



# colefabrics

Corporate Social Responsibility

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# Corporate Social Responsibility Statement

Cole Fabrics' Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programme ensures that social and environmental concerns are considered in all of our business operations.

We align our activities with the expectations of our stakeholders in relation to our economic, social and environmental impact.

Cole Fabrics has an excellent reputation in the UK for carrying out business in accordance with the highest principles of business ethics. We are proud of this reputation and are committed to conducting our business activities with honesty and in full compliance with current laws and regulations.

As an innovative business, we continually seek better, safer, more cost effective and sustainable methods of working, while adhering to best practice.

In developing our strategy to set out our CSR programme for the first time, and aligning them to the UN Sustainable Development Goals, we aim to deliver gradual but continuous improvements in our performance every year.

As a result, our approach continues to evolve as we learn lessons along the way.

## Company Mission

We are driven by doing business the right way; we believe in facilitating improvements and innovation to help manufacture the best materials without compromising the environment for the future.

To help define our programme we have divided it into four company values:

- Our People
- Our Community
- Our Supply Chain
- Our Planet



# People

We know that in order for our company to grow we first need to grow and nurture our team.

People are at the core of any company, and ours is no exception. We know that every individual brings unique skills and perspectives to the business.

Cole Fabrics Plc is a UK company with employees only in the UK and they are valued and protected by strict UK legislation.

Our staff numbers are stable at between 70 -75 employees.

We promote a diverse and inclusive workplace ensuring everyone feels welcome and can thrive to their full potential. We embed lean principles into our culture, and this allows meaningful improvements throughout all our processes.

[Click here](#) to read our Employment Policy and Procedure Manual

## Training

- **Required Training** - There are expectations on our staff that are both legal obligations and internal cultural expectations.
- **Mentor Training** - Also known as “on the job training” our culture is that everyone should help and support others and this includes training. Each new staff member is given a clear support structure so it is clear who is there to help. Development plans are available throughout the employment cycle.
- **Choosing to Train** - We run one formal appraisal each year and a “Catch Up” appraisal at the half way point. All staff are asked twice a year if there is any other training they feel would be of benefit to them. This includes external financially supported courses that are requested and relevant to the employee.

## Human Rights

[Click here](#) to read our Human Rights Policy

## Lean, Continuous Improvement

Back in 2013 we launched our “Lean, Continuous Improvement programme”. Over the years that programme has evolved and changed but the basic principles remain the same. We were inspired by the fantastic work of Paul Akers who launched his book, “2 Second Lean. How to Grow People and Build a Lean Culture”. It has been published for free in 18 different languages.

What does this mean for people?

1. Everyone is given time and support to improve HOW they do their work, and the resources to CHANGE the process.
2. Removing the 8 wastes from everything we do
3. The 3 S's. Sort, Sweep, Standarise
4. Clean work environment. We are all responsible to clean. “Clean as you go”. “Leave things better than you found them”.
5. No blame. We say when we are wrong and fix the problems rather than placing blame.
6. Enjoy coming to work

This gives people empowerment over what and how they carry out their work, free from blame and unnecessary pressure.

See more information on Lean:

<https://paulakers.net/>

<https://paulakers.net/books/2-second-lean>



# People

## Well-Being

Our staff well-being is of utmost importance to us and we have 3 Mental Health First Aiders (trained by St Johns Ambulance Services) to support all employees; as not all wounds are visible.

To learn more, visit: <https://www.sja.org.uk/courses/workplace-mental-health-first-aid/>

### Health

We provide seasonal fresh fruit for all employees to enjoy.

### Perkbox

We support our staff by providing access to the “Perkbox” platform where they can access free exercise online classes, mindfulness programmes, webinars, healthy eating tips and so much more.



### Helpline

Free 24/7 access to the Health Assured employee assistance helpline and up to four free structured counselling sessions per person per year.

### Environment

We promote a safe working environment and encourage innovation. We are proud to incorporate apprenticeships to help support job creation and promote future employment.

### Discrimination

Our policies show that we do not tolerate discrimination of any kind, We are all in this together and no-one is left behind.

### Compliance

We comply with national laws and regulations and have policies in place to ensure working environments are effective and stable.



