

# THE ETHICAL AND SUSTAINABLE SOURCING TEAM



## United Nations Global Compact, Communication on Progress 2022

### What we do at The Sourcing Team

For 26 years we have continued to push the boundaries to source ethically and sustainably, searching out new processes, materials and end of life solutions. Designing and creating branded marketing materials that bring brands to life – all ethically sourced, fantastically creative and driving the message for sustainability up and down the supply chain. Demonstrating our true passion for people and planet.

That passion manifested itself initially with our focus on sourcing ethically from around the world, driving awareness within our sector to the challenges of human rights and subsequently around modern slavery and working with our partners to drive positive change. Developing our sustainability program in 2010 to change our way of thinking around deeper environmental aspects of business.

Since our inception, I have been committed to contributing to our industry sector and the wider environment through voluntary roles Chartered Institute of Procurement & Supply, WEConnect International and historically the British Promotional Merchandise Association. Bringing best practice from our procurement institute to our sector and sharing insight up and down our supply chain. This focused on ethical sourcing, promoting the Ethical Trading Initiative and the Base Code, factory transparency and audit via Sedex and engaging with members of our institute to share insights that help them do business more responsibly.

### Statement by The Sourcing Team Ltd - To our stakeholders:

We are pleased to confirm that The Sourcing Team Ltd reaffirms its support of the ten principles of the United Nations Global Compact in the areas of Human Rights, Labour, Environment and Anti-Corruption.

As a business we are totally committed to supporting the ten principles of the UN Global Compact and acting responsibly with care for our people and the environment.

2020 and 2021 were challenging due to the pandemic however, we feel that has also brought the great opportunity of wider awareness to global sustainability, to build back better and with even more commitment and action to bringing change. As a SME we use our network and our connections, customers, supply partners, volunteering roles to share messages and bring to the fore issues around human rights and sustainable procurement.

Whilst the pandemic has reduced some of the more event based activities over the last two years we were proud to have become B Corp certified in 2020, signed up to the Sustainable Procurement Pledge and have signed up to Net Zero 2030.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gill Thorpe', on a light-colored background.

**Gill Thorpe FCIPS, Chartered**  
**Chief Executive Officer – The Sourcing Team Ltd**

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## Communication on progress:

As a responsible business we do our due diligence and respect human rights. Supporting the ten principles of the United Nations Global Compact, the International Labour Organisations Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, and the United Nations Convention Against Corruption.

We remain fully committed to constant improvement around our environment and work to prevent all forms of bribery and corruption.

<b>Principle 1</b>	Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights
<b>Principle 2</b>	Make sure they are not complicit in human rights abuses
<b>Principle 3</b>	Business should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining
<b>Principle 4</b>	The elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour
<b>Principle 5</b>	The effective abolition of child labour
<b>Principle 6</b>	The elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation
<b>Principle 7</b>	Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges
<b>Principle 8</b>	Undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility; and
<b>Principle 9</b>	Encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally – friendly technologies
<b>Principle 10</b>	Businesses should work against all forms of corruption, including extortion and bribery.

## Human Rights:

As an ethical sourcing company, we are very aware of the risks down the supply chain, taking a responsible approach to the due diligence process in our supply chain. This due diligence process takes several forms. Suppliers are assessed prior to on boarding and then via an ongoing annual review. This includes our self-assessment questionnaire, independent audits including Sedex SMETA, SA8000 and BSCI and review of policy and processes in place with the supply chain.

Our communication with our suppliers is driven by our passion to drive change and increase awareness through clear requirements and transparency. We ask suppliers to work to our code of conduct which explains our principles, expectations, the codes and standards we expect them to adhere to for them to proactively work to the Ethical Trading Initiative - Base Code and the UN Guiding Principles. We continue to map our supply base to understand risk and impacts throughout the value change.

We annually highlight the Modern Slavery Act asking suppliers about their processes, actions, training and what they are doing ongoing to address and take responsible action on Modern Slavery. Prior to the pandemic, we ran workshops for our core suppliers, and we continue to highlight it within our annual supplier communications.

## Labour:

The Sourcing Team uphold all laws relating to the protection of human rights, to ensure dignity, fairness, equality, respect and independence. We expect our supply partners to work to uphold the UN Guiding Principles, Ethical Trading Initiative and adhere to all local and international laws. As an employer we aim to provide a safe, inclusive culture and environment where our staff can grow, develop and thrive.

We have a full set of policies and processes in place and our staff are provided with our staff handbook including policies around Health and Safety, Stress Management, Equal Opportunities and Inclusion, Staff Code of Conduct.

