

naturalmat®



Celebrating 25 years of handcrafting
sustainable beds and mattresses



2024 Impact Report

As spring approaches for the 25th year since we started making natural and organic mattresses here in Devon, we have much to reflect upon, and despite the trouble and strife we hear in the news, we still do have some reasons to be hopeful.

We were a very lonely voice in 1999 when we set out to make mattresses using only the best natural materials from entirely renewable and sustainable sources, whilst building long term relationships with suppliers who were aligned with our ethos. But a quarter century later, we are pleased to say that our voice is now not alone!

As the first British bed company to be awarded B Corp certification we continue to pioneer the way ahead for the whole industry. Where we lead, hopefully others will follow.

Rather than being overwhelmed and disheartened by the environmental challenges we all face, we have proven there are viable alternatives to the way the industry has previously operated. Our actions as individuals and businesses, however big or small, make a difference to our future; and you can read here about all the great things we are doing to make a positive contribution.

We remain positive, even as our business continues to grow, that we continue to rise to the challenge of being truly sustainable. We can't ignore the climate and ecological crisis that's unfolding around us, and specifically the environmental impact of the mattress industry.

It's heartbreaking that 5 million mattresses go to landfill every year in the UK. We believe this has to change, immediately. With our Mattress for Life Initiative™, we're ensuring no Naturalmat mattresses need ever go to landfill.

We are also stepping up our recycling and donating programs for old mattresses not made by us.

Now more than ever, people need a sustainable sleep option, one made of natural fibres, carefully sourced and designed for disassembly, so everything can be recycled and reused again. And our customers can sleep easy at night knowing we're working hard on all aspects of our Sustainability Strategy.

This is our third Impact Report, created to share our progress so far as we work towards the 2025 goals and beyond. With renewed hope for the future we're stepping up to do even more in the most important decade in human history. We hope you'll join us as we strive to make the next 25 years of Naturalmat as impactful as the last.

Phil Tice *Victor*



“We hope you'll join us as we strive to make the next 25 years of Naturalmat as impactful as the last.”



25 years of naturalmat

What a journey it has been over the last 25 years. Here are some of our key sustainability milestones along the way.



1999

Launched the first, original 'natural mat' for boats.



2000

Became the first UK company to make a baby mattress using natural materials that passed British fire standards, without any glues or chemicals.



2002

Started buying our certified organic coir straight from source, through our supplier based in Sri Lanka.



2003

Started using an Oeko Tex certified, plant-based anti bed bug treatment for our mattress covers.



2005

Launched our first GOTS certified organic bed linen range.



2007

Pioneered home-compostable potato starch packaging for Naturalmat Baby.



2008

Started sourcing all our certified organic wool directly from local farmers in Devon.



2012

Installed solar panels which powered our entire workshop, and switched to 100% renewable energy for all sites.



2014

Introduced our first recycled mattress filling made with denim offcuts from jeans factories.



2017

Opened our flagship London showroom with the UK's first ever Sleep Zone.



2020

Won the prestigious Queen's Award for Sustainable Development.



2021

Began delivering the majority of our mattresses in sturdy reusable bags made especially for us.



2021

Started our Apprenticeship programme and became an accredited Real Living Wage Employer.



2022

Launched our formal Sustainability Strategy and first ever Impact Report.



2023

Became the first B Corp certified bed & mattress company in the UK.

our sustainability strategy

Sustainability has been at the heart of Naturalmat since day one, but with the ever increasing impact of climate change, we knew we had to do more.

So in 2021 we worked with experts to take a holistic view of our business and developed an ambitious Sustainability Strategy that represented our vision.

We identified five key impact areas to focus our efforts, with short and long term goals to work towards.

Since then, we've worked hard to align ourselves with the 2025 targets we set across our 5 pillars of sustainability. This report talks about our progress, as well as the plan moving forward. In Robert Frost's timeless words, 'we have miles to go before we sleep'.



1

closing the loop

We need to move to a mattress industry without waste. From the materials we choose to our upcycling and recycling services, we're stopping at nothing to close the loop.

2025 goal
Create a fully closed loop mattress service



2

sustainable and regenerative sourcing

We'll be exploring regenerative farming principles, using more recycled materials and continuing to uphold human rights and high animal welfare in our supply chain.

2025 goal
Set up or support at least 3 regenerative projects with our suppliers



3

healthy sleep for all

By forming impactful charity partnerships to tackle bed poverty and sharing sleep advice with the world, we'll help make healthy sleep accessible to all.

