

Responsible Business Impact Report 2022-23

Delivering impact with purpose





We strive to create a culture where our people can bring the best of themselves to work and I'm particularly passionate about how we can help them to achieve their full potential. We are constantly working on how we can do this better.

Pippa Clarke
Chair, Bishop Fleming

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Welcome

Welcome to our second annual Responsible Business Impact Report. 2023 has been a positive year of challenges and achievements, and I'm incredibly proud to work with so many dedicated and talented people.

We remain committed to working with Business in the Community (BITC) on our responsible business journey and are proud to share achievements made and future aspirations in this report. In the past year, we have endeavoured to further integrate our ambition and values into our responsible business framework around Healthy Business, Healthy Communities, and Healthy Environment.

We were particularly pleased to be certified as a Great Place to Work® by the Best Workplaces Programme in our first application. This globally recognised independent employee survey is built on a Trust Index and achieving this certification reflects the focus we have placed on making our organisation one that attracts and retains the very best talent. In addition, our ongoing efforts to define workplace culture and promoting gender equality and inclusion has been recognised with a listing in the UK's Best Workplaces for Women™ for large organisations.

Social mobility continues to remain a key focus for us. We are passionate about making our recruitment process as inclusive and accessible as possible and have launched a new Employer Brand website to reflect this. We continue to support the Strive Internship programme to provide paid internships to Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic students, and are actively engaged with Bristol Future Talent Partnership to give work experience to under-represented students.

A new coaching programme for working parents has proven to be immensely popular, and our Health & Wellbeing Ambassadors continue to deliver a suite of materials, tips, and advice to our people in maximising a healthy work-life balance.

As an accredited apprenticeship provider it was rewarding to be ranked 14th in the Top 100 Apprenticeship Employers in the UK, a national league table co-developed by the Department for Education.

Our Environmental team have also been busy, calculating our carbon footprint for the first time, researching and understanding the carbon market, and setting out our sustainability and carbon reduction strategy for the future.

All our responsible business work underpins the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, seven of which are particularly material to us, and we will continue to focus our efforts around these areas going forward.

Thank you to everyone who has been involved in our journey. I recognise that we have come far but we have much more to do, and I look forward to that challenge.

Fleur Lewis

Partner & Responsible Business Lead

A strategic view

With another year of double digit growth and record turnover, our ambition to be the most rewarding firm for our clients, people, and communities continues to be a fundamental element of the firm's Better Growth strategy.

One of our core values is to 'work as one team' and this is reflected not just in our financial performance this year, but in our client feedback and recognition that we are a Great Place to Work®.

During the year we added an eighth office location in Cheltenham, which together with another record intake of apprentices, has taken our headcount close to 500 for the first time. We continue to invest in our people and in an uncertain economic environment, have remained in close contact with our clients to support and assist with specialist advice when required.

Our client work is very much relationship-led, and we believe having a physical presence in our local markets, supported by engaged and enthusiastic employees is key to achieving this aim. We know this from talking with our clients, and I am immensely proud of our latest client listening results highlighting an overall Net Promoter Score (NPS) of +50, some 16 points above the professional services sector average.

I'm also extremely pleased with the numerous awards that we've won in the last year. These have included not only recognition for our high levels of professional service, but also rankings amongst the very best businesses in the UK for our apprentice and training programmes, as a Great Place to Work®, and our listing as the 5th best Mid-Tier Firm in the UK.

This provides us with a solid base and momentum as we turn our new Better Growth strategy into action. Our strategy is geared around sustainable growth across our business, our services, our markets, our clients, our people, and our enablement functions.

Responsible Business is central to all these areas and remains at the heart of our purpose-led ambition and values.

Andrew Sandiford
Managing Partner



About us

Whether our clients are an SME, owner managed business, large corporate, public sector organisation, charity, school or private individual, we have the capability and capacity to meet their needs.

From our office locations in the South West and the West Midlands, we are able to serve our clients across the UK, and internationally through our membership of Kreston Global.

We're client focused

- We pride ourselves on being relationship-led and place our client and people relationships at the heart of our business.
- We know that we only truly succeed when our clients, whether internal or external, are successful. Putting ourselves in our clients' shoes at every opportunity means we are more likely to deliver the service, advice and solutions that consistently exceed their expectations.

We have a depth of talent

- We have 42 Partners and nearly 500 people covering eight offices across the South West and West Midlands.
- We are employers of choice
- We are currently certified as a Great Place to Work®.

We are leaders in our field

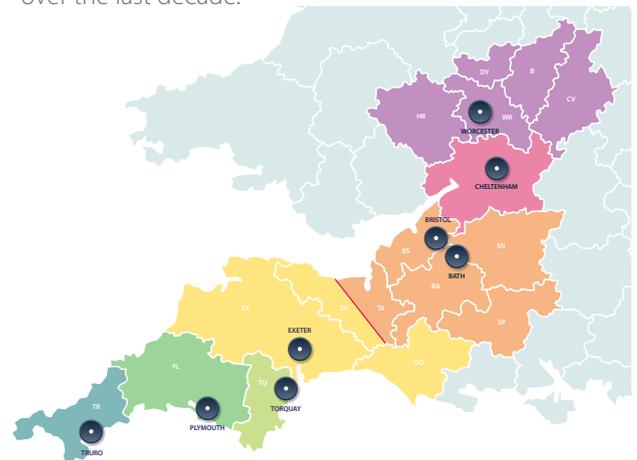
- We're the No.1 Auditor to Multi-Academy Trusts in the education sector. We are also the leading auditor to HE/ FE Colleges in the South West.
- We are pleased to be current suppliers of the Crescent Purchasing Consortium framework for both Audit and Financial Services.

We have international reach

- We're able to balance regional expertise with international reach. As a member of Kreston Global, we are part of a global network of over 200 independent accounting firms with a resource of more than 25,000 professionals and support employees, operating in 123 countries.

We're growing

- We're currently ranked the 30th largest firm in the UK by turnover and have been one of the fastest-growing firms over the last decade.





At a glance



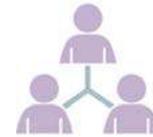
Depth of talent

With 42 Partners and nearly 500 people, we've got the capacity and expertise to meet your needs.



Continued growth

With a turnover of over £38m, the firm saw organic growth of 15% over the last 12 months.



12,000+ Clients

including 2,500 new clients in the last 12 months.



Leaders in our field

No.1 firm in the UK to the Academy sector.

Exceptional! client service

We have an above average industry net promoter score based on client feedback on our service delivery.



Award winning

We're ranked 5th in the Mid-Tier Power Index from Accountancy Age and have won multiple awards.

Employer of choice

We are certified and recognised as a Great Place to Work® in 2023.



Responsible Business

We're committed to having a positive impact on our communities, environment and people and are proud members of BITC.



8 UK offices

Bath | Bristol | Cheltenham | Exeter
Plymouth | Torquay | Truro | Worcester



National focus, international reach

Through our membership of Kreston Global, we have access to an international network of independent accounting firms.

