

A woman with long brown hair, wearing a dark dress with a light green leaf pattern, leans against a large tree trunk in a lush, green garden. The scene is filled with various plants, including purple flowers and large green leaves. The text 'SUSTAINABILITY UPDATE' is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif font, underlined.

# SUSTAINABILITY UPDATE

AUTUMN 2023

WHITE STUFF

## A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

We have always been a company with a strong sense of doing the right thing. We've been giving at least 1% of our profits to the White Stuff Foundation for well over a decade, and we are currently the UK's biggest fashion retailer of Fairtrade Sourced Cotton. We pride ourselves on being responsible, both in terms of how we treat those who work for us and how we mitigate the impact of our business on the environment.

More recently, we have looked to broaden and formalise our work here, developing clear goals and accountability frameworks, introducing dedicated sustainability roles to our business, and setting measurable targets to help us develop a cohesive ESG strategy. We have produced this snapshot of our current sustainability work which we will continue to build and develop.

We will be publishing transparent and measurable objectives in both our carbon emissions reduction strategy (using credible Science Based Targets) and our wider ESG goals and will provide updates on our progress. We have already made concrete steps here, for example we have measured our 'baseline' carbon footprint which has given us a clear understanding of where to concentrate our efforts to reach our Net Zero goals.

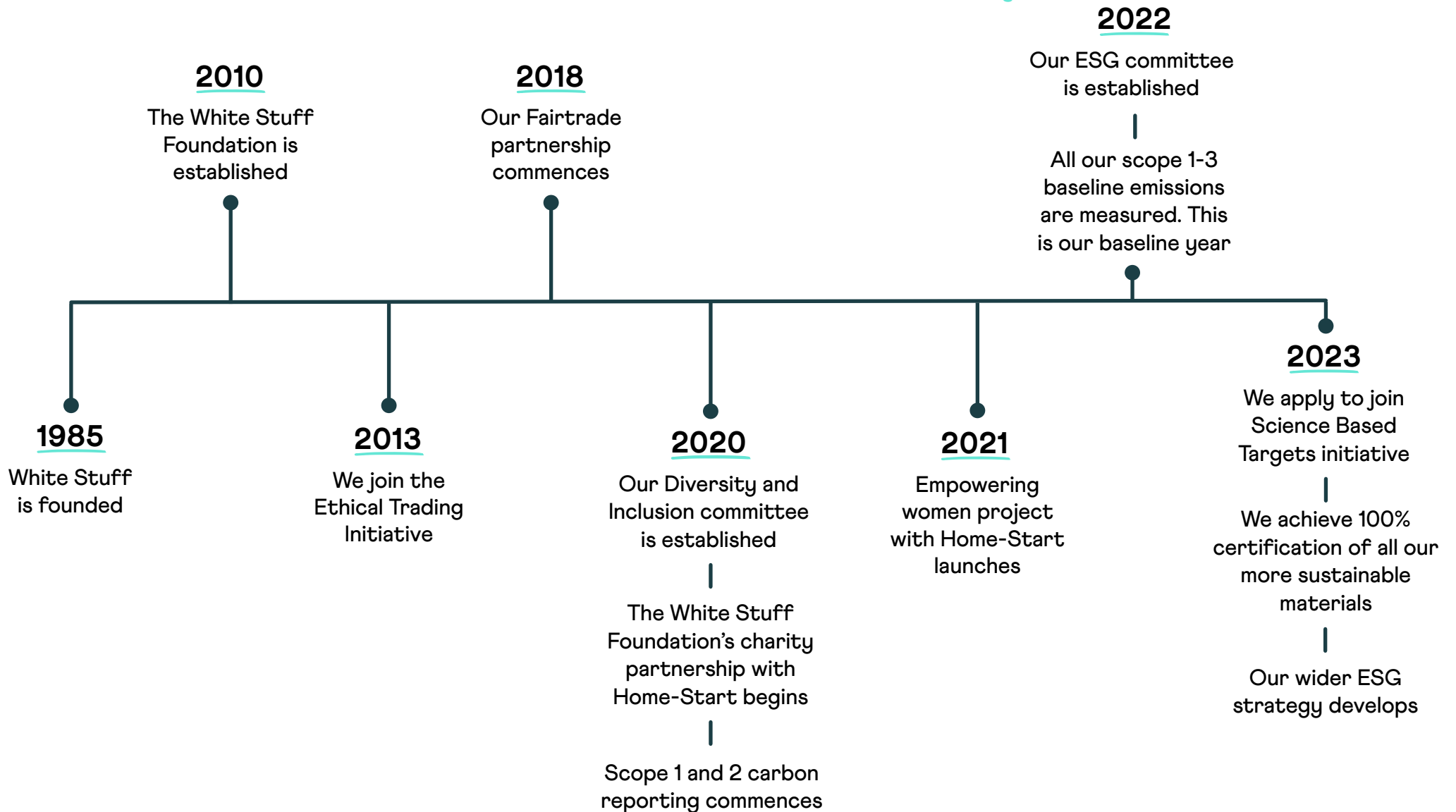
We're excited about the steps forward we've already taken this year, and we are working hard to get to the next stage.

