



Corporate Social Responsibility

Impact Report 2020

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Introduction

“Many individuals are doing what they can, but real success can only come if there is change in our societies...” (David Attenborough).

We aim to encourage change in our society through our dedicated Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programme. We are aware of the ongoing issues within both our local and wider society such as the climate crisis, physical and mental wellbeing challenges in the workplace and the need to provide equal opportunities to all. Our aim is to adapt the culture of Kreston Reeves to respond to these issues and instigate change.

This report outlines how we impact our staff and wider communities by holding ourselves accountable against four of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as recommended by the ICAEW. However, this does not mean that we are limited to achieving just four SDGs as those selected broadly encompass others too.

The UN defines the SDGs as a blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. They address the global challenges we face.

Our impact report will detail what each selected SDG is, what we did during the 2019/20 financial year to meet this and our future commitments for the financial year to 31 May 2021.

The report will bring together all the efforts made by our dedicated CSR, Wellbeing, Sports and Social teams, as well as our Staff forum and newly formed Kreston Reeves Foundation, in working towards these SDGs and the effect they have on our internal and external community.

James Peach
Head of CSR

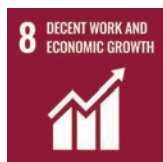


Our core UN Sustainable Development Goals

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Other goals we have met



01: Good health and well-being

What is it?

Good health and wellbeing is about ensuring healthy lives and promoting wellbeing for all.



Why do we support this SDG?

We aim to actively support our people to ensure that we all enjoy good physical, nutritional and mental health at work. We want this to be part of the Firm's culture so that we can continue to deliver the exceptional service our clients expect. We believe in being proactive in empowering our people to prioritise their wellbeing and support those around them in doing the same.

CIPD (Chartered Institute of Personnel & Development) research has shown that mental ill health is now the primary cause of long-term sickness absence for more than one in five (22%) UK organisations. It can also result in higher levels of sickness absence, presenteeism, staff turnover, conflict, and disengagement.

We know that there are many aspects to wellbeing, and so we are constantly expanding and adapting our approach and offer to our people. Our core focus is around delivering wellbeing which focusses on four key pillars: Nutrition, Financial, Physical and Mental.

By embedding wellbeing in our firm's culture, we are living our firm's values of 'Being Human', 'Understanding' and 'Making it Personal'.

What have we done?

Established a wellbeing team

To help achieve our aims we formed a wellbeing project team to help drive wellbeing into our workplace and culture. With a varying number of sites, it was decided to recruit wellbeing ambassadors across our offices internally to help support and implement wellbeing across our organisation. They are there to educate, involve, raise awareness, be a role model and signpost.

Our Wellbeing Ambassadors:



Provided training

Once recruited all ambassadors, as well as staff partners, have received Mental Health Awareness and First Aid Training from a specialist trainer in mental health. We now plan to roll this out further to our people in key roles to enable them to support others.

Our journey to date has involved launching wellbeing across the firm with a dedicated wellbeing week which included various activities and events which all staff could be involved in. These included a session on supercharging sleep, building resilience, mindfulness, and nutritional awareness which we organised with CABA.



Organised events and promoted good health

We have also actively encouraged our people to participate in national and international awareness days via our wellbeing calendar of events. The Wellbeing Ambassadors have helped encourage and drive participation in these days with their own spin on the various topics covered. These have included:

- Healthy nutritional breakfasts
- Zumba and Yoga classes
- Lunchtime walking groups
- Bean growing contests
- Taking part in local Parkruns
- Cycling challenges
- Pedometer challenges



Each office promotes healthy nutrition with fruit bowls available on a weekly basis for all staff to access.

Good health and wellbeing have also been encouraged through our Sports and Social team. The members of this team have organised a number of sport events, as well as other social events, to ensure that every person in the firm has the ability to collaborate together and feel the positive effects that exercise has on us.

