

Sustainability and Resilience What Do They Mean for Vercity?



www.vercitygroup.com

<u>Contents</u>

Defining Sustainability and Resilience
How important are Sustainability and Resilience to Vercity?4
Vercity's Responsibilities4
Management Commitments5
Climate Commitment5
Leadership Commitment6
Embedding Sustainability and Resilience7
Embedding Sustainability & Resilience: Governance7
Processes and Procedures7
Supply Chain Management7
Management Review8
Embedding Sustainability & Resilience: Planet8
Net Zero Carbon8
Reducing Waste8
Biodiversity9
Case Study: Delivering Carbon Reduction9
Embedding Sustainability & Resilience: People10
Training, Development & Progression10
Diversity & Inclusion10
Embedding Sustainability & Resilience: Prosperity11
Business Resilience11
Sustainability Through People11
Sustainability Through Projects11
Case Study: Recirculate12
Case Study: Broadening Horizons12
Appendix: The Four Pillars14



Defining Sustainability and Resilience

Sustainability and Resilience mean different things to different organisations. Vercity's aspiration is to ensure an enduring business, provide resilient services and meaningful employment, and have a positive impact in the communities and jurisdictions where the organisation operates.

Vercity's first annual 'Sustainable Business Strategy Statement' was approved by the Vercity Holdings Board in July 2022. This statement is organised around the identified World Economic Forum (WEF) Four Pillars metrics, which draw upon existing standards and measures, enabling companies to report in a way that is transparent and comparable.

Four Pillars

Vercity adopted the Four Pillars in 2021 and has made a commitment to apply their principles throughout the company and across all business undertakings. These values cover the following metrics and support nine of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals:

- 1. Principles of Governance a company's purpose and how it manages risk and ethical behaviour.
- 2. **Planet** a company's dependency and impact on the environment, carbon consumption and transition to net zero.
- 3. **People** a company's treatment of employees and ensuring environments encouraging development and growth.
- 4. **Prosperity** a company's financial wellbeing and how this affects the wellbeing of its community.





How important are Sustainability and Resilience to Vercity?

Vercity's Responsibilities

Vercity does not rank Sustainability and Resilience against other aims and aspirations. The adoption of the Four Pillars is deliberately designed to embed these concepts throughout Vercity's activities and objectives. Sustainability and Resilience underpins all company aims and aspirations.



Principles of Governace – Vercity has a responsibility to ensure its business operations conform with laws and regulations in the jurisdictions in which it operates. This compliance ensures that the obligations of these conventions are met (for example, Modern Slavery and Anti-Corruption) and also protects the company from the consequences of any breach, providing a sustainable basis to maintain business undertakings.



Planet – Vercity has a responsibility to ensure its business practices support Net Zero Carbon emissions by 2050, to eliminate waste, and to protect and where possible enhance the environment of those communities in which Vercity operates and provides services.



People – Vercity has a responsibility to provide its employees (current and potential) with a work environment where they are physically, mentally and emotionally safe, where there is no discrimination, and where there are opportunities for personal and professional development and progression. This will support employees in having a positive experience with Vercity that is sustainable, and also promotes wellbeing and growth that can influence their lives outside work.



Prosperity – Vercity has a responsibility to be a good corporate citizen. This means supporting social and community good and ensuring that its activities contribute to taxation, both directly from business performance, and indirectly from wealth generation for clients and employees. Vercity's financial strength creates pathways to support initiatives in local communities where offices are based and services delivered, assisting national programmes aligned with the Four Pillars.



Management Commitments

An example of how Vercity has embedded the Four Pillars within its business operations is illustrated through the following Management Commitment Statements:



Principles of Governace – Vercity adheres to its policies and terms of reference. Matters of business governance are monitored by the Executive Board¹, and reviewed annual by the independent Chair, Chief Executive Officer and Group Finance Director.



Planet – Vercity actively monitors its procurement of consumable products and services, and business activities (including business and commuter travel), with a view to reducing negative impacts on the environment. Ongoing trend analysis informs appropriate changes to business policy and working practice.



People – Vercity is committed to maintaining the health, safety and wellbeing of employees. The commitment is supported by investment in staff engagement, training and development, working policies and practices. Health and safety and staff wellbeing, and the effectiveness of associated initiatives, are reviewed at the monthly meetings of the Executive Board.



