

# Read about... *Our policies in action*

## Background

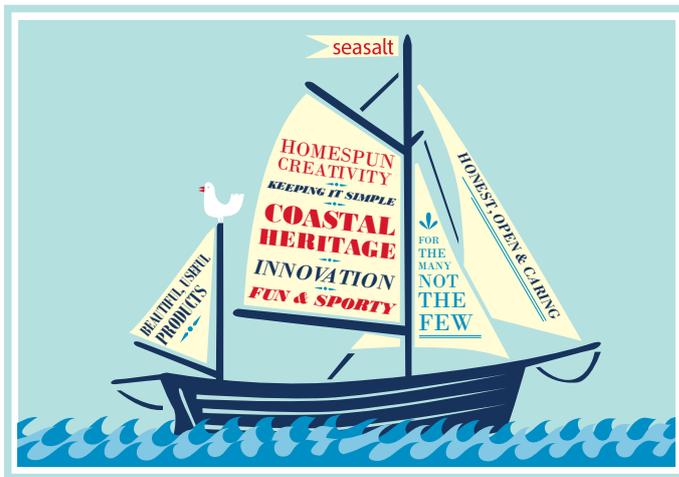
The roots of the Seasalt business go back to 1981 where the original shop was (and still is) in Penzance, and run by Don Chadwick, we sold government surplus clothing. The business is now owned and led by Don's three sons, David, Neil and Leigh.

From these beginnings, Seasalt has now grown to 20 stores across the South West and Guernsey, has hundreds of stockists right across the UK and in Eire and Europe, and has an ever-growing online shop, [seasaltcornwall.co.uk](http://seasaltcornwall.co.uk).

Organic cotton forms a large part of what we do - we were the first fashion company to have our clothing certified to Soil Association (SA) certified organic status back in 2005 and since then we have sold over one million organic products and are now the largest producer of SA certified organic clothing in the UK.

We've recently been recognised for our sustainable approach to growing our business by becoming the first fashion company ever to win the Queen's Award for Sustainable Development.

Seasalt is always evolving, developing and moving forward, but we always remember where we've come from and keep our core values at the heart of what we do.



## Our standards

We are aware that inevitably we have impact on all those people who are linked with us and with our physical surroundings. We therefore aim to:

- Reduce the impact of our business on the environment
- Choose the right suppliers
- Think about others and be socially responsible
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We've developed policies for each of these areas and these are included at the end of this report. You can also view them individually on our website (on Our Ethics page) at [seasaltcornwall.co.uk](http://seasaltcornwall.co.uk).

## The environment

We recognise that our activities can have some adverse impacts on the environment so we are committed to reducing these effects. There are a number of ways in which we're doing this ...

- **Organic cotton**

We know that the fashion industry is heavily reliant on chemicals through manufacturing and production processes, for instance. In fact cotton farming alone uses one quarter of the world's pesticides and over 8,000 chemicals can be used just to transform cotton into an everyday t-shirt. We knew from the start that when we first set Seasalt up that we would be committed to using organic cotton for our garments wherever possible to help reduce these damaging environmental effects. In 2005 Seasalt became the first fashion brand in the UK to have clothing certified by the Soil Association, the UK's leading organic campaigning and certification body.

Since then we are now the UK's biggest producer of Soil Association certified organic clothing, something we're hugely proud of. In fact, Lee Holdstock from the Soil Association has commented of Seasalt,

***"Seasalt can be considered true organic textile pioneers"***

Neil Chadwick is also a member of the Soil Association's Textiles Standards and Trade Group. This is a group of industry experts and leaders established by the Soil Association Textile Standards Committee to provide a more direct link and a forum for organic textile businesses. More details can be found [here](#).

Sometimes it's not possible for us to use certified organic or eco-friendly textiles and this may be due to issues of price or availability but we always aim to inform our customers about exactly what they are buying and make our labelling clear when garments are made with organic cotton.



- **Packaging**

The thousands of paper carrier bags that we give to our customers in-store every year are made with paper from sustainable sources. We also produce thousands of jute shoppers, giving customers durable, reusable bags - part of our commitment to encourage an alternative to plastic. Where we do use plastic, such as for our mail-bags for online customers, we have chosen a biodegradable option to minimise the environmental impact.\* Source : PAN-UK



- **Waste Management**

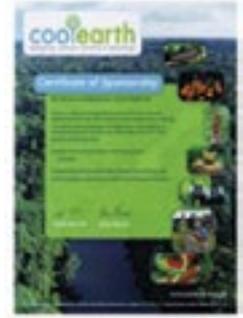
We currently produce around 14 tons of cardboard packaging and 2 tons of plastic packaging per annum and this is collected by a waste management company and recycled.

