

UN Global Compact

Communication on Progress Report

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About Forster Communications

We are a pioneering communications agency, working with businesses and charities to **accelerate social change**. We help our clients to protect and improve lives, and deliver measureable value for them, their stakeholders and wider society.

Statement of continued support

Forster has been a signatory to the United Nations Global Compact since 2007 and we remain fully committed to supporting and upholding all of the 10 Principles. We also recognise that living up to our commitment has to be seen as a process of continuous improvement and we are pleased to be able to show in this Communication on Progress that we have made some significant steps forward since we reported last year.

In September 2015 we became a founding UK B Corporation which squares with our core intent to help deliver material positive social and environmental change, while at the same time offering the opportunity to collaborate with, and learn from, like-minded for-profit businesses on a growing global platform.

We are proud to be early standard bearers for the movement in the UK, and to help bring new energy and momentum to the UK social economy. It plays to our pioneering spirit as a first mover, and allows us to share our 'Business to Society' agenda more widely.

Jilly Forster, Chair

B Corp Certification

B Corps ('Benefit Corporations') are 'for-profit' businesses of all sizes, independently certified to meet rigorous standards of social and environmental performance, accountability and transparency across five areas – Governance, Workers, Community, Customers and Environment.

Under the B Corp Impact Assessment process, Forster Communications scored 131 out of a maximum 200 points. The threshold for certification is 80 points, with a mean score for all B Corps of 97.

However, this isn't simply another sustainability accreditation.

Together, B Corps constitute a movement inspired by an alternative vision for the role of mainstream business in society. They back this up by adopting legally-binding governing documents under which they formally commit to balancing the interests of shareholders with having a material positive impact on society and the environment as a whole.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Human Rights

Principle 1: Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights; and

Principle 2: make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses

Forster's business ethics and relationship with all stakeholder groups are formally underpinned by our 10 commitments.

Two of these commitments specifically articulate our regard for human rights:

- We encourage the highest standards of environmental protection, social responsibility and respect for human rights from our clients.
- We will not generate profit or revenue from practices that threaten life or have negative social, ethical or environmental impacts.

We are committed to promoting human rights and observe those rights in accordance with the UN Human Rights Charter.

Human Rights: how we live up to the principles

Within our own core business there is negligible risk that any human rights violations will take place. However, we take a number of steps to ensure that our business activities deliver a positive impact on our employees and ensure that we only work with clients and suppliers that support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights.

In order to verify this, we vet all potential suppliers and clients against our 10 commitments and business principals and encourage all new suppliers to undertake the B Corp impact assessment ensuring they to are striving for continual improvement.

We are a certified Living Wage employer and committed to paying a fair wage to all our employees and on-site contractors.

We actively encourage the right to education as part of our learning and development programme for all our employees.

We promote the right to safe and healthy working conditions through managing the office environment and our comprehensive H&S policy, in conjunction with our award winning wellbeing programme focussing on an individuals nutrition, physical activity, mental health & community involvement.

Our employee handbook outlines our whistleblowing policy and grievance procedures that ensures employees are familiar with how to raise concerns about staff treatment or any other aspect of their work. In addition, all employees have 24 hour access to our EAP.

LABOUR STANDARDS

Labour Standards

Principle 3: Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;

Principle 4: the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour;

Principle 5: the effective abolition of child labour; and

Principle 6: the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

Our 10 commitments underpin everything we do. In addition our Equal Opportunities & Employee Development Policy makes clear that:

- We value and encourage diversity and difference within Forster and believe that we are a stronger company as a result
- We benefit from the different experiences and backgrounds that our employees bring with them to work
- We welcome diversity amongst our clients, associates and suppliers
- We take the training and development of our employees seriously

Labour standards: how we live up to the principles

As a small UK company specialising in the delivery of social change PR services, the risk of our having a detrimental impact on labour rights is relatively low. Nevertheless we consider robust labour practices as fundamental for attracting, developing and retaining the talented people that make us leaders in our field. Moreover, we attach importance to proactively encouraging positive labour practices across the UK through our work with clients and our supply chain.