I hope you find this update interesting, and I look forward to sharing more with you over the coming months.

- Jo Jenkins



# OUR ESG STORY SO FAR



# OUR ONGOING PRIORITIES

1.

We continue to increase the proportion of certified materials in our product ranges

2.

We continue to improve the visibility and transparency of our end-to-end supply chain

3.

We are measuring and reducing our carbon emissions – whether directly or indirectly produced – and working to become a Carbon Net Zero business by 2050, using credible science based targets

4.

We continue our long-standing practice of donating 1% of our profits to charity

5.

We continue to strengthen our position as a supportive employer, bringing in new policies and benefits, and working with external experts to benchmark and critique our Diversity & Inclusion work

## WHERE WE ARE WITH ESG



White Stuff has always sought to do business in the right way. To see the broader picture, and to be mindful of our responsibilities to our employees, or customers, our suppliers and the wider community. But we also know that it's not enough just to do what we've always done. That's why we are developing a new business-wide ESG strategy. The first stage of this is to address our impact on the environment.

In 2018, the UN estimated that the fashion industry is responsible for 10% of global carbon emissions and that 85% of all textiles produced eventually end up in landfills. The UN has also stated that a move to net zero emissions by 2050 is essential if we are to limit global temperature increases to 1.5C. As a responsible fashion retailer, we are determined to do our bit to help realise this.

In addition, we directly employ over one thousand people, indirectly employ many thousands more, and operate in hundreds of communities in the UK and abroad. We work hard to ensure the protection of human rights and to have a positive impact in the communities where we operate.

To understand how we can tackle these various challenges we have spent the last year looking hard at what we do, how we do it, and what we need to do differently, whether that's in the way we chose to make, pack and deliver our clothes, the way we treat our employees, suppliers and the wider community, or in our ambition to reduce the impact on the environment in our emissions and our waste.

We are pleased with how much we have already done, and committed to how much more we want to do. We have set ourselves ambitious targets and are determined to tackle the difficult stuff, to make the choices necessary to deliver an authentic and credible sustainability strategy.

# FABRICS

We will continue to increase the proportion of certified materials in our product ranges. And from the end of 2024 onwards, we will only use certified cotton in all our fabrics.

We are known for using natural materials in our clothes, and our customers have told us they prefer them. Over 70% of our range is made from natural materials, such as cotton, wool and linen. These natural fibres create soft, breathable fabrics that are biodegradable, recyclable and compostable. By using certified sources, we are confident that the land, animals and farmers that produce the fibres are treated in a more sustainable and ethical way.



## WHAT DO WE MEAN BY CERTIFIED MATERIALS?

These are materials that are more sustainable than their conventional alternatives, and that have their claims around sustainability verified by independent certification bodies.

*“MATERIALS THAT ARE MORE SUSTAINABLE THAN THEIR CONVENTIONAL ALTERNATIVES.”*

They include organic, recycled and other preferred materials (preferred because the environmental and societal harm caused by their production has been reduced or eliminated).

They have been certified to independent, third-party standards by globally recognised groups such as the Textile Exchange (a non-profit driving positive action on climate change across the fashion, textile, and apparel industry).

And because they're fully certified we can be sure of their integrity at every stage of the supply chain.

You can find out more by reading our Certified Materials Guide at [whitestuff.com/materials-guide](https://whitestuff.com/materials-guide)



# WHAT ARE WE DOING?

We are focusing on increasing the use of certified materials in our ranges. Certification ensures high ethical and chemical standards are met across the whole supply chain. It reduces or removes the harm at every stage, from making the fibre to delivering the product to our customers. We use approved global standards with a strict chain of custody requirement.



## AND NOW WHITE STUFF HAS BEEN SCOPE CERTIFIED TOO

In 2023 White Stuff Head Office and Distribution Centre were also inspected and audited by the Textile Exchange’s Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS) and by approved 3rd party auditor, Control Union.

We are delighted to be **Scope Certified** (accredited) to use and sell certified fabrics through all our retail stores and through all our partnerships globally. Our accreditation is issued yearly to ensure the highest and most sustainable textile standards are always met.







## THE CARBON IMPACT OF OUR FABRICS

As part of White Stuff Baseline Green House Gas (GHG) Inventory in 2023, we undertook a comprehensive **fibre carbon footprint** review to gain full transparency of the carbon emissions of all our product materials.



Source	Total Emissions (tCO2e)	%
Procured Fibre Production (including Raw material extraction)	30,731	85.30
Other Goods and Services	2,626	7.29
Procured Fibre Product Manufacturing	2,336	6.48
Procured Fibre Product Packaging	308	0.85
Samples	27	0.07
<b>Total</b>	<b>36,027</b>	<b>100</b>

# WE FOUND OUT...

Our fibre usage accounts for 60% of White Stuff overall GHG impact in 2021/22 and over 92% of our Scope 3 emissions. Scope 3 emissions are those we produce indirectly, for example by the factories that make our clothes.

Our highest emission impact materials are cotton which is 52% of our range with 32% emissions, followed by leather (8% of our range, 19% of our emissions) wool (6% of range, 18% of emissions), viscose (9% of range and 10% of emissions) and polyester (7% of range, 5% of emissions).

