

BITC 40TH ANNIVERSARY PARTNER CASE STUDY



BARCLAYS BANK

SUMMARY

Barclays has a long-standing commitment to the communities it serves. This has been at its core throughout its more than 300-year history.

As a founder member of Business in the Community (BITC), the bank brought this same commitment to its partnership with BITC and the wider responsible business network, through tangible action, initially by providing a significant number of secondees, both to BITC itself and BITC’s network of Local Enterprise Agencies during the 1980s.

In the time since, Barclays’ contribution to society has remained core in its work, both with BITC and more widely; including evolving into its current LifeSkills and Thriving Local Communities programmes, both of which BITC has supported as a delivery partner.

At the same time, its approach to responsible business has widened to consider many aspects of good corporate citizenship, from diversity and inclusion to the environment. Barclays continues as a leader in many of these areas, being one of the first banks to sign BITC’s Race at Work Charter and to announce its net zero ambitions.

BARCLAYS BANK – TIMELINE

- 1982

Barclays is one of the founding members of Business in the Community. A senior Barclays colleague seconded to the BITC management team
- 1984

Barclays publishes ‘Barclays in the Community’ report, setting out the bank’s approach to supporting communities
- 1986

Barclays launches its first community project, ‘Barclays Youth Action’ and becomes one of the founding members of the Per Cent Club
- 1987

Barclays Chairman becomes BITC’s Honorary Treasurer
- 1988

Barclays creates the Community Enterprise Unit, bringing together all of its community involvement activities into one team for the first time
- 1991

Barclays publishes its first strategy on the environment
- 1996

Barclays announces its Community Support Guidelines to help local communities, prioritising education, training, and economic regeneration
- 1999

Barclays publishes separate Social and Environmental reviews for the first time and appoints its first directors for Equality, Diversity and Environment
- 2000

Barclays publishes its first combined social and environmental report
- 2001

BITC launches ‘Ready for Work’ with Barclays as a key supporter and core funder
- 2002

Barclays’ annual report includes a CSR chapter for the first time, and it adopts the ‘workplace, marketplace, environment, community’ structure
- 2007

Barclays attends the Mayday Summit and signs the Mayday Pledge

- 2010

Barclays CEO is appointed a Prince’s Ambassador
- 2012

Barclays launches the Social Innovation Facility, an internal incubator of colleague ideas for financial products and services that tackle social challenges
- 2013

Barclays launches LifeSkills, setting an initial ambition to help 10 million people to develop skills needed to succeed at work
- 2014

Barclays takes part in the BITC Race for Opportunity Awards
- 2015

Barclays is part of the BITC Workwell Public Reporting Benchmark
- 2016

Barclays publishes its first Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) report and launches Unreasonable Impact, a partnership with Unreasonable supporting high growth entrepreneurs to tackle environmental and societal issues
- 2017

Barclays is listed as a Best Employer for Race by BITC for the first time and was a Race Equality Awards finalist for BITC’s apprenticeship programme
- 2018

Barclays is one of the first signatories of the UK’s Race at Work Charter and joins the BITC cross-organisational mentoring programme
- 2019

Barclays sponsors BITC’s Developing Resilience Award and extends its LifeSkills target to place 250,000 into work by 2022. Barclays voluntarily publishes its first ethnicity pay gap and continues to do so
- 2020

Barclays launches its Race at Work Action Plan, committing the bank to hiring, promoting and creating a culture of allyship for Black employees and being transparent about its ambitions. Alongside this, it announces its ambition to be a net zero bank by 2050
- 2021

Barclays integrates ESG reporting into its Annual Report, and opens a new operations and technology campus in Glasgow as part of its approach to building Thriving Local Economies. Barclays sets out its Race at Work ambitions, measurable outcomes against which it will assess the progress to close representation gaps

HERITAGE AND HISTORY

The ‘determination to be socially responsible in all our work wherever we operate’¹ was expressed by Barclays’ chairman in the 1984 annual report and aligned with the Quaker values and virtues of the bank’s founding families. Barclays’ heritage can be traced back more than 300 years to the goldsmith bankers and Quakers, John Freame and Thomas Gould, trading on Lombard Street in 1690. Freame’s son Joseph took his brother-in-law, James Barclay, on as a partner in 1736 – the latter’s legacy surviving in the bank’s name ever since.

