

# Responsible Business Impact Report 2021-22

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Delivering impact with purpose



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We are committed to growing our business with a sustainable and responsible focus, ensuring we remain true to our values and purpose-led ambition.

**Pippa Clarke, Chair, Bishop Fleming**

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# Welcome

Our approach to being a Responsible Business is led by our purpose-led Ambition, and everything we do is guided by our values.

We are delighted to publish our first Responsible Business Impact Report. Covering our financial year, June 2021 to May 2022, this report highlights our commitment and strategic focus to being a healthier business for our clients, staff, communities, and environment.

In June 2021 we joined Business in the Community (BITC) to help give us a framework to implement actions that will contribute towards the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Our ambition and values underpin the work we are focusing on in three core areas - Healthy Business, Healthy Communities, and Healthy Environment.

The completion of BITC's extensive 'Tracker' benchmarking exercise has helped identify key areas of strength and weakness, risks and opportunities laying the foundation for this report, behind which sits a comprehensive plan of activity putting responsible business at the heart of everything that we do.

Our work around Healthy Communities is focused on placing Inclusion & Diversity at the forefront of our recruitment and development programmes, as well as charitable work and volunteering commitments.

Our Health & Wellbeing teams are focused on four main pillars around mental, physical, financial, and social wellbeing – in the current economic and social headwinds that we face, we recognise that now more than ever, the wellbeing of our people is paramount.

Having calculated our use of electricity, gas, paper and business mileage for the last 12 years, we are currently calculating our overall carbon footprint for the first time. This includes independent verification, and a wholesale review of our operating practices in order to commit to a sustainable greenhouse gas reduction plan.

We are proud of what our teams have achieved so far but are hugely mindful, albeit excited, that we have much to do.

We look forward to updating you on progress across all areas of responsible business next year.

**Fleur Lewis**  
Partner & Responsible Business Lead



# A strategic view...

We are extremely proud of how our people have adapted throughout the Covid pandemic to not only deliver excellent service levels for our clients, but also help drive business growth.

Our financial year ending May 2022 recorded our highest ever turnover of just over £33 million, an increase of 19% on the prior year.

Our growth is underpinned by an ambition to be the most rewarding accountancy firm in the UK for our clients, people and communities. We are proud of the new awards gained, and particularly proud to be ranked 14th in the Top 100 Apprenticeship Employers in the UK. Indeed, we will shortly be welcoming a new cohort of 60 graduate and school leaver apprentices, taking our overall staff level to over 450.

We are committed to putting our people at the heart of our business, providing them with stimulating and rewarding career opportunities, as well as a flexible and agile working environment. We continue to heavily invest in technology to improve efficiencies and help achieve a balance between delivering excellent client service and a healthy lifestyle.

Our commitment to responsible business is strong and underpins our growth ambitions as a firm. We are privileged to build lasting relationships with outstanding clients, and are focused on delivering significant added value, particularly at this economically challenging time.

We hope you find our first Impact Report of interest and welcome your feedback.

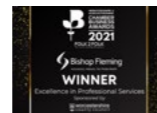
**Andrew Sandiford**  
Managing Partner



# About us

We have won or been shortlisted for numerous awards in recent years:

- 2019 Winner**  
**Health and Wellbeing in the Workplace**  
2019 British Chamber of Commerce National Awards
- Winner**  
**Business of the Year**  
2019 British Chamber of Commerce National Awards
- 2020 Winner**  
**Best Employee Experience or Engagement Campaign**  
2020 Chartered Institute for PR Annual Excellence Awards
- Finalists**  
**Challenge Event of the Year**  
2020 Business Charity Awards
- 2021 Winner**  
**Excellence in Professional Services**  
2021 Hereford and Worcester Chamber Business Awards
- Finalists**  
**Payroll Service Provider of the Year**  
2021 CIPP Annual Excellence Awards
- Ranked**  
**Top 5 Accounting Firms to Work For**  
2021 Best Companies



# At a glance



## Depth of talent

With 37 Partners and around 400 people, we've got the capacity and expertise to meet our clients' needs.



## Continued growth

We grew by 19% last year and have been one of the fastest growing firms in the last decade.



## 10,000+ Clients

including 1,500 new clients in the last 12 months.



## Leaders in our field

We're one of the leading advisory firms to owner-managed businesses in the South West and the number one auditor 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 14th in the UK's Top 100 Apprentice Employers List.



## Employer of choice

We've been ranked as a Top 5 Accountancy Firm to Work For as part of the Best Companies rankings.

## We're a responsible business

We're active members of Business in the Community.



## 7 UK offices

Bath | Bristol  
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.

# Responsible Business - our approach

Bishop Fleming’s approach is to place responsible business at the heart of everything we do.

We are therefore proud to be members of Business in the Community (BITC), the largest and longest established business led membership organisation dedicated to responsible business.

BITC provides us with a framework to implement actions that will contribute towards the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



We are primarily focused on:

- SDG 3: Good Health & Wellbeing**
- SDG 4: Quality Education**
- SDG 5: Gender Equality**
- SDG 8: Decent Work & Economic Growth**

- SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities**
- SDG 11: Sustainable Cities & Communities**
- SDG 13: Climate Action**

Central to this framework is the recognition that a responsible business is a healthy business, underpinned by a focus on healthy communities and healthy environment to achieve long-term value.

