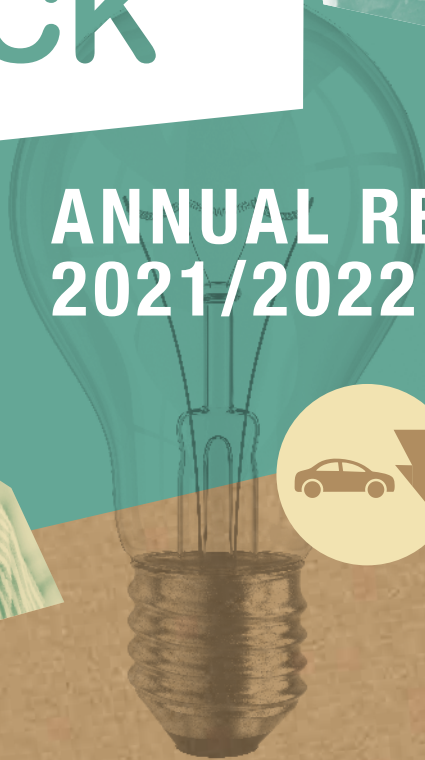




GIVING BACK

ANNUAL REPORT 2021/2022



DOING GOOD
MATTERS

Stephens Scown launched its Giving Back Programme in September 2018. This is our fourth annual report.

This report aims to give a description of our social and environmental programmes and performance, to set targets and share progress against those targets and to give information in a way that can be compared to previous years.

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**

The Giving Back Programme is split into four pillars:

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



**DOING GOOD
MATTERS**

This report covers our impact in the period September 2021 to August 2022: although as set out below, in some areas we are now reporting against some metrics on our financial year, which is 1 May to 30 April each year. This will enable easier year-on-year comparison.

We set the following targets this year and our progress is as follows:

1

Successfully achieve B Corp accreditation. Our B Impact Assessment was filed in August 2021 and at the time we go to press we are very close to concluding our verification. Watch this space!



3

Seek to get 30% of employees to have used at least one day of their volunteer leave, to include at least two board members and two Team Leaders/Directors. Part met. We have reached 20% of our full time employees, which has included 2 board members and two Team Leaders.



2

Keep our carbon footprint arising from work travel within a manageable level and no more than 50% of pre-Covid levels, namely less than 98,000 kg CO₂e pa.



4

Organise at least two opportunities for all staff to get involved in a firm organised volunteer opportunity (such as litter picking).



5

Undertake ten pro bono projects. Part met (more details included further on in this report).



7

Move to vegetarian/vegan catering unless people opt for meat on internal lunches. Partially met – continue to provide catering on the basis of 50% vegetarian or vegan.



9

Seek to ensure that we consistently incorporate social and environmental impact into decision-making because we consider it important to the success and profitability of our business.



6

Education campaign to get Giving Back targets into everyone's appraisals for 2022 onwards. Met and included in appraisal training.



8

Set up an environmental procurement policy.



10

Increase our firm's charitable giving to more than £15k pa (last year it was approx. £8,500).



ENVIRONMENT

We are on a journey towards Net Zero Carbon – seeking to lower our carbon footprint, having committed to be Net Zero by the end of 2025. One of our core values is 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.

How is our Carbon Footprint Changing?

Our carbon footprint is measured in line with our financial year, 1 May to 30 April

| | | |
|-----------|---------------------------------|---|
| 2018/2019 | 209,848.89 kg CO ₂ e | ▼ |
| 2019/2020 | 190,239.39 kg CO ₂ e | ▼ |
| 2020/2021 | 86,288.79 kg CO ₂ e | ▼ |
| 2021/2022 | 43,139.89 kg CO ₂ e | ▼ |

This is based on our scope 1 and 2 emissions.

