

# Leading the Way

In Sustainability & Ethics



Sustainability  
Report 2021

■ banner®



# Welcome & Introduction

Welcome to our sustainability report covering the year 2021.

Here at Banner we're continually working to improve all aspects our environmental and social responsibility, minimising the impacts of our operations on the planet, while optimising the benefits of what we do for our people and those we work with. As this report shows, we are making great strides with our direction, and that's why we're recognised as the company that's leading the way in sustainability and ethics in schoolwear.



“I’m proud to work for a company that takes sustainability so seriously, showing real commitment to responsible sourcing, low carbon principles and ethical trading. Every day, working with my colleagues reminds me that our sustainability goals are intrinsically linked to our values and the way we do business. And in helping to prepare this report I’m clearer than ever that we’re becoming an even better business, driving long-term change that has a positive impact on the environment, natural world and communities in which we operate.”

**Sarah Robins**  
**Sustainability Manager**  
**Banner Group**

# Overview

## Innovation: Collaboration: Progress

Our second annual sustainability report captures the progress we have made across the entire Banner Group (wholesale and retail operations) for the financial year ending 31 December 2021.

The report describes and measures the environmental and social impacts of our activities across the key pillars of our sustainability strategy. It also confirms the positive impact that our commitment to doing the right thing is having on our overall business performance and culture.

We know we still have a long way to go. In this regard the report highlights the steps we are taking to further integrate Environmental and Social Goals into our ways of working, and is open and transparent about those areas where we need to find better solutions.

What's clear, is that through innovation and collaboration we are making excellent progress, with a holistic approach to sustainability and ethics that is leading the way in our industry.



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# A Foreword From Our CEO, Glenn Leech

The title of this year's sustainability report is Leading the Way. It's a phrase that captures not only the results we've delivered, but also our commitment to making changes for the better. And as will be clear from the progress in these pages, it's more than just words. Leadership in sustainability is central to the strategy of Banner, to the future of schoolwear and to the expectations of the young people who wear our uniforms every day.

But in fact it's a great deal more than that too.

In my role as Chief Executive I've come to realise that Leading the Way has a host of dimensions. This year we've partnered with new owners, and in reaching agreement it was vital that we shared a vision on the sustainability journey that would shape Banner's future. Five years ago those discussions would not have taken place; today, no serious investors can ignore the importance of environmental and social goals.

Our customers too, expect more of the businesses they support. Leading the way in the supply chain means working on their behalf, helping them achieve the goals they are reliant on us to deliver. In this respect, we have a responsibility that goes beyond the balance sheet – although the good news is that sustainability enhances returns for shareholders as well as our reputation with the stakeholders we serve.

These last two years have seen unprecedented disruption to almost every aspect of society. Hundreds of thousands of us have lost loved ones and many are still suffering from the shock waves of the

pandemic, made worse by the recent conflict in Ukraine. As a medium-sized business we can't impact global events, but we can make a meaningful difference to our communities and the causes we care for. Leadership here is as much about giving willingly of ourselves as it is about strategy and data and delivery of objectives. Not that data doesn't matter! Indeed, it's critical that we measure progress and validate our success. By tracking results we can identify what's working, up the pace where possible and shout about our achievements too. I like to think that our sustainability dashboards might [one day] become something like Strava to a cyclist – an app that we use to record, improve and share progress.

And that's why this report is so important. In these opening comments I've not dwelt on the detail because it's all in the pages that follow. The story they tell is one we take pride in, and I hope all our colleagues, suppliers and customers want to continue being part of. For working together in a sustainable way is much a mindset as a measure. Which is surely what leading the way is all about.



Outside of work, Glenn has switched his home to an air sourced heat pump and solar panels to go with his electric car. His family are also sponsoring a Ukrainian refugee family of four. 'I feel fortunate to be able to make these changes,' he says. 'But I'm also mindful that it's the hundreds of everyday actions and choices we make that mount up to the biggest difference of all.'

# A Foreword From Our CFO, Ian Webb

They say that success breeds success. It's nonetheless pleasing, as we publish our second annual sustainability report, to see so many of our colleagues, customers and industry partners actively embracing the sustainability journey. A virtuous circle for sure and we can be very proud of what we at Banner are doing to help move the textile sector forward, reducing its impact on the environment and increasing the positive difference we make.

As I read the contents of this year's report I too am incredibly proud of what we've achieved. Not just these last twelve months, but perhaps even more importantly, in the progress we are making with some of our longer term plans. Of course, we don't yet have the answers to all of the problems but our collaborations with universities, trade bodies, accreditation providers, our suppliers and our customers is proving fruitful. Together, we are finding practical solutions to the more difficult problems, particularly around circularity and natural resource depletion.

At first sight, it was disappointing if not unsurprising to see our gross carbon emissions higher in 2021 than the previous year. I suspect we were not alone in that regard. We offset of course, but we also learned a great deal in the process, and on reflection this seems to me to be what a sustainability journey is about. It's unrealistic to expect only one way progress; what's important is that we review, learn and adapt from the times we fall short, just as we take heart when we succeed.

As you may recall I am an accountant and CFO, which comes with some excitement at times – truly it does! But I can honestly say that I'm never happier at work, than when seeing our massively engaged SER Stars team, our SER Governance teams and my colleagues throughout the business 'talking and living sustainability'. We are very lucky to have such great people making a difference – and this blurring of the boundaries between our work and personal lives, when it comes to sustainability, is so important, so empowering and so full of potential.

Meanwhile, we should continue to be inspired by our consumers, the schoolchildren that wear our products and who are demanding change. Our future success will be determined by doing the right thing for them, and of course, for our business too. Already, we are going bigger, bolder and faster with our sustainability strategies. Not only are we leading the way, we're loving the journey, with the wind well and truly in our sails....



In other news Ian is delighted to update on the activities of the Avon Reptile and Amphibian Group of which he is a committee member. 'We're incredibly busy with setting up new surveys. And we are also seeing a number of land owners committing to either rewilding, managing at least part of their land for biodiversity or just curious to find out what's there. This is brilliant to see and essential for the reptiles and amphibians that we try to help conserve'.



# About Banner Group

## Who We Are and What We Do

Banner is the UK's leading supplier of school uniform and sportswear for the schoolwear market. Our purpose is to give every child the chance to shine by creating school uniform and sportswear ranges that are durable and "built to last". In doing so, we aim to ensure that all children have an equal opportunity to develop, perform and feel good about themselves.

We are proud to offer customers the biggest and broadest range of schoolwear in the market. And we back this up with an industry leading service that includes unrivalled marketing support to enhance their proposition, and help them to win new business.

Our ambition is to be the market leader in sustainability and a force for good. In pursuing this goal we have embraced the responsibility to do the right thing, putting sustainability at the heart of our business. We want every garment that Banner produces to make a positive impact on our planet, the people we work with and the pupils who ultimately wear our products every day.



# Company Structure & Ownership

Banner Group comprises both a UK wholesale and retail operation. We are an independent business backed by private equity investors.

Our wholesale business, Banner Ltd operates from our Headquarters in Trowbridge, Wiltshire and our satellite office in Seaham, County Durham. Our retail business operates under the trading name of F R Monkhouse Ltd from our northern base in Altrincham, Cheshire; it comprises 37 retail stores and 3 distribution centres. Our Group Marketing, Product, IT, and Digital functions are also based at our Altrincham site.

In October 2021 the majority ownership of Banner Group was acquired by CBPE Capital, an experienced investor with a track record of backing high

quality inspiring businesses of a similar size and growth potential to Banner. CBPE is a strong supporter of our sustainability goals, sharing our vision for a business founded on values and actions that deliver both positive impact and competitive difference.

With CBPE's commitment and support Banner is uniquely positioned to deliver on that ambition. Furthermore, our underlying financial strength supports an ability to invest for the future, maintaining our position as the industry's market leader in both schoolwear and sustainable best practice.



"The clarity of Banner's ambition to integrate environmental and social goals into their plans and its clear link to their growth strategy was a critical factor in our decision to invest. We share Banner's values and look forward to working with the leadership team to support the business in a responsible and sustainable way."

**Sean Dinnen, Managing Partner CBPE**

## Introducing Banner Group Main Board Members

### Banner Group:



**Octavia Morely**  
Chair



**Glenn Leech**  
CEO



**Ian Webb**  
CFO



**Bruce Freeland**  
Group Operations Director



**Peter Monkhouse**  
Managing Director F R Monkhouse Ltd

### CBPE Capital Ltd:



**Sean Dinnen**  
Managing Partner



**Harry Hewlett**  
Director



# Banner Group at a Glance

- Financial
- Number of UK Employees
- Distribution
- Products Distributed Via
- No. of Garments
- Stock holding for Banner Wholesale at end of 2021

Annual turnover 2021 c. **£65 million**

**318.52 FTE**

**Wholesale DCs:**  
Trowbridge – 2 warehouses, 110,000 square meters holding **3 million garments**.

**Regional Retail DCs:**  
Tewkesbury & Stockport holding **1.1 million garments** and a total of 43,000 square meters of warehouse space.  
3PL Partner – Rhenus Logistics – Storage capacity up to **560,000 garments**

**1625 Wholesale customers in 22 countries** (Traditional school uniform outfitters, ecommerce, online ordering for parents, in-school “pop-up” shops & wholesale in-house school shops)

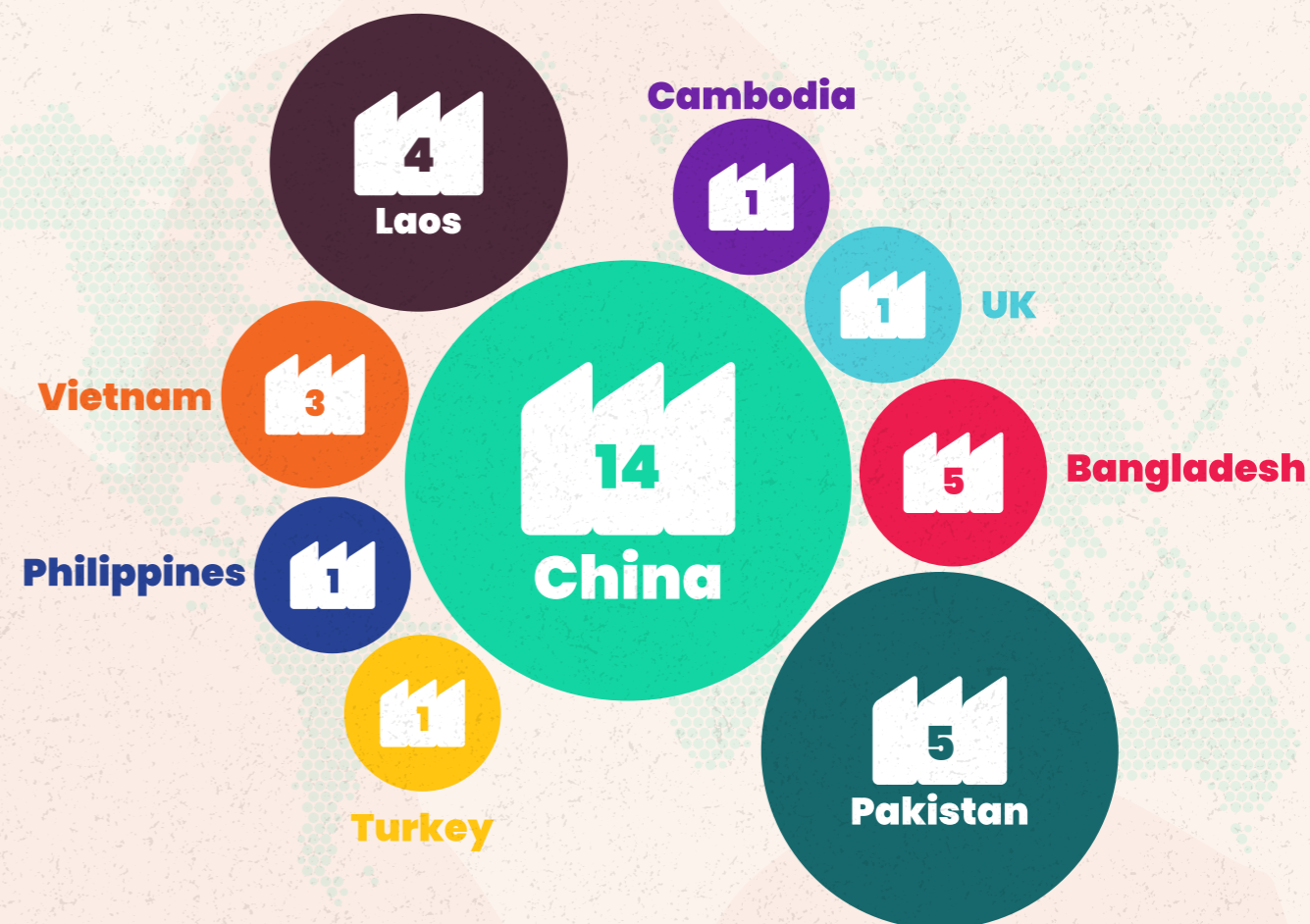
37 Wholly owned retail stores/school shops/ecommerce operation to **1,173 schools**.