The COVID-19 lockdown has also brought its own challenges, but our people continue to be positive despite the uncertainty and anxiety in society. This has been evidenced by our people taking part in 'Wellbingo' (a bingo sheet including various wellbeing activities), online quizzes and fancy-dress Thursdays.

Provided access to an Employee Assistance Programme

Our people have access to a dedicated 24-hour Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) where they can seek free counselling and legal advice from professionals. Access to this service has increased thanks to its promotion and awareness of availability to our people. Previously there had been only 47 calls or cases but for the year to March 2020 there has now been 119 calls or cases.

Organised a firmwide survey to monitor our efforts

A recent survey completed by our people in December 2019 showed the following results:

- 70% were pleased with the firm's wellbeing programme so far
- 92% felt the firm has been supportive towards their own wellbeing
- 82% of our people took part in at least one wellbeing activity during 2019

The firm's average sickness days has improved since introducing wellbeing – previously our average was 4.43 days per employee per year but now stands at 4.09 days. The current UK average is 5.8 days, so we are continuing to record sickness below the national average and improve.

We remain committed to improving these results and creating a culture and working environment that enables our people to prioritise their wellbeing and take care of themselves.

Our survey requested our people to provide the project team with feedback on the areas in which they would like to receive more support and training. We continue to listen to our people and adapt our programme so that we can create a culture that works for everyone.

As we respond to the repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic and adapt our ways of working our people need our support more than ever and we plan to be there to help, sign post and encourage good healthy practices for all.

Some of the year's best moments



Staff Forum

Our staff forum acts as a platform for our people to voice their opinions to local office representatives who will feedback as a group and provide management with an indication of how our people are feeling about certain decisions and also help initiate meaningful change. We are committed to listening to our people and initiating meaningful change to benefit our working environment and wellbeing for everyone.

Our staff forum has led to the introduction of several concepts that have benefitted our people:

Agile working – We used our staff forum to gauge the interest for agile working and how it would work in practice. Now our people can work flexible hours and from home. We appreciate that our people would prefer to choose where and how they work best and so we have been flexible in our approach.

Dress appropriately – Our staff forum led to the initiation of our dress appropriately policy. This means our people can now wear clothes that are appropriate for the occasion. If they are in the office then they can wear smart casual clothes, if they have an important meeting then they can choose to wear formal clothes. We appreciate that some people find it easier to work in smart casual wear rather than formal and we want to be flexible for our people.

Listening to music – Some people work best when they can listen to music. Our staff forum brought this to our attention, and we have implemented a policy to allow our people to listen to music while working.

O2 Open – A query from a member of staff to a staff forum representative led to the introduction of a new employee benefit. Now staff can enjoy a discount on their O2 phone contracts just by using a Kreston Reeves discount code.

What are our targets for the year ahead?

- a. Introduce mental health awareness training for all senior staff.
- b. Ensure that our students receive resilience training.
- c. Work with a wellbeing specialist to help improve engagement from our people and ensure that they take their wellbeing seriously.
- d. Our Sports and Social team will run a number of events during the year to keep our people active and make the benefits of collaborating and exercising clear.
- e. Continue to listen to our staff forum and the voices of our people, leading to meaningful change to improve the working environment for all.

What other UN SDGs have we met while working towards 'Good Health and Wellbeing'?



02: Quality education

What is it?

Quality Education is about ensuring there is inclusive, quality, and lifelong education opportunities for all.



Why do we support this SDG?

We believe in developing our people to be well-rounded professionals. This does not mean that educating our people is limited to technical training, but we believe in developing our people's soft skills and knowledge of wellbeing so that they can thrive in any environment.

Looking beyond our own people, we believe in helping to educate those still in educational establishments with knowledge of the accountancy and financial sector and employability skills. These are often skills that can be overlooked whilst in education.

What have we done?

Training our student intakes to achieve qualification

We have an ongoing commitment to help our Kreston Reeves student intakes achieve a professional qualification. We maintain the highest standards of training to provide students with the best chance of achieving qualification.