As a minimum working to the following principles whilst engaging with our partners to support and encourage going beyond what we see as basic compliance. We work with our supply partners to ensure they adhere to basic principles but encourage them to focus on going beyond these;

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- All employment is freely chosen and there is no forced or bonded labour.
- All workers have freedom of association and the right to create and, or join a trade union or workers committee to enable collective bargaining without discrimination
- All working conditions will be safe and hygienic with access to clean potable water and clean sanitary conditions. Adequate health and safety provision should be made available including recorded H&S training and accidents logs. Accommodation, where provided should be safe, clean and meet basic needs.
- Child labour (under 15 years, 14 in exceptional circumstances) must not be used and under 18s must not do night or hazardous work.
- All staff should be paid a minimum wage in accordance with local laws and where possible this should be a 'living wage' designed to meet the living costs of workers. No deductions (unless allowed by local law) should be made from pay without the express permission of the worker.
- Working hours should comply to local laws and all overtime should be voluntary and paid at a premium rate.
- All workers should be employed without discrimination based on gender, race, religion, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation or political affiliation. This also applies to training and promotions.
- No harsh or Inhumane treatment of workers is allowed – including verbal, physical or sexual abuse.
- Regular employment is provided, and the use of subcontracting should not be used merely to avoid providing worker benefits and training.
- All reasonable steps taken to ensure that modern slavery is not present within the supply chain.

## Environment:

As part of our ISO14001:2015 accreditation we assess our environmental impacts and try to reduce these wherever possible. We actively promote sustainable products, particularly those with a full end of life plan. We ask that our suppliers:

- Minimise the use of packaging and reuse/recycle wherever possible.
- Have an environmental policy that is available on request, detailing what measures are being taken to reduce carbon emissions, reduce water use and minimise environmental impact.
- Identify those products that are certified sustainable with a recognised accreditation, i.e., GOTS, FSC, Fairtrade etc.
- Within our 2022 review we will be asking our supplier partners to sign up to Net Zero and support us with our actions in Scope 3.

In 2021 we have invested in our office premises with new double glazing and LED lighting as well as creating an amazing garden for staff down time.

In line with our B Corp certification, we will be creating our first impact report in 2022. We have also continued our membership of EcoVadis – Platinum member, remaining focused on our program of continual improvement.

ISO14001 - we have identified where we have an environmental footprint through our environmental risk awareness policy and put in place a series of measures to reduce this footprint. This includes staff training and awareness, an active recycling policy across the business and reduced consumption of gas and electric. Following the Covid pandemic we will continue to use virtual meetings to keep our travel to a minimum and continue to use public transport where possible.

We continue to obtain our gas and electricity from Ecotricity – one of the UKs greenest providers. The electricity is 100% renewables – wind and solar and the gas supply is carbon neutral. We are pleased to be able to utilise this green energy for our building. We also assessed our remaining carbon emissions through travel etc and offset these to make us carbon neutral via a Gold Standard community based carbon verification - providing fuel efficient woodstoves in Darfur.

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All our environmental impacts are monitored and measured as part of our ISO14001 and underpinned by our policies on Travel, Environment and Sustainability.

## **Anti-Corruption:**

The Sourcing Team are opposed to all forms of bribery and corruption, and this is underpinned by our Anti - Corruption Policy and our Staff Code of Conduct, both of which are signed by individual staff members. Additionally, we include annual training with key members of the team completing the Ethics Test from the Chartered Institute of Procurement & Supply. In 2022 we are asking all our team to complete the Ethics test as part of the annual training program.

## **2022 Goals and Actions:**

COP26 in 2021 has brought a far wider awareness to the issues being faced around the world in the climate emergency and an understanding that the next 10 years are critical for real action for our planet and the people, particularly the most vulnerable within it.

We have been committed to supporting the SDGs and focused on those where we feel we can have the most impact and relevance to the business and continue to do so, with heightened focus on environmental action in 2022.

SDG 3 – Good Health and Well-Being – our team, flexible working, shorter working hours

SDG 4 – Quality Education – supporting Plan International and Microloan Foundation

SDG 8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth – through our ethical sourcing and supplier program

SDG 10 – Reduced Inequalities – via our support of Microloan Foundation, WEConnect International

SDG 12 – Responsible Consumption and Production – sustainable procurement, product strategy and even more local sourcing and production.

SDG 13 – Climate Action – supporting Cool Earth, developing products from recycled, upcycled materials and tree planting via Ecologi.

In addition, we continue, in our daily work to use our voice to highlight key issues, actions that can be taken both up and down the chain and drive awareness in any way we can via our volunteering and events, speaking opportunities, communications, client and supplier engagement, social media and areas where action is urgently needed.

This is a critical time for real action, in this vital decade for our people and planet. We signed up to Net Zero in 2021 and this will be a key part of our action throughout 2022.

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