



creative
communications
group

CSR review 2021

Making a **meaningful difference**
to brands, business and people



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CEO's message



Since the launch of our first CSR Charter in February 2020 the world has become a very different place. However, the opportunity and the need to minimise our impact on the environment, be closer to our community and respect the people we work with has never been so great.

As we emerge from a year that has been dominated by COVID-19, sustainability is at the top of our agenda in everything we do, from travel, waste and power, to the way we resource. Gone are the days of 'green washing' and 'tick box' exercises. As an industry we need to see real and tangible actions that will make a positive difference.

For over 13 years, we've been on our sustainability journey, constantly improving our systems and actions. The launch of our first CSR Charter in 2020 saw an acceleration of our commitment and activity. The Charter is directly aligned to the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals which has given us greater focus, direction and purpose.

We set ourselves some ambitious goals for 2020 and, despite the pandemic, we were able to accelerate our activity, achieving a whole series of real and tangible actions that have already made a significant difference, including:

Forming an in-house sustainability action group, tasked with engaging the wider team and driving innovation

Installing 750 solar panels, generating 21,644 kWh of renewable electricity for our main studio complex

Replacing the insulation on the main studio building, drastically reducing heat loss

The planting of 40 trees at our head office site

Achieving zero waste to landfill

Eliminating all single-use plastics at our premises

Installing air ventilation systems, reducing air conditioning usage

Installing motion movement sensors across our offices to control lighting

The completion of 40 community projects

The launch of our 'Equality' campaign to celebrate our team's diversity

We are audited annually by external auditors for our environmental and sustainability certifications **ISO:14001** and **ISO:20121**. Being the first in our industry to gain both these standards, we have once again maintained the highest level of recognition.

This CSR Review 2021 will look at advancing sustainability on the business agenda both internally and externally. The **DRPG** team has a brilliant understanding of sustainability and is integral in driving the CSR agenda. This review provides a snapshot of where we're making positive impacts in our operations, but also highlights where we need to make improvements as we continue to strive for carbon neutrality.

We are committing to more external education and training, assisting our clients to deliver more sustainable communication projects, particularly with live events and exhibitions. We will be addressing misconceptions around costs and quality, looking at ways to improve the supply chain and how everyone involved in a project can take accountability and responsibility.

Our ambition for the next 12 months is to continue the great work the **DRPG** team do and look for new opportunities where we can make a positive and tangible difference to the environment, the community and the people we work and interact with.



Dale
Chief Executive Officer

Our journey so far

The sustainability agenda remained a key focus area in 2020, even more so when the global pandemic hit, creating incredibly challenging times economically, socially and environmentally. As we've all had to adapt to new behaviours and ways of working, the pandemic brought with it opportunities to use a new sustainability management system, to adopt new and innovative approaches to further engage our teams to achieve the objectives set out in our CSR Charter. Our teams have sought innovative ways to adjust and pivot our services, internally and externally, future-proofing a more sustainable business. Here are some examples of how we're accelerating our efforts:



Communications and creative

We have continued to challenge our clients to not only push the boundaries of their business objectives but we work collaboratively with them to look at how communication solutions can positively impact audiences for the better, creating more meaningful experiences that align with their own sustainability goals, really putting their brand at the heart of their messaging and harnessing the power of creative communications to amplify positive change.



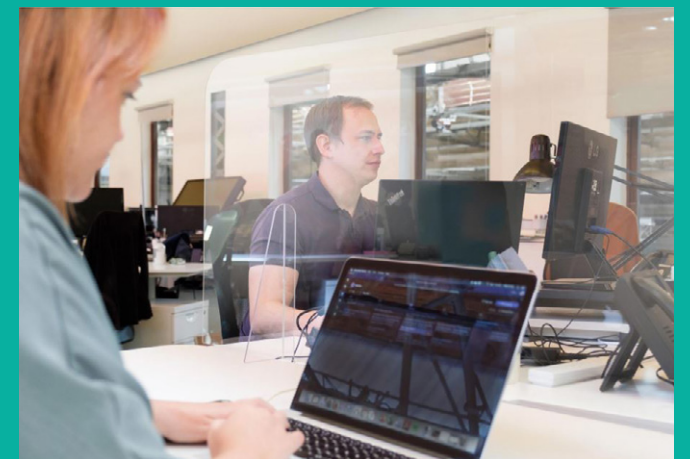
Events

Traditional, live, face-to-face events had to be transformed seemingly overnight, as the uncertain nature of the pandemic shut down the hospitality industry for a prolonged and, at the time, indefinite period. **DRPG's** stability comes from the continual investment in technology and infrastructure, allowing our live division to pivot to virtual events and alternative communication solutions that safeguarded our team and clients, while significantly reducing the carbon footprint and emissions for both us and them.



