the event we planted 80,000 trees via a donation to the environmental organisation, **Ecologi**.

Supporting our Islanders' mental health is a cause we work closely on internally, and this is a cause we carried through into our charitable work, through our outerwear campaign in October 2022. For every coat sold, we donated £2 to **Mind** and **Place2be**. Mind is a mental health charity that raises awareness, combats stigma and makes sure no one faces mental health challenges alone. Place2Be is a children's mental

health charity, with over 25 years' experience working with pupils, families and staff in UK schools. They provide mental health support through one-to-one and group counselling in schools, using tried and tested methods backed by research.

Elsewhere we continued to develop our longstanding relationships with charity partners. We have worked with **Fashion Targets Breast Cancer** for the past 25 years, one of several UK brands to collaborate on a unique campaign each year. In 2022, we were proud to take part once more, and for two weeks in May all profits from a selected range of River Island products were donated to the charity **Breast Cancer Now**.

One of our longest standing partnerships is with Newlife, the charity for disabled and terminally ill children. Newlife has been our charitable partner for over 30 years, and we are hugely proud to support them in various endeavours throughout the year. We continue to donate the plastic bag levy to Newlife, which raised a total of almost £400,000 this year. We have now donated over £3m since the levy was introduced in 2016. This money is used to support Newlife's charitable activities, including funding a nurses' help line for families, covering the cost of life-changing equipment provided to families such as play therapy pods. It also helps the charity to continue their invaluable fundraising activities and all associated costs. We also donate garments for Newlife to sell in their stores, helping raise additional funds for their endeavours.





In addition to working directly with charity partners, we also run schemes to maximise the donations of our Islanders and their chosen charities. One way we do this is through our **Giver Island Fund**, which matches funding to amounts that River Island colleagues raise for charity. Our teams support causes of their choice via their own fund raising, and we match their sponsorship amounts as part of this internal scheme

*"In 2022 we celebrated the 10th anniversary of our Giver Island programme which offers support to all our fantastic colleagues on the Island who are fundraising for their own special causes. Over that period we have awarded over £750,000 in matched funding which has helped hundreds of Islanders to support over 250 different charities, large and small, each of which means something very special to them."*

*The support that Giver Island offers to charities is amazing but I'm equally proud of the feeling behind the scheme which says to colleagues 'If it matters to you, then it matters to us too.'*

**Mark Woodruff, community and charities manager.**

**Give As You Earn (GAYE)** scheme 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.

Our commitment to making a difference extends beyond our UK community, and during 2022 we funded work with two of our Bangladesh Factories, partnering with the Ethical Trade Initiative on their Gender Sensitive Workplace Programme. The training, which will last for a minimum of 12 months, looks to help eradicate gender-based harassment and empowers female workers within the workplace, increasing female representation and strengthening grievance mechanisms within the factories. If successful, it is hoped that we can roll the training out to more sites in the region later in 2023.

## Our Successes.

- Donated £1.6 million via our charity partnerships
- Planted 80,000 trees in partnership with Ecologi
- Introduction of our new charity partner Smart Works

## Our Targets.

- Launch River Island international investment initiative for our supply chain communities by the end of 2023
- Establish the focus areas and strategy for community investment by end of 2023

## Our Partnerships.



**FASHION TARGETS BREAST CANCER**  
BY BREAST CANCER NOW



Member







## Commitment 5: Sustainable Materials

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

Here at River Island we are committed to using more sustainable materials in all our products. We have been on a journey to convert our cotton sourcing to be more responsible, meaning it is sourced from either Better Cotton, organic or recycled sources.

Today, we are proud to say that all the cotton sourced for our jersey and denim has been sourced more responsibly. This year we sourced 85% of our cotton from Better Cotton, which was an increase from 45% in 2021. River Island partners with Better Cotton to improve cotton farming globally. Better Cotton is sourced via a chain of custody model called mass balance. This means that Better Cotton is not physically traceable to end products, however, Better Cotton Farmers benefit from the demand for Better Cotton in equivalent volumes to those we source. Our commitment is to source 100% of our cotton as 'more sustainable' by end of 2023, which includes Better Cotton, Recycled Cotton and Organic cotton [Read more about our sustainable materials on our Editorial pages.](#)

This year was an exceptionally difficult trading year across fashion retail. Reduced customer demand due to the rising cost of living also impacted material costs. We managed to maintain our levels of recycled materials in 2022, but diversified our offering to include an increased volume of sustainable viscose and lyocell. We aimed to have 30% of our products sustainably attributed by the end of 2022, and we are pleased to have ended the year at 37%, taking us closer to our goal of 50% of our products attributed by end 2023.

In 2021, we identified that we wanted to place a specific focus on our conversion to more sustainable synthetic fibres, such as polyester and nylon. At present, the availability of recycled material is still low compared to the demand, but in a challenging year, we did increase our usage of synthetic materials: converting some of our fabrics and linings

to recycled material. While we're not yet able to make a full garment from recycled materials, we are working towards it: by converting our most-used fabrics to recycled alternatives, including our lining fabrics on clothing and handbags.

River Island has a long-standing commitment to animal welfare within our supply chain and the materials that we source. While animal materials only make up a small part of our materials usage, that does not mean our commitment is small. This year we took the decision to strengthen some of our commitments relating to animal-based materials and updated our Animal Welfare Policy to help put more pressure on the industry to make change.

All our animal materials are sourced as a by-product of the meat industry, but we want to know exactly where the material came from. We are committed to achieving a fully traceable leather supply chain, to ensure animal welfare and protection from deforestation. To this end, we are working on mapping our leather supply chain from finished leather to slaughterhouse by the end of 2025. By the end of 2030, River Island aims to source all leather in line with industry best practice: from known tanneries that are certified to a credible standard, or made from innovative and more sustainable non-animal sources. We insist all our tanneries and pre-tanneries must source 100% of hides from slaughterhouses and farms outside the Amazon Biome.