**6.1 million garments** (the vast majority of these come from our wholesale supplier factories)

**2.1 million garments** across the 2 warehouses at Trowbridge.

## Supply Chain & Sourcing

It's important to us that all suppliers we work with share our ethical values and vision for a sustainable future with responsible practices, ethical sourcing of products and sustainable fabrics, trims and packaging. We work with 35 direct and indirect (sourced via agents) suppliers in 9 countries.



All overseas supplier factories that produce our wholesale brochure stock are Sedex<sup>1</sup> members and are required to complete Sedex 4-Pillar SMETA<sup>2</sup> audits to meet the highest standards of social and environmental compliance.

Banner does not tolerate any form of slavery, servitude, forced labour and this is outlined fully in our 2021 Modern Slavery statement at [banner.co.uk](https://www.banner.co.uk)

### Retail Supply Base

Our multi-channel retail supply base sources over 8,000 products (uniforms, sportswear, equipment and accessories) from c. 77 suppliers (£1000+ spend). Out of the 77 suppliers, 15 make some or all their garments in UK factories. The products made in the UK represent c. 7% of the total schoolwear garments sourced from these suppliers.

They are all required to meet high standards of ethical and responsible sourcing including that all UK factories are fully compliant with UK employment law, national minimum wage and health and safety.

<sup>1</sup> Sedex is one of the world's leading ethical trade service providers, working to improve the working conditions in global supply chains. Sedex provides practical tools, services and a community network to help companies improve their responsible and sustainable business practices and resource responsibly.  
<sup>2</sup> SMETA Audit is the Sedex Members Ethical Trade Audit. SMETA is divided into a two tier system - 2-Pillar SMETA covers Health and Safety and Labour Standards, 4-Pillar also includes an environmental audit and enhanced business ethics.



# Accreditations & Memberships

We are proud to hold the following accreditations and trade memberships. They mean a lot to us and the customers that work with us. They clearly demonstrate our commitment to becoming an even more environmentally and socially responsible business.

## Sedex



Sedex is one of the world's leading ethical trade service providers working to improve the working conditions in global supply chains. As a Supplier/Buyer member (A/B) of Sedex since 2006 we have been working closely with our global supply chain to manage their social and environmental performance and protect workers. All are required to complete a third party ethical audit process (Sedex SMETA) 4-Pillar which is a robust and high level ethical, social and environmental audit standard.

## Better Cotton

Banner is a member of Better Cotton, the largest cotton sustainability programme in the world. Better Cotton exists to make global cotton production better for the people who produce it, the environment it grows in and for the sector's future.



## ISO9001



Cert No. 5144

## ISO 9001

Banner has achieved certification to ISO 9001, an internationally recognised standard that specifies requirements for a robust quality management system. This accreditation demonstrates Banner's ability to consistently provide products and services that meet regulatory and the ever-changing needs of our customers.

## Climate Neutral Now

As a confirmed participant of The United Nations Climate Neutral Now initiative, Banner has completed a 2021 carbon footprint report including a carbon reduction action plan and pledged its commitment to continue to strive to become climate neutral and support global efforts to keep global warming below 1.5 degrees. Our CNN achievement badge shows the levels we have achieved in 2021.



## Schoolwear Association



Banner has been an active member of The Schoolwear Association since its inception in 2006. The SA is an industry body made up of a network of schoolwear suppliers, wholesalers, manufacturers and retailers who believe in the creation and sustainability of a strong and ethical marketplace and who work together as a collective voice to help drive up standards and promote the benefits of school specific uniforms.

## The Confederation of Business Industry

The Confederation of Business Industry is a UK business organisation that represents "the voice of business". Banner has been a member since 2021 and our CFO is a representative on the CBI's south west regional council and our Sustainability Manager has been invited to join the CBI's new Sustainability Community.



### Other Partners We Work With








# 2021 Key Achievements

<p>All <b>35</b> overseas suppliers are members of Sedex</p>	 <p>Supply Chain</p>	<p>Our annual customer survey shows that Banner's focus on sustainability is changing customer perceptions.</p>
<p><b>74%</b> Have achieved both 2 and 4 Pillar SMETA audit</p>	 <p>Customer</p>	<p><b>43%</b> See Banner as the authoritative voice of schoolwear</p>
<p><b>01/09/21</b> Banner invest in Better Cotton, the largest cotton sustainability programme in the world</p>	 <p>Product</p>	<p>Over <b>40%</b> of all Banner's garments have successfully transitioned to sustainable fabrics* for Back to School 2022</p>

\*Recycled polyester/bio-degradable viscose

<p>We are carbon neutral for our Group UK operations in 2021!</p>	 <p>Environment</p>	<p><b>67%</b> of our company car fleet is hybrid/electric</p>
<p><b>14.9 MILLION</b> Plastic bottles were recycled to make all the eco garments supplied in 2021</p>	 <p>Community</p>	<p>We recycled <b>92.07 TONNES</b> of cardboard</p>
<p><b>500K</b> Single use plastic bags have been removed from our supply chain annually</p>	<p><b>17/11/21</b> Structured "Giving Back" programme launched - "Gift of time" volunteering</p>	<p>Our social impact in 2021 was: <b>92</b> Hours Volunteered in just 4 working weeks</p>
<p><b>73%</b> of colleagues feel informed about the work Banner is doing on sustainability. That's 8% more than in 2020.</p>	 <p>People</p>	<p><b>£10,000</b> Donated</p> <p><b>9</b> Good causes supported</p>
<p><b>16</b> Mental Health First Aider's Trained</p>		



# Carbon Neutral Business (UK Operations)

## A Continuous Improvement Journey to Tread Lighter

Banner Group first became carbon neutral for its UK Operations in 2020. It's a journey that we are committed to maintaining and improving on, using trusted data and constructive challenge to drive continuous improvement. In this regard, tracking and measuring our full value chain carbon footprint (Scope 3) is a further commitment we have made with work beginning in 2022 as a springboard for an ultimate net-zero<sup>3</sup> in the future.

For 2021 we set ourselves an ambitious reduction target. In a spirit of transparency and realism we had anticipated (and caveated in last year's report) that our gross emissions would go up as a consequence of a return to more normal working patterns, as the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic receded.

In the event, the pandemic continued to exert a significant influence both domestically

and worldwide, making it even more challenging to achieve a substantial net reduction. Furthermore, although not a legal or formal requirement, with just over 30 percent of our colleagues working from home we have chosen to include this impact within our total Scope 2+ carbon footprint measurement.

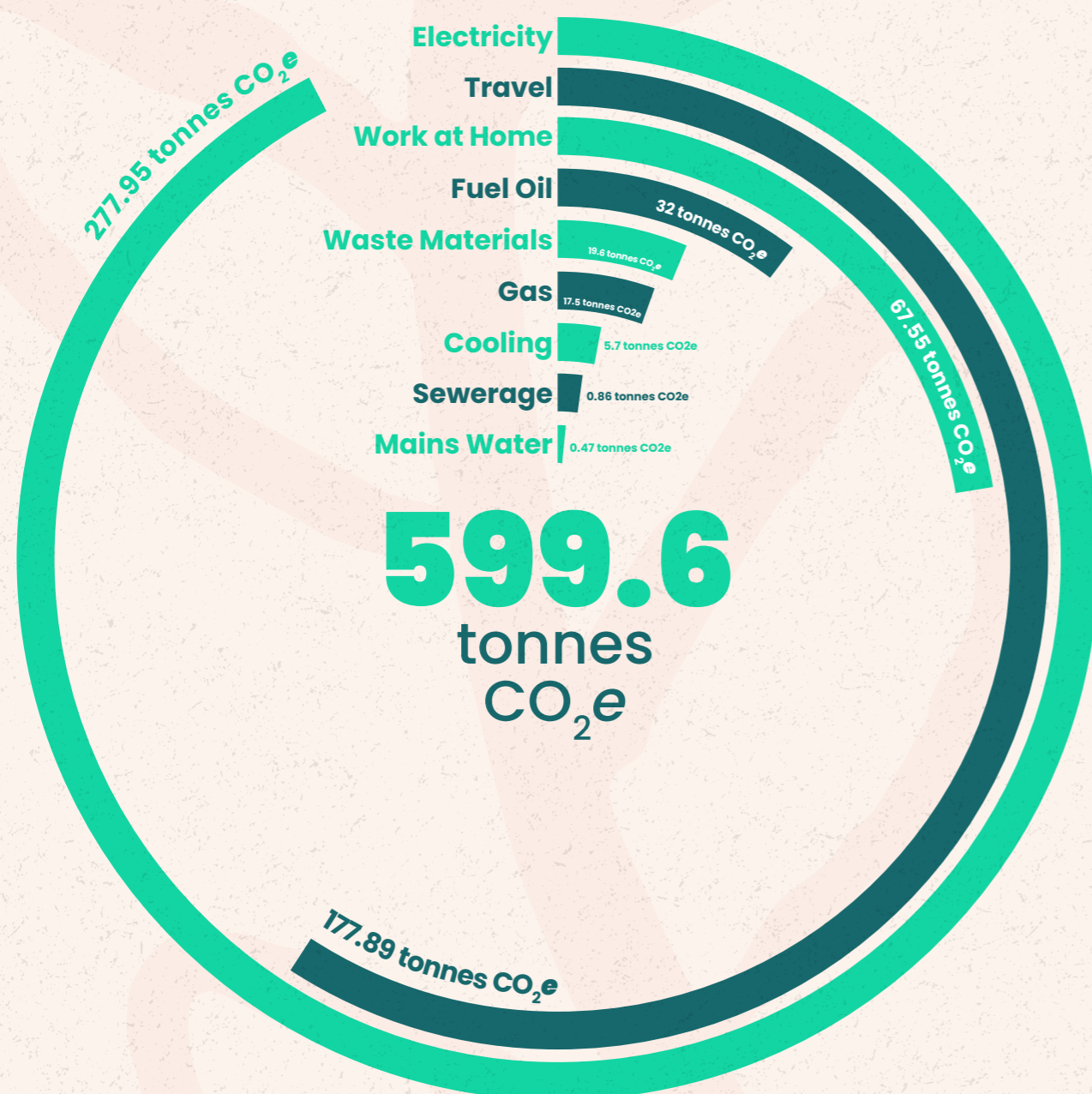
Any journey of continual improvement will have peaks and troughs, successes and set backs – the important thing is to learn and improve as we go. This reality, underpins our view that seeking full transparency of the impacts of our UK and worldwide operations is vital, not only to provide accurate and trusted data, but also to give confidence of the benchmarks we will use for the current year and those thereafter.

<sup>3</sup> At 'net zero', we'd eliminate or reabsorb all our emissions. Currently, at 'carbon neutral', we fund carbon-offsetting schemes elsewhere that exactly balance our footprint.  
<sup>4</sup> View homeworking white paper at <https://info.eco-act.com/en/homeworking-emissions-whitepaper-2020>



# Total Carbon Emissions

For Banner Group UK Operations 2021



Working from home emissions accounted for the majority of the increase compared to 2020. (*Work at home calculations were not available at the time of measuring our 2020 footprint*).

**Understanding our footprint has made us aware of what action we need to take and what areas we need to focus on in our 2022 carbon reduction plan to ensure we are keeping the 1.5 degrees in sight.**

It won't be until 2023 when we will start to see what a normal year looks like in relation to our UK operations' footprint. However, that is not stopping us from taking action to reduce emissions wherever we can so steps we are already taking this year are:

- Working with Heriot-Watt University to reduce and **develop sustainable packaging**
- Engaging a **cutting-edge waste management** company Futur First to track all our waste materials (and cut landfill to the minimum possible)
- Systematically **tracking energy** use at all our sites (our SER Stars energy squad will act as energy monitors)
- Including **working-from-home** as a routine component of our carbon footprint
- Extending our footprint to **include all suppliers** ('upstream scope 3')
- Continuing to **phase out fossil-fuel powered vehicles**



# Offsetting

To achieve carbon neutrality we have offset **599.6 tonnes** CO<sub>2</sub>e carbon emissions generated by our operations in 2021. We have taken a blended approach to selecting offsetting projects, focusing on the environment, social and biodiversity, and low carbon principles that seek to source more recycled materials rather than virgin raw materials. An important criterion has been to ensure that where possible the projects are in countries where we manufacture garments and are seeking to mitigate against any negative impacts of our business operations. The projects we have selected are either Gold Standard<sup>5</sup> or UN accredited and are fully traceable. Below is a summary:

**“We are offsetting our GHG emissions today and are actively looking at investing in projects that will help us further minimise our impact in the future”**



Image: www.goldstandard.org

## Emissions Reductions from PET Recycling - Romania



This project is the first in Europe to apply PET waste frameworks through PET waste recycling, pro-actively reducing greenhouse gases that would be otherwise required for the production of plastic products.

Apart from the economic benefits of reducing pollution in terms of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and plastic waste, the project has other important economic and social benefits (e.g. job creation, contribution to local communities, etc.).



