

Our vision to make a positive difference

May 2022

Naturally *different.*

business stream

A SCOTTISH WATER COMPANY



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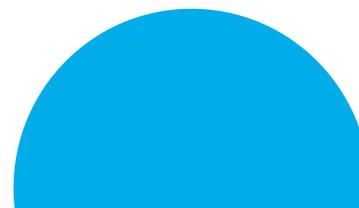
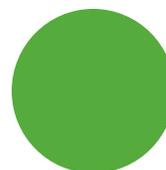
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An introduction from our CEO

As a responsible business we believe we have an important role to play by behaving responsibly and driving positive change for the environment and society as a whole.

This belief is shared across the business. Our people want to work for an organisation that makes a difference - for its customers, of course, but also for each other, the environment and our local communities – and, driven by colleague feedback, this led us to develop our vision to make a positive difference.

Since launching our vision in September 2019, we've introduced over 25 new initiatives to help deliver our ambitions, including planting 10,000 trees in partnership with the Green Action Trust; developing partnerships with BiTC, Career Ready and Sported to deliver volunteering and mentoring programmes; establishing our charity panel; and training colleagues to become mental health first aiders. And to help drive our ambitions, we've introduced a series of pledges under each of our four strands to push ourselves further and to hold ourselves accountable.

We're committed to making a positive difference in everything we do. We have ambitious plans for the future but we're really proud of what we've achieved to date. Going that extra bit further to make a positive difference is what sets us apart from other water retailers, and it's what unites us as a business and as people.”

Jo Dow



Jo Dow, CEO

Our vision to make a positive difference

Our vision was created following colleague feedback in our annual engagement survey and its success can be attributed to the drive and passion of our people. We want our vision to reflect how we do things at Business Stream and for that ethos to underpin the key decisions we take as a business. In order to help us achieve this, our vision sits at the centre of our Performance Wheel which we use to measure performance, at both an individual and company-wide level.

We launched our vision to make a positive difference in September 2019, focused on the four areas which are important to us.

-  Our customers
-  Our people
-  The environment
-  Supporting our local communities

From the outset we knew that to deliver our vision we needed to agree **clear actions and set targets that would hold us to account**. To do this effectively, we aligned our plan to the Business in the Community Responsible Business Map (see image), designed to help organisations assess the contribution they make to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

By understanding our strengths and opportunities and focus on what we wanted to achieve, **we were then able to identify and introduce a series of initiatives** that would help us to bring our vision to life.

In addition, we rebranded and introduced our ‘Naturally Different’ strapline and four pillars (Helpful by Nature, Supportive by Nature, Responsible by Nature and Local by Nature), to demonstrate our commitment to our vision externally.



Our vision to make a positive difference (continued)

Helpful *by nature.*

As a water retailer, our core focus is on delivering an excellent customer service, built around trust, experience and expertise. We're continually investing in our services and solutions to ensure they meet our customers' needs.

In addition, we want to support our customers' ambitions to be responsible businesses by helping them to reduce their water use, delivering financial and environmental savings. To support our ambitions we've launched a pledge to **help our customers reduce their water use by 20%**; we became **the first water retailer to partner with Waterwise**, the UK's leading NGO on water efficiency and conservation to promote the importance of using water wisely; and we've launched initiatives to provide funding and support to help customers invest in water efficiency measures. To date we've **helped our business and public sector customers to save over £305million in costs** and **over 52billion litres of water** - the equivalent of nearly 21,000 Olympic sized swimming pools.

Responsible *by nature.*

We've taken an honest look at what we should be doing internally as an organisation to help reduce our environmental impact. As part of the Scottish Water Group, **we have an ambition to become net zero by 2040** – five years ahead of the Scottish Government target and 10 years ahead of the UK target. To play our part in achieving our group-wide goal, we launched a pledge in April 2021 to **reduce our carbon emissions by 20%** within a twelve-month period, which we've achieved through pro-active measures to change both our processes and behaviours. We also **partnered with the Green Action Trust** to deliver a tree planting programme, with our investment sponsoring the delivery of an additional 10,000 trees in Scotland. And we've **introduced a series of measures to support our aims to become a circular office.**



Our vision to make a positive difference (continued)

Local *by nature.*

In order to help foster healthy communities and support future generations, we've **developed partnerships with external charitable organisations** to help primary school children, teenagers, local sports clubs and school leavers. This has included **running a primary school volunteering programme**; developing **free water efficiency resources for children**; providing **mentoring and paid work experience placements** through Career Ready; and **helping local community sports clubs** with administrative and business support.

Supportive *by nature.*

Finally, recognising the importance of looking after our colleagues, we've **invested in a range of initiatives** designed to improve health and wellbeing. This has included **enhancing our family friendly policies**; providing **mental health first aiders**; offering **wellness sessions**; and introducing an **Employee Assistance Programme**, which provides our people and their families with 24/7 access to free confidential support. And we've launched an ambitious target to **deliver the equivalent of over 1,200 days of training and development opportunities** to our colleagues by September 2022.