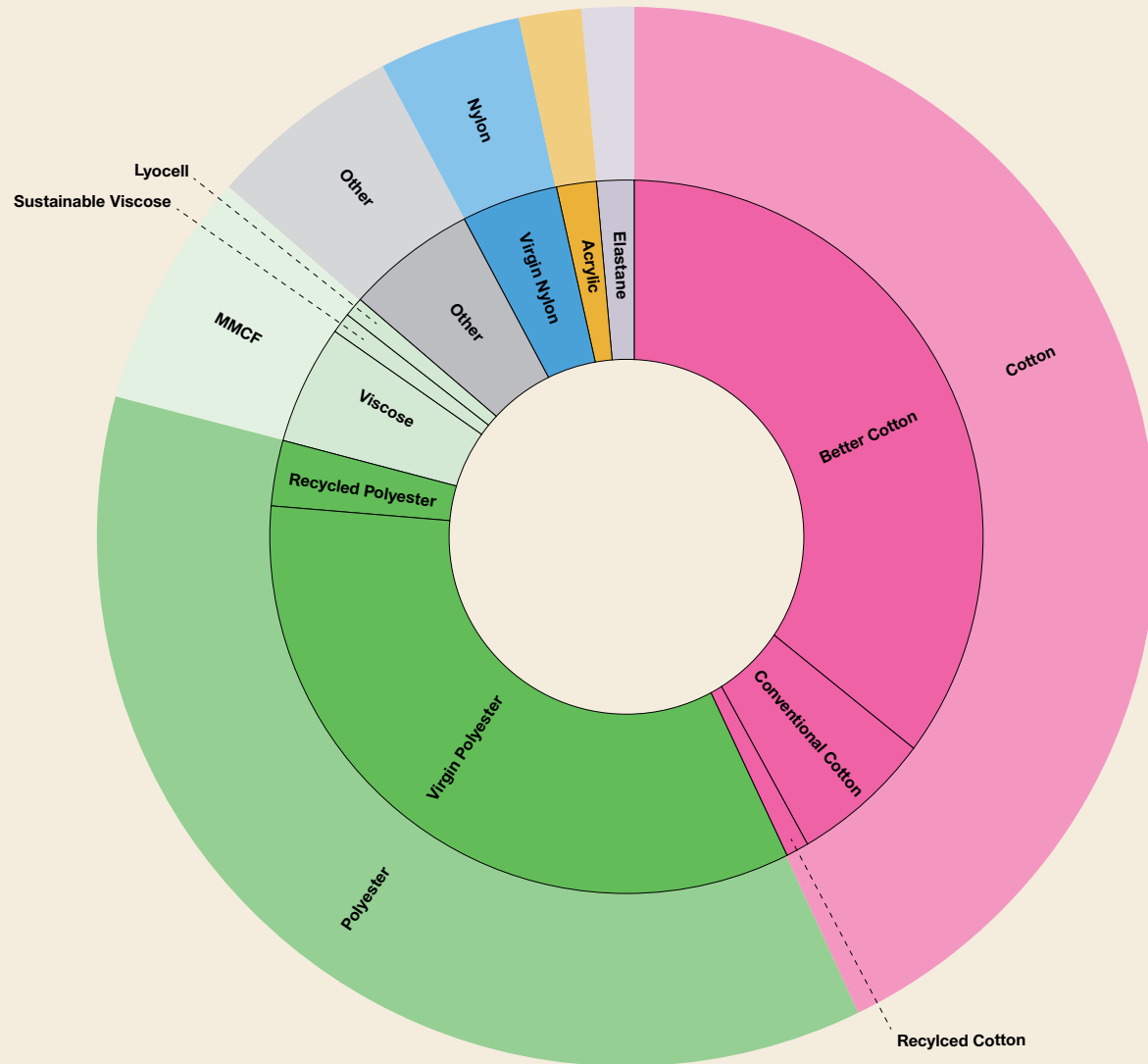
All our animal-based materials should be held to the same standard, so we are making the same commitment for wool and cashmere. By the end of 2030, 100% of all wool used by River Island will either come from farmers certified to the Responsible Wool Standard (RWS), will come from recycled or regenerated sources or will be replaced with other sustainable, non-animal fibres.





## Fibre Usage for 2022.

This graph shows our materials usage and our conversion to more sustainable alternatives.



## Our Successes.

- 85% of cotton sourced was from more responsible sources
- Committed to no viscose being sourced from ancient and endangered forests: achieved via mapping
- Updated our Animal Welfare policy to include timebound targets

## Our Targets.

- At least 50% of our garments will be sustainably attributed by end 2023
- Source 100% of our cotton as 'more sustainable' by end of 2023
- 50% of our synthetics will be made from recycled materials by 2025
- Work towards a significant reduction in fibre fragmentation from textiles by 2030 with The Microfibre Consortium (TMC)
- Map our leather supply chain from finished leather to slaughterhouse by end 2025
- By 2030, all leather products will be sourced from tanneries that have achieved Gold, Silver or Bronze Leather Working Group (LWG) certification
- 100% of all wool and cashmere used in the production of our products will be Responsibly Sourced by 2030

## Our Partnerships.







## Commitment 6: Green Chemistry

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

In 2021 River Island joined the ZDHC Roadmap to Zero Programme, to work collaboratively to achieve shared goals in this area. We 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 is 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, we will actively engage with many different stakeholders, including other brands, retailers and suppliers.

***"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 sustainability.

In 2022, we worked with our top 50 suppliers, their linked Tier 2 sites and our testing houses to implement the Manufacturer's Restricted Substance List (MRSL), and get our suppliers up and running on the ZDHC Gateway. We had an ambitious aim for all our top 50 suppliers to be registered by the end of 2022, but unfortunately we only achieved 50% of that goal. We remain committed to the target, and are looking to roll the MRSL and registration to ZDHC out to all our suppliers throughout 2023. Nevertheless, through the work we have done this year, we have managed to capture Tier 2 sites that were not in scope, which has been a great result.

