



Facing our future **with confidence**

Values driven organisations
ensure sustainable profitability.

Just what is Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)?

This is a perplexing question and one we have been determined to fully understand.

Traditionally CSR aims to encourage companies to be more aware of the impact that their organisation is having on society. Social Responsibility is an approach that contributes to sustainable development by delivering economic, social and environmental benefits for all stakeholders. It is a concept with many definitions and practices and one that addresses many and various topics such as human rights, corporate governance, health and safety and environmental effects.

The purpose of Social Responsibility is to drive change towards sustainability.

A new standard for CSR relevant for the new century

I wanted a new definition that was less fluffy at the edges and one that applied to all organisations across all sectors no matter how small or large. Social responsibility should be for everyone.

Having been asked by a large regional business membership group to look at establishing an accreditation for social responsibility I needed a new definition, a framework underpinned by an overarching statement, and arrived at the following.

‘Social Responsibility allows you to enrich the quality of lives for all by investing in social value as an essential part of an organisations culture. This provides purpose and impact and will ensure a sustainable and profitable business. It will help to build a better world for future generations by improving the environment and ensuring a cohesive community to live and work in.’

Now there was the question of **challenging the C in CSR** to make it far more inclusive...

Increasingly the term ‘corporate’ has been challenged. This is because it excludes a large number of stakeholders, specifically the third and public sectors and because ‘corporate’ does not encompass sole traders or smaller SMEs. For this reason we have defined the ‘C’ in CSR to be more inclusive, for example:

Corporate Social Responsibility

Large Companies - (Private Sector)

Company Social Responsibility

Sole Traders and SMEs - (Private Sector)

Community Social Responsibility

Local Authorities, Schools, Hospitals etc - (Public Sector)

Charitable Social Responsibility

Charities - (Third Sector)

Consumer Social Responsibility

Products & Services

Citizen Social Responsibility

Training & Workshops

Collective Social Responsibility

All of us

Finally this new standard is defined by a truly holistic framework that allows all organisations to look at what they are already doing against the CSR Four Pillars of Environment, Workplace, Community and Philanthropy. Each Social Responsibility Pillar is designed to help you benchmark, measure, record, report and communicate impacts on areas such as energy performance, recycling, staff engagement, health and well-being, community engagement and

The term **Corporate Social Responsibility** was first officially coined in 1953 by American economist Howard Bowen in his publication **Social Responsibilities of the Businessman.**

supporting local and national charities. This provides a structure that will help an organisation plan and act responsibly.

Having now established a new standard we then developed the CSR Accreditation as a visible testimony of independent, expert recognition to being a socially responsible organisation. The accreditation provides a roadmap for planning future activity and is very much the start of a journey that delivers impact purpose and social and financial value. The application process provides a simple and straightforward template where you can record activity against the Social Responsibility Four Pillars. The application is assessed by an independent assessment panel that expects to see evidence to support the claims made such as links to policies, testimonials, staff engagement, financial savings etc. We believe that for good story telling there must be evidence of good story doing.

The question is why be a responsible business?

Isn't CSR just a distraction, an unnecessary cost, a nice to have if you have time ?. This is definitely not the case. Social responsibility is driving forward successful businesses.

A structured CSR programme is the practical step developed out of an organisation's set of meanings, beliefs and values, namely its culture. This sets out that an organisation's social responsibility for its operational impact on society is integrated into the culture. It is a powerful force that gives meaning to people's lives, reduces uncertainty and creates stability but it is also the determinant of the success or failure of an organisation.

There is now no doubt about the impact of CSR on profitability for an organisation

Social responsibility is a new profit centre. The future shape of business will be measured in both social and financial value. The clear drivers for CSR can be seen in a return on social investment (ROSI) and a social return on investment (SROI).

CSR now drives an organisations brand and business reputation and is a powerful emotional investment that has a positive impact on all stakeholders. It makes us feel good because it is about something good. It is also a way to add value and give greater purpose to our time beyond the job role and title. This is about staff engagement, improved productivity and mental health and wellbeing. Employees want to feel proud of the organisation they work for. An employee with a positive attitude towards the company, is less likely to look for a job elsewhere.

Being a responsible, sustainable business makes it easier to recruit new employees. There appears to be a change in mindset from those seeking employment for the first time. This may be about underpinning value for business in engaging with the next generation from a CSR perspective. In other words, an organisation

that delivers social value. This is about lining up your values with those of the next generation.

Plus there is the measurable operational costs savings and better financial performance by reducing resource use, waste and emissions, you can help the environment and save money too.

It also is easier access to capital. Investors who are pouring money into companies want to know that their funds are being used properly. Not only does this mean that corporations must have sound business plans and budgets, but it also means that they should have a strong sense of corporate social responsibility. Investors care about corporate social responsibility and so should companies.

It is now commonplace to be scored on your CSR performance when tendering for both public and private projects. Already one out of three local authorities insist on evidenced CSR as part of the tendering process.