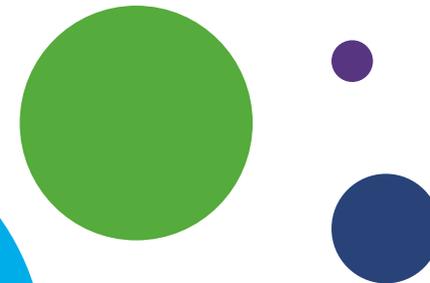


Our values and stakeholder collaboration

Our values

Our values define how we do things at Business Stream and help shape our culture. Our colleagues are expected to demonstrate our values in everything they do at work. When we refreshed our brand in September 2020, we took the opportunity to ensure our values really reflect who we are as a business and our vision to make a positive difference:

- **Dependable** – We keep our promises and respond to our customers' promptly
- **Knowledgeable** – We're the water industry experts
- **Purposeful** – We're committed to making a positive difference
- **Supportive** – We're helpful and focus on delivering solutions
- **Progressive** – We're forward thinking and innovative

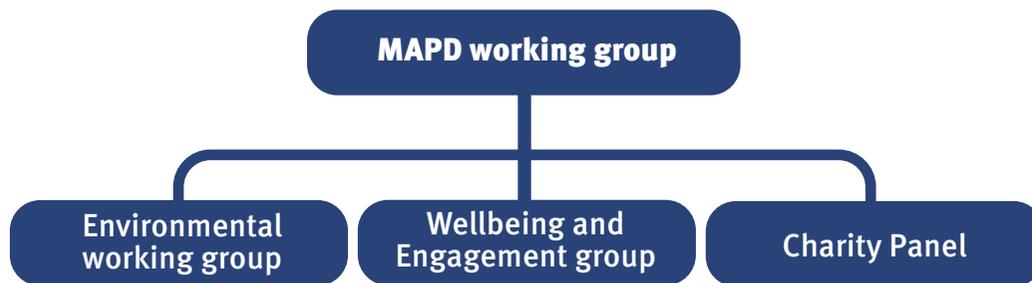


Collaborating with our stakeholders

To help shape our vision, we've engaged with both our internal and external stakeholders to gain their insight and views on how we can achieve our ambitions.

Internal stakeholders

To maintain momentum around our vision, we created our Making a Positive Difference (MAPD) Working Group, chaired by our CEO and made up of representatives from across the business. We also established a number of sub-groups to help deliver on our pledges and initiatives, beyond what we achieve as a customer-centric business. This includes our Environmental Working Group, our Wellbeing and Engagement Group and our Charity Panel. These groups provide our people with a real opportunity to drive forward our vision by contributing ideas and working together to help deliver initiatives.



We've also incorporated questions around our vision in our annual colleague engagement survey to help ensure every colleague is given an opportunity to reflect on our vision and to provide ideas around new initiatives and focus areas, and we regularly ask for feedback and views on our current and future pledges.

External stakeholders

We've partnered with a number of external organisations to help us achieve our ambitions and these same partners provide guidance around our vision. This includes Business in the Community, Waterwise and our five charity partners. This year we'll be undertaking BiTC's Responsible Business Map assessment to help us identify and shape our new Responsible Business Strategy, enabling us to achieve even more through our vision.

To help gauge our customers views on our vision we've incorporated questions within our annual customer survey, which provides us with an opportunity to measure awareness levels around our commitments and identify where there is scope to make further improvements.



Making a Positive Difference to our customers

We're committed to going over and above for our customers and we're continually investing in our people, processes and technology to ensure we can meet our customers' needs. This has never been more important than in the past two years when our customers have needed our support through the COVID-19 pandemic.

We're also passionate about water efficiency and recognise that we have an important role to play in supporting our customers to reduce their water use, helping to generate financial and environmental savings. Since launching our pledge to help our customers reduce their water use by 20%, we've introduced a series of initiatives to help achieve this ambition and in the past year we've delivered over £14million in savings for our customers through water efficiency measures.



Helpful by nature.



Enhancing our customers' experience

We've introduced a number of award-winning initiatives since launching our vision that are helping to deliver real benefits to our customers and which have helped us achieve our customer satisfaction score of 88% and an average Trustpilot score of 4.6 out of 5 in 2021. These initiatives include enhancing our single site onboarding journey which provides a bespoke and engaging experience for new customers and our customer dashboard, which enables us to seamlessly manage a customer's entire estate.

In order to continue providing a market-leading experience for our customers we've also invested in a multi-million pound transformation programme, which is currently underway, designed to transform our systems, processes and the way we work. This includes replacing our current technology with a scalable, resilient, modern technology platform that will directly benefit our customers and our people and help us achieve our aim of delivering a first-class customer experience.

Supporting our customers through the COVID-19 pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic and containment measures presented unprecedented challenges to businesses across the UK. Following the introduction of the containment measures in March 2020, many of our customers were forced to close their business properties overnight, which resulted in their revenue and cashflow either stopping entirely, or reducing significantly. They understandably looked to us as a critical supplier for reassurance and support throughout.

