

Responsible Business Impact Report 2023-24

Delivering impact with purpose





Welcome to our third annual Impact Report sharing our progress on our responsible business journey.

This year we are proud to have launched our 1% for Communities pledge – a commitment to give back the equivalent of 1% of our annual turnover through impactful volunteering and fundraising activities. This initiative underpins our values and ambition and helps focus our people's engagement in supporting local communities.

Being recognised once more as a Great Place to Work® by the Best Workplaces Programme, as well as being re-listed as a UK Best Workplaces™ for Women reflects our ambition to be the most rewarding accountancy firm in the UK. It was particularly satisfying to increase our overall Great Place to Work® score to 78% and participation level to over 80%.

We remain active members of Business in the Community (BITC) and were delighted last year to substantially increase our overall peer group benchmark Tracker® index score, as well as outperform our cohort averages in virtually all metrics.

We have continued our coaching programme for working parents and whilst pleased to report that our median and mean gender pay gaps have reduced in the reporting period, we acknowledge that our focus remains on promoting and recruiting more women to senior leadership roles.

2023-24 saw a record number of apprentices recruited both from schools and universities. It was therefore extremely

rewarding to see our ranking in the Top 100 Apprenticeship Employers in the UK increase from 40th to 27th in the Department for Education league table, topped only by a ranking of Outstanding by Ofsted in our Apprentice Programme's first full inspection report. This is testament to our commitment to giving our apprentices the best possible start in their careers.

A focus on local and sustainable procurement has been rewarding, and whilst we still have more work to do in this area, we also joined the Prompt Payment Code this year, as well as launch a new Supplier Code of Conduct based around the eight United Nations Sustainable Development Goals that are material to us.

With a third year's carbon footprint calculated, we are now in a better position to direct our impact reduction plans whilst balancing an ambitious growth strategy. We remain committed to achieving Net Zero by 2050 and to working with environmental specialists on how best to reach this goal.

Fleur Lewis
Partner & Responsible Business Lead



On a personal level, I have thoroughly enjoyed engaging with clients this year on their Responsible Business journey, understanding their challenges and ambitions, and offering support and strategic advice from our experience in this area.

Our focus is on creating a rewarding environment that nurtures talent, enabling our people to attain a sense of achievement and fulfil their ambitions.

Pippa Clarke
Chair, Bishop Fleming



A strategic view

The first full year into our five-year Better Growth strategy, which is designed to transform our business, has delivered another year of double-digit organic growth, and is testament to the hard work of our teams across all business areas.

But Better Growth is not just about our bottom-line; it is about sustainable growth that will develop all facets of our business including our people, clients, services, markets, modern working environment, and enabling functions.

We are a people and client based business and therefore committed to improving client service excellence and the employee experience. This year we made a significant leap towards our ambition to be the most rewarding firm for our clients, people, and communities through investment in a market-leading ERP platform, which will position the business on a par with the very best firms in the sector.

Aligned to this ambition is a recruitment strategy attracting talent from apprentices all the way up to lateral partner hires. For our Apprentice Programme to be rated Outstanding by Ofsted and recognised alongside some major employers in the country such as the British Army, BT, and Amazon is a fantastic achievement for our business.

We are committed to creating a rewarding and stimulating working environment for our people, and those who wish to join an ambitious firm like ours. Responsible Business is central to this, and I am extremely proud of all our teams in their achievements in this last financial year.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Andrew'.

Andrew Sandiford, Managing Partner

....We won!

This Impact Report may be based on the 12 months to May 2024 but as we publish this year's report, we've just received the news we've been awarded the Pride Award - ESG - honouring our internal Environmental, Social and Governance work at the prestigious Accounting Excellence Awards in London. To have our responsible business journey recognised in this way is proof that what we are doing is working.





Our Responsible Business Approach

Responsible Business is a commitment to manage our business to deliver a positive impact on the communities within which we operate.

We strive for best practice, acting on stakeholder feedback and utilising external assessments and benchmarks to make continuous improvements. That is why we now pledge to give back the equivalent of 1% of turnover through impactful volunteering and fundraising activities through our **1% for Communities** programme.



The Prince's
Responsible
Business Network

We are proactive members of **Business in the Community (BITC)**. BITC is the largest and longest established business-led membership organisation dedicated to responsible business.

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 **eight goals** highlighted below:

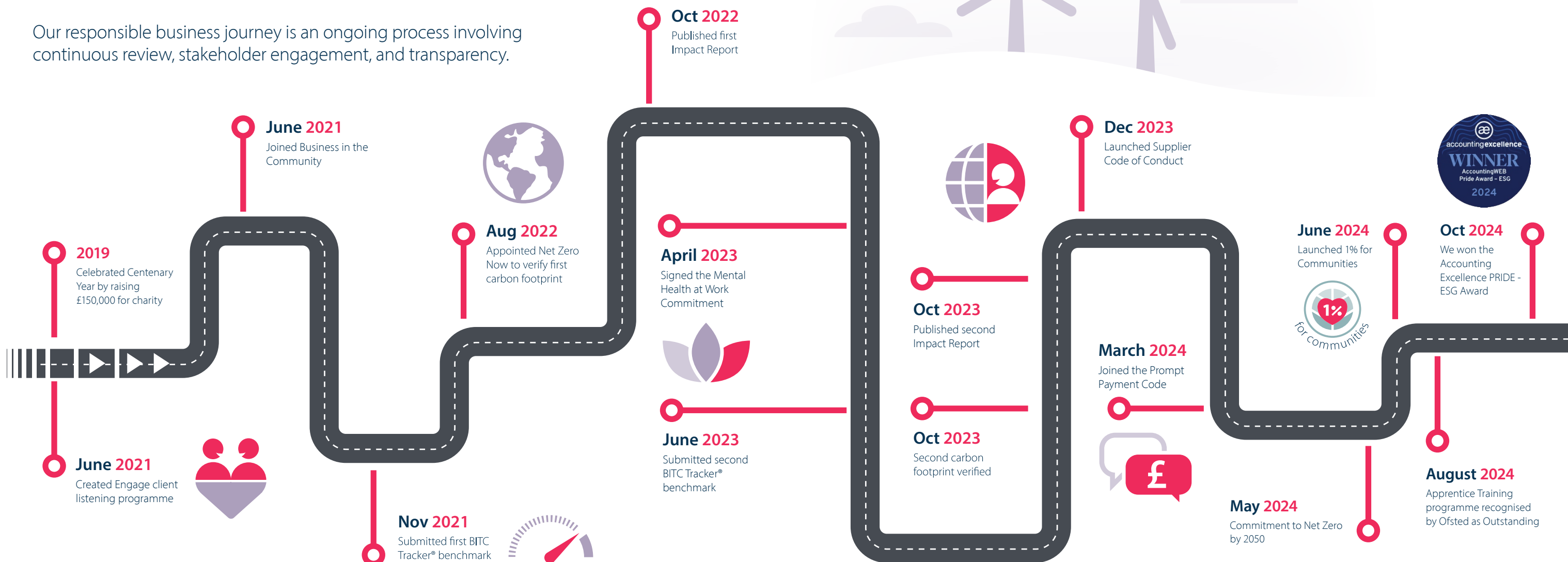
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS





Our Responsible Business Journey

Our responsible business journey is an ongoing process involving continuous review, stakeholder engagement, and transparency.





