



**GIVING
BACK**
Stephens
Scown

**ANNUAL
REPORT**



After an 18 month period of research and engagement, Stephens Scown launched its Giving Back Program in September 2018 at our whole firm away day.

Our Commitment (as confirmed in our Giving Back Policy) is:

- *Stephens Scown genuinely cares about our people, local community and the environment*
- *We seek to take business decisions and corporately act in a way that is consistent with this care and long term view*
- *We support our colleagues to follow their own passions for community and environment, to enrich their lives and increase the positive impact we can have*
- *We dedicate a significant proportion of our resources and energy to what we feel passionate about*
- *We wish to be an organisation that actively demonstrates this care, with a long term vision of becoming a leader in this field*

This annual report confirms the impact in the year since the launch (September 2018 to August 2019).

The Giving Back Program is split into 4 pillars:

- *Environmental*
- *Pro Bono*
- *Volunteering*
- *Charity*

The report deals with each of these pillars and reflects on success against the objectives the Giving Back Team set at the start of the year.

88% of our stationery is eco-friendly
50% of our teams have adopted PaperLite

ENVIRONMENT

We are on a journey towards Zero Carbon – seeking to lower our carbon footprint. One of our core values includes seeking to be sustainable and to do things efficiently and without waste. We want to leave behind a world that the next generation can enjoy.

We have moved to a Clean Energy Tariff

This year we met the following environmental objectives:

- *Measured our Carbon Footprint*
- *Joined Plastic Free Exeter and ceased using plastic cups, plastic straws and plastic cutlery across all offices. We ensure that any unavoidable plastic bags are reused where possible*
- *Undertook a colleague awareness campaign based on 5 top tips to reduce environmental impact*
- *Considered and informally implemented a firm wide policy on food supplied at internal events*

Some examples of our activity in this area:

Education

We have run inspiring lunchtime sessions for all staff on the problems around plastic pollution and on how to lower your carbon print.

The plastic session in Cornwall was presented by Hugo Tagholm, CEO of Surfers Against Sewage. He explained the impact that plastic is having on our oceans and what SAS is doing nationally to tackle the epidemic, encouraging colleagues to do more.

The plastic session in Devon was presented by Emily Stevenson of Beach Guardian, raising awareness of the work they do to clean beaches and working with manufacturers to change the products they make. Emily used Walkers crisp packets to demonstrate the longevity of plastic pollution, revealing that they had found packets from 1972 in the course of their beach cleans. This shocking discovery led Emily to engage Walkers, and force them to set up the national recycling scheme and change the composition of their crisp packets.

Following these talks the Exeter office spent a week collecting all the plastic used and thrown away in the office, reporting this to colleagues and then looking to see how we could reduce this.

The Giving Back team also published numerous articles on our firm intranet about how to reduce plastic in our everyday lives – from their own experiences of seeking to go plastic free.

The carbon awareness sessions in both counties were run by Sonya Bedford MBE, a partner in the firm who heads up our Energy Sector Team. Sonya received an MBE in 2018 for her services to community energy following a trio of industry awards. Sonya spoke from her fantastic personal and commercial experience on changes we can make corporately and individually to reduce our carbon footprint.



Colleague Campaign

Between November and April we led a campaign to get our colleagues to all consider 5 top tips where the firm could improve its resource use:

1. *Avoid single use plastics*
2. *Turn off monitors daily*
3. *Turn off lights, heating/air con when appropriate*
4. *Travel responsibly*
5. *Save paper*

Posters went up around the offices with a different tip each month. An article was published in our weekly download email that went to all staff explaining what we would like them to do and why. This was supported by articles on our intranet. In January 2019 we also gave surprise fruit rewards for those who had turned off their monitors overnight. Approximately 70% of the monitors had been turned off. Still room for improvement!

Awards were also given to those colleagues who got the top score on the 'Lightfoot' carbon reduction program installed on all our pool cars. This gives real time tips while you are driving to help reduce fuel consumption. Colleagues were also given the opportunity to purchase Lightfoot for their personal vehicles at a reduced price.

Our 126,547 KgCO₂e carbon footprint is getting smaller

Carbon Footprint and Cleaner Energy

Katherine Stanfield, a student trained to be a Green Consultant came in on secondment in March for 2 weeks from Exeter University to undertake a carbon audit report, which included building a carbon tracker for the firm which can be used to re-measure our carbon footprint each year. Our total carbon use was 126,547 KgCO₂e.

