FORSTER
COMMUNICATIONS

The power of

Clients & social purpose
Employees & long-term commitment
Suppliers & closer collaboration
Community & building trust
Environment & positive change

WHAT'S YOUR POINT?

Does your company communicate its social value?

&

Do your stakeholders support the social purpose of your business?

Forster believes that now is the time for mainstream businesses to stand up, declare and communicate their positive social purpose – their reason for being beyond making profit.

Share your knowledge.
We'd like to know how well you think you're communicating your company's social purpose.
Take our survey at forster.co.uk/whatsyourpoint

Forster Communications
We help organisations communicate effectively how they protect and improve lives.

Then & Now

If mainstream business is to be at all sustainable, there's always an &.

There's no progress with employees without long-term commitment. The value chain will never improve without closer collaboration with suppliers. Whilst change in the environment is inevitable, we won't make it positive without taking people with us.

As the **social change communications agency**, Forster works with organisations and businesses to deliver positive social change.

The *Forster Communications 2014 Sustainability Report* demonstrates how this business cannot be sustainable without a clearly communicated social purpose.

As a business, we're communicators, making profit by how well we help our clients communicate. But we measure the wider meaning of the profit we make by how effectively our communications help clients protect and improve lives. Our social purpose.

In this document we're effectively reporting on how we're doing with our social purpose & giving clear pointers to what we intend to do in the year ahead.

Jilly Forster, Founder & Chair

Contents

Sustainability Review

About the Forster 2014

Aim of our Review

Forster is keen to be innovative and lead best practice in the way we drive forward our business, with a particular focus on helping clients build social value.

Our 2014 Review assesses the impact of Forster's social purpose over the last two years. We have consulted with key stakeholders in the process, appraised the extent to which Forster has met the targets published in our 2012 Sustainability Report and checked that our policies and practices are still relevant and represent best practice. Results from the Review have been used to help inform our 2014-16 targets.

Measurement isn't fun, but it is an essential reality check on how we do business, how sustainable we are as a business. Every two years we work with an independent auditor to measure Forster's progress against set targets in specific areas of our operations and create new ones. We want to share what we've learned on our journey.

Find out more

Get in touch with Kate Parker who leads our review and impact programme. **kate@forster.co.uk**

Our auditor

Janet Shepherd of EcoAgility has been carrying out environmental and ethical reviews for Forster since 2004. The results of the stakeholder impact review carried out in July 2014, based on targets set in 2012, are reflected in this Sustainability Report, which she has formally approved as an accurate reflection of our activity and progress in 2012-14. **www.ecoagility.com**

"Forster's enlightened approach cuts through complexity, stimulating new ideas and action."
Director of Strategy, Barnardo's

Review Highlights

Financial performance

- Fee income in the first half of F/Y: 2014/15 is 24% ahead of the same period last year. This reflects a healthy balance between organic growth and focused new business development, with our pitch win rate at 82%. Profitability over the same period has more than doubled.

Employees

- Forster's transformation into a 100% employee-owned company has significantly increased staff's involvement in the day-to-day affairs of the business and given them a direct stake in our future. During the first year employee shareholders saw an 11% return on their investment

- Three quarters of staff have taken part in Forster Well, our new internal wellbeing programme, with 83% agreeing that Forster cares about their physical and mental health. Significantly, sick leave per employee has declined by 53% in the last two years

- Since introducing pool bikes, free training for new riders, 40p a mile expenses for business cycling and five minutes of extra holiday for every day staff commute by bike, 39% of staff now cycle regularly. Commuter journeys by bicycle increased by 33% in the last twelve months.

Environment

- Gas consumption used for heating our offices reduced by 56%

- 78% of all waste last year was diverted from landfill. A year-on-year improvement of 62%.

Community

- 100% of community groups with whom we work believe that Forster has distinctive values and environmental and social policies, and makes a positive difference to their organisation and/or the community

- 38% of staff volunteer.

Clients

- 100% of clients either agree or strongly agree that Forster helps organisations effectively communicate how they protect and improve lives

- In our last financial year, 67% of our business came from organic growth.

Forster on purpose

We've spent much of the last year thinking about purpose. Or, to be exact, the social purpose of businesses and organisations of all kinds, including our own.

Here are some of the things we've learned...

- An organisation's social purpose is its reason for being beyond the profit it makes for its shareholders or the core services it delivers to customers

- Social purpose is not the enemy or opposite of profit, it is simply a broader articulation of it: value beyond monetary income. It gives meaning to the profits achieved

- Social purpose isn't the same as social impact. Businesses, charities and public sector bodies have a social impact, both positive and negative, simply through their operation. It is about the positive difference they wish to make in the world beyond their front door

- Social purpose is the conscious aim to maximise the positive social impact of a business and minimise or mitigate the negative

- A declared social purpose is a clarion call to internal and external stakeholders for positive social action.

So, if you want to be an organisation with strong social purpose...

- **Articulate** your aim and approach to creating social value as well as monetary profit

- **Operate** a working culture that proactively engages your staff, suppliers, customers and stakeholders in your social purpose

- **Evaluate** your progress and performance against social purpose, then share it with key stakeholders

- **Demonstrate** a constant desire to look beyond compliance in terms of policies and practice when it comes to creating value for all your stakeholders

- **Educate** and enable your employees, suppliers and even customers to articulate, support and deliver on your social purpose

- **Motivate** positive change beyond the footprint of your operation.

We do it on purpose

At Forster, we are building brands with social purpose. By this, we mean...

Inspiring organisations to articulate their reason for being in terms of the positive social change they wish to bring about.

Enabling organisations to engage and communicate proactively with all their stakeholders about why they do what they do for positive social ends.

Working with organisations to communicate the positive social outcomes of their activities to the wider world.

& social purpose

Clients

Forster is...

... a creative agency valued for our knowledge, experience and expertise as well as our values, policies and practices

&... clear and honest in the way we price and charge for work

&... an agency that clients are prepared to recommend.

We see our clients as collaborators in negotiating the formidable challenges we face as a society to bring about meaningful social and environmental change.

Challenging times
Overall, clients remain very pleased with the work and service they receive from Forster. But occasionally our enthusiasm gets the better of us – with one client feeling Forster had been a little too forceful in putting forward challenging ideas.

"I would take Forster with me wherever I may move to. They are reliable, creative, good quality, trustworthy, clever people."

Learning experience
Feedback shows that several clients see themselves as making a journey with Forster. One typical quote: *"Our whole relationship with Forster has been an amazing learning experience from start to finish. Forster has more than lived up to its promise as a full service agency. Their professionalism has been an eye-opener and object lesson for my whole team."*

Survey Results 2012-14

Interviews were conducted with a representative sample of 12 clients with whom Forster has worked with over the past couple of years.

Good
- 100% of clients agreed/strongly agreed that Forster helps organisations effectively communicate how they protect and improve lives

- 100% feel that staff working on their account are honest and ethical

- 100% feel Forster is clear and honest in the way they priced and charged for work

- 100% feel very satisfied with the overall quality of Forster's work

- 100% say they would recommend Forster to other organisations, with some confirming they had already done so.

Not so good
- None could remember seeing Forster's 2012 Sustainability Report – or seeing Forster mentioned in any specialist/ general press recently

- Only 33% had looked at Forster's web site over the past year or been aware of Forster's presence at external events

- 67% recall seeing Forster's e-mail newsletter

- 67% believe Forster's work has directly contributed to positive social/ environmental change.

Top Targets 2014-16

- **Concentrate** our corporate reputation, campaigns and creative content service offer on working with cross-sector organisations driving positive change – especially in the areas of health, later life, social injustice and the natural environment

- **Become** famous for being the people behind two iconic campaigns that appreciably changed people's lives for the better in one or other of these areas

- **Conduct** regular and formal Client Satisfaction Reviews and Impact Assessments on at least 75% of completed projects – to provide evidence to measure Forster's effectiveness

- **Run** a biennial Perception Review of Forster's positioning and service offer among 60 past, present and prospective clients, as well as key collaborators and opinion formers within the PR & communications sector

- **Offer** all new clients a 'This is Forster' talk to their staff, focusing on our reason for being; values and principles; how we engage stakeholder groups, including employees.

Mental health for everyone

We stand by our big original ambition to reframe how society sees and values mental health. Who are the other companies facing the challenge?

Last year, more than 15 million days of sickness absence across the UK were caused by everyday mental health conditions such as stress, anxiety or depression. Whilst society no longer tolerates discriminatory legislation that prevents people affected by mental illness from being full and active citizens, is this a long-term vision, or an emerging reality?

Forster has been engaged on mental health issues for the past 18 years, working with clients from the Department of Health, Young Minds, Mind and Rethink to Blackdog Tribe, Mental Health Foundation, Time To Change and the Campaign to End Loneliness.

Forster Change Agenda 2014-16
We're building on our 18-year heritage of issues relating to mental health to identify key change-makers, win new cross-sector business, help influence attitudes, set agendas and improve service provision.

In 2014, we built on all this expertise to create and launch a national campaign for Business in the Community (BITC) to address the 'culture of silence' over mental health in UK businesses, and ensure mental wellbeing is recognised as a priority boardroom issue.