About Us

Bishop Fleming is a dynamic UK accountancy firm, providing a comprehensive range of professional services across a wide range of sectors.

From our eight office locations in the South West and the West Midlands we are able to serve clients across the UK, and internationally through our membership of Kreston Global. Our clients include SMEs, owner managed businesses, large corporates, public sector organisations, charities, schools, and private individuals.

Audit

External
AuditInternal
Audit

Accountancy

Statutory
AccountsCompany
Secretarial

Tax

Capital
TaxCorporate
TaxEmployer
SolutionsIndependent
Financial
Advice

Advisory

Corporate
Finance
and DealsFunding
AdvisoryForensic
Accounting
ServicesFinancial
ReportingManagement
Information
ServicesBusiness
Strategy and
AdvisoryInternational
TaxPersonal
TaxReal Estate
TaxR&D and
Innovation

Restructuring

Valuation
ServicesTax
ComplianceTrusts and
Probate

Transactions

Transfer
PricingVAT and
Indirect Tax

We work with clients across a wide range of sectors:



Automotive

Charities and
not-for-profit

Education

Energy,
renewables and
natural resourcesFinancial
servicesFood and
Drink

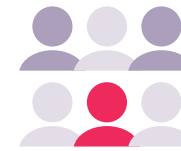
Healthcare

Hospitality
and LeisureHousing
Associations

Manufacturing

Private
ClientProfessional
ServicesPublic
SectorReal Estate and
ConstructionTechnology, media
and telecomsTransport and
Logistics

At a Glance



Depth of talent

With 43 Partners and over 500 people, we've got the capacity and expertise to meet your needs.



Continued growth

Our firm saw fee growth of over £45m - 19% increase over the previous 12 months.



8,000+ Clients

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



Award winning

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



Leaders in our field

We are one of only 18 Employer Providers to have our Apprentice Programme rated Outstanding by Ofsted



Employer of choice

We are certified and recognised as a Great Place to Work® in 2024.



Exceptional Client Service

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



1% for Communities

A pledge to give back the equivalent of 1% of turnover through impactful volunteering and fundraising activities.



National focus, international reach

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



Responsible Business

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



8 UK Offices

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



Owner-Managed Business Specialists

As an owner-managed business ourselves, we understand the unique challenges, needs and ambitions that come with running a business.



Recognising our Achievements

Awards and short listings are an important barometer that we are doing the right thing and getting recognition for our Responsible Business journey.

We are particularly proud for our Apprenticeship Programme to be recognised by Ofsted as **Outstanding** and to be re-accredited as a Great Place to Work®.



Apprenticeships Top 100 Employers 2024

Ranked – 27th Best Apprenticeship Programme



Ofsted

Apprenticeship Programme rated Outstanding



Great Place to Work®

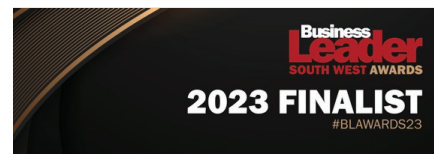
Certified March 2024- March 2025

Listed UK Best Workplaces™ for Women 2024
Listed Best Workplaces for Consulting and Professional Services 2024
Listed UK Large Workplace 2024



Accounting Excellence Awards 2023

Finalist – Large Firm of the Year
Finalist – Employer of the Year
Finalist – Client Service (Medium & Large Firms)
Finalist – Pride ESG
Finalist – In-house Marketing Team



Business Leader Awards 2023

Finalist - Advisory Firm of the Year
Finalist - Business of the Year



Insider South West Dealmakers Awards 2023

Winner - Small Deal of the Year



We are delighted to receive recognition once again as a Great Place to Work®.

We are committed to investing in our people, creating a modern working environment, and a supportive and inclusive culture that enables everyone to reach their full potential.

Anna Averis
Partner and Chief People Officer,
Bishop Fleming





Delivering Responsible Business

A year on since taking up a newly created role as Head of Responsible Business, Ewan McClymont shares his insights into the last 12 months.

What has been your main highlight of the last 12 months?

Launching our 1% for Communities pledge has helped to quantify and articulate our community work, both internally and externally. Accountants like numbers so it's given us a 'north star' target to focus on and is a rallying call to our people to get involved in community volunteering and fundraising.

Substantially increasing our BITC Responsible Business Tracker® score in all areas was also rewarding and has encouraged our various teams that we are on the right path.



What has made the greatest impact?

No one factor stands out on its own. Responsible Business is an ongoing journey and is most impactful when everyone plays their part in it. I've seen a change in the language we use to talk about responsible business as a firm - it is increasingly part of who we are and the values we represent. The more we talk about it internally and externally, the more we should be challenged on it. This leads to **greater transparency**, which is what this Impact Report is all about.

This is also helping create a new dialogue with our clients on the topic of ESG (Environmental Social Governance) as a whole and is enabling us to start having meaningful conversations with clients to help them with their journey.

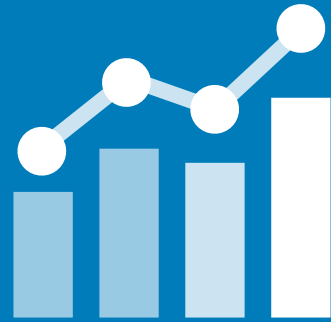
What has been challenging?

We need to accept that we **can't do everything at once**, but instead introduce initiatives at a pace whereby our people feel engaged. Good internal communication is important - not to overload people with too much information and finding creative ways to get the message across to secure their buy-in.

We've also recognised that access to good data is key to measuring impact and the new Workday platform will play a significant factor in this going forward.

I'm proud to volunteer as a member of the Cornwall Air Ambulance ground crew - it's immensely rewarding and a privilege to be part of a team whose sole focus is to save lives.

Ewan McClymont
Head of Responsible Business



Healthy Business

Ambition and Values | Employee Engagement | Governance & Transparency | Community Collaboration | Stakeholder Engagement
Client Feedback | Value Chain | Digital Transformation





Ambition and Values

Guided by our values, our approach to being a responsible business remains 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.

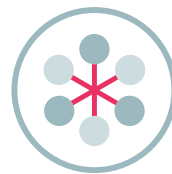
We continue to promote an agile and inclusive culture and believe it's what we bring together that sets us apart. Central to our culture are five core values.



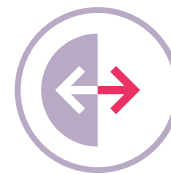
We think client.



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

We are delighted to have been certified for the second year running by Great Place to Work® under the Best Workplaces Programme.

Great Place to Work® is the global authority on workplace culture. 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.

We are also immensely proud to be recognised again as a UK Best Workplace for Women, a Best Workplace for Large Organisations, and a Best Workplace for Consulting & Professional Services in 2024.

Overall index up
4% points from

74% → 78%

Participation levels up
7% points from

74% → 81%

The superb culture is driven from the top by people who genuinely care.

I like how BF prioritises developing relationships with clients and staff.