Prosperity – Vercity's budget and plan, which is reviewed and reset annually, supports the overarching objective to sustainably grow the business over time. The business strategy, delivered by the Executive Board, is to accelerate the performance, productivity and growth of the business.

Climate Commitment

Vercity has made a clear commitment to ongoing reduction of its direct Greenhouse Gas Emissions, as required by the company's **Planet** Pillar's metrics:

"Vercity Group is committed to:

Reducing its direct Greenhouse Gas Emissions incrementally year on year, in support of UK and Canadian Government and WEF targets, with the goal of achieving Operational Net Zero no later than 2050. This will be achieved through governance, policy frameworks, and the provision of guidance and training, thus enabling employees to be aware of how their work-related actions and decisions can contribute towards the attainment of Vercity's ESG goals.

This Statement aligns with the UK Government's pledge to substantially reduce global greenhouse gas emissions to limit the global temperature increase, as set out within the Paris Agreement that was finalised during the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) in November 2021..."

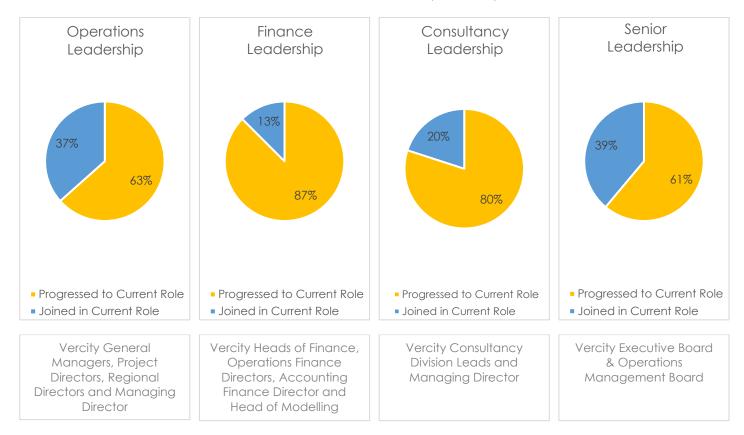
Vercity Carbon Reduction Mission Statement (June 2022)

¹ Group CEO, Group FD, Canada CEO, Operations MD, Consultancy MD, Defence Projects MD, HR Director



Leadership Commitment

The majority of Senior Leaders within Vercity have progressed within the organisation, developing from their initial role into their current position, demonstrating one way in which the **People** Pillar manifests in Vercity. Personal experiences of growth within the business are not a pre-requisite for, or a guarantee of, commitment to sustainable practice. However, the commitment of these individuals is underscored by their experiences:



Data correct as at September 2022



Embedding Sustainability and Resilience

Embedding Sustainability & Resilience: Governance

Processes and Procedures

Vercity's integrated management system includes a library of sustainability and resilience policies and procedures that staff are required to read, understand and 'live our values'. On a regular basis, topic specific articles and "Did You Knows" are posted on the company Intranet to raise awareness of these processes and other initiatives that are being run by the company.

Vercity is certified with BSI to ISO 9001, ISO 14001, ISO 45001 and ISO 55001. These accomplishments demonstrate to internal and external stakeholders that the procedures operated by the business are robust and that practices required by these standards are embedded within day-to-day undertakings.

Vercity's cloud-based management system MyRIAD includes the functionality to record ESG activities undertaken, which contributes to the Company's corporate reporting. The system provides a searchable library of initiatives and ideas to help teams identify opportunities that can best support outcomes on their projects, which at a corporate level enables the ability to plot hours spent to determine the social value gained.

Regular email and intranet communications are issued to advise on Vercity's sustainability and resilience initiatives and how these can be supported. In addition, the company intranet includes a standalone ESG page that hosts a variety of articles and announcements that are accessible to all staff.

The 2022 Four Pillar reporting and associated outputs have been translated into easily understandable and published Infographics, to raise awareness of the manner by which Vercity has embedded sustainability and resilience into business operations (see Appendix).

Supply Chain Management

Vercity's Modern Slavery Act Policy Statement outlines a zero-tolerance approach to any supplier who engages in modern slavery practices. Only reputable and registered companies will be appointed for the provision of services, with all having been formally vetted and approved by an Executive Board director prior to appointment.