# Health & Safety

Our health and safety training covers:

- Legal responsibilities
- Control of substances hazardous to health (COSHH)
- Personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Manual handling
- General safety
- Display screen equipment
- Fire arrangements
- First aid & accident reporting
- Hearing Loss and Hearing Protection



Our Fire Safety in the workplace covers:

- Fire facts
- How a fire works
- Common causes of fire
- When a fire emergency occurs
- Know and operate extinguishers
- What to do when the alarm is sound

Complete

December 2022 – Qualified to NEBOSH Level or above staff member at each manufacturing site.

Next Steps

Year	Month	Target	Progress	Date Completed
2023	August	Fire wardens to have external accredited training	100%	July 2023
2023	November	Increase number of IOSH trained staff by four	Courses booked	
2024	June	Move Health and Safety Inspections to online system		

# Health & Safety

Health and Safety underpins everything we do, and we take it very seriously.

## Results

Health and Safety (Nottingham)	2022	2023
Accidents or incident	3	
Reportable incidents (RIDDOR)	0	
Missed days through injury	1	
External visits	0	

## Results

Training (Nottingham)	2022	2023
Health & Safety, includes fire and manual handling	93%	
Company certifications, ISO, BRCGS, security	96%	
Equality, diversity, inclusivity, harassment & mental health awareness	98%	



# Community

## Rushcliffe Play Forum

We have been supporting Rushcliffe Play Forum for over 10 years, which is a local registered charity and solely run by volunteers. We donate materials on a weekly basis which are then made available to their Scrapstore members, providing affordable resources for arts and crafts to enriches lives socially and physically by developing play opportunities within and around the local community.

Find out more: <https://www.facebook.com/Rushcliffe-Play-Forum-162664877131453/>



## Breast Cancer

We have been supporting the Breast Cancer campaign for over 15 years by donating their iconic pink ribbon broaches. To view our letter from Breast Cancer Now, [Click Here](#)

## Christmas Jumper Day - Save the Children UK

Save the Children's annual event which raises money for children in the UK and across the world. This is done proudly every year, with comical results.



# Supply Chain

Cole Fabrics are a global business, we operate to the Ethical Trading Initiative base codes throughout our business and we are committed to responsible sourcing.

- We work closely with our Supply partners and promote open and honest relationships.
- We validate our partners as part of our quality management system requirements, and these validations are refreshed every 2 years.
- We monitor their certifications and seek further assurances where needed.
- Our company is not of the size where we can dictate changes in this area, but we can choose who to work with and who does not meet our own trading standards.

Our preferred supply partners will have one or more of the following:

**ISO 9001: 2015 or similar Global Quality Management System**

**SEDEX registered**

We have an expectation for all supply partners to work within the parameters of the Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI):

- Employment is freely chosen
- Freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining are respected
- Working conditions are safe and hygienic
- Child labour shall not be used
- Living wages are paid
- Work hours are not excessive
- No discrimination is practiced
- Regular employment is provided
- No harsh or inhumane treatment is allowed
- Open and honest information to our customers.

**17** PARTNERSHIPS  
FOR THE GOALS



# Supply Chain

To ensure our supply chain meets our expectations and compliance, we carry out audits in accordance with the Sedex Members Ethical Trade Audit (SMETA) guidelines.

## SEDEX

We are registered as a B Member of SEDEX (Supplier Ethical Data Exchange), and are committed to continual improvement of Ethical Trading Standards in our production operations. Our SEDEX company member number is ZC1013095 and our site member number is ZS1078175.

## SMETA - The Sedex Members Ethical Trade Audit

Our Audit reports are available to view via our SEDEX account.

## Other External Ethical Audits

We understand the importance of being transparent and we engage in third party audits to demonstrate our active compliance with our customers and suppliers too.

2022 – Kering Audit - Ethical Code of Conduct <https://www.kering.com/en/>

2021 – John Lewis Better Jobs Programme

2019 – John Lewis Better Jobs Programme

<https://www.johnlewispartnership.co.uk/csr/better-jobs-programme.html>

## Human Rights

Please [click here](#) to view our Human Rights Policy.