Digital

Our Digital team has helped to keep **DRPG** at the forefront of technological innovation and sustainable solutions by pushing the boundaries of our digital capabilities. As the comms world pivoted and relied on the power of digital, our teams were able to fast-track their innovations to create cutting-edge platforms and bespoke experiences that elevated solutions for clients that otherwise may not have been realised.



Tech, print and construction

Responding to the shortages experienced by frontline workers, our teams redeployed resources and materials to produce personal protective equipment (PPE); protective Perspex shields for office use; health and safety signage and wayfinding, including introducing a one-way traffic system at our HQ; and the creation of a dedicated COVID-testing site. Training team members with the help of BHA Medical and H&S specialists Alan Law Associates, we are now delivering antigen rapid testing to clients, colleagues and suppliers, playing our part to reduce the transmission of Coronavirus.



Our journey so far (Cont'd)



Operationally at our main headquarters, we've been able to **reduce water consumption by 15%** from January to December 2020, also **reducing our electricity consumption by 31%** (while generating solar energy) within the same period, down by 15% on the previous year. While we recognise this may start to increase as the team return to the office, we will continue to monitor and increase our efforts to reduce consumption where possible, keeping positive lockdown behaviours to reduce our environmental footprint.

We have continued to progress and increase our participation in CSR initiatives, with teams from all divisions across the Group taking part in innovative challenges, fundraisers, foodbank donations and pro bono activities to give back to our communities in their most pressing hour of need.





Our progress

We achieved an excellent outcome at our annual audit for **ISO 20121** and **ISO 14001** and we were extremely proud to have been awarded the Platinum status by Investors in People.



Thanks to the effort of our teams and the cooperation and collaboration of our clients and suppliers, we achieved an excellent outcome at our annual audit for **ISO 20121** and **ISO 14001**, the event sustainability and environmental standards. In 2020, we were extremely proud to have been awarded the Platinum status by Investors in People.

Platinum status means principles, policies and practices around supporting people are embedded in every corner of our organisation. It is a highly prestigious accolade, with only 2% of the 50,000 companies assessed throughout Investors in People's history awarded the Platinum status. Approximately 70 companies were awarded this status in 2020. This is testament to team engagement, with our sustainable and CSR initiatives highly commended by the accreditors.

"Everybody spoke with enthusiasm about how they were both inspired and motivated by managers and their colleagues to deliver services that “pleasantly and constantly surprise clients”. This even extends to the way you support CSR activities where you have supported charities in delivering events that are as well-executed as your commercial projects."

Investors in People assessor

Collaboration on sustainability issues is key, and **DRPG** is actively involved in the conversations and initiatives to accelerate the industry's transition to a sustainable future, such as *isla* and *One Industry One Voice*.



2020 provided a baseline for measuring our progress against our objectives outlined in our CSR Charter. We've monitored progress against these to provide a snapshot of where we're making an impact, areas for improvement, and what opportunities have arisen. A 2019 baseline is provided where no other data is available to benchmark.

Supporting Team Members & Wellbeing

Objective	Measuring Progress	Progress
Attract and retain talent by offering career progression opportunities, leadership and development programmes	Number and percentage of Team Members receiving training	95 team members on average received training per month (27% of entire team). Our L&D strategy is to fuel a culture of learning and we are revitalising our Academy to reflect this
	Number of training hours delivered	267.5 hours delivered Down 68% on 2019. We recognise this may be affected by factors such as screen fatigue, homeschooling and work demands, thus are adapting our Academy to improve uptake
Develop and implement initiatives that promote mental wellbeing, prevent mental disorders, and provide access to quality mental health services	Turnover rate (%)	Reduced by 33% from 2019. Protecting our team is a priority, and we have been fortunate to redeploy members to different areas of the business during the pandemic to protect jobs
	Absenteeism (%)	-% Data is skewed from current company systems and the pandemic has made it difficult to track absenteeism. The HR system is currently being reviewed and upgraded to accommodate this
Supporting equal opportunities and initiatives	Number of initiatives supported	4 New baseline for 2020