Upon appointment of new suppliers, ethical transparent evaluation techniques are applied to the selection process to ensure that appointments are made based upon capability, competence and locality, plus any ESG credentials and ISO Certifications.

Vercity's Anti Bribery and Corruption Policy together with Tax Policy (and associated mandatory training) provides the tools to ensure that all staff are aware of the expectations placed upon them regarding compliance with ethical business practices and that they pay heed to all related regulations.

Where possible and subject to need, SMEs are identified and approached to tender for work required by Vercity or those Project Companies to which Vercity provides services. The use of local suppliers not only adds value to the local economy, but also assists in reducing the carbon footprint of the delivery.



Management Review

The Four Pillars approach ensures that Sustainability and Resilience are reviewed by both the Vercity Holdings Board and the Vercity Executive Board.

During 2022, Vercity undertook an in-depth review of all Pillar metrics to establish performance against the company's aspirations, with the output RAG rated to highlight where additional inputs may be required. The outcome of this evaluation was included in the first annual Four Pillar report that was submitted to the Vercity Executive Board.

Vercity's Environmental Aspects and Impacts Register is subject to annual review to ensure that all relevant business activities and undertakings have been identified and captured, with appropriate measures introduced to mitigate the potential for any risks to be realised.

Embedding Sustainability & Resilience: Planet

Net Zero Carbon

Energy consumption data is collected and analysed for Vercity hub offices. This data is captured as kwh and transferred into CO2eT using Government validated conversion factors, with the results used to facilitate greater understanding of consumption, and where and how usage can be reduced.

Vercity's direct Scope 3 emissions relate to business travel and commuting to a designated place of work. Information on these emissions is collated through our expenses system, with miles travelled by vehicle/transport type converted into CO2eT using Government validated conversion factors. The results are formally recorded, analysed and reported upon to allow Vercity to understand where greater GHG emission savings can be made.

Vercity has employed a Clean Energy Manager to support delivery of services and undertake specific clean energy engagements. Vercity has also undertaken training for the Project Management team to support initiatives for the installation of EV charging points at managed projects (typically through variations).

Reducing Waste

Vercity's direct waste streams predominantly comprise redundant IT equipment, paper and other stationery item usage, wrapping/packaging, and food wastes. Initiatives are in place to ensure that volumes of waste are reduced and where feasible, eliminated, which include:

- **Paper Reduction** Enhanced electronic data storage systems and hybrid working arrangements implemented during 2020 and 2021 resulted in significant reductions of paper and other waste from Vercity offices. These reductions have been sustained beyond the lifting of Covid-19 restrictions.
- **Recycling IT equipment** Redundant equipment is recycled or reused via our specialist supplier, with regular communications circulated as reminders of waste production and management expectations.
- Single Use Plastics Vercity no longer procures single use plastics. The company's 'Procurement of Services and Products' procedure provides guidance to staff on how to select alternative options. Material is published on our intranet that provides additional information on the environmental harms caused by microplastics.



Biodiversity

Vercity's activities do not directly interface with flora, fauna or watercourses and due to the nature of business undertakings and workplace arrangements, it has limited potential to measure and manage company biodiversity impacts. However, where opportunities arise, Vercity embeds initiatives to support biodiversity. Examples of these include:

- **Woodland Walk** patients and visitors to a Vercity managed hospital now have somewhere quiet and visually appealing to visit while at the hospital. The walk is set out into four different garden sections representing each season of the year and features willow sculptures of Essex wildlife. Funding was contributed by the Project Company, with the Vercity team championing the initiative and providing volunteer days to support the work undertaken.
- Wildlife Initiatives initiatives at a Vercity managed MoD facility have created environments for local wildlife to flourish, including bees (now producing honey) and hedgehogs.
- Bug City creating an insect friendly environment in school grounds to support local biodiversity and education outcomes. Feedback from the Head Teacher was: "There are so many reasons why insects and other bugs and minibeasts should be welcomed to our outdoor spaces. They can be an important source of food for other animals like birds and bats, essential to pollinate our flowering plants and crops. Butterflies and moths, worms, snails and slugs, spiders, centipedes, beetles, bees and wasps we can attract them and give them a home. Therefore, on behalf of all the staff, and more importantly the children, I'd like to say a huge thank you..."

