

PRIMARK®



Primark Durability Framework

Foreword



Through our [Primark Cares](#) strategy, we're working hard so our customers can get more out of their clothes and love them for longer. This means changing our approach to designing and making our clothes, and the [Primark Durability Framework](#) is the next exciting step in this journey.

We created this framework to support our Primark Cares Commitments to strengthen the durability of our clothes by 2025. In an industry which currently has no universal guidelines or standard for clothing durability, we want to drive the conversation, spark debate and inspire action. This is the beginning of a journey, and the framework will evolve and change over time as we react to new materials, customer preferences and the emerging legal landscape which is looking to bring in durability standards.

There is a lot to learn and do. We are committed to being open and collaborative, to supporting innovation and developing partnerships which will be instrumental in driving change across the retail industry. I want to thank everyone involved in the creation of our Primark Durability Framework. This includes colleagues, customers, visionary partners, academic researchers and more. We believe there is a real opportunity for suppliers, brands and partners to learn from each other, share ideas and drive positive change by giving clothes a longer life.

Lynne Walker,
Director of Primark Cares



For us, durability is the amount of wear or use that a customer can get from an item of clothing over a period of time. Clothing is durable if it remains functional and wearable without requiring too much maintenance or repair, when faced with the challenges of normal wash and wear over its lifetime.

We understand that clothes play an important part in our lives. They help us to define our own look, and they bring us confidence when we need it, or add extra sparkle to big events. But they can only do this if they stand the test of time. We believe that clothing should be durable regardless of price. That's why, we've developed our [Primark Durability Framework](#) that draws from the WRAP (Waste and Resources Action Programme) [Clothing Longevity Protocol](#).

The framework is a result of working with many different stakeholders who are helping us work towards fulfilling our Primark Cares Commitments of making affordable clothes designed to last. In partnership with Hubbub, an environmental charity, we set out to explore aspects of the longevity of clothes. As part of this journey we commissioned research from the University of Leeds (UOL) School of Design. The research saw an array of clothing items with different price points put to the test. Under lab conditions, the UOL School of Design carried out physical tests for factors such as abrasion for denim, shrinkage for t-shirts, and pilling on hoodies, as well as extended washing and drying. The goal was to establish whether there is a connection between price and a piece of clothing's durability.

We found that for those items of clothing tested, there was no correlation between the price and the durability. For more detail, you can read Hubbub's report [here](#).

With no current universal guideline or standard for durability we have decided to develop our own Primark Durability Framework, one that not only ensures that durability testing can be embedded into our business, but also contributes to the development of industry best practice.

Vicki Swain,
Product Longevity & Partnership Lead

Inspired by WRAP

Inspired by WRAP, Primark defines durability as the amount of wear or use that a customer can get from an item of clothing over a period of time. Clothing is durable if it remains functional and wearable without requiring too much maintenance or repair, when faced with the challenges of normal wash and wear over its lifetime.



We found that extending the life of clothing by an extra nine months reduces carbon, waste, and water footprints by as much as 30% – each. If we can help people wear their clothes for longer, we can make an impact on the [environmental footprint](#) of the clothing sector. We've been really pleased to work with Primark as they investigate how to help their customers keep the clothes they buy in active use for longer, including supporting their development of the Primark Durability Framework.







Catherine David
Director of Collaboration
and Change

wrap

The Circular Ecosystem

We're committed to strengthening our clothing by 2025. We want our clothes to be worn for longer which is why, we're embracing durability for our customers. Durability underpins the circular ecosystem, from designing for longevity to providing information to customers on care and repair. Our Primark Cares Commitments to strengthening the durability of our clothes by 2025 will help support our aims to reduce clothing waste too.