To shape the campaign, we produced a report – *Mental Health: We're Ready to Talk* – which sets out the evidence that the current culture of silence around mental health is stifling UK business productivity and competitiveness. It also outlines a route map for every business to harness the benefits of proactively engaging with mental wellbeing: improved employee motivation, greater staff retention and increased competitiveness.

The campaign is being spearheaded by a new group of progressive business leaders who will drive the campaign ambition, report back on progress and work to inspire their peers. The new BITC Workwell Mental Health Champions Group has 12 founding members, including BT, RBS, Mars, Bupa, FriendsLife, Santander, Deloitte and Procter & Gamble. We worked closely with these businesses, as well as Mind, the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, the Work Foundation and Professor Cary Cooper to shape and steer the campaign.

We launched the new group, the report and the campaign itself at an event during Responsible Business Week. More than 150 individual organisations were represented, reflecting that even if many businesses are not openly talking about mental health yet, they are certainly looking for leadership to see how to open up the dialogue.

1 in 6 of your employees/colleagues is currently experiencing mental health issues.
What does your business have in place to ensure the mental wellbeing of your workforce?

What does it cost your business not to have a scheme?
Not just a huge amount of personal suffering but a loss of approximately £70 billion per year to the UK economy.

Forster has produced a series of short videos of businesses who are taking positive approaches to mental health. We'd encourage you to watch them, share them, and join the movement.

www.bitc.org.uk/programmes/workwell/mental-health-were-ready-talk

Boosting body confidence

Forster's focus on Body Image goes back to the 90s, supporting The Body Shop campaign for self-esteem based on women's real body shapes. Ranging from advertising to children and the taboo of physical disfigurement, today's challenges are even bigger. What are we doing about them?

More than half of the UK population suffers from body image anxiety, feeling anxious about how their body looks and functions. It causes low self-esteem and depression, leading to serious health problems such as eating disorders and obesity, high-risk behaviours such as drug use, lack of participation at school and poor progression at work.

Physical disfigurement is a new focus that isn't often talked about. Over one million people in the UK (1 in 44) have significant disfigurements to their face, body or hands. Forster is working with the British Association of Plastic, Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgeons (BAPRAS) to ensure that decision makers, healthcare professionals and the public at large understand the need to help build the confidence of people with physical disfigurement so that they can "live life to the full."

In terms of body image issues affecting a much larger part of the population, the widely publicised All Party Parliamentary Group on Body Image Report, Reflections on Body Image (2012), revealed the gravity and extent of the problem:

• Girls as young as five now worry about how they look

• By the age of 10, body image is the single biggest concern for millions of children; by 14, half of girls and a third of boys have started dieting

• Most bullying in school targets appearance

• The vast majority of young people today would rather be thin than healthy

• Media, advertising and celebrity culture were perceived by almost 75% of respondents to be the main social influences on body image.

In response, Forster has been working to establish body image anxiety as a national public health concern and create a social movement to change public attitudes forever. The Campaign for Body Confidence aims to become the authority on the issue. Easy task? You'd be hard pressed to find someone who doesn't think we should be more confident in our bodies, yet there is this sense of powerlessness in terms of it becoming more of a social challenge.

Tackling an issue as insidious as this one will require long-term thinking, with one of the challenges being to get the corporate coalition partners unified behind an inspiring set of messages. Once that is done, it will be about maximising the reach and influence of those organisations.

long-term commitment

Employees &

Forster is...

... a 30-strong company of change-makers, united by our values and general chutzpah, dedicated to building brands with social purpose

&... committed to providing a safe, inspiring and productive workplace for all employees and improving their health through better diets, work practices and lifestyles

&... a team of people whose sense of wellbeing is paramount and who feel fully engaged with the business.

We believe our continued success in helping clients to effectively communicate how they protect and improve lives is intimately linked to forging a highly motivated team.

Buy-in
In the past year, employee involvement in the company increased significantly – formalised through an employee ownership arrangement that gives them a direct stake in our future. As a result, the business has changed from being wholly owned by Jilly Forster and her family to 100% owned by directors and staff. Under the new arrangement – initiated through a management buy-out – an Employee Benefit Trust holds a 40% stake in Forster, and offers shares for purchase by employees who wish to invest in the business. We make interest free loans available to encourage as many employees as possible to take up shares – to date, take-up is almost 50%.

Fresh talent
As well as motivating existing staff, the share initiative is also attracting fresh talent from the outside: new energy, experience and skills. This has helped us hone our service offer around a new Practice structure, effective from April 2014, focused on corporate reputation, consumer campaigns and creative content and design.

Forster Well
Forster has been running an internal wellbeing pilot – Forster Well – aimed at encouraging good physical, mental and social health. We've also found it makes good business sense: whilst reducing sickness is an obvious benefit, positive wellbeing

also helps employees feel more fulfilled, confident, creative and emotionally resilient, which leads to working more productively. Our latest employee survey indicates that 74% of staff have taken part in the initiatives and 78% say it would be detrimental to their experience at work if the initiatives were discontinued. Moreover, 83% agree that Forster cares about their mental and physical health and wellbeing.

We're a team of 30. Average age is 35, with the youngest being 20 and the oldest 61. 19% of us work part time. 32% of us have dependants. 39% of us cycle to work. Staff turnover last year was 10%.

Survey Results 2012-14

Good
- 100% agree that Forster helps organisations effectively communicate how they protect and improve lives

- 100% of staff would recommend working for Forster to others

- 96% feel that Forster is driven by more than just profit, with the remainder neither agreeing nor disagreeing

- 96% are proud to work for Forster

- 91% feel that Forster tries to practice what it preaches

- 87.5% agree that they find their work stimulating *(up from 76%)*

- 82% feel the general level of morale at Forster is good *(up from 62%)*

- Forster is now an accredited Living Wage employer, committed to paying a fair wage, not only to staff but to contractors who work frequently on our premises

- Benefits offered by Forster are broad and innovative, with 96% of employees feeling initiatives are in place which help the company stand out as a great place to work

- Forster was highly commended in PR Week's 'Best Places to Work' annual awards for the second year in a row.

Not so good
- 71% see a future for themselves at Forster *(down from 81%)*

- 79% agree that they feel satisfied with their overall job, with 12.5% neither agreeing nor disagreeing and 8.3% disagreeing *(down from 90%)*

- 79% have a clear understanding of their job responsibilities and what is expected of them *(down from 81%)*

- 87.5% have respect for those who are leading Forster, with the remaining 12.5% neither agreeing nor disagreeing *(down from 91%)*

- 92% agree that working for Forster raises their awareness of pressing social and environmental issues *(down from 95%)*

- 74% agreed that Forster "has a General Management team that ensures we walk our talk, are an efficient, effective and great place to work and have policies and practices that support entrepreneurialism, fleetness of foot and commercial success." *(not asked last time)*

Top Targets 2014-16

Wellness
- **Reduce** annual sickness absence from our current 3.5 days to an average of 3 days per person

- **Establish** a new Wellness in the Workplace programme geared to encouraging good physical, mental and social health among employees; evaluate and proactively share results

- **Become** one of Britain's healthiest companies by March 2016

- **Receive** external recognition as a best practice employer by winning two Best Places to Work awards by March 2016

- **Make** our office space work more efficiently, despite the limitations of our office building, encouraging collaboration and creativity and enabling employees to disconnect when needed.

Work/life balance
- **Develop** policies and practices that support and value staff in their role as carers, particularly in the field of eldercare; make use of the resources of 'Employers for Carers' of which we are members; quantify individual, business and social benefits

- **Establish** a company-wide Community Day, engaging all staff in an annual creative endeavour within Southwark – to strengthen Forster's involvement in the life of the Borough, while creating an active learning & development and wellbeing opportunity.

Learning & development
- **Target** an annual average of 30 hours of learning & development per employee.

Employee ownership & other benefits
- **Educate** and support staff in exercising their pension entitlements ahead of the introduction of 'auto-enrolment' from 1 January 2016

- **Encourage** more employees to take advantage of having a direct ownership stake in the company

- **Target** a minimum 10% return to employees on their investment in the company.

96% of employees completed an anonymous survey and interviews were conducted with a representative sample of 8 staff members.

Wellness in the workplace

Forster is championing the positive health, social and financial impacts of running wellness in the workplace programmes, aiming to be one of Britain's healthiest companies by March 2016. What will it take?

Absenteeism, presenteeism, poor productivity, disengaged employees, high staff turnover – what does it take to make employees happier and healthier both at work and beyond the confines of the business?

Smart businesses are encouraging their employees to become well-connected through a new generation of wellbeing programmes based on intervention. Workplace wellbeing schemes are not new. But some businesses have realised that they need to move away from simple health and safety guidelines specific to their business and towards a range of initiatives that aim to tackle key health and lifestyle issues in society.

Forster has created an holistic approach to help clients work towards healthier lifestyles, fewer health inequalities and better access to services. We call this Wellness. We believe Wellness is an issue that every organisation needs to understand and engage with.

In our experience, the organisations most successfully delivering employee wellness are those taking an holistic approach to health, rather than focusing on just one aspect. But we recognise that it's easier said than done. Where does wellness start and finish?

