

# Packaging with purpose

Our sustainability pledge

ROBINSON

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# This is Robinson

Introduction from our CEO,  
Dr Helene Roberts



## Our pathway to sustainability and regenerative growth

The world is changing fast. We must create an economic system that supports this change, is more resilient and delivers social and environmental value for all. Businesses have a role to contribute to sustainability and regenerative growth, which we view as key drivers with great opportunities for our business and the industry.

Our company purpose underpins everything we do – from our business strategy to what we produce, our sustainability pledge, our People development plan, our continuous improvement – for the communities in which we operate. It is our long-term ambition, articulating the reason why we exist.

**Our purpose:** we go **above and beyond** to create a **sustainable future** for our **people and planet**

We know the importance of trust: it's more than just who keeps their word. It's who you turn to when the stakes are high and your appetite for risk is low. Who you can rely on to think outside the box to create solutions, using creativity to overcome any challenges along the way, whatever it takes. It's about going **above and beyond**.

Sustainability is about capacity for now and the long term, meeting social and environmental needs without compromising the ability of future generations to thrive and prosper.

In an industry whose products are used every day, we understand that we must make the most of the resources we use. By being a prosperous future-fit business, and improving social and environmental benefits, we create a **sustainable future**. Our aim is circularity: to recover, regenerate and restore all products and materials at the end of their useful life.

We also understand our social responsibility: our duty to our **people** to ensure a happy, healthy, committed workforce while protecting the communities in which we operate through food and consumer product hygiene and safety. What we do must bring positive impact to our **planet**, addressing the most significant environmental challenges, such as climate change, resource scarcity, food waste and the leakage of plastics into our marine and land environment.

Our sustainability strategy aligns these aims, strengthening our ability to deliver packaging with purpose. Business performance and long-term sustainability are not mutually exclusive, rather they work hand-in-hand. I am proud to be a part of the Robinson organisation with such ambition and delighted to share the launch of our pledge with you.

## Sustainability: Doing what we do, with the future of people and the planet in mind



### Materials

Our suppliers extract and supply raw materials for our packaging, as well as provide us with energy, tools, equipment and machinery



### Products

We offer custom solutions and technical capabilities that deliver social and environmental benefits while protecting our customers' products and the consumers who use them



### Team

We invest in our people, helping shape their careers and support their safety, health and wellbeing



### Operations

We use innovative processes at all of our manufacturing plants and offices to reduce our impact on the planet



### Transportation

We partner with our logistics providers to minimise transport through intelligent packaging design and taking advantage of our close locations to our key customers in the UK and Europe



### Customers

We partner with our customers, along with technical specialists, experts and researchers, to design packaging with sustainability features and benefits built into the entire lifecycle



## We are building a committed culture



### Honest

We are refreshingly real, straightforward and trusted. We tell it like it is while being respectful and gaining respect. We connect with audiences through being genuine and open.



### Agile

We are nimble and work flexibly and responsively to keep on track, committed to efficient success. We roll up our sleeves and get stuck in.

### Being

We apply our core values and behaviours in everything we do.



### Engaged

We want our people to thrive, supporting them to realise their full potential as we build a happy, committed culture.



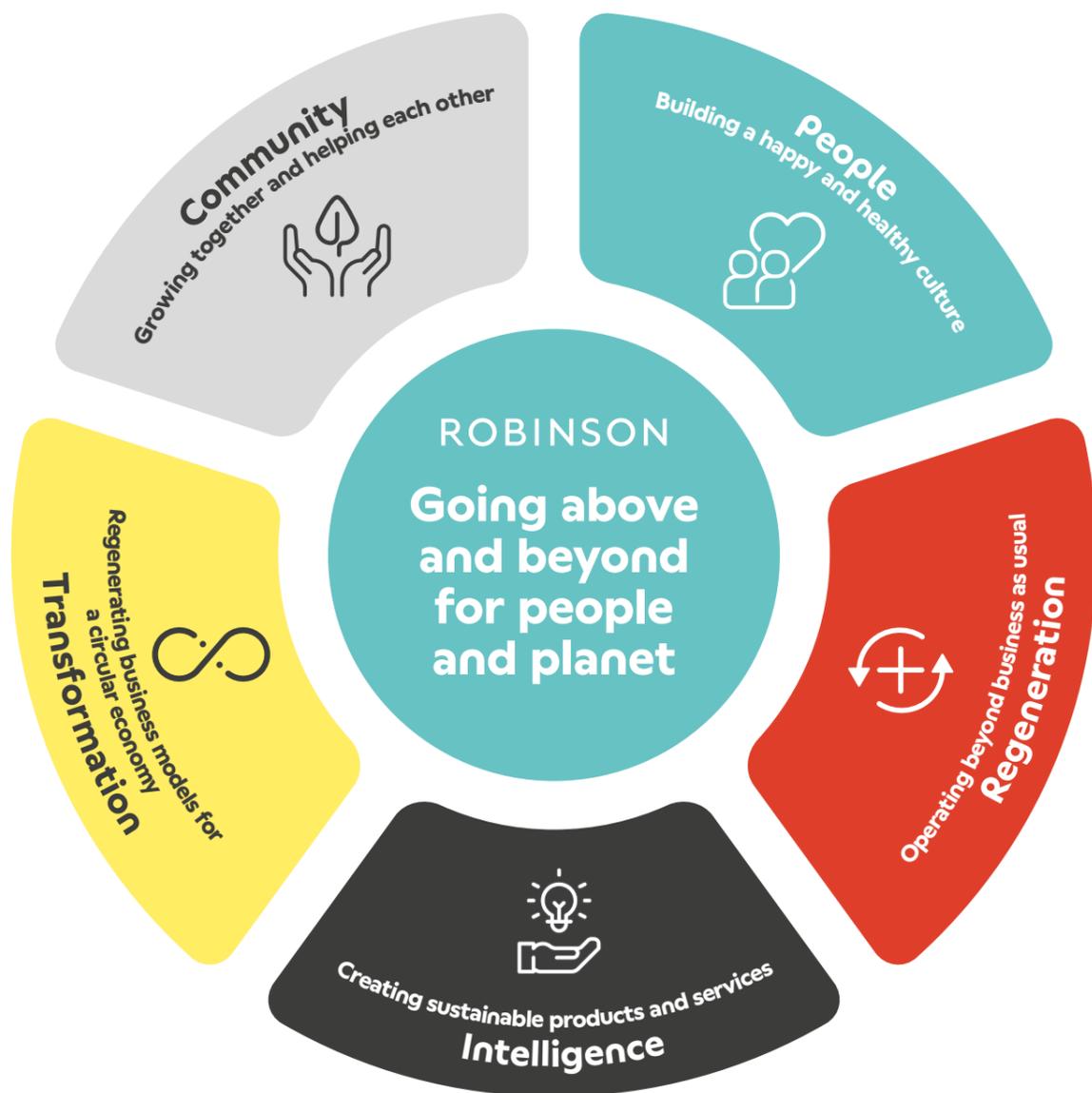
### Empowered

We are confident, with authority and competence to deliver our collective goals. We are trusted in our knowledge and our delivery.

Find out more about us at [robinsonpackaging.com](https://robinsonpackaging.com)

# Guiding our journey

We are pushing the boundaries of our business to create a sustainable future. This vision is driven by **our sustainability pledge**, which is focused on **five pillars** and **15 ambitious commitments**.



	<p><b>We want our people to thrive, enabling our team to reach their potential in a culture that prioritises health and wellbeing.</b></p>	<p><b>Our goals</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People development plan by 2023</li> <li>• Zero accidents every year</li> <li>• Champion employee health and wellbeing</li> </ul>	<p><b>The UN SDGs we can have the greatest impact on</b></p>
	<p><b>We will extract maximum value from the resources we use in our operations, recovering and restoring materials at the end of their life.</b></p>	<p><b>Our goals</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Zero waste to landfill by 2021</li> <li>• Net carbon positive by 2030</li> <li>• Sustainable buildings by 2025</li> </ul>	<p><b>The UN SDGs we can have the greatest impact on</b></p>
	<p><b>We will enable our customers to contribute to building a circular economy by applying purposeful design, using recycled content and making our products recyclable.</b></p>	<p><b>Our goals</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10% virgin plastic reduction by 2025</li> <li>• Maximum recycled content by 2022</li> <li>• All products fully recyclable by 2022</li> </ul>	<p><b>The UN SDGs we can have the greatest impact on</b></p>
	<p><b>We will drive shared commercial value and income streams beyond current business models, collaborating with our customers and partners to regenerate local economies.</b></p>	<p><b>Our goals</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build sustainable business environments</li> <li>• Greener spaces and habitats</li> <li>• Offer reusable products</li> </ul>	<p><b>The UN SDGs we can have the greatest impact on</b></p>
	<p><b>We will deliver real social and environmental benefits to our communities, educating the next generation of change-makers and bringing more sustainable initiatives to the areas where we operate.</b></p>	<p><b>Our goals</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer career-enhancing work experience and opportunities</li> <li>• Engage schools on benefits of packaging and recycling</li> <li>• Give back to our communities every year</li> </ul>	<p><b>The UN SDGs we can have the greatest impact on</b></p>

# People

## Building a happy and healthy culture

Looking after our people is crucial to the sustainable future of our organisation. We want to enable our people to thrive by investing in them, helping shape their careers and supporting their health and wellbeing. We are committed to paying a living wage to all employees, which can help in supporting a decent standard of life. Robinson will be known as a safe, productive and attractive organisation with a happy, dedicated culture – where ideas are generated from all levels of the business.

## What we've done and where we're going

### Goal: People development plan by 2023

**We will bring together a future-fit workforce**

Our new People development plan is a structured, disciplined approach with programmes to support and develop our people and teams. We are targeting full implementation for all employees by 2023. Our Robinson Academy will help us manage the training and development of people within our business with career opportunities and promotion from within, enabling everyone to thrive.

#### Prioritising our people

It is vital for Robinson that we retain and attract the best people. Our People development plan will help us make the ideal culture a reality.

To gain a better understanding of our culture, Robinson ran a survey of our entire workforce that compared our current position against some of the world's most successful businesses. The results identified our strengths, such as employee commitment and a calm workplace, and drove specific action plans targeting opportunities for more teamwork, engagement and empowerment. Our People development plan focuses on several comprehensive programmes, each with measurable indicators, including:

- **employee engagement** to understand what our people care about most;
- a **diversity plan** to ensure that we bring in experiences from a variety of perspectives and backgrounds, generating diversity in thinking;
- **rewards and recognition** to celebrate the contributions of all our teams. In addition, we have introduced employee perks schemes throughout Robinson, bringing employee benefits, wellbeing and recognition together; and
- investing in **development and training** while creating career pathways to enable professional development in knowledge and skills.

#### SUPPORTING THE UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



We want our people to thrive, enabling our team to reach their potential in a culture that prioritises health and wellbeing.



### Goal: Zero accidents every year

**Putting safety first, always**

We want all our employees to go home safely – that is our top priority. We are applying a safety first culture, focusing on achieving zero accidents in the workplace by implementing formalised, behaviour-based safety programmes, encouraging our people to report near misses and carrying out on-the-job checks through 30-second assessments.

#### Aiming for zero accidents

As a business, health and safety depends on active risk management by all. Through our health and safety strategy, we have set commitments and metrics, supported by an implementation plan. This focuses on:

- **culture change** – our managers lead by example, sharing best practice, engaging with their teams and clearly communicating expectations;
- **active training** – we've increased manager and employee training, supported by risk management and assessments and root cause analysis and action trackers;
- **monitoring and measuring** – we record, report and investigate all incidents: from near misses to minor incidents and lost time accidents. In addition, we implement internal and third-party audits, on-the-job safety checks and report against our SMART objectives; and
- **positive reinforcement** – we motivate our people, listening and acting on their recommendations, recognising the right behaviours, holding personal safety checks, observational safety walks and encouraging transparency throughout the business.

### Goal: Champion employee health and wellbeing

**We care for each other in times of need**

Our communication and engagement with our people during the Covid-19 pandemic has been critical. Through our products and services we continue to meet the hygiene, safety and food security needs of people while ensuring the utmost safety of our employees.

#### Protecting employee health during the pandemic

Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, we have prioritised keeping our people safe while supplying our customers with essential packaging for food, hygiene, personal care and homecare products. Our entire team has worked tirelessly, providing a reliable service to meet customer demand. We are all proud of the difference Robinson has made.

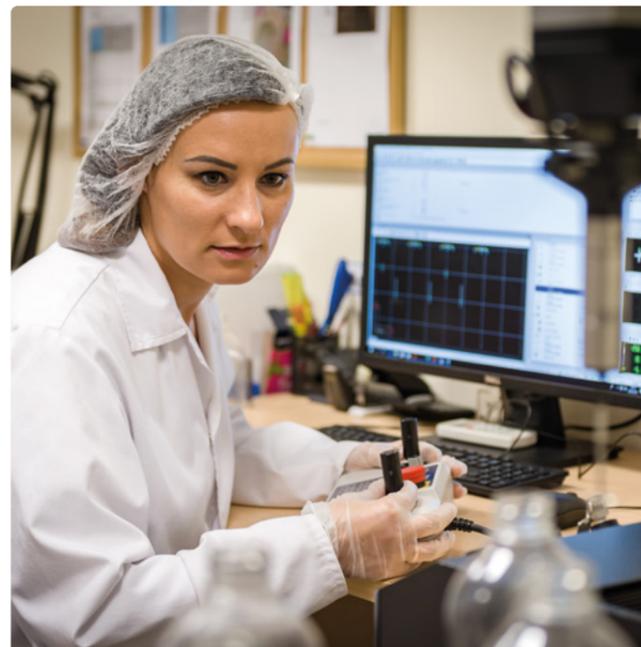
Our robust management programme includes onsite audits, with continuous employee engagement and communication in all workplaces. Unplanned assessments from health and safety authorities recognised our diligence. For all employees, we offer private Covid-19 testing (results within 24 hours), medical cover, access to a doctor, personal protective equipment (PPE) and guidance on how to protect themselves and others in and out of work. We also support those feeling isolated.

We prioritised our employees' wellbeing, giving them extended time with their families over key holiday periods. During the Easter break, we offered vouchers to ensure that employees enjoyed good food and provided longer time off work and gift bags at Christmas.

# Regeneration

## Operating beyond business as usual

Our thought leadership in sustainability differentiates us in the marketplace. We support this through our product and service offerings, how we operate and by applying the principles of continuous improvement across our direct and indirect operating environment. We use resources for as long as possible, maximising value extracted from them.



## What we've done and where we're going

### Goal: Zero waste to landfill by 2021

**We will put a full stop to waste**

We have launched a zero waste campaign, engaging our people on what we want to achieve. In turn, all of our sites have identified where their waste comes from and connected with end-markets where this valuable waste can be put to better use. We are signed up to Operation Clean Sweep and partner with local recycling facilities to ensure the recycling of all waste generated.

#### Reducing our waste to landfill

We sought to introduce more waste recycling collection points across all of our UK plastics business units and to find a more sustainable recycling process for the waste generated by our label backing.

We partnered with waste management company Biffa to identify solutions. We sourced and placed segregated plastic bins in our meeting rooms, with cardboard recycling bins installed in every office and each manufacturing unit. We also worked closely with a label supplier for them to recycle all label waste.

The immediate results were a reduction in average compactor collections, and a massive 50% drop in general waste costs, proving that zero waste is good for the environment and makes good business sense.



#### SUPPORTING THE UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



**We will extract maximum value from the resources we use in our operations, recovering and restoring materials at the end of their life.**

### Goal: Net carbon positive by 2030

**We will leave a positive footprint**

We set ourselves the challenging goal in line with the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference to be net carbon positive by 2030. This means we will create environmental benefits by removing additional carbon emissions from the atmosphere. We will achieve it through a series of actions including:

- quantifying the carbon impact of our scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions (direct and indirect), developing carbon mapping to identify high sources;
- integrating the energy and carbon impacts in our investment proposals, eliminating emissions where possible and prioritising the most energy efficient options;
- rationalising our portfolio, optimising energy use across our operations and sourcing from renewable energy; and
- developing and integrating requirements for transport efficiencies.

#### Reenergising our business

After mapping our energy use for our UK operations, we are now running a much more detailed and comprehensive exercise to determine exactly where and how much energy we are using. We will quantify this data as emissions to help identify further carbon reduction opportunities.

As part of our manufacturing excellence and energy and carbon reduction targets, we will continue to invest in the latest energy efficient and low carbon equipment and machinery. For example, we have installed 11 new hybrid injection moulding machines in our Stanton Hill, Kirkby-in-Ashfield and Lodz sites, delivering up to 40% energy and associated carbon savings compared to hydraulic machines.

We also changed the water cooling system at our Kirkby-in-Ashfield site, replacing it with a significantly more efficient system that uses the energy recovered to heat the warehouse, and have implemented the latest LED lighting in all of our UK factories.



### Goal: Sustainable buildings by 2025

**We will build sustainability from the ground up**

We believe that our buildings must be sustainable, particularly in terms of energy and water use. We are developing a protocol for Robinson properties and buildings, adopting LEED or BREEAM principles wherever possible. To ensure our sites meet our requirements, we will regularly audit them all, implementing actions and calling for investment when required.

#### Making our buildings more sustainable

We have been taking a sustainable approach to the development of our second factory and warehousing in Kirkby-in-Ashfield. Among the approaches implemented, we have:

- improved the factory structure, replacing old cladding with highly insulated cladding that is very energy efficient;
- planned to use air sourced heat pumps, providing renewable energy heating;
- used LED lighting throughout and adopted natural light where possible; and
- reviewed alternative renewable energy options for power generation, such as solar panels.

As we develop the new facility it will become our blow moulding centre of excellence, enabling increased efficiencies within the business and helping us meet our strategic goals in sustainable operations and manufacturing excellence.



# Intelligence

## Creating sustainable products and services

We are a knowledge-based organisation with innovation in technical capabilities and sustainability expertise that differentiates us. Our agility and flexibility is reflected in the speed with which we identify and develop custom products and solutions designed with environmental and social benefits. We will create new supply chains to maximise the use of post-consumer waste for a circular economy, driving collection and recycling of more plastic and paperboard than we put on the market.



### SUPPORTING THE UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



We will enable our customers to contribute to building a circular economy by applying purposeful design, using recycled content and making our products recyclable.

## What we've done and where we're going

### Goal: 10% virgin plastic reduction by 2025

#### We will not use new

The recyclability of plastic is one of its core appeals. However, as a business we are on the path to reducing the amount of virgin plastic we use – in other words, we can't use plastic that hasn't been used before. In addition, several product categories have been redesigned with weight reductions. We will go further by redesigning and continuing to lightweight select products and identifying and investing in alternative materials.

#### Cleaning up our products

We are redesigning our products to reduce our virgin plastic use. One example is our 1-litre bath and shower gel bottle that we redesigned for a global healthcare brand. The original bottle, made in 2019, contained 25% post-consumer recycled (PCR) PET; by December 2020, we had increased the PCR content to 50% and are working to increase this to 100% in 2021.

By implementing thinner bottle walls, we made the bottle lighter, and added a visual design to the outside in keeping with the brand, to strengthen its structural integrity. The new bottle has been a commercial success during the pandemic as people have chosen larger capacity containers. As well as the commercial benefits, the bath and shower gel bottle has met our own sustainability targets and those of our customers.



### Goal: Maximum recycled content by 2022

#### We will close the loop on packaging

We have two separate but related aims for increasing our recycled packaging content. By 2022, all of our paperboard will be made from recycled content and at least 30% of our plastic packaging will be too. We will achieve this by applying a life cycle approach and circularity to our design.

#### Pioneering our food-grade recycled packaging together

We have joined forces with the NEXTLOOP project to deliver a world-first supply chain model to close the loop on food-grade recycled polypropylene (PP).

Managed by environmental consultants Nextek, the project forms a consortium of expert organisations across the PP and food supply chain, including Robinson, a major user of PP. As a business, we will only meet our sustainability goals if we make transformational changes and create a clear pathway to a circular model, in which we produce food packaging that includes sustainably sourced, recycled PP derived from mechanically recycled food packaging.

Over the next two years, the project aims to develop and demonstrate innovative sorting technology, prepare protocols, implement the sorting and mechanically reprocessed PP as a food-grade raw material in packaging. As a company dependent on PP, Robinson will be involved in trials and tests to ensure the recyclate produced meets the technical specifications and functional needs of packaging products for our customers and their customers.

### Goal: All products fully recyclable by 2022

#### We will extend the life of plastics and paperboard

We are in the process of removing non-recyclable materials from all of our products. We are developing a strategy for each material type and identifying substitutions for those difficult to recycle, as well as transitioning the remaining products that use carbon black to detectable colours.

#### Changing the colour of recycling

Consumers are increasingly aware that a lot of black plastic cannot be recycled. This is due to its carbon black pigment, which cannot be detected by near-infrared sensors currently used in recycling sorting streams – preventing the loop from being fully closed.

At Robinson, we have been working with customers and suppliers to replace the carbon black used in our packaging with detectable colours to help in onward recycling, all without reducing the functionality or performance of the packaging.

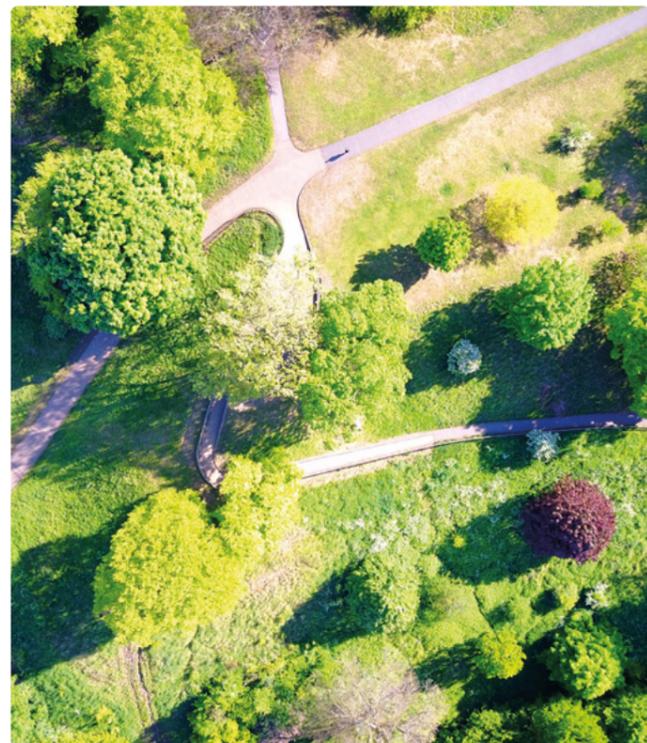
Our detectable colours have been and continue to be successfully and independently trialled and tested by recycling experts coordinated by RECOUP. We are currently on track to achieve our commitment to fully remove carbon black from our products in the UK by 2021.

# Transformation

## Regenerating business models for a circular economy

We strengthen the shared future of our business and our people by investing in self-innovation, continually reinventing ourselves to meet market needs. We want to keep resources in use for as long as possible, wasting nothing. We will collaborate to create new local circular economies that work at a micro scale, yet leverage the collaborative scale of all participants.

We're also deeply embedding ourselves within the recycling chain, from consumer recycling at home to working with government, local authorities, waste management and recyclers to bring back plastic waste as a valuable raw material used in the manufacture of more protective packaging.



## What we've done and where we're going



### Goal: Build sustainable business environments

**We will build a better business**

We will go above and beyond our current business model and operations to broaden our sustainable commercial activities and drive positive impact to our local communities. Our aim is to unite internal and external thinkers with diverse experience and backgrounds, and harness their combined expertise and creativity to investigate the creation of a self-sufficient closed loop business park.

### Goal: Greener spaces and habitats

**We will create a greener community**

Robinson has several spaces and land that are currently not used to their full potential. We will develop the land we own into healthy places and habitats, with social, environmental and community benefits.

### Goal: Offer reusable products

**We will lead the way in sustainability**

We want our customers to use fully recyclable products where it makes functional and environmental sense. We can play our part by exploring innovation opportunities; for example, developing reusable alternative packaging to traditional options.

#### SUPPORTING THE UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



**We will drive shared commercial value and income streams beyond current business models, collaborating with our customers and partners to regenerate local communities.**

## Circular economy



## Transforming our business

For more than 180 years, Robinson has sought to give back to our people and the environment in which we operate, while being a successful business. Our history is one of innovation: Robinson sold the first disposable nappy, and product design and manufacturing made significant contributions to efforts during the Crimean War and World Wars I and II.

This heritage guides our future. We apply this same spirit of innovation to every aspect of our business: from our workforce to how we use our products, from our reliance on resources to our role in the communities where we operate.



We are developing our role in our circular economy. Our imagined future is one in which Robinson is creating controlled closed loops and local circular economies for plastics, as well as for other resources and impacts, such as energy, carbon and water.



We can achieve this by employing local people and supporting the social and environmental needs of the communities we serve.

As we look to the future, we can also see new opportunities emerging for Robinson and our legacy products. We will strive to dramatically improve our core capabilities so that we are an exemplar of low waste production. We will have zero waste to landfill and net positive carbon emission manufacturing capabilities and all of our materials could be integrated into a zero waste circular economy.

Our vision is an open system model, where we work to resolve the shared challenge of reducing packaging waste to zero and generating greater wealth for all. We also want our consumers within local economies to be active participants, extracting product benefits and returning future raw materials. Together, we are working towards an effective circular economy.

# Community

## Growing together and helping each other

We want to have a lasting positive impact on the communities in which we operate: from nurturing the packaging technologists of the future to educating people about plastics, paperboard and recycling.



“ ”

Alice worked on her own initiative with confidence to share and consult with others to ensure her research was adding value. It was refreshing to have such a diligent and enthusiastic young person with an appetite to learn. I would not hesitate in engaging Alice on similar projects in the future.

**Nigel Morley,**  
Operational Excellence Director,  
Robinson

### SUPPORTING THE UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



We will deliver real social and environmental benefits to our communities, educating the next generation of change-makers and bringing more sustainable initiatives to the areas where we operate.

## What we've done and where we're going

### Goal: Offer career-enhancing work experience and opportunities

We will open the door to opportunity for people

We believe in investing in the future workforce. Our sites offer internships and apprenticeships to young people in our local communities, in partnership with colleges and universities and through regularly participating in careers fairs. We are formalising partnerships with these educational institutions to provide real opportunities in the specific fields of plastics science and engineering, as well as other business areas such as human resources and information technology.

### Putting sustainability studies into practice

Robinson has a history of helping students develop their careers and offering work experience. In 2020, Alice Armstrong, a postgraduate at Swansea University, worked with Nigel Morley, Operational Excellence Director, for eight weeks on two specific sustainability projects.

The first project sought to optimise injection stretch blow moulding for the manufacturing of food-grade recycled PET bottles from post-consumer recycled (PCR) waste. Alice explored the viability of turning PCR PET flakes into food-grade pellets as raw material to produce bottles made from 100% recyclate, and the possibility of using new technology that would improve the efficiency and sustainability of both the production process and the finished bottles. The eventual implementation of this technology could produce savings of more than 30 tonnes of carbon emissions per year, and the use of PCR PET instead of virgin PET could avoid emissions of 200 tonnes.

Alice made such impressive progress that she assumed another project, this time defining energy reduction opportunities at our Kirkby-in-Ashfield site. Alice participated in the energy use mapping initiative (read more about how we're Reenergising our Business on page 9). By monitoring specific machines, such as the water chillers, we aim to track energy usage in specific business areas. The objective is to implement a series of updates to aspects of machines such as chillers, vacuum pumps and compressed air distribution to improve our energy usage and prevent any further energy wastage.

## Goal: Engage educators and students on the benefits of packaging and recycling

We will educate the next generation of change-makers

We want younger generations to understand the power and benefit of packaging. We are developing a campaign to introduce students to plastic and packaging, from the high-tech science that is used to engineer it to its social and environmental benefits. Part of this includes joint events with customers and suppliers and the sponsoring of awards, such as the IOM3 Starpack award.

### Challenging students to find the future of packaging

The Starpack Students Competition, run by the Institute of Materials, Minerals & Mining (IOM3), introduces young people to the packaging design process and encourages them to think about packaging as a career.

The competition, established for over 50 years, engages college and university students to submit solutions to challenges set by brand-leading FMCG companies, design agencies and manufacturers. The expectation and key criterion for judging success is for students to really push conventional thinking and break the rules with off-the-wall creativity.

Briefs in previous years have included packaging to promote children's healthy eating, packaging to help reduce consumer food waste and social interaction at home through packaging during the pandemic. Robinson is proud to sponsor the competition. We are developing briefs to engage young creative minds in finding solutions, aligned with our sustainable packaging commitments.

## Goal: Give back to our communities every year

We will be a good neighbour

We know how important it is to give back to the local people that help make our work successful. That is why we are setting up local community projects at each of our sites, identified and managed by local teams. These projects could range from partnering with supermarkets on plastics and paper packaging recycling collection and pick-up points, to food and clothes banks, to consumer engagement on reducing food waste, or partnering with local community led projects.

### Supporting local fire services in Poland

Our teams in Minsk and Lodz have partnered with local fire brigades since 2018. Our financial contributions help towards the purchase of fire service equipment, while the fire service provides us with training on fire safety and checks, identifying specific areas for improvement. This support is provided both by professional fire fighters and trained fire marshals, some of which are Robinson employees volunteering. In 2020, we helped fund a fire exhibition and received tickets for a gala.



# Tell us your thoughts

Our aim is to go above and beyond to create a sustainable future for our people and planet. This is our purpose. We welcome any and all thoughts from stakeholders on how we can go further and make real progress on our pathway to reimagining sustainability.



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