We quickly put in place the technology to channel inbound calls to our colleagues' homes. Following a number of heartfelt conversations with customers, we knew we had to do even more, so we immediately suspended all debt recovery activity, ahead of regulatory guidance; offered flexible payment support arrangements; and we worked closely with both Governments and our Regulators to develop industry-wide schemes that offered real support to customers while their businesses were closed.

Recognising that the pandemic isn't over yet and its impact will continue to be felt for some time, we've extended and enhanced a number of our support measures to provide ongoing help to our customers who need support.



Our commitment to driving water efficiency

We're passionate about working with our customers to help them realise the benefits of reducing their water use. By saving water customers can lower their water bills, reduce their carbon emissions and help protect our natural resources and planet. To help deliver this commitment, we've introduced our water efficiency pledge, which is supported by a range of initiatives designed to help our customers save water. We've also looked beyond our customer base at how we can promote awareness and influence policy to deliver greater water efficiency savings for our customers.



Our pledge to help our customers reduce their water use

To support the delivery of our pledge, we're working with our customers, in particular those that haven't yet adopted water efficiency measures, to identify and deliver the right water efficiency solutions for their needs. To help achieve this goal, we've:

- issued free water efficiency packs providing water saving devices to our smaller customers
- created our online water efficiency website hub, providing a wealth of resources to help customers understand their water use and ways to save
- launched our online shop providing an easy way for customers to purchase effective water efficiency interventions
- created free online water saving resources for employers to be able to use in their workplaces to help encourage the right behaviours, and
- enhanced our training collateral to ensure our colleagues have the confidence and skills to talk to our customers about water efficiency.

Our vision is helping us to think innovatively about how we can deliver water efficiency propositions and services in a way that has a wider benefit on the environment and society as a whole. For example, through the Public Sector Scotland Water and Waste Water Framework Contract we've:

- Launched an annual water efficiency fund, awarding nearly £100,000 of funding to nine public sector initiatives in late 2021. The successful initiatives include a Council scheme educating young children about the importance of saving water; an innovative water capture and recirculation project; and the introduction of rainwater harvesting at an NHS body.
- Delivered re-usable water bottles to primary school children and created free online resources for pupils (along with teacher guidance notes) to help educate the next generation about the importance of saving water.

To build on the initiatives we've launched so far, we're also in the process of enhancing our Intelligent Water Management (IWM) system, which enables us to analyse and benchmark customers consumption data to identify anomalies and deliver water efficiency savings. And we're working with Climate Solutions to create a Water Stewardship programme that will enable businesses to gain water efficiency training and accreditation, supporting their wider sustainability targets.

Since 2008, we have helped our customers save over:

£305million
in discounts and water
and energy efficiencies

**52billion
litres of water**

the equivalent
of nearly

**21,000 Olympic-sized
swimming pools**

And in the past year alone we've:

helped our customers save over
**three billion litres
of water**

delivered over
**£14million in
water savings**
through our efficiency and
leakage detection services

A case study: Glasgow City Council

Glasgow City Council is the largest local authority in Scotland, employing just under 19,000 people to deliver essential services and facilities to the city and its residents. In order to keep track of its water use, the Council uses smart monitoring devices across its estate. The devices, known as automated meter readers (AMRs) are used to identify near real time patterns in water usage and identify any irregularities, including higher than normal consumption levels.

When we began working with the Council we reviewed the AMR data for a handful of sites where water consumption was higher than expected. This included two of the Council's primary schools - Notre Dame Primary School and Riverside Primary School – where, it transpired, there had been on-going issues for a number of years. An analysis of the AMR data, coupled with our Senior Account Manager's knowledge of the site and a detailed discussion with the Council's Carbon Management team, determined that a combination of factors was causing the spike in water consumption – and that a number of different solutions would be required to fix the problem.

A hybrid approach was agreed, which included leak detection work, a water efficiency audit and a cold-water tank inspection – all of which were carried out quickly by our team. Our specialist contractor then undertook all the remedial work, including the sourcing and fitting of specialised parts. Through our effective management of the project, we helped to fix the issues quickly and **delivered a combined annual saving for the two schools of over £54,000**. Both sites have also benefited from an **annual water saving of 34,177m³** - the equivalent of 13 Olympic-sized filled swimming pools.

“I am delighted we have managed to make substantial efficiency savings with these two schools, considering this has been an ongoing problem over a number of years.”

Greig MacDonald, Project Officer, Carbon Management – Neighbourhoods & Sustainability, Glasgow City Council



Promoting the importance of water efficiency

Awareness levels around the importance of using water wisely are relatively low. To help address this issue, we've identified opportunities to play a wider role in promoting the importance of water efficiency and we're working with the UK and Scottish Governments, Regulators and industry stakeholders to identify opportunities to deliver more water efficiency savings for business customers.

Our partnership with waterwise

To help raise awareness, we became the first water retailer to partner with Waterwise, the UK's leading non-governmental organisation (NGO) on water efficiency and conservation. Through our partnership we:

- helped set up the Waterwise Retailer Leadership Forum, which our CEO, Jo Dow, co-chaired, to facilitate a dialogue on how we can deliver greater water efficiency savings to customers
- became the first retailer to be awarded the Waterwise Water Efficiency Checkmark for our Head Office, recognising our efforts to practice what we preach and ensure our office is operating as efficiently as possible
- contributed to Waterwise's campaigns and conferences to help advocate for and promote their water saving ambitions.

