



The Prince's
Responsible
Business Network



THIS MUCH WE KNOW

A history of Business in the Community 1982 – 2022

Written by:

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on the occasion of the 40th Anniversary of BITC



AT A GLANCE

WHERE TO FIND OUT ABOUT

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Environment	Chapter 4 (Business in the Environment origins), Chapter 14 (BIE Index), Chapter 16 (Environment as part of Responsible Business agenda), Chapter 25 (Circular Economy)
Equity, diversity and inclusion	Part One (Mosaic) Chapter 13 (Gender, Race, Disability), Chapter 25 (Gender), Chapter 26 (Race equality)
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Engaging businesses	Chapter 8 (Seeing is Believing), Chapter 9 and 15 (Thought-leadership), Chapter 10 (Working with governments); Chapter 12 (Per Cent Club), Chapter 14 (Measurement, Reporting and Benchmarking, Awards); Chapter 16 (engaging SMEs); Chapter 25 (evolving ‘ask’); Chapter 28 (Campaigning)

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FOREWORD

GAVIN PATTERSON AND AMANDA MACKENZIE OBE



**Gavin Patterson, Chair
Business in the Community**



**Amanda Mackenzie OBE, CEO
Business in the Community**

When the history of Business in the Community is presented, as it is in this Report, one begins to get an understanding of the extraordinary nature of this business collaboration and of the impact and influence it has had across the UK, and indeed globally over the last 40 years. Above all, one understands the importance of His Royal Highness, The Prince of Wales, who sits at the very heart of BITC. The Report clearly shows how his leadership, his commitment and his personal beliefs have driven this movement and how he has moved the agenda forward. He, more than anyone else, has never stopped using the platforms he has to drive home the message that societal change requires business and society working together, and that the unique role of BITC is to work across both.

But in addition to the Prince’s vital role, the Report also shows how the organisation has been built from the personal commitment and passion of individual business leaders. BITC is, and always has been, its members: the individuals who stepped up to contribute, lead, share their passions and give their time to work together to effect social change. So many of the issues that BITC and its members pioneered are now on the Board agenda. It is hard to recall how innovative these campaigns were in their time and how much leadership it took to champion the issues when first proposed—a fact that should bring hope to all of us at this challenging time, when the scale of the issues we are facing in society and for the planet seem so inexorable.

**FINALLY, THANKS TO ALL
OF YOU: OUR MEMBERS,
OUR PARTNERS, AND OUR
COLLEAGUES WHO MADE THE
STORY HAPPEN AND WHO
HAVE BROUGHT US TO TODAY.
YOU ARE NOW THE STORY.**

We would like to share our gratitude to the writers, David and Mel, who have given so much to BITC, not only in the writing of this history but also over the 40 years as valued colleagues and campaigners. The task has been a mammoth one. At every review, there has been more material found to include and more people contacting us who wanted to contribute. The story of BITC is multi-faceted and has many, many authors.

It’s this collaboration that makes it such a unique organisation, and this Report really does get that across. When it was agreed we should try and consolidate our history, everyone we talked to agreed there was only one person who could tackle the task, and we are all therefore indebted to David who, working with Mel, has managed it, and who has also enabled us, as a result, to start to build the BITC archive and the BITC Alumni. Both, we hope, will now grow over the coming years.

We would also like to thank all the many people whose involvement with the organisation stretches across the 40 years, who stepped forward to join the Round-tables, to share their reflections, their memories, and their thoughts on what they learnt from their experience. We are so fortunate to have your support and friendship. Our gratitude goes also to our Anniversary Partners, all of them Founder Members of the charity, who have never faltered in their support and who stepped forward

and have enabled us to celebrate the Anniversary; as part of this celebration, they have enabled us to produce this Report, the archive, the ‘BITC Alumni.’, and the new interactive Timeline, which can be found on www.bitc.org.uk. We are indebted to our Anniversary Partners and to all the other Founder Members who have stayed with us over this journey.

Finally, thanks to all of you: our members, our partners, and our colleagues who made the story happen and who have brought us to today. You are now the story.

We are both proud and humbled to be leading BITC at such a momentous time, and we are acutely aware that we are standing on the shoulders of giants, and we hope we can integrate the learning set out in this Report and use the Enduring Success Factors identified in it. These have underpinned the legacy of 40 years and now need to help set the future direction of the organisation and to inspire the next generation of leaders to keep working together to make the world a fairer, better place for all. We all have a shared responsibility to make this happen.

Gavin and Amanda

HRH THE PRINCE OF WALES



HRH The Prince of Wales is the Royal Founding Patron of Business in the Community, accepting the role (then known as President) in 1985, when the charity was in its infancy. During the past 37 years, he has undertaken close to 600 engagements for Business in the Community.

From the very early days of HRH The Prince of Wales’s presidency, it was clear he was going to be so much more than a figurehead and name at the bottom of the letterhead. His Royal Highness took an active role from the very start, chairing Board meetings, attending AGMs and holding office meetings with the Chair and CEO. His Royal Highness readily accepted requests to visit fledgling projects, often countless times, and from the very start had this incredible ability to join up the dots, seeing that action here had a positive effect over there. In short, issues were holistically integrated as one whole challenge for UK plc. Dame Julia Cleverdon CBE, a previous CEO of Business in the Community, has often described His Royal Highness as “**a mobiliser, not a meddler.**”

There have been many firsts initiated by HRH The Prince of Wales, and, as John Neill CBE (a long-term trustee of Business in the Community) has said, “**BITC didn’t need a Product Development Team because it had The Prince of Wales. He is the R&D department.**”

HRH The Prince of Wales was a regular visitor to Calderdale and Blackburn in the 1980s, recognising the power of an equal partnership between the local business community, the local authority, the voluntary sector, and trade unions; they were all united under a common purpose of securing economic regeneration and reducing unemployment in their towns. Calderdale became the original blueprint for a one-town partnership on how to turn the tide on unemployment, bringing new life to disused buildings and a sense of civic pride. HRH The Prince of Wales’s regular visits drew national attention to the regeneration of this part of Yorkshire and brought investment to the area, such as Eureka! The Children’s Museum.

Following a visit to the US in 1986, HRH The Prince of Wales initiated the first Education Compact in East London one year later and challenged Business in the Community to take 100 business leaders into inner-city schools. This was one of the early catalysts for The Prince’s ‘Seeing is Believing’ Programme. Begun in 1990 and born from a simple but powerful idea: to close the gap between boardrooms and communities; some 25,000 leaders have since participated in The Prince’s programme, going into the hearts of communities and being given real-life insight into some of the most pressing social and environmental issues of the day. We can safely say that His Royal Highness has smashed his own target of 100.

HRH The Prince of Wales is well-known as a long-time passionate advocate of sustainability and safeguards to protect the environment, and he faced ridicule in the early days. Unperturbed, and universally proven to be right, he set up Business in the Environment (BiE), part of BITC, and made the comic video Grime goes Green with John Cleese in 1989, stating “**if everyone waited for a royal visit in order to clean up their act, we’ll never get anywhere.**” BiE produced the first annual indices on environmental performance, tracking companies year-on-year on how they were in fact cleaning up their act in their day-to-day operations and with their suppliers. As the climate crisis progressed, and (like many others) frustrated by lack of progress, The Prince called ‘Mayday’ on climate change in 2007, issuing an international distress call to business to ratchet up its operations and to take bolder steps to tackle climate change. HRH went on to launch ‘START’ in 2010, a customer-facing initiative to help people to take simple actions to live a more sustainable life. And then, in 2018, he convened over 200 business leaders with Michael Gove, then DEFRA Secretary of State, to urge business to double their resource productivity and eliminate avoidable waste by 2030, to thus beat the UK Government’s own target of 2050 by 20 years.

In 1995, His Royal Highness was once again at the vanguard of corporate responsibility, launching BITC’s Race Equality campaign (then called Race for Opportunity) with a network of senior business leaders who recognised the demographic shift in existing and future populations living and working in the UK. In 1996, the Prince took visiting South African President, Nelson Mandela, to Brixton, a place with which His Royal Highness was very familiar, as it was one of the areas that experienced riots in 1981; it led, in part, to the establishment of Business in the Community: business leaders realising that healthy high streets needed healthy back streets. There are now well over 800 businesses committed to tackling race equality in the workplace. This represents well over six million employees (bigger than the population of Denmark).



In 2011, Britain once again experienced considerable civil unrest across London and other major cities. Within three days, His Royal Highness was into Tottenham and was meeting community leaders, local people and businesses to find out how he could bring the weight of his charities to help. Speaking one year later, The Prince said that after years of visiting and meeting people, he had realised that, very often, something was missing. Following a royal visit, on many occasions there was no one based in the local area who would pick up all of the pledges and promises made on the day and then work to make them happen. This was why, in 2012, he created the ‘Business Connectors’ programme: individuals seconded from business and the civil service to connect people in the communities where they lived, worked and traded. ‘Business Connectors’ were the ambassadors who demonstrated the power of business to contribute to transformational change in communities. Close to 300 ‘Business Connectors’ leveraged almost £47 million of resources for local communities, including the equivalent of 167 years of full-time volunteering. For every £1 of Big Lottery funding received, nearly £10 of invaluable support has been generated into communities.

One of His Royal Highness’s other passions is supporting the people who look after the countryside: those who earn their living off the land, who provide food for us, and who care for the countryside so it remains a place of beauty and retreat. The Prince knows that poverty isn’t the province of inner-cities alone and that there is a high rate of suicide in farmers. Under the direction of The Prince, Mark Price (then MD of Waitrose) set up ‘The Prince’s Countryside Fund’, and BITC gave it a home for some eight years, grounding the charity in its early days. Mark, now Lord Price, hails The Prince as a true champion of the countryside and, to date, ‘The Prince’s Countryside Fund’ has supported over 400 projects and has made grants totalling millions of pounds.



Lord Allen of Kensington, a previous Chair of the Race Equality campaign, has said that **“The Prince of Wales set the agenda for responsible business 40 years ago, that he has never given up and has quite simply stuck with it.”** Sir William Castell, who led the first ‘Seeing is Believing’ visit to Penrhys alongside HRH The Prince of Wales over 30 years ago, said that **“The Prince gave business the licence to operate and has a tenacity of follow up.”** Sir Richard Lambert says that **“quite simply, The Prince of Wales is a global rockstar.”**

Lesley Wolfenden LVO

FOREWORD

FROM THE CRANFIELD SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT: PARTNERSHIP AND COLLABORATION

Partnership is established in this fascinating review of BITC’s 40-year history as one of seven of the organisation’s Enduring Success Factors. For us, the ability to convene people and organisations from diverse sectors of society around shared missions is fundamentally at the heart of BITC’s enduring success and impact. Gray’s definition of collaboration as **“a process through which parties who see different aspects of a problem can constructively explore their differences and search for solutions that go beyond their own limited vision of what is possible,”** (Gray, 1985)¹ seems to aptly characterise what it is that the BITC does so well.

As a business-led, but non-profit organisation, BITC has the qualities of what is known as a ‘hybrid’ organisation, always walking the line between campaigning for the achievement of social and environmental objectives and recognising the commercial objectives of its members. It would have been all-too-easy over 40 years for BITC to have ‘gone native’ (for example, by becoming a consultancy), weakening its ability to hold members to account for lack of action or, conversely, to have alienated members by failing to relate its work to their world view and ways of doing things. Instead, members spoke of BITC’s support in making a ‘compelling business case’ for social and environmental action and described BITC, for example, as ‘providing a lovely combination of challenge and support.’ Indeed, BITC has tended to adopt a policy of ‘name and fame’ rather ‘name and shame’, celebrating achievements as proof of the possible and inspiring others to action.

The leadership role played by HRH The Prince of Wales in embodying a ‘higher agenda’ above profit, politics and political cycles and is bringing a longer-term inter-generational perspective to BITC’s work; this has been unique and invaluable to its enduring ability to enable collaboration between business and society – as represented by the public and voluntary sectors. An interesting mirroring of this perspective in the business-school world was put forward by the European Foundation for Management Development, post the 2007/2008 financial crisis, stating that we should be producing graduates who are not just ‘hired hands’ but who have ‘higher aims.’

We know that for collaboration between organisations to happen, there must be a sufficient alignment or overlap of interest. However, identifying that overlap of interest requires openness and transparency about what you want and why you want it. This can be difficult if: 1) potential partners are competitors, or potential competitors, so they do not want to give too much away; or 2) potential partners are from different sectors and therefore can struggle to understand each other.

Throughout this fantastic account of BITC’s 40-year history, we see how BITC representatives have effectively played the role of ‘broker’ or ‘connector’ to facilitate value-generating collaboration. In the academic literature, people who, like them, can bridge the divides between organisations are known as ‘boundary spanners.’

With their ability to talk to the boardrooms of UK businesses, as well as to grassroots community groups and schools in some of the toughest neighbourhoods in the UK, BITC people have shown themselves to be the ultimate ‘boundary spanners’ who are able to be ‘ambassadors’ for their partners’ organisations, even on occasion called to ‘translate’ the language of one to the other.

For commercial organisations, bred on the spirit of competition, working collaboratively takes courage. As a ‘trusted broker,’ maintaining essential confidentiality, BITC has helped facilitate ‘co-opetition’ between for-profits, underpinned by a principle of contribution and sharing (of pre-competitive information at least), rather than non-disclosure agreements and the fear of giving more than you get. Our research at Cranfield has shown that approaching collaboration with this spirit of contribution helps widen the set of value outcomes such a collaboration can generate (Watson, Wilson and Macdonald, 2020)². A key tenet of BITC membership has been in exactly this spirit, with members making a commitment to share what they do, to inspire others and to contribute to the wider goals of the membership as a movement.

When it comes to partnerships between organisations representing different sectors of society, our research found that empathy is a vital facilitator of value-creating partnerships (Watson et al., 2018)³. Moreover, we found that one of the best ways to develop empathy is to immerse yourself in your partner’s world. This is exactly the principle behind the ‘Seeing is Believing’ programme, which has had such impact through the subsequent actions of those who experienced it.

A second key capability is listening – something which BITC recognises underpins all its best work but is not always easy!

Collaboration can work where the overlap of interest represents shared ends. These collaborations are typically fuelled by individuals who share the same passion for their mission regardless of the organisation they belong to. This identification of personal passions

and matching them with others who share them is one of the relationship skills honed by BITC representatives. Collaboration can also work when organisations find shared means to different ends. This works better when partners are not only aware of the nature of their mutual interest and what their organisation gets out of it but also understand how their partners seek to benefit individually from the project too. This brings us back to the key role of empathy and understanding of other sectors.

Either way, a strong narrative for a partnership helps members of diverse organisations to transcend their differences and bring to life their common goals. Understanding this, BITC has wisely and effectively partnered with media organisations to amplify the positive power of storytelling.

As well as sufficient overlaps of interest, collaborations rely on an ongoing willingness to combine resources, whether financial, reputational, or simply people’s time. So often, partnerships fall away when those at the top who initiated the relationship no longer find the time to participate actively. BITC’s rule that members of Leadership Teams cannot delegate the role sets exactly the right tone here.

Collaboration also requires an organisational mindset characterised by humility, propensity for innovation and the inclination to reach out to work with others. Reading this account, we are particularly struck by how BITC has not lost its appetite for ‘intense, eclectic networking.’ With age, it would have been easy to become more inward-looking, but BITC continues to innovate and to invest in the network of relationships that are so central to its success. What is more, BITC has showed particular genius by harnessing the networking and resource-matching skills of entrepreneurial business leaders and by applying them to regenerate their local ‘patch’ through the ‘Business Connectors’ initiative.

Many of BITCs most impactful collaborations have been place-based – orientated around local people and communities. Leaders we teach at Cranfield are increasingly aware of the need to reconnect with the

places and communities in which they operate, in large part because of the pressing need to respond to a shortage of workers with in-demand skills (Russell Reynolds Associates, 2021)⁴. Now more than ever, there is need for the type of place-based collaboration that BITC has championed for decades and is invigorating with its newly formed Place Taskforce.

We would argue that the whole story of BITC’s history to date can be told through the lens of partnerships and collaboration. BITC has successfully brought together leaders from across business and society to drive action on the most pressing social and environmental issues of the day. Its people have played a critical role as trusted brokers between organisations, building relationships with diverse individuals and demonstrating essential partnership skills, including empathy and listening—all while maintaining credibility as a principled, independent, non-profit, whilst being able to demonstrate both business and societal value to its members. This has been underpinned by a culture of giving, innovation, transparency, and a unique ability to steer a patient and consistent path towards the greater good.

The Cranfield School of Management has itself enjoyed a long collaboration with BITC. A former School Director – Prof Leo Murray – participated in a BITC summit at Highgrove in 2002 with HRH The Prince of Wales, and senior business leaders, to discuss how to incorporate Responsible Business into the work of business schools. Leo’s successor, Prof Michael Osbaldeston OBE, drove the establishment of the Doughty Centre for Corporate Responsibility at Cranfield in 2007 to help shape our teaching, research and practice, and this Centre did a number of projects in collaboration with BITC. This included the design of a one-day workshop for businesses to help them assess their stage of Corporate Responsibility Maturity. Even before the Doughty Centre, Prof Sue Vinnicombe CBE, and our then Cranfield International Centre for Women Leaders, was working alongside BITC’s gender-equality campaign. Before joining Cranfield, our current Director, Prof David Oglethorpe, worked in tandem with BITC to run annual regional conferences and collaborated with

BITC on a particular sustainable development initiative with the Grantham Institute. We are pleased that Cranfield today continues this collaboration by writing **This Much We Know**

Dr Rosina Watson

Head of the Sustainability Group, Cranfield School of Management

Prof David Oglethorpe

Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Dean of Cranfield School of Management

THIS MUCH WE KNOW:

OVERVIEW AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is the story of a remarkable non-profit organisation and social movement: Business in the Community (BITC).

BITC has helped to popularise the idea of Corporate Responsibility: that businesses large and small should take responsibility for their Social, Environmental and Economic impacts, reducing their risks by minimising their negative impacts and increasing opportunities by maximising positive impacts.

Today, ideas of Corporate Sustainability/ESG and Stakeholder Capitalism are commonplace. BITC, one of the world’s largest and longest-established national Corporate Responsibility Coalitions, has been in the vanguard of campaigners for 40 years. As a business-led movement, with HRH The Prince of Wales as BITC President for more than thirty years and now as the Royal Founding Patron, BITC has made a unique contribution, mobilising business expertise and leadership around a number of deep, societal challenges from Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and left-behind communities to the Climate Emergency. Working through an evolving series of local delivery partners over the last 40 years, BITC has contributed to a levelling up, regeneration agenda since the beginning of the 1980s.

The goal of this publication is, therefore, both to remind participants in this history of what they have helped to build – and to inspire new staff, new Board members, new Leadership Team members, and new representatives from member companies and BITC partners, with the story of how BITC has developed and evolved.

Even more practically, the objective of this history is to define and pass on to a new generation what are the Enduring Success Factors which BITC has learnt over 40 years about how to inspire and engage responsible business, and responsible business leaders.

Many readers will be primarily interested in a specific aspect of BITC’s rich history, such as a particular campaign; the engagement of business on a specific topic; or perhaps the techniques that BITC has developed and refined over the years, in order to engage businesses – and to keep them engaged. In the contents list, therefore, there is a table that provides an ‘at a glance’ overview of where readers can find the main discussion of individual themes. There is also a comprehensive index at the end of the publication. BITC’s website has up-to-date information on each of BITC’s current campaigns and the asks which these each make of business today.

BITC HAS HELPED TO POPULARISE IDEA OF CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY: THAT BUSINESSES LARGE AND SMALL SHOULD TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THEIR SOCIAL, ENVIRONMENTAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACTS.

1980s:

BITC began at the beginning of the 1980s as the UK started to go through a rapid economic and social restructuring, driven by the decline of old traditional industries, such as coalmining, heavy steel making and shipbuilding; and accelerated by the monetary policies and trade union reforms of the Thatcher Government. BITC’s early focus was on mobilising help for economic and community regeneration, through the promotion of an enterprise culture and practical help for people to make their own jobs, with the help of local enterprise agencies. This quickly extended to initiatives on skills and retraining and to increasing business links to schools. Overall, the goal was to mobilise business involvement in the community – whether ‘community’ was people and place in a neighbourhood, Urban Village, inner-city area, town, city, sub-region or what we would now call a city-region. A third ‘E’ for environment was added to enterprise and education by the end of the 1980s.

As a result, BITC’s **Directions for the Nineties** inquiry in 1991 could conclude that member companies would prioritise involvement in the three Es in BITC’s second decade. Thus, although BITC was widely known in its early years as ‘the national umbrella for local enterprise agencies’, in reality it was doing much more. This soon included focus on gender and then race equality and then on advising businesses on the quality and extent of their involvement in the community.

In order to do this work, BITC was recruiting more companies as members through direct engagement of company CEOs and chairs by the BITC CEO, executive team and already-committed business leaders. After 1985, this involved invitations to business leaders to join community visits made on behalf of BITC by HRH The Prince of Wales—and, from 1986, through increasingly well-attended annual conferences (starting in Newcastle). At the 1987 conference in Birmingham, BITC set up Target (later Leadership) Teams to engage more business leaders and to galvanise their involvement in a particular topic. After 1990, ‘Seeing is Believing’ became a key recruitment and engagement tool.

1990s:

As different campaign teams got into their stride, they were able to produce Good Practice Guides and ‘how to’ manuals for businesses, which also facilitated the work of BITC Regional Directors (especially after the merger with the Action Resource Centre in 1995) and Nation offices in Wales and Northern Ireland. (Scottish Business in the Community, ScotBIC, which started at the same time as BITC remained independent until 2016).

From the late 1990s, there was an increasing focus on core business activities in the workplace, marketplace, environment and the community, with an emphasis on measurement, reporting and benchmarking. This, of course, built on existing experience, such as Corporate Citizenship Company’s London Benchmarking Group (1994) to improve consistency of reporting cash and in-kind donations to the community and the Business in the Environment Index from 1996. It also reflected growing societal expectations on business – especially multinationals – articulated, for example, in a seminal lecture by Cor Herkströter, then Shell Chairman, in Rotterdam (Oct 1996)—and in the Committee of Inquiry into a **New Vision for Business** (convened by Prime Minister Tony Blair and Anita Roddick of The Body Shop), which reported in 1999. Most of the eight companies involved were also BITC members, and BITC was part of the core Inquiry secretariat alongside Forum for the Future.

2000s:

The anti-globalisation backlash (expressed in demonstrations in Seattle and at each subsequent global trade conference) and high-profile corporate scandals like Enron and Parmalat created what Sir David Varney – BITC’s incoming Chair – described in 2002 as a ‘Perfect Storm’ for businesses. This Perfect Storm, as well as BITC’s growing success in making Responsible Business credible, enhanced the credibility of BITC’s Annual Awards for Excellence, the Corporate Responsibility Index, and campaigns – and facilitated a series of long-term media partnerships, such as with The Financial Times – which, in turn, further reinforced BITC’s profile and credibility.

Whilst the Global Financial Crisis of 2008 could have derailed the drive for Responsible Business, careful stewardship of resources enabled BITC to expand membership and income and to launch additional campaigns on Health and Wellbeing and on Youth Employment and Skills.

2010s:

The abolition of the Regional Development Agencies after the election of the Coalition Government in 2010, and the start of a decade of austerity in public spending, led to fresh attempts to mobilise business resources for deprived communities with ‘Business Connectors’ and Place-based initiatives run in collaboration with other Prince’s charities. With an increasingly internationally-focused membership and in the absence of well-funded public bodies with significant autonomy through which business involvement locally could be focused, it will be interesting to see how far BITC can replicate the successful local partnerships created in places such as Burnley, Blackpool and Wisbech.

The professionalisation of Responsible Business and increased investor interest in ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance aspects of business) – as well as the internationalisation of business – has meant

that BITC is in competition (or at least coopetition i.e. sometimes cooperation and sometimes collaboration) with a far more extensive ecosystem in the UK and internationally, which is promoting responsible business and corporate sustainability.

In recent years, therefore, BITC has had to further professionalise, deepen relationships with member companies and ensure that member companies and their achievements are front and centre-stage. BITC is now an added-value adviser to business, as well as continuing to be a convenor, cajoler and, sometimes, conscience: the ‘stone in the shoe’, as some have described it.

BITC’s ‘Agenda for Action’ for business has developed and matured over time in the light of experience and growing societal needs and expectations of business. BITC’s core brokerage role, however, has proved remarkably durable – even as the mechanisms and partners have changed. BITC has inspired Corporate Responsibility coalitions around the world and has provided many practical outlets for several generations of business leaders and their employees to contribute to problems such as homelessness and mental ill-health at work.

BITC has been successful due to a powerful campaigning style and ‘toolkit’ for engaging individual business leaders and businesses, such as ‘Seeing is Believing’, Leadership teams, thought-leadership publications, and business summits. This has all been underpinned by seven, interlinking and mutually-reinforcing Enduring Success Factors, summarised as leadership, apprenticeship, showmanship, entrepreneurship, partnership, membership and relationship.

BITC now invites members and partners/alumni to add further to this history as well as to the realisation of its forward agenda.

BITC AT 40: INTRODUCTION – DAVID GRAYSON AND MELODY MCLAREN



David Grayson CBE
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Neither of us is a completely independent, detached researcher when it comes to writing about BITC. As our biographical details at the end of the publication make clear, we have both worked for, and with, BITC in various different guises, off and on – David over almost 40 years, Mel for 30 years. In the terminology of research, we are ‘participant observers.’ Many BITC staff and alumni have become our friends over the years. We believe in the mission of BITC. We want to see it succeed. Nevertheless, David as Emeritus Professor of Corporate Responsibility and Mel as a doctoral researcher and associate of Cranfield University School of Management are committed to being as rigorous as we can be, given our long associations with BITC and the cause of Responsible Business.

Before memories fade, we have tried to assemble a factually-accurate history, and to build up an online library of BITC publications: the BITC Knowledge Library, which will be available to future researchers around the world. We have done our best to avoid hype. Happily, our project partners at BITC, Gail Greengross, Amanda Mackenzie and Lesley Wolfenden, have been totally aligned and supportive of our mission to be as objective as possible. Our style, like BITC’s – while we aim to be inquiring – is ‘glass half-full’ rather than ‘glass half-empty’ – and to ‘name and fame’ rather than to ‘name and shame!’ Ultimately, this 40-Year History is intended to celebrate 40 exacting, exciting years yet, also, to encourage a far greater sense of urgency for far more comprehensive business action going forward.

Having written a history of BITC@25, David was pleased to be invited to update this for BITC@40. He had no hesitation in inviting Mel to partner on this assignment. We have worked together, first at BITC and then at Cranfield University, off and on for more than 30 years.

As we listened to more than 150 individuals – current and former staff, Board and Leadership Team members and Chairs, Campaign directors, and business and community partners – share their perspectives on BITC, in a series of virtual roundtables and 1:1 interviews, we quickly realised that rather than writing the history ourselves, we should be curating the rich history with the insights and stories of many more of the people who helped to make it all happen. Having built the overall framework, we hope that more contributors will come forward with additional materials, recollections, and analysis, which can then be considered for incorporation into the website version of BITC@40. We want to see this become a living history and ever-growing resource. This is, therefore, an invitation to co-create the history as well as the future of BITC.

The world has changed dramatically over the last 40 years in so many dimensions, including the relationship between business and society and between business and its communities – and so, BITC has constantly needed to reinvent itself to ensure it is meeting needs and that it remains relevant to business and to society. In some cases, BITC has helped to shape those changes over the last 40 years or so. Arguably, as the UK and the rest of the world emerge from the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic, BITC is entering a new era: an era that combines a far greater sense of urgency for the field of ‘Responsible Business and Corporate Sustainability’, together with a renewed focus on brokering help from business for local communities—for mobilising businesses in communities. Given the scale of the Climate Emergency, hyper-global inequalities and other sustainability challenges, this sense of far greater urgency and drive to connect is not a moment too soon.

David Grayson – Melody McLaren
June 2022

PART ONE:

THE CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS FOR BITC

The story of BITC over the past 40 years is one of constant innovation and evolution. Particular initiatives and programmes have come and gone – even as the core themes of BITC activity have been remarkably consistent::

- The asks of business involvement in society around the ‘3 Es’ of Enterprise, Education/Skills and Environment – first identified in ‘Directions for the 90s’ in 1991 and pretty soon thereafter a fourth ‘E’ – equity: in terms of gender and racial equality, broader diversity and inclusion, and improving opportunities for those left behind.
- The business imperative, as well as the moral case, for businesses to help heal fractured communities and to tackle acute inequalities.
- The need for trust, which in a global, connected society requires transparency, accountability and businesses taking responsibility for their impacts.
- The case for businesses to take responsibility for their social, environmental and economic impacts.
- That business done well is a powerful force for good in society.

Today, it might seem obvious that a coalition like BITC should exist. Indeed, long-serving Board member and current BITC Vice-Chair Steve Holliday argues that **“if Business in the Community ceased to exist, you would need to invent something very much like it the next day!”**

Yet it was not inevitable back at the beginning of the 1980s that BITC would survive and thrive, for 40 years and counting. One of the key requests for this project was that we should capture ‘this much we know’ – not just in the sense of providing a briefing for future trustees, staff, Leadership Team members and supporters – by explaining where BITC has come from and what it has done – but also, crucially, to spell out what is the DNA: the Enduring Success Factors that has enabled BITC to continue and grow.

At one point, management consultants apparently referred to this as ‘BITC’s secret source’, although memories differ as to whether this was spelt ‘source’ or ‘sauce!’ Either way, what has BITC learnt about how to engage and mobilise business and business leaders in partnership with other parts of society?

THE STORY OF BITC OVER THE PAST 40 YEARS IS ONE OF CONSTANT INNOVATION AND EVOLUTION.

In 2007, in his 25th anniversary account of BITC, David argued that it was the powerful interplay between five interlinking 'ships' – leadership, apprenticeship, showmanship, entrepreneurship and partnership.

LEADERSHIP	BITC has relentlessly pursued the current top business leaders. CEOs and main board directors of major companies head its Board and its campaign Leadership Teams.
APPRENTICESHIP	developing a series of tools based on effective brokerage to engage business; and regularly updating the 'Agenda for Action' for businesses.
SHOWMANSHIP	in the style and content of BITC events but also its formal and informal media partnerships.
ENTREPRENEURSHIP	like the businesses it is seeking to inspire, BITC has always been opportunistic in spotting and filling gaps, pulling together resources from many disparate places, and being prepared to experiment and take successful examples like the benchmarking Indices and spread them quickly.
PARTNERSHIP	working variously with national charities, local community and voluntary organisations, governments at local and national level, and international institutions like the European Union.
Fifteen years on, we believe these 'ships' have stood the test of time – albeit with considerable further refinement and deepening of what we mean by each of the 'ships.'	
We would argue that BITC has been less successful when one or more of these 'ships' has been missing or poorly executed. We would, however, now propose a further two 'ships':	
MEMBERSHIP	the symbiotic relationship between BITC and its membership: BITC fundamentally is its membership.
RELATIONSHIP	BITC's history is rich with the relationships it has cultivated through years of dialogue with a wide variety of actors in the private, public, and not-for-profit sectors. Those relationships arguably constitute the foundational glue for all the other 'ships' in its repertoire.

LEADERSHIP

BITC has always enjoyed the active engagement of top, current business leaders. It has been 'the club to belong to.' Each area of BITC's work, region and campaign has a business/Leadership Team in charge. Membership of the BITC Board and of Leadership Teams has been principally at the level of company Chairmen, CEOs and main board members of major companies. Strategic direction has come from the top of companies rather than been confined to the Corporate Responsibility/ sustainability function. Stephen Howard talks of the 'magic' of BITC as a business-led movement: **"It is so unlike those charities which take business money but then want to keep the businesses at arms-length. BITC really involves business leaders."** Several long-serving BITC staff members, such as Lesley Wolfenden and Patrick O'Meara, speak of BITC being able to behave like **"a stone in a business leader's shoe"** – that is to say, to be challenging. Sir James Wates, who chairs the Institute of Family Business and previously chaired Tomorrow's Company, observes of BITC, **"they changed the narrative about the responsibilities of business."**

The continuing ability to attract and retain the most senior levels of business leadership has been crucial. One top marketing guru argues that BITC has made it **"socially acceptable for business leaders to admit it [corporate responsibility] is important,"** and has created agendas for action. Anne Watts says BITC has given **"businesses a confidential space to talk about difficult issues."**

One aspect of continuing to engage top, current business leaders has been leadership to set the agenda and move the debate about business and society forward: the ability to keep asking **"what is the news on the Rialto"**, as Lord Browne famously quoted in his Conversation at the British Museum. **(See Box 5 below).** This has included a series of ground-breaking initiatives, such as BITC's gender and race campaigns and the Health and Wellbeing campaign, the Business Impact Review Group (which encouraged more companies

to measure and report on their environmental and social impacts), and the subsequent work to launch the Corporate Responsibility Index (CRI). This has also included periodic 'thought-leadership' exercises to consult on and then suggest a forward agenda for, such as 'Directions for the Nineties' (1991), 'Work in Society' (1994), 'Perfect Storm' (2002), the 'Lambert Commentary for BITC's 20th Anniversary' in 2002, the development of the 'Responsible Business Marketplace Principles' and the 'Brave New World?' series of reports.

It has also been about the bravery and boldness to take business leaders and businesses out of their comfort zones and to put issues not considered any responsibility of business onto the business agenda, such as mental health, workplace suicide and domestic abuse. Some observers talk about BITC having earned the trust to be able to take businesspeople out of their comfort zone; and about 'verified bravery' – yes, being courageous in raising new issues and challenging business, but with the reassurance of having tested out the analysis and proposed 'Agenda for Action' with business leaders already involved through a campaign Leadership Team. Others have emphasised the importance of the chemistry and strong relationship between a Leadership Team Chair and their Campaign Director – and how effective this has been where it has existed. Important too has been the rule that Leadership Team members cannot delegate their role.

The engagement of top, current business leaders has also enabled BITC to take a leadership role as an authoritative, independent third-party endorser of good practice in responsible business, for example, through the annual 'Awards for Excellence', which are independently judged and verified, and through benchmarking, particularly the 'Responsible Business Tracker', as well as the earlier 'Corporate Responsibility Index', the 'Business in the Environment' (BiE) Index, and benchmarking by BITC's Race and Gender-equality campaigns.

BITC has also benefited from strong executive leadership with just four CEOs in 40 years: Stephen O’Brien (1982-1992), Julia Cleverdon (1992-2008), Stephen Howard (2008-16) and Amanda Mackenzie since 2016. The charisma and convening power of these CEOs and, specifically, their phenomenal ‘people-tracking’ and networking skills have complemented the skills and experience of the thirteen Chairmen who have led the Board of the organisation since 1982: **See Box 1.**

Jeremy Darroch says he is “**particularly proud to have been associated with BITC: it is led really well. It is full of capable, well-intentioned people.**” During his term, he arranged for a number of Sky high-flyers to go on secondment to BITC as part of their leadership development and broadening their horizons. “**It was a great opportunity for some of our best people in Sky. They had to achieve with very few resources by comparison with back in Sky. The first secondees sold the opportunity to their successors.**” (See Chapter 29 BITC Impacts).

BOX 1: BITC CHAIRMEN 1982 – 2022

Sir Alastair Pilkington (Pilkingtons) ⁵	1982-1984
Lord Robert Carr (Prudential) ⁶	1985-1987
Sir (later Lord) Hector Laing (United Biscuits) ⁷	1988-1990
Sir Neil Shaw (Tate and Lyle) ⁸	1991-1993
Sir (later Lord) Allen Sheppard (Grand Metropolitan) ⁹	1994-1997
Sir Peter Davis (Prudential) ¹⁰	1997-2001
Sir David Varney (O2) ¹¹	2002-2004
Sir Mike Rake ¹² (KPMG)	2005-2007
Sir (later Lord) Stuart Rose (Marks & Spencer) ¹³	2008-2010
Mark (later Lord) Price (Waitrose) ¹⁴	2011-2014
Antony Jenkins (Barclays) ¹⁵	2015-2017
Jeremy Darroch (Sky) ¹⁶	2018-2020
Gavin Patterson (Salesforce) ¹⁷	2021 – present (at time of writing in 2022)

In retrospect, each of the different Chairs might be associated with specific themes – whether explicitly articulated at the time or not. **See Box 2.**

BITC CEOs have also been able to work very closely with BITC’s only president: HRH The Prince of Wales (1985 onwards and since 2017, the founding Royal Patron). The extent, range and sheer longevity of the Prince’s contribution has been a unique and invaluable contribution to the leadership of BITC and something unique.

See the tribute on behalf of the board and staff of BITC by the long-serving BITC Company Secretary Lesley Wolfenden at the beginning of this publication. See also Box 3 below.

Ed Burke – who created the Boston College Center for Corporate Citizenship in the 1980s – after attending a BITC conference in London in the early 1990s – ruefully reflected to Melody on the convening power of the Prince and how they had nothing remotely comparable in the USA.

BOX 2: BITC CHAIRS AND THEIR THEME AS CHAIR

CHAIR	THEME
Pilkington	Replicate the Community of St Helen’s Trust
Carr	Get companies into membership
Laing	Spread enterprise agencies and broader regeneration
Shaw	Support Community Development Trusts like Community Links; broaden agenda and nurture BITC’s second CEO
Sheppard	Scale-up and build proper regional presence
Davis	Measurement and impact; professionalising operation
Varney	‘Perfect Storm’ of reputational threats to business requiring more business action
Rake	Focusing the ask of business and overseeing the transition from second to third CEO
Rose	Make it core business; Work Inspiration
Price	Rural and place
Jenkins	Digital revolution, and Responsible business
Darroch	Deepen the relationship with member businesses
Paterson	Digital connectivity as an enabler of social mobility and economic growth

BOX 3: THE ROLE OF HRH THE PRINCE OF WALES

HRH The Prince of Wales became President of BITC in 1985 and, over the 37 years since, has undertaken almost 600 engagements for BITC. These have included taking ‘report-backs’ from ‘Seeing is Believing’ visits and leading visits to community projects across the UK. His memos to BITC Chairmen, and to BITC CEOs, identifying new issues and spotting potential synergies and opportunities to advance responsible business have become a regular part of BITC life.

As long-serving BITC Board member John Neill CBE explained: **“BITC didn’t need any New Product Development Team because it had the Prince of Wales!”**

The Prince’s long-serving Private Secretary, Elizabeth Buchanan added that **“His Royal Highness is particularly good at joining the dots”**

Stephen O’Brien sums up what each of his three successors as BITC CEO have also said in different ways: **“The Prince’s role was to spot coming issues, encourage action – and then to keep in touch to chivvy and encourage.”**

Hence, the often-repeated description of BITC as **‘business-led, Princely inspired.’**

HRH The Prince of Wales personally promoted the rural regeneration Leadership Team at the time of Britain’s foot-and-mouth disease crisis in farming. His early and persistent identification of climate change has been globally recognised. In the early years before the concept of responsible business was widely known, he was particularly crucial in opening doors. His early involvement also provided a critical degree of credibility and ‘Establishment-blessing.’ Cathy Ashton (now Baroness Ashton of Upholland) reflects that **“his presidency lifted BITC**

out of any party-political conflicts. He has become an expression of the organisation and the cause’s longevity.”

Today, his own widespread networks and experience ensure new issues and potential synergies are constantly being explored. HRH has also, of course, been able to take his messages global: first with the IBLF and then with the leadership development programmes of the Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership, HRH The Prince of Wales’s ‘Accounting for Sustainability’ and, most recently, the ‘Sustainable Markets Initiative’ with the World Economic Forum.

The Prince has either personally initiated or supported a number of BITC’s leading programmes:

- The Prince’s Seeing is Believing (SIB) Programme
- The Prince’s Ambassadors
- The Prince’s Business Connectors
- The Prince’s Countryside Fund
- The Prince’s Business Emergency Response Group

Indeed, speaking of the SIB, Sir David Varney (Chair 2002-2004) told us, “HRH was hugely significant. He was the guardian of the Seeing is Believing franchise.” (See Chapter 8).

Julia Cleverdon (CEO 1992-2008) referenced, **“The Prince’s ability to convene, to recognise, to be inspired, and to be absolutely maddeningly determined about what he wanted to happen.”** Mark Price, who chaired BITC 2011-2014, speaks of the Prince’s **“empathy, curiosity, sensitivity and networking power to bring people together.”**

One of the many programmes inspired by HRH The Prince of Wales was ‘Mosaic.’ John O’Brien MBE, who was its first director, reflects on how the initiation and development of ‘Mosaic’ owed so much to the leadership of HRH.

A further extension of leadership was the creation, both regionally and nationally, of ‘The Prince’s Ambassadors’ for BITC, appointed every two years and announced at the relevant regional/national ‘Awards for Excellence’ dinner. Over time, the kudos and unspoken expectations of the role that these ambassadors should play has risen.

BOX 4: ‘MOSAIC’

INTRODUCTION

This box looks specifically at His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales’s involvement in the conceptualisation, establishment and development of ‘Mosaic’, an HRH-founded initiative whose mentoring programmes create opportunities for young people growing up in many of the UK’s most-deprived communities, with a focus on Muslim youth – www.mosaicnetwork.co.uk.

It brings to life some of HRH’s characteristics and ways of working that are common to many of his charitable endeavours spanning 40-plus years:

- **Visionary:** HRH identifies major societal and environmental challenges earlier than most others.
- **Determined and persistent:** HRH identifies unmet need, and he works in a determined and persistent manner to meet it.

- **Passionate:** HRH is passionately and intimately involved with his charities – from setting the strategic direction to detailed programme implementation.
- **Mechanisms:** HRH employs to catalyse and facilitate change, including meetings, hosting receptions, writing memos, leveraging existing and historic relationships, building on the credibility that has come from 40 years of support for, and patronage of, relevant organisations – as well as constantly challenging his staff and charities.
- **Commitment:** HRH’s long-term commitment to creating sustainable solutions.

It should be viewed within the wider context of HRH’s long-standing commitment to, and support for, many of the key tenets of Islam and the Muslim population in Britain.

‘Mosaic’ ‘was founded by HRH in 2007, as a Muslim-led initiative, to take on the challenges facing young Muslims and others living in deprived communities in Britain.’ It began as an initiative of BITC and later transferred to The Prince’s Trust.

By 2013, ‘Mosaic’ was directly supporting 5,000 young people (83% of which were from the 20% most deprived areas of Britain), in 140 schools and prisons, supported by over 900 volunteers. ‘Mosaic’s’ International Leadership Programme also developed leadership skills and inspired thinking about global issues among delegates aged 25-35 from more than 15 Islamic countries.

In 2009, John O’Brien, the senior BITC director appointed to create and run ‘Mosaic’, identified an opportunity for an international leadership initiative to be supported by the Foreign & Commonwealth Office and by certain key funders in the Middle and Far East.

The ‘Mosaic’ International Leadership Programme at the University of Cambridge brought together 80 young leaders from Muslim-majority countries. The programme’s aims were to nurture the leadership talent of emerging young leaders and to educate them on some of the issues championed by HRH, such as climate change, global poverty and community cohesion. The programme was repeated in July 2010 (again in Cambridge), in November 2011 in Doha, and back in the UK in September 2013. HRH was personally involved in each programme, providing his personal encouragement to the young leaders.

In 2013, ‘Mosaic’s’ schools’ programmes secured accreditation through the Mentoring & Befriending Foundation’s Approved Provider Standard, and Prime Minister David Cameron awarded ‘Mosaic’ a Big Society Award¹⁸.

These programmes included:

- The ‘Mosaic’ Schools Mentoring Network
- The ‘Mosaic’ Enterprise Challenge
- The ‘Mosaic’ Media Network
- The ‘Mosaic’ Speakers Bureau
- The ‘Mosaic’ Prison Mentoring Programme

Following the McKinsey & Company Strategic Review for BITC in 2015-2016, responsibility for ‘Mosaic’ was transferred to The Prince’s Trust.

APPRENTICESHIP: THE PRACTICAL SKILLS TO MAKE THINGS HAPPEN

BITC and the Action Resource Centre before it, which BITC subsumed in 1995, have operated as credible, honest brokers between business and society. Effective brokerage has been at the heart of delivery. It is easier to be this broker if the organisation and its staff are able to relate to, and empathise with, business. The BITC philosophy has been to inspire rather than to bludgeon, to ‘name and fame’ through the annual Awards for Excellence, for example, and through the Business Connectors. A further aspect of brokerage is being able to talk simultaneously at the various levels (FTSE-100 board, community activist, and grassroots organisations) and to, where necessary, translate between them.

Another element of apprenticeship has been having a range of concrete community issues for companies to get involved with: a menu for people at different levels in a business (CEOs to front-line staff) and for different business functions (marketing, purchasing, HR etc). This also extended to developing menus of action for particular business sectors, such as the International Tourism Partnership, ‘COMM.UNITY’ (to engage the IT sector) and ‘ProHelp’ (to broker pro-bono help into the community from professional firms). A crucial aspect of BITC has been the simultaneous emphasis on individual and collective business action.

Providing a ‘safe place’ for businesses (often otherwise fierce commercial competitors) to meet and discuss collective business responses has also been important.

Intense, inveterate networking – putting people in touch with useful contacts – is part of the BITC corporate culture, and this fits well with prevailing British business culture. Significantly, when the then BITC Chairman David Varney persuaded a top American strategy consultant, Richard Pascale, to advise BITC, Pascale researched the organisation and then presented the BITC management team with a business school case study about Tupperware® whose enduring global success has been based on selling through personal contact and networks! Even some of BITC’s critics acknowledge its intense, eclectic networking, which seems in BITC’s DNA and something that staff seem hard-wired to deliver.

Apprenticeship has also involved identifying, codifying, disseminating, and refining (and then amplifying) Good Practice Guidance, and (particularly since 2000) regularly commissioning external evaluations by business schools or others of specific business programmes.

SHOWMANSHIP

Some reviewers have criticised our use of the word ‘showmanship’, arguing it is derogatory or somehow devalues the work described; that it sounds a bit too glib for the heavyweight engagement and outreach BITC has done. This is very much not our intention. On the contrary, we intend the word to capture the professionalism, the creativity and the entrepreneurialism that created a series of media partnerships and compelling, high-profile events.

BITC has had a number of successful media partnerships over the years. These have included the (London) Evening Standard, which published a series of full-page articles by corporate CEOs on different aspects of corporate responsibility; this was brokered by Adrian Hodges, then BITC Communications Director, over an 18-month period in 1992-1993. This was successfully replicated by BITC Northern Ireland with the Belfast Telegraph.

BITC ran the annual Prince of Wales Innovation Award with BBC Television’s ‘Tomorrow’s World’ programme from 1988 to 1997. This included an entire edition of the popular programme, once a year, devoted to the finals of the Award.

Growing out of the ‘Seeing is Believing’ programme, Granada TV (now part of ITV), hosted the Granada Community Challenge on air. This followed the progress of five major companies in the North West of England as each adopted a local community group and together fulfilled a community development goal. This was followed up with two Granada TV specials: one looking at the Future of Britain and, a year later, one on the future of Merseyside. BITC was involved in both programmes.

There were annual BITC supplements in The Financial Times for several years, and BITC’s annual ‘Awards for Excellence’ were run for a long time in partnership with The Financial Times.

‘Companies that Count’ was an annual supplement about the Corporate Responsibility Index published in the leading Sunday broadsheet newspaper, The Sunday Times. The Giving List with data from BITC’s ‘Per Cent Club’ was published annually in The Guardian for some years. For the last eleven years, BITC’s Gender Equality campaign has worked with The Times on an annual supplement covering the 50 top companies for female employees. There have been other one-off supplements, for example, with The Daily Telegraph about ‘Seeing is Believing’ and with The Independent on ‘Opportunity Now’ (now BITC’s Gender Equality campaign).

Showmanship has also been about the creativity of events to keep BITC fresh for long-standing member companies and individuals and about celebrating success. In the words of one top business leader, **“BITC is now probably the best events organiser in London.”**

The PR guru, the late Tim Bell, had told BITC back in 1990 that it had to create the **“Oscars of Responsible Business.”** Arguably, this happened when BITC started holding the ‘Awards for Excellence’ in the Royal Albert Hall. The 2007 Awards, for example, involved former Vice-President Al Gore; HRH The Prince of Wales; Lionel Barber, editor of The Financial Times; nine Permanent Secretaries of key government departments; and 1,800 business leaders. Subsequent Awards events in the Royal Albert Hall included performances by Cirque du Soleil, actor Joanna Lumley, and the late Michael Parkinson. Many interviewees have spoken of the 2014 Awards evening when HRH The Prince of Wales was joined by his two sons on-stage to make a powerful appeal for action on Climate Change and to support military veterans to help them adapt to civilian life again. Jim Naughtie, the veteran broadcaster, was MC for the awards for several years.

John Spence, a long-serving BITC Board member, reflected on his experience when the board of a company he had recently joined agreed to take a table for the Awards Gala. **“They did it to humour me. But they came away captivated. It was so good to watch as my fellow directors got it!”**

Steve Holliday, BITC’s Vice-Chair since 2015, emphasises that part of what makes the national Awards evenings so special is the knowledge that this is the culmination of a rigorous judging process, first at the regional round and then nationally. He also sees the Awards as real-time market intelligence into what the latest good practice in responsible business is, from across the UK.

Creativity has also been shown over the years in the venues used for BITC events, such as holding the 15th Anniversary of ‘Seeing is Believing’ in an old 19th Century Music Hall – Wiltons – in the East End of London, which was then being restored by enthusiasts with support from BITC member companies.

Creativity was also found in the format of events, for example, ‘Conversations’ with top business leaders in the British Museum, as described below in Box 5. The quality and originality of BITC events have been masterminded for three decades by Gail Greengross, now BITC’s Creative Director.

Another example of BITC’s showmanship came with the launch of Al Gore’s famous movie: **An Inconvenient Truth**. BITC was offered the opportunity of a special showing at a central London cinema. Rather than just inviting business leaders, BITC made the invites ‘Plus-1’, but with the proviso that the ‘Plus-1’ should be a teenage relative. After the special showing of the new movie, BITC moderated a discussion with the audience, which came alive when the compere (then CEO Julia Cleverdon) started to call on the young people in the audience to share their perspectives.

Showmanship is also demonstrated in the way BITC has

relied on story-telling over the years to communicate its key ideas and messages. It is probably no coincidence that Julia Cleverdon has been such a popular presenter on platforms like ‘Fifty Lessons’, where business leaders describe significant incidents in their careers, and then draw out the lessons they’ve gained from the incident. In the words of one commentator, **“Julia is one of nature’s story-tellers. She has been able to engage even business leaders who are normally numbers-driven to their back teeth!”** Showmanship continues with BITC’s embrace of digital in the 2010s and, for example, the launch of ‘The Lens UK Responsible Business Podcast’ in collaboration with One Young World, which matches current and future business leaders in searching conversations.

BOX 5: CONVERSATIONS AT THE BRITISH MUSEUM

The ‘Conversations’ ran in 2004-2005. They involved different business leaders, including Niall Fitzgerald, then Chairman of Reuters, and previously CEO of Unilever; Allan Leighton, then Chairman of Royal Mail Group; Sir Martin Sorrell, then CEO of WPP; and Lord Browne, then CEO of bp. Each session involved the CEO choosing examples from the British Museum collection to illustrate his chosen themes of business responsibility.

Niall Fitzgerald, for example, chose African artefacts to make the business case for business engagement in Africa. John Browne used museum exhibits from Venice to tell the story of Venice and lessons for sustainability, memorably asking why Venetian power waned and concluding that it was when the merchant class grew complacent and stopped

asking, “**What is the news on the Rialto?**” In other words, when a business, organisation, or society stops being interested in learning, progress, and finding better ways of doing things, it goes into decline. Richard Lambert, the former Editor of The Financial Times, and trustee of the museum, moderated each conversation.

BITC later used a similar concept for a series of evenings at the National Portrait Gallery.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

BITC has spotted and exploited opportunities. One of its greatest skills has been picking up issues early on, putting them on the boardroom table, and helping to make them mainstream. These have often involved challenging conventional views of what are issues for business: for example, pushing businesses to address mental health in the workplace and, more recently, issues like domestic abuse and the role of employers in supporting COVID-19-related bereavement.

Julia Cleverdon (CEO 1992-2008) frequently spoke of the need for the cafetiere and the percolator: the need for top leadership to set the overall, strategic direction: top-down – the cafetiere; but then also the need to empower and engage bottom-up creativity and entrepreneurialism: for ideas to bubble up – the percolator. Julia was renowned for building a culture that encouraged staff to be entrepreneurial: to be percolators. During her tenure, one of the regular routines of the organisation was the Friday Tea, when everyone physically in the Head Office at the end of a Friday afternoon was encouraged to meet up, and staff were encouraged to ‘brag’ about achievements and campaign successes, as well as announce key events coming up. (See Chapter 27 BITC’s Culture).

BITC’s most successful initiatives did not always start out as national programmes but as specific practical examples and projects. Subsequently, some of these were taken broadscale, for example, the Community of St Helen’s Trust, which became a national network of 300+ local enterprise agencies. (See Chapter 3). The Halifax One-Town Partnership (modelled on the example of Lowell, Massachusetts) led to some 12 other public-private-community city partnerships. (See Chapter 5). The East London Education-Business Partnership became a national network of (in its heyday) some 300 such partnerships. (See Chapter 6). BITC learnt from New York City CARES and developed more than 30 local CARES projects around the UK to encourage employee volunteering. In turn, this was exported to Australia, with Melbourne CARES. (See Chapter 17).

A further manifestation of this entrepreneurship is the ability to spot, tap and engage individual business leaders’ passions – e.g. international banker John Studinski’s and, then Barclays’ CEO, John Varley’s commitment to tackling homelessness, which led to their chairing BITC’s ‘Business Action on Homelessness.’ In order to do this, BITC has used the ‘Tupperware’ Principle: persuading current supporters to draw in the next generation of business leaders. This has involved an appeal to hearts and minds, as in HRH The Prince of Wales’s ‘Seeing is Believing’ programme (SIB), which has proved to be a very effective mechanism for engaging senior business leaders for more than 30 years. SIBs take business leaders out of their comfort zone to explore how business can help to tackle a significant societal challenge, such as homelessness or community deprivation.

Entrepreneurship has also been about assembling a range of resources to develop practical solutions for identified social problems, such as affordable rural housing. In the early 1990s, for example, BITC’s work with community entrepreneurs revealed a funding gap that led to BITC’s creating the **Local Investment Fund** (LIF) to offer an early alternative to grant-funding for community organisations. This concept was subsequently taken up and replicated by government. Similarly, BITC spotted a gap in how to persuade businesses to give people with criminal records a second chance. Business in the Community’s (BITC) **Ban the Box** campaign calls on employers to create fair opportunities for ex-offenders to compete for jobs. They can do this by removing the criminal convictions tick box from application forms and by asking about offences later in the recruitment process. **Ban the Box** employers publicly commit to fairly assessing criminal convictions, judging candidates first and foremost on the basis of their skills and suitability for a role, rather than their past mistakes. So far, over 150 employers have signed up to Ban the Box, covering more than one million roles.

An observation from a number of ex-colleagues has been that cash-rich organisations don't feel as innovative or passionate as BITC does. Where you don't need to worry about finding funds, there doesn't seem to be as much focus on impact – many ex-staff commented that, having left, they now understand that this was, in part, what caused the team spirit and sense of 'yes we can.'

BITC has played to the competitive instincts of entrepreneurial businesses with the **Awards for Excellence**, and the various benchmarking Indexes. Companies strive to improve their rankings. When Marks & Spencer was chosen by independent judges as BITC's Company of the Year for the second time in three years (in 2006) the company took out full-page advertisements to celebrate the recognition – and used it to evidence the centrality of its commitment to corporate responsibility as part of its corporate brand values.

PARTNERSHIP

BITC has not been about business replacing the public or voluntary sectors – the emphasis has rather been on the added-value contribution of business, and on cross-sectoral partnerships.

Corporate responsibility is not associated with any one political party or tradition. It is for all seasons. BITC has worked hard to achieve all-party engagement, and active involvement with successive governments. (See Chapter 10). This has included helping to:

(i) shape government ideas (Business Link, Compact, Training and Enterprise Councils); (ii) implement government policies (such as the **New Deal** and initiatives to tackle social exclusion) and (iii) take BITC programmes broadscale through public funding and support e.g. 'Right to Read' to 'Literacy Hour'; and 'Partners in Leadership' (to provide mentors between business leaders and high school head teachers).

Thus, BITC worked with the Thatcher Government whilst simultaneously helping miners' wives' support groups during the miners' strike (1984-1985) and worked with local government of all colours (a number of the 1980s-early 1990s local authority contacts of BITC became Blair government ministers).

Partnership is not just in the sense of BITC not being party political and being able to work with governments of different persuasions in the UK, and in the Nations of the UK, but also in the sense of being able to build trust – both with business and with communities. At its best, BITC has demonstrated an ability to talk simultaneously to the boardrooms of the UK, and to front-line community groups and schools in some of the toughest neighbourhoods in the UK. The continuing focus on Place and the business-community brokerage is a dimension of BITC that sets it apart from other major Corporate Responsibility coalitions, such as BSR or the World Business Council for Sustainable Development.

Interestingly, CSR Europe is also now emphasising a return to its roots in terms of encouraging members to focus more on place too. (It was originally set up in 1995 as the European Business Network for Social Inclusion).

Cath Sermon argues that one of the most-effective of the BITC partnerships has been with Public Health England for BITC's **Health and Wellbeing Campaign** – see below Chapter 22.

BITC HAS ASSISTED SUCCESSIVE GOVERNMENTS:

- David Grayson chaired the National Assessment Panel to establish the network of Business Links and subsequently served two terms as Chair of the Business Link Accreditation Board for the Major and Blair Governments. He also served two terms as Chair of the National Disability Council, established by Parliament, to fight discrimination against disabled Britons.
- Former Managing Director Peter Davies undertook a review of the effectiveness of Education-Business Partnerships (Ebbs) for the government.
- Julia Cleverdon chaired a taskforce for the Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, to engage more businesses with schools.
- Former BITC Chairman, Sir Peter Davis, chaired the government's New Deal Taskforce, and several members from BITC staff and member companies assisted the Prime Minister's Social Exclusion Unit.
- BITC Board members led a number of government reviews over the years, including the Russell Commission on volunteering amongst young people, the Leitch Skills Review, and the Wanless Reviews of Health.
- Ex-BITC Chairman, Sir Mike Rake, led the Government's Commission for Employment and Skills.
- Long-serving BITC executive director, Gail Greengross, was seconded to government to be the Talent and Enterprise Taskforce Campaign Director. Projects include setting up the Generation Talent Campaign, a joint initiative between BITC and The Department for Work and Pensions, to help jobseekers by providing practical help for companies as they promoted their vacancies to the unemployed.
- Ex-BITC Chairman, Mark Price, became a Trade Minister in the Coalition Government.
- Former BITC Chairman Antony Jenkins was appointed Chair of the Institute for Apprenticeships (subsequently the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education).

MEMBERSHIP

30 Founders are still in membership. **Table 1.**

Membership is both sides of the coin: the service, contribution, and value that BITC gives to the member AND the contribution to the movement and sharing of what the member does to inspire others. ‘You lead, and others will follow.’ A key tenet of membership is a commitment to share success and failure – something unsurpassed by this network –. Members can bring programmes that work for them and sponsor them to become something bigger through collaboration hosted by BITC. The broad membership base has enabled the model of BITC to change over the years: it was created initially to enable campaigning, but the lead is now much more aboutvalue for membership.

Importantly though, BITC has resisted the temptation to become a consultancy.

Charitable purpose remains absolutely key – membership is an outcome of engagement, not a means in itself. BITC sees its differential to a consultancy as being the mutual benefit of its services to business and society.

In recent years, the focus has been on significantly strengthening the member base and offer. As a result, the connection to BITC feels much stronger now and is proved by engagement. Today, BITC is more than the sum of the parts: it’s not about BITC – it’s about the collective. A further factor strengthening the link to members is the number of ex-BITC staff now working inside member companies, such as Andrea Callender at Arup, Jo Daniels at Marks & Spencer and Cath Sermon at Phoenix.

TABLE 1

COMPANY NAME 2021	
ASDA	HSBC
Aviva	KPMG
AXA	IBM
Barclays Bank	JLL
bp	Legal & General
Boots	Lloyds Banking Group
British Land	Marks & Spencer
Credit Suisse	Marsh
Currys	NatWest
Diageo	The Post Office
EDF Energy	PwC
EY	Shell
Ford	Tesco
Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer	UBS
GSK	Unilever

RELATIONSHIP

This refers to the relational networks that BITC creates through its ongoing dialogues with a variety of actors in the sustainability world. We see, for example, that the **Health and Wellbeing campaign** was the culmination of years of dialogue (**see the Health and Wellbeing campaign case study: Chapter 22 below**).

This also connects with the NURTURE element of the ACTION mnemonic from 1991. (**Chapter 9**). We recognise that nurturing relational networks is part of the BITC ‘secret sauce/source.’

We see relationship in operation in the interplay between CEO and main company contact – BITC now tries to keep the main contact informed so they aren’t door blockers but open them up and see the benefit of having the BITC relationship to help build further engagement within their company.

Successive BITC CEOs have emphasised the critical importance of maintaining the relationship at CEO level and of not allowing delegation on ‘Seeing is Believing’ visits/Leadership Teams, etc.

Strong relationships allow personal passion to be a driver for leadership and thereby to access leaders’ ‘address books.’

BITC, when at its best, has been confident enough to prevent businesses from ‘parachuting in’ to an area of an issue. **“Everything to do with BITC works best when it is based on listening,”** argues one long-serving former executive. Although some critical friends comment that this has not always been observed by BITC itself!

Relationship has also been about BITC’s understanding when privately to play ‘Cop and Coach’ with member companies; for example, not using the CR Index to shame but to encourage more to participate. (Despite the seeming allure of cheap headlines!).

Very practically, the relationship with the BITC Chairman of the day worked far better when there was dedicated help assigned to support the role. Experienced BITC staffers cite particularly positive examples in the past: Allen Sheppard and his long-serving Executive Assistant Brenda Wilson; Sir Mike Rake, his PA Paula August and his adviser Joanna Lewis; Sir Stuart Rose, his PA Julie Phyll and the quasi-chief of staff role played by Sacha Berneji; Lord Mark Price and Zoe Marson.

The longevity of a number of media partnerships for the Annual Report, Special Reports, Awards Partnerships, etc has crucially depended on quality relationships with the media concerned.

These seven, interlinking and mutually-reinforcing Enduring Success Factors, might be summarised as **Table 2 below**.

The Enduring Success Factors can be seen at work in the way that BITC has developed and refined over the years, its ‘toolkit’ to engage businesses on particular issues, or to change core business behaviours. This toolkit includes ‘Seeing is Believing’, various benchmarking tools, such as the Indexes (now the ‘Responsible Business Tracker’), ‘Awards for Excellence’, Leadership Teams and campaigns, periodic outreach to smaller businesses, ‘The Lens UK Responsible Business Podcast’, thought leadership, and Good Practice guidance. In the following pages, we trace the evolution of BITC over the last 40 years, some of the memorable moments and milestones, and the development of a number of the major campaigns.

TABLE 2: SEVEN CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

<p>LEADERSHIP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Engaging personally CEOs, C-suite, boards• Business-led, Princely-inspired: unique contribution of Prince Charles over almost 40 years• Regularly refreshing agenda for business action	<p>PARTNERSHIP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mobilising businesses to work with businesses and other sectors• Collaboration with governments over 40 years• Engaging businesses with communities
<p>APPRENTICESHIP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• On the ground brokerage• Networking: Tupperware model• Identifying, codifying & disseminating good practice	<p>MEMBERSHIP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Credibility from long-term relationships with hundreds of companies• Capacity-building members & harnessing members' expertise & resources for BITC/communities• A charity not a consultancy
<p>SHOWMANSHIP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Long-term media partnerships• Quality & creativity of events• Seeing is Believing as unique recruitment mechanism for 30+ years	<p>RELATIONSHIP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Patient, long-term dialogue on issues• Talent-spot and identify personal passions/business interests• Not signing Non Disclosures - it's about contribution and sharing/working collaboratively
<p>ENTREPRENEURSHIP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Spotting & promoting new Responsible business issues• Incubator for new initiatives• Flexibility to replicate one-off projects	

PART TWO:

BITC@40 – PROLOGUE

2 DECEMBER 2021 – SALESFORCE TOWER, BISHOPSGATE, LONDON

It is a crisp, winter's afternoon. The Omicron variant of COVID-19 has started to spread in London. In the Salesforce Tower in the heart of The City – one of the tallest buildings in London – a group of leading CEOs and other prominent business figures are talking about Climate Change, how to tackle inequalities, and the roles and responsibilities of modern business, in front of a socially-distanced audience of young managers and a virtual audience, watching remotely. HRH The Prince of Wales has just spoken via video to the meeting. It is the Annual General Meeting and conference of a not-for-profit called 'Business in the Community.'

This is the story of how the initiative of a handful of British business leaders 40 years ago has spurred a national, and indeed global, movement championing the positive power that business, done well, can have in society. What is this organisation? Where did it come from? How did it acquire such status and convening power? And how can it now generate a far greater sense of urgency amongst businesses generally to increase greatly the quality and the extent of their positive Social, Environmental and Economic impacts?

CHAMPIONING THE POSITIVE POWER THAT BUSINESS, DONE WELL, CAN HAVE IN SOCIETY

CHAPTER 1: BITC@40 – THE CHANGING CONTEXT

Interest today in Corporate Responsibility (CR), Sustainability, ESG, Responsible Business, Purpose-led business – whatever your term of choice – is pervasive. There are daily stories in The Financial Times and other business media about the responsibilities of business, poor ethical behaviour, Circular Economy, or sustainable innovation. Even more importantly, interest has gone beyond the business press to mainstream media and social media.

There are many reasons for this increasing interest. These include the sheer urgency of global problems like Climate Change, biodiversity loss, inequalities, and human rights abuses. There are increased expectations of how business should behave – from employees, investors, consumers, governments, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs); increased global media scrutiny of business as a result of greater business power in most societies arising from privatisation, liberalisation, and consequent globalisation. Another significant factor has been the emergence of business-led corporate responsibility coalitions across the world. There is now some form of coalition in each of the 100 largest economies in the world.

CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY COALITIONS

These intermediaries may be local, national, or international. They may be open to any type of business or may be focussed on a particular size or business sector. These CR intermediaries may seek to cover the entire CR agenda or to concentrate on a particular aspect, such as Climate action, ethical sourcing, or encouraging a more diverse workforce. **See Box 6.**

The distinctive features of these coalitions are:

- composed mainly, or exclusively, of for-profit businesses (directly or through business membership organisations)
- a directing board composed predominantly, or only, of businesspeople
- a mission to promote responsible business practice
- and core funded primarily from business

Most of the national coalitions emerged in the late-1990s and the 2000s.

Established in 1982, Business in the Community (BITC) is today the largest and third oldest of the national, generalist Corporate Responsibility coalitions (only Philippines Business for Social Progress founded in 1976 and one of the forerunners of South Africa’s National Business Initiative created in 1979 are older)¹⁹. So, in the early years, there was no sense of being part of any bigger, international movement – beyond drawing on US experience.

