

Corporate Social Responsibility

Annual Report 2011/12



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We hope you'll enjoy reading our first Corporate Social Responsibility report, which aims to highlight some of our targets, ideas and achievements in CSR over the past year.

Devonshires is committed to undertaking its business in a socially responsible manner. By combining the talents and efforts of our people, our goal is to create an effective CSR programme which will have an impact on our community, workplace, marketplace and environment.

We aim to integrate CSR into everything we do. In August 2011 we committed to setting up a CSR Group that includes staff from many different areas of the firm.

Our CSR programme focuses on five strands:

1. Community
2. Workplace
3. Marketplace
4. Environment
5. Charitable giving

Our Vision

- To embed our CSR goals into our wider culture and any strategy surrounding it
- To continue developing our strong environmental strategy
- To increase employee engagement by widening the scope of volunteering projects
- To work in partnership with organisations to improve the community in which we live
- To increase our donations of charitable giving and ensure they are tax efficient
- To be recognised as a leader in our field for our Corporate Social Responsibility programme



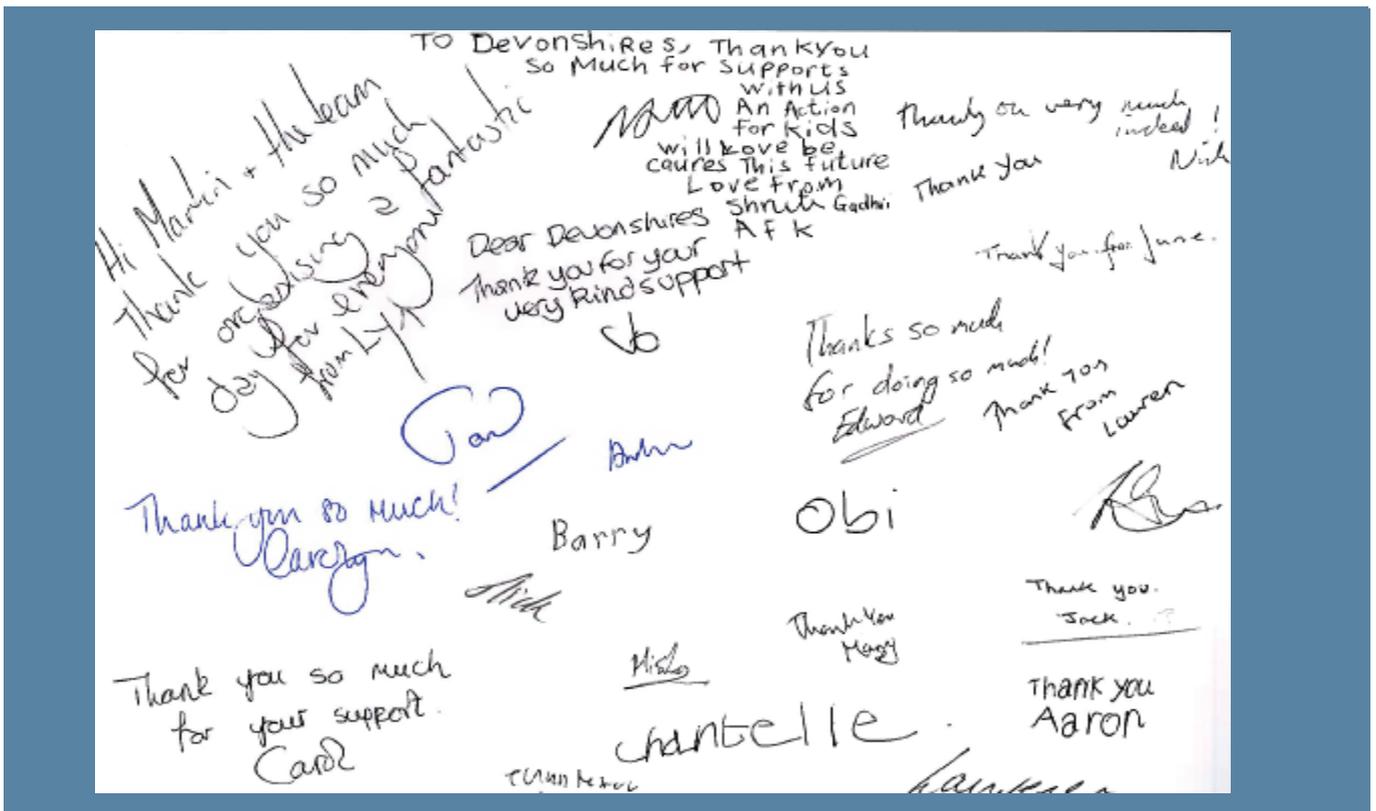
Foreword

It's great to look back over the past year and see the progress that we've made with our Corporate Social Responsibility programme. Over 30% of our staff have taken part in CSR related activities and I believe this figure will increase considerably in the years to come. From raising money through sponsored events and providing work experience roles to helping out at a Christmas Panto, the opportunities we have offered have grown and developed.