Our service expertise

We deliver services across a wide range of areas. To find out more information visit our website www.bishopfleming.co.uk

Audit



External Audit



Statutory Accounts



VAT Compliance and Advisory



Digital Services



Internal Audit



Company Secretarial



Management Information



Payroll

Company Secretarial

Management Information

Payroll

Tax



Corporate Tax Compliance



International Tax



R&D



Trusts and Probate



Employer Solutions



Personal Tax Compliance



Stamp Duty Land Tax



Independent Financial Advice

Advisory



Acquisition and Due Diligence



Funding Advisory



Restructuring



Business Sale and Valuation



Strategy and Forecasting

Our sector expertise

We deliver services across a wide range of sectors. To find out more information visit our website www.bishopfleming.co.uk



Automotive



Charities and not-for-profit



Education



Energy, renewables and natural resources



Financial Services



Food and Drink



Healthcare



Hospitality and Leisure



Housing Associations



Manufacturing



Private Client



Professional Services



Public Sector



Real Estate and Construction



Technology, media and telecoms



Transport and Logistics

Recognising our achievements

We are delighted with the number of awards that we have won or been shortlisted for in our financial year to May 2023.

This recognises not just the highest levels of client service and professional standards that we aspire to deliver, but also our commitment to being the most rewarding firm for our clients, people, and communities.

This year we have been certified as a Great Place To Work® which is the global authority on workplace culture. Our employees were independently surveyed across a wide range of themes including pay and benefits, working environment, health and wellbeing, and leadership resulting in a Trust Index score of 74% - 20% higher than a typical UK based company. As a result of our certification, we have also been ranked in the Best Places for Women list for 2023.

Certified
Great Place to Work®
Best Workplaces Programme

Ranked
Great Place to Work®
Large size category of UK's Best Workplaces for Women™



As a people-based business, this year we've made huge strides in our people activities and it's fantastic to see that this has been recognised with numerous certifications, rankings and awards.

Anna Averis
Partner and People Director

Ranked

14th Best Apprenticeship Programme

Top 100 UK Employer Apprenticeship Employers

Ranked

5th in UK Mid-tier

Accountancy Age Power Index 2022

Winner

Investing in People

2022 Accounting Excellence Awards

Finalist (Highly Commended)

Specialist Team of the Year (Education)

2022 Accounting Excellence Awards

Finalist (Highly Commended)

Large Firm of the Year

2022 Accounting Excellence Awards

Finalist

Best Apprenticeship Scheme

2022 CIPD People Management Excellence Awards

Finalist

Customer Service of the Year

2022 Business Leader Awards

Finalist

Advisory Firm of the Year

2022 Business Leader Awards

Finalist

Payroll Service Provider of the Year

2022 CIPP Excellence Awards



Responsible Business

Responsible Business is central to our culture and future growth strategy. We are proud to remain members of Business in the Community (BITC), the largest and longest established business led membership organisation dedicated to responsible business.

Using BITC's responsible business framework, we recognise that a responsible business is a healthy business, underpinned by a focus on healthy communities and a healthy environment to achieve benefit and long-term added value for all stakeholders.



Healthy Business

- Ambition & Values
- Governance & Transparency
- Stakeholder Engagement & Community Collaboration
- Value Chain
- Digital Transformation

Healthy Communities

- Health & Wellbeing
- Employment & Skills
- Inclusion & Diversity

Healthy Environment

- Circular Economy
- Climate Action
- Nature Stewardship

We use BITC's responsible business framework to implement actions that contribute towards the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

We are primarily focused on the seven goals highlighted below:





Healthy Business



Healthy Business

Ambition and Values

As attitudes to work shift and people are looking for more from their working lives as well as place of work, our ambition gives us the ability to reframe rewarding for a new era of purpose-led performance.

Guided by our values, our approach to being a responsible business is directed by our purpose-led ambition:

Our ambition is to be the most
rewarding accountancy firm in the UK
for our clients, people and communities.

We are prepared to challenge ourselves, as people and as a business, to expand our capability, build new alliances, increase our regional impact and with it, bring fresh perspectives to the issues facing our clients. We promote an agile and inclusive culture and believe it's what we bring together that sets us apart. Central to our culture are five core values:



We think
client.



We put relationships
at the heart.



We work
as one team.



We have the courage
to be different.



We do
the right thing.



Employee Engagement

Maintaining excellent employee engagement is a strategic priority for our business, which we encourage through a weekly employees 'pulse' survey, as well as our 'Your Say' Forum. This is made up of employee representatives from all areas of our business and ensures we understand the material issues affecting our people, maintaining an open-door to change policies and processes as a result.

Building on a strong heritage of being ranked in the Sunday Times 100 Best Companies To Work For lists for five consecutive years, as well as being ranked in the Best Companies' Top Five Accounting Firms to Work For in 2021, this year we were certified as a Great Place to Work® under the Best Workplaces Programme.

Great Place to Work® is the global authority on workplace culture. A great place to work is one where everyone, no matter who they are or what they do, is having a consistently positive experience. By taking part in Great Place to Work® we are committed to fostering an environment where everyone has a purpose, can contribute new ideas, and has access to the resources they need to thrive within the business.



Governance & Transparency

Our healthy business focus remains one of continuous improvement and maintaining the highest standards across all operations. That is why we have just completed BITC's Tracker benchmark exercise for the second time, a 360 degree appraisal of our business, and we will act on its feedback and recommendations in the coming year.

To support our future strategy we have put in place a new governance structure to enable better efficiency in decision making and improving accountability and transparency.

This involves a new market-led structure and builds on our expertise in key sectors. We believe that good governance should be the responsibility of all employees, which is why we have introduced a new Performance Management Plan with emphasis on how we integrate our core values into daily business.



Induction Week 2022

We welcome our 67 new apprentices to Bristol for Professional Development (PD1) Week - a programme of training and social events to kick start their career with Bishop Fleming.