Case Study: Delivering Carbon Reduction

Three boilers in a secondary school were approaching end of life and only required like for like replacement to ensure the project specification was met. Instead of pursing this option, this was seen as an opportunity to create carbon savings, which resulted in specialists from Vercity's Strategic Asset Management team undertaking a feasibility study that identified a potential to replace the boilers with heat pumps to achieve:

- 77% Reduction in gas consumption per annum (360,000 kWh to 80,000 kWh), with a corresponding decrease of 57 Tonnes CO2eq.
- **40% Increased electricity** usage per annum (130,000 kWh to 182,000 kWh), with a corresponding rise of 11 Tonnes CO2eq.
- A net 36% decrease in whole site carbon dioxide emissions tonnes per annum.



The conversion is being progressed through a contract variation which also permits grant funding to be applied for, allowing the school to significantly reduce CO2 emissions at only a marginal additional cost.

A copy of the full case study was published by the British Services Association² and thinking on broader opportunities is available on the Vercity website³

³ https://www.vercitygroup.com/2022/04/reconciling-pfi-ppp-expiry-with-net-zero-objectives/



² https://www.bsa-org.com/nz-vercity2/

Embedding Sustainability & Resilience: People

Training, Development & Progression

Vercity is committed to providing opportunities for the personal and professional development of its **People** This is embedded within culture throughout the business, as identified in the Leadership Commitment section above.

Vercity has several initiatives in place to support career development and progression:

- All staff have a regularly reviewed Personal Development Plan setting out the measures needed to support them, which may be in the form of recognised training and/or mentoring and work shadowing.
- Vercity operates an ongoing Development Programme for staff not yet at a managerial level, but who aspire to progress or are nominated by their line manager.
- For staff already at a managerial level, the annual Leadership Programme sponsors a group drawn from across the business through a combination of training and external coaching.

Vercity sponsors staff for academic and professional accreditations through financial contribution to their training and/or exam fees and paid study leave. Vercity has contributed to employees' study of a variety of qualifications to support staff development including:

- Chartered Accountant (Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales)
- Chartered Certified Accountant (Association of Chartered Certified Accountants)
- Chartered Management Accountant (Chartered Institute of Management Accountants)
- MBAs (Various)
- MSc in Built Environment (University College London)
- Chartered Tax Advisor (Chartered Institute of Taxation)
- Chartered Company Secretary (Chartered Governance Institution)

Enabling and promoting progression and development not only ensures that Vercity continues to provide a high-quality professional service, but is also an important component of Vercity's approach to staff development and retention.

Diversity & Inclusion

Vercity's commitment to sustainability is symbiotic with a culture that is open and supportive to meet the needs of its **People** and enable them to reach their potential.

Diversity and inclusion commences during recruitment, with HR policies ensuring there is no conscious or unconscious bias applied when selecting suitable candidates. All individuals are selected based upon their competence rather than any preferred characteristics.

Vercity trains and provides Mental Health First Aiders and offers all staff access to a 24/7 Employee Assist Helpline to give guidance and support to any staff member.

In September 2020 Vercity partnered with the National Centre for Diversity (NCfD) to launch a two-year action plan to further develop Equality, Diversity and Inclusion throughout the company. The initial review by NCfD assessors confirmed a strong starting position when benchmarked externally, with a Partnerships Award Silver win granted during 2020.





This initiative led to the adoption of Verity's FREDIE Principles (Fairness, Respect, Equality, Diversity, Inclusion & Engagement) and the establishment of a FREDIE Steering Group. The FREDIE Action Plan led to Investors in Diversity accreditation and in both the 2021 and 2022 FREDIE awards, Vercity was ranked in the Top 50 Most Inclusive Workplaces.



"I send my warmest congratulations to Vercity on successfully reaching number 23 in the Top 100 Most Inclusive Workplaces Index 2022. It's been a challenging year and yet, it has not dented the excellent work that organisations and individuals do in promoting FREDIE best practice. I am particularly proud that we celebrate excellent work across all sectors as these organisations are the future of the workplace in the UK. We celebrate the exceptional work of people and organisations who have EDI running through their DNA. Let's rejoice at this and build a better society"

Solat Chaudhry, Chief Executive of the National Centre for Diversity

Embedding Sustainability & Resilience: Prosperity

Business Resilience

Ensuring business resilience is a critical component of business sustainability. Vercity has embedded hybrid working arrangements within the business and among the benefits of this is a significant reduction in the risk of single site failure.

