BANKSGroup
development with care



Sustainable energy
Sustainable communities

CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY • 2019 REVIEW

Foreword

Who we are and how we view corporate responsibility





The Banks Group develops land for a variety of uses including renewable energy, property and surface coal mining. We are a family owned, County Durham, based business employing over 300 people across the north of England and Scotland.

We are proud to work with local communities to develop and refine our projects. Working with local communities is hugely important to us and central to our approach to our business. This has required us to develop new practices and innovative solutions to meeting all reasonable expectations of the people directly affected by our work. Our *development with care* approach remains at the heart of all that we do.

Whilst The Banks Group has been built on our coal mining expertise that is far from the whole story. We currently operate 10 on-shore wind farms. These ten wind farms provide over 222MW of renewable electricity generating capacity across Scotland and the north of England. In total, to date, we have obtained planning permission for 14 onshore wind farms and a solar array. We are also well established in land and property developments.

This report highlights our key corporate responsibility (CR) highlights in 2019 - building on the CR achievements and reported on in previous years. As in preceding years, this report is divided into four main sections, covering each of the strands of work that our CR group focuses on:

- **ENVIRONMENT** – how we seek to leave positive environmental legacies from our projects
- **COMMUNITY** – how we support the wider community both for areas hosting our projects and nationally
- **BUSINESS PARTNERS** – how we work fairly with our suppliers and promote local businesses
- **WORKPLACE** – how we keep safe, support and develop our people

However, in this year's CR review we use the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals as a framework and demonstrate how the strands of *development with care* dovetail with these international standards.

For further information about the Banks Group please also visit our website: *www.banksgroup.co.uk*



HARRY BANKS OBE, DL
BANKS GROUP FOUNDER & CHAIRMAN
July 2020

Objectives

Taking our corporate responsibility seriously









Corporate responsibility (CR) describes an organisation's commitment to good citizenship. It shows the organisation's ethics and values on issues such as the environment, business partners or suppliers, community programmes and employee welfare.



OUR CR KEY DELIVERABLES ARE:

- To capture CR initiatives and promote internally and externally
- To promote health and wellbeing initiatives to staff across the organisation
- To select and promote our annual charity and to manage fundraising events
- To identify and prioritise actions and activities that will promote our CR Agenda and to make recommendations to the Group Board on the group's CR strategy and new initiatives
- To produce specific, validated and measurable evidence of the group's delivery of its CR strategies

Looking at the bigger picture

Aligning with international sustainable development goals



The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are the blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. They address the global challenges we face, including those related to poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, peace and justice. The 17 goals are all interconnected, and are targeted to be achieved by 2030.

HOW DOES OUR *DEVELOPMENT WITH CARE* APPROACH FIT WITH THE UN's SDGs.

The Banks Group's *development with care* approach means we work with the local community in which our projects are located. It also means we want to ensure our employees are treated properly – safely, well trained and with respect – so they can do a good job and enjoy their work. *Development with care* is very much integral to our CR approach and work. It ensures that we conduct our activities in a responsible manner with consideration for the environment, for local communities in which we operate and for our customers, employees and suppliers.

We aim to develop our business by continuously improving our environmental performance, by using sustainable practices and by building and maintaining positive relationships with our stakeholders. By pro-actively meeting, talking with and getting to know the local people where our developments are going to be, we are able to take their feedback into account when designing our schemes. This helps to us to ensure that each development we put forward is of the highest standard and as sensitively designed as possible.

The Banks Group's *development with care* approach also encompasses The Banks Community Fund (which is actually made up of a number of funds). The Banks Community Fund was formally established in 1997 to provide support to community groups, voluntary organisations and environmental projects that are charitable, educational, philanthropic or benevolent in purpose, which are located within close proximity of a current or proposed Banks Group development and which will provide benefit to the local community.

The fund comes from a variety of sources including Banks Renewables wind farms, Banks Mining surface coal mines, Banks Property developments, the Banks Group's landfill fund and others, ensuring that local communities which host Banks operations share the benefits from our presence in the area.