We used a specialist tool called the Higg Index MSI (Materials Sustainability Index) to calculate the carbon emissions of every White Stuff product material. This showed us clearly what materials we needed to increase using in order to reduce our environmental impact.

*“WE ARE WORKING TO FIND THE BEST SOLUTIONS TO REDUCING OUR EMISSIONS FROM OUR ANIMAL PRODUCTS”*

The reason our wool and leather products are very carbon intensive is due to animal husbandry. We are committed to robust international compliance supporting animal welfare and have a White Stuff Animal Welfare Policy. We are working to find the best solutions to reduce our emissions from our animal products through a mix of certified recycled and organic fibres.

Setting robust sustainable fibre targets drives White Stuff’s wider ambition to both decarbonise and create more sustainable products year on year.

Material	% by weight	% of emissions
Conventional Cotton	33.20%	21.35%
Leather	7.55%	18.95%
Conventional Wool	5.57%	18.37%
Organic Cotton	12.63%	7.01%
Conventional Viscose	4.47%	5.14%
Polyester	6.60%	4.61%
Nylon	4.01%	4.45%
Linen Fabric	4.45%	4.08%
Fairtrade Cotton	6.37%	3.56%
Modal	2.73%	3.51%
Ecovero Viscose	2.19%	1.55%
TPU	3.58%	1.32%

# HERE ARE THE TARGETS WE HAVE SET FOR OURSELVES



*(AT LEAST)*

## 100%

of our cotton fabrics will be made from certified cotton by the end of 2024. This means it will be cotton that's certified organic by the Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS) or Organic Content Standard (OCS), recycled cotton, or Fairtrade cotton.

## 100%

of our manmade cellulosic fibre (viscose, modal and lyocell fabrics) will be from certified sources by the end of 2025

## 100%

of our leather footwear, bags and belts will be made from Leather Working Group (LWG) certified leather by the end of 2024.

## 25%

of our wool and synthetic materials will be recycled by the end of 2025.

# SUPPLIERS

We will continue to improve the visibility and transparency of our end-to-end supply chain.

White Stuff and our suppliers work together as one team to maintain good ethical practices. We are committed to ensuring labour rights are respected throughout our supply chain, to sourcing responsibly, and to prevent modern slavery and human trafficking, in line with the Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI) base Code and the UN Guiding Principles.

Our product is crafted and manufactured in partnership with 48 suppliers covering 97 factories in total across 11 countries: Bangladesh, India, Cambodia, China, Nepal, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Turkey, Vietnam and the UK.\*

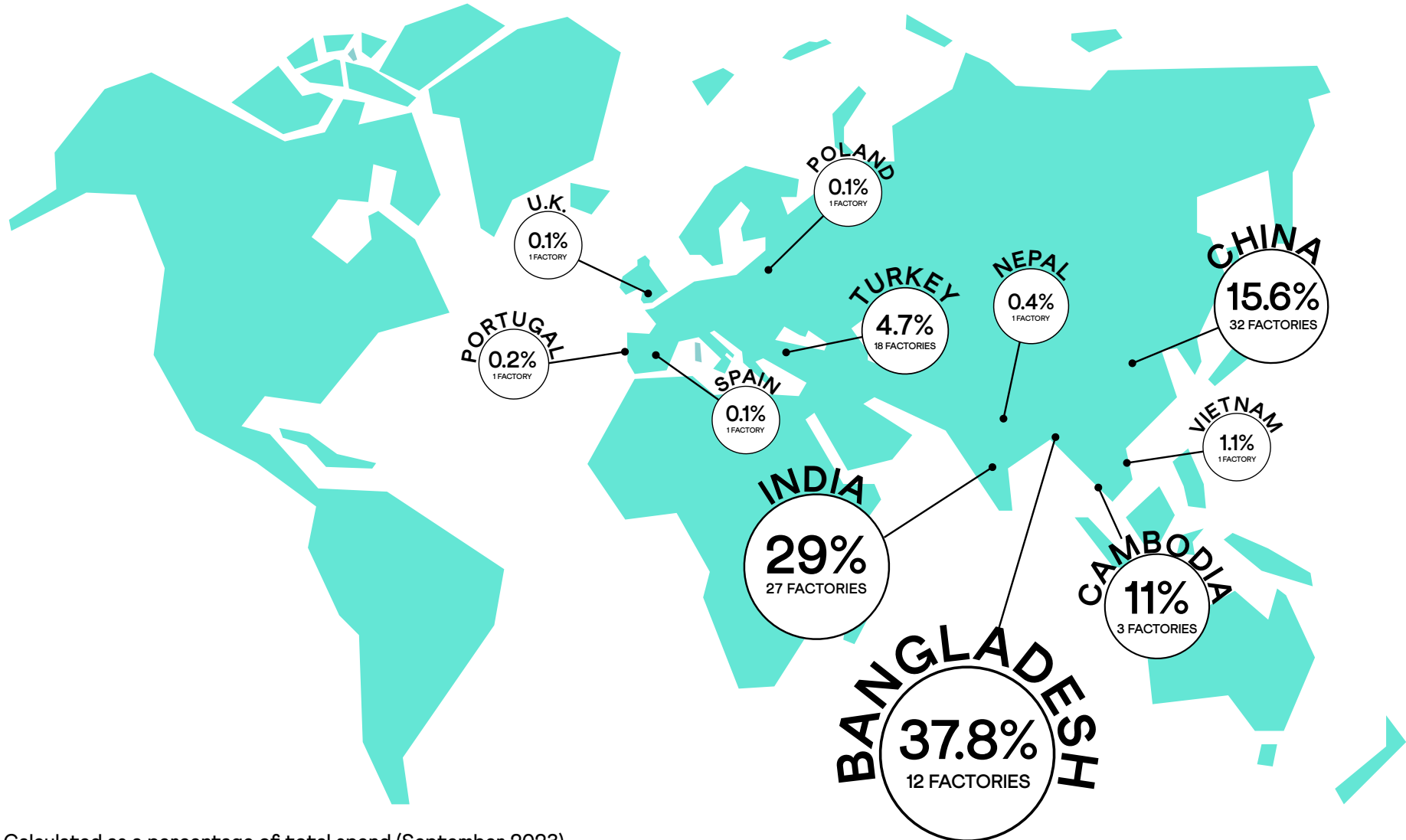
Our suppliers are chosen because of their impeccable manufacturing skills and good ethical credentials. Our suppliers share the same obsession with quality, attention to detail and ethical values as us, and because they have a proven commitment to operate their factories and treat their workers in an ethical and transparent manner.