BOX 6: TYPES OF CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY COALITION

BUSINESS TO BUSINESS (B2B)

- General corporate responsibility coalitions of businesses, both national, such as Business in the Community in the UK and Maala: Israel Business for Social Responsibility, and international business coalitions such as BSR (formerly known as Business for Social Responsibility) and the World Business Council for Sustainable Development: WBCSD
- Industry-specific coalitions, such as the Responsible Business Alliance, which focuses on worker rights and wellbeing in the electronics supply chain, and the collaborative platform Drive Sustainability (DS), facilitated by the international, generalist coalition CSR Europe. Drive Sustainability now has a common strategy and action plan for a circular and sustainable automotive value chain. Similarly, the generalist coalition BSR hosts a number of industry-specific collaboration initiatives for its member companies. Most industry sectors now have some form of pre-competitive coalition around sustainable development as well.
- Initiatives within existing trade associations, or spun out from trade associations, such as the sustainability programmes of the Consumer Goods Forum, the Plastic Waste and Food Waste coalitions, a Global Food Safety Initiative, and the Collaboration for Healthier Lives Coalition.

BUSINESSES AND OTHER PARTS OF SOCIETY

- Multi-stakeholder initiatives between multiple businesses, NGOs, and other players, such as governments, development agencies, and universities, for instance, for improving social and environmental performance in consumer goods, electronics, and apparel supply chains, like the work of the Fair Labour Association and the Ethical Trading Initiative.
- Issue-specific coalitions of businesses, and others formed to foster collaboration to address a specific sustainability issue, such as the CEO Water Mandate convened by the UN Global Compact, or initiatives tackling corruption and money laundering, such as Transparency International’s sector and country-based Integrity Pacts and The Maritime Anti-Corruption Network (MACN)

Source: The Sustainable Business Handbook: Grayson D, Coulter C and Lee M (Kogan Page 2022)

BITC’S EVOLVING SCOPE

The ‘canvas’ for BITC has evolved and expanded over the years, from encouraging businesses to contribute to economic regeneration in specific localities in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland (and in Scotland, through the sister organisation Scottish Business in the Community, which only merged with BITC in 2016), through to promoting ‘corporate community involvement’, to ‘corporate community investment’, to ‘corporate social responsibility’, to ‘responsible business’, to ‘sustainability’, and ‘purpose-led’, and ‘regenerative business’ today.

The focus began with regeneration, principally through companies supporting local enterprise agencies with cash, secondees (executives on loan), premises, equipment, expertise, and employee volunteering. This was described as corporate community involvement – later amended to ‘corporate community investment’ – to signify that business might gain benefits (such as enhanced reputation or improved staff morale and skills) which would not necessarily accrue from the earlier, ad hoc corporate philanthropy.

As BITC’s attention broadened to the way that business carries out its core activities and the impacts it has in the workplace, the marketplace, on the environment, as well as in the community, the language switched to ‘corporate social responsibility’ (CSR). Over the years, ‘CSR’ has become devalued in meaning as it has been used in different and even contradictory ways – but is still frequently used to describe community involvement programmes and charitable giving by companies. BITC itself tried to address this problem of definitions, first by dropping ‘social’, referring instead to ‘corporate responsibility’ (also arguing that this was more widely understood to include environmental impacts) and then moved to the term ‘responsible business’, since

many people familiar with the US business environment interpreted ‘corporate responsibility’ as more to do with ‘corporate governance,’ The latter is understood to mean, not just particular activities and programmes but how the business aspires to behave and operate overall. Today, there is increased emphasis on sustainability and on being a purpose-led, regenerative business. The broader canvas has been reflected, not just in the language used by BITC but also by the periodic updates to the mission and purpose of the organisation – the changes in wording over the years are instructive. We have added emphasis to highlight what seems to us to be important points of focus. **See Box 7.**

BITC itself had to add the ‘T’ when lawyers for BIC biro threatened legal action for infringement of its name as Business in the Community’s profile grew in the 1980s and its original diminutive form BIC came to the notice of the pen manufacturers.

BOX 7: THE CHANGING MISSION OF BITC 1982-2022

ORIGINS:

‘BiC is an association of major UK businesses committed to working in partnership with each other, with local and central Government, voluntary organisations, and trade unions to promote corporate social responsibility and to revitalise economic life in local communities’ (1988)

1990S

1990: ‘To make **community involvement** a natural part of successful business practice, and to increase the quality and extent of business activity in the community.’ (BITC Annual Report 1990)

1997: ‘To support the **social and economic regeneration** of communities by raising the quality and extent of business involvement and by making that involvement a natural part of successful business practice.’

‘To **inspire business** to increase the quality and extent of their contribution to social and economic regeneration by making corporate social responsibility an essential part of business excellence.’” (adopted before 1998)

2002: Business in the Community is a unique movement of companies across the UK committed to continually improving their positive impact on society

All members are asked to make a commitment to action to:

- Integrate responsible business practice throughout their business
- Impact through collaborative action to tackle disadvantage
- Inspire, innovate, and lead by sharing best practice

2021: Business in the Community, The Prince’s Responsible Business Network.
We work with our members to continually improve their **responsible business practices**, leveraging the collective impact for the benefit of communities.

THE BRITISH CONTEXT

Over the past 40 years, business has become a much bigger part of British society. Britain was, of course, the first country to privatise significantly in the 1980s as BA (British Airways), British Gas, BT (British Telecom), the water companies, electricity companies, and many other state-owned enterprises came under private control. Many of the most prominent and influential business leaders of the time, such as Allen Sheppard (the then CEO of Grand Metropolitan, later Diageo), were clear that the quid pro quo for a smaller state was a more activist business community. Indeed, as Hector Laing, Chairman of United Biscuits (later Lord Laing of Dunphail), and BITC's third Chairman was to observe, speaking of Margaret Thatcher's policies:

“I support this Government's policies –they have given business back its freedom, along with the discipline of failure if it is unprofitable. But freedom demands responsibility, and if we want to continue to enjoy our freedom, we must demonstrate that a buoyant economy and business success go hand in hand with a caring society; that as our profits increase so too does our contribution to improving the condition of disadvantaged areas and people.”²⁰

Business is much higher profile today – many business leaders have become media celebrities. Popular television programmes about business, such as **Dragon's Den** and **The Apprentice**, point to the public's heightened interest in business. Not surprisingly, therefore, interest in how businesses make their money, and their impacts on society and on the environment, has grown too.

In retrospect, BITC has benefited from a British business culture somewhere between the continental European social model and the US free-market voluntarism. Arguably, globalisation produced a greater convergence in these very different models of capitalism, but the UK's early adoption of responsible business ideas reflects the prevailing UK business

culture. Many business leaders felt both a moral duty, and a business imperative, to act. In the words of one early BITC Board member **“you cannot have prosperous High Streets without prosperous back streets.”** Geography has also been important for BITC: corporate UK remains heavily concentrated in London. Engaging a critical mass of business leaders based in close proximity is easier in the UK than in the United States, or Australia, where corporate headquarters are more dispersed across the country.

The operating environment for business, and therefore for BITC, has changed dramatically in the past 40 years, and continues to do so. Patterns of business ownership have shifted markedly – with, for example, many more businesses now owned by Private Equity firms – many of which are internationally-based.

Global connectivity, through 24-hour news channels, the Internet, and cheap air travel, means that what were once events 'in far-away countries, of which we know little and care less,'²¹ are increasingly happening in places we have visited ourselves, or have friends and colleagues with family living and working. One only has to look at the media coverage of the Ukraine crisis to see this. The complexity, turbulence, and speed of business today as more and more have global operations, means more businesses are directly impacted, whether by poor labour standards in suppliers' factories or by employees having relatives affected by increasingly frequent, extreme weather conditions. More companies are doing business in regions with weak governance or where local rules conflict with international standards on human rights, creating ethical dilemmas and reputational risks. Indeed, the current Russian aggression in Ukraine is starkly demonstrating many of these challenges in real time.

Furthermore, it is not only that business is far more global, but its structure has dramatically changed, thanks to liberalisation, privatisation, and consequent globalisation. In the first ten years of BITC, regional head-quartered companies made up the bulk of membership. Now head-quartered companies are global, and even some household company names are owned by Private Equity firms. More member companies are focused internationally and are therefore looking to international Corporate Responsibility coalitions like BSR and the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD).

Alongside this, there are higher expectations of business – investors, consumers, employees, media, and campaigning organisations all now have more information available. Societies are generally less deferential to those in authority, and businesses specifically face more organisations campaigning to make them more accountable²².

AN EVOLVING ECOSYSTEM IN THE UK

BITC has not operated in isolation in the UK. It has been part of a rich, if sometimes confusing and overlapping, tapestry of national and local organisations, such as the Action Resource Centre (set up in 1973), **Arts & Business** (formerly ABSA: the Association for Business Sponsorship of the Arts, created in 1976 to encourage arts-business partnerships, which became part of BITC in 2012); the Institute of Business Ethics (established in 1986 to champion the highest standards of ethical behaviour in business); Common Purpose (created by Julia Middleton in 1990 to encourage the development of active citizens through joint leadership development of people from business, the public, and the voluntary/community sectors); Tomorrow's Company (formed in 1994 by Mark Goyder and business leaders involved in the 1993-1994 RSA Inquiry into Tomorrow's Company); HRH The Prince of Wales's

'Accounting for Sustainability' (established in 2004 to transform finance to make sustainable business, business as usual); and Blueprint for Better Business (founded in 2011 to promote purpose-led business). Particularly since the Millennium, there has been an explosion in the number of issue-specific and industry-sector-specific responsible business coalitions. Whilst generally internationally focused, a number of these are based in the UK. Additionally, well-resourced and high-profile organisations, like the World Economic Forum, are increasingly focused on sustainability and the responsibilities of business.

As business became more global, so BITC's members looked more internationally and built relationships with other business responsibility and sustainability initiatives; and so, BITC became one of several partners for them. This sometimes also led to a collaboration between these organisations, but also to competition for business leadership attention, engagement and funding. Whereas in the 1980s, there were hardly any organisations like BITC, today there are many others 'on the case' for Responsible Business. Indeed, in 2022, whilst BITC celebrates 40 years, BSR and WBCSD are celebrating 30 years each. It would be an interesting conversation to explore what these three stalwarts of promoting responsible and sustainable business, with their combined century, have collectively learnt – and what others might learn from them.

A timeline at the end of this publication summarises developments in BITC 1982-2022, alongside developments in Responsible Business more broadly, and some of the key events in business, politics, and society each year.

CHAPTER 2: “IT TOOK A RIOT!” – ORIGINS AND EARLY YEARS OF BITC

“It took a riot!” So began Michael Heseltine’s report to the Thatcher Government in 1982 on the condition of Britain’s urban areas. It is commonly assumed that it was in response to those same urban riots in Brixton, Merseyside (and elsewhere in 1981) that Business in the Community was formed. Certainly, the urban unrest was a powerful stimulus, but the initial prompt was an Anglo-American Conference held at the Civil Service Staff College at Sunningdale in 1980, hosted by Tom King MP, then one of Heseltine’s junior ministers at the Department of Environment. The conference had been planned by the previous Labour Environment Secretary of State, Peter Shore MP, so even in its beginnings, we see BITC’s cross-party connections. King invited a group of American business leaders, involved in the urban regeneration of Baltimore and Detroit in the 1970s, to share their experiences with British counterparts. Strongly encouraged by Tom King, some of the British business leaders decided, as a result, to create what became BITC.

As Tom King explained in a memo dated July 1981 to Margaret Thatcher, retrieved from the Thatcher archives in Cambridge:

“Subsequently, I invited Sir Alastair Pilkington to lead a working group to consider ways in which industry and commerce might become more closely involved with local communities and in particular with local authorities and voluntary bodies. DOE [Department of Environment] provided the secretariat with support from bp and IBM.”

The King memo attaches a list of the founding business leaders²³. **See right:**

BUSINESS IN THE COMMUNITY	
LIST OF THOSE WHO ATTENDED THE INAUGURAL DINNER	
Sir Alastair Pilkington FRS	- Chairman of Working Group on Community Involvement the body which has instigated the setting up of Business in the Community.
David Sieff	- Member of Pilkington Working Group, Director Marks and Spencer Ltd.
Lord Sieff	- Chairman, Marks and Spencer Ltd.
Lord Caldecote	- Chairman, Finance for Industry Ltd.
Lord Carr	- Chairman, The Prudential Corporation.
E R Nixon	- Chairman, IBM UK Ltd.
Lord Weinstock	- Chairman, The General Electric Co Ltd.
David Sarre (vice Sir David Steel)	- Personnel Director, British Petroleum Ltd.
Bill Bowman (vice Sir Hector Laing)	- Personnel Director, United Biscuits Ltd.
Peter Moullin (vice Sir Derek Ezra)	- Member of Pilkington Working Group, Deputy Secretary National Coal Board.
Lord Byers	- Marks and Spencer Ltd.
Owen Heald (vice John Raisman)	- Director Shell UK Ltd.
Charles Green (vice Robin Leigh Pemberton)	- Chief General Manager, National Westminster Bank representing Committee of Clearing Banks.

BITC’s roots are also in the Action Resource Centre (ARC²⁴ – with whom the organisation was to merge in 1995) as well as Project Fullemploy²⁵ (founded by a successful businessman Stephen O’Brien in 1976) to encourage business to tackle the problems of lack of skills and unemployment amongst Black urban youth. BITC was also to be inspired by the heritage of the Industrial Society²⁶, from whom a number of key personnel were later to come to BITC, including BITC’s second CEO, Julia Cleverdon, as well as Catherine Carruthers, Michael Hyde, and Sir Peter White, amongst others.

These early pioneers recognised, at the beginning of the 1980s, that British business faced a massive shake-out. Already in 1977, the then head of Shell, Charles Carmichael Pocock, had delivered a seminal lecture at the Ashridge Management School in which he predicted that great businesses like Shell would employ far fewer people in the future and therefore had obligations to help society manage the resulting restructuring by helping individuals to re-skill and by helping small businesses to start to grow²⁷. **See Box 8.**

BOX 8: ORIGINS AND EARLY YEARS OF BITC

MEGATRENDS:	IMMEDIATE DRIVERS:	EARLY YEARS SURVIVAL:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• International economic competition• Declining Industries• Automation• Thatcherite restructuring of British economy• A.C.Pocock/Pilkington messages• Urban deprivation• Racial unrest• Mrs Thatcher’s “quid pro quo”• - if you want a smaller state...• Available models from US<ul style="list-style-type: none">- public-private-community partnerships- urban regeneration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ST Helens, Lenta & other eggs• Sunningdale conference• Added urgency with<ul style="list-style-type: none">- 1981 urban riots	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Corporate “club”<ul style="list-style-type: none">- have to make work• Positive examples cf• Mass unemployment• Credibility of HRH• & later:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Periodic refreshes- Updated agenda

LOCAL ENTERPRISE AGENCIES

Sir Alastair Pilkington, the first Chairman of BITC, suggested that the new organisation might help to replicate what he had done in St Helen's on Merseyside. Pilkington was CEO of a family glass-making business. He had invented a revolutionary glass-making technology, which boosted the company's fortunes. The downside was that far fewer employees were needed with the new technology. At that stage, Pilkington dominated St Helen's, which was effectively a one-company town. Pilkington needed to keep the motivation and commitment of the remaining staff when it was laying off their family members, friends, and neighbours. The solution was the Community of St Helen's Trust, a non-profit organisation created to help local people acquire new skills and to support small business creation. Pilkington provided premises, staffing, and funding for the new agency. In his book **The Pathfinder**, long-term Pilkington's employee, Bill Humphreys, who became the first director of the Trust, describes its origins and growth.

Quite separately, the Somerset Small Industries Group had started in Bridgewater; Herbert Loeb, an industrialist, and Allan Gibb, a small-business academic, had formed Enterprise North in the mid-1970s; a group of major employers had formed the London Enterprise Agency (LEntA) in 1979; and (what is now the longest-surviving agency) Project North East (now PNE Group) began in 1980. Together, these enterprise agencies or trusts offered models of how business could second staff and provide cash, surplus premises, expertise, and could open doors to other large businesses to stimulate new job and business creation, typically in partnership with local authorities.

THE FIRST EXECUTIVE TEAM

The putative BITC started life in offices provided by 3i with secondees from early supporters, including Philip Gibbs, Marks & Spencer; Tony Pelling, Civil Service; Christopher Norman Butler, Barclays Bank; Warren Baghurst, IBM; Ralph Spreckley, Whitbread; and John Guest (a bit later, from Cadbury). They were initially coordinated by Denys 'Tiny' Milne, – bp Oil's ex-Managing Director. The emergent BITC Board, however, quickly appointed one of their number, Stephen O'Brien, as CEO, and history has subsequently recorded Stephen as BITC's first CEO.

One of Stephen's first recruits was a young campaigner, Cathy Ashton. Cathy recalls entering what was initially a very old-fashioned, hierarchical, rather chauvinist environment.

Despite the inauspicious start, Cathy Ashton was excited by Stephen O'Brien's vision of the positive role that business could play in helping to tackle profound social and economic problems. Stephen later spelt out some of that vision in a carefully crafted letter to HRH The Prince of Wales, in April 1985, inviting him to become the President of the growing organisation:

"Business in the Community was really set up to be a catalyst and so we are actively involved in setting up local initiatives, leaving the longer-term management to the members of the partnerships once they have been established. Our task is to encourage and persuade companies to be involved and to enable members of local communities, who would not normally have combined, to come together with a common purpose. I suspect that the rapid growth in our work, owes much to the fact that there is, behind so much public rhetoric, a real yearning for partnership and for breaking down the barriers which exist in so many corners of our society."

As Cathy Ashton recently recalled: **"Stephen was fascinating! He wanted to do stuff! BITC could easily have become a staid organisation just pushing old-fashioned corporate philanthropy. But Stephen was determined to transform the fledgling organisation into a powerhouse of Public-Private-Community Partnerships, and he set about recruiting allies to help him."**

Apart from Cathy Ashton herself, these 'allies' were to include Beverley Barnard (to work on race equality); Robert Davies (who was seconded to BITC by the National Council of Voluntary Organisations: NCVO in 1984 and quickly became deputy CEO); David Grayson (the co-founder of Project North East) in 1987, initially to work on enterprise; Julia Cleverdon (from the Industrial Society) in 1988, originally to work on education; and Graham Bann (from Fullemploy) in 1989, who began his BITC career fundraising for enterprise agencies, but like the other recruits, quickly took on a much-wider portfolio.

Before then, however, the nascent BITC had faced-off a challenge from the CBI – the employers federation – which, in 1983, set up a CBI Special Programmes Unit (SPU) under James Cooke with a regeneration brief suspiciously akin to BITC's. After a tricky few months, a solution was found with the integration of the **SPU** into BITC – albeit with a change of BITC Chair from Alastair Pilkington to Lord Carr, then chairing the insurer, Prudential. The CBI Director-General of the day, thereafter, sat on the BITC Board and generally worked well with BITC.

CHAPTER 3: “BUSINESS IN THE COMMUNITY – THE NATIONAL UMBRELLA FOR LOCAL ENTERPRISE AGENCIES 1982-92

As the restructuring of large companies and traditional industries intensified during the early 1980s, through the Thatcher Government’s economic and trade union reforms, BITC first set about replicating the enterprise agency model. BITC’s push to promote the enterprise agencies was boosted when the then Small Business Minister David Trippier MP announced government incentives: including cash on a declining scale over three years to match rising business contributions (a Local Enterprise Agency Grant Scheme). There was also LEAPS (Local Enterprise Agencies Projects Scheme) in parallel with the previous scheme: with LEAPS, the government would match-fund private-sector contributions to innovative projects to promote enterprise and to help small businesses start up and grow.

Thus incentivised, the informal ‘Trippier – BITC roadshow’ travelled around the country to persuade local businesspeople to get involved in regeneration initiatives based on the enterprise agency model.

BITC’s ability to help establish local enterprise agencies was helped significantly by the appointment of the first group of BITC Regional Directors (RDs). They were all secondees, like Tony Weddle (East Midlands); George Pragnall (North West – from British Aerospace); Neville Martin (North East – from Marks & Spencer); Tony Shillingford (Eastern – from British Coal); John Hyatt (Greater London – from the Department of Employment); and Gary Herbert (South West – from CBI Special Programmes Unit). Several moved onto the BITC payroll at the end of their secondment. Some stayed active in their adopted regions many years after retirement from BITC. Neville Martin, for example, remained on the board of Project North East (PNE Group) until 2015.

Stephen O’Brien sees the appointment of the Regional Directors as also helping BITC overcome a perceived London-centric perspective and get a better understanding of community wants and needs around the country. O’Brien told the June 1985 BITC Board meeting that 75% of total BITC staff time was then spent on developing the enterprise agency and local partnership movement.

TABLE 3: NUMBER OF LOCAL ENTERPRISE AGENCIES IN EXISTENCE

1981	1983	1985	1987
4	100	196	300+

OTHER ENTERPRISE AGENCY CHAMPIONS

BITC was not alone in promoting the enterprise agency model. In 1981, the EU’s European Social Fund started well-funded demonstration projects in Wigan and in Tyne & Wear. British Steel (Industry) and later British Coal (Enterprise) – job-creation agencies established as subsidiaries of the state-owned parents – became major supporters of the Local Enterprise Agencies (LEAs) in steel and coal-closure areas, respectively. Nevertheless, by 1987, it was BITC that was acknowledged as the ‘umbrella’ for more than 300 LEAs. Each LEA was fiercely independent. Each had its own board of local businesspeople and local authority representatives, and its own strategy for dealing with job and business generation. Nevertheless, most LEAs did look to BITC for leadership and support. The BITC Enterprise Division – with financial and moral support from the major national corporate supporters of the LEAs (the banks, the oil companies, firms like Marks & Spencer, Whitbread, Legal and General, et al) and from government – produced ‘how to’ guides and directories of LEAs summarising what services each provided as well as sponsors and key personnel. BITC found secondees from business to staff the agencies, ran training courses for new and established LEA directors with the Durham University Business School (DUBS) starting in 1985, and sought to enthuse more business participation, both locally and nationally, through regular articles in the national media, speeches, and a regular ‘Enterprise World’ newspaper.

The DUBS Small Business Centre, created and led for many years by an entrepreneurial academic and passionate northerner, Prof Allan Gibb, was to become synonymous with its parent business school and, indeed, eclipsed it in the eyes of many for several years. Allan Gibb and the DUBS Small Business Centre were a powerful influence on civil servants and successive ministers, as well as on BITC, the enterprise agencies, and the LEAs’ corporate and public sector sponsors.

In consultation with both the major LEA sponsors, and the most active LEA CEOs, the Enterprise Division ran a series of national conferences, starting with one in Durham in 1988, both for agency staff and for the volunteer LEA chairmen and sponsors. It was sponsored by Shell, who also provided a number of the keynote plenary speakers, including Joop de Vries from the renowned Shell Scenario Planning Team; Joop offered delegates a global vision of how economies and societies might develop during the following decade. On the back of the conference, BITC published **The Future for Local Enterprise Agencies** and started an early version of certification for individual small business advisers (adopted and expanded by government almost a decade later).

In 1989, BITC took over the newly built London Arena in London Docklands for an LEA 10th anniversary celebration with the Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher. At this event, BITC announced that Sir Kit McMahon, Chairman of the Midland Bank (now part of HSBC), would lead a group of top business leaders to champion the LEAs and would help them raise more sponsorship under the banner, ‘Enterprise Works.’

Other members of the Enterprise Division in those years included Malcom Green, Gerry Jones, Rani King, Peter Quine, and Tim Walby.

BITC formally ceased to act as ‘the national umbrella organisation for local enterprise agencies’ and handed over to a new National Federation of Local Enterprise Agencies in 1992²⁸.

BOX 9: DAVID GRAYSON REFLECTS ON HIS TIME AS BITC ENTERPRISE DIRECTOR:

By the time Stephen O'Brien asked me to take on responsibility for BITC's work with the 300+ local enterprise agencies at the end of 1987, I had already spent almost a decade thinking about, and working on, enterprise promotion and local enterprise development: two years+ preparing the launch of Project North East (PNE) in Newcastle and six years running PNE, alongside David Irwin, when we started a number of innovative job and enterprise-creation projects (and got to know the rest of the very lively North East small business support scene). I had also been travelling the country, researching, and writing up LEDIS articles (Local Economic Development Information Service) – two A4-page sheets profiling innovative local projects and programmes, targeted at local authority economic development units, businesses, enterprise agencies, and so on.

I was also co-chairing a national Education for Enterprise Network, which brought together grassroots projects to help young entrepreneurs. I had made several trips to the US to study inner-city regeneration and local economic development, including as the first German Marshall Fund Employment Fellow. So, I knew the issues and many of the people involved in the LEAs very well indeed. In post, I continued to visit agencies

very regularly, to speak on each of the executive education programmes for LEA directors, to run at the Durham University Business School (DUBS), with government funding, and to meet with corporate sponsors of the LEAs. We set up a system of regional and national fora to consult with the agencies; we worked with them, and sponsors, to articulate a vision for the Future of Local Enterprise Agencies; and we launched a fundraising campaign to support them: 'Enterprise Works.' What I learnt from all of this was the crucial importance of getting out and about and of listening constantly, and the value of spotting/ making connections between different agencies, sponsors, and other partners. It was a hectic but fun period. I remember attending one anniversary celebration for a local enterprise agency. After my speech, the wife of the director came up to me and said: **"I don't know what you have done to my husband, but he is a changed man! He is full of energy. It's as though he has a new lease of life since he was seconded to run this agency!"** It was not a unique experience. A number of secondees told me themselves that they felt energised and that they had a sense of purpose again.

CHAPTER 4: “AND NOW FOR THOSE INNER CITIES” – EARLY BROADENING OF THE BITC AGENDA 1987-92

In June 1987, the Thatcher Government won a comfortable majority for a third consecutive term. On election night, a jubilant Margaret Thatcher stood in Tory Party HQ and declared “and now for those inner cities.” Ever-vigilant to advance the BITC agenda, the CEO – Stephen O'Brien – immediately wrote to Mrs Thatcher, congratulating her on her magnanimity for recognising, in her victory hour, the needs of Britain's urban areas. Whether Mrs Thatcher had, in fact, been thinking of how to improve inner cities at that moment – or making a partisan statement that the Tories had to win back the inner-city seats they had lost – is unclear. O'Brien, though, persuaded the head of the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit – Brian Griffiths – to commission a paper from BITC on how business could work with local and central government and with community organisations to revitalise the inner cities. BITC quickly convened a series of breakfast meetings with the most involved of the corporate CEOs and chairs to help draft the paper – which came back later from No 10 with ticks and positive annotations from Mrs Thatcher.

In fact, under the direction of BITC's then-deputy CEO Robert Davies, the organisation had already published **Business and the Inner Cities: How the business community can work with others to promote better opportunities in our inner cities**. This was first published in May 1986 and extended and reprinted in August 1987, with the support of bp. This highlighted a number of concrete ways that businesses could support regeneration, backed in each instance by numerous examples.

- The recommended actions included the following:
- Locating and investing in urban areas
 - Action through employment and training
 - Through purchasing
 - Through encouraging employee participation in local public affairs
 - Action through local partnerships, such as for enterprise support
 - And through community and charity support.²⁹

BITC’S FIRST LEADERSHIP TEAMS: TARGET TEAMS

Later that year, at its Annual General Meeting in Birmingham, BITC announced eight ‘Target teams’ of business leaders to explore the particular aspects of urban regeneration that had been identified in the dialogue with No 10 as being areas where business ideas and innovation would be especially welcome:

1. Finance for enterprise
2. Local purchasing, subsequently repositioned as partnership sourcing
3. Marketing business action to SMEs
4. Urban regeneration
5. Voluntary Sector initiatives
6. Enterprise development
7. Education partnerships
8. Priority hiring/customised training programmes for the unskilled and unemployed.

Local Purchasing was chaired by John Neill, CEO of Unipart. They developed a theatrical show to promote the value of large companies working with suppliers to improve their capacity and potential.

The marketing business action to SMEs was chaired by Mike Heron, then General Manager of Unilever. It ran a region-by-region direct-marketing campaign to draw many more SMEs into community involvement.

The Voluntary Sector Initiative, chaired by banker and businessman Claude Hankes Drielsma, who was then also chairing the Action Resource Centre, was created as a forum to involve several charities (such as ARC, Fullemploy, and Young Enterprise) in the work of BITC and to improve collaboration between these different business-backed organisations.

Enterprise Development, chaired by Kent Price, then CEO of the Chloride Group, looked at how to scale up some of the emerging pilot projects around stimulating inner-city enterprises.

The Education Leadership Team was initially focused on promoting the pilot of the East London Business Partnership, modelled on the Boston Compact (which BITC had visited in 1986). A form of The Education-Business Leadership Team continues to this day (now as part of a broader Employment and Skills agenda), albeit with priorities that have evolved many times over the last 35 years. See Chapter 6 below: **Education, Education, Education!**

The Priority Hiring Team, under the leadership of David Rowland and David Elstein (then at Thames Television), developed a series of practical ‘how to’ kits for employers prepared to collaborate with skills agencies and local community groups on ‘pre-recruitment’ skills-training programmes. The idea was that if (say) a major retailer, or construction firm, knew that it would be moving to an area of high unemployment, it would work in advance with local organisations to identify unskilled-but-motivated individuals who could be helped through a customised training programme to ensure that, when the employer was ready to recruit, the individuals would have the requisite skills they needed. This approach involved changing the way that both employers and publicly funded, skills-training agencies co-operated. The recession of the late-1980s and early-1990s delayed the major roll-out of the programme. Customised training was, though, a model that the leading British retailer Tesco was to pursue in the opening of its supermarket in Seacroft in Leeds and in other urban stores a few years later.

Finance for Enterprise, led by veteran city heavyweight Sir David Scholey, and his ‘Sherpa’ banker David McMeekin, went semi-independent but produced very tangible results. They created a series of Regional Venture Capital Funds that laid the basis for many subsequent regional venture-capital initiatives from both government and from the private sector.

Whilst the long-term impacts of these teams varied, all, however, helped shape emerging BITC understanding of the importance of engaging top, current business leaders and of ensuring that all BITC initiatives had such business champions and practical examples to work from. Additional teams were soon added, including ‘Opportunity 2000’ for gender equality, under the chairmanship of the late Lady Elspeth Howe (**see further: Chapter 13 below**) and the Bullock Target Team on Local Economic Development, chaired by John Bullock of Coopers and Lybrand (**now PwC**).

BUSINESS IN THE ENVIRONMENT LEADERSHIP TEAM

Another Leadership Team was assembled for ‘Business in the Environment’: BiE. The Founding Chair of BiE was Tony Cleaver (later Sir Anthony Cleaver), then Chairman of IBM UK. Tony Cleaver describes the beginnings of the Business in the Environment initiative.

“In early 1989, I was asked to go and see HRH The Prince of Wales. When we met, he got straight to the point. He didn’t believe business at that point was doing enough about environmental challenges; BITC wanted to develop an initiative – and would I lead it? I could hardly refuse!

My first task was to recruit a Leadership Team. I knew that getting the right team was crucial. My objective was to get genuine business leaders so that people would be compelled to listen to us.”

He succeeded in recruiting a formidable group from across industry sectors: John Baker (CEO, National Power); Peter Costain, CEO, Costain; Sir Nicholas Goodison, Chair TSB; Christopher Hampson, Director, ICI; Dorothy Mackenzie, MD BrandNew; Ian MacLaurin, CEO, Tesco; John Mowlem, MD; Johnson Wax; Robin Paul, MD Albright and Wilson; and John Raisman, Deputy Chair, BT.

IBM seconded an experienced manager, Elaine Sullivan, to work full-time on BiE, working closely with an existing BITC executive, Catherine Carruthers, and they in turn worked with the companies represented on the Leadership Team and other businesses to develop what became the launch publication for BiE: **Your Business and the Environment: An Executive Guide**. This guide was the centrepiece of the formal launch of BiE at the Grosvenor House Hotel in central London on 8 November 1990. **“We had enough interest to fill the Great Room at the Grosvenor House Hotel on Park Lane,”** recalls Tony Cleaver.

One of BiE’s early successes was to persuade HRH The Prince of Wales to revive his Cambridge Footlights days as a comic actor. The Prince, appearing in the film as himself, co-starred with the veteran British comedian John Cleese in **Grime Goes Green**. **Grime** was a light-hearted film made by a highly successful management training company, **Video Arts**, to get serious messages about improving environmental performance across to business. The core message of the video? It should not take a royal visit in order for a business to tackle its environmental impacts. **Grime Goes Green, reflects Tony Cleaver, “was one of the many tangible ways that HRH The Prince of Wales showed his support for the BiE work in those crucial, early years.”**

(For a description of the evolution of Business in the Environment, see Box 19 below in Chapter 16 and, specifically, on the Business in the Environment Index, see Chapter 14 below).

Thus, BITC – whilst widely known in its first decade as the national umbrella and voice of the local enterprise agencies during the 1980s – was broadening its remit and scope from very early on.

CHAPTER 5: ONE-TOWN PARTNERSHIPS, BUSINESS LEADERSHIP TEAMS AND EXTENDING PLACE-BASED INITIATIVES 1985-95

One of the ‘practical examples’, referenced at the end of Chapter 4, for BITC at that time – and an example of the early extension of BITC’s focus beyond enterprise agencies – was the Halifax One-Town Partnership.

In 1985, HRH The Prince of Wales had become President of BITC (initially for a five-year period). He had already made clear his interest in regeneration and in expanding opportunities for the disadvantaged by establishing, in 1976, his The Prince’s Trust to help young people. Sir Charles Villiers, a successful banker and businessman – who went on to chair the nationalised British Steel Corporation and, subsequently, its job-creation agency (British Steel Industry) – knew Prince Charles well and encouraged his involvement in BITC.

HALIFAX

A year after becoming BITC President, he had co-hosted an Anglo-American conference in Boston on youth employment with the Massachusetts governor Mike Dukakis. During a previous visit, HRH The Prince of Wales had visited Lowell, Massachusetts. Lowell was a former mill town that had confronted massive economic restructuring. A US Senator from Lowell, Paul Tsongas, had brought business and civic leaders together to develop a common vision, and action plan, for the future of his hometown. Inspired by the Lowell story, HRH The Prince of Wales persuaded BITC to replicate the one-town partnership in the UK.

After examining a number of locations, BITC decided that Halifax, West Yorkshire was particularly open to the idea of a public-private-community regeneration partnership, partly because of the energy of Ernest Hall, a concert pianist and successful local businessman, who had bought the derelict former Crossley Carpet Factory that physically dominated the town. Hall converted the complex of buildings into Dean Clough, a mix of business-incubator units, small business premises, and conference and entertainment facilities. www.deanclough.com/about-us/

In time, Dean Clough provided more jobs than the carpet factory had done at its peak. The Halifax One-Town Partnership –, in appealing to local civic pride and in creating a vision for the future, an action plan, and a capacity for action – was not that different from Alastair Pilkington’s approach in St. Helen’s, or the several hundred enterprise agencies that followed. It was, though, painting on a bigger canvas. The philanthropist, Vivien Duffield, was persuaded to fund Eureka – The National Children’s Museum – modelled on similar museums in Boston and other cities. The technology venture capitalist Harry Fitzgibbons was persuaded to establish an office for his Top Technology firm in Halifax.

BUSINESS IN THE CITIES

The early success of Halifax persuaded BITC to join forces with the Confederation of British Industries (CBI) – once again – to create a specialist, time-limited unit (Business in the Cities³⁰), under the leadership of Richard Wade and Peter Henschel, to replicate the One-Town Partnership model elsewhere. Now, however, the emphasis was on ‘Business Leadership Teams’ – first in Blackburn and then in a dozen other locations, including The Bristol Initiative and Sheffield³¹.

Many of the business leaders who emerged through ‘One-Town Partnerships’ and ‘Business Leadership Teams’ later migrated to become the early leaders of the government-funded Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) that had been created by the Thatcher Government, beginning in 1990, to involve business in the development and implementation of skills and local economic-development strategies³². Indeed, as the Director General of the CBI at the time, John Banham, later wrote:

“The leadership teams of Business in the Community provided a role model for the TECs.”³³ At the time of their creation, and for some time afterwards, the government insisted that only CEOs could serve on the TEC boards. Senior government officials stated that the BITC recommendations for business leaders were consistently the most credible, senior, and effective of the nominees of any of the business organisations they consulted.

Most of the One-Town Partnerships and BLTs got absorbed within two-to-three years into their local, publicly-funded Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) or – in the case of Bristol – into their local Chamber of Commerce. The North West Regional ‘Business Leadership Team’ (which had grown out of BOOM: Business Opportunities on Merseyside), however, continued well into the 21st Century, focussed on discussing strategic issues facing the regional economy. BOOM, and subsequently the North West Business Leadership Team, were led by Geoffrey Piper.

The experience of these local Leadership Teams also provided the initial blueprint when Stephen O’Brien – after ten years as CEO of BITC – stepped down, in 1992, and set up London First under the chairmanship of a former BITC Chair, Allen Sheppard of Grand Metropolitan (now part of Diageo). More than a decade later, O’Brien handed over the London First CEO-role to Jo Valentine, who had previously been the first CEO of the Blackburn Partnership.

FIRST RURAL FOCUS

A parallel embryonic effort to apply this emerging regeneration experience to rural areas was made with a BITC Rural Leadership Team under the chairmanship of the Duke of Westminster. Pushed by HRH The Prince of Wales in the wake of the growing plight of the rural economy after the Foot and Mouth Crisis of 2000-2001 that devastated farmers’ incomes, BITC launched a second, more substantial, **Rural Action Team a decade later**, in 2001. The 2000s’ version devolved a series of innovative programmes, such as ‘The Pub is the Hub’, that showed how to use rural pubs (bars) as the focal point for a range of community services. A related program of affordable rural housing linked banks with empty floors above their rural branches that could not be rented out, for security reasons, with police forces needing cheap accommodation in rural areas for their young police officers.

TRAINING AND ENTERPRISE COUNCILS AND BUSINESS LINKS

The creation of the TECs was, in many ways, a testament to the credibility that BITC had quickly built up for the idea of public-private-community partnerships.

Cay Stratton CBE came to the UK, initially for a year, on secondment from the Boston Compact, to help promote ‘Education-Business Partnerships’ but also to help transform the Manpower Services Commission (MSC) – the arms-length government agency tasked with running temporary job-creation schemes and vocational-skills training – from a Civil Service-led, top-down organisation into something more entrepreneurial and reflective of the local communities it was set up to serve.

She recalls working with Geoffrey (later Sir Geoffrey) Holland to submit proposals to Mrs Thatcher to transform the MSC. Late in the day, they added an option, TECs, to the options already worked up with officials. Unexpectedly, the Prime Minister chose the most radical option presented to her: the TECs. The TECs were given a remit for training and also some responsibility for helping unemployed people to start their own business through the local administration of the Enterprise Allowance Scheme (giving unemployed people £40 a week for a year while they tried to start their own business)³⁴. BITC became cheerleaders for business involvement in the TECs and hosted several events with the chairs and HRH the Prince of Wales to help set a forward agenda.

A year after their establishment, the TECs had created a national voice: the TEC National Council. Working closely with this Council and with the British Chambers of Commerce, BITC convened another conference at the Civil Service National Training College – Sunningdale – in Autumn 1991. This brought together senior officers and business leaders involved in BITC, Chambers, TECs, local enterprise and One-Town Partnerships with government officials. The

‘exam question’ was ‘how, together, these different networks might provide a consistently better quality of help to small businesses – especially those with the aspiration and the potential to grow.’ The Sunningdale Communique, which emerged from these meetings, recommended a One-Stop Shop model, responding to local needs and building on the best of local capacity. Michael Heseltine later took up this model when he was appointed President of the Board of Trade and Secretary of State for Trade and Industry as part of the Major Government’s competitiveness agenda, after the 1992 General Election.

Subsequently, these developments led to the establishment of a new national network of business-development organisations for England – the Business Links – with BITC, again, playing a prominent role in developing the vision for the Business Links; providing a meeting-place for the chairs, boards, and CEOs of the Business Links to meet together; and working closely with the major Government to implement the programme³⁵.

Thus, by the end of the first decade of BITC, the idea of public-private-community partnerships was established, along with ideas that businesses – and business leaders – could contribute practically to the improvement of help for start-ups, for existing small businesses, for youth employment and training, for adult retraining, and also to what was happening in schools, which we consider in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 6: EDUCATION, EDUCATION, EDUCATION! BUSINESS AND EDUCATION 1985-2000

“**Education, education, education**” – was the slogan of Tony Blair as incoming Prime Minister in 1997 to signal his government’s priorities. It might, though, have been a mantra for business involvement in the community around the world during the 1990s. Education was then a perennial favourite for corporate community involvement in many societies – whether that has meant employee volunteers going to help in schools, or sponsoring educational opportunities for child labourers who were displaced by Western multinationals’ drives to stop under-age working in their supply chains. In 1991, a **Harvard Business Review survey** of over 12,000 business managers in more than 20 countries identified education as the critical societal issue for business, and the one that was consistently rated as the most popular topic for corporate community involvement.

ANTECEDENTS OF BITC’S WORK ON EDUCATION

In the UK, business involvement in education increased markedly, both in the quality and extent of engagement – particularly after the success of Industry Year (in 1985) and the Industry Matters campaign. One vehicle for this business involvement was a network of local ‘Education-Business Partnerships’ that brokered business support for schools. The initial stimulus for what became the Education-Business Partnership network was a study visit to the Boston Compact in 1986 involving Whitbread, the then London Enterprise Agency, and Business in the Community. The Boston Compact was essentially a deal between enrolled students, schools and local employers brokered by the Compact (itself a joint venture between the Boston Schools Commissioner and business). This linked improvements in school attendance and test grades to a summer job and work-experience guarantees. The original director of Boston Compact, Cay Stratton, was invited to the UK and became a prominent champion for improved training, acting as a special advisor to successive governments on skills and business involvement in education and skills. (After a brief spell back in the USA, following the Clinton election in 1992, Stratton served as deputy BITC CEO and a senior member of the BITC management team during the mid-1990s.)

EDUCATION-BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS

The original East London Education-Business Partnership (Ebp) – led by Richard Martineau of Whitbread, and modelled on the Boston Compact – spawned what, in its heyday, became a national network of 300+ local Ebps. The focus was on raising aspirations and achievements, particularly among those with the poorest results. In Birmingham, for example, the Compact helped lift GCSE results from 4% to 25% in some of the most challenging schools. The Ebps brought together local businesses, schools, and the local education authority. There had been no all-encompassing, national vision in advance to create such an Ebp network, but timing, an effective vehicle, and key partners were all aligned and positive. There are close parallels with the original Community of St Helen’s Trust, started a decade earlier in 1979, that became the inspiration for the national network of local enterprise agencies. With both the Community of St Helen’s Trust and the East London Education-Business Partnership, there had not been any prior intention to create a replicable model, but LEAs and, similarly, Ebps were seen to be a practical and doable response to recognised need. In both cases, Business in the Community played an important brokerage role: convening players, identifying, and sharing good practice, and ‘naming and faming’ successful local partnerships and business and community leaders.

That BITC was able to play this ‘brokerage role’ was very much down to the recruitment, by Stephen O’Brien in 1988, of Julia Cleverdon, initially to be BITC’s first-ever Education Director and to support Martin Findlay of Whitbread and the newly convened Education-Business Partnerships Team. Julia had already had a successful career at the Industrial Society. She had played a leading role in Industry Year and other initiatives to engage businesses with education. She quickly set about recruiting a team to develop BITC’s education work, including Ian Pearce (who became Education Director in 1989 and who held the role until 2000). Ian describes his recruitment:

“As I remember, Julia started the ball rolling by combining her support network for Education-Business Partnerships with replicating the USA-founded Compact programme nationwide, helped by Robbie Mathers, Patrick Wintour, and Bill Sowerby from the crowded old BITC HQ in the NatWest Bank building on City Road and from the ‘greasy spoon’ cafe next door. I was active in Ebp support as part of the Economic and Industrial Understanding curriculum development project and cross-curricular themes developed with Julia and Nick Tate at SCDC (and later the National Curriculum Council). As that work ended, I worked for a few months on spreading Ebp activities into primary schools from the Schools Industry Centre at Warwick University but was, within weeks, helping Julia...

“My first task at BITC was to be told that I needed to be interviewed by Mike Heron, then Personnel Director on the Unilever global board, who was made chair of the education campaign leadership team in 1990 and who, understandably, wanted to be involved in appointing the Education Director. I remember putting on a new M&S suit & tie and walking nervously past the modern art paintings on the 5th floor – the directors’ floor – at Unilever House to be told by a strict-looking PA, called Maureen Henry, to sit down on a low sofa with a shaking cup of tea in ‘Mr Heron’s’ office, whilst the boss was on the phone to the Secretary of State at Agriculture and Fisheries reporting the sale of a Unilever food brand.

Mr Heron then said to me, “if you and I are going to make it, we have to trust each other, and all such business matters must be kept private” and when I reassured him that he could trust me, he thought for a whole minute and said, “what religion are you?” I had been up half the night reading up on educational policy but replied that I was brought up as a Methodist but deeply respected the human right to follow whatever religion a person chooses, and we all had much to learn from multiculturally diverse religious beliefs. He responded, “Sod it, which religion do you back?” Somehow, not then knowing his support for the England rugby team, I replied “religious belief is not like backing a rugby team Mr Heron”, and he simply clapped and said, ‘absolutely brilliant answer ... we will make it together, and that is the last time you call me Mr Heron – I am Mike or Mikey to you now.’

“That night, I enjoyed my first meal with Mike, and so it continued until 2010 with weekly 1-1s and monthly dinners in the BITC years, and frequent lunches or dinners thereafter.

“I start with this story because, uniquely, BITC offered executive staff the precious opportunity to work closely with top-rank business leaders. I should add that Mike gave similar time to the chief executives of St George’s Hospital Trust and the National Council for Vocational Qualifications, where he also chaired the boards, and he valued us all.”³⁶

This is an important point about BITC: the opportunity that it gave to staff members to work with, and learn from, top business leaders. Many other ex-BITC staff have similarly reflected on the mentoring and help they received from the business leaders with whom they interacted – and the insight and inner-confidence this gave them.

The early years were spent promoting the concept of ‘Education-Business Partnerships.’ This was turbo-charged by another study tour to the US. Peter Lambert, who became the Director of one of the most dynamic and successful of the Ebps – Birmingham, picks up the story:

“We went to learn about the Boston Compact and attend the US Education-Business Partnership Conference. We came back with great ideas and contacts, which helped with setting up Compacts UK-style. This was a great step forward in giving partnerships between schools and businesses a structure and a clear purpose to raise aspirations and achievements in schools in disadvantaged areas – a powerful example of BITC’s role as a facilitator of both ideas and of business support.”

Peter became the Chair of the National Ebp network and a member of the BITC Education Leadership Team with Mike Heron before becoming BITC’s West Midlands Regional Director in 1995.

SHARING GOOD PRACTICE IN EDUCATION-BUSINESS LINKS

BITC was to support the education/business partnerships with Patrick Tolfree, editing six editions of **Partnership Points**, which was circulated to more than 5,000 schools, policy makers, businesses, and practitioners on a bimonthly basis. Ian Pearce, writing a monthly column in the Times Educational Supplement (TES) for nearly a decade, circulated the publication to all schools, and it was regularly read by more than 60% of teachers (700,000). The whole team collated a 50-page specialist supplement in the TES, which celebrated best practice in business support for education and skills.

Amanda Bowman and the team ran BITC's 'Aim High Awards', sponsored by BT each year from 1994 onwards, to raise awareness of business involvement in education, to develop and promote standards of excellence, and to increase the quality of business support via 'the 10 Pathways to Achievement.' Additionally, BITC was organising national conferences and seminars for educational issues, policy, and business support.

Apart from promoting the Ebp model and capacity-building the individual Ebps, BITC was also encouraging and showcasing a number of business-led education programmes. These included literacy mentors reading with primary school children; BT study-support centres providing extended schooling; National Power laboratories for science, environmental studies and numeracy; Astra Zeneca's vocational qualification scholarships and bursaries for sixth forms and colleges; Royal Sun Alliance's Key Skills and Citizenship Portfolio; Unilever's Investors in People for schools and colleges; bp's tutoring programme to encourage young women to take up science subjects and to achieve qualifications at 16 and 18; IPC Magazines helped develop BITC's

'Roots and Wings' target setting and mentoring programme for secondary schools; the East Anglican Daily Times supported 'Reading Together' as part of the Newspapers in Education Project; and the start of headteacher mentoring, piloted by KPMG consultants, working with headteachers on management issues and problem-solving.

Key figures at that time, such as Lord Young (Chairman of the Manpower Services Commission and later Secretary of State for Employment) and Sir Brian Wolfson (who led the national body to establish the Training and Enterprise Councils and later headed Investors in People) – both successful entrepreneurs turned public servants – had a vision of work experience for 100% of secondary school students; industry experience for 10% of all teachers; and business experience to be incorporated in teacher-training colleges. With the support of initiatives such as the Ebps and other organisations (such as the Schools' Curriculum Industry Project and the government-established, business-led Training and Enterprise Councils) the vision was advanced. Throughout the 1990s, the focus of groups like the Ebps, as well as Business in the Community's education work, was on getting more businesses involved in schools in the most disadvantaged areas. There was also a drive to extend involvement from secondary schools to primary schools, with a particular focus on literacy, using methods such as persuading employees to volunteer to listen to children reading. Initiatives like 'Time to Read' had a positive, measurable impact on literacy levels as well as on aspirations to learn.

EXTENDING THE RANGE OF EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

Other education programmes that BITC ran in the 1990s included 'Compact Plus', where BITC's Peter Newman (previously director of the Ebp in Sefton) led a team replicating the successful US programme **Jobs for America's Graduates** branded as 'Compact Plus' and targeted at young people in need of specialist support, including participation in group events, goal-setting, and mentoring to achieve employment (this scheme passed to the Prince's Trust and is still running successfully in multiply deprived areas of Britain).

There was also the 'Toyota Science and Technology Education Fund' negotiated by Ian Pearce and managed by Rowzat Tayyebkhan & Amanda Tudge in BITC. This provided more than £600,000 of curriculum development funds to over 2,000 schools nationwide and involved 100,000 young people, with 60% of the grants match-funded through Education/Business Partnerships; more than 4,000 local businesses supported the school projects, and 60% of the grants went to primary schools in deprived areas. Many of these national programmes, notably the 'Partners in Leadership' programme, were supported and spread by BITC's new regional teams as they developed capacity in the 1990s.

Reflecting in 2006 for a Smith Institute collection of essays on "**Whose responsibility is it?**" Julia Cleverdon and David Grayson wrote of this period that it demonstrated:

(i) the long-term commitment of many firms; (ii) the increasing sensitivity of business to the concerns of educationalists about the manner and style of business involvement – for example, in being less assertive about pushing the personal values/agenda of corporate sponsors; and (iii) the need for brokers who are credible with both businesses and schools. It is no coincidence that some of the most effective protagonists for business engagement in schools have been entrepreneurial former head teachers who could relate comfortably to both schools and business, such as Chris Marsden³⁷, who was responsible for bp's business-education links for many years, and Peter Davies, who masterminded head teacher placements into industry before playing a leading role in BITC for more than a decade."³⁸

BITC's work with education particularly demonstrated the importance of engaged, visionary leadership, both at local and national levels. It is no coincidence that Birmingham – then under the visionary chief education officer Tim Brighouse – was one of the education authorities that embraced the 'Compact Plus' and collaboration with business. Similarly, the 'Partners in Leadership' programme began when, following a The Prince's 'Seeing is Believing' visit, the London Senior Partner of KPMG, Michael Fowle, visited Cathedral School in Southwark and persuaded seven of his colleagues to join him in a one-to-one, two-way mentoring relationship with eight head teachers. **See Box 10 below.**

Business leadership was also evident in the drive to recruit many more local businesspeople as school governors. Effective leadership from heads and governing bodies with business experience was crucial for the ability of individual schools to negotiate effectively with commercial contractors and local education authorities on public-finance initiatives. As heads and schools took on a larger management role, the transfer of appropriate management skills became one of the most relevant contributions from business.

Oracle, for example, provided its management development programme to the management team of Reading Girls’ School as part of an action plan to help the school come out of special measures.

The Ebps were eventually absorbed into the TECs, but BITC continued to mobilise business engagement to help schools, through the work of successive iterations of the BITC Education-Business Leadership Team chaired over the years by a number of influential business leaders, such as Derek Wanless of NatWest, Richard Greenhalgh of Unilever, Richard Handover of WH Smith, and Bob Wigley, who was then chairing Merrill Lynch Europe. One powerful and very practical vehicle for involvement and transferring expertise – both ways – was to be the ‘Partners in Leadership’ programme: **See Box 10.**

From the ‘Compact Plus’ onwards, BITC offered businesses practical routes/vehicles for helping schools to improve the quality of education – and also, crucially, made the **business case** for involvement.

As Cleverdon and Grayson wrote in their 2006 Smith Institute essay:

“Many businesspeople (especially small businesses) get involved in education and with a wide variety of other local community activities because of their personal values – they believe it is simply the right thing to do. All they ask is for simple, practical mechanisms to enable them to be involved and for some stability in funding and support structures.

Other businesses (particularly larger national and multinational businesses – faced with a bewildering range of requests to be involved in the community from around the world) look also for a compelling business case. For education involvement, this is a mix of preparing tomorrow’s workforce; the costs to business of remedial education work if they don’t achieve improvements in the school system; the growing demands for knowledge workers in an era of ageing populations and intensified global competition; and the fact that it is relatively easy to make the connection between effective business engagement in schools and improvements in performance of schools, reduced truancy and better community cohesion.”

In a later section below, we look at later BITC work on engagement with schools, post-millennium and especially the focus through the ‘Business Class’ programme pioneered in the North West. (**See Chapter 16 below**).

BOX 10: PARTNERS IN LEADERSHIP

More ‘Seeing is Believing’ visits were made to schools than any other type of visit and produced many innovative and practical initiatives.

The ‘Partners in Leadership’ (PIL) programme began when a then-senior KPMG partner, Michael Fowle, visited Cathedral School Southwark and persuaded seven of his colleagues to join him in a 1:1 two-way mentoring relationship with eight headteachers. PIL went on to match more than 7,000 headteachers with business leaders in a two-way mentoring programme. The experience of PIL was one of the inspirations for government to establish the National College for School Leadership in Nottingham.

Business leadership has also been evident in the drive to recruit many more local businesspeople as school governors.

PIL helped many headteachers to gain the Experienced Headship national leadership qualification. This programme originated when the BITC education team, the National Association of Headteachers, and Hay Management were developing a pilot qualification for experienced headteachers, backed by KPMG and with support from the Department for Education (DfE). BITC’s Chair of the Education Leadership Team, Richard Greenhalgh, introduced the Unilever senior management mentoring programme, and senior trainers in Hay Management contributed with proven training modules, which could then be adapted for headteachers.

PIL also led to the engagement of hundreds of experienced senior managers in business to work with headteachers on school-improvement projects with operational grants provided by the Teachers’ Development Agency at DfE.

Patrick O’Meara, BITC’s long-serving Membership Director, also calls out Cap Gemini’s early championing of PIL as crucial: **“Cap Gemini’s approach was fashioned by Cally Ware, who was its first head of community, and by Claire O’Neill, who was seconded from HR to build a community investment programme around it. It became a roaring success, with PIL as its flagship programme.”**

Patrick also praises Freshfields’ engagement in PIL: **“Lois Duguid, then Lois Yeaman, now Head Of Community at DAC Beachcroft, worked closely with Anthony Salz at Freshfields to build its programme.”**

Indeed, Peter Lambert describes ‘Partners in Leadership’ as **“our most important education initiative”**. And he notes wryly, **“we couldn’t find long-term funding. Anthony Salz was Chair of Education at the time it came to an end, and he never forgave us!”**

Based on the success of PIL, BITC subsequently developed a twinning programme with community entrepreneurs, called ‘Partners in Leadership in the Community.’ Later still, BITC also developed a further programme for two-way mentoring between business leaders with the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI). An attempt to replicate PIL for Prison governors did not take off – apparently due to public sector caution.

Julia Cleverdon also traces the origins of Teach First in the UK indirectly back to ‘Partners in Leadership.’ HRH The Prince of Wales gave a garden party for 150 business and education partners involved in the programme at his Highgrove home. Talking to his guests, he was puzzled at the evidence of the benefits for the Headteachers and asked Julia if an objective assessment of the impact of the programme on schools should be done. At a meeting of BITC ‘Education-Business Leadership Team’ the next morning, chaired by Anthony Salz of Freshfields, Julia explained the President’s request.

As Julia Cleverdon recalls:

“The eyes of the Leadership Team all turned to Ian Davis – then the Managing Partner of McKinsey & Co in the UK and a member of the Leadership Team – who agreed that McKinsey would do the investigation and that Business in the Community would be the client.”

One of the young McKinsey & Company consultants assigned to the task was Brett Wigdortz, who became consumed with the challenge of improving state education in the UK and who championed the transfer of a US programme to recruit top graduates to teach. Teach First began in London with the very active support of London First and its education lead, Rona Kiley, who was familiar with the early experience of the **Teach for America** experiment. Stephen O’Brien and George Iacobescu of Canary Wharf became the first joint chairs of Teach First in 2002 and were succeeded by Julia Cleverdon in 2006.

CHAPTER 7: “IT’S EASIER TO SEEK FORGIVENESS THAN IT IS TO ASK PERMISSION” – BITC AND NEIGHBOURHOOD-BASED REGENERATION – CHAMPIONING COMMUNITY ENTREPRENEURS 1986-96

Much of the Thatcher Government’s Urban Regeneration Strategy, such as the Urban Development Corporations, was based on major, flagship physical redevelopments: the Quayside in Newcastle, the Lowry Museum in Salford, the Meadowhall Shopping Centre in Sheffield, and (above all) the London Docklands. Early on, however, BITC realised that alongside top-down, physical renewal, there also had to be a bottom-up community regeneration. Thus, in 1986, BITC launched the first (with the Finsbury Park Community Trust) of six Neighbourhood Economic Development Partnerships (NEDP), which aimed to bring in big business cash and expertise to help neighbourhood-based community development groups. (Other NEDPs included Hartlepool, Manchester Moss Side, London Spitalfields and Walsall.)

COMMUNITY ENTREPRENEURS

By the mid-1980s, BITC was starting to work with a number of local activists, whom it described as ‘community entrepreneurs’ – men and women who are highly entrepreneurial, but for social benefit rather than personal gain. Prominent among them was Tony McGann from Merseyside, in the Northwest of England, a key figure in The Eldonians, a group of local residents who had defied the militant-controlled Liverpool Council and its plans for wholesale redevelopment of their neighbourhood. The Eldonians had eventually won the right to rebuild on their own terms.

They came to typify a group of determined pragmatic community activists ready to work with business and other sectors to achieve their goals³⁹.

Other prominent community entrepreneurs with whom BITC worked closely included Iain Tuckett and the Coin St Community Builders, who won the right to redevelop an area along the south bank of the Thames between Waterloo and Blackfriars Bridges; Roger Matland and the North Kensington Amenity Trust; David Robinson and Community Links in the London borough of Newham; Andrew Mawson and the Bromley by Bow Centre (**See Box 11**); and in Derry, Northern Ireland, Paddy Doherty, known as ‘Paddy Bogside.’⁴⁰ Businesspeople tended to empathise with the ‘can-do’ spirit and energy of the community entrepreneurs and to agree with Paddy Doherty that **“it is easier to seek forgiveness than it is to ask permission!”** BITC’s Chairman at the time – Hector Laing of United Biscuits – persuaded Margaret Thatcher to meet a cross-section of community entrepreneurs during a visit to Liverpool. It was not an obvious alliance, but the Prime Minister and community entrepreneurs concluded that they could. To borrow one of Mrs Thatcher’s memorable phrases, “do business” with each other.

Mrs Thatcher invited the group to a follow-up lunch in Downing Street and encouraged the government machine to use the community entrepreneurs for the delivery of various government-funded regeneration and training programmes. Beginning in early 1988, BITC was involved in developing and running several training programmes for the community entrepreneurs (modelled in part on a US Community Economic Development Training Programme, pioneered by the Development Training Institute, which David Grayson had participated in during a US study tour) and in

BOX 11: THE BROMLEY-BY-BOW CENTRE⁴¹

When Andrew Mawson became the United Reformed Church minister in the Bromley-by-Bow area of East London, in 1984, he was not over-burdened with resources. His church had a leaking roof, a central heating system that barely worked, a piano with its keys stuck together, and a congregation of a few elderly people. The church was based in the second-most-deprived ward of the most-deprived local authority in the country.

Mawson set about tackling the crisis of the church and the community. The church was redesigned to create a lighter, more open and flexible space that could be both religious and social. The space is now mainly used as a crèche and nursery; it becomes religious at weekends and on some evenings.

The first projects were idiosyncratic: a local woman (a squatter) used the church hall to build a boat, and several local artists moved in to use workshops and to provide classes for local people. From that beginning, the scheme generated its own momentum. The centre marketed itself through word of mouth, creating an interest that pulled in more people and created more connections. Soon, a dance school started, as did a nursery and a café.

A disability group started working on the garden outside the church. Business in the Community asked Andrew to be one of the hosts of the 10th Anniversary visits to the East End, in 1991, which was masterminded by Graham Bann, with fifty buses visiting community projects.

In 1995, a health centre opened, built to the highest standards, which housed local general practitioners. The health centre was the first one built and run by a community development trust.

The centre is the base for an outreach project to help provide local Bengali families with literacy skills. The park surrounding the centre has been transformed to create a garden, a children’s play area, and a sculpture park. Housing for homeless, single young people has been added next door, and an enterprise centre has opened, which serves as a greenhouse for local small businesses and social enterprises.

Source: The Rise of the Social Entrepreneur – Charles Leadbeater
www.bbbc.org.uk/about-us/our-history/

helping to find business partners and matching private-sector funding. It was in a trade union training centre in Haringey, North London, in 1990, when BITC was running one such good-practice-sharing conference for community entrepreneurs that the BITC President, HRH The Prince of Wales, met a then young, junior opposition front-bench parliamentarian who had been invited by BITC to sit in on the final conference session to learn more about community entrepreneurs: one Tony Blair.

BUILDING A ‘DEAL-FLOW’ OF COMMUNITY PROJECTS

As well as hands-on work with community entrepreneurs in a number of locations, by 1989, BITC and its members were also getting a ‘deal-flow’ of interesting community projects for potential support. This was as a result of BITC managing The Times Community Enterprise Awards with the Royal Institute for British Architecture (RIBA). Further leads came from the establishment of the Professional Firms Group (subsequently known as ‘ProHelp’). ‘ProHelp’/PFG began in 1989. It started as the theme of Christopher Jonas’s presidential year at the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS)⁴². The idea was that professional firms would volunteer in cross-sectoral teams to provide pro-bono help to community projects. The ‘ProHelp’ network grew to more than 30 groups across the country; at one point, it was brokering more than £2 million per annum of pro-bono help from architects, engineers, lawyers, accountants, and PR firms to local community groups. This concept of brokering sectoral help was later replicated in BITC’s own ‘COMM.UNITY’ programme to engage the Information and Communications Technology sector in the community. (It was also a model applied by the social entrepreneur Caroline Diehl in 1994 to create The Media Trust (www.mediatrust.org) to engage pro-bono help from media companies.)

It was sometimes necessary for BITC to ‘ask forgiveness.’ As with private sector entrepreneurs, not all of the community entrepreneurs were successful. One of the community enterprises that BITC took many senior people to visit was the Stonebridge Bus Depot in Harlesden, North London. Stonebridge was where a group of young Afro-Caribbean activists had transformed a former bus depot into a multi-purpose leisure complex and small business centre. Sadly, it later fell victim to fraud and mismanagement.

When Thames Television announced it was doing a TV expose of Stonebridge and asked BITC for a spokesperson to explain their involvement, Hector Laing, then BITC Chair, insisted that he would personally defend BITC’s overall work on community entrepreneurs. This he did, arguing that unless business and society took risks in tackling the problems of the inner cities, there would never be real progress. Inevitably, he declared that not all risks are successful.

CONTINUING SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITY REGENERATION

Overall, however, BITC’s early encouragement of community entrepreneurs and the Community Development Trusts was successful and was an important catalyst to more genuine community involvement in regeneration programmes. In 1992, Angela Monaghan, who had developed much of BITC’s work in this area, alongside Stephen Lord and Robert Davies, became the founding CEO of the Development Trusts Association: DTA. The DTA later merged with BASSAC to become LOCALITY UK: locality.org.uk

Angela Monaghan believes that the work with NEDPs and community entrepreneurs “**backing key individuals and anchoring in local neighbourhoods got asset-based, local community development on the agenda of BITC.**”⁴³

The concept of community entrepreneurs was further popularised in the 1990s under the more generic term ‘social entrepreneurs’ by the think-tank DEMOS and by the emergence of organisations such as the Scarman Trust and the The Community Action Network (CAN) **www.can-online.org.uk** to provide early-stage, flexible premises for community entrepreneurs and for the School for Social Entrepreneurs **www.the-sse.org**.

HRH The Prince of Wales’s and BITC’s innovative work in the early-1990s to create the Local Investment Fund as a loan alternative to grants to community entrepreneurs was built on by the Blair Government. The Blair Government also went on to create a number of new funding devices, such as FutureBuilders and UnLimited, to provide new funding sources for voluntary and community organisations.

At one point, one of the cofounders of CAN, Rev Andrew Mawson from Bromley-by-Bow, proposed a strategic collaboration between CAN and BITC, effectively putting CAN under the umbrella of BITC. As BITC had then recently disengaged from the local enterprise agencies, BITC concluded that it was in the best long-term interests of all concerned for CAN to grow as an independent network. Significantly, there was to be recognition of the work of CAN when its co-founder and CEO Adele Blakebrough was named the winner of the Sieff Award for Community Impact in the BITC Silver Jubilee ‘Awards for Excellence’ in 2007. In 2010, she went on to set up the Social Business Trust with Damon Buffini, partner and former Chairman of private-equity firm Permira.

URBAN VILLAGES

The grassroots community development work was championed by BITC Deputy CEO Robert Davies. As well as promoting the NEDPs and community entrepreneurs, Robert also championed the concept of Urban Villages – a term that HRH The Prince of Wales used in his 1989 book A Vision of Britain (the follow-up to a 1988 television documentary) – and that inspired his visionary Poundbury project on the outskirts of Dorchester.

As HRH The Prince of Wales explained in his foreword to a 1992 publication from his Urban Villages Group, convened by Robert Davies:

“I have, for many years, been concerned about the harmful effect that a great deal of urban development has on the human spirit. In an attempt to help the search for alternative approaches, I thought it worth trying to encourage people to look and learn from the lessons of communities that work. The formation of the Urban Villages Group was one initiative that grew out of this process.

“I felt that if developers, architects, planners, and others could review the mistakes of the past and talk with those living in communities where the quality and vitality of urban life are positively enhanced, they might be more able to understand how the modern urban development process can promote living towns and cities – communities based on mixed uses, human scale, self-sustaining environment and a sense of belonging.”