## Complete

December 2022 – Increase our current completion of the SEDEX Questionnaire.  
From 76% to a minimum of 90% - Achieved December 2022

## Next Steps

Year	Month	Target	Progress	Date Completed
2023	February	Complete SEDEX Questionnaire to 100%	100%	January 2023
2023	August	One accredited Trainer on Anti-Bribery Awareness	100%	August 2023
2023	November	All relevant staff to have received updated Anti-Bribery Awareness Training		
2023	December	All relevant staff to have received updated Mental Health Awareness Training	99%	August 2023
2023	December	Complete SMETA Audit by December 2023	100%	July 2023

# Planet

We know that the decisions we make for the future and the actions we take today have impacts on people and the planet. We have been weaving sustainability into our products for over 15 years. We actively develop our products to be better for all, working alongside our suppliers sharing knowledge and expertise. We are incredibly proud of the increasing sustainable options we bring to the market place.

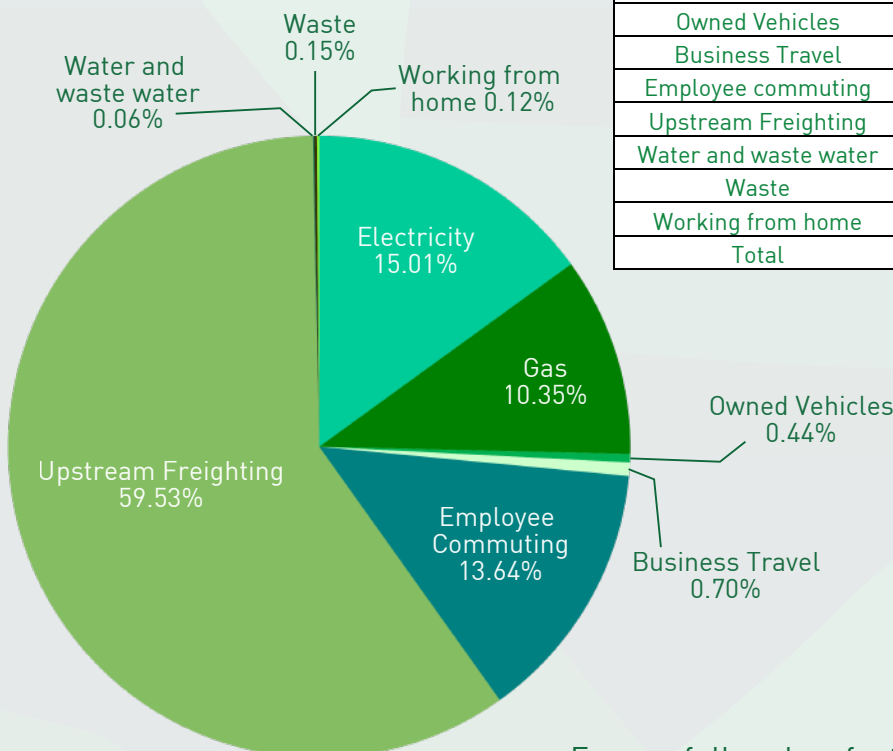
We have had our baseline carbon footprint calculated for 2021; with the support from the Sustainability Consultancy at NTU. We have been able to compare this to our 2022 Carbon footprint.

Our scope 3 emissions included in our calculations have been:

- Fuel and energy related activities
- Upstream transportation and distribution
- Waste
- Business Travel
- Employee Commuting



## Breakdown of our 2022 Carbon Emissions (tCO2e):



	2021	2022	Percentage Change
Electricity	84.69	75.77	-10.53%
Gas	61.91	52.24	-15.62%
Owned Vehicles	0.16	2.21	1281.25%
Business Travel	1.23	3.52	186.18%
Employee commuting	62.15	68.86	10.80%
Upstream Freightage	300.48	300.42	-0.02%
Water and waste water	0.24	0.28	16.67%
Waste	1.2	0.74	-38.33%
Working from home	0.62	0.62	0.00%
Total	512.68	504.66	-1.56%

For our full carbon footprint report, please contact us.

# Planet

## Previous Environmental Improvements

We have been improving our environmental impact for a long time, as this is part of our Lean, Continuous Improvements programme, and due to this we did not set ourselves measurable targets or a base line in which to draw comparisons from when they were implemented.

## LED Lighting

We changed the majority of our lights back in 2015 as LED lighting would reduce our energy and maintenance costs and improve our working light for staff.

## Heating system

Upon needing a new system in 2011, we invested in the most efficient system we could and this reduced our energy requirements.

## Waste Management

We invested in a waste compacting machine to reduce the number of collections from daily to a system of emptying when it is full. This is approximately once or twice a month. This is more cost efficient but also reduces the environmental impact of daily truck collections (plus our neighbours are happier too).