To find the answers, we ran our own scheme, putting our behaviour change insights and skills to work on ourselves, with a fun challenge to improve employee wellness. Each employee received a wellness card and earns stamps in 5 areas: physical exercise, healthy eating, time out, social engagement, community

support plus a 'wild card' stamp for extra challenges. Following the initial pilot, 76% reported that they have improved their fitness, social connections, cultural fulfilment and/or community engagement.

We're showing our staff and clients that Wellness needs to be a much bigger issue for everyone, not just those affected by obesity, drug dependency, loneliness or depression.

Got a wellbeing scheme in place? Do your stats show an overall increase in physical activity among employees? How about your achievement in increasing the number of employees who take up physical activity for the first time as adults?

Looking to start a wellbeing programme? Creating a new scheme is often easier than you might expect. Are you making the most of the resources you already have in place to support your employees?

Forster Change Agenda 2014-16
We are using our in-depth experience on issues from alcohol consumption to cancer screening to create communications that stimulate lasting change. We'll continue to work with clients towards healthier lifestyles, better access to services and fewer health inequalities.

For food's sake

Food is not the enemy. Food must become the solution rather than the problem. It's our attitude to food and nutrition that will change the world. Where does the canny business begin?

Britain is among the most obese nations in the world, with rates doubling in the last 10 years. Obese workers are twice as likely to miss work as fit workers. The UK economy lost 190 million working days to absence in 2010, with each employee taking an average of 6.5 days off sick, costing employers £17bn, or £760 per employee per year. An average firm of 250 people loses around £250k a year due to sickness absence. Poor nutrition is tied to absenteeism, sickness, low morale and higher rates of accidents. We consume at least a 3rd of our daily calorie intake while at work.

Forster works with organisations to help target audiences make the connection between the food they eat and the wellness they feel: from the Jamie Oliver Foundation to keep cooking skills alive to the National Trust encouraging children and families to see the connection between what they grow and what they eat.

From the Soil Association to Loch Fyne and the RSPCA to Organix, we've been helping organisations to take people's relationship with food beyond the kitchen so that it is not just fuel but a central part of the way we live our lives.

Increasingly, we're seeing eating as an issue that is owned by organisations who are responsible for audience-specific Wellness – from older people's charities and care homes to joined-up local health promotions targeting young mums. We're not yet seeing joined-up communications with the food providers themselves, despite the opportunity for both corporate leadership and positive impact.

Walking our own talk, we're developing and implementing 5 food-related pilot initiatives within Forster by January 2016. Ideas include:

- **Breakfast club**
- **Food diaries**
- **Cooking classes**
- **Equipment demonstrations**
- **Themed food weeks**

Despite all the campaigns and the plethora of messages, obesity continues to rise and its attendant problems soar. Attitudes can and must change. There are better ways to help people enjoy real food and consume it in moderation as part of an active lifestyle. Why not start in the workplace?

Forster Change Agenda 2014-16
We are raising public awareness of the impact of food on the performance of individuals – at schools, in business, government and families. We're also going to increase and measure awareness, standards and skills around good nutrition within Forster so people can be their best at work and at home.

closer collaboration

Suppliers &

Forster is...

... a company that gives clear briefs to suppliers, makes no unreasonable demands and pays on time

&... committed to improving the social, ethical or environmental impacts of business, seeking suppliers with whom they can create supportive partnerships

&... part of a network of other independent agencies – Network Partners – giving clients every marketing and communications service they could ever need, without the big agency overheads.

We encourage the highest standard of environmental protection, social responsibility and respect for human rights from our clients, our suppliers and ourselves.

Screening system

Forster has developed a system for screening suppliers based on a questionnaire regarding their environmental and social policies and practices. This leads to assessment according to a 4-tier rating system. We then encourage and advise on ways a supplier can move up to a higher tier.

In November 2013 current suppliers were sent a copy of the latest screening questionnaire, asking what they have been up to since we were last in touch and advising them of Forster's management buy-out, wellbeing programme, hubspace, Living Wage employer accreditation and commitment to the 10:10 CO_2 emissions cutting initiative. There are still a significant number of suppliers that have not responded to this request, whom we are chasing.

Good impressions

Feedback shows that suppliers are aware that Forster avoids association with, or investment in, companies and organisations which are not committed to improving the social, ethical or environmental impacts of business. *"Good client, pleasure to work with. Their values come across strongly."*

"I like working with Forster as they bring the best out of clients, are not afraid to put their point of view across, while being better listeners than other agencies I've come across."
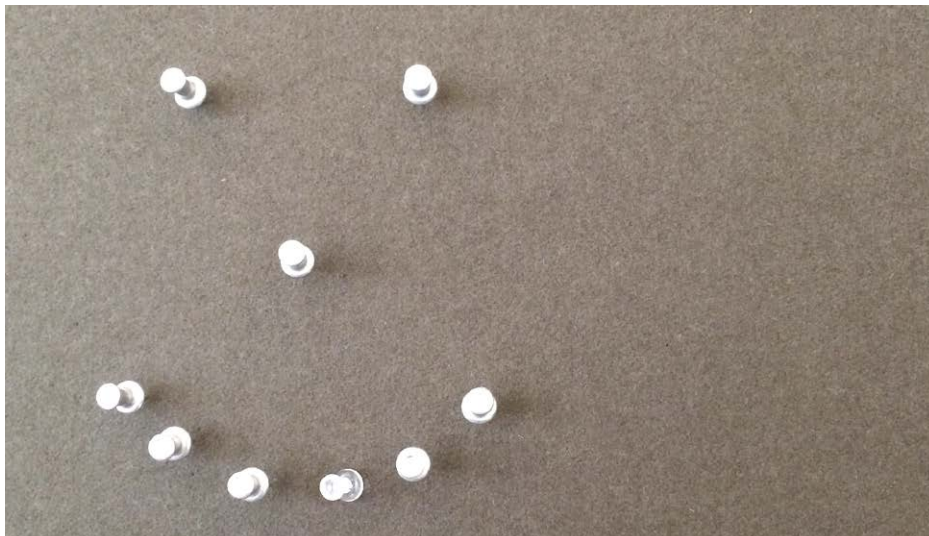
"Our ambition is to create supportive partnerships with best practice suppliers – partnerships which reinforce our social purpose and deliver mutual business benefits."

Survey Results 2012-14

Interviews were conducted with Forster's 8 largest suppliers in terms of spend, ranging from broadcast specialists and freelancers through to phone/internet suppliers and accountants.

Good
- 100% agreed that Forster helps organisations effectively communicate how they protect and improve lives

- 100% said it was evident that Forster has particular values and environmental and social policies

- 100% had been asked to complete a supplier screening questionnaire and to provide details of their company values, policies and standards

- 100% considered Forster to be a good customer, who paid on time and gave clear briefs, with none feeling that Forster made unreasonable demands on them as a supplier.

Not so good
- Only 57% had seen the Forster 2012 Sustainability Report, Forster's e-mail newsletter or looked at Forster's website over the past year.

Top Targets 2014-16

- **Aim** to have 10% of suppliers actively trading with social purpose and track and report impacts annually

- **Understand** our suppliers' sustainability practices better; share best practice for mutual benefit

- **Continue** to ensure all onsite contractors are paid the London Living Wage and target 50% of all suppliers committing to pay the Living Wage by March 2016

- **Ensure** all suppliers pass our screening criteria

- **Issue** *Sustainability Report 2014* to all suppliers and update them with our activities via our regular newsletters.

Rethink retirement

With more people now over 65 than under 16 in the UK, Forster believes society needs to reframe how people view old age and wants to see better informed and more proactive attitudes to ageing. What does this mean for businesses?

In June 2013, there were 1 million workers over the age of 65 in the UK – the highest since records began. The over-50s make up 35% of the population and have the highest disposable income of any age group, and they know it. Only a generation ago people were pretty 'old' at 60. If you think of yourself as old, then you start to feel old. Why should we be surprised that Facebook's 13-17 age group has declined over the last three years, while its over-55 group grew by 80%?

Many older people have more money than they had when they were younger. As a result, they spend more on going out than their younger counterparts. We're seeing unexpected purchasing – hi-end tech and sex toys, rather than cardigans and Tena Lady. Older people are as likely as younger cohorts to experiment with new products. Surprise, surprise!

Which businesses will take the opportunity to encourage people to live more independent and fulfilled lives in their later years? Who will rethink the tired presumption that older people make tricky customers, are harder to reach, stuck in their ways? The Marigold Effect survey – inspired by the movie The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel – affirms that 8 out of 10 mature workers want to help the younger generation succeed through mentoring. People are ready and waiting for businesses to catch up.

We know that many organisations glimpse the opportunity of connecting with mature people and want to do something about it. By working together, we can challenge ageism, debunk the myths and highlight the positives. We can get more people to remove their heads from the sand. We can replace ignorance and procrastination with social and economic opportunities. Best of all, we can embrace life and retire retirement.

Does your business assume teens and twenty-somethings are the only audiences that matter? Older people do not have exactly the same needs as millennials, but new technology can address those needs in new ways.

