

BIRKDALE

Birkdale Sales Commitment to Sustainability

Scope and definition

This document sets out the spirit and scope of Birkdale Sales' commitment to sustainability.

Birkdale interprets the term 'sustainability' broadly. It encompasses all matters relevant to operating a responsible business across the spectrum of 'people, planet and profit'.

It recognises that business success is not just measured by performance in the immediate term, but by long-term viability and being able to balance meeting the needs of people today without compromising the needs of future generations.

Birkdale embraces a sustainability mind-set, believing that success is gauged according to value generated and destroyed. Generating financial value (profit) remains key to business success, but in balance with generating societal value and environmental value too.

The business believes that committing to a path of sustainability is a continuous journey that will bring challenge but ultimately great reward. Through its commitment, Birkdale Sales is choosing to show up and play its part in creating a more equitable, healthy and just world as well as becoming a more resilience organisation for the future.

Rationale

Birkdale Sales understands that sustainability is increasingly important to the various groups that it serves and on whom its success depends (customers, current and future employees and suppliers for example). It appreciates that sustainability performance is now a key measure of core organisation effectiveness, for example by investors.

It also appreciates what sustainability can offer as an organising principle, helping Birkdale connect with a wider identity and purpose, engage people with a united, topical and forward-thinking agenda, and providing a moral licence to operate. Many

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businesses report that prioritising sustainability had lead to a win-win result of increased efficiencies, cost reduction and greater stakeholder interest and loyalty.

Some sustainability attributes have been present at Birkdale since its was originally founded to help fencing contractors do their work more easily. In this respect, the commitment acknowledges some ad hoc activities that Birkdale is already doing.

The main focus of the commitment however is to formalise Birkdale's intent to proactively respond to the sustainability agenda as a whole, in a deliberate, co-ordinated, complete and informed way.

Translating the principles within this commitment into tangible action is done in a range of ways. Birkdale already has a number of subject-specific policies that specify how it manages performance relating to certain sustainability risks. These include: Human Rights and Modern Slavery; Anti-Bribery and Corruption; Health and Safety, and the Environment. It is anticipated that a new Sustainability Action Plan will be developed as the main mechanism to operationalise the spirit of this commitment, articulating the complete spectrum of sustainability issues most relevant to Birkdale Sales' circumstances. To remain relevant and appropriate, both this Commitment and the Action Plan should evolve over time.

Sustainability framework and practical application

Birkdale uses the 'people, planet, profit' triple bottom line framework to organise and communicate its sustainability activity

- **Prosperity** for Birkdale means remaining viable for the long-term. This not only involves making a profit, but ensuring the business remains relevant, resilient, adaptable and well run in an increasingly uncertain world.
- **People** Birkdale's success depends on respectful and long-term relationships with its key stakeholders: its employees, customers, suppliers, contractors and the communities it is a part of.
- **Planet** Birkdale understands that the threat of climate change means that all businesses have to chart how they will operate in a low carbon future. Birkdale Sales is no exception.

Birkdale understands that it can best manage its impact by looking firstly at its own operations and then looking at its wider value chains (e.g. influence in the supply chain) and products.

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Guiding sustainability principles

In an increasingly volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous world, organisations need to be prepared to react to increasingly disruptive situations, often with incomplete information. As such, guiding principles can prove helpful in navigating the sustainability implications of unforeseen future scenarios. Key principles for Birkdale include:

- **Stakeholder engagement** Definitions of what is most important are best understood from the point of view of the people on whom Birkdale's success is dependent. Birkdale's main stakeholders are current and future employees, customers and suppliers, with contractors, investors, regulators, local communities and competitors anticipated to have more significant future influence. Shareholder or customer primacy in isolation no longer makes smart business sense
- **Continual learning and development** The world of sustainability is constantly evolving and so Birkdale aims to keep informed of new legislative requirements and best practice activity to remain relevant and proactive. Birkdale will seek to revisit and update the materiality matrix of sustainability issues periodically
- **Transparency and disclosure** Birkdale is prepared to share where it is facing challenges as well as where it is making positive progress in the interests of providing balanced and authentic communications with key stakeholders
- **Encouraging respectful and inclusive behaviour** Birkdale believes that sustainability can be used very effectively to motivate employees and provide meaningful opportunities for people to develop. More than that, actively encouraging positive wellbeing and tolerance is important at many levels amongst employees and other stakeholders.
- **Setting appropriate targets** Given the urgency of global challenges such as the climate crisis and increasing levels of global inequality, sustainability ambitions need to be proportional and relatable to the scale of the challenges. For this reason, Birkdale will pursue science and evidence-based targets where appropriate. Innovative thinking to anticipate and prevent problems arising, and finding ways to collaborate with other organisations who share a common purpose are further ways for Birkdale to explore finding impactful solutions.

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