Throughout the last year, we have witnessed societies attempt to return to some sense of normality. As a result, our energy usage has increased and our emissions are heading towards pre pandemic levels. However, due to measures introduced over the years we have continued a consistent reduction in our overall carbon footprint. Highlights of this programme to date have been:



Initiatives this year

6-monthly reporting on our Net Zero plan and carbon footprint. This year saw the publication of our first complete Carbon Report that highlighted where, how and the trends associated with the energy we are emitting. The report showed that our carbon footprint had reduced by circa 77% compared to the pre-pandemic levels of 2019-20, mainly due to a continued reduction in staff using the offices' facilities and a significant reduction in colleague (Scowner) travel to meetings and networking events.

To successfully continue on our journey of Carbon Net Zero by 2025 we have moved closer to all our office utilities being on a 100% renewable energy tariff. This has reduced our carbon emissions by 50% compared to our emissions in 2020/21.

Travel is currently our largest emitter of Carbon and although the last year has seen a dramatic increase of 185% in our carbon emissions from travel compared to last year, we are still only emitting 23% of our pre Covid emissions.

This has mainly been due to our new Green Travel Policy taking affect that promotes greener travel alternatives. We have enhanced the policy this year by:

- Mileage being paid for business travel by bicycle.
- Active promotion of use of electric vehicles by allowing charging at our offices.
- Promotion of car sharing by two designated car parking spaces in our Truro office.
- Car sharing calendar being introduced so people can more easily see who is going where.
- Increased use of Co Cars to offer electric vehicles for Scowners to use when driving to client meetings, networking events and inter office.
- Celebration of those choosing to travel in this way.
- Carbon offset with Plant One Cornwall for any flights that were unavailable (For example flights to USA to investigate B Corp).

One of our targets this year was to keep our carbon footprint arising from work travel within a manageable level and no more than 50% that of pre-Covid levels, namely less than 98,000 kg CO₂e p a. The figure was 17,012kg CO₂e, so this was achieved.



Office Waste and Resources

In the office we have seen a vast reduction in resources such as stationery and waste. 63.79% of our stationery consumed is environmentally accredited and we will aim to increase this with a review of alternate products. Our main spend is on paper and although this isn't from recycled sources it is FSA accredited. We have also moved towards 75% vegetarian and vegan catering from local suppliers for all internal meetings – starting to ask colleagues to nominate if they wanted a non-vegetarian option. All sites now use a local refuse company that guarantees zero waste will go to landfill. All waste is sorted and recycled where possible, with the remaining waste used to produce energy. We have also saved 297 trees through shredding and recycling.



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Suppliers

These are emissions resulting in indirect activities through our supply chains. We have introduced an Environmental and Purchasing Policy, which ensures all contractors and suppliers are vetted for their environmental and ethical attributes and wherever possible we look to purchase from local companies. We are also contacting our larger suppliers, asking them to explain to us how they are reducing their emissions and supply us with figures to show the impact of our relationship.

Preference will be given to suppliers that meet robust third-party social and environmental certification criteria. Where reasonable, all significant suppliers should meet one or more of the following standards:

- Certified B Corporation
- Leaping Bunny (certified by Cruelty Free International)
- 1% for the Planet
- Carbon Neutral Certification (certified by the Carbon Trust)
- Fair Trade
- BREEAM certified
- Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Certified
- Energy Star Certified
- Other rigorous and independent third-party certifications will be considered on a case by case basis.

We are also actively reducing our need for ongoing consumables. Remaining purchases are evaluated for sustainability, such as paper materials (business cards, printer paper, envelopes, files, etc.) that meet one or more of the following criteria:

- At least 50% post-consumer recycled material
- At least 50% rapidly renewable materials
- At least 50% materials harvested or extracted and processed within 500 miles
- At least 50% FSC certified paper products.

Other Scope 3 Emissions

The reduction in travelling to and from work has reduced the individual carbon footprint of Scowners, however, the increased working from home will have seen a rise in carbon output through increased utilities use through equipment and heating and we will be looking to record this. We hope that once the energy crisis abates the incentive of £100 to switch to our provider, Good Energy, allowing them to purchase energy from renewable sources will reduce Stephens Scown's and its Scowners' environmental impact for those working remotely.