(Foreword to Urban Villages – A concept for creating missed use urban developments on a sustainable scale. 1992)

Davies and the Prince recruited Trevor Osborne, the Chairman of Speyhawk plc developers, to chair the group, which also inter alia involved Martin Laing, chair of John Laing plc and Tim Melville-Ross, CEO of the Nationwide Building Society.

BITC has continued to look for and encourage community entrepreneurs, entrepreneurial headteachers and other civic (public sector) entrepreneurs through the ‘Seeing is Believing’ programme – a unique leadership engagement initiative: **see next Chapter 8.**

CHAPTER 8: SEEING IS BELIEVING – A VEHICLE FOR ENGAGING BUSINESS LEADERS AND THEIR SUCCESSORS – 1990 ONWARDS

BITC’s work with community entrepreneurs, described in the previous chapter, also benefited hugely from the interest and contacts generated through HRH The Prince of Wales ‘Seeing is Believing’ programme (SiB). Like so many of the most successful and enduring of the BITC programmes, SiBs began as a single project in 1990 following HRH The Prince of Wales’s experience in Halifax. By January 1990, HRH The Prince of Wales had led over 550 business leaders on visits to inner-city locations. The question was how to expand this number.

Leading firms of head-hunters (executive search firms) were asked to open up their ‘little black books’ of contacts containing the rising star business leaders they were tracking. The combined list produced the invitation list for the original SiB visits. Each visit was led by a prominent business leader already committed to BITC and to the particular topic of the visit. In groups, usually of six to ten people, senior business figures and rising stars were taken to look at a particular social problem in a specific part of the country and then asked to report back as a whole group to HRH The Prince of Wales. The original report-back was held in a bitterly cold night-club, Subtereania, under the Westway motorway in West London, one morning in December 1990.

Julia Cleverdon recalls, **“Seeing is Believing was the movement that built BITC and, to some extent, built me with it. I went on every Seeing is Believing visit while I was CEO. I talked to every business leader who had been on the visit. We shaped what the visit was going to be about, whether that was the place or the theme, such as what companies could do with homeless people in rural communities, or with education and inner cities. We had business leaders have school lunches with headteachers and made them write a report on what they had seen and what they were going to do as a result.”**

Julia recalls talking to Sam Whitbread about who would succeed him as CEO. **“He said it would be either David Thomas or Miles Templeman – you need to get them both on SiB!”** She did!

A number of the early visits led to long-term partnerships between community entrepreneurs and business leaders. Bill Castell (then running Amersham International – now part of GE) became a long-term mentor to the Rev John Morgan and a regular visitor to the Penrhys housing estate in South Wales, which he had originally visited on an SiB. Neville Simms from Tarmac similarly collaborated with community entrepreneur Dick Atkinson on the regeneration of the Balsall Heath district of Birmingham. These and numerous other partnerships were not pre-planned or anticipated. They resulted from the personal chemistry between business leaders and community entrepreneurs along with a sense that ‘something needs to be done – so let’s start here, and let’s start now!’

BITC has been running SIBs since 1990, with a pause during the COVID-19 pandemic. HRH The Prince of Wales recalled at the 15th anniversary of ‘Seeing is Believing’ in 2005 – after 4,000 business leaders had, by then, attended a SIB visit – that he had started the programme because he **“wanted business leaders to consider how their business could play a real role in tackling some of our most pressing social issues. Each and every one of them has been asked for a detailed report on what they found and what their business might do. We have discussed their impressions and, more importantly, their actions at more than thirty seminars, which I have hosted at Highgrove or St James’s Palace.”**

SIB has proved to be a highly creative way to get many more business leaders to go and see for themselves something of the severe social challenges being faced around the country than the limited numbers who could accompany him on his community visits.

THE SIB FORMAT

Each visit was led by a senior leader – always a member of Business in the Community – and committed enough to the issue to lead another 8 to 10 business leaders for half a day to look at a social problem in-depth and to meet those community exemplars of local, grassroots initiatives, who were tackling the problem. The method became the main device to test and develop support for key campaigns. The banker and philanthropist John Studzinski, for example, as he developed the ‘Business Action on Homelessness’ work in early 2002, ensured ten visits to illustrate the business case. Similarly, HRH The Prince of Wales drove the commitment to ‘Business Action on Rural communities’ through ‘Seeing is Believing’ programmes in the year before Foot and Mouth. There was also a less-successful attempt to get support for business partnerships with prisons, which was aborted when the Home Office said it was not prepared to support it!

For many years, participants were invited to report back on their experiences to HRH The Prince of Wales in annual sessions at St James’s Palace or a similar venue. In the first few years, there were two report-back sessions each year. The ‘Seeing is Believing’ programme became a unique recruiting vehicle for BITC, ensuring a constant pipeline of interested and highly talented business leaders, who wanted to make a positive impact and who brought their companies into membership as a result.

SOME SIGNIFICANT OUTCOMES OF SIB

Peter Simpson, CEO of Anglian Water recalls going on a SIB in the East End of London before the Olympics and going back to Anglian Water and asking about what their equivalent might be, which led to the company’s focus on Wisbech and its emphasis on Place.

Martin Baggs, then CEO of Thames Water, engaged his supply chain across London to examine how it could improve take-up of skills and apprenticeships within its sector.

‘Mosaic’ – the programme to engage Asian young people in schools and through a speaker programme and media – grew out of a SIB visit to look at how local Muslim leaders were working in their own communities. **See Chapter 22 below.**

‘Partners in Leadership’ and **Teach First: A Report-back at Highgrove**, with 150 headteachers on PIL, led to HRH The Prince of Wales asking for an evaluation that Ian Davis, then Managing Partner of McKinsey & Company, agreed to do. One of the consultants, Brett Wigdortz, who was put on to this, subsequently worked on the establishment of Teach First and became its first CEO. In 2000, some 150 business leaders visited homelessness hostels and agencies; as a result,

BITC was able to establish ‘Business Action on Homelessness’, chaired originally by John Studinski – then deputy Chairman at Morgan Stanley International – and then by John Varley, while CEO of Barclays Bank.

TRAX – on the Blackburn Leys estate, Oxford – was a project to reduce car crime by training young people to repair and drive cars instead. Sponsored by John Neill and Unipart, it was a popular SIB visit, inspiring other business leaders to get involved in community causes. One very tangible programme that originated

in a ‘Seeing is Believing’ visit was the Greggs’ Breakfast Clubs initiative, described in a 2007 Daily Telegraph feature, which analysed the results of ‘Seeing is Believing’ after more than 15 years of SIB operations. **See Box 12.**

BOX 12: GREGGS BREAKFAST CLUBS

Sir Michael Darrington (at the time Managing Director of Greggs, the leading bakery retailer) was first attracted to ‘Seeing is Believing’ by Chris de Lapuente (the then Head of Proctor and Gamble in the UK and Ireland), who led a ‘Seeing is Believing’ visit for a group of business leaders around parts of North East England. They saw mentoring in operation in a secondary school and visited a drop-in centre that helped with training the unemployed. Also included was a visit to a primary school that ran a breakfast club. **“The breakfast club, to me, was just the magic bit,”** says Sir Michael. **“It had something that really grabbed my interest. To start with, it was dealing with young people, and if you get them off to a good start, they’ve got a better chance later. If they get off to a bad start, they have a much worse chance later.”** The volunteer-run club had been started the year before by the school Head, Norma Redfern. However, three or four times a term, she had to find money to fund it. **“But it was working,”** says Sir Michael. **“Youngsters who were truanting were more likely to come to school because they were hungry and had a free breakfast. Other children didn’t have breakfast:**

there was no money in the house. Some just had a bit of junk food that gave them a quick lift of sugar but didn’t really stay there and help them through the morning.” If children are hungry, they lose concentration and can be disruptive without realising it. Giving them the breakfast meant that more attended school, reducing truanting, and there was less disruption and better attention. Darrington decided that Greggs would fully fund the club for two years. For him, it was, in his words, **“really rather special. It grabbed my imagination, and so I said we need to do something.”** Greggs moved from one school to supporting more than 120 breakfast clubs. The company provided money for all the food and basic equipment, such as toasters and kettles for hot drinks; the bread came free of charge from local Greggs’ shops, and most clubs have a Greggs shop they are linked with. The clubs are run by volunteers. What made Darrington take that first step and agree to go on a ‘Seeing is Believing’ visit? It was partly curiosity, it would seem – **“let’s see what there is to see; it will never be a waste of a day.”**

SOME MEMORABLE MOMENTS ON SIB

- The entire board of what was then the Scottish & Newcastle Breweries did an in-company SIB to look at homelessness. This included visiting a ‘wet hostel’ (where alcohol is permitted) at night. There they saw first-hand the negative consequences of the super-strength lager they were then promoting. They decided to withdraw the product, although profitable.
- Marco Pagni, the Executive Vice President, Global Chief Legal, and Administrative Officer for Walgreen Boots Alliance, visiting a prison for the first time in his life, listening to prisoners tell their stories about how they had ended up in jail, and the impetus that this gave to the ‘Ban the Box’ campaign to persuade employers not to include a question box on job application forms about prior criminal convictions.
- A visit to a primary school in Elephant & Castle, South London, where the headteacher told shocked business leaders about one young child with great potential who kept falling asleep in class. On investigation, it had emerged that the child’s mother was a prostitute, and every time she had a client, the young child was woken and taken from their bed and put outside on the balcony of their small flat until the client had left.

WHAT ARE ENDURING SUCCESS FACTORS FOR HOW SIB WORKED WELL

- There was the undoubted cachet of the Princely connection. Invitations originally went from the Office of HRH The Prince of Wales and later directly from the experienced, senior business leader hosting a visit.
- Invites to particular leaders could be a pincer movement between BITC and the CR director of the leader’s company. CR departments came to see SIB as an important way of developing understanding and engagement of their ‘rising stars.’
- The role of the business leader hosting a visit was critical – they had to be people that invitees would want to spend time with. Often invitees were from key suppliers to the CEO host.
- The SIB visits and report-backs offered plenty of opportunities for networking among the business leaders.
- The Chief Executive of BITC or a key member of the Senior Leadership team attended every visit.
- Alumni were then encouraged to recommend future invitees – the ‘Tupperware model’ in action.
- The SIB managers at BITC were carefully schooled in the art of running a successful SIB. There were detailed handovers from one SIB manager to the next.
- Each manager was an energetic, entrepreneurial campaigner with the self-confidence to interact with the SIB participants and SIB leaders as well as the community hosts.

- Community visits were carefully selected, and hosts were encouraged to find clients who would be articulate and interesting.
- SIB very consciously took business leaders out of their comfort zones, but BITC was trusted to do this sensitively. In later years, this even extended to advising participants on what to wear for their SIB visit.
- Asking for two-sides of A4 reports to go HRH The Prince of Wales helped to crystallise impressions and ideas of SIB participants.

“Seeing is Believing pulled back the curtain on horrors in society – highlighting needs literally on your doorstep and providing an ‘Agenda for Action.’ – Cilla Snowball, former BITC Leadership Team and Board member.

“SIB was an outstanding way to give CEOs direct insight and feel for the extent of poverty and disadvantage in society across the UK. It was key to BITC’s brand.” – Paul Drechsler CBE, former Chair of Teach First and former President of the CBI.

One of the most consistent community ‘hosts’ for ‘Seeing is Believing’ was David Robinson, and Community Links, which Robinson founded in Newham, East London in 1977. Robinson served on BITC’s Board for several years and was a community ‘conscience’ for BIT. He was also a persistently innovative and successful social innovator, as recognised by his appointment (in summer 2007) by the Prime Minister Gordon Brown to chair a Prime Minister’s Council for Social Action.

The BITC Jubilee Big Tick Award Winners (announced at the ‘Awards for Excellence’ 2007) recognised long-term corporate impact in the community, in some cases stretching back more than two decades. Several of these programmes had started with the support of BITC and SIB, such as Avon’s Breast Cancer awareness and fund-raising campaign; the visit led by David Varney to **Reading Jail**, which started the National Grid’s commitment to recruiting ex-offenders; and UBS’s ‘Roots and Wings’ programme to support disadvantaged students in Hackney (close to its City HQ), which had started from a ‘Seeing is Believing’ led by Rudi Bogni.

‘Seeing is Believing’ has proved to be a remarkably enduring mechanism for engaging current business leaders and their successors, in examining their own core business, and for getting them involved both in BITC itself and in wider community causes and charitable organisations.

CHAPTER 9: DIRECTIONS FOR THE NINETIES – SETTING THE PRIORITIES FOR ENGAGING BUSINESSES IN THE COMMUNITY 1990-1991

During 1990, HRH The Prince of Wales heard concerns from a number of business leaders that government was making too many uncoordinated and disconnected requests to business to join all manner of ‘partnerships’ with government. In at least some cases, business felt that these so-called partnerships were more like civil servants telling their ministers that there was insufficient public funding for the minister’s pet scheme but that if the initiative were dressed up as a partnership with business, the latter might make up the shortfall! In one week, several leading corporate citizens received eight different requests from different government departments. IBM alone reported requests for financial support for pet projects from ministers that exceeding its entire annual community involvement budget.

At a meeting of the BITC Board, at the Virgin HQ in 1990, HRH The Prince of Wales, therefore, invited BITC to consult its member companies and their partners on what should be the priorities for business involvement in the community in the 1990s. With the help of a number of short-term secondees (including one from the Transport & General Workers’ Union) and temporary extra staff, BITC ran a series of consultation meetings, including one for leading thinkers and practitioners back at Sunningdale, and interviewed almost 100 CEOs and other key figures 1:1 to canvass views. Some of the early ideas to limit demands on companies – for example, to rule out businesses funding certain things like paying teachers’ salaries – quickly had to be abandoned when it was discovered a few companies were already doing so. Instead, what emerged was a more nuanced set of messages, namely that . . .

- Different businesses would have different priorities, but three broad themes for business involvement in the community in the 1990s would be the 3Es – Education, Environment, and Enterprise.
- Whilst some businesses were involved because they believed it was simply the right thing to do, others would additionally or alternatively look for a business case that could be summarised as building your people, building your market, and building your licence to operate.
- Businesses should seek to professionalise their approach to community involvement by applying the ACTION mnemonic: Assess, Commit, Tell, Integrate, Organise, and Nurture, as described in the **Box 13 below**.

[The current authors: David Grayson and Melody McLaren first met and worked together on the drafting of Directions for the Nineties. The A.C.T.I.O.N. mnemonic was the first of many memorable wordsmithing exercises that Mel did for BITC and later for the Doughty Centre at Cranfield School of Management.]

BOX 13: THE A.C.T.I.O.N GUIDE TO CORPORATE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

ASSESS	Community and business priorities and where there is the best fit
COMMIT	The business to the cause or community partner
TELL	Employees and other stakeholders why the company is involved, what it is doing, and how
INTEGRATE	Cash support with a range of other corporate help
ORGANISE	Community involvement just as professionally as any other aspect of corporate activity
NURTURE	Long-term relationships with community partners, and develop their capacity

THE GREYCOATS CONFERENCE

A working version of **Directions for the Nineties** was shared with an inner circle of business leaders, the Cabinet Secretary, the General-Secretary of the Transport and General Workers’ Union, and HRH The Prince of Wales at a dinner in The Prince’s Kensington Palace home, in early summer 1991. A few weeks later, a more refined version was the subject of a day-long conference, which BITC organised in the Greycoats School in Westminster. The Prime Minister – then John Major – and HRH The Prince of Wales gave keynote addresses. Panels of business leaders and community partners reacted to the proposals, and a plenary session was held with rising stars from all three political parties. The BITC talent-spotters, led by Cathy Ashton, chose Tony Blair (then a Labour shadow Cabinet Minister); the Environment Minister, Chris Patten (later Governor-General of Hong Kong); and a young MP from Britain’s third political party – Charles Kennedy (later to become leader of the Liberal Democrat Party). As well as several business leaders, led by then BITC Chair Neil Shaw, local government was represented by Louise Ellman, then running Lancashire County Council and later a long-serving Labour MP.

Over the previous decade, BITC had been building up its corporate membership base and had been progressively engaging more business leaders. Coming up to its second decade, BITC had come of age, and the business attendees for Greycoats confirmed it. Attending the event was Bob Wigley – now Chairman of UK Finance and later to chair BITC’s Education Leadership Team – who was then a young corporate financier at Morgan Grenfell (now part of Deutsche Bank). He remembers sitting in the car, enroute to the conference, with the Morgan Grenfell, Head of Corporate Finance. Scanning the attendance list, the latter was sceptical that many of the senior figures on the list would show up at the event at all. They did, and the bankers ended up staying for much more of the conference than they had planned because so many of their senior clients were staying!

BITC published the final version of Directions in October 1991 and presented it at a series of regional conferences around the country. At the time, security in Northern Ireland remained a serious problem. In retrospect, the invitation to the Northern Ireland “Directions” roll-out event (an imitation brick to help build a more prosperous future) sent by mail to business leaders was a brave move!

SUBSEQUENT, REGULAR
THOUGHT-LEADERSHIP

Directions for the Nineties was the first of a number of inquiries over the following years (some initiated by BITC, some by government, and some by individual businesses). BITC was involved, in some way, in all of these inquiries. All explored how to increase the quality and extent of business involvement in the community. These included the following:

- The RSA’s **Tomorrow’s Company** Inquiry (1993-1994), which involved (then BITC Board members) Tony Cleaver and John Neill
- **Work in Society** for The Prince’s Charities (1993-1995 – **See Box 17 below**)
- **Two-Way Street** (NCVO and BITC in 1998) on business engagement with the voluntary sector
- The Committee of Inquiry into a **New Vision for Business** (commissioned by the late Anita Roddick – Body Shop – and Tony Blair in 1997, which reported in 1999),
- **Business & Society** (Department of Trade and Industry in 2004) **Tomorrow’s Global Company** (2006-2007)

In 2008, Geoffrey Bush from Diageo, Amanda Jordan (formerly of National Westminster Bank but by then with the Corporate Citizenship Company), Jane Nelson from the Corporate Responsibility Initiative at the Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, and David Grayson (by then director of the Doughty Centre and Professor of Corporate Responsibility at Cranfield School of Management) looked at the range of these reports and what had come of their recommendations to government and business.

They concluded:

“First, there is no ‘quick fix.’” Long-term community issues need long-term strategies and sustained implementation. Most of the recommendations previously made are still relevant, and real progress has been made. The government therefore needs to keep up momentum, to carefully prioritise tasks and new initiatives, and to ensure effective coordination across government, government agencies, and programmes.

Second, examples of some of the most successful and sustained business engagement, such as the Foyer Federation or the Business in the Community Silver Jubilee ‘Big Tick’ Award winners, suggest that business leaders respond best to helping to tackle specific tasks within an overall vision and with priorities agreed between government, business, and society as a whole.

Third, it takes time to build trust between the sectors. There are now many more men and women who have served over the years on a variety of cross-sectoral boards and partnerships. Some of these mechanisms have worked better than others, but there is a reservoir of experienced civic activists to be tapped in all three sectors.”⁴⁴

We discuss later examples of BITC’s Thought-leadership in Chapter 15 below.

CHAPTER 10: WORKING WITH
GOVERNMENTS – FROM THATCHER
TO CAMERON 1982-2015

As we have seen, BITC was created as a result of government initiative: the Anglo-American conference at Sunningdale in 1980. Michael Heseltine and Tom King encouraged the fledgling organisation.

Nevertheless, in the early years, BITC had to work hard to establish credibility with politicians and civil servants both nationally and locally. That it did so was due in no small part to its parliamentary and government liaison director for much of the 1980s (a role she continued on a part-time basis alongside family commitments up to the mid-1990s) – Cathy (now Baroness) Ashton . Her astute political savviness and personal warmth helped to persuade a wide range of politicians, from across the political spectrum, to work with BITC.

Many of the business leaders who got involved with BITC in the 1980s were active supporters of the Thatcher Government. BITC’s third Chairman: Hector Laing was to serve as a treasurer of the Conservative Party and became a Conservative member of the House of Lords.

A MOVEMENT FOR ALL SEASONS

Allen Sheppard (Chair 1993-1996) was also an ardent Thatcherite and later became a Conservative peer too. BITC’s second Chairman: Robert Carr, whilst not on the same wing of the Tory Party, had been a prominent Cabinet Minister in the Conservative Government of 1970-1974. Stephen O’Brien, therefore, briefed Cathy Ashton to focus particularly on centre and left of centre politicians, the trade unions and local authorities and local enterprise boards. “My job,” recalls Ashton, “was to make sure that they didn’t look at BITC and see a Tory front. And anyway, by definition, the parts of the country where we especially needed to form partnerships were likely to be under Labour control. It would have been impossible to do our job without

building alliances across the political spectrum.” Having HRH The Prince of Wales as a very active president from 1985 onwards, also helped to remove BITC from the party-political arena and gave BITC a licence to operate with politicians from across the political spectrum. It was equally essential for HRH that BITC was not associated with any political party.

The emphasis from the earliest days of BITC was that this would not be business falsely claiming to be able to solve intractable social and economic problems on its own. Instead, BITC put the emphasis on the centrality of cross-sectoral partnerships; and made engagement with local councils, trade unions, voluntary organisations, community groups and central government, a ‘given’ for BITC. “We didn’t want anyone to imagine that business was ever claiming it had all the answers or wanted to replace government or the Third Sector. We were about mobilising the distinctive contribution of business, in partnership with the other sectors,” declares Cathy Ashton.

Senior ministers were frequent speakers at BITC events from the early years – but so too were opposition leaders. In 1994, for example, Tony Blair, by then Leader of the Opposition, gave the ‘Per Cent Club’ Annual Lecture; and separately, Gordon Brown, shadow chancellor, chaired a half-day US Congress-style public hearing with expert witnesses, hosted at Shell HQ then in The Strand, as part of the evidence-gathering for the ‘Work in Society’ Inquiry.

It was these intense contacts with local and national politicians from all parties behind the scenes over the years that enabled a seamless switch from working with the Thatcher and then Major Governments to a close relationship with Tony Blair’s New Labour administration after 1997, initially contributing to an extensive range of Policy Action Teams, in the first Blair term, around social inclusion.

Later, there was to be a similar transition to working with Tony Blair’s successor Gordon Brown after 2007. There was a further seamless switch in 2010, when the Cameron-Clegg coalition came to power. A key part of understanding BITC’s close, practical working relationships with successive governments, is the hard work which was done over the years to build relationships across and within different political parties, as well as close collaboration with Civil Servants in different government departments.

Alongside the visible events when politicians from different parties spoke at BITC events such as termly ‘Community Affairs dinners’ for BITC’s main company contacts, when leading politicians were able to share their ideas and also respond to the fast-evolving thinking and practice about what was then still Corporate Community Involvement; there was close dialogue with officials on how government might practically encourage more business engagement in partnership with the public and Voluntary/Community sectors.

A MESSAGE FOR ALL PARTIES

Paradoxically, BITC’s messages of public-private-community partnership and corporate responsibility proved attractive in different ways to all the major parties. For the Thatcherite Conservatives, these messages were part of the quid pro quo for a smaller state and ameliorating the social consequences of the dramatic industrial restructuring of the 1980s. For ‘One-Nation’ Tories like Michael Heseltine and Chris Patten, BITC’s messages were a powerful endorsement of the need for a practical helping hand to support those hard hit by the economic restructuring of the 1980s. For the Liberal Democrats, they played strongly to local devolution. For Labour – and especially New Labour after 1994 – it was about local democratic accountability and partnership. It was also part of a wider wooing of business and the City of London financial community by New Labour, in the run-up to the 1997 General Election. The messages from BITC’s ‘Work in Society’ project in

the mid1990s, that what happens to business matters to society, but also that what happens to society matters to business, resonated well with a party told by its late leader John Smith, in his final speech the night before he died in 1994, that “**international competitiveness and social cohesion are just two sides of the same coin.**”

As already described, BITC worked closely with the Thatcher Government to build the national network of local enterprise agencies and subsequently the ‘Education-Business Partnerships.’ BITC was to be a key cheerleader for the Training and Enterprise Councils, producing thought-leadership about their roles and what they might do. David Grayson worked closely with Michael Heseltine and a succession of Small Firms Ministers to establish and develop the ‘Business Links’: one-stop shops, bringing together local help for small firms – especially those with the aspiration and the potential to grow – after 1992. He continued his role with the Blair Government⁴⁶. Several BITC staff were involved in an elaborate process of consultation around Social Inclusion at the beginning of the Blair Government. Peter Davies (BITC’s deputy CEO at the time), reviewed education-business links for the Blair Government.

After stepping down as CEO of BITC in 2008, Julia Cleverdon chaired an education-business review under the auspices of the National Council for Educational Excellence, for the Brown Government.

Over the years, a number of prominent business leaders active in BITC, were also tapped by government to chair major public inquiries. These included reviews by Sir Derek Wanless of the NHS; a skills review by Sir Sandy Leitch; and the former BITC Chair, Sir Peter Davis, investigating welfare to work.

In the early-2000s, BITC ‘Awards for Excellence’ were run for a decade in partnership with government: initially with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and subsequently with BEIS (the department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.)

AN ALL-PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP

In 2001, BITC was to encourage the formation of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Corporate Social Responsibility chaired by the formidable crossbench peer and former CEO of the charity Age Concern, Sally (Baroness) Greengross. The group was established by a group of backbench MPs and Peers after a 2001 survey (undertaken by BITC and PricewaterhouseCoopers) revealed a lack of awareness and understanding about corporate responsibility in parliament. The group’s main aim was, and is, to promote debate and understanding of Responsible Business among parliamentarians. One of the very tangible outputs of the APPG was to be an annual Responsible Business competition, involving individual MPs each nominating an exemplar business from their own constituency. BITC also organised dedicated ‘Seeing is Believing’ visits for senior civil servants – and ‘recess visits’ for parliamentarians to look at business involvement in the community in their constituencies.

Towards the end of the Brown Government, Gail Greengross was seconded into government to help with work experience and the Talent and Skills initiative, alongside Lucy Parker from Brunswick. Like several colleagues before her, she was able to transition to work with the incoming Cameron-Clegg Coalition on the ideas of David Cameron and his strategy director, Steve Hilton for a ‘Big Society,’ which led to the ‘Business Connectors’ programme after 2011 – **see Chapter 21 below.**

David Pemberton, who worked for BITC for more than 13 years, first as a regional and then a national executive director, highlights also the BITC contributions to changing corporate regulation such as requirements for directors to consider the interests of company stakeholders not just shareholders; the **Davies Review** to address the gender imbalance on the boards of FTSE-350 companies and resulting gender pay gap reporting; and having ‘race’ added alongside gender in the Financial Reporting Council corporate code.

Another way in which BITC has effectively engaged with governments, has been through the presence on the BITC Board of a succession of influential Permanent Secretaries such as Sir Geoffrey Holland, Sir Michael Bichard, Sir Michael Scholar and most recently, Sir Jeremy Pocklington.

In recent years, Sandra Kerr – BITC’s long-serving Race campaign director – has worked closely with officials in the Cabinet Office on the ethnic pay gap and tackling unemployment amongst the UK’s ethnic minorities. The dominance of BREXIT in UK politics in recent years, however, followed by the two years of the COVID-19 pandemic, has inevitably reduced opportunities for engagement with ministers and the opposition parties since 2015. Now that more traditional domestic politics appears to be resuming, it will be important for BITC to engage with officials and politicians across the spectrum, on its agenda – not least how to create an enabling environment for more responsible business and how to address the perceived limitations of Stakeholder Capitalism. The Levelling Up agenda is giving opportunities for this.

CHAPTER 11: PASSING ON THE REINS – STEPHEN O'BRIEN YEARS 1982-1992

Stephen O'Brien spent a decade building up BITC. He had successfully seen off the threats of duplication and competition from the CBI Special Programmes Unit (SPU). BITC had successfully taken the handful of early examples of local enterprise agencies and had built them into a national network. Under O'Brien's leadership, the 'one-trick pony' (enterprise agencies) now had a stable of horses: education, community enterprise, and urban regeneration; initiatives to engage HR and Purchasing departments (respectively, customised training and Opportunity Now; and Partnership Sourcing). Around ¾ of the FTSE had become BITC members. BITC events were attracting hundreds of top business leaders. There was a roadmap for the second decade with **Directions for the Nineties**. Stephen O'Brien had built up a diverse team in every sense of the word – a far cry from the six white, middle-aged male secondees he had started out with in Waterloo Road a decade earlier. Several of the senior staff were developing their own distinctive voices.

As Stephen O'Brien recalls in 2022:

"Timing is everything, and BITC in its earliest days was able to build on the 'let's get on with it and no nonsense' mood of the time as business shook off what it saw as the restrictive hand of nationalisation. This was stoked up by the real threat of social unrest in our cities. We all know that failure is an orphan, and success has many parents! As I look back, I think those 'parents' consisted of a handful of outstanding business leaders supported by a group of young executives who wanted to change the world. Outstanding among the business leaders were Alastair Pilkington and Hector Laing. Both drew on their experience outside business. Alastair, deeply affected by his personal experience of having to lay off workers from his family business in St Helens, wanted to help them rebuild their lives. Hector 'grew up' as a member of an army tank crew at the front in WW2 and was totally committed to building a better and more inclusive society. He had the ear of Margaret Thatcher.

The core staff team matched the commitment of Alastair and Hector and the other business leaders and were brilliant at transforming the ideas of these giants into practical action. First in was Cathy Ashton. Coming from a totally different background, she convinced the business leaders that nothing would be achieved unless they worked in partnership with Local government and the Trades Unions. She built the concept of partnership, which is now taken for granted and almost commonplace.

Robert Davies came from the Third sector and died all too young. He had the gift of being able to choreograph the most compelling events to engage busy business leaders. He was passionate about human-scale community regeneration and about championing Urban Villages and community entrepreneurs, and he went on to develop a huge international component to corporate responsibility.

Alongside these two worked Julia Cleverdon and David Grayson. Julia's passion was excellence in education and mobilising schools, especially to improve the life chances of those whose start in life was less promising. David had created Project North East in Newcastle and was a passionate and deeply effective campaigner for small-scale business. He built the network of enterprise agencies and, alongside it, a national understanding of the contribution that small business could make to the UK economy. Into this extraordinary mix came HRH The Prince of Wales as our President. He always led from the front, was full of fresh ideas, and spent vast amounts of time encouraging business and local community leaders to work for a better and more inclusive society. What a team!"

It is interesting to note that alongside the senior-level secondees from industry – predominantly older and almost exclusively white men – Stephen O'Brien recruited four young salaried executives as his core team. Cathy Ashton was 26 when she joined. Robert Davies was 34. David Grayson was 31 and Julia Cleverdon was 38 when they joined BITC. It is to Stephen O'Brien's enormous credit that he gave these young executives positions of central authority.

By 1992, BITC had not just survived but was thriving. O'Brien himself typically attributes this to others. Nevertheless, a lot of the success was down to Stephen O'Brien and his vision, determination, drive, and his personality: he had been able to charm much of corporate Britain! It had been, for example, an era when many Japanese businesses were establishing European bases in the UK, seeing the newly deregulated and more enterprising economy as a suitable platform into the EU. There were so many Japanese companies setting up in the UK that the strategy consultancy McKinsey & Company was running training courses for Japanese managers on how to operate in British society; as part of this, it was routinely recommending to these managers that they and their companies should become active in BITC. Ever entrepreneurial, Stephen O'Brien had found a senior business figure who understood Japan and Japanese business etiquette and who became a one-person membership recruitment team specifically for Japanese companies.

HRH The Prince of Wales was pushing Stephen and BITC to take on more projects including, in 1988, the organisation of HRH The Prince of Wales' 'Award for Innovation' – then an annual competition with the final filmed for BBC Television's **Tomorrow's World**. Stephen O'Brien felt, however, that he was **"running out of steam."** Reflecting back, in 2022, Stephen spoke of **"hearing myself speak the same words"** and deciding **"I was no longer being so creative."** As he had already done on at least a couple of earlier occasions in his career, he decided on a change of course.

He had articulated his idea in a chance conversation with Allen Sheppard, as the two men waited outside the old GrandMet brewery in Brick Lane, East London, for the arrival of the HRH The Prince of Wales for a BITC event hosted by GrandMet.

Sheppard, who had grown up in East London, had a trademark directness and asked Stephen O'Brien what he wanted to do next. Stephen found himself telling his host that he had decided it was time to move on from BITC and fancied the idea of trying to recreate the spirit of the Halifax 'One-Town Partnership' on the much larger stage of London. **"Well, if you do, I'd be happy to chair that!"** Sheppard replied. The idea of **London First** was born.

By this time, Robert Davies had moved across from BITC to become the founding CEO of The International Business Leaders Forum (initially called International Business in the Community.) He had made it clear that he saw his future mobilising businesses to help in the transition to market economies, first in Eastern and Central Europe and then further afield. Cathy Ashton had moved out of the organisation and had become a part-time adviser to BITC. David Grayson wanted to focus on developing the arguments and the agenda for extending business engagement in society.

Yet, as well as having his own plan, Stephen O'Brien also knew that he had groomed and nurtured a worthy successor as BITC CEO: Julia Cleverdon. She had joined BITC in 1988 from the Industrial Society, initially to head up a new workstream on education and to promote the replication of the East London 'Education-Business Partnership' across the country. O'Brien had carefully ensured that Julia Cleverdon had got to know HRH The Prince of Wales, who was highly supportive of the new CEO. The handover took place at the beginning of 1992, which coincided with the move of the remaining London-based staff out of the City Road premises,

which had been provided by National Westminster Bank, and into swanky newly refurbished offices on the upper floors of the new GrandMet (now Diageo) HQ in St James’s Square in the heart of London. These offices were shared with the fledgling IBLF and the new London First.

Stephen (today Sir Stephen O’Brien CBE) became a Vice-Chairman of BITC and later became a Vice-President (as he remains to this day). He has continued to be a generous mentor and an inspiration for many of the talented people he persuaded to work with him at Project Fullemploy, BITC, London First, and in the subsequent charity and public roles he has taken on – many associated with health and/or London regeneration.

CHAPTER 12: “BUILDING THE BUSINESS...” – 1992-2000

In early 1992, Julia Cleverdon – previously one of the joint Managing Directors of BITC (together with one of the present authors) – took over from Stephen O’Brien as CEO. By now, the organisation was working with its member companies on a number of issues, such as local economic development (see Chapter 5); business-education links (see Chapter 6); neighbourhood regeneration (see Chapter 7); diversity in the workplace (see Chapter 13 below); and, also, early environmental initiatives by business.

THE PER CENT CLUB

Since 1986, BITC had also provided the secretariat for ‘The Per Cent Club’ to encourage businesses to give (as a minimum) one-half percent of pre-tax profits to the community. ‘The Per Cent Club’ was loosely modelled on a number of similar clubs in the US, notably in the Twin Cities of Minneapolis-St Paul, Minnesota, which was a bastion of corporate community involvement in the 1970s and 1980s. The British ‘The Per Cent Club’ provided an early example of providing businesses with guidance on minimum performance standards and an early benchmarking tool.

HANDING OVER RESPONSIBILITY FOR LOCAL ENTERPRISE AGENCIES

Mobilising business engagement for a variety of social issues sat uneasily with providing leadership and an umbrella for just one type of organisation – enterprise agencies – or for one issue – enterprise. In 1992, BITC formally withdrew from its role as the national umbrella for the LEAs. The agencies subsequently formed their own National Federation of Enterprise Agencies (NFEA) with help from former BITC regional director John Guest (from Cadburys) as its first CEO.

Adrian Hodges – BITC Communications Director 1991-1995 – says one of his proudest achievements at BITC was when the Financial Times and other newspapers stopped describing BITC as ‘the national umbrella of the local enterprise agencies’ and instead started to acknowledge BITC’s far wider role mobilising business involvement in the community.

SPREADING GOOD PRACTICE IN COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

With the establishment of the NFEA and the transition from Stephen O’Brien to Julia Cleverdon, BITC was now free to focus more on identifying and disseminating good practice among businesses about how to work in the community. An elementary account-management system had been introduced in 1990. This was now accelerated with a dedicated national membership team, led by Edward Morris, who had originally joined BITC as a volunteer on the **Directions for the Nineties** programme. A pilot training course for Corporate Community Involvement Managers from member companies, drawing on a very successful programme run by the Boston College Center for Corporate Citizenship in the US, was run by BITC (along with the Manchester Business School in 1992) and transferred to Ashridge Management School in 1993, where it ran once or twice a year, well in to the 2000s. A decade after starting the CCI course, Ashridge would use the experience it had developed through this training programme to build on the work of corporate responsibility managers in the Corporate Responsibility Group to develop a ‘competency framework.’ This competency framework tried to identify the skills for what any manager in business needed in order to be able to handle business-society interactions successfully. In turn, this led the British Government’s CSR Minister at the time, Stephen Timms, to create a ‘CSR Academy.’ (Responsibility for this was transferred to BITC in 2006).

In 1992, BITC also created a Corporate Community Involvement Research Forum to bring together leading company CCI managers, consultants, and academics interested in the field. For several years, this Forum provided an opportunity to host visiting international experts, to share emerging research, to identify knowledge gaps, and to encourage further innovation.

Back in 1987–1988, a ‘Corporate Responsibility Group’ (CRG) was formed by Public Affairs/External Affairs directors from IBM, Shell, and a handful of other key BITC member companies. At the time, they positioned it unambiguously as being ‘the shop stewards’ trying to exercise more influence and control over BITC. The ‘shop stewards’ felt that BITC was too much in the habit of going over their heads and straight to their chairs and CEOs and of getting budget and time commitments from them, which they, as practitioners, then had to action (whether it fitted with their agreed corporate strategies or not). CRG was to grow into a substantial practitioner network. Amanda Jordan, then at National Westminster Bank, remembers being deputed by CRG colleagues to negotiate with Julia Cleverdon for better participation in BITC decision-making, which resulted in a CRG representative joining the BITC Board: Ben Stimson (while Director of Responsibility and Reputation at Sky) held the seat for several years. (CRG later became part of a new Institute of Corporate Responsibility and Sustainability: ICRS: www.icrs.info/)

BRINGING IN THE ACTION RESOURCE CENTRE

A significant boost to the scale of BITC operations and capacity around the country came with BITC’s merger with the Action Resource Centre in 1995. ARC predated BITC. It was formed in 1973 as a charity to mobilise business resources for community organisations. Whereas BITC came more from a business tradition, ARC had more of a community culture.

Looking back to that time, Julia Cleverdon recounts how the then Chairman of BITC, Allen (later Lord) Sheppard, had told her that it was all very well being able to talk to the corporates inside the M25, suggesting all sorts of things they should be doing in the East End or, for that matter, the West End of London, but what were we going to do when Smith + Nephew rang from Hull? How were we going to know what was going on up there in Hull? Julia concluded, “**we needed a merger with another organisation that was strong on the rim to back us up, while we held most of our strength at the centre.**”

Mergers of this sort are rarely easy, and this one was no exception, as Julia explains:

“The merger with ARC was problematic. Allen Sheppard was amazed at how long the takeover took. As he said, he had taken over eight companies in America in the time I took with ARC. Mergers in the voluntary sector are values driven.”

Following the merger, however, BITC was able to strengthen its regional offices and offer a more comprehensive local brokerage service for businesses, especially to support more employee volunteering in the community. ARC had championed the model of ‘development assignments’ – short, sharp community projects, which would also help participants to acquire additional skills. Clara Freeman at Marks & Spencer had been one of the champions of development assignments, as a way to train frontline supervisors and build their creativity and entrepreneurial, problem-solving skills.

EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERING

Before the merger, few of the FTSE-100 largest companies had formal employee volunteering programmes. After the merger, there was more focus on skills-based volunteering. David Halley from IBM was seconded first to ARC and then to BITC to promote ‘Employees in the Community.’ Peter Davies joined BITC from running the CBI Teachers programme and brought immense campaigning skills, and Gail Greengross was recruited from the Industrial Society to develop the employees in the community campaign.

One of the merged organisation’s vehicles for volunteering was CARES. This was another import from the US after a delegation of business leaders, including Sandy Leitch (then CEO of Allied Dunbar), visited the New York CARES in 1996, orchestrated by Graham Bann and Peter Davies. Significantly, the cities of Leeds and Leicester (where there had been strong ARC offices) were among the first to embrace the CARES programme to encourage more employee volunteering. Julia Cleverdon believes that the addition of the community focus and expertise of the ARC staff across the country helped BITC immeasurably to focus much more on the most deprived communities in the UK.

REGIONAL EXPANSION

The strengthening of BITC’s regional teams in 1995–1996 was to prove prescient, as an incoming Labour Government in 1997 was to move quickly to implement its devolution agenda. This involved the establishment of the Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh and the Welsh Assembly Government in Cardiff. In England, it involved the establishment of nine Regional Development Agencies (RDAs). The RDAs were to become sometime partners and outlets for programme delivery and sometime funders and target audiences for BITC to influence. In Yorkshire and Humberside, BITC was to sign a multi-million-pound, three-year contact (later extended) with Yorkshire Forward (the RDA) to increase the quality and extent of corporate responsibility.

NORTHERN IRELAND

In Northern Ireland, over the years, the organisation has been able to bridge the sectarian divide with extensive education-business links and partnerships between businesses and community organisations from the different traditions. BITC Northern Ireland was led for almost a quarter century by John Heaslip LVO (BITC’s Northern Ireland CEO from 1989, when the organisation was properly established in the province, until 2013).

Under John Heaslip’s visionary and entrepreneurial leadership, BITC Northern Ireland successfully mobilised business to support the regeneration of communities, leveraging funds from business, the public sector, and grant-making foundations. Its success gave it the authority to focus on those national programmes most relevant to the Northern Ireland economy and community – and, where appropriate, to customise programmes. John Heaslip built up a talented and highly committed staff team, able to mobilise the commitment of leading businesses and other employers across Northern Ireland, supported by a succession of highly engaged chairs and board members. One of the earliest recruits to the staff team was Kieran Harding, who joined in 1990 from a local enterprise agency/local economic development background. Harding became Managing Director in 2011 and has led a team of 40 outstanding individuals in championing the responsible business agenda in Northern Ireland, with distinction since 2013.

The rich history of BITC Northern Ireland cannot be captured in just a few paragraphs or even a chapter. The 35th anniversary of BITC Northern Ireland, in 2024, will be a suitable opportunity to do justice to the extent of the contribution and impacts. In preparation for that, it would make an excellent Masters, or even doctoral thesis, to track and analyse the evolution of BITC Northern Ireland, not least in relation to the Northern Ireland Peace Process – **see Chapter 30.**

CAUSE-RELATED MARKETING – WHO CARES WINS!

Another aspect of ‘building the business’ in the 1990s was BITC’s ‘Cause-Related Marketing’ campaign, which began in 1995. The idea was to link the power of business and marketing to a social cause. The original idea had been developed by a professional marketer, Sue Adkins. In brainstorming her initial ideas with friends, one had mentioned that they thought there was an organisation called something like ‘Business in the Community’, which might be interested. Adkins had had to use telephone directories to ascertain whether there was such an organisation and to make contact. Her ideas intrigued BITC’s CEO, Julia Cleverdon, but it was some time before potential sources of funding were identified and obtained. Seed funding came from Sir Dominic Cadbury and the Cadbury-Schweppes Charitable Foundation. The initial brief was to define the concept, develop the business and the social case for it, and put a marketing campaign around it.

Using the BITC Leadership Team framework, a number of leading companies were assembled, chaired first by Dominic Cadbury and including, BT, Unilever, Centrica, National Westminster Bank (later replaced by Barclays Bank) and Tesco, whose Marketing Director, Tim Mason, was to take over the ‘Cause-Related Marketing’ Leadership Team chairmanship from Dominic Cadbury. Tesco’s **Computers for Schools** became a highly visible flagship of the campaign. Sue Adkins was very clear and excited by the fact that the marketers held much more budget and sway in an organisation than the community teams – her push for Cause-Related Marketing was thus driven by the sense of the much bigger impact you could make.

Sue Adkins’ approach was to identify what she, as an ex-marketing director, would need by way of research, case studies, and ‘how to’ guides, and to go out and produce them herself (or commission others to do so). Her most notable commission was Research International (part of WPP), which produced the evidence base for the business and social benefits from well-designed and professionally executed cause-related marketing. The campaign also produced guidelines for businesses and charities that set out the importance of mutual respect and benefit. Adkins’ cause-related marketing campaign arguably followed closely the key principles of running a successful BITC business-engagement campaign (described below in Chapter 28). Sue Adkins distilled a lot of her insights and the examples of key member companies in her book: **Cause Related Marketing: Who Cares Wins** published in 1999. The book created a great platform for speaking events and engagements, which snowballed. Sue Adkins was prolific at being out there, speaking publicly in the UK and internationally; in turn, this created more demand for all the campaign resources.

Sue would be the first to acknowledge that BITC’s cause-related marketing owes a substantial debt to an American campaigner and author, the late Richard Steckel, who transformed the Denver Children’s Museum and went on to write a ground-breaking book **Filthy Rich and other non-profit fantasies** (1989). Subsequent Chapters (13-18) cover further aspects of Building the Business during the sixteen years that Julia Cleverdon served as CEO of BITC.

CHAPTER 13: THE EARLY YEARS OF OPPORTUNITY NOW AND RACE FOR OPPORTUNITY – PROMOTING DIVERSITY 1990 ONWARDS

Another part of BITC’s ‘building the business’ in the 1990s was a greater focus on promoting diversity. One of the forerunners of BITC, Project Fullemploy (a charity to help young Black Britons to get skills and jobs) had been co-founded by BITC’s first CEO Stephen O’Brien in 1976. The 1981 urban riots, which had increased the momentum for the creation of BITC, had particularly involved disaffected, young, Black Britons. BITC’s work with many of the local enterprise agencies, ‘Education-Business Partnerships’, and the Neighbourhood Economic Development Partnerships (after 1987) showed the continuing, dangerously high levels of social deprivation and exclusion among many of Britain’s Black communities.

BITC recognised that a more proactive approach to equality had to be pursued and that while corporate community investment would go so far, the real improvements would come from changes to core business policies in the workplace and the marketplace. BITC’s first foray into an explicit diversity campaign was ‘Opportunity 2000’ (later rebranded as ‘Opportunity Now’ and later still as ‘Gender Equality’). This campaign aimed to create a more balanced workforce male/female ratio at every level of an organisation. Started under the energetic leadership of Lady Howe (the first Deputy Chair of the statutory Equal Opportunities Commission), it quickly engaged a range of public and private sector employers, **as described in Box 14**. This represented a further, significant extension of BITC’s ‘ask’ of companies – and reflected a further maturing of ideas of business responsibility.

BOX 14: OPPORTUNITY NOW -
NOW BITC’S GENDER EQUALITY CAMPAIGN

BITC’s ‘Gender Equality’ campaign was launched in October 1991 as ‘Opportunity 2000,’ with 61 employers and supported by the then Prime Minister, The Rt Hon John Major MP. It became the UK’s leading membership organisation working towards gender equality and diversity in the workplace with, at one point, a membership network of more than 350 organisations from the private, public, and education sectors equalling a combined workforce of over 4.2 million employees.

What became ‘Opportunity 2000’ grew out of BITC’s Women’s Economic Development Initiative (WEDI), which was supported first by Cathy Ashton and subsequently by Jane Kershaw. The WEDI published good practice on improving opportunities for women at work, sponsored by Kingfisher and the Cooperative Bank. It also piloted a signposting service to childcare in Brighton, sponsored by American Express, in partnership with the DayCare Trust. An expanded Leadership Team with fifteen core supporter organisations created the building blocks for a campaign. This included a mission statement drafted by John Adshead, Sainsbury’s HR Director, which companies would be invited to sign up to. John Birt, Director-General of the BBC, and another member of the Leadership Team provided ‘Model Measures’ for middle-managers, which other companies could adopt. The Leadership Team also commissioned Val Hammond, then at the Ashridge Management Centre, to develop a toolkit on cultural change. This was meant to signal that tinkering at the edges would not be sufficient.

Jane Kershaw recalls accompanying Lady Howe to meet Sarah Hogg, then running the Prime Minister’s Policy Unit, to get John Major on board, and a launch date in Oct 1991 was agreed. Over the summer, BITC ran a series of workshops on how participating companies could set stretch goals relevant to their organisations. BITC made a point of engaging both HR and PR departments because it was clear that it would need such internal partnerships if businesses were going to set ambitious goals and publicise them.

By the time of the launch event at Lancaster House on 28 October 1991, the original 15 Leadership Team members had grown to 61 supporters. Liz Bargh, who had previously run the Pepperill Unit at The Industrial Society (promoting women’s leadership development), became the first director of ‘Opportunity 2000.’ She remembers walking back to BITC HQ from Lancaster House and seeing Evening Standard placards with the headline ‘Enter Major the feminist!’ Adrian Hodges, BITC’s Communications Director – working closely with Dotty Irvine from Colman Getty PR company – had successfully generated widespread TV, radio, and newspaper interest in the new campaign.

CAMPAIGN STRATEGY

The original by-line to ‘Opportunity 2000’ (sitting underneath the logo) was ‘Towards a Balanced Workforce’; this aimed to capture the essence of the campaign, which was to create a balance of men and women in the workforce along with a better balance between the ‘professional and the personal’ for both men and women.

The campaign emphasised the business case for effecting cultural change within organisations as well as the moral and human rights case. Participating businesses were clear: they wanted to make the business case for action rather than simply present the campaign as being about equal opportunities. Supporters could set their own goals and could commit to annual reporting on performance. Jane Kershaw emphasises, “**the Target Team’s insistence that we should not be telling businesses what to do but rather that they should have ownership in setting their own goals, as long as they signed up to the mission statement (a requirement rather than an invitation) and to an annual publication of progress against their goals.**” Jane also recalls how she and Elspeth Howe, and later Liz Bargh, used the Leadership Team members like John Birt, Peter Davis, and Colin Marshall as sounding boards and reality checks for how best to position the campaign in ways that would resonate with their peers.

Peter Davis (then Executive Chairman of Reed Elsevier and later BITC’s Chairman), who was also on the Leadership Team, used to speak about companies being prepared to light a fuse, which would catch up with them, if they did not take concrete action.

‘Opportunity 2000’ promoted the business case through ‘how to’ publications, workshops, and benchmarking. The goal remains to develop, share, and celebrate best practice in overcoming the barriers to the recruitment, retention, and development of women through awards, research, and benchmarking. ‘Opportunity 2000’ (later ‘Opportunity Now’) evolved a sophisticated benchmarking process, which was the most extensive annual survey on gender equality and diversity in the UK. It enabled employers to benchmark progress year on year against competitors and acted as a checklist for cultural change. “**It was,**” says Liz Bargh, “**very heady times.**” She particularly recalls the Fifth Anniversary Dinner in 1996 – the brainchild of John Birt: “**There was a brilliant double-act appearance from Tony and Cherie Blair, alongside Sir Howard Davies, who had just stepped down as Director-General of the CBI. By the time of the fifth anniversary, The Independent newspaper could now confidently declare that “research now proves that women who work for Opportunity 2000 companies have better career prospects.”** (Dec 3rd, 1996).

A number of key points stand out from the creation and early years of the ‘Opportunity 2000’ campaign.

- The emphasis on attracting a group of heavyweight, mainstream business leaders at the core of the effort: besides Elspeth Howe herself and John Adshead, John Birt and Peter Davis, the original Leadership Team also included Sir Colin Marshall of British Airways
- Making full use of existing good practice – the BBC Model Measures

- Establishing a robust, enduring partnership with a credible academic partner to provide relevant, independent analysis: the annual reports produced by Val Hammond (originally Ashridge and then Roffey Park when Val Hammond moved in 1993 to become Principal/CEO of Roffey Park)
- The expectation that participating businesses would make a commitment to action and then be held to account for their performance
- The use of transparency and benchmarking/the competitive spirit to drive progress – ‘the lit fuse’
- Regular celebrations of progress: the glass half-full rather than half-empty strategy
- A close, effective working relationship between the Leadership Team chair and the campaign director, who were both informed, credible media spokespeople, highly experienced in handling the media.

As with every other aspect of BITC’s work, the critics might question the scale of contribution and the speed of change. It is easy though, from a 2022 lens, to gloss over just how things have changed from the days when the norm was all-male panels and speaker line-ups and overwhelmingly white, male audiences – and there were few women in senior management or board roles.

The BITC campaign was later renamed as ‘The Gender Equality’ campaign, which went on to cultivate relationships with key partners, including the Cranfield Centre for Developing Women Leaders, which from 1997 has produced an annual Female FTSE that has tracked women on the boards of the FTSE-100 companies. Benchmarking was to become a very significant part of the BITC toolkit by the turn of the Millennium: see below: ‘**What Gets Managed Is What Gets Measured.**’ (Chapter 14) And also Chapter 25: **Fit for a global pandemic?**

‘Opportunity Now’ was originally chaired by Baroness Elspeth Howe of Idlicote CBE (1991-1998), then by Clara Freeman, OBE from Marks & Spencer (1998-2005), and then by Carolyn McCall (2005-2009), – then Chief Executive from The Guardian Media Group plc and subsequently CEO of the budget airline EasyJet and later of ITV. McCall was succeeded by:

- Alison Platt 2009 of BUPA – 2013
- Helena Morrissey, Newton Investment Management – 2013-2021
- Sarah Bentley 2021 of Thames Water – present day

See Box 21 – Chapter 25 below for list of campaign directors

Opportunity Now’s campaign experience was subsequently transferred to race with the launch of Race for Opportunity (RfO) in 1995. This tracked the development of race diversity on the business agenda, the development of appropriate HR practice and the impact of race on company profits. Its early years’ activities are summarized in Box 15 below.

Critics argued that notwithstanding Opportunity Now and RfO, BITC failed to develop a coherent diversity agenda at that time. This was despite various attempts to do so, including an abortive attempt to create a Diversity Forum with non-BITC organisations which also wished to influence business on diversity such as the Employers’ Campaign on Age, Stonewall (the LGBTQ+ NGO) and the Employers’ Forum on Disability whose establishment BITC had assisted.

BOX 15: RACE FOR OPPORTUNITY CAMPAIGN

BITC’s first CEO Stephen O’Brien was and is passionate about race equality. Before joining BITC, he had previously created another not-for-profit: Project Fullemploy to promote better opportunities for disadvantaged young people. In 1977 Project Fullemploy began running short training courses devoted to improving the skills of literacy, numeracy, and social and life skills. The majority of participants had been unemployed for at least two years and had no school certificate or other qualifications. The courses were run by professionals, many seconded from industry and commercial organisations.

Funding comes partly from Government and partly from sponsoring companies, who not only provide money and premises but also took trainees on work experience and where possible employed trainees at the completion of the course.

At the original Anglo-American Conference at Sunningdale in 1980, one of the American speakers: Elton Jolly, a charismatic Civil Rights leader, had presciently warned his British audience that he saw many of the factors which had caused urban riots in American inner cities, also present in the UK. A warning which came to pass in 1981 with the urban riots that summer.

There was a subsequent conference with The Prince of Wales at St George’s House, Windsor about business and race in the early 1980s with prominent business leaders and black community leaders.

Some of the neighbourhood partnerships and community entrepreneurs that BITC subsequently supported were focused on helping black communities. Nevertheless, it was well in to BITC’s second decade before a dedicated campaign on race was created.

The Race for Opportunity (RfO) campaign was established in 1995 with a small group of companies. Participating organisations were invited to improve opportunities for Britain’s racial minorities in ways that would also support their business objectives in terms of:

- Their bottom line
- Becoming an ‘employer of choice’
- Enhancing their corporate reputation and profile amongst ethnic minority stakeholders and other groups in the wider community

Membership by 2007, included 180 of the largest private and public sector organisations, representing over 2 million of the UK’s workforce.

The campaign focused on four key areas of business activity which demonstrated the business case for working on race, namely:

- Employment, including recruitment, selection, progression and retention
- Marketing to ethnic minorities as profitable consumers
- Engaging ethnic minority businesses in their supplier chain and as business partners
- Diversity-proofing community involvement activities and initiatives to ensure inclusion of ethnic minority individuals and communities.

A core activity of the campaign was the annual benchmarking exercise which helped RfO network organisations to measure their progress on race equality both internally and externally, whilst raising awareness and driving action within businesses.

The campaign also shared best practice through a range of events including focussed workshops and seminars that gave businesses the opportunity to learn from each other and collectively find solutions.

For more information on the Race Equality campaign, see below chapter 26.

EMPLOYERS’ FORUM ON DISABILITY

Disability had, in fact, been BITC’s first engagement in diversity, starting in 1985, when Cathy Ashton had convened a round-table between employers, disability charities, and disability campaigners, with the help of Susan Scott-Parker, then a consultant specialising in employing disabled people. An unpublished history of the origins of the Employers’ Forum on Disability, written by Patrick Tolfree, picks up the story:

“Hosted by London Electricity, it provided a unique opportunity for all participants to consider practical ways of getting disabled people into work.

Employers at the conference recognised that that there was a very great deal they could do themselves to employ more disabled people, but they were unsure of how to set about it. For example, they claimed that disabled people did not apply for jobs but were not sure whose fault that was or how to find disabled applicants. It was felt that some kind of forum was needed, exclusively for employers, where they could meet to exchange information and views and not be afraid to admit their lack of knowledge on the subject. And so, the idea of a forum for employers was conceived, which Susan Scott-Parker immediately began to translate into action.

In June 1986, with the backing of BITC, the Employers’ Forum on Disability was formed under the auspices of the Prince of Wales’ Advisory Group on Disability, with Susan Scott-Parker as its Director. It consisted initially of five companies: the BBC, Pearl Assurance, Prudential Assurance, Shell International, and Shell UK.

The Prince of Wales, at that time presiding over The Prince of Wales’s Advisory Group on Disability as well as being President of BITC, took a direct personal interest in the creation of the Forum. The Forum remained part of the administrative framework of his Advisory Group and of BITC until it acquired independent charitable status in 1991.”

The early years were financially precarious, and without the passion and dogged determination of Susan Scott-Parker, EFD would not have survived. Patrick Tolfree does, though, also credit BITC’s help:

“In early 1989, Julia Cleverdon, Managing Director Development of BITC, was instrumental in setting in motion the process that gave the Forum the stability and greater security it needed to take its work forward even more effectively. The intention was that the Forum should operate independently of BITC while still remaining in association with it, as well as with The Prince of Wales’ Advisory Group on Disability. Peter Hobbs, Personnel Director of Wellcome, was asked to chair discussions on the future funding and structure of the Forum.”

The main proposal that came out of the Hobbs working party, suggested by Julia Cleverdon, was that companies (and other organisations) joining the Forum should pay for their membership. Gold Card membership would be open to companies who agreed to pay £6,000 per annum; they would be the core funders of the Forum. Other members would be asked to pay a £500 joining fee and £1,000 annual subscription. The proposals were accepted, and the Employers’ Forum on Disability (EFD) became a company limited by guarantee, in May 1991, registered as a charity. The original Gold Card members were ARCO Chemical Europe, Barclays Bank, British Railways Board, Grand Metropolitan, Midland Bank, and Wellcome; they were quickly joined by BT, B&Q, and Shell UK.

BITC’s practical support also included hosting EFD for a time in BITC HQ and nominating, first, Julia Cleverdon and then Graham Bann as a trustee – a role he was to play with distinction for 20 years.

EFD – now the Business Forum on Disability – has worked diligently for more than 35 years to identify and promote good practice among employers about employing disabled Britons. As Patrick Tolfree wrote in 1998:

“The Forum provided a structure in which a nucleus of enlightened but pragmatic employers were able to articulate their (initially only) dimly sensed realisation that there was a powerful business case for employing disabled people. The first three years of the Forum’s existence generated much imaginative thinking, great enthusiasm among a growing number of employers, and considerable activity.”

Over subsequent years, despite having a very small staff, EFD produced a range of well-received publications, hosted high-profile events, and recruited several hundred members.

So, again, while BITC was widely identified during its first decade as ‘the national umbrella for local enterprise agencies’, it was developing a far wider agenda about the responsibilities of business and the practical agenda for action from very early in its existence.

Looking ahead today, while BITC celebrates its 40th Anniversary, the CMI (Chartered Institute of Managers) is celebrating 75 years in 2022. The CMI President, and former BITC Chair, Lord Mark Price is personally chairing an Anniversary Advisory Council to develop a comprehensive CMI approach to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). There will be an opportunity for BITC Leadership Teams and campaigns working on different aspects of the DEI agenda to consider and engage with this new CMI programme.

CHAPTER 14: WHAT GETS MANAGED IS WHAT GETS MEASURED – CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY REPORTING AND BENCHMARKING – HARNESSING THE COMPETITIVE SPIRIT 1997–2007

Most of BITC’s chairs have had a distinctive theme for their term. For Peter Davis, then CEO of Prudential, it was to push business to measure its impact on society. Yet another Leadership Team, this time led by Bill Cockburn (then Managing Director at BT) was asked to investigate tools for measuring business impacts. Cockburn was supported by Stephen Serpell at BT, who proved a tireless champion for the idea of rigorous measurement by businesses of their environmental and social impacts.

COCKBURN LEADERSHIP TEAM ON BUSINESS IMPACT

Fittingly under the tutelage of BT, this Business Impact Taskforce launched its own Impact on Society website at the end of 1999 to post material it was discovering and the ideas it was generating. This was one of the early, effective uses by BITC of the Internet. The site generated the most international traffic of any BITC website at that time and for some years thereafter.

Continuing BITC’s tradition of “creative swiping” from the United States, the Taskforce got permission and published in early 2000 a British version of an introductory primer for businesses on measuring impacts produced by the San Francisco-based Business for Social Responsibility (BSR). The Taskforce helped to generate a common understanding among several of the world’s business-led coalitions promoting

corporate responsibility such as BITC, BSR, and CSR Europe that business impacts should be measured with respect to four dimensions: marketplace, workplace, environment, and community.

BITC’s work also pointed to the need to link responsible business to purpose and values and guiding principles for a business and human rights. For a period, BT also provided a portal on the web, www.worldcsr.com, which gave direct access to the websites of the leading business-led CR coalitions.

The Cockburn Taskforce, ably supported inside BITC by Mallen Baker, reported in November 2000 under the banner of “Winning with Integrity.” By late 2005, 91 of the FTSE 100 companies produced a CSR report, as did 69 of the Fortune global top 100 companies and 38 of the Fortune top 50 European companies.

It is easy to forget how quickly this trend for companies to measure and report their non-financial impacts occurred. It was the result of pressure from a wide variety of UK and international sources. The Cockburn Impact on Society Taskforce was undoubtedly one of them. Its suggestions for how to measure impacts was a real Unique Selling Proposition USP for BITC, at a time when, for example, the Global Reporting Initiative had only just started.

COMPANIES THAT COUNT

Following “Winning with Integrity,” BITC established the Business Impact Review Group (BIRG) under the chairmanship of Phil Hodgkinson, then Finance Director of the bank HBOS – now part of the Lloyds Banking Group. **See the BITC founder member company profile on Lloyds Banking Group.**

BIRG brought together 20 leading companies which agreed to try out the indicators proposed in the Cockburn Team Report and to report on their experience of doing so, after two years. The result was “Indicators that Count,” published in July 2003. Asking companies to produce a Sustainability / Corporate Responsibility Report represented a significant new “ask” from BITC of its member companies. Reflecting in autumn 2021, Phil Hodgkinson says it was “a pathway to improvement for businesses. It encouraged learning amongst members.” See Box 16 below.

BOX 16: THE PIONEER COMPANIES THAT PRODUCED “INDICATORS THAT COUNT”

BAA, BUPA, Cap Gemini, EY, Carillion, Coca-Cola GB, CIS, FLAG, GUS, HBOS (now part of Lloyds Banking Group), Jaguar, EDF Energy, Marks & Spencer, Nestlé, Orange, Powergen, Sainsbury, Severn Trent, Thames Water, United Utilities, Zurich Financial Services.

ENCOURAGING CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY REPORTING

The ‘Business Impact Review Group’ was one of the major drivers of greater corporate responsibility reporting in the UK. Many critics of business argued that the voluntary disclosure by some companies was at best only partial progress. Some said it diluted the arguments of those seeking mandatory reporting by business of its environmental and social impacts. Others would argue that the voluntary approach and ability to experiment, represented by ‘Companies that Count,’ the Global Reporting Initiative, and (subsequently) the Integrated Reporting Initiative all helped to create the conditions in which mandatory reporting, when it came, was more effective. In a relatively rare public policy stance, BITC opposed mandatory measurement and reporting, for a time, arguing that a mix of marketplace, employee, and investor pressures – combined with companies’ spirit of volunteerism – would produce superior results. Subsequently, Hodgkinson led a consultation exercise with BITC member companies to produce recommendations for a UK government review of reporting requirements. In 2006, a group of leading CR practitioners, meeting under BITC coordination as the Integration Peer Group, advised on BITC’s submission to the Global Reporting Initiative for their consultation on the G3 (third generation) GRI.

After the original work on **Winning with Integrity** and the ‘Business Impact Review Group’, BITC subsequently published a **Director’s Guide to Corporate Responsibility Reporting** (with AD Little, Camelot, and HBOS [now part of Lloyds Banking Group], 2005) and “**Taking Shape...The Future of Corporate Responsibility Communications**” (with Radley Yeldar, 2007).

By the time of the Rio+20 Summit in 2012, a number of BITC companies, led by Aviva, were championing the idea of more stringent transparency, through the Corporate Responsibility Reporting Initiative. This, in turn, helped shaped the EU’s Directive on Non-Financial Reporting (this will be replaced by the more extensive EU Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive in 2022, which will cover many more businesses.) **See below for the BITC founder member company profile on Aviva.**

BENCHMARKING – HARNESSING THE COMPETITIVE SPIRIT

Implicit to Winning with Integrity was the idea of a Corporate Responsibility Index (CRI). In 1996, BITC’s Business in the Environment (BiE) campaign had launched the BiE Index. Some years later, BITC’s membership surveys showed that the opportunity to benchmark was one of the most valued aspects of BITC. At the time of the launch of the BiE Index, though, many thought that its publication could lead to mass resignations. It was an act of leadership on the part of CEO Julia Cleverdon, the BITC Board, and the Business in the Environment Leadership Team to press ahead. As with so many of BITC’s innovations, it was championed by a senior business figure, in this case, the BiE Chair Tony Cleaver, who provided much-needed protective ‘air-cover’ for BITC with his industry peers. A dedicated swimmer, Cleaver was even known to harangue any non-participating corporate CEOs he encountered on his daily early morning swims, in London’s Royal Automobile Club’s pool in Pall Mall, about joining the Index.

In 1992, BiE had published **A measure of commitment: guidelines for measuring environmental performance.** As part of the promotion of this publication, Tony Cleaver remembers, “**I found myself talking to a senior journalist from the Financial Times about BiE and commented that it would be nice to have a way of measuring and comparing FTSE companies’ environmental performance. The FT journalist responded that that was the kind of thing that the FT would be interested in publishing. That lay the foundation for the first BiE Index.**”

Cleaver was supported on the Business in the Environment Leadership team by business heavyweights, such as David Quarmby (then Managing Director of Sainsbury) and Derek Wanless (then CEO of National Westminster Bank), as well as senior leaders from BT, bp, Aviva, and National Power. In fact, some at the time said this campaign Leadership Team was even more powerful than the main BITC Board!

The publication of the first BiE Index was controversial, particularly as newspaper headlines emphasised ‘pollution.’ One key member company implied that their share price had been negatively impacted by the Index. There was even talk of FTSE-100 chairmen closing ranks against BiE and boycotting any future surveys. Nevertheless, by the second annual BiE Index, it was noticeable that some of the companies complaining at the outset about the methodology had markedly improved their scores.