Long term partnerships are really important to us and we pride ourselves on our collaborative relationships with our factories. We have been working with nearly half of our suppliers for more than 10 years.

\*As of September 2023



# WHERE WHITE STUFF IS MADE



NOTE: Calculated as a percentage of total spend (September 2023)

# OUR SUPPLY CHAIN TIERS



The garment industry is a fragmented one, with several layers of operation which we call tiers. All the tiers are involved in the production of the final garment that we offer to our customer.

We recognise that **Modern Slavery** may exist throughout any of the production tiers, and we continue to review, document and increase the visibility of our end-to-end supply chain to mitigate this risk.

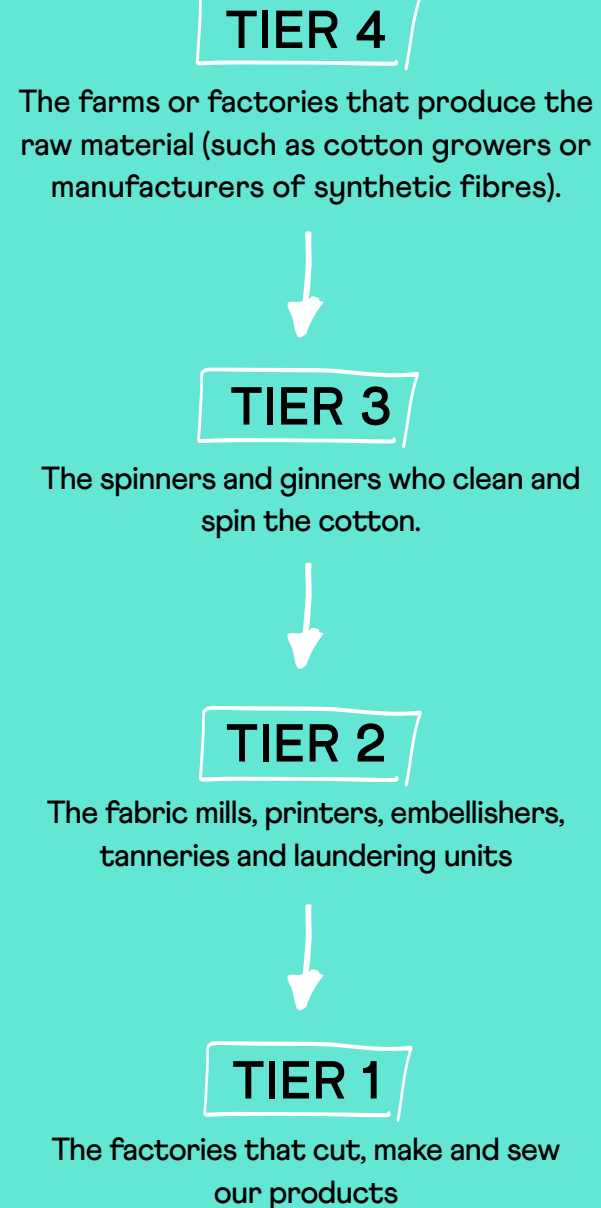
We have mapped and audited 100% of our tier 1 supplier base and are working hard to complete the mapping of our entire tier 2 supply base within the next 12 months.

*"WE HAVE MAPPED AND AUDITED 100% OF OUR TIER 1 SUPPLIER BASE"*

## OUR SUPPLIER TRAINING PROGRAMME THROUGH THE TIERS

White Stuff has its own **Factory Accreditation Programme** to ensure that our strategic suppliers meet the high standards that we expect from our tier 1 factories, and that such standards are in turn cascaded throughout their end-to-end supply chain. When a tier 1 factory reaches accredited status, we then train a number of individuals within the factory to deliver the accreditation training to their tier 2-4 factories, and to audit their compliance.

