

DEBRA

Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Annual Report 2025

As a charity operating over 80 stores and supported by more than 1,400 colleagues and volunteers, we recognise that our activities have both positive and negative impacts on the environment and the communities we serve. Our ambition is to be a force for good, minimising our environmental footprint, upholding the highest ethical standards, and embedding sustainability and social responsibility into everything we do.

In 2025, we refined our strategic vision to better reflect these commitments. To support this, we have updated our Environmental, Social & Governance (ESG) policy and action plan to align with our new objectives, ensuring that our approach drives meaningful change for people and the planet.



Our ESG Objectives:

1 To be more sustainable and environmentally friendly in everything we do and with everyone we work with.

2 To create a culture where equality and diversity are embedded in our values and actions, and where the wellbeing of our people is a priority.

3 To ensure the highest ethical standards, with consideration given to environmental sustainability and social responsibility in all that we do and in all our investment decisions.

Environmental	Social	Governance
<p>Reduces climate impact, conserve resources, implement sustainable working practices</p> <p>E1) Manage consumables sustainably</p> <p>E2) Reduce energy usage</p> <p>E3) Manage waste ecologically</p>	<p>Create a culture that positively impacts wellbeing</p> <p>S1) Monitor pay and conditions</p> <p>S2) Manage our impact and wider collaborations</p> <p>S3) Ensure equality in the workplace</p>	<p>Maintain a robust and agile structure across the charity</p> <p>G1) Manage governance compliance and policies</p> <p>G2) Monitor and manage risk</p> <p>G3) Ensure ethical working practices</p>



Our achievements so far

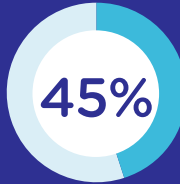


Environment

41



stores fitted with LED lighting



reduction in paper based marketing



30%

reduction in colleague travel

50%



reduction in use of packaging

30%

reduction in printing



Social

75
100

Cultural score



Wellbeing training program delivered

150



Colleagues trained via the DEBRA Academy



100%

of colleagues completed Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) training



Governance



Trustee handbook reviewed



Reviewed & streamlined management framework



Trustee training program developed



Governance manual published



DEBRA values reviewed

ENVIRONMENT

During 2025 we worked on several initiatives that will help to reduce our impact on the environment.

ECO-FRIENDLY PACKAGING

The loss of our book recycling option challenged us to find innovative solutions for unsold books. Our Merrow store pioneered a new project by shredding unsold books to create compostable packaging for eBay sales with an ask for customers to compost the packaging.

Fantastic and very eco friendly packing job done which was hugely appreciated and should be a model for other buyers....

50%
reduction in use of packaging

£2,600
saved

positive customer feedback

Rolled out to our top 10 eBay-selling stores

Reinforcing our commitment to waste reduction and the circular economy



Our West Byfleet store has also embraced book recycling, finding multiple ways to give unsold books a second life. They have established stands at the local Tesco and the Jubilee Social Club, and regularly donate books to schools, hospitals, and the local prison.

Their collaboration with Tesco proved especially rewarding when they selected us as their 'Charity of the Month', which resulted in a donation of £230.95.

This initiative highlights how community partnerships can drive both sustainability and support for our cause.




Following a successful trial we have changed our retail cleaning products to the eco-friendly brand Miniml. The products are 99.9% natural, cruelty free, and made in the UK.



ENERGY SAVINGS OPPORTUNITY SCHEME (ESOS)



We are pleased to confirm the successful submission of our Phase 3 action plan and progress report. As part of this initiative, we have committed to replacing all T8 fluorescent and halogen lightbulbs across our estate with energy-efficient LED alternatives.



A change projected to deliver energy savings of

90,457 kWh
by November 2027

To date, **41/83** stores have already been upgraded, and we have a defined roadmap to complete the remaining sites within the next two years. This program underscores our commitment to sustainability and operational efficiency, ensuring measurable reductions in energy consumption and carbon footprint.