In addition, we sit on the Waterwise Water Efficiency Strategy Group to help create a blueprint to deliver *'a vision of a UK in which all people, homes and businesses are water-efficient, and where water is used wisely, every day, everywhere'*.

Influencing policy to deliver the right outcomes for customers

As one of the largest water retailers in the UK, we also want to share our experiences and expertise to help shape the future water market and ensure it delivers benefits to all customers, both in terms of water efficiencies and customer service. To help achieve this ambition, we sit on a wide range of Boards and member associations to represent our customers and help to positively influence policy decisions.

We're represented on the Defra Senior Water Demand Reduction Group, the Retailer-Wholesaler Water Efficiency Group (RWG) and the Waterwise Water Efficiency Strategy Group, which provide an opportunity to champion change and identify and deliver further water efficiency savings for business customers. In addition, our CEO is a Non-Executive Director of the Central Market Authority (CMA) in Scotland and a Non-Executive Director of the MOSL Board, to help represent business customers and shape the market for the better.

Our future ambitions

We're driven to go that extra mile for our customers and we'll continue to invest in our services, technology and people to ensure we can meet our customers' needs. Through our commitment to driving water efficiency, we'll continue to develop and deliver solutions that will help our customers reduce their water use – and we'll identify opportunities to promote the importance of this issue and advocate for changes to the market that will help deliver further water efficiency savings for business customers.

Making a Positive Difference to the environment

As a water retailer and responsible business, we're passionate about the environment and recognise that we have an important role to play in not only supporting our customers to reduce their impact on the planet but also looking inwards at what we can do as an organisation to improve our environmental performance and reduce our impact on natural resources.



Responsible *by nature.*

Reducing our carbon footprint

Climate change is one of the biggest environmental challenges facing us today. We're already witnessing the effects of changing weather patterns and this will have a profound effect on how we live our lives in the future. We all have a responsibility to reduce our carbon emissions to help mitigate the severity of climate change.

Emissions reduction targets for the Scottish Public Sector are set out in the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009¹. The ultimate target is for net zero by 2045 with interim targets of 75% by 2030 and 90% by 2040. However, as a Group, led by our parent company, Scottish Water, we've set a more ambitious target of achieving net-zero (operational and investment emissions) by 2040.



Net zero by 2040

To help us achieve this ambition, we launched a pledge in April 2021 to reduce our carbon emissions by 20% within a 12-month period, which we have exceeded (reducing our emissions by 25.3%).

This target was set once we'd calculated our carbon emissions, in line with the guidance provided in the Greenhouse Gas Protocol², helping us to fully understand our environmental impacts. *For a full breakdown of our carbon reporting please refer to our Making a Positive Difference to the environment report.*

Our carbon footprint is relatively low however by calculating our footprint (using 2018-19 as our baseline) we have identified business travel and electricity use as our largest emission sources. Our priorities have therefore been to focus on reducing our activities in these two key areas. To help achieve our pledge and put in place sustainable practices that will enable us to maintain our progress, we've implemented a number of initiatives which can be found in the following pages.

1. This Act was amended by the Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019.

2. The Greenhouse Gas Protocol, A Corporate Accounting and Reporting Standard, Revised Edition, World Resources Institute. <https://ghgprotocol.org/corporate-standard>. The Greenhouse Gas Protocol is the main standard for calculating greenhouse gas emissions and is used worldwide. It applies to all types of organisation and provides a robust standard and guidance for calculating a greenhouse gas emissions inventory. The UK Government emissions factors for the relevant year have been used to calculate the emissions from company activities.



Reducing our electricity use

Recognising the impact electricity use has on our carbon footprint, we've taken forward the following actions to reduce energy use:

- we've utilised the building management system to ensure lights and screens are automatically switched off at a certain time
- we've adjusted the heating and cooling settings to avoid heating and cooling working in conflict
- we've replaced our air conditioning units with energy efficient versions
- we've replaced lightbulbs with lower energy LED equivalents
- we're in the process of moving our servers to the cloud to reduce the cooling requirements needed in our server room
- we're liaising with our landlord to discuss energy efficient improvements for the building fabric
- we're using a green tariff from our electricity provider.

We're also going to continue to identify additional measures that we can implement to help drive down our electricity use further.



Reducing the need for business travel

Prior to the pandemic, business travel was one of our largest emission sources. During 2018-2019, over half (53%) of our carbon footprint was from business travel. Of this, 24.6% involved vehicle travel, 27.6% flights, and only 0.6% by rail. The pandemic and subsequent lockdown restrictions reduced our business travel significantly, accounting for only 6.9% of our footprint during 2021-2022. Our challenge now is to ensure that as life returns to normal, our business travel activity does not.

Although we'll need to undertake some business travel, notably our Field Team who are required to travel to customers, there are pro-active steps we can and are taking to maintain a significant reduction in our travel emissions, including:

- installing electric charging points in our car parks to encourage the use of electric cars and bikes
- leasing low-emission vehicles such as hybrid or electric vehicles
- enhancing our remote video conferencing facilities to reduce the need to travel
- reviewing and updating our travel policy and processes to ensure the environmental impact is a key consideration.



