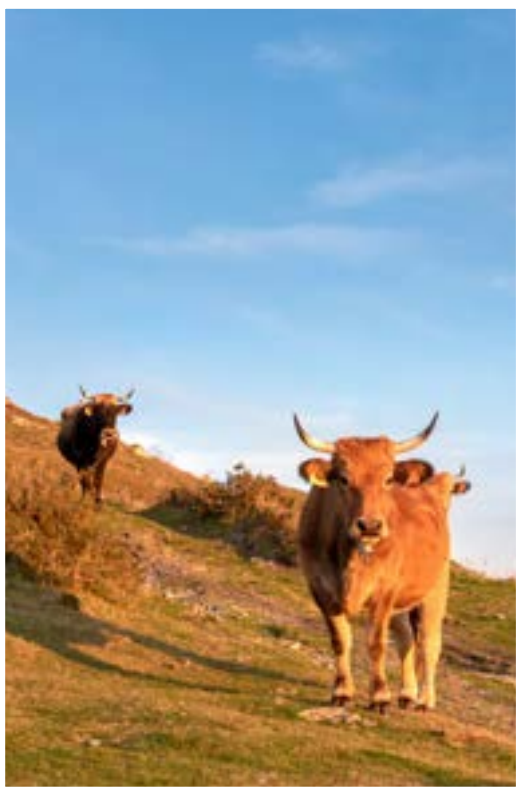


# Sustainability Strategy: Looking Forward Together

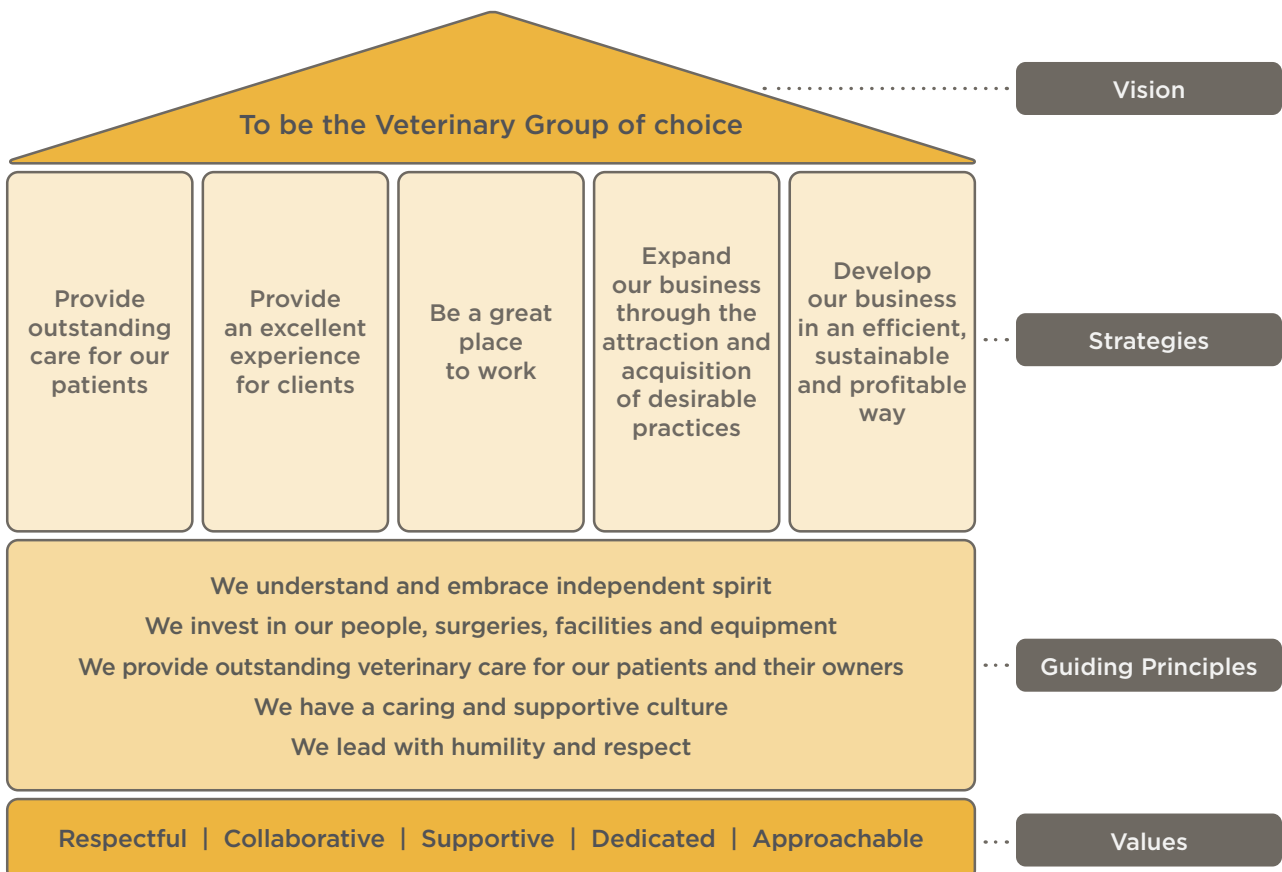


### Sustainability at VetPartners

VetPartners is an organisation built on strong core values that support our vision, shape our culture and reflect our priorities.



Respect for people and animals is one of our core values, so it's important to us that we grow our business without damaging the environment we all rely on, and while giving back to the communities we work in. In other words, that we grow and operate our business sustainably. One of the pillars of our business model is to develop our business in an efficient, sustainable and profitable way.



As a diverse, highly skilled and growing group, veterinary professionals have a vital role to play in the transition to a sustainable economy. This has been recognised by our colleagues in the sector: in response to a BVA survey in 2019, 89% of vets said they want to play a more active role in the UK's sustainability agenda; and VetFutures have committed to increasing collaboration between veterinary and human health professionals and environmental organisations, in line with the One Health concept. The recently formed industry group VetSustain has demonstrated the dedication of veterinary professionals in this area, and our partners and clients are also committing to sustainability: including the NFU which has set a target of net zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions across the whole of agriculture in England and Wales by 2040.

Growing sustainably is the right thing to do for people, animals and the planet, and it's also good for our business. As the effects of anthropogenic climate change and environmental degradation become increasingly apparent, so does the importance of mitigation and adaptation, to ensure we're resilient and can thrive in spite of these risks. Diets, consumer preferences and the regulatory landscape are shifting rapidly, and we need to be able to look ahead and adapt to these changes. The recent Covid-19 crisis has further highlighted the importance of resilience and adaptability for businesses, as well as the vital importance of the natural world to our wellbeing.