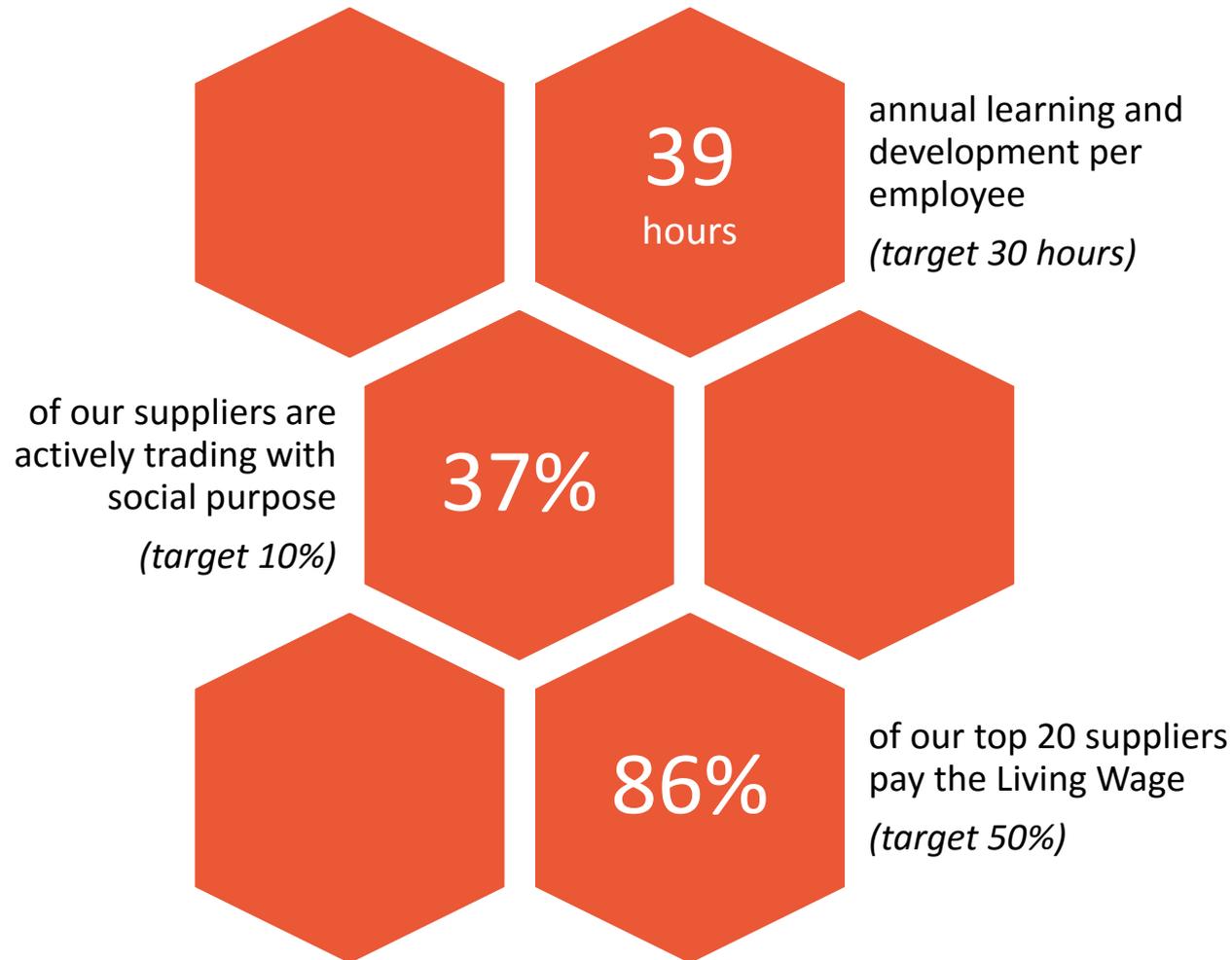
As a certified B Corporation and accredited Living Wage employer we screen all our suppliers to the same standards to which we aspire. We believe that paying the Living Wage is good for business, good for the individual and good for society.

We conduct regular performance reviews of all employees which feeds into our L&D programme and an extensive employee survey every two years as part of our ethical review to measure employee satisfaction among other elements.

Working hours are monitored through our online business analysis system which helps to maintain a positive work/life balance and we take steps to respond and address issues as required.

We regularly review and update our Employee Handbook, which covers staff benefits, our Human Resources policies and procedures including Equal Opportunities & Employee Development Policy and Harassment Policy. This is outlined as part of an individual's induction, with copies always available to any member of staff through an shared, accessible system.

Human rights & labour standards: measuring success



ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Environmental protection

Principle 7: Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges;

Principle 8: undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility; and

Principle 9: encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies

Our work involves helping businesses understand and address the current and future social and environmental challenges facing society and we have been working to increase awareness of and change behaviour around environmental issues since Forster was founded 20 years ago.

As an office-based consultancy whose 'products' are largely intellectual, our environmental impacts are relatively low. However, wherever possible we subscribe to a core philosophy of 'reduce, re-use, recycle'. We also recognise that the activities we undertake or manage on behalf of clients have an impact on the environment and believe that it is our responsibility to minimise this impact.

Environmental protection: how we live up to the principles

We have an Environmental Policy and an Environmental Management System, both approved at board level. All employees are made aware of our policy and systems when they begin working with the Company and provided with regular updates on progress against the ambitious targets we set ourselves. Our environmental objectives are to:

- Encourage walking and cycling on commuter journeys and cycling on business travel
- Reduce material consumption and maintain energy consumption at minimum levels;
- Use renewable resources where practical (100% of our electricity is generated from renewables) and ensure that we are working with market leaders in this field.
- Separating waste from recycling, with the aim of increasing the proportion of recycled material and decreasing the proportion of waste;
- Comply with relevant regulations and legal requirements,
- Uphold conditions of subscription bodies including UN Global Compact
- Work with clients and suppliers to reduce indirect negative environmental impacts, e.g. impacts of printing suppliers used by us or commissioned on behalf of clients.
- Promote our best practice water usage policy
- Maintain systems to the level of ISO 14001 Environmental Management Standard accreditation and B Corp certification
- Specific targets relating to these objectives are documented in our Sustainability Report. Our most recent report was published in October 2014.

Environmental protection: measuring success

In the last year we have:

- Recycled 85% of our waste
- Diverted all our unrecyclable waste from landfill by using an energy recovery system which converts waste into clean energy
- Decreased paper consumption by 4% per capita
- 18% of commuter journeys were made by bicycle
- Continued to use Good Energy for our electricity & gas - 100% of our electricity is from a renewable source
- Become a certified B Corporation, meeting rigorous standards of social and environmental performance, accountability, and transparency
- Maintained our ISO 14001 Certification

COMBAT CORRUPTION

Combat corruption

Principle 10: Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.

Forster is committed to operating ethically and takes issues of corruption in all its forms very seriously. Any activity that could be interpreted as corruption would involve Gross Misconduct proceedings for the individual involved.

Combat corruption: how we live up to the principles

Our employee handbook outlines our whistleblowing policy and grievance procedures that ensures employees are familiar with how to raise concerns about staff treatment or any other aspect of their work. It also outlines our policy on receiving gifts, and only permits us to accept gifts of no substantial financial value.

We are a **founding UK B Corp**
and are committed to be a
force for positive change.