#### Our Successes.

- Introduced MRSL to our top 20 suppliers by volume in 2022
- This year we collected Higg FEMs from 46% of our Tier 1 suppliers

#### Our Targets.

- Adoption of an MRSL by top 50 suppliers by 2023 that will apply to approximately 80% of our products
- 100% of our Tier 1 suppliers to respond the Higg Facility Environmental Module (FEM) by end of 2023

#### Our Partnerships.



# Higg







## Commitment 7: Water





### INTEGRATE SUSTAINABLE WATER STEWARDSHIP THROUGHOUT OUR VALUE CHAIN

River Island's denim is iconic, and its style, versatility and comfort make our jeans a staple for millions of wardrobes. However, the traditional method of making jeans can be harmful to the environment, because of the significant amounts of water, energy and chemicals involved in its production. All our denim has been made using responsibly sourced cotton for two years now, but we want to make sure that we are reducing the impact of our laundry process as well. We worked with suppliers and an industry renowned denim expert to review how we make our jeans, and have worked collaboratively to create guidance for how our denim products should be created. Throughout the process, we consulted suppliers, using their generations of knowledge to make sure we were doing the right thing, using all the innovations at our disposal.

The new guidance focuses on lessening the environmental impact in our laundry process, reducing the amount of water and chemicals. We educated buying teams on the latest laundry techniques, meaning they could work with our suppliers to ensure our denim has a green EIM Score by Jeanologica. The EIM, or Environmental Impact Measurement, assesses the environmental influences affecting industrial washing, and the results are represented using a traffic light system. The assessment categories are water, energy, chemicals and worker health.

We evaluated the environmental footprint of our laundry process using the EIM Scores for our autumn 2022 range to create our baseline results. We found several suppliers were not using the most sustainable methods at their disposal, and were instead using a lot of manual processes. We implemented the new laundry guidance for our spring 2023 products, with suppliers sharing their scores at development stage and beyond to ensure we all were focused on reducing our score. Suppliers and product teams embraced the process and the results for spring 2023 are very encouraging.

### Results for AW2022 Product

OVERALL ≤ 39.9 EIM	
	≤24L WATER SCORE
	≤1.4 ENERGY SCORE
	≤34.5 CHEMICAL IMPACT
	≤46.3 WORKER HEALTH

We have seen a good reduction in our average water usage, thanks to the reduction in manual processes and increased usage of Laser effects. Worker health scores have improved, due to the controlled usage of chemicals. We now use newer, sustainable machinery to apply chemicals and have reduced manual processes. These reduce the need to re-wash denim to remove chemicals, helping reduce energy and water usage. We have a long way to go in some areas but the averages are producing promising figures to build on going forward.









*“At River Island we are continually striving to make our denim more sustainable, with our biggest current focus on water saving. Through training our team to understand each element of the wash process, we have been able to identify where we need to switch out old practices and replace with new water saving techniques.”*

Alice Georgiou, denim buying manager

As part of our Denim Laundry Guidance training for buying and design teams we collaborated with Isko, one of our fabric suppliers. Isko hosted a training event at their Creative Room in London, taking teams through technical components and processes of denim development. The focus areas were replacing traditional washing and finishing techniques with sustainable processes. The event helped enhance our teams' knowledge and inspire them to create product that can drive real change. We hope this event will be one of many to enhance the education of our teams.

Results for SS2023 Product

OVERALL ≤ 31.7 EIM	
	≤16L WATER SCORE
	≤0.6 ENERGY SCORE
	≤40.0 CHEMICAL IMPACT
	≤31.9 WORKER HEALTH

We set some hard targets when we launched our strategy in 2021, and we have worked collaboratively to achieve as many as possible. However, there are areas where we have been unable to move as fast as we had hoped: and water is one of these areas. To implement a water stewardship programme, we need visibility of all sites that use water: such as dyeing and laundry facilities. As part of our Segura programme we have been collecting data on our supply chain, and we now have this information. Throughout 2023 we will introduce the ZDHC wastewater guidance to our top 20 suppliers and their wet processing sites. Our aim is to have rolled this out to our top 50 suppliers and their wet processors by 2025.

Our Successes.

- Reduced the water impact of our denim from 24L to 16L, via the implementation of new laundry guidance for all our jeans