Development with care and the Banks Community Fund, dovetails with the following, but not all, UN SDGs:



1. No Poverty

The Banks Group creates well paid, skilled, jobs and employs local people and contractors wherever possible. This approach helps lift people out of poverty in the areas in which we have projects in the UK.



2. Zero Hunger

Similarly decent jobs help lift people and families out of food poverty and holiday hunger.



3. Good Health and Well-being

The Banks Group's *development with care* CR approach includes the promotion of regular health awareness and good living campaigns, such as Dry January, mental well-being awareness and signposting campaigns.



4. Quality Education

The Banks Community Fund regularly awards grants to educational projects in the areas in which we work in the UK. The Banks Group is extremely committed to developing our staff, so they continuously improve their skills and gain experience. In 1996 we were awarded Investors in People (IIP) status and since then have achieved the year on year improvement in staff development required to maintain IIP status, gaining the Silver level in 2018.

Every member of staff has a training and development plan which is monitored every year during the appraisal process. We also provide high-level health and safety and IT training to all the plant operators at our surface mines. Banks employees are also encouraged to further their careers through professional chartered qualifications, degrees and specialist training courses. Banks Mining has a full time in-house heavy plant trainer/assessor who is certified to train and assess the competency of plant operators and has experience of operating all items of plant normally found on surface mining projects. As a result we have created the Banks Mining licensing scheme for plant operators, which is an extensive induction, training and licensing scheme that is far more challenging and robust than other third-party industry schemes, thereby raising our standards in the safe, efficient and responsible. Our training and licensing scheme has been presented to both the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and the Institute of Quarrying (IQ). We received positive feedback and endorsement from both organisations.



5. Gender Equality

Gender equality is a fundamental human right. The Banks Group is committed to equality of opportunity and offers flexible working practices to overcome employment barriers.

CONTINUED OVERLEAF >>



Renewable energy provided by our Penny Hill Wind Farm, near Rotherham



Local, sustainable, well paid jobs are essential to creating sustainable communities

6. Clean Water and Sanitation

Managing water on site, including in terms of grey water run-off and preventing particulate matter entering water courses, is a key part of how we manage our mining, property and renewables developments. Our property projects are developed with sustainable urban drainage schemes (SUDS) embedded in the design, to manage the flow of water drainage from sites.

7. Affordable and Clean Energy

The Banks Group's business model is focussed on investing in on-shore wind. As on-shore wind is the lowest cost form of renewable energy, the more there is of it on the National Grid the more consumers' bills can be kept low and affordable. We are also exploring the use of other cost effective renewable technologies solutions such as solar, battery storage and hydro-pump storage.

8. Decent Work and Economic Growth

We treat our employees with respect, paying and training them well. We have a low turnover of staff. Our business strategy is based on sustainable and responsible growth. This approach very much dovetails with this sustainable development goal.

9. Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure

A central plank of our approach to our work here at the Banks Group involves constantly innovating, improving and diversifying so we can become more efficient, safer and carry out our work to a higher standard. We strive for a high degree of efficiency, accounting for greenhouse gases and analysing this data to assess where improvements can be made, then implementing intelligent solutions to further our commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Our mining business produces coal and fireclay which are key ingredients to make steel, cement and bricks. These are the key building blocks to key infrastructure like roads, bridges, ports and railways.

10. Reducing Inequality

Our approach to business is to ensure that the communities around our sites benefit from our presence there. The Banks Community Fund panel always seeks to do the most good it can and so will often prioritise applications that seek to reduce inequality and benefit deprived areas.

11. Sustainable Cities and Communities

At Banks we understand that investment needs to be aligned with a commitment to quality, delivering jobs and skills, building a community and leaving behind a positive economic, social and environmental legacy. We seek to do this on all our projects.

