



VERSION 1

Community First Report

Corporate Social Responsibility

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Introduction

Community First – Version 1 Gives Back

Corporate Social Responsibility is the responsibility of businesses for the impact they have on:

- Society
- The environment
- Their workforce
- Customers
- Communities in which they operate

Following the success of the Community Trust which had been in operation since 2014, Version 1's Board approved the relaunch of our efforts with the Community First programme.

The mission of the scheme is:

“To improve employment opportunities in our communities by leveraging technology and our skills.”

This means:

- Encouraging groups in our communities to explore STEM-related education and careers.
- Improving employment options in by helping groups that may have high barriers to employment.
- Focussing on technology-related activities and enablement.
- Directing our efforts at the communities in which we work.
- Making a direct impact by contributing at a practical, tangible level.
- Providing support in terms of our time and expertise, as well as financial supports.

Community First – A Local Focus

One of the reasons for the change in focus and the delegation of decision-making at a local level was to ensure that whatever actions were taken were appropriate both to the locations in which our teams are working, and to the skills of our employees in those offices. The diversity of the initiatives, completed and ongoing, reflects this.

During the first quarter of 2019, much of the effort was focussed on establishing these local groups, with volunteers in each office heading up local activities. Despite this there has been significant progress during the year, as can be seen from this report.

Local Champions

Belfast: **Seamus Wilkinson** | Bengaluru: **Seema Hejip** | Cork: **Kieran McCarthy**
 Dublin: **Anita Regucka-Fleming** | Edinburgh: **Gavin Thornton** | Kings Hill: **Mark Weber**
 Knutsford: **Jennie Brown** | London: **Steve Austin** | Pune: **Shweta Jain** | Redditch: **Nick Evans**



Community First – Empowering our Employees

As well as refocussing our efforts in the areas noted previously, Community First devolved responsibility to offices, with each office allocated a budget and the authority to decide what initiatives would have the greatest impact in their local area.

The initiatives described here represent a very small proportion of the voluntary activities undertaken by staff across the organisation and from which communities right across our geographies benefit. Many of the initiatives described in this report emanated from these voluntary activities across Ireland, the UK, and India and individual employees' connections to local organisations.

Community First – Increasing our Contribution

One of the major changes to the Community First programme was a change in how the programme is funded. Originally the Community Trust was intended to be jointly funded by the directors and staff – over the year staff contributions had decreased so the money available for good causes had reduced, in spite of our growth.

In 2019, renewed efforts resulted in a five-fold increase in the number of employees contributing to the Community First fund! Matching company contributions resulted in

funding being “topped up” by nearly €10,000 representing a 16% increase in total funding on 2018. Because these additional contributions have been growing throughout the year, the expected full year impact in 2020 is that the funding available will grow by a minimum of 37% compared to 2018.

Community First – Making a Difference to our Communities

The remainder of this report highlights specific examples of the excellent work undertaken throughout the year. While many individuals and organisations have benefited directly in 2019, many of the projects are providing foundations which we expect to build on in 2020. The activities completed included:

- Sponsorship of education
- Support for local groups aimed at developing IT skills
- Grant funding for hardware purchases in community groups
- Promotion of IT Skills and careers in schools
- IT training for community workers
- Development of programming curriculum for teenagers
- Support & sponsorship tackling Youth Homelessness (ByteNight)

Key Performance Indicators

Many of the initiatives undertaken have arisen from the individual personal contributions and voluntary efforts of our staff. A significant number of staff give their time across a diverse range of activities and community organisations, including Sporting clubs, Community Groups,

Scouting organisations, environmental groups, and a wide range of charities. Their ongoing contributions make a massive difference to the communities in which they live. In many instances, the initiatives supported in 2019 arose directly from those local contributions and efforts, and we hope that this will continue in 2020.

“ I’ve always been someone who thrives on helping others when I can. With the Community First initiative I have been able to put myself forward for various events that I wouldn’t have taken part in if I wasn’t employed in Version 1.
- James Aston, Knutsford

One of the objectives of Community First is to be able to measure the impact that we are having at local level. While many of the initiatives described in this document are long-term and developmental in nature, they do have a positive impact.

Key performance indicators	End of Year	Notes
Version 1 core contribution (EUR)	35,000	Guaranteed company funding
Number of employees contributing financially	82	This represents a 530% increase since the start of the year, however more employees are encouraged to consider making a small monthly contribution
Projected value of employee contributions (EUR) at end of December	5,600	The monthly contribution amount has been increasing throughout the year and is 230% greater than Jan 2019. Based on current contribution levels the figure is expected to be closer to 10,000 per annum next year
Value of Verion 1 matching funding (EUR)	5,600	
Total funding available	46,000	
Number of initiatives - financial support	10	
Total money distributed	17,700	Time to establish local teams led to slower than expected draw-down of funds. Money not spent in 2019 will be available in 20202
Number of initiatives - other supports	Numerous!	See the specific reports for additional initiatives undertaken throughout the year.