Image: www.goldstandard.org

## Terraclear Clean Water Access for Families in Laos



- **15,000** tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e saved annually by the Terraclear project.
- **20–30** litres of clean water – the average daily household consumption fully met by each filter.
- **65,000 households** benefiting from filter use.

## Burgos Wind Farm in the Philippines

The UN accredited Burgos Wind Farm project supports economic, environmental and social benefits:

- **Promotes** the growth of renewable energy industry in the Philippines.
- **Reduces** fossil fuel consumption.
- **Provides** financial benefits to the local community and employment opportunities.



© EDC Burgos Wind Power Corporation

In addition, through **9Trees CIC** and their team of ecologists we have planted a further 300 trees near Built Wells in the same woodland near Hundred House to provide woodland habitat where biodiversity and nature thrives and CO<sub>2</sub> is sequestered.

## Cambodia National Biodigester Project



- **27,980** biodigesters constructed from March 2016 to December 2020.
- **79,256** direct beneficiaries.
- **\$143 USD saving** in expenditures on cooking fuels per household per year.



Image: www.goldstandard.org

## CLIMATE NEUTRAL NOW

We are a confirmed participant of Climate Neutral Now<sup>6</sup> and have pledged our support to climate neutrality and the global race to net zero.

We submitted our 2021 carbon footprint report including our carbon reduction action plan to the UN Climate Neutral Now Initiative to have our carbon neutral status verified. Our achievement level, validated by UNFCCC is shown here.

## CLIMATE NEUTRAL NOW



<sup>5</sup> Gold standard (www.goldstandard.org) is an independent, internationally recognised benchmark for carbon offset projects.  
<sup>6</sup> See <https://unfccc.int/climate-action/climate-neutral-now> for further information.



# Global Context

## Climate Action

“Code red for humanity” highlighted in the IPCC report<sup>7</sup> communicated a compelling and urgent message reverberating globally in 2021, to act now to secure the future of our planet, people and for future generations. Decarbonising energy is important and is a focus hotspot for us to address our gross emissions but also equally important is protecting nature and the responsible use of resources that we take from the earth to make our uniform and sportswear ranges for schoolchildren to wear with pride. We will continue to embrace a circular economy and look for innovative ways of producing our garments more sustainably, ensuring we close the loop.

Customers preferences are changing. Schoolchildren are now even more committed to sustainability than ever before. They want to know the provenance of the products they are wearing, where they come from, how they are manufactured, and if the materials used are responsibly sourced and associated packaging is sustainable. They want to support sustainable products that are made from recycled raw materials instead of new ones. They are demanding change, and this is only going to increase as we move through this decade.

**65%** of consumers said that they would think more positively about a brand that could demonstrate it had reduced the carbon footprint of its products.  
(Source: You Gov Survey in 2020 commissioned by the Carbon Trust)

At the recent COP 26, the education secretary announced his vision<sup>8</sup> for all children to be taught about the importance of conserving and protecting our planet from 2023 onwards, which will educate and empower young people, our future climate leaders even more to take action. In addition he has also just unveiled the details of a new climate change GCSE that teaches students “how to conserve the planet” which will be available in 2025.

We also know through our research that schools want their uniform suppliers to be active in high ethical standards, responsible sourcing and sustainable fabrics and strong environmental practices and policies. As a responsible business we need to listen to all customers, schoolchildren and their parents, schools, retailers, understand their needs and make sure we respond to them. As a schoolwear industry we need to transform and drive to accelerate the move towards a circular economy where resources are used efficiently and waste is kept to a minimum, and where there is collaborative system change.

## UN SDGs help strengthen our commitment to positive social and environmental impact

The UN SDGS form a blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. We identified 13 out of 17 SDGs that are central to our SER strategy (Social Environmental Responsibility strategy). We believe by doing so, we are the first schoolwear supplier who are putting a strategic focus on these high-level goals and mapping them across our value chain and measuring desired outcome. They are presented in full on pages 72–73.

WE ARE AT  
A GLOBAL  
TIPPING  
POINT FOR  
CHANGE

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/sixth-assessment-report-working-group-3/>

<sup>8</sup> Education Secretary puts climate change at the heart of education - <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/education-secretary-puts-climate-change-at-the-heart-of-education--2>



## Committed to a transparent, ethically responsible supply chain.

### We have been members of Sedex since 2006

We only work with suppliers that share our values about sustainability and are committed to achieving environmental, social, and ethical excellence in the supply and manufacture of our schoolwear and sportswear and responsible sourcing of sustainable fabrics such as recycled polyester or biodegradable viscose and associated packaging. We have for many years taken a leading stance on ethical trading<sup>9</sup> and are committed to improving the working conditions of those within our global supply chain through a robust ethical audit process with Sedex, one of the world's leading ethical trade service providers. We require all our overseas suppliers to be members of Sedex and complete third party (SMETA or equivalent) audits to Sedex 4-Pillar measurement criteria (includes extended environment and business ethics). Sedex incorporates the ETI<sup>10</sup> base code and local laws as a monitoring standard. Of course, it goes without saying that we ensure all suppliers comply with the Modern Slavery Act 2015.<sup>11</sup>

## Regulation & Compliance

We are aware that more and more regulations are being introduced and the government are likely to expand this in the future as we move post COVID-19 to the "new normal" with the drive towards net zero and a circular economy, elevating sustainability even further on the agenda. The plastic packaging tax introduction (effective 1 April 2022) is a new regulation that we are fully complying with, and since the initial consultation on this in January 2021 we have been following the government updates to ensure we have everything in place ready for the first reporting deadline in July 2022. In September 2021 we were also aware of guidance published by the CMA for businesses and consumers regarding Green Claims relating to eco products and services. As a responsible business we have always substantiated all eco/green claims with independent certified standards and accreditations and will continue to do so.

Working with the CBI has helped us keep pace with what's current and what's coming down the line regarding government regulations and policies and gaining valuable insights from panel discussions regarding net zero and ESG factors.

# Our Approach

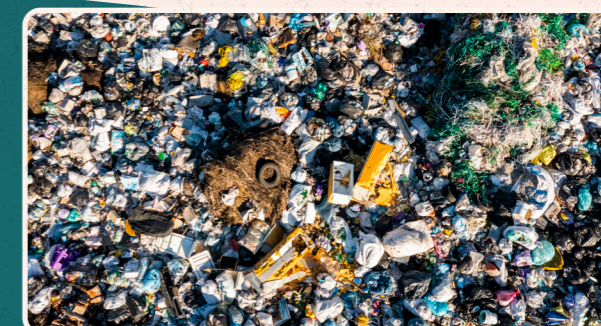
## To becoming a better, more sustainable business

### Responsibility Focus

As the UK's leading supplier of schoolwear we recognise that we have a responsibility to:



**Respond to global environmental issues, climate change, biodiversity loss and resource depletion.**



**Do whatever we can to reduce our environmental footprint and pollution.**



**Help keep global warming below 1.5 degrees.**



**Drive positive social impact 'for good'.**

Schoolchildren today are passionate advocates of zero emissions and a circular economy. Our approach to sustainability and ethical trading resonates with their aims and will increasingly be a competitive advantage for Banner.

**"Banner's approach to sustainability demonstrates best practice by considering not just the environmental aspect but also social value."**

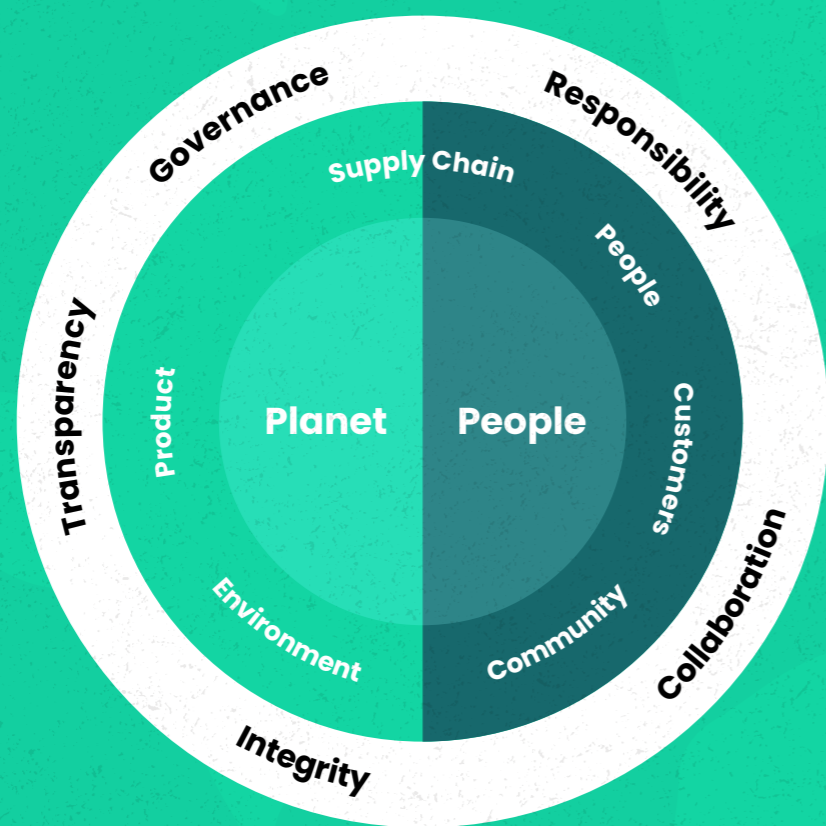
**Sara Tomley, Deputy Director, CBI Southwest**



# Our Vision & Strategy

## A holistic approach

We have a very clear vision and strategy. It's built on 3 key ambitions with a long-term focus. One of the key things that really sets us apart from the competition is that we take a holistic approach to sustainability.



### Responsibility Vision

"To have a net positive impact on the planet and the people that we engage through our activities"

### Environmental Vision

"To transform the market's product cycle from 'brown to green'"

### Commercial Vision

"Deliver competitive advantage - by doing the right thing"

As a strategic priority, sustainability aligns closely with our values framework too. "Making the right calls" and "in it together" are two of our company values which are intrinsic to our sustainability and people plans. They are helping us to embed sustainability into the culture of our business and guide every decision we make across the 6 sustainability pillars that we refer to as our "framework for change". Each pillar is critical to protecting the planet and people.

# Our 6 Sustainability Pillars



## Supply Chain

We ensure that the overseas supplier factories producing our brochure stock are all Sedex members and audited to ensure compliance with Sedex 4 Pillar / SMETA Audits (which includes extended business ethics and environmental measures).



## Environment

We are focused on reducing our environmental footprint and maintaining our carbon neutral status. We are also working with our supplier factories to reduce water consumption, waste and conserve energy.



## Product

We design and source the best products sustainably and have launched a full range of innovative eco products made from recycled polyester and biodegradable viscose.



## Community

We are "Giving Back" to local community projects and charities with fundraising and the "Gift Of Time" for our employee volunteering programme.



## Customer

We actively engage with our customers to get their views on eco issues, record and act on their feedback to shape the future strategy and green initiatives. We are also supporting their sustainability journey and delivering a faultless service.



## People

We ensure our employees' voices are heard through an annual engagement survey and "pulse" surveys to ensure that they feel "safe, supported and understood" and also through a structured programme of well-being, mental health support and engagement activities.



# Governance & Resourcing

## Collaboration = Progress

The SER<sup>12</sup> Governance team is made up of 6 Exec. level members, representing functional areas such as Finance, Operations, HR, Marketing & Design, Retail and Buying, the Sustainability Manager and Community Lead across the Banner Group. The team meet monthly to discuss, review and have oversight on progress with initiatives and marketing outputs. Robust governance ensures that we collectively “make the right calls” when it comes to ethical and sustainable decision-making.



## SER Governance Team

### Trowbridge



### Altrincham



## Our Dream “Green” Team

We have expanded our brilliant cross-functional team of passionate sustainability volunteers to 20 across the Banner Group, simply because we have more people requesting to join who are wanting to drive change (which of course is fantastic). The SER Stars<sup>13</sup> are helping to deliver our green initiatives across our 6 sustainability pillars while still carrying out their normal day job responsibilities. They support on the ground actions and getting stuff done! Their collective efforts, commitment and innovative ideas during our monthly meeting discussions have really had a positive impact on the progress we have made on our sustainability journey and wider engagement with colleagues. Internal campaigns supporting our environmental and social goals that they have helped develop and implement, include our Waste Nothing Campaign (Don't Waste Energy) and Ditch the Plastic (single use drinks bottle). When it comes to community and fundraising for charitable causes they also get stuck in, encouraging colleagues to get involved and donate where they can.



We are very proud of our SER Teams and Product and Buying teams, and what has been achieved through a collaborative team effort! They are a shining example of living our values “**Making the Right Calls**” and “**In it Together**”.



“I love being with a team of like-minded people who I can share and develop ideas to improve our working environment and minimise waste.”

**Jess Davies, QC Supervisor, Trowbridge**



“With sustainability growing in importance for schools, I wanted to get a deeper knowledge and understanding so that I am equipped to deal with questions from schools and pupils relating to our eco ranges, ethical trading and responsible sourcing.”