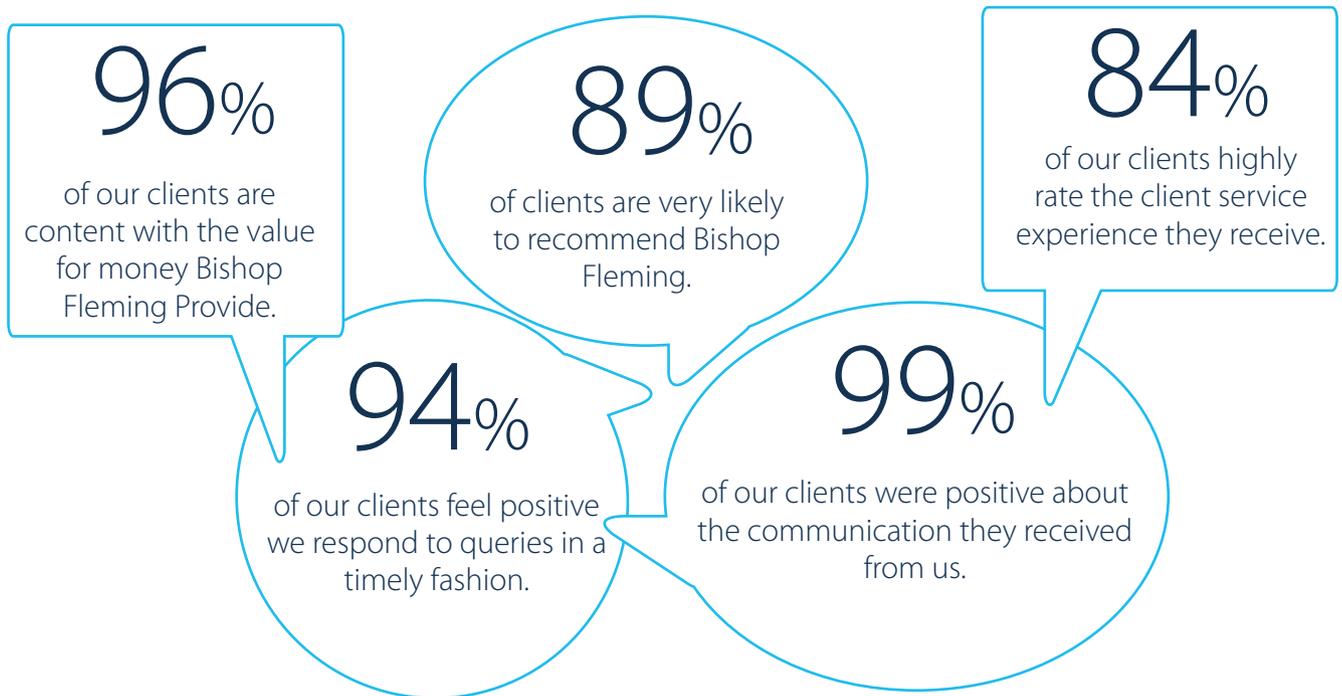




Client Listening

We actively listen to our clients through regular feedback surveys on our service delivery. Results are reviewed by department heads and shared with teams to improve processes and service delivery.

Our current overall Net Promoter Score (NPS) is +50, which is 16 points above the professional services sector average and up 2 points on our previous year.



Whilst we are encouraged by such positive client feedback, we recognise the need to continuously improve our service delivery processes and are increasing our focus on strengthening client relationships through ongoing employee training at every level.



“ I felt they took the time to get to know us and our business needs, it feels more like a working partnership with Bishop Fleming. ”

“ The team are always very professional and ready to listen. Work is handled efficiently. Communication is very clear. Any queries are dealt with promptly. Thank you! ”



Healthy Business



Community Collaboration

We regard engagement in community projects as a core part of our responsible business ethos. At a global level, we have volunteers on an international ESG (Environmental, Social, Governance) team organised by Kreston Global to support its 200 independent member firms with best practice on environmental, social, and governance areas.

Closer to home, our people are encouraged to undertake volunteering and fundraising activities, as well as invest time in positions of responsibility on committees, community groups, trusts, and charities.

All our people can use a day of time to invest in local community activity of their choice – this has included working in a food bank, assisting on exhibition stands, planting trees, decorating, litter picking, participating in personal fundraising for charities, and taking part in client and third-party fundraising events.

In our last financial year, our eight offices worked with nominated local charities to raise £23,700. These included – Exeter Northcott Theatre, Rowcroft Hospice, The Wave Project, Cornwall Air Ambulance, Midlands Air Ambulance, Primrose Hospice, FareShare, and Mind Devon.

Recognising that bringing our teams together to work in the community not only benefits local charity and community groups but stimulates our people's engagement and improves overall health and mental wellbeing, our ambition is to rekindle the pre-Covid community spirit we successfully created in our 2019 centenary year. For our next financial year, we have therefore selected six regional charities with the aim that our offices raise an ambitious target of £50,000. They are Cornwall Air Ambulance, Devon Wildlife Trust, Hugs, Off The Record, Prostrate Cancer UK and Teens in Crisis (TIC).

**EXETER
NORTHCOTT
THEATRE**

 **FareShare**
fighting hunger,
tackling food waste

 **mind | Devon**
for better mental health


**rowcroft
hospice**

Cornwall 
Air Ambulance

 **THE WAVE
PROJECT**


**MIDLANDS
AIR AMBULANCE CHARITY®**

Healthy Business



Young Enterprise

Young Enterprise is our chosen firmwide charity and celebrates its 60th Anniversary in 2023. Since its inception, 7.2 million young people have engaged in its financial education programmes and 84,000 student companies have been set up.

Therefore as the leading auditor to Academies and Multi-Academy Trusts in the Education Sector and a leading advisory firm to businesses, our partnership with Young Enterprise is a natural fit. We provide financial support to participating schools, act as business advisors to student companies, and volunteer as board members.

In 2022/23, the winners of the Bishop Fleming sponsored Best Marketing Award and overall winners at the West of England Area Final, was Bubble Botanics from Clifton High School. Bubble Botanics provides solutions for getting greenery into homes and workspaces in an affordable, environmentally conscious way. Clifton represented the West of England area at the South West Final where they won Best Financial Management Award and came overall runner-up.



Each September a new cohort of schools enter the programme, setting up their companies, creating fresh ideas, and developing products to take to market. It is a great privilege to be part of their journey, to help them unlock their entrepreneurial skills and to see these student companies succeed.

Paul Seymour

Chief Marketing Officer and Chair, West of England Board, Young Enterprise





Young Enterprise Regional Final

Bubble Botanics are awarded the Best Financial Management Award at the Young Enterprise South West Regional Final.

Healthy Business

Stakeholder Engagement

We liaise and interact with several different stakeholder groups as part of our daily business. These include our clients, our people, key suppliers, regulatory bodies, professional networks, community teams, and environmental groups.

This year we have started a stakeholder mapping exercise across key areas of our responsible business framework to understand their material priorities more fully. This is an ongoing exercise focused on our people, our clients, and our suppliers. Some of our main external stakeholder groups include:



THE STRIVE INTERNSHIP





Value Chain

We are governed by the ICAEW's code of ethics in ensuring that we carry out detailed background checks before taking on new clients. In a similar way, we are committed to acting ethically and with integrity in our business relationships with suppliers. This checks that the suppliers we work with conduct their business in an ethical manner.

This year we have started a supplier mapping exercise, which includes an in-depth due diligence review of our top supplier stakeholders, to better understand materiality and establish what policies and processes they implement as a responsible business. This will be complemented by a new Supplier Code of Ethical Conduct to be launched shortly.

We have also implemented a local procurement policy to increase our engagement with local suppliers and to ensure wherever possible, that we source goods and services that are sustainable. An example includes sourcing hand sanitiser from our client Salcombe Distilling Company. Not only do Salcombe Distilling make fabulous gin and rum, but they also donate one bottle of their hand sanitiser to ShelterBox for every 100ml bottle purchased. A win-win – buying locally, buying sustainably, supporting a client, and having a positive community impact.