Reducing paper consumption

As a water retailer, billing customers is a large part of our business activities. To help reduce our paper consumption, we've enhanced our digital capabilities (including ebilling) and we've launched a pledge to reduce the number of pages in our bills for those customers who still require a paper copy.

Our office paper use has declined substantially as people have been working at home. This has encouraged people to re-think how they work and we are encouraging the continued low level of printing as people return to office working.



Waste and resource efficiency

Due to the nature of our business, we have minimal volumes of waste. In accordance with current environmental laws, we apply the waste hierarchy to our business activities and separate our waste streams for recycling.

We're also committed to reducing resource use where possible to avoid generating any avoidable waste. Recent examples include the purchase of second-hand furniture and IT equipment for the temporary expansion of our office space.





Carbon Capture – investing in a tree planting programme

Our primary focus is on reducing our emissions but we also recognise the benefit tree planting programmes can play in not only locking away carbon emissions but also in providing green spaces for local communities and improving biodiversity.

In November 2021, we partnered with the not-for-profit organisation, **Green Action Trust**, to support an initiative to create a new woodland area in the south of Glasgow. Our sponsorship delivered an additional **10,000 trees** to the project, which will help to create over six hectares of new woodland and is expected to sequester **2,812.5 tonnes** of carbon over the next 100 years.

The new planting will also help to create an integrated woodland habitat that stretches around the southern edge of the city from Linn Park all the way to Cathkin Braes Country Park; Glasgow's largest green space and local nature reserve. In addition, the site will be home to the Glasgow Children's Woodland, a community led initiative run by the Lost Woods project that has enabled children from Glasgow's Primary Schools to plant trees within the area. Once completed, the new area will be open for the local community and visitors to enjoy and help to create a fairer, greener and healthier environment for all Glasgow residents.

To support the delivery of our sponsorship, **30 of our colleagues volunteered** for a day to **plant 2,000 of the 10,000 trees within the 15-hectare site.**

We're now scoping additional tree planting opportunities to help us achieve our carbon offsetting target and support our wider net zero activities.

“It was lovely to be out in the fresh air and feel like we did something good for the environment. I will definitely go back to check on our trees from time to time.”

Christine Loney, IMS Coordinator, Business Stream



Creating a circular office

We've also introduced a series of initiatives to help create a more circular office and to help our colleagues reduce their environmental impact, including:

- removing all single-use plastics from our vending machines
- providing all colleagues with re-usable coffee cups and water bottles
- increasing our recycling facilities
- providing resources and running a net zero session to educate colleagues about the issue and the steps we can all take as individuals and collectively to reduce our impact on the environment.



Encouraging behavioural change through our Green Champions

Adopting the right behaviours can make a significant difference to our overall impact on the environment. To help encourage these behaviours we've appointed colleagues from across the business to become our Green Champions. Their role includes raising awareness of the steps we should all be taking to help protect the planet and identifying opportunities through our environmental processes to make it even easier for colleagues to do the right thing.

“Our Green Champions play an important role in leading by example and encouraging colleagues to reduce their impact on the environment. In addition to maintaining our ISO 14001 certification, we also monitor office behaviours, including our recycling facilities, and help to raise awareness of the simple steps that colleagues can take to help us reduce our carbon footprint and protect the planet.”

Margaret McWhinnie, Key Account Case Owner and Green Champion, Business Stream



Working together to protect the planet

In addition to reducing our own footprint we believe that we also have a role to play to work with our customers, supply chain and beyond to help others to achieve their environmental goals. To this end, in early 2021, our CEO, Jo Dow, was appointed Chair of the Business in the Community Climate Action Group. The Group has been set up to support businesses across Scotland to reduce their carbon emissions, helping to accelerate the journey to net zero. At COP26 in November 2021 the Group launched its plans to run a Climate Skills Exchange, which will provide an opportunity for businesses to volunteer time and resources to smaller companies to help them reduce their carbon footprint. A pilot is currently being developed.

In addition, we've created resources for our customers to help raise awareness of the link between water efficiency and carbon reduction and we've incorporated this messaging into our collateral and at speaking events. We provide a carbon consumption figure on every customer bill to help our customers understand their carbon use, with additional messaging around how they can reduce it.

Finally, we're committed to working with responsible suppliers that share our strong commitment to the environment. We've included scored questions relating to environmental credentials and procedures in all our tender evaluations. We also reach out annually to key suppliers and ask them to define their carbon reporting activities, including how they measure their footprint and what steps they're taking to reduce it.



Our next steps

We're committed to achieving our net zero target by implementing policies that will drive down our emissions and to educate and inform our colleagues about the ways in which they can make a positive difference at work and at home. We'll launch new pledges that will help us achieve this ambition, by reducing our carbon footprint and supporting our carbon capture requirements, and we'll continue to work with our customers and supply chain to help each other to collectively reduce our impact on the planet.