**Kel Monstad, Senior Area Sales Manager, Monkhouse**



“Plastic is a huge concern of mine and when I first spoke with Sarah I was so happy to learn that packaging is a key strategic priority for the Group and real progress is being made. It's great knowing that as a SER Star my voice is heard and I really feel I can make a difference.”

**Arpana Hathi, Internal Recruiter**



“I love being involved with supporting textile recycling and charity donations and the “Gift of Time” community volunteering programme. As a SER Star I feel really involved with what we are doing right across the business and am able to share this knowledge with the rest of the team at Seaham.”

**Helen Thompson, Senior Pattern Technologist, Seaham**



# Responsible Supply Chain From Source to Retail Store

Not only are we working to have the most sustainable and ethically sourced supply chain in our industry, we want to have the best independent accreditation too. This gives customers confidence in our products and service, confirming the difference we are making with verifiable results.

To achieve this, we work exclusively with suppliers and agents who share our vision for sustainability, forming long term partnerships that support the necessary investments on their part. The first thing we discuss with any new partner is their adherence to the ethical code of conduct for our supply chain, sourcing and manufacturing. Every partner we work with must also sign Banner's Supplier Code of Conduct which sets out our expectations of working conditions. In practice, we have been working with some of our suppliers for over 20 years, and it's these long-standing relationships that are critical to making further and rapid progress together.

For 16 years we've been a member of Sedex (Supplier Ethical Data Exchange), the leading worldwide ethical trade service provider, working to improve working conditions in global supply chains. We believe we are the first company in the UK schoolwear industry to set Sedex 4-Pillar as the minimum audit standard for all our suppliers to comply with. Sedex 4-Pillar SMETA includes extended environmental and business ethics measures, using best practice methodology in supply chain auditing.

In addition to meeting these high standards, we want to go further and faster. Our aim is to materially improve the sustainability performance of our overseas supply chain, working collaboratively to develop even more stretching environmental and social targets. This is why we plan to go beyond the Sedex 4-Pillar, including measuring and reducing greenhouse gas emissions, water usage, waste, and social impacts. Ultimately, we want all our suppliers to adopt the same low carbon principles as Banner and have a net positive impact on the environment and their local communities.

We know that our supply chain is where the most carbon intensive activity takes place across our operations. That's why we've focused so intensely on this area, voluntarily adopting the measurement of our Scope 3 emissions in 2022. By way of preparation, we conducted our own detailed sustainability audit with each of our suppliers in September 2021, comprising detailed questions on Accreditations & Business Ethics, Environmental performance and Community & People.

The insights that we've gained from this audit are helping us to shape the standards we expect going forward, blending ambitious goals with realistic and achievable targets. We plan to finalise and implement these standards by the end of 2022. We've recently contacted all our suppliers to keep them informed of the progress, indicating the new mandatory requirements and the short to medium-term goals we would like them to work to. It's all part of working together to drive progress in an open and transparent manner, using audits and data to keep us on track and set new and exciting directions for the future.

Country of Origin	Number of Tier 1 Supplier Factories*	Sedex 2-Pillar	Sedex 4-Pillar OR Equivalent	Sedex 4-Pillar due for completion Q3 2022
Bangladesh	5	1	3	1
Cambodia	1			1
China	14	1	11	2
Laos	4		1	3
Pakistan	5		5	
Philippines	1		1	
Turkey	1		1	
UK	1		1	
Vietnam	3		2	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>8</b>

Table 1 - Tier 1 Overseas Wholesale Suppliers for Banner brochure stock in 2021.

"We work with suppliers who share our commitment to decent working conditions and welfare of their workforce, who are ethically audited using the Sedex SMETA audit methodology, and are committed to reducing the environmental impacts of their operations"

**Julie Marshall, Buying Director, Wholesale**



**Our Supply Chain**



# What We Have Achieved

1

100% of overseas suppliers for brochure stock are members of Sedex.

2

74% of these Tier 1 Wholesale Suppliers have completed both Sedex 2 & 4-Pillar SMETA or equivalent audits.

3

100% of all overseas factory workers have been double vaccinated and quite a lot of factory owners have paid for these vaccinations, including boosters, to ensure their workers' health, safety and protection.



4

100% of our overseas suppliers completed the Banner Sustainability Audit in 2021. From the detailed responses we have been able to highlight some great examples by our suppliers of best practice in areas such as environmental and community support. See both case studies from 2 of our supplier factories on pages 36-37.

5

Despite the challenges with Covid, shipping delays and container shortages we worked closely with our supply chain partners to mitigate this and ensure that schoolchildren received their uniforms on time for their first day back at school. Our long-term relationships helped in this area.

## Sustainability is a key criterion, within our supplier tender process.

Because we have been working with our agents for many years, they know and understand our requirements and do all the groundwork in respect of proposing any new factories. Tenders are given for 2 or 3 years, and points are awarded on the evidence submitted. Through our tendering process we started working with a new factory in Bangladesh and successfully transitioned some production of our best-selling Ziggy's Eco blazer with them.

We insist that in all factories we have independent and dedicated QC personnel that ensure and maintain consistency in delivering high quality standards of finished goods.

We issued our updated **Modern Slavery Transparency Statement**<sup>14</sup> in Q2 2021 (June 2021). Our next statement is due by the end of Q2 2022.

Our buying and sustainability teams have strengthened their relationship with the Sedex team. They take every opportunity to attend relevant training webinars, keeping up to date with developments relating to all the tools available and system upgrades for reporting purposes. They ensure we maximise the detailed level of reporting open to us and closer monitoring and management of risks/compliance as a Buyer/Supplier member. A total of 17 hours training/webinars were completed with Sedex in 2021 and 7.5 hours training with Better Cotton.



6

7

8

9

# Improvements & Actions

## 1 Transparency of Environmental Impacts of our Supply Chain

Through our own audit/survey in 2021 we have found that some of the suppliers we work with actually use the Higg Index already with other customers they deal with. We are still researching this including the financial implications for our suppliers to join and are waiting for the Sedex partnership with the Higg Co High Facility Environmental module to be fully integrated within the new Sedex reporting system. Higg Index is a standardised apparel and footwear industry tool that provides metrics to assess a supplier's environmental performance. The partnership is still in the planning stages and a definitive go live date has not been confirmed as yet.

## 2 Scope 3 Carbon Emissions - Value Chain

We are committed to measuring our full Scope 3 carbon footprint which will involve collating data from all our suppliers for 2022.

## 3 Reduce Carbon Emissions and Pollution

All our factories in Laos for example are using 100% green energy for all their sites which is great news. Measuring and reducing carbon emissions as well as water usage, reducing waste and pollution from manufacturing will also be incorporated within the new supplier standards and targets we will set as part of their reduction plans in Q3 2022.

## 4 Understanding our Raw Materials Footprint

Our commitment to measuring our full scope 3 carbon footprint in 2022 will require full traceability of the end-to-end sourcing in manufacturing Banner garments, including sourcing of yarn, trims from the mills and dye houses.

## 5 Reduction in Plastic Packaging

Our goal is to remove single use packaging from our global supply chain. By the end of 2022 we hope to have removed more than 1 million single use plastic bags from our supply chain. Working collaboratively with academia (Heriot Watt) will help us accelerate this journey and go further.

## 6 Expanding Our Overseas Supply Base Through Tendering

With existing agents, we have opened up the tendering process for 2022 to more factories and are engaging with 8 new ones that all meet the criteria/standards we set. We are able to be flexible and agile in this process because of the strength of the relationship we have with our agents who also complete all the necessary due diligence work for us.

## 7 Secondary Sourcing

We are secondary sourcing on a lot of products to reduce the risk and continue to closely manage fabric supply and quality and ensure continuity of supply to our customers.

## 8 Mitigating Impact of the Pandemic on Deliveries

Due to the impact of the pandemic, container shortages and inflated costs of containers in 2021 and continued lockdowns overseas, we have as a group made the decision to pull our buying plans forward to bring product in earlier from all of our suppliers in 2022.

## 9 Retail Supply Base Accountability

The same level of accountability in terms of ethical and environmental standards is applied to our retail supply chain.

## 10 Audits/Factory Visits

All factories have to complete a Sedex SAQ (Self-assessment questionnaire). An SAQ is a set of questions that gives details about workforce and management systems on site. As a Sedex A/B member Banner has access to Sedex's risk assessment tool, Radar, which helps us to manage our supply chain and indicates social and environmental risks.

The benefits of this are: 1) Improved visibility of global supply chains 2) Actionable, prioritized information 3) Improved methodology to more effectively capture site-based risk. 4) The SAQ is aligned with SMETA 6.1 audit and its four pillars 5) Provides a management controls' report giving each supplier a score against the 4 SMETA pillars of Labour, Health and Safety, Environment and Business ethics.

We are looking to use Sedex Virtual audits with some factories that have not been able to complete their audit in 2021 due to local lockdowns and travel restrictions have continued into 2022.

As soon as it's safe to do so we will carry out factory visits ourselves to complete our own internal audits and inspections. We hope to visit Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia at the end of 2022.

## Supporting SDGs





# Case Study 1

## APTUS Essentials Supplier Factory, Pakistan

### Accreditations

ISO9001, ISO 14001 & Sedex 4-Pillar compliant.

### Business Ethics

100% of the workforce are paid above the minimum wage set by the local government and all qualify for additional benefits such as a pension and are also covered through group life assurance.

The factory runs an apprenticeship programme covering a range of skills such as mechanical, electrical, processing, fabrication, accounting functions across different departments. On an annual basis they recruit up to 20 young people into the apprenticeship programme.

The young people benefit from receiving a fair wage and are supported with skills training and development in their selected areas for a couple of months.



### Environment



They have processes in place to effectively manage and reduce the environmental impacts of their operations. All sewing machines have been switched to Servo motors which is the latest method to save energy. These motors only consume energy when they are operational. They actually consume ¼ of the energy compared to old vending motors.

LED lights are being installed throughout the factory. Currently the installation stands at 30% and will be 70% by the end of 2022.



Further investment in solar PV is planned which will help to reduce their environmental footprint further.

They have planted 150 trees around their factory site with a further 700 trees planned to be planted around their knitting facility.

### Community

**Safe Drinking Water** – They have sponsored the installation of 3 RO Plants in rural communities, providing safe drinking water for c.45,000 people as follows:

First RO Plant:  
**Supporting c. 20,000 People**

Second RO Plant:  
**Supporting c. 10,000 People**

Third RO Plant:  
**Supporting c. 15,000 People**

They are also in talks with the Government to support a Girls High School (500 pupils), which is located in a rural area, with clean, safe drinking water and basic necessities and will share updates with us when available.

# Case Study 2

## Polyester Suiting Supplier Factory, Bangladesh

### Accreditations

Sedex 4-Pillar, Higg & STeP certified

### Environment

The factory has a very good environmental management with a responsible focus on reducing its emissions and reducing energy consumption. They are already working with a third party carbon specialist inspector to assess and measure their Greenhouse gas emissions.

The factory has a 25MW solar panel system and use CFS free (Chlorofluorocarbon) air conditioning which is installed throughout the site. All the sewing machines have Servo motors. LED lights are installed throughout.



They also have a tree planting campaign to sequester carbon at their site.

### Community

They provide school essentials to all workers' children and give financial support to a local orphanage.



### Business Ethics

They provide great welfare and health support to its workers. They have a medical facility on site that includes 2 x 4 bed wards (one male ward and one female ward) plus 2 emergency beds in the on site doctor's room. They provide comprehensive medical services to their staff as follows:



- See and attend patients
- Medical fitness for workers
- Medical check-up for pregnant workers
- Maintain an injury register and maternity register
- Organised training delivered on First Aid and HIV
- Provide discounted sanitary towels to female workers
- Child care facilities for all workers.





# Collaboration = Progress

At Banner, we pride ourselves on presenting our customers with the broadest range of uniform and sportswear, and our progress in developing sustainable product has led us to quickly offer one of the biggest and best eco ranges in the schoolwear sector. Our collaborative approach to teamwork both internally and with our fantastic suppliers has enabled us to build upon our eco range, utilising recycled polyester, biodegradable viscose, and sustainably sourced cotton across nearly 60% of our entire product offer.

materials which suit low washing temperatures to minimise energy consumption and are reducing our use of plastic through our revised eco product packaging initiative. We greatly recognise the necessity and demand for sustainable uniform and sportswear, which is why our focus remains on this exciting area of development.

Our approach to responsible design has evolved over the years and we now consciously select

To certify our sustainable materials, each are independently tested for durability, quality and safety and are then asserted to relevant industry standards such as GRS Global Recycling Standard (Bronze to Gold). This ensures that our customers can feel confident and assured when purchasing Banner eco product.

"We are more than halfway towards achieving our 2025 target of successfully transitioning 100% of the Banner product range to eco, achieving our exciting 'Head to Toe in Eco' initiative."