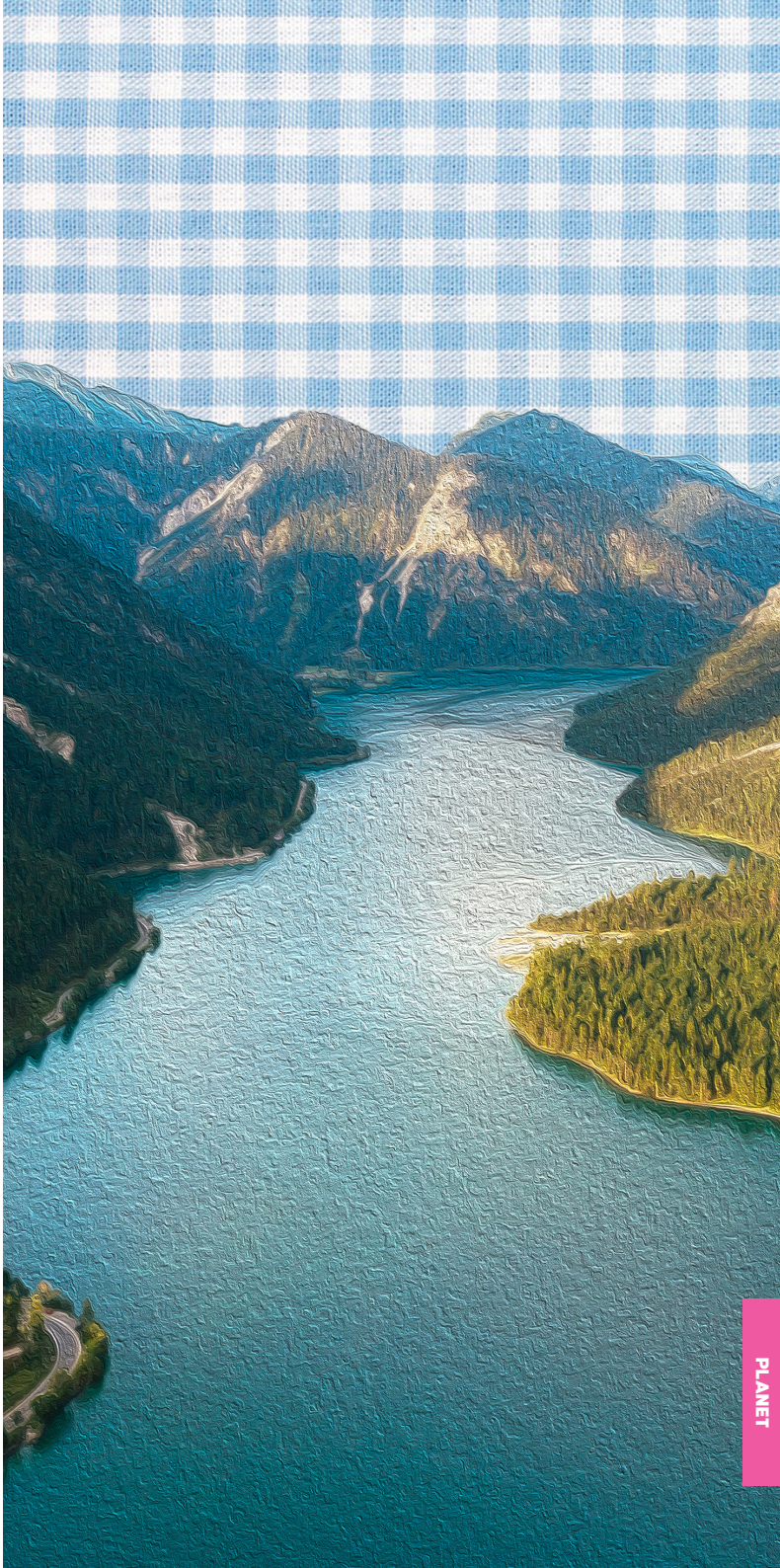
Our Targets.

- Reduce water use in our products' manufacturing process by 50% by 2030
- All denim jeans to have a water rating of 22 litres or below by end of 2024
- Integrate water stewardship and conservation programme by end 2023

Our Partnerships.

EIM<sup>®</sup> by Jeanologia

ROADMAP TO  
ZERO







## Commitment 8: Circularity

### DEVELOPING MORE SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTS THROUGH CIRCULAR DESIGN, ELIMINATING WASTE, RE-USING OR RECYCLING PRODUCTS AND SUPPORTING NATURE REGENERATION

In our previous reports, this commitment was referred to as Waste and Recycling. However, as we developed our strategy and workstreams in this area we realised that, ultimately, what we are working towards is circularity. This seemed a distant prospect when we first defined our strategy in 2020, but with every project we implement and achieve, we move closer to the Circularity goal. Circularity is not something River Island can achieve alone, and reaching our goals will require technological advances and industry wide collaboration. Nevertheless, our aim remains to work in a circular model, and we are excited to keep progressing towards this goal.

We are proud to have launched our takeback scheme in partnership with Reskinned in Q1 of last year. This project aims to keep River Island clothes in circulation for longer. Rather than throwing clothes away, if our customers fall out of love with their clothes we will find them a new home instead. We launched the takeback scheme in 25 stores across the UK and all customers online with the shipping costs pre-paid. At the start of February 2023, the takeback scheme was rolled out to all stores. [You can read more about the scheme, and see behind the scenes at Reskinned here.](#)

***“Through our takeback scheme we hope to provide an effective option to our customers for giving unwanted clothes a new home, rather than adding to the estimated 1.2m tonnes of garments ending in landfills every year in the UK. At River Island we are deeply committed to eliminating as much waste as possible: re-using or recycling, to extend the life of our products”.***  
**Jose Arguedas, head of Sustainability.**

We have been valued partners of Newlife for over 30 years and we are proud to continue to support them. This year we donated 445,000 units of clothing for Newlife to sell in their stores. Not only does this provide valuable funds to Newlife but it also allows our clothes to be re-used for longer.

Earlier this year we moved the supplier of our carrier bags from Malaysia to the UK, to help reduce the carbon emissions from their production. The focus of the change in supplier, however, was to create a more circular production model. We already collected the plastic in our supply chain and recycled it via our DC, but now we use this waste as a feed source to produce our carrier and ecommerce bags. This enables us to recycle a higher percentage of our plastic. Since the full roll out of the project at the end of October 2022, we have recycled the equivalent of 4.8 million carrier bags, you can [read more about the switch on our editorial pages.](#)

As an additional element of our move towards a circular model, we are proud to have launched our first rental trial in November 2022 with the online retail platform Hirestreet, operated by Zoa Clothing. This platform offers our customers the opportunity to rent our clothing for periods of 4-30 days. Sharing the joy of fashion is the very heart of River Island, and during the cost of living crisis, it was particularly important to us that our customers had the opportunity to enjoy our clothes, without having to buy them.

Our elevated partywear collection, Nine, was our first range to launch on the Hirestreet platform. It was important to us that we offered our full size range on Hirestreet, so all our customers had the opportunity to rent our clothes. Customer reactions have been very positive. We are looking forward to increasing this offering through 2023.

While these initiatives are vitally important, we know that we must build circularity into River Island from the very beginning, and this year we have defined our circularity targets and requirements for product. Our CSR team developed and hosted workshops to demonstrate the principles of circularity, inviting teams across the business to attend. Our suppliers will also participate in the circularity workshops to ensure that they have a greater knowledge of the processes involved. To ensure we put this learning into practise, the teams are working collaboratively with suppliers to develop our first circular collection, which will be available towards the end of the year.