# Healthy Business

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



# Healthy Environment

- Circular Economy
- Climate Action
- Nature Stewardship

# Healthy Communities

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

# Healthy Business

# Healthy Business

Our responsible business strategy recognises that at the core of a healthy business lies transparency and good governance, positive engagement with community stakeholders, suppliers, and employees, and guidance by a strong set of values and purpose-led ambition.

We recognise the need to increase trust in business and in the potential for business to be a force for good. Our healthy business focus is therefore one of continuous improvement and maintaining the highest standards across all operations.

We are fortunate to work with diverse groups of stakeholders and have stepped up our engagement with them to understand their material issues. Whilst more work is needed in this area, our client and employee listening programmes are helping us develop new ways of working to deliver added-value and strengthen long-term relationships.

Similarly, the collaborative work we do in our communities is central to our healthy business ethos and we are keen to get back to the high levels of interaction experienced before the Covid pandemic.

## Governance & Transparency

High levels of commitment with our people and advocacy with our clients are maintained by inclusive and accountable governance. As members of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW), we are bound by a robust code of ethics that guide how we run our business, as well as how we advise our clients.

Our clients come to us for who we are; getting a strong sense of partnership, a deep sense that we do what's right, and satisfaction from people who establish a strong, open, and honest relationship with them.

Working in partnership with strategic suppliers, the right technology ensures that we are at the forefront of service delivery, where stronger processes, relevant insights, and timely information rewards us with the freedom to adapt our thinking, innovate, and ultimately ensure better informed decisions and greater value for our clients.



# 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:

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

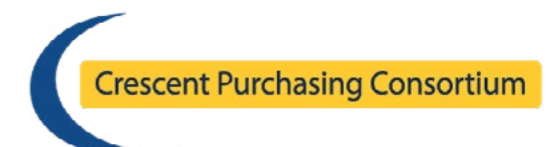


We do the right thing

## 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.

We are currently undertaking a stakeholder mapping exercise across key areas of our Responsible Business framework to understand their material priorities more fully. This will help us to better define our Responsible Business Strategy, ensuring our attention is focused where it can have the most effective impact.





# Healthy Business

## Stakeholder Engagement: Employee Engagement

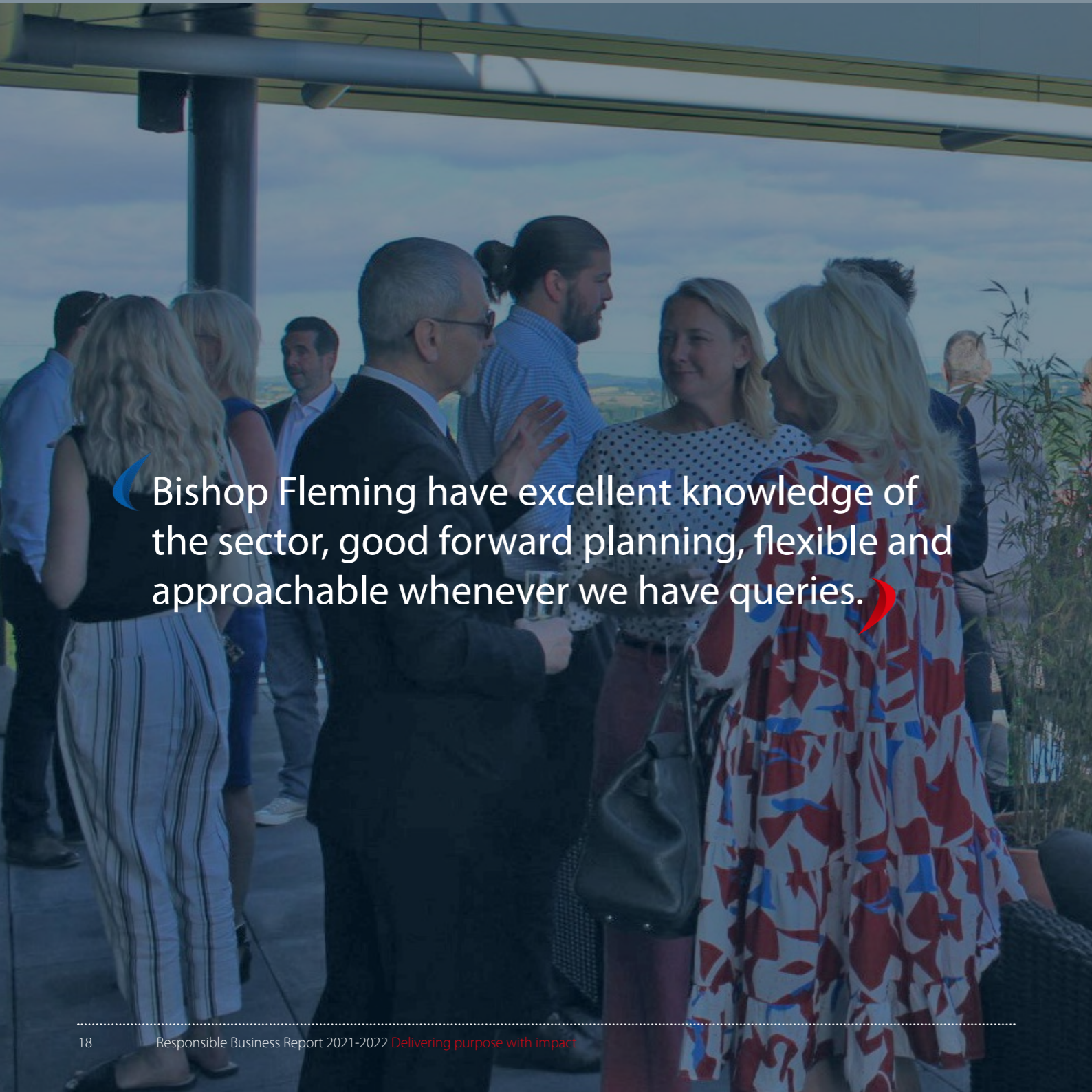
As a people-based organisation, maintaining excellent employee engagement is a strategic priority for our business. In addition to a weekly staff 'pulse' survey, our 'Your Say' Forum is made up of employee representatives from all areas of our business. This medium ensures we understand the material issues affecting our people and maintain an open-door to change policies and processes as a result.