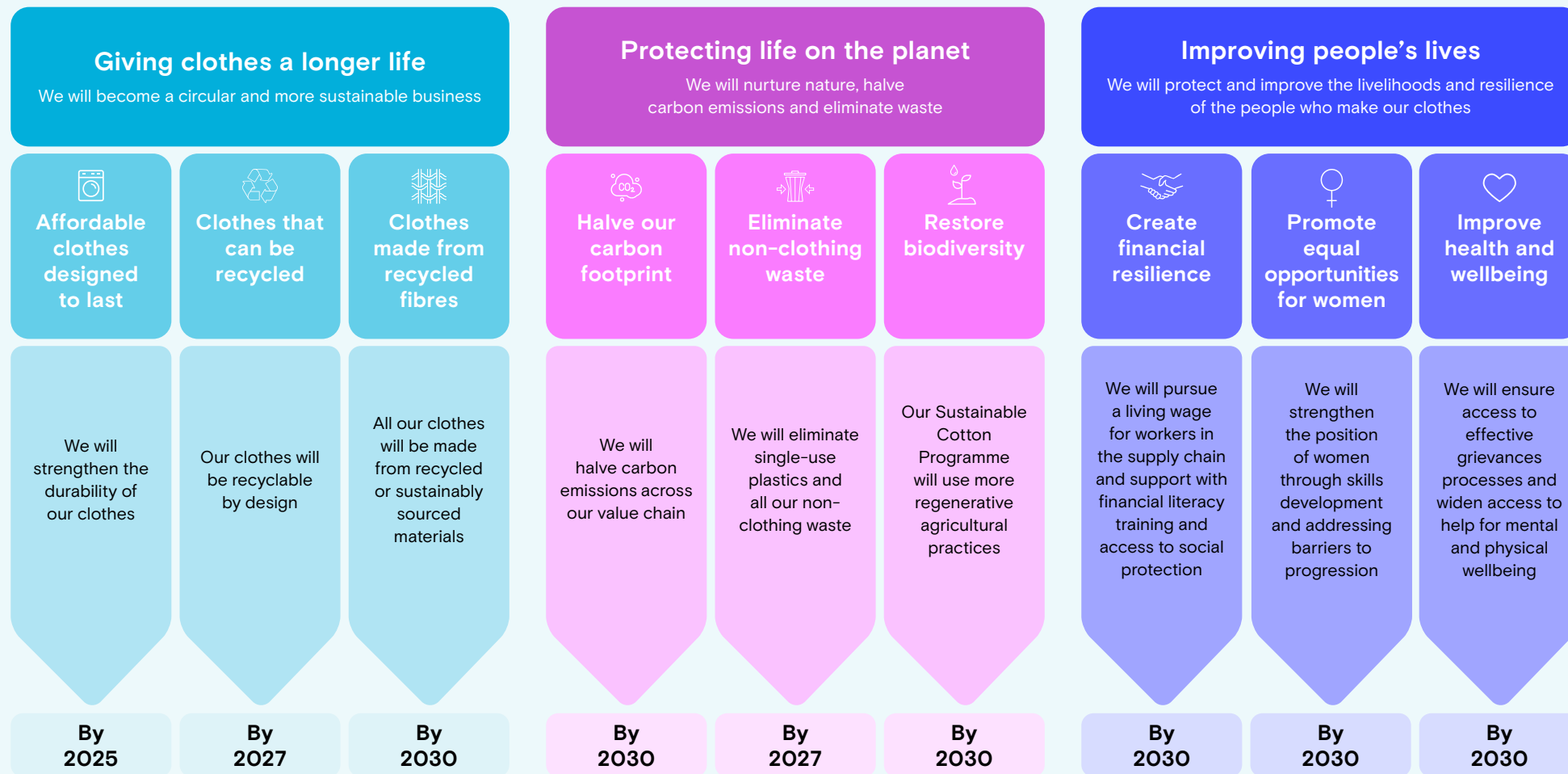
This circular ecosystem demonstrates the importance of collaboration to drive real change and deliver impact. We know we've a lot more to do, but we're making progress at a number of stages in a product's lifecycle. The technology in this space is changing all the time and opening new possibilities for the circular ecosystem. While scalable models relating to some of our commitments in this space do not yet exist, we're optimistic that in the next few years there will be new solutions that we can adopt.

-  Customer education
-  Circular business models
-  Product design
-  Product manufacturing



Primark Cares Commitments

Durability is the foundation of the product pillar commitments within our **Primark Cares** strategy.



What do we mean by Durability

We think durability has two main aspects: **physical** and **emotional**.

Physical

Clothing with high physical durability stays **functional** and **wearable** for a long time.

This depends on things like:

- Clothing construction
- Its functional performance
- The composition of its fabric
- The stability of the item
- How resistant it is to colour fading or colour running



Emotional

The emotional durability of clothing relates more to the personal **experience** and **perception** of clothing we have, such as:

- Style
- Relevance
- Comfort and feel

True value lies beyond price tags – that's why we're working to make sure our clothes are there for all of life's moments. By combining emotional significance with physical robustness, we have clothing designed that will last for many seasons that will become wardrobe staples.