Making a Positive Difference to our local communities

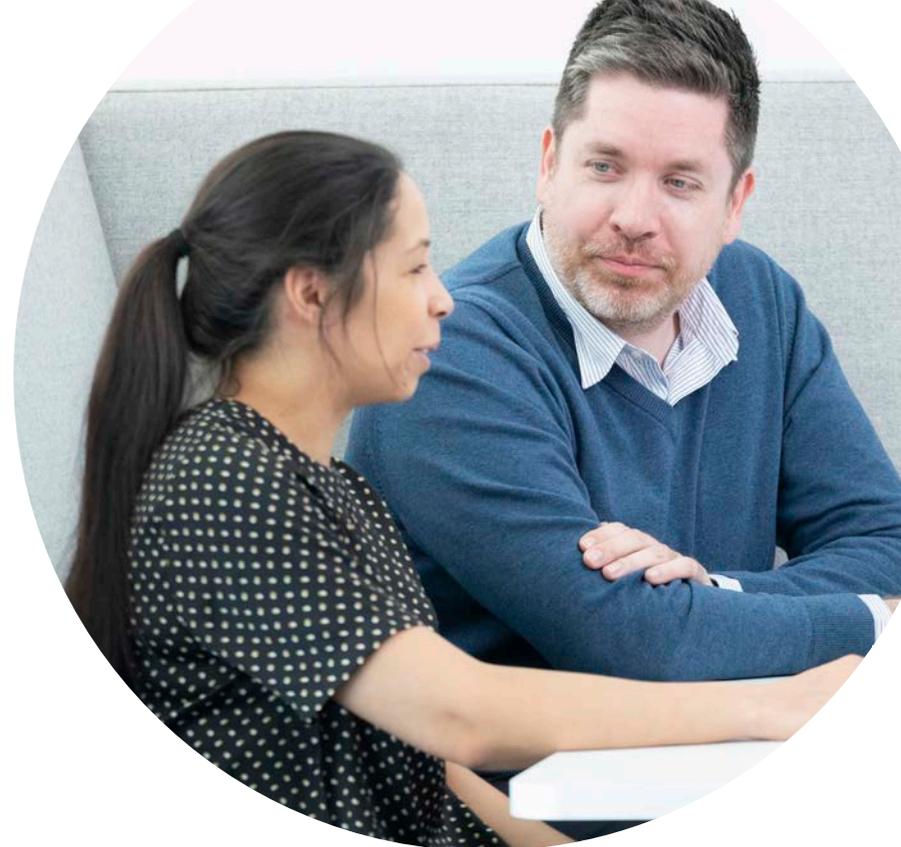
We wanted our vision to incorporate our local communities to enable us to directly give back to others. To do this effectively we've identified and partnered with a number of fantastic charitable organisations to offer volunteering and mentoring support.



Career Ready

We've partnered with Career Ready to provide mentoring and work experience placements to senior school students to help them gain skills and confidence and prepare them for the world of work. Since we launched our vision, we've mentored twelve students, with our current four preparing to spend a month on a paid placement at our office this summer. In addition, we've also hosted a number of masterclasses for students across Scotland, which over 200 students have attended to date. The masterclasses focus on the Career Ready Skills for Success programme and have included topics such as communicating and networking and understanding career pathways.

Through our Career Ready partnership, we've also worked with Developing the Young Workforce to run communication sessions with school groups. And we sit on the Career Ready Edinburgh, Midlothian and East Lothian Local Authority Board to help steer and support the charity's development.



“Business Stream have been a fantastic supporter of the Career Ready programme for the past couple of years. In that time, they have mentored and changed the lives of students throughout Edinburgh and the Lothians, always giving of their time, experience and expertise. Because of this commitment these young people have been given an incredible opportunity to fulfil their potential and move to a positive destination when leaving school. It is a pleasure to work with such committed people at Business Stream who continue to change the lives of young people in Edinburgh and the Lothians through the Career Ready programme.”

Rose King, Regional Manager Edinburgh, Midlothian, East Lothian, Career Ready



preparing young
people for the
world of work

Sported



We've partnered with Sported, which is the leading sport development charity in the UK, working with over 3,000 sport clubs, youth groups and small charities to 'survive and thrive'. They believe that sport can help to counter some of the biggest challenges facing young people today, including youth violence, mental health and community cohesion but the reality is a lot of these clubs struggle, either financially or through a lack of resources, making their future uncertain.



Through Sported, our volunteers are providing free support services to help local sports clubs, which can include support in accessing funding grants, admin support and help with marketing and social media activities to attract more participants.

“Sported appealed to me as it was an opportunity to give something back to the community. The ability to do this through sport, which has always had a huge impact on my life, both directly and indirectly, sounded fantastic and I'm really enjoying the experience.”

Tom Abel, Head of SME, Business Stream

Business in the Community



In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Business in the Community launched its Business Response Network to provide support to businesses and charities that had been impacted by the lockdown restrictions, which we have and are continuing to actively support:

- our Field Team used our vans to make essential deliveries for charities across Scotland
- nine of our colleagues are supporting the Cyrenians Befriending Programme, making weekly phone calls to people living on their own to provide company and support

“Business Stream’s level of commitment to Responsible Business was demonstrated with its support of BITC’s National Business Response Network (NBRN). The NBRN looked to connect business resource with community need and Business Stream provided volunteers for the Befriending programme. They also provided access to fleet of vehicles to deliver much needed resources such as toiletries, hand sanitizer and children and adult books to a range of charities across Scotland.”