Our contractor can recycle onsite, send waste to incineration for energy or to landfill. We can extract data from our Contractor to breakdown how much of our waste goes down what type of waste stream.

## New Dyeing Equipment

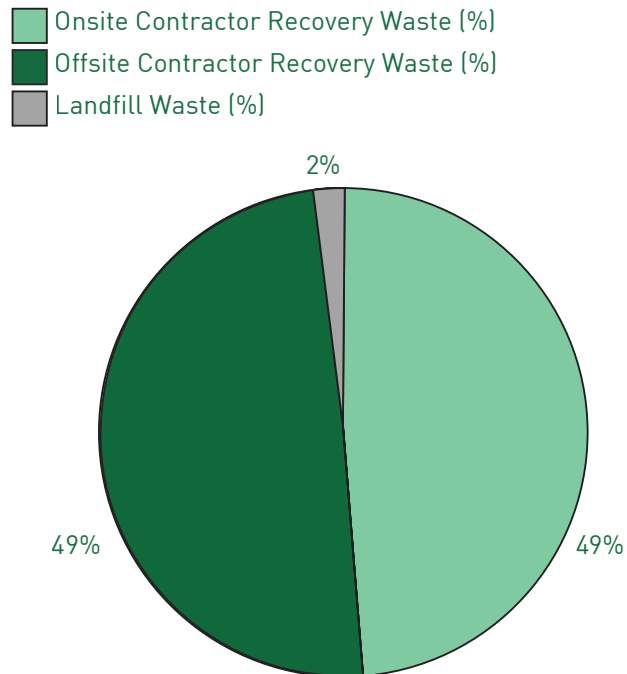
We look to improve efficiencies and safety with every new machine we develop and build. We therefore make each machine better than the one before.

The main aims are to:

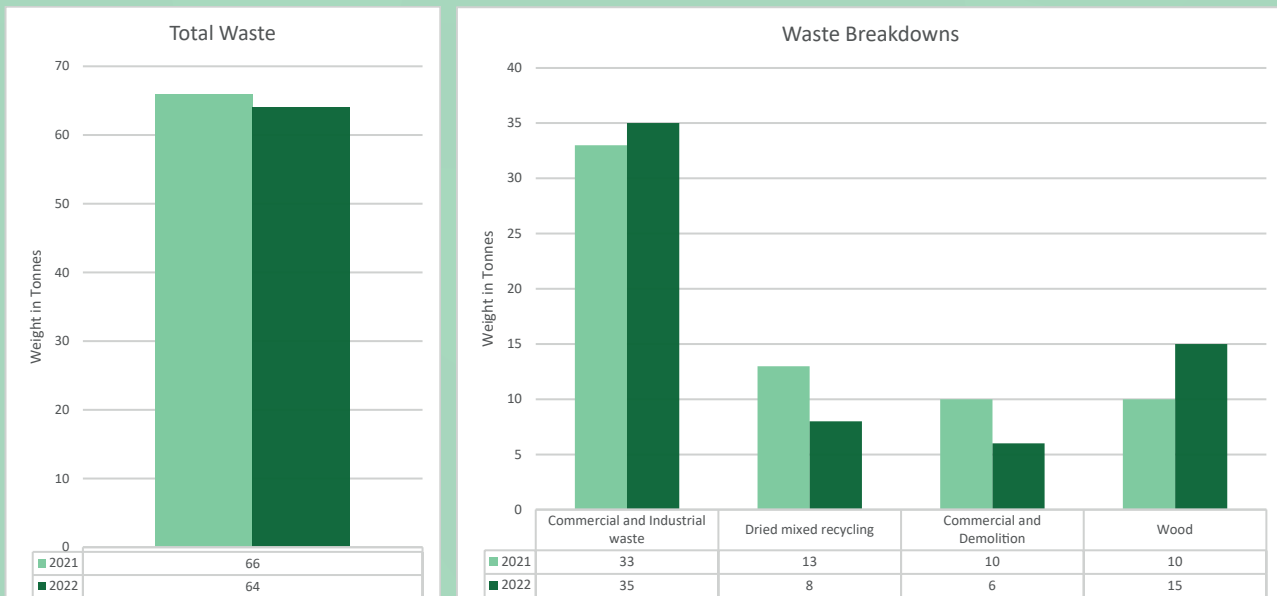
- Reduce energy costs
- Reduce water cost
- Improve the working environment by reducing the noise levels of the machine and reducing the steam released without capture.
- Improve the ergonomics of the machine, making the machine easier to operate and incorporating our machine operators ideas on where screens, pipes, hoses and controls should be located.
- Improve efficiencies so an operator can produce more material on the new machine than the old.
- Improve guarding, we always look to how we can make machines safer.