We are pleased to have been ranked in the Sunday Times 100 Best Companies To Work For lists for five consecutive years, and also delighted to be ranked again in the Top 75 Companies To Work For in the 2020 Midlands and South West regional lists, as well as ranked in the Best Companies' Top Five Accounting Firms to Work For in 2021.

In 2020, we were awarded the prestigious Chartered Institute of Public Relations (CIPR) Annual Excellence Award for Best Employee Engagement Initiative for our Centenary Campaign:

*It's what we bring together..... that sets us apart.*





Bishop Fleming have excellent knowledge of the sector, good forward planning, flexible and approachable whenever we have queries.

# Healthy Business

## Stakeholder Engagement: Client Listening

We actively listen to our clients through regular feedback surveys on our service delivery. These include questionnaires aimed at specific client groups, mystery shopping exercises, and one-to-one client interviews.

Results are reviewed by department heads and shared with staff teams in order to improve processes and service delivery. Our current overall Net Promoter Score is +48, which is 14 points above the professional services sector average.

95%

were either happy or content with the speed of response to queries

86%

were very satisfied or satisfied we deliver clear advice

85%

were either very satisfied or satisfied with the overall service experience

85%

were very satisfied or satisfied we understood their needs



# Healthy Business

## Community Collaboration

We encourage community engagement by our staff through volunteering and fund-raising activities, as well as building close relationships with organisations by undertaking Committee, Trustee, and Board level positions.

A recent survey of our workforce showed that over 70 of our people occupy over 120 different positions across a large range of areas, including business, sectors, regional activity, local community, public sector, educational, charitable and not for profit, sporting, volunteering and more.

Outside of these areas, there are lots more activities and initiatives in which our people support charities and our community – such as volunteering, personal fundraising for charities, dress down days, charitable sporting events, participation in client and third-party charity events – many of which take place in our own time.

In our centenary year we raised over £150,000 for local community charities across our regional footprint. Post-pandemic, we are working to rekindle these fundraising initiatives, which includes all staff using a day of time to work with a community activity of their choice.



# Healthy Business

## Community Collaboration: Bianchi Dama Team

In 2022, we sponsored the Bianchi Dama Women's Cycling team.

Bianchi Dama started in 2015 as part of Exeter Uni's performance programme, and has developed into one of the best female cycling squads in the UK. They compete nationally and internationally in road, time trial and track events.

Bianchi HUNT Morvélo have been consistently competitive in the National Elite Road Race Series, National Championships on road and mountain bike, with numerous podium finishes and topped the team rankings at selected races.

As a business that has many runners and cyclists among its people, this sponsorship was a perfect fit and supported our commitment on women's initiatives.

2022 is the fourth season for this team of inspirational women as they balance full time racing with full-time careers.





# Healthy Business

## Community Collaboration: Young Enterprise

Young Enterprise is our chosen firmwide charity. It is the UK's largest business and enterprise education charity, enabling over 250,000 young people to learn about business and the world of work through Young Enterprise every year.

The programmes range from teaching primary school children about money through to the flagship Company Programme. In the latter, students set up and run their own company for a year, designing, making, and selling products and learning all the life skills that this process entails, whilst being mentored by at least one Business Adviser – a role which many of our people can undertake. Each area of Young Enterprise is run by a volunteer board and many of our people sit on Young Enterprise regional boards and participate in judging activities.

As the leading auditor to Academies and Multi-Academy Trusts in the Education Sector, our partnership with Young Enterprise is another natural fit as we are able to support our clients with volunteering support and financial contributions to costs.

It never ceases to amaze me how entrepreneurial the next generation can be. It is hugely rewarding both personally and to our business to support Young Enterprise and talented young people.

**Paul Seymour, Marketing Director and Chair, West of England Board, Young Enterprise**



# Healthy Business

## Value Chain

We are committed to acting ethically and with integrity in our business relationships with suppliers.

Our Modern Slavery Policy highlights that we will not knowingly support or deal with any business involved in slavery or human trafficking.