***“With this circular training, we are enhancing the way in which we approach fashion design. The training gives our design teams the knowledge and skills they need to confidently create products with intention, and to design with circularity and sustainability front of mind.” Elizabeth Taylor, menswear design controller.***

In addition to our products, we also want our stores to be fit for the future by minimising their carbon footprint and waste to landfill. We are working to realise this goal via developments in a select number of stores. Each store has been created using up-cycled and recycled equipment and furniture, and we are using these sites to trial new innovations in this field. Last year, we conducted a trial to reduce the amount of lighting in stores. This trial has led to a 30% reduction in energy usage, while maintaining light levels for an enjoyable shopping experience. Further trials began in Q1 2023, which we expect to fully roll out by the end of the year.

Instead of traditional printed POS in the store windows for Sale and promotional offers, we have installed unique blinds that the store controls and can drop when required. This not only saves on waste, but also saves time for our store teams. Re-usable linen sale tags are also being trialled, reducing the need for additional ticketing and signage; these have been well received by customers so far. Initiatives such as this help reduce the amount of waste we are responsible for as a retailer.

To enable us to achieve zero waste to landfill from our operating sites by the end of 2023, we have had to engage with our store landlords, who are responsible for our waste stream, and work with them to amend processes. We are also implementing waste reporting across our sites, to allow us to reduce waste generated. We are pleased to say that our HO and DC have been zero waste to landfill since 2020, and we're excited to work towards achieving this across our stores as well.

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## Our Successes.

- Successfully launched our takeback scheme in partnership with Reskinned in 25 stores and to all customers online
- Over 445,000 garments reused or recycled through our partnership with Newlife
- All carrier bags and ecommerce shipping bags are recyclable and made from recycled UK materials, including our own waste

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## Our Targets.

- Zero waste to landfill from all UK operations by end 2023
- Zero waste to landfill from our products' manufacturing process by 2025

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## Our Partnerships.

RE\_SKINNED™



HIRESTREET

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## Commitment 9: Climate Change

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

Back in 2020 River Island joined the British Retail Council's commitment to reach Net Zero emissions in the fashion industry by 2040. To help achieve this, we partnered with the Carbon Trust to assess our carbon footprint and develop a roadmap to Net Zero. In 2022, we calculated our value chain footprint in order to assess direct and indirect carbon emissions, especially those relating to the products sold.

We have now set our science-based targets to help achieve this commitment, these are yet to be validated by the Science-Based Targets Initiative, however we will be submitting them for validation at the start of 2023. The science-based targets must include near-term and long-term goals in our road map to net zero, and as a result of this we have implemented several more targets within this target to help us structure our work in this area.

#### Our Emissions

Scopes 1 and 2 cover the carbon emissions of all our operations in the UK and ROI. To calculate our emissions, we used pre-pandemic data from 2019, as this was deemed more representative of a normal year in operations. Having established our baseline we have since calculated our emissions for 2021, to show improvements made.

River Island's total Scope 1 and 2 direct emissions in 2019 were calculated at **10,357 tCO<sub>2</sub>e\***. Energy purchased from the National Grid was our largest source of emissions, at 71% (7,356 tCO<sub>2</sub>e). Since 2019 we have moved our UK operations to a Green energy tariff, which has helped to significantly reduce our total emissions. This contract means that all the energy we purchase comes from renewable origins.

River Island's total direct emissions in 2021 were calculated at **2,557 tCO<sub>2</sub>e**. Electricity from the National Grid had reduced to 15% of these emissions, and purchased fuel has become our largest source of emissions, at 66% (1,702.20 tCO<sub>2</sub>e). Energy procured through our Green contracts has offset emissions by 5,813.80 tCO<sub>2</sub>e.

We are committed to maintaining our Green energy contracts and continuing to drive further reduction in all other areas of our direct emissions. We are aiming to neutralise 20% of residual emissions by 2025, as well as aiming for 20% year-on-year increased residual emissions neutralisation by 2025 on our continuing roadmap to Net Zero. By 2030 River Island aims for the neutralisation of residual direct emissions to be at 100%.

Unlike Scopes 1 and 2, River Island's indirect emissions, known as Scope 3, were benchmarked based on 2021 emissions, as supplier data was incomplete for previous years. Scope 3 represents 99% of River Island's total emissions in 2021. The total indirect emissions for River Island in 2021 were **380,179 tCO<sub>2</sub>e**. Products purchased to be sold to customers formed the largest source of emissions, at 63% (238,858 tCO<sub>2</sub>e), with upstream transport representing 9% of emissions, with 33,462 tCO<sub>2</sub>e in 2021.

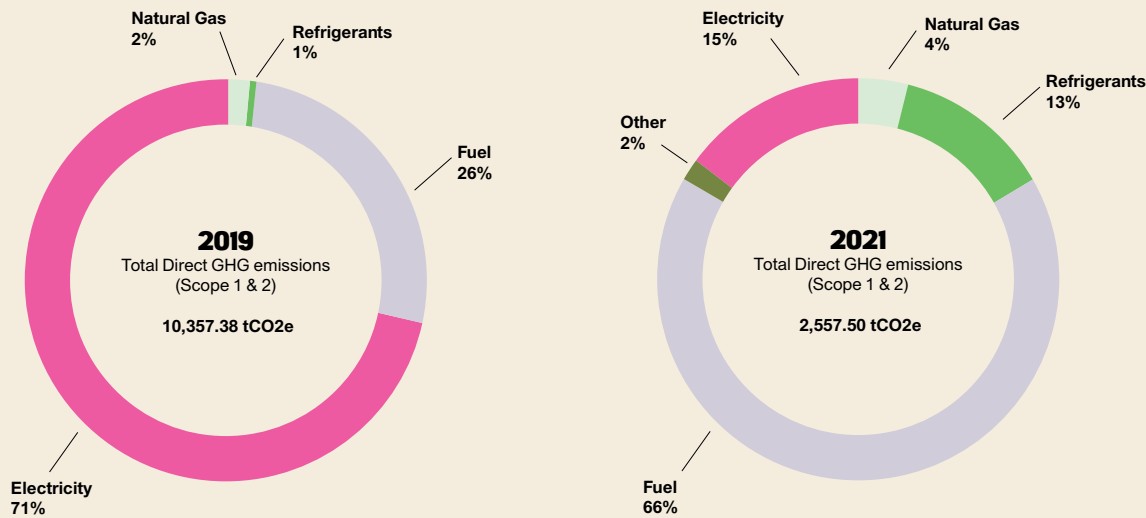
As part of our science-based target setting, we have decided to follow the absolute contraction approach. We have set a Scope 3 near-term target of 30% tCO<sub>2</sub>e\* absolute reduction, aligned to the UN scenario of global temperature rises well below 2°C (e.g. 3% annual linear reduction) by 2032. Of this we are aiming to achieve a 60% reduction in the physical intensity, which refers to emissions based on number of products sold, by 2032.