The carbon tracker shows total carbon has been decreasing since November 2018 whereas it was much higher and increasing in March 2018. This could be due to the Education and Colleague Campaign initiatives starting around the same time – with employees learning how to reduce carbon.

Katherine's report also suggested areas for improvement and reflected that the new double glazing in the Exeter office would reduce our Carbon Footprint, as less gas would be used to heat the building.

As electricity accounts for 68% of carbon at Stephens Scown, Katherine recommended moving to a renewable energy source, stating this would make a significant difference.

We are implementing all other recommendations including turning off the heating during the lunch break and encouraging staff to turn off heating and lighting when rooms are not in use.

From 1 July 2019 we moved to a Clean Energy Tariff for all offices. This matches 100% of our estimated annual electricity use with UK-sourced Renewable Energy Guarantee of Origin (REGO) Certificates. This ensures that an equal amount of the electricity we use is added to the energy grid from renewable sources, supporting renewable energy in the UK and projects across the world to help towards reducing CO₂ emissions.

Now we have measured our carbon footprint we need to set objectives to seek to reduce this over the next year.

Resources and Recycling

50% of our legal teams are now operating under our PaperLite scheme, which requires electronic filing rather than paper.

We also changed our paper supplier to Commercial, which prides itself on scouring the supply chain to find reliable organisations offering the most sustainable office products. They also run their own assessments to gauge suppliers' credentials and proactively support the continual improvement of their approaches to ethical trading and sustainability. Their online ordering system makes it easy to compare the green credentials of different products and proactively suggests more environmentally friendly alternatives.

88% of our stationery is eco-friendly and we use 'green' or recycled products wherever possible. We do this by regimentally sticking to our contract list and ordering agreed items.

None of our waste goes to landfill and all offices recycle. Even our confidential shredding is recycled – last year we saved 684 trees through this program.

We have started recycle points for crisp packets at all offices as these cannot be recycled in the usual way. These have been extremely popular, especially given the talk from Beach Guardian about how long crisp packets take to degrade.

We also collect writing instruments in Cornwall for recycling. These can be any brand of pen, felt tip, highlighter, marker, correction fluid/tape, mechanical pencil and eraser pen regardless of composition.

Cornish Tea and Coffee now take back our decaf tea tubs from our Truro office when they are empty in order to re-use them. The caterers in Truro also do the same with sandwich and salad trays.

Colleagues in Truro have been collecting their egg boxes and donating them to a local lady who runs a smallholding selling free range eggs. In exchange, she gifts them a box or two of free range eggs. All of this was sparked by Sophie Greenland, member of the Giving Back team, posting her egg boxes on Freecycle – a perfect circular economy success story which is reducing waste and supporting a local business.

We now order 50% vegetarian food

Food Policy

Office Managers were reminded in February of the need to use local providers wherever possible for food purchased and to organise catering to avoid single use plastic. All caterers now take back any plastic trays or salad boxes and re-use them. Where possible, food is ordered on a 50% vegetarian basis. Non dairy milk alternatives are offered now in all offices (oat or soya).

Caterers to our offices produce minimal waste, with plates and containers being returned to them and reused and single-use plastic being limited to clingfilm in our Exeter office. All sandwiches for lunchtime meetings in St Austell are delivered in paper bags.

The only waste produced by the caterers to our Exeter office is cling film to cover plates, as well as of course any food waste which we keep to a minimum through strategic ordering decisions implemented by office manager Jaime Thornton.

Benchmarking

Our office managers jointly reviewed the recommendations from Legal Sustainability Alliance (<https://legalsustainabilityalliance.com/>). We were pleased to see that the vast majority of their recommendations for improving the environmental sustainability of our offices were already in place.

PRO BONO

Pro Bono work is professional work undertaken voluntarily and without payment or at a reduced fee as a public service. The firm undertakes Legal Aid work for individuals at greatly reduced rates and has a history of undertaking wider pro bono work.

Teams are encouraged to undertake pro-bono work for specific charities or community interest companies. This can be applied to all the work undertaken for the project (so it is free), or as a part pro-bono (where it reduces the fees).