Action for Children's Byte Night

Version 1's involvement with Action for Children's Byte Night predates the Community First programme, going back to 2015. Byte Night is a UK-wide corporate sleep out and fundraiser, which aims to tackle Youth Homelessness – a key barrier to employment for many. In 2019, there were four Version 1 locations taking part

(Edinburgh, Belfast & Knutsford/Redditch) with approximately 30 Version 1 employees sleeping out and raising significant additional funds. Community First teams participated actively in these activities, providing additional funding and supports to a cause which is closely aligned with the Community First objectives.

Activities By Office

Knutsford

While the team in Knutsford is one of the smallest Version 1 teams, they joined the Knutsford “Business in the Community” group and are now active contributors. Many of the initiatives undertaken during the year arose from that forum. The team was particularly active with local schools. Visits from team members to those schools and return visits from some classes to the office have had an impact in terms of educating school children about the possibilities of STEM careers.

My World

Version 1 Knutsford collaborated with other local businesses in the locality to deliver a week long activity for Manor Park Primary School Y6 to Y7 students. Manor Park is a Knutsford based disadvantaged primary school, the catchment area falls within the ONS’s (Office of National Statistics) 20% most deprived UK boroughs in terms of employment outcomes for children.

The My World experience, which is co-ordinated and evaluated by Manchester

Airport Communities Team is designed to give the children an insight in to the world of work in their area. 30 School children attended the Knutsford Office in small groups and were given a brief introduction in to what Version 1 does and what it is like to work in the IT Sector.

Digital Footprints

93% of employers use social media to screen applicants, and 1 in 3 have found content which has ruled an applicant out. The Digital Footprint sessions delivered by Version 1 volunteers were held at Knutsford Academy Studio school and were designed to get the students to consider what they post, how to avoid social media employability pitfalls and how they can use social media for their own employment advantage. Studio schools are designed to foster the more vocational subjects including IT. The sessions were attended by 50 Year 10 and 12 students who were all preparing to commence work placements.

Numbers at Work

Numbers at Work is another initiative coordinated by Manchester Airport. As part of our contribution, members of the team visited two local primary schools to deliver the sessions and activities which are

intended to give Primary School children real life examples of using numeracy and STEM skills. These were delivered at Manor Park and St. Vincent's schools.

What's My Job?

Members of the team also delivered sessions at the two primary schools which explored different career options and types of job with children. In total, the team delivered sessions to nearly 200 children during the year, helping them to better

understand STEM and other career options. The team also participated in ByteNight (including running additional fund-raising activities) and hosted a female student considering a career in IT for a week's work placement.

London

Our London team mentored career-changers looking to enter the world of Development and IT, and Master's Graduates from Essex University. Feedback from the mentees has been very positive: *"I was a career*

changer struggling to find a developer job in the IT industry. I have secured countless interviews after our meeting and finally received a fantastic job offer."

Edinburgh

The Community Trust team in Edinburgh has been busy making connections with local and statutory groups, and expects to have new initiatives up and running in 2020. In particular they have made connections with the Scottish Government-sponsored "Developing the Young Workforce" group, the recommended body for engaging with

schools in Scotland. The team has also made connections with a local Community High School and Further Education centre. Several members of the Edinburgh team participated in the ByteNight sleepout, and raised additional money for Action for Children.

Pune

While Several of the team in Pune are involved in voluntary activities with their local communities, and identified that lack of access to education in early years was the biggest impediment to future employability. The team in Pune decided to tackle the issue from a number of angles.

Four people from the team worked with Community Link workers ("CLWs") who work on the ground in their own communities helping malnourished children to enter the "green zone" for their health by improving their nutrition. The Version 1 team used their IT skills to teach the CLW's basic computer skills, enabling those workers to better serve their own communities.



The CLW's were keen to learn basic computer skills and improve their English to create reports and communicate with other groups working on similar issues. The Version 1 team trained them in basic computer concepts like email, internet and Office, as well as best practice English communication.

In another Community First Initiative our Pune team visited a slum area (Anand Nagar, Chinchwad, Pune) along with a team from the local SNEH charity. A new pre-primary school had recently opened there for under-privileged kids, and the team did door-to-door surveys to spread awareness about early education and to encourage children to attend the school. There were around 200 kids in the target age group that were not going to school. The team helped to make the school more attractive by participating in a painting session at the school, and hosted drawing competitions to attract kids to attend. Financially, the Community First Trust funding was used to sponsor the education of 16 children for the year - the objective is that this early years investment will yield dividends in relation to future employability.

The team closed out the year by hosting children from the SNEH school in the office.



Cork

The team in Cork brought together both the Community Trust objective and our company focus on Innovation. In an initiative intended to appeal to teenagers, the team has put together a training programme to teach programming skills within schools by explaining how to programme Alexa

devices. The team has also worked with AWS Educate to leverage their materials and make the most of our partnership. The initial sessions are scheduled with a local school for early 2020, and it is hoped to repeat these sessions both in Cork and across the company.