Both Freame, Gould and generations of Barclays were active in Quaker society – blending family, religious and business ties. Barclays and Co was formed as a limited company in 1896, when the London-based partnership of ‘Barclay, Bevan, Bening and Tritton’ merged with several regional banks. The group grew rapidly through acquisitions to establish its presence across the UK. By 1920, it had become one of the ‘Big Five’ clearing banks with national coverage. In 1925 it had expanded overseas into Africa and then to India by the late 1930s.

During the 1920s and 1930s, Barclays ran social and sporting clubs for colleagues, and branch managers were fully embedded in local communities, typified by the manager of the Brackley branch, HA Robottom. He retired in 1952 after 20 years in the role, having also served as local secretary for King George VI’s jubilee and coronation funds; as a school governor; and sat on the committees of local organisations from the Swimming Baths, Cricket Club and Bowling Club to the local Food Control Committee, the Conservative Association and Brackley Pig Club².

Following the Second World War, commercial viability drove a desire to innovate, stay ahead of the competition and attract a new class of customer to open accounts. In 1958 Barclays was the first bank to appoint a female bank manager, Hilda Harding, who ran the Hanover Square branch in London. During the 1960s, as part of its focus on customer service, the bank introduced an automatic cash dispenser and in June 1967 Barclays opened the world’s first cash machine in its Enfield branch. During the 1960s and 1970s Barclays became an active supporter of young people and the arts; channelling its support through a sponsorship programme, and a formal donations committee was established in 1979³ to manage both the growing number of requests and the increase in the scale of its support for charities and communities.

In 1982, Barclays’ recently appointed Chairman joined the newly-formed Business in the Community (BITC) as a representative on its Governing Council. It also seconded a Barclays employee into BITC’s initial management team; joining M&S, bp and IBM as key providers of early resources. Barclays’ secondee to BITC was due to leave in December 1983, but the secondment was extended until ‘at least the end of 1984’ at his own request.

“We are going through an exciting period of development which combines great potential and great dangers and some continuity of management and direction is essential.”

Letter from Christopher Norman-Butler to a Barclays colleague, April 1983⁴

After his request was approved, he wrote with thanks to Barclays Vice Chairman

“BI[t]C is in good heart and I think we are beginning to make some quite substantial progress. This is only due to the support that we are receiving from our members and most notably from the Bank.”

Christopher Norman-Butler, to Barclays Vice Chairman, May 1983⁵

The bank’s 1982 annual report records that [Barclays has] **“seconded some four dozen colleagues, set up training programmes and given [free] advice to over 2,000 companies”**. This included support for over 40 Local Enterprise Agencies, BITC’s key programme at the time.

As well as donating a significant amount of colleague time to BITC and its related activities during the 1980s⁶, Barclays’ senior executives were also involved in its governance, with a Barclays representative sitting on the main board or one of its committees for 24 out of 40 years⁷. In 1987, Barclays’ newly-appointed Chairman became BITC’s Honorary Treasurer – a role held by his successors on the board until 1995. Over the following 40 years, as its own Citizenship agenda evolved, Barclays has been involved in almost all of BITC’s campaigning areas and was an early participant in key initiatives such as the CR Index.

Barclays’ support for BITC has included senior colleagues representing the bank on multiple campaign Leadership Teams – from the Market Target Team during the early 1990s⁸, to the Environment Leadership Team and the Employment for Excluded Groups Leadership Team (formerly Business Action on Homelessness). It has won several BITC awards, providing best practice exemplars. Barclays’ relationship with BITC has evolved as its approach to responsible business has developed, providing a space for collaboration on key issues as well as acting as a delivery partner where appropriate.

Today, Barclays’ relationship with BITC centres on two areas. Firstly, within the bank’s Citizenship programme, LifeSkills, for which BITC is a key delivery partner; and secondly, on the Diversity and Inclusion agenda, where, as a signatory to the Race at Work Charter, Barclays has participated in BITC’s Mentoring Circles programme. Barclays’ Race at Work benchmarks have been introduced to monitor progress around this agenda.