We are pleased with the progress of this programme, which has initially focused on our Indian strategic suppliers and which we will be rolling out to our strategic Bangladeshi suppliers in 2023/24.



# OUR SUPPLIER AUDIT PROCESS

White Stuff has robust processes to ensure that all Tier 1 factories are audited annually in line with the ETI base code. These audits are carried out by nominated independent third-party auditors. 100% of our tier 1 factories underwent an independent external audit during the year under review and we have found no instances of Modern Slavery to date.

*“WE HAVE FOUND NO INSTANCES OF MODERN SLAVERY TO DATE”*

Where non-compliance issues are identified, a rating is assigned (Critical, Serious, Minor) and a corrective action plan which includes timescales for resolution is discussed and agreed with the supplier. This Corrective Action Plan Report is then issued to the supplier and factory management and is monitored by our ethical compliance manager who ensures issues are rectified in line with the agreed timeframe, working with the factory to support where needed.

In addition, we recognize that that audits are only the first phase of the ethical journey that we share with our suppliers; engaging and training their auditors is the second phase; supporting supplier auditors to check their supply base is the third; and reaching the final 4th Tier of the supply chain (raw materials) is the eventual final phase.

*“OUR AUDITS ARE ONLY THE FIRST PHASE OF THE ETHICAL JOURNEY”*

In addition to our requirement for all factories to have an annual independent third party audit, we also commission our own independent audits in India, where the supply chain is particularly fragmented. Our auditors visit our Indian factories and conduct additional audit reviews to provides a deeper level of insight and support to ensure we maintain a high degree of consistency and transparency within the region. This approach allows us to share with our suppliers our belief in the fair and equitable treatment of workers throughout the supply chain as stated in our Code, and then help them embrace those principles with conviction and belief, not just duty of care.

*“WE HAVE QUICKER, MORE INSIGHTFUL ACCESS TO OUR FACTORY AUDITS”*

This year we are introducing an enhanced and comprehensive database to monitor our supply chain audits, so that we have quicker, more insightful access to our factory audits and issue progress, and have clearer, up to date information on any issues raised during an audit, and their timely resolution. We will also improve the risk ratings of our global supply chain so that we can ensure our work is appropriately focused on higher risk areas.

# OUR ETHICAL CODE OF CONDUCT

Our supply base is risk assessed using the guidance from the United Nations Guiding Principles and by adopting the Ethical Trade Initiative's internationally recognised Base Code of labour standards.

White Stuff has been a member of the ETI since 2013. The ETI work with companies, trade unions and voluntary organisations to tackle the many complex questions of about what steps businesses should take to trade ethically and make a positive difference to workers' lives.

Our Ethical Code of Conduct states:

- Employment is freely chosen
- Freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining are respected
- Working conditions are safe and hygienic
- Building & Fire Safety for all workers [applicable laws]
- Child Labour shall not be used
- Living wages are paid [applicable laws]
- Working hours are not excessive
- No discrimination is practised
- Regular Employment is provided
- No harsh or inhumane treatment is allowed
- There are no bribery & corruption practises.

Our code of conduct is supported by key standards, policies and processes which are issued to suppliers, and which, in addition to our Ethical Code of Conduct, include:

- Anti-Bribery, Corruption & Tax Evasion Policy
- Responsible Sourcing Policy

Above all, our primary goal is to have trust and transparency between our product teams and our suppliers so that we can identify and resolve any issues as efficiently as possible.

*"OUR PRIMARY GOAL IS TO HAVE TRUST AND TRANSPARENCY BETWEEN OUR PRODUCT TEAMS AND OUR SUPPLIERS"*

White Stuff will avoid using factories located in areas where a high risk of illegal migrant labour has been identified.





## OUR MEMBERSHIP OF THE ETI

We have been full members of the ETI for 10 years and work closely with the ETI team on our policies and supply chain progress, using the stringent ETI code of conduct. We have regular communication with the ETI along with annual progression meetings to ensure that together we tackle the complex challenges of today's global supply chain improving the lives of workers globally.

As a brand we attend forums which involve open discussions with the ETI and other retailers about the global supply chain challenges we encounter and how collectively we can work through these as one team, understanding and addressing systemic and/or new issues related to human rights at work.

*"WE CONTINUALLY MONITOR AND ASSESS TO IDENTIFY AND MITIGATE MODERN SLAVERY RISKS, AND TO ADDRESS AREAS WHICH MAY REQUIRE IMPROVEMENT."*

The ETI support us as a brand to develop and execute our human rights due diligence and support workers' rights. We continually monitor and assess modern slavery risks, and address any areas which may require improvement.

# ENVIRONMENT

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**We are measuring and reducing our carbon emissions – whether directly or indirectly produced – and working to become a Carbon Net Zero business by 2050, using credible science based targets.**

For several years, we have reported our emissions and energy usage in our annual report and accounts in accordance with our obligations under the Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting (SECR) policy.

