



# People, planet, / purpose

At VolkerWessels UK, it is important to us to understand the positive impact we have on people, society and the environment. We believe that a good business is one which acts responsibly and with integrity, and delivers its activities with an eye on sustainability in its widest sense.

## People



## Planet



## Purpose



We work hard to ensure that we minimise the impact of our activities on the environment; that we deliver social value and leave a legacy in the communities where we work; and that we support and nurture our own people within the business, and find ways of encouraging the employees of the future.

The three pillars of our responsible and sustainable business are:

1. People putting people at the heart of our approach;
2. Planet protecting and enhancing the natural environment;
3. Purpose being a trusted, forward-thinking and respected business of choice, by delivering long-term social value.

## Pillar 1: People

### Putting people at the heart of our approach

We pride ourselves on being a 'people first' business. In everything that we do, safety and wellbeing is our priority. Our goal is to provide a working environment which is safe for our workforce and anyone affected by our activities, and to help ensure good mental and physical health. Inclusion is also extremely important to us, and we work hard to maintain a workplace which values diversity and provides a welcoming and inspiring environment for everyone.

Our Accident Frequency Rate (AFR) is consistently below industry average, but we are never complacent and we continue to introduce measures to ensure that we maintain the best possible standards. Throughout the year, we have continued to work on improving safety through behavioural safety campaigns, sharing lessons learnt and initiatives which help improve our processes and safety controls.

Each of our businesses operates its own robust, engaging and widely understood behavioural safety programme, and VolkerStevin's Safety Ripple initiative won the 2019 Construction News Talent Award for Health, Safety and Wellbeing Initiative of the Year.

In 2019, Airsweb AVA was introduced across the business for recording, reporting and analysing accidents, incidents, close calls and audits across VolkerWessels UK. AVA is an enhanced version of an Airsweb platform, which has been used by VolkerRail for a number of years and has enabled the benefits of digital close call reporting via QR codes and simplified the process for reporting and managing close calls and incidents for all parts of the business. Separately, our close call reporting initiative - with £1 donated to charity for each close call reported - saw us raise £38,385 in 2019.

You can read more detail on pages 16 and 17 on our activities to address wellbeing across our business, as a key element of our health and safety culture, and also about our approach to equality, diversity and inclusion.

## Pillar 2: Planet

### Protecting and enhancing the natural environment

We are committed to minimising the impact of our activities on the environment, ensuring that we enhance biodiversity around our projects, and protect habitats and ecosystems which might be affected by our activities. Our focus is on taking positive action to reduce or, wherever possible, eliminate adverse impacts on climate change, through the efficient use of energy and resources, and reducing our carbon emissions.





## Transforming space at Caritas Anchor House

In 2019, VolkerFitzpatrick worked with the CRASH Charity to refurbish the communal lounge area at Caritas Anchor House - a homelessness charity providing accommodation and life-skills support for single homeless adults.

The 169-square metre space was typically used for a range of events and activities, including group wellbeing sessions, fitness classes, employability open days and award ceremonies – as well as being used by residents as a space to come together and build friendships.

The work carried out included the relocation of the IT suite into a dedicated room, followed by a full strip out of existing fixtures and fittings. We also supplied and installed the new ceiling, lighting system, flooring, internal doors and electrical work, and then carried out redecoration and furnishing. The end result was a fresh and inspiring new environment, with individual zones within the space. The total social value for this work was £140,000, representing 111% of the contract value.



“At VolkerWessels UK, we believe we should act responsibly and with integrity, delivering our operations with people, planet and purpose at the heart of our approach to sustainability.”

**Adrian Shah-Cundy**  
corporate responsibility director,  
VolkerWessels UK



Our carbon footprint has been externally verified since 2011 through the Planet Mark scheme. Our year-on-year greenhouse gas emissions reduction target is 5%, and we have a goal of 40% of our energy from the grid being procured from renewable sources in 2020.

We are also looking at ways of reducing and managing waste and resources. We have, in the past, worked hard on diverting waste



from landfill, and still continue to do so. We are increasingly focusing on the amount of waste generated and the careful use of resources, developing a more robust approach to a circular economy. Our teams across the business are identifying ways in which we can deliver continuous improvement across all of our metrics. During 2019, 91% of all our waste was diverted from landfill through reuse, recovery and recycling initiatives, and we achieved a 9% reduction in the number of tonnes of waste generated per £100,000 turnover.

During the year, Adrian Shah-Cundy, corporate responsibility director, won a Planet Mark award for his work as a Sustainability Influencer (see page 25), the M5 Oldbury Viaduct Major Renewal Scheme (with VolkerFitzpatrick as part of the BMV joint venture) won a 2019 Green Apple Award for environmental best practice, and our commercial fleet was awarded 'Gold Certification' for fuel efficiency from Masternaut.

Our teams continued to embrace and support our strategy during 2019, with a range of events, activities and initiatives to highlight sustainability issues on sites and in offices, as well as taking measures on sites to encourage and protect flora and fauna and natural habitats.

## Pillar 3: Purpose

### A trusted, forward thinking and respected business, delivering long-term social value

Part of our culture is to ensure we are the contractor of choice and a good neighbour in the communities in which we work. We are committed to making responsible and forward-thinking choices about the way our projects are executed, ensuring that our impact on those communities is a positive one that leaves a sustainable legacy.

We strive to add social value in a wide variety of ways, and we capture this using metrics within the National TOMS framework to provide a defensible and transparent way to report on value added to society.

Our activities include charitable and sponsorship activity, volunteering and engagement with local communities, and work with schools and education providers to raise awareness of the opportunities that exist within the construction industry.

## Charity and sponsorship

Each of our businesses supports its own charity of choice each year, and as VolkerWessels UK, we have a charitable partnership with Macmillan Cancer Care. As well as our close call donation scheme already outlined, each year people across the business undertake a wide range of activities to raise money for this and other charities.

For example, VolkerFitzpatrick is a supporter of CRASH - a charity that helps homelessness and hospice organisations with their construction projects. Following four years of VolkerFitzpatrick's patronage, commercial director, John O'Grady, became a Trustee of the charity during 2019.

The Anglia Route Collaboration (ARC) team, of which VolkerFitzpatrick is part, raised over £15,000 as part of a year-long fundraising initiative for Great Ormond Street Hospital (GOSH), and the BMV Joint Venture (which includes VolkerFitzpatrick) partnered with national homelessness charity, Crisis, to support homeless people in the region into work on its M5 Oldbury Viaduct project.



VolkerRail colleagues during the Big SleepOut

VolkerRail has been a big supporter of the Railway Children charity – taking part in the Big SleepOut (which the business sponsors) and the Porterbrook Three Peaks challenge, through which they raised over £19,000. The business also raised funds for the Bluebell Wood Children's Hospice through activities like the annual dragon boat race.

VolkerStevin supported The Christie NHS Foundation Trust in 2019, and VolkerLaser raised money for the Trussell Trust, a charity working with local communities to help stop UK hunger.

VolkerWessels UK and its businesses also sponsor a wide range of events, sports clubs and other organisations across the UK.

### Volunteering

Volunteering is a key way in which our site and office teams, and individuals, like to give back to the communities in which we work. During the year, our people have volunteered across a range of activities, from helping on local building projects, to litter picking; from donating materials, to working on

wildlife projects and local community events.

Annually, VolkerFitzpatrick takes part in Raleigh International, sending a group of young employees to join an international team of volunteers to create meaningful change, and in 2019, they travelled to Costa Rica.

### Schools and skills engagement

We have continued to formalise our approach to schools and further education engagement during 2019, as we work to encourage relationships between our employees and schools, to promote our industry to the workforce of the future. We are active in terms of careers events, as well as providing meaningful work experience placements to inspire young talent into the industry.

This includes our annual participation in Build UK's Open Doors initiative, with 10 sites welcoming visitors from schools in 2019; the establishment, by some of our projects, of local skills and training academies; and a wide range of activities in and for schools and colleges in the areas where we work.



The annual dragon boat race



## Introducing... Adrian Shah-Cundy, sustainability influencer

Adrian Shah-Cundy, corporate responsibility director at VolkerWessels UK won the Planet Mark's 'Sustainability Influencer of the Year' award in 2019. Here are a few of the reasons why.

### What are Adrian's responsibilities within the organisation, and particularly around sustainability?

As corporate responsibility director, Adrian oversees occupational health, safety, environment, quality, sustainability, and social value. The breadth of his responsibility provides him with the scope to make a real difference in delivering sustainable solutions across the business.

### What is it that makes Adrian stand out as an influencer?

The sustainability culture at VolkerWessels UK has increased in strength every year, in a large part thanks to Adrian's guidance and drive. He is the driving force behind the business' sustainability strategic direction, which has resulted in the company adopting initiatives like the Social Value Portal and the Planet Mark Sustainability Certification Scheme, and being a proactive Partner member of the Supply Chain Sustainability School and the Considerate Constructors Scheme. He was instrumental in the introduction of VolkerWessels UK's extensive mental health awareness programme, including the training of mental health first aiders and champions.

### What impact does Adrian have as an influencer?

Thanks to his work within the business, sustainability and the understanding of the responsibilities and opportunities around social and environmental opportunities is now 'business as usual' for VolkerWessels UK. He is a key driver and supporter of the benefits of sustainability across the business, and also within the wider industry, and has worked to develop a culture of leaving a sustainable legacy.

### What other recognition has Adrian had for his work?

Adrian has recently been recognised by IEMA as creating a vision, embedding environment and sustainability cultures into core activities, leading and inspiring collaboration and cooperation to deliver innovation for sustainability and shaping the development of a specialist field, discipline or body of knowledge. He was awarded a Fellowship in recognition of this.

During 2019, Adrian went to Chile to present at the National Construction Week as a guest of the Chilean Chamber of Construction.

Adrian Shah-Cundy  
sustainability influencer