

Business in **AWARDS**  
Community **2007**

West of England Awards for Excellence



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# Awards for Excellence 2007

Now in their tenth year, Business in the Community's Awards for Excellence are the UK's leading awards for responsible business practice.

The Awards recognise companies that are integrating responsible business practice into their mainstream operations and are delivering positive impacts on the environment and in the marketplace, workplace and community.

There are a total of 19 categories in Business in the Community's national awards, twelve of which have been awarded this year in the West of England. We also have a number of awards exclusive to the region which recognise businesses and individuals in the West of England that have excelled in corporate responsibility and their contributions to the community.

If you would like to enter the **West of England Awards for Excellence 2008**, please contact us on 0117 972 2111 or email [westofengland@bitc.org.uk](mailto:westofengland@bitc.org.uk)

# Jubilee Award

## Nationwide Building Society, Nationwide/Macmillan Partnership

Macmillan Cancer Support has been Nationwide's flagship charity since 1993 - one of the longest running business and charity partnerships in the UK. The two organisations work across the whole of the UK and have jointly developed a system to ensure any funds raised by employees and members in a geographical area are used to support Macmillan services in that area; this results in a strong local community focus. The partnership has flourished to the point that every day someone from Nationwide is raising funds for the charity.

Fundraising initiatives include a 'Climb Your Own Mountain' challenge, selling pin badges in branches and the 'World's Biggest Coffee Morning'.

### Impact

Almost £5m has been raised for Macmillan to date. This has contributed towards:

- Over 2,000 nurses now working for the charity and the number of Macmillan healthcare professionals rising to over 3,500
- The opening of the Macmillan National Institute of Education with ten lecturers to train specialist cancer care professionals
- The launch of the Macmillan Benefits Helpline, offering financial advice to those living with cancer
- 89% of employees considered Nationwide as a socially responsible company in the company's 2006 employee survey



# BUPA Healthy Communities Award

## Serco, Serco Integrated Services

Over the last two years, the company has developed three community programmes which reflect Serco's corporate values: to make a fair profit as well as a positive difference to the people and communities it does business with.

The main emphasis of the company's community engagement is focused on supporting deprived communities through adult education. This is done through a basic skills programme 'S4U' which reaches staff, parents and children at the Brentry and Henbury Children's Centre (BHCC) through a programme of initiatives.

S4U also offers employees basic skills training; this was rolled out with the goal of enabling employees to attain skills that could ultimately be taken back to their communities and families, with the business benefit as a secondary consideration.

Serco has also utilised its Fire Service alongside local partners to raise awareness of fire services. The most notable community success of this project has been working in partnership with the Fire Service registered charity 'Gambia and Avon Fire Services in Partnership'.



### Impact

- Support given to BHCC has enabled the children's centre to provide a childcare service enabling parents to return to employment
- 55% fewer accidents and a drop of 72% in lost time since S4U was developed
- 30% of staff took part in basic skills training over 2005/06
- 28% decrease in fire service staff attrition since the fire service community programme was developed
- Fire service visits provided free training and assessments to BHCC, Patchway Primary School, Friends of Corey Appeal and the Women's Refuge

# Merrill Lynch Raising Achievement in Young People Award

## MITIE Group plc, MITIE Construction Skills Centres

The company has established seven regionally based MITIE Construction Skills Centres (MCSC) in secondary schools in order to demonstrate its philosophy of providing opportunities for young people to develop their full potential, irrespective of their background.

The MCSC's main objectives are to:

- Address the skills shortage within the construction industry
- Attract young people into the industry, particularly female participation
- 'Home-grow' MITIE talent by engaging with 14-19 year olds
- Encourage the future stars of the construction industry
- Promote MITIE as an employer of choice

The centres provide the students with a vocationally-orientated learning environment in order to gain sufficient skills and knowledge to obtain meaningful employment. The curriculum is delivered by dedicated tutors and supported by MITIE employees and its supply chain partners.

### Impact

The key successes to date are:

- 7 centres running in Birmingham, Bristol, Ipswich, London, Manchester, Portsmouth and Sunderland, an eighth to open in Airdree in June 2007
- Over £250,000 invested in the programme by MITIE in 2006
- Remarkable improvements demonstrated by a large number of students who previously exhibited low attainment and poor attendance
- An improved opinion of MITIE as an employer by 80% of employees involved in the MCSCs



# Merrill Lynch Raising Achievement in Young People Award

## HMP & YOI\* Ashfield & Serco, Positive Partnership

HMP & YOI Ashfield has focused on finding a solution to the difficulties surrounding the re-integration of young offenders into the community. This challenge has been addressed through linking work experience to vocational training in partnership with other providers such as Bristol City Council, Avon & Somerset Fire Brigade and the Chef's Forum.