We are building upon existing processes across several areas in our business including our supplier engagement and staff training and reporting. Over the next 12 months we plan to build on the robustness of our supply chain which will include:

- Building a risk assessment for reviewing and monitoring modern slavery for our major suppliers and applying the assessment to future engagements.
- Providing modern slavery and whistleblowing awareness training for all our people.
- Publishing a knowledge hub for staff on our intranet with guidance and advice on modern slavery.

## Digital Transformation

As a business, we take cyber security very seriously and make substantial investment into our systems, technology, and internal staff training. We are members of both the South West and the West Midlands Cyber Resilience Centres, and our Chief Innovation Officer sits on their Advisory Group. Though voluntary working with these centres, we can support local businesses to ensure their threats to cyber security are minimised.



## What have we achieved?

After becoming members of Business in the Community (BITC) in June 2021, we completed a comprehensive 'Tracker' benchmark exercise with them to better understand the opportunities around responsible business as a whole.

The Tracker exercise is aligned to the UN Sustainable Development Goals. It covers core areas around Healthy Communities and Healthy Environment, as well as Healthy Business through the lenses of governance, purpose, values, stakeholder engagement, community collaboration, value chain, and digital transformation.

We are using Tracker as a framework to develop our Responsible Business strategy, which this first Impact Report forms a key part.



## Objectives 2022 - 23

- Complete 2nd Tracker benchmark and report on progress.
- Extend our key supplier engagement and risk assessment to a wider range of organisations.
- Extend our client listening programme across core service lines, including client journey mapping to understand key points of ongoing interaction.
- Implement training for all staff on modern slavery.

# Healthy Communities

# Healthy Communities

As a responsible business, we strive to have a positive impact on the communities we operate in and serve. This includes making employment opportunities accessible and attractive to all, and providing a stimulating, diverse and inclusive workplace and culture. We offer fair, equal, and unbiased recruitment, promotion, and reward systems, as well as a safe, inclusive, and agile work environment where talent can thrive.

Our people undertake varied and fulfilling accountancy and advisory work for a wide range of local, national, and international clients. We promote a vibrant and agile one-firm culture, where career and professional development opportunities run alongside wellbeing support, excellent communication, valued employee benefits and a quality of life. These are attributes that set us apart.

We aspire to have an inclusive and diverse workplace, underpinned by the physical and mental health and wellbeing of our people. Our Inclusion & Diversity (I&D) and Health & Wellbeing (H&W) workgroups have been created with the remit to develop and implement strategy and focused plans against a responsible business framework. With a diverse mix of voices leading to better discussions, decisions, and outcomes for everyone, these working groups are sponsored at partner level and report to the Management Board on a quarterly basis.

A fundamental principle of making I&D work for all of us, is to respect each other whilst celebrating our differences. Our I&D ethos also links to initiatives such as our support of Young Enterprise and seeking to help improve the social mobility of children in certain schools and from particular social backgrounds who might not otherwise make a career in the professions.

Our Wellbeing Ambassadors and Mental Wellbeing First Aiders are instrumental in raising awareness, involving, and signposting to information, and throughout the year we support a range of initiatives including Mental Health Awareness Week, Eating Disorders Awareness Week, National Eye Health Week, Stress Awareness Day, and World Blood Donor Day. In addition, our hybrid working policy is designed around the health and wellbeing of our people, where performance is measured in productivity rather than presenteeism.





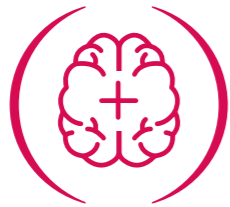
# Healthy Communities - Health & Wellbeing

## Health & Wellbeing

The firm's Health & Wellbeing Group is Partner led and reportable to the Board. The group is made up of Wellbeing Ambassadors, who are spread across our offices and promote wellbeing around four pillars:



Financial



Mental



Physical



Social





## Financial

We have recently partnered with **Better with Money**, a leading financial education provider. This is aimed at our new trainee cohort and will provide a number of face-to-face briefings on topics such as how to make the most of your employee benefits, through to budgeting and starting out on the right foot.

Our involvement with them will also give us access to resources such as money calculators and online webinars.

Staff benefit from membership of **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, mindfulness and sleep.

## Social

Each office has a social committee who liaise with our Wellbeing Ambassadors to provide local events such as walking / running groups, yoga, and summer socials. We are planning to increase activity based on the results of our recent Wellbeing survey – to ensure that we are targeting activity and tailoring it to people's preferences.

Teams are encouraged to combine social activities with being a responsible business, such as a beach clean before lunch. In addition, our annual personal development training sessions for trainees are designed to include an element of residential time and social activities.

## Mental

Alongside our Physical Wellbeing First Aiders, our Wellbeing Ambassadors are Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) trained. We have had MHFAs in place since early 2020 and have increased our total of fully trained people to 22 this year, of which 9 are also Wellbeing Ambassadors. Their role is to help identify the signs when someone has an issue they are struggling to cope with, to listen, and signpost to professional support services such as CABA (Chartered Accountants Benevolent Association).

We supported Mental Health Awareness Week in May, focusing on the theme of loneliness. Activities included daily updates, shared personal stories, signposting support resources such as the Mind charity, insights, TED Talks, and hosted office cream teas to bring people together.

