


SUSTAINABILITY AT ALDENS

Aldens
of Oxford
— Est 1793 —



*“We recognise the impact
our business and industry
has on the environment
and are fully committed to
minimising this ”*

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Introduction

Sustainability is concerned with protecting the planet, halting climate change and promoting social development, without endangering life on Earth or leaving anyone behind. This concept seeks to cover our present needs without compromising resources for future generations.

The 3 pillars of sustainability

This is the path governments, corporations and other institutions are following in an attempt to achieve the sustainability targets.

Environmental

Sustainability implies assuming that nature and the environment are not an inexhaustible source of resources, but subject to protection and rational use. Actions we can undertake in our daily routines, related to the decisions we take for our lives.



Social

At the social level, sustainability promotes social development, while seeking cohesion among communities and cultures to reach satisfactory levels of quality of life, healthcare and education. The fight for gender equality is another aspect which will determine social sustainability actions over the years to come.



Economic

Thirdly, sustainability also drives economic growth, generating equitable wealth for everyone without harming the environment.

We need to act in the present, think of the future.



Background to Aldens

Aldens - 7th generation family butchers established in 1793

In 1792, a young Lord Edward Seymour was admitted to Christchurch College, Oxford and with him came his personal assistant Isaac Alden (1764-1832). One year later Lord Seymour became the 11th Duke of Somerset. Isaac stayed in Oxford and opened a butcher's shop on Bear Lane in 1793. He lived above the shop with his wife and young son, Thomas.

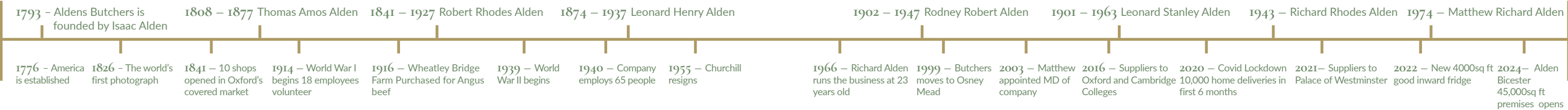
Thomas (1808-1877) and Robert (1841-1927) expanded the business with an abattoir and moved to Eastwyke Farm – less than a mile from Oxford city centre. Len, Rodney and Leonard Alden were followed by Richard who ran the business from 1966 until Matthew was appointed MD in 2003.



Aldens moved to Bicester, Oxfordshire in May 2024 and we have become a well-respected butcher supplying world-famous places including Oxford & Cambridge Universities, The Palace of Westminster as well as schools, restaurants, airline caterers and our wonderful retail customers.

So much has changed over the last 230 years. There have been nine monarchs, 44 prime ministers have served, two world wars and eight pandemics. However, we remain focused on product provenance, consistency, flavour, animal welfare and sustainability allowing us to deliver consistently better produce.

1764 Aldens founder is born



Attitude to business & environment

Noted for quality

Since 1793, we have served families and businesses across Oxfordshire and more recently across the UK with superb quality meat, fish and fresh produce. We source produce from producers with high welfare and ethical standards. Many products are hand cut and prepared by our amazing team of butchers.

A historic butcher

We're very proud of our history. We have many stories to tell from the last 230 years but throughout it all, we have remained true to our values; great tasting meat, provenance you can trust, the highest welfare standards, traditional craft butchery and first-class customer service.



Our farmers

To sell great tasting meat we must be able to buy it. We have built great relationships with farmers and producers, ensuring our supply chain is always guaranteed the highest quality produce.

Sustainability

We have made sustainability a high priority for the business. We recognise the impact our business, and industry has on the environment and are fully committed to minimising this.

Having already made significant changes, we regularly review and invest in improvements, always seeking opportunities to minimise energy use and waste generation.





Wool is
100%
natural and a
renewable fibre
source

Snapshot of achievements to date

- 6 refrigerated electric vans for deliveries
- 1 electric company car
- E-bike (fitted with temperature monitoring) for local deliveries
- 2 electric forklifts
- 150 tonnes of cardboard is recycled each year
- 15 tonnes of polystyrene is recycled each year
- Reusable plastic crates for deliveries
- Automatic light sensors
- Electronic invoices
- Custom made refrigeration units
- Heat recovery system from fridges to power hot water throughout the building
- 200,000kW harnessed through solar panels
- New 45,000 sq ft building (opened May 2024) built with modern eco friendly materials

Around
65%
of farmland in
the UK is best suited
to growing grass

It is estimated that the
contribution of beef cattle and
sheep to biodiversity value is
£121 MILLION
in England alone.