**Emma Connelly, Product Director, Banner Group**



# Our Product

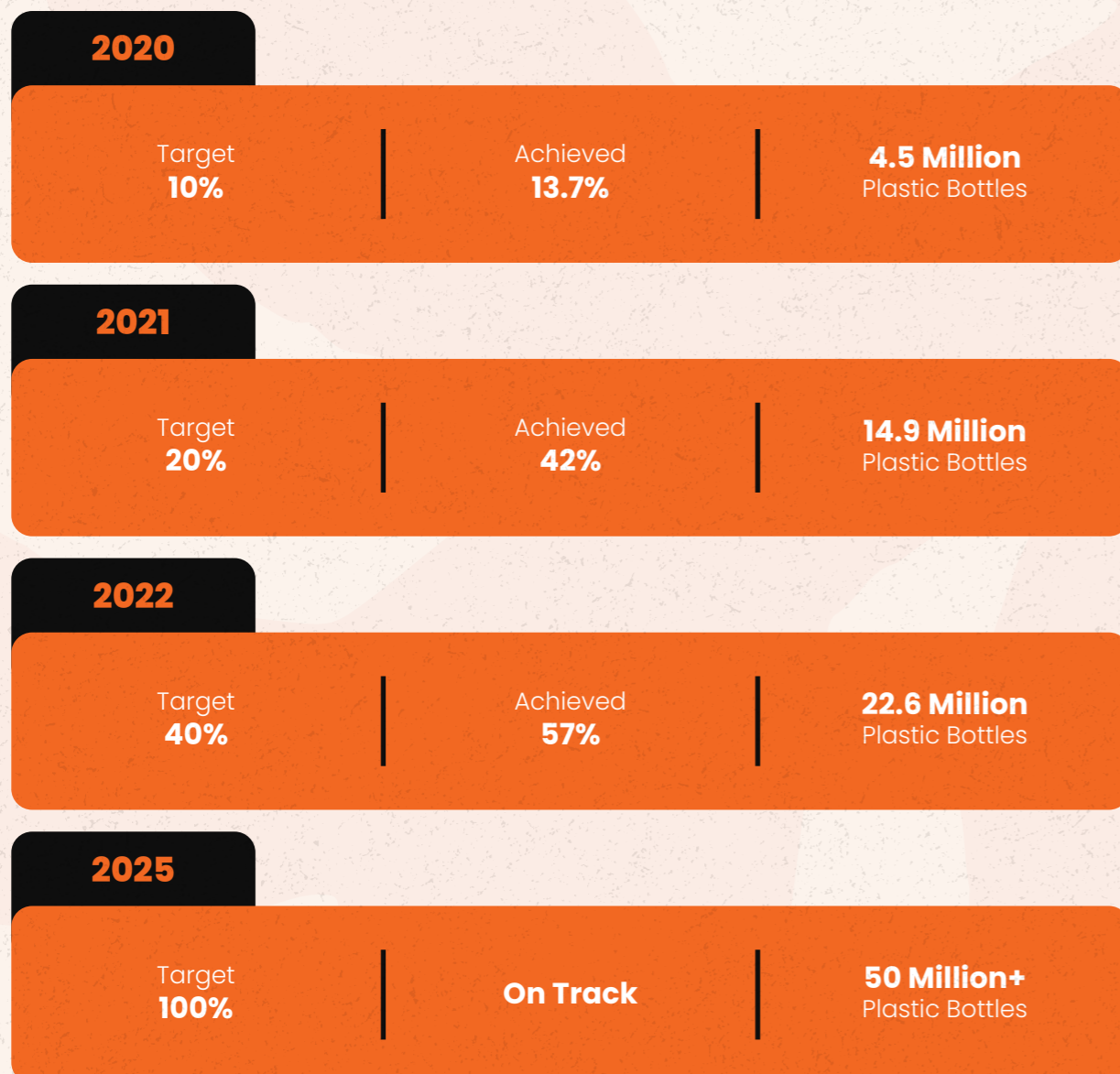


# What We Have Achieved

## Wholesale Product

We have accelerated our transition plans to eco<sup>15</sup> and smashed our 2021 target.

### Aims



2

The full Signature, Ziggy, and Designer ranges have now transitioned to eco, and are made from **100% recycled polyester (PET)<sup>16</sup> certified to Gold Standard<sup>17</sup>** for all main outer fabric and internal linings. The sustainable fabric for these Blazers and Jackets contain up to 48 recycled plastic bottles, and our trousers and skirts contain up to 26 recycled plastic bottles.

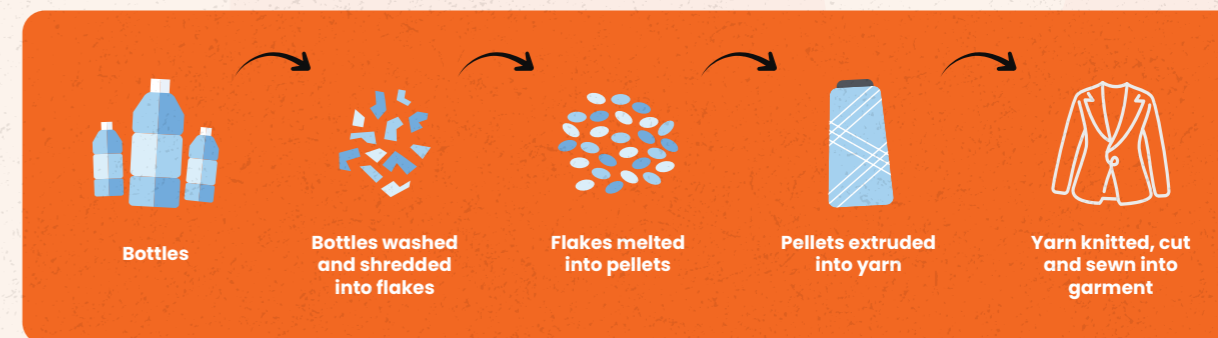


Figure 1: Recycled polyester process

3

Our shirt and blouse product offer has transitioned to eco with updated **sustainable packaging**.

Many of our boys' trousers have also made the transition over to eco, created from **65% recycled Polyester and 35% biodegradable viscose main fabric**. Up to 11 recycled plastic bottles are recycled to produce the polyester for each of these styles.

5

Our Champion Tee is made from 100% Cotton and is **OEKO-TEX Standard 100 certified**, which means that every component of the garment has been tested for harmful substances.

The Classic range of sweatshirts, jog pant and polo have all transitioned to eco. The Classic Polo fabric is **produced from up to 15 recycled plastic bottles** and all of our Classic Sweat product is **OEKO-TEX Standard 100 certified**.

7

100% of the Polyester used in the girls trouser and skirt styles that have transitioned to eco is produced from recycled bottles, **that's up to 17 bottles per product**. We have also added waist-adjusters into all our girls' skirts for our eco transition.

In September 2021 Banner became members of Better Cotton, the largest cotton sustainability programme in the world. Better Cotton aims to transform cotton production globally and **supports 2.4 million cotton farmers**, across 25 countries, training them in sustainable agricultural practices. **We are aiming to source 50% of our cotton as Better Cotton by 2025.**

## Packaging

We are committed to reducing single use plastic packaging wherever we can. In an effort to make this change, moving forward, our shirt and blouse packaging will be **100% recycled and recyclable**.

**We are also working towards moving all eco product polybags to 100% recycled sources and ensuring that they can be recycled after use from 2023.**

9

11



We continue to use **FSC certified Card** for our garment swing tickets.

<sup>15</sup> By eco we mean that garments are made from sustainable fabrics such as recycled polyester or biodegradable viscose and are certified to GRS standards (bronze to gold).

<sup>16</sup> PET (Polyethylene Terephthalate) a plastic resin that is made from recycled plastic bottles.

<sup>17</sup> Gold Standard is the highest possible standard certified and audited by GRS (Global Recycling Standard) to verify that the garment is made from 95-100% recycled content.





**Ziggys Blazer**  
Made from 100% Recycled Polyester (Certified gold standard by GRS)

Up to **48**  
plastic bottles are recycled to produce the polyester for this product.



**Prestwick Tartan Pinafore**  
Made from 65% Recycled Polyester, 35% Biodegradable Viscose

Up to **11**  
plastic bottles are recycled to produce the polyester for this product.



**Kelso Tartan Kilt**  
Made from 65% Recycled Polyester, 35% Biodegradable Viscose

Up to **9**  
plastic bottles are recycled to produce the polyester for this product.



**Avon Dress**  
Made from 65% Recycled Polyester, 35% Cotton

Up to **7**  
plastic bottles are recycled to produce the polyester for this product.

# Improvements & Actions

- 1 Increase independent testing of products including measurement of microfibres to limit microfibre pollution.
- 2 Continue to collaborate with wider teams at Banner and also within the wider textile market to research new innovations in renewable fabrics to minimise both waste and pollution.
- 3 Move away from the linear model of “take and make” to circular model “Made to be made again” closing the loop on design and manufacture of our garments in the process and find ways of sustainably disposing of waste fabrics.



- 4 Reduce the amount of plastic weight and content in our garment hangers and ensure they are recyclable.
- 5 Work with academia to support our journey towards circularity with garments and associated packaging.

## Supporting SDGs





# Together for the Planet

In our business the planet is a key stakeholder, as are the children who wear our garments and the communities we serve. This means we embrace our responsibility to put back into nature what we take out, seeking to achieving circularity that minimises the impact of our operations. To make even greater progress we're adding to our in-house expertise by forming partnerships with academia and industry leaders in the wider textile market.

The textile industry is the second biggest polluting industry globally, responsible for 8-10% of the world's carbon emissions. That's why we place a heavy emphasis on the environmental aspect of our sustainability strategy. It's also why we intend to go bigger, better and bolder with our environmental commitments, investing in projects that reduce our Green House Gas emissions and reduce or eliminate any detrimental impact on biodiversity.

In recent years we've worked hard to diligently measure and monitor the carbon footprint for our UK operations. We now plan to go

further, measuring our Scope 3 carbon footprint (which includes our full value chain) in 2022. As part of this process, we will seek to use renewable and green alternatives across our value chain; we'll also be supporting biodiversity and nature in the UK by planting woodland which helps offset our carbon emissions.

Sustainable packaging is a parallel priority. We are all aware of the impact that plastic pollution can have on biodiversity, with public perceptions irreversibly changed by shocking images of ocean turtles surrounded by waste that have gone viral around the world. The children who wear our garments are now demanding that businesses are proactive in reducing plastic pollution which they rightly see as essential for the health of our planet.

Here at Banner we want to be part of the solution not the problem, which is why we are taking the action we can today and collaborating with academia to help us make progress on for the future. It's all part of doing the right thing for the children who wear our garments, for future generations and ultimately the planet and all of nature.

# Our Environment



"Decarbonisation itself is not enough. We have to also address biodiversity loss too which means more reuse of existing resources, consuming less and wasting nothing"

**Sarah Robins, Sustainability Manager, Banner Group**



**We are carbon neutral for our UK Operations in 2021**

# What We Have Achieved

1

## CLIMATE NEUTRAL NOW



We joined Climate Neutral Now Initiative in March 2021 and pledged our support to the global race to net zero by 2050.

2



In March 2021 we planted a woodland of 246 trees near Builth Wells, Wales as part of our blended approach to our offset plan, to take action in the UK and overseas that had a strong biodiversity and nature focus.

9Trees matched that brief perfectly with the woodland being an ideal environment for wildlife to flourish and we have added a further 300 trees to the same woodland. It's not only a great way to sequester carbon but it also provides a lasting legacy that we can all be proud of.

**“Cherish the natural world, because you're part of it and you depend on it.”**  
- Sir David Attenborough

3

We implemented a **100% green energy** strategy in 2020 and by the end of 2021 all main office sites including our DCs and 65% of our retail sites were moved to green/renewable energy. The remaining 35% of retail sites will move as and when existing contract dates permit.

4

LED transition programme continues. Our Trowbridge DC at Kennet Way was already at **75% LED lighting**. Our Trowbridge Kennet Way canteen/restroom was upgraded to LED and our refit programme for 5 stores were all fitted with LED lighting.

5

We recycled **92.07 tonnes** of baled cardboard in total for the Group in 2021 which is over a **130% increase on 2020** which was 41 tonnes.

6

We measured our Group packaging footprint in 2021. Our plastic footprint was c.250 tons and our carton footprint was c.180 tons. The good news is that all the carton packaging we use is made from recycled material and some is FSC accredited. All the plastic mailing bags we use have a minimum of 30% recycled content and are recyclable.

7

Consumables – we continue to use **100% recycled paper at all our UK sites**.

8

Our Group company vehicle policy is 100% hybrid/electric. **67% of our company fleet is hybrid/electric and 18% is fully Electric currently**. The remaining vehicles will move to hybrid/electric once the contract renewal dates are up.



9

We have continued to remove single use plastic bags from our supply chain, **500,000 annually** and plan to go further with this in 2022.

10

We have reduced our printed Marketing collateral by 50% using FSC accredited paper. In line with our sustainability goals we launched a Media Hub, a digital resource platform in March 2021 to encourage our customers to move to digital downloads. **Our Sustainability section was the most downloaded section in 2021!**

11

We completed our first full year working with our **“zero to landfill”** waste management company, Futur First manage all waste streams at our Trowbridge sites. The accuracy and level of monthly reporting they provide for each type of waste that is removed from site means we have really good quality data when measuring our annual footprint and will help us in finding ways to reduce waste and recycle more. Our retail sites' waste is handled by Biffa.