Business App for older people? Whilst tablets are the current toy of choice, how many apps producers have woken up to the market in business apps for older people?

Older people are less and less interested in battling against ageing and trying to look young. They are increasingly confident in getting older and looking for products that make them look and feel great, not promise a facsimile of their younger selves. Of the wide-ranging products and services needed, many are out there already but hidden behind walls of bad communication. Forster is working with businesses to change that, to encourage the word 'retirement' to be retired.

Forster Change Agenda 2014-16
We're working with clients who have the desire to help people prepare better for later life. Together, we'll challenge stereotypical thinking about people in later life and unearth exciting opportunities to help older people continue to contribute.

Take the heat out of **care** decisions

Forster has a track record of working with organisations interested in care in older age – a Cinderella subject that most of us do little to plan around until it is too late.

Research published last year by our client, the Social Care Institute for Excellence, showed that more than two thirds of us will leave care-making decisions until they are pressing, and only 15% of us are planning ahead for ourselves or our family.

The ongoing uncertainty surrounding the future public funding of care for older people places a greater emphasis on each of us taking responsibility for planning around how we deal with it rather than throwing ourselves on the mercy of the State.

Some subjects are easier to tackle than others. Like Forster, many businesses have policies on issues ranging from mental health to personal safety, but a much smaller number will have tackled the issue of care and the impact it has on the workplace in two main ways – supporting people with care responsibilities, and encouraging people to plan for their own and their family's future care needs. In 2013 we adopted Employers for Carers' best-practice policy on supporting staff who need to take time off to care for others, and we are developing APT, a new working process to help staff realise why later life planning is important.

We seem happy enough to plan around other significant changes in our lives such as having children, buying a home or changing career, but thinking about care makes us face up to our own vulnerabilities and for most people conjures up thoughts of deterioration, reduced quality of life and less independence. Our expectations of care are shockingly low but it needn't be that way.

Forster Change Agenda 2014-16
We're helping reframe how society sees old age. Working with change-makers, we're encouraging people to prepare for later life, helping tackle the stigma around death and dying and increasing support and status for all carers.

Businesses can help banish that poverty of aspiration around care by showing the difference good planning and provision can make, by highlighting that many of the negative experiences associated with going into care are related to it being forced upon people by circumstance rather than planned for or anticipated.

As an issue, it needs distance and light to counter the heat and emotion of decisions that get made at times of crisis. Building care planning into the support services offered to all, but particularly employees heading towards retirement, would go a long way to ensuring businesses help to tackle our ostrich tendencies around the issue and encourage people to take the longer term view.

building trust

Community involvement &

Forster is...

... a company that takes a wide view on its community involvement: from volunteering to pro bono work; from company giving to providing meeting space and local sourcing

&... locally considered to be a valued member of its community

&... an employer that aims to improve on only 38% of its staff utilising our paid volunteering system.

Volunteering figures
At Forster, being too busy or having time constraints may well be reasons for our volunteering participation rates to be low at 38%. More positively, this figure is well above the percentage of employees volunteering in the UK (15% among members of the London Benchmarking Group).

Favoured location
Forster continues to give preference to local businesses when purchasing supplies and services. We are also active participants in the business community of 'Better Bankside', including the chairing of their award-winning and internationally renowned travel planning group.

Survey Results 2012-14

In addition to an employee survey, interviews were conducted with three of the key community groups with which Forster is involved: Better Bankside, Team London Bridge and The Sheila McKechnie Foundation.

Good

• 87% of staff agree that Forster supports community volunteering (76% last time)

• 100% of community groups interviewed say it is evident that Forster has particular values and environmental and social policies

• 100% consider Forster to be a good member of its local community

• 100% value the involvement of Forster and feel it has made a positive difference to their organisation and/or in the community.

Not so good

• 38% of staff actually volunteered during office hours

• None of the community groups in which Forster is involved with have seen Forster's e-mail newsletter and only one has seen Forster's 2012 Sustainability Report.

Top Targets 2014-16

• **Engage** 100% of Forster staff in volunteering initiatives – regardless of how much of their 20 hours volunteering time they decide to use

• **Identify** 3 community events by March 2016 that aim to engage local residents, businesses and schools, while creating learning and development opportunities for Forster staff

• **Establish** a company-wide Community Day, involving all staff in an annual creative endeavour that supports one or other of the three community events identified

• **Issue** *Sustainability Report 2014* to all associated community groups and update them with our activities via our regular newsletters.

"Forster are a pioneering business in so many ways, and have proved a real asset to Better Bankside. Their advice, volunteering time and support has helped us deliver sustainable positive change in the area."

Art for all our sakes

At Forster, we see art and culture as glue that can connect diverse communities and address a wide range of social issues. It's not a new idea. But, if you believe in it as a business, how do you make it work?

Art as educator, enabler, motivator?

Nobody knows this better than Gareth Malone. He takes what would appear to be an old-fashioned, middle-class activity like choral singing into lower economic class communities. Encouraging participation and fostering community pride and cohesion, enabling people to occasionally forget their individual problems and differences, see and share the world through different eyes and voices.

Whatever its nature or medium, the best art and culture invites people in, almost in spite of themselves. It can overcome inhibitions and lay aside conventions and concerns about what other people think of us. It seduces us for ends other than our own individualistic desires. It's this that enables people who would not otherwise look each other in the eye to spend time together in such positive and uplifting ways.

If we're prepared to look, examples are all around us, in our own backyards.

Local to Forster, Better Bankside is a Business Improvement District – an independent, local business-owned and led company with 480 members, whose job is to make Bankside a thriving place to work, live and visit. Transforming Southwark Street through contemporary public art, the Better Bankside art initiative is collaborating with contemporary artists and cultural institutions to experiment and engage with one of Bankside's busiest streets and public spaces and its side streets. Among its many positive aims: demonstrating how a busy central London street can transform over time from a congested thoroughfare dominated by traffic, to a lively, creative and engaging public space that people want to spend time in; giving a sense of co-ownership to the diverse groups of people who live/work/visit the neighbourhood.

Art as healing – therapy for individuals?

If you visited indiegogo.com – the multi-media artistic expression created by social artist Jeremy Cowart, involving former child soldiers in Uganda – the healing value of art will be in no doubt.

Closer to home, many small initiatives aiming to improve mental agility are appearing, determined to help people with dementia use performance art, painting and dance to make a breakthrough. Drug addiction clinics and mental health charities are promoting art to bring about profound changes in emotions, sensory experiences, actions, behaviours and thought patterns, so effectively altering the way in which a person perceives the world.

In your business...

Could you use art to give people a meaningful social experience?

What would happen if you gave over your corporate entrance hall to a community art installation?

Social and cultural activities can bring people together for a common purpose. With its people, resources, buildings and connections, a business is the best place to start.

Antidote to loneliness

Forster believes society should be judged on how it treats its most vulnerable. Among these are people who are lonely. Is increasing loneliness among younger and older people a sign of the times?

Loneliness is now recognised as having a similar health impact as smoking. With over 1 million people over 65 saying they are often or always lonely, significant work needs to be done to tackle this growing issue.

Between 6% and 13% of people aged over 65 say they feel always or very lonely. Over half (51%) of all people aged 75 and over live alone. 59% of adults aged over 52 who report poor health say they feel lonely some of the time or often, compared to 21% who say they are in excellent health. 60% of those aged between 18 and 34 feel lonely often or sometimes. 41% of pre-adolescents (between 6 and 13) feel lonely.

Do we still feel that loneliness is the lot of older people?

The NSPCC reports that many children counselled about loneliness lack a network of social relationships or friends. Whilst this may refer to their inability to relate to other people, rather than the absence of people, it's still loneliness.

Forster Change Agenda 2014-16
We're helping to reduce ignorance and stigma attached to loneliness by working with clients to raise awareness of its growing health impacts, including using our influence in Better Bankside and our trade sector to increase understanding of contributing factors.

At Forster, we see our work to combat loneliness as quite diverse. From literally working with the Campaign to End Loneliness, to collaborating with businesses, national and local government, communities and the voluntary sector to help support those going through major life changes. We will highlight opportunities, remove barriers and increase access to rights, culture and care. We will help organisations connect with their community, improve services and build partnerships that include members of the public.

While organisations like Contact The Elderly – hosting tea parties – are working on behalf of older people, the younger end of the spectrum really needs businesses to step forward and act as a buffer between alienation and inclusion.

Could your business mentor young people in the community?

How about finding a cause to promote that involves younger and older people?

An organisation may not be able to offer a job to a younger person or keep an older person employed, but opportunities are there for the enterprising business. Business in the community could really mean business of the community.

Companies are often urged to sweat their assets but not many consider applying this approach to their social capital as well. Many are involved in multiple transactions and interactions with a vast array of different people and organisations.

Examine these and you'll find opportunities to promote causes, encourage community action or simply bring together parties who can collaborate and make a difference.

positive impact

Environment &

Forster is...

... still using its 2009 Sunday Times Green Business Award to make environmental improvements right across the board

&... still the first company in our sector to reach the ISO 14001 Environmental Management Standard (attained in 2010)

&... an award-winning example of a company that responds to the Government's green transport incentives, which can save employees around 40% off the price of a new bike.