Returning to work after maternity leave has been made really easy for me.

Everyone wants one another to succeed.



Governance & Transparency

BITC's Responsible Business Tracker® tool has provided us with a comprehensive performance assessment and robust validation process across the three pillars of Healthy Business, Healthy Communities, and Healthy Environment.

Tracker® is aligned with the UN SDGs, and delivers gap analysis, scoring and benchmarking against peer member organisations, as well as recommendations and recognition of good practice.

We have now undertaken two Tracker® exercises some 18 months apart and are encouraged to have **increased our overall score by 140%**, as well as risen above our cohort averages in virtually all metrics.

Overall Score

20% → **48%**

Our overall score increased to **48% in 2023 - 2% points higher** than other businesses who undertook the Tracker.

Inner Map Score

18% → **52%**

Our Inner map score **increased considerably** demonstrating our work in Healthy Business (in areas such as our values, governance, stakeholder engagement, and supplier value).

Outer Map Score

23% → **45%**

Our outer map score **increased considerably** demonstrating our work in Healthy Communities (inclusion & diversity, health & wellbeing, and employment & skills).

Having a robust responsible business strategy in place is no longer a nice to have for businesses, it's a necessity.

Results from Bishop Fleming's 2023 participation in BITC's Responsible Business Tracker® demonstrates real progress and shows the firm's commitment to being responsible.

We look forward to supporting Bishop Fleming to take this work even further.

Harriet Walker, Advisory and Member
Services Director, Business in the Community

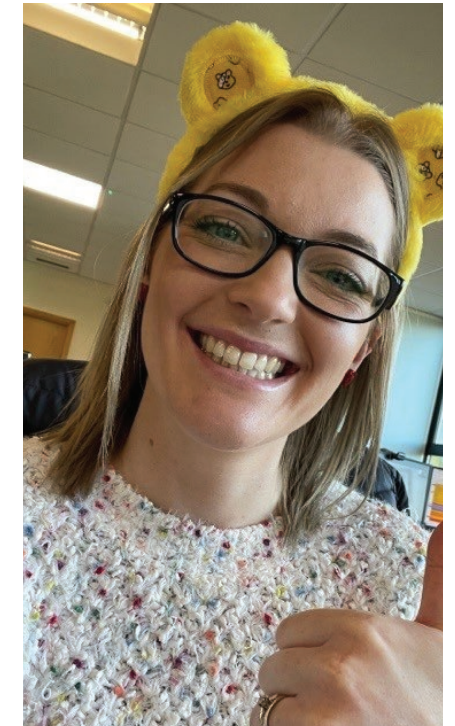
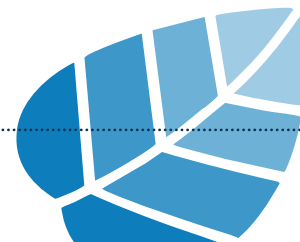


Community Collaboration

Community engagement and collaboration is core to our responsible business ethos. We are therefore delighted to launch a new initiative to reflect the work and social value that this entails.

1% for Communities is our commitment to give back the equivalent of 1% of our annual turnover through impactful volunteering and fundraising activities. Through this, we will support our communities, foster employee engagement, and contribute to meaningful causes that align with our ambition to be the most rewarding accountancy firm in the UK for our clients, people, and communities.

Our time invested includes activities such as volunteering, fundraising, giving blood, undertaking positions of responsibility, and organising and participating in charity events. As part of this commitment, we increased our responsible business hours to 1,590 in 2023-24.





This year our people rose to a challenge we set ourselves and exceeded our target to **raise £50,000** for our six regional office Charity Partners, as well as national charitable causes.

Activities included sporting endurance challenges such as walking, running, rowing, and cycling. We also held bake sales, dress-down days, speed quiz nights, karaoke events, salsa evenings, and organised competitions around netball and table tennis.

We encourage volunteering, giving every employee a free day to undertake community support of their choice. In addition, over 50 of our people regularly undertake over 70 positions of responsibility in their communities.

Great West Run

On Sunday 24th May we sponsored the Great West Run in Exeter. This is the first event in a three-year sponsorship deal with next year being the 40th Anniversary of the event.

A team of over 100 Bishop Fleming runners from all offices, together with friends, family, contacts and clients took part in the event as well as spectators around the course.

They joined several thousand other runners, helping to support health and wellbeing and raise vital funds for the local community.





An example of our community engagement included members of our Plymouth office who used their Volunteering Day to undertake much needed renovation work at the respite home of their office charity, Hugs Children's Cancer Charity.

Over 30 team members spent 250 hours painting, cleaning, and completing garden maintenance. It was an incredibly rewarding experience for those who took part, stimulating engagement with colleagues and positive health and mental wellbeing benefits.



Hugs is very thankful for the team at Bishop Fleming Plymouth for attending our respite home and helping revamp it for the new season.

The home is now looking fresh and ready for our paediatric oncology families to stay, relax and enjoy the beautiful home and gardens. Thank you to everyone who got involved in the project.

Elsbeth Hallam,
Founder of Hugs Children's Cancer Charity



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.



THE STRIVE INTERNSHIP



As members of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England & 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.

We are immensely proud that after serving on several boards and committees and as a council member for ICAEW, our Risk Partner, **Caroline Smale**, has been elected by the council as **Vice-President of the ICAEW**.

ESG Advisory

A core part of our responsible business focus is in sharing the importance of Environmental Social Governance (ESG) with key stakeholders.

We are active members of Kreston Global's ESG Group – an initiative set up to assist Kreston members worldwide to establish their own ESG programmes, and to understand and share the impact of sustainability and ESG regulatory reporting in order to better advise clients.

A series of successful Finance Director workshops across our region highlighted the growing significance of ESG in financial reporting. This was complemented by an **ESG Guide to the changing landscape of sustainability** and ESG legislation for our clients, and its relevance to them and their supply chains.



Young Enterprise

Young Enterprise remains our chosen firmwide national charity, providing support to participating schools and sponsoring local awards.

As the leading auditor to Multi-Academy Trusts in the UK and with a considerable focus on the education sector, supporting Young Enterprise is a natural fit for our business. But our partnership also goes much deeper, enabling us to cement relationships with feeder schools in our region, and promote the huge range of apprentice opportunities we can offer school leavers, leading to a rewarding career in accountancy as part of our wider social mobility strategy.



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



Client Feedback

We are committed to delivering an exceptional client service which not only meets, but exceeds expectations. Each year, we survey our clients to better understand their needs, and to review key themes and insights from their feedback. A summary of our latest survey results is below.

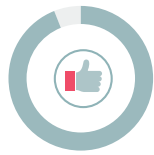
Based on the industry standard loyalty and satisfaction measurement on likelihood of clients recommending Bishop Fleming, our Net Promoter Score (NPS) is recognised as a 'great' score and compares to the Financial Services sector average of +34.

+43 Net Promoter Score (NPS)



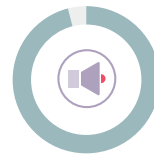
95%

of clients are positive about our client service



94%

of clients are positive that we understand their needs



95%

of clients feel they receive clear advice



94%

of clients are positive about our speed of response



95% of clients highly rate the relationship they have with our team.