CITIZENSHIP

Within two years of BITC’s formation, over 70 Barclays colleagues were seconded on an annual basis, largely through BITC’s Local Enterprise Agency network, and much of the bank’s contribution was aligned with BITC’s agenda at the time of inner-city rejuvenation, job creation and training and support for small businesses. In 1984, the bank began to formalise its approach to community involvement, setting this out in a booklet, ‘Barclays in the Community’⁹, in which employee involvement was encouraged.

“equally or more important are those activities which involve members of the staff of our Group whose enthusiasm and concern, often given in their own time, strengthens the Bank’s own determination to be socially responsible in all our work wherever we operate.”¹⁰

It also continued to actively support charities, the arts and young people. Barclays was consistently ranked in the top 5 corporate donors in the UK¹¹ and was a founder member of the PerCent Club in 1986, which committed its members to donating a percentage of profits each year to communities. In the same year Barclays launched its first significant dedicated community programme, Barclays Youth Action; a grant fund for voluntary organisations supporting young people. The first 12 organisations to successfully bid for grants were awarded their ‘certificates’ by the BBC Radio 1 DJ Bruno Brookes at a launch lunch held in Barclays’ dining rooms¹². And two years later, in 1988, the bank formalised this proactive approach to community involvement, creating a Community Enterprise Unit, overseen by an internal committee¹³. This amalgamated the former Social Responsibility Unit (previously the Donations Committee) and the Secondments Section of the Personnel Department. Its approach to giving showed a desire to give ‘well’, but also, as it began to develop a business case for community involvement, to causes where a shared benefit could be identified¹⁴.

Increasing efforts were made to support and encourage employees to volunteer, with the bank providing volunteering days for employees.¹⁵ From 1996, Barclays Community Support Guidelines outlined its priorities for supporting communities, broken down into local communities; education and training; and economic regeneration. Within this, priority was given to young people and those in disadvantaged groups with an emphasis on skills development¹⁶. In 1999, Barclays set up regional community teams across the UK to manage local donations and fundraising activities, and support programme delivery and employee volunteering as the scope and scale of its community involvement grew. By 2008, over 51,000 employees were involved in volunteering, fundraising and matched giving¹⁷.

During the 2000s, Barclays developed a series of national award-winning partnership programmes. These included the launch in 2004 of Barclays Spaces for Sports, aligned to the bank’s sponsorship of the Premier League. The initiative, a partnership with the Football Foundation and charity Groundwork, created sustainable sports facilities across the UK as well as providing kit and equipment to grassroots sports. The initial investment of £30 million over three years was the single largest corporate investment into grassroots sport in the UK. The programme was extended globally in 2008, under the banner of a wider five-year global community investment strategy ‘Banking on Brighter Futures’. Other major investments included a global partnership

¹ Barclays Bank plc Annual Report 1984

² The Buckingham Advertiser and Free Press

³ Barclays Archive, Note on history of Community Enterprise Committee, 1988 1165.9a

⁴ Barclays Archive, 36.71

⁵ Barclays Archive, 36.71

⁶ Barclays Archive, List of Secondee 1986 717.444

⁷ BITC Annual Reports, 1982-2021

⁸ Sparking Action, Marketing community involvement to medium-sized businesses, BITC 1993

⁹ Barclays Archive, B205

¹⁰ Barclays Annual Report 1984

¹¹ Barclays Archive, Community Enterprise Unit papers, 1988 574.620e

¹² Barclays Archive, Youth Action, 341.91

¹³ Barclays Annual Report 1988; Barclays Archive, Community Enterprise Committee 1988, 574.620a

¹⁴ Barclays Archive, Community Enterprise Policy Review 1988, 574.620b-f

¹⁵ Barclays Archive, 968.905

¹⁶ Barclays Archive, Community Support Guidelines 1996 968.260

¹⁷ Barclays Annual Report 2008

with Unicef on the Building Young Futures programme to help young people access education, training, employment and entrepreneurship opportunities. The programme operated in six countries across three continents with projects in Brazil, Egypt, India, Pakistan, Uganda and Zambia. Banking on Change was a three-way partnership between Barclays, Plan UK and CARE International. By supporting the establishment of informal savings groups, it was the first partnership between a global bank and international NGOs to successfully provide a pathway for these groups to the formal banking sector, extending access to financial skills and linking informal groups to local banks. The programme enabled more than 750,000 people to have access to financial services, in 37,000 informal groups and 5,000 savings groups linked to formal bank accounts¹⁸.