12

DPD our 3PL provider have **more than doubled their EV fleet** to nearly 1,500 in 2021.



2,936 DPD parcel deliveries to Banner customers in the UK were delivered by EV in 2021. **That's a 430% on 2020!** It's great to see that in the process we have saved 1,262 kg of CO<sub>2</sub>.

14

**14.9 million plastic bottles** were recycled in 2021 to make the eco garments we sold. By 2025 that number could look something like 50 million+!



We have successfully driven engagement with colleagues with our **SER “Waste Nothing” Campaigns** in 2021 to raise

awareness and encourage energy saving behaviours and a move to a refill drinks bottle model – ditch the single use plastic bottles. This campaign is ongoing and really helped to keep the discussion alive as well as provide easy actions that could be taken now by everyone to help reduce our emissions and reduce plastic.

15

16

One of the big focus areas in 2021 was packaging and a commitment to ensuring that all packaging is sustainably sourced by 2025. Some actions we took:

Continue to remove single use plastic from our supply chain – **500,000 annually**.

Set up a dedicated **Packaging Project team** with all key decision makers together as it's a key strategic priority.

Completed our **Group Packaging Audit** to understand what our total plastic and carton footprint looked like as well as our potential tax liability for the plastic packaging tax effective 1 April 2022 and future EPR regulations.

All eco products being launched for 2023 will be delivered with sustainable packaging that is made from **100% recycled plastic and can be recycled**.

Continue to use **millions of plastic bottles** to produce recycled polyester fabric used in our garments and thus preventing them from going to landfill.

In November 2021, we **enlisted the help of academia** with the right expertise to help us tackle this systematically.



# Improvements & Actions

- 1** Reducing our Scope 1 and 2+ emissions is our first target and involves focussing on our carbon emissions' hotspots, Energy and Travel and implement our comprehensive reduction plan. The plan includes systematic tracking energy use at all sites and the move to 100% renewable energy for all Group sites, continue to phase out fossil fuel vehicles, encourage use of public transport where possible.
- 2** Re-evaluate the financial viability of installing a large solar PV system on the Canal Road warehouse roof in Trowbridge. This will provide annual reductions in carbon emissions of 10%.
- 3** Revisit EV commercial viability for the vans that operate out of our Group DCs. Our goal eventually, once the EV infrastructure is right is to have a company car fleet that is 100% EV. This would save us 100 tonnes of carbon based on the current carbon profile calculations.
- 4** With the climate emergency demanding more action and for us to become fully carbon neutral we are prioritizing our full Scope 3 emissions which are the indirect emissions released upstream and downstream in our value chain. We are committed to including Scope 3 for our supply chain in our 2022 carbon footprint profile.
- 5** Working closely with our supply chain partners to reduce their environmental footprint and support them on their carbon neutral journey and meeting Banner's new standards.
- 6** Keep working to find a sustainable and commercial solution to recycle/re-purpose textiles at end of life and get used surplus textiles back into the supply chain to achieve circularity.
- 7** Develop a transformational packaging strategy that delivers a net positive impact on the environment and reduces our plastic footprint by 50% by 2025 and 100% of our plastic packaging and carton packaging will be sourced using recycled materials and not from virgin sources. We are currently trialling a "skinny" hanger with 30% less recycled plastic and exploring a solution to collect used hangers and to recycle them. Watch this space!
- 8** Improve waste management and better recycling across all sites through closer monitoring of waste collections, better education on categories of waste (general & mixed recyclables), and wider engagement and increasing awareness through our "Waste Nothing" campaigns and advocacy from our own SER Stars teams and the introduction of "Waste Nothing" squads on all our sites.
- 9** Keep collaborating and researching options to ensure that the fabrics we resource for our garments come from renewable sources.

## Supporting SDGs



# Case Study



## Innovation: Collaboration: Progress

We scoped out a packaging reduction project to collaborate with academia and are working with a multi-disciplinary team from Heriot Watt an award-winning Business School, of top academics and industry professionals. Edinburgh Business School at Heriot-Watt is proudly leading on Policy, Society and Finance theme in a major £4.4M UKRI Interdisciplinary Centre for the Circular Chemical Economy (CircularChem). The team comprise of a business performance specialist, a circular economy specialist, a product specialist and a sustainable materials specialist.



Banner has 3 main long-term goals from this research project and they are:



**Remove as much packaging as we can without compromising garment integrity.**



**The packaging that is left to be as low an environmental impact as possible.**



**Close the loop on packaging with the end consumer, ensuring it can be recycled/reused and does not end up as waste in landfill**

The project proposal was signed off in November 2021 and comprises:

**Phase 1)** A research phase to get under the skin of the problem and understand Banner's supply chain from end to end.

**Phase 2)** The implementation phase that will be defined by the results and recommendations of Phase 1.

We have had a number of meetings with the team including a face to face workshop and site meeting with key personnel from Supply Chain, Purchasing, Operations and Finance and also included tours of our DCs in full flow as well as MS Teams meetings to review progress which have gone really well.

The team have all the data regarding the material specifications and weights of all packaging including hangers and kimbles and have mapped our supply chain from end to end to complete their modelling and analysis. We are due to receive their recommendations in a full report in Q2 2022.

**We are delighted to be collaborating with such a dynamic team and excited at the opportunity this potentially will bring in terms of innovation and progress in reducing, reuse and recycling packaging.**



## On The Journey Together

We know that bringing customers with us on our sustainability journey is vital to its success, and indeed, to all our futures. That's why we're listening to and involving not just our retailers, but also schools and schoolchildren. And it's also why we're working hard to ensure our supply chain responds to their concerns and meets their needs as we transition to new ways of working and more sustainable production methods. Furthermore, as the market-leading supplier, we want to share our expertise, providing support, advice and materials that will truly help our customers make changes and embrace sustainability goals.

It's therefore pleasing to see the take-up of our new Media hub and note that the sustainability section has the highest number of downloads from registered customers. We've clear feedback too, that practical advice and actionable tips need to sit side by side with insight on the industry and lobbying for change. The recent Department for Education Guidance on school tenders is an example of where we have sought to balance clear and accessible communication with more detailed workshops and even one to one support for those preparing and responding to tender requests.

And perhaps what's clearest of all is that sustainability is now an essential part of customer service. From eco products to ethical sourcing, giving back to living our values, we are integrating a more responsible and sustainable mindset into everything we do. The pace of that change means there will be some peaks and troughs, successes and missteps. What's important is that we are open and transparent so that we learn from these and improve for the future.

Any review of the last twelve months can't ignore that we've been living and working with the pandemic still prevailing. Almost all schoolwear retailers were closed for the first three months of 2021 and our supply chains saw continued severe disruption for much longer. We worked hard to adapt and it goes without saying that we aimed to deliver the highest level of service despite the trying circumstances.

And it's those schoolchildren who tell us they want to feel good about the clothes that they wear, and that we must all be more sustainable! We have a responsibility to listen to what they say and to involve them, our retail customers and schools in the actions we are taking in response to their concerns. As we look ahead, it's this multi-stakeholder collaboration that is going to shape the really big decisions we take - steering our service and its supporting supply chain in new and exciting directions.

Keeping everyone informed and onboard is one of our priorities. Last year we launched Insight our "voice of Schoolwear" quarterly publication providing information, interviews and guidance for retailers. It's an accessible showcase for what's new and topical. But we want to do more, with regular workshops, opportunities to meet at trade shows, school forums, and responsive feedback channels. The feedback from our customer survey indicated that we were the supplier of reliable industry information and especially so, within the sphere of sustainability. This is good to hear, but the journey still has a long way to go. We're excited about what's to come and committed to bringing our customers with us.

"Sustainability is becoming a very important factor for retailers when working with schools and even more important to the schoolchildren who wear our garments"

**Howard Wilder, Sales Director, Wholesale**



# Our Customers



# What We Have Achieved

## What Our Customers Say

"I'm hugely impressed by the pace at which Banner is embracing the challenge of sustainability and in particular their eco product offer. And it's good to see initiatives like the Media Hub and Insight helping small businesses like ours with the professional support we need when dealing with schools"



**Sean Foster, MD Fosters Schoolwear**

"Schools, pupils and parents are all demanding more, and sustainability is at the top of their wish list. It will require us to think differently and change how we work with schools and suppliers. I'm looking for partners who are prepared to innovate and support us in that journey. The advice and support we've received from Banner in a number of areas including for example school tenders has been first class."



**Paul Beresford, MD Uniform4Kids**

## 1 Engaging

Our annual customer survey gathers feedback on our service and strategy, providing us with valuable insights on what matters to our retailers, schools and schoolchildren. We follow through actions using our "green monitor" tracking system which logs eco issues and progress so that we deliver on the key issues.

## 2 Responding

In response to customer requests we have elevated improvement to our product packaging to become a key strategic focus in 2022. We are now working hard to find ways of reducing packaging and make what we do use as environmentally friendly as possible.

## 3 Marketing

Our marketing support is recognised as the 'best in our industry.' In the year we have delivered over 400 presentation packs to retailers/schools, helping them project a professional look and feel to their schools. Using contemporary lifestyle images we help retailers show their partner schools how a new uniform might look. Over 1/3 of customers are using our Media Hub with 16,146 downloads completed in 2021.

## 4 Communicating

Aiming to provide an authoritative but accessible voice of schoolwear **Insight Magazine** was launched in 2021. It has since swiftly become a highly regarded source of advice, information and guidance on topics that resonate with our schoolwear sector. Topics covered range from sustainability, expert interviews, legal guidance, product design and development, school and schoolchildren's perspectives. We have specifically sought and highlighted views on sustainability and eco products, as well as explaining Banner's mission.

## 5 Listening

As part of research we held a **focus group with local schoolchildren** to find out their thoughts on sustainability and eco school uniform. Dean Plant our Marketing Director was blown away by the response.

"Speaking to primary schoolchildren you realise these youngsters have grown up with a concern for the environment. From washing out yoghurt pots to reusing shopping bags, or even their parents driving hybrid cars, they are accustomed to thinking about the impacts of what we do and what we buy. It was also interesting when it came to their thoughts on school uniform that they didn't just look at style; some even talked of cool wash temperatures!"



**Dean Plant, Marketing Director, Banner Group**

## 6 Guiding

We have provided comprehensive advice to retailers on the recent guidance on tendering from the Department of Education. The progress that we made in our sustainability journey and eco/ethical credentials has been integrated into the support material so that retailers can provide a comprehensive and professional response to this critical aspect of school tenders.

## 7 Producing

We have developed a range of eco products made from ethically sourced and recycled fabrics and the transition to eco fabrics for our leading Ziggys blazer went smoothly with nothing wasted in the process – providing many lessons for future product development.

## 8 Learning

From service to sustainability, we seek to learn from both our successes and our failures, embedding a culture of continual improvement in everything we do. We believe that our performance assessments should be open and honest, calling out issues without fear of repercussions or falling into complacency.

## 9 The Extra Mile

All our customer facing teams seek to go the extra mile, founded on a commitment to serving customers and aligning with our company values of "Service is Everything" and "No Limits". Where we fall short, we work to explain the reasons and give customers practical alternatives.



# Improvements & Actions

- 1 Increase the level of engagement with “Banner Know How” seminars following a successful first session in February 2022, covering detailed advice regarding tenders, eco products, ethical trading, and sustainability.
- 2 Implementing a transformational packaging strategy.
- 3 Create and deliver a “green customer programme”.
- 4 Continue to invest in “accreditations” that elevate Banner’s Environmental and Social performance to actively make Banner a better business and a force for good e.g. B Corp.

# Case Study

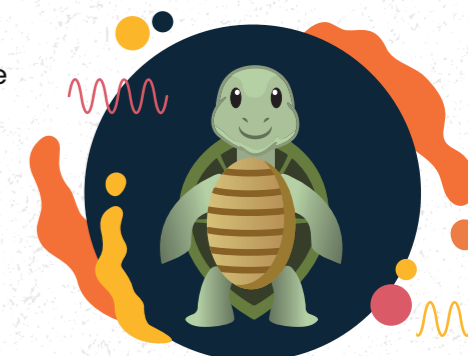
## Introducing Enzo

Enzo is our sustainability symbol and is designed to help retailers and our wearers recognise the positive impact we’re making on the environment through our internal initiatives, and the eco products we produce.

It’s true that young people today are even more aware of the importance of sustainability, and we hope that Enzo can help them to explore this subject further. When they see our Enzo symbol in their eco uniform, they can feel proud and confident that they are helping to drive change.

As we continue on our sustainability journey, Enzo will be recognised more and more throughout our range of products and will also become a direct voice to students.

Retailers who share our vision for a sustainable future and offer our eco range to schools and students will be able to use Enzo as a mascot for their sustainability efforts too. We will be designing Point of Sale materials to help retailer voice their eco values through Enzo.



**Dean Plant, Marketing Director,  
Banner Group**

## Supporting SDGs







## Giving Back Where it Matters

This year was another year where community and “giving back” became even more important. Local good causes need more help than ever before which is why Community is one of our SER focus areas.

