



Co%ownership



Corporate
Social
Responsibility

2018

In 2018 we have continued our efforts in relation to corporate responsibility with many practices now embedded. 2018 saw a record-breaking fundraising total raised by staff within the organisation for their chosen charity. Congratulations to all staff on this achievement. The ongoing commitment to our CSR projects during the last 12 months has been a great achievement whilst at the same time purchasing 926 properties through Co- Ownership this calendar year.

Our activities are based around 3 areas:

- **Environment** – reducing the impact of our operations on the environment through encouraging behaviours and introducing initiatives that minimise waste and maximise efficiency.
- **Workplace** – building on our existing activities that support equality of opportunity and diversity both in our dealings with clients and stakeholders and also across the organisation.
- **Community** – encouraging and supporting our staff in volunteering and fundraising opportunities.

Environment

Our aim is to embed environmentally ethical behaviour into our culture and workforce and we have done this through the following:

- Actively encouraging staff to recycle materials such as paper, cardboard, cans and plastic, to further reduce the amount of waste we send to landfill each year.
- We have removed our plastic cups by the water fountain and provided all staff with a reusable metal water bottle to reduce our single use plastic.
- Staff are regularly reminded of good practices in relation to saving paper and 2018 saw great progress in digitalising some of our core services which has led to a reduction in paper use both internally and externally.
- Raised awareness of biodiversity and introduced corporate planting in the workplace.
- Continued to promote the use of sustainable transport by participating in initiatives such as Translink Bus and Train week.

Workplace

- Review of our governance framework and policies for good practice in terms of meeting the needs of our various stakeholders.
- Our Equality Team continued their work internally with the Annual Progress Report submitted to the Equality Commission in August 2018.

- We continued to contribute to consultations on strategy and legislation in the housing arena.
- We saw our outreach efforts increase with the introduction of a business development team who attended events throughout all of Northern Ireland, free of charge. As a result, we have seen an increase in our geographical reach in terms of new applications.
- We offered staff a wide programme of Health and Well-being activities throughout 2018 including a comprehensive health check; flu clinic; staff events, access to healthy snacks; private healthcare; and a financial wellbeing week which included a will writing session and pension planning.
- In 2018 we were able to share our resources with several organisations who used our facilities free of charge to host meetings and forums.

Community

- Staff voted for the charity they would most like to support and Meningitis Now became our chosen charity for 2018. We raised an incredible £4967.45 for the charity through numerous fundraising activities which staff took part in including raffles; cake and book sales; Lap the Lough; 50K in 50 days challenge; Vitality half marathon and dress down days.
- Once again, our staff supported the Barnardo's Bereavement Campaign by collecting gifts for local children during the Christmas period. The gifts collected provided support to grieving children and their families and the generosity from staff was yet again overwhelming.
- The Co-Ownership Social Fund was opened to applicants for the second year running in 2018 with funding of £10,000 available. Following an application and scoring process the funds were awarded to Street Soccer NI who used the funds to send a team to take part in the Homeless World Cup which took place in Mexico. The project supported some of the most vulnerable groups in Northern Ireland and through training and support, it has provided great outcomes for participants.
- We continue to encourage staff to volunteer and in 2018 our staff gave over 50 hours volunteering for various organisations including Cancer Focus; Princes Trust; Cats Protection League; Assisi Animal Sanctuary; Upcycling; Cavaliers in Need and CiNI. All staff are supported with 1 volunteering day per year.
- Staff have continued to take part in volunteering throughout the year and are supported with one days volunteering per calendar year.

The year ahead

We will continue our CSR activities focusing on the 3 main areas, environment, workplace and community working alongside Business in the Community. We especially want to continue our fundraising days and volunteering opportunities for staff.

We are delighted to report that Co-Ownership achieved CORE reaccreditation in 2018 and we aim to build upon our current practices and improve these where possible. CORE is a framework for identifying and measuring corporate responsibility activity and performance. It is based on Business in the Community's Corporate Responsibility (CR) Model.

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