Our progress (Cont'd)

Topic

Promoting Responsible Procurement

Objective	Measuring Progress	Progress
	Number and percentage of supplier contracts with a CSR clause on environmental and/or social practices	<div>-%</div> <div>We've been fortunate to keep resources inhouse with little to no external supplier outsourcing due to the pandemic, providing savings and reducing impacts</div>
Integrate CSR clauses in suppliers' contracts and CSR criteria in invitations to tender (including venues)	Number and percentage of suppliers sourced within 50 miles of the office location	<div>31.5%</div> <div>We are looking at ways to improve this and encourage local economic sustainability</div>
	Number and percentage of suppliers sourced within 50 miles of the event location	<div>-%</div> <div>No data due to indefinite postponement of events. This will resume as events return</div>
Work in partnership with suppliers to improve CSR performance (including venues)	Number and percentage of suppliers engaged in CSR performance improvement initiatives and the results	<div>-%</div> <div>No data due to limited outsourcing in 2020. We are working on improving data collection</div>
Create a database of responsible suppliers and develop a mechanism to enable centralised procurement of services and products	Number and percentage of suppliers integrated into database	<div>-%</div> <div>Work in progress. Priority lowered due to pandemic, this will be re-evaluated</div>
Maintain our responsible supplier conduct to clients and other stakeholders	Number of certifications achieved and maintained by DRPG	<div>3</div> <div>Maintained the highest standard of recognition available</div>

Topic

Collaborate for Positive Change

Objective	Measuring Progress	Progress
Promote team engagement through leadership initiation of a self-managed CSR programme	Number and percentage of team members that have implemented a CSR objective and results achieved	<div>40 initiatives achieved</div> <div>Data is skewed due to teams not being able to implement programmes and is work in progress</div>
Implement tools and collaborative techniques to engage clients and team members in sustainable development issues	Monitoring of initiatives dedicated to positive change in social and/or environmental behaviours	<div>76% engagement</div> <div>of team members proactively engaging with our inhouse sustainability comms and we proactively include CSR in our events such as DRPGBIGtalk</div>
	Number and percentage of clients engaged in sustainable development issues	<div>-%</div> <div>Work in progress. Postponed due to pandemic and other business priorities. This will be re-evaluated however we have actively involved clients in sustainable themes</div>
Utilise our creative communications skills to mobilise and amplify positive change	Number of projects related to CSR issues	<div>18</div> <div>We will evaluate increasing this to match a proportion of the projects undertaken each year</div>
	Number of industry-wide CSR initiatives supported and their results	<div>2</div> <div>As the industry emerges from the pandemic, we'll proactively look to support more initiatives</div>
Become a leader in sustainable development and work in partnership with the wider industry to mobilise positive change	Number of CSR awards entered and won	<div>13</div> <div>This accounts for 9% of our total annual awards submissions for the various projects we undertake</div>
	Number of external communications initiatives with a CSR theme	<div>168</div> <div>This accounts for 19% of all media coverage gained</div>

Our progress (Cont'd)

Topic

Promoting Values and Ethics

Objective	Measuring Progress	Progress
Train our team on sustainable development issues and responsible communications	Number and percentage of employees that have received training in sustainable development issues and responsible communications	5% on sustainable training 76% for engaging with sustainability comms
Ensuring the highest level of data confidentiality and information security is upheld	Maintenance of certification ISO 27001	Maintained Certified since 2016, recertified in 2020 with an annual compliance audit
	Number and percentage of training courses offered on data and information security	100% with an additional 28 people from Aug-Dec 2020

Topic

Achieving Sustainable Growth

Objective	Measuring Progress	Progress
	Number of DRPG entities included within CSR Charter reporting	3 We are working with acquired brands to include them in Group activities
Increase size of the CSR network	Number of DRPG entities who have achieved certification	Limited to headquarters We are working to define the scope of including acquired brands as part of Group activities