Why we need a Durability Framework

Understanding physical durability isn't a simple process. Getting it right means looking at all the different criteria that impact durability performance such as shrinkage, colour, appearance, abrasion and pilling (bobbling).

But despite the increasing amount of legislation coming into play, the rising cost of living and the impact of waste on the environment, there is currently no agreed industry or legal standard for physical durability of clothing. This is why we are taking part in an industry-wide durability project led by WRAP to support the creation of industry guidelines.

Our Primark Durability Framework will help us work towards increasing the durability of our clothes, and allow us to talk about the challenges we face but also the successes such as the improvement in durability performance of clothing.

So far, we've focused on three key areas:



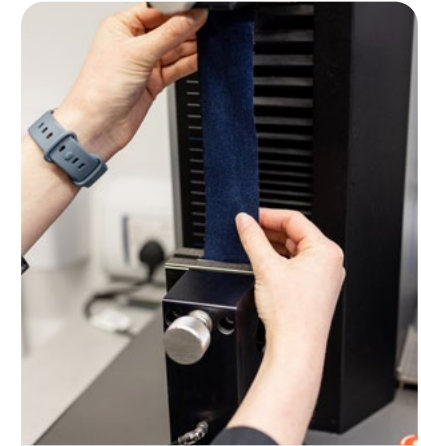
1

As part of the **Textiles 2030 initiative**, we are taking part in an industry-wide durability project led by WRAP to come to an agreed UK retail industry guideline for durability which will keep customers informed and confident about the clothing they buy.



2

We are developing durability and **repair initiatives** for our products that support our Primark Cares Commitments to delivering **affordable clothing** designed to last.



3

We **conducted research** with Hubbub and the University of Leeds, School of Design on the factors that impact clothing durability and how these can be addressed.

Primark Durability Framework

As signatories to the [Textiles 2030 initiative](#), we benefited from the support and advice of WRAP’s expert team throughout the creation of the Primark Durability Framework. This helped inform the decision to include two pillars of testing: Extended Washing and Physical Quality testing.

Beneath each pillar, we have determined three additional tiered levels that build on our existing Minimum Compliance level: Foundational, Progressive and Aspirational. This structure is designed to be flexible to allow for change and improvement over time.

Since January 2024, most of our clothing has been washed as per care label, to the aspirational level of 45 washes to build a data set on the performance of different clothing groups. Prior to this, we piloted several clothing categories (denim, jersey and socks) using the WRAP Clothing Longevity Protocol 2014 and subsequent updated versions, the latest of which was updated in 2021.

There are some exemptions. For example, anything that needs hand washing or dry cleaning is not currently part of the framework. The framework is anchored by the continuous improvement principles we use across our operations so that durability is sewn into every part of the clothing lifecycle.

Pre wash quality/ Performance tests	Framework levels	Extended washing	Number of washing intervals	Durability and appearance tests
These tests are conducted pre wash as part of Primark’s minimum compliance, as well as all legal, chemical and safety requirements.	Minimum compliance	Primark requires all clothing to meet these requirements as a minimum compliance	5	Clothing passes all Primark test requirements
	Foundational	Meets extended wash requirements	23	Clothing passes all Primark test requirements *
	Progressive	Meets extended wash requirements	32	Clothing passes all Primark test requirements *
	Aspirational	Meets extended wash requirements	45	Clothing passes all Primark test requirements *

Underpinned by Continuous Improvement Principles

Clothing is designed and developed for longevity through the design/development process

Clothing is designed and developed for longevity using our ongoing learning for fabric and garment make up

Actively develop into the longevity of clothing using dyestuffs, enzyme treatments, thread choices

* Where technically possible

We are excited to partner with Primark in strengthening the durability of its clothes. The aspirational targets they have set are truly stretching, with extended 45 wash testing that is way beyond the industry average. Because of the leap this testing requirement represents, it was initially a challenge to align everyone (including, for example, fabric mills, component/trim suppliers, dyestuff producers and so on) to believe that this goal is possible. However, we have been pleasantly surprised by how many clothes we produce already meet foundational and progressive targets. The next stage is to partner on a ‘continuous improvement’ programme to analyse and close the gap to the aspirational targets. This starts with the design and development decisions we make in partnership with the Primark teams and includes working with all our different supply chain partners on the detailed technical changes required to strengthen clothes to meet the aspirational targets.