Our workplace colleagues are highly engaged in fundraising and “giving back” to support our local communities, genuinely seeking to provide help where and when it’s needed. Reflecting on what we’ve collectively achieved in 2021 is truly inspiring. Mindful that Covid 19 limited our face to face involvement, we tailored our support to those areas where we could still make a difference, such as food bank donations, supporting organisations helping to reduce food poverty, and helping charities with clothing donations and fundraising activities.

In November, we were delighted to launch our Group wide “Gift of Time” employee volunteering programme. This allows all of our 318 employees

to take at least one day off annually to participate in volunteering activities that align with our SER goals.

On a global level, a number of our overseas supplier factories have implemented community support programmes that benefit their workers and families, focused on doing good in the localities where they are based. It’s also great to have the enthusiastic support of our SER Stars who help to shape what we do and promote participation with their colleagues in the new “Gift of Time” programme.

And finally... we recently set up a dedicated fundraising team, called the FundSquad, that comprises both SER Stars and other committed colleagues with a passion for supporting good causes and giving back where it matters most.

# Our Community



“We want to become a force for good and make a difference to people’s lives, creating positive social impacts using the skills and resources we have at Banner and support where help is needed.”

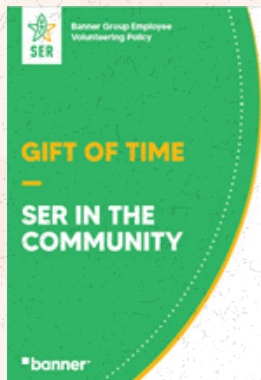
**Debbie Gillespie, Community Lead, Banner Group**



# What We Have Achieved

1

## "Gift of Time"



Our structured Giving back, Group Community Volunteering Programme was successfully launched in November and the policy document together with the shopping list of possible activities was shared group wide. **Our goal is to encourage 100% participation by all Banner colleagues throughout the UK and deliver over 2,500 hours of volunteer support in our local communities.** We are offering a choice of flexible alternative community projects, that can be taken in small chunks of time up to 8 hours and that have a strong environmental, social or education focus.

At the end of 2021, 2 months since the programme launched, we have already started to achieve a positive social impact:



18

Colleagues



92

Hours



8

Projects

In just **4 working weeks**

There are 3 reasons why volunteering is good for our business:



**We're giving back!**



**It develops skills!**



**It helps to attract new talent!**

*And of course, when you are doing good it makes you feel good.*

### Some of the activities comprised:



Sarah Robins, Sustainability Manager  
Eco-matting with 9Trees CIC.



Laura Williams, Retail  
Helped pick and pack Christmas gifts for Cash4Kids Mission Christmas Campaign for underprivileged children.



Jennifer Pitman, Finance  
Vaccine programme support.



10 Santa Helpers  
Banner Supported Trowbridge Future with a donation of 70 food hampers. This presented the team at Trowbridge with a great opportunity to use some of their volunteering hours to help decorate and fill 70 Christmas food hampers for local families in Trowbridge.



Antiopi Kasapidis & Chloe Hitchinson,  
Marketing & Design  
Wishing Well project, arts and crafts activities supporting adults with spectrum disorders.



## 2 Trowbridge Future Partnership

Our partnership with Trowbridge Future has gone from strength to strength in 2021. They work with youth groups, children and disadvantaged communities and are the perfect partner for our "Gift of Time" volunteering programme. We donated branded uniform (approx £1,000) for all the TF volunteers so that they are easily recognizable when out and about in the local community doing good. Our Mistral outerwear jackets protect them from the elements as well as keeping them warm and comfortable. We have also provided professional HR support when needed and when the charity approached us regarding a position, they needed to fill for a Treasurer for their board of trustees, our own Financial Controller, Robert James stepped forward and very kindly agreed to volunteer for the role and join their board of trustees. **Sharing and giving at its best!**



"Trowbridge Future cannot thank Banner enough for all the support that they have given us and the local community over the past year. With Banner's donation of 70 christmas hampers we were able to distribute to people across Trowbridge and improve our visibility through uniform for our staff and volunteers. We are really excited about more face to face activities in 2022."

**Meg Aubrey, Chief Executive, Trowbridge Future**

## 3 Local Food Bank Donation - £2,300

We continued to support a number of foodbanks with voluntary food and toiletry donations to do what we can to alleviate food poverty.

## 4 Group Charity Donation - £2,180

Each year Banner selects a charity to support on a national basis. MIND was selected as our Group charity for 2021. We wanted to help support the incredible work they do and the services they provide for anyone struggling with mental health issues, helping to change their lives for the better.



"On behalf of Mind I wanted to thank Banner for your kind and generous donation of £2,180. We are incredibly grateful for your support especially considering the difficult circumstances faced by all businesses at the moment."

**Rebecca Mayhew, Mind**

## 5 WWF Donation - £1,750



**Banner made a significant donation of £1,750 to WWF.** We are proud to be supporting the WWF-UK and their work to put nature first and protect and restore species and their habitats. As part of our annual customer survey in 2021 we committed to donating £10 for every completed survey. The donation we made will be used to support WWF's efforts to protect our amazing planet and help creating a future where people and nature thrive.

## 6 Wiltshire Search & Rescue - £2,000

A £2,000 donation was made to this incredible local charity that works to keep the local communities in which it serves safe and saves lives with the search and rescue services it provides. **It's entirely run by volunteers.**

## 7 1,640 T-shirts donated to local charities/good causes



**200 T-Shirts**  
Donated to Silverwood Special School Trowbridge



**400 T-Shirts**  
Donated to Jumpspace in Altrincham



**50 T-Shirts**  
Donated to Little Learners in Altrincham



**940 T-Shirts**  
Donated to Ruksak in Trowbridge



**50 T-Shirts**  
Donated to Trowbridge Future



We regularly donate t-shirts and shorts to a special needs Castle School, in Cambridge.

### Giving back across the globe...

## 8 Textile Donations

Other textile donations have been made to overseas charities such as Armenian Ministries, Operation Orphan and also includes the Salvation Army.

**In 2021 6.4 tonnes of textiles were sent to these charities.**

## 9 Operation Orphan - £250

Banner has a long-established relationship with Operation Orphan a charity that supports and cares for orphans around the world. In July 2021, Banner donated £250 to support a sports event held in Kangowea, Mombasa, Kenya which was a tremendous success. After coping with the challenges of lockdown and disrupted education, it was great for the children to have a really fun and engaging day, participating in a well-organized sports event with their schoolfriends.



"Together we have made a real and lasting difference in their lives – they will never forget this day. I hope we can collaborate again in making a positive impact in the lives of the most vulnerable"

**Brad Moore, Founder of Operation Orphan**



### 10 Overseas Supply Chain Community Support

It's great to see that our overseas supply chain factories are also giving back to their local communities and supporting their workers across many initiatives covering welfare, education, health. See page 36-37 for some example case studies.

### 11 Larkrise/Silverwood & Pictor Academy - £350

Banner donated £350 worth of easter eggs to the children of Larkrise/Silverwood School in Trowbridge and the Pictor Academy in Altrincham.



The students from Larkrise/Silverwood school in Trowbridge above and the Pictor Academy were extremely happy to receive their egg-stra special delivery just before the easter holidays.

### 12 Our Fund Squad in Action

Here's what our fabulous FundSquad fundraising efforts have achieved:



£277



£761  
(Combined CIN & STC)



SMALL ACTS OF KINDNESS CAN MAKE A REAL DIFFERENCE.



# Improvements & Actions

- 1 Augment our social responsibility focus across the whole of the Banner Group.
- 2 Ensure that "Gift of Time" is 100% inclusive and supports all minority groups as well as hardship and poverty alleviation and also meets our SER goals.
- 3 With Covid-19 now in the rear-view mirror, we will widen engagement and drive participation for the "Gift of Time" programme with a big internal push. Debs our community lead will visit each of our sites to engage directly with colleagues and offer ready-made opportunities that colleagues can sign up to immediately.
- 4 Regularly share successes and examples of colleague's volunteering experiences. This will help encourage, inspire, and improve participation.
- 5 Ensure that all activities are recorded and tracked within our internal reporting system so that we have an accurate summary and can measure the social impacts on a bi-annual basis.

# Case Study



## Community Champion

Laura is passionate about charity work and always keen to help others. She spends a lot of her spare time outside of work raising vital funds and supporting a local charity, Cash for Kids Manchester who support underprivileged children and families.

During the pandemic in 2020, Laura assisted an elderly neighbour with shopping and personal errands as well as making time for doorstep chats and a cuppa to ensure she didn't feel isolated during what proved to be a very difficult and challenging time for us all.

It's great to see Laura put her passion for community and sustainability in action. She always commits 110% to supporting initiatives and is a very positive, proactive member of our SER Stars team helping to drive our sustainability agenda forward. In her day to day role as Personal Assistant she also lives and breathes sustainability ensuring that SER updates are cascaded to all the retail teams.



"I'm proud to have Laura as a SER Star. She's a STAR in every sense and it's clear that without the drive and commitment of SER Stars like Laura, we wouldn't have made the progress we have so far on our journey"

**Sarah Robins, Sustainability Manager,  
Banner Group**

## Supporting SDGs







# Our People

## Committed to Each Other and a Place to Prosper

At Banner, a key element of our vision and values is to ensure a sustainable work environment that's a place where our people can prosper.

This means ensuring Banner is a great place to work where colleagues feel they are:

- Safe, supported and understood
- Treated fairly at all times
- Supported in their health and well-being
- Listened to and heard
- Inspired to achieve their potential.

Sustainability is embedded in Banner Group's culture, permeating across the whole of our business and people plan. We believe that diversity and difference make us stronger, widening our perspectives and improving overall performance. As an inclusive and empowering organisation we work to ensure everyone feels confident to make decisions, taking ownership of their role and responsibilities to the benefit of the business. It's all part of being the very best we can be by working and prospering together.

We have made excellent progress in relation to the 4 actions we committed to in our 2020 report:

Actions	Progress
Increase mental health and well-being support	16 trained MHFA with more in the pipeline. RISE forum & #TalkWorks
Well-being and sustainability focused events	Wellness Week Feb 21 Sustainability Manager attendance at key meetings (Exec, Retail regional meetings, etc.)
Help colleagues to decarbonize their journeys	Invest in technology (Wildix etc.) Hybrid Working Cycle to Work April 2022
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion	Forum coming together

"Sustainability is intrinsically linked to our people plan and our values "make the right call" and "in it together""

**Lesley Lye, Group HR Director**





# What We Have Achieved

1

Living our values or **SMILE** for short has had a positive impact on our people and overall culture. This clear set of values is also helping us to make Banner the very best company to work for, and to work with in our industry.



2

## Safe, Supported, Understood

At the very beginning of the pandemic, we set 2 clear goals – protect our business and protect our people. To protect our people we implemented our Safe, Supported, Understood campaign.

We worked with SSU in mind and regularly asked colleagues for feedback. From July 2020 to date:

- **94% agreed** they felt safe, supported, and understood.
- **95% agreed** that leaders in the business were role modelling the behaviours asked of them
- **95% agreed** that information affecting their work during the pandemic was openly shared
- **95% agreed** that they had enough contact with colleagues to be productive and feel connected

Safe, Supported, Understood will change in focus as the impacts of Covid become less intrusive in our day-to-day lives, however the principles will remain in our organisation for the long term.



**Safe** – Ensuring our people felt safe in the performance of their duties, wherever they were.



**Supported** – Ensuring they had the resources and tools necessary to do their jobs effectively.



**Understood** – Ensuring their unique personal circumstances or concerns were discussed and considered.

3

## Well-being Support With a Focus on Mental Health

In February 2021 we sought volunteers to become trained Mental Health First Aiders across our group. Today, we have 16 colleagues trained to provide immediate support and guidance to anyone experiencing a mental health issue or emotional distress.

### Spotlight on MHFA, Rory Elliott

“I have been with the company for over 5 years. It’s always been a passion of mine to not only help and develop myself but to also help others. The course has provided me with the skills and knowledge as well as confidence to be able to support and offer guidance to colleagues who may be experiencing a mental health issue or needing support. It’s also kick-started my own self-improvement journey. Receiving gratitude from someone you have helped is so incredibly rewarding and fulfilling and makes you realise that small acts of kindness or positive praise can really make a big difference to someone’s well-being”.



**Rory Elliott, Embroidery Production Manager, Banner Trowbridge Operations**

Our group of MHFA’s get together regularly to share, in a Chatham House environment, their experiences to ensure they themselves are supported and to ensure we are targeting our efforts in the right areas.



Ideas for ongoing support are fed to our RISE Forum – a small group of trained MHFA who meet regularly to drive our mental health well-being support forward in meaningful ways.

Examples of this are:

- **Sharing useful information, a recent example being on how to stay safe when out in public, particularly at night**
- **Encouraging and enabling conversations about diversity and inclusion – we recently were successful in petitioning for a broader range of pronouns to be available, and visible to all, on our HR system**

Our RISE Forum will continue to ensure we don’t stand still when it comes to well-being support, and I’m excited that we are shortly opening access to thousands of well-being online classes to all employees, through our partnership with AMBA.