Each year we run Supporting Wellbeing training for people managers to raise awareness of mental health, and how to support their staff. Our **SimplyHealth** employee benefit also provides My Wellbeing – an Employee Assistance Programme that give access to online counselling and advice plus a 24/7 GP service.



# Healthy Communities - Health & Wellbeing

## Physical

Physical activity is encouraged through apps such as YuLife. This rewards activity and encourages healthy choices by measuring simple steps towards a healthier lifestyle. Activity can be tracked to earn Yu Coins which can be converted into rewards or used to make charitable donations.

Fresh fruit is delivered on a weekly basis to all offices to encourage healthier eating, and free water bottles are provided to all to promote hydration. As part of our ongoing Health and Wellbeing campaign, we have purchased over 1,000 water bottles to give to our people, our clients and our contacts. But far from just keeping us hydrated, these bottles are changing lives too. Through the social enterprise, Give me tap!, every bottle we purchased has given 5 years of clean drinking water to a person in Ghana. **GiveMeTap** - Reusable BPA-free Water Bottles that Fund Water Projects

All staff benefit from membership to **SimplyHealth**, a benefit in kind that enables them to claim against a range of everyday health costs such as dental, optical and physiotherapy, as well as online access to health professionals and discounted gym membership. This can be extended to family members at a reduced cost and children are free up to age 21.

The firm operates a Cycle to Work scheme to encourage healthy commuting and refurbished offices are equipped with showers to promote outdoor activity during breaks.

We are a member of **Kreston Global** – a network of accountancy practices in over 125 countries worldwide. Last year we launched our Round the World Challenge, a challenge to foster employment engagement, promote health and wellbeing, create fundraising activities, and maintain great relationships with our contacts and clients.

With the ambition to circumnavigate the globe from our UK base and back again, 200 of our people and client guests logged their activities to create a virtual journey that took in 6 continents and 31 countries, plotting 19 fellow Kreston firms along the way. The challenge provided our people with the flexibility to incorporate smaller activities, personal challenges, hobbies, fundraising attempts, training or simply getting fit across a variety of physical activities including walking, running, hiking, cycling, swimming, rowing, and kayaking.



# Healthy Communities - Health & Wellbeing

## Health and Wellbeing

### What have we achieved?

Having to work in a very different way during the Covid pandemic served to reinforce the importance of the health and wellbeing of our people. Like many organisations, we have introduced a home working flexible working policy with the emphasis on productivity and being where we can deliver best client service.

We established a Health & Wellbeing Group, with partner sponsorship and responsibility, tasked with developing a Health & Wellbeing strategy through consultation with core stakeholder groups. Our group of Mental Health First Aiders has been increased to a cohort of 22, and all have undergone two-days of training with Mental Health First Aid England.

As a key stakeholder group, the views of our people are fundamental to building a future Health & Wellbeing strategy. Following Mental Health Awareness Week in May 2022, we undertook a comprehensive Health & Wellbeing staff survey covering the four pillars of Mental, Physical, Social, and Financial wellbeing. We were pleased to note that 95% of people managers felt that Health & Wellbeing was part of their role. These results, as well as those from our weekly 'pulse' survey, are informing our future strategy and the exercise will be conducted on an annual basis to track progress.

### Objectives 2022 - 23

- Improve accountability by formally integrating Health & Wellbeing into people manager's job roles.
- Roll out compulsory training for all people managers on mental wellbeing.
- Join the Mental Health at Work Commitment and implement best practice.
- Create a programme of mental, physical, social, and financial training for all staff.
- Continue to deliver training with Better with Money to support staff through challenging economic headwinds.
- Measure impact through weekly pulse survey and annual Health & Wellbeing survey.



# Healthy Communities - Inclusion & Diversity

## Inclusion and Diversity

Towards the end of 2021, we relaunched our Inclusion and Diversity (I&D) offering by establishing a new working group, BF Voices, who have the remit to develop a new strategy and focused plan. Our I&D strategy is focused on five key areas:

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

We're passionate about creating an inclusive workplace that promotes and values inclusion, diversity, equality and equity and we know businesses that are diverse are proven to be better businesses. In doing so, we will continually challenge any discriminatory practices or unconscious bias, along with constantly reviewing how we engage with all of our people so they feel valued, appreciated and free to be who they are at work, regardless of gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, race, religion, ethnicity, age, disability status or any other aspect that makes them unique.

Diversity is all about the mix of people we have in the firm – and the differences they bring to the firm. We already have over 400 people who are completely different, with each one bringing something unique to the collective mix.

## Modern Slavery

Our [Modern Slavery Policy](#) highlights that we will not knowingly support or deal with any business involved in slavery or human trafficking.

We are committed to acting ethically and with integrity in our business relationships and implementing and enforcing effective systems and controls which address the risks of modern slavery and human trafficking anywhere within our business and supply chains is of key importance to us.

As highlighted in our Value Chain section, we are building upon existing processes across several areas in our business including our supplier engagement and staff training and reporting.



# Healthy Communities - Inclusion & Diversity

## Women's initiatives

For some time, we have been delivering initiatives for female clients including our Bishop Fleming Women's Network, which has seen such activities as coastering, abseiling, paddle boarding, and even llama walking!