2025 goal
Dedicate 5% of our production capacity to tackling bed poverty



4

climate emergency

We face a climate and ecological emergency that requires urgent action. We're playing our part to cut emissions and protect and regenerate our planet's precious ecosystems.

2025 goal
Absolute zero scope 1 and 2 emissions (net zero Scope 3 by 2030)



5

supporting our Devon community

We want Naturalmat to be one of the best places to work in the UK and to support our local community in any way we can.

2025 goal
Gain a recognised award or certification for being a brilliant employer, such as the UK's 100 Best Companies to Work For.

closing the loop

5 million mattresses end up in landfill in the UK alone. This heartbreaking reality has reinforced our commitment to move to a mattress industry without waste.

First off, we never produce anything we don't need to, cutting waste at its source. That's why we've always made our mattresses to order, each one carefully handcrafted by our skilled team.

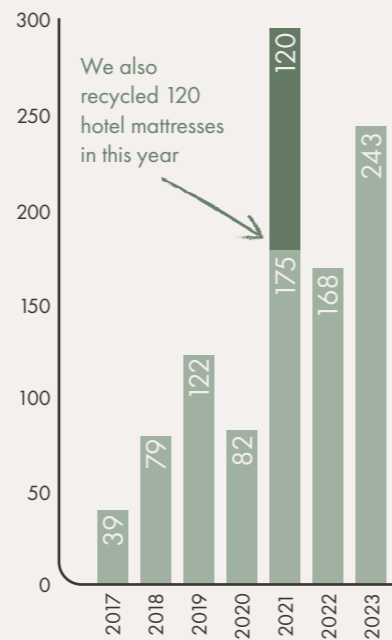
Second, we think about the end of life right at the start, designing for longevity and disassembly. So, at the end of a Naturalmat's long life, every component can be taken apart and either composted, reused or recycled, rather than being thrown away.

Finally, and most importantly, we have a plan for old mattresses whether they're ours or not.

When you decide to replace your mattress, we will drop off your new mattress and bring your old one back to our workshop. If the mattress is still in relatively good condition we will send it to our partner to be washed, cleaned and donated to local charities. If the mattress is entirely worn out, we will have it fully recycled at a mattress recycling facility.

To ensure a Naturalmat mattress never ends up in landfill we offer our Mattress for Life Initiative™, the first of its kind in the UK. When the time comes, customers can choose to Refurbish, Recycle or Donate their mattress to charity, creating a fully closed loop service.

1,028 mattresses recycled since 2017



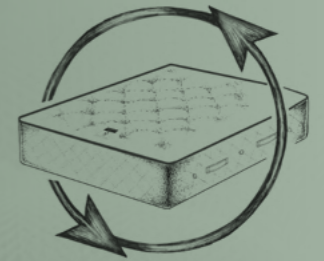
closing the loop

Our Mattress for Life Initiative™

When your Naturalmat mattress reaches the end of its lifespan, landfill is not an option. Instead, you'll have 3...

Refurbish

Your mattress is re-filled and re-covered to make it as good as new for around half the price of a new one. You'll receive a completely refreshed mattress that's kinder to the planet and will last for years to come.



Recycle

If you'd prefer not to refurbish your mattress, we can recycle it for you through our partners TFR, who ensure that nothing ends up in landfill. You'll receive a 10% discount towards your next purchase as a thank you from us.



Donate

If your mattress is in an acceptable condition we will send it to our partners in Liverpool who have invented the world's first mattress washing machine, called Mattilda! It will be thoroughly cleaned and then donated through their network of charity partners, supporting our mission to alleviate sleep poverty.



plastic-free deliveries

When it comes to packaging, one size truly does not fit all! Over the years we've worked hard to develop a range of plastic-free, sustainable packaging that aligns with our ethos.

Potato starch packaging

17 years ago, when sustainable packaging was still a new concept, we pioneered a certified home compostable potato starch packaging to wrap our baby mattresses. We even use a water based ink to print on it, so it doesn't leave any harmful chemical residues when left to naturally biodegrade. You can simply pop it in your food bin or add it to your home compost, where it will naturally biodegrade in 6-12 months.



Sugarcane bioplastic

On the odd occasion where we can't use our reusable mattress bags, we use a certified carbon neutral bioplastic packaging, made with a blend of sugarcane and post-consumer recycled plastic. The bioplastic is 100% recyclable through councils that collect LDPE 4 plastics, or can be taken to most local supermarkets to be recycled through the soft plastic recycling scheme.