The partnership formed with Avon and Somerset Fire Brigade has led to a number of successful placements on their Fire Cadet Scheme and in vehicle maintenance and office services.

The young offenders have also been given the opportunity to gain professional qualifications in catering and receive support as they work in a real catering environment within the community.



### Impact

- An enhanced profile in the eyes of stakeholders and consequent increased involvement from public sector bodies such as the Youth Justice Board
- New contracts have been secured on the back of the knowledge gained from forging new partnerships and innovation trialled at Ashfield
- 187 trainees have completed a ten day Forklift course with 60% finding employment on release
- 34 and 38 young men have worked towards achieving NVQ Level 1 and 2 in Catering, respectively. Another 65 have gained Food Hygiene certificates
- On release, 15 young men have taken up temporary placements with Bristol City Council. Not one of these has re-offended

**\*Her Majesty's Prison Service & Youth Offenders' Institute.**

# Eco-efficiency Award

## Bordeaux Quay

The key objective of Bordeaux Quay has been to create a beautiful, successful restaurant that operates in a wholly sustainable manner. A sustainable approach has been the primary driver in both the development and operation of the business.

The restaurant carefully considers resources consumed, waste minimisation, energy use and supplier selection. At every stage in its business operations, it chooses suppliers who are committed to carrying out their operations and delivering their products and services with the least possible impact on the environment.

In the business' conception a specialist environment architect was brought on board whose brief included re-using as much as possible from the existing structure and equipment, donating or recycling what couldn't be used and sourcing new or second-hand building materials and equipment with their environmental impact in mind.

### Impact

- The restaurant has a unique selling point with both customers and for events, the latter bringing in a gross income of £20,000 in the business' first six months

- Annual saving of £1,700 from using energy saving light bulbs and 40% lower annual electricity bill through exploitation of natural airflows in the design of the building so that air conditioning is not needed
- Saving of 175,000 litres of water a year through a rainwater harvesting tank. Every week 2,200 litres of cardboard and 2,000 litres of glass are diverted from landfill through recycling
- 2,000 litres of food waste composted each week reducing methane emissions and landfill
- Use of environmental cleaning materials has reduced chemical consumption by 45% in the first four months of 2007



# BUPA Healthy Communities Award

## Re-Accreditation: Nationwide Building Society, Nationwide Cats' Eyes for Kids

In 2001, Nationwide launched Cats' Eyes for Kids by distributing reflectors, worksheets and lesson plans in order to help reduce the number of child pedestrian casualties.

In 2000, the Government launched a 10 year strategy to reduce UK road casualties. Consultation showed that primary schoolchildren were the most vulnerable road-user group and that accidents peaked at the times when children were walking to and from school.

A successful pilot project involving 75 schools was run in 2000 and the first reflectors were distributed in 2001. Since then, 11 million reflectors, lesson plans and worksheets have been donated to 25,000 UK schools.

Cat's Eyes for Kids will continue until 2010, in line with government strategy.

### Impact

- Heightened road safety awareness of 11 million UK primary schoolchildren, and a practical and popular device provided to improve their visibility to motorists
- An estimated 12,000 child pedestrian deaths and injuries avoided through Cats' Eyes for Kids
- Positive media coverage achieved with an estimated equivalent media value of £3.4m
- 49% reduction in casualties after only 6 years, against a Government target of a 50% reduction to child pedestrian casualties between 2000 and 2010



## BT Cause Related Marketing Award

### Re-Accreditation: The Somerfield Group, The Somerfield Butterfly Campaign

In July 2005 the Somerfield Group announced their Charity of the Year partnership with the Association of Children's Hospices (ACH). The hospices provide an essential community service to children with life-limiting illnesses and their families. The partnership has encompassed a mixture of fundraising weeks, awareness raising and government lobbying.

The 'Somerfield Butterfly Campaign' is now successfully embedded at all levels within Somerfield, with Board support and buy-in, senior management involvement in planning, implementation and motivation of staff, and unprecedented support from colleagues at all levels. The partnership is owned and managed by Somerfield's charity team, with a separate staff committee to organise the Somerfield Charity Ball.