The main risks identified to business continuity are IT failure and cyber-attack. To mitigate these risks Vercity has invested heavily in IT systems and cyber security and has been certified to the Cyber Essential standard. Security systems implemented include Mimecast, Microsoft InTune, Samsung Knox, Symantec and Zscaler.



Sustainability Through People

The commitment to supporting people and helping them realise their potential not only supports the individual but also has broader impacts where such training and/or qualifications programmes positively effects communities in localities where Vercity's offices are based or management services are provided.

Sustainability Through Projects

Well managed PPP and PFI projects enhance social value in local communities. Vercity is committed to this principle and adding benefit by enhancing the social impact of those projects the company provides services to.



As part of Vercity's commitment to ESG, every employee is entitled to an annual Volunteer Day to support approved initiatives, which equates to 2335 hours of community volunteering per year (UK). These volunteering days allow staff members and teams to engage with communities and assist projects and schemes that have a local impact. These programmes are often instigated by Vercity's project staff, who then gain sponsorship and funding from other contracting stakeholders.

Vercity has been a signatory on the Vision for Literacy Pledge since 2017, with employees undertaking reading support across projects and in local communities as part of individual volunteering activities.

Case Study: Recirculate

Recirculate⁴ was founded by InfraRed, Vercity and Bouygues, working together and across projects to maximise impacts. The scheme focuses on the repair and reuse of bicycles which are then provided to key workers and those in need; it is an example of activity under both the **Prosperity** and **Planet** pillars of the Vercity strategy.

The initiative supports several Sustainable Development Goals, with particular benefits including:

- Reducing carbon emissions and waste.
- Offering a route to mental and physical wellbeing amongst NHS key workers.
- Supporting prisoners during their incarceration and in developing skills for release.



Case Study: Broadening Horizons

In June 2022, Vercity held a booth at a Secondary School Careers Day, with lunch for pupils provided by the Project Company. Over 800 students attended, with handouts provided giving an explanation about Vercity and how pupils could become involved in careers in the Asset Management sector. Vercity staff in attendance included those not involved in the dedicated project team, providing a variety of backgrounds including engineering, military service, financial experience and SHEQ.

The RCDP & Careers Coordinator at the School shared her thanks and gratitude to all involved:

"Can I please extend a massive thank you to each and every one of you for supporting our Careers Fair today to be the success that it was. Please do also pass my thanks onto your colleagues who I don't have email addresses for that were here too. You all deserve to relax with a nice glass of something chilled this evening. I will be raising a toast to you all, you were amazing!





Across the day I had so many positive comments from staff and pupils about how much they enjoyed the event. Pupils found it really interesting and helpful to come and speak to you all (I promise it wasn't just your freebies and sweets that got their attention!) Many teachers came up to me and said they were unaware of just how many different pathways into employment there are that differ to the 'traditional' routes – You all certainly fulfilled the brief for the day to 'broaden horizons' and this makes my job so much easier. I have also had some feedback from a couple of parents who said that their kids have brought home your booklets and information with one Y9 even pleading with his mum to take him to an open day next week – I think that says it all!"



Appendix: The Four Pillars



Embedding principles of sustainability, environmental stewardship and social impact in our business.



Governing Purpose Propose solutions to economic, environmental and social issues



Quality of Governing Body Composition of highest governance body and committees



Stakeholder Engagement

Material issues impacting stakeholders



Ethical Behaviour Anti-Corruption Protected Ethics Advice and Reporting

Governance | Planet | People | Prosperity

www.vercitygroup.com



Actions and Monitoring



Vercity adheres to its policies and terms of reference. Matters of business governance are monitored by the Executive Board, and reviewed annually by the independent Chair, Chief Executive Officer, and Group Finance Director.

Annual Targets



Annual Review

Vercity Governance Pyramid for relevance.



Monitor and update details of Holdings and Executive



Boards. Stakeholder Engagement



Ethics

100% anticorruption training. Zero incidents reported. Maintain Investors in Diversity. Review Whistleblowing Policy.