Cotton bedding bags

Our pillows and duvets are packed in drawstring sacks, handmade with ethically sourced, undyed cotton and printed with a water based ink. This ensures that our bags are not only reusable, but naturally biodegradable too. These bags can also be repurposed into shopping bags, laundry bags or storage bags for your out-of-season clothes, bedding or shoes. The only limit is your imagination!



Reusable mattress bags

We never liked the idea of delivering our beds and mattresses in reams of bulky, plastic packaging. So we challenged ourselves to get rid of it altogether, and lead the revolution for a plastic-free mattress industry.

Since 2021, we've delivered over 75% of our mattresses in these sturdy, waterproof reusable bags, which are specially made for us in the UK.

Over the last year, we've started using these to deliver our bed bases and headboards as well, further cutting down on single-use packaging.

Our reusable delivery bags have saved over

3,441kg

of single-use plastic



closing the loop



Elliot and Bailey delivering a mattress in a reusable delivery bag.

recovered collection

One of the goals of our Sustainability Strategy is to reduce waste and create a fully closed loop mattress service.

It's therefore hugely important to us that any pristine Naturalmat mattresses that are returned are found a new home where they can be used and loved for years to come.

Although the return rate for our mattresses is incredibly low, we launched the Recovered Collection to renew these occasional returned mattresses and offer them to our customers at a discounted price.

It's still early days but we've already rehomed a fair few of the returned mattresses through this collection, which not only reduces unnecessary waste but also provides mattresses at a more affordable price for our customers.



Here's how we refresh these mattresses:



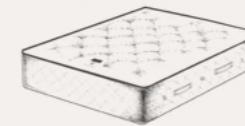
Step 1

We bring the mattress back to our Devon workshop and conduct a thorough quality check.



Step 2

We remove and recycle the old mattress cover and replace any compressed fillings if required.



Step 3

We put a brand new quilted cover on, which is tape edged and tufted as normal.



Roman cutting down a recycled denim pad for a bespoke headboard.



closing the loop

material offcuts

From the fabric that covers our beds to the fillings inside our mattresses, we source and use only the finest, long-lasting natural fibres. Despite our best efforts, we inevitably end up with offcuts from the production process, so we've launched several initiatives to reduce our waste, and our impact.

Haines Collection partnership

Our partnership with The Haines Collection has helped us find a new home for a lot of our leftover fabric. Haines has a carefully curated selection of premium fabrics offcuts from the textile industry which they offer to customers at heavily reduced prices, saving them from ending up in landfill.



Waste logs

All our wool offcuts are routinely collected in the workshop and sent to be turned into more wool mattress pads, forming an endlessly recyclable loop. We've also set up waste logs to track our offcuts of other key materials, allowing us to prioritise our repurposing and recycling efforts.



Latex offcut partnership: Petit Miracles

NEW

We've recently partnered with Petit Miracles, a London-based social enterprise that helps vulnerable adults access employment opportunities through education and training workshops. We have been donating our offcut latex pads, which are used by students to learn upholstery and furniture upcycling.



A student using our offcut natural latex to upholster a chair.



closing the loop

sustainable and regenerative sourcing

Over the last 25 years we've built long-standing relationships with our trusted suppliers, making sure to source only the finest natural and sustainable materials.

From the organic certified wool and coir layered in our mattresses, to the FSC certified timber in our beds, we handpick materials from sustainable sources to minimise our impact on the planet.

All of the key materials in our mattresses hold a third-party verified sustainability certification, with the exception of our springs. These are encased in pure cotton calico pockets and manufactured with around 25% of recycled steel, which has a significantly lower carbon impact when compared to virgin steel.

We buy from local suppliers whenever possible to reduce emissions from transport while also supporting our local communities. In fact, all our organic wool is sourced directly from local farmers in Devon, Somerset, Dorset and Cornwall, based less than 70 miles from our workshop.

By buying direct from the farm we can offer a premium of at least 30% more than standard market auctions, in recognition of what we believe is the true value of their goods.



Amelia upholstering the side rail of a Budleigh Bed.



Organic Wool

Wool is naturally renewable, inherently fire-retardant and an exceptional temperature regulator, which is why we use it in everything. By sourcing all our wool from from GOTS certified organic farms we can ensure that the wool comes from farms with the highest standards of animal welfare, where great care is taken so farm sheep are happy, healthy and free of disease.



sustainable sourcing



Natural Latex

Our OEKO-TEX® certified latex is a breathable, healthy alternative to widely used synthetic foams. It's made from a blend of natural latex, which is whisked to create a soft, springy filling. It's inherently hypoallergenic so dust mites don't like it, and it's incredibly elastic ensuring long lasting support for your mattress.