#### Impact

- Raised over £2.8 million over the 18-month campaign
- Reached an audience of over 43 million through national press, radio and television
- Increased profile of ACH resulting in further national businesses also considering selecting the charity as their community partner
- An extra £27 million of funding to support children's hospice services pledged by the government following the Somerfield and Sun online petition calling for increased statutory funding
- Dramatically improved public perception of children's hospices. In 2005 70% and 27% of people associated them with the words 'death' and 'bleak'. In 2007 the figures have fallen to 37% and 9%

# FirstGroup Skills for Life Award

## Re-Accreditation: FirstGroup plc, UK Bus Division, Continuing Lifelong Learning & Skills for Life

FirstGroup plc has pioneered a joint strategy of Learning Centres aimed at its 20,300 drivers in partnership with the Transport & General Worker's Union. The three key business drivers are recruitment, retention and motivation.

As an operator in numerous communities, it was also important to increase job opportunities for local people, particularly minority groups, and to ensure increased customer satisfaction through maximum safety.

In March 2006 there were 40 Learning Centres across the UK. Employee access now stands at 56% and is on target to exceed the original target of 80% by the end of 2007. The company also runs mobile learning centres in Scotland.

### Impact

- Driver turnover has consistently improved since the launch of the programme and currently stands at 26%, lower than the industry average of 30%. £4.9 million has been saved in recruitment since the programme was introduced
- Lost time injuries have continued to decrease with an overall 30% reduction
- Increased satisfaction of employees is reflected in a recent survey which revealed a 16% increased perception of 'positive management behaviour'
- The UK Bus Division of FirstGroup plc is becoming an increasingly trusted and reliable means of transport with a 41% improvement in customer satisfaction over a ten month period



Kraft Foods



# John Lewis & Waitrose Supply Chain Award

## Re-accreditation: Kraft Foods UK & Ireland, Rainforest Alliance Certified sustainable coffee

Kraft Foods Inc is the second largest food and beverage company in the world. In 2003, Kraft Foods began to buy significant quantities of coffee beans from certified sustainable sources and these quantities have increased year-on-year. Certification of these sources is carried out by the Rainforest Alliance, an independent not-for-profit organisation. Coffee from Rainforest Alliance Certified farms commands a higher price in the market which allows farmers a better standard of living.

Kraft procurement teams are responsible for ensuring financial traceability and chain-of-custody of the coffee itself. Rainforest Alliance teams also verify this work, carrying out periodic spot checks.

The bulk of the certified coffee purchased by Kraft is also blended into mainstream product lines such as Maxwell House, Kenco, and Carte Noire at no extra premium to the consumer.

### Impact

- A total of 12,500 tonnes of coffee has now been sourced from certified sources representing 2.2% of the company's global coffee purchase
- An estimated £4.6 million in additional premiums have been returned to farmers
- \$1,120,000 has been contributed to support Rainforest Alliance in training and assistance
- Over 150,000 farmers have benefited and more than 72,000 acres of forest in Central and South America have been preserved



# Merrill Lynch Raising Achievement in Young People Award

## Re-accreditation: Kraft Foods UK & Ireland, health 4 schools

In September 2004, Kraft Cares - the community partnership programme for Kraft Foods - launched 'health 4 schools', an initiative to promote healthy diet and active play to school children and communities in Gloucestershire. Participating schools are supported with funding, training, a resource pack, access to the health 4 schools website, a dedicated health 4 schools coordinator, and hands-on facilitator support to implement the programme.

The programme takes a holistic approach focusing on four strands of activity: growing and learning about food; learning to cook; eating breakfast; active play.



### Impact

- 75 schools now benefit from the programme reaching 18,000 primary and secondary pupils in Gloucestershire
- 94% of schools who have participated in health 4 schools indicated that the programme had contributed to a change in school culture. This includes an interest in growing and cooking food as well as choosing to eat breakfast and engaging in active play
- Willingness from families to become actively involved in running gardening and cooking sessions with pupils as well as engage with their local community on events such as family breakfast sessions and healthy living weeks
- Increased dialogue with government stakeholders resulting in a House of Commons reception, presence at the Labour party conference and partnership with the Local Government Authority

# Power in Partnership Award

## Re-accreditation: Bristol Business Action on Homelessness Group

Bristol Business Action on Homelessness (BAOH) aims to break the vicious cycle of 'no job = no home', through helping homeless people find employment and achieve independent living.