Georgia Watson, Senior Business Lead, Business in the Community Scotland

In addition, we have supported BiTC to run its Enterprise Challenge days at local primary schools (now run externally), which are designed to teach children about the world of work. To enhance the day, we've incorporated an engaging water efficiency session for the children to help educate them about the importance of using water wisely.

Our CEO, Jo Dow, also sits on the Advisory Board of Business in the Community (Scotland) to help shape the organisation's priorities and provide strategic guidance and support to help BiTC achieve its objectives, of which there is a strong focus on supporting local communities.

Our Charity Panel

In order to support charities whose values are closely aligned to our own, we established our Charity Panel. Given the alignment with our core business, we're supporting Marine Conservation Society and charity: water. We asked our colleagues to choose their local and our national charity; in Scotland our colleagues chose the Scottish Association for Mental Health (SAMH) and in England our colleagues chose Dementia Support. Our national charity was put to a vote and Macmillan Cancer Support was chosen.

Since launching our Charity Panel we've run a wide range of fundraising events, including virtual quizzes, step challenges, silent auctions and bake sales.



Since September 2019 we've raised over £12,000 for our charities. In addition to raising funds, we've also made a commitment to work more holistically with our charity partners by promoting their campaigns internally and externally, broadening our colleagues' awareness of the issues they're tackling and providing volunteering support where possible, including beach cleans up for the Marine Conservation Society.

Our next steps

Since launching our vision we've developed fantastic partnerships with these charitable organisations that are helping us to achieve our aim of making a positive difference to our local communities. In the year ahead, we'll increase our volunteering hours and continue to develop our charity partnership.



Making a Positive Difference to our people

We're committed to providing a great place to work where our people feel trusted, supported, valued and empowered. To help achieve this ambition, we've introduced a wide range of initiatives to enhance our colleagues' health and wellbeing and support their learning and development goals.



Supporting our colleagues' health and wellbeing

To help make a positive difference to our colleagues' health and wellbeing, we've:

- **Committed to paying over the Real Living Wage**, recognising the importance of financial security.
- **Trained colleagues to become mental health first aiders** who are available to talk to colleagues in confidence.
- **Invested in an Employee Assistance Programme** provided by AXA, which provides 24-hour free confidential support to colleagues and their families on a wide range of issues including support and advice on physical and mental health issues and life management guidance, including financial planning.
- **Launched wellbeing activities**, including installing health machines in our Head Office, offering online mindfulness sessions and providing a wealth of tools and resources on our intranet for colleagues to access.
- Through our **volunteering programme** we've provided opportunities for colleagues across the business to get involved in and benefit from the various partnerships we've developed, including mentoring, tree planting, beach clean ups and running Enterprise Challenge days with school children.





Providing support throughout the COVID-19 pandemic

At the outset of the pandemic we made a commitment to provide complete flexibility so that colleagues could care for their families whilst working flexibly from home. We provided tailored wellbeing and mental health support, as well as employee engagement activities, to help our colleagues feel supported and connected. And we ensured our people were equipped to continue working productively, which included purchasing and delivering 180 laptops. Over 80% of our colleagues, when asked in our annual employee engagement survey, felt we had supported them well to work from home during the pandemic. Since the lockdown restrictions have eased, we've introduced a hybrid way of working for the vast majority of our colleagues, providing greater flexibility.

Recognising our colleagues

Our people make our business and we like to make sure that they are recognised and thanked for their contribution. After launching our vision, we established our Making a Positive Difference monthly award to recognise and reward our people who have gone the extra mile. In addition, at our annual Awards Evening we have created three new Making a Positive Difference award categories to recognise our colleagues that truly live and breathe our vision.

Investing in our colleagues' learning and development

We want to make sure we provide opportunities for our colleagues to develop their careers at Business Stream. To help achieve this we have:

- established our leadership development programme for over 60 colleagues
- offered sponsored study support to colleagues working towards professional qualifications
- partnered with the Institute of Customer Service (ICS), which has enabled us to provide training in service excellence to our frontline colleagues
- provided brand and communications training to every colleague in the business to enhance our colleagues' skillset and deliver direct benefits to our customers in their interactions with us
- delivered ICS First Impressions training to colleagues.



Rebecca Wilson,
MA graduate

We've also pledged to provide four Modern Apprenticeship placements each year for the next four years, which we've on track to deliver. We've run our programme for a number of years and the majority of our Modern Apprentices (MAs) are offered permanent roles in the company, enabling them to build on the skills and experience they gained during their apprenticeship.

“Since joining Business Stream as a Modern Apprentice (MA), the business has helped support my career and personal development greatly. My journey with Business Stream started as an MA in our Customer Services Centre and led to me joining the Learning and Development Team as a Learner Support. I feel that my time as an MA helped prepare me for this role, developed my skills and also gave me exposure to the wider business.”