Digital Transformation

We have set out an ambitious growth strategy. Our investment in digital transformation is aligned with this as we seek to strengthen the firm's operations scalability and resilience, to meet the growth challenge in a sustainable and rewarding manner.

A recent example of this is our Accountancy service line's investment in implementing FAST. FWD – a new approach to work, that brought about a new attitude and fundamental change to how the teams deliver our annual tax and accounts compliance services. As part of this, we partnered with a leading cloud technology provider, Silverfin, to enable the new workflow processes. The upshot has been a significantly more rewarding outcome for our teams – being able to get the work done faster, with fewer hours, in shorter turnaround times – which benefits their wellbeing, as well as deliver a more relevant and responsive client service.

We are delighted to continue our support of both the South West and the West Midlands Cyber Resilience Centres, and our Chief Technology Officer also sits on their Advisory Group. Through voluntary working with these centres, we can support local businesses to ensure their threats to cyber security are minimised.



Healthy Business

What have we achieved?

- Responsible Business embedded as an integral part of our culture and 5-year Better Growth strategy and plan.
- Implemented a new management and reporting structure to enable improvements in efficiency and decision-making.
- Launched an innovative process efficiency programme to make our client service more responsive and benefit employee wellbeing.
- Proudly received industry awards and recognition to have achieved Great Place to Work® certification in our first application.





Objectives 2022-23	Status	Progress
Complete 2nd BITC Tracker benchmark and report on progress.	Delivered	We have completed the Tracker submission in June 2023 and will report on results both internally and externally.
Extend our key supplier engagement and risk assessment to a wider range of organisations.	Ongoing	We have initiated a supplier mapping exercise with our Top 50 suppliers whilst developing a new Supplier Code of Ethical Conduct, which will be launched this year.
Extend our client listening programme across core service lines, including client journey mapping to understand key points of ongoing interaction.	Ongoing	Journey mapping exercises have been completed with our Education and Payroll client teams. Further ongoing work will be conducted with markets and services as a key part of our growth strategy.
Implement training for all employees on Modern Slavery.	In planning	This will be incorporated into a wider learning and development training plan this year.

Objectives 2023-24

Foster a strong sense of community engagement by actively participating in local fundraising initiatives and increasing volunteering efforts for charitable causes.

Implement a Supplier Code of Ethical Conduct with key suppliers.

Deliver Modern Slavery training to all employees.

Increase stakeholder engagement through research and client listening programme.



Healthy Communities

Healthy Communities

Health & Wellbeing

Feedback received from our people as key stakeholders is incredibly important. It enables us to understand sentiment across our business, including areas of people's health and wellbeing, and how well they feel we are focused on inclusion and diversity.

We acknowledge and respect the fact that we have more work to do, but are encouraged by the Great Place to Work® employee feedback which highlighted:





Our overall ambition in this area is to create an environment where all individuals can bring their best selves to work, building the right culture to enable people to find a healthy work-life balance.

We have rolled out a series of videos and blogs written by part-time employees to highlight how hybrid working helps people in our organisation to progress their careers whilst having caring responsibilities.

This year we have introduced a new performance management system that links our firm's Ambition and Values into performance objectives. This is designed to ensure our commitment to responsible business through our values is linked to ongoing performance conversations where every employee clearly understands their role.

Using feedback from the BITC Tracker benchmark exercise, a specific H&W survey, a weekly Pulse survey, and the recent Great Place to Work® survey, our Health & Wellbeing teams have continued to focus their efforts around four core wellbeing pillars – Mental, Physical, Financial and Social.



Mental



Physical



Financial



Social

Our 22 trained Mental Health First Aiders (MHFA) and Wellbeing Ambassadors continue to remind people of the importance of their wellbeing through ongoing blogs and events to support national awareness campaigns. Some examples include:

- Mental Health Awareness Week
- Nutrition & Hydration Week
- Pension Awareness Week
- Movember
- World Mental Health Day
- Time to Talk Day
- Random Acts of Kindness Day
- World Blood Donor Day
- Wear it Pink Day

Healthy Communities



Social

Social Wellbeing is about sharing, developing, and sustaining meaningful relationships with others. In a work context, it relates to the measure of our interpersonal relationships with co-workers or interactions with management, but overall it is about that sense of belonging within the business as a whole.

Our offices celebrated Random Acts of Kindness Day in February by working with local charities to provide warm clothing and blankets for the homeless, and food and toiletries via food banks. Our people were positively engaged in their local office initiatives and the overall message of thinking of others was reinforced.

We remain focused on creating an environment where the mental, physical, financial, and social wellbeing of all our people is actively encouraged and supported, with strategic decisions taking into account the impact on these four pillars.



Isobel Savage

Partner and
Health and Wellbeing Lead

Mental

This year we joined the Mental Health at Work Commitment, a framework that recognises the importance of promoting employee wellbeing.

This framework sets out six clear best practice standards that will better equip us to create an environment where employees can thrive. These standards build on those set out in the independent Government-commissioned Thriving at Work review in 2017 and Time to Change Employer Pledge. They include:

1. Prioritise mental health in the workplace by developing and delivering a systematic programme of activity.
2. Proactively ensure work design and organisational culture drive positive mental health outcomes.
3. Promote an open culture around mental health.
4. Increase organisational confidence and capability.
5. Provide mental health tools and support.
6. Increase transparency and accountability through internal and external reporting.

We continue to provide an online counselling service through My Wellbeing, delivered through our SimplyHealth employee benefit scheme.



Physical

A Menopause Group was started at the end of 2022, made up of a mixture of people – some are experiencing menopause (from early symptoms through to having full-blown experience and therefore bringing knowledge and learnings to share) to others that are not there yet but curious to find out what to expect.

Working with Joanna Kippax, a registered sleep practitioner and founder of WyeSleep, we encouraged all employees to engage in a webinar that addressed the basic science of sleep, what sleep needs for it to arrive, how to sleep when stressed, and how to maximise your sleep to benefit your health, wellbeing, and productivity.

Financial

We have continued our work with **Better with Money**, running webinars and live sessions with all employees around Budgeting and Saving, Debt and Borrowing, Homes and Mortgages, and Pensions and Retirement. Employees have also continued to benefit from Perkbox, which in addition to offering discounts on everyday items, also has a wellness focus to access online classes ranging from HIIT to yoga, meditation, and sleep. In addition, all trainees now qualify for a free railcard during their period of training.



Healthy Communities

Health and Wellbeing

What have we achieved?

- Joined the Mental Health at Work Commitment.
- Implemented a successful hybrid working policy.
- Placed our values central to a new Performance Management system.
- Implemented an efficiency review of working practices and processes to redefine job descriptions and ensure clarity on roles and expectations.