- **Property**

We take great care in the way we restore and fit out our stores. In 2003, this was recognised by Restormel Borough Council with a design, conservation and environmental award for the regeneration of our Fowey shop. The design and construction of our studios in Falmouth and warehouse in Redruth has been environmentally certified as BREEAM Excellent ([www.breeam.org](http://www.breeam.org)).

- **Energy**

We've signed up to UK charity Cool Earth's Positive Power programme ([www.coolearth.org](http://www.coolearth.org)). Cool Earth is a unique charity that focuses on protecting rainforests that will be destroyed within 18 months without intervention. By purchasing our electricity in this way Seasalt has protected 17 acres of endangered Amazonian rainforest and prevented the harmful release of over 4,400 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>. We've protected 748 mature trees, 3230 saplings, 6 endangered species of animal, 322 types of plant and over 11,000 species of insect and worm.



We're continuing to invest in the energy efficiency of our stores, such as by scrapping thirty two 50-watt low voltage light fittings (which were at the end of their useful life) in our Falmouth store alone, and replacing them with just seventeen 8-watt compact fluorescent fittings. We have reduced electrical consumption in this one store alone by over 1,460 watts. In Truro we swapped eighty 50-watt low voltage lamps for 5-watt LEDs, reducing electrical consumption of those fittings by 90%. And in Padstow, by reducing the number of light fittings and by swapping low voltage fittings for LED fittings, we cut consumption by 1,150 watts. Over the next three years we will be improving the energy efficiency of all our remaining stores.

- **New fabric developments**

As well as using as much organic cotton in our garments as possible, we have also introduced cotton alternatives into our ranges where organic isn't possible - fabrics such as bamboo, hemp and fleece made with recycled polyester fibres. In order to make our outerwear more environmentally-friendly we have also introduced a new waterproof fabric, Tin Cloth, made with organic cotton which is our take on the traditional oil skin waterproof.

## Choosing the right suppliers

We have worked really hard to find the right suppliers and have built up lasting relationships with them. We recognise that with the globalisation of trade, however, that the goods and services we buy can be at risk of being produced by people who could be abused or exploited. With this in mind we work with our suppliers to promote good environmental and labour standards, and have developed a **Supplier Standards Workbook** which is issued to all of our suppliers and ask them to:

- Sign a Statement of Commitment to ethical trading.
- Produce and manufacture Seasalt branded products in compliance with the labour (ETI) and environmental standards stated in the manual.
- Where organic or fair trade certification is specified by us as a condition of supply, follow the relevant certification organisation's rules and guidelines.
- Where certification is not specified by us as a condition of supply, use eco-friendly and/or fair trade and/or recycled materials wherever practicable.
- Support their local communities and be socially responsible.
- Join Sedex and report progress on ethical practice annually.
- Provide 3rd party evidence of any environmental, labour and/or social responsibility audits.
- Provide a copy of our Supplier Standards Workbook to all of their factories and ask them to join Sedex
- Allow Seasalt to visit the production sites and farms where our products are made.



## Thinking about others and being socially responsible

We've always been aware that we don't operate in isolation and that what we do has a direct impact on our employees, our suppliers and our communities. We've therefore always tried to support our people and put something back into our communities, and we've tried to do this in a number of ways ...

### Investors in People

Although Seasalt has been accredited by the Investors in People (IIP) scheme since 2005, we have also recently achieved the additional Silver status to recognise our commitment to supporting all those who work for Seasalt, and creating the best environment and culture we can in which to work.



### Charity campaigns

Every year we support numerous charities both national and local through our various campaigns and activities, such as in-store raffles, donating items for auction, encouraging people to knit for charity and many more.

- Cornish Rowing Challenge – in the run-up to the London 2012 Olympics we set up a partnership with two top Cornish rowers, Helen Glover and Annabel Vernon, and followed their journey to the games held in the summer. Following on from this gave our support to an event set up by Annabel which saw Team GB rowers, who competed at the Olympics, row against the very best of Cornwall's gig rowers. Gig rowing is a regional sport we have long supported so this event brings the two rowing worlds together. The whole event raised funds for **Shelterbox** – an international disaster relief charity based just 10 miles away from us.



- Charity Christmas Campaigns – each Christmas we run a charity campaign - previous years have included lending our support to coastal charity, the **Fishermen's Mission**. Being by the sea is such an important part of Seasalt so it seemed only natural that we should try to help raise funds for this charity who support UK fishermen and their families. In 2013 we ran a competition for people to submit their own 'Coastal Christmas' card designs, the design of five winners then went on sale in our shops and online. All of the money raised went to the Fishermen's Mission.



- We also got involved in the *Go Knit!*, a charity knitting campaign which raised over £4,000 for charities such as **The Cinnamon Trust**, **The Bumblebee Conservation Trust** and **The Alzheimer's Society**.

- **RNLI** – we designed an exclusive range of women's, men's and kids' clothing and made a donation to the RNLI for every item sold in this range, raising over £18,000.

- **Marie Curie** – One of the colourways of our very popular Sailor Shirts was designated as an exclusive Marie Curie Sailor Shirt. Through our donations made by sales, we raised over £2,600. For many years now we have also held an annual raffle for Marie Curie in our shops each Christmas and, all together, this has raised £12,500.



- We have also designed, created and donated special fundraising Jute bags to raise money for organisations such as **Surf Life-Saving GB (SLSGB)**, the **Leach Pottery** and the **Cornish Maritime Trust**. In response to many requests that come in to us every day, we also support numerous smaller-scale charities. Those charities/events that we have supported previously include **Swim for Logan** (raising money for Cystic Fibrosis research), **Cornwall Air Ambulance & Children's Hospice Southwest**

## Community Support

- Gig rowing - gig rowing is embedded in the heritage of the South West but nonetheless still thrives today. Many Seasalt employees race regularly, along with thousands from the Cornish and Devonian communities. We're therefore very proud to support this sport through giveaways and actively working to raise awareness.
- Sea Shanty Singing – we like to celebrate our maritime heritage and part of that heritage is the tradition of shanty singing. We have teamed up with various local shanty groups based in the southwest and helped to promote them via our blog and social media networks. In turn they have supported us by entertaining our customers at shop openings and other events.
- Isles of Scilly Boatmen's Association – for several years now we have helped the Boatmen's Association on the Isles of Scilly by kitting out all of the crews which otherwise would have proved fairly costly to them. They are an integral part of island life, providing a lifeline to those who live on the smaller islands.
- Supporting local schools - we've worked with local schools in our communities on various projects including a GCSE project to design and make a Seasalt-inspired skirt. We then treated the students to their own special photoshoot to show off their achievements!



## Recognition

Our achievements have been recognised as follows:

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|-------------|---|
| 2003        | Restormel Borough Council gave Seasalt a design, conservation and environmental award for the regeneration of its Fowey shop  |
| 2004        | Orange Best Family Business Award   |
| 2005        | Cornwall Sustainability Award for Best Environmental Initiative   |
| 2006        | Neil Chadwick, Seasalt founder, won the Cornwall Business Award for Entrepreneur of the Year  |
| 2006        | Seasalt won the Cornwall Business Award for Innovation  |
| 2007        | Leigh Chadwick, director, won the ICAEW (Institute of Chartered Accountants in England & Wales) South West Regional Award for Best Chartered Accountant for Sustainable Business  |
| 2010 & 2011 | The Ethical Company Organisation ranked Seasalt the UK's top fashion company for its ethical standards  |
| 2010        | Seasalt named the UK's Best Organic Retailer in the Natural & Organic Awards 2010, a first for a non-food company   |
| 2013        | The Queen's Award for Sustainable Development - the first time this has been achieved by a fashion company and a Drapers Award for Womenswear Brand of the Year.                  |
| 2014        | Shortlisted for two Drapers Awards - 'Fashion Retail Business of the Year (under £125m turnover)' and 'Womenswear Brand of the Year' (the winners will be announced in November). |

## **The benefits of working to the standards we do ...**

We believe we have a duty to work in the most responsible way we can but we find there are also other benefits to our business by working in this way ...

Maintaining high standards in the way we source and produce Seasalt goods sets us apart from other fashion brands.

- We have established a good reputation for this and it is now expected by our customers.
- We receive positive publicity which helps us to grow Seasalt brand-awareness and our sales.
- As a result of working closely with our suppliers we enjoy better relations with them.
- It gives everyone who works for Seasalt and sense of achievement and pride in working in the way we do.