SOCIAL

Providing opportunities and training for our people:

DEBRA ACADEMY

In 2024, we proudly launched the DEBRA Academy, a cornerstone initiative designed to empower our people with the skills and confidence they need to thrive as leaders, managers, and commercially aware professionals. Through dynamic, face-to-face workshops, the DEBRA Academy has already engaged over 150 colleagues, equipping them with practical tools and insights to help drive performance and foster inclusive, high-performing teams.

The program was delivered through four cohorts, each engaging in immersive workshops designed to build essential leadership and collaboration skills. Topics spanned critical areas such as effective communication, high-performing teamwork, strategic problem-solving, and the art of coaching, empowering participants to lead with confidence and drive meaningful results.

A key pillar of the DEBRA Academy is personalised coaching, designed to unlock individual potential and

accelerate growth. Participants benefit from one-to-one coaching sessions that provide a safe, supportive space to reflect, set goals, and overcome challenges. This tailored approach ensures that learning goes beyond theory, helping colleagues build confidence and apply new skills in real-world scenarios.

The DEBRA Academy is more than a training programme; it is an investment in our collective future. By nurturing leadership capability and commercial acumen across the organisation, we're building a culture where every individual can make a meaningful contribution and help shape the future success of the charity.



CULTURE AND ENGAGEMENT

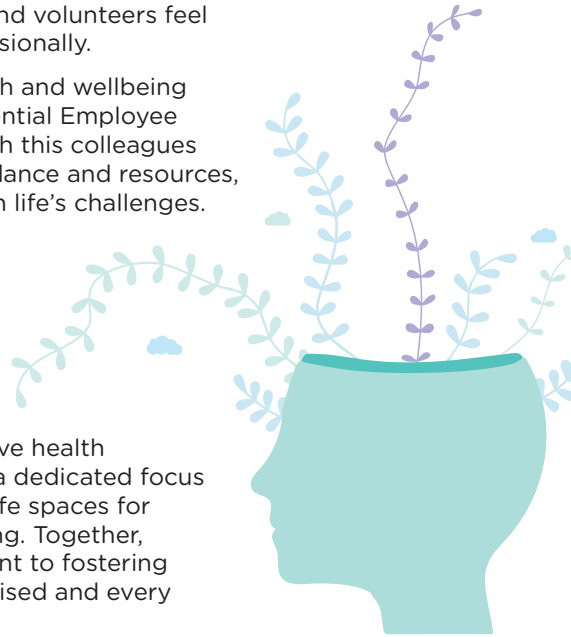
At DEBRA, we are deeply committed to fostering a positive and inclusive culture that empowers our people and aligns with our values. To strengthen this commitment, we have invested in a leading engagement platform designed to provide meaningful insights into our organisational culture and colleague experience. This investment enables us to listen, learn, and continuously improve, ensuring that every voice matters. In our most recent cultural assessment, DEBRA achieved a score of 75, which is classified as "Excellent", reflecting the strength of our culture and the dedication of our teams to creating an environment where everyone feels valued and supported.

SUPPORTING HEALTH & WELLBEING

At DEBRA, we place health and wellbeing at the heart of our culture, ensuring our colleagues and volunteers feel supported both personally and professionally.

Our comprehensive approach to health and wellbeing includes providing access to a confidential Employee Assistance Programme (EAP). Through this colleagues and volunteers can access expert guidance and resources, whenever they need them to help with life's challenges. We also deliver engaging wellbeing workshops that promote resilience and self-care, alongside a network of trained Mental Health First Aiders (MHFA) who can offer immediate, empathetic support when it's needed most.

Recognising the importance of inclusive health conversations, we've also introduced a dedicated focus on menopause awareness, creating safe spaces for dialogue, education, and understanding. Together, these initiatives reflect our commitment to fostering a workplace where wellbeing is prioritised and every individual feels valued and cared for.



EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION (EDI)

EDI is central to who we are at DEBRA. We champion awareness and understanding through initiatives that celebrate individuality and foster belonging. Our flagship event, J-EDI, is a month-long celebration every January, dedicated to amplifying voices and promoting inclusive practices across the whole organisation. Throughout the year, we reinforce this commitment with focused campaigns such as Pride, Mental Health Awareness Week, and Black History Month, creating meaningful opportunities for education and engagement.