The initiation of our CSR Group with individuals from different sectors within the firm has resulted in greater awareness of events and strategies for improving our contribution to our 5 core CSR areas. It is important that we focus and improve on what we have achieved, but I hope that by reading these pages you will appreciate the efforts that we have made and the success that we've shared with our clients and local communities.

We have many targets for the year ahead. With a designated CSR Group now in place, Devonshires can look forward to forging stronger relationships with our clients and communities and making further progress in 2012/13.

Martin Parfitt (Facilities Manager)



Community

Many of our clients are local authorities, schools and social housing providers. We aim to be involved in initiatives that support the work our clients are doing in their communities as well as ensuring we provide our employees with the chance to 'give something back'.

We support our community through a variety of methods via our fundraising efforts and most importantly from individuals volunteering their time.

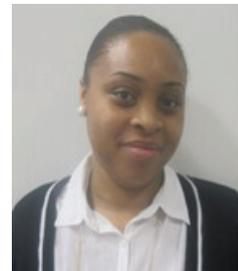
Our staff volunteer at a number of charitable events that make a valuable contribution to the community. Approximately 30% of our staff have taken part in CSR related activities over the past year.

Community Workplace Scheme

We want to help less fortunate people in the community by giving them chances and experiences that they can build on and use in later life. In 2011 we began employing people on a fully paid 6 month work experience placement within our General Office Team. The candidates are trained, developed and educated in the role of a General Office Clerk. The individuals also receive £150 as a clothing allowance towards their workplace and uniform expenses.

"I really enjoy my role working as a General Office Clerk. I have gained new experiences and learnt how to complete many different tasks. I have fun working as part of the team who have made me feel very welcome and at home at Devonshires"

**SHAKIRA HUNTE - CURRENT COMMUNITY
WORKPLACE STUDENT**



Community

Devonshires Discount Card

The firm signed up with several local businesses to help encourage our staff to support them. In return, our staff receive 10% discount from all of the stores involved ranging from small eateries to large national businesses.



Fire Safety Training

Fire Safe is a charity which aims to help educate Primary and Junior school children on lifesaving skills such as what to do in the event of a fire, how to make an emergency call, why they shouldn't make hoax calls and what effect this can have on communities. Devonshires donations help to educate children on these issues during a half day interactive session.



Work Place

Devonshires recognises the value of its people and encourages both their professional and personal development. We aim to foster a culture based on individual merit, effective teamwork and mutual respect. We want our CSR programme to engage all of our staff, whilst helping society as a whole.

We want to ensure we recognise the efforts of our staff, reward them for the contribution they make to our success and promote initiatives that can improve employee satisfaction and well-being.

Training (internal and external)

Training and development is integral to life at Devonshires with regular day to day feedback, appraisals and mid year reviews.

We offer seminars both in-house and externally on a number of topics on a regular basis. Examples of in-house training includes SRA code of conduct training, AML training and assessment, client care, equality and diversity training and webinars.



Work Place

Running Club

The Devonshires Running Club was launched in April with an event attended by our charities. The event allowed our staff to meet and socialise, get fit and raise money for our chosen charities. Action for Kids' personal Trainer, Andy Shaw, gave a presentation to staff on running tips and how to prepare for upcoming running events. Staff received running packs at the event which included a guide written by Andy Shaw and a Devonshires T-shirt. Andy Shaw also offered all the Devonshires staff preparing for charity runs a free personal training session to assist them in their preparation for the event.

The Devonshires Running Club meets twice a week and arranges events linked with our charities. Many of the running club members are currently training for races between 5k and half marathon distance which they will be doing on behalf of our charities. The firm assists our staff with registration for these events and makes a contribution towards the entry fees.



Market Place

Our clients are at the centre of our firm's activities. Their values are important to us and by understanding these and incorporating them into our own practice we can ensure that our working relationships are more cohesive. We feel it is valuable for us to share our clients' CSR principles and objectives, and we therefore build our CSR programme with our clients in mind.

When procuring services for the firm we look for suppliers who already comply, or are willing to comply, with our CSR principles. Their willingness to adhere to these principles is a significant factor in our suppliers' selection and retention.