With perseverance and improvements to its methodology, and with the appointment of KPMG as independent auditors for the process, member companies came to accept that the Index was a useful management tool and that publication of the BiE Index was an effective league table of corporate environmental performance that had sounded a much-needed and timely wake-up call in the UK’s boardrooms.

CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY INDEX

Building on the success and experience of the BiE Index, the plan was to invite companies to benchmark voluntarily against their peers in terms of how far they were integrating a genuine commitment to responsible business into their purpose and core strategy. Based on the BiE model, the first CRI, in 2003, listed the top 100 performing companies in five quintiles (each quintile listed in alphabetical order). Imagine the horror when reports of the publication of the first Index on BBC Radio News described Reuters and WH Smith (the last in the alphabetical listing of the fifth quintile) as the worst companies in Britain. Despite this gross misreporting and fall-out from the negative publicity, the CRI went on to be published as ‘Companies that Count’ in a special supplement of The Sunday Times for several years. Along with benchmarking exercises for BITC’s diversity campaigns, ‘Opportunity Now’ and ‘Race for Opportunity,’ BITC developed a stable of indexes to help companies to integrate their commitment to responsible business.

In 1996, 73 companies completed the BiE Index. In 2006, 829 organisations took part in Business in the Community benchmarking activities (BiE, ‘CR Index,’ RFO, ‘Opportunity Now’).

Patrick Mallon – who first joined BITC in 1991 to work on the environment campaign and later ran the CRI for many years – says now that,

“I am especially proud of our work in “Engaging the city.” It has now got a cottage industry behind it, but we at BITC were pushing it decades ago. Sir Derek Higgs was instrumental in positioning BITC and our work. Using the CR Index datasets, we did some clever analytics that showed an inverse relationship between share price volatility and doing well in the CR Index. Our hypothesis was that “well managed” companies, who worked across the triple bottom line, removed uncertainty and so smoothed out volatility in share movement. It provided a different lens to company performance.”

Patrick adds: **“I am proud too that BITC was able to give a voice to progressive businesses and, of equal importance, that we gave a voice to practitioners within their company. This worked both ways of course – I remember doing a visit to a big engineering company in the Midlands, and the Director I met welcomed me by saying ‘I had cost him his bonus!’”**

There were also, briefly, attempts to extend benchmarking to higher education with a pilot ‘Universities that Count’ survey in 2007, involving 25 higher education institutions completing either the full CRI or the Environmental Index; and also, separately, to UK football clubs with ‘Clubs that Count’ through which participating football clubs were asked to benchmark their community engagement. At one point, it also extended to rugby clubs too.

The 25th anniversary history concluded that the challenge going forward for the main CRI would be ‘to ensure that the leading companies continue to be stretched and supported on a continuing journey to more responsible business.’

Despite the introduction of a ‘Platinum’ status for CRI and later saying that only businesses that had achieved Platinum status would be eligible to enter BITC’s prestigious ‘Responsible Business of the Year’ main award, the CRI did finally run out of steam, with loyal participants feeding back that it no longer challenged them sufficiently. CRI closed in 2017. Nevertheless, for many years, the CRI was a powerful engagement tool for BITC and a catalyst to help many member companies improve their performance. It is an example of the often-repeated mantra of Julia Cleverdon: **“Every Work of Art is a child of its time and, therefore, cannot be expected to be relevant forever! Each programme or campaign is a ‘child’ of its time’ rather than for all-time!”** The CRI was later replaced by the ‘Responsible Business Tracker’ during the leadership of Amanda Mackenzie, in 2018, with the support of Sky. **See Chapter 25 below.**

AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE

Alongside the ‘BiE Index’ and then the CRI, BITC also introduced what quickly became very high-profile annual ‘Awards for Excellence.’ With regional and national rounds, these quickly attracted several hundred entries each year – with increasingly stringent judging criteria and processes. For many years, these awards were run in partnership with The Financial Times and with the Department of Trade & Industry (later BEIS). Stephen Howard praises the creativity and entrepreneurial flair of Gail Greengross, who has choreographed the annual awards finale dinner, held for many years at the Royal Albert Hall – in the presence on alternating years – of HRH The Prince of Wales or the Prime Minister of the day. **(See ‘showmanship’ in Enduring Success Factors in Part One).**

The regional and national awards dinners each year attracted several thousand business leaders and – alongside ‘Seeing is Believing’ visits, conferences, and Leadership Teams – were an important mechanism for communicating key messages about responsible business and for raising awareness of the positive role that business, when done well, can play in wider society. Additionally – and very importantly – the entries for the awards and the rigorous judging process involving NGOs, academics, campaigners, civil servants, as well as other businesses provided significant insights into both the challenges of embedding responsible business and of emerging good practice. This insight was increasingly used to identify topics for future BITC campaigns (and the focus of these campaigns). Award winners were frequently cited as good-practice examples, which invariably formed part of BITC ‘how to’ guides on topics from race equality to health and wellbeing in the workplace. Insights from the awards also came in time to help BITC keep the agenda for responsible business action refreshed – the topic we turn to next.

CHAPTER 15: KEEPING THE AGENDA REFRESHED – THOUGHT LEADERSHIP 1992 ONWARDS

Winning with Integrity and the Indexes discussed in **Chapter 14** above were two examples of the way that BITC tried to keep the agenda for action fresh for member companies and other businesses. BITC has also done this through a series of thought-leadership reports and papers over the years.

The earliest thought-leadership exercises included **Directions for the Nineties** (see **Chapter 9** above) and, during 1993-94, **Work in Society**. See **Box 17**.

Between 1992-1995, alongside WINS, BITC’s ‘Business Strategy Group’ (an internal think-tank) published a series of Occasional Papers and hosted internal and external debates around these.

- Occasional Paper 1 **Common Purpose, Uncommon Urgency**. 1993 (David Grayson)
- Occasional Paper 2 **Doing it for Ourselves**. 1994 (Paddy Doherty, Derry Inner City Trust, Northern Ireland)
- Occasional Paper 3 **Megatrends in Corporate Community Involvement** 1994
- Occasional Paper 4 **Community Links: The Power of Partnership**.
- Occasional Paper 5 **Unavailable - believed to be paper by Peter Hunt, then with Shell on lessons from Brent Spar for other businesses**
- Occasional Paper 6 **Making Business Links World Class** 1996

BOX 17: WORK IN SOCIETY (WINS) 1992–1995

WINS was an hour-long presentation of global trends and what they meant for business and society. It stressed the inextricable link between improving international competitiveness and social inclusion. A theme for the presentation was, ‘What happens to society matters to business but also, what happens to business matters to society.’

The idea for what became WINS began with a conference that HRH The Prince of Wales hosted for all his major charities in Autumn 1992. The then Permanent Secretary at the Department of Employment, Geoffrey Holland, analysed future employment trends. In response, the Prince asked his charities to consider the implications for their own work.

BITC took on the responsibility of developing the analysis. It brought together experts from Shell scenario-planners, McKinsey & Company, and other member companies. The resulting WINS presentation was delivered by the author on 150+ occasions to a wide variety of audiences. These included the BITC annual conference, SIB report-back in St James’s Palace, prominent politicians, the boards of member companies, the annual conference of Chief Constables, local authority CEOs, and conferences of long-term unemployed in Teesside, Merseyside, and Northern Ireland.

THE PERFECT STORM - 2002

In 2002, the then newly appointed BITC Chairman David Varney produced “The Perfect Storm” (2002) using the title of a popular movie of the time. In “The Perfect Storm,” Varney warned his fellow business leaders that in the aftermath of WorldCom, Enron, and other international business scandals, expectations of business were growing massively around the world, whilst perceptions of performance were declining dramatically – a point subsequently confirmed by the Canadian-based polling organisation GlobeScan in their annual surveys of international public opinion.

In The Perfect Storm, Varney concluded, “If external standards are tougher and more exacting than ever, then our standards must rise accordingly. At Business in the Community, we must meet the threat of the Perfect Storm by requiring and demanding more of our members...We are radically altering the requirements of membership. Companies will be asked to make a commitment to action. Passive membership will no longer be acceptable. We are moving from enlarging the membership of the organisation to enlarging the meaning of membership.”

All members would be asked to make a commitment to action to:

- Integrate responsible business practice throughout their business
- Impact through collaborative action to tackle disadvantage
- Inspire, innovate and lead by sharing best practice.

LAMBERT COMMENTARY – 2002

For BITC’s 20th anniversary, the former editor of The Financial Times, Richard Lambert, attended a series of Anniversary Dialogues and then produced his Lambert Commentary, summarising what he believed that BITC and the corporate responsibility agenda had achieved. Lambert had memorably advised BITC at the 2000 ‘Awards for Excellence’ dinner that it was time to “kick the tyres,” in other words, to check on the substance of companies’ commitments. In part, his Commentary reviewed how robust the tyres had become.

Lambert concluded:

“Business in the Community has come a long way over the last twenty years. The personality of the leadership has changed substantially and has become more hard-headed in its approach. The concept of Corporate Social Responsibility has broadened and deepened and has moved to the centre of the business agenda. And the challenges faced by business leaders have grown ever greater, as a result of wider divisions in our society and the growing assertiveness of a whole range of critics. BITC has also been the catalyst for an extraordinary range of creative partnerships between business and other parts of society.

The challenge now is to roll the programme forward. To avoid political correctness and to be ready to stand up for the arguments that support competition and free markets. To be ready to work with organisations that have common interests but to shun those that have very different agendas.

Above all, to make the case that active engagement by businesses in their communities is in the interest both of shareholders and of society at large.”

Perhaps only the terminology of ‘CSR’ might alert the observant reader that these words are not freshly written in 2022!

VISIONING THE FUTURE

In 2010, Jo Daniels and colleagues produced a big megatrends piece of work to support **Visioning the Future – Transforming Business** (2010-11). This raised awareness and interest in the need to move beyond incremental change to transformational change. Under the leadership of Ian Cheshire (then CEO of retailer Kingfisher), supported by Catherine Sermon, from BITC, and later, the BITC Sustainability Director, Alan Knight, BITC engaged over 350 companies through Visioning the Future events and workshops. Cath Sermon recalls:

“these were particularly thought provoking, closed door, CEO roundtables with Ian Cheshire. The feedback was that these events created a unique space to share and learn and to share challenges at the top for the scale of change and innovation required. On one of them, the CEOs even talked about it as a self-help group for CEOs. Ian was particularly good at getting them to reflect on the irony of getting to the top because you are clearly adept with the current business model then finding out that you now have to create another one. I have heard Peter Simpson from Anglian Water talk about how hearing the story of interface through this Visioning the Future work by BITC, combined with Seeing Is Believing, really spurred him to do the amazing things they have done in their business and in their communities.”

In consultation with member companies, BITC then developed an adaptable methodology to support companies to innovate and trial new products, services, and business models, in response to global megatrends. It seems, however, that various personnel changes and changes in responsibilities meant that the methodology was not widely promoted or taken up.

RESPONSIBLE LEADERSHIP

What was taken up was the broader challenge of trust in business and the question of what Responsible Leadership is. BITC had previously supported a taskforce on leadership skills, chaired by Vincent de Rivaz, then head of EDF Energy. Other members included senior personnel from Adnams, BSKYB, Lloyds Banking Group, Marks & Spencer, and WSP, as well as from CISL, Forum for the Future, and the Global Action Plan. It began with a literature review undertaken by CISL and followed by an online quantitative survey of the ‘MayDay’ network, run in association with Ipsos Mori.

This identified the need for new training for senior managers and board directors, for middle managers, for customer-facing staff, and for all staff: **see above**.

The Doughty Centre for Corporate Responsibility at Cranfield and BITC had subsequently looked at the leadership role of company boards and the different options for boards to organise oversight of commitments to corporate sustainability. (2012) Now Peter Lambert, from the BITC Executive, drove a Leadership Team-supported programme on Responsible Leadership.

In February 2013, Stephen Howard, CEO of Business in the Community wrote in the Daily Telegraph:

“Every generation of business leaders faces its own challenges. But business leaders today face challenges on a scale that would have been unimaginable even a few years ago. When we convened the Business Impact Taskforce in 1998, the key challenge was identifying the issues that needed to be embraced as integral to mainstream business leadership. The focus was on understanding and improving the impact a business could have in the community, environment, workplace, and marketplace and how to benefit from the new relationships this created.

THERE ARE SOME CLEAR AREAS TO FOCUS TRANSFERABLE LEARNING

Pooling the lessons from these different sources, it is clear that the focus for the development of resources, sharing experiences and transferable learning should be:

For senior managers and board directors	For middle managers	For customer-facing staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Enhancing the ability to develop a meaningful sustainable business purposeEncouraging tenacity, consistency and enthusiasm from the topDeveloping the ability to spot the game-changing strategic opportunityEmbedding the ability to inspire and empower others to come with you	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Developing the ability to identify tangible business benefits - and to create a clear short and longer term business caseEnsuring sufficient knowledge and fostering the ability to integrate this into business strategyCreating tailored programmes targeting specific business functionsUnderstanding how to put in place clear metrics and periodic check backs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Creating a general awareness and understanding to enable staff to communicate effectively
		For all employees
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Highlighting personal relevance in day to day job and career aspirationsEnsuring that staff are engaged at all times - not just a short shot in the armProviding links to ongoing support networks

Now the challenge is much broader and not just about issues. Today, the requirement is about the impacts of the product or service being produced, the behaviours and values of the company, and about adopting the business models that support and ensure them.

In the interconnected global community of stakeholders and observers today, news travels too fast to give the new CEO the luxury of time to consider decisions that will fundamentally affect the nature of their business in the future. Business leaders today have to balance the need for immediate action while at the same time investigate and integrate new business models that will create change and support a culture that rewards the right behaviour.”

Faced with these new challenges, Stephen Howard announced that:

“In consultation with our members, it is clear we need to review the old frameworks and provide some fixed points for business leaders to help them focus and navigate this testing agenda. All leaders need a ‘North Star’ to guide them: a framework that enables them to align values and behaviours and confidently balance the need for short-term action and long-term strategy.”

TAKING IT PERSONALLY

BITC drew on several pieces of research on different aspects of responsible business, conducted in conjunction with a range of partners. These included: **Towards a Sustainability Mindset** (Doughty Centre for Corporate Responsibility, Cranfield School of Management); **Conscious Capital** (Legal and General); **Fortune Favours the Brave on Sustainability** (M&S and Accenture); **Added Values: The importance of ethical leadership** (ILM); **Pathways to developing more responsible business leadership** (‘Seeing is Believing’ and Ashridge School of Management); as well as conversations with other initiatives, such as Blueprint for Better Business, The UN Global Compact – Accenture CEO Study on Sustainability, and the Integrated Reporting Council.

The Institute of Leadership & Management and Business in the Community worked together to produce a research-based report on ethics and values in business in June 2013. 2,000 business leaders and managers at all levels within organisations were surveyed about ethics at work. This found that:

- 77% of managers believed that public expectations on business ethics have risen, but there were some alarming findings:
- 9% of managers have been asked to break the law at work
- One in ten has left his/her jobs as a result of being asked to do something at work that made them feel uncomfortable
- Over a quarter (27%) were concerned they would be negatively affected if they were to report an ethical breach
- 63% of the managers say they have been asked to do something contrary to their own ethical code at some point in their career
- 43% of managers have been told to behave in direct violation of their organisation’s own values statements

A short survey was sent out to business leaders involved in BITC’s work and followed up with a series of debates around the country on the issues raised. In total, 318 executives from 220 companies participated in the survey and debates. Peter Lambert recalls attending these regional debates and, especially, a lively discussion held at Birmingham Airport with the West Midlands Regional Leadership Team and other business leaders from the region.

These debates fed back to a leadership summit with HRH The Prince of Wales and the final **Taking it personally: BITC Leadership Task Force Report on Responsible Business Leadership**, published in April 2014, with five central ‘calls to business action.’

These were as follows:

- Create a clear long- and short-term strategic vision, aligning personal values and business goals
- Demonstrate your values, and reward the behaviours you want to encourage in your business
- Identify and communicate total long-term value creation
- Develop responsible leaders for the future
- Be an advocate for responsible leadership.

Peter Lambert as the architect and main driver, with Stephen Howard of the Leadership consultations, believes they led to further refinement and use of the ‘Seeing is Believing’ programme and the realisation of the need – as an integral part of developing future leaders – to show how programmes like BITC’s ‘Business Connectors’, could be a powerful tool. **“Business Connectors was important for this. They took the calls from ‘Taking it Personally’ back into their companies, at the end of their secondments,”** Peter Lambert reflected in 2022.

THOUGHT-LEADERSHIP SINCE 2014

Besides the **Taking it Personally: BITC Leadership Task Force Report on Responsible Business Leadership** (2014), subsequent thought-leadership reports from BITC have included:

- **Fortune Favours the Brave** – a ground-breaking report that revealed the £100 billion opportunity to be gained by businesses that embrace sustainability and long-term thinking. (2013 – jointly with Accenture and Marks & Spencer)
- **Smart growth in the Circular Economy** – focused on realising business opportunities from unlocking new value from better resource management. (2015)
- **A Brave New World?** – a report with Accenture Strategy about responsibility for employability in an era of rapid automation, driven by Artificial Intelligence (2016).

These later reports marked a new focus from BITC on the implications for business and society of the Digital Revolution – or what Klaus Schwab, the founder of the Davos World Economic Forum has termed **“The Fourth Industrial Revolution.”** Namely, the confluence of Machine Learning, Artificial Intelligence, automation, and intense global connectivity. These new technologies are producing impressive advances in medical technology and knowledge generally. They do, however, disrupt whole industries, require new skills, and will lead to many job losses. **A Brave New World?** encouraged businesses to think deeply about their responsibilities for people made redundant by the Digital Revolution.

In Spring 2022, a Place Taskforce will report on what a two-year inquiry into business involvement in the community in place-based regeneration has learnt – and will offer a series of recommendations for the future. (see **Chapter 25** below).

CHAPTER 16: TOWARDS RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS – BUSINESS IN THE ENVIRONMENT AND OTHER CAMPAIGNS: 2000 ONWARDS

All too often, businesses have treated corporate responsibility as a ‘bolt-on’ to business operations rather than ‘built-in’ to business purpose and strategy. By the early-2000s, the development of the ‘Corporate Responsibility Index’ and the detailed CRI questionnaire that participating companies had to complete each year effectively summarised the steps that BITC considered to be essential elements for a business that wanted to integrate corporate responsibility. Through a somewhat ad-hoc mixture of awards, CRI results, conferences, and ‘how to’ guides on individual aspects of responsible business, BITC was trying to flesh out the guidance it gave to member companies. For examples of the latter, see **Box 18 below**.

In turn, BITC’s guidance, *inter alia*, by taking on the CSR Academy, led to a professionalisation of the corporate responsibility and sustainability function in many companies. This was also supported by organisations such as the Corporate Responsibility Group (CRG), an association of individual CR directors of leading companies, originally formed in 1987. The CRG later became The Institute of Corporate Responsibility and Sustainability (ICRS). www.icrs.info/

DEVELOPMENT OF BUSINESS IN THE ENVIRONMENT

One of the critical areas that businesses had increasingly been expected to focus on, and where far-deeper levels of professional and technical expertise were expected, was the environment. **See Box 19: BUSINESS IN THE ENVIRONMENT**

BOX 18: KEY BITC GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS FROM THE 2000S ON ASPECTS OF RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS

- Management framework: **Winning with Integrity**, 2000
- Developing business case: **The Business Case for Corporate Responsibility**, ADL and BITC, 2003
- Guidance for company boards: **Rewarding Virtue: Effective Board Action on Corporate Responsibility**, 2005
- Integrating into Marketplace: **Responsible Marketplace Principles**, 2006
- Measurement and Reporting: **A Director’s Guide to Corporate Responsibility Reporting**, 2005
- Stakeholder Engagement Taking Shape – **The Future of Corporate Responsibility Communications**, with Radley Yeldar, 2007
- **The Business Case for Responsible Business (updated)** with the Doughty Centre for Corporate Responsibility, Cranfield School of Management, 2009
- **Towards a Board Mindset for Corporate Sustainability**, David Grayson and Andrew Kakabadse, Cranfield School of Management, 2013

BOX 19: BUSINESS IN THE ENVIRONMENT

The twin pressures from HRH The Prince of Wales and concerned member companies, like IBM, for action on the environment led to the creation of the ‘Business in the Environment’ Leadership Team and campaign, in 1989, chaired initially by Sir Tony Cleaver from IBM. Early initiatives included: Grime Goes Green, (1990), Green Business Clubs, environmental training of small business advisers (particularly through the ‘Business Links’) and the ‘Business in the Environment Index’.

Belinda Howell, the Campaign Director of ‘Business in the Environment’ from 1998-2002, reflects:

“As incoming Executive Director of Business in the Environment (BiE), my first task was to recruit (the late) Sir Derek Higgs as the new Chair, following 10 years of Sir Anthony Cleaver’s chairmanship. Under the leadership of Derek Higgs, BiE undertook some ground breaking research on the views of Investment Managers and City Analysts and analytical work to compare financial performance of companies with their performance in BiE Index.

Derek Higgs used his “little black book” to ensure we had coverage of Board members from FTSE-100 companies across the sectors on BiE’s mega-powerful board. Derek not only published the Higgs Review of Corporate Governance during this time but also played a role on early committees setting up what is now called Environmental Social & Governance (ESG), such as the FTSE4Good Indices.

We increased voluntary participation in the BiE Index to 85 of the FTSE-100 companies, expanded the audience for the BiE Index to the FTSE-350, extended the scope to our new Corporate Responsibility Index, and brought in varied income streams by licensing our Indexes to the South Africa and New Zealand Stock Exchanges.”

This was underpinned by a series of good practice guides, conferences and, subsequently, the incorporation of the ‘BiE Index’ into the wider ‘Corporate Responsibility Index’. At this point, the environment was confirmed as one of the four core impact areas of BITC (alongside workplace, marketplace, and community).

From 2000 onwards, BITC expected businesses to report on their impacts across these core areas and to demonstrate how they were constantly improving their performance.

Through the ‘CR Index,’ BiE was able to data mine for good practice and disseminate this out through its network.

Al Gore’s analysis of the climate challenge, **An Inconvenient Truth**, stimulated another significant pivot. Many of BITC’s core audience had heard Al Gore deliver his powerful presentation in person at a Tomorrow’s Company event in March 2006 as part of the **Tomorrow’s Global Company Inquiry** (which led to a powerful piece of thought leadership being produced in 2007).

The release of the movie prompted further awareness. BITC was given the opportunity to host a private pre-general release showing at a cinema in Leicester Square, central London. BITC decided to invite its senior business contacts – with the proviso that these contacts should come together with a teenage relative. The discussion, after the movie’s showing, hosted by Julia Cleverdon, really came alive when some of the teenagers were invited to give their impressions. David Grayson remembers taking his then-fifteen-year-old godson, Sam, to the showing and recalls Sam’s precocious awareness – first about the seniority of the business leaders in the cinema and then about the need for urgent action.

An Inconvenient Truth – and the training of ambassadors to promote the presentation to many more audiences that the Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership (CISL) was commissioned by Al Gore to do – all helped to raise climate up the business agenda.

Jim Haywood reflects on ‘Business in the Environment’ during his tenure as BITC’s Environment Director (2003-2011):

“Business in the Environment (BiE) was possibly one of the earliest (if not the first) collaborative programmes to engage and encourage businesses to step up and widen their efforts to protect the natural environment. In the early days of BiE, most businesses ‘got’ the need to factor environmental considerations into their thinking. For a number, this was simply about compliance with prevailing legislation. Some corporates adopted a ‘compliance plus’ approach, which recognised the importance of taking a more strategic view of environmental protection and how this could benefit their business. What we now understand and describe as ‘sustainable business’ – that is, recognising the interconnection and interdependence between society, the natural environment and economic prosperity – was beginning to gain traction. This thinking was arguably always at the heart of BITC’s wider message but initially, perhaps, not well articulated through a robust business case – something BITC has subsequently made great strides to address.

In those early days, aside from meeting legal obligations, many businesses regarded donations to environmental charities and staff volunteering with environmentally themed projects as the necessary tick in the ‘green’ box. BiE, largely through resources such as the BiE Index (later incorporated into the broader Corporate Responsibility Index), played a significant part in pushing the boundaries and raising the bar by helping BITC members understand how well their environmental programmes were faring as well as providing a competitive benchmark to encourage year-on-year improvement.

The gradual transformation (started in 2007) of a standalone ‘BiE’ into BITC’s Environment Campaign marked more than a simple change of name – it highlighted the importance of integrating environmental stewardship into the wider thinking of responsible business practice and helped avoid the environment being seen as a single or discrete

agenda item. It is to BITC’s credit that the organisation recognised early the need to effect this shift in thinking. However, this shift was not one which could be achieved instantly – particularly given the depth of BITC’s own roots and an understandable focus on often-more-visible societal needs (such as education, homelessness, diversity, and inclusion, etc.).

At one level, the concept of protecting the environment is one which everyone buys into but, at a practical and immediate action-oriented level (which is often what inspires and motivates people) there was still the danger that protecting the environment was simply regarded as being about staff volunteering to plant a few trees.”

MAYDAY

Jim Haywood continues, “It possibly took a little while to find a tangible hook on which to engage BITC’s members with environmental protection. That hook became evident in 2007 when HRH The Prince of Wales issued a ‘Mayday’ distress signal and entrusted Business in the Community to mobilise UK business to take practical and meaningful action to tackle the urgent issue of climate change.”

Julia Cleverdon vividly recalls the origins of ‘Mayday’: “It was March 22nd, 2007, at Highgrove for a SIB report back, when The Prince of Wales challenged BITC to put together an urgent summit event on Climate Change which would capitalise on the heightened awareness created by the Al Gore movie.”

Cleverdon adds, “I came back to London and, two days later, told the BITC Executive Team meeting that we were going to do a May Day summit on Climate Change – less than seven weeks later. I faced a near riot!” Not, though, from the ‘Business in the Environment’ team, led by Jim Haywood, who enthusiastically took up the challenge.

Jim Haywood picks up the story: “We established the Prince’s Mayday Network. The Network’s mission was to engage significant numbers of businesses in the Network (reaching beyond the membership, an ambitious target was set for 10,000 by 2012!) and to inspire, support and challenge them in achieving real carbon reduction.

Three Mayday Summits were held in 2007, 2008 and 2009, which engaged over 1,700 business leaders. The first of these, at St James’s Palace and attended by HRH The Prince of Wales, saw Stephen Fry acting as compere and climate change quizmaster for business leaders around the UK connected virtually to the London event. Each was asked to pledge their commitment to tackling climate change by taking action within their organisations.

The 2008 Summit was held at the BT Centre and hosted by Angela Rippon with HRH The Prince of Wales, Prime Minister Gordon Brown and US Senator George Mitchell in attendance, input from Jonathan Porritt, and a filmed address by Dr Rajendra Pachauri, the then Chair of the influential Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

Hub events were also run around the UK regions, organised in partnership with the Regional Development Agencies and linked to the central event via BT technology. Participants used the technology to make pledges and confirm commitment to action.

The final Summit in 2009 was held at Old Billingsgate Market and attended by senior government ministers, including Ed Miliband (then Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change), as well as HRH The Prince of Wales. The event was again streamed to 11 hub events around the UK and also involved a ‘marketplace’ showcasing a number of innovative and climate-friendly products and services. A highlight for the event was connecting HRH The Prince of Wales with Arctic explorer Pen Hadow via satellite phone. Pen was leading an expedition to measure the thickness of Arctic sea ice to determine the effects of climate change. It was a great achievement to make

that connection and highlighted the real impact of a warming world. Making that long-distance connection work at the right time was a great team effort and a highlight of the Summit. (Another was me managing to get Ed Miliband lost in the basement of Old Billingsgate Market whilst escorting him out after the event – my team did not let me forget that one!)”

Over several years, these ‘Mayday’ summits helped to concentrate boardroom attention on the role of businesses in tackling Climate Change and garnered several thousand ‘Mayday’ pledges from businesses and others. The ‘Mayday’ summits helped strengthen a strong ‘Mayday’ Network, underpinned by a dedicated ‘Mayday’ website with a variety of resources and practical support, including workshops, environmental ‘Seeing is Believing’ visits, the inclusion of a Climate Change ‘Award for Excellence’ and an associated ‘Big Tick’. It also spawned the Legal Sector Alliance (now the Legal Sustainability Alliance).



CLIMATE CHANGE – MAYDAY

‘Mayday’ also helped pave the way for the ‘Visioning the Future – Transforming Business’ initiative aimed at taking businesses on a positive journey, helping them first to picture (and then to plan and build) the business models that will lead them into a successful, sustainable future. It aimed to provide an inspiring, positive, and structured programme that helps businesses understand what will change, what this means for them, and what actions are needed.

As Sir Ian Cheshire, then CEO of Kingfisher said at the time: **“The changes we are likely to see in our society and environment over the next two decades and beyond will require a paradigm shift in the economy and society. The companies that recognise and plan for it now will be the winners of the future. We need to think now about how business services will evolve in the next two decades and beyond. The opportunities are real for those who help create a sustainable future.”**

In the earlier days, the ‘Environment’ campaign at BITC was not the lone voice in encouraging a broader perspective on, and longer-term view of, what it meant to be a responsible business, and yet the opportunity to engage with the majority of the FTSE-100 (and a significant number of other influential businesses) did give it a great lever. It is entirely appropriate that this remains the focus of BITC’s environmental efforts to tackle climate change, enhance the circular economy, and promote nature stewardship. It is an encouraging development that is based on the foundations laid down from the very early days of BiE.

Jim Haywood concludes:

“I am proud that, during my tenure as Environment Director at BITC, with the encouragement and leadership of HRH The Prince of Wales, we were able to engage with so many businesses on the issue of climate change through the Mayday Network. We perhaps enabled a conversation in many boardrooms that had not been had before: that climate change is an existential threat that will impact us all; that businesses can and must do something about it; and that, by acting collaboratively and collectively, we can achieve far more than by going it alone. Now, some 15 years later, despite the clock continuing to tick down, we see encouraging signs of more and more businesses committing to achieving net zero carbon to limit global warming below 1.5 deg C by the end of the century. There is still so much more to do to achieve that goal, but I am grateful to have been part of an amazing team at BITC facilitating some key steps along the way.”

Subsequent BITC environmental work has also focused on the Circular Economy with a **Waste to Wealth summit**. Cath Sermon recalls this as **“a huge piece of theatre, bringing together business leaders, HRH, Michael Gove etc all at Veolia’s waste-processing plant. We literally sat amongst huge bales of plastic waiting to be processed (plus only spotted one rat!)”**

BIE DIRECTORS

- Noel Morrin 1992-1996
- Dr Alan Marples 1996-1998
- Belinda Howell 1998-2002
- Jim Haywood 2003-2011
- Alan Knight 2012-2014 – Sustainability Director
- Gudrun Cartwright – 2015 onwards – Environment Director and now Climate Action Director

BUSINESS AND EDUCATION

BITC was still also pushing hard on core programmes like ‘Education’. John May succeeded Ian Pearce as Education Director in 1999, straight from being a school head in High Wycombe, Bucks. He recalls:

“I moved into the office in Marylebone, found a desk with wires trailing over the floor and a rather uncomfortable chair – and wondered why I traded my delightful Headteacher’s office in High Wycombe for the madness of a daily commute.

Partners in Leadership was already underway but needed gripping. I appointed Nigel Purkis to run it, which he did superbly. We took the reading volunteering programme created in Y&H and went national with it. We created a regular series of seminars for CSR practitioners in corporates to get them up to speed with educational policy and practice. We battled with the Ebp network, sometimes daggers drawn, sometimes working in partnership, never entirely comfortable in each other’s company as they saw BITC as a threat to their position in local authorities. We helped to launch the Headteacher’s College and got Geese flying into every school in the country as a result. [A reference to an inspirational New Zealand training video about the lessons for good team work from the way that geese fly in formation]. And, of course, we worked with McKinsey and the indefatigable Brett to launch Teach First (originally with the working title of Teach for London).”

Summing up his contribution, John May (who went on to become the founding CEO of Career Ready, then to run Young Enterprise, and is now working for the Duke of Edinburgh’s International Award Foundation), says modestly:

“I probably did something to build a better understanding of what life is really like in schools for the company representatives with whom I worked. I think, in particular, I helped folks see how teachers grow skills in the classroom that are eminently transferrable and that they don’t deserve to be patronised.”

BOX 20: BITC’S EDUCATION DIRECTORS

Julia Cleverdon	1988-1989
Ian Pearce	1989-1999
John May	1999-2003
Melanie Renowden	2003-2005
Nick Chambers	2005-2010
Fiona Rawes	2010-2013
Susie Perrett	2014-2020
The ‘Education’ brief was eventually merged into the ‘Employment & Skills’ Director role, and the two Leadership Teams merged in the COVID-19 restructure, when Nicola Inge took on the responsibility for ‘Education’ as part of the ‘Employment & Skills’ Leadership Team.	

Melanie Renowden, who succeeded John May in 2003, offers two insights – one about the issues, and one about the practicalities of BITC’s business model for education:

“PiL and later Business Class showed over and over that it was a very definitely a two-way street – not just a case of business gifting their time and expertise to educators.

There was always a tension between being the honest broker between business and other external education programmes versus setting up and running our own. The latter helped with revenue to cover team costs but did mean we were sometimes in competition with our partners. It’s hard to make brokerage pay though.”

ENGAGING WITH GOVERNMENT ON EDUCATION-BUSINESS LINKS

This question of who might fund brokerage was one of the issues that Julia Cleverdon was subsequently to examine in a review of business-education partnerships.

Nick Chambers, who succeeded Melanie Renowden in 2006, takes up the story: **“I was appointed to implement an education strategy which had been devised by McKinsey. Its aim was to “help create tomorrow’s competitive workforce by inspiring and engaging businesses to work in partnership with schools to raise the levels of achievement of young people, especially those in disadvantaged areas, and to lead the setting of standards for how businesses should get involved in education and how their impact and experiences should be measured.”**

Chambers worked with an ‘Education’ Leadership Team led by Bob Wigley, then chairing Merrill Lynch Europe. With KPMG, they undertook a study looking at the range of initiatives and organisations in education in order to help employers and schools identify the most effective interventions. The team also developed a series of guides for employers and schools on how to engage with each other – and worked with Ordnance Survey and Experian to undertake a mapping exercise that looked at the locations of businesses in relation to educational achievement, a ‘mashing up’ of a range of data sets.

Meantime, as Julia Cleverdon handed over the BITC role, she cleared with BITC Chair Mike Rake that she would accept a government invitation to review education-business links. She recalls:

“The review was commissioned by Gordon Brown and Ed Balls in 2008 as I was about to stand down from BITC. I took everything BITC and I had learnt thus far since 1988 on brokerage at local level, the need to start where schools were, the need to engage senior business leadership, to start in Primary etc and wrote it up with a brilliant DFE team led by Rose Pennells.”

BITC also seconded Nick Chambers, the Education Director after Melanie Renowden, to the DfE team. Cleverdon continues:

“Richard Lambert, then at CBI, and I thought we would be able to establish a permanent structure between the CBI and BITC to oversee the development of the recommendations – but that did not suit the DfE who wanted to control it! The next thing we knew was that Nick Chambers had been appointed as the director of a new organisation called Education and Employers, which was being co-chaired by Bob Wigley and Anthony Salz. We were surprised to say the least as it left BITC rather high and dry, with not much apparent role.”

Inevitably, recollections can vary, and Nick Chambers has a slightly different perspective.

“I supported the Council’s work, including instigating and commissioning research from the University of Bath on school governance. Using their findings, I wrote a report entitled ‘Governing our Schools’. This report, presented to the Prime Minister, recommended: greater clarity in the role of governors, changes to the way governing bodies are formed; improved information and performance data available to governors; the provision of support for governors from people employed to provide professional clerking services and improved recruitment; placement and training of governors, chairs of governing bodies and clerks, and a review of governor composition with a greater emphasis on relevant skills...

In late 2008, I was seconded to the DCFS to help them set up an independent Education and Employers Taskforce to help implement the recommendations of the NCCE. This was launched in October 2009 by Ed Balls and Peter Mandelson, with Bob Wigley and Anthony Salz as Co-Chairs and myself as Director.”

The Taskforce – which continues – has produced a range of important research and has made extensive connections internationally.

Those of us involved in producing reports for governments over the years well understand how key proposals can get changed, sometimes quite dramatically at the last minute, with people outside of government left with a fait accompli!

BUSINESS CLASS

Still, for BITC, it forced something of a rethink on where it could best contribute to education going forward. Fiona Rawes, who became Education Director in 2010, picks up the story:

“I arrived in April 2010 in the midst of a volcanic ash cloud, which grounded aircraft flights across Europe and the North Atlantic for days. I quickly learnt that the ash cloud was a metaphor for the confusion I would feel in my first six months in post.

I faced some “complexity” (!) in the shape of a breakaway Business Education partnership – the Education and Employers’ Taskforce led by my predecessor Nick Chambers and involving a large percentage of the big guns on the BITC Education Campaign Leadership Team. The campaign budget in dire straits owing to the exodus of the big guns.”

In time, however, Fiona found **“reasons to be cheerful in the shape of Paul Drechsler from Wates as our phenomenal ELT Chair; Julia as an impassioned and wonderfully networked advocate across Whitehall, Clarence House and beyond; Richard Hardie from UBS as a brilliant source of frontline expertise from the Bridge Academy and financial and professional service introductions; and Anthony Salz from Freshfields as a wise and constructive bridge across to the Education and Employers Taskforce.”**

Additionally, she was to find the ‘Business Class’ programme, “so skilfully developed in Manchester by Raksha, Melanie Renowden, Liz Holmes, and others.” See Chapter 18 below.

TAKING THE MESSAGE TO SMALL BUSINESSES

One of the persistent criticisms of BITC for many years has been its failure to engage small businesses and owner-managers. This was certainly through no want of trying. There were several attempts, including a scaled-down ‘Corporate Responsibility Index for SMEs’.

Even earlier, one of the original ‘Target Teams’ from 1987 had focused on engaging SMEs and had raised funds and significant help in-kind to pay for a series of direct-mail campaigns, rolled out (after a successful pilot) region by region. As a review of the campaign several years later reported, this had resulted in almost 1,000 medium-sized businesses being supported with their responsible business activity.

One of the most persistent efforts that lasted from 2000 to 2010 was the ‘Small Business Consortium’. This was coordinated and chaired by BITC but also involved, at various stages, AccountAbility, Arts & Business, British Chambers of Commerce, CSR Europe, Federation of Small Businesses, Forum of Private Business, Institute of Directors, Lloyds Bank Small Business Banking (now Lloyds Banking Group) and Scottish Business in the Community. Keeping the rival small business representative groups involved was no small feat.

With the strong support of Lloyds Banking Group, the consortium created and ran the Small Business Journey website and published a well-received guide for small-business owner-managers: **The Better Business Journey**. It was always, however, a ‘side of the desk’ assignment for most of the active participants, and a succession of personnel changes in 2010 brought the project to an end. The practical insights of the ‘Small Business Consortium’ were, however, used extensively in the European Union Multistakeholder Forum on CSR and, in particular, for the Forum roundtable on engaging SMEs. This, in turn, led to EU-funded training for Chambers of Commerce around the EU to run projects to engage SMEs in, what was then still called, CSR. This was one of the practical ways that the UK experience was being taken international.

CHAPTER 17: GOING INTERNATIONAL – 1990 ONWARDS

In his **Twentieth Anniversary Commentary**, Richard Lambert (the long-serving editor of The Financial Times, and later Director General of the Confederation of British Industries) identified the impact of globalisation for BITC and its member companies. As noted previously, BITC had never been immune from overseas influences, dating back to the original Sunningdale Conference in 1980, which inspired BITC’s creation.

Social innovations BITC imported from the US to the UK from abroad over the years include the following:

- Lowell One-Town Partnership inspiring Halifax ‘One-Town Partnership’
- Boston Compact as the model for the East London ‘Education-Business Partnership’ and the Ebps, and the Training and Enterprise Councils
- Boston College Center for Corporate Citizenship training course on how to develop an effective Corporate Community Involvement strategy
- New York CARES inspiring BITC’s UK ‘CARES’ movement
- Gifts in Kind – also from the US (the UK organisation became known as InKind Direct)

Equally, from the mid-1980s onwards, the exchange of social innovations became a two-way street, with overseas visitors seeking to learn from BITC and the British experience. At the end of 1984, BITC was a founding member of the European Business Network (EBN), established to give ‘practical advice and assistance to organisations encouraging the creation of new businesses with particular emphasis on technological developments in the EEC (European Economic Community).’ One of the original secondees to BITC, Christopher Norman-Butler, was intimately involved in the establishment and development of the EBN.

In 1985, Swedes advising Per Gyllenhammar (of Volvo) studied BITC and the early local enterprise agencies. This led to the creation of Swedish ‘Jobs and Society’, an organisation that developed a Swedish network of more than 90 business-led local enterprise agencies. There were to be (abortive) attempts to start a Business in Community in each of the Australian states in the late-1980s (largely focussing on the enterprise agency and Information Technology Centre models from the UK).

INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS LEADERS FORUM

Weeks after the fall of the Berlin Wall – and against the advice of the British Foreign Office, who feared failure – BITC, led by HRH The Prince of Wales, hosted a gathering of international business leaders in Charleston, South Carolina. This Charleston meeting gave birth to what was first called the International Business in the Community but quickly became HRH The Prince of Wales’s ‘International Business Leaders Forum’ and then, simply, the ‘International Business Leaders Forum’ (IBLF). Charleston had been masterminded by Robert Davies, then BITC’s Deputy CEO, who quickly became the founding CEO of IBLF. Under Davies’s visionary leadership, the IBLF developed a series of innovative business-community partnerships in emerging markets and developing countries. It was successful at influencing core business behaviours of multinational corporations, and it showed how business can contribute through social investments and contributions to better public policy formulation.

Adrian Hodges, who transformed BITC communications and later worked at IBLF – first in the Americas and then as part of the senior leadership team – believes that, of note, was “...the substantial impact IBLF had on the topic of, and actions related to, the role of business and development/international development. IBLF was working at the highest levels of the Word Bank and various other UN agencies. It helped to spearhead the ‘Business Partners in Development’ movement in the UN, for example, and went on to co-convene with UNDP the first global business gathering on the MDGs (Millennium Development Goals), the predecessor of the SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals.) IBLF also played a significant role supporting the establishment of UNAIDS and UN Global Compact – the latter now the biggest global coalition for Responsible Business.”

Jane Nelson, another long-term collaborator with Robert Davies and senior figure in IBLF, perceptively notes that:

“key to Davies’s success was that organisations such as the WHO and NGOs and the development community knew that, behind closed doors, he was ‘speaking truth to power’ and urging businesses to assume more responsibility. Equally, his business members understood that, privately, Davies was similarly delivering home truths about the critical importance of business to the NGOs and public sector agencies.”

Julia Cleverdon adds, “we learnt a huge amount from Robert’s work and the international groups because they did some fantastic work in very difficult situations.”

Davies’s untimely, early death in August 2007 robbed the corporate responsibility movement globally of one of its most talented and entrepreneurial figures. The Financial Times in its obituary described him as “a towering figure in the movement for sustainable development” who “travelled tirelessly for his cause and was equally at home discussing world affairs at the United Nations, advocating sustainable business

practices at smart CEO dinners in Manhattan, or talking to villagers in India, South Africa or Brazil.” (Champion in the fight against poverty – FT – 23/08/2007).

IBLF was to continue for a further five years after Davies’s death; however, without the vision and drive of Davies, and having lost the involvement of HRH The Prince of Wales in 2009, its funding model became unviable. Nevertheless, the 20 years of IBLF seeded a range of Corporate Responsibility coalitions around the world. Some of its most innovative programmes survived, either independently, like The Partnering Initiative (a clearinghouse of good practice in creating and sustaining cross-sectoral partnerships), or were taken on by BITC, such as the ‘International Tourism Partnership’. There is a much fuller profile of IBLF 1990-2012 in **Corporate Responsibility Coalitions: The Past, Present and Future of Alliances for Sustainable Capitalism**, written by David Grayson and Jane Nelson. (Stanford University Press and Greenleaf Publishing – 2013).

RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS ACROSS THE EUROPEAN UNION

BITC was slower off the mark when the then President of the European Commission, Jacques Delors, called on European business leaders, in 1993, to play a more prominent role in tackling social exclusion across the EU. The resulting organisation, the European Business Network for Social Inclusion (now known as CSR Europe), included many of BITC’s core member companies. The original UK partner, however, was not BITC but the London Enterprise Agency (LEA). Only in 1999 did BITC take over as UK national partner. One might argue, as some continental European colleagues have done, that BITC’s attitudes and engagement with CSR Europe rather mirrored the UK’s general schizophrenia when it comes to matters European! Nevertheless, BITC did contribute to a number of CSR Europe projects, including a Europe-wide version of its own Responsible Business Awards.

Similarly, the Board of BITC rejected an invitation to become the UK chapter for the UN Global Compact in 2006, although (in more recent times) it has become an active supporter of the SDGs – the Global Goals, which is now the focus of current BITC international work. **See below.**

In fact, the BITC Board had been clear, back in 1990, that while it recognised the relevance and importance of promoting responsible business engagement internationally, it did not want to distract the organisation from the continuing challenges of doing this well in the UK; hence the decision to create a separate organisation: IBLF. For the nineties, this division of labour worked reasonably well. Individual BITC staffers were occasionally invited to speak at conferences or help out overseas, sometimes through IBLF or through the encouragement of a member company. Thus, BITC can, for example, claim a hand in the conversion, masterminded by IBLF, of a former Russian Red Army barracks in Kecskemét in Hungary into small-business incubator units. These were modelled on similar managed workspaces, developed with a number of member companies in the UK during the 1980s. It also played a role in mentoring a small business loan fund for young people in Israel. Often unknown to BITC, its publications popped up in translation around the world: the Business in the Environment DIY Guide was published in Mandarin; the **Two-Way Street** report into strengthening links between business and the voluntary and community sectors was translated into Spanish in Argentina (and was quoted back to this author, who had also co-written **Two-Way Street**, at a meeting in Buenos Aries in 2001 by an Argentinian NGO leader unfamiliar with the original source!).

As privatisation, liberalisation, and globalisation gathered pace through the 1990s and beyond, more and more of BITC’s member companies spread their operations internationally and began to expect that BITC could advise on corporate responsibility issues elsewhere – or at least would be able to make introductions to similar organisations in other parts of the world. Take one of BITC’s oldest members and BITC ‘Company of the Year’ 2007, BT: when BT was privatised in 1984, it had been a monopoly provider of fixed

landlines in the UK only. By 2007, it provided a range of telephony solutions in 170 countries on six continents. Similarly, by 2007, 20% of BITC’s membership invoices were paid, or approved, outside of the UK, as ownership of more British headquartered companies, such as Abbey National or BAA, passed overseas.

With the support of British embassies and the Foreign & Commonwealth Office, BITC ran several ‘Seeing is Believing’ visits in European capitals, with report-backs at the local British embassy – which were – according to Julia Cleverdon, “generally orchestrated by the indefatigable David Halley.”

SHARING INSIGHTS WITH COALITIONS ACROSS THE WORLD

On an ad hoc basis, BITC helped in the creation or expansion of business-led corporate responsibility coalitions in several other countries, such as Business in the Community Ireland, the Australian Business Community Network, and Fundación Empresa y Sociedad in Spain. Many other national Corporate Responsibility coalitions looked to BITC for ideas and inspiration. Talia Aharoni – the founder of Maala: Israel Business for Social Responsibility – was a frequent attendee at BITC conferences in the early years of Maala. Sabine Denis, who ran Belgium Business and Society for several years, speaks of BITC as one of the ‘go-to’ coalitions she monitored for clever campaigning techniques and insights. [For a fuller account of the evolution of Corporate Responsibility Coalitions around the world, see Grayson and Nelson’s **Corporate Responsibility Coalitions** (Stanford University Press 2013)].

Working in partnership with IBLF, BITC also created the ‘ENGAGE’ Network (formerly CECILE) with a number of leading law firms and international businesses – such as Citigroup, IBM, and KPMG – to support employee volunteering, first across Europe and then further afield. The network grew, in part, thanks to a programme of more than 30 seminars and conferences that the

‘ENGAGE’ partners ran with British Embassies and High Commissions between 1998 and 2009, to share experiences with local businesses and Corporate Responsibility coalitions. In turn, funding – first from BHP Billiton and then KPMG in 2006-2007 – enabled the building of a website for what became the CSR360 Global Partner Network that BITC continued to facilitate for several years. CSR360 shared information and good practice among affiliates.

Maria-Jose Subiela, who was part of BITC’s international team from 2006 to 2021, ending up as BITC’s Director for The Global Goals (and is now with The Corporate Citizenship Company) reflects on her experience at BITC:

“Looking at the early 2000s, BITC was ahead of most organisations globally in terms of inspiring and practically supporting businesses to engage with the communities where they operated. David Halley developed a global network of not-for-profit partners who could support BITC members locally to engage their employees in meaningful community investment activities, a network that grew to 130 organisations in all continents. I was lucky to join in the effort and to run ENGAGE, a programme that facilitated community partnerships between NGOs, government and groups of companies in more than 20 countries. At the time, bringing companies to work together supporting the local community and generating tangible business benefits was quite innovative. Through ENGAGE activities, we got to engage 9,000 employees, 250 local and global companies, 210 community organisations and 27,000+ beneficiaries every year. I see the work we did at BITC accelerating business action working with local partners and local branches of our members globally, a legacy to be very proud of.

I’d argue that the most influential framework to understand global progress and create action to meet humanity’s need for peace and prosperity protecting people and planet are the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. By 2018, it was clear that the world was not on track to meet these Goals by 2030. At BITC, we developed a campaign to accelerate business action. We started with curating the right

conversations to drive change and in early 2020, we totally reshaped our work to focus business action to build back responsibly as COVID-19 changed the world as we understood it. Again, showing BITC’s ability to bring business around the table and move the table as times and needs change.”

Individual BITC staff members and alumni – notably Sue Adkins, Mallen Baker, Peter Davies, David Grayson, David Halley, and Adrian Hodges, as well as Maria-Jose Subiela – have spoken and advised in countries around the globe, from Australia to Zimbabwe, Serbia and Kazakhstan to South Korea, as well as China, Japan, Russia, Brazil, and India. They have provided input to companies’ activities in terms of employee volunteering or responsible business more broadly.

How best to support member companies to integrate their commitments to sustainability and corporate responsibility, wherever they do business, and how best to learn from and share learning with other business-led coalitions around the world is a continuing challenge for BITC. Julia Cleverdon made several visits to Australia, leading – among other things – to the establishment of Melbourne ‘CARES’ under the auspices of the Committee for Melbourne. She encouraged the secondment of Simon Robinson from BITC’s Yorkshire and Humberside regional team to Melbourne in 2004 for one year, to assess the feasibility of creating the employee volunteering platform ‘CARES’. He became the first CEO of Australia ‘CARES’ for three years and has remained in Melbourne ever since.

Today, BITC’s international focus is very much on supporting member companies in their efforts to contribute to the achievement of the Global Goals (The SDGs), as the quote above from Maria-Jose Subiela makes clear.

CHAPTER 18: HANDING ON THE BATON – JULIA CLEVERDON YEARS 1992-2008

Julia Cleverdon spent 20 years at BITC (1988-2008), building on the campaigning skills she learned over more than a decade at the Industrial Society. Julia was – and is – a force of nature; time and again, interviewees for this project spoke of her charismatic speaking, formidable campaigning abilities, uncanny skills for attracting, developing, tracking, and tapping talent, and her very considerable personal capacity for hard work; she is married to the motivational power to produce hard work from others. Many interviewees also spoke fondly of her fearlessness in cadging help and resources for her courses and of her inspirational speeches – and many of us have a fund of our favourite Julia aphorisms. As one former Board member commented, **“she makes people feel special.”**

Julia helped many rising stars in BITC to develop and hone their campaigning skills, and she continues to be a generous mentor to many – always ready to inconvenience herself to support friends, allies, and causes. As Lesley Wolfenden, BITC’s long-serving Company Secretary and ‘institutional memory’, wrote in her foreword to a book of tributes to mark Julia’s 20 years with BITC: **“Julia has a passion for people and understands better than many that an organisation’s strength lies in its people. Julia’s people passion means she engenders terrific loyalty within the core of the staff team, and many of her closest colleagues have worked with her for over 20 years, growing immeasurably in the process.”**

THE TRIP, THE TABLE AND THE TREE

Looking back on her time as CEO of BITC, years later, Julia Cleverdon described it as **“the most achieving period of my life.”** She spoke of the ‘Theory of Change’, which she championed, based on the Trip, the Table and the Tree. She explained:

“The Trip was The Prince of Wales’ ‘Seeing is Believing’ Programme. During that time, we took 9,000 business leaders out on visits, and I went on every visit, so there wasn’t anything much that anyone could tell me about what was happening in hostels for the homeless, housing estates, prisons, tough schools or primaries trying to tackle their early years which we hadn’t seen on those visits.

The Table was about helping companies benchmark what great looks like by discovering what the leadership companies were doing about the key business issues, like the environment or tying their marketing to causes or employee community engagement. We carried out a review about how companies measure their impact on society: ‘Winning with Integrity’. As a result, we developed the Corporate Responsibility Index to measure how companies behave in their marketplace, their workplace, their environment and their community. It was all about trying to share best practice in order to learn and innovate faster and was ahead of its time. That was the power of collaborative action.

Then there was the Tree. We started the Awards for Excellence. Companies competed to get onto the shortlists of the Awards and to win them. The Prince of Wales loathed the bits of plastic that awards ceremonies tended to produce, so Gail Greengross decided that the thing to do was to hand out oak trees that could be planted somewhere of significance to

the business. The quid pro quo was that tree-winning companies had to tell others what they had learnt and what they had done because the only way to ensure fast improvements was by having those who were doing something impactful share their knowledge with others. That was the power of encouraging competition to synthesise best practice and the secret of so much of BITC’s success.”

Julia Cleverdon also spoke of her close partnership with Gail Greengross and Peter Davies, who served as her deputy for many years: “**the Three Musketeers!**”

Julia has continued as a very active Vice President of BITC, regularly speaking on behalf of the organisation and, in particular, championing the Place-based agenda – notably in Burnley and then in Blackpool.

Speaking in 2022, Sir Alan Parker, the Founder and Chairman of the city communications company Brunswick, and confidant of numerous business leaders, sums up the affection, respect and sense of awe that many of us have for Julia in a vivid anecdote. His diary for a particular day included an appointment with ‘Dame Julia Cleverdon’ to which his long-serving assistant had appended the instruction: ‘**JUST SAY ‘NO.’** And to which Alan, in turn, had reflected simply: “**As if you could!**”

CHAPTER 19: A CHANGE OF LEADERSHIP – AND A GLOBAL FINANCIAL CRISIS

At the beginning of 2008, Sir Mike Rake handed over the chairmanship of BITC to Stuart (now Lord) Rose, who was then leading Marks & Spencer (M&S). M&S had been one of the Founder Members of BITC, and a number of senior company executives had served on BITC’s Leadership Teams over the years. Marks & Spencer had been BITC’s ‘Responsible Business of the Year’ in both 2004 and 2006 (and would uniquely win the award for a third time in 2012). Stuart Rose, having successfully fought off a hostile take-over bid from Philip Green in 2004, had championed the launch of M&S’s ambitious **Plan A for Sustainability** in January 2007. (Plan A – because when it comes to the planet, there is no Plan B!).

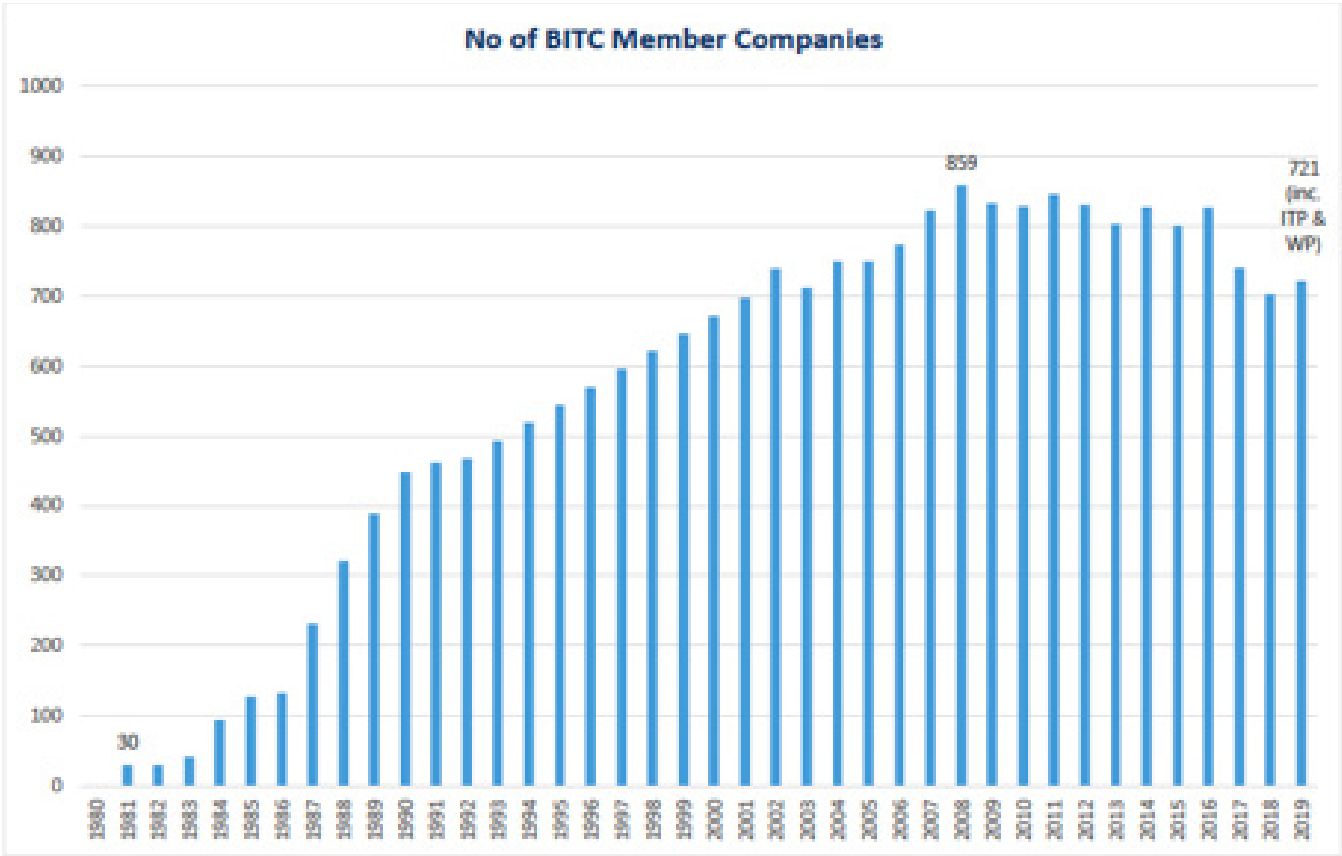
Alongside a new chair was the new BITC CEO: Stephen Howard, himself a former FTSE CEO, who had served as BITC’s Deputy CEO since 2005. In the words of one top business leader, Stephen Howard brought a corporate CEO mindset to the running of BITC after the campaigning years of Julia Cleverdon. Stephen himself argues though that “**we campaigned even harder – but differently.**”

This proved crucially important in helping BITC to weather the twin challenges represented by the Global Financial Crisis of 2008: a very real risk of the loss of income and members, as many companies – especially in the financial services sector – grappled with their own financial crises and also with the massive loss of popular trust in business, which the Global Financial Crisis (GFC) intensified. Stephen Howard did the necessary belt-tightening, enabling BITC to overcome the immediate storm and actually increased membership. **See TABLE 4.**

Looking back, Howard cites the famous aphorism that “you should never let a crisis go to waste,” and argues that the GFC, “gave BITC opportunities to develop much deeper relationships with member companies.” “Member companies,” he says, “were facing big challenges. We had to understand that. It was important that we learnt how to help member companies to focus, not to lose, the progress they had made, and help companies to communicate internally. This meant giving member companies more profile, putting them upfront.” This was very much reflected in the regional and national Awards events each year, and in the positioning of campaigns.

This was also a time for the consolidation of many existing BITC campaigns, such as ‘Business in the Environment’, as described by Jim Haywood in Chapter 16, and the gender and race equality campaigns (described further in Chapters 25 and 26); and the development of new campaigns – notably on health and wellbeing: see Chapter 22. It was also a further spur to a rediscovery of BITC’s roots in local communities: in place; and in opportunities for young people, as we now discuss in the following chapters.

TABLE 4



(At end of FY '20 total membership was 556 and at the end of FY 2021, it was 570 companies).

CHAPTER 20: TACKLING THE SKILLS AGENDA

In May 2007, 400 business leaders and community/ NGO partners gathered in a central London hotel for two days for a European Responsible Business Summit, co-hosted by BITC and the corporate responsibility magazine **Ethical Corporation**. Among the keynote speakers was the long-time BITC supporter and inspirer Richard Lambert. He had been invited to address the summit on the key forward challenges for business and society. He highlighted the continuing challenge for the UK of the large numbers of unskilled workers. He quoted a businessman he had recently met who had said, **“It is easier to recruit from Poland than it is from the backstreets of Batley [a poor, northern English town].”** For individual businesses, that may be so; however, as Richard Lambert emphasised, ignoring the UK skills crisis, or the needs of Britain’s long-term unemployed and poor, is not an option for UK plc. Large numbers of unskilled, alienated young people are a recipe for unrest and violence.

BUSINESS CLASS

One of numerous BITC change-agents, concerned with tackling the skills crisis and long-term unemployment, was a Business Development Manager, Raksha Pattni, who joined BITC in the North West of England in 1998. Her post was funded by the Government’s Single Regeneration Budget, and her brief was to develop a model to engage business in supporting community regeneration in the Deepdale district of Preston. The area had a large South Asian population and multiple deprivation problems.

Pattni had to find her own free office in the area and set about establishing a ‘Business Support Group’ (BSG) with local employers, such as BNFL, Leyland Trucks, and Sainsbury’s. She developed and presented to the BSG a community-needs assessment, identifying low educational attainment and literacy as one of the major problems. This provoked a lively debate within the BSG about how business could help.

One early, practical ‘win’ was with the Fishwick Primary School, which had a tough catchment area. The Headteacher explained that only about 25% of parents ever showed up at Parents’ Evenings to discuss their children’s progress with teachers and asked how they could support the school’s efforts with the children.

The ‘Business Support Group’ organised a weekend challenge where some 60 employees from BSG firms repainted the school, landscaped the school grounds, and generally spruced up what had been a very tired and dilapidated building. This, in turn, motivated parents to get more involved, and attendance at Parents’ Evenings rocketed up to 70%. Soon, the local FE college and the Benefits & Skills Agency started using the school as a local hub. Pattni replicated the model in Wythenshawe, Greater Manchester, and in other areas, and this later became the footprint for the successful ‘Business Connectors’ programme.

This experience gave Pattni the confidence and vision, when she was promoted to be BITC’s North West Regional Director, to look more strategically at how to engage regional businesses to help raise the region’s educational attainment and young people’s aspirations. Talking to both businesses and to schools, she found something of a dialogue of the deaf, with businesses not knowing how best they could help and schools uncertain as to what help they should be asking for from business. This led Pattni to develop a strategic Education programme to transform the way business engaged with schools to help raise attainment and pupils’ aspirations. The evidence-based model was centred around a three-year, business school strategic collaboration, and it was targeted at secondary schools in areas of high deprivation across the North West. Through the programme, businesses joined a local cluster and were partnered with a single school for a minimum of three years.

Using the specially-designed needs assessment, linked to the OFSTED Development Plan for a particular school, partnerships worked together to review each school’s particular challenges and to identify opportunities for the business to provide tailored support. This might involve help with school governance and leadership, Headteacher mentoring, curriculum enrichment, or Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) teaching, etc.

With the support of prominent North West businessman Edwin Booth, who chaired the North West BITC Regional Board, Pattni pitched her model to the North West Regional Development Agency who agreed funding for a pilot of this ‘Business Class’ collaboration in Burnley. After six months, the early results were so impressive that Pattni was able to go back to the RDA and get ten times the original pilot funding (this time £500,000) to roll out ‘Business Class’ across the North West. The flexibility of ‘Business Class’ allowed it to make the best use of skills, experience and resources of the businesses involved, and helped to deliver significant improvement in schools serving some of the region’s most disadvantaged communities. The model was subsequently adopted by BITC as its flagship education programme and was rolled out across England.

ROLLING OUT BUSINESS CLASS

As Fiona Rawes, BITC’s national Education Director at the time, recalls:

“With Paul Deschler’s support, we decided to go deep on Business Class across the country, recognising its rich potential given its needs-led approach, long-term nature, and networking opportunities through local and national clusters of schools in low-income communities.”

Stephen Howard, then BITC’s CEO, also highlights the impact of ‘Business Class’ and the leadership role of Paul Drechsler in helping to promote the model nationally. Stephen emphasises the practical ways that ‘Business Class’ could engage a business, from the most senior levels to the most junior. He also argues that the very practical, “on the ground nature” of ‘Business Class’ finally persuaded the global bank Goldman Sachs to join BITC.

Fiona Rawes adds that “Goldman Sachs’ significant financial support, secured from the redoubtable Michelle Pingerra, in December 2010, was a game changer for this, kick-starting the much-needed financial stability to the core team to create a national proposition to promote and scale. We started with 35 Business Class partnerships in 7 clusters in the NW when I joined; by the time I left 3 years later, we had secured 350 business class partnerships in 40+ clusters across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland with additional funding of over £2.5m to expand the programme further from the UKCES.”