12. Responsible Consumption and Production

We monitor both the supply and demand side. In particular we manage our impact on the environment. Many people across our business have undertaken positive initiatives in order to improve the efficiency of our use of energy, materials, consumables and water. These are important as they not only improve the prospects of success for our business but do so in a positive way for the planet. However, we believe that these, and new initiatives, should be more visible and coordinated. To that end, (in December 2017) the Group Board agreed to the establishment of a Group Resource Efficiency (RE) team. The role of the RE team is to promote, coordinate and measure the resource efficiency initiatives undertaken across all of our businesses and all of our premises. A baseline survey of our resource usage was commissioned to establish a starting point against which to measure our resource efficiency improvement. The RE team will establish resource efficiency improvement targets and will collate, support and promote the initiatives towards achieving those targets. In terms of production we strive to work efficiently, safely and responsibly; minimising waste and resources used to produce coal and build our wind farms.

13. Climate Action

At Banks we are very much at the coalface of this extremely important debate; literally! We are in favour of a low /net zero carbon future and we are very proud that we have invested profits from our coal business into our renewable business, which now operates ten onshore wind farms in the UK. These ten wind farms provide over 222MW of renewable electricity generating capacity across Scotland and the north of England.

The greenhouse gas emissions generated by the transportation of these imports, from countries such as Russia and the USA to UK customers, can be more than five times higher than transporting coal mined in the UK. Increasing imports of coal simply 'off-shores' the UK's environmental responsibilities without the significant local economic and employment opportunities and environmental enhancements that indigenous coal production delivers.

On Tuesday 3 March 2020, Rt Hon Kwasi Kwarteng MP, Minister of State at the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy said: "Obviously, from a coal and carbon emissions reduction point of view, it makes sense to have a locally based coal source rather than shipping it in a very costly way halfway around the world."

We must look at emissions in a global context, as Greta Thunberg says, and not simply close down UK industry and import the minerals and products we need from far away suppliers – thus creating even more CO_2 emissions. To close UK indigenous mines and then import more coal is worse for the planet, virtue signalling and frankly hypocritical.

14. Life below water

We go about our business being mindful of life below water. We carefully design our projects to protect aquatic life and strive to go beyond UK regulations. Water features are often included as part of our restoration plans creating opportunities to create new or enhanced water bodies and habitats for aquatic life.

15. Life On Land

Surface mining creates new habitats and biodiversity at a scale few other industries can. We operate biodiversity action plans (BAPs) on our sites, which create and manage habitats for wildlife through working and aftercare. At the Shotton and Brenkley Lane sites, our surveys indicate that we have improved the local endangered species populations. We've also been able to create wildlife habitats close to our wind farms too. Wild flower meadows have been planted at many of our wind farms which are ideal for encouraging the biodiversity of insects, birds and small mammals.

16. Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

Not applicable

17. Partnerships for the goals

To successfully work towards these goals requires inclusive partnerships — at the global, regional, national and local levels. We are proud to work in partnership with a number of institutions including Investors In People, Better Health at Work, BetterCoal, Unite the Union, RenewableUK, the House Builder's Federation and a number of local authorities. For example we work in partnership with South Lanarkshire Council on Connect2Renewbles – they administer a learning, working, earning scheme for us that utilises funds from our wind farms within their council area.

Our landscape architect, Mark Simmons overseeing the planting of a first wave of 3,500 trees at our Bradley Surface Mine in July 2019. Around 10,500 trees will be planted in total by the time the site is fully restored in August 2021.

Banks Mining has planted more than 1.2 million trees across all the 113 surface mine sites it has restored across Scotland and northern England over the last four decades.

Environment

Creating positive legacies

RELEVANT UN SDGs:



HIGHLIGHTS OF 2019

- Increasing our net positive carbon rating. In 2018 we displaced 1,742 tonnes of CO_2. In 2019 we displaced 36,817 tonnes of CO_2.
- Increasing biodiversity on our surface mines – in particular species of mammals, birds and wildflower.
- Our biggest wind farm to date, Kype Muir, a 26 turbine 88MW wind farm, started supplying green energy to the National Grid from April 2019.