From the moment our student intakes join Kreston Reeves we provide them with basic skills training so that they enter the professional world with a basic understanding of their role before they start any formal training for their qualifications.



Accredited Employer Provider status

We have been accredited as an Employer Provider by the Government to deliver our own apprenticeships. This is a status only given to three other accountancy practices.

Access Accountancy

As a signatory of the Access Accountancy charter, Kreston Reeves have made a commitment to improve access to our profession. The vision of Access Accountancy is that our profession is 'more representative, at all levels, of the socio-economic demographic of wider society'.

At Kreston Reeves, we believe that every individual should have an equal chance to realise their potential. We support this by proactively reaching out to a wider spectrum of schools and colleges. We have also committed to offering a percentage of our work experience placements to students whose personal circumstances match those laid out in the Access Accountancy charter.

Student of the year initiative

This year we launched our student of the year initiative in memory of our late Partner, Janet Fautley. Every year we will present an award to our highest achieving student for both their exam results and their efforts in their work at Kreston Reeves. We hope that our students all strive to be the best they can be, and this award will provide us with the opportunity to show our appreciation of our high achievers.



Opening the Aspire Training Academy

This year we opened our own training academy 'Aspire' to be used for Student training and in-house seminars and courses, successfully combining both personal and technical knowledge and the softer skills needed to make a rounded career for our people.



Business advisory training

At Kreston Reeves we see the future of our people being more than simply number crunching. Our clients want advice on how best to operate their business, whether this be the best structure, best brand, or how best to improve the operations of their business in a cost-effective manner.

As a result, we have made a commitment to provide good quality business advisory training to our staff. We want our staff to be able to advise our clients and not simply present them with numbers.

Ongoing soft skills development

We provide our staff with ongoing soft skills development training. This helps to ensure that our people have the tools to operate effectively in any situation they are presented with. Whether this be discussions with clients, teamwork, managing other staff or dealing with stress.

This is done through accredited training providers under the Institute of Leadership and Management and covers a wide variety of areas from client relationships, to managing people, to influencing skills, and much more.

Our commitment means that we maintain the very highest standards of people. Our commitment also provides staff with a pathway to develop their career and progress upwards at Kreston Reeves at a pace that works best for them.

Wellbeing training

As discussed in the 'Health and Wellbeing' section of this report we have provided, and continue to make a commitment, to develop our staff's understanding of their own health and wellbeing both physically and mentally.

Helped build a school in Ghana

As has been discussed in the 'Reduced Inequalities' section of this report we sent a team of our people to help build a school in Ghana as part of the Kreston Reeves Foundation's 'Making Dreams Come True' initiative.

In doing this we have provided greater access to education for those most in need. Our team also helped to teach Maths and English while there and provided much needed pens and paper for the children.

"I'm really very happy to have won the Student of the Year award. KR is a great firm to work for and I really like the people and the teams I'm working with. I'm also really pleased to have achieved my ACA. It has been a long-held ambition to qualify. Sephrena Hartley, Accounts & Audit Team



University, School and College Careers Fairs + KR student days

Our people have attended numerous careers fairs and presented to many groups of school students and undergraduates to promote, and provide equal opportunities, to those who wish to explore a career in accountancy and advisory.

We have also organised our own Student Days. Where local universities come to our offices to gain advice and hear about the careers of some of our team.



Work experience opportunities

We have provided 24 school and university students the opportunity to have work experience placements in our offices. During this time, they have the opportunity to experience a variety of different departments within our organisation and gain the practical experience that can often be difficult to find at a young age. This is all part of our aim to provide opportunities to all no matter their background.

What are our targets for the year ahead?

- Introduce mental health awareness training for all senior staff.
- Ensure that our students receive resilience training.
- Continue with our commitment to provide quality education services to our people to ensure they have the tools to be a well-rounded professional.
- Expand our business advisory training opportunities.
- Continue to attend local school careers events and educate students about workplace skills and opportunities.