Rawes also remembers that “we secured Michael Gove (then Secretary of State for Education) at our big annual shindig or ‘symposium’ in 2012 hosted by Goldman Sachs. We managed to persuade all the Goldman Sachs big wigs to let children and young people front all engagement with Michael Gove,

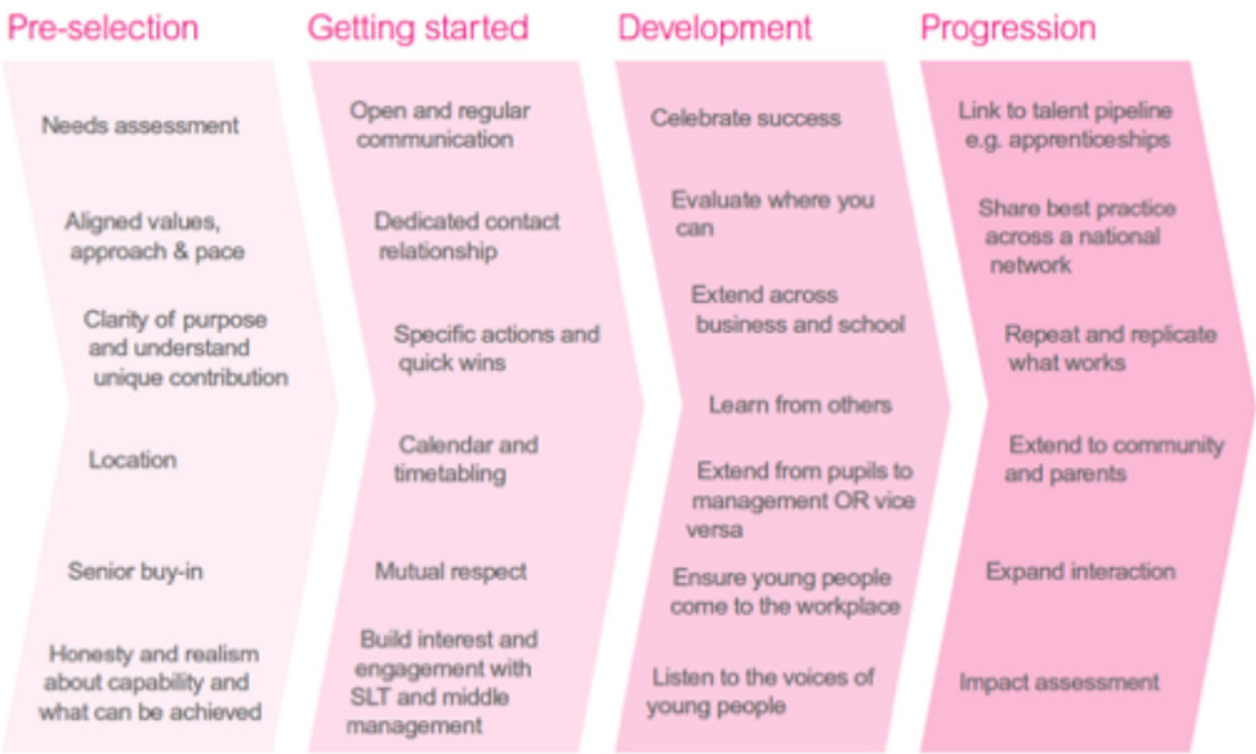
from meeting and greeting him outside the building to accompanying him up in the lift and showing him around a range of ‘show and tell’ stalls. We ended up getting endorsement for the ‘Business Class’ philosophy from him, (deputy Prime Minister) Nick Clegg, and (Labour MP) Stephen Timms.”

Also in 2012, research by Anthony Mann found that if a young person had four or more interactions with employers, they were five times less likely to be NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training).

“It is through these interactions that they are able to build their understanding of the skills and competencies needed to build successful working lives.” [Mann et al, It’s who you meet, 2013].

A 2015 study for BITC by Warwick University and Bean Research, which examined the wider benefits for schools and for businesses of the ‘Business Class’ partnerships, stated that: “Destiny should not be determined by Demography: Building alignment between the classroom and the boardroom.”

What are the characteristics of success?



Echoing the reflections of earlier BITC Education Directors, Fiona Rawes’s lessons – articulated in 2022 – are:

- “Remember who you are there to serve – the Children and Young People whose life chances can be so richly influenced through the right type of business input for them and their schools. Engage with them, listen to them, provide them with platforms, champion them. Always go back to them if you are feeling depleted. You’ll get your energy back.
- You have to put the school first. A needs-led approach never failed to create reassurance for the teachers and, therefore, the right foundations for a fruitful partnership
- Engaging with schools can feel daunting. Businesses want to get it right but often don’t know where to start. Therefore, shaping mechanisms, such as ‘Business Class’ clusters, which provide safety in numbers for businesses wanting to engage with schools was a powerful driver for developing and sustaining sign-ups. And the fact that they could do so through a common framework across the country really drove engagement from businesses based across multiple locations.”

At its height, 540 schools were involved and £8m was raised through ‘Business Class’ for schools. Cass Business School (now Bayes Business School) did an evaluation of ‘Business Class’ and concluded that ‘Business Class’ creates benefits for the whole school not just pupils, including better leadership and governance, enhanced management skills and financial savings. Also, in schools engaged in ‘Business Class’, there is a 13% greater alignment between young people’s career aspirations and their activities at school, meaning these young people are more likely to make a successful transition from school to work.

Raksha Pattni says “**Business Class transformed the way businesses engaged with schools and framed business engagement in 540 most challenging secondary schools across the UK for nearly a decade. I am intensely proud of it – it’s my legacy to BITC.**”

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS

Katy Neep, BITC’s Head of Campaigns, raises another area of BITC’s work over many years.

“We also built our work on youth employment. The forerunner to this was the Talent Debates and the Big Conversations. The Big Conversations brought together business leaders and young people to have a conversation about what was needed to support more young people into employment. It is BITC at its best, enabling the business leaders to hear and understand first-hand from the young people and for solutions to be co-created. This gave rise to Work Inspiration – turning work experience into work inspiration. A simple but powerful concept which encouraged employers to think about three key areas when bringing young people into their organisations – 1. Careers Happen: Demonstrate the various routes into job roles showing the different pathways – here we had careers boards from the likes of Chris Satterthwaite and Stuart Rose – both showing their pathway was not straightforward. 2. Look behind the label – demonstrate the full range of roles within your organisations, i.e., a Law firm is not just about being a lawyer and 3. Start with the young person – Who are they? What are their interests?”

From ‘Work Inspiration’ and the ‘Big Conversations’, fast-forward to the economic crash and the rise in youth unemployment. BITC worked in partnership with City & Guilds and created the ‘Futureproof’ campaign: www.cityandguildsgroup.com/whats-happening/news/future-proof

The result was a framework of what employers could do – in short – to inspire/hire/grow. It was led by the ‘Talent and Skills’ Leadership Team, led by Steve Holliday. He recalls that: “**the UK had more than one million NEETs: young people not in education, employment, or training. It was clear that the NEETs should be a focus for business.**” He remembers touring the company promoting ‘Work Inspiration’. “**I was regularly talking about the scandal of so many NEETs at a time when the country also had such severe skills shortages. We generated 120,000 places and got lots of companies involved, such as ASDA, Barclays Bank, Cap Gemini, Marks & Spencer and Tesco.**” He also cites the success of Whitbread in recruiting so many NEETs into jobs at Premier Inn and then helping them to progress within the firm.

Steve Holliday quotes the example of one young man he met on a ‘Seeing is Believing’ visit in the West Midlands, to make the point that successfully getting NEETs into jobs, and then **keeping** them in jobs, was a major challenge for employers.

“**We visited a youth club where we met a young man who had finally got a job but was constantly in trouble for over-sleeping and being late. It turns out, he had never owned an alarm clock. He was third generation unemployed. Family members hadn’t needed an alarm clock. That conversation really jarred with me.**”

CAREERS LAB

Steve Holliday is particularly proud of ‘Careers Lab’ – an initiative his company, National Grid, sponsored. ‘Careers Lab’ aimed to bridge the gap between schools and the world of work by getting employees from businesses of all sizes into the classrooms to deliver inspiring careers lessons side-by-side with teachers, helping young people think more widely about their future working life. Following a successful pilot programme with the likes of Capgemini, Costain, HS2 and Whitbread, ‘Careers Lab’ was rolled out to around 600 schools through Business in the Community’s ‘Business Class’. Writing back in 2014, Steve Holliday

explained: “**With around half of those employed in utilities companies due to retire in the next 10 years, there’s a real acknowledgement in the sector that we need to be more proactive in showing young people the fantastic range of interesting and well-paid jobs we can offer them.**” Once again, a clear and direct link to the business case for the proposed agenda for businesses.

Steve Holliday argues that the ‘Talent and Skills’ campaign gave a major boost to the ‘Ban the Box’ initiative. “**Ban the Box had been around for some time. We decided we would ask our Leadership Team to check back in their own organisations, which said they had banned the box, that they had actually done so. We found half hadn’t done so. In National Grid, for instance, we discovered that we had outsourced the screening of job applications to a third party – and that third party did still ask about previous criminal records. As a result, we wrote out to all member companies, asking them to double-check, even though they had made a commitment. It really boosted the Ban the Box drive.**”

From the ‘Talent and Skills’ Leadership campaign also came mystery shopping, where young people ‘mystery shopped’ employers’ job descriptions and adverts. They then presented back to employers how they were not being inclusive, where information did not make sense, etc. Cath Sermon remembers a follow-up report on BBC Radio 4 about the mystery shopping where a journalist talks to young people about jargon-free jobs, and they asked, “**what on earth are ‘ad hoc duties to the C.O.O.’, which had been on one of the job adverts reviewed, or “what is an ‘SLA or an LLP?’**” This led to ‘Jargon-free jobs’. ‘Mystery shopping’ and ‘Jargon-free jobs’ are both integral to BITC’s campaign around inclusive recruitment ‘Opening Doors’: www.bitc.org.uk/inclusive-recruitment-opening-doors/

Reflecting in 2022, Cath Sermon argues that “typically ‘inspire’ or education has been run entirely separately to HR/Talent etc within a business historically, and what we saw through Futureproof, and the wider youth employment work, was a move to bring the two together. HR and community teams working together – that bridge between Inspire and Hire is a unique space BITC can bring together, and does bring together, really demonstrating that in order to deliver an inclusion or social mobility strategy when it comes to talent pipeline and recruitment, you need to start in schools.”

This work is now led by Jon Lewis of Capita as the ‘Employment and Skills’ and ‘Education’ Leadership Teams, which merged nearly two years ago. The opportunity that BITC now has here is to continue this alignment while bringing in the Regional Leadership Teams and Place team.

CHAPTER 21: BIG SOCIETY, URBAN UNREST AND BUSINESS CONNECTORS

After the Global Financial Crisis (GFC) and the massive loss of popular trust in business, there was a widespread sense that business could, and must, do more with local communities – but also an understanding that this required effective, on-the-ground community brokerage. Sainsbury’s former Customer Service & Colleague Director, Gwyn Burr, who was then chairing the BITC Community Leadership Team, offered to send Sainsbury’s early- to mid-career managers on secondments as ‘Business Connectors’, if BITC could find other companies willing to help too. She told BITC’s 2010 AGM:

“Charities and community organisations are facing significant challenges, so support from businesses will become increasingly important. Businesses across the country are already engaging with voluntary organisations to the benefit of both parties, and it’s important to build on that heritage. We believe that Business Connectors have the potential to be a powerful and positive force for good, and we’re convinced we can achieve a real step change by having individuals in place to act as a local broker.”⁴⁸

As Cath Sermon recalls: “What had spurred a lot of Gwyn’s involvement was David Cameron’s pledges around Big Society. We did some rudimentary research with our Regional Boards and campaign Leadership Teams, asking them to reflect on what the role of Business should be in building a ‘big society’. It helped crystallise that the big, sophisticated member companies felt that they were doing well/doing enough in communities, but they felt others needed help to do more. Additionally, as BITC, we were finding that the demand from businesses for the old CARES Employee Volunteering model and brokerage payments for volunteering was diminishing. Still, we felt strongly that the need for business to be involved was not reducing at all. This was the puzzle: we knew the work was needed but that the places that needed it most were least likely to benefit – that businesses

were running their own, albeit fabulous schemes, but these didn’t reach the toughest places nor aid collaboration: the pooling of businesses resources and assets that these “left behind” places needed.”

A series of roundtables organised by Gail Greengross, together with David Cameron’s then Strategy Director Steve Hilton, highlighted a successful brokerage model in Shoreditch, East London. Civil Society Minister Nick Hurd MP committed £200,000 to support a pilot programme. Gwyn Burr promised ten Sainsbury’s secondees and other businesses – especially Lloyds Bank (now Lloyds Banking Group) – who came in strongly behind the pilot.

2011 CIVIL UNREST

Then came the summer of 2011 and – 30 years after the Brixton and Toxteth riots, which had turbo-charged the nascent plans for BITC – England’s inner cities were on fire again.

Paul Buchanan recalls: “All the other BITC senior executives were on holiday at the time. I was the only one in the office and temporarily in charge. Well, never let a crisis go to waste!”

We hastily assembled a Business Emergency Resilience Group led by John Varley, then CEO of Barclays. Together with long-term BITC ally Bill Castell, who was by then chairing the Wellcome Trust and the London Evening Standard, we created an emergency fund to help small businesses get back on their feet after the riots. Bill Castell was driving this. Marsh facilitated fast-track loss-adjustment processes; BITC did the outreach to small business owners in affected communities; and Deloitte checked applications to the fund and allocated cash. We spoke to the insurers and quickly mobilised the BITC membership. I was having daily, progress-chasing calls with John Varley and Bill Castell.”

The focus quickly turned from the immediate crisis to the more fundamental questions: How do we avoid these riots happening again? How do we tackle the underlying problems that caused the riots?

BUSINESS CONNECTORS

BITC, with personal leadership from CEO Stephen Howard and his deputy Peter Lambert, coordinated a bid for multi-year funding from the Big Lottery Fund – one of the distribution bodies set up to disburse funds generated by Britain’s National Lottery. This led to a five-year grant, starting in 2012, of £7 million+ to fund a national roll-out and core administrative support of ‘Business Connectors’ to broker business help to local communities. BITC managed to eke out the funding to six years, so it was only in 2018 that ‘Business Connectors’ came to an end. In total, there were some 270 managers seconded from BITC member companies as ‘Business Connectors’, and it was subsequently calculated that for every £1 of Lottery funding, some £9.86 of business help was generated for communities in need.

In a sense, the ‘Business Connectors’ were a throwback, almost 30 years, to the first wave of BITC regional directors – all initially secondees in the mid-1980s – who were also tasked with mobilising business support, in cash and in-kind, for community projects in their regions. The ‘Business Connectors’, however, would have a much smaller geographical patch – but also much less time to make a difference. It was important, therefore, that they could ‘hit the ground running.’

BITC designed and ran a three-day residential training programme, hosted by the Lloyds Banking Group at its national training centre in the West Midlands, as part of its in-kind support, to induct and train up new ‘Business Connectors’ as they were seconded from their companies. These training sessions always included inputs from Julia Cleverdon, talking about the history of BITC and how business involvement in the community had evolved over the decades. The sessions always included a section with David Robinson, the founder

of Community Links in Newham, East London, who would focus on really listening to community needs and aspirations. Again, echoes of the BITC-commissioned, intensive training courses for secondees who had been newly appointed as local enterprise agency directors, which were run at Durham University Business School in the 1980s.

David Robinson would invariably build his talk to the new ‘Business Connectors’ around a favourite poem of his: **The Ambulance Down in the Valley**.

**“Twas a dangerous cliff, as they freely confessed,
Though to walk near its crest was so pleasant;
But over its terrible edge there had slipped
A duke and full many a peasant.
So the people said something would have to be done,
But their projects did not at all tally;
Some said, “Put a fence ’round the edge of the cliff,”
Some, “An ambulance down in the valley.”
But the cry for the ambulance carried the day,”**⁴⁹

The message from David Robinson was clear: the ‘Business Connectors’ were to be there, to build the fences, strengthen their communities and reduce the need for the ‘ambulances’.

The intention was that each ‘Business Connector’ would get to know his or her patch – if they didn’t know it already from their existing job – and to mobilise a range of business skills and resources to help communities improve social and economic regeneration. The ‘Business Connectors’ were trying to channel earlier BITC programmes, like the ‘Professional Firms Groups’ of old (later PRO-HELP). There are also echoes of the old Action Resource Centre.

Paul Buchanan – now BITC’s Executive Director of Delivery and Impact but previously the Community Director and the Director for People and Place – adds that, sometimes in the past **“companies ‘did to a place’, but with Business Class and Business Connectors, it was a local, needs-led approach.”**

BIG SOCIETY IN ACTION

As described above, the ‘Business Connectors’ were also part of efforts to give more substance to one of the ‘big ideas’ of the incoming Cameron-led Coalition Government (2010-2015) – namely, the ‘Big Society’. This had been originally conceived as part repudiation of the much-misunderstood remark of Margaret Thatcher in the 1980s that there was **“no such thing as society”**. The Tories, under the leadership of David Cameron and heavily influenced by Cameron’s then chief strategist Steve Hilton, did indeed believe in

“such a thing as society” – it was just not the same in their view as ‘big government’. In itself, the ‘Big Society’ was unobjectionable – and, indeed, was an idea that could be traced back to Edmund Burke at the end of the eighteenth century and his **“little platoons”**; this was in contrast to the centralised, top-down diktat of the continental European, Napoleonic system. Unfortunately, the Cameron-Hilton vision of ‘Big Society’ was to be fatally undermined by the ‘austerity’ programme to cut public expenditure dramatically, which the coalition government introduced in 2010. ‘Business Connectors’, therefore, were operating in less-than-benign, external, macro-economic conditions.



(The visual shows these supporters – with their names and corporate logos as at the time of the final evaluation report on ‘Business Connectors’)

Nevertheless, an independent evaluation of ‘Business Connectors’ by the NCVO – commissioned as part of the BITC contract with the Big Lottery – found positive results from the ‘Business Connectors’:

- Almost 4,500 community organisations received support from ‘Business Connectors’
- BITC leveraged over £10 for every £1 of Big Lottery Fund investment
- 277 ‘Business Connectors’ and over £45.4 million leveraged
- 53 private and public sector organisations seconded ‘Business Connectors’

Stephen Howard describes ‘Business Connectors’ as representing a “**magic triumvirate**” – they helped “**communities; they helped companies to reconnect with communities; and they helped to develop the individual secondees. People got into the community space through Connectors – and this largely kept going once they went back into their seconding organisations.**” Significantly, he adds, “**Connectors is what I am proudest of, in my time as CEO of BITC.**”

CHAPTER 22: HOW BITC’S HEALTH AND WELLBEING CAMPAIGN HAS TRANSFORMED UK BUSINESS ACTION ON HEALTH

FROM FRUITY FRIDAYS TO WAYS OF WORKING THAT SUPPORT THRIVING PEOPLE, THRIVING COMMUNITIES, AND A HEALTHIER PLANET

Business in the Community’s **Health and Wellbeing Campaign** is the organisation’s longest-running campaign, led continuously by a single campaign director, Louise Aston. Louise has directed the campaign since its launch in 2007, overseeing the transformation of corporate health and wellbeing – from a peripheral business issue promoting healthy eating and gym memberships to a core business issue that achieves ways of working that support personal wellbeing – benefitting both individuals and businesses.

To learn about the Enduring Success Factors that have underpinned the evolution of the Health and Wellbeing campaign, the Cranfield School of Management research team interviewed Louise Aston as well as other BITC colleagues who have played important roles in shaping its development and success.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP: IT ALL STARTED WITH A CONVERSATION...

Even before the campaign launch in 2007 (as ‘Business Action on Health’), BITC campaign leaders Cath Sermon, Grace Mehanna, and Graham Bann had invested months and years in dialogue with health and wellbeing leaders across the private, public, and not-for-profit sectors. Cath Sermon said BITC Chief Executive Julia Cleverdon gave her:

“...almost complete freedom to just go out and talk to people and listen and stuff. I went to Select Committee meetings...companies would be holed up in front of the Health Select Committee to talk about sugar and fat and drinks and crisps and things. But I just listened really, really intently and met lots and lots of people... when we started looking at workplace and health, that’s where it was really clear, there was a very interesting opportunity.”

The meaning of workplace ‘health and wellbeing’ varied from business to business. When Cath asked companies for discussions about health and wellbeing, some referred her to a health and safety director, whose primary focus was on safety, particularly avoiding accidents in industries such as construction and transport. But if she asked specifically about health, she could be referred to the HR team, or sometimes a chief medical officer, who talked about the need to better understand and manage employee absence and sickness, including its underlying causes (e.g., musculoskeletal disorders).

For companies in sectors such as hospitality, pharmaceuticals and insurance, the health of customers, and others in the general population was a focus of the conversation. Topics were diverse and could include healthy menus (food service), or sleep and its relationship to accident rates (insurance). But Cath also found that practitioners expressed curiosity about what their counterparts in other businesses were doing to address health-related issues, however they were being defined within companies.

These informal conversations led to Cath joining working groups and to other networks connecting BITC with Investors in People (IIP), International Business Leaders Forum (IBLF), the Work Foundation, Sport England, the British Heart Foundation, and other organisations with an interest in health and wellbeing. This period of dialogue built important network connections between BITC and other institutional actors in the health and wellbeing field.

The BITC team also identified key UK Government narratives in reports calling for action to promote the health of the British people. These included the **Wanless (2002) report** from the Department of Health calling for a shift from sickness to health promotion, and the **Wanless (2004) report** focused on reduction of health inequalities (both written by Sir Derek Wanless, a former BITC Leadership Team member and Board member). Later key reports included the **Dame Carol Black Review (2008)** of the health of Britain’s working-age population, and the **Stevenson/Farmer Review (2017)** of mental health at work. The not-for-profit sector was also actively contributing to the public discourse on health and wellbeing. **Jamie’s School Dinners (2005)**, for example, promoted awareness of diet, obesity, and health.

All of this early cross-sector dialogue created a foundation for BITC to do what it does best – **using its collective entrepreneurship skills** to change how responsible business leaders think about, and act on, health and wellbeing in the workplace.

To lead conversations about health and wellbeing in the workplace into the public domain, and to scale these up, BITC published **Talking Health: Prompting Dialogue on Health at Work** (2005). This publication built on the **Spend Now, Save Now** health and wellbeing business-case research and launched a five-question framework for companies to prompt conversations and to improve impact on health.

LEADERSHIP: BUILDING THE TEAM

Louise Aston was recruited by Graham Bann in 2007 to join BITC as Health and Wellbeing Campaign Director. She had already acquired many years of expertise and experience as a creative professional in the fashion industry – where she had worked to create a mass market for skin cancer prevention merchandise for children – and also as Creative Director for the COI (Central Office of Information), the UK Government’s marketing and communications agency, where she had led multi-stakeholder campaigns, such as Five A Day, FRANK (national anti-drug advisory service), and Don’t Give Up Giving Up (tobacco education). Louise’s own passion for health and wellbeing was grounded in first-hand experiences of family health issues. This enabled her to reach out and connect at a personal level with other senior leaders with similar histories who recognised the importance of taking action on health and wellbeing at work.

Louise prioritised shifting the focus of workplace health and wellbeing activity away from the periphery to the core of business operations. She commissioned research to build the **business case** for addressing workplace health issues and (building on the previous dialogue and networking activities of BITC’s experienced campaigners) began to assemble a campaign Leadership Team using her own networking skills.

“I love networking, and I was even going up to people absolutely cold at the BITC AGM to engage them with the campaign...and off the back of the collateral we developed, I got invited to various speaking platforms, which gave BITC profile”.

Key recruits included Boots UK’s Alex Gourlay, who was then Managing Director, and Richard Ellis, the company’s CSR Director. Louise noted that the two played complementary roles in supporting the campaign:

“Alex Gourlay was such a supportive Chair. The other reason Boots was so effective was that Richard Ellis was the most wonderful gatekeeper in terms of helping me navigate the best way to press the right buttons for Alex... [I learned] that lesson of always having a really good gateway to navigate the chair.”

She also recruited Leadership Team members from the public sector who recognised the importance of workplace health and wellbeing, using her ability to leverage network connections:

“The next kind of big breakthrough moment was meeting Dr Justin Varney, who had just joined a new government agency called Public Health England... And I found out that Justin’s father was David Varney, who’s been [Chair] of BITC. I invited him out to lunch. That was the beginning of a beautiful relationship. Justin already knew a lot about Business in the Community from his dad. Unlike most civil servants, he actually spoke plain English and understood a bit about business. He spotted a great opportunity.”

Louise also brought her distinctive creative skills to consolidate the cohesiveness of the Leadership Team from its first meeting:

“I wanted an icebreaking moment. And I remember walking down Oxford Street with Graham Bann...I had my wheelie suitcase. And in it, I had all kinds of different glasses and fruit and juices and laid it all out in the boardroom and said, I would like everyone to make their own non-alcoholic cocktail, which

represents their brand. And I remember it was brilliant: National Grid picked an empty green glass (environmental puffery); Richard Ellis chose tomato juice, to which he added a private stash of vodka for a Bloody Mary (Boots being taken over by the Spanish) ...I have enormous affection for members of my Leadership Team.”

SHOWMANSHIP: CAMPAIGN LAUNCH AND AWARDS

The ‘Business Action on Health’ campaign was officially launched in 2007 with a **Wealth from Health** launch report, packed with research-based statistics and case studies. The launch event featured eye-catching health and wellbeing statistics printed on colourful postcards. The emphasis on evidence helped to establish the business case for investment in workplace health and wellbeing, adding weight to the premise that ‘people are our greatest asset.’

To drive progress, the campaign also set a collective target for FTSE-100 companies and BITC’s members: 75% of FTSE-100 firms and 20% of BITC’s 850 members should report on the wellbeing and engagement of staff at boardroom level by 2011. BITC announced that FTSE companies had exceeded this target, with those reporting rising from 68% in 2007 to an impressive 85% in 2010.

A subsequent launch of a ‘Health and Wellbeing Award’ enabled the campaign to recognise and promote examples of best practice that enhanced the legitimacy of health and wellbeing as a core business issue. As Grace Mehanna, Wellbeing Campaign Manager, observed:

“case studies from the award, being able to turn some of that into a business case with a bit of research...are real trigger moments to being taken seriously on this and having value to others.”

APPRENTICESHIP: DEVELOPING TOOLS TO ENGAGE BUSINESS

‘Workwell Model’: taking a whole person/whole organisation approach to embedding health and wellbeing into organisational culture.

Recognising the importance of integrating measurement and public reporting on health and wellbeing into business operations (‘What gets measured gets managed’), the ‘Workwell Model’ was established early in the campaign and, as Louise reflected in 2021, has remained a bellwether to this day.

“I think the other big milestone was in 2009. We launched the evidence-based Workwell model, and it’s still being used to this day. It’s a gold standard of a biopsychosocial model that provides a framework for embedding health and wellbeing into organisational culture. And it’s really stood the test of time.”

The ‘Workwell Model’ was aligned with existing responsible business reporting infrastructures, backed by business leaders, to consolidate its position in mainstream business operations:

“I linked this to FTSE-100 benchmarking on reporting and managed to recruit a really excellent group of FTSE-100 leaders, chaired by Dr. Paul Litchfield of BT with Hendersons and Towers Watson. So, we produced; really, we were ahead of our time: it was public reporting guidance for larger companies. And we accompanied that with a FTSE-100 benchmark... over a cycle of four years, we did see an increase in terms of public reporting against the Workwell model [we included leading (vs. lagging) indicators so that investors could make informed decisions.]”

In addition to developing the ‘Workwell Model’ as an operational tool, Louise worked with Alex Gourlay to recruit Stef Calcraft, co-founder of world-famous creative agency Mother, to design a simple, powerful graphic for the ‘Workwell Model’:



Grace Mehanna observed that “companies could see... it’s not just about health and safety: it’s about good jobs and mental health. Having that very simple model creates a kind of language around what we’re talking about. I think that is really powerful.”

The ‘Workwell Model’ has been adapted over time so that it now integrates with BITC’s ‘Responsible Business Tracker’, launched in 2018 to assess the responsible business performance of BITC’s member companies:

“We tweaked it slightly about a year ago. But you know, in terms of the design of the health and wellbeing section of the RB [Responsible Business] Tracker, [it] is totally aligned to the Workwell Model.”

Louise also established a Working Group to lead on adopting the ‘Workwell Model’ as a tool for integrating health and wellbeing into business practice:

“I formed a very close relationship with Paul Litchfield, who at that point was the CMO of BT. And basically asked him if he would chair a Working Group primarily made up of FTSE-100 companies...to use the Workwell Model as a reporting template for public reporting.”

PARTNERSHIP: COLLABORATION DRIVES GROUND-BREAKING IMPROVEMENTS IN PRACTICE

Cross-sector partnerships have been key to identifying, and pushing, the boundaries on improving business practice in addressing the most pressing health and wellbeing issues in UK organisations across the life of the campaign, up to 2022.

Grace highlighted the role of collaborative partnerships in developing a series of employer toolkits that provided practical guidance and promoted examples of best practice early in the campaign:

“All those Toolkits that we developed with companies...It wasn’t just us sitting behind a desk thinking what businesses should be doing. It was Steering Groups of companies creating the content with us, which was really critical. And those case studies. And their input into what they thought we should be asking businesses to do.”

Louise emphasised the holistic approach to health and wellbeing as well as the research that underpinned all the Toolkits:

“We co-produced a suite of interconnected toolkits in partnership with Public Health England (PHE), supported by a variety of expert NGOs, that took a whole person approach. And we started with one on mental health. And this was before mental health

had the kind of standing that it has now. And the beauty of working with PHE was that we were able to gather the very, very best evidence on a whole range of interconnected topics, including sleep, physical activity, healthy eating, musculoskeletal health, drugs, alcohol, and tobacco to make that compelling business and social case supported by practical actions for all employers.”

As the campaign has evolved, it has pressed companies to address issues that were not traditionally considered the responsibility of businesses. A landmark milestone was opening the door to discussion of mental health issues that had previously been stigmatised, as Louise explains:

“We had this amazing event at the Barbican called ‘Let’s talk about mental health’...it was just an extraordinary turnout in terms of showing a real pent-up demand from Business in the Community members who really wanted to get to grips with what mental health was about, and how they could really start talking about it at a time where there was really a kind of stigmatised approach. Business hadn’t got its head around it. That was a real turning point.”

Another breakthrough came with the establishment of a dialogue on suicide, thanks to a partnership that Louise brokered between BITC, Public Health England and Samaritans, supported by PwC.

“We produced the first-ever suicide postvention toolkit in the world for employers...with Public Health England but in partnership with Samaritans...we did one on suicide prevention and postvention. And that was coinciding with the launch of new ONS figures, which had worrying rates of suicide. And that, again, was a really taboo topic. I couldn’t get anyone to talk to me about it. And so, in the end, I managed to get hold of PwC. And they’ve had a couple of really kind of high-profile suicides, so they couldn’t exactly deny they’ve ever had a suicide. And they were incredible. They hosted an event called ‘Let’s Talk About Suicide’ to promote both prevention and the postvention toolkits...at a venue where one of their colleagues had jumped and killed himself.”

Another frontier for corporate dialogue and action was domestic abuse. While initially encountering resistance from her Leadership Team, Louise pushed ahead with this theme, and was subsequently vindicated as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impacts:

“I took the topic to my Leadership Team. And they all were in denial. They claimed, a bit like suicide, that they believed that domestic abuse isn’t our responsibility. It’s something that goes on at home... all suicides that have taken place in our organisations, all kinds of things where people have been affected by things that are not work related. So basically, it got kicked out of the Leadership Team...but the evidence was so strong that I went ahead and produced toolkits of those topics anyway.

Peter Simpson, who is the CEO of Anglian Water Group (AWG), was the Leadership Team Chair at that time and, subsequently, AWG developed really excellent domestic abuse and suicide prevention programmes in place.”

Death and bereavement became an important campaign topic during the COVID-19 pandemic. Personal experience led Louise to push the collaboration forward:

“To really challenge one’s Leadership Team...I mean, obviously, you’ve got to keep them on board at the same time. I’ve had lots of situations like that. And the most recent one was around death, bereavement and grief during COVID.

I lost a friend to COVID, early on in the pandemic. And that brought it home really powerfully...it wasn’t like experiencing bereavement in so-called normal times without social distancing. The fact that none of us could grieve together in person, we had to wait two months for his [Louise’s friend’s] funeral. The thought of him being on a ventilator and being surrounded by people wearing PPE...what a traumatic way to die, on your own.”

The campaign’s latest frontier, on the topic of ways of working that enable people and businesses to thrive, is embodied in the theme of the latest report, **What if your job was good for you?**

This focus was driven under David Oldfield of Lloyds Banking Group, who was responsible for introducing ‘The Mental Health at Work Commitment’ as the spine of the campaign, which is underpinned by six standards.

Standard 2: Proactively ensure work design and organisational culture drive positive mental health outcomes was considered too difficult to tackle by most businesses before the pandemic. However, COVID-19 provided a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to reimagine ways of working, and the report supports the implementation of this standard.

The report was never intended to be an end in itself, as BITC didn’t have all the answers, but a vehicle for driving action and sharing insights.

We convened a whole series of roundtables with BITC members and stakeholders to capture insights to inform the sequel report, **Your job can be good for you**. And what we’ve found now is a real appetite across BITC Leadership Teams, including ‘Gender’, ‘Race’, ‘Employment and Skills’, ‘Climate Action’ and ‘Global Goals’ to look at ‘good’ work through multi-intersectional lenses.

The synergies between BITC’s ‘Health and Wellbeing’ campaign and other inter-connected campaigns – addressing issues including equity, diversity and inclusion, and employment and skills, along with a natural environment dimension – are emerging as strands of integrated wellbeing.

So, for the next phase of the campaign – **Your job can be good for you report**, which launched on 9 June 2022, it takes a joined-up approach to look at ways of working that are good for individuals and businesses, and healthier for the planet, by examining ‘good’ through multiple Global Goal lenses.

“Going forward, I’m really excited about the potential opportunity to start exploring how we redefine value and can integrate health as part of ESG reporting, which is a priority for many of our members right now... And that’s where BITC – in our ability to look at issues through multiple interconnected lenses – that’s where I feel there’s a real opportunity.”

BITC WELLBEING LEADERSHIP CHAIRS

ALEX GOURLAY, Managing Director, Boots UK	2007-2011
IRWIN LEE, Managing Director UK & Ireland, Procter & Gamble	2011-2015
PETER SIMPSON, CEO, Anglian Water Group	2015-2019
DAVID OLDFIELD, Group Director, Commercial Banking, Lloyds Banking Group	2019-2022

CHAPTER 23: STEPHEN HOWARD

YEARS 2008–2016

Stephen became CEO when the fallout from the Global Financial Crisis (GFC) of 2007-2008 was just starting to be felt by business. Companies were cutting back on non-core activities, and charities and voluntary organisations were some of the first to feel the corporate pinch. Many voluntary organisations went to the wall in the years after the GFC, but Business in the Community thrived, putting in some of its best-ever financial results against a backdrop of severe public sector cuts.

Stephen came from the corporate world as a FTSE-100 CEO and maintained that connection in engaging business at the most senior level in BITC’s mission. He was able to speak powerfully from personal experience and influenced many business leaders on ‘Seeing is Believing’ visits and at many corporate events. He was not just a successful FTSE CEO though. He had a long involvement with homelessness projects and indeed came to the attention of BITC, in the first place, through his involvement with ‘Business Action on Homelessness’ in London, and specifically the ‘Ready for Work’ project. He remained a huge supporter of the homelessness work throughout his tenure, working closely with John Varley when he was CEO of Barclays, who had picked up the reins from John Studzinski.

When Stephen became CEO, BITC was funded 60/40 by the public and private sector respectively. At the end of the Gordon Brown era, when David Cameron took power as head of a Conservative-LibDem coalition government, the Regional Development Agencies, from which BITC’s regional operations took a significant amount of their funding, were abolished. This gap had to be filled, and filled quickly, to prevent BITC’s regional operation from reducing significantly in size and affecting many local communities.

Stephen led the organisation from the front in turning around the financial structure of the charity so that 80%+ income came again from the private sector. This was done in a number of ways, and there was a difficult balance between allowing freedom of operations for campaigns and regions, while promoting a sense of ‘one BITC’, one charity, one vision, and one operation working with HRH The Prince of Wales to promote responsible business. As Stephen Howard later reflected, **“the shift away from public funding gave us more freedom again. It also helped to remind us that we are campaigners not consultants and that we campaign through the member companies.”**

In the aftermath of the Global Financial Crisis, START, Arts & Business, The International Tourism Partnership (from IBLF), and Prime (to help older people become self-employed) were all integrated into the BITC family.

There was also closer collaboration with Scottish Business in the Community, which was eventually to lead to the much-envisioned merger of the two organisations. As an intermediate stage, Scottish Business in the Community was given access to BITC programmes, such as ‘Business Connectors’, ‘Business Class’, and ‘Mosaic’.

There was also an emphasis on much greater partnership working across BITC, enabling campaigns to work in partnership with other organisations to create greater impact. This was seen with:

- ‘Careers Lab’ – a partnership with National Grid and the National Schools Partnership to roll out better careers education to young people and to plug the gap in the involvement of business in careers education
- ‘The International Tourism Partnership’ (taken in when The International Business Leaders Forum folded) – created job opportunities in the hospitality sector for young people around the world
- ‘Generation Talent’ – with Jobcentre Plus to tackle youth unemployment
- HRH’s ‘Business Connectors’ programme enabled the Connectors seconded by business to BITC to work directly with local communities on community needs; this was financed, largely, by The Big Lottery. The Connectors were not required to promote any BITC initiatives, nor be hampered by any income-generation targets, but utilised BITC contacts and principles to meet specific local needs

Like his predecessor, Julia Cleverdon, Steven Howard made a point of attending every ‘Seeing is Believing’ visit. He also met regularly with HRH’s Ambassadors, both nationally and in the regions, and secured their support for key developments like HRH’s ‘Business Connectors’ programme, ‘Generation Talent’ and especially the ‘Business Emergency Response Group’ (BERG); through BERG, they played a key role as the local link in emergencies, helping to mobilise the local business community.

In the years immediately prior to the London Olympics, BITC worked hard with many successful businesses to get them together, contributing at least £75k each to a new initiative to get local people in the Olympic boroughs into work and to help them to set up their own businesses. Stephen Howard personally championed BITC’s social enterprise programme (named ‘arc’) which supported 100 social enterprises and created nearly 1,800 jobs, with an estimated value to the economy of £46m.

As Mark Price (later Lord Price), who was Chairman for half of Stephen’s tenure, was to conclude:

“As Chief Executive, Stephen created financial stability, a stronger partnership method of working, a considered new home for other charities within the Prince’s core family, and enabled old programmes to continue to thrive, and he set up new ones, which knocked on the door of complacent corporates. He was a democratic leader with an open-door policy and a strong sense of moral purpose. He could often be found on a Saturday morning handing out food at a soup kitchen to homeless people. He worked tirelessly to raise the profile of Business in the Community.”

CHAPTER 24: THE PRINCE’S CHARITIES AND PLACE-BASED REGENERATION

A few years before ‘Business Connectors’, Julia Cleverdon had started working in Burnley. After she had stepped down as CEO of BITC in 2008, she had gone portfolio. She continued to chair Teach First, working in the poorest communities, but had also gone to work for HRH The Prince of Wales at Clarence House. She had led the review for Ed Balls on the National Council for Educational Excellence. But crucially, she also became The Prince’s ‘Place Tsar’. The idea was to mobilise all the relevant Prince’s charities to focus on how they could improve a specific place, starting with the North West England town of Burnley. This involved putting down a small team of the key charities – The Prince’s Trust, BITC, and others to work collaboratively together. Cleverdon asked her long-serving Executive Assistant Bernie Hearn, who had moved on with her from BITC, to diarise 48 hours every month in Burnley for her and David Feldman (ex-Industrial Society), who led the team in Burnley. She was there once a month for three years and said that **“gradually we became more confident about what to do and how to do it...In the big evaluation, which I commissioned Peter Grant of Cass Business School to carry out over the seven years starting with our ‘opening balance’ in 2007 and finishing in 2014, we had achieved a considerable transformation. The Prince came every year for five years, and we convened together teams for Burnley but also for Burslem, Redcar, Middlesbrough and Tottenham to share progress and to learn from each other. By 2014, Burnley was the fastest growing town in the North for private sector jobs.”**

FROM BURNLEY TO BLACKPOOL

In 2016, Julia met Andy Charles – the ‘Business Connector’ for Blackpool – at a Connectors’ Summit and agreed to act as the Champion for Blackpool, saying that she always had to have a town beginning with B in her life. She and Paul Buchanan set out to support Blackpool and Andy, who was then on secondment from Lloyds Bank (now Lloyds Banking Group). Andy Charles is important for the next part of the ‘return to Place’ story. Andy was the third ‘Business Connector’ in Blackpool after Natalie Brown (Warburtons) and Ian Fogg (DWP), who had started the process of building confidence and trust locally. Andy Charles is a native of Blackpool, so for him, **“The Business Connector programme gave me the platform to work with the best of the voluntary, public and private sectors, seeking to make a difference at every opportunity. The independence of BITC gives the authenticity in a place to orchestrate campaigns to change the lives and futures of many.”**

Andy enjoyed his 12 months so much that he extended and subsequently joined BITC as a local broker for Blackpool, building up the local partnership. As he says:

“The best experts have dirty shoes! The Blackpool Pride of Place Partnership is a real-life example of how to take a plan and make it work for real on the ground. This along with trust and collaboration are the key ingredients to everyone working together to regenerate a town.”

This ad hoc team was later augmented with Baroness Jo Valentine: after an early career in banking, Jo Valentine had been seconded by her then employer, Barings Bank, to set up the Blackburn Partnership in 1988, as part of the Business in the City joint programme between BITC and the CBI. She later ran **London First** for thirteen years, championing Crossrail, Teach First, and the regeneration of South Bank. Now a working peer, she has retained her passion for cross-sectoral partnerships to drive local regeneration.

PRIDE OF PLACE BLACKPOOL

This core team worked with Blackpool Council and a Business Support Group: Pride of Place Blackpool – chaired by the senior CapGemini leader and BITC Board member Christine Hodgson (now Chair of Severn Trent) – and published a Blackpool 2030 Town Prospectus in 2018. It included a forward-looking vision of Blackpool as a technology hub: Silicon Sands, taking advantage of the North Atlantic Loop – a trans-Atlantic sub-sea fibre-optic Internet cable. The Town Prospectus helped to unlock £40million of public funds from the Government’s **Towns Fund**. In November 2021, the Government announced the creation of more than 3,000 Civil Service jobs to be based in a new regional hub for the Department of Work and Pensions, in Blackpool.

Today, The Pride of Place Partnership Board consists of the following organisations:

VOLUNTARY SECTOR

Council for Voluntary Services (CVS), Groundworks, National Lottery Community Fund

PRIVATE SECTOR

Associated British Ports (Abp), Atos, BAe, Beaverbrooks, Blackpool FC, Cisco, Merlin, Northern Rail, Prospect Developments, Victrex

PUBLIC SECTOR

Blackpool Council, Blackpool Opportunity Area (DfE), Blackpool Teaching Hospitals, Lancaster University, Lancashire County Council, Lancashire LEP.

WISBECH PARTNERSHIP

Meantime, on the other side of the country, another ‘Business Connector’, Russell Beale – from Anglian Water – starting in 2013, was helping to broker help from Anglian Water and its suppliers for the East Anglian town of Wisbech. This Wisbech Partnership mobilised business support for the revitalisation of a local community centre: The Queen Mary’s Centre.

Faced with a third of its workforce due to retire within the decade, Anglian Water sponsored a new, industry-leading training facility at the College of West Anglia in Wisbech. Its goal was to attract, train and retain the engineers and technicians it would need for its future workforce. And, as in Blackpool, the Business Support Group and local partners developed a shared future vision to work collectively towards this goal – including proposals to create a new satellite Garden Town of 10,000 to add to Wisbech’s existing 34,000 population.

So, when Anglian Water was made the ‘Responsible Business of the Year’ in 2017, it was a logical next step for the company, and for BITC, to challenge other member companies, to ‘find your Wisbech’ and to consider how they too could contribute to place-based regeneration.

The reality, however, was that engaging local authorities and community groups, alongside business, generally needs some independent, ‘honest broker’, such as BITC or the Prince’s charities. BITC itself, however, had had to change its own structures around the country.

BITC’S REGIONAL FOOTPRINT

If the Global Financial Crisis (GFC) had threatened the stability of the global financial system and the global economy, it was to be the domestic, political ramifications from the GFC that caused another challenge to BITC: the election of the Conservative/Lib-Dem coalition government in 2010 with its commitments to austerity; these included cuts to public spending and a ‘bonfire of the quangos’, and this had an immediate impact on BITC – particularly with the loss of funding from the Regional Development Agencies (RDAs). The RDAs were an early innovation of the Blair government and had, over the subsequent decade, become a significant funder of BITC operations in the English regions – notably ‘Yorkshire Forward’ – the RDA for Yorkshire and the Humber. In time, this loss of funds led to the painful decision to first reduce and then substantially close the regional operations of BITC across England. David Pemberton – who had himself

joined BITC in the early 2000s as the Regional Director for the East Midlands and later became a National Executive Director – had the difficult task of managing the process.

For 30 years, there had been a classic ‘regions: centre, push-pull’ – with an increased or lesser regional independence at different points in the BITC story. Arguably, with substantial public sector contracts negotiated by powerful regional directors, some of these regional operations had become semi-autonomous and focused on delivering the contractually agreed outputs with their public-sector paymasters. Indeed, one senior BITC director had presciently asked some years earlier: **“by taking the RDA money, have we stabilised BITC funds at the expense of our mission?”**

The closure of the regional offices, and the absorption of the regional staff who remained with BITC into the campaign teams, was done quickly in the end, as Stephen Howard was finishing his tenure and before his successor took over. The aim was to ensure his successor as CEO had a clear hand and didn’t have to start with a loaded legacy of unfunded activities. BITC did, though, keep the regional Leadership Teams and the regional rounds of the annual ‘Awards for Excellence’. Stephen Howard argues he was changing the business model to meet the new circumstances. Certainly, even without the loss of public sector funding, the regions were having to face the consequences of the loss of many of the traditional, significant regionally based businesses, whose leaders had historically provided local and regional leadership for BITC and many other partnerships.

Fast-forward a few years, however, and regional boards of BITC members are still helping to facilitate brokerage of BITC programmes and activities within their areas.

REAFFIRMING THE IMPORTANCE OF PLACE-BASED REGENERATION

Place-based regeneration, and mobilising business support for this, has been a constant of BITC’s 40 years – like the name ‘Blackpool’ running through the proverbial stick of Blackpool rock (candy). Examples include:

- Pilkington and the Community of St Helen’s Trust and the inspiration that gave to a national network of local enterprise agencies
- Halifax’s ‘One Town Partnership’
- the ‘Business Leadership Teams’
- the TECS
- the community entrepreneurs like Andrew Mawson and Adele Blakeborough in Bromley by Bow and David Robinson in Community Links, Newham
- the ‘Business Support Groups’ for places like Deepdale and Preston
- ‘Business Class’ and ‘Business Connectors’
- Work in Burnley, Blackpool, Burslem, Wisbech, and so on

There had also been another import from the USA, namely, the work of Bill Boler on retail-led regeneration. This attempted to replicate what Boler did in Harlem, New York to the run-down South Coast town of Hastings. This work really did seek to change the system not just the place, not just by engaging retailers and developers to see the market opportunity of regeneration in a place but also, so often, by having to work to change the planning system and regulatory trip wires, etc.

See Table 5

In the following chapter, we consider inter alia BITC’s future work on place-based regeneration.

TABLE 5 – BITC AND PLACE OVER THE DECADES

	1980S	1980S	1980S	1980S	1980S
HIGH BITC INVOLVEMENT/ OWNERSHIP	Enterprise agencies One Town Partnerships Business Leadership Teams Neighbourhood Economic Dev. P’ships	Education-Business Partnerships Community entrepreneurs	Business Class	Business Connectors	Place partnerships
LOW		TECs* Business Links*	RDAS*	Local Enterprise Partnerships*	HMG Levelling Up programmes*

*Government-initiated programmes

CHAPTER 25: FIT FOR A GLOBAL PANDEMIC? 2017-2022

An examination of BITC’s annual reports for the early 2010s shows an impressive array of different initiatives, such as:

- ‘arc: Building Better Business’ launched to support social enterprise as part of the London Olympics’ legacy
- ‘Ready for Work’ and ‘Get Ready!’ programmes to help young people facing multiple barriers to work, including homelessness, unspent convictions, and experiences of substance or alcohol misuse
- ‘Get Food Smart’ – a public-facing campaign driven by 20 consumer-facing brands to encourage customers to be mindful of their food
- ‘Workplace Travel Challenge’ to reduce work-related car travel
- ‘ENGAGE’ Key Cities
- ‘Careers Lab’
- ‘Access the Buyer’
- ‘International Disaster Relief’

While this meant that member companies had a wide range of ways to become involved in BITC, it also meant that many found BITC very confusing and an organisation with whom it was hard to interact. This sense of ‘difficult to understand’ and ‘initiative-itis’ was not new. Melody vividly remembers, as a BITC account manager in the early-2000s, visiting one of the companies she was responsible for, and her interlocutor pulling open a desk draw overflowing with papers and explaining “**this is my current ‘asks’ from BITC!**”

Thus, by the time Antony Jenkins (BITC Chair 2015-2017) assumed the Chair of BITC in 2015, the feeling of complexity was sufficiently widespread to prompt Jenkins to ask McKinsey & Company to do another pro-bono strategic review of BITC. (McKinsey & Company had done an earlier review in 1994 at the beginning of Julia Cleverdon’s CEO leadership, and A. D. Little had done one in 2008 shortly after Stephen Howard had become CEO). McKinsey & Company recommended

some streamlining of BITC. Richard Hamilton was brought into the BITC Executive on a short-term contract to help the team to begin to operationalise the McKinsey & Company recommendations; but a wide-ranging mandate to simplify, refresh and renew was, therefore, the clear brief to Amanda Mackenzie, who succeeded Stephen Howard as CEO in 2016.

AMANDA MACKENZIE CEO

Mackenzie brought a successful marketer’s perspective to her mandate, with 20 years’ brand and marketing experience, including spells as Marketing Director of BA Airmiles, Brand & Marketing Director at BT, Commercial Director at British Gas and Chief Commercial & Marketing Officer at Aviva. Along the way, she had served on the **Davies Review** on women on boards and latterly had been seconded to Project Everyone – a not-for-profit communications agency, founded by film-maker Richard Curtis to support the Global Goals (SDGs). Project Everyone was made up of a dedicated team of campaigners and communicators, who sat at the heart of a global network of civil society organisations, private sector partners, brands, governments, and UN agencies.

At the outset, Mackenzie steeped herself in the rich history of BITC – in particular, spending time at Clarence House, reading some of the voluminous correspondence between HRH and BITC over the years, starting from Stephen O’Brien’s original letter inviting HRH to become President of BITC in 1985. Drawing on her commercial background, and with a brief from the Board to take forward the recommendations of the McKinsey & Company review, Mackenzie said that her desire for BITC was to “**endeavour to be an irresistible organisation with remarkable people, providing great thinking whilst challenging and convening members around a responsible business agenda.**”

Thinking back to the early correspondence about BITC, Mackenzie sought to return to a renewed clarity of purpose but with a far larger membership this time. The membership offer was refreshed, once again, which saw an increase in retention and growth, as well as considerably increased NPS (Net Promoter Scores). Mackenzie’s new ‘Responsible Business Map’ and ‘Responsible Business Tracker’ (RB Tracker) put purpose and values at the heart of a healthy business, effectively a new ‘CR Index’ for the late-2020s and beyond, defining responsible business as a healthy business. Jeremy Darroch, BITC’s Chair from 2017-2020 put the weight of Sky behind the new ‘RB Tracker’, alongside support from the Lloyds Banking Group Centre for Responsible Business at the University of Birmingham. This new measurement tool enabled businesses to track progress against BITC’s ‘Responsible Business Map’ and was the only tool to offer gap analysis, benchmarking against sector peers, and the ability to track improvement over time.

Mackenzie assumed the role of CEO in Autumn 2016, just after The Prince’s Charities had undergone a restructure. Just weeks into the role, she was able to retain the support of HRH The Prince of Wales as Royal Founding Patron and rebrand the organisation as Business in the Community The Prince’s Responsible Business Network. Mackenzie worked hard to support HRH The Prince of Wales across his range of charities and the issues closest to his heart.

BITC, for example, continued the working agreement with the Royal Warrant Holders Association, begun under Stephen Howard’s leadership and undertaking the assessment of warrant holders’ environmental credentials.

In late 2018, HRH The Prince of Wales asked BITC to galvanise business action on waste and resource use. Mackenzie convened more than 200 leaders across business, government, and academia, in partnership with The Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership (CISL), and more than 50 businesses signed the **Waste to Wealth** commitment on the day to double resource productivity and eliminate avoidable waste by 2030.

With funding from HRH The Prince of Wales’s Charitable Foundation, BITC achieved the following:

- Increased the number to 160
- Engaged companies with Defra’s resources and waste strategy
- Facilitated projects on circular workwear, the circular office and circular construction
- Created content
- Supported shared learning through events

The ‘Waste to Wealth’ campaign concluded at the end of 2020.

Mackenzie restructured her Executive Team, including hires to drive strategic planning, to develop the advisory and consultancy services, and to allow BITC to build fewer and better insight-led products. She has driven a renewed focus within the organisation on diversity and inclusion; BITC hitting its own internal target of 20% of staff being Black, Asian, or mixed race 18 months early. On her watch, the number of ‘Race at Work Charter’ signatories has soared to over 850 companies – that’s more employees than the population of Singapore, and in 2022, there were a record number of entries for ‘The Times Top 50 Employers for Women’.

BITC continued to develop some of its long-established campaigns, such as ‘Gender and Race Equality’ and the ‘Health and Wellbeing’ campaigns, with the support of committed Leadership Teams and a cohort of companies dedicated to improving their own performance on gender, race, and health and wellbeing at work; and encouraging more organisations to follow their lead.

BITC EQUALITY CAMPAIGNS

The early focus on the ‘glass ceiling’ – and building the pipeline of senior female talent for the C-suite and boards – has evolved, especially over the last decade into a broader focus on all women in the workplace. BITC was one of the business organisations making the case for gender pay gap reporting and subsequently encouraging employers not just to report on their pay gap but also to develop and publish an action plan to tackle the gap.

Helen Wells, who ran the ‘Gender Equality’ campaign from 2010 to 2013, looks back on her time with fondness and humour:

“We were banging the drum for culture change, equal pay, agile working, values-based leadership, and inclusivity long before these things were mainstream business ideas. We managed to walk a tightrope of celebrating businesses’ achievements whilst also pushing them to do more and do it faster...I was always hugely grateful and slightly intimidated by our advisory board of senior leaders; they were formidable and brilliant in equal measure and ensured we, as a team, were moving at pace and creating the biggest impact possible...managing ten CEOs around one table has given me some very valuable life skills. I was always slightly amazed and astounded by quite how much our small team managed to pull off: research, benchmarking, awards...There was a wonderful sense of camaraderie and rolling our sleeves up, working together to make the world of work a better place for women...and there was always a lot of snacks, which seemed to help a little...”

For the last eleven years, BITC has collaborated with The Times newspaper on an annual supplement listing ‘The Times Top 50 Employers for Women’. The 10th anniversary supplement in 2021, as well as reviewing progress, highlighted some of the persistent challenges, such as domestic abuse and the imbalance in caring responsibilities – both for childcare and eldercare.

This drew on several seminal reports from BITC, such as **Project 28-40** (looking at the experience of women at work aged 28 to 40) and **Equal Lives**. A new report in March 2022, **Who cares?** focuses further on working carers and on better help for employees juggling their jobs and looking after loved ones. A challenge that became all the greater during COVID-19 and the loss for many families of paid domiciliary care services.

Katherine Nawrockyi, Gender Equality Director (2013-17), also produced a stunning photo exhibition: **Same but different**, emphasising the very personal stories of different carers and introducing ideas of intersectionality into mainstream discussions about diversity and inclusion. The exhibition was launched outside London’s City Hall before being hosted in a number of BITC member companies around the country.

BOX 21: CAMPAIGN DIRECTORS OF OPPORTUNITY NOW AND (THEN) GENDER EQUALITY

Liz Bargh	1991-1997
Ann Chant	1997-1999
Norma Jarboe	1999-2008
Sarah Williams Gardener	2008-2009
Allison Siedlar	2010-??
Helen Wells	2010-2013
Kathryn Nawrockyi	2013-2017
Chloe Chambraud	2017-2019
Charlotte Woodworth	2019 onwards

There was also substantial further development of the ‘Health and Wellbeing’ and the ‘Race Equality’ campaigns (see respectively Chapter 22 and Chapter 26). The latter included the launch of the ‘Race at Work Charter’ with, to date, over 800 businesses pledging to ensure opportunities within their businesses are fair, inclusive, and transparent. BITC decided to ‘lead from the front’ by voluntarily publishing BITC’s gender and ethnicity pay gap, conducting regular wellbeing surveys, and reducing staff turnover.

There was also further development of the ‘Ageing Workforce’ campaign started under Stephen Howard’s tenure and led by Andy Briggs, then of Aviva and campaign director Rachel Saunders. See Box 22.

It is interesting to reflect on the ‘ask’ of businesses from BITC and how this has evolved over the years. See Box 23.

BOX 22:

BITC AND AGE

The origins of the BITC ‘Age’ campaign lay in conversations between BITC CEO Stephen Howard and David Pemberton, who was then running BITC’s workplace campaigns. They were keen to build on the existing work on gender, race, and Health and Wellbeing. At the same time, there was an increasing number of reports and white papers on the theme of older workers and the wider societal consequences of ageing populations. Around the same time, The Prince’s initiative to help older people start their own businesses: ‘PRIME (The Prince’s Initiative for Mature Enterprise), which BITC had helped to establish in 2005, was negotiating to assimilate into BITC.

‘PRIME’ had already commissioned research from the UK branch of the International Longevity Centre: ILC-UK as part of its legacy. This report: **The Missing Million** (2015) about the million older workers who had involuntarily left the UK labour market, became the launchpad for a new BITC campaign around the responsibilities of employers for older workers. This was led by a BITC Leadership Team chaired by Andy Briggs, then the CEO of Aviva UK’s Life business, with Rachael Saunders as the first campaign director from 2014 onwards. Briggs, along with the BITC Leadership Team, also subsequently became the Government’s second Business Champion on Older Workers.

The Age campaign has been a good example of working closely with a number of external partners and building on their work. Geoff, Lord Filkin, had led a major inquiry in the House of Lords asking if the UK economy and society were prepared for the rapid ageing of the UK population. His conclusion was a resounding “**no!**” As a result, he championed the establishment of the Centre for Ageing Better with a multi-million-pound endowment. Filkin went on to become the first Chair of Ageing Better. He had identified work and encouraging employers to become ‘Age-friendly employers’ as one of the big themes for the new centre. It was a natural fit for the Centre to become a research partner for the BITC campaign. The Centre had the funds and the capacity to do important research papers. BITC’s ‘Age’ campaign could be a powerful ‘route

to market’ and an amplifier of the research and the recommendations from it. Areas of focus included the health of older workers and how organisations could better support working carers (employees juggling their job and caring for a loved one, such as an elderly parent or a disabled partner/sibling/child).

Similarly, the BITC ‘Age’ campaign picked up and amplified the mantra of (now) Baroness Ros Altman, who was the Government’s first champion for older workers, to focus on “**Retain, Retrain, Recruit**”.

BITC also picked up and promoted the concept of a ‘Mid-Career MOT’, which might set employees up for a longer working life by identifying retraining needs and opportunities and changes of work/role, etc.

BITC’s ‘Age’ campaign engaged a number of member companies besides Aviva. These included Barclays championing older apprenticeships and EY who rethought its approach to transitioning older partners out of EY. Nationwide did great work on addressing menopause. Andy Briggs later left Aviva and is now CEO of Phoenix, where he has established an internal ‘think-tank’ around age.

Reflecting on her time as BITC’s Age Director 2014-17, Rachael Saunders says: “**it was really exciting to bring the power of business to address a major social issue – how we respond to an ageing population and enable business to make the most of the talent and contribution of older workers.**”

BOX 23:

EVOLUTION OF THE ‘ASK’ OF BUSINESSES OVER THE YEARS

The business imperative for action has evolved over the decades. In the 1980s, there was an understanding that big businesses would not be employing people in such large numbers in manufacturing (in mature economies like the UK); that ‘healthy High Streets needed healthy back streets;’ and that if businesses wanted a smaller, less interventionist State, they would have to step up and take more responsibility themselves: ‘the Thatcher quid pro quo.’

These heightened expectations were increased further with globalisation and the backlash against rapid, pervasive globalisation. Multinational businesses, in particular, faced pressure to take responsibility for their impacts and to manage different stakeholders.

The Global Financial Crisis greatly eroded trust in traditional institutions, as identified by the annual **Edelman Trust Barometer** from 2000 onwards. Partly in response, there has been a new emphasis on the **purpose of business**, encouraged by Larry Fink of Blackrock and his annual letters to business since 2012.

BITC’s ‘asks’ of business have similarly evolved over the 40 years in step with these external, macro-trends.

In the early 1980s, the ‘ask’ was to support local regeneration through help for small firms and the promotion of an enterprise agenda. This quickly extended to help for education and a range of other community issues, identified by Robert Davies in *Business and the Inner Cities* 1987. By the time of **Directions for the Nineties** (1991), there was also an ‘ask’ to businesses to professionalise their own approaches to what had already shifted from corporate philanthropy to corporate community involvement or investment. (CCI). This extended into looking at business’s own core role as employer, customer, and marketer, with programmes such as Customised or Pre-recruitment training, actions to improve opportunities for women in the workplace (and then for employees from Black and Asian

backgrounds), ‘Business in the Environment’, and ‘Cause-Related Marketing’.

An important further extension of the ‘ask’ came at the end of BITC’s second decade, with the emphasis on measuring impacts and reducing negative impacts/increasing positive impacts. This was supported by further national campaigns, such as around ‘Health and Wellbeing’ (2007 onwards) and giving ex-offenders a second chance (‘Ban the Box’)

By the end of BITC’s third decade, however, the external environment has shifted further:

- Government austerity programmes are biting, and there is less public funding available
- Many of BITC’s ‘sophisti-cats’ (the high-skill, high-will businesses originally identified as a category by McKinsey & Company in 1993-1994) are now operating globally and increasingly looking to international partners in Responsible Business and corporate sustainability, such as BSR, the Consumer Goods Forum, the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) and the UN Global Compact – as well as the myriad of sector-specific and subject-specific coalitions that have grown up since the millennium, such as the Better Cotton Initiative and the Sustainable Apparel Coalition.
- In a sense, by 2015, BITC had become the victim of its own success – having contributed so much to the mainstreaming of sustainability and making a market for boutique and the major management consultancies. There were too many more UK competitions pitching for the management time, engagement, and resources of businesses in the UK.

RESPONDING TO A GLOBAL PANDEMIC

Sometime before COVID-19, BITC’s Business Emergency Resilience Group (BERG) had looked at business and society’s preparedness for various extreme events, such as flooding, civil unrest, cyber-attacks, and the like; it included a global pandemic⁵⁰ in the scenarios. (The 2018 and 2019 **Global Risks Report** from the World Economic Forum, likewise, had the spread of infectious diseases as high impact – but relatively low likelihood). Nevertheless, when the COVID-19 virus spread from Wuhan, China, at the beginning of 2020, the pandemic and the consequent global lockdown were a major shock to BITC along with everyone else.

Amanda Mackenzie believes, however, that the renewal programme that she had initiated and driven hard meant that BITC was able to operate successfully throughout the pandemic. In particular, BITC rapidly developed a brokerage service to match offers of help from businesses to community groups in need: ‘The National Business Response Network’ (NBRN). In March 2020, before the first lockdown, the ‘Delivery & Impact’ team had reached out to all the community organisations it knew to understand their evolving needs that the pandemic was creating. Peter Simpson (CEO, Anglian Water and HRH Ambassador and Chair of the East of England Leadership Board) challenged BITC to set up a digital platform for community organisations to post these requests for help and for members to say what they could offer. Eleanor Bradley (Interim CEO, Nominet) who was the chair of BERG provided immediate funding to develop the platform, which was created in 48 hours. NBRN galvanised members’ desire to help and facilitated large-scale donations of goods, food, skills and expertise to the communities that needed them most. The success of this programme could not have been maintained throughout the pandemic without the leadership and funding from AXA, London Stock Exchange and the Association of British Insurers.

The NBRN brokered more than 5,000 business offers of assistance, supporting over 1.7 million beneficiaries and was described by Jeremy Pocklington, Permanent Secretary at the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government as “**the best and most effective response to COVID-19 by the voluntary sector.**” Cath Sermon argues that “**from a reflections perspective, it was like we had the muscle memory to respond and go back to our roots when we needed it. It also was I think a major catalyst in helping reignite the regional boards.**”

The NBRN model, which in different guises/names, has helped in many ways:

- To mobilise business help for a countryside ravaged by foot and mouth
- To help countries devastated by the 2004 Tsunami
- To help localities hit by flooding or civil unrest
- To help community organisations badly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic

The NBRN model is now being mobilised to help broker business help for refugees from Ukraine.

As Paul Buchanan observes, “**with NBRN, we created an emergency response model that we could activate and deactivate in response to an emergency (which is what HRH The Prince of Wales always wanted.) We have codified it and now have the process and procedures to activate it for emergency situations that we (as a business organisation) can respond to.**”

The Building Back Responsibly report, which was the other element of BITC’s COVID-19 response, enabled the organisation to capture learnings from how companies responded during the pandemic and enabled it to reassess and clarify campaigning priorities in relation to the substantially changed operating environment. Looking to the post-pandemic recovery and to building back better, BITC has worked to pull together the different strands of its health & wellbeing and diversity, equity, and inclusion agendas,

as the prompt to ask, ‘what if work was good for us’ and how to ‘make work, work?’ This is the theme of a major advertising campaign supported by member companies, for the 40th Anniversary year. BITC has also been rethinking the role of place-based regeneration.

LEVELLING UP

The current UK Government has committed to ‘levelling up’ the country, tackling deep-seated deprivation. There has been a lot of uncertainty about what precisely levelling up is all about. Perhaps one of the best attempts at greater clarity has come not from a politician or even a business leader but from the Financial Times journalist Sebastian Payne in his book *Broken heartlands – A journey through Labour’s lost England* (2021):

“For me, the success of levelling up cannot be purely measured in metrics but in a palpable sense that life is getting better. For an eleven-year-old child, growing up in a northern town who started secondary school in 2019, their life chances should be better when they leave seven years later. His town should have better further education opportunities, a stronger local economy, new businesses opening, better connections to neighbouring settlements as well as cities. He should not feel disconnected or disenfranchised by Britain’s institutions.”

Thirty-five years ago, BITC took the initiative, immediately after the 1987 General Election, to offer a set of practical ideas for how businesses, working together with government and local communities, could help tackle urban deprivation. Perhaps BITC should take a similar proactive step now to suggest how businesses can help level up Britain. After all, as Amanda Mackenzie has been saying in speeches and articles for some time, when you think about it, BITC has been levelling up for 40 years!

Now, in Spring 2022, a BITC Taskforce – co-chaired by Baroness Jo Valentine (who had initiated the Blackburn Partnership at the beginning of the 1990s and later succeeded Stephen O’Brien as CEO of London First) and Lord Bassam (the former leader of Brighton & Hove Council and ex-Labour Government Minister) – is due to report on how to encourage more business engagement in Place-based initiatives – especially in areas of the country deemed to need help to ‘level up.’ Namely, communities left behind by globalisation, with high levels of social and economic deprivation: communities at the end of branch lines or with no rail connections at all.

Jo Valentine brings a unique perspective to BITC’s work on local regeneration. She was seconded to work on the original Blackburn ‘One-Town Partnership’ in 1988; she subsequently worked on the ‘Business in the Cities’ joint project between BITC and the CBI to support the emergence of ‘Business Leadership Teams’; and she was later a highly successful second CEO of London First 2003-17, after Stephen O’Brien, having joined the organisation in 1997 first as Managing Director working closely with O’Brien.

Drawing on this rich experience, Jo Valentine emphasises the importance of starting with a clarity about the problems to be solved and the ambition for doing so: finding the leaders and engaging the wider stakeholders to act.