Objectives 2022-23	Status	Progress
Improve accountability by formally integrating Health & Wellbeing into people manager's job roles.	Delivered	Our new Performance Management process recognises employee wellbeing as an integral part of people manager's job role.
Roll out compulsory training for all people managers on mental wellbeing.	In Progress	We have identified a training provider and are incorporating mental wellbeing training into a wider learning and development programme.
Join the Mental Health at Work Commitment and implement best practice.	On Target	We are now members of the Mental Health at Work Commitment and are incorporating its best practice recommendations for our business operations.
Create a programme of mental, physical, social, and financial training for all employees.	Ongoing	Our H&W Workgroup has delivered a series of lunchtime workshops throughout the year and will continue to do so going forward.
Continue to deliver training with Better with Money to support employees through challenging economic headwinds.	Delivered	Financial training with Better with Money has been delivered for trainees as a formal part of their Personal Development training. We also invited Better with Money to run a workshop at our All Firm event for all employees last December.

Objectives 2023-24

Review and incorporate best practice recommendations from Mental Health at Work Commitment.

Continuous review of job design, clarity of role, and expectations to achieve improved workplace wellbeing.

Streamline our Wellbeing Ambassador activity to achieve better focus and impact on wellbeing.

Healthy Communities

Inclusion and Diversity

Promoting inclusion and diversity is a fundamental aspect of our values and business strategy at Bishop Fleming. We believe that diverse perspectives fuel innovation and drive positive change.

We're passionate about creating an inclusive workplace that promotes and values inclusion, diversity, equality and equity. We recognise that we have nearly 500 people who are completely different, with each one bringing something unique to the collective mix. Our Diversity Report can be viewed here :

www.bishopfleming.co.uk/diversity-and-inclusion

Our Inclusion and Diversity (I&D) working group, BF Voices, has continued to focus its energies around five strategic areas:

- Improved representation of women at senior levels.
- Greater need for ethnic diversity.
- Social mobility and widening access to our workplace.
- Better recognition of the LGBTQIA+ community.
- Recognition and support for those with neurodiversity, disabilities, and carers.

Analysing the data from our latest diversity monitoring is key in identifying the groups of people we should focus on in order to promote fairness and equality. Whilst there is still a lot of work to do around social mobility, we are confident we are taking the right steps to widen access to the accountancy profession and our firm.

A key part of our I&D messaging has been to support and celebrate national and international awareness campaigns including;

- International Women's Day
- Black History Month
- ADHD Awareness Month
- Pride Month
- National Inclusion Week
- Neurodiversity Week

Recognising our people come from many different ethnic and cultural backgrounds, we also take time to celebrate and raise awareness of religious festivals such as Diwali and Ramadan.



Social Mobility

We have steadily increased the number of apprentices we recruit directly from school, giving them an alternative career route other than university. We continue to support the Strive Internship Programme, working with universities to provide paid work placements for students of Black Asian Minority Ethnic backgrounds living in Bristol and South Gloucestershire. This has resulted in full-time positions being filled in our Bristol office and we are committed to providing two internships each year across a five-year period. In addition, this year we supported the Crankstart programme led by Oxford University to deliver work experience to a student from a lower-income background.



Our Chair, Pippa Clarke, was invited by Business in the Community as a guest on their responsible business podcast series, The Lens. The episode explores how businesses can build a responsible business culture, and how personal passions for people are creating workplaces that are agile and creative. Pippa highlighted the firm's drive to be open and inclusive, recognising that our people have different experiences and backgrounds.

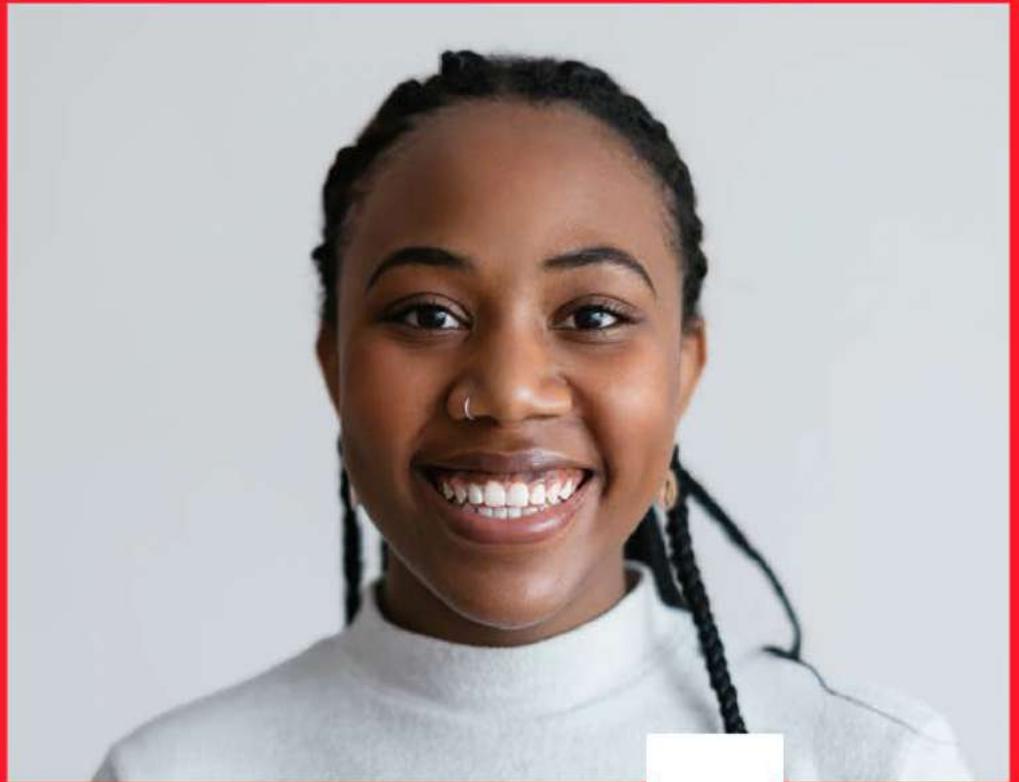
Listen to the podcast here:



Encouraging differences and allowing everyone to express themselves helps us create a stronger, more dynamic and more diverse culture.



Ria Burrige
Partner and
Inclusion and Diversity Lead



We're a UK's Best Workplace™ for Women 2023

Great Place To Work®



Healthy Communities



Gender Equality

A key part of our Inclusion and Diversity (I&D) strategy is to improve gender equality. This year we introduced a coaching programme for working parents across the firm in partnership with transition experts 'How Do You Do It' to assist our people, and working mothers in particular, to achieve success both at work and at home.

Results from the programme have been incredibly positive, highlighting a positive uplift of 41% in confidence in achieving success both at work and at home, and a 71% positive uplift in developing practical and relevant strategies to combine work and parental responsibilities. Participants unanimously agreed that they had benefited from the programme, and based on such positive feedback, we will continue this initiative going forward.

I've worked at a few firms over my career so far and the support at Bishop Fleming has been excellent. There's a clear understanding of the challenges faced as a parent within my peer group and the audit partners I work with, and I feel that I can talk to them about how I'm getting on or challenges I'm facing delivering my projects.

Good to gain perspective of peers and their challenges which are often very similar and share ideas as to how to achieve goals.

As founding signatory members of the Bristol Women in Business Charter, we continue to report on commitments and goals, including the availability of flexible working opportunities, increasing the number of women at senior management and partner positions, and supporting women through mentoring and women's networks such as the Women's Work Lab.

