# Patrick Grant fights fast fashion with UK-made sustainable clothing



Patrick Grant stands as a formidable voice against the tide of fast fashion, championing a shift towards sustainable practices and mindful consumption in the clothing industry. A renowned judge on "The Great British Sewing Bee" and a veteran retailer with two decades of experience, Grant is not merely an observer; he embodies his ethos through the businesses he operates. At Cookson & Clegg, the Blackburn factory he acquired in 2015, he illustrates his commitment to local production, showcasing clothing items whose origins he proudly traces back to various UK regions.

In his book "Less," Grant advocates for a more conscious approach to consumption, urging readers to reconsider the sheer volume of goods they purchase. Subtitled "Stop Buying So Much Rubbish: How Having Fewer, Better Things Can Make Us Happier," the book serves as an anti-shopping manifesto that challenges the prevailing fast fashion paradigm – one that he criticises as a commercial strategy to encourage unnecessary spending.

Grant's business ventures, most notably Community Clothing, reflect his conviction that quality should supersede quantity. Established as a for-profit social enterprise, Community Clothing aims to create jobs and bolster the UK textile industry, reviving areas that have historically reliant on manufacturing. Here, all clothing is made domestically, adhering to Grant's philosophy that local production can be both profitable and beneficial for communities. His initiative recently launched a crowdfunding campaign, an effort to further galvanise support for sustainable British apparel.

Critically, Grant articulates a broader disillusionment with the fashion industry's relentless push for newness. "The whole idea of fashion with a big ‘F’ is a deliberate act on the part of commercial businesses to encourage people to buy things they don’t need,” he states candidly. He believes this approach has led to what he terms the "acceleration and shitification" of the consumer landscape, where quality is sacrificed for fleeting trends. His business model, devoid of sales and seasonal collections, focuses instead on timeless, high-quality basics, reminiscent of brands like Sunspel but at a more accessible price point.

Despite his staunch stance against consumerism, Grant's own relationship with clothing is one of pragmatism and simplicity. He typically dons a navy crew neck and Community Clothing trousers, prioritising durability and ease over extravagance. "Most days I just have fresh pants and socks, and the same stuff as yesterday," he quips, highlighting his preference for a uniformed approach to dressing that eschews frivolity.

Reflecting on his past, Grant has a storied history with fashion, once enamoured with high-end pieces from designers like Issey Miyake and Jean Paul Gaultier in his youth. However, his current philosophy reflects a shift towards sustainability, where the emphasis is on repair and longevity. He offers five practical tips for consumers seeking a more sustainable wardrobe: buying fewer items, opting for preloved clothing, upcycling, and minimising washing, all of which reduce textile waste and promote responsible consumption.

Grant’s critique is not merely aimed at newcomers in the fast fashion arena, such as ultra-fast fashion brands like Shein and Temu, which churn out countless low-value products annually. He also targets established retailers such as Marks & Spencer, who he believes have lost their focus on product quality in favour of marketing. "They’ve decided that the way to compete is to out-advertise and out-market people," he asserts, positioning Community Clothing as a counter-narrative that prioritises craftsmanship and accessibility.

Within this framework, the environmental stakes are significant. Grant's insistence on sustainability includes an initiative to grow flax and woad for linen and natural dyes, confronting the wasteful practices of the mainstream fashion industry directly. He strives to create a regenerative system where local resources and labour are adequately valued, paving the way for a future less reliant on synthetic materials.

In navigating the complexities of wealth and privilege, Grant acknowledges that his advocacy for sustainable practices comes from a position of relative comfort, having been educated in private schools and holding valuable property. He recognises this privilege, yet passionately believes in using his resources to effect positive change. "We have to try to find a way to reverse the enormous wealth inequality we’ve created," he insists, underscoring his commitment to purpose-driven work.