Dublin

The Dublin team has focused on developing partnerships with community organisations to maximise the benefits of our contributions. The team has decided to partner with Junior Achievement Ireland – a non-profit organisation which links businesses with local schools. Volunteers will deliver specially tailored programmes aimed at exploring different career options to school children of all ages. Nearly 30 Version 1 volunteers have already been recruited, and classroom sessions are expected to start in early 2020, with a focus on STEM careers.

The team also held meetings with Focus Ireland, the Homeless Charity, and is exploring ways in which we can assist them and their clients in improving their employment options. Version 1 is also an active participant in various other initiatives aimed at improving employment options in the IT Sector. This includes the Women in IT Initiative, and the Women's Reboot programme, under which we provide work placements, as well as providing multiple work placements and intern opportunities for second and third level students respectively.

Bengaluru

Bengaluru is the newest Version 1 office, and only established its Community First team in June 2019. Despite the late start, the team has been very active, identifying and supporting programmes relevant to

their own community. The team decided to work with a local orphanage, and thanks to Version 1 Community First funding, were able to sponsor the education of six children in the orphanage for a year.



The team is establishing a long-term relationship with the orphanage, and six members of staff paid a visit, participating in various games and activities with the children who range in age from a few months to 15 years old. Local fundraising and

contributions from the team in Bengaluru also enabled the purchase of stationary, and additional funding for the organisation. Plans are well progressed to also deliver IT and English language classes to some of the older children within the orphanage.

Redditch



The team in Redditch has also been involved in a variety of Community First activities throughout the year, again focussed on developing and using technology skills within the community. The Redditch Youth and Community Enterprise (RYCE) group is a charity in Redditch that aims to improve education options and the local community. One of their initiatives is a Coding Club, that teaches local youngsters how to develop games, websites, animations etc. The Code Club is affiliated to the Raspberry global code club.

Grant funding from the Community First programme in Redditch will enable the

centre to purchase 10 Raspberry Pi starter kits, to enable young people who would not otherwise be able to afford them to participate in the Code club, developing their skills and improving future opportunities.

Plans are underway to recruit a team of Version 1 volunteers in 2020 who will supplement this funding with their time and expertise! The team also made connections with several local schools during the year, and has hosted informative careers fairs and Women in IT talks. These enabled the team to promote IT as a career choice for girls as there is a clear issue with girls in the area not considering IT to be a suitable career path. Work experience opportunities were provided for a number of local school children exploring careers in IT.

The team were active fundraisers – a team of 6 Version 1 staff participated in the WolfRun and were delighted to raise an additional £480 for local causes.

Kent

The team in Kings Hill identified Carers as a group who very often put their own careers on hold and whose employment options can be curtailed. The team has been working with the Heart of Kent Hospice which provides end of life care services for people in the locality. The hospice also has a programme of events for day attendees and their families and carers. The office has

been putting together some fundamental IT training courses which will be of benefit to Carers as well as patients, volunteers and hospice staff. The team provided laptops and relevant software for the workshops which were delivered by volunteers from the office and will provide relevant skills to help attendees seek new employment.



Belfast

The office in Belfast had established links with local schools over a number of years, and built on these efforts in 2019. Following a meeting with Hazelwood Girls College at the beginning of the school year, several joint activities were agreed which took place throughout the year.

An office open day where 8 year 14 students came into the office. They provided talks from colleagues from different areas of the business, including Development, Testing, Functional, Technical, BI and Project Management. These students were in the process of deciding on university courses and found the day very helpful in terms of course selection.

Four year-12 work experience students attended the office over the course of a week. The team provided talks again from different areas of the business and allowed

the students to shadow different members of the team. Some development, team building and career planning activities were also provided for the students.

Funding was provided by the Community First fund to Bradbury Hub. Bradbury Hub is a community organisation which aims to equip teenagers with IT skills. It provides coding classes, but until now attendees had to have access to their own laptop – something that rules out many who would otherwise benefit. Version 1 provided funding to provide laptops which can be used by young people who would not otherwise be able to avail of the classes available.

The team intends to supplement the equipment with volunteer time in 2020.



Plans for 2020

In 2020 we will continue to promote Community First internally.

We encourage staff to get involved with local teams, and to propose initiatives which are aligned to our overall objectives with which we can work.

We will also encourage more staff to contribute financially as many small contributions can make a big difference, as already seen in 2019.

We continue to identify groups who may be excluded from future employment options, particularly in the technology sector, and

will work with local partners to ensure that the impacts of our efforts are maximised.

Agreements are already in place with several of the organisations to which we provided funding in 2019, to supplement this funding with staff expertise and time input.

Where money was committed but not spent in 2019, this has been ring-fenced for the offices to which it was allocated and remains available.



Get in Touch

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