BAOH is a collaboration between businesses and homelessness agencies who work in partnership with Business in the Community to support the 'Ready-for-Work' programme. The BAOH's partners in Bristol include:

Aspire, Believe, Bristol City Council, BUPA Hospital Bristol, Business in the Community, Cadbury Trebor Bassett, Crisis Centre Ministries, Gala Casino, Hilton Bristol, HM Revenue & Customs, Jobcentre Plus, John Lewis, Marks & Spencer, The National Trust, Novas Group, Priority Youth Housing, Royal Mail.

The group supports homeless people in developing the necessary skills to gain and

maintain employment. Clients are prepared for work through a business-led training programme and work placements and are also offered job coaches to support them in sustaining employment.

### Impact

- 47 clients placed in Ready-to-Go training and 37 in work placements, 12 placed in employment and 12 matched with job coaches
- Goody bags donated to all candidates about to embark on the Ready-for-Work programme, including shampoo, shower gel and alarm clocks
- Provided business volunteers to work as job coaches to help participants move towards gaining employment
- HM Revenue & Customs' work placement offering increased to 100 a year as a result of Government liaison
- Christmas party held to recognise the contributions of clients, agencies and businesses to the success of the programme



# Unum Healthy Workplaces Award

## Re-accreditation: Nationwide Building Society, Employee Health & Lifestyle

Nationwide has a tradition of caring for their employees and creating a positive working environment. The company's Health and Lifestyle programme fits in with its business objectives, most importantly making Nationwide a place "...where I want to work". The programme addresses illness, health and safety and promotes employee wellbeing.

The Employee Health and Lifestyle programme is an integral part of the company's business plan and culture. It is measured and reported on in line with the Group Performance Measures reviewed at Board level.

Processes in place include: flexible working and BodyCare policy, free health screening for all employees, range of health-related products available including subsidised healthcare, subsidised gym and employee sports clubs, discounted alternative therapies and healthy food services.



### Impact

- Awarded third place in the Sunday Times Best Companies to Work For
- Reduction in annual turnover rate and drop in employee absence
- 19,500 health screenings given to employees. Case management of over 484 cases of long term sick employees
- Over 1,700 calls and over 200 face-to-face counselling interventions per year to the EmployeeCare scheme. Creation of specialist training programmes for managers in recognising stress and depression in employees
- Access to private healthcare for 7,059 current employees and 7,795 dependants/retired employees

# The Government's Health, Work, Wellbeing Award 2007

in association with Business in the Community

## University of Bristol, 'Positive Working Environment'

The University's Positive Working Environment (PWE) programme aims to make work life productive, rewarding, enjoyable and healthy. Firmly embedded in the institution's operations, PWE offers staff the facilities, services and culture to lead a healthy working life.

The programme includes subsidised gym membership, a counselling and careers service, stress management workshops, summer sports camps and guidance pamphlets. Two PWE weeks are also planned each year offering employees a range of opportunities including swimming lessons, blood

pressure checks, motivational lectures and free consultations with a sports medicine clinic.

### Impact

- 1,744 days of work regained in 2005/06 as a result of decreased employee absence, saving the University £16,580
- 191 staff seen by the Staff Counselling Service with 81% of those categorized as having high anxiety seeing a dramatic reduction in severity at the end of treatment
- Careers advice given to 694 staff and 50% reduction in fixed term contracts amongst research staff resulting in increased job security and reduced stress
- Over 20% of workforce attend PWE weeks with a number of events oversubscribed



## The Government's Health, Work, Wellbeing Award 2007 in association with Business in the Community

### UCAS

UCAS aims to provide a safe, healthy and pleasant work environment through promoting the general wellbeing of staff and providing a comprehensive package of benefits, beyond pay and conditions, in order to minimise sickness absence and remain an employer of choice.

The company has in place a number of initiatives designed to achieve this aim including a sickness absence policy ensuring that all absence is certificated and return-to-work interviews are undertaken.

An on-site occupational health clinic is available once a month and health 'MOT's, osteoporosis and prostate clinics are provided for staff. An 'Employee Assistance Programme' offers staff confidential advice and counseling and a staff benefits package provides child-care vouchers, a bicycle lease scheme and facilitates access to private health care.