Internally, our Bishop Fleming's Women's Mentoring Initiative is designed to connect senior female members of the firm with junior members, helping to support women in progressing to more senior positions within the firm. Mentoring is a process which facilitates personal and professional growth, so this programme allows women to work with someone whose broader knowledge, skills and experience can assist and guide them at different points in their career. Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive in that it has helped women to improve their confidence, build relationships and come up with strategies for their progression.

In 2019, we were a founding signatory of the **Bristol Women in Business Charter** – a first of its kind in the UK. This requires us to make annual commitments to various goals including: availability of flexible working opportunities, increasing the number of women at senior management/ partner level, ensuring people processes (e.g. recruitment, performance management, career progression) are non-discriminatory and free from unconscious bias, and support women through mentoring/ women's networks.

Each year we support **International Women's Day**. 2021's theme of Choose to Challenge inspired the creation of our I&D working group - BF Voices, which was created to ensure that we have a diverse employee team to drive forward our inclusion and diversity practices. Partner Ria Burrige is the I&D lead for the firm.



# Healthy Communities - Inclusion & Diversity



## Social Mobility

We support students of a Black, Asian and minority ethnic background and the **Strive Internship Programme**, which works with universities to provide paid work placements to students of a BAME background living in Bristol and South Gloucestershire. We have identified that we need to improve diversity in all of our offices and particularly in Bristol, in order to better reflect the communities in this area. We are committed to providing two internships each year for the next five years and have recently welcomed two new interns to our Bristol office.

We also support the **Women's Work Lab**, which helps unemployed mums aged 25+ to become work ready. Some of these mums face a number of challenges including domestic violence, lone parenting, children with special education needs, or home displacement. The group aims to support these underrepresented women to fulfil their career potential and placements take place during term time school hours. By supporting this initiative, we have been able to provide a 4-week paid training and placement opportunity in 2021 and will continue our support in 2022.

This year we marked **Social Mobility Awareness Day** through our work experience programme in our Bristol and Plymouth offices. This involved a partnership with Bristol Future Talent Partnership, Burts Crisps, and a number of Plymouth schools to open our doors to students from a diverse range of backgrounds. This included a specific programme for black and minority ethnic students in Bristol, in order to introduce them to professional careers that they may not have previously considered.

## THE STRIVE INTERNSHIP

# Healthy Communities - Inclusion & Diversity

## Gender Pay Report

As a responsible business, we recognise the importance of gender pay gap reporting as an important contributor to our transparency. Not only is it important for society as a whole, but gender parity and greater diversity within the workplace is good for business and critical to our own success. That's why our approach to tackling gender pay equality aligns with our wider approach to Inclusion & Diversity, not just to do things right, but to do the right things. It is an integral part of how we operate our business and is underpinned by our vision and values.

### Our actions

- We have an almost equal number of men (51%) and women (49%).
- We have an inclusive approach to hybrid and flexible working Policy for all of our workforce, which helps to support women and care givers in particular to balance home and work life.
- We appointed two Partners to be our I&D sponsors and we launched our BF Voices group to set and implement our strategy for inclusion and diversity
- 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 are committed to investing in long term careers with our firm. Over 16% of our firm have at least 10 years' service and over 35% have over five years' service.
- We have a Women's Mentoring Network which connect junior female talent with senior female talent.
- Inclusion and diversity is built into our key accountabilities for our people managers.

### 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, make changes to ensure that these are inclusive and allow all of 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.

# Healthy Communities - Inclusion & Diversity

## Inclusion and Diversity

### What have we achieved?

We have invested considerable time into developing an integrated Inclusion & Diversity programme over recent years. The creation of the BF Voices Group has intensified our focus in this area, resulting in a comprehensive I&D staff survey, the results of which are driving our future I&D strategy. We were particularly pleased to note that under 10% of staff rated the firm's Inclusion & Diversity culture as poor.

We acknowledge that it is sometimes not possible to tell what someone's gender identity is by looking at them. We therefore introduced the option of employees adding their preferred gender pronouns to their signature in response to an employee request. It demonstrates our commitment to creating an inclusive working environment, signaling to members of the LGBTQIA+ community in particular that they belong and helping them to feel more comfortable being themselves at work.



### Objectives 2022 - 23

- All people managers and recruitment panel members to undertake training on unconscious bias.
- Work with BITC to improve our ethnic diversity
- Review the ICAEW RISE programme, a UK-wide initiative that delivers workshops to local schools in areas of low social mobility.
- Review experiences of Maternity returners to improve flexibility and benefits.
- Review our Paternity Leave policy to remove barriers to more equal care.
- Create a Women's Development Programme, laying the foundations for targets on minority groups and women in management and senior roles.
- Apply for entry into Top 75 Employers for Social Mobility.



# Healthy Communities - Employment & Skills

## Employment and Skills

Our business is heavily focused on employee engagement. The firm was ranked in the Sunday Times Top100 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 are proud to have won the Accounting Excellence Award for Investing in People.

We introduced a Hybrid & Flexible Working Policy in June 2021 to encourage people to consider where they do their best work for themselves, their colleagues, and their clients. This has proven to be popular with a healthy blend of office and home working making for a more productive and happier workforce.

The firm fosters a positive team culture with a family spirit, and our working environment ensures that every person has the opportunity to achieve his or her fullest potential. We invest heavily in personal training and development as we feel that this is the right way to give our clients the best team for their business.

Clear job descriptions are consistent across our levels for different service lines, and people managers are responsible for taking a holistic management approach with staff. This includes work performance, feedback, objective setting, and career aspirations and development, and health and wellbeing. Channels of communication are therefore enabled to ensure employees are clear on their roles and responsibilities, able to ask questions and get support for their work and development, and discuss how they are feeling about work and wider issues impacting them.

Performance and Development Reviews are viewed not just in terms of what someone did but how they went about it, we believe that behaviours are equally important to results. We link these back to our 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

## Apprenticeships

We are proud to be ranked 14th in the Top 100 Apprenticeship Employers in the UK. Co-developed by the Department for Education, the national league table 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.

Our sustainable growth strategy is firmly focused on recruiting and developing young adults into the business either from university or school. Despite economic uncertainty, in the last two years we have recruited record numbers of trainees in to the firm, and in 2022 will shortly welcome another cohort made up of 60 graduates and school leavers. The majority of trainees pursue qualifications from the Institution of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW).

Since 2020 the firm has proudly held the status of 'Partner in Learning' with the ICAEW enabling us to be an accredited apprenticeship provider with 'Platinum' approval for Training and Development for the ACA. We are one of very few accountancy firms who 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.

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

We believe that our school leaver programme 'Launch Pad' is fairly unique in that we enrol school leavers directly onto a level 7 apprenticeship, and we give them the opportunity to gain a milestone qualification after two years to recognise their progress and achievements so far.

Several of our apprentices are regional Apprentice Ambassadors in the South West Apprenticeship Ambassador's network. They visit schools and deliver careers fairs, classroom workshops and assemblies, championing apprenticeships as an alternative to university for school leavers. We encourage all apprentices to get involved and give them time to carry out their responsibilities.



## Bright Futures

Bright Futures is a 12-month development programme open to qualified staff up to managerial level, and aimed at individuals who seek to invest time and effort into the development of their careers.

It is tailored to the individual, allowing them to develop in the areas they need, as well as taking part in a team challenge, each employee on the programme works with a mentor, attends training sessions, and reads widely around related subject areas.

The programme has been a strong pillar in the development of some of our health & wellbeing, environment, and inclusion & diversity initiatives such as reducing single-use plastic and working with **Speakers for Schools (S4S)** to raise the profile of accountancy as a career for students in less affluent areas. We are currently reviewing the programme to integrate it into a wider staff Learning & Development initiative.

# Healthy Communities - Employment & Skills

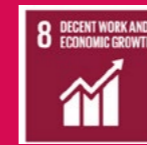
## Employment and Skills

What have we achieved?

The firm has continued its investment into skills training, welcomed and on-boarded a record number of apprentices, and undertaken extensive research into the needs and expectations of new joiners. This will help shape the way we will communicate with future new team members, and ensure that we are extending our message to a wider talent pool.

Objectives 2022 - 23

- Develop and launch a new modular Learning & Development Programme for staff across all levels.
- Launch a new employer branding communications strategy to help attract a wider and more socially diverse group of future trainees and managers.



# Healthy Environment

# Healthy Environment

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

Since 2012, we have implemented an Environmental Management System to measure our consumption of three main environmental indicators - electricity & gas, mileage, and paper. Monitoring these indicators has helped identify opportunities to reduce our environmental impact. For instance, through use of technology and process change, our annual paper consumption has been reduced by 91% per employee since 2012 – an annual reduction of 87.6% overall representing 262 fewer trees.

We are compliant with the government's Energy Savings Opportunity Scheme (ESOS) and in accordance with this, have our EMS data gathering process independently verified every four years.

However, we recognise that we need to intensify our actions to reduce our environmental impact. Working with independent environmental specialists, Net Zero Now, we are currently undergoing an in-depth environmental review to prepare a greenhouse gas footprint and establish a credible science-based target for carbon reduction.

In order to achieve this, our Environmental strategy and action plan is focused on three key areas – Climate Action, Circular Economy, and Nature Stewardship.

## Climate Action

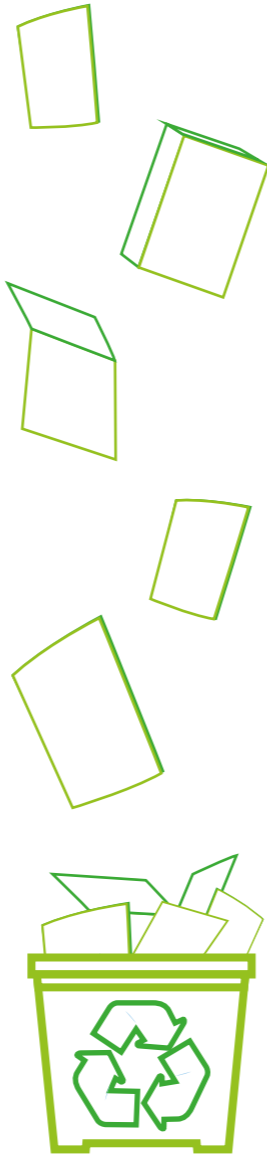
Our Flexible Home Working Policy, as well as effective use of digital communications technology, has reduced our need to commute and travel between offices. Indeed, our mileage, paper and energy figures for 2021 reflect this change in ways of working and subsequent savings.