As well as social responsibility and respect for human rights, Forster encourages the highest standard of environmental protection, from our clients, suppliers and ourselves.

Progress by default
Over the past seven years, we've looked at our environmental performance from every angle. Our independent report recommends maintenance of standards, but that's not our style. Progress is our default state. We know that climate change as an issue has left people bemused and unable to meaningfully engage, so we need to use our insight to tap into what else is going to make a difference.

Sustainable balance
With the myriad of environmental campaigns people have witnessed over the decades, many might suspect that the job is done, assuming that little more can be achieved. Companies are still learning that they have a responsibility to understand that a sustainable future requires a balance between social, economic and environmental considerations.

Intellectual environment
As an office-based consultancy whose 'products' are largely intellectual, we know our own impacts are relatively low. However, we recognise that our activities on behalf of clients have an environmental impact and try to minimise this impact year on year. Our most significant efforts to mitigate impact relate to fossil fuels for transport; energy for office heating, lighting and power; paper and waste disposal; and water usage in toilets and kitchens.

Survey Results 2012-14

Good

- Reduced electricity consumption by 6.5% per capita

- Reduced total gas consumption by 56%

- 16% of commuter journeys were made by bicycle – up from 12%

- Decreased water usage per capita by 12%, from 6.8 m3 to 6.0 m3

- Decreased A4 paper consumption by 9% per capita

- Increased recycled material from 48% to 78%

- Diverted all our unrecyclable waste from landfill by using an energy recovery system which converts waste into clean energy.

"We know that climate change as an issue has left people bemused and unable to meaningfully engage, so we must use our insight to tap into what is going to make a difference."

Top Targets 2014-16

- **Maintain** energy consumption per capita

- **Increase** commuter journeys by bicycle to 20%

- **Re-energise** our best practice water usage policy and reduce current water usage per capita from 6.0 m3 to 5.8 m3

- **Install** a water fountain on our doorstep

- **Reduce** paper consumption by 5% overall

- **Continue** separating waste for recycling, increasing recycled material to 85% and send 0% waste to landfill

- **Maintain** systems to the level of ISO 14001 Environmental Management Standard accreditation, which is about to undergo some significant changes

- **Use** renewable resources wherever practical and review current suppliers to ensure we are championing the market pioneers in renewable energy innovation

- **Continue** to champion the Forster Five Rs (reduce, repair, reuse, recycle, reframe) to all stakeholders and develop one small but innovative initiative within each and share results amongst stakeholders.

Engaging with our environment

Forster has used social marketing techniques to get its own staff swapping taxis for bikes and walking, but can these same techniques be applied by businesses to change behaviour around environmental issues?

The environment is, like, so 2007. The concerns over climate change and the need for Western societies to address our chronic waste of resources haven't gone away, they've simply struggled for attention with all the other bad news that has swamped us ever since then. On an individual level, people who previously wrestled with their conscience over taking flights are in many cases now getting on the plane without a backwards glance at the impact on the environment.

If employers are to take an active role in re-invigorating personal attitudes and behaviour towards tackling climate change, then perhaps we can adapt the techniques used to get us to do the same in relation to public health?

Forster has a huge amount of public health experience – primarily focusing on prevention rather than cure. As governments, businesses and even charities are realising, it's relatively easy to make upstream improvements compared with the enormous task of shifting consumer behaviours downstream. Public health has been wrestling with it for decades. Progress has been made, but some hard lessons have been learned that we can all learn from – particularly when it comes to sustainability issues.

Forster Change Agenda 2014-16
We believe we should all work harder to respect and reconnect ourselves with the natural world. The environmental movement depends on long-term thinking, so we are working with clients to put it back into the front seat of policy-making – in government, in business, in life.

People DON'T need more information. **They need practical tools**. Those involved in public health have spent decades firing messages and health information at target audiences with little demonstrable impact. Now they are focusing more on clear, actionable steps, combined with practical support to implement them. When our staff are cold in the winter, we encourage them to put a jumper on before we turn the heating up. We even supply the jumper.

We need to **take people on a journey**. Behaviour change is a journey, incremental steps, not an event. But sustainable change requires long-term strategic approaches based on robust behavioural strategies and models of change. Our journey to increase staff cycling started with an incentive: five minutes of extra holiday for every day staff commute by bike. This was followed by the provision of pool Brompton bikes, free training for new riders, confidence-building buddying schemes, 40p a mile expenses for business cycling... 39% of staff now cycle regularly. And we are providing insightful services for clients working to increase cycle safety and uptake including Sustrans Cyclescheme, Bike Week, CTC and the Department for Transport.

'But this issue is really important'. No it's not. **Work, money and family are important**. Culturally, sustainability is seen primarily as a scientific issue and too often assumptions are made that people will attach as much importance to climate change, biodiversity and resource depletion as the scientists do. To successfully drive behaviour change on environmental issues, businesses need to locate the 'issue' within consumers' existing value sets, priorities and lives.

One size doesn't fit all. Tailored approaches/ strategies based on **particular needs of specific audience** segments have the most impact. Mass-media campaigns can accelerate change among those who are already considering it or implementing it, while ignoring those who need to engage. Segmentation generally isn't applied with anything like the same rigour when it comes to environmental issues as it is in public health.

We need to **empower**. The use of shock, fear or guilt appeals can be hard to shake but doesn't always work. As humans, we're pretty adept at protecting ourselves from bad news and personal responsibility. Who hasn't experienced disaster fatigue? Businesses who want to inspire tangible behaviour change on environmental issues would do well to move away from hell and damnation and extinction as motivators. Make the future more **positive**.

Time for play

Forster has been working with several clients who recognise the importance of play in the lives of children. Intriguingly, you wouldn't ordinarily associate some of these organisations with the lightheartedness of play. What are they up to?

Play is a very British idea. The components of play—curiosity, discovery, novelty, risk-taking, trial and error, pretence, games, social etiquette, and other increasingly complex adaptive activities—are the same as the components of learning. But, if play is not what it used to be, just whose responsibility is it to promote more child-led as well as adult-led play?

The Professional Association of Childcare and Early Years (PACEY) believes it's up to Government. Raising awareness of PACEY's School Ready campaign, Forster has learned that the necessary tools and expertise for creating more opportunities for play are already in the sector. So, this isn't about needing more money! For a child to be considered 'school-ready', reading and writing are not as important as being confident, independent and curious. So, it's about communicating the importance of play via policy, best-practice sharing, qualifications and training.

What is Government afraid of here? Is it that our children are over-protected, over-scheduled, over-managed? Trouble is, children are risk-averse, seemingly more focused on adult-directed activities. Among the most developed nations, our children are back in 21st place in terms of happiness. Over 50% of all 7-year olds are not getting enough exercise and their average daily screen time increases year-on-year. Nature phobia is increasing. Whatever happened to uncommercialised play? What sort of adults do we want our children to become?

The adult world is a serious place. Yet we seem to be making the world of childhood more like it. You buy your way to happiness. We need to show the generations of the future that technology is not the be-all and end-all. There was a time when top brands could at least smile at themselves. Let's bring that back. Let fun join in.

Organisations that encourage free thinking, imagination and, heaven forbid, demonstrate a genuine and generous sense of humour, are proving to be more engaging to consumers. Take The National Trust – stepping up its action to get more kids out in the open by backing The Wild Network and working to get more kids going free-range in the parks, countryside and open spaces they manage.

The NSPCC is associated with STOP and being against bad behaviour towards children. So, getting the opportunity to work with them on Bring Back Play was both refreshing and inspiring. Telling moving stories about play practitioners and the children they have helped linked so well to a fundraising activity at anyone could get involved in.

Ultimately, play changes lives. For the simple reason that it teaches us to co-operate with others. Let's face it, if we don't introduce a new generation to the freedom and joys of play, technology will truly become the e-all and end-all of their lives.