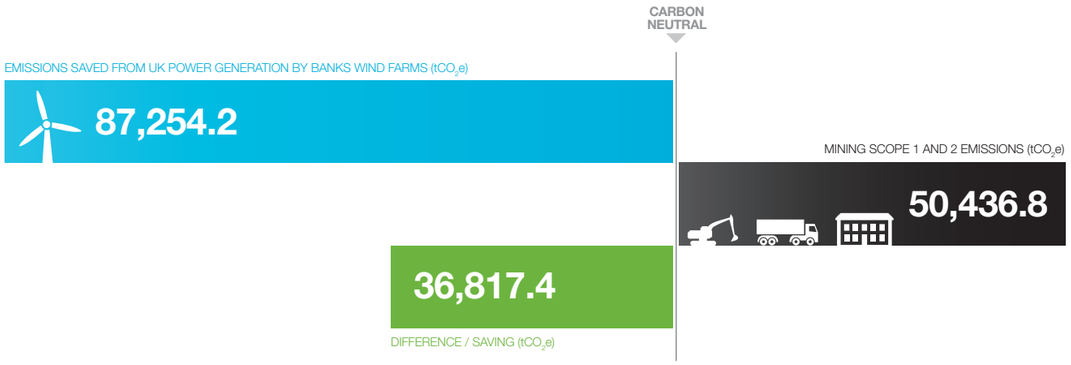
OUR PLANS FOR 2020:

- Improving at least 500 acres of sustainable habitat for local wildlife.
- Embedding our Resource Efficiency (RE) team with the role of promoting, coordinating and measuring the resource efficiency initiatives undertaken across all of our businesses and all of our premises.
- Investing in new plant and machinery to reduce our operational emissions including trialling electric HGVs when they become available.

Greenhouse gas emission reporting

Supporting a just carbon transition by investing the profits from a fossil fuel business into a renewables business

2019 ANNUAL GHG EMISSIONS SAVINGS FROM BANKS RENEWABLES WIND FARMS COMPARED TO THE EMISSIONS GENERATED FROM ALL BANKS MINING ACTIVITIES



The Banks Group is one of the few companies to invest its profits from a fossil fuels business (Banks Mining) directly into a renewable technology business (Banks Renewables). Rather than being a net zero business, we are in fact a net positive business as the graphic above shows. We are proud to be leading the way in investing to transition to a net zero society by 2030.

HOW DO WE MONITOR OUR GREEN HOUSE GAS EMISSIONS (GHGS)?

Greenhouse gas emissions are categorised into three groups or 'scopes' by the most widely-used international accounting tool, the greenhouse gas protocol. Scope 1 covers direct emissions from owned or controlled sources. Scope 2 covers indirect emissions from the generation of purchased electricity, steam, heating and cooling consumed by the reporting company. Scope 3 includes all other indirect emissions that occur in a company's value chain.

WHY MEASURE OUR GHG EMISSIONS?

We measure GHGs because it helps us evaluate, and therefore, improve our efficiency. We measure GHGs because it is in line with *development with care*. We measure GHGs because we are the first European coal producer to gain the internationally recognised Bettercoal accreditation. We measure GHGs because it is the right thing to do.

WHAT HAVE WE DONE TO MINIMISE OUR EMISSIONS?