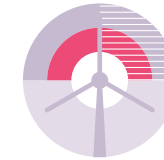


The team demonstrate a real care about us as a client. Very good communication and great experience and expertise in our sector.

We have received excellent service and value for money since we engaged BF and will continue to use your services.



Strong client focus in terms of relationships, advice and adaptation of service.



I've found every member of their team I've spoken to is engaging, helpful, keen to learn and understand our business.



The staff are knowledgeable, flexible and helpful, queries are answered promptly, this helps to ensure a good working relationship.





Value Chain

Demonstrating one of our core values to do the right thing, this year we joined the **Prompt Payment Code (PPC)** that sets standards for supplier payment practices and is administered by the Small Business Commissioner on behalf of the Department for Business and Trade (DBT). The Code is a promise to pay at least 95% of all invoices from small businesses within 30 days, as well as wider payment procedures to benefit suppliers.

The supply chain that supports our business comprises a wide range of suppliers across many areas, from smaller businesses to global companies. It includes products and services from IT hardware and software, office stationery, fit-out and maintenance, marketing materials, recruitment agents through to outsourced services such as cleaning and catering.

We launched our **Supplier Code of Conduct** at the end of 2023 with our Top 50 suppliers. This is based on the eight UN Sustainable Development Goals material to us and complements the work we have been doing on **Modern Slavery**.

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



Digital Transformation

As part of our Better Growth strategy, this year we committed to the largest and most significant business transformation project in the firm's history. Collaborating with partners **Workday**, we have completed a comprehensive process mapping exercise ensuring the successful launch of a new cloud-based integrated management platform linking all functions including People, Payroll, Finance, IT, and Client Management under one open and connected solution. Immediate benefits include a mobile app for convenient task management, as well as undertaking a comprehensive review of our practices, policies, processes, and structure.

This investment significantly strengthens the firm's operations scalability in a sustainable and rewarding manner by making it possible to deliver in-context, real-time reporting, and end-to-end processes for more transparency in all areas of the business, including social value.





What Have We Achieved?



Great Place to Work®

Re-certified as a Great Place to Work® with an increase in score from 74% to 78%.



UK Best Workplaces™ for Women.

Re-listed as a UK Best Workplaces™ for Women.



BITC Tracker®

Completed our second BITC Tracker® benchmark, increasing overall score from 20% to 48%, and exceeding cohort average in most key metrics.



1% for Communities

Launched our 1% for Communities pledge to give back the equivalent of 1% of our turnover through impactful volunteering and fundraising activities.



Charity fundraising

Achieved our £50,000 charity fundraising target and increased our responsible business time to 1590 hours.



Kreston Global ESG Group

Active member of Kreston Global ESG Group and launched ESG Guide for our clients.



Prompt Payment

Joined the Prompt Payment Code.



Code of Conduct

Launched a new Supplier Code of Conduct based on the eight UN Sustainable Development Goals material to us.



Process Improvement

Completed a firmwide process mapping programme, laying the foundation for the successful launch of the new Workday cloud-based integrated management system.

Objectives 2023-24

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

Status

Delivered

Progress

Launched 1% for Communities.
More than doubled our charity fundraising to exceed £50,000 target.
Increased responsible business hours from 945 to 1590.

Implement a Supplier Code of Ethical Conduct with key suppliers.

Delivered

Sent to 50 largest suppliers and new future suppliers as part of onboarding process.
Bishop Fleming Code of Conduct

Deliver Modern Slavery training to all staff.

Delivered

Updated our Modern Slavery Statement and delivered mandatory training to all staff.
Bishop Fleming Modern Slavery

Increase stakeholder engagement through research and client listening programme.

Delivered

Conducted research survey with clients on economic challenges, using results to focus advisory support.
Ongoing Engage Client Listening programme focused on service delivery and process improvement.

Objectives 2024-25

Integrate 1% for Communities into our people's charity and community engagement, ensuring achievement of this metric.

Establish charity committees in all offices to focus and co-ordinate local fundraising and volunteering activity.

Increase volunteering with Young Enterprise, focus on social mobility and participation in events like the Great West Run.





Healthy Communities

Health and Wellbeing | Inclusion and Diversity | Employment and Skills





Health and Wellbeing

Wellbeing is the mutually supportive relationship between an individual's mental, physical, social, and financial health and their personal wellbeing.

Business in the Community

Our focus on improving the health and wellbeing of our people is reflected in the BITC Responsible Business Tracker® result, increasing our score in this area substantially across metrics including governance, strategy & risk, measurement, disclosure, and action.

Overall Score

28% **60%**

Our overall H&W score **increased by 114%**, 12% points higher than other businesses who completed the Tracker

Great Place to Work® re-certification is a valuable and robust means towards how the work experience of our people impacts on overall health and wellbeing.

We are working hard to improve our internal communications, ensuring our people are kept informed of the firm's growth strategy and the important issues and changes that might impact on them. This is reflected in our Great Place to Work® feedback.

92% **85%** **85%** **85%**

When you join the company you are made to feel welcome

I am treated as a full member here regardless of my position

Management is approachable and easy to talk to

I can be myself here

I have never worked with a team of such lovely people.

It feels like the company genuinely cares about wellbeing.

Being a working parent can be stressful and exhausting, however BF have made this as easy and painless as possible for me.

I do appreciate the emphasis the company places on ensuring your out of work life (fitness, finances, mental wellbeing) is equally as important as your work life.

This is a very social and open minded place where I feel people from various background are welcomed and treated equally.



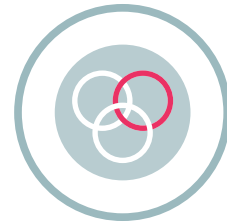
Our Health & Wellbeing team includes over 20 trained Mental Health First Aiders (MHFA) and Wellbeing Ambassadors who have continued to focus their attention around four core wellbeing pillars.



Mental



Physical



Financial



Social

Mental

We are proud to be members of the **Mental Health at Work Commitment**, a framework that recognises the importance of promoting employee wellbeing.

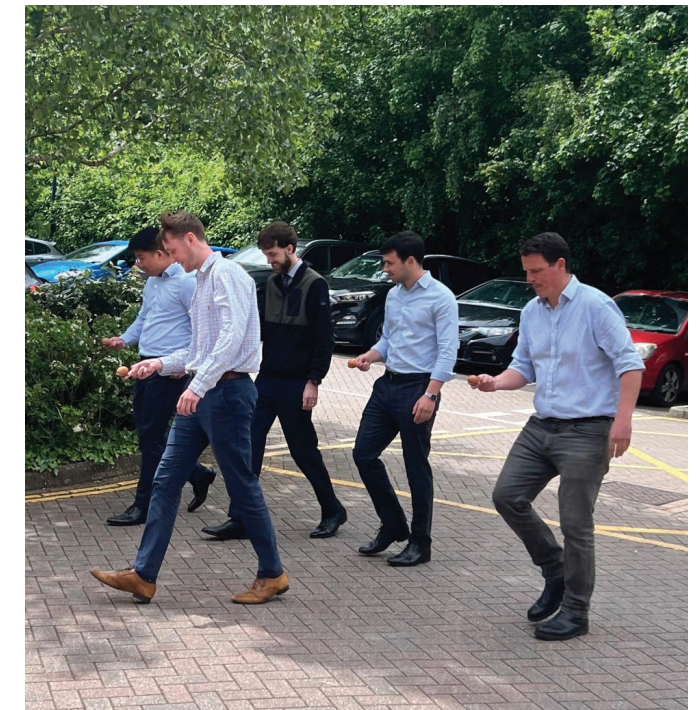
Our Mental Health First Aiders recognise that **‘it’s OK to not be OK’** and have been trained to help support people through difficulties they may be experiencing. With a ‘closed door’ confidential approach they listen non-judgementally and help signpost to the appropriate help if needed. This includes an online counselling service through My Wellbeing, delivered through our Simplyhealth employee benefit scheme.