Employee well being

We have a set of values that we call the Alden REGS that set the tone of behaviour in the company. They are:



Respect (mutual)

- Respect for our suppliers and customers and expect mutual respect back for us – we all want to make a living so business needs to be a win/win for both parties; we all make mistakes – it's how we deal with them that will define us.
- Respect for each other (staff) – appreciate we all have strengths and weaknesses so don't criticise but try to support or help; consider your work colleagues.



Enjoyment

- Enjoy servicing customers (it's not a chore! They provide for our livelihood).
- Enjoy working for the company (create an atmosphere where people feel content that they are working for the right company and don't want to work elsewhere).



Growth

- Personal growth; personal development and opportunities to further one-self.
- Company growth & professionalism



Service

- Do the basics right.
- Ensure 'customers have their product delivered to the correct specification, at the required delivery slot, consistently, and if something does go wrong (either their or our fault) to fix it for them'.
- 'Treat everyone as you would want to be treated yourself'.
- Friendly (smile, say hello), reliable, professional.





Fair pay and bonuses

Underpinning fair pay is our belief that the Oxford Living wage is the minimum amount per hour needed to live and work in the environs of the city of Oxford. All our staff are paid this as a minimum per hour.

We want to encourage employees to share in the success and profitability of the company. The company sets aside 10% of its annual profits to a bonus pool which is shared out to staff based on their appraisal and effectiveness during the year.

Every 6 months a member of staff is nominated as employee of the company for outstanding effort and commitment to sustainability.



Growth and enjoyment

We have a robust annual appraisal system that allows two-way feedback between staff and their manager and is a formal occasion to review personal growth and career development.

We like to celebrate and 'let our hair down' – we organise a summer punting trip along the Thames where it is a chance to relax, laugh and enjoy some nice wine and a Christmas party.

We encourage everyone to have their birthday as a day off (given gratis) and where appropriate our office-based staff can work.



Meat sources and buying strategy

Around
70%
of a typical
British cattle
herd's diet is
grass

Our aim is to source our meat and poultry products from within the UK & Ireland. We collaborate with regenerative beef farmers with a view to encouraging harmony with nature and allowing the environment to regenerate and flourish.

We are acutely aware that the food supply system pushes prices down and forces farmers into a race to the bottom to produce food for cheap. We want to make a move in a new direction.

In addition to quality and commercial considerations, procurement decisions are made by reference to animal welfare standards, the ethical trading practices of suppliers, and the environmental impact of production and supply chains.

Where possible we seek to promote the sales of locally produced farm assured meat through the continued development of menu items with our customers.

Nutritional standards are considered in the development of our meat preparations including sausages, coated and glazed products.

We aim wherever possible to use fresh ingredients, work with our seasoning suppliers to minimise or eliminate additive usage, and to ensure the Food Standards Agency salt targets are met.

We aim to collate nutritional data for our full product range through a combination of use of reference values and analysis. This information is then to be made available to our customers.

We also aim to support other local businesses and organisations by sourcing goods and services locally, making contributions to fund raising events, use of local labour, investment in the future of the workforce by establishing staff development opportunities and training needs.

For new suppliers we conduct our own sustainability audit to ensure that we understand their policies and procedures.



Current carbon footprint

A carbon footprint measures the amount of carbon dioxide (CO₂) released into the atmosphere as a result of the activities of an individual, organisation or community.

Carbon dioxide isn't the only emission that needs to be looked at, but for simplicity, the below emissions are usually converted to CO₂ or equivalent to produce a carbon footprint, as per the Kyoto Protocol (an international agreement to limit and reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions across the EU).

GHG emissions are divided into different scopes depending on how 'direct' they are:

Scope 1 emissions are direct emissions from your business. This includes emissions from combustion of fuels from furnaces and vehicles, as well as emissions from chemical production.

Scope 2 emissions are indirect emissions from the consumption of purchased energy from utility providers that an organisation does not own. This includes electricity, heating, steam and cooling.