1

This year we met our pro bono objective of undertaking at least 3 pro bono projects. Over the year we supported on 8 projects but would like to do even more next year.

Some examples of our activity in this area:

Action Against Suicide

Action to Prevent Suicide flag some alarming statistics about suicides in the South West – there are approximately two to three suicides in Devon and Torbay every week, while two-thirds of suicide victims have never told a GP or health professional about their problems.

Action to Prevent Suicide's goal is to train over 600 'suicide first aiders' who will be able to identify those at risk of suicide and guide them away from this course of action.

Laurie Trounce (our Charity Sector Head), with support from Olivia Miller (Solicitor) gave the charity valuable pro bono support around governance and its structure, which will enable the charity to grow and access a wide range of funding options.

Laurie quickly identified crossovers between the organisation's work and our firm-wide values: "We have signed up to the Mindful Employer Charter and promote positive mental health and mental health awareness, which are both key tenants of Action to Prevent Suicide's work. Providing support to people at risk of suicide is a very worthy cause, and Action to Prevent Suicide also aims to break through the stigma around discussing depression and suicide."



2

Hope for Justice

Hope for Justice are an international anti-trafficking NGO operating in 8 countries and 23 locations. Headquartered in Manchester, UK, their mission is to bring an end to modern slavery by preventing exploitation, rescuing victims, restoring lives and reforming society. Their work includes empowering people to protect themselves from traffickers, supporting police to identify and rescue victims of modern slavery and campaigning for policy change. Through a connection with Robert Camp, in May our partners Verity Slater and Laurie Trounce undertook a detailed employment and governance review on a pro bono basis to give the charity valuable information to drive their organisation forward and plan for expansion. It was fantastic to support such a passionate and effective group of people doing such important work.



3

Exeter Community Energy

Exeter Community Energy is an innovative, community-owned organisation that enables local people to take ownership of renewable energy and energy-saving projects. In 2018, total generation across their sites amounted to the equivalent of electricity provision for 85 homes for a year.

The Energy Team has been supporting Exeter Community Energy to expand their portfolio by assisting on a variety of projects including progressing solar installations at local community centre sites, the Beacon Community Centre and Westbank Healthy Living Centre, and providing advice on a proposal to install a hydro project on the River Exe.

Sonya is also a volunteer director of South Dartmoor Community Energy, which is about to embark on an innovative project providing affordable eco homes to local people using Vehicle to Grid technology and by managing local electricity balancing.

**We supported
8 pro bono
projects**

6

Truro City of Lights

Truro City of Lights is Truro's midwinter lantern festival and the largest Christmas lights switch on outside London. We assisted the festival organisers on a pro bono basis by reviewing and amending their standard form Sponsorship Agreement entered into with various sponsors of the event.

Marketing for Young Farmers Clubs

Cornwall - over the last few years we have been supporting CYFC with their marketing activity including designing their print newsletter for them which allows them to present themselves professionally to the rural marketing place. We also design their invitations for events and have reviewed their website for them, ready for when they are able to do a website refresh. This year we have also produced Christmas card packs from their members' designs and sold them in their marquee at Royal Cornwall Show, with all proceeds going back to CYFC.

Devon - our marketing team also supported DYFC with their health and safety campaigns, designing a banner for them so that they could promote their campaign in all the main tractor dealerships.

8

Surfers Against Sewage

Surfers Against Sewage are famous for their great work helping to keep our oceans clean. Many of our team live near the coast and so the cause of Surfers Against Sewage is close to many of our hearts.

To help ensure the integrity of their work it is important for Surfers Against Sewage (as it is for any business) to protect their reputation. We were delighted to be able to assist Surfers Against Sewage with a number of trade mark registrations, helping them to take control of their brand. As one of the largest trade mark filers in the UK it was great to be able to help a client whose work means so much to the firm.

4

Restormel Mind

The charity Mind provide advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem. They do so via a network of independent local Mind charities who provide help and support directly to those who need it most. In Cornwall that mental health support and influence will be significantly improved by the integration of Restormel Mind and Carrick Mind into one Cornwall Mind. Our charity and real estate teams are delighted to assist with the integration of assets involving the provision of property and governance support to enable the new organisation to focus on the great day to day work undertaken.