In support of gender equality in the community, we were delighted to sponsor the Royal West of England Academy (RWA) exhibition, *Found Cities, Lost Objects: Women in the City*, showcasing contemporary art that challenges societal norms and sheds light on important issues. This extraordinary exhibition highlighted the invaluable contributions of women artists in shaping Bristol's artistic legacy.

We celebrated the #Embrace Equity theme of International Women's Day in March with a series of workshops, talks, podcasts, and articles throughout the week with the aim of challenging people to understand that equal opportunities are not enough, recognising that people start from different places and therefore true inclusion requires equitable action.

We were delighted to be listed in the large-size category of UK's Best Workplaces for Women™ following our accreditation as a Great Place to Work®. This recognition comes as part of our ongoing efforts in redefining workplace culture and promoting gender equality and inclusion. We remain committed to making sure we maintain an environment that helps our people to reach their full potential, regardless of their background or role, and fostering a diverse and inclusive environment remains part of our Better Growth strategy.

Inclusion and Diversity

Gender Pay Report

Gender parity and greater diversity within the workplace are important for society as a whole and as a responsible business, gender pay gap reporting is a significant element of our transparency. Whilst we have an almost equal number of men to women, we understand our gender pay gaps are caused by an underrepresentation of women at senior levels and we are actively working to address this.

Our 2022 Gender Pay Report highlights a gender pay gap median average of 8.7% against a UK average of 14.9%, and down 8.6 percentage points on prior year. Our Gender Pay Report can be viewed here: www.bishopfleming.co.uk/gender-pay-report

Our actions

- We have an almost balanced number of men (45%) and women (55%).
- We have an inclusive approach to hybrid and flexible working for all of our workforce, which helps to support women and caregivers in particular to balance home and work life.
- We have two Partners who sponsor and champion our I&D strategy, supported by a working group of employee volunteers.
- We continue to use job evaluation and benchmarked external data to inform our approach to pay.
- We have gender-balanced interview panels for senior promotions and external hires.
- We review our job adverts to ensure that they are gender inclusive.
- We are committed to investing in long-term careers within our firm. Over 13% of our firm has at least 10 years of service and over 28% have over five years of service.
- We have a Women's Mentoring Network which connects

junior female talent with senior female talent.

- Inclusion and diversity is built into our key accountabilities for our people managers.
- We have introduced a targeted maternity coaching programme to support women to continue to progress in their careers after they become parents. We hope this will contribute to improving the number of women progressing to more senior roles, and therefore narrowing our gender pay gap.

Supporting our female employees to achieve their career aspirations and reducing our gender pay gap remains a core objective.

Nadine Mensah-Kessie
People Business Manager





Our commitment:

- We are committed to reducing our gender pay gap even further.
- We empower our employees to bring their best selves to work.
- We lead by example by demonstrating strong leadership and accountability for equal opportunities.
- We will continue to assess our internal working practices and, where appropriate, amend them to ensure that these are inclusive and allow all our employees to reach their potential.
- We will promote diversity and inclusion issues in our internal communications.
- We will ensure the recruitment, retention and progression of our people are free from discrimination or unconscious bias in seven key areas: race and ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, social mobility, religious beliefs, disability, and age.
- We aim to reward fairly and equally on the basis of ability and potential.
- We monitor and act on any perceived or actual inequalities.



Inclusion and Diversity

Inclusion and Diversity

What have we achieved?

- Introduced a coaching programme for working parents, including one-to-one maternity coaching for pregnant women before they go on maternity leave.
- Enhanced paternity cover to include full salary for two weeks that can be taken at any point within the first 12 months of a child's birth or placement.
- Formed a Menopause group to share ideas and recommendations with others.
- Listed in the large size category of UK's Best Workplaces for Women™ as a Great Place to Work®.
- Worked closely with Business in the Community (BITC) to review our approach to recruitment and our website, so that we can ensure that we are recruiting inclusively, and our roles are accessible to all.
- Carried out our first I&D employee survey, the results of which have informed our future strategy on Inclusion and Diversity.
- Continued our focus on social mobility through supporting the Strive Internship programme and the Bristol Future Talent Partnership, and engaged with Oxford University's Crankstart internship programme.





Objectives 2022-23	Status	Progress
All people managers and recruitment panel members to undertake training on unconscious bias.	Ongoing	This is currently being incorporated into a wider learning and development training programme.
Work with BITC to improve our ethnic diversity.	Delivered	We undertook a review of our recruitment processes to understand if there are any barriers to ethnically diverse talent joining us.
Review the ICAEW RISE programme, a UK-wide initiative that delivers workshops to local schools in areas of low social mobility.	Ongoing	From our research we are reviewing several programmes including the Crankstart Internship, as well as developing a partnership programme with our existing Academy clients.
Review experiences of Maternity returners to improve flexibility and benefits.	Delivered	A new maternity and paternity coaching programme was launched in March to coincide with International Women's Day.
Review our Paternity Leave policy to remove barriers to more equal care.	Delivered	Our enhanced Paternity Leave now covers two weeks fully paid leave instead of statutory pay.
Create a Women's Development Programme, laying the foundations for targets on minority groups and women in management and senior roles.	In Progress	Having successfully rolled out our maternity and paternity coaching we will further expand on this by creating a Women's Development Programme to help all women achieve their potential.
Apply for entry into Top 75 Employers for Social Mobility.	Ongoing	We have reviewed the entry criteria for Top 75 employers for social mobility and will focus on the social mobility programmes highlighted in the table above in advance of an application.

Objectives 2023-24

Implement the next phase of the Women's Development Programme to support women to achieve aspirations and goals, and reduce our gender pay gap.

Review and implement a social-mobility focused outreach programme through an intersectional lens.

Continued support for all diversity groups through celebrating key events.

Employment and Skills



Our business has a strong ethos in employee engagement. The firm was ranked in the Sunday Times Top 100 Best Companies to Work For lists for five consecutive years until 2020, and then in 2021, was placed in the Best Companies Top Five Best Accounting Firms to Work For in the UK.

In 2022, we were proud to have won the Accounting Excellence Award for Investing in People, and in 2023 were certified as a Great Place to Work® under the Best Workplaces Programme.



Our new Performance Management system is designed around clarity of expectations and a consistent framework that gives our people an opportunity to highlight how they are delivering their work in line with our values. By linking our values to a quarterly review process, our aim is to embed responsible business into the heart of everything we do as individuals, as teams, and as one firm.

We have delivered and continue to deliver, face-to-face and virtual training modules covering the following topics: the importance of feedback (asking, giving, receiving), managing and preparing for performance conversations, designing and setting expectations, and development planning.

An important part of our social mobility strategy is linked to employment and skills. This year we ran two work experience weeks in Plymouth and Bristol, opening our doors again to 12 work experience students from City College of Bristol and St Brendan's Sixth form in March. Through our collaboration with Bristol Future Talent Partnership, the students gained insights into the world of accountancy and other professional services careers and presented their experiences about the week to a panel of guests.