In the UK, Barclays also became one of eight core partners in BITC's Business Action on Homelessness (BAOH) campaign and Ready for Work programme. Launched in 2001, Ready for Work provided work placements for people who were experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness. Barclays CEO at the time chaired the BAOH Leadership Team, with the bank providing financial support for the campaign as well as hosting work experience placements. Barclays has continued to support wider industry initiatives on employability and skills, including offering traineeships through Movement to Work, an initiative supported by a coalition of companies and organisations formed in 2014 to help young people gain the skills needed to get into jobs.

Barclays' current citizenship activities evolved from these earlier programmes and guidelines into its current focus on skills and employability and helping businesses to grow and create jobs – undertaking primary research to understand the issues before evolving and developing its own programmes or participating in wider collaborative initiatives. These also maintain its support for young people which has been a constant theme since the 1960s.

In one example, Barclays MoneySkills initiative was developed in 2005 as part of its commitment to financial education. It created resources for practitioners to use with groups of young people to develop their financial capabilities across six key areas, including tracking their finances and attitudes to money. It combined peer mentoring, one-to-one, and group support to help young people 'not in education, employment or training'. By 2013, participants were seeing improvements in budgeting, spending awareness and training; with 64% of participants reporting they had begun to keep a budget¹⁹.

Barclays LifeSkills launched in 2013. The programme helps people, particularly young people, across the UK to build the confidence, knowledge and the core transferable skills and connections needed to get into work. Whether that's a young person preparing for their first job, someone wanting to progress in their career, make changes to their working life or even start their own business. They develop the skills that employers are looking for such as communication, problem solving, creativity, resilience, adaptability, CV writing, interview and money skills.

The programme provides free lesson plans, modules and interactive tools for educators to use directly with young people whilst in education, or those supporting adult learners post-education, plus access to online tools and resources for independent learners and families.

To date more than 15 million people have participated and 90% of schools, 79% of Further Education colleges and 87% of Universities are signed up to use the programme. After engagement with LifeSkills, the vast majority of participants feel more positive about their future, are more motivated to succeed and better understand the skills needed for the workplace. LifeSkills has also placed 5,000 individuals into work across 1,000 employer partners in the UK.

LifeSkills also works with a number of charities to provide more intensive support for some of the more underserved and under-represented groups in the UK.

BITC has been a long-term delivery partner of LifeSkills, delivering workshops in targeted schools across Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland, helping to ensure that LifeSkills reaches those students who are in need of more support.

Alongside its skills and employability programmes, Barclays has also become an increasingly proactive supporter of social innovation. In 2012, it launched the Social Innovation Facility – an internal incubator of ideas from colleagues for financial products and services that tackled social challenges. Since 2016, it has supported more than 200 high-growth entrepreneurs around the world with the network and resources they need to address key

global issues and scale up their businesses through Unreasonable Impact, a strategic partnership with Barclays and Unreasonable. The programme is dedicated to supporting growth stage ventures with guidance and support from a global community of world-class mentors and industry specialists, including experts from across Barclays.

In early 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic prompted a renewed response to community need by companies. For Barclays, the key to responding appropriately was understanding the need in communities, and finding a way to partner with and support organisations that were delivering relief. Its £100m Covid-19 Community Aid Package was set up to support more than 370 charity partners around the world who were best placed to deliver vital support to communities impacted by the pandemic. And through its 100x100 Programme, Barclays was also able to distribute funds directly to 250 smaller grassroots charities across the UK. Barclays also rapidly adapted its LifeSkills programme to deal with the changing circumstances, including launching new tools to enable remote learning, creating a new families hub to support parents, providing more advice for adults, and developing resources on money management, wellbeing and mental health.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Being a diverse and inclusive company is an integral part of Barclays success. They remain committed to building a supportive and inclusive culture, where people of all backgrounds are represented, feel they belong and can bring their whole selves to work²⁰.