5

TEDx

In the spirit of ideas worth spreading, TED has created a program called TEDx. TEDx is a program of local, self-organized events that bring people together to share a TED-like experience.

Over this last year we have been a sponsor of TEDxExeter and TEDxTruro, with members of our marketing team working on TEDxTruro on a pro bono basis as part of the organising teams. You can find out more about these at <https://www.tedxexeter.com/> and <http://tedxtruro.com/>.

7

Last year we saved 684 trees by recycling our confidential shredding

CHARITY

Through the Charity Committee's hard work running bake sales, a farmers' market, dress down days and other projects we raised **£10,600** for our firm charities, Alzheimer's Research UK (firm-wide), FORCE cancer charity (Devon) and Cornwall Air Ambulance (Cornwall) to the end of our financial year on 30 April 19.





The firm charities for 2019/21 are:

- *Surfers Against Sewage (firm-wide) - a grassroots movement tackling plastic pollution and protecting the UK's coastlines for all to enjoy safely and sustainably*
- *Exeter Foodbank (Devon) - helping local people in crisis since 2008*
- *Invictus Trust (Cornwall) - a small charity which aims to support and offer services to local teenagers who are suffering from poor mental health and associated issues*

Secret Santa – The Homeless Shoebox Appeal

Instead of buying each other “plastic tat” for Christmas, the marketing team decided to donate a shoebox of gifts to someone in need through The Homeless Shoebox Appeal. This year we would like to encourage other teams to consider doing the same!

Cornwall Air Ambulance

This year we sponsored the Cornwall Air Ambulance annual draw, donating £500 to this fantastic cause as well as a hamper to their fundraising efforts. Colleagues also volunteered to help on their stand at the Royal Cornwall Show.

Truro Fireworks

Stephens Scown sponsors this community fireworks display and 12 colleagues volunteered on the gates and as general signposts, as they do each year. All money raised (usually between £4,000-£7,000) goes to Penhaligon's Friends, a Cornish charity supporting bereaved children and Cornwall Air Ambulance.

Workplace Choirs

Our choirs have been out in full force this year raising money for our chosen charities.

Our Exeter choir has performed at St Stephens church and in Princesshay, as well as asking our more vocally-challenged colleagues to turn their hands to baking cakes instead to raise money at their performances. We also performed at a Christmas concert in support of the YMCA.

The Cornwall choir has sung in the rain at late night Christmas Shopping, continued to sing at nursing homes and did a set in support of the RNLI at the Falmouth International Sea Shanty festival.

Firm Charitable Giving

We are proud to be corporate members of:

- *Cornwall Community Foundation (100 club)*
- *Cornwall Wildlife Trust*
- *Regen*
- *The Falmouth Sea Shanty Festival in support of the RNLI*

We have also given charitable donations on behalf of the firm in this period to:

- *Epilepsy Society*
- *St Austell Running Club*
- *Laddock Cricket Club*
- *Cancer Research*
- *Hall for Cornwall*
- *Exeter Foundation*
- *Alzheimer's Research UK*
- *Beach Guardian - to Support the publication of an environmental report called 'Everyday Plastic' – in line with our reduction in plastic*

Donations to Colleagues for their Personal Fundraising Efforts

The Giving Back Team has a budget to distribute to colleagues who are involved in personal challenges to raise money for charity.

The contribution varies per challenge as follows:

Tier 1 - Bake sales, 3k runs, bungee jump or physical events with little training
£10 contribution

Tier 2 - Sky diving, physical events that require training for a shorter period (say up to 4 months)
£50 contribution

Tier 3 - Marathon, climbing Kilimanjoro, any other event that requires more than 4 months training
£100 contribution

The total sum distributed over the last 12 months since 1 September 2018 has been £985 out of a budget of £3,000. We'd like to increase take up and awareness of this this year.

Colleagues have been amazing in running marathons, organising charity dinners, holding bake sales, completing cycling challenges and much more.

VOLUNTEERING

Many of our colleagues use their free time away from work to support charitable causes or to support those in need. This is recognised, celebrated and supported by the firm and colleagues are often asked to take up external voluntary roles as part of their personal development. Colleagues may also use our flexible working policy to alter their hours so they may undertake voluntary work more easily in their free time.



