

Corporate Social Responsibility



Corporate social responsibility

Introduction

I have great pleasure in introducing our corporate social responsibility policy. We consider there to be three particularly significant elements to acting responsibly as a business. Namely how we act towards our people, how we treat the environment and how we impact upon and interact with our local community and the wider world. All three strands are, of course, interrelated and overall our policies in these three areas form the core of our corporate social responsibility policy.

As a professional practice our people are at the very core of our business. It is crucial to the overall wellbeing of our business that our people are treated fairly, with respect and are given the opportunity to nurture and develop their skills. Each and every one of our people is an ambassador for our firm. Happy and fulfilled people are more likely to promote the CW culture and impact in a positive way in the business environment and the local community.

As well as looking after our people in the present, we recognise we have a responsibility to future generations to operate our business in a way which minimises our impact on the environment. We have worked hard to reduce our energy consumption per capita and to operate in a much "greener" and more sustainable way.

The third strand of our CSR policy recognises how fortunate we are at CW and aims to give something back to the communities in which we work. Our people never cease to amaze me with their resourceful and generous initiatives to raise money for charity ranging from running through the Sahara, entering marathons and "ironman", baking cakes, charity quizzes and race nights. As well as money, our people generously give their time to work with the community with activities ranging from talks to local schools, reading buddies for primary schools, mentoring of teenagers and acting as school governors.



Stephen Rosser
Chief Executive

Our people

People are the most important part of our business. We are committed to building a supportive culture to enable our people to enjoy their work, fulfil their career potential and excel at what they do.

This means:

1. We care about diversity:
 - in all our offices we wish to see a workforce which reflects the local community and seek to encourage the recruitment, retention and career development of people regardless of ethnic, cultural, religious and social backgrounds.
 - discrimination of any kind is unacceptable in all aspects of our management and employment practices. We ensure that selection, appointment and advancement is on merit.
 - we actively encourage and work with organisations which promote people from less traditional backgrounds to follow a career in law.
 - we run regular diversity training programmes for all of our people to ensure our values become part of our culture.
2. We care about career development for all of our people:
 - we have a well developed and thought out performance review process which provides clear performance criteria and objectives.
 - we encourage and make available training and development of skills and qualifications through the Clarke Willmott School of Management.
3. We care about staff welfare and work life balance:
 - we take health and safety very seriously.
 - there are staff liaison committees in each office.
 - we promote flexible working.
 - we provide a confidential personal support service for all staff.
 - we provide a wide range of staff benefits from pensions to healthcare.
4. We care about the views of our people:
 - we monitor, obtain feedback on and review our diversity, performance review, training, welfare and other staff policies regularly.
 - we aim to constantly evolve, develop and improve our policy.
 - full details of our extensive people policies are on our intranet for all staff to see.
 - we take grievances regarding discrimination or harassment seriously and aim to handle such matters sensitively but firmly.

The environment

We care about our environment and aim to reduce our energy consumption per capita and investigate greener ways of achieving our business objectives.

1. We care about our buildings and their use:
 - we are constantly monitoring ways of reducing our energy consumption including commissioning periodic surveys.
 - we have actively encouraged recycling including kitchen waste, cans, plastic, cartons and paper.
 - we use energy efficient lighting and heating where possible and encourage all staff to turn off all equipment when not in use.
 - we encourage staff at the regular liaison meetings to suggest green initiatives.
2. We care about how we do business:
 - we promote the use of public transport where possible including the provision of season ticket loans.
 - we encourage and provide an environment conducive to cycling to work by taking part in the national "Cycle to Work" scheme.
 - we run car share schemes where possible.
 - we have invested in our video conferencing facilities to reduce the need for inter-office travel.
 - we commission regular travel to work surveys to see how we can improve.

Giving something back

We care about our communities and about those less fortunate. It is our policy to encourage as many of our people as possible to get involved in charitable and community initiatives.

This means:

1. Each office of the firm chooses a charity to support:
 - the partners agree to provide funding to support staff initiatives.
 - we support and encourage our people to organise fund raising events.
2. We support charitable donations and events for other charities promoted by individual staff.
3. We give time – currently one day of paid leave for charitable or community based initiatives per annum.
4. We support our people to become school governors, trustees of charities or committee members of other community support groups.
5. We are pleased to consider involvement in any worthy initiative brought to the firm by our people and encourage them to do so.

Conclusion

I hope that this summary of our CSR policy and the initiatives which flow from our policy has been of interest. The original individual policies which comprise our CSR initiative are available on our intranet site and elsewhere within our organisation.

We are constantly reviewing and evolving our approach and striving to have the best possible policies for our people and the wider world. We speak with a variety of our clients to see if we can learn from their approach. We encourage our people to feedback their views and ideas. If, having read this document, you have ideas for further improvements we would be interested to hear from you. Please contact:



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