This year, we have measured our entire emissions output from both direct and indirect sources. We are now in the process of setting credible reduction targets both in the near and long term, using science based tools. We have registered with the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi) so that our targets can be objectively and scientifically assessed.



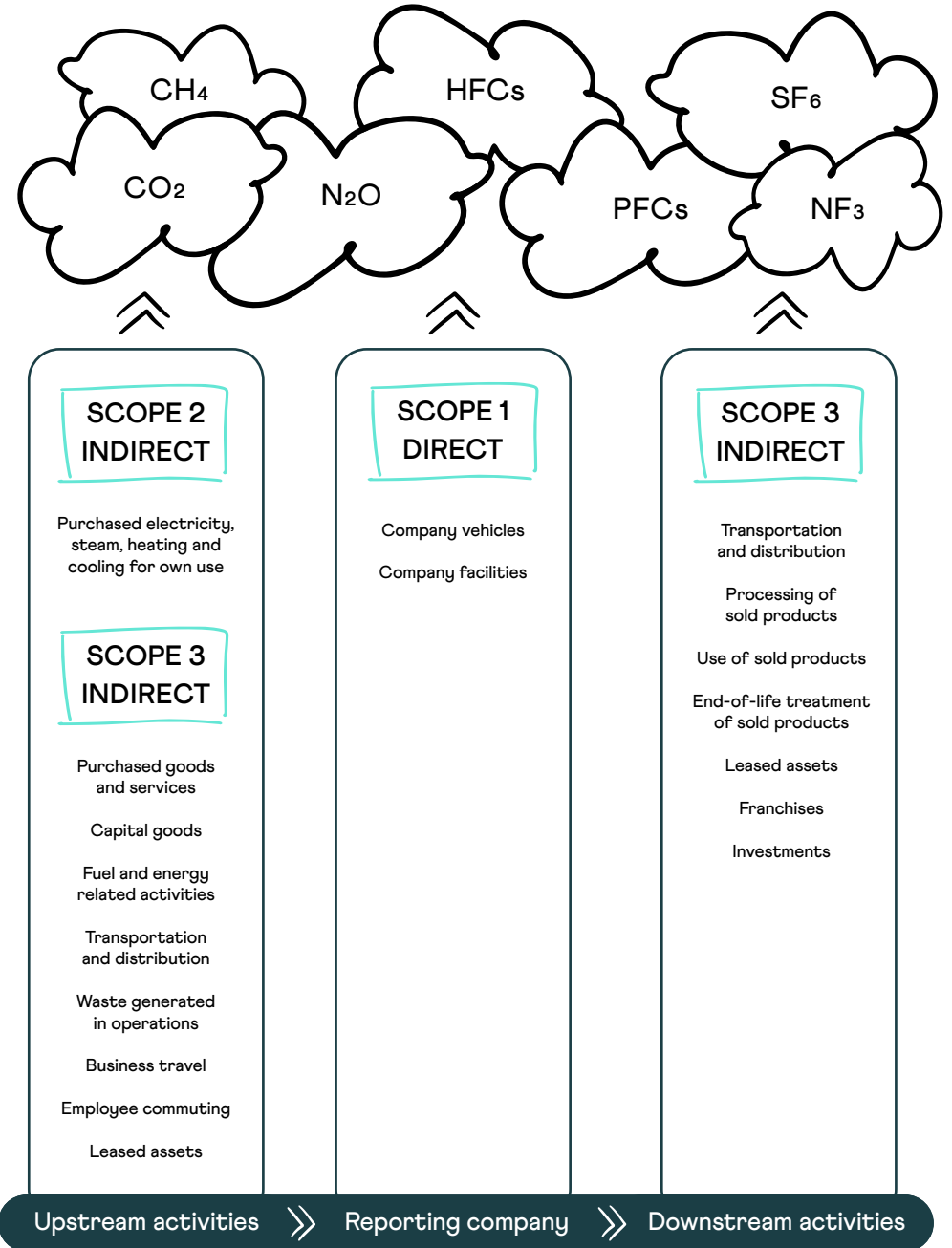
# MORE ABOUT EMISSIONS

We wanted to understand and help mitigate the climate change impact of our business. To date, we have measured and reported those emissions which we are directly responsible for – for example the energy that is used to power our shops, head office and distribution centre, and that produced by the cars driven by our employees. These are predominantly Scope 1 and 2 emissions, with some small amount of Scope 3 emissions included.

However, we are conscious that this does not paint the whole picture, and crucially does not include the emissions that we are indirectly responsible for. These are largely comprised of Scope 3 emissions and include the emissions produced by the factories that make our clothes, those generated by the ships that bring our products from our factories into our UK distribution centre, and by the carrier companies that we use to distribute our products from our distribution centre to our shops and to our customers.

Since Scope 3 emissions – the emissions that our business is indirectly responsible for – makes up the vast majority of the carbon footprint of retailers like White Stuff, we believe it is disingenuous to ignore them.

We want to work together with other retailers to drive down ALL the emissions that the clothing sector produce – a sector that accounts for around 10% of total global emissions (according to United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change).