What's next

- Review the Electric Vehicle Salary Sacrifice Schemes available.
- Encourage colleagues to share their own carbon footprint on their Scown Zone profile page by using the WWF tracker.
- Look at the carbon footprint and initiatives of our top ten suppliers, which will feed into our Scope 3 carbon assessments.
- Review the office energy use and improvements to be done once our plans for the refurbishment are reported and finalised. We are partnering with an organisation for this refurbishment that is focused on the environmental impact of the changes and new space.
- Research science-based Carbon Targets to explore as part of our Net Zero journey.
- Stay part of this conversation. Peter Cooper, a renewable energy specialist in the firm spoke on our Net Zero Journey and his experiences in November 2021 to Taunton Chamber of Commerce.

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 (CIC). 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).

Last year we completed five Pro Bono Projects. This year we completed eight Projects. Our target was ten.

Our pro bono activity this year:

1

St Day Old Church Community Interest Company

We provided governance advice and assistance to St Day Old Church Community Interest Company in connection with the resignations of former directors, filings made by third parties with the regulator and Companies House without authority of the CIC, and misuse of the CIC's authentication code in connection with the filings.

We assisted the CIC to rectify the filings made with its regulator and Companies House, and provided detailed advice on the options available to protect the CIC from any future filings made by third parties without authority and the methods available to protect the security of its authentication code. This work has allowed the CIC to move forward with new appointments to its board and successfully apply for the award of grant funding to allow a full programme of performing arts events to be scheduled for the community over summer 2022. The work was undertaken by Jeremy Crook and Olivia Miller.



2

British Veterinarian Association Animal Welfare Foundation

The Animal Welfare Foundation (AWF) is the charitable arm of the British Veterinarian Association, and their aim is to improve the welfare of animals through science, education, and robust debate. They developed a free resource called The Puppy Contract which is designed to empower puppy buyers and help them to avoid the problems that can arise from buying a puppy from an irresponsible breeder. For breeders, the contract is a record of the thought and attention they have devoted to their puppies' breeding and care and helps ensure high welfare standards in their industry.

The AWF is looking at ways to make this resource available abroad, to maximise its impact, and the first step was to conduct a pilot project in partnership with a Taiwanese animal welfare organisation. The IP team were able to draft a licence agreement which allowed AWF to keep control of the materials and their translation, as well as ensuring their branding was consistent and protected. Tom Chartres-Moore (Partner and Team Leader for the IP and IT team) met with the client and oversaw the work, assisted by Abigail Grace (trainee) who came across this opportunity for pro bono work via her connections with the UK Centre for Animal Law.



3

Employment Lawyers' Association – ELIPS

Advising litigants who are acting in person in employment claims as part of a clinic on employment tribunal litigation. Sessions over the year supported by Employment Partner, Joe Nicholls.



4

The Employment Law Telephone Advice Line (“ELTAL”)

Providing advice as part of an advice line rota, where we provide advice to different businesses / individuals who are not able to afford legal advice in relation to their employment issues. Henry Cross, a solicitor in our Employment team, received great feedback off the back of his work, with the supervising solicitor and pro bono manager, Laura Jones, saying:

“I just wanted to get in contact to say a really big thank you from the ELTAL project. I reviewed your client advice in the CIS for your last two clients and it was fantastic. It is so wonderful to see the clients getting such a brilliant service. A huge thank you again, and we are so pleased to be working with you.

Henry said: “Employment Tribunal claims can be a tremendously stressful experience, and it is not surprising that claimants experience high level of stress and anxiety in relation to the process, particularly if they already have pre-existing physical or mental health conditions which may be exacerbated by such high levels of stress.

“Providing advice in this “no strings attached” way, even if it is just simple procedural guidance, can have a significant impact on these individuals’ lives and ultimately may improve their chances of success in tribunal.”