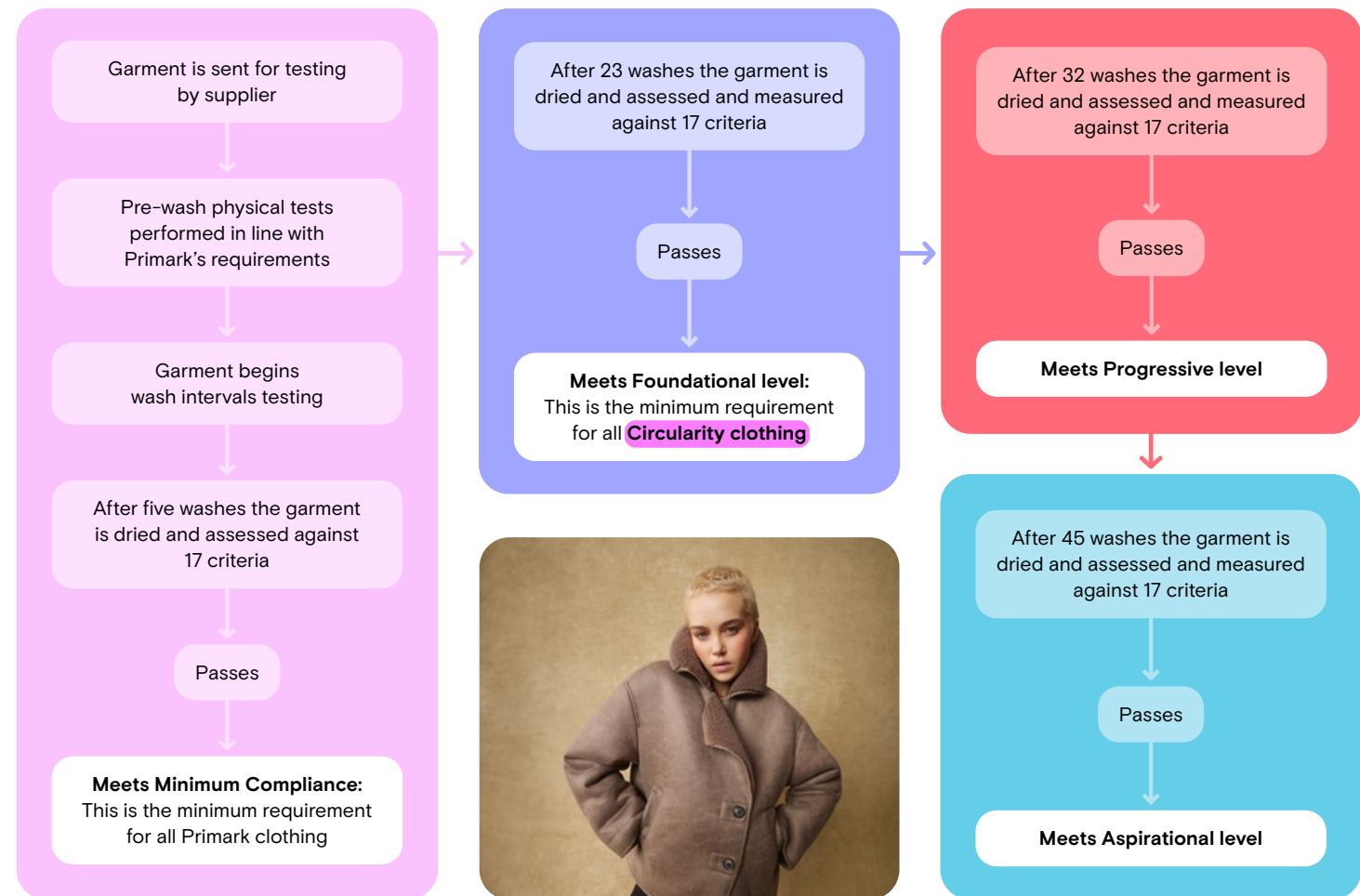
Glen George
Director, Padma Design Ltd.
(Supplier)

PADMA

Our Durability Framework Testing Process

We test our clothing in partnership with our approved third-party testing labs in conditions designed to reflect how customers wash garments in real life.