What other UN SDGs have we met while working towards 'Quality education'?



03: Reduced inequalities

What is it?

Reduced Inequalities is ensuring that we allow equal opportunities for all, regardless of gender or culture.



Why do we support this SDG?

We believe in the importance of providing equal opportunities for all. There is no need to discriminate against people and we strive to help our people be the best they can be, giving everyone the same tools to make the most of their career at Kreston Reeves

We also acknowledge that there is inequality in the business and social communities in which we work and so we aim to give back some of what we have and help those most in need using our newly established Kreston Reeves Foundation. We aim to help charities through grant giving, volunteering and by sponsoring our people's own fundraising efforts through our Automatic Sponsorship initiative.

The Kreston Reeves Foundation was established as a channel for all our charity work. Through the Kreston Reeves Foundation we distribute grants each year to charities voted for by our people. The grants consist of funds generated by our people through various fundraising events held throughout the year.

What have we done?

Staff Gender split

We have maintained a balanced workforce by gender with 56% female and 44% male. We aim to maintain an equally gender split workforce and continue to provide equal opportunities for all staff.

Gender Pay Gap report

Due to the outbreak of COVID-19 the requirement to publish a Gender Pay Gap report for 2020 has been suspended. As a result, we can only refer to the 2019 Gender Pay Gap Report, as published [here](#).

This report highlights that we have been successful in reducing the 'difference in mean hourly rate of pay' by 1.8%. We have also a more balanced split between men and women in the upper quartile pay band in comparison to 2018. The ratio has changed from 54:46 men to women in 2018 to 50.5:49.5 men to women in 2019, which suggests we have been successful in providing promotion opportunities to both men and women.

It is worth noting that Gender Pay relates to the difference between pay for men and women

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across the total workforce, which differs from Equal Pay which compares rates of pay for the same job role, or work of equal value.

Ethnicity profile

As part of our efforts to ensure we provide equal opportunities to all we monitor our ethnicity profile. As we are an organisation in the South East it is fair to compare our ethnicity profile to that of the region. Per the gov.co.uk website the South East has a majority of White British Citizens at 85.2%, with the remaining 14.8% formed from other ethnicities. At Kreston Reeves we have a majority of White British Citizens at 82.52%, with the remaining 17.48% formed from other ethnicities.

Charitable giving to our office Charities of the Year

The Kreston Reeves Foundation has donated £7,971, excluding gift aid, to our office charities this year, this does not include anything raised for national charities by our people.

Numerous fundraising events held by our dedicated Corporate Social Responsibility team throughout the year has raised money for the following charities:



The benefit of the Kreston Reeves Foundation Gift Aid Registration status meant that an additional £400 could be raised for these charities.

The Kreston Reeves Foundation also provided donations to staff through its Automatic Sponsorship Initiative to our people taking part in a sponsored event. This scheme meant that additional donations of £1,050 were made to a number of charities as chosen by staff.

Altogether we therefore donated £9,421 to charities selected by our staff. Our selective criteria for charitable grants ensure that any raised funds really do make a difference and help those that are in desperate need of the support offered by each charity.

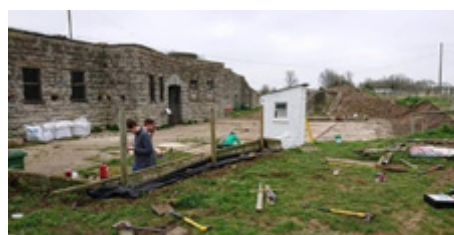


Volunteering initiative

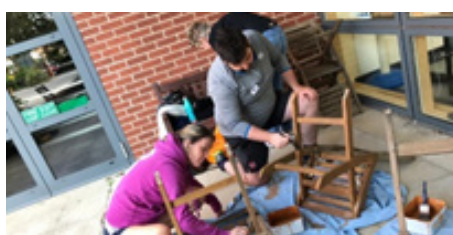
Through the Kreston Reeves Foundation volunteering initiative every member of staff is allowed a paid day (7.5 hours) of volunteering during work hours. During its first year we expect there to be some teething problems and we expected there to be a need for some encouragement to volunteer. As a result, we have set no formal target or anticipated figure for the first year.