### Impact

- Sickness absence has dropped by a third since 2004
- Staff turnover for 2005/06 stood at 11%, lower than the average rate of 18.3%
- Improved emotional health of staff as a result of counselling and significant reduction in time taken off work to deal with stress
- High take-up of relaxation classes and consequent improved staff morale



## Regional Champion

### **Roger James, Community Relations Manager, Rolls Royce plc**

Roger is an outstanding individual, truly embodying Rolls-Royce's corporate responsibility values both within the business and the wider community.

Roger took on the role of Community Relations Manager for Rolls-Royce in Bristol ten years ago. He has been a leading figure for the organisation and the community over this period through his involvement with Race for Opportunity, Business Action on Homelessness (BAOH), Cares and ProHelp, amongst a number of other business and community initiatives.

Roger encourages employees to get involved in their community and make a difference. Working with BITC, he has encouraged staff to take advantage of a wide range of opportunities from individual or team-based projects through to personal and professional development.

Roger has also worked with ProHelp offering local community organisations business and accountancy support. Rolls-Royce's document services department regularly offers community groups and schools design and print facilities.

Through BAOH, Roger has hosted four tours for the homeless, provided free IT training courses and offered counselling for clients on placement within the company. Roger has also overseen the integration of Bristol Cares into Rolls-Royce and is a founding member of Bristol Cares Leadership team and Cares partnership.

Roger demonstrates Rolls Royce's commitment to social responsibility through the wide range of community initiatives in which the business participates. A large number of their programmes are driven by Roger's enthusiasm and personal commitment to responsible business practice. Working with the community is a way of life for Roger, and he personally supports and number of trusts and community-based organisations outside his working commitment.

## Marks & Spencer Sieff Award

### Joy Pollard, The Park Local Opportunity Centre

The Park helps to strengthen regeneration in Knowle West, Bristol, through adult and community courses, learning in schools and vocational training. The centre has a number of long standing partnerships with businesses in Bristol.

Joy has shown enormous dedication to the community of Knowle West through the partnerships she has built and sustained with businesses in the city. Joy has secured the support of a number of companies through Cares, enabling employee volunteering. It is Joy's ability to demonstrate the importance of The Park and her personal dedication to its service users and the wider community that captures the commitment of volunteers.

Joy has been key in securing a £4,000 grant from HBOS for investment in the centre. Working with Cares, HBOS has already transformed the Conference Room at The Park while developing team building and project management skills for employees.

Joy has also hosted business leaders through The Prince's Seeing is Believing to highlight the problems of youth disengagement and low aspiration and the vital role The Park plays through its facilities, programme and support.

Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant of Bristol Jay Tidmarsh worked alongside Joy in planning the Her Majesty The Queen's visit to Bristol and comments on how the visit; "has given me the opportunity to see Joy working with an enormously wide and varied number of groups ... in the process I have been able to develop a profound respect for her ability to get on at all levels and with all manner of people... she is an outstanding person and deserves to receive the Award for the remarkable contribution she has made and continues to make in a very demanding role."

## Cares Team of the Year

### Stepping Stones Project Team, Nutricia Ltd

The team re-designed and renovated the garden of Stepping Stones, a group which works with children with special needs, creating a safe play area and welcoming entrance for the children and visitors.

The 'spectacular transformation' was achieved through:

- A very diverse group bringing together their project management, communication and negotiation skills exceptionally well
- Consistent communication with the

benefactor, managing expectation and ensuring the Challenge satisfied shared goals

- Good planning and management as well as a positive attitude which enabled the complex project to deliver a strong result

"Every member of the team brought huge benefits to Stepping Stones. Their team spirit, sense of fun and endless attention to detail earned them huge respect from everyone." (Deborah Wickham, Project Manager, Stepping Stones)

## Cares Team Leader

### Dr Nick Walker, Royal Society Research Fellow University of Bristol

Nick has gone above and beyond the role of a team leader by developing a case study from his team's volunteer work in order to demonstrate to other university departments how community engagement can benefit the local community and an institution as well as drive forward culture change.

Nick organised and inspired a large team of staff and postgraduate students to get involved in renovating Weston Park primary school in Lawrence Weston.

He encouraged participation by contributing to the planning prior to the day, organising activities leading up to the event and by undertaking the challenge itself.

