

# People Planet Purpose

**2020-2030:  
A Decade of Action**



**Our framework for a sustainable business**

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# INTRODUCTION

In the construction industry we hold a privileged position in society. Contributing significantly to the national economy, we have the ability to instigate change. Change on a level that can have real impact, to hundreds of thousands of people both in the physical sense and to society. At VolkerWessels UK, it remains our ambition to deliver projects that demonstrate excellence in terms of design, construction and engineering excellence. These projects enhance the way we live, through innovative engineering solutions across the civil engineering and construction sectors including rail, highways, airport, marine, energy, water, and environmental infrastructure, but only if delivered sustainably, responsibly and with a desire to unlock the long-term social value embedded within these projects.

The last 20 years has seen Sustainability as a strategic model grow beyond recognition and has opened our eyes to how business can be done responsibly, and yet still be profitable. What started as a focus on the environment – carbon footprint, waste reduction and pollution prevention – is now a balancing act of business and society, thus intrinsically tied to profitability. In other words, it is no longer just a measure of goodwill, it's a measure of being a good business. Our ability to take bold action to balance the needs of the environment and society against the desire to grow economically, is critical. In the changing environmental and economic climate, our capacity to endure, be agile and be resilient will be fundamental to our long-term growth and our ability to future proof our business.



**Alan Robertson**  
CEO

## VISION

# 2020-

# 2030

will be our  
'Decade of Action'.



VolkerWessels UK's vision is to be the construction contractor of choice by always exceeding our stakeholders' expectations, being sustainable, innovative and future-oriented. It is our desire to grow responsibly, with respect for communities and the natural environment, and to leave a legacy we are proud of.

We will use 2020-2030 to take bold action to achieve this vision, aligning our approach internally to our organisational values and existing strategies, and externally to our client expectations, as well as to international, national and industry best practice, including to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's).

We will continue to respect our workforce as the foundation of our business by making safety and wellbeing a priority, forging relationships with likeminded clients and supply chain partners, actively seeking to unlock our collective ambition to deliver long-term social value and support our workforce and supply chain in delivering VolkerWessels UK's sustainability ambitions.





# THE PILLARS OF OUR RESPONSIBLE AND SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS

The three pillars of our responsible and sustainable business are:

**PEOPLE** Putting people at the heart of our approach

**PLANET** Protecting and enhancing the natural environment

**PURPOSE** Being a trusted, forward thinking and respected business of choice by delivering long-term social value

These pillars will act as our guidepost to ensure we make corporate decisions informed by our inherent culture to do business in the right way, as well as recognising that social and environmental risks have interdependencies that touch every part of our business and our supply chain.

Each one of our pillars has three themes and is supported either by working group or function within the business that aims to challenge current thinking, set ambitious targets, develop best practice, share learning and provide a support network to enable the business to grow collaboratively and innovatively.

# EMBEDDING OUR APPROACH

This framework sets the strategic direction for VolkerWessels UK and is fully endorsed by the Board. To fully embed the People-Planet-Purpose pillars of this strategy into our operations, and make sustainability inherent to the way we do business, it has three things at its core.

The first is the belief that being a responsible, sustainable business must be delivered with **substance and integrity**, the second is that it must be delivered with **people at its heart**, and finally it needs to **connect seamlessly** with every other part of our business.

It sets a structure that enables us to talk consistently to our stakeholders and, importantly, offers flexibility to our Business Units and projects to direct focus to those areas of greatest value to their stakeholders, based on their own materiality assessments. This approach engenders trust, respecting that embedding sustainability must be an agile and empowering process at the same time as providing standardisation, transparency and a collective ambition.



## Sustainable Development Goals

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) provide a blueprint for the transition needed to a healthier planet and a more just and fairer world – for present and future generations. The 17 Global Goals have been adopted by 193 world leaders and aim to create a better world by 2030, catalyse global action to end poverty, fight inequality and stop climate change. We are aligning our strategy to these goals.





# MEASURES

Measuring and sharing the progress we are making supports our desire to be transparent and build a culture where sustainability is inherent to our business model.