We also encourage all staff to undertake volunteering during their work time via:

1. Firm organised volunteer days/sessions. This is organised by our Charity Committee.
2. Allowing every colleague with more than 6 months service to have up to 3 paid days per annum to undertake their own volunteer work for a registered charity or CIC. This is applied pro rata for those who work part time. Colleagues book this time via our HR Self Service system in the same way as holiday.

We set an objective of organising at least 3 colleague volunteer opportunities (in work time) in each of Cornwall and Devon (6 total) and encourage teams to incorporate Giving Back into team socials or projects. This has not quite been met so one to work on again this year.

Recent firm organised colleague volunteering projects have included:

Gardening for St Petrocs

Five colleagues helped St Petrocs to tidy up their gardens this year using their volunteering days. They were extremely grateful for our help!

"I would like to say, we are truly grateful for the hard work you and your amazing team have achieved today."

"Tremayne is transformed, as I said earlier I didn't even know the ground could look as good as it does now."

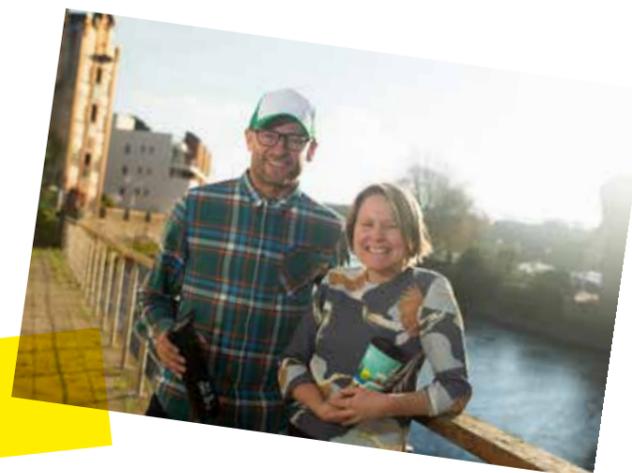
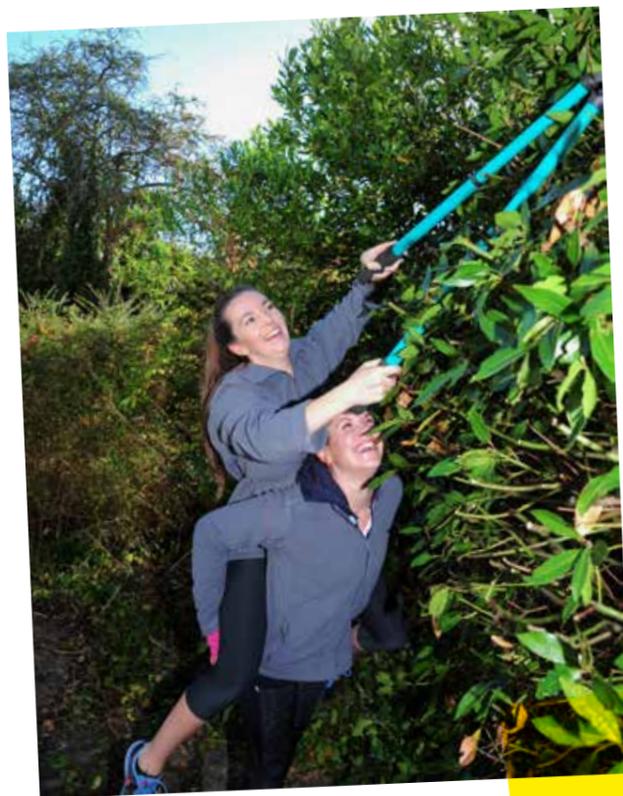
Litter picks and beach cleans

Colleagues have participated in a number of litter picks, including a clean up of Exeter Quay, and another of Malpas Road. Real Estate Exeter also recently completed a litter pick in St Thomas, Exeter, using it as a valuable team-building exercise as well as an opportunity to give back to the local area.

Inspired by SAS and Beach Guardian, Cornwall colleagues also did a beach clean on Porthtowan beach and were amazed at the amount of microplastics found.

Supporting Invictus Trust

Our Cornwall firm charity opened a new 24 hour mental health assessment and treatment unit in Bodmin on 31 August. This is the first unit of its kind in Cornwall. 7 Colleagues gave their time to assist with events to mark the opening of the unit e.g. serving drinks, helping with parking, acting as guides etc.