Rebecca Wilson, MA graduate and Learner Support, Learning and Development team, Business Stream

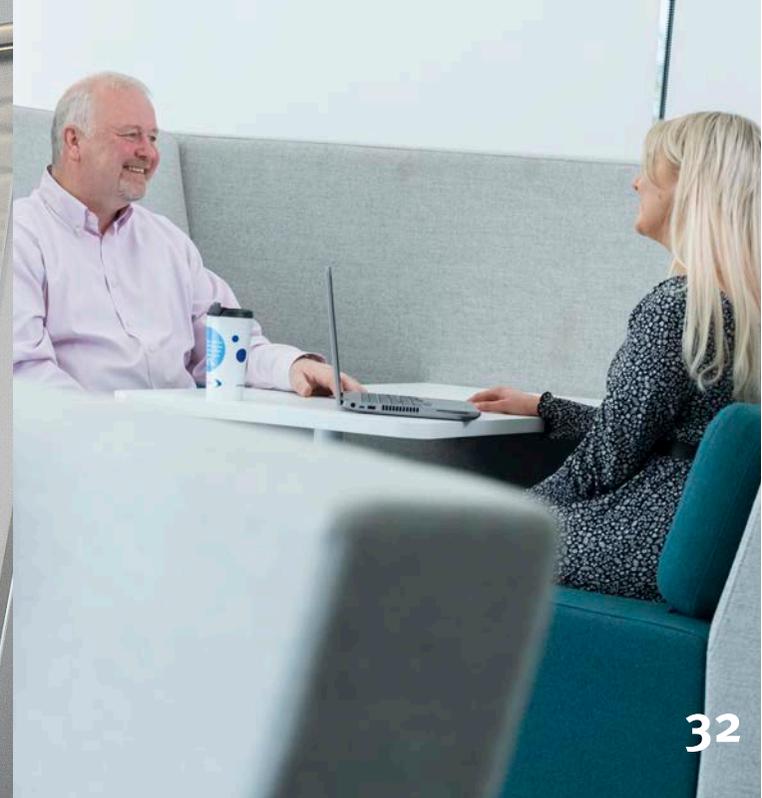


Our next steps

Our MAPD Wellbeing and Engagement Group has an ambitious programme for the year ahead to help support our colleagues' health and wellbeing.

We recently launched our pledge to offer the equivalent of over 1,200 training and development days for our colleagues – ensuring every colleague is offered at least one training opportunity in the year ahead.

We're committed to continuing to identify and deliver initiatives designed to support our colleagues' health and wellbeing and investing in training and development opportunities to build our peoples' skills and confidence – helping to make a positive difference to each and every one of our colleagues.



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

As a business, we're fully committed to providing equal opportunities for everyone to learn, develop and progress, regardless of their gender, age or ethnicity. We're passionate about providing a working environment that encourages diversity and inclusion at all levels of our organisation.



Gender

Our workforce is well balanced from a gender perspective – 54% male and 46% female (as of March 2021). Our gender pay gap results for the year 2020/21 were:

- the mean gap was 5.1% (in favour of males) – compared to a national average of 15.5% (in favour of males)
- the median gap was 6.2% (in favour of males)
- the proportion of females receiving a bonus in 2020/21 was equal to males at 81%, which is an improvement from the previous year

We're in a strong place from a gender pay perspective relative to the national averages. However, we are not complacent and we remain committed to maintaining this performance and doing even more to reduce the gap. To help achieve this, we've made a number of commitments including:

- ensuring our leaders and line managers are encouraging inclusion by attracting, promoting and retaining a diverse workforce
- continuing to educate our leaders on the importance of embedding attraction and assessment strategies that improve our gender balance in areas where we have traditionally had a higher proportion of males in role
- ensuring our talent and succession processes and leadership programmes drive actions that enable the reduction of our gender pay gap and have ambitions to do much more around this agenda, and
- creating more opportunities for part time and flexible working.

Age

- We have a strong commitment to investing in and developing Scotland's young people by providing training and work opportunities - with 10% of our total workforce aged 24 or younger. To further support young people's career development, we also have a well-established Modern Apprenticeship (MA) Scheme in place.
- Over 19% of our workforce are aged 50 or over, which demonstrates our commitment to providing employment opportunities to people of all ages.

Ethnicity

At 4.64% our workforce demonstrates a higher representation from minority ethnic groups than Scotland's average minority ethnic population of 4% (taken from Scotland census 2011).

Our next steps

As an organisation we know we need to do more to understand and shape our diversity and inclusion goals and we've recently partnered with Business in the Community to help us achieve this ambition.

Through this partnership we'll be running focus groups to provide our colleagues with an opportunity to share their views and speak honestly and openly – helping us to identify the key actions and commitments that we need to take forward as a business to ensure we provide a truly inclusive culture.



The image features three silhouetted figures against a blue, cloudy sky. On the left, a person in a red jacket holds a bundle of bare tree branches. In the center, a person with a beard uses a shovel. On the right, a person holds a small sapling in a pot. The text 'Thank you' is written in a white, cursive font across the middle of the scene.

Thank you

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