

Ofgem Customer Service Reward Scheme

Corporate Social Responsibility

A Helping Hand for Communities

Our Community Support Policy aims to identify areas where business issues link to social issues, and for us to work in partnership with regional organisations and local community groups to deliver a wide range of projects. Our key themes are:

- Education
- Safety
- Environment

We encourage the involvement of our local communities and staff in putting forward initiatives that go beyond our core business needs.

In 2009/10 we supported initiatives that:

- Bring opportunity to young people.
- Help older people feel safe.
- Support those with life threatening illnesses.
- Promote sustainable living.

Opportunities for Young People

NEW Employability Skills

The innovative Education Business Partnership 'World of Work' Programme in South Wales gives 11-14 year olds an insight into industry and helps them to develop the skills and confidence needed by employers. It covers 19 secondary and 4 special schools in the disadvantaged areas of Bridgend, Merthyr and Rhondda Valleys. We are working with other local employers work and schools to raise students' achievement levels by developing employability skills. The aim was to show the young people what it would be like working for WPD and give them motivation and confidence for their future.

RESULT In 2009 our Contact Centre organised visits for over seventy 11-14 year olds. Further sessions are taking place in 2010.

BENEFIT Showing young people what it would be like working for WPD and give them motivation and confidence for their future.

NEW Theatre Participation

The National Theatre of Wales (NTW) was founded in 2009 with the aims of providing access to the theatre to new audiences by creating shows and events for local communities in South Wales. The first production "A Good Night Out" was developed through workshops in schools and community centres. Local people were invited to take part and their experiences used to develop the plot. The NTW also ran residency days where people could meet the cast.

RESULT The play was then performed in five valley towns in 2010.

BENEFIT Bringing opportunities to participate in a theatre production targeted at young people in disadvantaged communities.

We also helped bring theatre to disadvantaged community groups in West Wales by funding a scheme to provide 120 free tickets to the Carmarthen Youth Opera's production of South Pacific.

UPDATE Hi-jinx Theatre Project Last year we helped 8 young people with learning disabilities to qualify as drama workshop assistants and find work in local community groups. For 2010 we are funding further opportunities for these graduates to work in local primary schools running theatre based workshops. This will again involve our Contact Centre staff in regular sessions to enable the graduates to develop their skills.

BENEFIT Providing opportunities to people with learning disabilities and to provide a positive image of them to our staff and the wider community.

UPDATE Apprentices

Each year we recruit around 35 apprentices. "Apprentice Challenge"; a community based project, forms part of their induction training.

RESULT Over the last 10 years projects have improved amenities at local special schools, in communities and National Parks, including the 2009 project to improve visitor access on the Brecon Beacons.

BENEFIT Showing our apprentices our commitment to the community.

ONGOING Youth Sports

Many of our staff are involved in youth sports, as parents and coaches.

RESULT We provide new kit for around 25 teams each year.

BENEFIT This provides healthy opportunities for youngsters across our community.

UPDATE Personal Safety

We have a responsibility to protect the public from the potential hazards of our equipment. We work with young people in disadvantaged areas to reduce equipment vandalism and keep them safe.

RESULT Our Community Safety Adviser continued to work with schools and the emergency services, promoting safety messages to over 40,000 children last year.

We also helped raise awareness of Avon & Somerset Police's CraniumCaviar.com website. This contains lots of useful information on personal safety for young people with the aim of keeping them out of trouble.

BENEFIT Keeping young people safe and reducing vandalism to our equipment.

Helping Older People Feel Safer

UPDATE We work in partnership with the police and local councils on projects helping older people feel safer in their own homes.

The Elder Aware Scheme is a WPD funded scheme in Somerset which provides informal coffee mornings where elderly residents are given practical advice on protecting property, bogus callers and personal safety. We also provide goody bags with a timer switch, personal alarm and advice leaflets.

RESULT We have supported the scheme for 3 years, helping over 1,000 vulnerable elderly people.

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Corporate Social Responsibility

UPDATE Safety Equipment We have donated around £10,000 worth of security lighting, intercoms and personal alarms to projects across the region including Care and Repair Torfaen, the Dolphin Society in Bristol and the Neath Port Talbot Feelsafe Scheme.

NEW Safety Handbook We sponsored a Gwent Council handbook, launched by the Older People's Commissioner for Wales, Ruth Marks MBE. This gives advice on health, independence and safety and was distributed to 15,000 older people in South Wales.

BENEFIT These initiatives are aimed at helping vulnerable elderly people to feel safer in their own homes.

Promoting Sustainable Living

UPDATE "Keen to be green" is our programme funding a wide range of community projects aimed at protecting wildlife habitat, recycling, reducing waste and conserving energy. Tree planting is an integral part and we work with established organisations such as the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV) and The Silvanus Trust. We have worked with them for over 15 years.

We encourage staff, schools and community groups to tell us about their ideas for projects through competitions and via our website.

We provide children with hands-on experience of sustainable living by donating resources such as trees, recycling bins and nesting boxes. We have also supported a number of Forest Schools in the South West, and some schools vegetable growing projects.

Some of the projects have helped community groups to develop allotments and neglected land for the benefit of local people.

Others have provided hi-visibility jackets for children at schools wanting to adopt a walking bus initiative for their pupils. This promotes health and fitness for the children but also reduces the environmental impact as there are fewer cars on the road.

In West Wales, we are working with farmers on a project to introduce barn owl boxes in key areas to help monitor the owls and improve their nesting sites.

RESULT In 2009/10 we donated over £16,000 to a range of projects including planting around 10,000 trees and shrubs.

BENEFIT Our programme promotes sustainable living and healthy outdoor activities to children and the local community. It also enhances the national

curriculum by helping schools to achieve the green flag as part of the government's Eco Schools Programme.