Cotton Wool Covers

Our signature herringbone ticking is 100% chemical-free and made with a blend of cotton and wool which passes stringent British FR standards. We are the only manufacturers that have an extra finishing process where we treat our fabric with an OEKO-TEX® certified plant-based geraniol, which guarantees protection from dust mites, moths and bed bugs.



Organic Coir

The core of our natural fibre mattresses, coir is derived from coconut husks. The husk is stripped, soaked, dried and twisted and then pressed into breathable, springy sheets to our specified density. We are the only mattress company that uses this sustainable fibre, sourced from one of the only certified organic coconut plantations in the world.



Timber

We only use timber from FSC® certified sources for all our beds. The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) is the world's most rigorous forest certification system, widely trusted to ensure our forests can support the future of our planet. The programme exclusively certifies timber suppliers that prevent environmental degradation by maintaining forests and protecting native species.



our organic wool farmers

We've always worked closely with our organic wool farmers, but in the last few years we've gone a step further and launched several projects to support their efforts and measure the true impact of their work.

Regenerative Farming

Last year we worked with Farm Wilder, a regenerative farming consultancy, to fully fund 3 regenerative farming projects for our local and organic wool farmers. This was designed to help them introduce more regenerative practices on their farms, to build healthier, carbon rich soils and replenish lost biodiversity.



The happy, friendly sheep of Coombe Farm in Somerset.

The unanimous feedback from the organic farmers was that a majority of the regenerative farming principles and practices were already a central part of their organic certification. They also highlighted the lack of financial incentives to cover the significant costs of implementing additional regenerative farming practices, such as planting hedgerows and cover crops.

We were pleased to learn that our farmers were already incorporating most regenerative principles as part of their organic farming systems, but it was disheartening to discover the lack of funding available for all their hard work. We are determined to lobby for more incentives for farmers to continue caring for British land and protecting its precious biodiversity.

Farm Carbon Toolkit

We know that organic farming has widespread environmental benefits, but we have little information on the true carbon footprint of organic sheep farming in the south west.

We've recently teamed up with Farm Carbon Toolkit, an independent farmer-led enterprise, to measure the true impact our local and organic wool - the good and the bad.

We hope that this will support our local farmers by highlighting the many positives of farming organically. The project is still in the initial stages but it has already shown encouraging results and we will report on our progress later this year.



Our founder Mark with George Welch, a passionate organic farmer, at Allerdown Farm near Totnes.



healthy sleep for all

Recent studies reveal that over 30% of families in the UK suffer from bed poverty, with children being forced to share a bed or sleep on the sofa.¹ We're only a small business, but we're doing what we can to make a healthy night's sleep accessible to all.

Exeter Community Initiatives

We recently teamed up with Exeter Community Initiatives, a local charity with a core mission to support families facing challenges and hardships. Through our partnership we have already donated a few mattresses to vulnerable families in our local communities, and we hope to donate even more this year.



ECI's Family Resource Manager, Daisy Binnie with our founder Peter.

Little Village x The Lullaby Trust

Through our partnership with The Lullaby Trust, the UK's leading safer sleep charity, we have committed to promoting healthy sleep for babies. As part of this, we have donated over 200 natural fibre Coco Mats to the London based baby bank, The Little Village, who will pass them on to families in need.



Our founder Mark delivering a nursery Coco Mat to the Little Village HQ in London.

'Mattilda' the mattress washing machine

We have partnered with the Liverpool-based social enterprise FRC who have invented the world's first mattress washing machine, called Mattilda! We send them used mattresses in good condition, which they clean and then donate to people in need in the local area.



1. www.thesleepcharity.org.uk/get-involved/sleep-poverty



Cotton Lives On™ Recycling Programme

The Cotton Lives On™ Recycling Programme is on a mission to collect and recycle old cottons, and turn them into something that quite literally, lives on.

The programme works with a number of clothing brands, including Frugi, Charles Tyrwhitt and Hush, to collect used cotton clothes from consumers as well as offcuts from the garment manufacturing process.

The garments are then processed into wonderfully soft and fluffy recycled cotton pads. In 2021, we teamed up with them to develop a unique mattress that is filled with recycled cotton and denim from the programme.