Volunteer days



Other Objectives



In the 12 months from 1 September to 31 August, 30 days of volunteer leave have been taken by 18 colleagues. Examples of what our great team have been doing include:

Shelterbox:

To ensure that the charity is ready to handle any crisis it holds regular crisis management training days. Toby Claridge used one of his volunteering days to take part in a recent exercise. "I was involved in preparing for the crisis management exercise, as well as taking part in the exercise itself as a legal advisor. After the session we discussed the feedback and lessons that could be learned."

Devon Christian Youth Camps:

Tom Cox spent his volunteer leave with Devon Christian Youth Camps (DCYC), a charity based near Dartmouth in the south of the county. DCYC has been active for over 70 years and provides summer camps and house parties for young people aged between 10-17 every year, along with a camp for families.

Truro District Scouts:

During Tim Walmsley's volunteer leave, he supervised a team of Scout Explorers on a three-day Duke of Edinburgh (DofE) Silver-Qualifying Expedition on Bodmin Moor.

Celtic Cross Education Multi-Academy Trust:

Laurie Trounce, partner in our corporate Cornwall team, used her volunteering leave with the educational charity Celtic Cross Education Multi-Academy Trust (the Trust), which helps a family network of schools across rural Cornwall provide high quality teaching and improvement opportunities.

SANDS Stillbirth and neonatal death charity:

Kerry England took her volunteering leave to help out SANDS, a charity that closely supports anyone who has been affected by the death of a baby. Kerry has a close personal connection to SANDS and works with the charity directly, as well as being the local PR officer on Exeter's committee which is entirely run by bereaved parents.

Sirona Therapeutic Horsemanship:

Sirona has recently completed a move to a purpose-built centre on the Dartington Hall Estate, which has facilities to provide a large number of equine-based therapy activities. With the help of horses like Toro, Roxi and Mabel, the charity encourages young people to develop transferable skills that they can use in everyday life. As a trustee of the charity, Sarah Newton has provided support through attending meetings and a recent open day held to showcase Sirona's supportive activities.

Children's Hospice South West:

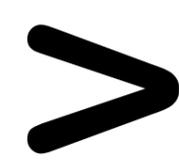
Brittany Allen from our Truro planning team used her volunteering leave to help out Children's Hospice South West, a charity with hospices in Devon, Somerset and Cornwall. The charity provides compassionate facilities to children with life-limiting conditions and their families, through support like respite, palliative care and emergency care.



A spot check showed that 70% of our computer monitors were switched off

We are pleased to confirm that we have also succeeded in the following objectives set this year:

1. Get the promotion criteria altered to include involvement in the Giving Back
2. Measure ourselves against the B-Corp Impact Assessment. Our initial score is 84.4 (unaccredited) which is really good. See <https://bcorporation.net/> for more details. We are looking at accreditation, what it might mean to be a B-Corp and how best to implement learning from the Assessment
3. Get information (posters/boards etc) put up in each of our office receptions explaining our Giving Back credentials. Posters are now proudly displayed in all reception areas
4. Get the Giving Back pages of the website up and running
5. Maintain our intranet page on Scowzone to celebrate what we do and regularly flag up to colleagues opportunities for personal volunteering etc
6. An introduction to the Giving Back program is now undertaken for all new starters – at the same time as our employee ownership is explained



Verity Slater
Giving Back Partner
31 August 2019

DID YOU KNOW.....

GIVING BACK

795

Hours we spent in work time last year on GIVING BACK projects.



- > Using local suppliers
- > Members of Plastic Free Exeter
- > Raised staff awareness through litter picking and beach cleans
- > Committee members on 75 community or charity projects

684

Trees we've saved from recycling our confidential shredding



3 DAYS

Paid volunteer leave each year

0%

Of our waste goes to landfill - all our offices recycle



Lightfoot is installed in pool cars to help save fuel and the environment

£10.6k

Raised for our firm charities in 2017/2019

88%

Of our stationery is Eco Friendly

All of our colleagues are gifted a reusable metal water bottle

Firm charities are:

- SAS
- Exeter Foodbank
- Invictus Trust