By embracing sustainability as part of our business model we're setting ourselves up for success. As well as becoming more resilient to environmental, economic and social risks, we're also meeting the expectations of our colleagues and clients who choose us for our integrity and commitment to ethical business. Public attention to the ways in which businesses treat their employees, how they interact with society, and how they impact on the environment has never been higher.

In this strategy we share our vision for sustainability at VetPartners, set out the targets we've set ourselves for the next five years, and describe the actions we'll take to make sure we achieve them.

### **Our vision for sustainability**

A clear vision for the future is vital to the success of a sustainability strategy. Almost every aspect of what we do is relevant in some way, so it's important to have clear outcomes and targets in mind to ensure we stay on track and make effective progress. A clear vision also helps us to articulate what we're doing and why, and to encourage and inspire colleagues to make the changes needed for success.

To develop our vision for sustainability at VetPartners, we asked our colleagues what sustainability means to them, and how it should look at VetPartners. We spoke to veterinary surgeons, veterinary nurses, and paraprofessionals from different parts of the business - including small animal, farm and equine practices - to understand their ambitions, ideas and priorities. We also considered how our vision would contribute to VetPartners' mission and values, using them as a framework while developing our targets.

We have developed our vision around three themes, based on our colleagues' key priorities, and linked to VetPartners' core values and mission. Our sustainability vision describes the ideal outcome towards which we're working.



### We are resilient

What our colleagues say:

“Sustainability means asking the question: will we still be here in 5 years time?”