To mark World Mental Health Day in October 2023, our Plymouth office welcomed guest speakers and mental health experts, Horizon Plymouth. The session included top tips to help manage stress, prevent mental health deterioration, and information on how to support colleagues.

November was celebrated throughout all our offices, not only raising over £500 for charity, but also educating our colleagues on supporting men’s health with an excellent live webinar from Ryan Parke to share his expansive scientific knowledge surrounding men’s mental health.

We celebrated the theme of Mental Health Awareness Week in May 2024 - **‘Movement: moving more for mental health’**, with our Wellbeing Team putting together a program of activities throughout the week. As well as a ‘wear it green’ day to raise awareness, this included encouraging us all to find creative ways to commute using our own steam and supporting colleagues with team running, walking, and yoga events.





Physical

Our people have embraced several physical team and individual challenges this year, in many cases raising funds for our local office charities.

Bristol office held a 24-hour sporting challenge for their charity, Off the Record, involving a range of physical activities to suit all abilities.

Our Worcester and Exeter offices held a popular netball tournament for local professional firms, raising funds for Prostate Cancer UK and the Devon Wildlife Trust.

We were proud to be the title sponsor for the Great West Run and have committed to continue this local investment for the next two years. A team of over 100 Bishop Fleming runners took part in what was a fantastic day, bringing together colleagues, friends, family, and clients in the Exeter community.

Extending our commitment to the local Cheltenham community, we have also committed to sponsor Run Cheltenham.



Financial

The Financial wellbeing team used national awareness weeks to highlight the range of support available to our people. These included - Pension Awareness Week, Talk Money Week, and National Debt Awareness Week.

We have continued our work with Better with Money, running webinars on financial management and giving free access to advice on debt, pensions, mortgages, and savings. In addition, as part of our life assurance benefit, all employees have access to a YuLife app enabling discounted gym membership and ability to earn YuCoin towards high street brands.

Social

Social wellbeing is intrinsically linked to one of our core values - we put relationships at the heart. Our office social committees are empowered to organise social events throughout the year, with activities including table tennis tournaments, karaoke evenings, football, golf, and salsa lessons.

Working together as teams towards a collective goal is an important part of our culture, as summed up with feedback from the Great Place to Work® survey.

A good prioritisation on mental health, as well as a nice culture where the ultimate goal is working together to overcome challenges.



Health and Wellbeing - What Have We Achieved?



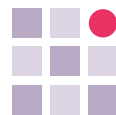
Workplace wellbeing

Prepared the foundation for a new people management protocol, with additional coaching and training support to improve workplace wellbeing.



BITC Responsible Business Tracker®

Increased the Health & Wellbeing score in the BITC Responsible Business Tracker® benchmark 114% from 28% to 60%, 12% points higher than the cohort average.



Our awareness and engagement strategy

Celebrated national mental, physical, and financial awareness weeks as part of our awareness and engagement strategy.



Mental Health at Work

Focused on the six best practice standards of the Mental Health at Work Commitment.



BITC's Workwell self-assessment benchmark

Completed BITC's Workwell self-assessment benchmark to underpin future Health & Wellbeing strategy.

Objectives 2023-24	Status	Progress
Review and incorporate best practice recommendations from Mental Health at Work Commitment.	In Progress	Positive progress made under the six best practice standards, in particular with promoting an open culture where people can be themselves, as highlighted in GPTW results.
Continuous review of job design, clarity of role, and expectations to achieve improved workplace wellbeing.	Delivered	In parallel with the preparatory work undertaken to implement Workday, all employees have been allocated a Growth Coach.
Streamline our Wellbeing Ambassador activity to achieve better focus and impact on wellbeing.	In Progress	Service Line Champions identified to embed wellbeing into working practices.
Roll out compulsory training for all Growth Coaches on mental wellbeing.	In Progress	Forms part of the new Workday Learning Platform and Client Management Development Programme.

Objectives 2024-25

Support the Growth Coach training programme to enable a high performance culture, leading with empathy, including mental health awareness training.

Focus on a range of activities to support our people in reducing occasions of excessive work-related stress.

Continuous programme of activities under the four H&W pillars to be delivered locally by Wellbeing Ambassadors.

Promote BITC's Let's Care Together programme to support our people with caring responsibilities.

Undertake refresher and new Mental Health First Aider training for existing cohort and new volunteers.





Inclusion and Diversity

At Bishop Fleming we are committed to implementing long-term strategies to increase our diversity, equity, and inclusion further. We acknowledge that improving in all these areas is a journey, but we are confident that we recognise and value the different characteristics and backgrounds of each member of our workforce.

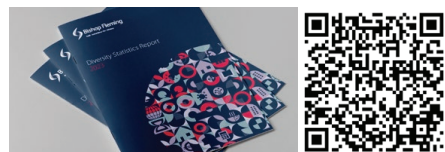
Progress in this area has been reflected in the BITC Responsible Business Tracker® result, increasing our Inclusion and Diversity score by 61% across all metrics.

41% → 66%

Our overall I&D score **increased to 66%, 15% points higher** than other businesses who completed the Tracker.

Our commitment to inclusion and being a Great Place to Work® remains to 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.

Our latest Diversity Report can be [viewed here](#)



Through our Inclusion and Diversity (I&D) working group, BF Voices, we continue to engage our people on five key strategic areas:

1. Improved representation of women at senior levels

As a responsible business, we welcome the introduction of gender pay gap reporting as an important contributor to our transparency. Not only is it important for society, but gender parity and greater diversity within the workplace is good for business and critical to our own success.

Our Gender Pay report can be [viewed here](#)



We are pleased to report that our median and mean gender pay gaps have reduced in the reporting period, by 3.1% points and 7.2% points, respectively.

Our median gender pay gap

1.5%

Our median gender pay gap of 1.5% highlights that we are satisfying equal pay requirements, with men and women receiving equal pay for the same or equal work.

We continue to recognise that our mean gender pay gap of 13.3% is driven by having fewer women in our most senior roles, and we are committed to a long term plan to address this disparity. Indeed, in our latest round of new promotions, 50% were awarded to women. This reflects our ongoing efforts to create an inclusive workplace culture where all employees have equal opportunities for advancement and success.

Following a successful pilot, we were pleased to extend a parental coaching programme in collaboration with transition experts, 'How Do You Do It.' The coaching sessions assist parents in achieving the right balance at work and at home and help parents to learn strategies for combining parenting with their professional roles.

We have also introduced individual coaching sessions for expectant mothers which begin prior to the start of maternity leave and continue during leave and following their return. The coaching supports these employees to develop strategies which will support them in preparing for their maternity leave as well as facilitating their return to work, enabling them to maintain their career momentum.

We continue to run a menopause support group each month, where a number of women from across the firm meet to share their questions, experiences, and knowledge. This has now been in place since 2022 and is well established within the firm.

We take a balanced approach to hybrid working, encouraging our people to choose when, where and how they work, considering client, team, firm, and individual needs.

We celebrated the 2024 International Women's Day with its theme, **'Inspire Inclusion'**.

We are proud to be recognised as a UK Best Workplace™ for Women in 2023, and again in 2024. This recognition comes as part of our ongoing efforts in redefining workplace culture and promoting gender equality and inclusion.





2. Greater need for ethnic diversity

Being inclusive regardless of someone's background allows our people to perform to the best of their ability, make a positive impact on their personal development, and enhance delivery of client service.

How have we improved our ethnic diversity?

Strive Internship Programme - working with the University of the West of England, Hargreaves Lansdown, and Bristol City Council to provide two paid summer internships for students from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds living in Bristol and South Gloucestershire.



Recruitment – working with BITC to review our careers website and job adverts, improving our recruitment policies, the wording we use in our adverts and where we advertise our roles so that they can be broad reaching.

Awareness Building – celebrating and engaging in a range of national awareness campaigns and religious festivals including:

- National Inclusion Week
- Black History Month
- Islamophobia Awareness Month
- Diwali

3. Social mobility and widening access to our workplace

Bristol Future Talent Partnership - running a work experience week for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic sixth form students to introduce them to professional careers that they may not have previously considered. The week concluded with insightful presentations from the students, who shared their ideas on enhancing inclusivity, diversity and learning within Bishop Fleming.



4. Better recognition of the LGBTQIA+ community

Bishop Fleming is committed to promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion for LGBTQIA+ employees and does not tolerate discrimination, victimisation, or harassment based on a person's sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or transition status.

Our people are encouraged to highlight the pronoun they wish to identify with, and our BF Voices group are extremely proactive in maintaining a healthy ongoing dialogue through insights and articles, as well as celebrating Transgender Awareness Week, Pride Month, and International Day against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia.



5. Recognition and support for those who are neurodivergent, with a disability, or have caring responsibilities

We celebrated Neurodiversity Week with a series of personal blogs written by our people to highlight their experience of ADHD, autism, and dyslexia, and a quiz that proved to be an excellent engagement and educational tool.

Fluctuations in those that live with long-term conditions can mean a person may appear okay one day but be struggling the next. A key message therefore is that not all disabilities are visible.

For instance, we now give full access to Grammarly, a writing assistant tool for neurodiverse team members, to allow colleagues to write more confidently and clearly.

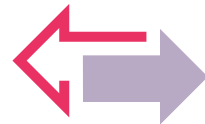


Inclusion and Diversity - What Have We Achieved?



BITC Tracker®

Increased the Inclusion & Diversity score in the BITC Responsible Business Tracker® benchmark 61% from 41% to 66%, 15% point higher than the cohort average.



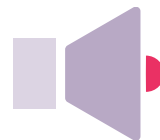
Gender Pay Gap

Reduced both our median and mean gender pay gaps by 3.1% points and 7.2% points, respectively.



UK Best Workplaces™ for Women

Recognised as a UK Best Workplace™ for Women in 2023 and 2024.



Empowered Voices

Empowered our BF Voices workgroup to continue the awareness raising of key focus areas.



Diversity Inclusion

Recruited several female managers and partner positions.



Mental Health Awareness

Identified gaps in support for our people with neuro diversities or disabilities and implemented practical tools to support them.

Objectives 2023-24	Status	Progress
Implement the next phase of the Women's Development Programme to support women to achieve aspirations and goals, and reduce our gender pay gap.	In Progress	Continued focus on embedding women into the workplace after parental leave through one-to-one coaching. Commitment to running 'How Do You Do It' coaching programme for the next cohort of parents returning from maternity / paternity leave.
Review and implement a social-mobility focused outreach programme through an intersectional lens.	In Progress	Currently undertaking a review of potential outreach volunteering opportunities.
Continued support for all diversity groups through celebrating key events.	Ongoing	Implemented a calendar of key events throughout the year, raising awareness and enhancing education.
All Growth Coaches and recruitment panel members to undertake training on unconscious bias.	Delivered	Training completed with all managers and recruitment panels. Will form part of Workday Learning Platform for all staff going forward.

Objectives 2024-25

Continued focus on the Women's Development Programme to support diversity enrichment in senior management positions.
Continued commitment to diversity and social mobility outreach through the Strive Internship Programme, Bristol Future Talent Partnership, and Young Enterprise.
Continued support for all diversity groups, celebrating key national inclusion events such as Pride Month and National Inclusion Week.
All employees to undertake training on unconscious bias.





Employment and Skills

Our learning and development strategy encourages growth and excellence within our organisation and is tailored to meet the specific needs of our diverse workforce.

We focus on developing soft skills, people management, and client management through robust management development content.

We have identified five key capabilities (service excellence, quality management, team management, project management, and commercial engagement) that are assessed as part of our performance management framework, and are rolling out a training programme to develop these capabilities further. This will include introducing coaching as a key management skill, enabling our people to support one another's development and career progression.

Through our new Workday system we now have a single platform to record the performance management cycle, with increased capability through career conversations and regular 'in the moment' transparent feedback.

In addition to a comprehensive review of our systems and processes as part of the Workday implementation, we have introduced a new grading structure and replaced the 'people manager' role with a 'Growth Coach.' This will encourage a coaching culture focused on supporting performance, maximising potential, and career development.

Increasing our Great Place to Work® participation level from 74% to 81% reflects our increased focus on employee engagement. Progress in this area is also reflected in the BITC Responsible Business Tracker® result, increasing our Inclusive Employment & Good Work score by 92%.

Our IEGW Score

36% 69%

Our IEGW score increased to 69%, 26% points higher than other businesses who completed the Tracker

Apprenticeships

We are proud to have held the status of 'Partner in Learning' with the ICAEW since 2020 and hold 'Platinum' status for training and development with the ACCA. As one of only three accountancy firms recognised as an employer-provider, we provide bespoke learning throughout the apprenticeship training period and in 2023 were ranked 40th in the UK Top 100 Apprenticeship Employers, increasing our ranking to 27th in 2024.

Each September we onboard around 70 new apprentices into the firm, with 30% of them joining straight from school. Complementing the work experience weeks that we host in our Exeter and Bristol offices, the 'Launch Pad' non-graduate programme is an important element of our social mobility focus, giving young people an alternative career path into the accountancy profession.

Launch Pad is a five-year programme that includes a two-year seat rotation across our core service lines, whilst also ensuring our trainees progress through their Level 7 Apprenticeship.

In the last year we have comprehensively reviewed our apprenticeship program to ensure its continued success and alignment with our goals. These improvements led to the development of a series of guides and knowledge management articles to educate the business.