Diversity and inclusion at Barclays focuses on six areas: disability, gender, LGBT+, multicultural, multigenerational and socio-economic inclusion.

Barclays has had a long-standing relationship with BITC on many aspects of diversity and inclusion, in particular gender, ethnicity and age. For 10 years, Barclays actively engaged in The Times Top 50 Employers for Women, and was listed in the top 50 for ten consecutive years.

Barclays has a long-term commitment to take actions to improve equality of opportunity on race. Barclays was an inaugural signatory to BITC's Race at Work Charter in October 2018. The Charter was one of the recommendations made in the McGregor-Smith Review **"Race in the Workplace, following on from the Parker Review"** recommendation that at least one Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic person should sit on all FTSE 100 Boards by 2021.

Like many businesses, the Black Lives Matter campaign during the summer of 2020 prompted Barclays to look again at its actions to improve ethnic diversity in the workplace, and to ask **"what we have been doing to aid the fight against racism,... is it enough?"**²⁰.

In October 2020, Barclays published a revised Race at Work Action Plan, committing the bank to action in four areas: hiring, promoting, creating a culture of allyship and being transparent about its ambitions.

In 2021, Barclays sets out its Race at Work ambitions with measurable outcomes against which it will assess the progress to close representation gaps. It published three ambitions within its UK and US businesses including increasing the number of underrepresented minority employees in the UK to 25% by the end of 2025, and doubling the number of black employees at Managing Director level in the UK and US by the end of 2022. Barclays defines underrepresented ethnicities as Black and Multiracial in the UK.

Activities and initiatives to support this include building an internal pipeline of potential candidates for promotion, specialised career coaching, appointing Race at Work Champions, investing in a diverse talent programme and mandatory training. As well as growing its relationships with partner organisations such as SEO London (see below), it has also created a Black Founder Accelerator programme aimed at boosting diversity in entrepreneurship.

The bank has also been involved in BITC's Cross Organisational Mentoring Circles programme since 2018 to support its employees, enabling them to access mentoring opportunities to support their career progression and grow their networks. The programme, initially developed in 2014, runs over six months and consists of a mentor and 8-10 mentees from a range of workplaces.

¹⁸ Banking on Change, Barclays, Plan UK, CARE International April 2016
¹⁹ <https://www.fincap.org.uk/en/evaluations/barclays-money-skills-for-disadvantaged-young-people-impact-evaluation>

Through its community partnerships, the bank is upskilling and creating pathways into work for black and ethnically diverse people, and working with ethnically diverse leaders who have the greatest experience to address these challenges. These include the Skill up, Step up LifeSkills partnership with the London Evening Standard, The Independent and the London Community Foundation to help upskilling more than 1,000 young disadvantaged people living in London including black Londoners who are twice as likely to be unemployed compared to their white peers. And in March 2022, Barclays renewed its partnership with charity SEO London for a further three years to help more than 400 graduates from black and ethnically diverse communities across the UK, with a focus on tackling socio-economic inequality, into full time employment. Funded by Barclays, SEO's new Beyond Barriers programme seeks to level the playing field for under-represented graduates who are yet to secure suitable full-time employment after finishing university.

For more than 15 years, Barclays' diversity networks have provided a space for colleagues to celebrate diversity, foster belonging and improve engagement. Today, with over 25,000 unique members, allies and sponsors globally, by amplifying the unique challenges of diverse groups at Barclays, its employee resource groups play an ever increasing role as a sounding board for the business, driving better understanding of the needs of its customers, clients and communities. To recognise this important role, effective January 2022, the diversity networks were relaunched as ERGs and have expanded from 7 to 12 ERGs with an increased focus on Barclays Black and Asian Professionals and colleagues across the generations.