Ultimately, Grant's multifaceted persona—as both a pragmatist and a passionate advocate for change—crafts a compelling narrative around the future of fashion. His focus on sustainability, local production, and less consumption serves not just as a business model, but as a broader societal call to action, inviting consumers to rethink their consumption habits and invest in quality over quantity.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraphs 1-3: [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/fashion/2025/may/19/the-retailer-who-wants-us-to-buy-less-patrick-grant-on-his-fight-against-fast-fashion), [[2]](https://www.gq.com/story/patrick-grant-community-clothing-q-a), [[4]](https://www.newstatesman.com/culture/observations/2019/09/patrick-grant-maverick-mission-transform-clothing-business), [[7]](https://www.theguardian.com/global/2019/sep/29/fashion-designer-patrick-grant-social-enterprise-community-clothing)
2. Paragraph 4: [[3]](https://www.pioneerspost.com/news-views/20211221/growing-fashion-s-regenerative-future-community-clothing-s-patrick-grant), [[6]](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/men/style/need-lower-levels-consumption-sewing-bees-patrick-grant-should/), [[5]](https://www.ft.com/content/c51be1b6-87f6-4b00-bc86-4869691edc41)
3. Paragraph 5: [[6]](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/men/style/need-lower-levels-consumption-sewing-bees-patrick-grant-should/), [[3]](https://www.pioneerspost.com/news-views/20211221/growing-fashion-s-regenerative-future-community-clothing-s-patrick-grant)
4. Paragraph 6: [[2]](https://www.gq.com/story/patrick-grant-community-clothing-q-a), [[4]](https://www.newstatesman.com/culture/observations/2019/09/patrick-grant-maverick-mission-transform-clothing-business), [[5]](https://www.ft.com/content/c51be1b6-87f6-4b00-bc86-4869691edc41)
5. Paragraph 7: [[4]](https://www.newstatesman.com/culture/observations/2019/09/patrick-grant-maverick-mission-transform-clothing-business), [[6]](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/men/style/need-lower-levels-consumption-sewing-bees-patrick-grant-should/)
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7. Paragraph 9: [[3]](https://www.pioneerspost.com/news-views/20211221/growing-fashion-s-regenerative-future-community-clothing-s-patrick-grant), [[2]](https://www.gq.com/story/patrick-grant-community-clothing-q-a)
8. Paragraph 10: [[4]](https://www.newstatesman.com/culture/observations/2019/09/patrick-grant-maverick-mission-transform-clothing-business), [[5]](https://www.ft.com/content/c51be1b6-87f6-4b00-bc86-4869691edc41), [[7]](https://www.theguardian.com/global/2019/sep/29/fashion-designer-patrick-grant-social-enterprise-community-clothing)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/fashion/2025/may/19/the-retailer-who-wants-us-to-buy-less-patrick-grant-on-his-fight-against-fast-fashion> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.gq.com/story/patrick-grant-community-clothing-q-a> - In this GQ interview, Patrick Grant discusses his initiative, Community Clothing, which aims to revitalize the UK textile industry by producing timeless, high-quality garments. He emphasizes the importance of local manufacturing and fair wages, highlighting the decline of domestic clothing businesses due to overseas competition. Grant envisions a sustainable future for British factories by focusing on efficiency and quality, challenging the fast fashion model that often relies on cheap labor and unsustainable practices.
3. <https://www.pioneerspost.com/news-views/20211221/growing-fashion-s-regenerative-future-community-clothing-s-patrick-grant> - This article explores Patrick Grant's vision for a regenerative fashion industry through Community Clothing. Grant advocates for sustainable practices, such as using responsibly sourced materials and ensuring product durability. He introduces five tips for a sustainable wardrobe, including buying less and better, repairing clothes, purchasing preloved items, upcycling, and washing less. The piece also highlights Community Clothing's efforts in growing flax and woad to produce linen and indigo dye, aiming to create a more sustainable and regenerative fashion system.
4. <https://www.newstatesman.com/culture/observations/2019/09/patrick-grant-maverick-mission-transform-clothing-business> - In this New Statesman article, Patrick Grant discusses his mission to transform the clothing industry by focusing on quality and sustainability. He highlights Community Clothing's business model, which allocates a significant portion of revenue to manufacturing, ensuring high-quality, long-lasting products. Grant criticizes the fast fashion industry for its emphasis on constant newness and low prices, advocating instead for a model that values durability and ethical production. The article also touches on Community Clothing's efforts to support British manufacturing and create skilled jobs.
5. <https://www.ft.com/content/c51be1b6-87f6-4b00-bc86-4869691edc41> - This Financial Times article covers Patrick Grant's launch of Community Clothing's Organic Athletic line, a plastic-free and biodegradable sportswear collection. The range includes items like T-shirts, shorts, and sweatshirts made entirely from plant-based materials. Grant discusses the challenges of eliminating synthetic materials from sportswear and the importance of sustainability in the fashion industry. The collection represents a significant shift towards environmentally friendly practices, aligning with Grant's broader mission to promote sustainable and ethical clothing production.
6. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/men/style/need-lower-levels-consumption-sewing-bees-patrick-grant-should/> - In this Telegraph interview, Patrick Grant emphasizes the need to reduce consumption and focus on long-term, quality purchases. He advocates for buying fewer, better items and learning to repair and cherish existing clothing. Grant also discusses the importance of avoiding synthetic fibers and supporting fair labor practices. He encourages consumers to be discerning and demand transparency from brands, highlighting the significance of sustainability and ethical production in the fashion industry.
7. <https://www.theguardian.com/global/2019/sep/29/fashion-designer-patrick-grant-social-enterprise-community-clothing> - This Guardian article profiles Patrick Grant's Community Clothing initiative, established in 2016 to support UK manufacturers and provide affordable, high-quality clothing. Grant discusses the challenges faced by British factories due to seasonal demand fluctuations and how Community Clothing aims to address these issues by offering timeless, seasonless products. The initiative focuses on creating sustainable jobs and revitalizing local communities, emphasizing the importance of quality over quantity in the fashion industry.