Topic

Reducing our Environmental Footprint

Objective	Measuring Progress	Progress
Lower CO2e emissions in line with science-based targets and commit to net zero carbon by 2030 and carbon negative by 2050	CO2e emissions in total and per person as measured against science-based targets from a target base-year	94,294.28 kgCO2e/kWh Averaging 248.14 kgCO2e/kWh per person, a reduction of 44% from 2019. Data limited to electricity consumption, however will roll out the scope of carbon reporting with specific reductions in line with science-based targets, and ultimately targeting net zero
Reduce consumption of office paper per person over the period 2020 - 2025	Tonnes of paper consumed and kg of paper consumption per person	393.6kg Averaging 1.02kg per person, a reduction of 92% from 2019. We recognise that not every team member consumes paper as part of their role thus will look at how we can continue to minimise use
Use of 100% paper from recycled fibres or chain-of custody certified (from post-consumer waste) or chain of-custody certified (FSC preferable, PEFC acceptable)	Percentage of use of 100% recycled paper	100% We will continue to ensure all paper is 100% FSC certified
Use of 100% chain-of-custody certified timber (FSC preferable, PEFC acceptable)	Percentage of use of 100% chain-of-custody certified timber	100% We will continue to ensure all timber is 100% FSC certified
Reduce volume of waste per person and achieve zero waste to landfill over the period 2020 -2025	Tonnes of waste generated and kg of waste per person	74.66 tonnes averaging 196.47kg per person, a reduction of 39% from 2019. We recognise waste generation is not part of every role thus will look at how we can continue to reduce this
	Percentage of waste diverted from landfill	100%
Eliminate single-use-plastic from our offices and events. Definition: plastic that is used only once for a short period of time (i.e. one week), including bio-plastic	Number of items of single-use plastic used in our offices and on our events	0

The journey ahead

We recognise that there is still more to do and being transparent in our progress helps on our journey to becoming a net zero carbon company by 2030. With the continued support and consultation of Syntiro Associates, our sustainability partner, we aim to join the growing list of Certified B Corporations meeting the highest standards of verified social and environmental performance, public transparency and legal accountability to balance profit and purpose. In addition, we have ambition to be part of the United Nation's Global Compact list of company signatories committed to achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

The next 12 months

We will continue to reduce negative environmental impacts, particularly at our headquarters. This includes taking full advantage of renewable energy, harvesting rainwater, and protecting biodiversity in our immediate surroundings by continuing to plant and nurture nature. We'll also keep and encourage positive lockdown behaviours where possible, including maintaining a hybrid model of working and comms which is part of the service we offer clients to maximise effectiveness and ROI.

At our Windsor Studios, we will be undertaking a feasibility assessment to switch to renewable energy, eliminate the single-use plastics and strive to achieve zero waste to landfill. As we bring our family of brands together, we are looking to achieve similar with our Central London production facilities.

Departmentally, setting sustainability targets remain part of the agenda. For example, our media division has the largest power consumption among the team due to the nature of its work thus will have targets to reduce or offset its emissions to contribute to the wider goal of becoming a net zero carbon company. Our print division has started to implement sourcing alternative materials to Foamex and vinyl, eventually eradicating the use of these. Our team in construction continue to sustain progress in our commitment to reduce, reuse and recycle, only using FSC certified timber. We've limited the use of carpet due to the postponement of live events, allowing us to continue looking at alternative solutions. As hospitality begins to reopen, teams are tasked to continue sourcing locally where possible, helping us to achieve objectives for promoting responsible procurement.

Lastly, we continue to educate our clients on sustainable communication solutions through our work, encouraging them to look at how campaigns and projects can link back to their own organisational sustainability goals, further embracing hybrid models for events and remote working to lower carbon emissions through the reduction of transportation and commuting. As reward and recognition picks up and incentives return as part of those discussions, there is a huge opportunity for clients to contribute to their own community investment strategies by embedding activities within their programmes. These small actions contribute to positive behaviour change and working together, collaboratively, we can all make a meaningful difference.

Contributors

This review was made possible thanks to the continued support and consultation of Sam Wilson, MD at **Syntiro Associates** who partnered with **DRPG** on its sustainability journey over 13 years ago. The smallest actions do make the biggest difference and we extend our thanks to our in-house Sustainability team for their interventions and the wider **DRPG** team for continuing to put CSR and sustainability at the heart of our business.

We welcome your views on our efforts or thoughts on how we can improve our sustainability journey. **Please email:** sustainability@drpgroup.com



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GROSVENORCOMMS

hmlx

FIREHOUSE



0844 682 5989 | anythingspossible@drpgroup.com | drpgroup.com