This work has been recognised by Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills), which has given an **Outstanding** rating in their first full inspection of our Apprentice Programme across all five areas - Quality of Education, Behaviour and Attitudes, Personal Development, Leadership & Management, and Apprenticeships.

We are one of only 18 employer providers to have achieved Outstanding status so far in 2024 and only the second accountancy firm in the UK.



The full Ofsted report can be found here

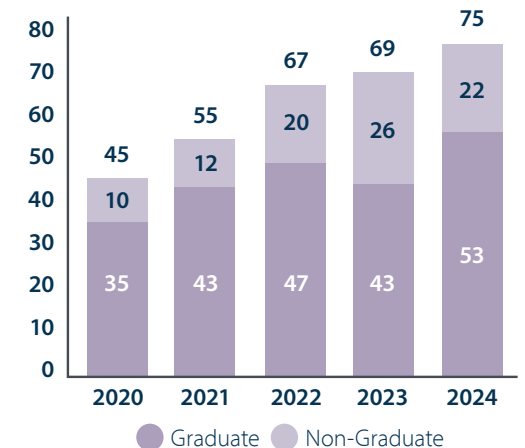


We are thrilled to receive this recognition for our leading apprenticeship programme, which is now officially rated among the very best in the UK. This is testament not only to hard work, but teamwork and of course, our brilliant apprentices.



Anna Averis
Partner and
Chief People Officer

September Apprentice Intake





Key improvements implemented include:



Transparency: Enhanced visibility of learning progress for apprentices and managers, ensuring clarity at each apprenticeship stage.



Skill Development: Increased focus on critical client service skills, better preparing apprentices to meet client needs.



Safeguarding and Support: Increased awareness of safeguarding and improved manager training to better support apprentices.





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Induction Week 2023

We welcome our 69 new apprentices to Bristol for a Professional Development (PD1) Week - a programme of training and social events to kick start their career with Bishop Fleming.



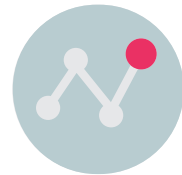


Employment and Skills - What Have We Achieved?



Ofsted Outstanding

Rated Outstanding by Ofsted in first full inspection of Apprentice Programme.



Increased Ranking

Increased our Top 100 Apprentice Programme ranking from 40th to 27th in the UK.



Feedback

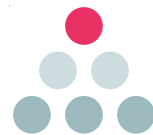
Launched a single source performance management system enabling 'in the moment' feedback.



The Prince's Responsible Business Network

BITC Tracker®

Increased the Inclusive Employment & Good Work (IEGW) score in the BITC Responsible Business Tracker® benchmark from 36% to 69%, 26% points higher than the cohort average.



New Grading Structure

Introduced a new transparent grading structure, aligning apprentice grades with study years.



Apprenticeship Review

Completed a comprehensive review of apprenticeship programme and recruited a new apprentices manager role.



Record Apprentice Recruitment

Another record number of new apprentices recruited.



Growth Culture

Introduced a new 'Growth Coach' role to encourage a coaching culture.

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.

Status

Ongoing

Progress

Identified five key capabilities that are assessed as part of our performance management framework and rolling out a training programme to develop these capabilities further.

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

In Progress

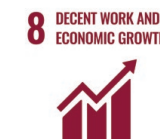
Introduced a new Growth Coach role, which will be further embedded through management training starting in January 2025.

Objectives 2024-25

Launch and develop the Workday Learning Platform to transform the way the business delivers and records learning.

Launch a new Client Management Development Programme with all client managers.

Adopt BITC's Opening Doors commitment to further promote inclusive recruitment.





Healthy Environment

Climate Action | Nature Stewardship | Circular Economy





Bishop Fleming is committed to achieving Net Zero emissions by 2050.



We continue to collaborate with environmental specialists and other professionals on how best to reach this goal according to industry agreed definitions, and in line with relevant environmental legislation.

Our aim is to minimise our environmental impact, operate as a responsible and sustainable business, and contribute to the global effort to mitigate climate change. This is reflected in our updated **Environmental Policy**.

Climate Action

We are pleased to continue our partnership with carbon experts, Net Zero Now, and are now in our third year of measuring and independently validating our greenhouse gases footprint.

In accordance with new SBTi (Science Based Targets initiative) guidance and anticipated GHG (Green House Gas) Protocol changes to include Well-to-Tank emissions in all forms of transport, going forward we will update all historical data to accurately reflect this.

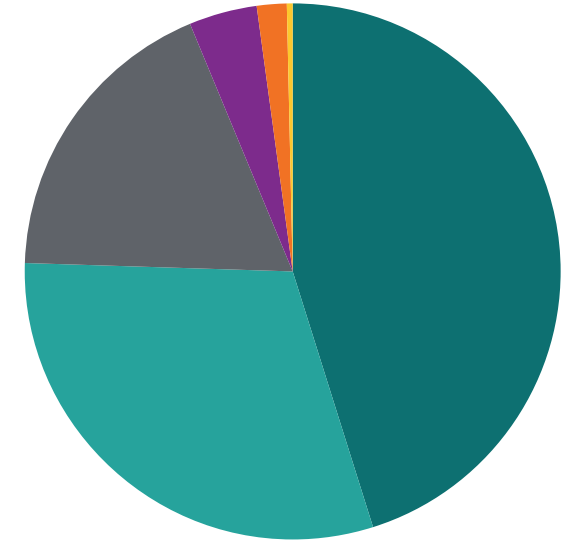
A breakdown of our carbon footprint by Scope:

		2023-24	2022-23	2021-22
Scope	Explanation	tCO2e	tCO2e	tCO2e
One	Gas heating, air-conditioning gases	46.59	9.38	24.88
Two	Electricity (single occupancy offices)	0	0	29.77
Three	Business travel, commuting, purchased goods & services, waste, transportation, shared office electricity	1372.22	1236.09	1014.65
Total	Absolute	1418.81	1245.47	1069.30
Total	Per Employee	2.96	2.77	2.73

Scope 1 emissions have increased due to substantial air-conditioning refurbishment in two of our offices, but combined Scopes 1 and 2 emissions have decreased by 14.75% compared to our base year. Six of our eight offices are supplied by renewable electricity, and we are in discussions with the other two landlords for them to follow suit.

Scope 3 emissions have been influenced by our continued growth, with the highest emissions areas in Purchased Goods & Services, Employee Commuting, and Business Travel.

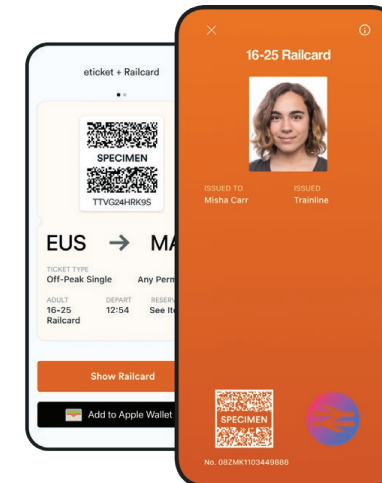
Our IT emissions last year increased from 253.16 tCO2e to 327.12 tCO2e - a reflection of the significant investment in our new Workday platform and increased number of licences and cloud utilisation.