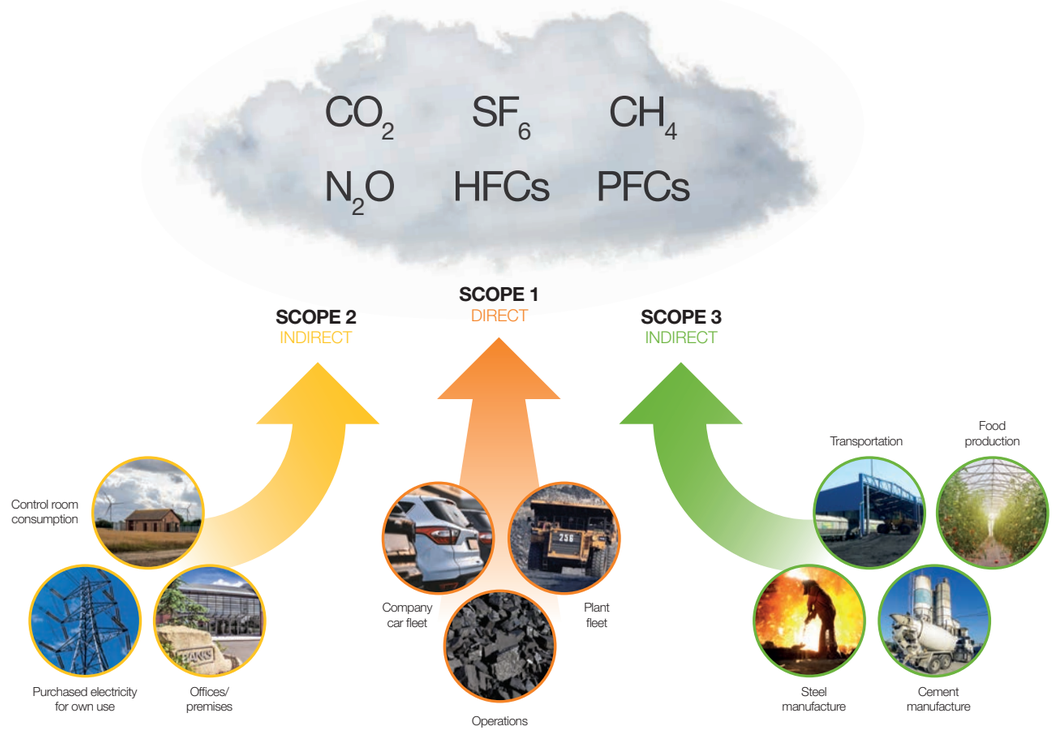
The past three years have seen improvements in total emissions at Group level and Group efficiency (measured against material shifted) and Q1 of 2020 has shown positive performance compared to quarterly averages

- Greenhouse gas reports were carried out by independent and respected consultants in this field, Wardell Armstrong
- Diversifying and modernising key plant vehicles – including investing in new very efficient Komatsu loading shovels and new very efficient heavy goods vehicles
- Further operator training on heavy goods vehicles and plant vehicles



Our Armistead Wind Warm, South Lakeland

UNDERSTANDING HOW GHG EMISSIONS ARE CATEGORISED

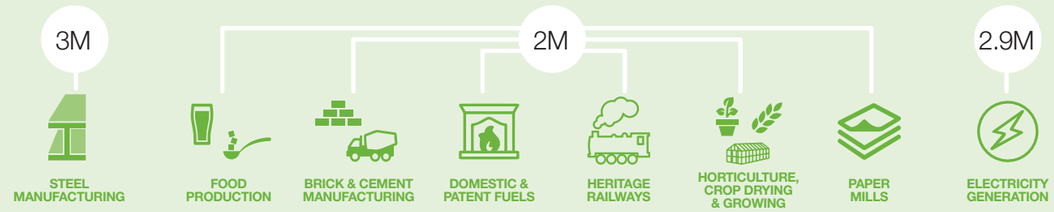


The environmental case for mining coal in the UK

A common sense approach to meet the UK's industrial coal demand locally and sustainably

WHAT DO WE USE COAL FOR IN THE UK (TONNES)?

SOURCE: DUKES Report Annual Data & Energy Trends - March 2020

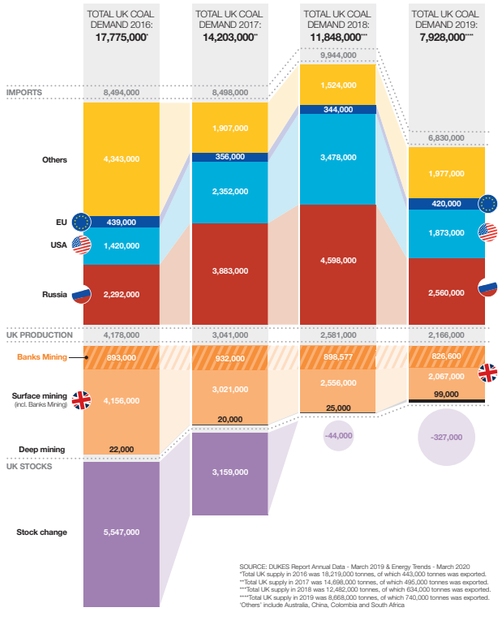


In 2019, UK coal demand was 7.9 million tonnes and of that UK Industry consumed 5 million tonnes. Even with a transition to other fuel alternatives - these key industries are likely to rely on coal for at least the next 10 - 15 years.