The process starts when an item of clothing is submitted by one of our suppliers to the in-country lab. The first step in our framework is to carry out all the pre-wash physical testing. After this, the clothing item goes through multiple washes, being assessed against our 17 core criteria along with other factors relating to specific product performance at regular intervals. By replicating everyday wash cycles, we can be confident that our results reflect how our clothing performs over the course of its lifetime.

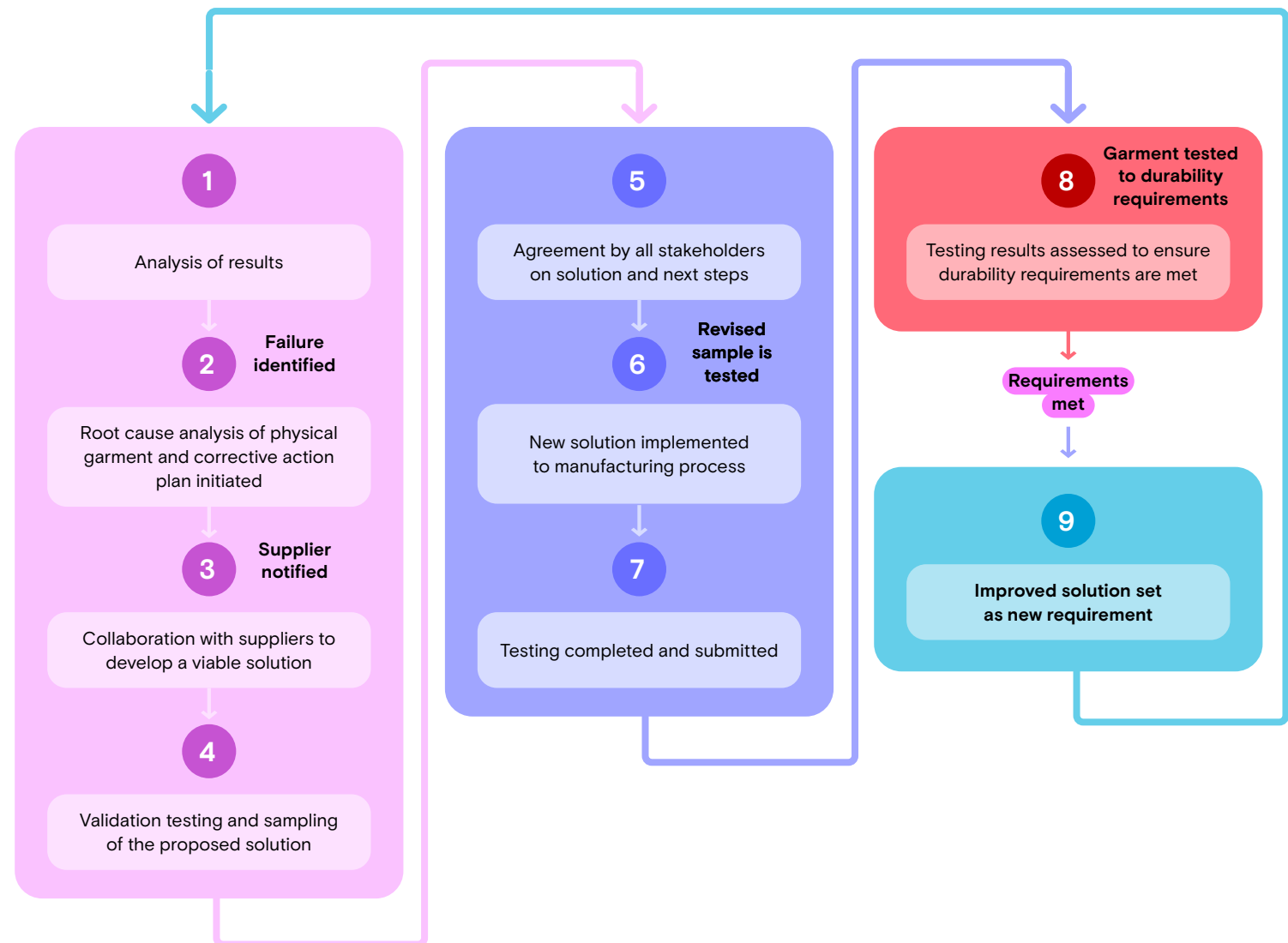


Each stage links back to our Durability Framework

Creating a Continuous Improvement Loop

Our expert teams put continuous improvement at the heart of our process, collaborating with other specialists in our supply chain to develop continuous improvement plans for our clothing.