We have set measurable and meaningful targets to monitor progress and challenge ourselves towards stretched, exciting and ongoing progression, alongside highlighting the need for more qualitative sharing of best practice.

## Quantitative Measures

Primary measures and targets have been established and will be reviewed annually. For some metrics, 2020 will be used to collect data that was previously unavailable or was not deemed to be reliable enough to be used for benchmarking purposes, in order to set future targets.

## Qualitative Indicators

It is recognised that all indicators of success can't be quantified. Qualitative narrative, such as case studies, best practice and story-telling, adds greater depth and richness than numbers alone can provide. This supports our desire to build a culture around sustainability and endorses the spirit of our ambition to contribute positively to society and leave a legacy we are proud of.

## Measuring Social Value

To quantify the added value to society of our commitments we have adopted a range of metrics from the National Themes, Outcomes and Measures (TOMS) Framework to present a defensible and transparent way of capturing tangible social value. Each metric carries a proxy value representing the 'financial benefit' to society. We have aligned our measures to the TOMS framework.



# PILLAR 1: PEOPLE

## Putting people at the heart of our approach

Empowering our workforce to be the drivers of sustainable and responsible change will be key to the delivery of our framework; they are the foundation of our business so their safety and wellbeing will remain our priority, as will our desire to ensure our workplace is an inclusive and inspiring place to be.

### SAFETY AND WELLBEING

The provision of a safe working environment which prevents incidents or injury to our workforce and anyone else affected by our work.  
A workforce that maintains good mental and physical wellbeing, free from ill-health.

| Principal measures  | 2020 Target | 2025 Target | 2030 Target |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Accident Frequency Rate (AFR)   | 0           | 0           | 0           |
| % of workforce attending voluntary health and wellbeing drop-in-clinics | 25%         | 40%         | 50%         |
| % of mental health first aid trained staff                              | 5%          | 7.5%        | 10%         |

We will continue to monitor and analyse lagging indicators such as injury rate, service strike rate and lost time. The development of a correlation rate between leading and lagging indicators will form part of our analysis.

#### Qualitative Indicators of Success

Improving safety metrics are a result of an improving safety culture. Whilst overall culture is challenging to measure, we will continue to prioritise this through our behavioural campaigns, sharing lessons learnt and promoting initiatives to improve processes and safety controls. A broader range of metrics will continue to be captured which will be used to support our growth in this area.

Helping our workforce maintain a healthy work life balance will remain a priority, as will our commitment to supporting a number of national and industry specific pledges and maintaining our accreditation to SEQOHS.



## EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

We will ensure that VolkerWessels UK is thoroughly inclusive of people from all lifestyles and is enriched by a diversity of perspectives, cultures and backgrounds, characterised by fairness and equality of opportunity.

| Principal measures                                    | 2020 Target                        | 2025 Target      | 2030 Target      |
|---|------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| % of EDI champions across the business                | 3%                                 | 6%               | 15%              |
| % voluntary staff turnover against industry benchmark | 70% of benchmark                   | 65% of benchmark | 60% of benchmark |
| % of diverse employees promoted                       | New measure – data collection only | TBC              | TBC              |

### Qualitative Indicators of Success

Many of the benefits associated with EDI initiatives take time to embed and be realised in a business. Statistics will demonstrate movement, but it will be the results of our employee survey and the general 'feeling' around our offices and sites that will help us understand how a diverse workforce is affecting our culture.

Many of the targets listed will require a significant shift in behaviours and advancements in the systems used to capture and analyse data.

Communication remains key, so we will continue to review how the EDI message reaches our teams across a broad range of initiatives as well as adopting inclusive policies and best practice models. Storytelling and case studies will be pivotal in sharing the message and promoting success.

We will also be reviewing the training available to our employees to ensure it is specific to their role and responsibilities.

We will continue our work to promote and encourage employees from all backgrounds to join and thrive at VolkerWessels UK.