The recycled denim pads are layered together with our signature organic wool, to make our exclusive Naturalmat x Cotton Lives On™ mattress.

These mattresses are then donated to various charities across the UK that are working to tackle sleep poverty such as Single Homeless Project, Refuweegee and Shelter.

86 mattresses donated since 2022



healthy sleep for all

the natural sleep revolution

We spend about a third of our lives sleeping and getting quality rest is essential to a happy and healthy lifestyle. We know that a good night's sleep starts with a great mattress and we are committed to leading the natural sleep revolution.

Lack of quality sleep has been proven to have detrimental effects on health and mental wellbeing. Which is why we've made it our priority to make healthy sleep accessible to all.

When it comes to sleep, we believe that natural is always best.

We meticulously source natural and organic fibres for our mattresses that are not only incredibly comfortable but also breathable, helping keep you cool in summers and warm in winters.

In fact, our clever covers made with cotton and wool are naturally fire retardant, eliminating the need to add any chemical fire retardants to our mattresses.

However, getting a good night's rest does involve building some key habits and lifestyle changes.

We actively work with sleep experts to share the knowledge and craft of healthy sleep. Throughout the year we run workshops, Q&A sessions and consultations, where we offer advice and guidance on sleep related issues.

Our most recent one was hosted at our new showroom in Knutsford, where we teamed up with Lucy, the founder of the childhood consultancy Nest, to discuss sleep tips and tricks for parents and children.



healthy sleep for all

acting on the climate emergency

Whilst our efforts to reduce our impact on the planet began long before we ever considered measuring it, we have now committed to ambitious targets that we're determined to achieve.

Using locally and responsibly sourced materials, running on 100% renewable energy and eliminating single use plastic from our deliveries - we knew we were doing all the right things. But a few years back we decided to set ourselves the task of achieving absolute zero emissions across Scope 1 & 2 by 2025 — which means eliminating all carbon emissions that are directly under our control, without using any offsets.

we're powered by
100%
renewable electricity

Scope 1 & 2 emissions

While absolute zero is an ambitious target, we have already done a lot of the hard work to reduce our Scope 1 & 2 emissions to the bare minimum.

In 2012 we installed 37kW of solar panels on the roof of our Devon workshop, which powered all of our operations at the time. Since then, all our sites have been powered by 100% renewable energy, and 50% of the energy we used last year came from our solar panels.

The challenges

The remainder of our direct emissions come from gas heaters and our delivery vans, both of which we are working on swapping out.

The switch to electric heating is a fairly simple one, but moving to electric vans is a much bigger challenge as their limited battery capacity makes them impractical when delivering over long distances. We've introduced software to help plan deliveries more efficiently but it may be a case of waiting for improved technology and charging infrastructure.



Our Devon HQ and workshop.



climate emergency

our carbon footprint

As a rapidly growing business it is a real challenge to reduce our absolute carbon footprint, but what we can do is become more efficient and reduce the emissions for each mattress we make.

Scope 3 emissions

While Scope 1 & 2 emissions generally rely on factors within reasonable control, Scope 3 includes emissions throughout our supply chain and beyond. Our annual calculations have established that the growing, processing and manufacturing of our raw materials contribute to over 90% of our overall carbon footprint.

our emissions per £mn of turnover decreased by

6.8%

from our baseline year

Which is why we've decided to make sustainable material sourcing our top priority for the coming years.

We encourage low-emission commuting to work by offering a cycle-to-work scheme for our staff, and 4 of our team members have already taken it up. With more of our staff opting for car-sharing and working hybrid weeks we've reduced our staff commute emissions by 34% compared to last year.

We're aware that our total company-wide emissions will go up as the business grows, but we're committed to reducing our impact for every mattress we make.

This year, although our total emissions were 55% higher than our baseline year (2021-22), we reduced our emissions per £mn of turnover by 6.8%.