“When I talk about partnership,” she says, “I really mean a joint venture where each partner can be clear and honest about what they need out of it as well as what they put in. Where there is mutual trust and a shared determination to challenge the status quo.”

“You have to mobilise the right people for the right tasks.”

CONSISTENT THEMES FOR ENGAGING BUSINESS IN PLACE-BASED REGENERATION

- Running through all the various formats for mobilising businesses in local economic development, we as authors see certain Enduring Success Factors:
- The engagement of business leaders with passion, drive and authority to commit resources from their businesses
 - An enthusiastic and engaged local council as well as other key public sector players, such as the police, schools and FE/HE providers, health and social care
 - Some capable, committed civic entrepreneurs – maybe on-the-ground community entrepreneurs and certainly also some social entrepreneurs
 - Other NGOs and community groups willing to participate
 - Some key projects to focus on, to build momentum and a sense of pride in progress: yes, have some long-term aims but also some quick wins. It has to be a judicious combination of both
 - Pump-priming funds from somewhere in the public sector
 - Time and trust to break down mutual suspicions or worse and to build up a common purpose and vision for the future for the place
 - Effective community brokerage – whether from a ‘Business Connector’ or natural networker like Raksha Pattni, Julia Cleverdon and Jo Valentine
 - And, crucially, the shared mindset and skillset for partnership – a generosity of spirit and an ability to see the bigger picture, memorably summed up by the late Peter Henschel. Peter had been Deputy Mayor of San Francisco when the veteran American politician Diane Feinstein was Mayor. He moved to London in 1990, when his wife, Kathy, was

transferred by her employer. Having specialised in local economic development in San Francisco, he joined what is now PwC, on the understanding that he would then be seconded part-time to ‘Business in the Cities’. Peter became a mainstay of the time-limited ‘Business in the Cities’. He would frequently quote the Chinese paramount leader at that time: Deng Xiaoping:

“It does not matter what colour the cat is, as long as it catches mice.”

For Peter, this meant, “worry less for who gets the credit in a partnership for successes – concentrate on achieving more successes!”

As we review the 40 years of the BITC journey so far, Place bookends the story.

CHAPTER 26: BUSINESS IN THE COMMUNITY’S RACE EQUALITY CAMPAIGN

In this chapter, we track the evolution of the BITC ‘Race Equality’ campaign from the 1990s to the present day and do so through the lens of the BITC Enduring Success Factors. This chapter is largely based on an extended conversation with long-serving Campaign Director Sandra Kerr CBE.

The evolution of the campaign from 1995 to the present day has been marked by the Enduring Success Factors that have characterised other long-running BITC initiatives – Entrepreneurship, Scholarship, Relationship, Showmanship Leadership, Partnership and Apprenticeship.

BACKGROUND

Business in the Community’s ‘Race Equality campaign’ (then called ‘Race for Opportunity’) was established by HRH The Prince of Wales in 1995 with a network of senior business leaders who recognised the demographic shift in existing and future populations living and working in the UK.

To learn about the Enduring Success Factors, which have underpinned the evolution of the campaign, the Cranfield School of Management research team interviewed Campaign Director Sandra Kerr CBE, as well as two former BITC colleagues who have played important roles in shaping its development and success: Anne Watts CBE was instrumental in the genesis of both the ‘Race Equality’ and ‘Gender Equality’ campaigns while serving as equal opportunities director at Midland Bank (now HSBC) and continues to serve on their respective Leadership Teams as an independent adviser. BITC Talent & Skills Director Graham Bann had worked previously with BITC CEO Stephen O’Brien on race equality issues at Project Fullemploy, a charity offering employer-supported training courses in economically deprived communities. In 1989, he joined BITC as Communications Director and played critical roles in developing ‘Race for Opportunity’ and other BITC campaigns, including the ‘Local Investment Fund’, ‘CARES’ and ‘Health and Wellbeing’. Bann was also a very long-serving trustee on the board of the independent Employers’ Forum on Disability (now the Business Forum on Disability).

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

After the launch – with the support of BITC of the independent **Employers’ Forum on Disability in 1986** and of BITC’s own ‘Gender Equality’ campaign (as ‘Opportunity 2000’) in **1991** – Anne Watts wrote to Julia Cleverdon and suggested that BITC now had an opportunity to address issues of race, an idea which **Fiona Cannon OBE** (Lloyds Banking Group) and **Julie Mellor** (Commission for Racial Equality) supported. Anne recalls:

“We formed an ‘Advisory Group’ with Graham nominated from BITC and others including people like Mohan Yogendran, then [Recruitment & Equal Opportunities Officer] at Gloucestershire County Council...An initial proposal was put together, and Graham [Bann] and I took it to the BITC Board...It was rejected on the basis that there wasn’t a sufficient business case. This was probably true as no one had done this kind of research. The following morning, I was sitting at my desk at about 7.30 am when my phone rang and it was Mike Heron, by then Chair of the Post Office and a stalwart of the BITC Board. He had called me to say that he wanted me to know that the Board wasn’t against the project and recognised the need but that BITC wasn’t capable of taking on another campaign at this stage. What was needed was a better researched business case and leadership support.”

SCHOLARSHIP

In response, Midland Bank provided budget for a year’s worth of research:

Anne: “Christine Camp, a senior HR director, was working for me, having been on a Sloan Fellowship, and did a great job collecting every piece of ethnic data available in 1992...She compiled into what became the first-ever publication on the business case and given to all the sign ups to the campaign... Bob Ayling [then Group Managing Director of British Airways] and I took it to the BITC Board, and it became the Race for Opportunity Campaign.”

Graham: “Way before the campaign launch, we had hard information...research by Anne Watts’ team meant we understood what we were getting into...we brought companies and communities together...The Midland Bank research gave us information on the spending power [of ethnic minority communities] and the business case.”

The early focus on evidence-based research became a central ethos of the campaign, with its first benchmarking report on 93 companies published in 2001 and other reports published throughout its history (see list at the end of this case history).

RELATIONSHIP

The Midland Bank research helped to identify the appropriate Black-led community organisations and businesses who needed to connect with each other and become regional partners in the ‘Race’ campaign. Graham worked alongside Bob Ayling to take the initiative on the road and grow its UK network. He drew on his previous experience at Fullemploy in the development phase of the campaign: “There were Fullemploy centres in every city. We had a network of people who trusted us...We had extraordinary support. We got Black-led organisations on our side.”

He added:

“It was important to bring the regional offices of companies backing the campaign with us... Important to put those regional company representatives at the forefront, show this was not a London-led event...we needed buy-in from regional companies and black communities. Regions need to be included and loved.”

Graham added that disseminating the detailed research across BITC’s teams also helped to reduce the anxieties of the organisation’s predominantly white, male regional directors about how to deal with the issues sensitively and appropriately.

SHOWMANSHIP

The ‘Race’ campaign was launched in 1995 at the Grosvenor Hotel in London and was covered in The Times:

‘The first 18 to join the campaign include five banks, the BBC, British Gas, BT, Boots, Grand Metropolitan, Littlewoods, McDonald’s, Northern Foods, the Transport and General Workers’ Union, and WH Smith. The campaign will begin with pilot projects in London, Liverpool, Birmingham, Bristol, and Nottingham. Companies will be asked to commit themselves to an action plan to employ, market, and purchase from minority groups, while undertaking to involve themselves in the communities.’

LEADERSHIP

The first ‘Race’ campaign Leadership Team, which was “central to the campaign’s early success,” according to Graham, included:

- Robert Ayling, Group Managing Director, British Airways plc (Chair)
- Garry Griffiths, Director, Development & Training, BT
- Lord Herman Ouseley, Chairman, Commission for Racial Equality
- John Elbourne, Deputy Group Chief Executive, TSB Bank plc
- Steve Gatfield, Chief Executive, Leo Burnett Ltd
- Mike Geoghegan, General Manager & Head of International, Midland Bank plc
- Norman Blacker, Executive Director, British Gas plc
- Lord Bill Morris, General Secretary, Transport and General Workers Union (T&G)

Graham added that in addition to the business leaders, Bill Morris, the first Black leader of a major trade union, was a particularly valuable member of the Leadership Team as he brought “lots of influence and a good address book.”

The second Leadership Team Chair was Lord Charles Allen (Granada TV), and Allan Leighton (the then Chairman of Royal Mail) was the Chair of the campaign when it celebrated its 10th Anniversary. This was marked with a reception in 2005 at Clarence House, generously hosted by HRH The Prince of Wales for many of the active business leaders and employers. While today it is a given that far more urgency is needed to improve diversity and inclusion, it should not be underestimated just how significant the personal commitment and networking of the early leaders was. Their energetic promotion of the campaign across their networks created the foundations on which subsequent Chairs and Leadership Teams have been able to build. Sandra Kerr who has worked with almost all the Leadership Team members emphasises their collective dedication and engagement.

In 2007, under the Chair of Mike Fairey of Lloyds Banking Group, the campaign went on to create the ‘Race Equality Awards’ and used these to promote good practice on race and inclusion with employers for 10 years.

The Race Campaign Leadership Team Chairs (and their then organisations) have included:

- Bob Ayling, British Airways 1995-1997
- Lord Charles Allen, Granada 1997-1999
- Allan Leighton, Royal Mail 2000-2006
- Mike Fairey, Lloyds Banking Group 2007-2008
- Baroness Ruby McGregor-Smith CBE then CEO MITIE 2009-2011
- Adrian Joseph OBE, Google (now at BT) 2012-2016
- Richard Iferenta, KPMG 2017 to present

Leadership has been provided by the BITC Executive Team through two Campaign Directors: Andrea Callender 1995–2004 and Sandra Kerr 2004–present. Sandra has highlighted the role of HRH The Prince of Wales and other leaders in establishing the business case for action on race and in inspiring others to take action throughout the life of the campaign:

“The Prince of Wales was really key to convene the business leaders to be in the room to say, look, we need to look at this. What had happened is the gender campaign had already been established. And leading organisations recognise that actually, when we look at the future, it is not diverse...We know we’re going to go global. We know that customers and clients are going to be changing, but our workforces don’t look like that. So, it’s very clear from the beginning, it’s good for business; that’s been a strong ethos.”

PARTNERSHIP AND APPRENTICESHIP

The launch of ‘Race for Opportunity’ inaugurated a series of collaborations between BITC, large and small businesses, third-sector charities, and community organisations – as well as UK Government agencies – aided by campaign director Sandra Kerr’s previous tenures at the Cabinet Office and the Department for Work and Pensions. These have resulted in the launch of innovative networks and events to promote action and learning, toolkits for employers seeking to improve their practices as well as continuing research, which has documented the progress of action on race equality throughout the life of the campaign.

In 2009, with Baroness Ruby McGregor-Smith CBE as Chair of the ‘Race’ campaign, the team obtained sponsorship from the Department of Communities and Levelling Up to pilot the BITC Cross- Organisational Mentoring Circles with ethnically diverse women. In 2013, this became an established BITC programme for men and women from ethnically diverse backgrounds and has been running for nine years, with 40 employers and 300 participants currently in the 9th cohort.

SEEING IS BELIEVING AND UNEMPLOYED MENTORING CIRCLES WITH DWP

In 2013, the BITC ‘Race’ campaign ran a ‘Seeing is Believing’ visit with Chair Adrian Joseph, Google, and a Youth Advisory Panel to examine the issue of Black male youth unemployment disparities following the 2008 economic downturn and to introduce solutions.

In 2014, as a direct result of a ‘Seeing is Believing’ visit to Brixton Jobcentre, BITC spearheaded an Unemployed Mentoring Circles Pilot in collaboration with 10 leading employers and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). This resulted in **70** out of the **90** young people

who participated in the pilot going into full-time work. In 2018, these circles were piloted again with DWP across 20 locations and more than 500 young people, with outstanding results. As a result, Unemployed Mentoring Circles is now the policy approach that DWP and jobcentres use to support young people from all backgrounds to better engage with employers and to gain work opportunities.

20TH ANNIVERSARY LANDMARK RACE AT WORK 2015 SURVEY – 22,457 RESPONSES

In 2015, for the campaign’s 20th Anniversary — with generous sponsorship from BT, Enterprise-Rent-A-Car, KPMG, Nationwide and Sainsbury’s — the landmark ‘Race at Work’ survey was launched, in collaboration with YouGov, with the stunning results of 24,457 responses.

The evidence from the survey was used to call on the government to conduct a review into race in the UK labour market. The government commissioned a review in 2016. This was delivered by Baroness Ruby McGregor-Smith CBE, former Chair of the BITC ‘Race’ campaign. When the review was published in 2017, it found that action by employers could boost the UK economy by £24 billion annually¹. And subsequent reviews from McKinsey & Company found that businesses with ethnically diverse senior teams financially outperform competitors by 36%². However, these potential gains are being stifled by the unequal barriers faced by ethnic minorities in the workplace. The campaign is focussed on empowering employers to tap into this economic potential by accelerating change for Black, Asian Mixed Race and ethnically diverse employees. The ‘Race’ campaign works with its network of partners from private and public sectors to offer tailored practical advice and to share new insights to drive long-term change.

RACE AT WORK CHARTER ESTABLISHED IN 2018 WITH 85 EMPLOYERS NOW HAS 840 EMPLOYERS

In 2018, under the current chair Richard Iferenta (from KPMG), the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) funded the BITC ‘Race’ campaign to run another ‘Race at Work’ survey in collaboration with YouGov. Again, the results were **24,310** responses, and the evidence from this survey (in comparison with the 2015 results) were used to establish the ‘Race at Work Charter’.

The ‘Race at Work Charter’ is designed to foster a public commitment to improving the outcomes of Black, Asian, Mixed Race and ethnically diverse employees in the workplace. It currently consists of **seven principle calls for action** to ensure organisations address the barriers to recruitment, retention, and progression. The key Charter commitments are leadership, capturing data, zero tolerance on bullying and harassment, managers promoting equality, supporting the progression of ethnic minority talent in the workplace, allyship, and inclusive supply chains.

Since it was launched by the then Prime Minister Theresa May in 2018, the Charter has seen an increase in senior leadership and executive sponsors from **33%** in 2018 to **44%** in 2021. There has also been a shift in employers increasing transparency and capturing data on their ethnicity pay gaps, from **11%** in 2018 to **19%** in 2021. To help employers bring their commitments to life, webinar events and roundtables were convened to gather insight from leaders. The Charter was launched with **85** employers in 2018 and now has more than **840** employers, who employ more than **6 million** employees in the UK. Employers who have signed the Charter include Barclays, Coutts, Goldman Sachs, Hilton, House of Commons, Marks & Spencer, The Prince’s Trust, The Prince’s Trust, and Tesco.

25TH ANNIVERSARY RACE AT THE TOP REVISITED AND BLACK VOICES REPORT

In 2020, the campaign marked its 25th Anniversary with Race at the **Top Revisited** research, which found that there was less than 2% of representation of Black talent across the top tables in the UK, against a target of at least 3.5%. In the wake of the killing of George Floyd and the resulting Black Lives Matter protests in the US and UK, a **June 2020 blog post** by Sandra Kerr elicited an unprecedented volume of responses, which enabled the campaign team to identify three key priority areas for business action in response: **leadership, allyship, and connections to employee networks and communities**. The campaign’s reports and supporting webinars attracted more than 1,000 employers.

On Windrush Day, 22 June 2021, through generous funding from HRH I Prince of Wales Foundation, the ‘Race’ campaign collaborated with therapists to produce two toolkits to support mental health and wellbeing of Black, Asian, Mixed Race and ethnically diverse women in the workplace: one for **individuals** with self-care tips and one for **managers** to support their employees.

THE MOST RECENT AND TOPICAL RACE CAMPAIGN WEBINARS INCLUDE:

Ethnicity Pay Gap Reporting Advice for employers, Black Talent and Allyship in the workplace, and supporting the mental health and wellbeing of ethnically diverse women in the workplace.

RACE CAMPAIGN CHARTS PROGRESS IN 2021 WITH 24,638 RESPONSES

To mark the **International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination**, the **Race at Work 2021 Survey** launched in March with generous sponsorship from **Co-op, Enterprise-Rent-A-Car, KPMG, Sainsbury's, and Shell**. There were **24,638** responses, and there is evidence of more engagement across businesses in the UK. There were **24,450** comments with this survey, and professors from the University of Birmingham and Queen Mary University of London are conducting a thematic review of them to provide greater insight to employers and policymakers.

ENGAGING THE GOVERNMENT

On 24 May 2021, the Race campaign's actions were cited in the **House of Commons Briefing**, following a debate on Race and Ethnic Disparities.

There is also an increase in the number of employees saying that their employers are capturing ethnicity and pay data. The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) has asked the campaign to collaborate with it to create guidance to support all employers across the UK to voluntarily publish their ethnicity pay gaps.

On 9 February 2022, the Women and Equalities Committee published a report recommending the government introduce mandatory pay gap reporting by April 2023.

REFERENCES

- ¹£24 billion annually
- ² (McKinsey, May 2020).

BOX 24: TIMELINE: RACE CAMPAIGN REPORTS, PILOTS AND SEEING IS BELIEVING VISITS

The first report highlighted four key areas for priority action on race in the UK: employment, customers, communities, and supply chain.

- 1995** Research to support campaign launch as well as Guidelines for Business
- 2001** 2007 'Race' campaign annual benchmarking – ran for seven years
- 2005** 10th Anniversary Reception, HRH Clarence House
- 2007** Introduced Annual 'Race Equality Awards' which ran for 10 years
- 2009** Race to the Top published with extensive media coverage
- 2009** Piloted 'Cross Organisational Mentoring Circles' for ethnically-diverse women
- 2010** Aspiration and Frustration – access to the professions
- 2010** Race into Higher Education – ground-breaking insight into Higher Education
- 2011** Race to Progress
- 2012** Race to Recruitment
- 2012** Established a Youth Advisory Panel
- 2013** 'Seeing is Believing' Visit to Brixton Jobcentre to focus on Black men and youth unemployment
- 2013** Launched the BITC 'Cross-Organisational Mentoring Circles Programme' (now in its 9th year)
- 2014** 'Unemployed Mentoring Circles' piloted with DWP and ten employers following SIB
- 2014** 'Race at the Top'
- 2015** 'Race at Work 2015 Survey' and report 24,457 responses – 20th Anniversary
- 2016** 10th 'Race Equality Awards' Celebration
- 2017** Let's talk about Race booklet and Best Employers for Race listing
- 2018** Race at Work 2018 survey and Scorecard report – 24,310 responses
- 2018** Race at Work Charter Established – 85 employers
- 2018** Following 2nd pilot in 20 locations 'Mentoring Circles' (becomes DWP policy for young people)
- 2019** Race at Work Charter Report – 108 employers
- 2019** 'Race at the Top Revisit' – 25th Anniversary
- 2020** Black Voices Report
- 2020** Race at Work Charter Report – 114 employers
- 2021** Race at Work 2021 Survey and Scorecard report – 24,638 responses

CHAPTER 27: BITC’S CULTURE OVER THE YEARS

In this chapter, we track the evolution of the BITC ‘Race We have been encouraged, by several reviewers, to say something about the culture within BITC. Writing about culture across time at BITC is a very significant challenge! There are two sides to BITC’s organisational culture – inside and outside facing: the management of staff, secondees and resources; the periodic financial crises; the somewhat peripatetic existence for the first two decades, moving the HQ from one donated office to the next: Waterloo Road, City Road, Cleveland Place, Stratton Street, Baker Street until the organisation took a long lease on the current premises: Shepherdess Walk. Externally, leading the external network of Board members, CEOs/Chairs and CR practitioners, community partners, NGOs and relationships with governments and would-be governments.

A second caveat is that what follows focuses on the culture of the Head Office in the national organisation. We have not had the time to examine the culture in the regional offices nor in the Nations. Scottish Business in the Community was an independent organisation until 2016. The culture in the BITC Northern Ireland office in Belfast, led for the first 22 years by the entrepreneur John Heaslip – and then by Kieran Harding, who had worked closely with John for most of his term – was different again.

THE CULTURE NATIONALLY

Focusing on the national BITC: in the 1980s, paradoxically perhaps, it **began** as a rather hierarchical, paternalistic mix of government and corporate old-style bureaucracy, as recalled by Cathy Ashton. (**Chapter 2**). It then quickly evolved, under the leadership of Stephen O’Brien and the young team of third-sector executives he recruited into the organisation, into a much more entrepreneurial start-up. It then grew rapidly in the heady days of Big Bang, privatisation, economic liberalisation, and major inward investment to the UK from overseas. It was pushing the boundaries

of royal and corporate protocol as it created a practical space where business leaders could respond to the implicit Thatcher quid pro quo: **“If you want me to get government off your back, you have to step up and lead both in business and in society.”**

It was heady days, as the small group of the BITC Executive Team worked closely with intrigued business leaders. The latter were, for the most part, willing to accept a degree of improvisation and sometimes almost chaos in return for the recognised entrepreneurial passion, creativity, and hard work – and because BITC was persistently punching way above its weight.

BUSINESS MENTORS

Business leaders like Mike Heron, John Neill, Hector Laing, Neil Shaw, and Allen Sheppard gave huge amounts of their personal and business time, mentoring campaign directors and others – as Ian Pearce vividly recalls in his anecdote about meeting Mike Heron for the first time at Unilever HQ. (**Chapter 6**)

Julia Cleverdon fondly refers to the patience and thoughtfulness of Neil Shaw as her first Chair, holding regular early-morning breakfast meetings with her as she worked through her first two years as CEO. David Grayson remembers regular conversations with John Neil, especially to develop and refine the core messages of the ‘Work in Society’ presentation in the early 1990s and then as he transitioned out of a full-time BITC role into a portfolio career. Other senior BITC executives have similar memories of the encouragement and advice from their leadership team chairs or equivalents.

BORROWING TOOLS FROM THE INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY

Julia Cleverdon introduced many of the leadership and internal management tools and techniques developed in the Industrial Society when she moved across to BITC in 1988 and especially after she took over the reins as CEO in 1992, including L.E.O.s (financial forecast of Latest Expected Outcomes), Blue Briefs, Green Briefs, and Pink Briefs.

The Industrial Society experience of Team Briefings meant that all Campaign Directors and Regional Directors came together, face-to-face for a day, every month to shape the Green Brief of the 4Ps: Progress, Policy, People, and Points for Action to be briefed through the organisation. Blue Briefs were setting the context for a decision that required consultation and came thick and fast in Julia’s time, and Pink Briefs were weekly regarding new vacancies, people appointments, and development opportunities.

Friday teas were opportunities for teams to boast about the latest successes and to flag up forthcoming events where help was going to be needed from other departments; ‘glassing out’ ceremonies for all employees who had completed two years’ service (whether for chairs or secretaries); and annual All-Staff events, often led by different regions with particular themes: John O’Brien, North West Regional Director at the time, got Granada to lend BITC the House of Parliament chamber for the All Staff to debate corporate responsibility; and Peter Lambert, the West Midland Regional Director, had a Wild West All Staff conference in cowboy outfits. These all became part of the BITC culture, along with a fund of Julia Cleverdon aphorisms – many still faithfully repeated by ‘BITC Alumni’ ‘around the bazaars.’ Quotes such as:

“Factories, like schools, like Fish, go bad from the Head downwards!”

“Leadership is like a teabag: you only know how strong it is when it is in hot water!”

AN EVOLVING CULTURE

It was a time of rapid growth in membership and campaigns, with a crowded diary of ‘Seeing is Believing’ visits, conferences, Leadership Team meetings, pitches to businesses, work with government, and external speeches and representation.

‘Buccaneering,’ ‘freewheeling,’ ‘inspirational,’ and ‘hard-driving’ are some of the vivid adjectives used to describe the culture at this time.

“In those days, from the outside, it sometimes felt seat-of-the-pants! Even chaotic! You had the impression of high-energy swans paddling ferociously below the surface”, says one long-term BITC-watcher.

One unintended consequence of a ‘let a thousand flowers bloom’ culture at this point could be some campaigns with powerful Leadership Teams and strong campaign directors who were sometimes ‘operating semi-offshore.’ Indeed, one experienced observer speaks of **“independent colonies in an archipelago.”**

There was an intriguing tension at this point:the culture encouraged internal competition, which sometimes led to multiple, separate requests for money from different regions and campaigns (reflected in Melody McLaren’s memory as an Account Manager) of the business leader showing Melody a desk draw full of BITC requests. This competition sat alongside a care for the individual staff member/corporate staffer and where they were coming from and hoped to go to. Many interviewees have spoken about the opportunities that BITC gave them to grow – as Cath Sermon referenced in her account of being given **“a hunting licence”** to go and investigate what BITC might do about health and wellbeing in the workplace – which led, in 2007, to the launch of the ‘Health and Wellbeing’ campaign. The attention to the personal is reflected in the annual strawberry cream teas, held every summer for the personal assistants and the executive assistants of Leadership Team chairs and other key Board members, meticulously organised by Julia Cleverdon’s long-time-serving Executive Assistant, Bernie Hearn, together with Lesley Wolfenden. These

teas provided a crucial opportunity to provide context to the frequent diary requests from BITC for the time of their bosses – which they would have to shoehorn into already over-subscribed diaries. It was a simple but highly effective gesture on the part of BITC and reflective of a culture determined to use all of the resources at its disposal.

It was the practice of changing the Chair every three years that provided BITC with the chance to reshape the strategy and to learn from a different business leader at each cycle, but it required a lot of hard work to engage them and brief them – not only with termly meetings with the President but also with the culture and values of BITC.

Julia Cleverdon says that her much-misquoted line that “**Every work of art is a child of its time**” helped her to shape and reshape every three years from the community engagement focus of Sir Neil Shaw to the entrepreneurial energy of Sir Allan Shepherd, to the commercial disciplines of Sir Peter Davies, on to the ambitious heights of Sir David Varney, and to the best Chair she believes she ever had – for focus and simplicity – Sir Mike Rake.

When David Varney handed over to Mike Rake in 2004, he said “**I give you the great BITC – it’s like the Great Barrier Reef: it goes on for miles, and it’s very weak in places.**”

CULTURE WEB

It was a Cranfield Faculty member, Gerry Johnson, with one of his doctoral students, Kevan Scholes, who developed the model of the Culture Web in the early 1990s (1992) to help to explain organisational culture. It was, argued by Johnson and Scholes, as much the rituals and routines, the stories that employees repeated about their organisations, as from the formal policies and procedures, that you could really understand an organisation’s culture. It has been fascinating to listen to the roundtables convened for

this BITC@ 40 project, and to hear current and former members, Leadership Team Chairs, staff and former staff reflect on BITC – not least when we asked for their ‘memorable BITC moment.’ Frequently, these have been a brief encounter or exchange on a ‘Seeing is Believing’ visit, such as the child falling asleep in class because his sleep was regularly disrupted when his prostitute mother put him out on the balcony of their one-bedroom flat while she entertained a client; or the homeless person helped to turn his life around thanks to the business help of the ‘Business Action on Homelessness’ programme (who subsequently left part of his modest savings in his will to BITC, in grateful appreciation – the money was used to pay for a powerful photo exhibition of the individuals whose lives were transformed by a BITC-supported programme).

RITUALS AND ROUTINES – HOW MAGENTA ARE YOU?

For over two decades, BITC’s logo was the colour magenta, and today’s logo still features magenta as one of three primary colours. Long-term staffers use the word ‘magenta’ as an adjective to describe the culture of the organisation, to describe a feeling of duty and service and of coming together for a common purpose. People are described as having ‘a stick of magenta rock running through their core’ or, maybe after having left the organisation some years previously, still being ‘magenta through and through’, and this shows up in some of the anecdotes from ‘BITC Alumni’ when they say that the sense of purpose – and belief in business as a force for good – was forged in their earlier years working at BITC.

Among the stories that were told down the years is often the one of the tired CEO, who thought she was speaking on background to a Financial Times journalist and making some particularly frank comments on the appropriateness of Phillip Green as the potential owner of Marks & Spencer. This came at the height of Green’s hostile bid to take over Marks & Spencer. The

next morning, the CEO found (to her horror) that her comments were spread across the front page of the Financial Times and received (at 6:30 am) a phone call, expletives not deleted, from an irate Phillip Green who threatened to sue her and BITC.

There was, sadly, a darker side sometimes to this campaigning culture with strong leadership personalities in different executive and non-executive roles. Some alumni, for various reasons, did not have happy or successful times working at BITC (or a pleasant leaving). A few have repeated back to us the perceived abruptness of their departure from the organisation. Inevitably, over 40 years, with what must be several thousand staff and secondees over that time, not everyone’s experience can have been positive.

Many younger staff, quite rightly, saw BITC as an excellent exposure to responsible business and community regeneration before joining a sustainability consultancy or member company. A smaller number grew and developed inside BITC and stayed for extended periods. Such determined campaigners, social-movement builders, and social entrepreneurs can be hard taskmasters – especially those of us with little or no prior management training who had to ‘learn on the job.’ What makes passionate, successful campaigners can sometimes blind them to the unreasonableness of the work demands on teams. Their own prodigious work rates and high standards can be daunting to others.

Still, there was something almost magical, evangelical even, about the drive and determination that came from a fierce belief in the positive force for good from business when done well.

PUNCHING ABOVE ITS WEIGHT

A number of our interlocutors – including BITC Board alumni, Leadership Team members and ex-secondees – have talked to us about their enduring surprise about how much BITC achieved with relatively few people. This is not to excuse BITC when member companies felt blindsided, or when BITC staffers went straight to the C-suite rather than through corporate responsibility teams, or when different BITC campaigns submitted competing bids for corporate resources. It is rather though to acknowledge and empathise with the frustrations that some have expressed – but also to explain and contextualise. Some have argued that proximity to corporate and political power, and a royal patron, sometimes led to a perceived arrogance or high-handedness. On the other hand, many have spoken of the positive impact of the direct collaborations between top business leaders and determined, skilled campaigners – and have cautioned against losing this magic in layers of middle-management, corporate bureaucracies, or public sector processes. Some have questioned if all of BITC was fast enough in adapting to the new breed of Corporate Responsibility professionals and their departments, even though it was a trend BITC had encouraged and supported? The old habits of going straight to the C-suite caused occasional friction and frustrations with the new generation, who had increasingly become the CR budget holders and main points of contact. Conversely, some have questioned how BITC can rebuild closer relationships with more C-suites and boardrooms after the pandemic, while still engaging specialist CR and sustainability departments.

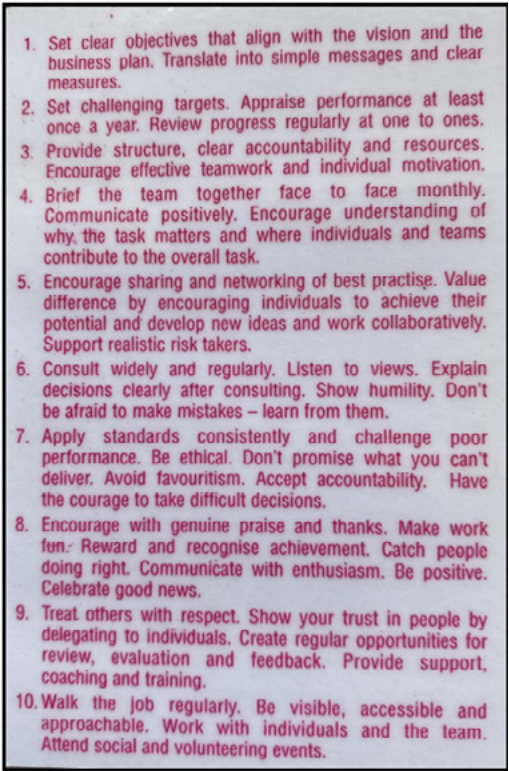
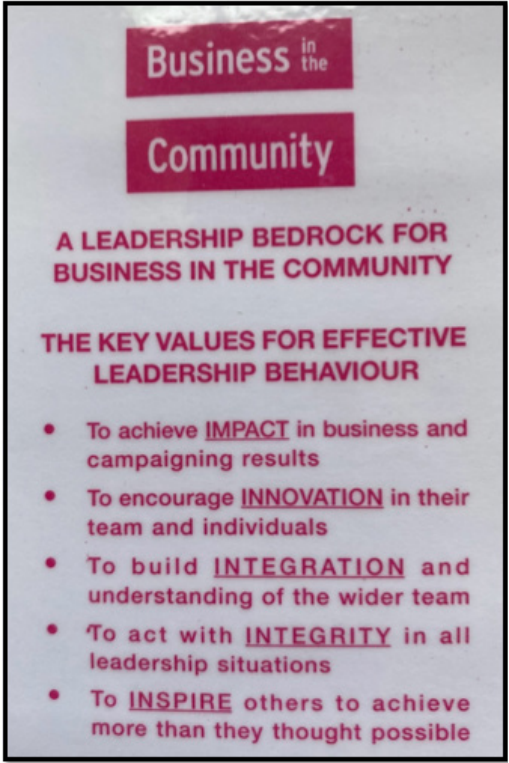
Overall, however, what is striking is the number of employees who have continued to ‘carry a torch for BITC’ – summed up in the frequently repeated aphorism; “**you never really leave BITC; it is just that someone else is paying the salary!**” For many years, there was a wonderful mix of long-stayers and a diverse mix of secondees who came and went.

VALUES AND LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOURS

Under the Chairmanship of Sir Mike Rake, there was a drive to focus the ask of members, to put more expectations on what being a member of BITC should mean, to clarify exactly what BITC did, and to train staff in the leadership attributes required in order to respond to this greater focus. David Feldman, ex Industrial Society, ran training programmes at that time to explore the implications of this greater focus, and to train BITC staff as to what was expected of them as leaders. The essence of this training was captured in a credit card style laminated card, which staff could carry in their wallets or purses as an aide memoire – see visual. Effectively, this card expressed the desired culture of the organisation at that time.

These values were refreshed under Stephen Howard and Peter Lambert in an employee-led initiative that led to a set of values which reflected the organisation and ambition they wanted.

These values: Pioneering, Collaborative, Passionate, Acting with integrity and Focused are spelt out in more detail on the current (2022) version of the BITC website: www.bitc.org.uk/careers-at-business-in-the-community/



MATURING OF THE CULTURE

Long-serving BITC Board member John Williams refers to a maturing of the BITC culture “**more managerial but still highly entrepreneurial” by the early-tomid-2000s. “This was accelerated by the arrival of Steve Howard as Julia’s number two and then as CEO – change he helped drive without any loss of campaigning zeal. Amanda Mackenzie has continued the process of driving professionalisation and commercial savvy while campaigning passionately and fearlessly.”**

Francoise Seacroft, who served as BITC’s Director of Human Resources from 2004 to 2018, highlights the tangible ways that BITC’s maturing culture was recognised externally, such as the attainment of Investors in People status and repeated listings in the Sunday Times Top 100 Best Places to Work.

“**One of the reasons that BITC was able to pull off many events and projects with so few resources was the willingness of employees to pull together across all the different strands to deliver. There was a spirit of collaboration amongst the employees despite any internal differences on the day to day,**” declares Francoise Seacroft.

“**Employees created significant impacts with Walk the Talk initiatives under Peter Lambert’s leadership, for example, with employees taking part in job coaching programmes, school partnership programmes, tree planting, environment impacts etc. BITC had paid time off for volunteering as you would expect, with managers organising their own team activities. These really generated energy.”**

Pre-COVID-19, there were annual ‘All Staff’ conferences (a tradition revived on May 18, 2022) and an Employee Award scheme: the ‘Pink Flamingos’ to recognise achievement across a whole range of categories.

The Global Financial Crisis of 2007-2008 and its aftermath, especially once the Coalition Government came to power in 2010, created the ‘burning platform’

for tighter financial disciplines. And in more recent years, a new generation of commercially-focused managers has joined the organisation and sought to streamline an ‘offer’ to members and deepen further relationships with member companies – without falling into the trap of appearing as a consultancy.

NETWORKING AND CONNECTING

Frank Nigriello, Director of Corporate Affairs for the Unipart Group, brings more than a quarter-century of experience of working with BITC, including over a decade chairing one of BITC’s Regional Boards.

He sees BITC today as “**having become much more about networking, connecting, and promoting relationships within and across regions and companies.”**

It is, he says, “**of much higher value to member companies. It is really making a difference. It is building connections and relationships that may never have been there before.”**

Frank Nigriello says BITC has always been able to inspire – but that “**now BITC is built around the facilitation of companies sharing and learning together and collaborating. Membership is much more out in front, supported by BITC where relevant. That’s critical. There are also some great programmes. BITC is a most phenomenal organisation.”**

As a recently retired BITC Regional Board Chair, he praises the support he has received from BITC executives such as Paul Buchanan, Zoe Hill, and Libby Sandbrook.

Frank Nigriello also highlights the calibre and the commitment & integrity of the business leaders he has worked with in BITC over the years, starting with his experience being sent by Sir Anthony Cleaver, his then boss in IBM, on one of the very early SIB visits led by

Allen Sheppard. **“Everyone else on the SIB visit was far more senior to me. I had just been promoted into a leadership role and was very much the ‘new boy’. Lord Sheppard was so gracious. He made me feel so welcome. So many of the business leaders I have met in BITC have been like that, always demonstrating that shared commitment to doing well by doing good.”**

Reflecting on the evolution of the BITC culture over the last two decades, Francoise Seacroft concludes:

“My memory is of a passionate, inspiring culture that allowed employees to develop and achieve the amazing, both in terms of BITC, personal goals, and impacts on their communities – a desire to challenge business and change the world that made them energising and demanding to work with, in a positive way.”

THE PANDEMIC EFFECT

Like so many other organisations across the world, the repeated lockdowns and enforced WFH (**working from home**) will have changed the BITC culture – intensified by the need to reduce staff numbers at the beginning of the pandemic. Today, there is a trade union inside BITC.

We are all social creatures, and you don’t build a culture; it’s also harder to nurture and maintain such when your relationship to your work, your purpose, and your career is solely through a computer screen. You build your career and your sense of belonging and purpose through working collaboratively with people, together – including physically.

Roughly a quarter of BITC’s staff are joiners during the pandemic, so this 40th Anniversary creates a timely opportunity to help build afresh the common understanding of purpose and ‘how we aspire to do things around here.’

CHAPTER 28: CAMPAIGNING BITC-STYLE

As depicted in the box below, all these Enduring Success Factors can be seen at work in the implementation of successful BITC campaigns. Some of these campaigns have focused on increasing the quality and extent of business involvement in the community, such as ‘Business Action on Education’ and campaigns on various aspects of regeneration (including earlier leadership teams on economic development and engaging more small and medium-size businesses in the community). Other BITC campaigns have focused on core business operations, such as environmental impacts, campaigns to persuade businesses to adopt responsible marketing principles or, more recently, ‘Ban the Box’ (to persuade employers to stop asking job applicants to tick a box to confirm they had no criminal record); the ‘Age’ campaign, and the ‘Health and Wellbeing’ campaign. **See Box 24.** The substance of this box is from a summary of campaigning lessons prepared by Peter Davies, Managing Director of BITC 1996-2005, for the 2007 25th Anniversary Paper.

BOX 25: THE GOLDEN RULES OF BITC CAMPAIGNS

<From initial awareness-----Widespread acceptance >

Business in the Community’s campaigns have been central to the success of the organisation – particularly once the organisation became established by the 1990s.

Some of the key learning points include:

PURPOSE

Campaigns aim to create a lasting change in an aspect of business practice. The aim is to improve the positive impact of business on society. They are the means by which BITC delivers its mission.

PRINCIPLES – CAMPAIGNS MUST BE:

- 1. business-led, not staff-led or government-led
- 2. business-funded, attracting core business funding that can leverage government funds. The first McKinsey strategic review of BITC (1994) identified the willingness of business to invest as the critical acid test of business need
- 3. based on a business case of clear business benefits
- 4. self-financing
- 5. time limited with exit strategies, even if the strategy is to establish a long-term campaign brand

EVOLUTION AND RENEWAL OF A CAMPAIGN – A SEVEN-STEP MODEL

- 1. Identifying an issue for business – may be triggered by a suggestion from HRH The Prince of Wales, Board discussion, or a challenge from government or third sector, or it may start as a result of discussion on (say) a ‘Seeing is Believing’ visit
- 2. Scoping what the issue means for business, potential solutions, and possible business contributions, research partners, public and private partners, businesses, and businesspeople already interested. At this stage, it is important to build key partnerships with public and NGO sectors and

to involve them in the Leadership Team, where appropriate, since their involvement will often be critical to providing the inspiration and the basis for funding bids and for long-term exit strategies.

- 3. Making the business case – building the hard evidence from practical examples – Identify a research partner who can establish benchmarks and can plan regular research to measure progress. Many consultancies will be keen to offer pro bono support to build relations with business leadership
- 4. Building leadership – finding and recruiting business leaders. As with organisations, the leadership style effective in the early stages of a campaign may not be best suited to a mature campaign or one being refreshed.

The campaign leaders – the business leaders who are passionate – are critical. This tends to be based on personal commitment or business interests. Campaigns must directly engage these leaders, and while it may be necessary to go through intermediaries in the business, direct engagement is critical to success. Get to know the personal assistant (PA) – plan into their diary, link to speaking engagements or business visits, and use their Contacts book. **“The relationship between Campaign Chair and Campaign Director should ideally be like the champion ice-skating couple ‘Torvill and Dean.’”**

“Campaigns should be fun for business leaders too with inspirational opportunities. Avoid their becoming involved in the routine,” advised Peter Davies.

Campaigns need to know how to run great parties and to use the BITC Tupperware model for engaging more businesses and more business leaders.

- 5. Promoting the agenda for action – involving both actions for individual businesses to adopt and the agenda for collective business action – Use ‘Seeing is Believing’ – the most powerful engagement tool at all points in the development of the campaign. It can also be used at Step 4 to build the leadership

team, to engage business on the issue, and (later) to communicate impact to a wider business audience. Create a web resource – it will act as a focal point and reference point for companies you want to engage. Make sure it is full of leadership company endorsements and case studies, which can then be used in the media and in speeches. Use the companies to host ‘open door’ sessions.

- 6. Learning from early adopters, refining the agenda in the light of their experience, and promoting a refined agenda to a more broadscale audience – Work with BITC Account Managers because they know the members best, but make life easy for them. Provide brief, regular updates, join with them in meetings with key target companies, and keep them involved when you have engaged their company. Products and services campaigns go through a cycle of development, moving from awareness-raising through to service provision in providing the business solutions developed by the campaign. Be clear about how these are to be delivered in the long-term.
- 7. Showcasing and reporting results and using these to renew the campaign. Case studies are best generated through awards such as the BITC -Awards for Excellence- which are externally assessed. Award winners may be the initial step prompting a campaign: help to scope what is possible and contribute to the business case, as well as the agenda for action. Awards also provide critical profile. Enlist media partners and make campaign leaders the spokespeople. A partnership with a specific media outlet can make an impact, although it can also limit wider coverage by other media.

Make sure all the relevant trade/specialist/CR press are briefed and know the campaign team personally. Some campaigns work best on the -slimming club- model: companies join as a commitment to improve, regularly measure progress against each other, and share what has worked with each other – the BITC version

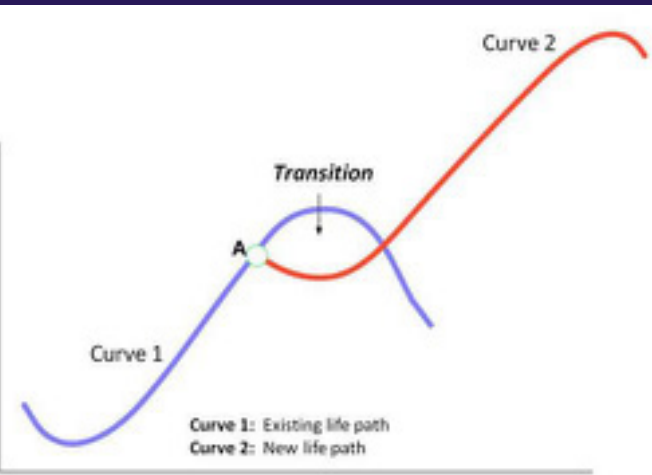
of Weight-Watchers! Business leaders will want to be focused on measuring and reporting campaign success from the outset, so make sure this is clearly established.

In implementing these Seven Steps, BITC has applied its Enduring Success Factors. It can now also use a ‘toolkit’ of different techniques and devices, which help to shape the campaign.

EXPERIENCE IN PRACTICE

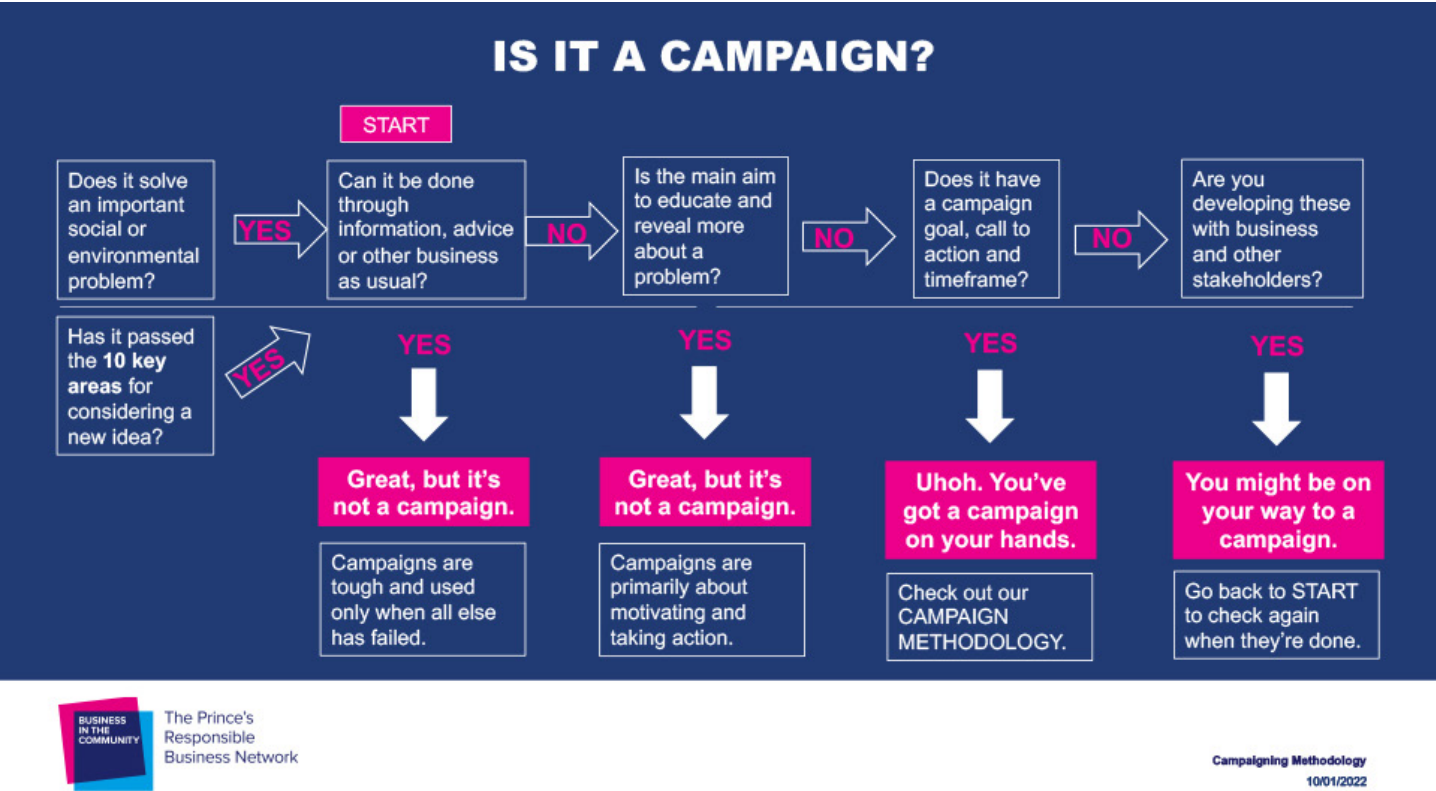
Back in 2007, at the time of the 25th Anniversary study, a number of experienced BITC staff suggested that the organisation was often more effective on the early steps and weaker on refining the agenda for broadscale adaptation and renewing campaigns (on identifying the point on the Sigmoid Curve when renewal is needed).

The Sigmoid Curve



The more recent ‘Health and Wellbeing’ campaign (HWB) suggests that those earlier lessons have been applied – certainly in relation to the HWB campaign.

Cath Sermon, who held various roles during a 24-year career at BITC (between 1998-2022, finally as Campaigns & Content Director) summarised the questions she hoped BITC staff would ask themselves before proposing a campaign.



Cath Sermon suggested a five-stage evolution of modern BITC campaigns:



And a range of tools and techniques:



All of which speak to a growing professionalism, a greater emphasis on analysing and learning 'what works,' and on using research and data as the basis for future campaigns. It also highlights the importance for BITC now of measuring and reporting on the impacts it has, as discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 29: BITC IMPACTS

BITC is more than aware that while members have made significant progress in tackling social issues, there is still so much more to be done. And while BITC and others discuss impacts, finding mechanisms to measure impacts is still one of the most challenging activities in which it is engaged. Ironically, this applies most particularly to the area of its genesis – community. Furthermore, as authors, we are not specialists in impact assessment and to do justice to the range of impacts of the overall organisation and the individual campaigns over time is beyond the resources and time available for this history. We have, therefore, had to settle for a mix of vignettes, examples, and perspectives of some of those involved.

While it is possible to provide hard numbers – companies in membership, budgets, and participants in Indices are a few of the measures commonly used – it is much harder accurately to assess impact. BITC today, however, is much more rigorous in its approach, citing on its website the impact of each of its campaigns through national targets and campaign goals. www.bitc.org.uk

Kevin Ellis, Chairman and Senior Partner of PwC says that **“PwC is a founding member of BITC and as such, our organisation has a 40-year partnership that enables us to demonstrate many of the ways we live our purpose.”**

Many still share the view that BITC’s great success has been in making responsible business mainstream: getting influential business leaders personally involved and keeping them involved. In doing so, it has created a range of campaigning techniques for engaging business and a practical menu of things for businesses (and for individual businesspeople) to do, whether they are experienced or just starting out.

“The remarkable thing about working with BITC,” says Steve Mogford, CEO of United Utilities, **“is how it uses its convening power to bring together organisations from across different sectors to focus on a shared problem and to find a shared solution.”**

Sarah Murray, the distinguished journalist, has covered BITC in a professional capacity for many years. She sums up her perspective:

“In supporting companies on their journey towards sustainability, Business in the Community was a trailblazer. Since its inception, it has provided a home for corporate leaders as they work to solve tough social and environmental challenges. And, through its awards, BITC has celebrated pioneering businesses whose ambitious visions for positive social impact have in turn inspired others.”— Sarah Murray, Financial Times contributor and writer on sustainable development.⁵¹

BITC has been the incubator to create or take a whole range of ideas, organisations, and corporate responsibility activities to scale, such as the Employers’ Forum on Disability; the International Business Leaders’ Forum; making health and wellbeing an essential part of Responsible Business practice; employee volunteering; the idea of businesses voluntarily benchmarking their performance through the ‘Corporate Responsibility Index’; and encouraging companies regularly to measure and report on their environmental and social impacts. According to the latest edition of the KPMG analysis of Corporate Sustainability Reporting, for example, most of the world’s largest companies now regularly report. Clearly, this is because of many more factors than BITC’s activities, but BITC can claim some contribution.

IMPACT ON INDIVIDUAL BUSINESS LEADERS

More than 25,000 business leaders have participated in The Prince’s ‘Seeing is Believing’ programme.

7,000 business leaders were twinned for two-way mentoring with school head teachers (principals); at any one time, up to 500 top business leaders are providing strategic direction through membership of BITC Board, Leadership Teams, Advisory Boards, and as speakers at BITC events.

To these can be added Peer/Reciprocal Mentoring (e.g., through the ‘Race Equality’ campaign and ‘Mosaic’); the impact on thousands of secondees over the 40 years – executives lent to BITC and to partners from the enterprise agencies in the 1980s to the ‘Business Connectors’ in the 2010s and the Sky secondees to BITC when Jeremy Darroch was Chair.

One of those Sky secondees, Rachel Groenendijk, (now a Sky Senior Manager, Responsible Business) recently reflected:

“My year at BITC was a whirlwind. I am very grateful to have had the opportunity to work with hugely passionate experts in sustainability, and to take on new challenges and experiences. My eyes were opened to a whole range of community issues and work, and I left even more determined to be a positive force for good.”

Another Sky secondee, Luke Burford, adds:

“There is substantial mutual value to be gained from secondment opportunities at BITC, both for the individual and for the organisation. Whilst the secondee has the chance to delve much deeper into what responsible business really means, working alongside experts to strengthen their knowledge and leverage useful insight and techniques when they return to their normal place of work, so BITC can draw upon the secondee’s professional knowledge to build, grow, and strengthen their presence,

performance, and capabilities. The mutual benefit of this relationship mirrors the mutual value that implementing responsible business strategies can bring for companies, employees, and customers alike.”

There were also the opportunities provided to young managers (e.g., through the ‘Future Leaders and the Youth Board’, set up by Adrian Joseph when Chair of the ‘Race Equality’ Leadership Team).

In the words of John Neill, Executive Chairman of Unipart Group, **“BITC has reached so many people, inspired them, and got them involved.”**

As Chris Hyman – now Senior Partner at Privet Capital LLP – reflected: BITC **“challenged me and created the environment for me to talk freely as a CEO about Responsible Business.”**

IMPACT ON INDIVIDUAL BUSINESSES

Over the 40 years, BITC has helped several thousand companies to become more Responsible Businesses through a rich mix of in-company speaking engagements, advisory services, participation in one or more of the Indexes and Awards, involvement in Leadership Teams, and Good Practice Guidance, etc.

“BITC,” says Lucinda Charles-Jones, then with AXA, **“provides a lovely combination of challenge and support”** to member companies.

The close link between the influence of member companies – especially those that have been members from the very beginning (or at least the early years) – on BITC and vice-versa can be seen in the case studies of five of BITC’s founder members: Aviva, Barclays, bp, Lloyds Banking Group, and Marks & Spencer, which

have been specially written by independent researcher (and former BITC staffer) Stephanie Hagan, with the cooperation of the companies, as an integral part of the BITC 40th Anniversary celebrations.

IMPACT ON THE BUSINESS WORLD IN THE UK/ INTERNATIONALLY

BITC has been one of the organisations helping to institutionalise the concept of corporate responsibility – both in the UK and internationally – and it has promoted corporate responsibility reporting by companies as a management and communications/transparency/accountability exercise.

As long-term BITC Board member Christine Hodgson comments: “**BITC has led an unparalleled call to action for 40 years. It has incredible convening power.**” She cites SIB, the Awards ceremonies, and the Leadership Teams – the latter being “commercial genius to get very busy business leaders to give their time – and to pay for it too!”

Sir Mike Rake, Chair 2005-07, says: “**BITC sowed the seeds that business is society and society is business, and that business has to serve society. BITC legitimised Corporate Responsibility – both morally and with the business case.**”

IMPACT ON NGOS/VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTORS

- Started In-Kind Direct
- Helped to nurture Employers’ Forum on Disability
- Established the concept of ‘community and social entrepreneurs’ and helped build all-party support for them.

Nearly a quarter of all UK head-teachers have had a business mentor through the BITC-led ‘Partners in Leadership’ programme. It was an individual ‘Business Connector’ who started City Harvest www.cityharvest.org.uk/

GOVERNMENT/GOVERNMENT POLICY/DELIVERY OF PUBLIC SERVICES (E.G. CONVENING POWER TO GET BUSINESS COLLECTIVELY INVOLVED AND INFLUENCING THE THINKING OF CIVIL SERVANTS)

Created the expectation of cross-sectoral partnerships as integral to delivery of social policy, and worked with local, regional, and national governments (irrespective of political persuasion).

David Schofield, Corporate Sustainability Director of Aviva says that “**BITC has been banging the partnership drum for 40 years.**”

IMPACT ON MANAGEMENT EDUCATION (THINKING ABOUT THE ROLE OF BUSINESS IN SOCIETY AND HOW IT OPERATES VIS-À-VIS OTHER ASPECTS OF SOCIETY)

A BITC Report for bp (in 1995) on how to introduce corporate responsibility into business schools led to the bp-supported Centre for Corporate Citizenship at Warwick Business School and to the early work that led to the creation of the European Academy for Business in Society (EABIS – now ABIS-Global), which brings together leading European business schools and multinational businesses interested in improving research and in the teaching of Corporate Responsibility www.abis-global.org.

BITC convened a roundtable at Highgrove, in December 2002, that brought together Deans of leading UK business schools and Directors of Top Talent, Learning and Development from a number of leading BITC member companies to examine what practical steps could be taken to introduce Responsible Business more systematically into the work of UK business schools.

Several senior business leaders from BITC served on the international advisory council for the Doughty Centre for Corporate Responsibility at Cranfield School of Management between 2007-2017, including John Neill, Sir David Varney, and Bob Wigley.

BITC has worked over the years with several business schools, including Bayes (formerly Cass) and Lancaster, to evaluate individual BITC programmes. It also now works closely with Lloyds Banking Group Centre for Responsible Business at the University of Birmingham.

IMPACT ON SPECIFIC LOCALITIES

From Halifax to Blackpool, from Hackney to Wisbech; from the development of the local enterprise agencies, ‘Education-Business Partnerships’, ‘One-town Partnerships’ to the new examples of ‘Place-Based Partnerships’ today.

We would also call out the bridge-building cross-communities in Northern Ireland. In the 1990s onwards, BITC in Northern Ireland was a vehicle for a younger generation of businesspeople to participate in civic life in a non-party political way.

Kieran Harding – Managing Director of BITC Northern Ireland – quotes prominent local politicians describing BITC “**as one of the unsung heroes of the ‘Peace Process’.**”

Several of the specific local business-community partnerships, such as The Croydon Commitment, have continued long after the active BITC involvement came to an end.

www.croydoncommitment.org.uk/

IMPACT ON SPECIFIC SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

BITC has consistently put previously un/under-recognised issues on the business agenda: such as support for community entrepreneurs; Gender, Race, and now the broader issues of Diversity, equity and inclusion; Health and Wellbeing – notably issues like mental health in the workplace and employers’ responsibilities for domestic abuse, suicide prevention, and COVID-19-related bereavement.

Among other issues that BITC has helped to popularise with business over the years are homelessness, rural deprivation, cause-related marketing, employment, and skills from pre-recruitment training through to inclusive recruitment and the circular economy.

Long-term BITC Trustee and Co-founder, and former Chair of Fishburn Hedges, the corporate communications agency, John Williams observes: “**BITC has been ahead of the curve on so many issues, such as race and Health & Wellbeing.**”

IMPACT ON CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY COALITIONS ELSEWHERE

BITC has supported employee volunteering around the world through ‘ENGAGE;’ has created a similar organisation in Hong Kong – and the International Business Leaders Forum (IBLF); and has inspired many different Corporate Responsibility coalitions – particularly through the CSR 360 Global Network. Over the years, it has participated in CSR Europe, in The Prince’s Charities Canada, and has exported CARES and SIB to Australia.

THE RIPPLE EFFECT

Setting up what is now the oldest-surviving enterprise agency in the UK: Project North East, at the end of the 1970s, David vividly recalls a BBC documentary about the rise of Silicon Valley. In the programme, there was a segment about one of the earliest companies in the ‘Valley’, – the Fairchild Corporation – and how ex-employees had gone on to create many other tech companies, which in turn spawned more businesses. The programme showed these ‘Fairchildren’ branching out and out. – quickly covering Silicon Valley in the

1950s and 1960s. Pretty soon, the new start-ups had no – idea of their early progenitors or even less of the Fairchild Corporation. Significantly, the Spanish sociologist Manuel Castells devotes a chapter to Fairchild Corporation in his book **The Rise of the Network Society**.

There is an analogy today with the way that ‘BITC Alumni’ – former staff members, ex-secondees, former Leadership Team, and Board members – have gone on to start or run many more initiatives, programmes, and organisations, which partner business alongside public sector and Civil Society. Many of these alumni have taken what they learnt at BITC and have applied it in different contexts elsewhere:

- The increasing number of former staff who have gone to work in sustainability consultancies or in the sustainability functions of businesses in the UK and internationally
- The social and civic entrepreneurs exposed to BITC partnerships who have gone on to apply that learning in other initiatives
- The social entrepreneurs running Corporate Responsibility Coalitions around the world inspired by BITC

Assessing these ripple impacts is way beyond the scope of this BITC@40 project, but it is something that independent researchers from universities and business schools may wish to return to in the future.

See Opportunities for Future Research Chapter 30 below.

CHAPTER 30: BITC@40 – OPPORTUNITIES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

In the time available to us, we have only been able to ‘scratch the surface’ of the rich history of BITC over the last 40 years. We hope, however, that we have laid the foundations for further research in the future.

We can see a number of obvious, further research projects, such as:

- What has been the impact of ‘Seeing is Believing’ (SIB) on individual business leaders who have participated? How did their SIB experience impact their subsequent careers and involvement with social causes? For example, Charles Allen talks about how his experience in SIB, and then BITC more generally, influenced the way he approached his responsibilities for legacy impacts and regional engagement in the London Olympics of 2012.
- How have particular BITC campaigns emerged and evolved over the years, and what have been the direct and indirect impacts from individual campaigns? For example, the longevity and development of the ‘Health and Wellbeing’ campaign over almost 20 years is worthy of more intense scrutiny.
- How has the example of BITC inspired and influenced the way that social entrepreneurs have run Responsible Business coalitions in other countries? For example, Sabine Dennis who ran Belgian Business and Society (now The Shift) for many years speaks of tracking BITC, along with a couple of other coalitions, for practical ideas and inspiration. Talia Aharoni, who founded and ran MAALA: Israel Business for Social Responsibility, was a regular visitor to BITC and hosted BITC alumni as speakers, to learn from what BITC did and how it did it.
- How did the evolution of Scottish Business in the Community (SBC) match/diverge from that of BITC during the 34 years from 1982-2016, when it was a separate organisation? For example, how did SBC work with the Scottish Government and Civil Society in Scotland?

- Although BITC Northern Ireland is part of BITC, the particular circumstances of Northern Ireland has meant BITC NI has always operated with substantial autonomy and discretion to adapt to the possibilities of Northern Ireland. What has been the impact of BITCNI – not least in contributing to the Peace Process and the post-Good Friday Agreement settlement? For example, how did engagement of a generation of younger business leaders after 1989, working across the communities of Northern Ireland, help to build relationships and greater mutual understanding?
- The Place Agenda has been a strong theme of BITC for most of the last 40 years. What has been the history (and the impacts) of BITC in particular places? For example, Bristol where **The Bristol Initiative** of the 1980s–early 1990s, working closely with a strong Chamber of Commerce, has generated a continuing legacy of business-community innovation and collaboration.
- What have been the ripple impacts of BITC as alumni from the Board, Leadership Teams, and staff went out into the world and applied the campaigning skills and insights from BITC in other roles?
- What have been the long-term impacts of BITC on individual businesses and on NGO partners? And how has BITC helped to shape the development and implementation of Government policies over the years?

We hope that this BITC@40 Project will be the catalyst to build up an online archive of reports and papers that will help future researchers. We also hope this 40-Year Review will whet the appetite for more research: for example, by business school management students, doctoral researchers, management consultancies doing pro bono assignments, BITC alumni, or volunteers from member companies.

PERSONAL CONCLUSION FROM DAVID GRAYSON AND MELODY MCLAREN



We started our story at #RBLive – Responsible Business Live – in the Salesforce Tower in Central London on 2 December 2021 and broadcast live to a remote audience. Present in the room were some of BITC’s current business leadership, with a live audience of ‘Next Generation’ employees from member companies. At one point, the MC for the panel discussion, Albertha Charles (Partner PwC and member of the ‘Race Equality’ Leadership Team of BITC) asked the physical audience of young employees to raise their hand if they felt their employers were conveying enough sense of urgency to tackle problems like Climate Change and inequalities. Not a single hand went up. These Gen Y and Millennials – let alone the ‘Greta Generation’ – even coming from businesses committed to the Responsible Business agenda and sustainability – did not feel truly inspired. Whatever today’s leaders think they are communicating,

it appears that tomorrow’s leaders do not feel they are getting the necessary sense of urgency from today’s business leaders.

We are not surprised. Almost a decade ago, we at Cranfield were commissioned by Coca Cola Enterprises to look at the views of today’s and tomorrow’s business leaders about business purpose and sustainability and to produce a thought leadership paper examining whether business should have a social purpose.

Working in collaboration with The Financial Times’ FT Remark and the socially responsible international student organisation Net Impact, we interviewed serving CEOs of businesses across Western Europe and future business leaders (recent MBA participants and other Management MSc students from leading

European business schools). While current and future leaders overwhelmingly believe businesses should have a social purpose, only 19% of future leaders think businesses actually do have a clear social purpose, compared to 86% of CEOs⁵².

Nevertheless, moments like in the Salesforce Tower should be a wake-up call for business leaders, as BITC starts its fifth decade. This must be the decade of action – lest it defaults to the decade of consequences. As long-serving BITC staffer, BITC Northern Ireland Managing Director, Kieran Harding, told us:

“The need for urgency is now accepted. This is our time. We have to capitalise on it.”

Similarly, long-standing partner of BITC, Justin Keeble (Accenture Strategy Managing Director 2008–2021 and now with Google Cloud) says: **“fast catch-up is needed now if BITC is to be at the cutting-edge of the 2020s and beyond.”**

BITC and its allies have the agenda. In the coming decade – as the ‘**Making Work Work**’ campaign stresses – companies need to be faster, braver, and bolder in embracing sustainability in their purpose, strategy, and core operations in order to help build a fairer and greener world. A number of staff and supporters have spoken of the need for BITC itself to be bolder again; to channel the campaigning zeal it has been known for; to be engaging and inspiring to the next generation of business leaders, as it has done so successfully for 40 years, and to be setting the forward agenda, with thought-leadership and engaging governments – not just at Westminster but in the Nations.

There are, though, risks ahead: one important note of caution came from long-term, critical friend of BITC Richard Lambert, who warned in an interview in late 2021:

“BITC needs to navigate carefully around the ‘Woke Capitalism’ debate and to avoid getting caught up in the Culture Wars.” Since Richard Lambert articulated that threat, we have seen an increasing number of articles on this topic in The Financial Times, The New York Times and elsewhere⁵³.

The challenge is to engage the mass of businesses – large and small – and, in turn, to help them to engage their employees, so that sustainability really does become everybody’s business. This was shorthand for us by one interviewee as **“helping businesses to mobilise the Greta Generation for sustainability.”**

Thanks to the heritage of the first 40 years, there are untapped resources to harness, such as what could become an active ‘BITC Alumni’ network. Is it too fanciful to hope that BITC might aspire to become the world’s smartest Responsible Business network and a hub for rich networks of responsible business and Civil Society organisations to connect and build collaboration and facilitate what Bill Gates calls **“collective intelligence?”**

The professionalisation of recent years could enable BITC to become a portal to Good Practice Guidance of its own and from its many partners. Might BITC in future also provide a platform for empowering employees from member companies – especially digital natives – to speak-up and become active citizens engaged in building a fairer and greener future?