6

Hidden Treasures CIC

Laurie Trounce, a Partner in our Corporate team (supported by Tamsin Best, Trainee Solicitor) has provided legal support to Hidden Treasures (Cornwall) C.I.C to support company’s development. Laurie provided strategic governance advice including a review of the CIC’s structure and decision-making framework.

Providing this legal advice on a pro bono basis was invaluable to Hidden Treasures (Cornwall) CIC who are extremely grateful for Laurie’s support and expertise.



7

Exeter Law School Mock Tribunal

Terry Falcao, a partner in our Employment team, assisted the Exeter Law School Cornwall in early December 2021 for half a day by acting as the judge at a mock tribunal. The students on the course were required to plan the case and then act as witnesses and advocates in front of the panel led by Terry. The Law School is committed to delivering a teaching programme that goes well beyond traditional book learning and offers opportunities for students, which many undergraduate programmes simply do not offer, including opportunities to begin learning practical legal skills from a very early stage in their studies. The hearings are an important part of this – a first foray into the world of ‘real’ lawyering.”

8

Training for the Cornwall Citizens Advice Clinic

Rebecca Harmer provided training to advisors at Citizens Advice Cornwall surrounding the change in the divorce law and with top tips about the resolution of matrimonial finances. The training was well received with the feedback from attendees thanking Rebecca and saying how helpful and informative the session was.



5

The Cornwall Federation Of Young Farmers’ Clubs

With its aim of advancing the education of young members of the public in agriculture, home crafts, country life, and related subjects, CYFC were looking for assistance in maternity matters.

Providing employment advice in relation to employees currently pregnant and those on maternity leave, Sophie Petrucci was able to provide a template Maternity Policy and FAQ-style document, on a pro-bono basis. The policy set out arrangements relating to maternity leave, pay, and outlined the statutory rights of employees who are pregnant or have recently given birth. The FAQ-style document included a “go-to” quick reference guide for pregnancy and maternity related questions.

The advice given helped CYFC to create a framework that they’re using for all members. As a charity, the opportunity to access pro-bono support is hugely beneficial to them both as an organisation and for the benefit of their members who now have access to first-rate legal guidance.



CHARITABLE GIVING

Overall our firm charitable giving over the last financial year (1 May 2021 to 30 April 2022) has amounted to £16,336. This includes donations that we make to support charitable events or organisations, donations made to support our colleagues' own fundraising efforts and money raised by our Charity Committee.

In this period the Committee Raised £3,639.09 for our three Firm charities: Man Down (Cornwall), MIND (Firm-wide) and Hospice Care (Devon).

We also held a Christmas Lunchbox session for all the Firm encouraging volunteering and charitable giving into 2022. £570 was raised at this event alone for the Firm charities and many pledges were made by colleagues of volunteer and fundraising activities to follow.



Firm charitable support this year has included:

Supporting the Exeter University Negotiation Club attend the International Negotiation Competition final in Nebraska USA. This was through Amy Ralston who had founded the club when she was a student to teach, practice and refine communication skills and to enable students to gain valuable experience.

Supporting Duchy Opera Trust: bringing opera to everyone in Cornwall.

Continuing our important membership of Cornwall Community foundation and Cornwall Wildlife Trust.

Firm fundraising events this year have included:

The Halloween scary Bake Off raised over £100 for Exeter Hospiscare, while the Harvest Festival sale also raised £140 for the same charity.

The Firm's 12 days of Christmas events, which included a silent auction, participation in National Christmas Jumper Day, Big Christmas Quiz, and Partner Cameo raised £1,332.

Here are just some examples of our Scowner's personal fundraising efforts:

Charlotte Mackay did the Santa Cycle for Cornwall Hospice Care, cycling from Bodmin to Padstow on the Camel Trail. The firm donated £50 to her sponsorship.

