

# [News story: Our commitment to corporate social responsibility \(CSR\)](#)

As a government organisation and a large employer, corporate social responsibility (CSR) is important to us. We're committed to ethical and sustainable business practices. This means we take account of our social, economic and environmental impact. CSR is good for the planet, our employees, customers and communities.

There are 4 main strands to our CSR activities.

## **1. Environment (estates and environment)**

We're committed to reducing our direct impact on the environment by actively managing our waste, emissions and consumption of natural resources.

## **2. People (human resources, health and wellbeing)**

We aim to create a workplace that encourages diversity and equal opportunities for all. We actively encourage professional development through our 5-days-a-year learning programme and support employee health and wellbeing.

## **3. Procurement (finance and purchasing)**

We seek out the most advantageous procurement route for the life of a project. This means 90% of our supply chain contracts are through government frameworks, where suppliers have been tendered, audited and checked against important criteria like financial stability and environmental compliance.

## **4. Community (volunteering, skills matching and fundraising)**

To play a positive role in society, we've built a culture that promotes employee volunteering, skills matching and fundraising. We actively support local businesses and the communities in which we operate.

## **Origins of our CSR**

In 2014, we created our CSR strategy. Its aim was to bring together and recognise the range of CSR activities we were already doing and to outline future commitments under each of the 4 main strands. We wanted to show how we're contributing to sustainable development and adopting responsible behaviours that reflect our core values as an organisation.

## **Our CSR today**

Since 2013, we've raised over £50,000 for charity and this year we've been accredited with the [MIND gold award](#) and the [IIP gold award](#).

Our CSR activities have grown significantly over the last 5 years. We've increased our volunteer days from 3 to 5 days a year. This means each employee now gets 5 days a year to go out and support local projects and charities. We also have CSR ambassadors across the organisation, who help the CSR team set up and run various community projects.

Some of our current team volunteer days include:

- Bute Park Litter Pick
- Cardiff Food Bank
- Cardiff Dogs Home
- Ty Hafan Craft Centre

Our CSR Coordinator, Leanne Hugglestone, spoke to us about her passion for CSR and our responsibilities as a government organisation to help the local community.

Leanne said:

According to 'Business in the Community', a good goal to have for staff volunteering is around the 18 to 20% mark. Last year we hit 28% unique volunteers in Companies House.

[Listen to our podcast.](#)

Leanne explains how we've impacted our community, and the future of CSR at Companies House. From donating our office furniture worth over £40,000, to helping local charities through the knowledge and skills of our staff volunteers.

To stay up to date with our CSR activities, [follow us on Twitter](#) and search #CompaniesHouseCSR.

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## **[Notice: Competition guidance for Agri-tech Catalyst round 7: agriculture and food systems innovation](#)**

*Updated:* Taken out the requirement for the technical lead to provide an address as this is not included in the application form.

Please read the [full competition scope](#) before you make your application.

There must be a UK administrative lead. The technical project work can be led by an organisation from the UK or an eligible African country.

The administrative lead:

- must be UK based
- can be a business (of any size), academic organisation, charity, public sector organisation or research organisation for early and mid stage projects
- must be a business (of any size) for late stage projects
- work in collaboration, including with at least one organisation from an eligible country in Africa
- carry out your project work in the UK or an eligible African country or both

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## [News story: Strong public backing bolsters fight against blight of plastic waste](#)

Individuals, businesses and campaign groups have expressed overwhelming support for action on tackling the impact of plastics on our environment.

The backing comes as HM Treasury publishes the [summary of responses](#) to its recent call for evidence on how tax can be used to reduce plastic waste. The call attracted an unprecedented 162,000 responses, the highest in the Treasury's history.

The Chancellor, Philip Hammond, has reiterated the department's commitment to take action through the tax system to reduce the amount of single-use plastic waste. The views received will help inform and shape the government's approach ahead of this year's Budget.

Measures which received noteworthy public support and are being considered include using the tax system to:

- encourage greater use of recycled plastic in manufacturing rather than new plastic
- discourage the use of difficult to recycle plastics, like carbon black plastic
- reduce demand for single-use plastics like coffee-cups and takeaway boxes
- encourage further recycling as opposed to incineration

The Exchequer Secretary, Robert Jenrick, while visiting a plastic pollution clean-up operation on Perranporth Beach in Cornwall, said:

Tackling the scandal of plastic pollution is one of our top priorities and we know the public is right behind us. I've been overwhelmed by the public support and the responses we've received will be invaluable as we develop our plans for using the tax system to combat this.

Our duty to leave the environment in a better state than we found it is absolutely clear and what we've set out today is another important step to ensuring a cleaner, greener future for Britain.