We ensure that any suppliers we use have effective CSR and environmental policies in place. Over the past year we have worked closely with external companies to help improve our own policies. An example of this has been our relationship with our stationery suppliers who have reduced deliveries, provided 'greener' products, reported on 'green' targets and used less packaging wherever possible.

Environment

The environment is important to us and we are continually striving to maximise our performance on a variety of environmental issues following best practice wherever resources allow. It is no longer good enough to be committed to environmental management - we want to take a lead and make real, significant and measurable progress in this regard.

In 2011 Devonshires were awarded a Clean City Award by the Corporation of London in recognition of our recycling programme and for reducing our carbon footprint. We are looking to build on this work during 2012 and beyond.



Environment

In addition to our CSR Group we have also developed a 'Green Team' that includes members of staff who take responsibility for their own department's environmental efforts. This has helped to educate other members of staff in terms of recycling and reusing.

We will be producing management reports on the firm's waste records in 2012 in partnership with one of our main contractors. This will help raise awareness of our priorities and objectives throughout the firm. We will be setting up in-house competitions and games based on the success of the teams.



Devonshires signs up to the Legal Sector Alliance.

The Legal Sector Alliance is an inclusive movement of law firms and other related organisations committed to working collaboratively to take action on climate change by reducing their carbon footprint and adopting environmentally sustainable practices. We signed up to the scheme in January 2012 and have already started reporting on our carbon emissions.



Charitable Giving

Devonshires has a long standing commitment to donating money to charities. The individual activities of the partners were consolidated three years ago with the establishment of the Devonshires Foundation: a registered, grant giving charity (no.1117506). There is an emphasis on working with smaller charities and the work of the Foundation is designed to include both financial assistance and volunteer support.

The Foundation and the Partnership select three charities to work alongside for a 2 year cycle. Our focus over the course of the 2 years is to participate in fund-raising activities as well as undertaking volunteer work. Partners and staff are actively encouraged to get involved wherever and whenever they can.

Charity cheques

In March 2012 we celebrated the firm's success in raising over £30,000 for our chosen 2011/13 charities Action for Kids, Teenage Cancer Trust and Theatre Royal Stratford East with a presentation ceremony.

Everybody in the room had participated in fundraising for these three charities, taking part in running, baking, cycling and even leaping off buildings! Whilst not everybody in the firm made such daredevil contributions, there has been considerable support right across the firm in terms of donations.

The partners agreed to match fund everything that was raised individually and the impact of this raised our total donations, as a firm, to over £30,000.



Charitable Giving

Our chosen charities for 2011 - 2013 are;

**STRATFORD
EAST**.COM **THEATRE ROYAL
STRATFORD EAST**



The Theatre Royal opened in 1884, and since then it has undergone many changes. In 1992 the beautiful Victorian-era auditorium was restored. The refurbishment project enabled the theatre to re-open in the Autumn of 2001 with both technical facilities and public areas fit for the 21st Century.

They produce approximately seven new shows a year, including a pantomime, plus one-off events.

In 1999 they launched their Musical Theatre Initiative, with the vision to break new ground with musicals that bring contemporary and urban music into the mainstream of British theatre. The aim is to revitalise the musical form, to create work that is relevant to and informed by today's Britain and attract new diverse audiences.

Their youth arts and education work, new writing and audience outreach all form part of their holistic approach to developing new work and new audiences.

They are committed to developing new work that represents the aspirations and concerns of our diverse local community.

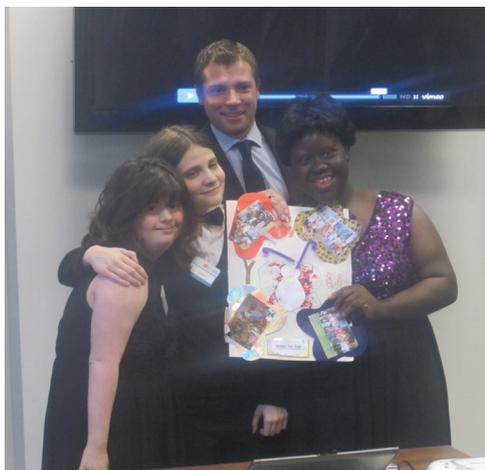
"We are thrilled with the support from Devonshires. It has been a real partnership in terms of working with their team on volunteering activities. The most unique part about it is the fact that all three charities are working together to maximise opportunities for all our young people. It is amazing to be part of it and we look forward to what more we can achieve this year. Thank you to everyone at Devonshires for your time, efforts and support – it makes a huge difference!" **EMMA LOUISE NORTON (TRSE)**

Charitable Giving

Action For Kids TOWARDS INDEPENDENCE

Action For Kids is a national charity working with children and young people with physical and learning disabilities, their parents and carers. We help to transform young lives by removing the barriers to independence.