Amy Ralston ran the Race for Life on 10.10.21 and managed to raise £2,265 for Cancer Research UK (we supported with sponsorship too).

Val Spargo and Samantha Paley undertook the polar bear challenge – sea swimming through winter to raise money for Man Down.

Jennifer Short-Martin, Steve Alcock and Holly Sautelle-Smith ran the Imerys trail half marathon in May 2022 for Man Down. The Firm also sponsored the event, which was organised by our client, Imerys.

Louise Carpenter raised over £1,300 for pancreatic cancer walking 100k in the Cotswolds for 27 hours. The Firm helped with a £100 donation towards her target.

VOLUNTEERING

Scowners across the firm are involved in many charitable organisations inside and outside of work. The Firm are keen to encourage Scowners to be involved in the community they live in through volunteering or supporting charitable causes.

Scowners can use their volunteer leave to assist them with this or alter their hours to undertake voluntary work more easily in their free time.

The Firm has been encouraging teams to use volunteering as a way to get out of the office for the day and improve relationships with colleagues and the Real Estate Team in Cornwall and Corporate and IP/IT team in Exeter have had excellent days out doing this.



Every Scowner with more than six months service is entitled to have up to three paid days per year to undertake their own volunteer work for a registered charity or CIC. This is applied pro rata for those who work part time. This does not need to be taken in whole days and can be taken in half days.

Our target this year was to seek to get 30% of employees to have used at least one day of their volunteer leave, to include at least 2 board members and 2 Team Leaders/Directors. Whilst the target of 30% of employees using at least one day of their volunteer has fallen slightly short, two board members and two Team Leaders/directors have undertaken volunteer leave in the last year.

In the 12 months from 1 September to 31 August 2022 at least 30 Scowners have taken volunteer leave. This is a whopping 500% increase in the use of volunteer leave from the past 12 months (when only 5 days of volunteer leave was booked by colleagues). No doubt the previous year was hindered due to COVID and it is great to hear that Scowners are out and about again helping the community.

In our financial year 2021/22, 20% of our full-time employees undertook paid time off to volunteer. Last year we logged 186 hours on our time recording system as being used for CSR and Charity work. This is only recorded by legal advisors. In this Giving Back year this increased to 303.18 which suggests our colleagues are doing more work on CSR, Giving Back and Charity matters.

We had a target to organise two firm volunteer days which we hit:

- Litter Picks in both Truro and Exeter for the big city clean ups in Autumn 2021
- Beach Clean at Porthtowan Beach on 23 March 2022



Team Volunteering Days



Intellectual Property, Data Protection and Technology

11 members of the Exeter IP/IT and DP team spent a day at InFocus Charity, a national charity for young adults who have vision impairment and other complex needs. They helped the charity in the garden by putting up fences, handrails and making raised beds. It is all so visually impaired young people can experience the outdoors in a safe setting. They also had a tour of the site which included polytunnels for growing vegetables, a woodland and a sensory garden. The team helped make the site safer and more accessible for users. Abigail Grace who organised the day said "It was interesting to think about how someone's interaction with nature might be different if they have visual impairment or mobility limitations, but really encouraging to see that there are still ways these people can experience nature. We were pleased to have helped in some small way to achieve this."

Real Estate

Eight members of the Cornwall Real Estate team headed to Cornwall Wildlife trust's HQ at Allet to assist with clearing trees and shrubs to create a new footpath for visitors. Ben Wheeler, Tim Atkins, Anthony Booth, Roz Davidson, Becky Davies, Megan Julier, Lowenna Spears and Jimmy Tiltman all helped create the new footpath. Ben Wheeler said "It was the perfect opportunity to get together away from the pressures of work and in a COVID friendly way!" Charlotte Goodship of the Cornwall Wildlife Trust thanked the group for their hard work and said "thanks so much to you and your team for all the work you put in yesterday... Hopefully you all enjoyed yourselves and didn't get too damp and muddy – the work done looks amazing."