In addition to working closely with the University of West of England (UWE) Business School to help support an undergraduate event for accounting and finance degree students, we support UWE's Equity programme, which is aimed at providing personal and professional development opportunities for Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic students. We have apprentices who act as online mentors to UWE students who are part of the programme, with a focus on CV enhancing activities through sharing what it is like working in the sector, discussing the different specialisms and structure of the firm, giving advice on making an application and finally providing the opportunity to establish a contact in the industry.

We are also delighted to welcome another 5 one-year undergraduate university placement students this year in our Plymouth, Exeter, and Bristol offices, matching the 5 we hosted in 2022. This gives undergraduates an opportunity to gain invaluable work experience in a professional environment as part of their university degree.

Thank you for listening!



Bristol Future Talent Week

Students complete their Certificate of Achievement

Apprenticeships

Since 2020 the firm has proudly held the status of ‘Partner in Learning’ with the ICAEW. To achieve this status, the ICAEW have recognised the learning that is offered throughout our apprenticeship programme to complement the ACA qualification and work-based learning. In addition, we hold ‘Platinum’ status for training and development with the ACCA. We are one of very few accountancy firms that has taken this step of becoming an employer-provider. It enables us to provide learning that is bespoke and gives our learners access to real clients and businesses throughout their apprenticeship.

Recognition of this successful programme is demonstrated in our ranking of 14th in the 2022 Top 100 Apprenticeship Employers in the UK. This is a national league table co-developed by the Department for Education that recognises leading apprenticeship employers for their overall commitment to employing apprentices, their creation of new apprenticeships, the diversity of their new apprentices, and the progression of their apprentices onto further apprenticeships and employment.

Last year we were also shortlisted as a finalist for the Best Apprenticeship Scheme in the prestigious CIPD (Chartered Institute of Personnel & Development) People Management Awards.

Apprenticeships are a key part of our recruitment and training strategy to develop the skills of young adults either from university or school. Indeed, our non-graduate programme, ‘Launch Pad’, is a five-year programme that includes a two-year seat rotation across our core service lines, whilst also ensuring our learners progress through their level 7 apprenticeship.

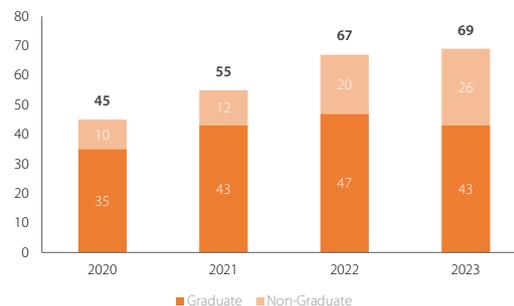
This year we look forward to welcoming another cohort of 69 new apprentice trainees with almost 40% of them joining us straight from school – our highest school leaver intake to date. This is an important part of our social mobility focus, providing an alternative route for young people to enter a career in accountancy.

I get huge satisfaction watching our new apprentices grow in confidence as they develop their skills and achieve their professional qualifications.



Carrie Barker
Apprentice Lead

Bishop Fleming Apprentice Intake



Apprentice Induction Week

Apprentices take part in a lunch and learn in our Bristol office.



Employment and Skills

Employment and Skills

What have we achieved?

- Recruited a record number of apprentices.
- Revised and enhanced our approach to our Apprenticeship programme using OFSTED's new provider monitoring visit.
- Launched a new recruitment website with an emphasis on social mobility to ensure we extend our message to a wider talent pool.
- Revised our apprentice curriculum to include learning across five key competencies – commercial & business acumen, leadership & management, personal effectiveness, technical expertise, staying safe & supporting wellbeing.
- Piloted a new management development programme which will form the foundation for a wider management training initiative.
- Introduced our new approach to performance management, including a series of training modules delivered to managers and all individuals across the business.





Objectives 2022-23	Status	Progress
Develop and launch a new modular Learning & Development Programme for employees across all levels.	In Progress	We have comprehensively revised our Apprenticeship curriculum as the first stage in developing a new wider Learning and Development Programme.
Launch a new employer branding communications strategy to help attract a wider and more socially diverse group of future trainees and managers.	Delivered	We completed an extensive research exercise with professional third-party support to fully understand the aspects of employer brand that users found to be material to them. This has resulted in a campaign focused around 'It All Adds Up' - https://careers.bishopfleming.co.uk/

Objectives 2023-24

Continue the learning and development of managers and employees through the development and delivery of ongoing training, including performance management and other skills.

Introduce a series of training modules, workshops, materials, and content to support the client manager role.



Healthy Environment

Healthy Environment

Bishop Fleming is committed to protecting our environment and operating as a responsible and sustainable business.

We have a long-standing commitment to minimising our impact on the environment and acting as a responsible and sustainable business. Indeed, we now save over 250 trees per year compared to our paper consumption in 2012 through investment in technology.

Recognising that we needed to intensify our actions to reduce our environmental impact, last year we partnered with carbon reduction specialists, Net Zero Now, to help us measure our carbon footprint for the first time, as well as develop a sustainable reduction plan with a Net Zero ambition.

A key outcome of this work is our acknowledgment of the need to address both our direct and indirect emissions throughout our value chain in line with the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi), aligned to limit climate change induced warming to less than 1.5°C by 2050.



ICAEW
Climate
Champion



Carbon footprint
base-year June 21 -
May 22



Kreston Global
- ESG Advisory
Group



Compliant with
Energy Savings
Opportunity Scheme
(ESOS)



Surfers Against
Sewage Plastic
Free Champion



89.3% reduction in
paper consumption
since 2012



Our Environmental Policy and Sustainability Plan

Central to our new Environmental Policy, the following commitments form the foundation of our future sustainability strategy which is focused on three key areas – Climate Action, Circular Economy, and Nature Stewardship.



An approach of utilising renewables first, further emissions reduction second, and use of offsets as a last resort.



Using May 2022 as our base-year, our aim is to achieve ambitious Greenhouse Gas (GHG) reduction targets of 50% for Scopes 1 and 2 emissions by 2030, driving energy efficiency improvements in all our offices.



Within 12 months develop our Net Zero plan further to set an ambitious long-term target to reduce Scope 3 emissions by employee.



Collaborate with environmental specialists and other professionals on how best to achieve long-term Net Zero status according to industry-agreed definitions, in line with relevant environmental legislation.



Complete an annual financial year-end carbon footprint calculation and report on our GHG emissions.



Manage our activities with consideration for the environment in a manner that is consistent with our values.



Reduce waste volume as far as practical and promote recycling in all our offices.



Leading by example, engage with stakeholders, industry peers, and relevant organisations to collaborate on emissions reduction initiatives.



Support local nature stewardship projects within our localities and communities.



Beach Cleans

Our Truro office taking part in our beach clean at Porthtowan on the North Cornish coast.





Climate Action

Independently verified by Net Zero Now, our base-year carbon footprint is 1069.3 tCO₂e for the year ending May 2022. This represents 2.73 tCO₂e per employee and 32.18 kgCO₂e per £1,000 revenue.