We have set a Scope 3 long term target of 90% tCO<sub>2</sub>e absolute reduction, aligned the UN's 1.5°C scenario by 2040, including a 97% reduction in physical intensity. To achieve our Net Zero targets by 2040, we aim to have 10% residual emissions neutralised by 2030 and 10% increase year on year for residual emissions neutralisation to achieve Net Zero by 2040. By 2040 we aim for residual emissions neutralised to have reached 100%.

\*Tonnes of Carbon Dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) equivalent. Carbon Dioxide equivalent is a standard unit for counting greenhouse gas emissions, and also includes other gases, such as methane.



## River Island's 2019 and 2021 Scope 1 & 2 emissions



To assist with achieving our targets in this area, we have been asking our suppliers to complete the Factory Environmental Module (FEM) from the Higg Tools. We are using the data that we gather to help us work with each supplier to achieve carbon reductions. We aim to collect FEMs from all Tier 1 supplier by the end of 2023 and by 2025 we aim to have all Tier 1 supplier FEMs validated.

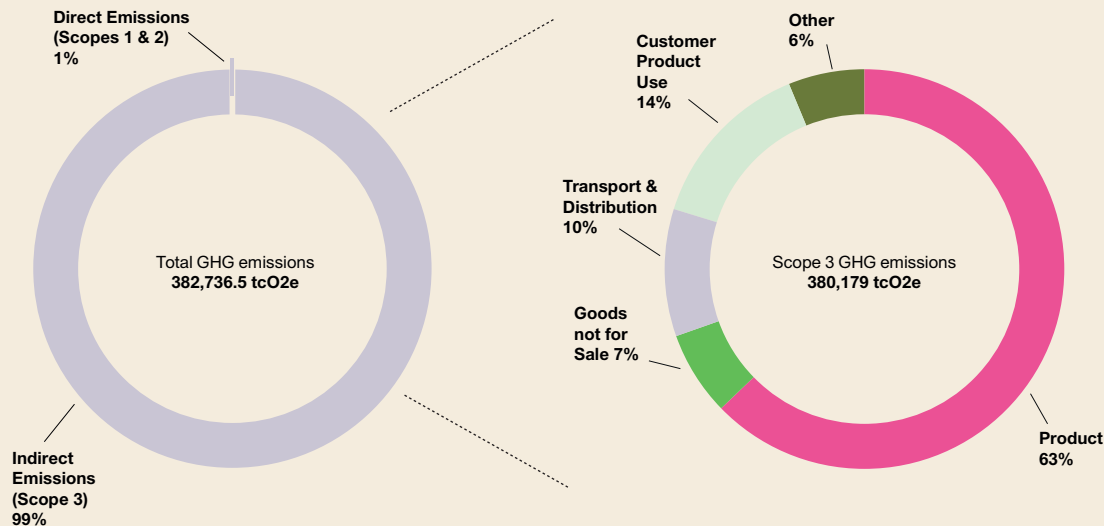
## Our Successes.

- Mapped our scope 1, 2 and 3 carbon emissions and submitted to SBTi
- 100% energy in all our stores, head office and distribution centre purchased through green energy tariffs
- 10% of energy used at our distribution centre and head office from solar

## Our Targets.

- Net Zero carbon emissions by end of 2040
- Science-Based Targets set for reducing GHG in line with our Net Zero ambition to be validated by the Science-Based targets Initiative (SBTi)
- River Island commits to reduce absolute Scope 1 and 2 GHG emissions 90% by 2030 from a 2019 base year.
- Complete neutralisation of residual emissions by 2030 to achieve Net Zero on direct emissions (Scope 1&2)
- River Island commits to reduce absolute Scope 3 GHG emissions 30% by 2032 from a 2021 base year
- River Island commits to reduce absolute Scope 3 GHG emissions 90% by 2040 from a 2021 base year
- River Island commits to continue annually sourcing 100% renewable electricity through 2030

## River Island's 2021 Indirect Emissions (scope 3) in relation to the total GHG Emissions



## Our Partnerships.







## Commitment 10: Transparency

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

The requirement to have clear transparency deep into the supply chain is quickly becoming an industry norm, something which we at River Island identified several years ago. We joined the Transparency Pledge and the Transparency Index back in 2020, and then partnered with Segura in 2021 to help us to build on the pledges we have made, as well as on our commitment to improve human rights within our business and supply chain. In 2022, we conducted 344 factory audits and 232 ethical site visits.

We have continued to partner with the **Sustainable Apparel Coalition (SAC)** using its sustainable measuring tool, The Higg Index, to help increase transparency. During 2023 we have started to focus on their **Factory Social and Labour Module (FSLM)**, working alongside fellow UK brands to try and increase transparency of social and labour issues at sites in the lower tiers of our supply chain. We are currently examining where brands can collaborate to build a clearer picture of shared sites, and work together along with the factories to deal with any issues that may exist.

Towards the end of 2022, we completed the creation of a supplier scorecard. This will be rolled out early in 2023 to all teams. The information will be used to help improve sourcing and help understand our suppliers' performance across several categories. The aim is to provide visibility on a supplier's performance to suppliers and product teams to drive improved standards and create a more robust supply chain.

As part of our commitment to increasing supply chain transparency, River Island partnered with Segura in 2021. Segura is 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. 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 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 in their manufacturing. This means our lower tier suppliers confirm they are supplying the component or process, directly within Segura. This provides us with the transparency and visibility we require. As a result of the success of the trial, we adopted Segura as part of our standard working practices in late 2021, and on-boarded all own brand suppliers during 2022.