Railcards

In order to encourage use of public transport, all our apprentices are entitled to a free railcard throughout their training period.

This card, worth £30 per year, enables them to save 1/3 on all eligible journeys including business travel.



Scope 3 emissions	tCO2e	%
Purchased Goods & Services	619.64	45.15
Employee Commuting	416.43	30.35
Business Travel	250.27	18.24
Fuel & Energy-Related Activities	56.45	4.11
Capital Goods	24.67	1.80
Waste	4.76	0.35
Total	1372.22	100.00



Nature Stewardship

To engage with our people on environmental issues, as well as create team bonding activities as part of our health and wellbeing focus, we have directed our energies into organising a series of litter cleans through environmental charity, **Surfers Against Sewage (SAS)**.

We are pleased to have moved from Bronze SAS Plastic Free Champions to Silver and are setting our sights on Gold, which will involve further removal of single-use plastic from the business.

All our offices recycle paper, card, plastic, and tin. We have also worked with waste recyclers, Terracycle, to pilot a crisp and snack wrapper recycling initiative in three of our offices which recycles 100% of these items and turns them into household items such as garden and playground equipment.



Circular Economy

As part of our development of our new Supplier Code of Conduct and a thorough review of office procurement, we have implemented an internal decision-making guide to remind our people to buy local and sustainable products and services as a first resort.

As a result of this, all our copy paper is now sourced through **The Woodland Trust**. Every sheet of Woodland Trust paper sold contributes directly to the work of the Woodland Trust. Energy needed for paper production is generated from waste material, resulting in zero CO2 emissions from fossil fuels, and any excess heat from the production process is piped to a community heating project.

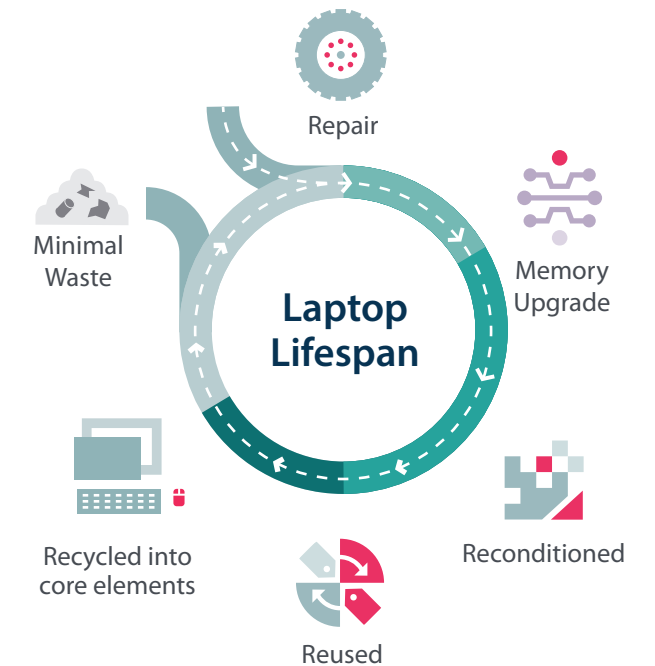
Another example is the supply from **Birchall Tea** to our Bristol, Exeter, and Torquay offices. Their new state of the art solar-powered tea factory in Wiltshire generates twice the electricity it needs, putting power back into the National Grid. Not only is the tea ethically sourced, Birchall plant-based prism teabags are made from biodegradable starch, without any trace of plastic.

Huge annual reduction in printing



We are proud to have reduced our annual paper usage by 4,300 fewer reams since 2012, which equates to some 258 fewer trees per year. Last year our paper usage reduced by 14.2% to 681 reams. In addition, 100% of our confidential paper waste is recycled into making new paper products with zero waste to landfill.

With IT being one of our core annual purchases, our policy is to extend the lifespan of each asset either through repair or memory upgrade. As part of the circular economy process, 99% of redundant IT equipment is then either reconditioned and reused or recycled into core elements with virtually zero waste to landfill.



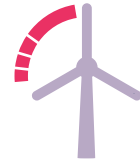


What have we achieved?



Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Measured our total greenhouse gas emissions for a third successive year.



Net Zero ambitions

Developed an initial Carbon Reduction Plan.



Energy Savings Opportunity Scheme

Completed our third ESOS (Energy Savings Opportunity Scheme) energy compliance audit.



Reduced paper usage

Reduced paper usage by 14.2% on previous year to 681 reams.



Surfers Against Sewage

Organised a series of beach and litter cleans and recognised as a Silver Plastic Free Champion by Surfers Against Sewage.



Sustainable procurement

Completed an office supplier review to ensure continued focus on local and sustainable procurement.

Objectives 2023-24	Status	Progress
Develop our Net Zero plan further to set an ambitious long term target to reduce Scope 3 emissions per employee.	In progress	We are committed to achieving Net Zero across all Scopes by 2050. As the firm grows, a key metric will be Scope 3 emissions per employee.
Develop a waste reduction plan with particular focus on single-use plastic.	Delivered	Completed a waste audit across all offices to trace recycling and general waste. Implemented Terracycle pilot to remove plastic snack wrappers and achieved Silver SAS Plastic Free Champion status through single-use removal.
Galvanise employee engagement with carbon reduction initiatives.	In progress	All employees qualify for Cycle 2 Work bike savings. Trainee apprentices qualify for a free rail card during their training period.

Objectives 2024-25

Develop a sustainable travel policy aimed at reducing fossil fuel business miles through better use of car sharing and public transport.
Work with Surfers Against Sewage to further reduce single-use plastic and achieve SAS Gold Plastic Free Champion status.
Re-use, re-cycle, and adopt sustainable practices where practical, in planned office refurbishments.
Foster employee engagement through recognition and reward for good environmental practice.





Impact Summary



Impact Summary

Key Performance Indicators

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

Healthy Business	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22
Community & Charity Responsible Business (hours)	1590	945	1167
Amount raised for Communities and Charities	£50,168	£23,700	£15,640
Awards shortlisted or won	10	8	2
Employee Listening – Net Promoter Score	+27	+30	+29
Client Listening – Net Promoter Score	+43	+50	+48
BITC Responsible Business Tracker	48%	n/a	20%

Healthy Communities	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22
Headcount (FTE)	479	449	392
Female partner %	24%	28%	27%
Female directors and senior managers %	33%	28%	28%
Gender Pay Gap (mean)	13.3%	16.4%	14.1%
Gender Pay Gap (median)	1.5%	8.7%	17.3%
Number of new Apprentices recruited	69	67	55
Sickness absence (% of working hours)	0.83%	0.38%	1.35%
People turnover %	20.7%	21.6%	24.2%

Healthy Environment	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22
Total CO2 emissions (tCO2e)	1418.8	1245.5	1069.3
CO2 emissions per employee (tCO2e)	2.96	2.77	2.73
Business Travel emissions (tCO2e)	250.3	247.2	156.3
Business Travel emissions per employee (tCO2e)	0.52	0.55	0.4
Paper use (reams)	681	794	776





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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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