We shared these results, as well as the methodology and need for climate action with all our people on World Earth Day in April 2023. This included encouraging our people to calculate their personal carbon footprints using the World Wildlife Fund's online calculator - <https://footprint.wwf.org.uk/>

Having an understanding of our footprint enables us to now focus on areas that will have the greatest impact on reducing our carbon.

We are committed to calculating our carbon footprint each year and will publish results both online and in this annual Impact Report.

We have learned a huge amount by measuring our carbon footprint across all scopes and are committed to reducing this in a sustainable and pragmatic way.



Pam Tuckett
Partner and Environment Lead

A breakdown of our carbon footprint by Scope:

Scope	Explanation	2022-23 (tCO ₂ e)	2021-22* (tCO ₂ e)
One	Gas heating, air-conditioning gases	9,378	24.88
Two	Electricity	0	29.77
Three	Business travel, commuting, purchased goods & services, waste, transportation, shared office electricity'	1,236.09	1014.65
Total	Absolute	1,245.47	1069.30
Total	Per employee	2.77	2.73

*The original base-year figure has been updated to reflect the latest government carbon conversion emission factors (DEFRA June 2022).

We have switched to a renewable electricity tariff in the three offices where we are the sole occupant and are in discussion with landlords of shared office buildings to follow suit. We also encourage green transport for our people through providing our apprentices with a young persons' railcard.

However, we recognise our greatest carbon emissions are derived from business travel and commuting. This will be an area of priority focus in future years and a key part of our carbon reduction plan.

Healthy Environment



Nature Stewardship

We appreciate that our economy depends on the natural environment and that we must do more to restore and protect it. Whilst all offices operate waste recycling, we need to also reduce waste at source through reduced consumption.

In the recent past, we removed over six common single-use plastics and were recognised as 'Plastic Free Champions' by environmental charity, Surfers Against Sewage. Going forward we will make this a priority area of focus and step up our engagement with this initiative.



Circular Economy

We continue to complete due diligence on major suppliers to the business through an in-depth assessment of their policies. In addition to Data Processing and Security, these include Environment, Modern Slavery, Health & Safety, and Equality & Diversity.

In updating our environmental policy, greater emphasis has been placed on sustainable purchasing, in particular with local supply chain partners who have demonstrated a commitment to good environmental practice.

This year we launched a Sustainable Procurement Guide with our Operations Support Group, which is now being rolled out to all employees who make any purchasing decisions. This has resulted in waste recycling initiatives such as Cancer Research UK battery collection points and switching to local and sustainable suppliers such as TrueStart Coffee, Salcombe Gin hand sanitiser, Cheeky Panda hand towels, and Grace & Green sanitary products.

As part of a supplier mapping exercise, work has started on implementing a Supplier Code of Ethical Conduct with our largest spend suppliers. This is linked to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, including Climate Action and Sustainable Cities & Communities.

Healthy Environment

What have we achieved?

- Completed our base-year (June 2021 – May 2022) carbon footprint exercise, with independent data verification by Net Zero Now.
- Switched our electricity to a renewable tariff in three offices where we are the sole occupant.
- Identified risks, stakeholders, opportunities, and priorities around Climate Action, Circular Economy, and Nature Stewardship.
- Implemented a Sustainable Procurement Guide for regional and central purchasing decisions.
- Created an online Sustainable Business Knowledge Hub for clients to help them with their carbon reduction plans.
- Created an Environmental Resource Library on our intranet for employees to learn of the need for climate action.
- The firm and our Environmental Lead, Pam Tuckett have been recognised as ICAEW Climate Champions.
- Formed part of a Kreston Global ESG Advisory Group to develop, share, and educate members on ESG best practice.





Objectives 2022-23	Status	Progress
Complete and independently verify our total Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions for base-year (y/e May 2022).	Delivered	Calculated our 2022-23 carbon footprint as our base-year and verified by Net Zero Now.
Develop and implement a 5-year plan to reduce all GHG emissions by at least 30% using Science Based Target methodology.	In Progress	We have developed a plan to reduce our Scopes 1 and 2 emissions by 50% by 2030 and will develop a long-term target to reduce Scope 3 per employee over the next 12 months.
Undertake a sustainable procurement review across all main suppliers to embed environmental, social, and ethical sourcing across a much wider supply chain.	In Progress	A supplier mapping exercise has been initiated, which includes the creation of a new Supplier Code of Ethical Conduct. Next stage is to communicate this to our main suppliers.
Update the firm's Environmental Policy to reflect its carbon reduction ambitions and KPIs.	Delivered	Our new Environmental Policy can be viewed by clicking on the QR Code below
Strengthen employee benefits to include incentives and reward for healthy environmental practice.	In Progress	All trainee apprentices now qualify for a free rail card during the time of their training.

Objectives 2023-24

Develop our Net Zero plan further to set an ambitious long-term target to reduce Scope 3 emissions per employee.

Develop a waste reduction plan with particular focus on single-use plastic.

Galvanise employee engagement with carbon reduction initiatives.



Impact summary

Key Performance Indicators

We measure progress on each of our three responsible business areas through key performance indicators. Our financial year is from 1st June to 31st May.

Healthy Business	2022-23	2021-22
Volunteering (hours)	945	1167
Amount raised for Communities and Charities	£23,700	£15,640
Awards shortlisted or won	8	2
Employee Listening – Net Promoter Score	+30	+29
Client Listening – Net Promoter Score	+50	+48
BITC Responsible Business Tracker	48%	20%
Healthy Communities		
Headcount (FTE)	449	392
Female partner %	28%	27%
Female directors & senior managers %	28%	28%
Gender Pay Gap (mean)	16.4%	14.1%
Gender Pay Gap (median)	8.7%	17.3%
Number of new Apprentices recruited	67	55
Sickness absence (% of working hours)	0.38%	1.35%
People turnover %	21.6%	24.2%
Healthy Environment		
Total CO2 emissions (tCO2e)	1,245.47	1069.3
CO2 emissions per employee (tCO2e)	2.77	2.73
Business Travel emissions (tCO2e)	247.2	156.3
Business Travel emissions per employee (tCO2e)	0.55	0.4
Paper Use - (Reams)	794	776

Looking to the future...

Having first established a Responsible Business framework, this past year has been one of progress and ongoing continuous improvement. It has been rewarding and encouraging but we also recognise there is still much to do.

To strengthen our focus and commitment in this area, we have therefore recently created a new Head of Responsible Business role. Having spent the last 21 years in a number of different roles with the firm, I'm delighted to have taken on this new position and look forward to working with colleagues to achieve ambitious objectives and ongoing improvement in everything we do as a responsible business.

Ewan McClymont
Head of Responsible Business



Contact us

If you'd like to know more about our Responsible Business approach, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

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I am passionate about responsible business and in my new role will seek to further drive Bishop Fleming's commitment and investment in being a better business. I look forward with anticipation to our future progress in all areas as highlighted by our Impact Report.

Ewan McClymont
Head of Responsible Business, Bishop Fleming



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