We achieved 232.5 hours of volunteering this year, the equivalent of 31 days.

We are very proud of the good work our people have achieved for our local communities. From homeless shelters to animal charities there have been so many worthy hours of volunteering. The photos and quotes below indicate the huge impact that we have had in our local communities.



"It's been an absolute pleasure working with this polite, friendly and dedicated team who have significantly helped with our community restoration programme on this little-known piece of local history and we have received many positive comments from our Trustees and volunteers about the work carried out. We would love to welcome Kreston Reeves back in the future."
Stuart Clack, Trustee at Slough



"I am really pleased the team enjoyed the 2 days and all 11 of you were a pleasure to work alongside, so thank you. I have had really positive feedback about how much better the place looks from both staff and clients which is fantastic. We look forward to working with you and your team in the future".
Amy Thorley, Volunteer Co-ordinator of Turning Tides



"The volunteer groups had a direct impact on the support of our clients..."
Simon Rice, Volunteer Coordinator at Catching Lives

Making Dreams Come True

Another Kreston Reeves Foundation initiative took place during the year with 'Making Dreams Come True'. A team of five of our people who had always had the dream of building a school in an underprivileged country had their dream come true when the Kreston Reeves Foundation made it possible.

The team raised £12,000 and the Kreston Reeves Foundation provided a donation of £6,945 for them to travel to Ghana and help the local community with a variety of tasks including:

- Knocking down and rebuilding a concrete base for a large water harvesting tank for the school in the village of Obom, helping to enable the children to drink and wash their hands.
- Fixing doors and windows around the school.
- Teaching the children Maths and English.
- Playing games with the children at the school such as Connect 4, volleyball and catch.
- Arts and crafts with the children and providing much needed supplies of pens and paper.
- Playing with balloons and singalong.



'Thank you NHS' Campaign

COVID-19 has meant that our NHS heroes have faced a great challenge maintaining services and high standards. They required much needed supplies to help them battle this challenge and so we wanted to show our support for hospitals in our local communities by donating some of those supplies.

We set up three Amazon Wishlists for our people to donate supplies to the doctors, nurses, medical professionals, students, staff and patients at three regional hospitals; Barts Charity in London; East Kent Hospitals Charity; Brighton and Sussex University Hospital NHS Trust.

Thanks to the support of our people we were able to donate £2,205 worth of supplies, this was over 5,700 products.



Total value provided to charities by the KR Foundation

All of the above donations mean that the KR Foundation has provided the value of £18,571 to Charity, an incredibly impressive achievement.

£18,571
value raised for charities

What are our targets for the year ahead?

- Maintain an equally split gender workforce.
- Ensure fair pay regardless of gender.
- Raise £10,000 through the Kreston Reeves Foundation for Charities within our local communities that provide support to those in need.
- Develop our methods for offering volunteering opportunities to staff to increase the number of hours that we are supporting local charities through the Kreston Reeves Foundation.

What other UN SDGs have we met while working towards 'Reduced inequalities'?



04: Climate action

What is it?

Climate Action is the need to take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.