Barclays' focus on sustainability and diversity & inclusion has also led to the bank taking a pioneering approach to its buildings and operations. In October 2021 Barclays opened a new operations and technology campus in Glasgow – designed to the highest standards of environmental sustainability restoring and transforming a former brownfield site. But its internal design has been almost as significant. Fundamental to the project was an aim to make it as inclusive as possible, and Barclays worked with the charity Scottish Autism to ensure that its design took neurodiversity into account. The Covid-19 pandemic also forced changes to the design, and as a result almost every area is completely flexible and can be completely altered within days or weeks.

MEASURING, REPORTING AND THE EMERGENCE OF 'ESG'

During the late 1990s, Barclays began to measure and report its responsible business-related activity and impacts in line with a general trend towards increased reporting on social and environmental issues. Barclays' stance on the environment was first articulated in 1991. After two internal reviews, the bank commissioned an independent consultancy to review and benchmark its environmental approach in 1997. The results of this were published in 1999, the same year its first Social Review was published²⁰. In 2000, Barclays' first combined social and environmental report stated **"Integral to our new business strategy is an increasing focus on corporate social responsibility".** The report **"outlines how we are building on previous experience to achieve our aim of making a positive and long-term contribution to the many communities we serve."**

The growing profile and breadth of the agenda also saw the emergence of dedicated teams to manage environmental issues. Greater priority in the business translated into greater visibility and in 2002, Barclays' annual report included a CSR chapter for the first time. This adopted the 'workplace, marketplace, environment, community' structure set out by the BITC convened Business Impact Reporting Group, that formed the structure of BITC's new benchmarking tool, the CR Index, in which Barclays had been one of the first participants.

By 2007 climate change had, in the words of Barclays CEO at the time, **"joined the top list of risks and opportunities."** On 1 May 2007, HRH The Prince of Wales convened leaders at a Mayday Summit on Climate Change. Barclays, who had joined BITC's Environment Leadership Team, was one of 600 companies that signed up to become a 'Mayday company' as well as sponsoring a case study publication with examples drawn largely from BITC's award winners.

In 2016, Barclays published its first Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) report. It was now providing more than £20 billion of financing for social and environmental projects and organisations, including renewable energy and social housing. Barclays, already a supporter of global partnerships such as the UN Environment Programme Finance Initiative, Equator Principles and Banking Environment Initiative, began to increase its external engagement further during 2017. It participated in the EU High-Level Expert Group on Sustainable Finance, the Taskforce on Climate-related Financial Disclosure consultation and joined the UK Green Finance Initiative, chairing the latter's banking workstream. Via an internal Green Banking Council it began to develop additional 'green' products and services, strengthening the bank's ambitions on green finance. A research partnership with the Columbia Water Center at Columbia University led to the holding of a Water Symposium for more than 100 clients. In 2017, it also became the first UK bank to launch a Green Bond.

In March 2020 Barclays set out a new approach to climate change. Having achieved net zero status for its own operations, it set an ambition to be a net zero business by 2050 across all direct and indirect emissions. Key to the strategy was the commitment to align all of its financing activities to the Paris Agreement on climate change. The final element of the strategy focused on financing the transition to a low carbon economy by providing green and sustainable finance. In April 2021 the bank became one of the 43 founding members of the UN who convened the Net Zero Banking Alliance.

In 2021 Barclays integrated ESG reporting into its Annual Report, as its approach to environmental and social issues continues to become increasingly integrated into core business activities – recognising its role in society and in supporting people and businesses to make the transition to a low-carbon economy. Within this lie its global Citizenship activities, that focus on enabling people to develop the skills and confidence they need to succeed and helping businesses to create jobs, with an emphasis on supporting under-represented groups; those most in need of extra support.

Steph Hagan, March 2022

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This case study was researched and written by Steph Hagan, an independent researcher and writer (and former BITC employee), as part of BITC's 40th Anniversary Year celebration. It is one of a series of 'Anniversary Partner Case Studies', focusing on five of BITC's founder member companies, their responsible business journeys and relationships with BITC. As with all historic research, the story is only as complete as the surviving documents and memories of those still living allow us to tell. We would like to thank the companies and their archivists for their help, support and input. Information was also gathered from BITC's own archive and documents in the public domain including the British Newspaper Archive.

²⁰ Barclays Environment Review, 1999; Barclays Social Review 1999 [corporateregister.com]