GRI sustainability report

Decision on Global Reporting Initiative Application Level Checking

As well as sharing our story with stakeholders, transparent and comprehensive reporting is important to us and we aim to measure up against the highest standards. This is why we have chosen to disclose information in line with the Global Reporting Initiative Reporting Guidelines. On this occasion we have taken the decision to self-declare our Application Level, rather than seek a formal Application Level Check by GRI, as we do not feel that the investment required is met by the level of interest from our stakeholders. If this proves to be a wrong assumption, we may reconsider and submit our report for formal checking in the future. In the meantime we, along with our independent auditor, feel that we have met the standard up to level A and have either included all of the relevant data below or signposted to where this can be found within the main body of the report. We hope the GRI Guidelines provides a logical format for sharing this information and enables readers to make meaningful comparisons with other reporters in our sector. If you have any questions regarding this decision, please do not hesitate to get in touch: Kate@forster.co.uk 020 7403 2230

GRI Element	Comments
Profile:	
Strategy and Analysis:	
1.1 Statement from the most senior decision maker e.g. CEO about the relevance of sustainability to the organisation and its strategy.	See **P1**.
1.2 Description of key impacts, risks and opportunities.	As an office-based consultancy whose 'products' are largely intellectual, our environmental impacts are relatively low. However, we also recognise that the activities we undertake or manage on behalf of clients e.g. sourcing printed materials have an impact on the environment and believe that it is our responsibility to minimise this impact and continually strive to better our performance year on year. Our most significant direct environmental impacts relate to the use of: Fossil fuels for transport; energy for office heating, lighting and power; paper and waste disposal; water in our office kitchens and toilets. Our social impacts relate to the way we work with our other key stakeholders (employees, freelancers, clients, suppliers) and these are covered in the main body of this report. Our key sustainability opportunity is our core campaigning communications work – communications to bring about positive social and environmental change. We're working with innovators to promote sustainable business, protect the environment and tackle climate change.
Organisational Profile:	
2.1 Organisation Name	Forster Communications
2.2 Primary brands, products and/or services.	Forster is the social change communications agency, with wide-ranging issue expertise in health, sustainability, social justice and age . We specialise in behaviour change, PR, consumer marketing, reputation management and creative content

GRI Element	Comments
2.3 Operational structure	The senior team (Executive Committee) is made up of seven members of staff. They make the decisions regarding the day-to-day running of the business. Amanda Powell Smith is Managing Director and oversees all members of the Executive Committee who run the operational teams. We have a General Management Team, a Business Development Team and three client Practices: Creative, Consumer Campaigns and Corporate Communications. The senior team is ultimately responsible to the 3-strong Board of which Jilly Forster (Founder) is Chair. Employee ownership is open to all staff as part of an Employee Benefit Trust.
2.4 Location of HQ	49 Southwark Street, London, SE1 1RU
2.5 Number of countries where the organisation operates.	1 – UK
2.6 Nature of ownership & legal form.	Private Limited Company
2.7 Nature of markets served	We work with change-makers from multi-nationals and Government to social entrepreneurs and charities.
2.8 Scale of reporting organisation	We employ 29 members of staff (24 full-time and 5 part-time). Capital & Reserves of £575,000. The largest shareholders are Jilly Forster, Peter Gilheany and Amanda Powell-Smith.
2.9 Significant changes during the reporting period regarding size, structure or ownership.	Since our last Ethical Impact Review report published in 2012 we have undergone a management buy-out with Peter and Amanda now equal partners in the business and shares available to all employees through an Employee Benefit Trust.
2.10 Awards received in the reporting period.	Recertification to Environmental Management Standard ISO 14001, PR Week Best Places to Work 2012, 2013 (Highly Commended), Corp Comms Awards: Best use of video 2014, Corp Comms Awards: Best Crisis Management 2012
Report Parameters	
3.1 Reporting period for information provided.	Financial years; Apr 2012 – Mar 2013 & Apr 2013 – Mar 2014.
3.2 Date of most recent previous report	2012
3.3 Reporting cycle	Biennial
3.4 Contact point for questions regarding the report or its contents.	Kate Parker, Sustainability Manager

3.5 Process for defining report content.	The report covers those company stakeholders that Forster interacts with on a regular basis (employees, suppliers (including freelancers), clients, network partners, the local community and the environment. All employees were included in an employee survey. A sample of other stakeholders was interviewed by our auditor on the basis of significant levels of spend by Forster, clients who indicated a willingness and availability for interview and had not already been covered by a Forster non-executive board member review process, non-inclusion during previous biennial Reviews and/or the level of environmental or social impact of products or services supplied. The content was also guided by these GRI Sustainability Reporting Guidelines and the interest of the stakeholders who read our reports.	4.4 Mechanisms for shareholders and employees to provide recommendations or direction to the highest governance body.	Forster is a small company with a relatively flat structure with open communication from top to bottom. The Executive Team operates an 'open door policy' in as much as they sit in an open plan office with the rest of the staff. All employees are invited to take part in confidential biennial employee surveys and provided with feedback on the results (with highlights provided in this report). Whole company meetings take place each Monday and formal company update meetings to share financial information take place quarterly. Senior Team meetings take place every month, and meetings between the Environment Officer and the MD take place at least twice a year. Shareholders meet twice yearly to discuss business strategy and feed in to the business plan.
3.6 Boundaries of the report.	The whole of Forster and key stakeholders.	4.5 Linkage between compensation for members of the highest governance body, senior managers and executives and the organisation's performance (including social and environmental performance).	The company operates a bonus system linked to whole company profitability. Non financial goals are included in biannual appraisals and performance against these goals can have a direct bearing on compensation. All staff are encouraged to become shareholders via the Employee Benefit Trust with the option of cash purchase or interest free loan.
3.7 Any specific limitations on the scope or boundary of the report.	None.		
3.8 Basis for reporting on joint ventures, subsidiaries, leased facilities, outsources operations and other entities that can significantly affect comparability from period to period and/or between organisations.	Not applicable.		
3.9 Data measurement techniques and the bases of calculations, including assumptions and techniques underlying estimations applied to the compilation of the indicators and other information in the report.	Explained within the report as applicable. Happy to disclose all measurement techniques. Please contact Kate Parker kate@forster.co.uk for details.	4.6 Processes in place for the highest governance body to ensure conflicts of interest are avoided.	The hands on role of the Founder minimises any conflict of interest.
		4.7 Process for determining the composition, qualifications and expertise of the members of the highest governance body and its committees, including any consideration of gender and other indicators of diversity.	Forster is a meritocracy that favours and attracts talent from junior apprentices and interns through to senior consultants, regardless of gender or other differences.
3.10 Explanation of the effect of any re-statements of information provided in earlier reports, and the reasons for such re-statements (e.g. mergers/acquisitions, change of bases years/period, nature of business, measurement methods.)	Since our last report we have altered the reporting period from calendar year to financial year.		
3.11 Significant changes from previous reporting periods in the scope, boundary, or measurement methods applied in the report.	Where the amount of office space occupied by Forster or staff numbers have changed this is stated within the report or reflected in data being provided per capita or per square meterage.	4.8 Internally developed statements of mission or values, codes of conduct and principles relevant to economic, environmental and social performance and the status of their implementation. Explaining the degree to which they are applied across the organisation and relate to internally agreed standards.	Forster holds a range of policies which we would be happy to share in full on request. These include: - Our 10 Commitments (the founding principles of the company) - Equal Opportunities and Employee Development Policy - Health & Safety Policies - Sickness Absence policy - Flexible Working Policy - Drug and Alcohol Policy - HIV and AIDS Policy - Mental Health & Wellbeing policy - Quality Assurance Policies - Client and Supplier Engagement Policy - Environmental Policy - Water usage Policy - Company Pool Bike Policy These are applied fully and consistently across the company.
3.12 Table identifying the location of the Standard Disclosures in the report, identify the page numbers or web links where these.	Supplied in this table.		
3.13 Policy and current practice with regard to seeking external assurance for the report. If not included in the assurance report accompanying the sustainability report, explain the scope and basis of any external assurance provided. Also explain the relationship between the reporting organisation and the assurance providers.	No external assurance for the report provided. However we used an external consultant, EcoAgility Ltd to conduct our Stakeholder Review.		
Governance, Commitments, and Engagement		4.9 Procedures of the highest governance body for overseeing the organisation's identification and management of economic, environmental and social performance, including relevant risks and opportunities and adherences or compliance with internally agreed standards, codes of conduct and principles (including frequency with which highest governance body assesses sustainability performance.)	The Board meets twice a year to oversee business performance, including progress towards achieving our sustainability objectives, with adjustments to strategy and direction as necessary in the light of perceived risks and opportunities at the time. Meanwhile sustainability performance is reviewed by the Senior Team monthly as part of the review of monthly management accounts. Other standards and policies are reviewed at least six-monthly, including those covered by our comprehensive Employee Handbook and those relating to Health & Safety.
4.1 Governance structure of the organisation, including committees under the highest governance body responsible for specific tasks such as setting strategy or organisational oversight. (describing mandate, composition, non-execs, responsibilities, gender, age, diversity etc)	Senior Team comprising of 3 men and 4 women, responsible for delivering the formal strategy and business plan agreed by the Board, chaired by a woman.		
4.2 Indicate whether Chair of the highest governance body is also an executive officer etc.	Jilly Forster, Founder and shareholder, chairs the Board and is part of the ExecutiveTeam.		
4.3 For organisations with a unitary board structure, state the number and gender of members of the highest governance body that are independent and/or non-executive members.	None.	4.10 Processes for evaluating the highest governance body's own performance, particularly with respect to economic, environmental and social performance.	This is covered in the annual audit by our accountants and as part of our biennial Ethical Review. Our Chair is always interviewed as part of the process and other Senior Team Members are included.