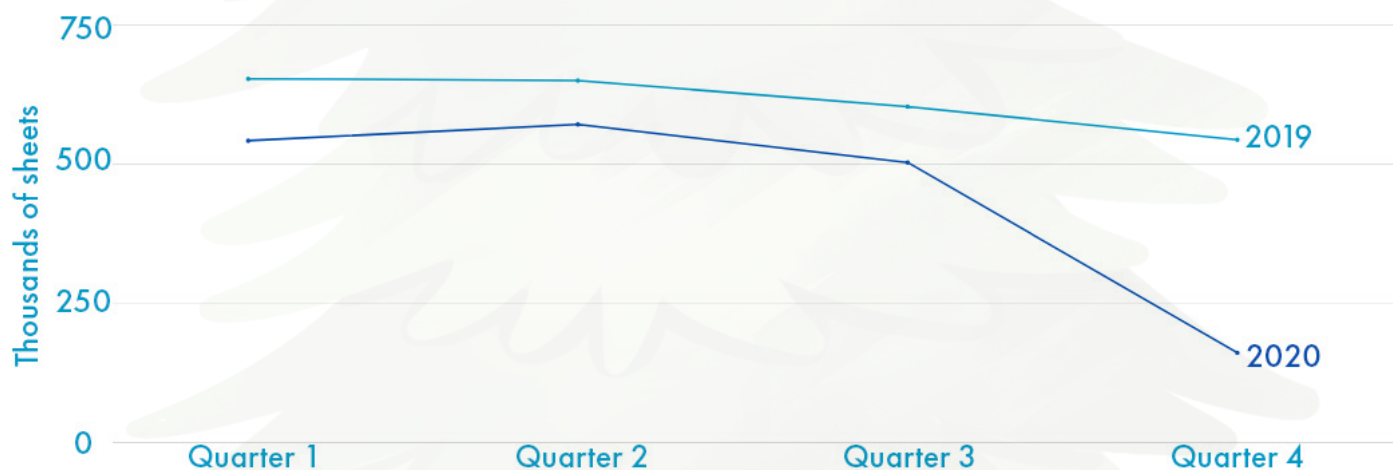
Why do we support this SDG?

We acknowledge that there is a climate emergency. All organisations should have a responsibility to monitor their impact on the environment and act accordingly. As a professional services firm our largest carbon output is caused by our staff, given we do not manufacture anything.

We aspire to be an example to other organisations in this area and also reassure our people that we are aware of the current climate related issues and that we will act to ensure we act to minimise our effect on the environment and remain a profitable organisation.

What have we done?