This is the point at which we, as curators of the BITC history, hand over the baton and invite the current Board, Leadership Teams, and Executive of BITC to take over and define their Call to Action for the 2020s – one that encourages the leadership of member companies to engage their employees in the drive for sustainability – as the #RBLive audience clearly wants to be. As today’s stewards of BITC, the Board and Leadership Teams can be confident that they are building on rich foundations in responding to ‘the fierce urgency of now.’

PART 3

FOUNDER MEMBERS' PROFILES

WRITTEN BY STEPHANIE HAGAN



AVIVA – TIMELINE

Early 1980s	Norwich Union join Business in the Community, represented on the Board by Victor Hughff, Chief General Manager	2006	Aviva commits to carbon neutrality and Richard Harvey, Chief Executive, joins the CBI's climate change task force in January 2007. It wins BITC's Opportunity Now City Award, and is listed in The Times Top 50 Best Places for Women to Work
1984	Friends Provident becomes the first British company to launch an ethical fund	2010	Aviva revises its CSR strategy and becomes the first UK company – and first Financial Services company in the world to put its corporate responsibility business agenda to a separate shareholder vote
1995	General Accident participates in the Berlin Mandate	2011	Aviva founds the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Coalition
1999	CGU is the first UK insurer to publish an environmental report	2012	Aviva encourages companies to commit to a new global agreement on corporate sustainability reporting as part of the Rio +20 Earth Summit. It attends the summit as part of the UK's official delegation
2000	CGU and Norwich Union merge to form CGNU. The company establishes its first socially responsible investment (SRI) fund	2015	Aviva acquire Friends Life and helps to launch BITC's Age Campaign and Leadership Team, chaired by Andy Briggs, Chief Executive of Aviva's UK and Ireland life business. Alongside this, it becomes a founder member of the Business Emergency Response Group Leadership Team
2002	CGNU publishes its first CSR report and rebrands as Aviva. Aviva publishes its first company-wide CSR policy and establishes a CSR panel to advise on the business strategy		
2003	Aviva participates in the Business in the Environment and Corporate Responsibility Indexes, and is the only insurer to place in the top 20 of the CR Index		
2004	Aviva employees raise £200,000 to support relief aid for the Indian Ocean Earthquake and Tsunami, with a further £500,000 provided by Aviva		

2016	Aviva and the British Red Cross form a strategic partnership to help communities become safer and stronger	2020	Aviva becomes BITC's Age Friendly Award's Responsible Champion
2018	Aviva Foundation is established, and the company wins BITC's Ageing Workforce Award	2021	Amanda Blanc, Chief Executive, is appointed as Champion for the Women in Finance Charter. Aviva is the first major insurer worldwide to target Net Zero carbon by 2040
2019	Aviva publishes its sustainability ambition – “to lead the UK financial services sector in taking action on climate change, building stronger more resilient Britain and running itself as a sustainable business”		

SUMMARY

Aviva, and its many predecessor companies, has been at the forefront of developments in responsible business, evolving from an early focus on corporate philanthropy, community giving and employee welfare. Norwich Union, one of its core ancestor companies, was a founder member of Business in the Community (BITC). Aviva was formed in 2000 as CGNU when Norwich Union merged with CGU and changed its name to Aviva in 2002. Since then, it has led the way on corporate sustainability reporting and has often been regarded as a leader in financial services. Aviva was an early adopter of the need for carbon neutrality across its operations and has combined its support to communities with its drive to build resilience to climate change. Its engagement with BITC has focused in the last decade on diversity and inclusion; championing age in the workplace, and the role of women in business. It continues to lead the wider agenda, being the first insurer to set a Net Zero target.

AVIVA AND ITS HERITAGE COMPANIES

Aviva is an insurance company focused on the UK, Irish and Canadian markets. The present-day company is the result of hundreds of smaller constituent companies merging over three centuries to form four

larger companies – Norwich Union, Commercial Union, Friends Life and General Accident. In 2000, CGU (the result of a merger of Commercial Union and General Accident) merged with Norwich Union to form CGNU; rebranding as Aviva in 2002. Then in 2015, Aviva’s acquisition of Friends Life created the company as it is today.

Aviva has recently set itself a target to be a Net Zero business by 2040. During 2019-2020 Aviva’s sustainability strategy evolved following an extensive stakeholder engagement and materiality process. This resulted in an ambition to act on climate change, build a stronger, more resilient Britain and run itself as a sustainable business.

This approach to business is built from legacies across its ancestor companies; which include the oldest mutual life insurer, the first company to issue a burglary policy and the first and only insurance company to hold a royal warrant. Aviva’s earliest constituent was the Hand in Hand, formed as a mutual society in November 1696, to provide fire insurance. It created its own fire brigade in 1699, which was amalgamated with other London fire insurance brigades in 1833 and would eventually evolve into the London Fire Brigade.

With multiple constituent ancestor companies, tracing the company’s history becomes increasingly complex.

However, like so many businesses that can trace their heritage back over centuries, Aviva’s origins lie in the economic and social changes of the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries – when commercial opportunities blended with social and economic need.

Many of the earliest insurance companies were mutuals, owned by their policy holders who also received a share of the profits. The earliest life assurance societies were formed to ensure that widows and children were provided for in the event of the policy holder’s death. Introduced by Aviva’s ancestor company, Provident Mutual, in 1846, the first group life assurance policies were examples of early employee benefit schemes. In 1885, Employers Liability (which merged with General Accident) claimed to be the first UK company to provide subsidised lunches for its staff. In a much later first, London and Manchester introduced flexible working hours for its staff in 1972 which it claimed was a pioneering idea for staff in the City of London; and Friends Provident became the first British company to launch an ethical fund in 1984. This was dubbed the ‘Brazil fund’ because analysts thought anyone who invested in it was nuts.

Norwich Union, one of Aviva’s core ancestor companies, joined the newly formed Business in the Community (BITC) in the early 1980s, and was represented on BITC’s board by Victor Hughff, the Chief General Manager. Like the majority of BITC’s early members, Norwich Union (along with Aviva’s other ancestor companies) had given regularly to local and national charities, developed community sponsorship programmes, and run staff fundraising drives¹. Again, in common with many companies, staff welfare had also been seen as priority during the post-war years. For example, during the 1950s, St Helen’s House Nursing Home in Norwich was set up at the request of Norwich Union President Sir Robert Bignold, for the benefit of staff and the wider community, with some beds kept exclusively for Norwich Union staff². And in the 1980s medical screening for staff was introduced including cervical smear screening for women.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS OR ‘CSR’

Although ‘CSR’ developed individually across Aviva’s ancestor brands and companies prior to the group’s formation in the early 2000s, there are significant similarities between the trajectories and activities of many of the companies, reflective of sector wide trends.

Community programmes in the form of sponsorship, charitable donations and fundraising remained core to corporate social responsibility initiatives during the 1980s and 1990s, with an increasing drive to engage and encourage employees to get involved in volunteering. These were often linked in theme to commercial sponsorship, such as Aviva/Norwich Union’s sponsorship of UK Athletics; with the Norwich Union Community Sport Fund providing grants to grassroots sporting initiatives in a ‘playground to podium’ strategy³. But environmental issues began to grow in significance and importance for the sector, and were reflected in the emergence of environmental policies by the late 1990s within the constituent companies that would later form Aviva⁴.

The development of sustainable business practices – beyond community and charitable activities – began to emerge with greater clarity in the mid-1990s. General Accident (GA) participated in the 1995 Berlin mandate (precursor to the Kyoto agreement) and became a founder signatory of the UNEP’s insurance initiative on the environment. Following the merger of GA and Commercial Union to form CGU in 1998, the new company’s board approved an environmental policy in 1998. The first Environmental report was published in 2000 by CGNU following the merger of CGU and Norwich Union. Morley, CGNU’s fund management subsidiary, also established its first SRI fund in 2000.

The company’s first CSR report came in 2002, shortly before it was renamed Aviva. The same year Aviva launched a groupwide CSR policy, to be implemented across the group’s businesses, including those in the UK. Performance was measured across eight areas: environment, community, workforce, human rights, health & safety, standards of business conduct,

suppliers and customers⁵.

“The territory of CSR is comparatively new. We are therefore keen to work with others in our exploration of it, as we find that their perspective enhances our own understanding.”

This was how Aviva’s 2003 CSR report summed up the sentiment within the company at the time, and reflected the value of collaborative working spaces provided by organisations and networks such as Business in the Environment, Business in the Community and the Institute of Business Ethics – all of which were cited in the report as having been ‘of considerable help to us over the years in developing our approach and practice’. One of BITC’s senior staff members (Patrick Mallon) sat on Aviva’s CSR panel and Aviva used both of BITC’s benchmarks – the BiE Index and CR Index. It was the only insurer placed within the top 20 companies in the CR Index during 2003. Aviva had also been asked to participate in a study on CSR by two academics (Jason Chilvers and Justin Keeble). They concluded that Aviva **“can be regarded as a leader within the financial services sector and beyond... although these changes can be seen as a response to the business case for CSR... it is actually the leadership, culture and ethic of the company that are the most significant driver for change.”** These they conclude **“indicate that Aviva’s innovation and leadership in the area of CSR will be sustained long into the future.”**⁶

Aviva continued to take an active role in global and local CSR initiatives, signing up to the UN Global Compact including chairing the UK network; as well as chairing the UK banking and insurance sector FORGE group. In keeping with its global common policies and local implementation strategy, subsidiary businesses were encouraged to publish their own country level CSR reports. These included a 2008 report from its UK businesses, Norwich Union, Aviva Global Services & RAC. Key partnerships were also formed with WWF-UK, Earthwatch and BTCV. As environmental issues became increasingly important and relevant to the sector in terms of the commercial impact of extreme weather, the environment took an increasingly prominent role in Aviva’s responsible business strategy. In 2006, Aviva

announced a commitment to go carbon neutral; and during 2006, Chief Executive Richard Harvey joined the CBI’s task force on climate change.

Aviva’s reporting and management of responsible business evolved alongside both sector trends and the wider movement. In 2010 Aviva had revised its strategy after undertaking a materiality assessment and became the first company in the UK to put its corporate responsible business agenda to a separate shareholder vote. The affiliations and external engagements listed in the 2010 CR report reflect the areas of greatest focus and concern as well as its global reach: CBI Climate Change Board; Carbon Disclosure Project; HRH The Prince of Wales’s Accounting for Sustainability; ClimateWise; UN Environment Programme Finance Initiative; UN Global Compact; UN Principles for Responsible Investment working group; UN Caring for Climate working group; BITC’s International Leadership Team; UN Women Empowerment Principles; ORC Global Diversity and ORC UK forums; Consortium for Street Children.

In 2011, Aviva founded the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Coalition and actively began campaigning for cooperation and consistency on sustainability reporting. The Coalition represented investors as well as financial institutions, professional bodies, NGOs and other stakeholders including church organisations. Its target was the UN Rio+20 Earth Summit. In 2012, full page adverts were placed by Aviva on behalf of the coalition in the **Financial Times** which asked participants at the Rio Summit to come to a new global agreement on corporate sustainability reporting. Aviva’s role in the coalition led to it being given a place as part of the UK’s official delegation⁷.

THE ISSUE OF AGE IN RUNNING A SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS

Diversity and inclusion has been part of Aviva’s responsible business strategy from the start. By the mid-2000s, it had begun to be recognised for its diversity agenda; winning awards including BITC’s Opportunity Now City Award, and being listed in **The Times Top 50 Best Places for Women to Work** in 2006.

In 2020, Aviva became BITC’s Age Friendly Award’s Responsible Champion for its Mid Life MOT programme; two years after having won BITC’s Ageing Workforce Award in 2018. Aviva’s Mid Life MOT programme had been launched after the business recognised that age was one of the biggest dynamics in its business; with over a third of its workers aged over 45⁸. The programme offers a free annual check-up for all employees over 45 looking at issues around wealth, work and wellbeing. It is estimated that the programme secures a £3 return for every £1 invested in greater engagement, better retention and improved wellbeing⁹.

Addressing the challenges of an ageing workforce is a relatively recent campaigning area for BITC and one that Aviva has played a central role in shaping as a key supporter. In 2015, BITC published **Missing Millions**, a report that identified that one million older people had been pushed out of work involuntarily. It introduced an age section to its workplace benchmarks, that was completed by 50 companies and became the first age audit of UK companies¹⁰. Aviva played a crucial role in the nascent campaign and has been central to its success from the beginning; not least in ‘walking the talk’. Having previously been involved in BITC’s Business Action on Health Leadership Team, Andy Briggs, then CEO of Aviva UK & Ireland agreed to chair the new Age at Work Leadership Team (now the Age Taskforce). On leaving Aviva for a new role as CEO of Phoenix Group in 2019, Briggs continued as Chair, with Aviva’s Alistair McQueen (Head of Savings & Retirement) joining the group.

The issue has also provided Aviva with a platform for both community and customer engagement. Aviva’s charitable Foundation partnered with BITC to pilot an employability programme for over-50s in England replicating National Lottery funded programmes in the devolved nations; and offered its Mid Life MOT programme to clients.

The company’s wellbeing strategy includes menopause support at a number of different levels, from awareness raising, to individual support and training. The company’s approach was used as a case study by BITC when submitting evidence to the menopause in the

workplace inquiry undertaken by the UK Parliament’s Women & Equalities Committee in 2019.

Aviva has established six employee groups, known as Aviva Communities, as part of its efforts to increase diversity and become more inclusive as an organisation. These each tackle one dimension of the overall agenda and include committees looking at disabilities; gender parity; support for carers and parents; age; cultural differences; and LGBT issues. It also continues to utilise collective initiatives to help drive change. As well as being a signatory of the UK Government’s Women in Finance Charter, in 2021, Aviva’s CEO Amanda Blanc was appointed as the Charter’s Women in Finance Champion. Alongside this, the Black Lives Matter campaign prompted a formalisation of an action plan on race. It is a signatory of BITC’s Race at Work Charter and has recently developed a bespoke leadership development programme to promote ethnically diverse talent.

RESILIENCE AND SUSTAINABILITY

Aviva’s core insurance business, by its very nature, is designed to provide support and enable resilience when things go wrong – albeit at a cost. However, the principles of its core business have also been the inspiration for much of its community work and these two interlinked agendas have now evolved into one of its three sustainability ambitions – Building Stronger Communities.

In 2004, the Indian Ocean tsunami triggered a staff fundraising drive that raised £200,000, with a further £500,000 committed by the business. The tsunami response prompted some internal questioning and identified a policy gap, with the business recognising that it had not provided equivalent support to its tsunami response for other disasters¹¹.

Aviva had also supported the co-ordination of tsunami funds by Oxfam and Concern India, and this relationship led to it becoming a founder member of Oxfam’s 365 Alliance designed to support advance preparation for disaster relief¹². And in 2016, it formed a three-year strategic partnership with the British Red Cross to help communities become safer and stronger.

This involved a wide variety of projects which varied from country to country depending on need. Globally, staff helped map the most vulnerable communities which then enabled humanitarian agencies to target support. In Singapore, digital technology was used to tackle isolation in older people; and in the UK a community volunteer force was recruited. The British Red Cross also provided support and training for Aviva call claims handlers. During the Covid-19 pandemic, as part of its response, Aviva has contributed to the British Red Cross’s hardship fund.

In 2010, the Business Emergency Response Group (BERG) was initiated by BITC in response to the impact of the 2010 floods on local communities. It aimed to better match businesses resources to need. To support it, a business Leadership Team was formed, and Aviva joined as founder member of this team in 2015. Resources were created to help small businesses prepare for emergencies, such as flooding, cyber-attacks and civil unrest, drawing on the expertise of its members. Volunteers from companies, including Aviva, were also mobilised to support local groups.

LOOKING FORWARD

In 2017, Aviva’s CR report was titled ‘Defying Uncertainty’ as the overall unifying theme for its responsible business strategy. It’s language, like that of most businesses, had also evolved, from corporate social responsibility (CSR), through corporate responsibility (CR) to responsible business then into sustainability, and now ESG (economic, social, governance). More recent reports map Aviva’s strategy to the UN Sustainable Development Goals and in 2019, it created and published its sustainability ambition – ‘to lead the UK financial services sector in taking action on climate change, building stronger more resilient Britain and running itself as a sustainable business’.

In 2018, Aviva set up the Aviva Foundation as a vehicle for distributing unclaimed shareholder assets for public benefit. It is funded both by dormant assets from shareholders and donations from the business. Aligned to the business’s sustainability goals, it has so far distributed £7million in grants to innovative projects in the areas of climate change, financial capability and

inclusion, and community resilience. These include the ‘Accessing Experience’ programme delivered in partnership with BITC to reduce employment barriers faced by the over 50s (see above).

In terms of resilience, the Covid-19 pandemic affected individuals and communities on a global scale. Aviva was one of many insurance sector firms who have contributed to the Covid-19 Support Fund launched by the insurance and long-term savings sector to support those affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. As well as charitable donations and a target to invest 2% of profits into the community via the Aviva Community Fund and other community programmes, Aviva’s approach to building stronger communities also includes a £10 billion investment into UK infrastructure between 2020-23.

In its response to climate change, Aviva has set itself a goal of becoming a Net Zero business by 2040 – the first major insurer to do so. At the start of 2022, BITC’s 40th anniversary year, Aviva’s relationship with BITC extends across several of its sustainability focus areas, with senior members of staff involved in the Age Taskforce, Small Business Taskforce, East of England Leadership Board and Gender Equality Leadership Team.

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² Aviva Archive, SR3616
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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.



BARCLAYS BANK

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	2001	BITC launches ‘Ready for Work’ with Barclays as a key supporter and core funder
1984	Barclays publishes ‘Barclays in the Community’ report, setting out the bank’s approach to supporting communities	2002	Barclays’ annual report includes a CSR chapter for the first time, and it adopts the ‘workplace, marketplace, environment, community’ structure
1986	Barclays launches its first community project, ‘Barclays Youth Action’ and becomes one of the founding members of the Per Cent Club	2007	Barclays attends the Mayday Summit and signs the Mayday Pledge
1987	Barclays Chairman becomes BITC’s Honorary Treasurer	2010	Barclays CEO is appointed a Prince’s Ambassador
1988	Barclays creates the Community Enterprise Unit, bringing together all of its community involvement activities into one team for the first time	2012	Barclays launches the Social Innovation Facility, an internal incubator of colleague ideas for financial products and services that tackle social challenges
1991	Barclays publishes its first strategy on the environment	2013	Barclays launches LifeSkills, setting an initial ambition to help 10 million people to develop skills needed to succeed at work
1996	Barclays announces its Community Support Guidelines to help local communities, prioritising education, training, and economic regeneration	2014	Barclays takes part in the BITC Race for Opportunity Awards
1999	Barclays publishes separate Social and Environmental reviews for the first time and appoints its first directors for Equality, Diversity and Environment	2015	Barclays is part of the BITC Workwell Public Reporting Benchmark
2000	Barclays publishes its first combined social and environmental report	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

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.

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 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.

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.

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bp – TIMELINE

1981	bp is a founding member of BITC. bp Oil’s ex Managing Director, Denys ‘Tiny’ Milne, becomes BITC’s first Executive Director	2006	launch of ‘Tomorrow’s Global Company’ inquiry co-chaired by bp and Infosys
1983	bp secondee, Sarah Darling, helps set up BITC’s City of London branch	2010	Deepwater Horizon accident in Gulf of Mexico
1995	bp Corporate Citizenship Unit set up at Warwick Business School, led by Chris Marsden on secondment from bp	2011	bp becomes key sponsor of BITC’s arc programme, supplying business volunteers to mentor social enterprises
1996	bp’s Company Secretary, David Jackson, is part of the Business in the Environment Leadership Team that launches the BIE Index	2017	bp’s sustainability strategy evolves to planning for the transition to a low carbon economy
1997	Lord Browne becomes first CEO of a major oil company to acknowledge climate change and global warming	2020	bp launches new strategy and announces its ambition to transform from an oil company to an energy company
1998	bp publishes its first Environmental and Social Review	2021	bp is a sponsor of BITC’s Just Transition research with YouGov in the lead up to COP26 in Glasgow
1999	bp wins BITC’s Most Inclusive Annual Report Award and launches its ‘Global Social Investment’ approach to community relationships		
2003	bp’s corporate responsibility reporting shifts from ‘Environmental and Social’ to ‘Sustainability’		

SUMMARY

A long-standing supporter of Business in the Community’s education and local enterprise work, bp was a founder member of BITC and provided its first executive director. Education and enterprise have been the continuous threads running throughout its relationship with BITC; however, bp has helped set the wider agenda as responsible business has evolved. It was instrumental in influencing the teaching of responsible business and CSR in business schools and has been at the forefront of the oil industry’s approach to climate change. This included supporting the development of BITC’s Business in the Environment Index and joining the Environment Leadership Team. Over the last decade, it has returned to its roots in its relationship with BITC, supporting the growth of Business Class and being the major corporate supporter of the arc programme, supporting social enterprise growth. It continues to partner with BITC as it develops these three key priorities of environment, education and enterprise.

HERITAGE AND HISTORY

bp’s origins date back to the founding of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, a subsidiary of the Burmah Oil Company, in 1908. On the outbreak of WWI, the British Government became a major stakeholder in the company after signing a deal with the company to supply the British Navy. It adopted the name British Petroleum (bp) in 1954. During the 1970s political changes in the Middle East led to effective nationalisation of the oil industry across the region; requiring a fundamental shift in strategy. Further changes came with bp’s discovery of oil in Alaska in the early 1970s, which sparked discussions about the environmental implications of extracting oil in ecologically-sensitive areas. The project – the Trans Alaskan pipeline system – required US government approval and the implementation of environmental mitigation measures such as raising areas of the pipeline at caribou crossings to avoid disturbing migration patterns.

As discussions evolved, bp sought to take a more active role in emerging thinking on the role of business in society. In 1981, bp Oil’s outgoing Managing Director, Denys ‘Tiny’ Milne, agreed to become Business in the Community (BITC)’s first Executive Director. David Sarre, bp’s Personnel Director had attended the new organisation’s inaugural dinner, and supported the organisation from the very beginning with a series of secondees, both to BITC and the Local Enterprise Agency network. These included Sarah Darling, seconded in 1983 as one of the first three employees of BITC’s new ‘City of London Branch’¹.

Fourteen years later, bp would be at the forefront of introducing ‘corporate citizenship’ into management education. David Grayson of BITC began working with Chris Marsden, bp’s Head of Community Affairs, looking at how to influence business schools to teach corporate responsibility. This work ultimately led to bp sponsoring a Corporate Citizenship Unit at Warwick Business School. The unit was set up by Chris Marsden, who would become its first director².

THE DEVELOPMENT OF SUSTAINABILITY AT bp

In May 1997, Lord Browne gave a landmark speech at Stanford University. He became the first CEO of a global oil company to acknowledge that global warming was real and to call for action on climate change.

“Governments, corporations, and individual citizens have all had to redefine their roles in a society no longer divided by the Iron Curtain. A new age demands a fresh perspective on the nature of society and responsibility... There is now an effective consensus that there is a discernible human influence on the climate and a link between the concentration of carbon dioxide and the increase in temperature... it would be unwise and potentially dangerous to ignore the mounting concern.”

Browne’s speech put bp at the heart of debate and divided opinions within the environmental movement. He committed bp to the UN Rio+20 Earth Summit agreements and five steps to tackle climate change. Browne’s speech came just a year after the launch of BITC’s Business in the Environment Index (BIE), in which bp had also played a part. Commentators have long speculated on Browne’s real motivations and beliefs in making the speech. It did, however, have one real impact as it led to the eventual collapse of the industry-funded Global Climate Coalition following bp’s withdrawal from the group³.

In 1996, BITC’s Business in the Environment campaign had developed the BIE Index – a benchmark of companies’ performance on environmental issues. Its publication was controversial, with some fearing that public benchmarking would alienate members. As a member of the BIE Leadership Team, bp’s Company Secretary David Jackson was among those supporting the then BIE Chair Tony Cleaver of IBM in pushing ahead. The BIE Index laid the groundwork for the CR Index and BITC’s diversity benchmarks, and both directly and indirectly affected corporate reporting on sustainability and responsible business issues.

bp (as bp Amoco in the year after the two companies merged) published its first joint Environmental and

Social Report in 1998, stating that ‘the environment is the primary challenge facing the industry.’ This reported on its performance in relation to health and safety, environment and social issues. The report also showed how the extent to which the concept of ‘CSR’ had broadened within the company and the extractive industries – there was no mention of charity or charitable donations. In an effort to challenge some of the criticisms made by detractors, bp’s report included independent auditor’s reports on the social elements of its report, and third-party commentary collected independently by the consultancy ERM. Ahead of its time in this regard, bp’s Annual Report won BITC’s Most Inclusive Annual Report Award in 1999.

Also in 1998, bp, along with M&S and Barclays, was among the first of 16 companies to complete the ‘Bruce Naughton Wade CCI’ index – a ‘standard best-practice model to measure CCI programmes’. The Index would be relatively short-lived and its role largely taken over by BITC’s new CR Index in 2002. bp was among the first of 122 companies to participate in the Index, achieving the 2nd highest ranking in the first year.

During the 2000s, bp was hit by a series of accidents, including an explosion at the Texas City Refinery in 2005; a pipeline leak in Alaska; and the Deepwater Horizon disaster in 2010. bp’s response, under CEO Bob Dudley, who took over in October 2010, was a 10-point plan designed to delivery stability and restore trust. This included making bp a safer, more risk-averse business. From a responsible business perspective, both health & safety and environmental issues were inextricable from its operations and largely dominated both its activity and reporting. Yet the scale of the challenge bp faced in responding, particularly to the Deepwater Horizon accident was summed up by Ernst & Young, auditors of its 2010 Sustainability Review,

“We saw that bp’s materiality process has been used to prioritise the issues related to Deepwater Horizon to be included in this report. Although this process includes consideration of the importance of issues to stakeholders, some groups may consider that their individual concerns have not been addressed. Others will feel that the coverage in the report does not do justice to the complexity of certain issues.”⁴

For the next decade, managing and mitigating the impacts of its business remained high on bp’s agenda, but it would not be until late in the decade that it began to fundamentally rethink its role as an energy company (see below). In the wake of Deepwater Horizon, reporting tended to lead with health and safety, followed by restoration work in the Gulf of Mexico. Low carbon investments began to be made, and in 2012 \$1 billion was invested in alternative energy businesses – moving it towards its ambition to invest \$8 billion by 2015. It was an early adopter of the Global Reporting Initiative’s guidelines and also reported against the UN Global Compact principles.

In February 2020, bp introduced a new purpose to ‘reimagine energy for people and our planet’, setting out ten aims to get to net zero by 2050. In its 2020 Sustainability report, it introduced ten further aims: five related to the planet and five to improving people’s lives. The shift in tone from ‘justifying our business’ to ‘talking proactively about how to manage the energy transition’ came in 2017, when bp’s reporting summarised the new strategy put into place by CEO Bob Dudley – one which would commit the company to actively plan for a transition to a local carbon economy. The 2017 sustainability review was structured in the form of answers to a series of questions ranging from ‘which policies do you think are necessary to make a 2oC world a reality?’ to ‘has your human rights policy changed the way you do business?’ In 2017, bp also shifted its reporting towards an alignment with the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As a result, sustainability reporting has moved closer to the centre of the company’s overall reporting. The company’s 2020 Annual Report set out the need for bp to change from ‘an International Oil Company to an Integrated Energy Company focused on delivering solutions for customers.’

BEYOND ENVIRONMENT

In 1999, bp developed what it called ‘a radical new approach’ to its relationships with local communities that it called ‘Global Social Investment’, and, in 2003, changed the name of its responsible business-related reporting from ‘Environmental and Social Review’ to ‘Sustainability Review’. This was structured broadly into three areas: operational issues, including the future of energy and safety; managing environmental impacts, and socio-economic impacts. The scale of the business globally was reflected in its global spend on community-related projects – \$115.2 million, of which \$36.7 million was spent in the UK in 2010. In the UK, bp focused on building long-term strategic partnerships in arts, culture and education. bp’s relationship with the Science Museum shows how these have evolved from what was initially a sponsorship-based project into a collaborative research and development partnership. The relationship began with the sponsorship of the Science Museum’s energy gallery, but soon moved into learning programmes. As part of its Olympic sponsorship activity, bp developed an early version of the ‘Carbon Challenge’ with the Science Museum creating a teacher training programme and school roadshow. This work expanded into research conducted with King’s College London and UCL to understand why children make the choices they do around STEM subjects. This subsequently informed the development of its whole education and skills development agenda.

bp & BITC

During the 1980s, bp’s initial engagement with BITC had largely focused on social and economic issues; supporting small business and enterprise through the local enterprise agency network. As awareness of environmental issues grew both in general, and in significance for the company, its focus and engagement with BITC shifted towards the environment with it joining the Environment Leadership Team in the mid-1990s. From 2010 onwards, following bp’s sponsorship of the London 2012 Olympics and the leading role it played in in BITC’s arc and Business Class programmes, the balance of involvement shifted again to social and economic programmes.

In 2012 bp joined BITC’s Education Leadership Team. The Business Class programme – for which bp became the National Champion for STEM – complemented a broad range of STEM-related educational initiatives, delivered in partnership with more than a dozen partners, including the CREST Awards, Science Museum, Engineering Development Trust, Governors for Schools, and **This is Engineering** with the Royal Academy of Engineering, and Engineering UK. bp also developed its own educational platform, bp Educational Resources (bpES), sharing free STEM resources for 4-19 year olds.

It also joined the Enterprise and Culture Leadership Team which now incorporated Arts & Business following its merger with BITC, something bp had been involved in for many years. BITC’s arc programme was designed as an Olympic legacy initiative to provide support to help social enterprises grow and create 2,000 jobs in 15 London boroughs. Olympic sponsor companies were approached to get involved, including bp, which became the programme’s major corporate supporter and only business to support the programme for the six years it ran. bp provided core funding as well as employee volunteers to act as mentors. During 2018, 85 bp employees supported 71 social enterprises across East and West London, with both general business advice and project-based volunteering.

bp’s long standing involvement in BITC’s environment campaign has evolved into a leading role, with the Climate Action Leadership Team currently chaired by bp’s Louise Kingham CBE. And in 2021, bp was one of the sponsors of BITC’s **Just Transition** research, published in the lead up to the COP26 summit in Glasgow. Representatives from bp also sit on BITC’s Employment and Skills Leadership Team, reflecting its long-standing investment in education and skills in the UK. In recent years, bp has used engagement with BITC’s diversity and inclusion teams to drive action internally. It is a signatory of the Race at Work Charter and has been named as one of The Times Top 50 Employers for Women between 2019-21.

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- ⁴ bp plc, Sustainability Review 2010

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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.



LLOYDS BANKING GROUP

LLOYDS BANKING GROUP – TIMELINE

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| 1982 Lloyds Bank publishes Lloyds Bank in the Community , which covers a wide range of responsible business topics; and joins the newly formed Business in the Community as a founding member. Sir Jeremy Morse, Chairman, becomes Deputy Chairman of BITC | 2002 Lloyds TSB is the only corporate to join the Small Business Consortium |
| 1985 The Group established four independent charitable Foundations– covering England & Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and the Channel Islands – to provide grant funding for charities | 2003 Phil Hodgkinson, Chief Executive – Life & Investments, HBOS, joins BITC’s Board |
| 1986 Halifax becomes a member of BITC. Lloyds Bank becomes a founding member of the PerCent Club | 2007 Mike Fairey, Deputy Chief Executive, Lloyds TSB Group, becomes Chairman of Race for Opportunity |
| 1989 Sir Jeremy Morse, Chairman, Lloyds Bank, becomes Deputy Chairman of BITC’s newly incorporated charity board of directors | 2008 Fiona Cannon, Group Sustainable Business Director, helps to establish BITC’s Race Leadership Team |
| 1991 Sir Jeremy Morse, Chairman, Lloyds Bank, becomes a Vice President of BITC | 2009 Lloyds TSB acquires HBOS to form Lloyds Banking Group, who joins BITC’s Climate Action Leadership Team |
| 1995 Lloyds Bank and TSB merge to become the Lloyds TSB Group | 2010 Lloyds Banking Group started its first Business Class Partnership in Birmingham, going on to have 39 needs-led partnerships with schools from 2010-2016 |
| 1996 Peter Ellwood, Chief Executive, Lloyds TSB, becomes a Deputy Chairman of BITC | 2012 Lloyds TSB is the official banking and insurance partner of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Lloyds Banking Group begins three-year sponsorship of BITC’s Give & Gain Day, and starts to second employees to the Business Connector programme, providing access to the Group’s Solihull Training Centre to support induction |
| 2000 John Spence, Director of Branch Networks, Lloyds TSB, becomes Deputy Chairman of BITC | 2014 Lloyds Banking Group launches ‘Helping Britain Prosper’ – it’s social and economic plan for generating value in society |
| 2001 Phil Hodgkinson, Chief Executive – Life & Investments, HBOS, chairs BITC’s Business Impact Review Group | |

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| 2016 Lloyds Banking Group employees vote for mental health and wellbeing as the theme for its charity partnership | 2020 Lloyds Banking Group publishes its Race Action Plan, publicly committing to further change and the establishment of a Race Advisory Panel |
| 2017 Race in the Workplace: The Ruby McGregor Smith Review profiles Lloyds Banking Group’s proactive approach to collecting diversity data for all its colleagues | 2021 BITC’s CEO, Amanda Mackenzie, becomes chair of Lloyds Banking Group’s Responsible Business Committee 2022. Lloyds Banking Group announces a new purpose-driven business strategy, aligned to the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals, Helping Britain Recover |
| 2018 Lloyds Banking Group is BITC’s Responsible Business of the Year. David Oldfield, Director of Commercial Banking, Lloyds Banking Group, becomes Chair of BITC’s Wellbeing Leadership Team | |

SUMMARY

From the inception of Business in the Community (BITC), Lloyds Bank has led the way in defining what good responsible business looks like.

It has continued to do so over the years under the many brands that have formed Lloyds Banking Group. From the publication of ‘Lloyds Bank in the Community’ in 1982, which highlighted the need for more women in management roles, to its 2022 purpose-driven business strategy, aligned to the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals, Lloyds Banking Group has been a leader.

Throughout, it has worked closely with BITC to define the agenda, driving change across all areas. Contributions include: helping to evolve employee volunteering to focus on skills and being a key supporter of the Business Connector programme; bringing wellbeing to the front and centre of business thinking with the Wellbeing Leadership Team; and focusing on collaborative action to achieve net-zero carbon through the Climate Action Leadership Team. Its in-depth involvement in the leadership and governance of BITC right from the start is demonstrative of the on-going importance Lloyds Banking Group places on being a responsible business.

COMPANY HERITAGE AND HISTORY

Lloyds Banking Group was formed in 2009 following the acquisition of HBOS (formed by the merger of Halifax and Bank of Scotland) by Lloyds TSB.

The Group’s heritage stretches back over 300 years to the founding of Bank of Scotland in 1695, whilst the name Lloyds originated from Birmingham’s first bank, Taylors and Lloyds, formed in 1765. The Lloyds family were Quakers, a faith they had in common with other key banking families at the time. The Halifax was founded as a mutual investment and loan society in 1852.

Today the Group operates under multiple customer brands that came together following the 2009 merger, this includes Lloyds Bank, Halifax, Bank of Scotland and Scottish Widows. TSB returned as a brand to the high street in 2013, with 632 branches being divested to form the new TSB.

The component parts of the current business have long individual histories, their roots reflecting social, political and economic development over three centuries. This included the emergence of savings banks and the building society movement, which evolved, in part, to finance large-scale philanthropic housing developments during the C19th. Like many companies at the time in the 1920s and 1930s, efforts were made to improve staff welfare during a time of rapid social

and economic change. Halifax, for example, began to organise staff holidays during the 1920s. It also started to finance the great inter-war housing schemes built to accommodate the growing numbers of upper-working-class and middle-class families. It is estimated that under a Government scheme in 1933, 60% of all houses built were Halifax funded, set up to alleviate the housing crisis at the time.

The years following the Second World War posed new challenges and responses to social shifts. In 1947, marketing to women began, and the marriage bar, which meant women had to give up work on marriage, was lifted in 1949. In the late 1960s, leisure, social and welfare benefits of working at Lloyds Bank were promoted in job adverts¹. At a time when many would have spent their entire careers working for one firm, pensioners were also well looked after, with dedicated staff liaison officers.

In 1982, the year that Business in the Community (BITC) was founded, Lloyds Bank published **Lloyds Bank in the Community**. In it, chairman Sir Jeremy Morse wrote:

As so often with social change in Britain, pressures have come gradually from more than one direction to intensify the responsiveness of businesses to the attitudes and needs of the community.²

The fact the report was published in the same year that Business in the Community was founded was no coincidence; it was driven by the same factors that led to BITC’s formation. Lloyds Bank had not been directly involved in the working group discussions that led to BITC’s formation but Sir Jeremy Morse as chair of Lloyds Bank was quick to respond to the emerging organisation’s call for companies to join.

It is also one of the first examples found of a company providing, as the report said, ‘**a less formal account ... in terms of our responsibilities to the community in Britain**’. Although its scope is far from the understanding of corporate responsibility that would emerge 20 years later in frameworks like the CR Index, let alone today’s world of ESG and integrated reports, it also showed how ‘community’ was nevertheless understood to be more than just philanthropically motivated good deeds. Sections touched on issues

relating to the workplace, to the environment, on economic regeneration and the provision of products and services.

In a section headed ‘**The Community Within**, the bank acknowledged diversity and inclusion issues, specifically the lack of women in management roles. Support for economic regeneration included schemes designed to support entrepreneurs and small businesses, training for the unemployed and a £1m investment in Birmingham’s new Aston Industrial Science Park. Funding and secondees were being provided for the Local Enterprise Agency network (operating under the umbrella of BITC). In relation to the environment, its approach at the time is best summed up in its own words:

For Lloyds Bank, environmental concern is a term that is broadly interpreted. It ranges as widely as appointing an energy adviser and setting up a campaign to save energy throughout the organisation, and sponsorship of a playwriting competition run by the World Wildlife Fund and the Young Vic on the theme of World Conservation Strategy³.

Lloyds Bank remained a key supporter of the Enterprise Agency network throughout the 1980s and the bank’s alliance with BITC’s mission appeared to play a significant role in its strategy. Later iterations of its community report cited the founding of BITC in 1981 and Lloyds Bank’s active membership of both BITC and the PerCent Club which it signed up to when the club was founded in 1986⁴.

THE FOUNDATIONS

Lloyds Banking Group has four independent charitable Foundations covering England & Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and the Channel Islands. They were established in 1985 as part of TSB’s flotation and are independent registered charities providing grant funding as well as developmental support for charities.

The Foundations, are, and have been since the 1990s, amongst the largest corporate grant making foundations in the UK. The Foundations are independent charitable trusts, with their own professional staff teams, but are funded by the business in a negotiated funding agreement. Whilst they have a broad charitable remit, they focus on supporting ‘small but vital’ charities tackle social disadvantage. In doing so, they help build capacity in the charity sector and on a day-to-day basis divert ‘donations’ and requests for donations away from the parent company.

Since 2014, the Foundations have been partnering with Lloyds Banking Group to offer skills-based volunteering opportunities to employees including acting as mentors in skills exchange programmes and in charity response forums. Charity response forums were introduced in the early days of the Covid-19 pandemic to help charities navigate the immediate challenges they face.

Lloyds Banking Group has also worked at a strategic level with charities supported by the Foundations to share issues from a customer and banking perspective. In 2018, the Group participated in the development of UK Finance’s **first Financial Abuse Code of Conduct**, and was able to bring the Foundations in to provide insight and user experience. It has also led to a shift in approach from a customer cohort (e.g. those with cancer) to customer need (i.e. access to banking or affordable credit).

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE AT BITC

In 1982, BITC had a large governing council on which every member had a seat. In 1989, this was slimmed down to a smaller board of directors. Sir Jeremy remained on this smaller board as BITC’s deputy chairman until 1991, when he was appointed a Vice President – an honorary role in the gift of HRH The Prince of Wales – in recognition of his contribution to the organisation.

Leaders from Lloyds Banking Group have regularly occupied a seat on the BITC Board throughout its history. John Spence followed Sir Jeremy’s lead by building a close personal relationship with BITC and its governance structures. In addition to his roles on the Board, which he remained on until 2017, John Spence chaired the Regeneration Leadership Team. A similarly central governance role was played by Phil Hodgkinson of HBOS. An actuary by training, Hodgkinson became closely involved in BITC’s reporting and benchmarking work, chairing both the Business Impact Review Group (2001-2003)⁵ and the independent approvals panel for the community investment standard, CommunityMark.

Since 2004, when BITC implemented a CRM system and the information was consistently recorded, Lloyds Banking Group and its former companies have been represented on seven of BITC’s leadership teams and three taskforces on issues across the responsible business agenda. These include climate action, employee volunteering, regeneration and enterprise, race, rural action, circular economy, net zero carbon and small business. The Group has also provided several Leadership Team chairs – with senior individuals providing both personal as well as ‘corporate’ leadership to bring others around the table. Just one example is Fiona Cannon, Group Sustainable Business Director, who worked with Sandra Kerr of BITC to establish the Race Leadership Team in 2008. Fiona’s work on equal opportunities was recognised with an OBE in 2011.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS

Membership of BITC Leadership Teams has been aligned to the Lloyds Banking Group strategy at the time. For example, Truett Tate of Lloyds Banking Group took on the chair of the Employee Volunteering Leadership Team at a time when the Group was seeking to encourage and increase the numbers of colleagues involved in its employee volunteering programmes. As well as working with BITC on mass volunteering initiatives like Give & Gain Day, which it sponsored from 2012-14, Lloyds Banking Group also worked with Community Service Volunteers (now Volunteering Matters) to sponsor the annual Make a Difference Day. It was Lloyds Banking Group’s involvement with the then Economic Renewal Leadership Team that triggered its involvement in the Business Connectors programme – regarded within the business as the point at which employee volunteering, and particularly skills-based volunteering, became established and valued. From 2018, Lloyds Banking Group, represented by a team of its senior staff led by the leadership team chair, Lloyds Banking Group’s Director of Commercial Banking, David Oldfield, has formed the core of BITC’s Wellbeing Leadership Team (see below).

EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERING

During the late 1990s BITC imported a city-based employee volunteering model, ‘Cares’, from the US. 30 local Cares projects around the UK matched teams of employee volunteers with local charities and voluntary organisations. Lloyds TSB and Halifax were amongst the companies who developed policies giving staff paid volunteering days and joined local Cares groups. The Halifax (and later HBOS) with its headquarters in Halifax, Calderdale, West Yorkshire, and a major employer in the area, became the lynchpin business for a semi-independent Calderdale Cares partnership.

The idea for a Business Connector programme – of business secondees placed into communities to identify needs and then broker in support – took off during 2010 and launched as a pilot in 2011. The

secondee model was far from new to BITC, as it had promoted it extensively during the 1980s and 1990s, but it was now updated for the 2010s.

After receiving pilot funding from the government, a BITC co-ordinated bid for a five-year Big Lottery Fund grant was successful, allowing the programme to be rolled out. Lloyds Banking Group made one of the largest commitments of any business to the programme. It pledged to place up to 20 senior employees a year for three years and provided use of its training centre in Solihull as the venue for the initial training of each new Connector cohort, worth £200,000 of in-kind support. At the end of 2016, Lloyds Banking Group’s Connectors had supported 53 local communities. Combined with the impact of the Group’s sponsorship of the London 2012 Olympics that inspired nearly 1 in 3 employees (32,000) to volunteer, during 2016 more than 39,000 Lloyds Banking Group employees recorded 267,000 hours of volunteering with 35% of this being skills-based . This was a significant increase compared to the 16,000 who volunteered in 2011. The Lloyds Banking Group’s volunteering programme now offers a range of volunteering options, including skills-based volunteering that can be done from a desktop to try and make getting involved as easy as possible.

One of Lloyds Banking Group’s Business Connectors, Andy Charles, was seconded to Blackpool and became part of another BITC-related initiative that influenced the development of the organisation’s current approach to ‘place’. After leaving BITC, former CEO Julia Cleverdon was appointed the Prince’s ‘Place Tsar’ – with the task of mobilising all the Prince’s charities to support a specific location. After working in Burnley for several years, she chose to focus on Blackpool, where as a Business Connector, Andy Charles became part of a team working collaboratively with the Council and a local business support group to create long-term socio-economic improvements.

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ENTERPRISE & REGENERATION

John Spence’s chairmanship of BITC’s Regeneration Leadership Team – and the introduction of a number of regeneration focus areas during his leadership - was in many ways an evolution of the locally based support previously provided via the Enterprise Agency Network. In 2000, Lloyds TSB’s own community activities included initiatives to tackle financial exclusion in deprived areas including a new bank account for low-income customers, support for credit unions and money advice services. Its involvement in the Portsmouth Area Regeneration Trust, a community based financial institution, won it a BITC Award for Excellence the following year.

In 2001, Lloyds TSB claimed to have the ‘largest community investment programme in the UK’⁷; this included the funds distributed by its four independent foundations (see below). It was actively supporting the promotion of the EFQM Excellence Model as a quality management tool to schools. This model would soon be used to underpin another BITC initiative – the CommunityMark – designed as a ‘kitemark’ or standard for small businesses to recognise their community involvement.

Extending ‘CSR’ beyond large businesses to small businesses had been identified as a priority by Kim Howells, then Minister for Corporate Social Responsibility. A study was conducted on behalf of the Department for Trade and Industry by BITC, along

with the British Chambers of Commerce, Institute of Directors, and AccountAbility⁸. One of the outcomes of this report was the ‘Small Business Consortium’, a group of membership-based organisations with reach into small businesses (Federation of Small Businesses, British Chambers of Commerce, Federation of Private Businesses, Institute of Directors), with a one person secretariat based at BITC. As a major provider of banking services to small businesses with one of the largest branch networks, Lloyds TSB committed to joining the consortium, the only corporate involved. Together the Consortium partners created the ‘Small Business Journey’ a series of web-based toolkits for SMEs on all aspects of corporate responsibility, that would be promoted via each consortium member’s networks.

During the 2000s, Lloyds TSB’s language began to change, mirroring the wider landscape, evolving from community to corporate citizenship, to corporate responsibility. In 2004, its Annual Review stated ‘**There is a business case for corporate responsibility**’; and public reporting focused on its people and its community involvement, with acknowledgement of some responsibility to customers or its ‘marketplace’ – particularly those who were vulnerable or financially excluded either as individuals, small businesses, or social enterprises. At this point there was little public emphasis on the environment, nor mention of its supply chain in its annual reporting, although it had been one of the first UK banks to introduce an environmental risk assessment system for its corporate and business lending; and had begun to set targets to reduce its property related CO2 emissions⁹.

By 2012, pressure was growing on the largest companies to integrate responsible business more fully into their operations; and Lloyds Banking Group undertook a major piece of research looking at a variety of external benchmarks as well as research with customers and stakeholders. The outcome was the launch in 2014 of a social and economic plan – **Helping Britain Prosper** – setting public targets to 2020. This focused on issues shown to be important to customers and stakeholders. It didn’t include issues – for example environmental performance – which, though considered to be within the scope of responsible

business and ESG reporting, were now considered a given, or ‘business as usual issue’, by customers. The areas specifically identified for improvement were: paying suppliers on time; apprenticeships; and diversity and inclusion. The ambition of its commitments and its success in meeting them was rewarded with BITC’s Responsible Business of the Year Award in 2018.

In the four years since its launch the impact of Helping Britain Prosper was seen both inside and outside the business. £72m had been invested in communities through the Group’s independent foundations and £4.8m raised for Mental Health UK. The number of senior roles held by women had increased from 29% to 34% and 89% of colleagues believed the Group was committed to being a responsible business. The Group had reduced its own carbon emissions by 14% between 2016-2018 and lent £530m to energy efficient commercial real estate. Over 440,000 small businesses had been helped to start up and over £47 billion lent to first-time buyers.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Lloyds Bank had acknowledged a lack of gender equality in the business as early as the 1980s, but by the late 1990s and early 2000s, another diversity issue was rising higher up the agenda – race. BITC’s Race for Opportunity campaign had been launched in 1995. Lloyds TSB committed to participating in its annual benchmark.

In 2007, Mike Fairey (Lloyds TSB) took on the chair of Race for Opportunity (RfO) - now the Race Equality Leadership Team - in 2007 but had been a public figurehead for the campaign for some years, often quoted in the press on the release of RfO’s annual benchmarking survey. He credited the campaign for the progress Lloyds TSB had made on diversity

RfO has been an invaluable partner in helping us to design and implement our Race Equality Strategy. They have a unique focus on the business case for taking action and have developed pragmatic tools that have helped us to make significant progress in this crucial area.

Mike Fairey, quoted in Local Government Chronicle, 8 Oct 2003

During the 2000s Lloyds Banking Group has been ranked top on several occasions in the RfO’s annual benchmark of companies taking action on racial diversity. In 2017, Ruby McGregor Smith was asked by the UK Government to conduct an independent review of the issues affecting black and minority ethnic groups in the workplace. Her report profiled Lloyds Banking Group as a case study, highlighting its proactive approach to collecting diversity data for all its colleagues¹⁰. Lloyds Banking Group’s diversity strategies also included appointing diversity champions in each business unit, and a dedicated career development programme. However, the **Black Lives Matter** campaign put all companies’ activities under a spotlight. Lloyds responded with a **Race Action Plan**, published in 2020, publicly making commitments to further change and establishing a Race Advisory Panel – made up of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic employees from across the Group¹¹ as well as a Black Business Advisory Committee.

WELLBEING AND MENTAL HEALTH

In the 1980s, corporate policies on mental health and wellbeing were non-existent and the stigma associated with mental health conditions was an everyday battle for people. Lloyds Banking Group is a prime example of a business that refused to shy away from the challenges of the mental health agenda.

Wellbeing was a ‘looming issue’ picked up by research undertaken and commissioned by the Lloyds Banking Group’s sustainable business team around 2015. Lloyds Banking Group’s charity of the year partnership was also renewing at the end in 2016. After putting several issues to a colleague vote, mental health and wellbeing was selected as a theme for its next partnership.

Four mental health charities submitted a collective bid to Lloyds Banking Group as Mental Health UK. What started as a two-year fundraising partnership has now evolved into an ongoing relationship that has had a transformative impact not only on the business itself but in addressing the issue of mental health at work collectively with other businesses.

When Lloyds Banking won BITC’s Responsible Business of the Year Award in 2018, this led to an opportunity to chair BITC’s Wellbeing Leadership Team, a role taken on by David Oldfield, the Group’s Commercial Director and Executive Sponsor for Disability. **What was really impressive about David’s approach was when he became Chair of the Wellbeing Leadership team, he commissioned an independent review of BITC’s wellbeing campaign.** Louise Aston, Wellbeing Director, Business in the Community.

With David and the Lloyds Banking Group team at the helm, the Leadership Team drove action, collaborating on the Mental Health at Work Commitment and launching the ‘**What if your job was good for you**’ report. The Mental Health at Work Commitment involved working with the Thriving at Work leadership council to create a collective initiative based on the Thriving at Work standards with as broad a reach as possible. The number of signatories has grown from the initial 30 starter organisations to more than 1,750 in early 2022. The Mental Health at Work website is also a partnership, hosted by Mind, supported financially by The Royal Foundation and a steering group of key organisations including BITC.

Internally, Lloyds Banking Group has moved the conversation on from mental health to healthy minds, relationships and finances. This now underpins a large part of Lloyds Banking Group’s current responsible business strategy, that now encompasses colleague wellbeing, financial wellbeing and increasingly customer wellbeing.

Louise Aston, Wellbeing Director at Business in the Community, credits David Oldfield for driving BITC’s wellbeing agenda forward and giving businesses a platform to enhance support for employees when the Covid 19 pandemic started in 2020. **“Focus was shifted towards providing toolkits and frameworks around issues that people were going through as the pandemic evolved. We did something around bereavement and death, empathy and compassionate leadership - all topics that hadn’t really been talked about before and I credit this work to David’s leadership.”** Louise Aston, Wellbeing Director, Business in the Community.

STRATEGY AND PURPOSE

In recent years Lloyds Banking Group’s Helping Britain Prosper plan has evolved in response to internal and external changes. In 2018 the Group created a new Sustainability strategy focusing on the opportunities and threats related to climate change and sustainable use of resources.

This included creating products and services aligned to **Helping Britain Prosper** such as its **Sustainability Bond Framework**. In the meantime, it had become the first FTSE 100 company to set gender and race targets (see above) and the first UK bank to set an ambition to reduce the amount of carbon emissions it funded by over 50% by 2030.

In 2018, BITC’s CEO, Amanda Mackenzie, became a non-Executive Director of Lloyds Banking Group and in 2021 took on the role of chair of the Responsible Business Committee.

Following the impact of the Covid19 pandemic on both the Group and its customers, the focus for 2021 became **Helping Britain Recover**. Lending to first time buyers increased, with £16 billion lent to over 80,000 buyers against a target of £10 billion and £3.4 billion of new funding provided to the social housing sector.

Another focus, highlighted by the increase in home and remote working, was supporting small businesses to boost their digital capacity, with over 193,000 businesses helped. The **Essential Digital Skills Gap** report, produced in partnership with the Department for Education, provided a benchmark of the digital skills needed to access the online world and showed that the UK still had 10 million adults who were unable to manage digital basics. The Group’s own response included the establishment of the Lloyds Bank and Bank of Scotland Academies teaching digital and workplace skills and established a dedicated Digital Helpline in partnership with We Are Digital. This helped nearly 15,000 callers and distributed 1,700 devices and data to customers.

In early 2022 the Group announced a new business strategy, taking steps to build a purpose driven organisation which is ‘truly more inclusive and sustainable’ and aligned to the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals. The new strategy has two strands: building an inclusive society; and supporting the transition to a low carbon economy.

CONCLUSION

As a founder member of Business in the Community, Lloyds Banking Group has defined and demonstrated what good responsible business looks like. Throughout BITC’s history, Lloyds Banking Group has worked closely with Business in the Community to define the agenda, and drive action, through supporting the leadership and governance of BITC.

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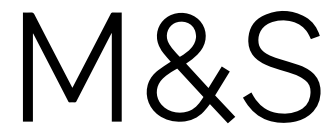
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This case study was researched and written by Steph Hagan, an independent researcher and writer (and former BITC employee), as part of BITC’s 40th Anniversary Year celebration. It is one of a series of ‘Anniversary Partner Case Studies’, focusing on five of BITC’s founding 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.



EST. 1884

MARKS & SPENCER

MARKS & SPENCERS – TIMELINE

1982	Marks & Spencer is a founding member of Business in the Community. David Sieff becomes the first chairman of BITC’s Executive Committee and Lord Sieff a member of the Governing Council. M&S provides a number of secondees to BITC’s central team and Local Enterprise Agencies	2002	M&S and BITC launch the Sieff Award to recognise community organisations or individuals who have successfully collaborated with the private sector. M&S commits to offering 600 work experience placements to homeless people over two years through Ready for Work. The company takes part in the inaugural Corporate Responsibility Index.
Late 1980s	M&S is the major sponsor of the Compact scheme – a series of education business partnerships across the country	2004	M&S wins BITC’s Company of the Year. It moves to a new headquarters in Paddington, where it commits to being a socially responsible neighbour. The company launches Marks & Start, its internal employability programme, offering placements to disadvantaged groups including previously homeless people, single parents, disabled people and the young unemployed
Early 1990s	M&S establishes a dedicated CSR team		
1994	BITC launches a two-year trial of ‘Compact Plus for Jobs’ supported by M&S. M&S and five other companies launch the London Benchmarking Group		
1996	M&S participates in the first Business in the Environment Index	2006	M&S wins BITC’s Company of the Year for the second time
1998	M&S participates in the inaugural ‘Bruce Naughton Wade CCI Index’	2007	Plan A is launched, setting ambitious environmental targets for the company. Sir Stuart Rose, Chief Executive, becomes Chairman of Business in the Community
2001	M&S is a member of BITC’s Business Impact Review Group	2012	M&S wins BITC’s Company of the Year for the third time; the only company to have done so

- 2014** M&S launches Make Your Mark to help 5,000 unemployed young people get into work as an evolution of its employability work. M&S also develops and launches Movement to Work, inviting suppliers and other businesses to support young people
- 2014** M&S secondee leads Healthy High Streets collaboration with founding partners Boots UK, The Co-op Group and Santander
- 2017** Steve Rowe, CEO, becomes Chair of the Place Leadership Team and the Co-Chair of the Community Leadership Board in 2021

- 2019 /20** M&S launch Kick Start as part of its employability work.
- 2020** M&S launches new ESG framework and Net Zero strategy with the target to be net zero in its value chain by 2040
- 2022** M&S celebrates supporting 10,000 young people through The Prince’s Trust, and 28,000 more widely through Marks & Start since 2004

SUMMARY

Marks & Spencer (M&S) has been one of the most integral members of Business in the Community since its inception. The only business to have won BITC’s ‘Company of the Year’ three times, it has continually set the benchmark for good practice, whether through its delivery and evolution to Plan A or the founding of the London Benchmarking Group. Stretching back throughout its history, M&S has recognised its significant role in local communities, and this has guided its partnership with BITC. From its early support of Local Enterprise Agencies, through its leadership of education-business partnerships, to its 20-year commitment to reducing barriers to employment through Marks & Start, M&S has been at the forefront of BITC’s local community programmes since the beginning. It continues to build on this leadership through the on-going evolution of Plan A and ESG, which combines environmental, ethical trade, health and social commitments to achieve long-term benefits for the planet and communities.

HERITAGE AND HISTORY

“Many businessmen tend to think first of their shareholders before their customers and employees. Marks & Spencer has always recognised its responsibilities to all three groups.”

What is unusual about this comment is that it was not written by anyone at M&S, but by Lord Sainsbury, owner of its competitor J Sainsbury, writing in **The Times** in January 1969. M&S began life as a market stall in Leeds run by Michael Marks, a Jewish immigrant from Belarus. In 1894, he went into partnership with Tom Spencer – founding Marks & Spencer (M&S). The pair called their new stores ‘Penny Bazaars’ and by 1900 had expanded to 36 outlets, including 12 high street stores. It became a public company, run by Michael’s son Simon Marks. Marks invited his brother-in-law Israel Sieff to be his business partner, ensuring the firm remained a family business. The Sieff family would remain involved in the business until the death of Sir David Sieff in 2019.

During its first decades, M&S continuously evolved and adapted to the rapid socio- economic changes of the 20th century. Whilst many of the company’s innovations were designed to deliver commercial success and keep customers coming back to its stores, the founding

families of M&S also had a keen awareness of their social responsibilities and strong philanthropic values. M&S’s responsible business story takes off in the 1930s, when it developed a benefits and welfare package for all employees, pioneered by Flora Solomon. Hired by Simon Marks to improve working conditions after challenging him over employee welfare standards, she created the staff welfare and training departments in 1933 & 1934.

The benefits she introduced were revolutionary for the time. Alongside subsidised staff canteens were training programmes, pension schemes and pre-NHS era health care services. During the Second World War, she helped to establish what became the government sponsored communal ‘British Restaurants’ and in doing so shaped the future welfare state. M&S continued to take a leading role in ensuring the welfare of female staff in particular. In 1965 M&S introduced free cervical screening at a time when it was not yet available on the NHS; and it was the first company in Europe to introduce a mobile breast screening unit.

By the 1960s M&S was actively fundraising for chosen charities. Charity fashion shows were held in aid of organisations like the Family Welfare Association¹, Leonard Cheshire Homes, Shelter and the YMCA². In 1974 the company’s staff welfare programme and local community activities were recognised with an award for social responsibility in European business. Five years later Lord Sieff issued a statement to shareholders:

“We recognise our social responsibilities and help the communities in which our customers and staff live” ...”M&S have always believed that our store in the high street is not just another shop but an integral part of the community. And as a company we want to be good citizens by contributing to the community we serve.”³

In doing so, Marcus Sieff (Lord Sieff of Brimpton) became one of the first business leaders to publicly acknowledge that corporate responsibility was important. His advocacy of social responsibility during the 1980s – to audiences as diverse as the London Stock Exchange, trade unions and headteachers⁴ –

then gave the movement a voice which undoubtedly helped shape the agenda being promoted by the newly formed BITC, which M&S’s leaders had played a key role in founding.

M&S AND BITC – AN INTEGRAL PARTNERSHIP

In 1980, David Sieff, a director of M&S and son of its chairman Marcus Sieff, was invited to attend the UK government organised Anglo-American conference on Community Involvement at Sunningdale⁵. At the time M&S was already involved in the work of groups such as the Action Resource Centre (ARC), providing secondees on one to two-year assignments to help run services such as the ARC Islington Small Business Counselling Service. Following the Sunningdale conference, Sieff joined the working group led by Sir Alastair Pilkington looking at how business might become more closely involved in local communities, from which BITC emerged. The Sieffs would both remain closely involved and key to BITC’s early operation. David Sieff personally took on a significant early role as the first chair of BITC’s Executive Committee. M&S secondee Philip Gibbs joined BITC’s first staff team and later Neville Martin would help expand the organisation’s reach as BITC’s north-east regional director. David Sieff also later coined the phrase ‘prosperous High Streets’ needed ‘prosperous back streets’ – which became one of BITC’s long-running mantras. In recognition of the pioneering role he played as an individual in forging links between the private sector and communities, BITC and M&S jointly established the ‘Sieff Award’ in 2002 to mark David Sieff’s retirement – awarded to community organisations or individuals who have successfully collaborated with the private sector.

From this early investment in BITC in 1981, M&S has had one of the most unique relationships of any company with BITC; and although impossible to calculate, in hindsight has almost certainly invested one the highest number of man-hours of senior executive time into the network of any member company. From 1995-99 M&S sublet offices on Baker St (opposite M&S’s Baker St headquarters) to BITC at a peppercorn rent and would host BITC for four months in its main offices before

BITC’s move to its current premises at Shepherdess Walk. The pair’s relationship is also characterised by mutually beneficial delivery partnerships – including of a contractual and semi-commercial nature, such as on its Marks & Start employability programme. M&S has provided BITC with a chair in Sir Stuart Rose, and numerous best practice examples in terms of award-winning programmes. M&S is the only company to have won BITC’s Company of the Year award three times; and was an early supporter and participant in almost all of BITC’s key campaigns and initiatives from enterprise agencies to education business partnerships, benchmarks like the CR Index, the Mayday Network on climate change and marketplace sustainability campaign.

SUPPORTING PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES

At the heart of this relationship lies M&S’s focus on its people, the community and specifically the skills and employability agendas which have provided the focus for much of its community activity for over 40 years. With prime locations on so many of Britain’s high streets, M&S had felt the impact of the riots of St Pauls, Mosside, Toxteth and Brixton first hand. After closing the doors as the disturbance began, Philip Morris, the Brixton Store Manager repurposed the staff lounge into a temporary ‘creche’ for the many customers and children who had been in the store at the time, until it was safer to leave, with many staff providing lifts home for customers. Speaking in the 1982 film **Helping Hands**, which featured M&S’s involvement in the community, the store manager spoke of his determination to **“do something to regenerate the community”**⁶ and launched a ‘Backing Brixton’ campaign, making substantial efforts to restore confidence and attract shoppers back into the area. The impact of the riots showed the important interrelation of social, economic and environmental aspects in an area, and how crucial this is to the success of retailers. The same thinking lay behind M&S’s decision to second staff to town centre management schemes during the 1990s⁷ and to lead BITC’s Healthy High Streets partnership initiative nearly 30 years later (see below). **Helping Hands** also

featured several of the skills and employability projects and initiatives its stores and staff were involved in at the time; from job creation schemes with Leeds Business Ventures to training schemes for young unemployed with Project Fullemploy in Dalston and Transition to Working Life in Glasgow.

Throughout the 1980s M&S continued to offer full-time secondees both to BITC, Local Enterprise Agencies and other job creation schemes. It also created a 100-hour development assignment programme for colleagues to work part-time with charities and external organisations. Between 1978 and 1985, 32 M&S colleagues were involved (as part- or full-time secondments ranging from three months to two years) in 35 schemes in different parts of the country aimed at job creation and training unemployed young people. By 1994, 40 colleagues a year were on secondment to third sector organisations⁸. Alongside this, high profile charity donations and fundraising continued and long-term relationships with multiple charity partners such as BTCV were formed⁹.

By the late 1980s, businesses had begun to focus on education as a key community issue, as well as the training, employment and enterprise agendas that had dominated during the 1980s years of high youth unemployment. David Sieff wrote in 1989 **“Today, one of the major areas where business should make a contribution is education”**. From 1988 BITC became involved in setting up education business partnerships across the country, known as Compacts. M&S became the major business sponsor of the Compacts initiative as well as providing secondees as project directors for several local Compacts. M&S also invested in other education initiatives including developing head teacher training and enterprise skills packs for primary children with Durham University Business School¹⁰. The Compact model was expanded during the 1990s to raise the employment levels of young people with the goal of providing jobs with training for all young people over 14 who achieve their goals. Then in 1994 a two-year trial of ‘Compact Plus for Jobs’; to provide young people with follow up support after leaving school was supported by M&S, Whitbread and Sainsburys.

By the turn of the century M&S’s commitment to skills and employability had begun to shift from supporting schemes run by others to what it could do itself. In 2002, M&S made a commitment to BITC’s newly formed homelessness campaign, Ready for Work, to offer 600 work experience placements to homeless people over two years – the scale of this commitment alone required a dedicated project manager based at BITC. The success of the scheme – in which over a third of participants went on to secure work - encouraged M&S to develop the model, offering placements to other groups including single parents, disabled people and the young unemployed. Existing employees volunteered as ‘buddies’, to mentor participants. The scheme, Marks & Start, was bold, the largest of its kind in the UK, and remains a flagship initiative. Formally launched in 2004, Marks & Start has now supported over 28,000 disadvantaged people, working with a range of charity partners including the Prince’s Trust, BITC, Remploy and Gingerbread. Marks & Start also enabled M&S to extend its education offer into work experience placements for school students.

2004 was a landmark year in many ways for M&S, both in terms of the business and in relation to responsible business. It saw the formal launch of **Marks & Start** (see above) and significant scaling up of its employee volunteering and employability programmes. M&S also won BITC’s company of the year award in 2004 for the first time. In the words of one commentator, the award ‘**confirms the team’s success re-articulating the philanthropic values of M&S’s Victorian founders in terms of strategic business management and future commercial success**’¹¹ and formed part of the defence in a fierce take-over battle. M&S also moved out of its Baker St headquarters, and into new offices in Paddington. The move was accompanied by a number of commitments by M&S to ‘integrate the company to its new location as a socially responsible player’. These included joining the Paddington Waterside Partnership, working with Paddington First to recruit local residents into jobs, recycling assets and donating clothing samples in a partnership with Shelter. It also involved a number of employee engagement tours. These introduced employees, particularly senior staff, to local community groups and leaders including headteachers

and local voluntary groups. The tours were run with the support of BITC and based on its successful ‘Seeing is Believing’ model.

In 2006, both Marks & Start and M&S’s cause related marketing partnership with Breakthrough Breast Cancer won BITC awards. The latter had led to the creation of a range of post-surgery lingerie for women with breast cancer and evolved into a major fundraising partnership with Breast Cancer Now which has successfully raised over £33 million to date in 2022. Other high profile and long-running fundraising partnerships have included multi-year campaigns with Macmillan raising £23m, Shelter £14m and Royal British Legion £9m.