CSR is about the future: discovering your sustainable and profitable potential and achieving it.

Customers want to trust organisations they engage with. Employees want to work for values-driven employers and investors want to know that a company is addressing its ethical responsibility.

But it is also about delivering social value, and investment in something much bigger than the organisation. It will help with clarity about what you want to get out of business and from your life. It becomes a road map for delivering greater purpose and value to all stakeholders.

There has also been a change in mind set - COVID 19 a game changer. The coronavirus pandemic has actually re-introduced us to a more authentic normal, one in which we have a stronger sense of community and social responsibility. It feels like we lost sight of those values and now we are beginning to see them again. The world has changed dramatically and the focus on social responsibility has become far more important. We have already witnessed some incredible acts of kindness, support for struggling businesses, charities and individuals and positive business practices. This will become normal as consumers and stakeholders expect increased social value and from the businesses they are engaged with.

So, ask yourself what is the cost of not being socially responsible? Increased absenteeism, retraining, poor engagement, lost social capital, losing tenders, poor reputation, dropped from the supply chain, not attracting new talent and a high risk investment.

Can you afford **not** to be a socially responsible organisation?

According to the London Stock Exchange **investors now routinely analyse CSR (ESG) performance** to gain an understanding of a companies' prospects. **Sixty percent of assets managed for EU investors incorporate sustainable investment strategies.**

Start your CSR Journey now and plan for future success as a **sustainable and profitable** organisation.

CSR-A are a leading UK based company delivering a new standard for Social Responsibility

It is now more important than ever to show that we are doing everything we can to improve the world we live in for future generations, not only by reducing the negative impact we have on the environment, but by building a better and cohesive society. It's amazing what we are already doing that we don't talk about. CSR-A provides the perfect opportunity to tell your positive story

Social Responsibility allows you to enrich the quality of lives for all by investing in social value as an essential part of an organisations culture. This provides purpose and impact and will ensure a sustainable and profitable business. It will help to build a better world for future generations by improving the environment and ensuring a cohesive community to live and work in.

What is CSR Accreditation?

CSR Accreditation is the perfect way to collate what you are already doing in regard to social responsibility. The application process helps you easily report on your organisations sustainable and community engagement and provides a simple template where you can record activity against the Four Pillars of environment, workplace, community and philanthropy. Each Pillar is designed to help you measure, record and impact report on areas such as energy performance, recycling, staff engagement, health and well-being, diversity, community engagement and supporting local and national charities. Successful applications become CSR Accredited and receive our members pack. The CSR Accreditation Mark should be displayed on your website, in your reception and throughout your literature, proudly showing that your organisation has been independently recognised for its CSR endeavours. Members are encouraged to take full advantage of our benefits package which includes access to thought leadership and insight pieces, consultation for ongoing activity and re-accreditation at the end of a three year cycle. A tree is planted for every accreditation by Green Earth Appeal and 5% of the application fee goes to charity.

Your application report subsequently becomes an invaluable CSR policy / Social Impact Report which you can use to show all your audiences that you are a caring and responsible organisation.

This is a holistic and inclusive approach that allows for all organisations - private, public and third sector, for all sizes from sole traders to large corporations. It employs a white paper approach that promotes an organisation's CSR personality and individuality.

Sustainable and social purpose with profit – the future for successful businesses and organisations

It is clearly recognised that social responsibility gives competitive advantage through good corporate governance, effective execution of innovative environmental and social projects and ethical management. In order to maximise the potential of this advantage, it is essential for companies to smartly communicate their social responsibility efforts to ensure that consumers view them as driven by intrinsic (genuine) rather than extrinsic (profit led) motivations. CSR Accreditation encourages a culture of sustainable and social purpose which differentiates applicants in tendering opportunities and also increases general business efficiency, productivity and profitability.

CSR Accreditation helps with ESG (Environmental Social Governance) reporting and in identifying the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) which you may wish to support. The CSR Accreditation can be used to produce a Social Impact Report.

Values driven organisations deliver sustainable profit

Customers want to trust organisations they engage with. Employees want to work for values-driven employers and investors want to know that a company is addressing its ethical responsibility.

Some of the clear benefits of CSR

- Positive business and brand reputation.
- Builds customer engagement.
- Encourages employee engagement and team building.
- Greater ability to attract talent and retain staff.
- More likely to attract Investment and supports ESG Reporting.
- Essential for tendering.
- Provides a new profit centre - your return on social investment.
- PR and Marketing – positive story telling.

Achieving CSR Accreditation is a visible testimony of excellence in Social Responsibility that communicates evidenced environmental and social impact to all of an organisations audiences and stakeholders.

To find out more visit

www.csr-accreditation.co.uk

Demonstrate your commitment now and become a **CSR Leader.**

Call **01494 444494** to find out more about application or visit www.csr-accreditation.co.uk

Take our free **CSR Accreditation assessment survey** online visit www.csr-accreditation.co.uk/csr-assessment-survey/

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