NEW Big Bristol Habitat Hunt is a unique project being developed in partnership with Avon Wildlife Trust (AWT). The aim is for primary schools across Bristol to participate in a survey of the wildlife living in the school grounds. AWT have put together a colourful survey pack with teacher notes. We are sponsoring a competition to win £1000 to help schools develop their grounds for the benefit of wildlife and provide a natural learning environment.

BENEFIT The results of the survey will feed into the Bristol Biodiversity Action Plan and influence the future management of school grounds for wildlife. Schools can also use this in the Eco Schools evaluation.

NEW Our Staff As well as engaging with the wider community we also look at creative ways to involve our staff through competitions aimed at reducing waste and saving energy at home.

In Cornwall staff supported the "Clean Cornwall" campaign by distributing brown paper bags to colleagues in a county wide initiative raising awareness of the impact of litter.

Staff found environmentally friendly solutions to dispose of unwanted furniture and carpets following recent office reorganisations. Carpet was donated to Resurgem, which operates a tile re-entry scheme by cleaning the tiles and donating them to charities. A member of staff also gave some carpet tiles to his children's toddlers group. Furniture was collected by a social enterprise in Abergavenny that recycles furniture at affordable prices to local people.

BENEFIT Reducing waste going to landfill and providing low cost carpet and furniture to charities and individuals.

Supporting those with Life Threatening Illness

The affects of life threatening illness touches the lives of many in our communities, including our own staff. We have funded a range of health related initiatives championed by staff.

The annual WPD Hospice Heights Challenge raised over £50,000 for St David's Hospice in South Wales. Teams scale three mountain peaks in a single day. We sponsored Ty Hafan Children's Hospice' "Santa Runs" in South Wales. Each involved around 500 runners and raised over £30,000. WPD also provided glow-in-the-dark safety wristbands for the hospice's "Midnight Sleep Walk".

Our Charitable Trust supports charities and community groups. This includes our £for£ scheme that helps the fantastic fundraising efforts of many of our staff who take part in cake sales, sponsored walks, runs, mountain climbs, bike rides and parachute jumps for good causes. This year many of the events supported care for those affected by life threatening illness. Here are some examples.

- Breast Cancer Care Headstrong campaign.
- Welsh Dragons Burns Club.
- Ty Hafan Children's Hospice.
- British Heart Foundation Cardiff - £2,000 raised by Contact Centre staff.
- Help for Heroes.
- FORCE Devon Cancer Charity, Great West Run.
- Weston Hospice Care – Mecury Mendip Challenge.
- Dorset & Somerset Air Ambulance cycle ride.
- Prostrate Cancer skydive.

We are also long term fund raisers for St Peter's Hospice in Bristol and the Forever Friends Appeal of the Bath Royal United Hospital Neonatal Unit.

BENEFIT Helping charities to raise funds by organising major local events and getting staff and the community involved in healthy outdoor activity

Led by one of our Contact Centre supervisors who also volunteers as the local press officer, we have a partnership with the British Heart Foundation (BHF). As well as regular staff fund raising, we co-funded four life saving defibrillators for SARA the search and rescue service for the river Severn, the largest volunteer boat service in the UK after the RNLI. We also co-funded a defibrillator for the Welsh Ambulance First Responder Team in Brynmawr.

BENEFIT The chances of surviving a heart attack falls by 14% every minute. Early response within four to five minutes is vital.

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Supporting Information

World of Work

"I was asked to develop a programme highlighting the sort of disciplines and qualifications youngsters would need to join an organisation like WPD. Together with my team we gave a short presentation to the children, let them sit in and listen to calls and explained to them the many different roles within the company. We ended with a question and answer session. We are now hoping to develop our involvement further by setting up some mock interviews which we hope will boost their confidence further." **Chris Griffiths, WPD Contact Centre Manager.**



Our Award for providing employability skills and confidence to disadvantaged young people.

Helping Community Allotments

Our "keen to be green" programme has helped some community allotment projects. One involved local volunteers who restored a neglected patch in South Wales with the aim of encouraging young people involved in anti-social behaviour or with mental health issues to learn about gardening as a new activity. This project was supported as part of the BTCV's "Green Gym" programme. This is designed to help people to get fit gently, and improve confidence and social skills, especially those recovering from physical trauma or mental health problems.



"In my crew are single mums, unemployed couples, one gentleman who is a carer to his disabled wife and one lady recovering from a major stroke. And they are headed up by one middle-aged eccentric! It's an explosive mix!"
Byran Browne, Project Leader.

Elder Aware

This year the initiative targeted hard to reach ethnic minority groups, forging links with Bath's Chinese and Asian Communities.

In another area, following an increase in complaints about noise and disturbance, elderly residents were invited for coffee with students at the local school. These community meetings helped the young people and the elderly residents understand each other better, reducing the fear of crime.



Supporting the elderly so they don't become victims of crime and alerting them to the pitfalls of dealing with doorstep callers.

Support from Community Partners

"With the support of WPD we have successfully introduced Elder Aware across Bath and it has contributed to bringing down crime affecting older people." **"Feedback from those who have attended shows that they were well received and people feel more confident and reassured, and helped by the items in the [WPD] goody bags."** **Beth Shire, Crime Reduction Advisor, Avon & Somerset Police.**

Providing Vital Medical Equipment



WPD and its staff in Bristol are supporters of St Peter's Hospice for adults. In November 2009 the efforts of staff and a donation from WPD funded an IV pump.

"It is a vital piece of equipment which we needed desperately to enable us to provide the highest level of care to our patients, so we are so grateful to WPD who funded it"
Sian Rees, St Peter's Hospice.