This ensures we're always developing and implementing improvements to enhance our clothing durability.



Why we created the Durability Framework



Putting customers front of mind

While quality, price and fit remain the most important factors for customers when picking new clothes, environmental concerns and product durability are playing a growing role in purchasing decisions.

We created the Primark Durability Framework to give our customers greater confidence that price doesn't come at the expense of durability.

Our multi-stakeholder approach

We know that to make our approach to durability a long-term success, we need the support and participation of stakeholders across the value chain.

One of our aims with the framework is to make it easier for our suppliers and testing houses to understand, implement and identify areas for improvement.



Why 45 washes?

We set an aspirational level of 45 washes for our clothing testing, after consulting WRAP on their latest data on the average number of washes for the target lifetime and taking an average of all clothing categories from the WRAP Clothing Longevity Protocol. This will allow for consistent communication and efficiencies on extended washing.

For many categories, 45 washes is above the suggested washes on the WRAP Clothing Longevity Protocol.

How were extended washing intervals agreed?

To allow for this framework to continue to evolve and improve over time, we needed to set measurable goals to track the progress we are making. This way, we can make continuous improvements to our clothing.

The halfway point of 23 washes (Foundational) was a clear marker of progress, and the next level of 32 washes (Progressive) was selected because we knew there would be some products, due to its nature, that would be harder to achieve the extended wash and would require further innovation and development.

How we test durability

Our strength lies in turning big ideas into scalable solutions. For durability, this means taking a customer-centric approach to testing that aligns with industry-recognised best practice.

Conducted in lab conditions by accredited third party partners, our testing processes aim to replicate the way our customers wash their clothes in real life. This means that all products are washed as per the care label.

We start with 17 core criteria, which are assessed at specific wash intervals. These include shrinkage, twisting of seams, colour loss, opening of seams, pilling and more. Additional product-specific criteria have also been developed to assess key performance elements of durability at product/fabrication level like print adhesion.

In addition to these tests, we also carry out other product performance testing to make sure the product is fit for function. We use methodology following recognised UK, EU and International (BS, EN, ISO, or ASTM) standards. Our testing data gives us valuable insight into which products need further development, and will help us work with our suppliers to identify the best remediation to improve product durability where technically possible, alongside the work we do for quality.

As well as reviewing our own testing data, we are closely monitoring current and upcoming legislation, plus the ongoing work being carried out by WRAP and the Textiles 2030 initiative. This helps us make sure we are not just improving the durability of our clothing, but being responsive to changes in direction, new guidelines and industry best practice.

Embedding Durability

What we are doing:



Our business

We are rolling out the framework across our business and engaging with internal and external stakeholders to gather feedback.

Our customers

We are empowering customers through education on how best to care for their clothes, what they can do to repair them, so they can love them for longer and extend their clothing's life.

Our suppliers

We are collaborating with suppliers to highlight the value of durability, collectively improve our clothes and raise the ambition of the entire industry.

Policymakers and Industry

We are involved in the conversation about durability at EU level including through our membership with trade associations, as the EU looks to set ecodesign standards for products in the future.

What's next?



Shifting perception that price doesn't equal durability

Our hope for sharing this framework is that it will foster more collaboration across the retail industry. To reduce the growing environmental impact of clothing waste, we need to ditch the false idea that the longevity of clothing is tied directly to its cost. We can only achieve this if manufacturers, retailers and customers are all working towards the same goal. We believe that our Primark Durability Framework is an important step in the right direction.



Working with Primark on their new Primark Durability Framework has been a great opportunity. We are currently working on products which meet the Primark Circular Product Standard, and are still embedding the new ways of working, to ensure an efficient process to set ourselves up for success to meet the growing demands from customers to improve durability of clothes.

To align with this framework, we have reviewed each step of the manufacturing process from sourcing raw materials like yarn to the finishing process of a piece of clothing's construction and production, to support consistency of both the aesthetics and durability of the clothes. Novel Hurricane is always eager to adapt to new processes and innovations that improve the product.



Hasan Shahriar Maruf
General Manager, Novel
Hurricane Knit Garments
Ltd. (Supplier)



New Clothing Regulations Taking Effect in the UK and EU

In March 2022 the European Commission published the [EU strategy for sustainable and circular textiles](#), with the aim of creating a more sustainable and circular textile economy. It looked at how textile products are designed, made and consumed, with an important element being how textile products can be made to last longer.