When M&S was the first retailer to voluntarily charge for carrier bags in 2008 to reduce plastics, M&S used the funding to support five ‘greener living spaces’ projects, in partnership with Groundwork. By 2017, M&S was donating £4 million a year to charity, voluntary, environmental or health related causes through these funds.

The recession following the 2008 financial crisis disproportionately affected young people, with over a million 16-24 year olds out of work in 2014. In response, M&S launched an initiative called Make your Mark to support 5000 unemployed young people into work (as part of its long-standing Marks & Start programme Marks & Start). M&S worked in partnership with The Prince’s Trust to offer young people four-week placements. Recognising the scale of the challenge needed a bigger response, M&S invited its suppliers and partners to also offer placements to young people. This gave birth to a larger movement called Movement to Work, which Mark Bolland, M&S CEO founded. From an initial 14 companies, Movement to Work now involves nearly 200 companies, multiple local and regional partners and operations as a charitable coalition that has supported over 100,000 placements for young people.

As well as its focus on employability and skills, M&S has always been committed to supporting local communities where its colleagues and customers live and work. From 2014-2016, M&S seconded six colleagues to BITC to be Business Connectors and create connections between local businesses and

community groups. One connector was Malcolm Heaven in Loughborough who brokered almost 3,000 hours of support to local community organisations and schools. At the same time, M&S became a core partner of the Healthy High Streets Campaign, with Peter Donohoe seconded as the Head of Field Operations. The programme’s aim was to encourage collaborative action between retailers and stakeholders on high street regeneration, specifically to increase footfall, employment opportunities and reduce vacant shop spaces.

M&S colleagues feel passionately about supporting local charities and community organisations. Stores choose a ‘charity of the year’ to fundraise for and this on average raises £1m for local causes every year. Alongside this, M&S colleagues actively volunteer time to support their local communities. In 2015 M&S launched its first large scale volunteering programme Spark Something Good which saw 4,000 volunteers helping out at 240 community projects across the UK. This was replicated each year (until interrupted by Covid-19) with a volunteer week where over 5000 colleagues would support 450 community groups – from delivering tea parties to improving facilities at youth clubs and children’s centres.

M&S was one of the first businesses to join up with the social platform Neighbourly. This was a digital first way to connect with local community organisations and the platform helped power M&S’s local fundraising and volunteering. In 2015 M&S extended the partnership with Neighbourly and launched its new surplus food redistribution scheme, designed to ensure no food goes to waste. This initiative sees surplus food taken from each M&S store and is donated to thousands community organisations serving local people who are struggling to put food on the table. Since 2015 more than 40 million meals have been donated by M&S in this way.

In 2017 and 2018 M&S delivered an innovative programme in ten communities across the UK to learn how to deepen its impact at a local level, led by Jo Daniels. Each community was sponsored by a member of M&S’s Executive Committee and deep listening was undertaken to understand the needs of each community. A ‘place based’ programme was designed to address two key issues 1) education and employability – raising aspirations of young people and supporting hard to reach people, and 2) isolation and social connections. The programme provided a framework where Store Managers could develop local partnerships to test and deliver new solutions.

One of the key outcomes of the Ten Communities Programme was that in order to make transformational change at a local level, large scale collaboration was essential. Not just with community groups and local authorities, but with other businesses. This led to Steve Rowe, CEO of M&S, becoming Chair of BITC’s Place Leadership Team and subsequently BITC’s Community Leadership Board and M&S playing an integral role in the development of BITC’s Place Strategy and toolkit.

In 2022 M&S had also donated over £11.5m through its Sparks loyalty scheme to 35 charity partners, engaging customers in charity donations every time they shopped.

LEADING A WIDENING AGENDA

In 2012, M&S had won BITC’s company of the year award for the third time, having previously won it in 2004 and 2006. The accolade recognised M&S’s leadership across the responsible business agenda. During the 1990s, understanding of corporate responsibility widened, and M&S was at the forefront of this development. A key element was an increasing focus on management and measurement and led to M&S’s involvement in a series of multi-industry initiatives both within and outside of BITC’s umbrella. These included Opportunity 2000 (Opportunity Now) launched by BITC in 1991 to campaign for gender equality, which pioneered the use of benchmarks. The campaign’s leadership team would later be chaired by Clara Freeman of M&S, who also spent

several years on BITC’s board. In 1994, M&S along with five other companies (bp, IBM, Natwest, Diageo and Whitbread), became founding members of the London Benchmarking Group (now B4SI) for corporate community involvement and in 1996 M&S was one of the 73 FTSE 100 companies who completed the first Business in the Environment (BIE) Index. M&S was also amongst the participants in BITC’s inaugural CR Index in 2002, ranking as the top retailer and joining the Business Impact Reporting Group, convened to review and test out the framework devised by BITC in **Winning with Integrity**¹² which went on to set the BITC agenda for the next decade.

SUSTAINABILITY AND PLAN A

As the corporate responsibility agenda broadened, sustainability, environmental, social and ethical issues related to operations, products and supply chains became increasingly important to businesses. M&S published its first CSR Review in 2003, addressing the themes of products, employees and community, although it had published information on its environmental activities since 1992¹³. M&S’s earlier commitments and achievements included using free range eggs in all of its food lines containing eggs (2002), selling only fairtrade tea & coffee in its cafes (2005), becoming the first major retailer to remove hydrogenated fats from all its food and meet salt reduction targets (2006); launching a clothing line using Fairtrade cotton and developing a supplier code of conduct on dyeing, printing and finishing (2006).

In 2007, M&S launched Plan A (because there’s no Plan B for the planet) - a £200m eco plan setting 100 ambitious commitments designed to address the key environmental, social and ethical challenges across its value chain¹⁴. It was brought to life within store marketing and Plan A champions were appointed in every store. The strategy was updated every three years as commitments were delivered and new issues identified. Through every iteration there was greater integration into core operations and ‘how we do business’.

A flurry of achievements came as M&S focused on delivering leadership actions. In 2008 M&S launched their clothes recycling scheme (as the first step toward a more circular business model. “Shwopping” has since collected 35 million items raising an estimated £23 million for Oxfam. Also in 2008 M&S worked with BITC on the launch of its MayDay Climate Change Summit and Mike Barry was a member of its Leadership team. In 2012, M&S was the first major retailer to become carbon neutral in its UK and Ireland operations. By 2014, M&S’s global operations including stores, warehouses and delivery fleets became carbon neutral and it became the first UK retailer to achieve the Carbon Trust Standards for carbon, waste and water. A new range of more sustainable denim was launched in 2017, and now all the denim across womenswear, mens and kidswear is made to its Sustainable Denim Principles. By 2019, all of the cotton used in M&S clothing was also responsibly sourced.

Fourteen years on from the launch of Plan A, in 2021 M&S set a new ambitious net zero strategy. M&S committed to be net zero across its entire value supply chain (scope 1, 2, and 3) by 2040 with a science based target to help keep global warming below the all-important benchmark of 1.5 degrees. The target is supported with an action plan with 10 key areas, including low carbon farming, planet-based diets and circular fashion. This is now a key pillar of M&S’s renewed ESG framework. Going forward M&S remains ambitious to drive a greater commercialisation of sustainability and create compelling propositions for customers to live more sustainable lifestyles.

PARTNERSHIPS AND THE FUTURE

Just as the challenges of recession and unemployment during the 1980s were too big for one sector or organisation to tackle alone (and led to the formation of BITC as a business coalition), so too are the many sustainability challenges in global supply chains that need addressing. M&S often led and actively participated in multiple collaborations and industry groups to find solutions that can be scaled across markets and raw materials used its products such as palm oil, soy, cotton, timber and fish. They include the Roundtable for Sustainable Palm Oil, Better Cotton Programme, the Ethical Trading Initiative, Consumer Goods Forum, WRAP’s Textiles 2030, and the British Retail Consortium’s Climate Action Roadmap. M&S believe that by working together, the business community can do the right thing for people and our planet.

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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.

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END MATTER

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND A NOTE ON SOURCES/METHODOLOGY

This BITC@40 history has drawn extensively on ‘**Business-led Corporate Responsibility Coalitions: learning from examples of Business in the Community in the UK – an insider’s perspective.**’ This was written by David Grayson in 2007 for the Corporate Responsibility initiative of the Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University in partnership with the then Doughty Centre for Corporate Responsibility at Cranfield School of Management and with Business in the Community as well. We are enormously grateful to Jane Nelson of the Kennedy School for her permission to use considerable sections of the 2007 text in this new report.

The 2007 BITC study, and the interest it generated, led David Grayson and Jane Nelson to research and write: **Corporate Responsibility Coalitions – The Past, Present and Future of Alliances for Sustainable Capitalism** (Stanford University Press and Greenleaf Publishing 2013). This book included an abbreviated and updated profile of BITC extending the 2007 history to 2012. A number of the then BITC executives commented on drafts of the updated profile, coordinated by Catherine Carruthers. Again, we have drawn on that updated profile.

For this BITC@40, we held 11 virtual roundtables with current and former Board members, current and former staff, Leadership Team chairs, and representatives from member companies. We also held a hybrid in-person and virtual roundtable with representatives from anniversary sponsors, kindly hosted by AXA. Additionally, we did repeat interviews with each of BITC’s four CEOs. We also heard from almost all the BITC Chairmen still alive.

Additionally, we interviewed a number of long-serving staff members as well as external commentators on responsible business (BITC Alumni). We thank all these interviewees and Roundtable contributors.

INTERVIEWEES AND ROUNDTABLE PARTICIPANTS

Lord Charles Allen, Mark Allan. Zoe Ashdown, Rt Hon Baroness Catherine Ashton GCMG PC., Louise Aston, Mallen Baker, Graham Bann MVO, Lord Steve Bassam, Suzanne Baxter, Claudine Blamey, Caroline Brown, Catherine Brunger, Anna Bolt, Amanda Bowman, Elizabeth Buchanan CVO, Paul Buchanan, Michelle Brannen, Blessing Buraimoh, Luke Burford, Gudrun Cartwright, Andy Charles, Lucinda Charles-Jones, Sir Anthony Cleaver, Dame Julia Cleverdon DCVO CBE, Alan Coates, Emma Codd, Thomas Colquhoun-Alberts, Julie Cullen, Jo Daniels, Sarah Darling, Jeremy Darroch, Dr Shaun Davis, Nick Diamond, Paul Drechsler CBE, Richard Ellis, Emma Gage, Camilla Goodwin, Claire Gordon, Gail Greengross LVO, Alison Grieve, Jason Groves, Eva Hamilton MBE, Liz Hankin (Bargh), Kieran Harding, John Heaslip LVO, Adrian Hodges, Christine Hodgson CBE, Phil Hodgkinson, Steve Holliday, Stephen Howard LVO, Chris Hyman CBE, Antony Jenkins CBE, Amanda Jordan OBE, Justin Keeble, Jane Kershaw, Sandra Kerr CBE, Charlotte Kirby, Sophia Koniarska, Leigh Lafever-Ayer, Sir Richard Lambert, Peter Lambert OBE, Emily Landsborough, Jan Levy, David Logan, Amanda Mackenzie OBE, Lucy Macnamara, Lisa McIlvenna, Samantha Martin, John May OBE DL, Nishi Mayor, Angela Monaghan, Celia Moore, Edward

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CURRENT AND FORMER MEMBERS OF BITC STAFF

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CURRENT AND FORMER BOARD MEMBERS OF BITC

Geoffrey Bush, John Kelly, Lord Laing, Richard Lambert, Gerry Marston, Carolyn McCall, Sir Mike Rake, David Robinson, Lord Sheppard, Cilla Snowball, Sir David Varney, Gerry Wade, Bob Wigley, John Williams

MEMBER COMPANIES

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WORKSHOPS

Versions of the paper have been discussed with the BITC Board and with the BITC senior management team. There have also been a series of seminars and workshops: BITC All Staff; BITC Senior Management Team; BITC Northern Ireland; BITC North-West; BITC ‘Next 25 Years’ Group; BITC/Ethical Corporation ‘Responsible Business’ Summit break-out session; Kennedy School of Government, Harvard in November 2006 and April 2007; MSc students in Sustainability, Bath University; seminar and separate dinner discussion at PWC, Sydney and seminar and separate dinner at Macquarie Bank, Melbourne (March 2007); BITC East Midlands Leadership Team (September 2007); winners of the BITC Jubilee ‘Big Tick’ awards for long-term community partnerships at BT (October 2007); CEOs dinner hosted by Marks & Spencer (Oct 2007) and with community partners hosted by the National Council of Voluntary Organisations. Additionally, there was a series of dinners at Diageo corporate HQ in Feb-March 2007 looking specifically at experience of encouraging more business involvement in the community over the past 15 years.

Morris, Heidi Mottram CBE, Karen Mugenyi Green, Liz Needleman, Katy Neep, John Neill CBE, Sir Stephen O’Brien, Patrick O’Meara, Sir Alan Parker, Raksha Pattni, Holly Pearce, Cathy Phillips, Lord Mark Price, Sir Mike Rake, Masudur Rahman, Faye Ramsson, Les Ratcliffe MBE TD DL, Chelsie Riley, David Robinson, Hannah Rowley, David Rowsell, Clare Rudall, Rachel Saunders, David Schofield, Susan Scott-Parker OBE, Francoise Seacroft, Wolfgang Seidl, Catherine Sermon, Adley Siddiqui, Peter Simpson, Dame Cilla Snowball, David Soanes, Cay Stratton CBE, Kay Supra, Joey Tabone, Robert Tate, Alan Thornburrow, Karen Tighe, Mike Tuffrey, Baroness Jo Valentine, Sir David Varney, Tracy Williamson, Rebekah Wallis. Anne Watts CBE, John Williams, Andrew Wilson, Anne Willmot, Lesley Wolfenden LVO

We have also had email exchanges with former BITC staff, including Patrick Mallon and David Pemberton.

We also looked at the BITC annual reports and key thought leadership and other publications from BITC itself. We have not had access to the minutes of the Board of BITC, and we have not examined BITC finances over the years.

As part of the exercise, we have started to pull together an online library of key BITC documents. We hope that the ‘BITC Alumni’ network, to be launched in June 2022, will help BITC to fill the gaps in the key documents of the organisation, so that they can be available to future researchers.

BITC’s formative years have already been the subject of at least one doctoral thesis, and we are enormously grateful for the help with this project from Prof Daniel Kinderman, whose PhD is a meticulously researched resource about the origins and early development of BITC. We have been able to access the personal BITC archives of Dame Julia Cleverdon and David Grayson. Julia’s archive, in particular, is an invaluable treasure trove. We would like to see a successful application – perhaps to the National Lottery Heritage Fund or to foundations interested in codifying what is an important

resource for a significant part of recent socio-economic and political history, both for the UK and more broadly. We are particularly grateful to friends and colleagues who have given invaluable feedback on early drafts of BITC@40. In particular, Sabine Dennis, Julia Cleverdon, Richard Hamilton, Adrian Hodges, Steve Holliday, Prof Daniel Kinderman, Stephen Howard, Stephen O’Brien, Cath Sermon, and John Williams.

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A special thank you to Helen Bowman and to Brian Le Flem who have done a painstaking proof-read of the finished manuscript.

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Finally, we want to thank Amanda Mackenzie and Gavin Patterson for the invitation to write this BITC@40 and for giving us the freedom and discretion to write as we saw fit.

This is not the final word. As we said at the beginning, we hope readers will send their memories, perspectives, and materials so that BITC@40 can become a richer account of 40 exciting years of both the organisation and the cause.

David Grayson and Melody McLaren

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TIMELINE OF BITC

RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS AND THE WIDER WORLD: 1982-2022

	BITC	RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS AND CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY	POLITICS, ECONOMY, SOCIETY
PRE 1982	Anglo-American Sunningdale Conference on Business and Urban Regeneration (1980)	London Enterprise Agency set up (1979) Project North East, now PNE Group (1980)	Brixton, Toxteth and Notting Hill riots (1981) 30,000 women protest at Greenham Common air base (1981)
1982	BITC set up Companies such as IBM, bp, Shell, British Steel (Industry), Marks & Spencer, Barclays Bank, W.H. Smith, ICI and Midland Bank becomes early supporter of BITC	J&J recalls Tylenol painkiller after tampering – becomes model of effective crisis-management	Falklands War
1983	100th Local Enterprise Agency established		Government launches Youth Training Scheme Thatcher Government re-elected Grameen Bank founded
1984	Amalgamation of CBI Special Programmes Unit with BITC Sir Alastair Pilkington hands over Chair to Lord Carr	BA and Unicef Change for Good Prof Ed Freeman: Stakeholder Theory of Corporation Bhopal Disaster, India Marks & Spencer celebrate centenary with community projects from each store	Miners' Strike starts FTSE launched President Reagan re-elected

	BITC	RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS AND CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY	POLITICS, ECONOMY, SOCIETY
1985	HRH The Prince of Wales accepts the Presidency Over 200 local enterprise agencies 75% BITC staff time on LEAs First DUBS courses for LEA directors		Live Aid Concert Gorbachev becomes leader of USSR Ozone hole discovered
1986	Launch of 'Per Cent Club' by HRH The Prince of Wales and Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher Employers' Forum on Disability launched with HRH The Prince of Wales's Advisory Group on Disability and BITC New BITC Inner City Initiative under Robert Davies	Industry Year Barclays Bank withdraws from Apartheid South Africa	Chernobyl disaster
1987	First 'One Town Partnership' in Halifax Launch of first Education 'Compact' in East London by HRH The Prince of Wales BITC takes on 'The Inner City (Dragon) Awards' (with DTI) and HRH The Prince of Wales 'Innovation Awards' BITC finally obtains charitable status Hector Laing becomes Chairman		Brundtland Commission Report: Our Common Future Definition of sustainable development Montreal protocol to protect ozone layer Stock market crash (Black Monday) Conservative government re-elected: "And now for those Inner Cities" Industry Matters
1988	BITC Mission Statement: " BiC is an association of major UK businesses committed to working in partnership with each other, with local and central Government, voluntary organisations and trades unions to promote corporate social responsibility and revitalise economic life in local communities. "	Institute of Business Ethics starts The Green Consumer Guide	BSE scare starts Pan Am 747 Lockerbie Margaret Thatcher environmental speech: " no generation has a freehold on this earth. All we have is a life tenancy – with full repairing lease. "

	BITC	RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS AND CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY	POLITICS, ECONOMY, SOCIETY
1988	<p>BITC hosts Anglo-American Conference London</p> <p>BiC biro complained about name infringement: BitC in future</p> <p>'Business in the Cities' starts</p>		
1989	<p>'Professional Firms Group' starts</p> <p>BITC takes over 'Community Enterprise Awards', and HRH The Prince of Wales's 'Innovation Awards'</p> <p>40 'Education-Business Partnerships'</p> <p>'Business in the Environment' set up at the request of HRH The Prince of Wales under Anthony Cleaver</p> <p>Enterprise Works – 10 years of LEAs</p> <p>BITC Northern Ireland established</p> <p>New BITC 'wheel' corporate logo designed by Michael Peters Group</p>	<p>Exxon Valdez tanker ruptures off Alaskan coast and spills 11m gallons of crude oil</p> <p>Natural Steo think-tank for promotion of sustainability in core business strategy</p>	<p>Berlin Wall falls after 28 years</p> <p>Tiananmen Square</p> <p>Employment White Paper proposing Training and Enterprise Councils</p> <p>Greens get 2.3m votes in UK in European Parliament poll</p>
1990	<p>HRH The Prince of Wales's 'Seeing is Believing' Programme begins.</p> <p>John Cleese and HRH The Prince of Wales star in Grime goes Green</p> <p>First Employee Community Involvement Award (sponsored by Whitbread) 5 – 153 entries in three years</p> <p>First BITC Account Management Handbook</p> <p>Agenda for Action published as a guide for company boards</p>	<p>IBM publishes one of first corporate environmental reports</p> <p>International Business Leaders Forum created after Charleston Conference</p> <p>Charles Handy's RSA Lecture: "What is a Company for?"</p>	<p>Poll tax riots.</p> <p>Margaret Thatcher resigns</p> <p>Nelson Mandela freed in South Africa</p> <p>Estimated 8million living with HIV/AIDS worldwide</p>

	BITC	RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS AND CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY	POLITICS, ECONOMY, SOCIETY
1990	<p>BITC Board agrees new mission: BITC "aims to make community involvement an accepted part of successful business practice and to increase the quality and extent of business activity in the community."</p>		
1991	<p>Launch of 'Opportunity 2000' ('Opportunity Now') with over 60 founder members</p> <p>Directions for the Nineties launched with Prime Minister John Major</p> <p>Sunningdale Conference with British Chambers of Commerce, TEC National Council and DTI proposes 'one stop shops' to help small business (Business Link)</p> <p>Mike Heron from Unilever chairs new Leadership Team on Education</p> <p>Neil Shaw becomes BITC Chairman</p>	<p>Coffee farmers suffer as prices fall to a</p> <p>30-year low. In response Cafedirect is founded by Oxfam, Traidcraft, Equal Exchange and Twin Trading.</p> <p>Formation of BSR including early members such as Ben and Jerry's and Tom's of Maine</p> <p>Companies & Communities by Fogarty & Christie: PSI</p>	<p>Sweden becomes first nation to enact a carbon tax</p>
1992	<p>Julia Cleverdon succeeds Stephen O'Brien as CEO</p> <p>First National Volunteering National Challenge (now 'CARES') with 30 corporates, 500 community challenges with participation of more than 8,000 people</p> <p>BITC ceases umbrella role for enterprise agencies with formation of new National Federation of LEAs</p> <p>10th Anniversary of BITC with mass SIB East London</p> <p>Launch of London First</p>	<p>BSR and WBCSD established</p> <p>Start of Tesco's Computers for Schools</p> <p>Launch of London First</p>	<p>Earth Summit in Rio with business participation</p> <p>Britain phases out manufacture of CFCs through concerns over the ozone layer</p> <p>Conservative government reelected</p>

	BITC	RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS AND CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY	POLITICS, ECONOMY, SOCIETY
1993	<p>'Aim High' campaign launched</p> <p>First Managing Corporate Community Investment training programme at Ashridge</p> <p>Work in Society launched</p>	<p>1st KPMG global survey of Corporate Responsibility reporting</p>	<p>Maastricht Treaty – European Union created Go ahead for Sunday Trading</p>
1994	<p>Launch of Local Investment Fund</p> <p>'Cause-Related Marketing' campaign set up</p> <p>First BITC supplement with Financial Times</p> <p>Allen Sheppard becomes BITC Chair</p> <p>McKinsey & Company helps to write Business Plan for 1994-1997</p>	<p>LBG: London Benchmarking Group created</p> <p>Ray Anderson, founder Interface, 'mid-course correction' to sustainability</p> <p>SustainAbility coins phrase: 'Triple Bottom Line'</p>	<p>UK National Lottery launched</p>
1995	<p>Launch of 'Roots and Wings' Mentoring programme</p> <p>Merger of BITC and Action Resource Centre to form Action: 'Employees in the Community'</p> <p>Launch of 'Race for Opportunity' with 21 member companies</p> <p>Launch of 'Cause-Related Marketing' campaign</p>	<p>Shell's 'annus horribilis' over Brent Spar & Ogoni executions</p> <p>A Gallup poll finds that those tempted by ethical banking products tended to be in professional classes, under 45 and slightly more likely to be female</p> <p>RSA Tomorrow's Company Report</p> <p>WICE merged with BCSD to form the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD)</p>	
1996	<p>BiE 'Index of Corporate Environmental Engagement' launched – 73 FTSE-100 companies benchmark their environmental management</p> <p>'Partners in Leadership' launched</p> <p>Tony Blair addresses 'Per Cent Club' at Tate Gallery</p>	<p>Unilever's first environmental report and establish external Environmental Advisory Group</p> <p>Body Shop's Social Audit and Social Report</p> <p>Launch: Gifts in Kind</p> <p>Nike's Sweatshops' allegations</p>	

	BITC	RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS AND CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY	POLITICS, ECONOMY, SOCIETY
1996	<p>President Mandela visits Brixton with BITC and meets RFO champions</p> <p>Fishburn Hedges design logo/ corporate identity</p>		
1997	<p>Launch of 40 'Regeneration Action Areas'</p> <p>Head Teacher mentoring launched</p> <p>Launch of pilot 'Principles of Corporate Community Investment'</p> <p>Peter Davis becomes BITC Chair</p> <p>BITC-NCVO Taskforce on partnerships: Two-Way Street report</p> <p>'Employees in the Community Leadership Team' visit to New York to look at City CARES</p>	<p>European Business Network for Social</p> <p>Cohesion set up (now CSR Europe), Copenhagen Centre</p> <p>Global Reporting Initiative created</p> <p>Marine Stewardship Council set up by Unilever and WWF</p> <p>Cannibals with Forks by John Elkington</p>	<p>Asian financial crisis</p> <p>Blair Government elected</p> <p>national network of Business Links established</p> <p>Kyoto Protocol</p>
1998	<p>'Business Action on Homelessness' launched</p> <p>Taskforce 2002: BITC-NCVO reports: Two-Way Street</p> <p>Launch of Awards for Excellence in Corporate Community Investment</p> <p>Launch of 'Right to Read' education initiative</p>	<p>Nike takes active role in formation of Fair Labour Association</p> <p>Monsanto/GMO controversy in Europe</p> <p>Launch of first European Online Resource Centre on CSR</p> <p>De Beers Blood Diamonds</p>	<p>Government sets tough new literacy targets. 80% of all primary school leavers to reach standard level</p> <p>New Deal Launched</p> <p>Stephen Lawrence murder</p>
1999	<p>New Principles of Corporate Community Investment launched</p> <p>First 'Per Cent Club' Index launched</p> <p>Launch of 'CARES' incorporated to encourage employee volunteering</p> <p>Company of the Year: BT</p> <p>Cause-Related Marketing – Who cares wins book by Sue Adkins</p>	<p>Dow Jones Sustainability Index-becomes 1st mainstream sustainability index</p> <p>Committee of Inquiry into New Vision for Business reports</p>	<p>UK writes off £1bn of debt owing by some of the world's poorest countries</p> <p>Mass protests at the WTO meetings in Seattle</p> <p>Euro adopted as currency by 11 member states of the European Union</p> <p>World population reaches six billion</p>

	BITC	RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS AND CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY	POLITICS, ECONOMY, SOCIETY
2000	<p>Winning with Integrity final report of Business Impact taskforce launched at CBI conference</p> <p>BITC moves to Hackney HQ</p> <p>Company of the Year: United Utilities</p>	<p>1st full version of GRI Sustainability Reporting guidelines released</p> <p>‘No Logo’ by Naomi Klein published</p> <p>UN Global Compact</p> <p>Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)</p> <p>CORE coalition to promote transparency and accountability</p>	<p>European Convention on Human Rights becomes part of British law</p> <p>UK appoints first CSR Minister</p> <p>EU Lisbon Summit</p>
2001	<p>Launch of ‘Rural Action Campaign’</p> <p>Establishment of the All Party Parliamentary Group</p> <p>Rural Action Team/Pub is Hub</p> <p>Company of the Year: Cooperative Financial Services</p> <p>Business Impact Review Group</p> <p>Everybody’s Business book by David Grayson and Adrian Hodges</p>	<p>FTSE 4 Good</p> <p>First EU CSR Conference by CSR Europe</p> <p>Association of British Insurers Guidelines on Socially Responsible Investment</p> <p>Collapse of pharmaceuticals’ companies court case against South African Government</p>	<p>Foot and Mouth outbreak</p> <p>Oil Storage regulations brought into control pollution</p> <p>9/11</p> <p>Government’s National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal</p>
2002	<p>‘CR Index’ launched</p> <p>BITC 20th Anniversary</p> <p>Launch of ‘ENGAGE’ BITC/ Business Schools Highgrove Conference</p> <p>David Varney’s A Perfect Storm</p> <p>Company of the Year: Scottish Power</p> <p>Engaging SMEs in community and social issues – original research report produced by BITC, BCC, IOD and Accountability for the DTI which kicked off the Small Business Consortium.</p>	<p>Johannesburg Stock Exchange becomes 1st exchange to require listed companies to report on sustainability</p> <p>EITI launched</p> <p>Enron collapse</p> <p>20th anniversary Shell Livewire youth enterprise programme</p> <p>Launch EABIS (European Academy for Business in Society)</p> <p>Getting down to business – an agenda for corporate social innovation, Rachel Jupp, DEMOS</p> <p>Dissolution of Arthur Anderson</p> <p>Teach First starts</p>	<p>Sarbanes Oxley Act, USA</p> <p>European Commission adopts a formal CSR strategy</p> <p>World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg</p> <p>600 million users of Internet globally</p>

	BITC	RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS AND CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY	POLITICS, ECONOMY, SOCIETY
2003	<p>Launch of ‘CR Index’ results</p> <p>Skills for Life</p> <p>Company of the Year: Carillion</p> <p>‘Indicators that Count’</p>	<p>1st Carbon Disclosure Project survey</p> <p>Parmalat Scandal</p> <p>Equator Principles launched</p>	<p>Invasion of Iraq</p>
2004	<p>Launch of ‘CSR Academy’</p> <p>Launch of ‘Prison Partners’</p> <p>First Conversation at the British Museum</p> <p>First Starbucks Dialogue</p> <p>Corporate Social Opportunity book by David Grayson and Adrian Hodges</p> <p>Company of the Year: Marks & Spencer</p>	<p>Super Size Me, documentary</p> <p>Good Migrations – study looking at impact of off-shoring of jobs – BT case study</p> <p>‘The Corporation’ movie</p> <p>Small Business Journey website launched by Small Business Consortium</p> <p>‘Accounting for Sustainability’ (A4S) established by HRH The Prince of Wales</p>	<p>Kyoto Protocol comes into effect</p>
2005	<p>Initial launch of ‘Business Action on Health’</p> <p>Launch of Marketplace Taskforce</p> <p>15th Anniversary ‘Seeing is Believing’</p> <p>Company of the Year; bhp Billiton</p> <p>Sir Mike Rake as BITC Chairman</p>	<p>Walmart’s first global sustainability strategy</p> <p>Ian Davis – The Economist: By special invitation</p>	<p>Indian Ocean earthquake causes large tsunamis</p> <p>Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Wilma</p> <p>40 million living with HIV/AIDS</p> <p>Blair Government re-elected for 3rd term</p>
2006	<p>Marketplace principles launched</p> <p>RED Summit to encourage business involvement in priority regeneration areas and issues</p> <p>Company of the Year: Marks & Spencer</p> <p>Community Mark relaunched</p>	<p>Al Gore’s ‘An Inconvenient Truth’</p> <p>Michael Porter and Mark Kramer, Harvard Business Review: “Strategy and Society: Competitive Advantage and Corporate Social Responsibility”</p> <p>UN Principles of Responsible Investment</p>	<p>California imposes cap on GHG emissions-1st US state to do so</p> <p>Companies Act 2006</p> <p>One billion users of Internet globally</p>

	BITC	RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS AND CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY	POLITICS, ECONOMY, SOCIETY
2007	<p>635 business leaders involved in 43 Prince’s ‘Seeing is Believing’ visits</p> <p>Shopping malls’ consumer exhibition on Climate Change</p> <p>‘Mayday’ Summit with Regional Development Agencies</p> <p>‘Awards for Excellence’ with Al Gore</p> <p>First CR Yearbook with Haymarket</p> <p>Media Group</p> <p>Silver Jubilee ‘Big Ticks’</p> <p>Jubilee Dialogues</p> <p>Company of the Year: BT</p> <p>BITC Silver Jubilee and 25-Year History with Kennedy School of Government, Harvard and Cranfield School of Management</p> <p>Formal launch of ‘Business Action on Health’ campaign</p>	<p>Marks & Spencer launches Plan A</p> <p>One planet Business published by WWF</p> <p>Report of Tomorrow’s Global Company Inquiry led by bp and Infosys</p> <p>Baker Report into health and safety failings in bp North America</p>	<p>Al Gore and IPCC share Nobel Peace Prize</p> <p>Tony Blair steps down as Prime Minister and is succeeded by Gordon Brown</p> <p>Climate Change Act</p>
2008	<p>Stuart Rose BITC Chair</p> <p>Julia Cleverdon retires, and Stephen Howard becomes CEO</p> <p>‘Seeing is Believing’ events held in Bangalore, India, with focus of understanding how business can make an impact on issues facing communities at the end of the supply-chain.</p> <p>12 linked ‘Mayday’ summits addressed by HRH The Prince of Wales and Prime Minister Gordon Brown</p> <p>Gail Greengross and Julia Cleverdon were asked to take a lead on key Government initiatives on talent and enterprise, and education respectively</p>	<p>Lehman Bros bankruptcy and Global Financial Crisis</p> <p>Satyam Computer fraud Scandal, India</p>	<p>Barack Obama elected US President</p> <p>Sichuan Earthquake</p>

	BITC	RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS AND CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY	POLITICS, ECONOMY, SOCIETY
2008	<p>Healthy Eating Toolkit</p> <p>Company of the Year 2008: Co-operative Financial Services</p>		
2009	<p>Company of Year: United Utilities</p> <p>Better Business Journey guide for SMEs</p> <p>‘MayDay’ summit included a link-up with the Catlin Arctic Survey, led by Pen Hadow, which demonstrated the impact of climate change on the thickness of the Arctic ice</p> <p>National Talent Bank, working with the PM’s Council on Social Action and TimeBank.</p> <p>15 research papers published together with toolkits including Governing our Schools; Race to the Top; and Making Work, Work (on behalf of ‘Business Action on Homelessness’)</p> <p>‘Big Conversation’ project to launch ‘Turning Work Experience into Work Inspiration’ (a collaborative initiative with other agencies)</p> <p>Focus on Burnley with other Prince’s charities</p> <p>‘Corporate Responsibility Index’ launches ‘Platinum Plus’ to challenge top companies</p>	<p>Bernie Madoff “Ponzi” savings scheme</p>	<p>G20 London Summit</p> <p>Swine Flu pandemic</p> <p>Copenhagen Climate Summit</p> <p>Concept of ‘planetary boundaries’ in nature</p> <p>China overtakes USA as largest GHG emitter</p>
2010	<p>Company of Year: Unilever</p> <p>CSR360 Global Partner network now includes over 110 partners across 60 countries, over 35% up on 2009</p> <p>CR Academy Competency Map launched</p>	<p>The Prince’s Countryside Fund set up</p> <p>Deepwater Horizon disaster</p>	<p>Coalition Government</p> <p>Launch of “Big Society” plan</p> <p>“Bonfire of QUANGOs”</p> <p>Wikileaks</p> <p>European Sovereign debt crisis</p> <p>Haiti Earthquake</p>

	BITC	RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS AND CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY	POLITICS, ECONOMY, SOCIETY
2010	<p>Leadership Skills for a Sustainable Economy report led by Vincent de Rivaz, EDF Energy</p> <p>Cumbrian floods led to the setting up of a Business Emergency Recovery Group in conjunction with HRH The Prince of Wales</p> <p>‘Business Class’ framework for three-year business-schools partnerships rolled out across UK</p> <p>How can Marketers Create a Sustainable Future and How to Manage Supply Chains Responsibly Guide</p>		
2011	<p>Company of Year: Unilever Mark Price Chair</p> <p>‘Visioning the Future – Transforming Business’ programme led by Ian Cheshire engaged over 350 companies</p> <p>BITC supported the formation of the High Street Recovery Fund in response to UK inner city civil unrest</p> <p>‘Give & Gain Day’ went international with activity taking place in 16 countries</p> <p>BITC’s ‘Workwell Model’ was launched in Brussels and was translated into 14 European languages and also launched in China</p> <p>MPs’ Guide to Responsible Business</p> <p>The Business Case for Responsible Business with Cranfield’s Doughty Centre for Corporate Responsibility</p>	<p>UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (“Ruggie Principles”)</p> <p>Blueprint for Better Business established</p>	<p>Davies Review: Women on boards</p> <p>Seven billion people on planet</p> <p>Osama Bin-Laden executed</p> <p>Arab Spring</p> <p>UK urban riots</p> <p>Occupy movement/#Wearethe99%</p>

	BITC	RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS AND CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY	POLITICS, ECONOMY, SOCIETY
2011	<p>Responsible Business supplement with the Financial Times, and a Transforming Business Transforming Communities supplement with the Sunday Times</p> <p>First two-day ‘Responsible Business Convention’</p> <p>1st annual ‘The Top 50 Employers for Women’ listing and national supplement with The Times</p>		
2012	<p>Arts & Business merges into BITC</p> <p>Company of Year: Marks & Spencer</p> <p>‘arc: Building Better Business’ launched with bp to support social enterprise as part of the Olympic legacy</p> <p>Big Lottery Fund grant to fund national roll-out of ‘Business Connectors’</p>	<p>1st Blueprint for Better Business conference</p> <p>London Inter Bank Offered Rate (LIBOR) rigging</p> <p>IBLF closes</p>	<p>London Olympics</p> <p>Diamond Jubilee</p> <p>Rio +20 conference</p> <p>Malala shot by Taliban</p> <p>Xi Jinping to power in China</p>
2013	<p>Fortune Favours the Brave, with Marks & Spencer and Accenture</p> <p>International Tourism Partnership (ITP) relocates from IBLF to BITC</p> <p>Company of Year: Jaguar Land Rover</p> <p>Over 250 ‘Business Class’ partnerships</p> <p>European CSR Award Scheme initiated by the European Commission, designed and developed by BITC in partnership with CSR Europe and 33 partners across Europe</p>	<p>Rana Plaza Factory collapse</p> <p>Horsemeat scandal</p>	<p>Margaret Thatcher and Nelson Mandela die</p> <p>Election of Pope Francis</p>

	BITC	RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS AND CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY	POLITICS, ECONOMY, SOCIETY
2013	<p>The Princes ‘Accounting for Sustainability’ project and BITC delivered an event, hosted by HRH The Prince of Wales, to explore risks and opportunities that pension funds face</p> <p>BITC reviewed applications and renewals for Royal Warrants against sustainability criteria</p> <p>181 companies benchmarked their workplace practices; 105 ‘Workwell’ benchmarks and 76 Gender and Race benchmarks</p> <p>Towards a Sustainability Mindset: Oversight & Governance Responsibility: David Grayson CBE & Andrew Kakabadse, Cranfield</p> <p>Launch of ‘Ban the Box’ campaign aimed at removing the check box that asks if applicants have a criminal record from hiring applications</p> <p>‘Marketplace Sustainability’ initiative launched</p>		
2014	<p>Company of the Year: National Grid</p> <p>‘Healthy High Streets’ campaign backed by Boots, Co-operative Group, Marks & Spencer, and Santander</p> <p>Taking it personally: BITC Leadership Task Force Report on Responsible Business Leadership</p> <p>We’re Ready to Talk publication launched at Responsible Business Week’s Big Conversation on mental health</p>	<p>India’s ‘CSR law’ requiring 2% of profits to social causes</p> <p>Glencore becomes last FTSE-100 company to appoint female director</p> <p>EU Non-financial reporting directive</p> <p>Tesco Accounting scandal</p>	<p>Scottish Independence Referendum</p> <p>Ebola West Africas</p> <p>ISIS Islamic Caliphate</p> <p>Singapore’s Transboundary Haze Pollution Act: criminalises cos for environmental pollution</p>

	BITC	RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS AND CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY	POLITICS, ECONOMY, SOCIETY
2015	<p>Antony Jenkins Chair</p> <p>Company of Year: Fujitsu</p> <p>30th Anniversary of HRH The Prince of Wales’s Presidency of Business in the Community and launch of brand extension The Prince’s Responsible Business Network</p> <p>Campaign on Age and Missing Million Report, which identified one million people over 50 who had been employees pushed out of work involuntarily</p> <p>Strategic review by McKinsey & Company</p>	<p>FIFA corruption scandal</p> <p>VW emissions scandal</p> <p>UK Modern Slavery Act: all large cos to publish annual statements</p> <p>Toshiba profits overstatement</p>	<p>Majority Conservative Government elected</p> <p>Facebook: 1billion users</p> <p>UN Sustainable Development Goals</p> <p>Paris Climate Conference</p>
2016	<p>Scottish Business in Community merges with BITC</p> <p>‘Mosaic’ transfers to The Prince’s Trust</p> <p>500th ‘Business Class’ partnership</p> <p>Circular Economy Taskforce launched</p> <p>Marketplace team publishes a Purpose Toolkit</p> <p>BITC is a founder member of the Fair Education Alliance</p> <p>BITC commits to the Living Wage campaign – all employees are paid at or above the Living Wage</p> <p>Stephen Howard retires, and Amanda Mackenzie becomes CEO</p> <p>Company of Year: Veolia</p>	<p>Wells Fargo Fake Accounts Scandal</p> <p>Panama Papers</p>	<p>UK’s EU Referendum</p> <p>Donald Trump becomes US president</p> <p>Jo Cox MP murdered</p> <p>Russian hacking/Fake News</p>

	BITC	RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS AND CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY	POLITICS, ECONOMY, SOCIETY
2017	<p>Company of Year: Anglian Water Services Ltd.</p> <p>A Brave New World? thought-leadership paper with Accenture Strategy on impacts of AI and automation on jobs</p> <p>‘Pride of Place’ initiative launched, piloted in Blackpool</p> <p>Best Employers for Race list launched</p> <p>‘Good Work For All’ project launched, funded by the Joseph Roundtree Foundation.</p>	<p>UK introduces mandatory gender pay gap reporting for large businesses</p> <p>Equifax data breaches</p>	<p>Inconclusive UK election</p> <p>Terrorist attacks on Westminster and London Bridges</p> <p>Harvey Weinstein and #MeToo</p> <p>Charlottesville riot and aftermath</p> <p>US NFL ‘Take the Knee’</p> <p>Trump withdraws from Paris Agreement</p>
2018	<p>‘Waste to Wealth’ Summit</p> <p>Jeremy Darroch Chair</p> <p>Company of Year: Lloyds Banking Group</p> <p>Responsible Business Map and Responsible Business Tracker rolled out</p> <p>‘Business Emergency Resilience Group’ (BERG) launches Extreme Weather, Cyber and Pandemic preparedness campaigns</p> <p>‘PLACE’ campaign launches Building the Case for a Connected Britain report</p> <p>‘Race At Work Charter’ launched</p>	<p>Carillion liquidation</p> <p>Facebook data-breach with misuse of personal data by Cambridge Analytica</p> <p>1 Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB) and Goldman Sachs scandal</p> <p>Danske Bank Money Laundering</p> <p>Theranos/Bad Blood</p>	<p>IPCC: 12 years to act or pass point of no return</p> <p>Apple becomes first public company to achieve market cap of \$1 trillion</p> <p>Greta Thunberg starts Climate strike</p> <p>EU GDPR into effect</p> <p>Chinese scientist He Jiankui announces he has altered DNA of twin girls</p> <p>Yellow Vests protests in France</p> <p>More than half world using Internet</p> <p>Deadliest wildfires in California</p>
2019	<p>Company of Year: Boots UK</p> <p>Employment & Skills campaign launches Good Work for All project focussed on improving low paid jobs and separately launches employer toolkit for employing refugees in partnership with UNHCR</p> <p>Environment, Community, and Strategy’ and ‘Purpose Partnership’ offerings launched, building on the successes of the well-established ‘Inclusion and Wellbeing’ partnerships</p>	<p>Facebook \$5 billion fine to FTC for user privacy practices</p>	<p>Boris Johnson becomes PM</p> <p>EK election and majority govt</p> <p>US-China Trade war</p> <p>Amazon rainforest burns</p> <p>Intergovernmental Science Policy Platform: biodiversity loss accelerating and decline natural living world ‘unprecedented’</p> <p>First reports of COVID-19</p>

	BITC	RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS AND CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY	POLITICS, ECONOMY, SOCIETY
2020	<p>‘Build Back Responsibly’ priorities launched during UN General Assembly Global Goals week</p> <p>New employability programmes for over 50s launched with Aviva</p> <p>Guide for Procurement Professionals launched to embed sustainability in all procurement practices</p> <p>Responsible Retail Banking in the 2020s report with Volans, with support from Santander which was part of setting up and running the responsible retail banking network</p>	<p>11th edition of KPMG’s global survey of Corporate Sustainability reporting</p> <p>Airbus bribery scandal</p>	<p>UK leaves EU</p> <p>Australian bushfires</p> <p>Murder of George Floyd and #BlackLivesMatter</p> <p>COVID-19 pandemic</p> <p>Joe Biden elected US President</p> <p>Protein-folding: 1 of biggest mysteries in biology solved by AI developed by Google’s Deep Mind</p>
2021	<p>Gavin Patterson Chair</p> <p>Celebrated one million roles made accessible through ‘Ban the Box’ and the one m roles later document</p> <p>Roundtables on BITC@40 with current and former trustees, staff, leadership team members and supporters</p>	<p>Paul Polman and Andrew Winston’s ‘Net Positive’</p> <p>Pandora Papers</p> <p>LBG rebranded as B4SI: Business for Societal Impact</p> <p>Post Office IT/sub-postmasters scandal: Dangers of over-reliance on IT</p>	<p>US rejoins Paris Agreement</p> <p>Glasgow COP26 climate conference</p>
2022	<p>National advertising – Making Make Work campaign for Responsible Business contributed by BITC member companies</p> <p>Just Transition research</p> <p>Who Cares? Report</p> <p>Embedding Purpose report</p> <p>Place Taskforce recommendations</p> <p>BITC@40 celebrations, launch of ‘BITC Alumni’ Network and This Much we Know microsite and publication</p> <p>Your Job Can Be Good For You report</p>	<p>BSR 30th Anniversary</p> <p>WBCSD 30th Anniversary</p> <p>50th anniversary of “Limits to Growth” Club of Rome Report</p>	<p>Almost Eight billion people on planet</p> <p>Her Majesty The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee</p>

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AUTHORS

DAVID GRAYSON CBE

David Grayson is an independent commentator, adviser and speaker on Responsible Business, Corporate Sustainability, and collaboration between businesses and other parts of society. He is the author of ten books and has contributed chapters to a further eighteen others. His most recent book: **The Sustainable Business Handbook**, co-authored with Chris Coulter and Mark Lee, is published by Kogan Page (Feb 2022). He is a regular keynote speaker at business conferences across the world.

David is Emeritus Professor of Corporate Responsibility at Cranfield University School of Management. David joined Cranfield and the world of management education in 2007 after a 30-year career as a social entrepreneur and campaigner for responsible business, economic regeneration, disability rights and diversity. This included founding Project North East (now PNE Group) – an innovative economic development social enterprise which has worked in nearly 60 countries since its formation in 1980 – and serving as a CEO of HRH The Prince’s Youth Business Trust. He has been a visiting Senior Fellow at the Corporate Responsibility Initiative of Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government.

David has served on various charity, social enterprise, regulatory and public sector boards, including The Co-operative Development Agency, HRH The Prince of Wales’s Innovation Trust, and the Strategic Rail Authority. He chaired the National Taskforce to establish the network of One-Stop-Shops for help for small businesses: the Business Links and went on to serve two terms as Chairman of the Business Link Accreditation Board. He has also chaired one of the leading providers of social housing for older people and extra-care: Housing21 and the National Disability Council. Most recently he chaired the national charity Carers UK for eight years. He currently is Chairman of the international charity: The Institute of Business Ethics. He is also now the chair of the international, pan-disability charity Leonard Cheshire.

During his career, he has done work with numerous multinational businesses as well as for the OECD, European Union and the World Bank. He is part of the Circle of Advisers for Business Fights Poverty and part of the faculty of The Forward Institute.

David has been involved with BITC from the early years. He was part of a small group of early Enterprise Agency directors, convened by Legal & General, to advise Stephen O’Brien and BITC 1983-85. He did feasibility studies for BITC in 1985-1986 for the pilot HRH The Prince of Wales’s Community Venture schemes in Sunderland and Birmingham. He joined the BITC Senior Management Team in 1987, first as Enterprise Director overseeing BITC’s role as the national umbrella body for the enterprise agencies and then from 1989 was Joint Managing Director. From 1992-1995, David ran an internal think-tank/Public Policy Unit for BITC which ran the **Work in Society** project for the Prince’s charities. After leaving BITC in 1995, he continued as an associate for more than a decade, representing BITC nationally and internationally and chairing several BITC-initiated taskforces with voluntary sector and business representative organisations. During his time at Cranfield, David continued to be a regular speaker at BITC events and contributed to joint publications. He wrote the 25th Anniversary history.

MELODY MCLAREN, MSC, FRSA

Melody McLaren’s eclectic career spans a wide range of fields including research, writing, media relations, sales promotion, web development, social media and corporate responsibility and sustainability campaigning in the US and Europe.

Since joining Business in the Community in 1990, she has served the organisation in a wide range of organisation and consultancy roles, including Corporate Writer, Business Case Campaign Manager, Account Manager, Head of Information, Head of Knowledge Management/IT, Learning and Development Director, as well as producing diverse publications and website content for companies on health and wellbeing, skills development, and work inclusion. She also worked as a communications consultant for BITC spinoffs International Business Leaders Forum and Business Disability International and has produced sustainability reports for a range of companies.

Melody’s initial collaboration with David Grayson in producing **Directions for the Nineties** in 1991 blossomed into a working relationship which has spanned over 30 years. Since 2009 this has encompassed writing, social media management and research at the Cranfield School of Management Doughty Centre for Corporate Responsibility (now the Cranfield Sustainability Network) under David’s directorship, culminating in Melody becoming a PhD researcher investigating social intrapreneurship in 2019. Melody and David have collaborated on a range of corporate responsibility and sustainability publications, most notably (with Heiko Spitzneck) **Social Intrapreneurism and all That Jazz** (2014). She also drafted tips for freelance working carers which David incorporated into his 2017 book, **Take Care: How to be a Great Employer for Working Carers**, based on her experience of caring for her husband Ian while living with Parkinson’s.

Her volunteer work includes serving on the board of community training provider Camden ITEC (2002-2010). A trained classical and jazz pianist, Melody has also promoted the work of the Global Music Foundation since 2005 as well as being an enthusiastic jazz photographer, amassing over 30,000 photographs in her All That Jazz Flickr gallery. Her support for innovation in neurological medicine has led her to run four London Marathons for neurology charities since 2003. She also has the distinction of being the 1969 World Hula Hoop Champion and set a world record twirling 65 hoops at once in 1985.

FURTHER READING

CHAPTER 1

- **Corporate Responsibility Coalitions: The Past, Present and Future of Alliances for Sustainable Capitalism** by Grayson D., Nelson J., Stanford University Press and Greenleaf Publishing 2013
- **‘Free us up so we can be responsible!’ The co-evolution of Corporate Social Responsibility and neo-liberalism in the UK, 1977–2010**, Kinderman D., Socio-Economic Review 2011.

CHAPTER 2

- **The Pathfinder, The Origins of the Enterprise Agency in Britain** (The Story of the Community of St Helen’s Trust) by Ian Hamilton-Fazey

CHAPTER 3

- **The Future of Enterprise Agencies**, BITC 1987
- **Tribute to Allan Gibb**: Atherton A., 2020, www.sieforum.co.uk/allan-gibb-legacy

CHAPTER 4

- Bullock Leadership team Reports 1991

CHAPTER 5

- Communique from BITC/British Chambers of Commerce/TEC National Council Conference on One Stop Shops, Sunningdale, 1991

CHAPTER 6

- Julia Cleverdon and David Grayson In The Smith Institute

CHAPTER 7

- **What If? – 15 Visions of Change for Britain’s Inner Cities, Community** Links, 2000

CHAPTER 8

- Daily Telegraph supplement

CHAPTER 9

- **Directions for the Nineties** (1991)
- **Committee of Inquiry into a New Vision for Business** 1997
- BITC Occasional Paper I: **Megatrends in Corporate Community Involvement** (1992)
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CHAPTER 10

- **“Engaging business in the community – not a quick fix,”** The Smith Institute, 2008

CHAPTER 15

- **Work in Society Lecture**, RSA 1994 and working text 1994
- **The Lambert Challenge and the Lambert Commentary**
- **The Perfect Storm**, David Varney

CHAPTER 16

- **Companies that Count**, Sunday Times Supplement 2007
- **Better Business Journey 2006**

CHAPTER 17

- IBLF Fifth Anniversary Review

CHAPTER 25

- Place Report 2022

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² Watson, R., Wilson, H.N. and Macdonald, E.K. (2020) ‘**Business-nonprofit engagement in sustainability-oriented innovation: What works for whom and why?**’, Journal of Business Research, 119 Elsevier Inc., pp. 87–98.

³ Watson, R., Wilson, H.N., Smart, P. and Macdonald, E.K. (2018) ‘**Harnessing Difference: A Capability-Based Framework for Stakeholder Engagement in Environmental Innovation**’, Journal of Product Innovation Management, 35(2), pp. 254–279.

⁴ Russell Reynolds Associates (2021) ‘**Divides and Dividends: Leadership Actions for a More Sustainable Future The Undeniable Case for Sustainable Leadership**’, (September), pp. 1–33.

⁵ Sir Alastair Pilkington 1982 -1984

As the first Chair of BITC, Sir Alastair looked to replicate what he had done in St Helen’s, Merseyside, creating a non-profit organisation to help local people acquire new skills and to support small business creation. BITC’s initial role was to support the establishment of local enterprise agencies across the country.

⁶ Lord Carr 1985 – 1987

Bringing together the CBI unit with BITC meant a new Chair for BITC, Lord Carr of Hadley, assumed the role from Sir Alastair. Robert Carr had been a long-serving Conservative MP in the One Nation tradition of the party and served as a Cabinet Minister in the Heath Government 1970-74. He subsequently became a life peer and chairman of the Prudential Insurance company.

⁷ Sir Hector Laing 1988 – 1990

As CEO of United Biscuits, Hector believed the success of any enterprise rested on its employees and he went out of his way to ensure that UB’s workforce was treated well. He spent a huge amount of time in the factories

getting to know the workforce and took a close interest in their pension entitlements. After a decade working for UB, employees could virtually count on a ‘job for life.’ He also used his influence, as one of the driving forces in Business in the Community, to encourage corporate giving through the Per Cent Club.

⁸ Neil Shaw, Chair 1991 – 1993

Neil Shaw, CEO of Tate & Lyle appoints Julia Cleverdon as second next CEO, strengthens the Board and evolves the Target Teams into Leadership Teams giving BITC a wider campaigning remit broadly described as the 3 Es of Education, Environment, Enterprise. Work is consolidated across 11 regional offices.

⁹ Sir Allen Sheppard, Chair 1994 – 1996

Son of a train driver, with his trademark direct style, Allen spent much of his career at Grand Metropolitan (now Diageo), where he oversaw radical and successful change. Like his predecessors as BITC Chair, he had a strong belief that business should be working in the interests of the communities in which it operates, and that everyone deserved a chance to succeed. Alongside BITC, Allen was involved in other HRH The Prince of Wales charities and was also passionate about promoting London, setting up London First with Stephen O’Brien in the early 1990s.

¹⁰ Sir Peter Davis Chair 1997 – 2001

Chief Executive of the Prudential and then of Sainsburys, Sir Peter chaired BITC for four years. His term was characterised by a new period of benchmarking and reporting of corporate community investment, with Principles of CCI launched and the new Awards for Excellence. It was kicking the tyres and the growing professionalism of CCI as it moved into the mainstream. Sir Peter oversaw a period of rapid change with companies crying out for simple but effective ways of taking a CCI healthcheck but never losing sight of impact and easy ways to make a difference.

¹¹ Sir David Varney, Chair 2002 – 2004

David was chairman of O2 when he chaired BITC during 2002 – 2004. David said that business was in a ‘perfect storm’ of reputational threats, in the aftermath of WorldCom, Enron, and other international business scandals. Expectations of business were growing massively, whilst perceptions of performance were declining dramatically.

¹² Sir Mike Rake Chairman 2005 – 2007

Mike was International Chairman of KPMG, moving to become Chair of BT, whilst chairing BITC. He initiated a far seeing strategic and governance review refocusing on the ask of business and he oversaw the transition from Julia Cleverdon to Stephen Howard as CEO.

¹³ Sir Stuart Rose, Chairman 2008 - 2010

Chairman of Marks & Spencer, Stuart’s legacy as Chair was Work Inspiration. In response to the ‘talent challenge’ set by the Labour Government, Stuart set up Work Inspiration which saw over 100,000 work placements offered to young people. Stuart’s model was to move away from mundane work placements for young people and to inspire them about the world of work and the opportunities work gave to individuals and their life chances.

¹⁴ Mark Price, Chair 2011 - 2014

As MD of Waitrose, and Deputy Chairman of the John Lewis Partnership, Mark already had an outstanding track record and reputation with customers and consumers. As BITC Chair, he strengthened and simplified, refocusing work under a small number of flagship programmes to have the greatest impact on the people living and working in deprived communities. As Chair of the ‘Rural Action Programme’, and at the request of The Prince of Wales, Mark founded ‘The Prince’s Countryside Fund’, a charity under the auspices of BITC for five years. Mark holds a passionate and personal belief in the importance of British farming and fisheries, and of the countryside as a place to live, work and visit.

¹⁵ Antony Jenkins, Chair 2015 – 2017

CEO of Barclays and then founder and CEO of 10X, Antony became Chair when the pace of technological change had accelerated exponentially. Not wishing for BITC, or the development of responsible business to be left behind, Antony did two things. Firstly, he asked McKinsey & Company to undertaken a pro bono strategic review of the charity. Secondly, he focused on the implications of technology on the responsible business agenda. This led to the **Brave New World** series of reports demonstrating the significant opportunities for responsible business in a digital era, and how if not addressed, inequalities could deepen.

¹⁶ Jeremy Darroch Chair 2018 - 2020

CEO of Sky, Jeremy challenged BITC to become the **“beacon for responsible business.”** Providing seed-funding for a responsible business healthcheck and additional digital investment, the Tracker was launched under Jeremy’s watch and the website was significantly overhauled. The member proposition too matured. During his term, Jeremy sent a number of Sky high-flyers on secondment to BITC as part of their leadership development and to broaden their horizons. Those returning to Sky from BITC sold the opportunity on and for BITC they were flush with commercial expertise and know-how. Jeremy’s style was to always let the charity shine and for others to take the limelight; he worked in the service of the mission rather than himself.

¹⁷ Gavin Patterson, Chair 2021 – 2023

President and Chief Revenue Officer of Salesforce, Gavin assumed the chair during the pandemic when the organisation was managing all of its meetings and operations virtually. He laid out three priorities for his term which were to drive membership making BITC the go-to place for business on matters of responsible business, to drive digital connectivity as an enabler of social mobility and economic growth, and finally to keep pushing on digital skills in schools and in the workplace. As Chair during BITC’s 40th Anniversary, Salesforce is a major sponsor of the work building on the past for a faster, braver, bolder future.

¹⁸ Government Press release July 15th, 2013 “Mosaic wins Big Society Award: 6,000 young people to be mentored this year” - <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/mosaic-wins-big-society-award-6000-young-people-to-be-mentored-this-year>.

¹⁹ For a broader history of the evolution of Corporate Responsibility coalitions around the world, see Grayson D., Nelson J., ‘Corporate Responsibility Coalitions: The Past, Present and Future of Alliances for Sustainable Capitalism’ Stanford University Press and Greenleaf Publishing, 2013

²⁰ Laing, H. (1990a) A Parting Shot, London, United Biscuits quoted in Kinderman D., ‘**Free us up so we can be responsible! The co-evolution of Corporate Social Responsibility and neo-liberalism in the UK, 1977–2010, Socio-Economic Review** (2011)

²¹ British PM Neville Chamberlain in 1938 called the conflict between Nazi Germany and Czechoslovakia a “**quarrel in a far away country, between people of whom we know nothing**.” BBC Archive

²² See, for example, Timms H., Heimans J., “**This is New Power**” Pan Macmillan, 2018

²³ The founding of Business in the Community was, therefore, in 1981 but substantive work began in 1982 and subsequently BITC itself has recorded 1982 as the real start of the organisation. In conversations in the mid-2000s with Prof Daniel Kinderman for his doctoral thesis, Tony Pelling, the civil servant from the Department of the Environment who was seconded to help set up BITC, was insistent on 1981 as the start date.

²⁴ ARC was formed in the early 70s by the Public Affairs Director of IBM UK, John Hargreaves, who had been invited to contribute to the crisis of the Ugandan Asians refugees expelled by the Ugandan dictator Idi Amin. He had responded not with funds but by seconding an experienced manager to help with the initial resettlement. ARC had two bilines ‘In Business for the Community’ and ‘Business Skills in Community Action’.

The Action Resource Centre set up the ARC Islington Small Business Counselling Service in the Autumn of 1978 was managed by a paid Manager (salaries for him and a secretary from the Urban Programme partnership fund) and secondees from Marks & Spencer and National Westminster Bank. Typically, they were younger managers who came on secondment for 1-2 years.

²⁵ Fullemploy went into liquidation in December 1991. Much of its work was subsequently taken over by Grand Metropolitan’s Tomorrow’s People Foundation

²⁶ Founded in 1918, much of the Industrial Society’s training activities were sold off in 2002 and the remaining organisation was relaunched as the Work Foundation (www.theworkfoundation.com).

²⁷ Pocock argued that large businesses would have to actively support and promote entrepreneurialism and employment growth in small businesses. This would permit large businesses to rationalise and regain competitiveness. Who and what are to blame for the UK’s economic predicament? Pocock identifies a number of “**sacred cows**”: “**a whole raft of well-meaning social legislation,**” “**the burden of taxation, availability of finance, and the coils of red tape,**” and above all, trade unions. As Daniel Kinderman writes: “**It is not difficult to characterize the general thrust of Pocock’s lecture: a decisive break with the post-war political-economic order is necessary, a move away from risk adversity and the ,entitlement state’ towards a more dynamic form of capitalism.**”

Kinderman D., ‘**Why do some Countries get CSR sooner, and in Greater Quantity, than Others? The Political Economy of Corporate Responsibility and the Rise of Market Liberalism across the OECD: 1977-2007**’, WZB Discussion Paper 2009

²⁸ For a potted history of the local enterprise agencies see Irwin, David. 2006. National Federation of Enterprise Agencies Report.

David Irwin was co-founder/director of Project North East along with David Grayson

²⁹ Davies, Robert, ‘**Business and the Inner Cities: How the business community can work with others to promote better opportunities in our inner cities.**’ BITC 1987

³⁰ The joint launch of Business in the Cities followed the CBI’s work on Initiatives Beyond Charity and a major Confederation of British Industry-led regeneration partnership in Newcastle-upon-Tyne in the North East of England: The Newcastle Initiative.

³¹ The intention was that these ‘Business Leadership Teams’ would be the precursors in each case to more multi-stakeholder ‘One-Town Partnerships’ of the Halifax variety. In practice, they stayed as ‘Business Leadership Teams’.

³² Michael Frye CBE (1945-2012) in West London was one such business leader. Frye was a successful serial entrepreneur and first chairman of the West London Business Leadership Team. He subsequently became Chairman of West London TEC and then of London Business Link. He also chaired the Royal Society of Arts (RSA) and encouraged the RSA’s **Tomorrow’s Company** Inquiry.

³³ Banham, John. 1994. ‘**The Anatomy of Change: Blueprint for a New Era. London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson**’ page 167

³⁴ Author interview Nov 4th, 2021

³⁵ For his account of the establishment of ‘Business Link’ see Heseltine, Michael. 2001. ‘**Life in the Jungle London: Coronet Books,**’ and see also: Grayson, David. 1996. “**Making Business Links World-Class.**” BITC Occasional Paper No 6. London: BITC.

³⁶ Email exchange with authors, March 2022

³⁷ See “**Bridging Boundaries – memoirs of working life,**” Chris Marsden OBE, 2018 – a privately- published memoir shared with family and friends in which he discusses his work heading the bp Education Unit

³⁸ Cleverdon J., Grayson D., ‘**Whose responsibility is it?,**’ in Smith Institute collection of essays 2006

³⁹ For an early history of The Eldonians and other community entrepreneurs see Leadbeater, Charles. 1997. **The Rise of the Social Entrepreneur**. London: DEMOS www.demos.co.uk

⁴⁰ See Doherty P., **Doing it for Ourselves** BITC Occasional Paper, 1994

⁴¹ See Mawson A., **The Social Entrepreneur: Making Communities Work**, 2008, Atlantic Books; Andrew Mawson, now Baron Mawson, see: <https://amawsonpartnerships.com/>

⁴² Christopher Jonas continued to chair PRO-HELP until 2006.

⁴³ Author interview, Nov 17th, 2021

⁴⁴ Bush G., Grayson D., Jordan A., with Jane Nelson, “**Engaging business in the community – not a quick fix,**” The Smith Institute, 2008

⁴⁵ Cathy Ashton was made a life peer by Tony Blair in 1999 and subsequently held a series of ministerial posts before joining cabinet in June 2007 as leader of the House of Lords in the government of Gordon Brown. She subsequently became EU Trade Commissioner and later the European Union’s first High Representative for External Affairs and Security Policy and First Vice President of the European Commission in the Barroso Commission from 2009 to 2014.

⁴⁶ See Grayson D., Making Business Links World Class, BITC Occasional Paper Number 6, 1996 and also the final report from the Business Link National Accreditation Board 2000

⁴⁷ Sir Derek Higgs (1944-2008) was a British business leader and merchant banker. In 2002, the British Labour Government commissioned Sir Derek to chair the **Review of the role and effectiveness of non-executive directors.**

The report, widely known as the ‘**Higgs review**’ or ‘**Higgs report**’, was published in 2003 and many of its recommendations for large companies were implemented. The ‘**Higgs Review**’ was one of a series of influential Corporate Governance reports over the last thirty years. He was another highly credible champion for BITC.

⁴⁸ **BITC, Building the Case for Connected Britain, Report on Business Connectors Programme, 2017**

⁴⁹ ‘**The Ambulance Down in the Valley Joseph Malins**’ (1895)

⁵⁰ The ‘Business Emergency Resilience Group’ (BERG) grew out of mobilising businesses to help during the UK Riots 2010-11, Cockermouth floods 2010, Hebden Bridge flooding 2012, Somerset floods 2013/14, Ballater Station fire 2015 and the 2015/2016 Winter storms. BERG evolved into a leadership team to help small to medium-sized business owners recognise and plan for significant risks, and to sign-post support from larger organisations, helping them recover more quickly following an emergency. BERG aimed to assist SMEs to:

- **Prepare** by raising awareness through tailored messages, practical information and events
- **Respond** by signposting to advice and practical support
- **Recover** by following-up requests for help

It involved senior business leaders including from Adler & Allan, Aviva, Barclays, BT, HSBC, Marsh, Network Rail, RBS, Virgin Money, Munich Re/HSB Engineering Insurance, SecuriGroup and Novae; with support from the Cabinet Office (Civil Contingencies Secretariat), Met Office, Environment Agency and Safer Scotland.

⁵¹ Email exchange with authors, March 2022

⁵² <https://www.cranfield.ac.uk/som/case studies/coca-cola-enterprises-combining-profit-and-purpose#>

⁵³ ‘**How an Organized Republican Effort Punishes Companies for Climate Action Legislators and their allies are running an aggressive campaign that uses public money and the law to pressure businesses they say are pushing ‘woke’ causes.**’ by David Gelles and Hiroko Tabuchi, New York Times May 27, 2022

And Andrew Edgecliffe Johnson, **The War on Woke Capitalism**, Financial Times, May 28th, 2022

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