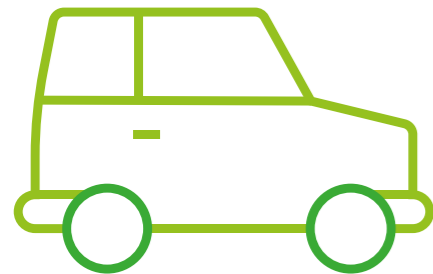
### Paper consumption

Reduction of 26.3% in annual paper consumption in 2021 in comparison to 2020, and a reduction of 87.6% on 2012.



### Electricity & Gas

Our utilities consumption increased by 13.8% in 2021 on prior year reflecting a more balanced pattern of office and home working. However, in comparison to 2012, this represents a reduction of 18.5% in kilowatt hours, despite increasing staff by some 40% in this period.



### Business mileage

In 2021, our total mileage was reduced by 5.7% in comparison to 2020, and by 64.0% in comparison to 2012.

# Healthy Environment

### Circular Economy

As part of our procurement process, we complete due diligence on all 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.

We are currently undertaking a review of our environmental policy, which includes a focus on local supplier purchasing, in particular with supply chain partners who have demonstrated a commitment to good environmental practice.

Our largest external spend is on IT equipment. We are actively moving from on-premises IT servers towards cloud-based systems. For instance, in 2020 we had 40 Citrix servers whereas we currently only have 20.

We have also migrated all of our telephony systems from wired networks onto Microsoft Teams, utilised through laptops. This means no desk has a physical telephone handset, thus reducing cables and the need for comms room equipment.

All staff are issued with a laptop to carry out their work – these are now all procured through Dell on a 3-4 year lease by which they are returned to be repaired, re-used, or recycled in a sustainable fashion at the end of the period. Other IT equipment is recycled through two specialist organisations:



[ComputerAid](#)



[Blackmore Ricotech](#)

# Healthy Environment

## Nature Stewardship

Bishop Fleming has completely removed the use of over six commonly used single-use plastic items from its seven offices. The firm is continuing to work to eliminate all single-use plastic from its business, having already got rid of carrier bags, bubble wrap, single use coffee cups, plastic straws, plates and cutlery.

Highlighted for our efforts, the firm has been accredited as a 'Plastic Free Champion' by conservation charity, Surfers Against Sewage.



All seven of our offices recycle cardboard and paper, plastics, and tin.

During our centenary year in 2019, we managed to build 446 Ecobricks, removing 135,000 items of single-use plastic from reaching landfill.

An Ecobrick is a PET bottle packed solid with clean and dry used plastic. They are made to a set density to create reusable building blocks and sequester plastic.

Our Ecobricks went to local organisations who were collecting them for specific projects.

[Ecobrick Powered Plastic Transition | Ecobricks.org](https://www.ecobricks.org)



# Healthy Environment

## Healthy Environment

### What have we achieved?

This year we embarked on a major review of our environmental impact in order to fully understand our total greenhouse gas footprint. This will enable us to develop and implement a focused carbon reduction programme and set credible science-based targets.

Members of our Healthy Environment Group underwent bespoke carbon reduction training with specialist advisors from Business in the Community. Having set our base year to match that of our first Impact Report, year ending May 2022, we have recently partnered with independent environmental specialists, Net Zero Now, to validate our carbon footprint. Net Zero Now have worked with the ICAEW, ACCA, AAT, Sage, and the Good Business Charter to establish a Net Zero protocol specific to the accountancy sector.

During the early part of 2022, we relocated our Bath office to a much smaller and central location, reflecting our hybrid working policy, and reducing our energy and resources consumption considerably. We have also taken the opportunity to switch our electricity to a renewables-based supply where possible, and now power five of our seven offices on a green energy tariff. In addition, recognising that our clients are looking for help and support to reduce their energy consumption and understand how to calculate their carbon footprint, we have established a new Sustainable Business Hub on our website to share knowledge and best practice.

### Objectives 2022 - 23

- Complete and independently verify our total Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions for base year (y/e May 2022).
- Develop and implement a 5-year plan to reduce all GHG emissions by at least 30% using Science Based Target methodology.
- Undertake a sustainable procurement review across all main suppliers to embed environmental, social, and ethical sourcing across a much wider supply chain.
- Update the firm's Environmental Policy to reflect its carbon reduction ambitions and KPIs.
- Strengthen staff benefits to include incentives and reward for healthy environmental practice.



# 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 FY 2021-22

Volunteering (hours)	1167
Amount raised for Communities and Charities	£15,640
Awards shortlisted or won	2
Employee Listening – Net Promoter Score	+29
Client Listening – Net Promoter Score	+48
BITC Responsible Business Tracker	20%

### Healthy Communities

Headcount (FTE)	392
Female partner %	27%
Female directors & senior managers %	28%
Gender Pay Gap	14.1%
Number of new Apprentices recruited	55
Sickness absence (% of working hours)	1.35%
People turnover %	24.2%

### Healthy Environment

Total CO2 emissions (tCO2e)	1069.3
CO2 emissions per employee (tCO2e)	2.73
Business Travel emissions (tCO2e)	156.3
Business Travel emissions per employee (tCO2e)	0.4
Paper Use - (Reams)	776





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