Hugo Tagholm, CEO of Surfers Against Sewage, said:

Surfers Against Sewage is delighted with the huge public response to the Treasury's recent call for evidence on how the tax system could be used to reduce plastic waste, which many of our supporters responded to.

This is a clear indication of the public appetite for more fiscal interventions to help reduce plastic pollution littering our environment, from inner-city streets and countryside to our oceans.

The Treasury is also looking at how it could further support measures to fund the development of new, greener products and innovative processes that will help ensure a more sustainable future for the country.

This work forms part of the government's overall commitment in its [25 Year Environment Plan](#) to eliminate all avoidable plastic waste. It builds on the recently announced £20 million plastics innovation fund – to support the production of sustainable and recyclable plastics – and follows the £61.4 million announced by the Prime Minister to be invested in tackling plastic in the world's oceans.

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## [News story: LLWR Manager wins share of industry honour](#)

LLW Repository Ltd (LLWR) Manager Mike Coward has received the prestigious Shared Services Alliance (SSA) Walker Award for Collaborative Working as a member of a team that undertook a pilot project predicted to lead to major cost savings across the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) Group.

The award-winning team, drawn from across the SSA, undertook a collaborative supplier assessment on the management system arrangements of Nuvia Ltd, and its assessment report has been well received across the Alliance.

Such joint assessments are expected to reduce the burden on resources across the NDA Group and the supply chain, creating significant efficiency savings.

In an extreme example, one particular supplier had been audited 135 days out of 250 potential working days because of a lack of collaboration between SSA members.

“I am delighted the team won the award which recognises the hard work that went into the collaborative assessment,” said Mike, LLWR Operations & Projects Quality Manager.

“I think the potential huge cost and efficiency savings of this approach for both suppliers and resources across the NDA estate were a major factor in us winning the award.”

The team, led by Martin George, from Sellafield, and including DSRL’s Mary-Jane Statham, and Karina Pellow, of the SSA, is now developing a collaborative assessment programme.

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## **[Press release: Make it your business to be flood resilient](#)**

The Environment Agency has launched a campaign to ensure North East businesses are prepared for flooding.

Since 1998 there has been at least one serious flood every year with businesses more likely to flood than be destroyed by fire.

And with recent events such as 2012’s ‘Thunder Thursday’ hitting businesses hard the Environment Agency is working with them to reduce the impact of a flood.

The campaign launches with an event in Yarm next week and will culminate with an event in North Shields in October.

The Environment Agency’s four Flood Resilience Community Engagement Officers for the region have already been in touch with more than 700 business across the region to raise awareness of flooding issues – more than 100 in Tyne and Wear, more than 500 in Durham and Darlington and more than 90 in Cleveland.

In Northumberland, the team worked with seven businesses during a drop-in about a potential flood scheme at Hexham Industrial Estate and 18 businesses attended a drop-in event at Prudhoe.

## **'It will never happen to me'**

Taryn Al-mashgari, Community Engagement Officer for Tyne and Wear, said:

A common phrase I hear when out visiting businesses is 'it will never happen to me'. Some aren't even aware they are trading in an area at risk of flooding. Flooding accounts for 33% of all losses to business property. This has a huge impact on our economy.

With climate change meaning extreme weather events becoming frequent and more severe in the future it's more important than ever that businesses are prepared.

Most businesses can save between 20% and 90% on the cost of lost stock and moveable equipment by taking action now, before winter. For every £1 spent preparing for flooding £5 is saved – this is money well spent.

- The campaign launches with a 'Business Breakfast' drop-in event in Yarm which takes place at Yarm Fellowship Hall between 7.30am-9am on Wednesday 22 August.

Businesses can come along and talk to Sarah Duffy, Community Engagement Officer for Cleveland, about their experiences of flooding and she will be helping them understand how to prepare for a flood, create a business flood group and ensure the safety of staff and customers during a flood event. Refreshments will be provided.

- This will be followed up by a community drop-in event at Redcar and Cleveland Leisure and Community Heart on Friday 24 August between 10am and 12noon.

And in October, the campaign will culminate with a big event for businesses at North Shields Fish Quay. Taryn added:

The impact of 'Thunder Thursday' on businesses across the country was estimated to be £200million, that's an extraordinary figure. There's lots that businesses can do to reduce the impact.

Things businesses can do to make them more resilient to flooding:

1. Understand the different types of flooding. Flooding can happen from the coast, river, surface water, sewer and groundwater.
2. Check their flood risk. Businesses can check if they are at risk of flooding from rivers, the coast and surface water.

3. Check they have the right level of insurance.
4. Write a flood plan.
5. Invest in flood protection measures and link up with neighbouring properties.