Scope 3 emissions are all indirect emissions not included in scope 2. This includes anything that is linked to your organisation's operations that are not controlled or owned, such as your entire supply chain, business and employee travel, waste generated, purchased materials and goods, office technology, assets, investments, as well as consumer use of your products and services.

Carbon footprint calculations

Scope 1 emissions	tCO ₂ e	%
Vehicle fuel	<u>162.5</u>	37.6%
Scope 2 emissions		
Electricity	216.4	
Gas	<u>35.1</u>	
	<u>251.5</u>	58.2%
Scope 3 emissions		
Water	0.3	
Waste water	0.5	
Recycling	2.3	
Landfilled waste	<u>15.0</u>	
	<u>18.1</u>	4.2%
Total carbon footprint	<u>432.1</u>	
Carbon offsets		
Used EVs	12.3	
Tree planting	<u>1.8</u>	
	<u>14.2</u>	
Net carbon footprint	<u>417.9</u>	
Carbon footprint per employee	<u>4.2</u>	

Vehicle emissions

The most important facet for the reduction of vehicle emissions is route optimisation.

We have recently acquired an **E-bike** for the smaller and local city deliveries.



It isn't just about finding the shortest path from point A to point B that allows us to maximise completed orders and juggle driver schedules, available hours, total stops and fulfilment estimates. Our 20 or so standard routes are continuously updated and evolved to handle these requirements.

Allied to the route optimisation is the tracking information supplied from Web fleet. This provides real time data on a driver's location and helps monitor speed awareness and MPG analysis.

Where possible we try to deliver early to reduce delay and avoid unnecessary traffic congestion.

To avoid direct vehicle emissions, we are moving to an electric fleet. Presently we have a small Berlingo e-chassis van which is used for local Oxford deliveries and 6 Maxus E-deliver refrigerated vans for the longer and straightforward delivery routes.

Building emissions

Due to the nature of our business, we are an intensive user of energy. However, where possible we look to mitigate its usage.

We believe that good lighting is essential and have changed to low power LED lights and bulbs as well as installing motion-activated lights so that they are not left on by accident.

We try to utilise and increase natural light and avoid turning on lights in the daytime by keeping curtains or blinds open.

Our refrigeration system is all custom-built low energy specification, and our new production factory is being installed with Isentra Trans-critical CO2 packs and Bitzer compressors with lead invertors meaning the hot water needed for tray and hand washing is produced from heat recovery from the fridges.



Waste

Despite the nature of the business which is subject to FSA regulations dealing with contamination and disposal we try to find ways to recycle our wastage.

We have two compacting machines which bale cardboard and one polystyrene machine so that waste can be easily collected and recycled.

Meat by-products and trimming, where appropriate, are used for mince and bones are collected by Advance Proteins for grinding into pet food.

Water usage

Whilst we are required to clean out our production factory and maintain the cleanliness of our van fleet, we do remain vigilant of our water usage.

In practical terms that has manifested itself with more efficient jet washers and nozzles which increases the pressure of a clean and simultaneously using less water.

We are installing a new wash down system that will reduce our water usage by 50%.

Packaging

We encourage single use packaging so that orders aren't unnecessarily unpacked and repacked.

Whilst plastic trays aren't themselves of benefit to the environment, they do help limit the use of cardboard and so where possible we pack orders into reusable plastic trays so that they can be easily transported in our vans.

Paper usage

We use recycled paper; only print out in black and white and whenever possible use electronic means to convey information. Invoices, order acknowledgments and statements are all sent electronically.



Green team

Whilst it is incumbent on everyone at Aldens to be aware of sustainability we do have a dedicated senior management team who consider our efforts. This includes an outside consultant.

Education of staff

We believe in the value of education and have a training regime for new butchers as well as offering apprenticeships. Ultimately efficient butchering leads to minimum waste and utilises as much as possible of the larger carcasses we buy in.

Farm visits and field days

We run 'field to fork' days for our customers. This will start with a farm livestock visit followed by a butchery demonstration and then a tour of the Aldens' production factory.

We like to work with our customers to educate them on where and how the animals are raised and then how the meat is dealt with and butchered once it has arrived at our premises.