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 the transparency and traceability we need to ensure our supply chain is ethical, sustainable and efficient – essentially fit for the future. The platform allows us to measure our supply chain performance and ESG credentials, identify risk, and underpin our buying decisions with robust data. Segura's built-in reporting tool means we can quickly and easily meet our reporting requirements without the overhead of managing multiple spreadsheets. Having the Segura solution is a big win for both our Sustainability efforts and our Buying teams and demonstrates our commitment made through River Island's 'The Kind Society initiative'."*

Jose Arguedas, head of sustainability.





## Tracing our Man-made Cellulosic fibres

Man-made Cellulosic Fibres (MMCFs) are made from wood pulp, and when sourcing these materials, we need to ensure that we protect ancient and endangered forests from deforestation. To help achieve this goal, we have partnered with environmental group, Canopy, and we will only source from manufacturers that have a “green shirt” designation. Suppliers that fail to meet this standard will be excluded from our supply chain.

To ensure that our viscose is being sourced from the required suppliers, we have partnered with Segura to map our viscose supply chain at product line level. We manually mapped the supply chain in 2022 but as we move into 2023 we wanted to add more detail to this process, to allow us to implement additional requirements in the future such as the introduction of ZDHC’s Man-made cellulosic Fibres guidance.

## Our Successes.

- 100% of River Island own brand suppliers onboarded onto the Segura Transparency Platform
- All supplier compliance information is uploaded onto Segura Platform, providing increased visibility and reporting capabilities and improving overall supply chain transparency
- Creation of a scorecard to give greater transparency of overall supplier performance
- Continued our work with suppliers in the UK as part of the Fast Forward Programme
- Uncovered 17 cases of subcontracting during 2022, and worked with suppliers involved to understand the root cause of these occurrences. We remediated the issues using the findings of this analysis

## Our Targets.

- Visibility of our product supply chain to Tier 4 (yarn) by end of 2023
- Begin to add Tier 2 sites to our Transparency Pledge factory list throughout 2023
- Full rollout of supplier scorecard to internal teams, as a key tool to improve sourcing decisions within the business

## Our Partnerships.



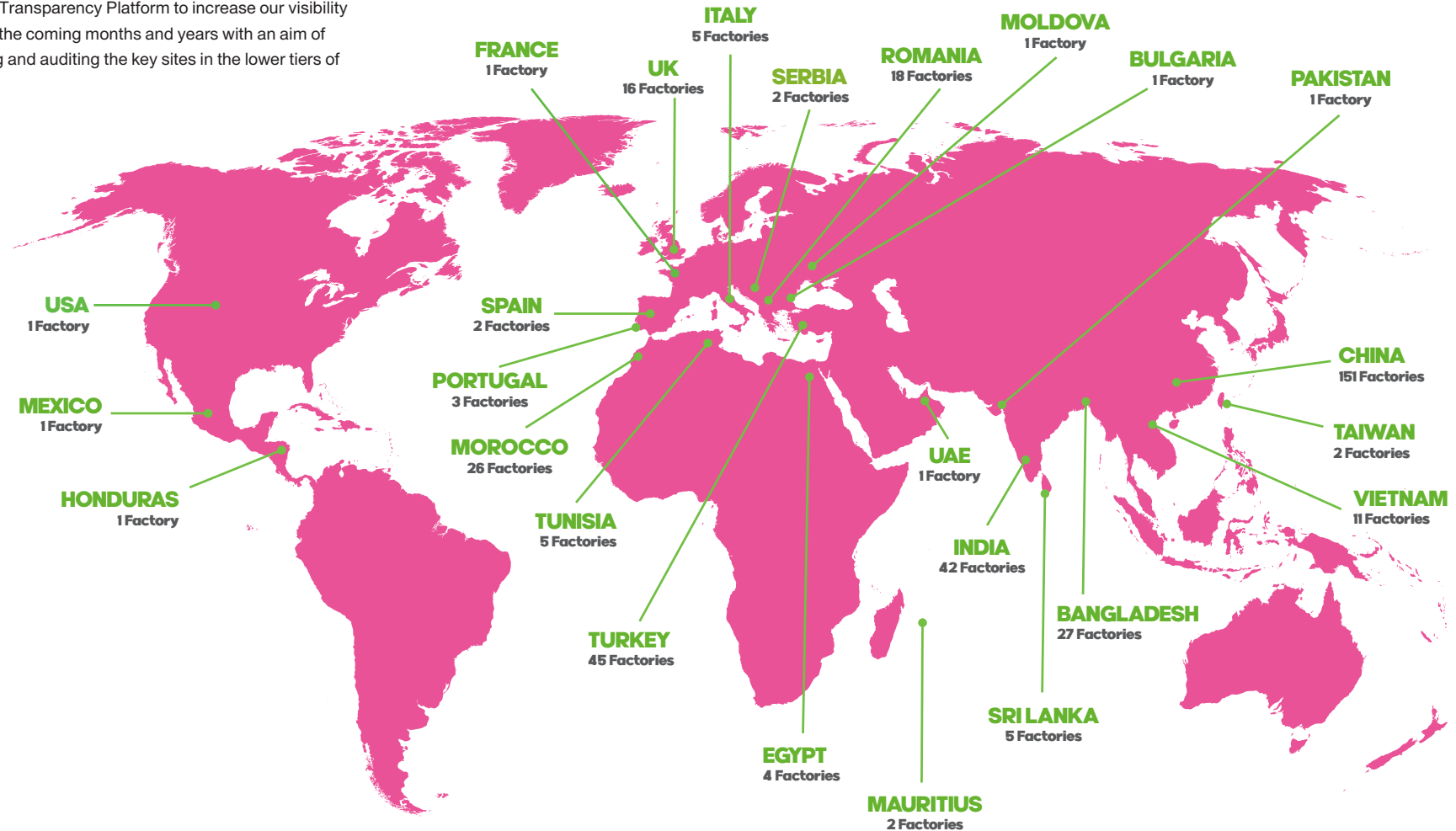




## OUR SUPPLIERS AROUND THE WORLD

During 2022 we worked to consolidate our supply chain and focus more on our key partner suppliers. Below is a map of all of our tier 1 sites that have been used to manufacture our production during 2022. The full 'live' RI Factory list can be found [here](#) (or you can download the Excel version [here](#)) and includes 100% of our tier 1 sites and also a list of our known tier 2 fabric sites. The information on this list is updated every 6 months. For a We currently have audits for all our tier 1 sites and will be looking to use the Segura Transparency Platform to increase our visibility of tier 2 sites over the coming months and years with an aim of fully risk assessing and auditing the key sites in the lower tiers of our supply chain.