They provide three main strands of support: providing wheelchairs and mobility equipment, supporting families and work related training and development for disabled young people.



“All of the staff, children, young people and families at Action For Kids would like to say a big thank you to everyone at Devonshires for their ongoing support and generosity. We are a relatively small charity relying entirely on the efforts of fundraisers at companies like yours.

The funds you raise throughout our partnership will be used to provide vital mobility equipment and to support a range of education and training programmes.

Everything you do really does have an impact and makes a real difference to the lives of disabled children and young people and their future independence, health and wellbeing.”

LYN PRODGER – ACTION FOR KIDS

Charitable Giving



Teenage Cancer Trust aim to ensure that every young person with cancer and their families receive the best possible care and professional support throughout their cancer journey.

Young people have a much better chance in their fight against cancer if they are treated by teenage cancer experts, in an environment tailored to their needs. Teenage Cancer Trust are working every day to make that happen.

“A huge thank you to Devonshires Solicitors for choosing Teenage Cancer Trust as one of their chosen charities this year. We’ve had a fantastic year working with Devonshires and the other charities and some of our young people have had some great experiences over the partnership.”

CAROLYN MWANIKI – TEENAGE CANCER TRUST



Charitable Giving - One Off Charitable Events

The London Legal Walk May 2011 and May 2012

The London Legal Walk is an annual 10k walk around London organised by the London Legal Support Trust. The walk raises money for law centres and specialist legal advice agencies which provide free advice and assistance to the community. With reductions in legal aid rates and the proposed cuts to the scope of public funding in areas such as family and social welfare, they understand that the work of organisations providing free legal advice to the most vulnerable members of society is more important than ever.

Devonshires have now taken part in two London Legal Walks and hope that this participation will continue in the future.



Poppy Appeal

Donation boxes are kept within our offices and Reception and staff and visitors are encouraged to donate to help support the Armed Forces and their families.



Crisis Square Mile Run

On June 9th, the Devonshires Square Mile Team joined 60 employees from L&Q in a 4 mile run through the city. Crisis is a national charity for single homeless people. It is dedicated to ending homelessness by delivering life-changing services and campaigning for change. Their innovative education, employment, housing and well-being services address individual needs and help people to transform their lives.



Christmas Panto

On Saturday 10th December Devonshires sponsored a trip to the Panto for our three chosen charities.

Around 40 children from Teenage Cancer Trust and Action For Kids went to Theatre Royal Stratford East to see Cinderella. The fun day out started at 10am with party games, before going into the theatre to see the show.

Judging by the smiles and laughter from the kids they clearly had a great time and thoroughly enjoyed the performance. It was also arranged as a special treat that four children, two from each charity, had small roles within the performance - something they'll never forget. The theatre was packed so they handled their nerves well!



Coffee At Work Week

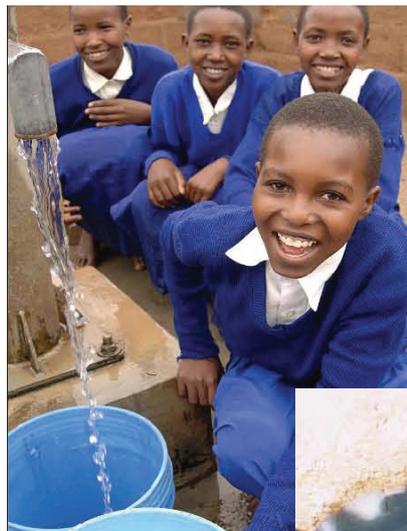
Devonshires participated in the Coffee At Work week in April 2012. Allegra Foundation is a registered charity (No. 1133540) set up by the Allegra Group to support sustainable development projects to provide clean drinking water and relevant education to deprived communities in Africa related to or contributing to the tea, coffee and food industries.

The objectives of Allegra Foundation are outlined below:

- To invest in sustainable projects providing drinking water to underprivileged communities in Africa connected to or contributing to the global coffee and tea industry
- To bring clean daily drinking water and relevant education to more than 100,000 individuals within a 3 year period and 1 million individuals within 10 years
- To ensure that projects contribute to long-term development of the communities benefiting from the initiatives
- To maximise the impact of projects and make efficient use of funds

COFFEE

WORK



We hope you have found this report informative and useful. As always, we are looking to improve so if you would like to provide feedback, or just get in touch regarding CSR activities, please contact:

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