4

## Colleague Engagement

Our highest scoring areas in our 2021 colleague engagement survey were on purpose and SER, with almost 90% saying they understand the aims of Banner and know how the work they do individually helps Banner to achieve those aims.

The majority of our colleagues agreed that **Banner is an organisation which shows it cares about its employees.**



## 5 Hybrid Working

In July 2021 we were proactive in signalling our intent to continue enabling colleagues to work in a way that is best for them, by communicating our hybrid working guidance. Fairness being really important, we addressed head on the fact that there are roles within the business that simply can't be performed from home but explained that we need to adopt this way of working for the long-term success of the company, and shared other ways we can be flexible for and with those colleagues.

In keeping with Safe, Supported and Understood, it was important to recognise that not everyone would be keen to rush back to the office. And it was clear that the guidance was just that, not a hard and fast policy, and that it would be phased in when Covid allowed over a period of time.

We helped and will continue to help people to maintain the balance of all the great advantages of working from home, and the importance of staying connected with the culture of our organisation by being 'in it' on a regular basis.

## 6 Value Based Leadership Development Programme

In 2021 we delivered year 3 of our Banner Leadership Development Programme – designed specifically for our managers and with our values in mind to guide our actions every day. Delegates benefit from classroom-based training, covering both theory and practical tools, as well as one-to-one coaching sessions for 6 months to imbed their learning.

We also created a brand-new programme to support and enable our store colleagues lead their teams through the ever-tough Back to School season, and that's something that we're refreshing and upgrading for the 2022 season.

## 7 Continued Refurbishment and Upgrade of Working Spaces

At the beginning of 2021 we implemented a store refit programme across retail stores. We have so far carried out 5 store refits and 8 reworks of store layouts, providing colleagues with an upgraded working space. We also have made improvements to communal spaces at our Trowbridge site too including plans for outdoor green space development here and also at Altrincham.



## 8 Embedding The Importance of SER For All

Sustainability is now one of our 3 goals in our business plans.

It's included in specific questions in our annual performance review form and is within SMART objectives across our management teams with the specific goal of cascading.

**73% of colleagues surveyed said they felt informed about Sustainability.**

# Improvements & Actions

### 1 Engagement Survey

- Enabling better communication and collaboration between teams in the organisation
- Enabling personal development with the company through stretching work and training and mentoring opportunities.

### 3 Family Policy Review

We're reviewing our maternity, paternity, shared parental and adoption leave policies to improve our support of our people in the moments that matter.

### 4 Seasonal Colleagues

Our colleague numbers increase by over 100% during our peak trading season. We have pulled together a plan specific to supporting those seasonal colleagues including things like: increasing the frequency of pay during their fixed term contract and making available impactful employee benefits, historically reserved for our permanent colleagues.

### 5 Time to Rest

We're giving colleagues the ability to buy additional annual leave from July 2022.

### 6 Development Opportunity Improvements

Colleagues want to help the company's progression by realising their personal potential to help us develop. In 2022 we will select an online learning platform and finalise our implementation plan for 2023, giving all colleagues access to learning opportunities face-to-face and online. Every colleague has the opportunity to work on a Personal Development Plan and this is something we will continue to encourage and enable.

### 7 Amba Lumina Additional Employee Benefits

We are proud to have partnered with Amba to provide our colleagues with impactful and sustainable additional benefits including discounted shopping, saving the average user £850 per year on their every-day purchases. Throughout 2022 we will steadily increase access to more benefits including for example access to green pension, electric vehicle personal lease, and personal carbon offset tracking.

## 2 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

We are facilitating a working group within our colleague base to review and re-design our policy on DE&I, and importantly decide what actions we should progress to ensure the words in our policy are reflected in the natural way of doing things around our company.

#### Diversity

Intentionally employing a workforce made up of individuals with a range of characteristic traits.

#### Diversity that matters

Intentionally employing a workforce made up of individuals with a range of characteristics that creates difference, such as gender, race, age, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, disability, LGBTQ+ and others.

#### Belonging

People feel personally connected to their colleagues, employer and environment. Psychological safety for all.

#### Equity

Often described as treating everyone the same. True equity is about treating people differently in order to treat them the same.

Recognising people who have historically or systematically been excluded or marginalised, and removing obstacles to their inclusion.

#### Inclusion

Creating an environment where everyone is not only welcomed but valued; everyone feels able to and has avenues to participate, contribute, speak up, and be heard.

## Supporting SDGs

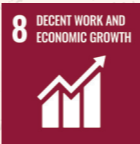









Below is a matrix showing all 13 of the 17 SDGs that we have identified as being central to our SER Strategy and have mapped them across our value chain measuring desired outcome and impact.

# Supporting the UN

# Sustainable Development Goals

SDGs	Desired Outcome & Impact	Pg Ref	SDGs	Desired Outcome & Impact	Pg Ref
	<p><b>No Poverty</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Banner code of practice and regular auditing ensures that workers in our global and UK supply chains are paid correctly by their employers.</li> <li>No workers are paid less than the minimum wage.</li> <li>Some workers in overseas factories are paid above minimum wage.</li> </ul>	33-35		<p><b>Decent Work &amp; Economic Growth</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Banner employees are treated fairly and are provided with a good working environment.</li> <li>We are a strong, stable, profitable market leading business and employer.</li> <li>Our people are given opportunities to grow and develop with the business in new roles and/or are encouraged to enrich their working lives and participate in cross functional projects. A great example of this is our SER Stars team.</li> <li>Our Tier 1 suppliers in our supply chain are all fully audited to ensure they provide decent working conditions for their workers.</li> </ul>	43, 48, 54 & 71
	<p><b>Zero Hunger</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our donations to local foodbanks have so far helped over 100 families.</li> <li>No workers are paid less than minimum wage in supplier factories.</li> </ul>	35-60		<p><b>Responsible Consumption &amp; Production</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working with supply chain partners to minimise waste, reduce pollution and source sustainable fabrics that can be "Made to be Made again".</li> <li>Successful eco transition achieved in 2021 with sell through of existing stock ensuring that nothing was wasted in the process.</li> <li>We have implemented a number of office based initiatives to reduce waste, using recycled paper and improving recycling of all consumables.</li> <li>We are also exploring the best options for textile recycling and getting used/surplus garments back into the supply chain.</li> </ul>	35 & 43
	<p><b>Good Health &amp; Well-being</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Covid Secure measures "Safe, Supported &amp; Understood campaign" – 95% engagement levels achieved.</li> <li>Zero accident vision in the workplace.</li> <li>Mental Health Awareness training for Managers/Supervisors.</li> <li>Internal "WECARE" programme providing free health and well-being 24/7 support service for all colleagues when needed.</li> <li>Internal team of 16 Mental Health First Aiders have been recruited and trained to increase level of support for all colleagues at these challenging times.</li> <li>We have supported many families in our local communities with regular voluntary food and toiletry donations.</li> </ul>	37 & 68-71		<p><b>Climate Action</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Carbon neutral certification and annual carbon footprint measurement and carbon reduction plan.</li> <li>Blended approach to offsetting emissions that we can't eliminate choosing a mix of projects both in the UK and overseas that align with our environment, biodiversity and social economic goals.</li> <li>Systematic waste reduction/improved waste management (UK Trowbridge site &amp; Retail Stores).</li> <li>Circular approach to design and sourcing of raw materials.</li> <li>We joined Climate Neutral Now Initiative to support the global race to net zero.</li> </ul>	22, 23, 35-37 & 41
	<p><b>Quality Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular email campaigns to help customers navigate through government covid secure measures and industry advice about the new department for Education guidance.</li> <li>We launched "Insight" communication tool, Banner's voice of schoolwear sharing advice and best practice.</li> <li>Providing Training and Development plans for all Banner Employees.</li> <li>Our high quality, durable uniforms and market leading service performance, ensure that children that wear our uniforms and sportswear are ready to learn.</li> </ul>	51-53 & 69-71		<p><b>Life Below Water</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Removing single use plastic (c. 500,000 per annum) from our supply chain.</li> <li>Re-using plastic reclaimed from oceans (PET).</li> <li>Reduction plan to remove single use plastic from our business.</li> <li>Implemented a packaging reduction project with Heriot Watt Business School.</li> <li>Enzo (turtle) our eco mascot will be used to resonate with schoolchildren and educate them on biodiversity in oceans, plastic action etc.</li> </ul>	35, 41, 47, 49 & 55
	<p><b>Gender Equality</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New Diversity, Equity and Inclusion policy to be implemented in 2022.</li> </ul>	71		<p><b>Life on Land</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Balance between production and environmental considerations.</li> <li>Protect areas to promote biodiversity.</li> <li>Offset projects that mitigate our operations involve tree-planting by 9Trees CIC, a group of ecologists who carefully create native woodland which will sequester carbon throughout its life. 246 trees were planted in Builth Wells, Wales in 2021 and a further 300 have been planted in March 2022. We also supported a Gold Standard clean water access project for families in Laos and a Wind Power (renewable) project in the Philippines. Both of these projects are certified by carbon credits retired from the UN's CER registry and Gold Standard.</li> <li>Reducing the amount of packaging.</li> <li>Introducing sustainable packaging.</li> </ul>	22, 23, 41 & 46
	<p><b>Clean Water</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aim to use the Higg Co environmental module tool to closely monitor and manage this reduction process and better recycling of water.</li> <li>We have selected a water based offset project that provides clean water access for families in Laos to mitigate the impacts that our operations have on local communities where we manufacture.</li> </ul>	22 & 36		<p><b>Partnerships for the Goals</b></p> <p>Banner are members of and work with a number of influential partners in sustainability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CBI and active participants on local forums relating to sustainability and decarbonisation, and involved with Influencing government initiatives.</li> <li>Future Economy Network, Carbon Lens, Interface, Heriot Watt Edinburgh Business School, 9Trees CIC, Trowbridge Future.</li> </ul>	14, 15, 19, 46 & 49
	<p><b>Affordable &amp; Clean Energy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implemented a carbon reduction programme, measured our footprint and achieved certified carbon neutral status.</li> <li>Committed to 100% green/renewable energy delivery across our UK Operations.</li> <li>Implemented company car policy in 2020 that 100% of all new company cars will move to hybrid/electric vehicles (67% is hybrid/electric and 18% is fully EV).</li> <li>Systematic efforts to conserve energy – LED light programme.</li> <li>We are exploring the feasibility of solar PV options for our Canal Road Site in Trowbridge.</li> </ul>	37 & 46			



# Looking Forward 2022-25

## Rethink: Regenerate: Repurpose

At Banner we're always looking to lead the way, driving positive change with a sustainability agenda that's founded on innovation and industry collaboration.

We plan to continue finding ways to reduce our environmental footprint and limit waste across our product and packaging supply chains. As the market leader we'll continue to be an influential voice in our industry and passionate advocate of the circular economy.

Becoming a better business means meeting the needs of all stakeholders, including our people, customers, suppliers, and investors. Most of all it requires us to listen and respond to the children who wear our garments. To this end, we're committed to becoming a force for good and role model for treading lighter on the beautiful planet we all share.

As we look ahead, we keep constantly in mind that our purpose is to give every child the chance to shine. And central to this goal is developing more sustainable clothes in an even more environmentally and socially responsible way.

# SER Focus In 2022



### Supply Chain

All suppliers must comply with Sedex 4-Pillar audit standard and work towards achieving Banner's own stretching environmental and ethical suppliers' standards in 2022.



### Environment

Focus on our carbon emission reduction plan, and include Scope 3 Value Chain in our annual carbon footprint measurement. Work with our supply chain to support them on their journey to become carbon neutral.



### Product

50% of all garments (including our APTUS sportswear) ranges to sustainable fabrics, trims and associated packaging.



### Community

Implement a structured "Giving Back" volunteering programme with 2,500 hours of volunteering completed by colleagues in 2022.



### Customer

Put a plan in place to achieve B Corp in 2023 and achieve recognition as No.1 supplier of choice for all customers and market leader in sustainability.



### Packaging

Deliver a transformational packaging strategy that will deliver a positive impact on the environment. Reduce our plastic footprint by 25% in 2023.

## 2025 Key Goals

**100%**

of all products will be made using sustainable materials

Reduce our plastic footprint by **50%**

**100%**

of plastic packaging to be reusable and recyclable with a minimum 100% recycled content

Successfully closing the loop on packaging so that at least **70%** of our packaging is recycled/repurposed over and over again

Our supply chain to become **recognised as the best accredited supply chain in our industry** and all suppliers we use do not use fossil fuels - only renewable energy/recycled materials throughout the manufacturing process

Develop a **recommerce/repurpose scheme for unwanted textiles**

Recognised as leading the way in sustainability and a **"force for good"** as member of the B Corp community

## Our Guiding Principles Are:



Reduce, Reuse, Recycle



Tread lighter to protect our environment and biodiversity



Only work with people who share our sustainability values



Giving back



Collaborate to innovate and build a better business



Be better together



# Leading the Way

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Together For The  
Planet For Future  
Generations

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