

A pair of hands is shown holding a small, vibrant green plant with several leaves, growing out of a mound of dark, rich soil. The hands are positioned to support the plant from below and the sides. The background is a dark, textured surface of soil. The image is framed by a red and white geometric design in the corners.

Co/ownership

**CORPORATE SOCIAL
RESPONSIBILITY
2022**

Co/ownership

Our CSR activities continued in 2022 with a particular focus on net zero and considering how as an organisation we can reduce our carbon emissions. We completed our submission for Business in the Community Core accreditation and were successfully reaccredited. Yet again, our staff rose to the occasion and delivered a fantastic fundraising total for our chosen charity, achieved through various events which saw good staff participation. Congratulations to all staff on this achievement.

The ongoing commitment to our CSR projects during the last 12 months has been a great achievement whilst at the same time we have continued to deliver our services as normal. We continue to base our activities around 3 key areas:

- **Environment** – reducing the impact of our operations on the environment through encouraging behaviours and introducing initiatives that minimise waste and maximise efficiency.
- **Workplace** – building on our existing activities that support equality of opportunity and diversity both in our dealings with clients and stakeholders and also across the organisation.
- **Community** – encouraging and supporting our staff in volunteering and fundraising opportunities and reaching out to the wider community.

Environment

Our aim is to embed environmentally ethical behaviour into our culture and workforce, and we have done this through the following;

- Our recycling practices are well established, and staff are encouraged to continue to recycle materials such as paper, cardboard, cans and plastic, to further reduce the amount of waste we send to landfill each year. A staff session facilitated by Belfast City Council reiterated the importance of recycling and minimising food waste. This was a great success and we saw an increase in our recycling after the event.
- Saved 45 trees by recycling 2625 kgs of paper through our confidential waste. A reporting dashboard has been developed and this is being used to monitor and track our recycling and energy usage.



Windowsill propagators for the office

environment continued...

- Took part in Business in the Community Environmental Benchmarking Survey in 2022 and achieved Bronze status. This process continues to provide a good opportunity to assess the environmental practices we currently have in place and look at how we can improve on this.
- Established a working group to develop our thinking and take forward actions on reducing our carbon emissions. This was supported by the Board who met for a strategy session on net zero.
- We continue to encourage biodiversity where we can, and our Gardening and Wildlife group continued to meet throughout the year, providing a forum for participants to share ideas on attracting wildlife into the garden along with gardening tips. Windowsill propagators were trialled and provided staff with peas, broad beans, radishes and beetroot seedlings to take home as part of a “Grow Your Own” trial. We also successfully grew and gave away to staff a number of tomato plants.
- On completion of their purchase, new Co-Ownership customers now receive a congratulations card containing a packet of seeds to grow in their new home, which helps to promote the importance of biodiversity externally.
- Demonstrating our commitment to net zero, carbon literacy training was undertaken by key staff and further training on energy efficiency is planned.

Workplace

- Our governance framework and policies are reviewed regularly for good practice in terms of meeting the needs of our various stakeholders.
- Our Equality Team continued their work internally with the Annual Progress Report submitted to the Equality Commission in August 2022.
- Staff were offered a comprehensive health and wellbeing programme which was tailored specifically around their needs during the pandemic and lockdowns.
- We continued to contribute to consultations on strategy and legislation in the housing arena.



Mary Brady from Belfast City Council presenting a session on recycling and food waste

Workplace continued...

- The Equality Commission of Northern Ireland (ECNI) accepted our 3 year review and update of our Disability Action Plan review on 6th April 2022. We received notification from ECNI on 13th September 2022, that our 5 year review of the Equality Scheme was accepted and our Annual Progress Report was accepted on 12th October 2022 and the Commission made particular reference to the work completed on the development of the Over 55's product.
- The business development team continued their outreach and have attended events throughout all of Northern Ireland, free of charge.

Community

- Our fundraising efforts continued, and we presented a cheque to the Alzheimer's Society for £4129.17 in May. Following staff consultation, staff voted to support NI Chest, Heart and Stroke and we have held a number of fundraising events including staff taking part in the Belfast half marathon, raffles, a Halloween 'spooky' lunch and coffee mornings.
- Once again, our staff supported the Barnardo's Bereavement Service Christmas Gift Appeal. The staff response to the appeal always exceeds expectations and in 2022 we were able to support 25 families with Christmas gifts.
- Our annual Community Fund helped support 4 organisations with their chosen projects which ranged from gardening initiatives, supporting community clubs and local foodbanks.
- Along with all our fundraising activities which support the wider community, all staff are encouraged to partake in volunteering and are supported with 1 day's volunteering per annum. We have 15 staff members who volunteer with the AgeNI Check in and Chat initiative. This involves a ½ hour phone call to an older person who may be feeling lonely or isolated. We began taking part in this over the period of lockdowns when the need was great, and our staff have continued to volunteer in this initiative.
- Once again, we were proud to support the Mela Festival in Belfast and became a 'Friend of Mela' for the August celebrations.
- ReachDeck was introduced onto our website to replace Browsealoud. This ensures content is clear, simple, and concise and provides speech reading and translation support tools to improve accessibility.



Barnardo's Christmas Gift Appeal



Winners of the 2022 Community Fund

co- owner ship. org

Moneda House
25-27 Wellington Place
Belfast, BT1 6GD

Call 028 9032 7276
Textphone 18001 028 9032 7276
hello@co-ownership.org