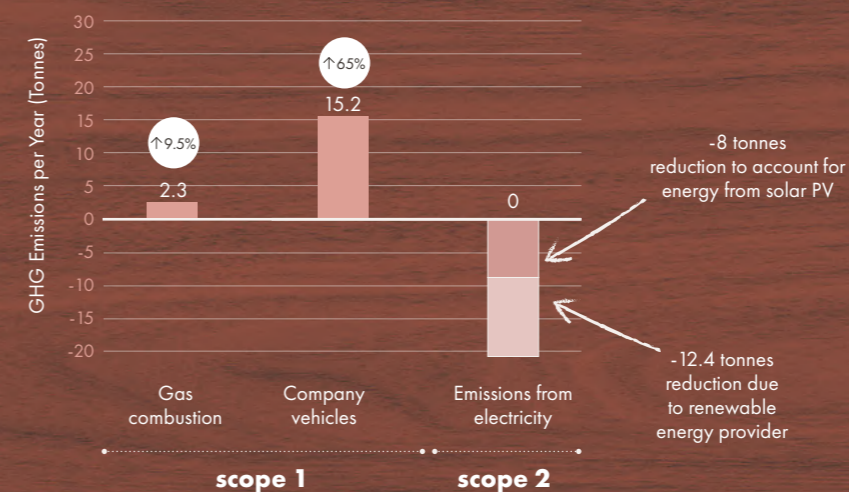
Tom cycling into our Devon workshop, rain or shine!

Total emissions 2024 tonnes CO₂ per year



Scope 1+2 carbon emissions

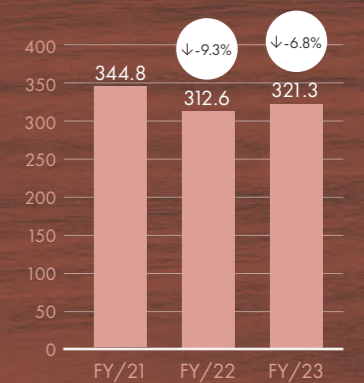
17.5 tonnes CO₂ per year (↑54%)



All increase and decrease percentages are calculated from our baseline year of 2020-2021.

Carbon reduction

tonnes CO₂e / £mn turnover



climate emergency

supporting our Devon community

We are proud to be based on the banks of the river Exe in Devon, a historical centre for the wool and textile industries.

We care about our team, our suppliers and everyone that helps make Naturalmat a company we're proud of. We believe that people, not machines, make a superior, long-lasting mattress.

For 25 years we've provided skilled, well-paid jobs for our Devon community. Even today, our local team of craftspeople ensure every stitch, fibre, tufting button and cover is painstakingly created, teased and checked — all under one roof in our Topsham workshop.

Naturalmat has now grown to a team of over 55 employees, and 44 of them are based local to our Devon workshop and head office.

We've taken great care to create a comfortable and rewarding work culture, making sure to invest in our team by helping them upskill through training sessions. We even offer an apprenticeship programme for young professionals based in our local communities of Devon.



Cass, our mattress making apprentice, hand tufting a Naturalmat topper.

..is at the heart of what we do.

Living Wage Employer

Supporting our local community has always been a core part of our sustainability ethos. Which is why two years ago we signed up for the Living Wage Employer accreditation, as a way to reinforce our commitment to supporting our team by ensuring that we pay everyone at least the Real Living Wage, regardless of their age, role or number of working hours.



Team perks

Our annual feedback survey gives us the opportunity to really listen to our team and help make Naturalmat a better place to work. Through this we've introduced several team perks over the years - a monthly organic veg box from our friends at Riverford, a Perkbox discount programme, additional days of holiday the longer you work with us, and a free Naturalmat mattress after your first year.



People Strategy NEW

Looking after our team has always been a priority at Naturalmat. But last year we went a step further and created our first ever People Strategy. Since then we've introduced regular employee feedback sessions, hired our first Head of People & Culture and developed a clear roadmap for achieving our goal of becoming one of the best places to work in the UK.



the year ahead

Our 2024 priorities



closing the loop

Prioritise reducing or reusing offcuts and set up systems to recycle or compost the remaining waste.



sustainable and regenerative sourcing

Work with our local wool farmers to measure and highlight the extensive benefits of organic farming.



healthy sleep for all

Keep sharing our knowledge about healthy and natural sleep and get closer to our 2025 goals of dedicating 5% of our production capacity to alleviate bed poverty.



climate emergency

Focus on reducing our Scope 3 emissions, particularly those associated with material sourcing and suppliers.



supporting our Devon community

Continue supporting local suppliers and businesses, and start executing our People Strategy.



We hope you'll join us in taking bold steps towards a healthier, more sustainable future.

If there's anything in this report you would like to discuss or think you can help us with, please contact our Sustainability Officer, Ish at impact@naturalmat.co.uk

naturalmat®

organic mattresses and beds

made by hand in Devon

Certified



Corporation™



THE QUEEN'S AWARDS
FOR ENTERPRISE:
SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
2020

Follow our progress on Instagram @naturalmatuk