Provenance

BEEF

- Scottish Beef
- Lancashire Beef
- Herefordshire Beef
- Somerset Beef
- Devon Regenerative Beef
- Cornish Beef

LAMB

- Dorset Lamb
- Oxfordshire Lamb
- Welsh Lamb

PORK

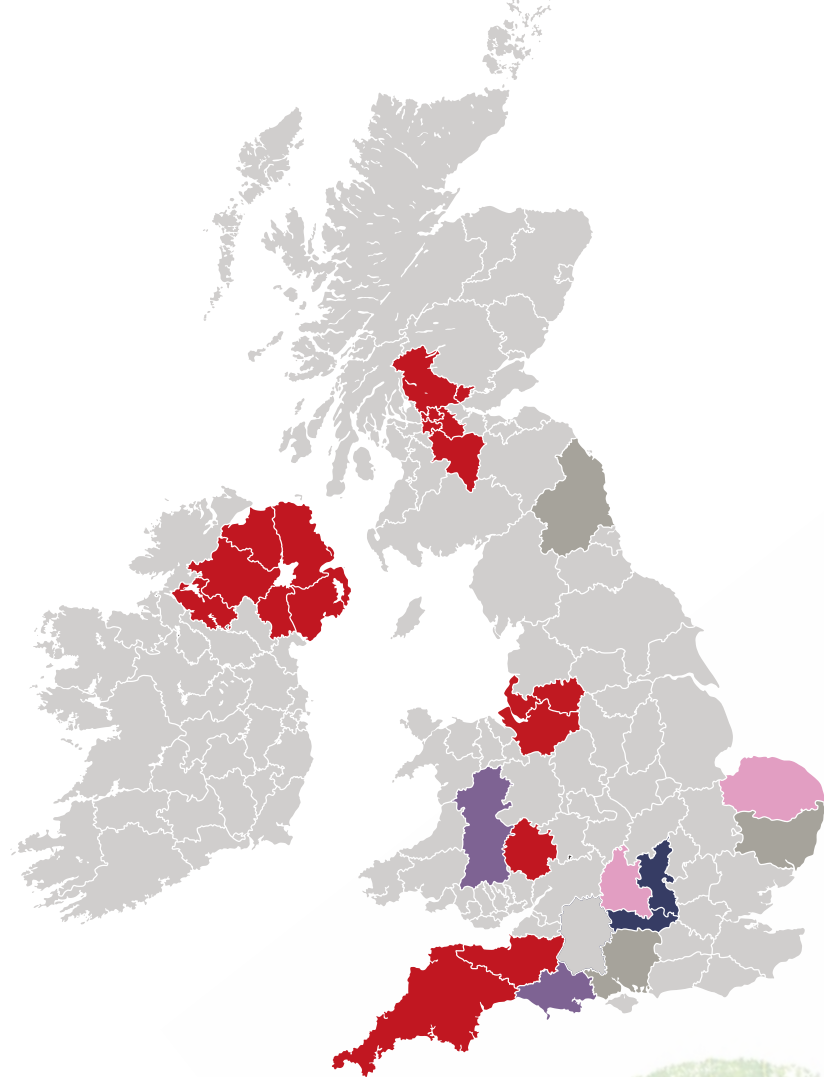
- Oxford Outdoor Bred Pork
- Norfolk Free Range Pork

CHICKEN

- Hampshire Chicken
- Suffolk Chicken
- Yorkshire Chicken

VENISON

- Berkshire Venison
- Oxfordshire Venison



Targets

- Reduce total carbon footprint; and,
- Work with suppliers to improve the supply chain efficiency.

Affiliations

- We are members of SEDEX;
- We are part of the EcoVadis sustainability assessment program and have a rating in the 37th percentile (the assessment can be shared on request); and,
- We adhere to the ETI Base Code.

Charity and Eco projects

- When appropriate we work with local food banks so that near out of date goods are not wasted.
- We contribute via our fuel card program to Eco Miles and helped grow 339 trees in 2022 as well as offsetting additional KgCO2 from projects in Brazil and Peru.



Accreditations



Further information

For more information about sustainability at Aldens please contact:

Matthew Alden | MD
matthew@aldenoxford.co.uk

Simon Warren | Head of sales
simon@aldenoxford.co.uk