## EMPOWERING SUSTAINABLE LEADERS

Our workforce will be supported in their ambitions to enhance their own skills, knowledge and experience in order to embrace and instigate sustainable and responsible change and inspire others to follow.

| Principal measures   | 2020 Target                        | 2025 Target | 2030 Target |
|--|------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Number of sustainability initiatives instigated by the workforce on a voluntary basis            | New measure – data collection only | TBC         | TBC         |
| % of employees undertaking sustainability related learning                                       | 15%                                | 75%         | 100%        |
| % compliance with minimum competency requirements as defined in the VW UK HSE Training Standards | 100%                               | 100%        | 100%        |

### Qualitative Indicators of Success

Empowerment is not solely a result of classroom courses, but also our ability to find alternative ways to address development and helping employees to feel confident in making the right decisions and bring others along on the journey. Approaches will need to be varied; the right solution for the business area and individual.

Sometimes it is difficult to capture growth, development and confidence but personal stories will enable us to share these successes. A 'Sustainability Hub' will be developed to act as a central depository for learning material and shared best practice.

# PILLAR 2: PLANET

## Protecting and enhancing the natural environment

Each of our projects is unique and, as such, the environmental risks and opportunities that they present to us are unique. Our ability to address these risks professionally, combined with creatively assessing the opportunities available to us to deliver no net loss or, better still, net positive solutions, will ensure we act responsibly and pro-actively.

### CLIMATE, ENERGY AND EMISSIONS

Translating and taking positive action to reduce or, wherever possible, eliminate our adverse impacts on climate change.

| Principal measures   | 2020 Target               | 2025 Target | 2030 Target |
|--|---------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| % reduction in tonnes of CO <sub>2</sub> e emissions   | 5% year on year reduction |             |             |
| % of energy from the grid procured from renewable sources  | 40%                       | 75%         | 100%        |
| <b>Qualitative Indicators of Success</b><br>During 2020, VolkerWessels UK will develop and publish a Carbon Reduction Strategy which will formalise our approach to drive energy efficiency in order to meet our targets. It will be our workforce that will bring this to life by making changes to the way their projects are designed and delivered so the way we support them through training, awareness and collaboration will be fundamental. |                           |             |             |



## RESPONSIBLE MANAGEMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Environmental risks and opportunities will be managed professionally, responsibly and innovatively.

| Principal measures  | 2020 Target                        | 2025 Target | 2030 Target |
|---|------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Projects implementing biodiversity enhancement initiatives                        | 50% projects                       | 75%         | 90%         |
| Hours spent supporting community initiatives that enhance the natural environment | New measure – data collection only | TBC         | TBC         |

### Qualitative Indicators of Success

We will add focus to collectively sharing ways to achieve net positive benefits to the natural environment.

Implicit within this theme is our ongoing commitment to reduce other environmental impacts such as nuisance and pollution. This will be managed through the Aspects and Impacts assessments of our activities.

## CIRCULAR ECONOMY

A fully embedded approach to a circular economy which aims to design for sustainability, minimises waste and make the most of resources.

| Principal measures   | 2020 Target | 2025 Target | 2030 Target |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| % of waste diverted from landfill through reuse, recovery and recycling initiatives  | 94%         | 97%         | 100%        |
| % reduction in tonnes of waste generated per £100,000 turnover against 2019 baseline | 5%          | 20%         | 50%         |

### Qualitative Indicators of Success

The transition from 'waste and materials management' to Circular Economy is one that will require education and training to support a new suite of metrics. We will seek engagement from our supply chain and Clients to support our ambitions in this space.

Materials management will remain at the heart of our approach in order to instil best practice both internally as well as through our supply chain.

# PILLAR 3: PURPOSE

## Being a trusted, forward thinking and respected business of choice by delivering long-term social value

Making responsible and forward-thinking choices about the way our projects are executed, and how they will deliver social value, will support our overall vision to be the contractor of choice and encourage us to be a good neighbour in the communities in which we work.

### EDUCATION AND EMPLOYABILITY

Raising awareness of the opportunities that exist within the construction industry and ultimately promote VolkerWessels UK as the employer of choice.

| Principal measures   | 2020 Target                        | 2025 Target | 2030 Target |
|--|------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Number of days provision of meaningful work experience placements                      | 425                                | 525         | 700         |
| % of people in 'Earn and Learn' employment in line with our commitments to the 5% Club | 5%                                 | 5%          | 5%          |
| Hours spent undertaking school and further education visits                            | New measure – data collection only | TBC         | TBC         |

#### Qualitative Indicators of Success

The business benefits of a robust Schools Engagement strategy may not be realised for many years to come, but it is our role now to ignite an interest in VolkerWessels UK and the employment opportunities that exist to help support other attract policies and contribute to the well documented skills shortage.

We will consider how to capture any previous interactions with VolkerWessels UK e.g. at school / careers events when new starters join the company. The way each part of the business interprets the Schools and Further Education Strategy will

reflect their own needs and support specific industry needs. There will be overlap here with our volunteering commitments.

There will be a focus on the completion of apprenticeship across the range of focus areas e.g. reskill, upskill, school leavers, retirement programmes and people who return to work. Our 5% commitment for 'Earn and Learn' employees is in line with the national 5% Club campaign and includes apprenticeships at all levels, formalised graduate training programmes and sponsored students.



## CHARITY, VOLUNTEERING AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Establishing meaningful relationships with charitable bodies and local communities which provide mutually beneficial opportunities.

| Principal measures  | 2020 Target                        | 2025 Target | 2030 Target |
|---|------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Number of hours spent volunteering in the local community | New measure – data collection only | TBC         | TBC         |
| Average score in Considerate Constructors Scheme audits   | >40                                | >42         | >45         |

### Qualitative Indicators of Success

We will continue to report on the financial contribution made to our chosen charities and will work closely with them to get to heart of their approach, and how our support will add value to the charity. Case studies and storytelling are imperative to help engage hearts and minds.

The launch of a structured approach to Volunteering will enable employees to build on existing relationships, as well as exploring opportunities with our designated corporate charities and school links. In addition to the metrics this platform will provide, there will be an opportunity to produce case studies to share the softer benefits that volunteering can bring.

## SUSTAINABLE SUPPLY CHAIN AND ETHICAL PROCUREMENT

To operate in a fair and ethical manner and publicise our desire to work alongside a network of likeminded supply chain partners.

| Principal measures   | 2020 Target                        | 2025 Target | 2030 Target |
|--|------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Hours of sustainability related training or workshops completed by our supply chain partners, including through the SCSS | New measure – data collection only | TBC         | TBC         |
| % of our supply chain in the Supply Chain Sustainability School achieving Bronze, Silver or Gold membership status       | 20%                                | 50%         | 75%         |
| % of total procurement spend with SME's  | 60%                                | 65%         | 70%         |

### Qualitative Indicators of Success

The overall aim of this metric is to raise awareness of the benefits that sound sustainability practices can bring throughout our supply chain, and we understand that this will be best achieved by seeking 2-way engagement. Whilst we will capture the formal interactions we have with our supply chain in our metrics, this will only be possible by our own internal culture reflecting the desire to share this message.

We will continue to provide sustainability training to our Procurement teams across the business training and will formalise our approach to Sustainable Procurement with the implementation of ISO 20400 across the business.

In addition to our focus on the use of SME's across the business, we will also continue to broaden our supply chain to include Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprises (VCSE's) as well as local suppliers and contractors.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

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For further information about our  
People-Planet-Purpose sustainability  
framework, please contact  
[sustainability@volkerwessels.co.uk](mailto:sustainability@volkerwessels.co.uk)  
or visit our website  
[www.volkerwessels.co.uk](http://www.volkerwessels.co.uk)

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A photograph of construction workers in safety gear. In the foreground, a man in a white hard hat with yellow earplugs and an orange high-visibility jacket is looking down. Next to him, a woman in a blue hard hat, safety glasses, and an orange high-visibility jacket is looking forward with a focused expression. In the background, another worker in a white hard hat and orange jacket is partially visible. The text '2020-2030' is overlaid in large green and blue letters, with 'A DECADE OF ACTION' in smaller blue and green letters below it.

# 2020- 2030

A DECADE  
OF ACTION