# OUR EMISSIONS TARGETS

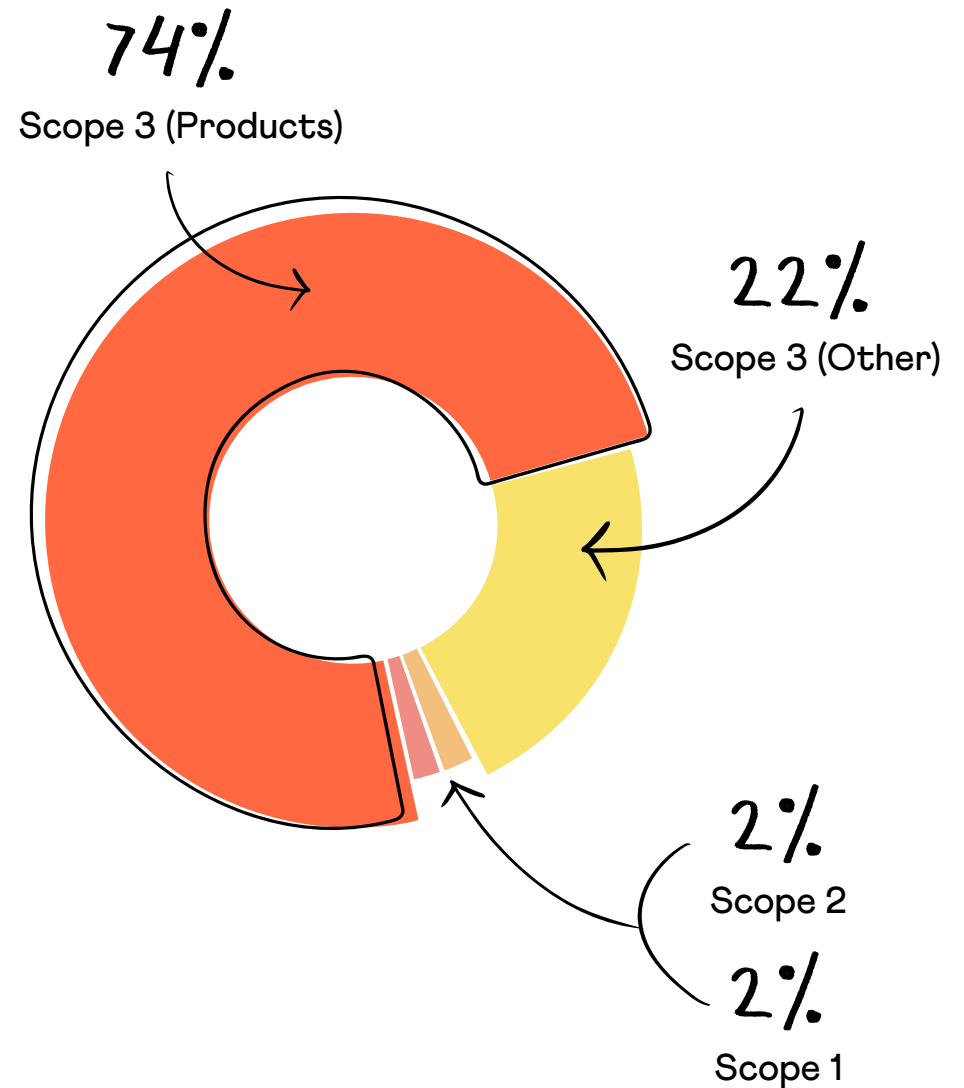
This year, we calculated our Baseline Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Inventory for all White Stuff's operations – that is for our own operations, and crucially, for the operations of our end-to-end supply chain. This baseline measure is the starting point against which we will measure the success of our carbon reduction efforts.

Having measured our baseline emissions, we are now turning our attention to setting reduction targets and timescales, both for the near and the long term, and the steps we will take to achieve these reductions. We have registered with the SBTi and will submit our reduction targets to them for validation.

*"WE CAN TAKE ACCOUNT OF OUR CARBON EMISSIONS WHEN DESIGNING OUR PRODUCT RANGES"*

We are now working to understand the carbon impact of the different sorts of materials that we use (for example, cotton, wool, viscose) so that we can take account of our carbon emissions when designing our product ranges.

We will continue to measure our total emissions each year, so that we can monitor our reduction targets and evolve our reduction strategy as appropriate.





## OUR ENERGY USAGE

Currently, 92% of our energy usage is renewably sourced electricity, all of which is provided from a mix of wind, solar and hydro sources. The remaining 8% of our energy usage is gas. Most of this is used at our distribution centre and we are reviewing options to reduce this usage.

Several years ago, we began a programme of replacing our shop lighting with more energy efficient LED lights. Today, 73% of our shops have LED lighting and the goal is to be 100% LED by the end of FY27.

All of our air conditioning units use low impact refrigerants and we use an energy portal that provides heatmaps for each store to enable us to investigate and monitor hot spots.



## OUR CONSUMABLES

All of the paper we directly buy for use in our offices and shops is Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) accredited.

All of the swing tickets on our garments are made from FSC accredited paper.

All of our ecommerce bags are made from 100% recycled content and are recyclable.

All the cardboard boxes bought by our distribution centre are recycled.