As a Disability Confident Employer, we actively work to remove barriers and ensure accessibility for all. Our EDI Working Group plays a vital role in shaping strategy and driving progress, ensuring that inclusion is embedded in everything we do. Together, these efforts reflect our belief that diversity is a strength, and inclusion is a responsibility, helping build a workplace where everyone feels respected, valued, and empowered to thrive.



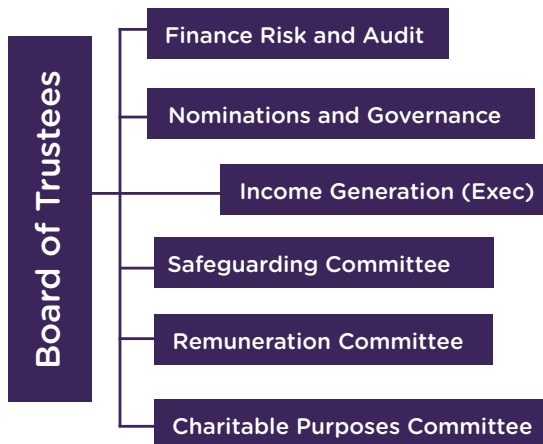
GOVERNANCE

Governance at DEBRA is embedded in policy, annual action plans, and board-level oversight, with a focus on continuous improvement and transparency.

1. GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

Board and Committees

- **Board Oversight:** The Senior Leadership Team (SLT), supported by the Board of Trustees, is responsible for setting ESG strategy and approving annual action plans.
- **Committees:** Our five board-level committees underpin governance:
 - ❑ **Finance, Risk & Audit Committee:** Oversees financial controls, risk management, and statutory compliance.
 - ❑ **Charitable Purposes Committee:** Guides care and research strategy and priorities.
 - ❑ **Nominations & Governance Committee:** Ensures best practice in governance and board appointments.
 - ❑ **Remuneration Committee:** Manages executive pay and performance.
 - ❑ **Safeguarding Committee:** Creates and oversees policies that promote the welfare of, and safeguard, all children, young people, and adults at risk with whom we come into contact during our work.





2. GOVERNANCE IN PRACTICE

- DEBRA has adopted the Charity Governance Code
- DEBRA has launched a comprehensive Governance Manual, which will be regularly updated to reflect best practice and evolving structures. This manual is a practical guide for all colleagues, supporting transparency and consistency.
- Our Trustees and colleagues complete an induction and training programme which has been strengthened to include a buddy system for new trustees. Mandatory training is in place for policies including Health & Safety, Safeguarding, GDPR, Cyber security awareness, and fraud.
- Regular review of policies & procedures.
- Board and committee oversight of financial, risk, and governance matters.
- Transparent reporting and compliance with statutory requirements.
- Regular updates to governance frameworks and manuals.
- Regular internal audits carried out during 2025 for member services, research, retail, fundraising, marketing, and financial reporting. Further audits are planned in 2026 covering IT/Cyber Security, Safeguarding, Health & Safety, and financial controls.
- Dashboards are being put in place to improve reporting.

Plans for 2026



Our Estates team will be running a project to increase awareness of waste segregation, with a view to increasing recycling to 50% of our overall waste.



During 2026 site energy audits will be completed. This will allow us to accurately report energy savings, and begins our journey towards calculating our carbon footprint.



We have purchased green energy, and this will start to be supplied to our stores from October 2026, reducing our carbon footprint.



Some of our larger stores will become community hubs with spaces offered for the community to use for meetings and events. Strengthening our links with the community and bringing more footfall into our stores.



Our stores will continue to reduce the number of textiles that are going to rag by ensuring stock is transferred strategically across the estate. We will also explore the possibility of selling 'mystery' bags to further reduce unsold donations going to waste.



In our larger stores we will be trialling 'sustainability corners' where we will offer the services of a seamstress, recycle buttons, ribbons and laces and use the fabric from unsold clothing to create fat quarters for sale to quilters.