We also continue to be an active member of the Bangladesh Accord. Please click on the attached link where you can monitor the status all of the factories who are part of the on-going improvement programme. [The Bangladesh Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh](#)







## Commitment 11: Advocacy

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

We believe that advocacy and communication are core to creating 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.

During this year, we launched our Kind Society initiative, which aims to communicate our work towards sustainable change to our customers. As well as holding us accountable, the Kind Society helps us to educate our customers on sustainability, allowing them to make more empowered choices when they shop with us.

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

Elsewhere this year we have closely focused on supporting and advocating for our Islanders. To help offset the impacts of the cost of living crisis, a unique package of support was announced for our Islanders in November 2022, with numerous initiatives aiming to offset the rising costs as much as possible.

While we are proud of all the work we are doing, we are still far from achieving all our goals at River Island, but there is a fantastic opportunity for us to use our voice to help drive behavioural change through our Kind Society activations. Collaboration and transparency are fundamental principles upon which our sustainability strategy is built, and that commitment extends right through to our customers. Finding a balance between commercial gain and sustainability progress is a challenging task, but it is one we are committed to achieving.

### The Islander Support Scheme

A message to Islanders from River Island founder, Bernard Lewis.

*"I WANT TO WRITE PERSONALLY TO YOU ALL TO SAY THAT, SINCE STARTING RIVER ISLAND NEARLY 70 YEARS AGO, I HAVE NEVER KNOWN A TIME WHEN THE COST OF LIVING HAS RISEN SO DRAMATICALLY, SO QUICKLY AND CAUSED SO MUCH DISTRESS. WE ARE COMMITTED TO HELPING ALL OF YOU WHO MAKE THIS BUSINESS WHAT IT IS. IT IS DIFFICULT TO KNOW WHAT THE BEST WAY IS TO DO THIS, BUT I AM VERY PLEASED WITH THE PACKAGE OF SUPPORT THAT WE HAVE DEVELOPED, AND I HOPE THAT IT WILL GO SOME WAY TO HELPING."*

*WITH VERY BEST REGARDS,  
BERNARD LEWIS  
FOUNDER*





## Islander Support Payment

To help with increased costs we paid an Islander Support Payment to all colleagues who had been in the business for at least three months (with the exception of our most senior leaders).

## Care Packages

Our stores provided care packages including personal care products and a regular supply of food basics, such as breakfast items, tea, coffee, and tinned goods.

In Chelsea House, we offered free breakfasts every day, and free hot lunch options on Mondays and Fridays. We also introduced hygiene packs in all our bathrooms.

## Retail Trust Fund

We worked with the Retail Trust to create a dedicated River Island Financial Support Fund, which will be available to support Islanders in the UK and ROI experiencing financial difficulties with a non-repayable grant.

## Everyday Savings

Our engagement platform Life on the Island (LOTI) gives Islanders discounts or cashback on groceries, train tickets, restaurants, insurance and much more, to help save on everyday spending.

## Financial Wellbeing

Our financial wellbeing programme gives access to workshops and tools on subjects such as budgeting, debt management and future planning.

## Mental Health Support

We know that financial pressures can take a deep toll on mental health. We opened channels of communication for all our staff, via our People Team, our Mental Health Allies and the Retail Trust for support and guidance if needed.







## Commitment 12: Partnership

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

We continue to make good progress towards our sustainability targets, much of our success is in part thanks to the great partners we have supporting us along the way.

In 2022, we worked even closer with the Carbon Trust to map and assess our indirect greenhouse gases (GHG) emissions and finalise the setting of our Science Based Targets for achieving Net Zero emissions by 2040. This past year we also continued to partner 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, and strengthened our partnership with the Retail Trust to build our Islanders' Support Scheme to help offset the impact of the rise of cost of living.

We know that partnerships can help us address the social impact our business can have more effectively, through our own operations as well as through our suppliers. This is why in 2022 we became members of the Slave Free Alliance and performed an assessment to better address the risks of modern slavery within our business.

As proud as we are of the progress made in 2022, of delivering on our commitments towards people and planet, we understand that the impact our industry has is broad: meaning solutions are challenging and complex. 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.

Together, we will continue to integrate sustainability further into our operations, supporting the industry we love and care for.





## [View Our...](#)

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- [1. Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#)
- [2. Gender Pay Gap Report](#)
- [3. Anti-bullying and Anti-Harassment Policy](#)
- [4. Ethical Trade Policy](#)
- [5. Anti Slavery & Human Trafficking Policy](#)
- [6. Anti-Bribery and Anti-Corruption Policy](#)
- [7a. River Island Factory List](#)
- [7b. River Island Factory List \(Excel Version\)](#)
- [8. Modern Slavery Statement](#)
- [9. Animal Welfare Policy](#)
- [10a. Restricted Substances List](#)
- [10b. Manufacturing Restricted Substances List](#)
- [11. Tax Strategy](#)
- [12. Commitment to Protect Forestry](#)
- [13. River Island Child Labour and Young Worker Policy Sept 2018](#)
- [14. River Island Homeworking Policy February 2018](#)
- [15. River Island Migrant Worker Policy](#)
- [16. River Island Subcontracting Policy](#)



*MAKING FASHION A FORCE FOR GOOD*

# RIVER ISLAND

## SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

*12 COMMITMENTS TO PEOPLE AND PLANET*