Family

Four members of the Exeter Family Team also took on a spot of gardening and clearing when they visited Poltimore House to help clear lots of stinging nettles and brambles that had grown round the base of a preserved handkerchief Tree. Rebecca Harmer, Ellie Lord, Shavaun Womersley and Elizabeth Ferguson blessed by good weather, transformed the base of the tree into a shaded space, perfect for sitting in over the summer months.

Once the work was completed, they took a tour around the house, learning more about its varied, fascinating history, and discovering just how spooky the place could be! Rebecca says: "There are no paid staff at Poltimore House so the maintenance and care of the house and grounds and the running of many events is all done by volunteers. There are extensive renovations required and so they are always on the lookout for extra volunteers to assist with numerous project work around the garden, house or in their pop-up café. We achieved a lot in the space of a day and it was nice to be able to physically see what a day's work could achieve."

Unfortunately the Family team also had to cancel an event last minute due to Covid in December 2021, but they made sure that the food ordered was donated to a local Foodbank.

Corporate

The Exeter Corporate team spent a day at Haldon Forest Park helping to maintain the natural landscape. The team lopped and cut down birch trees to allow the heathland to thrive which is a better habitat for the wildlife that lives on Haldon. Dave Robbins, Giles Dunning, Viv Weatherington, An Swainston and Joanne Price initially felt that it was counter intuitive to do an environmentally friendly activity which involved cutting down trees! However, they learnt that it was better for the eco system and the wildlife and soon got into the swing of chopping! As well as helping the local environment the team got to enjoy the beautiful views on Haldon and get out of the office and enjoy some sunshine.

Construction

Members of the Construction team spent time at Pentewan Beach, doing a beach clean and helping the local community. James Gill, Sian Barrett, Jim Gorrod, Leah Waller, Guy Michell, Tom Cox, and Sarah Smith were involved as they lived up to the Firm's ethos of Giving Back.



Individual Volunteering

As well as the team volunteer days lots of individuals chose to use their volunteer leave.

Charlotte Owens volunteered for the NHS providing support at a COVID vaccination site by assisting the pharmacy team in checking patient details and then directing them to the waiting area for their vaccine.

Rebecca Harmer used a volunteer day to help renovate a workshop space for Exeter-based arts-for-health charity, Magic Carpet, and has now joined Natalie Vizard in our BECX team on the board of trustees.

Lisa Mulholland used a volunteer day to attend a first aid course as part of her training as a volunteer as a police special constable.

Jack Saunders spent five days delivering essentials such as tents, sleeping bags, medical supplies, sanitary and hygiene products to Poland and to the Slovakia/Ukraine border to help refugees fleeing the current conflict.



CONCLUSION

I am really pleased to report a strong engagement with our Giving Back Programme this year, with good improvements on our metrics and targets. Although we have not met all the stretch targets the Giving Back team aimed for, the whole Firm's enthusiasm and awareness of our drive to be a force for good has been noticeable. Undertaking the B Corp Verification process has embedded this yet further and I am looking forward to the additional positive changes and initiatives that will come this year.

Verity Slater
Giving Back Partner
2 October 2022

DID YOU KNOW.....

GIVING
BACK
2021/2022



Better cycle to work scheme

SAVED
297
TREES
RECYCLING
CONFIDENTIAL
WASTE
(= to 97 tonnes CO₂)

0%
TO LANDFILL

81.97% of our stationary consumed is environmentally accredited

Our Charity Committee raised around **£3,639.09** last financial year



We use 100% renewable energy significantly reducing our carbon footprint

Paper consumption reduced by 2/3 rds due to paperlite



Partnered with Co-Cars

Goal of Net Zero by
2025

CARBON FOOTPRINT
52.27%
DOWN FROM LAST YEAR



NEW GREEN TRAVEL POLICY

8 pro bono projects last year

303 hours recorded as CSR and charity work last year



£100 DISCOUNT for Scowners switching to Good Energy