## Waste Recovery Chart



Our Contractor also provides a breakdown of the total weight per waste category.



The 2 tonnes difference, between 2021 and 2022, is a result of the relocation of Signature Ribbons that joined Cole Fabrics in 2020. To integrate Signature into the business, a mass clear out of our old and clearance stock was thrown away; the majority of which did end up as general waste that was collected at the start of 2021.

# Planet

## The Next Step

Year	Month	Target Area	Target	Progress	Date Completed
2023	May	Environmental	External Water audit to improve any fixtures and fittings	100%	February 2023
2023	June	Environmental	Upgrade current heating system	100%	March 2023
2023	June	Environmental	90 % of all staff to have received Environmental Management Systems training	100%	May 2023
2023	December	Environmental	Consume 5% less electricity compared to 2022		
2023	December	Environmental	Consume 2% less Gas compared to 2022		
2024		Environmental	Monitor our carbon footprint for 2023, to report in Q1 of 2024		

## Plastic Packaging Tax

In April 2022 the UK Government implemented a Plastic Packaging Tax (PPT). If plastic packaging contains more than 30% virgin plastic, it is taxable. This is to incentivise businesses to use recycled plastic material within any plastic deemed as packaging.

Our PPT registration number is: XLPPT0000001679.

To find out more, visit: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/register-for-plastic-packaging-tax>

## Waste

We are aware that our products are likely thrown away at their end of life. We encourage the re-use of all our products where possible; from craft groups to primary schools.



Currently the UK does not have the infrastructure to recycle textiles. However, there is some interesting research being explored and we are keeping ourselves up to date on this.

We are aware that Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) came into force at the beginning of 2023. To prepare for this, we implemented a new process to extract the relevant data required to be able to perform this efficiently.

To learn more about this please visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/packaging-waste-prepare-for-extended-producer-responsibility>

# Sustainable Products

Over the last 10 years, Cole Fabrics have sold Mechanically Recycled Polyester. Over the last 3 years we have researched and developed the following products:

- Chemically Recycled Polyester
- Mechanically Recycled Polyester
- Tencel™
- Acetate
- Organic & Recycled Cotton
- Paper



We have published all of our products and details of their sustainable credentials here: <https://sustainableribbon.com/>

## The Next Step

Year	Month	Target	Progress	Date Completed
2023	June	Review and amend "Sustainable Ribbon" webpage information	100%	June 2023
2025	December	Convert all Virgin Polyester yarn stock line to Mechanically Recycled Polyester yarn.		



Cole Fabrics  
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Nottingham  
NG2 6HF

Dear Cole Fabrics team

On behalf of Breast Cancer Now I would like to say a huge thank you to Cole Fabrics for your continued support of our work. Since teaming up with us, your generous donations of pink ribbons have been used at numerous Breast Cancer Now events including our Pink Ribbon Walks, Walk 100 Miles challenge, The Women's Tour and our annual fashion event, The Show. Your ribbons have given our supporters the opportunity to share their stories, motivations and memories of loved ones. For our Pink Ribbon Walks, these messages of strength, hope and solidarity for people who have been, and continue to be, affected by breast cancer form a powerful and moving backdrop to the start and finish of the Walks.

I am delighted to share with you that Cole Fabrics' support has helped raise over £11.5 million for Breast Cancer Now. This is a staggering amount that has helped to power our world-class research and provide even more life-changing care for people affected by breast cancer.

At Breast Cancer Now we're determined to make sure anyone affected by the disease gets the best possible treatment and care. We're working side by side with hospitals and their patients to improve breast cancer services.

By supporting Breast Cancer Now, you are helping us take another step towards our goal that by 2050, everyone who develops breast cancer lives – and is supported to live well.

Thank you once again for your generosity. We couldn't achieve our goals without the support of people like you and I hope that we continue to work together in the future.

Warmest wishes,

Rachael Franklin  
Director of Fundraising, Communications and Engagement