Commitments to External Initiatives:	
4.11 Explanation of whether and how the precautionary approach or principle is addressed by the organisation.	ISO14001 standard requires regular review of commitment to external initiatives and this is addressed annually through external monitoring. The precautionary approach to Environment forms principal 7 of the UN Global Compact Corporate Commitment below.
4.12 Externally developed economic, environmental, and social charters, principles or other initiatives to which the organisation subscribes or endorses.	Forster has signed up to The Corporate Commitment of the UN Global Compact and is up to date in providing the required communication on progress reports to the UN – see www.unglobalcompact.org/participant/3835-Forster
4.13 Memberships in associations (such as industry associations) and/or national/international advocacy organisations in which the organisation has positions in governance bodies, participates in projects or committees, provides substantive funding beyond membership dues or views membership as strategic.	Forster are members of PRCA, CharityComms, NSMC (founding member) & MMA (is a member). Director Peter Gilheany is a trustee of CharityComms; Jilly Forster is a trustee of the Jamie Oliver Foundation, Patron of the Royal Parks Foundation and The Forgiveness Project.
Stakeholder Engagement:	
4.14 List of stakeholder groups engaged by the organisation.	Employees, freelancers, suppliers, network partners, clients as part of the biennial Ethical Review, members of the community through employee community volunteering and other members of society as part of Forster's client work and campaigning.
4.15 Basis for identification and selection of stakeholders with whom to engage.	With guidance from the consultant who conducts our ethical review and the ISO 26000 Social Responsibility Standard we engaged with those stakeholders that Forster interacts with on a regular basis (employees, freelancers, clients suppliers & freelancers).
4.16 Approaches to stakeholder engagement, including frequency of engagement by type and by stakeholder group.	As described in the relevant stakeholder sections of this report. Client **P6**; Employees **P10**; Suppliers **P14**; Community **P18**; Environment **P22**
4.17 Key topics and concerns that have been raised through stakeholder engagement and how the organisation has responded to those key topics and concerns, including through its reporting.	As described in the relevant stakeholder sections of this report. Client **P6**; Employees **P10**; Suppliers **P14**; Community **P18**; Environment **P22**
PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	
Economic:	
EC1 Direct economic values generated and distributed, including revenues, operating costs, employee compensation, donations and other community investments, retaining earnings and payments to capital providers and governments.	Over the past two years Forster has donated over £ 7,700 to charitable organisations and dedicated volunteering and pro bono hours to a variety of causes.
EC2 Financial implications and other risks and opportunities for the organisation's activities due to climate change.	As an office based consultancy the direct risks to Forster are small but we have great opportunities to reduce society's impacts on climate change through our work with clients to influence attitudes and change behaviour. Our own energy use reduction initiatives have resulted in financial savings.
EC3 Coverage of the organisations defined benefit plan obligations.	52% of the Company take up the pension scheme.
EC4 Significant financial assistance received from government.	None.
EC5 Range of ratios of standard entry level wage by gender compared to local minimum wage at significant locations of operation.	Not applicable.

EC6 Policy, practices and proportion of spending on locally-based suppliers at significant locations of operation.	Forster's highest areas of spend are on specialised services rather than products and there are limited opportunities for these to be sourced locally. However, Forster is a member of Better Bankside, a regeneration body for the area where their offices are located, which seeks to improve the quality of the local environment and enhance trade. Where products and services can be sourced locally e.g. food, meeting venues, bike maintenance etc Forster does this and encourages employees to do so.
EC7 Procedures for local hiring and proportion of senior management hired from the local community at locations of significant operation.	As Forster only operates out of one office, it is not always possible to prioritise hiring from the local community for senior management positions. However opportunities for interns, facilities and administration support staff are advertised locally and are appointed from the area where possible.
EC8 Development and impact of infrastructure investments and services provided primarily for public benefit through commercial, in-kind, or pro bono engagement.	The nature of the work carried out by Forster results in positive social and environmental change through a variety of projects across the sectors. In addition to this various community and volunteering efforts, pro bono projects and charity donations have had additional impacts.
EC 9 Understanding and describing significant indirect economic impacts, including the extent of impacts.	Forster has some indirect economic impacts through products but mainly services it purchases but, due to the size of Forster, none of these are felt to be large enough to have significant impacts.
Environmental:	
EN1 Materials used by weight or volume.	The most significant material used is paper. In F/Y: 2013-14 357.50 kg of printer/copier paper was purchased.
EN2 Percentage of materials used that are recycled input materials.	All printer/copier paper purchased is made from 100% recycled material. Other stationery items purchased are specified to be recycled, where available and Forster encourages clients to select printed materials and promotional items made from recycled material.
EN3 Direct energy consumption by primary energy source.	None.
EN4 Indirect energy consumption by primary source.	Gas and electricity are consumed.

EN4 table:

	F/Y 11/12	F/Y 12/13	F/Y 13/14
Gas (kWh):	26,701	53,140	23,408
Gas per capita (kWh):	996	1816	791
Elec (kWh):	27,826	24,580	23,243
Elec per capita (kWh):	1037	840	785

Electricity is purchased from Good Energy; all their energy comes from certified renewable sources.

EN5 Energy saved due to conservation and efficiency improvements.	The energy saved due to employees switching off equipment, sensors being fitted on lights and a new gas boiler being installed are detailed in the Environment section of this report. see page **P22-23**
EN6 Initiatives to provide energy-efficient or renewable energy based products and services, and reductions in energy requirements as a result of these initiatives.	We do not provide energy based products or services. However, we do encourage our clients to source printed materials from printing companies that employ the best energy efficiency measures and/or use renewable energy and/or pay to offset their CO2 emissions.
EN7 Initiatives to reduce indirect energy consumption and reductions achieved.	We screen our suppliers for their corporate social responsibility policies, practices and performance and this includes energy efficiency.

EN8 Total water withdrawl by source.	We purchase water for office usage from Thames Water. Our consumption in F/Y 2013-14 was 244m3 which is 13% more than in F/Y 2012-13 (215 m3) .	EN30 Total environmental protection expenditures and investments by type.	None.
EN9 Water sources significantly affected by withdrawl of water.	N/A – Our usage is negligible and Thames Water water reservoirs are not depleted.	**Labour Practices and Decent Work**	
EN10 Percentage and total volume of water recycled and reused.	None.	LA1 Total workforce by employment type, employment contract, and region, broken down by gender.	In F/Y: 2013-14 permanent employee numbers were 29. Of these 21 were full-time and 8 were part-time. 9 were male and 20 were female. We also regularly work with contractors, interns and freelancers.
EN11 Location and size of land owned leased or managed in, or adjacent to, protected areas and areas of high biodiversity values outside protected areas.	None.	LA2 Total number and rate of employee hires and employee turnover by age group, gender and region.	During F/Y: 2013-14 we hired 1 (1 female) new member of staff – totalling 3% of the team. Our turnover for the same period was 10% (3 female members of staff left).
EN12 Description of significant impacts of activities, products and services on biodiversity in protected areas and areas of high biodiversity values outside protected areas.	None.	LA3 Benefits that are provided to full-time employees that are not provided to temporary or part-time employees by significant locations of operations.	Part-time employees are provided with the same benefits as full-time employees pro-rata. The only temporary employees are interns who are entitled to paid annual leave pro-rata.
EN13 Habitats protected or restored.	N/A.	LA4 Percentage of employees covered by collective bargaining agreements.	None.
EN14 Strategies, current actions, and future plans for managing impacts on biodiversity.	N/A.	LA5 Minimum notice period(s) regarding operational changes, including where it is specified in collective agreements.	None, apart from any statutory obligations.
EN15 Number of IUCN Red List species and national conservation list species with habitats in areas affected by operations, by level of extinction risk.	N/A.	LA6 Percentage of total workforce represented in formal joint management-worker health and safety committees that help monitor and advise on occupational health and safety programmes.	None, although through open communications channels, all staff have the opportunity to raise health & safety issues and concerns with senior management, and are involved in their resolution.
EN16 Total direct and indirect greenhouse gas emissions by weight.	26,923kgs of CO2 in F/Y: 2013-14 total electricity and gas purchased but not including transport.	LA7 Rates of injury, occupational diseases, lost days and absenteeism and number of work related fatalities by region and by gender.	61.25 days sickness absence during F/Y: 2013-14. 18% male and 82% female. All through sickness – no recorded occupational diseases. No work related fatalities.
EN17 Other relevant indirect greenhouse gas emissions by weight.	N/A.	LA8 Education, training, counselling, prevention and risk control programs in place to assist workforce members, their families, or community members regarding serious diseases.	As a purely office based consultancy the main disease risks are those related to use of computers, stress and cycling. We have policies and systems in place to manage these.
EN18 Initiatives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and reductions achieved.	Electricity and gas usage reductions described in environmental section of this report. **P22-23.**		
EN19 Reductions of ozone-depleting substances by weight.	N/A – our offices are not air conditioned.	LA9 Health and safety topics covered in formal agreements with trade unions.	N/A as no trade union members.
EN20 NO, SO and other significant air emissions by type and weight.	None.	LA10 Average hours of training per year per employee, by gender and by employee category.	Employee training varies depending on level but taking into account internal, external, on the job training and personal development opportunities, employees received an average of 7.5 hours training per year (F/Y: 2013-14).
EN21 Total water discharge by quality and destination.	Our only water discharges are wastewater from toilets, basins, sinks and dishwashers in our single office.		
EN22 Total weight of waste by type and disposal method.	938 kgs of waste sent to energy recovery facility and 3248 kgs of waste recycled in F/Y 2013-14.		
EN23 Total number of volume of significant spills.	None.	LA11 Programs for skills management and lifelong learning that support the continued employability of employees and assist them in managing career endings.	Carried out on a case by case basis, although has not been an issue yet.
EN24 Weight of transported, imported or treated waste deemed hazardous under the terms of the Basel Convention Annex I, II, III and VIII, and percentage of transported waste shipped internationally.	None.	LA12 Percentage of employees receiving regular performance and career development reviews, by gender.	100% of employees have formal annual performance appraisals that include learning and development need identification.
EN25 Identity, size, protected status, and biodiversity value of water bodies and related habitats significantly affected by the reporting organisation's discharges of water and runoff.	None.	LA13 Composition of governance bodies and breakdown of employees per employee category according to gender, age group, minority group membership, and other indicators of diversity.	Senior Team comprised 4 women and 3 men with ages ranging from 34 to 61. Delivery teams and General Management comprise of 16 women and 5 men. Our age spectrum ranges from 20 to 61 year olds. 20-24 years old: 7% 25-29 years old: 25% 30-34 years old: 25% 35-39 years old: 11% 40-44 years old: 7% 45-49 years old: 14% 50-54 years old: 4% 55-59 years old: 4% 60+: 4%.
EN26 Initiatives to mitigate environmental impacts of products and services and extent of impact mitigation.	As a communications consultancy we do not produce products and the environmental impacts of our services are minimal. As described in the Environmental (**P22-23**) and Client (**P6-7**) sections of this report we have systems in place to reduce the impacts of our business travel and any print and promotional items we source for clients.		
EN27 Percentage of products sold and their packaging materials that are reclaimed by category.	N/A.		
EN28 Monetary values of significant fines and total number of non-monetary sanctions for noncompliance with environmental laws and regulations.	None.	LA14 Ratio of basic salary and remuneration of women to men by employee category, by significant locations of operation.	Salaries are based on our capabilities framework (available on request) which indicates spectrums per role level. This is applied consistently regardless of gender.
EN29 Significant environmental impacts of transporting products and other goods and materials used for the organisation's operations and transporting members of the workforce.	Our transport impacts are not significant but we do have environmental transport policies and practices relating to the use of couriers, business travel and commuting. (**P22-23**).	LA15 Return to work and retention rates after parental leave, by gender.	100% return to work rate after parental leave.