“More and more reporting requirements are coming in”

“The biggest priorities should be benefiting the company and mitigating risk”

“Our customers will expect us to be doing this”

“Farmers are under a lot of pressure... a big risk to the company would be a shift from dairy to arable ”

“Using less paper could save us a lot of money”



Our sustainability vision:

- We understand the environmental and social risks to our business, and take effective action to mitigate them
- We use resources efficiently, saving money and minimising our impacts on the environment

### We are ethical

What our colleagues say:

“We want to choose the clinical option with the best outcomes... this should include thinking about the best outcome for the environment”

“It would be good to provide some incentives for doing things more sustainably”

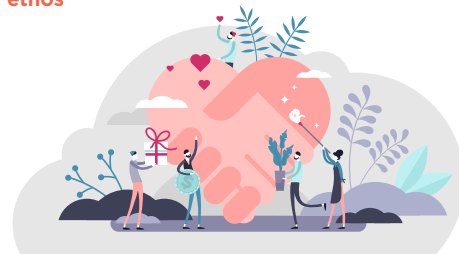
“I’ve got children: I care about their future”

“Sustainability means staying true to our ethos”

“We want to do the right thing”

Our sustainability vision:

- Our business grows and develops in line with our ethical ethos
- We encourage and reward our colleagues for taking action on sustainability
- We are a carbon neutral company



### We are champions

What our colleagues say:

“There’s strength in numbers: together we could make a big difference”

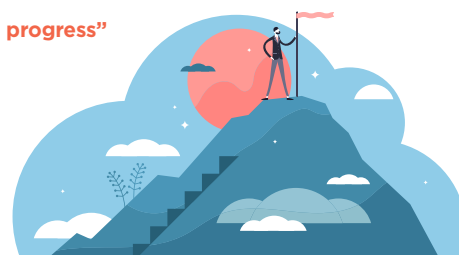
“There are some really passionate people in our team”

“It’s good to measure and demonstrate the positive impacts we are having”

“We want to get involved in some social progress”

Our sustainability vision:

- We’re known for being environmentally and socially responsible - it’s part of our brand
- We provide expert advice to clients on sustainable farming and animal ownership
- We’re a force for good in our industry and the communities we work in



### Headline targets – our five year plan

We have set ourselves targets for 2026 to help track our progress, and to take us further along the path to our vision for sustainability at VetPartners. We'll review these targets annually to ensure they remain relevant to our business and to the wider world, and report on our progress against them.

#### We are resilient

1. This strategy and the associated action plan are reviewed and updated annually.
2. We have established a regular review process for environmental and social risks, and included mitigating actions in updates to the sustainability strategy and action plan.
3. Environmental and social risks are included in the company risk register.
4. We divert 90% of our waste from landfill.
5. Our energy use has reduced by 20% (on a per practice basis) compared with 2021.
6. 30% of practices have installed water saving measures.
7. 10% of practices have the Surfers Against Sewage 'Plastic Free' award.

#### We are ethical

8. We have developed environmental and human rights KPIs and engaged with all our tier 1 suppliers to ensure they meet them.
9. 20% of practices have implemented additional measures to reduce the escape of anaesthetic greenhouse gases.
10. All colleagues have access to VetPartners sustainability resources, including web-based and in-person delivery channels.
11. 75% of central support colleagues and 75% of practice managers and clinical directors have received sustainability training.
12. We have implemented at least three ways to reward or incentivise colleagues for positive environmental or social actions.
13. We know the carbon footprint of VetPartners and have set carbon reduction targets for 2026 and 2030.
14. 90% of practices are on renewable energy tariffs.

#### We are champions

15. We have achieved the Investors in the Environment (iE) Green level award at head office, and at least Bronze level at 15% of practices.
16. We publish an annual sustainability/CSR report.
17. We have established a Sustainability in Farming working group, focused on securing funding and expanding our services to farmers. Our farm vets give expert advice to clients on sustainable farming and future-proofing against environmental and social risks to the agricultural sector.
18. 10% of our farm and equine practices have implemented biodiversity action plans.
19. We have working partnerships with industry groups and other organisations such as VetSustain, helping to promote best practice for sustainability in the veterinary and farming sectors.
20. Our colleagues collectively volunteer 5,000 hours per year.
21. We raise £50,000 for charity per year.



Working in collaboration with our practices, we aim to care for people, their pets and our profession. Established in November 2015, our group includes small animal, equine and farm animal practices.

We have more than 4,600 employees working in over 400 sites across the UK and from our headquarters in York.

We provide centralised support tailored to individual practice requirements in areas such as Operations, HR, Finance, IT, Purchasing and Marketing.

To find out more about sustainability at VetPartners, visit our website at [www.vetpartners.co.uk](http://www.vetpartners.co.uk)