Paper consumption

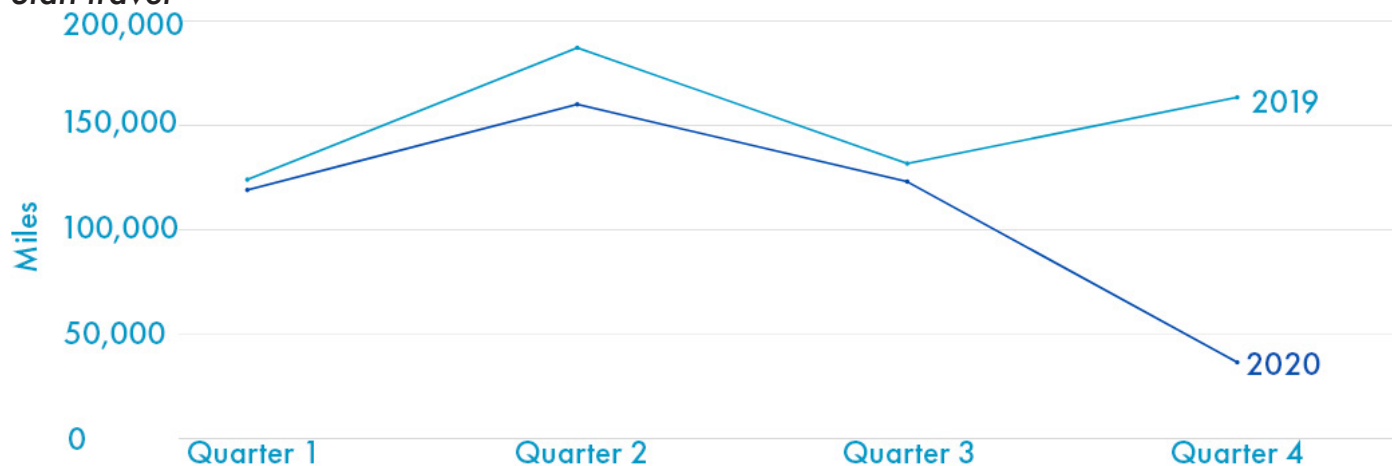


The graph above demonstrates our paper consumption throughout the year. As can be seen the paper consumption has reduced dramatically since the onset of COVID-19. Before then, our results to February 2020 show a moderate reduction in total printing at all offices, however not at the levels we would like. One office is in the process of trialling the implementation of double-sided printing (by default) on all documents as standard with the aim to roll this out across all offices in Summer 2020, whilst encouraging all colleagues to think before printing. In addition, there has been an ongoing drive to enable more paperless working such as encouraging clients to accept scanned accounts/tax returns from ourselves as opposed to a printed copy. We have also been making better use of our online systems for receiving post and for sending out letters on electronic headed paper. As a result, the firm has continued to experience a noticeable reduction in its paper consumption.

Total printed page consumption at year end was 1,776,187 sheets (2019: 2,448,918 sheets). This translates as 22.56 tonnes of CO₂ (2019: 31.1 tonnes of CO₂) or 213 trees (2019: 294 trees).

There is still significant progress to reach our ideal goal of being a fully paperless firm, however we continue to make good progress in this area.

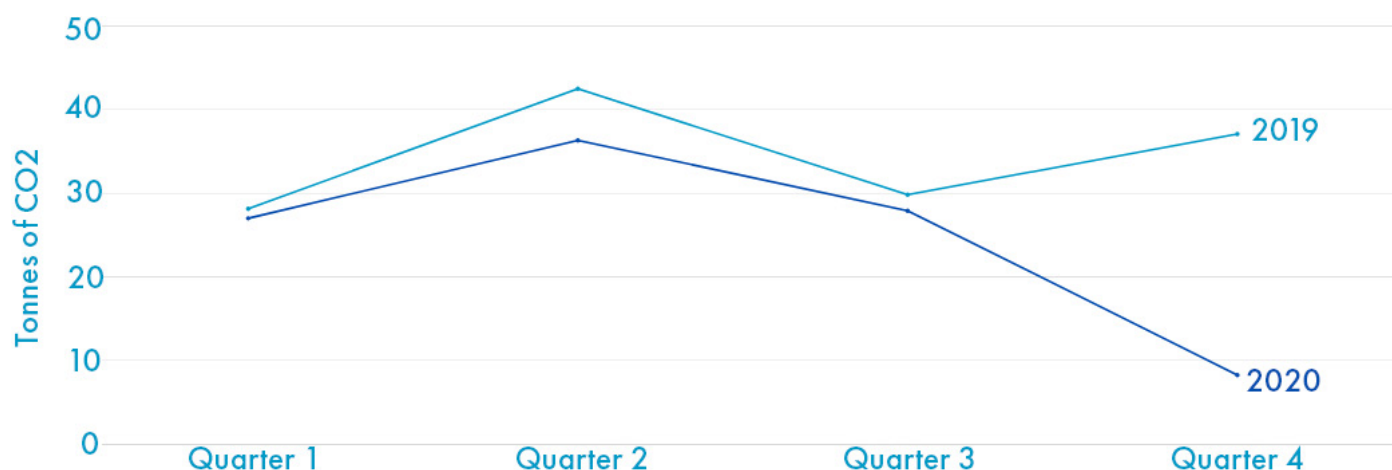
Staff travel



The graph above demonstrates our people's travel mileage throughout the year for mileage performed by private vehicles in excess of their normal daily commute to their office. The graph clearly demonstrates that there was a significant decline in the final quarter, which is due to the impact of COVID-19 with very few travelling at that time. However, prior to the significant reduction we had made some progress to reduce our vehicle travel. This year our people's travel mileage amounted to 415,226 miles (2019: 568,346 miles).