HR1 Percentage and total number of significant investment agreements and contracts that include clauses incorporating human rights concerns, or that have undergone human rights screening.	N/A – Although we have changed our business banking to the Co-operative Bank because of their Ethical Investment Policy in 2009.	SO5 Public policy positions and participation in public policy development and lobbying.	We do business with people, businesses, charities and social enterprises who are looking to create positive social, ethical, environmental change. In this, we encourage the highest standards of environmental protection, social responsibility and human rights.
HR2 Percentage of significant suppliers, contractors and other business partners that have undergone human rights screening and actions taken.	We do not specifically screen for human rights but we send all core suppliers an ethical screening questionnaire, rate the responses according to ethical criteria and favour suppliers with the best policies and practices.	SO6 Total value of financial and in-kind contributions to political parties, politicians and related institutions by country.	None.
		SO7 Total number of legal actions for anticompetitive behaviour, anti-trust and monopoly practices and their outcomes.	None.
HR3 Total hours of employee training on policies and procedures concerning aspects of human rights that are relevant to operations, including the percentage of employees trained.	25% of staff are regularly involved in supplier screening and carry out the process. All staff are aware of the requirements, with new staff receiving specific training on this during their induction. This results in approximately 3.5 hours training per year across the Company.	SO8 Monetary values of significant fines and total number of non-monetary sanctions for noncompliance with laws and regulations.	None.
HR4 Total number of incidents of discrimination and corrective action taken.	None.	PR1 Life cycle stages in which health and safety impacts of products and services are assessed fo r improvement and percentage of significant products and services categories subject to such procedures.	N/A – We produce no products and our services do not have health and safety impacts.
HR5 Operations and significant suppliers identified in which the right to exercise freedom of association and collective bargaining may be violated or at significant risk, and actions taken to support these rights.	None.	PR2 Total number of incidents of non-compliance with regulations and voluntary codes concerning health and safety impacts or products and services during their life cycle by type of outcomes.	N/A.
HR6 Operations and significant suppliers identified as having significant risk for incidents of child labour, and measures taken to contribute to the effective abolition of child labour.	Not relevant to our direct suppliers. We use three suppliers to source promotional items for our clients. We ask them for assurances relating to the potential labour issues in the supply chain.	PR3 Type of product and service information required by procedures, and percentage of significant products and services subject to such information requirements.	N/A.
HR7 Operations and significant suppliers identified as having significant risk for incidents of forced or compulsory labour, and measures to contribute to the elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour.	As above.	PR4 Total number of incidents of non-compliance with regulations and voluntary codes concerning product and service information and labelling, by type of outcomes.	N/A.
HR8 Percentage of security personnel trained in the organisation's policies or procedures concerning aspects of human rights that are relevant to operations.	N/A.	PR5 Practices related to customer satisfaction, including results of surveys measuring customer satisfaction.	We carry out client satisfaction reviews on completion of significant projects and these are usually carried out by our Non-Executive Director. As part of the biennial Ethical Review conducted by an external consultant a limited number of clients were contacted and interviewed with regard to their satisfaction and information on this is included in this report. **P6-8.**
HR9 Total number of incidents of violations involving rights of indigenous people and actions taken.	N/A.		
HR10 Percentage and total number of operations that have been subject to human rights reviews and/or impact assessments.	N/A – The only human rights impacts relevant to our operations are those relating to employment conditions of single UK office based staff. These are covered by UK employment legislation and our own best practice policies.		
HR11 Number of grievances related to human rights filed, addressed and resolved through formal grievance mechanisms.	N/A.	PR6 Programs for adherence to laws, standard and voluntary codes related to marketing communications, including advertising, promotion and sponsorship.	As an ethical business we would not stand for misrepresentation of ourselves or do so on behalf of our clients. Our PR Director works alongside our MD to ensure that all communications regarding the company are accurate. In addition, we are members of the PRCA and a number of senior staff are members of the Market Research Society.
SO1 Percentage of operations with implemented local community engagement, impact assessments and development programs.	Our work is not of a type that has negative impacts on our local community. On the contrary, we engage with our local community to find ways in which we can contribute to improvement. See Community section **P18-19.**		
SO9 Operations with significant potential or actual negative impacts on local communities.	None.	PR7 Total number of incidents of non-compliance with regulations and voluntary codes concerning marketing communications, including advertising, promotion, and sponsorship by type of outcomes.	None.
SO10 Prevention and mitigation measures implemented in operations with significant potential or actual negative impacts on local communities.	N/A.	PR8 Total number of substantiated complaints regarding breaches of customer privacy and losses of customer data.	None.
SO2 Percentage and total number of business units analysed for risks related to corruption.	N/A.	PR9 Monetary value of significant fines for noncompliance with laws and regulations concerning the provisions and use of products and services.	N/A.
SO3 Percentage of employees trained in organisation's anti-corruption policies and procedures.	N/A.		
SO4 Actions taken in response to incidents of corruption.	N/A.		

We are the people who...

... developed and launched the **StreetLink** brand, leading to 15,000 members of the public calling the helpline and over 1,500 homeless people being taken off the streets in the first three months of the campaign

... aligned **Astellas Pharma Europe's** position as a global urology leader with obstetric fistula and created a major corporate giving initiative to transform the lives of over 1,200 women in Kenya

... encouraged 500 cyclists an hour to 'share the space and drop the pace' on London's towpaths for **Canal & River Trust**

... inspired young people to sign up as young farmers and grow their own vegetables with the **National Trust**

... built on 5 years heritage of running corporate responsibility communications for the **Vodafone Group** to help their Foundations in India and Tanzania develop new donation and communications strategies

... created the global Stop the Violence campaign for the **World Association of Girl Guides** and the UN

... got 35 million people to take a fresh look at the **Hospice** Movement

... created the Seeing is Believing campaign for **Standard Chartered** which has so far reached more than 53 million people

... ensured the **Marine Stewardship Council** (MSC) has a consistent face and strong voice across their entire international network

... created a step change in **KPMG**'s employee volunteering programme, moving from one involving unskilled volunteering placements to one that maximises existing skills and helps staff develop new ones

... are working with the **South Downs National Park Authority** to encourage 370,000 visitors to switch to sustainable transport by 2015

... developed the annual Spread the Warmth campaign, helping **Age UK** to raise over £800,000 in its first year and secure additional government funding of £20 million

... helped **Danone** get primary school children excited about health eating through their Eat Like A Champ programme

... helped establish the **Professional Association of Childcare and Early Years** (PACEY) as one of the most active voices and influencers in the childcare sector

... helped raise awareness of the **National Minimum Wage** with employers and employees, resulting in a 47% increase in calls to the Pay and Work Rights Helpline

... created the £50,000 pint, cited as one of **Department of Transport**'s 'best ever drinkdrive campaigns – simple, eye-catching and sobering'.

...reduce & re-launch & increase & develop & track & target & establish & capitalise & identify & educate & become & help & build & provide & work & challenge & raise & conduct & offer & issue & understand & aim & continue & encourage & consolidate & maintain & re-energise & install & improve & protect &...

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