

UN Global Compact Annual Report and Plan for Primeast Ltd – May 2022

Statement of intent

I am pleased to confirm that Primeast 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.

In this Communication on Progress, we describe our actions to integrate the Global Compact and its principles into our business strategy, culture and daily operations. We have chosen to do this with headings that correspond to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which we found to be an inspiring way to engage our workforce.

We are also committed to share this information with our stakeholders using our primary channels of communication.

We note that the last year or so has been difficult for many businesses. Primeast is no exception. Our action taken (and not taken) must be considered in this light. We seek to review our programme in the year ahead.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G Edwards'.

Gary Edwards

Chief Executive Officer

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Background

Primeast has been a member of the UN Global Compact since 2016. As a signatory, Primeast signs up to principles of Human Rights and takes progressive action in support of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. This document details the actions that are being taken and some of those planned for the future (in italics). They have been listed for convenience broadly under headings that correspond to the SDGs.

This year (2022) our board has been particularly inspired by the concept of “Net Positive” as outlined in the recent book of the same title by Paul Polman and Andrew Winston. It is our intention to conduct a feasibility study to explore the practicality of achieving “Net Positive” by 2030. In parallel with this work, we are also exploring the possibility of achieving BCorps status.

SDG1: Poverty and SDG2: Hunger

We provide support to Harrogate Homeless Collections, particularly with the supply of food and household goods through our team activities.

SDG3: Health

We partner with Head Torch to raise awareness of mental health issues in our workplace and those of our clients. We have regular workplace events/activities. We also offer practical support to Horticap, a local charity that provides horticultural work for local people with special needs.

We provide good, healthy working conditions and encourage healthy habits such as cycling and walking to work (we provide shower facilities); car sharing; walking meetings; and a “healthy snack” counter in our kitchen.

A great deal of our recent attention has been looking after our employees, suppliers and clients during the Covid-19 Pandemic. We implemented working from home, flexible working, remote working and online learning delivery. This has been a priority for us over the recent period.

In April 2022, in line with UK Government Guidance, we encouraged our staff back into the workplace with the agreement and adoption of a hybrid working policy. This provides for social interaction and collaboration alongside the climate and family benefits of working from home.

SDG4: Education

Our core business is the provision of quality adult learning and development.

We actively support overseas schools and learning opportunities for adults with special needs at Horticap in Harrogate.

Since 2016 we have run workshops and activities to introduce our staff to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Their thinking helped to drive many of the actions listed in this document.

In 2022, we facilitated a workshop for all staff to introduce the concept of “Net Positive”.

Consequently, staff are encouraged and empowered to adopt “Net Positive” principles into their work. We are also building these concepts into our client-facing leadership development work.

This builds on work we did in 2021 with a number of clients to view their corporate purpose through various stakeholder lenses, including that of society – which gave us the opportunity to help them consider which SDGs they impact positively through their operations.

SDG5: Gender equality

We do not differentiate on grounds of gender in our own employment practices and support various initiatives for gender equality, such as Women in Nuclear.

We are delighted to report that, in 2022 we welcomed two more women to our board of directors (making the total now three). This makes the current proportion of women on the board 37.3%

SDG6: Water

We provide water coolers for staff and visitors and through this contract we support Water Aid.

SDG7: Energy

In 2019 we installed solar PV at our UK headquarters in Harrogate and have *made provision for future electric vehicle charging points on the system*. Our solar generation, especially during the pandemic has far exceeded our energy consumption.

In line with previous commitments, we have now switched 95% of our lighting to LEDs saving over 50% of the associated energy consumption and the associated CO2 emissions.

By 2024, we will also review the performance of our energy systems to determine the extent to which they mitigate climate change and offset the carbon-loading of other activities (especially travel).

In 2022 we also introduced EVs through salary flexibility.

SDG8: Employment rights

We seek to offer good employment to our staff and associates as detailed in our staff handbook.

We seek regular feedback on the cultural implications of what we do. Our most recent cultural survey was in 2017 and *a further survey is planned for 2022*.

In 2019 we appointed a member of staff to our board in a non-director position to contribute to good governance and providing a “staff perspective”.

In 2022 we introduced a new mentoring scheme that will be available to all staff in support of their career development.

We take care not to discriminate on any grounds in the employment of our staff and the engagement of suppliers (principally our associates).

We pay a living wage and also *commit to keep the gap between our lowest and highest paid staff (wage ratio) within a 4:1 ratio. We are currently at 3:1.*

Our core business in leadership and consulting is aimed at supporting clients with sustainable improvement to business efficiency and effectiveness.

We continue to ensure that all our temporary workers and/or apprentices are properly rewarded and not seen as “cheap alternative labour”.

SDG9: Industry, innovation and infrastructure

The core of our work is to support sustainable growth in industry through leadership development and consultancy services.

SDG10: Reduced inequalities (within and between nations)

Our support to various charities and NGOs as part of our core business and our volunteering initiatives (in Gambia, Kenya, Malawi, Nepal and Horticap) is consciously aimed at reducing inequalities. Over the years we have worked with various UN agencies and others (such as the British Council).

SDG 11: Sustainable cities and communities

We encourage and strive to adopt actions to progress sustainable cities and communities. Many of these are listed under SDGs 7 and 13 (energy and climate).

SDG12: Responsible consumption

We have systems in place (and encourage their use) for the recycling of paper, cardboard, plastics, glass, printer toner and cartridges, coffee pods and food waste (compost).

We strive to use sustainable materials on our premises, such as PEFC certified timber for decking and recycled paper where appropriate.

We are conscious promoters of digital learning resources to steadily reduce corporate dependency on paper.

Our administrative staff have been encouraged to continually review our recycling and materials use.

SDG13: Climate change

As well as our activities to adopt clean energy solutions (see above), *we encourage hybrid working (home and office), car-sharing and cycling to work to reduce CO2 emissions. So far 5/23 of our HQ based staff have participated in the Cycle2Work scheme.*

During 2022, we have also asked project leaders to encourage our employed trainers and associates to use public transport rather than private cars and taxis, where this does not cause health and safety risk or onerous logistics.

With a view to supporting reforestation, we encourage our staff to use the [Ecosia search engine](#) which donates 80% or more of its surplus income to non-profit organizations that focus on reforestation and conservationism. We have also worked with the Forest Stewardship Council (Chief System Integrity Officer and his team) to co-create a new vision for forest stewardship in the coming years.

SDG14: Life below water

We are very conscious of the impact of single-use plastic and waste plastic generally on our seas and oceans. We strive to minimise our impact through our recycling policies and by provision of water-coolers and re-usable water bottles for staff.

SDG15: Life on land

Some of the items listed under SDG12 above also help to prevent unnecessary deforestation.

SDG16: peace and justice – including modern slavery

We take care in our direct operations and in the choice of suppliers to make sure we are not involved in any activities which exploit slavery of any kind.

SDG17: Partnership for the goals

As well as being involved with the Global Compact, we actively support our local branch of UNA. The branch has been holding its meetings at our Harrogate office since 2015 and is chaired by one of our client partners.