The [Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation](#) came into force in July 2024 across the EU, which will introduce new ecodesign requirements for products including clothing, footwear and home textiles.

Regulation & Reporting

[EU Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation \(ESPR\)](#)

We must meet EU guidelines for textiles covering durability, recyclability and reusability and report on these through a Digital Product Passport (DPP). ESPR has also introduced separate reporting requirements on unsold products and a ban on their destruction.

We support legislation that creates a level playing field. The EU focus on durability aligns with our [Primark Cares product pillar](#) to give clothes a longer life.

[EU Green Claims Directive](#) and [UK Green Claims Code](#)

We must ensure that any product claims, including for durability, meet the principles of these environmental claim guidelines.

[EU corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive \(CSRD\)](#)

We will be required to report on the progress of improving our durability of the textile products we sell, under Standard E5 of the Circular Economy and Resource Use ESRS. (European Sustainable Reporting Standards).

[EU Waste framework Directive \(WFD\)](#) and [UK Environmental Act \(EPR for Textiles\)](#)

Companies must establish systems for managing and recycling textile waste.



Our Learnings

Testing:

- Generally, the industry tests clothing for physical quality before washing, and assesses shrinkage or appearance after a single or a minimal number of washes. Going forward, we believe it is important to switch to testing clothes after washing them. However, to make this change, we need more information from ongoing research projects like [LITAC](#) and the Textiles 2030 initiative.
- Testing is only a moment in time but offers a valuable insight into a product's potential durability.

Importance of data:

- We are building a data set through our extended durability testing that gives us valuable insight into the performance of different clothing groups.

Materials and fibres:

- Not all clothes are the same, even within one type of fabrication. For example, we have seen different durability results in jersey fabrications as the weight and construction can differ. So, we've made adjustments on jersey durability testing requirements, such as dimensional stability, based on data results on how each jersey fabrication actually performs.
- We are seeing new and newly developed materials and fibres being introduced into the industry with no history on whether these are more durable. To tackle this, we have worked with our suppliers and product teams to make sure we stay on top of all new developments that could impact the durability of our clothes. We will also continue to collect data to inform the decision to include recycled materials to our product.

Practical information:

- The landscape of durability for new materials and fibres is limited. Most of the existing data is based on customer insights and theoretical data. By starting to collect data on the durability of our clothes we can help ground the conversation in facts and findings, helping us on our journey to making our clothing more durable by 2025.



We have been partners with Primark for over two decades and have supported them in rolling out many new initiatives including the Durability Framework.

Sustainability is ingrained in our DNA and we genuinely wanted to understand the life cycle of the products we were shipping to Primark, which is why we volunteered to be a part of this project.

After doing rigorous testing on all our core products, we were extremely happy to learn that most of our products were already achieving the durability standards laid out by Primark.

Throughout this journey, we have discussed and shared our internal and third-party test findings with Primark based on which the final product expectations were laid out.

Our discussions with Primark were very engaging and fruitful. Wherever we felt the standard was not achievable, we voiced our concerns and were heard.

We are proud of the outcome, and this framework will also help us achieve our internal ESG goals.



Harbir Singh
Simple Approach Ltd.
(Supplier)



Durability and the Customer Experience

We analysed test results at each wash interval to see exactly how it impacts customer experience.



Even if the clothing remained functional after washing, but an aspect like an internal back neck print had faded – we would mark this as an observation. In this example, the garment has not failed the durability test as the details on the back neck print are duplicated on the care label which is fixed into the garment.



We identified anything that impacted the customers ability to continue wearing an item of clothing, for example this included things like a broken zip on a jean or elastane breakdown in a sock.



The results showed that some fibres and fabric characteristics and appearances change over time through repeated washing. Following the process outlined in slide nine, for [continued improvement in durability](#), we work with our supply chain to develop and implement solutions.

Enhancing Durability across our Product Lines



Denim

The way denim fades over time is an important part of what makes it such a unique and beautiful material. But the fade is more noticeable when you wash over multiple increments in a short space of time rather than if the garment is worn and washed over longer periods. We focus on other areas like seam strength and componentry that affects the performance and functionality.