The coal we need can be sourced from here in the UK or it can be sourced from abroad. In 2019, imports were used to meet our coal demand with over 80% of the coal we use coming from countries like Russia, the USA and as far away as Australia.

The associated greenhouse gas emissions generated by the transportation of these imports to UK customers, can be five times higher than transporting coal mined in the UK. Increasing imports of coal simply 'off-shores' the UK's environmental responsibilities without the significant local economic and employment opportunities and environmental enhancements that indigenous coal production deliver.

HOW IS UK COAL DEMAND MET?



SOURCE: DUKES Report Annual Data - March 2019 & Energy Trends - March 2020.
*Total UK supply in 2016 was 18,219,000 tonnes, of which 443,000 tonnes was exported.
**Total UK supply in 2017 was 14,698,000 tonnes, of which 495,000 tonnes was exported.
***Total UK supply in 2018 was 12,482,000 tonnes, of which 634,000 tonnes was exported.
****Total UK supply in 2019 was 8,668,000 tonnes, of which 740,000 tonnes was exported.
'Others' include Australia, China, Colombia and South Africa

Coal is a key raw material to important sectors such as steel and cement production and to sectors that need cost effective, easy to handle and high energy fuel sources such as domestic heating, food production, and heritage railways. It provides materials needed to build our future hospitals, schools and homes.

Though we need to reduce our reliance on coal, the need for it will continue into the foreseeable future and without a secure domestic resource these sectors and businesses will need to look abroad to source this essential mineral. By using our own coal reserves, additional green house emissions created through the transportation of imported coal can be avoided.

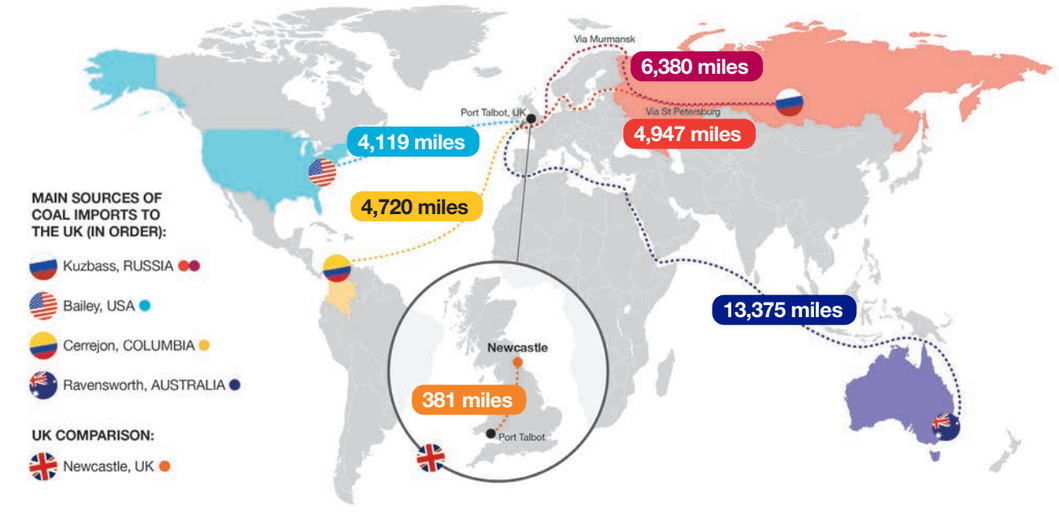
Therefore surface mining in the UK is the most sustainable way of meeting the UK industrial sector's continuing need for coal. Surface coal mining in the UK creates significant economic benefits as it provides skilled, well paid, jobs in areas where job opportunities are scarce. It supports an extensive supply chain and also creates positive community and environmental benefits through high quality natural capital as a result of innovative restoration as well as improved public access.

It makes environmental, economic and social sense to produce the coal that the UK continues to need, here in the UK.



Coal is an essential component of the steel manufacturing process

HOW FAR DOES THE UK'S IMPORTED COAL TRAVEL?