During the year we have implemented a number of methods for our people to use IT to hold meetings rather than driving to meet them. For instance, we introduced Skype for Business, conference phone facilities in our meeting rooms and Microsoft Surface Hubs.

We believe that there is progress still to be made. We will encourage the use of IT systems to communicate without the need for additional travel. We appreciate that the systems were new during the year and naturally there will need to be some time for our people to adapt to the new technology.



The graph above demonstrates the CO2 emissions produced from the additional travel discussed above. This year our carbon emissions from additional staff travel amounted to 117 tonnes (2019: 161 tonnes). It is important to note that this data has been calculated using a figure for the average emissions produced by a UK car as per Statista.

'Our Planet' viewings in office and supporting SESCA with those viewings

During the year we held viewings in each of our offices of WWF's 'Our Planet: Our Business' to raise awareness of the climate emergency and generate some ideas that our people have that, as a firm, we can use to address the climate emergency.

We have also supported SESCA (South East Society of Chartered Accountants) with their showings of the 'Our Planet: Our Business' viewings as they aim to raise awareness across the business community.

Our Green Team

Our 'Green Team' is an informal internal group of staff members who all feel strongly about environmental issues. The Green Team share articles covering this topic, ideas on changes we can each make in the workplace, as well as signposting activities in our local communities that we could get involved in. The motivation behind this is to keep these issues in the forefront of our thinking and to encourage and enable everyone to make whatever lifestyle and behavioural changes that they can. This collective 'grass roots' initiative has naturally evolved from the desire of individuals to find a way to make the working environment as green as it can be, and to make differences on a personal level.

Investor Leadership on climate change

The rapid and growing awareness of climate change, together with the role that the financial sector plays in supporting a transition to a more sustainable economy, are factors that are contributing to a growth in investor demand for products and services that match their own views and preferences.

Our Kreston Reeves Financial Planning team have always offered portfolios to clients, catering for those who wish to hold investments based on ethical or moral principles. An increased public knowledge has led to a far greater uptake of these portfolios together with new solutions which create positive environmental, social and governance impact whilst continuing to meet client's other personal financial objectives.

We have reached a tipping point; where investors place their capital will determine future practices and success of businesses, economies, and governments.

For our Financial Planning team, ethical investment is not just one strategy among many. The change in requirements for companies to report on their ESG impact means that CSR is increasingly present in how they construct and manage investment portfolios and investors are a key part of the solution and are using their capital towards a climate aware future.

We pledge to be a carbon neutral organisation by the end of 2021.



What are our targets for the year ahead?

- a. Reduce paper consumption by 10% by encouraging the use of our paperless systems.
- b. Encourage staff to travel less by encouraging the use of our Surface Hub systems and working from home.
- c. Ensure we recycle as much of our waste as possible.
- d. Remove all single use plastics from our offices.
- e. Begin changing our energy sources to more sustainable suppliers.
- f. Review our current stationery suppliers to ensure we are receiving the best value and carbon efficient stationery.
- g. We pledge to be a carbon neutral organisation by the end of 2021.

What other UN SDGs have we met while working towards 'Climate action'?



Summary of the year ahead

To summarise, we have had a successful year in beginning to meet the four selected SDGs effectively. We are aware that there is still more work to be done to reach our overall goals but believe we have put in place effective strategies to achieve these.

As we respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and adapt our ways of working our people need our support more than ever and we plan to be there to help. We are also aware that other members in our community, such as charities that provide much needed services and are in particular demand right now, still need our support.

We will work to ensure that we still provide help to those in need and maintain an effective Corporate Social Responsibility programme while we continue to develop.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone that has contributed to this year's success and continue to aid us in developing our CSR programme. CSR is a vital part of how our organisation functions and it is as a result of those people within the organisation that continue to give their valuable time that we are able to continue operating an ever improving CSR programme.

Our CSR reps





**Corporate Social
Responsibility**

**Impact Report
2020**