Jersey

Testing showed a clear variance in the way different print methods perform through the wash cycle phases. We have included an assessment of print performance within the extended wash framework and established variable assessment criteria based on print application type. We've focused on the degree of print appearance change through the different intervals and set requirements that ensure the product remains functional for the customer.



Socks

Our test results for cotton and polyester rich styles consistently showed very limited shrinkage through the wash intervals. However, the characteristics of nylon means it hardens through repeated washing, making the fit restrictive. We have included an additional fit process for nylon socks as part of the assessment criteria at each wash interval to make sure our socks remain wearable for as long as possible.

Our work with Hubbub

Recently, there has been much focus on how brands can reduce the impact of their clothes on the planet. Garment durability may not be the most obvious or exciting solution for a greener industry, but extending the life, or the number of lives, of a garment by improving its durability can significantly reduce environmental impacts and reduce resource depletion. Better garment durability can also offer better value for money for customers as well as helping them do their bit for the environment.

Measuring durability is a critical step in the process for making garments more durable; without an objective way to measure durability how can we know which garment will last longer? There was limited understanding of durability and how this important characteristic can be measured and be improved. But, with the support of Primark and Hubbub, we were able to develop a new objective way of measuring durability, which is now being used to explore how garments can be made to last for longer.

What was particularly important about the Primark/Hubbub project was the focus on how the project could support the whole of the UK industry and how the outputs of the work were for the benefit of industry, customers and policy makers. The collaborative approach of the project demonstrates the value of working together; the support of these two partners has accelerated progress towards a greener approach to fashion.



Dr Mark Sumner

Lecturer in Sustainable Fashion,
BA Sustainable Fashion
Programme Lead School of
Design, University of Leeds



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

In 2022, we partnered with the environmental charity Hubbub and the School of Design at UOL.

The School of Design team undertook tests under lab conditions to determine the physical durability of hoodies, t-shirts and denim jeans. In total, they assessed 65 garments sourced from high street, designer and online retailers.

Most people think expensive clothes are more likely to be durable than lower cost ones. However, across the 65 garments tested, the research found:

- Women's t-shirts priced under £10 outperformed one retailing at around £40.
- Women's hoodies priced between £11 and £20 were ranked higher on the durability scale than items priced closer to £50 and £100.
- There were negligible differences in durability between a pair of women's jeans priced at around £15 and a pair retailing at over ten times the price.
- A men's t-shirt costing under £5 was ranked as the second most durable of the 17 items tested – outperforming one ten times the price.
- Of the garments tested, only higher-priced menswear hoodies showed consistently higher performance than the lower priced options.



Our work with Hubbub continued

Our research findings:

The following reflections on the work supported by Hubbub and UOL have supported our thinking around durability.

This research has reinforced our belief that clothing can be both durable and affordable.

The price of a garment cannot be used as an indicator to identify good or inferior durability.

All clothing should be cared for regardless of price, to extend their life as much as possible.

We're always collaborating with partners to tackle tricky topics in a way that everyone can easily understand. With Primark, we busted the myth that clothing is only durable at higher prices by testing the physical durability of garments, led by the School of Design at the University of Leeds. Driving awareness around clothing durability helps shoppers understand the value of their clothes and how to keep pieces in the best condition for as long as possible.

We're excited to see how the positive impact from the project continues to grow, and so pleased that we could be part of Primark's durability journey.



Within each category there were minimal differences between the top, mid and lower product rankings.



Some low-priced garments demonstrated excellent value for money and outperformed expensive garments.



All the garments were still functional after the extended washing.



Aoife Allen
Director at Hubbub



This is just the start of our Durability Journey

We are proud to launch our Primark Durability Framework and we hope it will help get people thinking about the changes they can make to extend the life of clothing. We believe that more sustainable fashion should be affordable for all and that everyone should be able to trust that the clothes they are buying can go the distance.

This framework is the result of cross-sector collaboration and open conversations with a range of stakeholders. We will regularly review this framework to ensure that it remains fit for purpose.

There is a lot to learn and do. We welcome collaboration with partners and the wider industry to support initiatives that will drive durability of clothing innovation further. To find out about our work to ensure customers can love their clothes for longer please visit: [Love it for Longer](#).



For more information visit:

[Primark Sustainability and Ethics Progress Report 2022 /23](#)



PRIMARK®

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Version 2

Consultancy and design by Black Sun Global
www.blacksun-global.com