## RECYCLING AND WASTE

We have recycling arrangements in place at our head office, distribution centre and in all of our shops. In addition, we try to recirculate equipment that we no longer need.

We offer old laptops, monitors and desktop computers internally, with any proceeds going to charity.

We aim to responsibly recycle anything that can't be sold or otherwise rehomed.

# COMMUNITY

**We will continue our long tradition of donating at least 1% of our profits to charities and causes that promote independence and resilience.**

We try to stand up for what we believe in (like creativity, independence and self-expression) and to support others to stand up too.

Our commitment to donate at least 1% of our profits to charity has been our stated policy since 2010, when we established our own registered charity, the White Stuff Foundation.

But we don't stop at 1%. Since 2010 we have donated over £4.4m to hundreds of charities, large and small, in the UK and abroad. Which is quite a bit more than 1%!





## THE WHITE STUFF FOUNDATION AND HOME-START UK

In 2020 we partnered with Home-Start UK. Home-Start provides skilled support through its network of volunteers to deliver programmes to families in difficult circumstances to prevent them reaching crisis points. They do this at a grassroots level, through their extensive network of local Home-Starts throughout the UK.

In 2021, we launched the White Stuff Empowering Women grant fund and to date have donated £155,000 to this project. We're delighted to have recently embarked on our third round of funding for this project.

## OUR NEW LIFE PARTNERSHIP

We don't destroy our unwanted samples and end-of-life unsold clothing, and we don't send them to landfill. We donate our unwanted samples and unsold clothing to NewLife, a charity that supports disabled children. The clothes are then sold in NewLife shops, or are recycled or repurposed.

## OUR FUNDRAISING

We see fundraising as an integral part of doing business and try to weave this into our core activities.

We have run a design workshop with some of the mums helped by Home-Start. Three T-shirts were produced from their designs and these were sold as part of our regular range with all profits going to Home-Start.

We also have a range of charity Christmas cards, again with 100% of the profits going to charity.

Sometimes we tie in charitable initiatives to our seasonal marketing campaigns. For Autumn Winter 22's 'Autumn is for Ambling' concept, we created an internal and customer-facing 'Walking Week' as a fundraising angle. This is included donating 100% of the profits from sock sales during the week, as well as a walking themed quiz and bar night at our head office and a sponsored Tough Mudder event for team members.

In addition to donating old samples to NewLife, we hold regular sample sales at our head office and distribution centre, with every penny going to our charity partners.

Our shop bags are made from paper, not plastic, and so we don't have to charge for them. But we invite any customers who want a White Stuff bag to make a discretionary donation to charity.

When we refit our shops or move locations, we're often left with random bits and bobs, like a life-size dog prop or various ornaments. We offer these to our employees or to our customers in return for a donation to charity. And of course, by finding them another home, we're reducing our waste too.





AS CHAMPIONS OF THE INDEPENDENT SPIRIT,  
DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION NATURALLY SITS  
AS OUR NUMBER ONE PRIORITY.

This of course not only means creating an environment where everyone can be comfortable being themselves, but also one where we can help support colleagues in whichever way is important to them. We recognize that we have a long way to go, but over the last year we have made great strides in bringing difficult subjects to the table.

# DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

From the very start of the employment journey with White Stuff, we underline our commitment to diversity and inclusion.



1.

Before a colleague joins us our recruitment system anonymises their CV through the initial screening phases to help eliminate unconscious bias or discrimination by the hiring manager.

2.

We ask all new starters to volunteer their personal diversity data (such as gender identity, sexual orientation, caring responsibilities, disabilities etc). This helps us better understand what the main needs of our staff are, and consequently introduce new policies or benefits to support them.

3.

All new starters in head office and shop management roles undergo mandatory unconscious bias training.

4.

All shop managers undergo disability awareness training.

## SUPPORTING COLLEAGUES IN DOING GOOD THINGS

We offer all colleagues the opportunity to take 2 paid charity days per year. They can use this time to volunteer at a local charity, climb a mountain to raise funds, or even spend it planting trees.

As well as giving paid time off we also offer financial support in fundraising through our Matched Funding Scheme. Any employee can apply to have the money they have raised for a charity matched up to a maximum of £250 by White Stuff.

## GIVING PEOPLE AN OPPORTUNITY

### Local schools

We believe that our business is well suited to helping people onto the career ladder, whatever their educational background. We employ many students and young people straight from school in our shops, but this year we piloted work experience at our head office with a local secondary school. This school is located in an area with high levels of disadvantaged families, and our joint aim is to inspire these young people into seeing the range of career opportunities open to them.

### Apprenticeships

During the year we employed 2 people in our head office on formal apprenticeship schemes, and a further 3 on internships. These placements are often a great success, building up confidence and skills and very often lead to a permanent role within our organisation.

WE'RE PROUD OF THE PROGRESS WE'VE MADE THIS YEAR,  
BUT WE KNOW THERE'S SO MUCH MORE TO DO.

WE'RE EXCITED TO SHARE THE NEXT STEPS ON OUR JOURNEY  
WITH YOU SOON.

Stay up to date at [whitestuff.com/sustainability](https://whitestuff.com/sustainability)



WHITE STUFF