Vercity

Corporate ESG Reporting

Embedding principles of sustainability, environmental stewardship and social impact in our business.



Climate Change

Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions: report in metric tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions. Estimate and report material upstream and downstream emissions.

Freshwater Availability





Water consumption and withdrawal in water-stressed areas: Report for operations.



Paris-aligned GHG emissions targets Define and report progress against GHG emissions targets limited global warming below 2°C above pre-

industrial levels. Limit warming to 1.5°C. **GHG emission impact**

Report wherever material along the value chain the valued impact of greenhouse gas emissions.



Report estimated metric tonnes of single-use plastic consumed. Disclose most significant use of single-use plastic, approach used and definition adopted.

Governance | Planet | People | Prosperity

www.vercitygroup.com

CEO Management Commitment Statement

Actions and Monitoring

Vercity actively monitors its procurement of consumable products and services, and business activities (including business and commuter travel), with a view to reducing negative impacts on the environment. On going trend analysis informs appropriate changes to business policy and working practices.

Annual Targets



To Green energy tariffs for 100% of Vercity's hub offices once contracts end.

Capture 100% Air and Rail journeys to establish annual carbon savings.







Achieve 100% Net Zero Emissions by 2050.



Evaluate Supply Chain partner ESG Credentials.





Switch

Vercity Corporate ESG Reporting People

Providing the framework for employees to be treated equally and with respect via environments encouraging development and growth.



7. Living wage: Companies offering a living wage to work can help lift households and communities out of poverty.

8. Employee wellbeing: Recognition that employee wellbeing has a positive impact on organisational success as well as on employee health, professional fulfilment and quality-of-life.

Governance | Planet | People | Prosperity

www.vercitygroup.com

Actions and Monitoring



CEO Management Commitment Statement

Vercity is committed to maintaining the health, safety, and wellbeing of its employees. Our commitment is supported by investment in staff engagement (regular PEAKON surveys and promotion of the principles of Fairness, Respect, Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Engagement), training and development, working policies and practices. Health and safety and staff wellbeing, and the effectiveness of associated initiatives, are reviewed at the monthly meetings of the Executive Board.

Annual Targets

95%+ Employees supply EDI Data

Ethnicity Demographics monitored as proportionate to UK average figures
Pay Equality

duce inequalities.

Zero Cases of Discrimination & Harassment



Zero Staff on basic living wage

No RIDDOR ir



122



Health & Safety

Sickness Compare long-term statistics against work-related absence. Investigate and communicate Employee Wellbeing related actions.

Vercity

Corporate ESG Reporting Prosperity

Embedding principles of sustainability, environmental stewardship and social impact in our business.

Employment & Wealth Generation

Absolute number and rate of employment: Total number and rate of new employee hires during the reporting period. Economic Contribution: Direct economic value generated for organisation global operations.

Community & Social Vitality

Total tax paid: total global tax borne by the company, including corporate income taxes, property taxes, non-creditable VAT, other sales taxes, employer-paid payroll taxes, other taxes that constitute costs to the company, by category of taxes.

Infrastructure investments & Services

Qualitative disclosure to describe extent of development of significant infrastructure investments and services supported, and current or expected impacts on communities and local economics, including positive and negative impacts where relevant. Whether these investments and services are commercial, in-kind or pro bono engagements. **Social Value generated**

% revenue from products and services designed to deliver specific social benefits or address specific sustainability challenges. Additional tax remitted

Total collected by the company on behalf of other taxpayers, including VAT and employee-related taxes that are remitted by the company on behalf of customers or employees, by category of taxes.

Governance | Planet | People | Prosperity

www.vercitygroup.com

Actions and Monitoring



CEO Management Commitment Statement

Vercity's budget and plan, which is reviewed and reset annually, supports the overarching objective to sustainably grow the business over time. The business strategy, delivered by the Executive Board, is to accelerate the performance, productivity, and growth of the business.

Annual Targets

Achieve

Budget targets, Strategy Objectives and delivery of Strategic Plan.



Social Value

Formally report on the Social Value Vercity Services add to Society.



Tax Compliance

Fully compliant with tax legislation. Deliver staff training and communications. Ensure all staff receive this training and briefings as necessary.