"The organisation of the project was first rate ... there was a spirit of cheerfulness and shared commitment, and the work was carried out to a very high standard." (Dr Janet Thomas, School Governor, Weston Park Primary School)

## Cares Volunteer of the Year

### James Farrell, Nutricia Ltd

James has shown 100% dedication and enthusiasm to the business' four day community challenge with Stepping Stones. Involved in the planning, renovation and follow up work, James' commitment to the company's Cares Challenge has brought enormous benefits to both the business and their community partner.

Motivation, problem solving and negotiation skills have all been clearly demonstrated by James over the course

of the project as well as a 'can do' attitude that has inspired colleagues and significantly moved the challenge forward.

"To date James continues to visit the setting, checking on wear and tear and completing work as required. James has made himself available to Stepping Stones and in the manner of a true volunteer has never looked for any recognition for all the support he has given." (Deborah Wickham, Project Manager, Stepping Stones)

## ProHelp Recognition Award



Osborne Clarke's Bristol office has reflected the firm's commitment to community investment by undertaking a range of pro bono legal work, offering their expertise for free. The last eighteen months has seen the business assist 11 community projects through Bristol ProHelp, giving professional support to grassroots community organisations with the equivalent value of over £10,000. Projects include providing legal advice on lease renewal and property ownership.

The firm has developed an understanding of key local issues by supporting

organisations in the community in which they operate. They have also worked collaboratively with other businesses in the region where different skills and expertise have been needed to fulfil a request for help.

Osborne Clarke has made a real difference to community organisations, helping them overcome obstacles, develop and grow; their commitment to the ProHelp programme is inspiring.

## The Prince's Ambassador Award

### **Ben Clarke, Vice President & Area Director, Kraft Foods, UK & Ireland**

As Vice President and Area Director of Kraft Foods UK & Ireland, Ben has been at the forefront of marketing and general management for the business during a period in which Kraft has significantly progressed its corporate responsibility agenda in western Europe.

Responsible business practice implemented under Ben's leadership includes:

- Forging strong connections with the local community in Gloucestershire through investment in a long term education programme and employee volunteering
- Making employee health a priority for the business
- Reviewing suppliers and their relationships, ensuring responsibility and sustainability
- Transforming the business marketing strategy in western Europe to demonstrate responsible marketing and transparency

During Ben's leadership Kraft UK & Ireland has been awarded:

- Big Ticks and reaccreditations for both its 'health 4 schools' programme and its Rainforest Alliance Certified sustainable coffee
- Highly commended for its supply chain in Business in the Community's 2006 Awards for Excellence
- BBC Big Challenge Health Works Award for Healthiest Large Employer
- Clarion Strategic Communications Award 2006 for promotion of Kraft's partnership with the Rainforest Alliance
- Food & Drink Federation Community Partnership Awards - Education Award 2005 and 2007

Ben graduated in Marketing from Thames Valley and has a BA in Business Studies. Outside of work Ben enjoys spending time with his young family, travelling, reading and opera.

“Again, congratulations to all the organisations and individuals who have been recognised this year, you’ve made an enormous contribution in the West of England.

I also want to thank and encourage companies in the region who have submitted entries to our Awards for Excellence but perhaps haven’t been successful this year as well as those companies that may just be embarking on their responsible business agenda. Your hard work and energy is commendable and undoubtedly has already and will continue make an enormously positive contribution to society.

Along with my team in the West of England, I look forward to supporting you in your work over the next twelve months and celebrating with you again in June 2008.”

**Peaches Golding**  
Regional Director  
Business in the Community

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GALA CASINO



Burleigh

WESTERN  
**Daily Press**

**"The overall costs and risks of climate change will be equivalent to losing at least 5% of global GDP each year, now and for ever."**

Stern Review 2006



Business in the Community is a unique movement of over 750 member companies, with a further 2000 plus engaged through our programmes and campaigns. We operate through a local network of more than 100 business led partnerships and 60 global partners.

**Registered Details**

President HRH The Prince of Wales  
Chairman Sir Michael Rake  
Chief Executive Julia Cleverdon CVO, CBE  
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**Business in the Community  
West of England Office**

ITV West  
Bath Road  
Brislington  
Bristol BS4 3HG

T: 0117 972 2111  
F: 0117 972 2334

[www.bitc.org.uk](http://www.bitc.org.uk)  
[westofengland@bitc.org.uk](mailto:westofengland@bitc.org.uk)

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE