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INSPIRING GLOBAL STORIES OF
CONSCIENTIOUS CLOTHING

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Foreword

Over the years, we've been critical of the dominant fast fashion model at Apparel Insider. We have also raised question marks about various fashion industry sustainability initiatives, as well as misleading and ambiguous claims made by so many leading brands and retailers.

In response, several readers and commentators on our social media channels have quite reasonably asked: what is the alternative? A few times, I have been asked, which brands are doing the right thing? Which brands are sustainable?

We decided to ask around on this issue and the result was this publication – a celebration of businesses doing interesting, innovative work in the sustainable fashion space.

When we wrote on LinkedIn about this issue, our post received 55,000 views. We were inundated with responses from all four corners of the world.

We received dozens of suggestions for small and medium sized enterprises doing all sorts of cool things in sustainable fashion. We narrowed these down to give us an eclectic, diverse mix from different parts of the world. The aim was to get a broad cross-section of different types of retailers rather than to make any meaningful judgement about one being better than another.

To those not included, our apologies. Your correspondence, however, did help us build a very clear picture of how innovative, new start-ups are approaching the issue of sustainable fashion. Many of these businesses have been founded by executives who previously worked for major brands and had become disillusioned with the slow pace of change.

Several themes stand out. First is the focus by almost all respondents

on slow fashion. This means emphasising quality, durability and longevity. There is a pride among the business owners we spoke to about how long their clothing lasts. The use of natural fibres such as wool and silk is important in this context.

A second theme is an emphasis on the people who make our clothes. Many we spoke to stressed how important it was that workers at their suppliers are properly remunerated and/or receive a living wage. One does wonder whether the fact these business owners know their suppliers intimately (due to their smaller scale) means they are much more conscious of such issues. This is in contrast to the larger fast fashion businesses where big players have hundreds of suppliers and consequently it is easier to become disconnected to such concerns.

A final theme is a broader one of the passion and enthusiasm of all we spoke to. It must be incredibly tough as a small fashion player to compete with multi-nationals, with their scale, buying power and multi-million-dollar marketing budgets. But through smart use of social media, word of mouth and authentic storytelling, the business owners highlighted in this publication are showing the limitless possibilities of slow, sustainable fashion.

We hope you enjoy the read. We would like to thank Compare Ethics for sponsoring the publication. For full disclosure, Compare Ethics nominated two (very worthy) businesses for inclusion. The rest were submitted directly to Apparel Insider and selected internally.

Brett Mathews
Editor
Apparel Insider

Introduction

The apparel market is at a crossroads. Brands know that there is an urgency to reduce their environmental impact and change the relationship with workers across the value chain. But change can be tough. From complying with new regulations to increasing product durability and ensuring worker safety, there is a lot to digest. For those that manage to deliver on the stakeholder demands of today, there lies an opportunity to lead the way into a new era of retail.

At the start of 2020, a global sweep on environmental claims led by market authorities in the United Kingdom and the Netherlands found 40 per cent of claims made online to be misleading (1). Last year, a report from the Changing Markets Foundation also revealed 60 per cent of green claims made by major fashion giants are too ambiguous (2). Whether they realise it or not, many brands are no longer compliant due to vague language or a lack of credible evidence to back up their environmental claims.

Every stakeholder is adding pressure to act, today. Customers, investors and employees are demanding businesses to take action, reduce their environmental impact and communicate their activity accurately. But doing this well is difficult. Even fashion brands founded on a vision to protect the planet and people need the right expertise to get the conversation correct. Though new regulation on green claims is welcomed, many leaders lack the tools to achieve compliant communications at scale.

Meanwhile, regulatory bodies are adding heavier pressures into the mix. Authorities from the United Kingdom, France, Netherlands, Norway, European Union and the United States are



updating consumer protection law to improve standards and create a level playing field when sharing environmental product claims. What's more, new rules on durability, extended producer responsibility and the safe treatment of supply chain workers will be on the horizon in the next 24 months. Non-compliance with the EU Green Deal could also stop the movement of goods in Europe (3) – directly impacting the operations of those who trade there.

Ultimately, a lack of compliance creates risk on a variety of levels. Whether that's operational, reputational or financial. Failure to take action on the reduction of a brand's environmental impact puts even more at stake. For example, loss of market share as their competition moves quickly on this agenda. Loss of top talent who no longer wish to stay at companies ignoring the climate emergency. And loss of a secure

investment opportunities as both public and private investors seek out more reliable data on how brands are reducing their environmental impact.

Most apparel businesses I speak to today feel stuck. They are left with headaches and a lack of confidence in the next steps they need to take to improve the impact of their business. As a result, they are missing out on the new market opportunity, and they know it.

Some brands are not saying anything about their impact. They fear getting it wrong and being called out for it. This is a process I've come to know as greenhushing, which is non-competitive in today's environment. Although these companies have worked hard in the background on many projects and face internal pressures to promote their progress, they

lack the expertise to know how to share claims that are compliant worldwide.

Other companies are at risk of greenwashing – misleading customers on their environmental impact. Some may be doing so intentionally, while for others it may be the result of human error. In either case, they are struggling to comply with anti-greenwashing rules and regulations.

What I have seen is that it doesn't need to be this way. Not anymore. There are many fashion brands seeking out scalable, compliant technology to ensure confidence in their impact communications. In fact, responsible businesses are leading from the front by assessing and verifying their impact. This is propelling the new era of retail forwards. It's clear that with the right support, tools and processes in place, all fashion brands have the opportunity to thrive.

Helping brands to create compliant claims at scale - and pull the plug on greenwashing - is the reason Compare Ethics exists. Businesses that use tools to verify and deliver compliant claims regain confidence in their communications. Those that we talk to have reported increases in productivity, reduced costs and a rise in revenue. For some, verification technology is a lifeline. In fact, without a third party to verify their claims, responsible brands such as VAER have told me they'd just have to stop making them.

Thriving in this new era of retail means taking actionable steps to a better future, today. It means working to understand your product impact data to enable transparency at scale. And it means celebrating progress in a measurable and compliant way. Brands that fail to act now stand to be on the wrong side of their stakeholders, and history.

Abbie Morris
CEO and co-founder
Compare Ethics

SOURCES

- [1https://www.gov.uk/government/news/global-sweep-finds-40-of-firms-green-claims-could-be-misleading](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/global-sweep-finds-40-of-firms-green-claims-could-be-misleading)
- [2https://changingmarkets.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/SYNTHETICS-ANONYMOUS-PRESS-RELEASE-UK.pdf](https://changingmarkets.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/SYNTHETICS-ANONYMOUS-PRESS-RELEASE-UK.pdf)
- [3https://lpscdn.linklaters.com/-/media/digital-marketing-image-library/files/06_ckp/2022/march/220331-alert_ecodesign-regulation.ashx?rev=1b8dc01a-66e9-490b-be93-94c37c420fbc&extension=pdf](https://lpscdn.linklaters.com/-/media/digital-marketing-image-library/files/06_ckp/2022/march/220331-alert_ecodesign-regulation.ashx?rev=1b8dc01a-66e9-490b-be93-94c37c420fbc&extension=pdf)



Name:
Socko
Founder:
Emma Mathews
Location:
London, UK
Website:
<https://socko.shop>

What is your company's ethos regarding sustainable fashion?

Socko's mission is founded on circular design and closing the loop. This means that not only are all of our socks made from waste materials but we are on a mission to extend the active life of all clothing by re-teaching the lost art of darning. We do this in 3 ways: To date, every pair of UK-made Socko socks has come with a needle and thread. Founder Emma has taught over 200 people to darn, both in person, live streaming through the pandemic and via Socko's comprehensive online workshops. Socko also makes tools to assist with repair, including our ergonomic hand-turned darning eggs. Manufacturing in the UK keeps our carbon footprint low and imported materials are always sea freighted. Socko continually monitors our impact and engages with third party experts to ensure they are keeping up with best practices. Our packaging is plastic-free, recycled and recyclable, whilst maintaining a

we can bring down costs to manufacture locally. Sourcing and manufacturing locally is essential to a sustainability story. Not only do you have to factor in the environmental consequences of freighting goods across the world but, you also have to consider the environmental regulations and labour regulations set by the governing authorities in countries you are sourcing your manufacturing from.

In terms of fashion sustainability, please rank the below in terms of importance (1 = most important, 4 = least important):

1. Other -The process under which the garment is made is vital in determining its sustainability. It is this process of manufacturing that has the biggest sway on how sustainable a garment is.
2. aterials/fibres used to make clothing
3. Durability/longevity
4. Recyclability



carefully designed aesthetic. We are also a member of 1% for the Planet. We pride ourselves on transparency and sharing our sustainable journey with our customers.

Can genuinely sustainable fashion be affordable to all?

With time. As a micro business we are in a fortunate position to make sure we are doing things differently from the get-go. However, minimum order quantities of sustainable materials are large and they do come at a premium. This cost is ultimately passed on to customers; our business has to be sustainable in both senses of the word. The way that this can change is with demand. Over time it will make economic sense for large suppliers and brands to produce more sustainable fibres and fabrics to keep up with demand. This could be sped up with government incentives but the hope, certainly from our perspective, is that the cost of materials will begin to match their less environmental equivalents.

In terms of fashion sustainability, please rank the below in terms of importance (1 = most important, 4 = least important):

1. Other (the workforce – the faces behind who makes your clothes)
2. Durability/longevity
3. Materials/fibres used to make clothing
4. Recyclability

Name:
Red Land Cotton
Founder:
Mark Yeager & Anna Brakefield
Location:
Moulton, Alabama
Website:
www.redlandcotton.com

What is your company's ethos regarding sustainable fashion?

Our company is devoted to a completely transparent and local supply chain. We grow all of the cotton ourselves on our family farm and use a supply chain within a 400-mile radius within the USA to spin, weave, finish and cut and sew our garments.

Can genuinely sustainable fashion be affordable to all?

We believe if we can strengthen the infrastructure in the US,

Name:
SABINNA
Founder:
Sabinn Rachimova
Location:
London
Website:
www.sabinna.com

What is your company's ethos regarding sustainable fashion?

SABINNA is a female-led conscious lifestyle brand. Offering sustainable and education-led fashion, we operate from a studio and retail space in East London, as well as a small knitwear studio in Vienna.

We've nurtured close relationships with our manufacturing partners in the UK, Vienna, and Portugal, keeping our production local and considered. Beyond our products, we are mindful about all aspects of our business – from eco-friendly packaging to fair wages for everyone in our supply chain. We want to shift the perception of what sustainable fashion can look like, through our focus on bold prints, statement pieces and timeless silhouettes. Transparency is at the core of the business. By educating our customers on ethical fashion and consumption, we are combatting greenwashing and giving them the power to

make informed decisions. We do this through a variety of mediums, including workshops, a podcast, and webinars

Can genuinely sustainable fashion be affordable to all?

SABINNA was founded in 2015 and since the very beginning we got questions about the pricing aspect of sustainable products. We spent years explaining the whys and hows of pricing to our customers, one by one. That's why at some point we decided to make a campaign out of it, and that's how 'How much did you say' was born. This year we won the Drapers Highly Commented Sustainable Fashion Award.

We think the question is how we define affordable and what we can do to give people an understanding of the true cost of fashion. Fast fashion items can only be cheap because the garment workers are paying the high price for it.

In terms of fashion sustainability, please rank the below in terms of importance (1 = most important, 4 = least important):

- Materials/fibres used to make clothing = 1
Durability/longevity = 1
Recyclability = 1
Other: I would also add the journeys between the different steps of the supply chain.



Name:
Cloth & Co.
Founder:
Caroline Poiner and Daisy Burgess
Location:
Sydney
Website:
clothandco.co

What is your company's ethos regarding sustainable fashion?

Cloth & Co. is a purpose driven apparel brand, designed in Australia, and ethically produced in India. We are committed to producing thoughtfully designed, timeless and long-lasting collections that have a positive impact, both social and environmental.

Circularity and pre-consumer waste management is key, with our mission to not only do less harm, but to actually do good



and look to regenerative and sustainable approaches from the product design to end of life.

We are committed to using the highest quality natural fibres, partnering with like-minded suppliers and using toxic-free processes that are gentle on people and gentle on the planet. Natural fibres are inherently more sustainable; they are a renewable resource that is biodegradable, can be carbon neutral or in some cases positive. We source the highest quality materials, our cotton is sourced from organic and regenerative farms and all of our pieces are biodegradable so that in the end, they can be recycled, repurposed or decomposed.

Can genuinely sustainable fashion be affordable to all?

Ethically and sustainably produced fashion is inherently more costly to produce than high volume fast fashion due to many factors from lack of economies of scale, lower yield farming, higher wages, costs of certifications, lower MOQ's and slower production. However, the quality, timeless aesthetic and overall value should be greater, meaning you buy less over time and the opportunity for quality resale, repair and swap is more achievable.

Most important is the value proposition and taking the real cost into consideration; this is a process of awareness and education.

In terms of fashion sustainability, please rank the below in terms of importance (1 = most important, 4 = least important):

1. Materials/fibres used to make clothing
2. Pre-consumer waste through over ordering, high MOQs to reduce unit price with inflated pricing to allow for markdowns vs. actual requirements and realistic pricing.
3. Durability/longevity
4. Recyclability

Name:
Humans Are Vain
Founder:
Chris Margetts
Location:
Sweden
Website:
www.humansarevain.com

What is your company's ethos regarding sustainable fashion?
 Humans Are Vain is a Swedish eco-deluxe brand that fuses the latest vegan sustainable materials and innovative methods with contemporary design. Our sustainable and recycled materials are what defines us – products made from materials such as apple leather and recycled plastic can be found throughout our collection. More specifically, our materials include:

- Oeko-Tex Standard 100 class 1 vegan eco-microfiber
- Recycled PET and natural

corn fiber lining (Oeko-Tex + GRS certified)

- Recycled rubber soles (70%)
- High density recycled cork insoles
- 100% organic cotton laces
- SEAQUAL recycled plastic (GRS certified)

Can genuinely sustainable fashion be affordable to all?
 Genuine sustainable fashion at this moment in time can't compete with fast fashion high street prices but it can still be fairly-priced and affordable to many people, especially with the right business model that focuses on product and price over huge profit margins and large overheads.

In terms of fashion sustainability, please rank the below in terms of importance (1 = most important, 4 = least important):
 Materials/fibres used to make clothing = 1
 Durability/longevity = 1
 Recyclability = 1
 Other (Ethical Production) = 1



Name:
The Onikas
Founder:
Veronica Pesantes
Location:
Miami Beach, FL
Website:
www.theonikas.com

What is your company's ethos regarding sustainable fashion?
 We all know the big problem is the fast fashion industry and its toxic overproduction. Responsible for an estimated 4-10 per cent of the global carbon emissions, it is unsustainable to the core. At Onikas, our solution is small batch, ethical production. Our products feel good on the body- the fabric is soft, durable and beautiful- and also for the planet. As a slow growth brand, we understand that constant growth is the primary cause of the degradation of our planet. Fast fashion also impacts the craft or artisan economy which is made up of mainly women artisans who are in danger of losing their livelihood and cultural heritage. There are as many as 300 million home-based workers around the

globe, and it's a proven way out of poverty for many. In 2020 the global handicraft industry was valued at US\$466bn, it is the second largest employer in the developing world. Cultural preservation and economic development for these artisans has always been at the forefront of my work as a designer and activist. We work with family-owned workshops in India and Ecuador that practice ancient techniques like block printing and weaving.

Can genuinely sustainable fashion be affordable to all?
 Once it pays garment workers, artisan makers and brand owners fairly it can, but not until the consumer understands the true cost of that US\$5 Shien garment. Until fast fashion quits green washing it is an uphill battle that needs fighting.

In terms of fashion sustainability, please rank the below in terms of importance (1 = most important, 4 = least important):
 1. Materials/fibres used to make clothing
 2. Durability/longevity
 3. Recyclability
 4. Other (living wage for workers)



Name:
Res-Res
Founder:
Søren Alling Sørensen & Lars Toft
Location:
Copenhagen
Website:
www.res-res.com

What is your company's ethos regarding sustainable fashion?
 As a conscious fashion store, our vision is to improve the fashion industry and to contribute to drive the change we want to see through our everyday actions. We carefully select the brands we work with, and we only offer products that are made with respect to resources. This includes respect for the people involved in the production process, as well as respect for our planet. We become wiser every day, and this knowledge is reflected in the choices we make. Transparency and information are key to making responsible choices, and we are here to share our extensive knowledge on materials, production processes, care instructions and social issues related to the fashion industry with you.

Can genuinely sustainable fashion be affordable to all?
 It is a big myth that sustainable fashion comes at a higher price. Sustainable fashion means wearing clothes for longer, buying new clothes less often, finding creative ways of re-using clothes such as swapping, repairing and upcycling. If these options are not available, buying new clothes from "sustainable brands" with high quality and

longevity is a way to consume responsibly. So buying "sustainable fashion" is only one element of a different mindset on how to engage with fashion. Sustainable fashion is about challenging the current system of overproduction and overconsumption in the textile industry. Sustainably produced fashion will never be able to compete with prices of fast fashion producers, and it shouldn't. Rather, it should reflect the true value of clothing. This includes reducing the environmental impact of clothing production, and ensuring fair wages and working conditions for textile workers in the entire production process.

In terms of fashion sustainability, please rank the below in terms of importance (1 = most important, 4 = least important):
 1. Materials/fibres used to make clothing
 2. Durability/longevity
 3. Other (social standards in supply chain)
 4. Recyclability
 This question was very difficult for us, since all of these criteria are part of our selection process, and one does not necessarily outweigh the other. In our opinion, a truly sustainable product entails all categories and does not just score high on materials.

Name:
Saywood. (Saywood Studio LTD)
Founder:
Harriet Saywood Bellisario
Location:
London, UK
Website:
<https://saywoodstudio.co.uk/>

What is your company's ethos regarding sustainable fashion?
 Saywood creates beautiful edits of wardrobe staples, elevated through colour and unexpected detail to make each piece unique. Each piece is made to last, and designed to be worn and reworn. People and planet are considered at every stage. Saywood works with ethical factories in London and Europe, that pay well-above the living wage, and which are working towards a more environmentally friendly ways of manufacture, with an ambition of zero waste. For example, Saywood's partners use low energy sewing equipment, and collect any factory floor offcuts to be repurposed as mattress padding or biofuel.

Fabrics are an integral part of Saywood, ensuring a premium look with a sustainable approach. Natural fibres are used throughout the collection, recycled materials and deadstock fabrics are used as much as possible, with no new cloth produced. Saywood works with fabrics mills that are producing cloth with the planet in mind, reducing water consumption, energy, and the chemicals used. Riopelle, the fabric mill in Portugal where much of the deadstock fabrics are from, are STeP by OEKO-Tex certified, meaning they have permanently implemented a production process that is more environmentally friendly and has high social standards. They have their own solar farm and water treatment facility, cleansing and recycling the water for reuse in production, and

whilst recycling any their chemicals. Our Italian fabric mill, Canclini, uses only Supima cotton. Supima is only from the US, cultivated and grown by family run farms, who use satellite technology to monitor soil health, reducing water usage, and fostering wildlife, whilst ensuring fair wages. The buttons are made from eco-friendly corozo nut, or Codelite - from milk casein - both are natural and biodegradable.

Can genuinely sustainable fashion be affordable to all?
 In theory, yes, eventually. Sustainable fabrics don't necessarily cost much more than the classic fibres, where they have been produced in a fairer system. But crucially, to be truly sustainable, everyone in the supply chain has to be paid a fair living wage; a skilled wage. If we took this approach to all industries across the board, and everyone was paid a fair living wage, sustainable fashion wouldn't seem so unaffordable. And at that, we must buy less and choose better lasting quality - this approach would then change the way we spend on clothes. If we buy less, we have more to invest.

In terms of fashion sustainability, please rank the below in terms of importance (1 = most important, 4 = least important):
 1. Other (paying fair living wages)
 2. Durability/longevity
 3. Materials/fibres used to make clothing
 4. Recyclability





Name:
Ninja Monk
Founder:
Sandra Saulnier
Location:
Los Angeles, California
Website:
www.NINJAMONK.com

What is your company's ethos regarding sustainable fashion?

At Ninja Monk we have a holistic approach to sustainable fashion as it's all connected. This brand was created to change the message that 'You don't need to buy more stuff to feel good about yourself, you are a Badass as you are' and the smashing of all stereotypes: 'No Labels and Just Humans'. Our design sustainability is unisex quality multifunctional clothes to live in featuring 2 in 1 convertible products with reversible colour, wear front to back, and customised lengths. We created a flexible fit with easy sizing for Everybody & Every Body that also reduces the need for extra sizes and product. We cut waste on every aspect of manufacturing, from no excess trims or tags to throw in the garbage, to reusable zip-close packaging, and we support sustainable manufacturing vendors, ethical business practices, liveable wages, and quality eco-

friendly fabrics. Our ethos is Longevity = Sustainability = Timeless = Simplicity = Creativity & Collaboration Over Consumption.

Can genuinely sustainable fashion be affordable to all?

*Yes. When you know who you are & trust yourself to BE YOU, you are more thoughtful of the end usage with questions such as: 'how will this improve my life' & 'why do I think it will?' This translates into investing in fewer clothes you actually love and wear. This is the core of sustainable fashion.

In terms of fashion sustainability, please rank the below in terms of importance (1 = most important, 4 = least important):

Durability/longevity = 1
 Recyclability = 1
 I feel these two points go together and are very important as they incorporate design sustainability and not trends but quality over quantity and timeless style and function. Sustainable Mindset/Awareness = 1
 This is about self-awareness and how you live every area of your life and the connection to why you buy what you buy, why you wear what you wear and this is the first step to not getting sucked into the 'Marketing Machine of More'.
 Materials/fibres used to make clothing = 2

Name:
United State of Apparel
Founder:
Anthony Quiroz
Location:
Los Angeles, CA
Website:
unitedstateofapparel.com

What is your company's ethos regarding sustainable fashion?

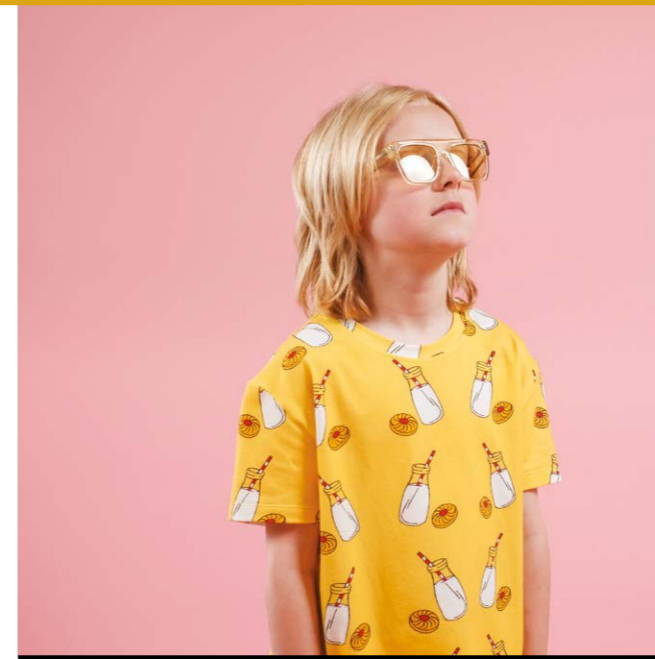
For over 25 years we have been perfecting our process for true eco-friendly apparel. Our sustainable products start with locally grown organic cotton or recycled fabrics, then they are cut, sewn and finished in the USA by hard working Americans.

Can genuinely sustainable fashion be affordable to all?

Absolutely! Sustainable fashion is only about 15-20 per cent higher in price on average. Consumers must alter their buying mentality from price to purpose as the return on sustainable fashion is priceless.

In terms of fashion sustainability, please rank the below in terms of importance (1 = most important, 4 = least important):

Materials/fibres used to make clothing = 1
 Durability/longevity (how long a garment is likely to last) = 1
 Other - products produced in same country as distribution = 1
 Recyclability = 2



Name:
Boy Wonder
Founder:
Ismay Mummery
Location:
UK
Website:
https://boywonderland.com

What is your company's ethos regarding sustainable fashion?

Boy Wonder is a sustainable business that focuses on extending garment life. According to WRAP (Waste Recycling Action Programme) extending the life of clothes by just nine months of active use would reduce the carbon, water and waste footprints by 20-30 per cent each. We design high quality, long-lasting garments that are trend and season free, will wear well, be loved and passed down to be cherished by others. This is supplemented by designing in extra growth room and by providing care guides, repair kits and iron-on patches, so that customers have the tools to help them to care for their purchase. Our secondary focus for sustainability is hyper local production. All our garments are

knitted, printed and made ethically in Leicester just over 20 miles from our studio. This enables us to not only invest in our local economy and ensure high ethical standards but also makes our 'fashion' footprint very low. Our products travel approximately 44 per cent less than big brands. According to Nottingham University, making them in the UK creates 47 per cent less emissions. I believe Britain could and should become as renowned for its sustainable and ethical fashion production standards as it is for its quality and classic design.

Can genuinely sustainable fashion be affordable to all?

Sustainable fashion also includes preloved, swapped and resale fashion which are all lower in price and impact than new products made with virgin materials.

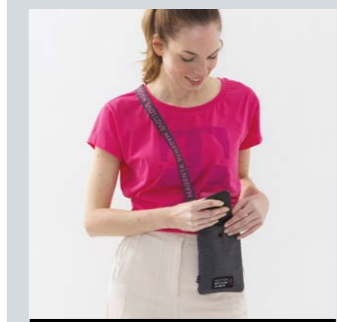
In terms of fashion sustainability, please rank the below in terms of importance (1 = most important, 4 = least important):

1. Durability/longevity (how long a garment is likely to last)
 2. Materials/fibres used to make clothing
 3. Recyclability (how easy it is to recycle the garment, including design for recyclability)
 4. Other

Name:
two lives
Founder:
Tina Lilienthal & Niklas Vila Karpe
Location:
London
Website:
www.two-lives.com

What is your company's ethos regarding sustainable fashion?

two lives was founded with the aim to address the vast amount of waste being created by the fashion industry, which some claim is the world's second largest polluter. According to Fashion Revolution an estimated 92 million tons of textile waste is created annually, and every second the equivalent of one garbage truck of textiles is landfilled or burned globally. Having seen this first hand at factories worldwide, two lives was created with the mission to give textile waste a second life by reusing and upcycling textile leftovers, reprocessing unsold stock, and eliminating deadstock. We believe that existing systems are no longer fit for purpose as they were designed 10 to 20 years ago for a retail reality that no longer exists. To create a circular approach, we need to think of supply as something dynamic, responsive, and variable rather than static. It is our aim to turn waste into a commodity through high-value reuse of secondary/discarded materials. We have identified 4 main areas of waste:
 1) Off-cuts from bulk production
 2) Deadstock textiles left from overproduction or cancelled orders



Can genuinely sustainable fashion be affordable to all?

This depends on the definition of 'affordable to all'. When costing a garment, we take into consideration not only the sustainability of the material but also the ethical and social implications of the manufacturing process, making sure that people are treated well and paid fairly. We work very closely with our factories ensuring that we are able to streamline and scale the process of utilising and repurposing discarded materials so it becomes not only feasible for production but also has an impact on the price. With that in mind, sustainable fashion can be affordable if consumers understand the real cost of a garment and are willing to buy less but more qualitative.

Can genuinely sustainable fashion be affordable to all?

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In terms of fashion sustainability, please rank the below in terms of importance (1 = most important, 4 = least important):

Materials/fibres used to make clothing = 1
 Durability/longevity (how long a garment is likely to last) = 1
 Recyclability (how easy it is to recycle the garment, including design for recyclability) = 1
 Other (regional or local production) = 1

Name:
Falling Leaf Clothing
Founder:
Lindsay Galloway-Hall
Location:
Stirling, Scotland
Website:
www.fallingleafclothing.com

What is your company's ethos regarding sustainable fashion?

I created the company specifically with sustainability and affordability at its core. My aim was to showcase the beauty of Scotland while offering more exciting, funkier eco-friendly, ethical clothing, without the usual inflated price tags. Everything is unisex, which means that customers can wear the design they like best, rather than being constrained by their gender. This streamlines the product line, which ultimately reduces waste. Our garment suppliers are known for their environmental and ethical practices, and are large enough to make a real difference. They are members of Fair Wear, the Tile Exchange, and are PETA certified. Our t-shirts and beanies are made with GOTS-certified organic cotton, our hoodies are a blend of organic cotton and recycled polyester, and our caps are made from recycled PET. Our garment printers use solvent-free, water-based inks, plastic-free embroidery techniques and 100 per cent renewable energy to decorate our products. Their waste (i.e. misprints) is overprinted and donated to charity. We use wildflower

seed paper tags attached with jute to label our products, and dispatch it in 100 per cent compostable packaging. I know that there is always more we can do – we're looking into how to reduce the carbon footprint of transiting the goods, and we know that our pricing is still out of reach for some. As we grow, our increased order volumes should bring down the unit cost, allowing us to reduce our prices. Once we're more established, I also plan to introduce a service to refurbish and resell pre-owned garments.

Can genuinely sustainable fashion be affordable to all?

Sustainable fashion will need to become affordable to all, as the alternative is literally unsustainable. While we can never compete with fast fashion, that model is untenable in the long run. The solution will require managing consumers' expectations of what clothing is worth, and how long it should last. The current rate at which fashion trends rotate needs to be slowed down, instead encouraging garment care, refurbishment, upcycling and recycling, plus reduced VAT for sustainable brands.

In terms of fashion sustainability, please rank the below in terms of importance (1 = most important, 4 = least important):

- 1: Other (Economic viability & social sustainability)
- 2: Durability/longevity
- 3: Materials/fibres used to make clothing
- 4: Recyclability



Name:
Lechery
Founder:
Vyra Scher
Location:
New York
Website:
<https://lecherynewyork.com/>

What is your company's ethos regarding sustainable fashion?

Lechery offers sustainable, timeless, luxury Italian hosiery at a price that others simply don't. Hosiery has always been known for being a "single-use" piece of fashion. Aside from being cost-prohibitive for those who enjoy wearing hosiery regularly, single-use fashion is needlessly detrimental to the environment. That's why Lechery continues to commit to being the first Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) focused hosiery company in the United States. We're eager to create hosiery for all consumers through an eco-friendly supply chain. We're intent on re-defining the hosiery industry that has historically been environmentally harmful and sexist. Lechery only partners with the most ethical and sustainable manufacturers in Italy. Our manufacturers only use green production, which requires less energy during the manufacturing process. It also recycles left-over yarns, which are turned into fibres

that become our eco-friendly collection: Intricata, Iluzie, Selvaggia, and Herringbone tights. Lechery also uses refined, double-covered Lycra yarns for our unique 3D-manufacturing process. This gives our hosiery a stretch, fit, and a high level of durability.

Can genuinely sustainable fashion be affordable to all?

Absolutely. It's just a question of prioritising sustainability and environmental consciousness. We are the only hosiery brand with products that are sustainable, affordable, and don't have price mark-ups that make consumers feel they can't make quality hosiery a regular part of their wardrobe. The first step in sustainability is making quality products that will last. A lot of companies claim sustainability in their production, but their goods don't last more than one or two uses. Here at LECHERY, we know that no matter how things are made, nothing is sustainable if they end up in landfills a day or two later. Sustainability doesn't have to be expensive. It just means creating durable products that the consumer will wear for many years.

In terms of fashion sustainability, please rank the below in terms of importance (1 = most important, 4 = least important):

1. Durability
2. Materials/fibres used to make clothing
3. Recyclability
4. Other (Production processes)

Name:
The Bad Billy
Founder:
Bhanu Pratap Singh Tanwar
Location:
Jaipur, Rajasthan, India
Website:
<https://thebadbilly.com>

What is your company's ethos regarding sustainable fashion?

We are firm believers of slow fashion. We are manufacturers of leather goods and experimented with polythene recycled fabrics and wool felt fabrics for inner linings and water-resistant dust bag, along with discarded brass further melted/ casted into leather fittings. Pet bottle recycled threads proved to be three times stronger than nylon threads used for stitching. The leather in our products is recycled and upcycled instead of dumping them into

landfill and water reserves, which will naturally destroy the flora and fauna around. We concluded that these products would last long for more than 50-60 years.

Can genuinely sustainable fashion be affordable to all?

Yes, when a product lasts for 50-60 years then this will reduce the trend of creating waste out of polycarbonate products. The Bad Billy offers clients a lifetime warranty on the products, promoting a culture of legacy transfers, to pass-on the products to their next of kin.

In terms of fashion sustainability, please rank the below in terms of importance (1 = most important, 4 = least important):

1. Materials/fibres used to make clothing
 2. Durability/longevity
 3. Recyclability
 4. Other (design concept and consistency)
- We rank all of the above equally.



Name:
The Ido Movement
Founder:
Sandhya Laloo-Morar
Location:
Dubai, United Arab Emirates
Website:
www.theidomovement.com

What is our company's ethos regarding sustainable fashion?

Our approach is based on thoughtful design, coupled with mindful manufacturing and underpinned by three key pillars: earth-friendly, ethical, and reduced consumerism. When we talk about earth-friendly, we consider everything from using optimised design cuts to minimise fabric wastage, using monotone/natural colours to minimise the usage of dyes, as well as using organic and regenerated/recycled fabrics where applicable. Fabric selection plays an important role to ensure the longevity and the quality of the product. Tagging of products and packaging also plays a big role as we focus on using plant-based bio-degradable packaging and compostable packs as well seed tags that our customers can plant to regenerate our environment. When we talk about ethics, we really focus on ensuring we use suppliers that guarantee fair wages and a good standard of working conditions for their workers. We do not mass produce our ranges and as such we work on small quantities and slower cycles. We also believe in giving back by ensuring that a percentage of sales goes back toward rehabilitation of our environment. In term of the third pillar on reduced consumerism, we design our clothing to be multipurpose. We believe less is more and one should not be investing in clothes

for each activity (especially when you look at athletic and leisurewear). The clothing we produce allows you to perform yoga/gym or dance class, wear the same piece to jump into the pool or even use it for casual or evening wear – we really want people to stop investing in multiple pieces of clothing and reduce their wardrobe clutter. Quality and longevity of the product is also key to ensure that it need not have to be washed as often and when it is washed, it does not age or lose its structure.

Can genuinely sustainable fashion be affordable to all?

We believe that sustainable fashion can be affordable. While there is a premium at present due to fabric costs and ensuring an ethical supply chain, we believe that the longevity and quality of the product coupled with the market drivers pushing towards more sustainable practices will drive the industry towards normalising the price premium.

In terms of fashion sustainability, please rank the below in terms of importance (1 = most important, 4 = least important):

1. Materials/fibres used to make clothing
2. Recyclability
3. Durability/longevity
4. Other

Name:
Namuk
Founder:
Franz Bittmann
Location:
Wetzikon, Switzerland
Website:
www.namuk.com

What is your company's ethos regarding sustainable fashion?

Namuk is a Swiss sustainable outdoor brand for children. The brand wants to revolutionise the kids' market by offering functional, sustainable and durable kids clothing, made to last. Namuk's products are made of robust materials and processed to a high standard, meaning they can easily be passed on for years and worn by many children. Over seventy per cent of Namuk's collection contains recycled

materials. Namuk has been working with its outerwear producer in Asia for more than 17 years and is on site several times a year. The company deliberately places part of its annual production in the low season, so that the workers are busy all year round.

Can genuinely sustainable fashion be affordable to all?

Yes, because its more durable and long lasting than fast fashion and therefore at the end mostly cheaper than buying three items which break pretty fast.

In terms of fashion sustainability, please rank the below in terms of importance (1 = most important, 4 = least important):

1. Recyclability
2. Durability/longevity
3. Materials/fibres used to make clothing
4. Other



Name:
Y.O.U Underwear
Founder:
Sarah Jordan
Location:
Oxford, UK
Website:
https://youunderwear.com

What is your company's ethos regarding sustainable fashion?

Our mission is to run a fashion business in an environmentally and socially responsible way, creating positive social and environmental impact through selling sustainably sourced organic products and supporting disadvantaged groups. We are focusing primarily on the education, empowerment and wellbeing of women and children in Africa, India and the UK. We became a B Corp at the end of 2021, and were certified with 160.5 points, making us the top B Corp in the UK, and the highest scoring fashion brand in the world.

Our underwear is Fairtrade, PETA-Approved Vegan and made from 100 per cent GOTS Certified Organic Cotton. We are proud to only use low-impact, fibre-reactive GOTS certified dyes, which use less water, contain no toxic substances and produce a limited waste runoff than conventional chemical dyeing processes. At the start of 2022, we implemented a circular fashion scheme that allows us to collect and recycle underwear, socks and tights. Our end goal is to have a fibre to fibre recycling scheme.

Can genuinely sustainable fashion be affordable to all?

We believe that sustainable fashion being too expensive for most people is a myth. Most of the middle class and above are well within their means to shop with sustainable brands – it's just a case of getting one item rather than a few at a fast fashion brand. For those who are less financially



privileged, they are not the ones over-consuming and tend to mend their clothes, rewear them and shop second-hand. The crux of it is that our mindsets need to change: we cannot buy organic cotton t-shirts to get us out of the climate crisis or into a more sustainable world, those who have enough clothes in their wardrobe already don't need to buy more - even from sustainable brands. Repairing, upcycling, swapping and renting are all alternatives to buying, which can still give you the garment that you need. As an underwear brand, we appreciate that it's something many people don't want to buy second hand and do need. That's why we try to keep our items affordable and durable, while still ensuring that nobody is exploited in the manufacturing process - and that the earth isn't either.

In terms of fashion sustainability, please rank the below in terms of importance (1 = most important, 4 = least important):

1. Other (fair wages)
2. Durability
3. Materials/fibres used to make clothing
4. Recyclability

Name:
Ran By Nature
Founder:
Bryna Chrismas
Location:
UK (online - global/world-wide delivery)
Website:
www.ranbynature.com/

What is your company's ethos regarding sustainable fashion?

Our values are integrity, loyalty, trust, honesty and protecting human rights. We are aligned with several of the UN's sustainable development goals. And we only work with suppliers and freelancers who uphold our values and code of conduct. Our fabric, trimmings, and packaging are sustainable (recycled, organic or natural). All of our orders are sent via Fulfilment crowd, using carbon neutral shipping. Fulfilment crowd use biodegradable packaging, a fleet-of-foot culture, and are striving to eliminate plastic by 2022. By taking these steps fulfilment crowd are aiming to be the first fully-sustainable fulfilment provider in the UK. We also chose to work with diverse female founded businesses and freelancers where we could. It is important that we are breaking the bias, and creating a fair and equal society where the production of the clothing does not cause harm to the planet or the people



involved. We provide all this information on our website so the customer can see our sustainability practices and our code of conduct.

Can genuinely sustainable fashion be affordable to all?

Second-hand/preloved, and thrifting, or clothing hire/ swapping are sustainable options for individuals on a lower income. Also, in my opinion a truly and genuine sustainable brand would offer sample samples, plus would donate to charities. For example, I donate to 'the movement charity'. Not everyone can afford luxury brand new sustainable items. But there are many other ways for them to access sustainable clothes/engage with sustainable fashion (e.g. as mentioned with thrifting, hire, swapping - apps and brands such as DEPOP, OWNI, NUW etc are great places to start). Plus the most sustainable outfit is the one in your wardrobe already.

In terms of fashion sustainability, please rank the below in terms of importance (1 = most important, 4 = least important):

1. Durability/longevity
2. Materials/fibres used to make clothing
3. Recyclability
4. Other: For us, ethics and sustainability are linked. It is the intersection between breaking the bias, fighting for equality and eradicating poverty. From fair living wages to human rights - this would actually be our number one priority in terms of sustainability.

Name:
Tripulse
Founder:
Franziska Mesche
Location:
Sweden
Website:
https://tripulse.co/

Please describe your company's approach to/ethos regarding sustainable fashion:

Tripulse makes innovative natural performance activewear for the conscious minded. Our products combine quality, comfort and performance with a user-centric and timeless design that have sustainability in their very DNA. Designed in Sweden. Ethically made in Europe.

Can genuinely sustainable fashion be affordable to all?

Fashion needs to be priced fairly, ensuring that both high social and environmental standards are being met and that neither people nor our environment or animals have to suffer because of the production of a particular garment. Ensuring fair and safe working conditions as well as ensuring that high environmental standards are being met along the entire supply chain usually means paying a higher price. And that is, for instance, because suppliers pay more for their investments in better technology that enables them to e.g. produce using renewable energy or provide well-constructed and safe factories, or so that workers are paid a fair wage that allows



an adequate livelihood. Lastly, selling fashion very cheaply (or using a fast fashion model for sustainable fashion) only incentivises consumers to buy more and more often, which is the root cause of our current problem of waste and overconsumption and resulting in detrimental effects to our planet and people. In my opinion truly sustainable fashion can't be cheap and should be priced fairly while still being affordable to the consumer. And that means, buying less, but better.

In terms of fashion sustainability, please rank the below in terms of importance (1 = most important, 4 = least important):

1. Materials/fibres used to make clothing
2. Durability/longevity
3. Recyclability
4. Other. I'm missing: Low-impact supply chain (meaning low impact on the planet & people); transparent and ethical supply chain & production; CO2 Neutrality (or even better climate positivity/carbon negativity of the entire business); use of non-toxic and clean substances in the material and end product; design for timelessness & versatility



Name:
Aday
Founder:
Meg He and Nina Faulhaber
Location:
Global, with an office in London
Website:
thisaday.com

What is your company's ethos regarding sustainable fashion?
 At Aday, we view sustainability as making products that are better for the environment and better for you. We don't believe in replacing the contents of our wardrobes every season. Instead, we strive to create comfortable, seasonless essentials that do more and last longer. As a result, many of our products have been sold out several times, demonstrating their value in your wardrobe. We are very focused on the idea of cost per wear of each item. We use considered design to create pieces that can be worn different ways, for different activities, on repeat. Each piece is versatile, packable, super comfortable, machine washable and always has pockets. The fabrics we use are crafted with superpowers, often recycled or regenerated and made in a way that is better for the planet.

These unique blends improve the longevity, durability and easy care of our products. While an average item of clothing is worn only 7 times before being thrown away, our aim is for our customers to become outfit repeaters: to wear and love each piece of their Aday over and over again.

Can genuinely sustainable fashion be affordable to all?
 Sustainable fashion doesn't have to cost a fortune if there is enough demand. As new innovations become mainstream the prices will naturally reduce. It's important fashion is affordable to all but it's also important to educate brands and consumers that fast fashion and throwaway culture is also more expensive in the long term. We talk about cost per wear because despite the cost being higher than your US\$3 t-shirt you can get so much more out of our clothing, and you don't need to buy new clothing season after season.

In terms of fashion sustainability, please rank the below in terms of importance (1 = most important, 4 = least important):
 Materials/fibres used to make
 Recyclability
 Durability/longevity
 Other: Living wage and the welfare of people that make our clothes is business critical

Name:
Full Circle
Founder:
Max van Bree, Constantin Wahle, Wytze de Jong
Location:
Amsterdam, Netherlands
Website:
www.fullcircleclothing.eu

What is your company's ethos regarding sustainable fashion?
 We create circular basics from textile waste. They are made to last, and designed to be recycled. Our take-back program rewards you for helping us turn your old Full Circle garments into new ones, and our community empowers you to live a better life with less stuff. Full Circle believes in circularity as the systemic solution to sustainable fashion. It allows us to reduce the amounts of raw resources needed, and it minimizes waste as an output. Additionally, the new revenue streams which our circular business model grants us - resale of second hand, repaired & imperfect garments - enable us to move away from a make-more-sell-more growth model and focus



on slowing down fashion.
Can genuinely sustainable fashion be affordable to all?
 Yes! We are positive that every soul on the planet can have access to decent, stylish, and well-made clothes. That being said, it requires industry & governments to do their part in helping re-define the relationship people have with their clothes. That's why we are fighting for the normalisation of garment repair, second hand, slow-fashion, radical transparency, and end of life management practices/circularity.

In terms of fashion sustainability, please rank the below in terms of importance (1 = most important, 4 = least important):
 1. Materials/fibres used to make clothing
 2. Other: Worker conditions. Most notably, how much are workers paid to make the garment.
 3. Durability/longevity
 4. Recyclability

Note: All four of these statements are fundamental to the success of our circular model and thus ranking or prioritising any of them is not really an option for us. Full Circle does not compromise on any of these.



Name:
Alter X Company
Founder:
Randy Allison
Location:
Los Angeles
Website:
alterxco.com

What is your company's ethos regarding sustainable fashion?
 Less is more, fair labour, built to last and larger percentage of charitable giving. Worked with locally based knitting, dye and cut/sew and finishing all within 12-mile radius. Personally met workers, owners and insured all held organic and fair labour certifications in good standing (GOTS). Only committed to small batch, high quality production. Less than 1500 units and paid premium per yard cost to keep with fair labour and organic/sustainable standards. Per yard cost nearly US\$5.00. Total cost per shirt US\$17.00 not including marketing and operational expense. US\$25.00 donated to charity (alterxco.com/collabs). Retail US\$50.00. People over profit.

Can genuinely sustainable

fashion be affordable to all? Yes. But affordability and consumers appreciating value and mission are not always associated. The cost to produce an organic, fair labour, verifiable product requires a higher cost than consumers realise. Factor in tremendous costs that go into marketing and advertising and it is very difficult for a small upstart brand to compete. Then, commit to not chase the "cost savings" of volume-based production overseas and the temptation to down-sell or dump unsold product to chase new revenue with new product that contributes to rampant industry waste is cost of doing business that takes money and time, two things small brands don't have a lot of. Some will break through and most not.

In terms of fashion sustainability, please rank the below in terms of importance (1 = most important, 4 = least important):
 1. Fair Labour (California has some of the strictest labour and environment law in the world)
 2. Durability
 3. Materials (hemp and organic cotton...ultimately US grown)
 4. Charitable giving (we give US\$25.00 from every short sold to fight hunger and poverty related food access issues)

Name:
Moggans
Founder:
Alistair Crawford
Location:
Edinburgh
Website:
www.moggans.com

What is your company's ethos regarding sustainable fashion?
 Personally, we would avoid the word fashion as it has short-term connotations. We focus on using ethical materials and manufacturing to produce durable, long-lasting, and functional clothing.

Can genuinely sustainable fashion be affordable to all?
 Again, we think we need to move beyond fashion and start thinking about long-term functionality. We believe it is possible to make garments that are affordable for the majority* people. The "upfront" purchase cost of sustainable garments may need to be slightly higher but by focusing



on durability, longevity and reparability they can be produced to represent better value in the long-term. Buying better and buying less also represents a saving in the long run. After all the cheapest and most environmentally sustainable garment is the one you don't buy! * we strive to keep our costs down and make our products accessible to as many people as possible but in the age of food banks and a cost-of-living crisis for millions in the UK we think we need to be incredibly careful about telling people what is affordable for them.

In terms of fashion sustainability, please rank the below in terms of importance (1 = most important, 4 = least important):
 1. Materials/fibres used to make clothing
 2. Durability/longevity
 3. Recyclability
 4. Other
 Honestly, it is impossible to rank these. We believe a holistic approach to sustainability is required, including where you manufacture and how you move your goods around.

Name:
Modistas
Founder:
Rumpa Dutt & Mridul Dutt
Location:
Australia
Website:
www.modistas.com.au

What is your company's ethos regarding sustainable fashion?

Witnessing an industry contributing to global carbon emission we decided to introduce sustainable, eco-friendly fashion clothing. Our product is made from plant-based, bio-natural Lotus silk. This natural fibre is extracted by a few skilled craftspeople and is cut by hand to make silk. The pure lotus silk fabric is the first natural microfibre that is resistant, soft, lightweight and wrinkle-free. Lotus silk was first used to weave monastic robes as an offering to Buddha images or Buddhist monks. Lotus plants are pure in virtue as they emit this purity through their fibres. Our vision is to create a luxurious,

sustainable, eco-friendly fashion for the world. We at Modistas are committed to a conscious fashion cycle starting with our base which is our fabrics thus focusing on positively impacting the environment and telling a story.

Can genuinely sustainable fashion be affordable to all?

Yes, it absolutely can. In many ways, sustainable fashion is already affordable, especially when one considers how popular second-hand shopping is, because of its affordability and because it encourages reuse.

Just as there is demand for organic food which is driving the price down similarly this could be a possibility with ethical fashion.

In terms of fashion sustainability, please rank the below in terms of importance (1 = most important, 4 = least important):

1. Materials/fibres used to make clothing
2. Recyclability
3. Durability/longevity
4. Other (Eco Friendly, Biodegradable)



Modistas
Rattana



Name:
ONE Essentials
Founder:
Carrie Davies
Location:
London
Website:
https://www.onee.earth

What is your company's approach to/ethos regarding sustainable fashion?

At ONE Essentials we believe that the whole life cycle of the garment should be considered when creating products, not just the materials. We think of each life-cycle of the garment and design accordingly, considering each component for relevant end of life of the item – recycling, reuse, resale or to biodegrade. Creating items with circular design and cradle-to-cradle design principles, choosing materials for their lowest environmental impact in manufacturing and their life-span you can reduce the impact of the product overall.

For example by creating our underwear to be biodegradable we have invested in compostable elastane to ensure we deliver comfort and durability, whilst providing a viable end of life use case for a disposable garments. All fabrics are Bluesign or OEKO-TEX accredited, there is no Polyester in our products including threads and we use GOTS certified printing to ensure the items can be easily recycled or biodegrade.

I believe in responsibility, transparency and accountability so we have invested in a life-cycle assessment (cradle – gate) on all items in our first collection. Communicating this independently verified data and supply chain on each product page. We source from

sustainable suppliers who adhere to ethical working practices, our tier 1 and 2 suppliers are all living wage suppliers and we hope to be able to impact further down our supply chain as we grow.

For me the approach to sustainable fashion needs to be holistic one, not just more environmentally friendly products on smaller units with ethical labour, but one that is part of solving the problem we have today. That is why we partner with the OR foundation and donate 1 per cent of every sale to their textile clean-up initiatives. We want to be part of the clean up as well as a better future.

Can genuinely sustainable fashion be affordable to all?

I hope that sustainable fashion can be inclusive and attainable for all, but I think we need to readdress the value we put on clothes.

A t-shirt should not be cheaper than a cup of coffee and should we be able to buy 5 pairs of pants for less than £10? What are the people making those garments being paid, what's the environmental cost of the materials being used?

I'm not talking about luxury price points, but real prices that pay workers well, provide quality materials and manufacture for garments that will last and can give back not just take.

Affordability comes with scales, but if we chase super low prices that scale needs to be huge and that in itself is not sustainable.

In terms of fashion sustainability, please rank the below in terms of importance (1 = most important, 4 = least important):

1. Materials/fibres used to make clothing
2. Recyclability
3. Other (Ethical manufacturing conditions)
4. Durability/longevity

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