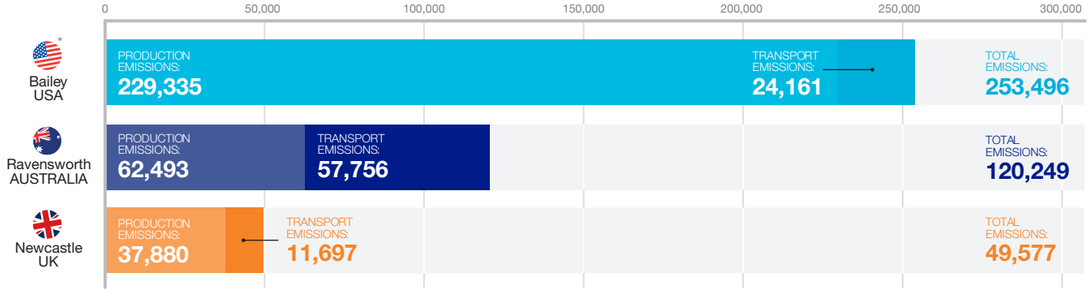


MINING COAL IN THE UK REDUCES THE UK'S CARBON FOOTPRINT

The coal from our proposed Dewley Hill Surface Mine (800,000 tonnes) near Newcastle can be mined and transported for significantly less greenhouse gas emissions than sourcing the same amount of coal from the USA or Australia.

CO_2e EMITTED DURING TRANSPORTATION AND PRODUCTION

Mining and transporting 800,000 tonnes of coal / *USA mining production figures from underground mining. Australian and UK production figures from surface mining (tCO_2e)



Encouraging biodiversity

A rich variety of biodiversity can found on our surface mines



Red Mason Bee on storage mounds at Brenkley Lane Surface Mine

As part of the site biodiversity action plans we have looked at how we can provide a range of habitats that will increase biodiversity. A focus for this has been the enhancement of the soil and overburden storage mounds to benefit insect species, which in turn provide food for a range of wildlife species.

Our approach has been to look at the mix of native grass and flower species sown on the mounds to provide food and cover for insects. Flowers provide nectar, pollen and seeds along with grasses, which are also an important source of pollen. The dead stems of the flowers and grasses also provide winter cover for insects to hibernate.

Another important habitat is bare ground, in particular for burrowing insects such as solitary bees and a number of wasp species. The bare ground quickly warms up in the sun and provides basking areas for butterflies and other species. Our site mounds provide a mosaic of microhabitats across their surface and support a growing diversity of species, such as the Red Mason Bee and the Dingy Skipper Butterfly.

RED MASON BEES

Red Mason Bees have been found at our Brenkley Lane Surface Mine. They nest in hollow plant stems, in holes in mounds/cliffs and in the crumbling mortar of old buildings.

'On the wing' from late March, they feed solely on pollen and nectar. They are covered in dense gingery hair. There are many similar species of Mason Bee that can make them difficult to identify.

It is a solitary bee so, after mating each female builds her own nest; she lines each 'cell' with mud and pollen and lays a single egg in each until the cavity is full. The larvae hatch and develop, pupating in autumn and hibernating over winter.

Monday 20 May 2019 was World Bee Day. Bees are among the only insects in the world that produce food people can eat, and they pollinate as many as 170,000 species of plants. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 75% of the world's food crops depend at least in part on pollination by insects and other animals - the reason why bees are considered the invisible helpers of farmers across the globe. Agricultural products that require pollination - like coffee, chocolate, almonds and cocoa - are also an important source of jobs and income.



Stock image of a Red Kite

RED KITES

Red Kites (Milvus milvus) have been spotted regularly over Bradley Surface Mine throughout 2019. This elegant bird soars on long wings held at a dihedral, and long forked tail, twisting as it changes direction. The body, upper tail and wing coverts are rufous. It is thought the soil mounds on the mine provide a good source of food - namely mice, voles, shrews, hares and rabbits.

OTTERS



Remote camera picture of otter on the Brenkley Lane site

BARN OWLS



Barn Owl on the edge of the Brenkley Lane site

NATURE BENEFITS FROM MINING OPERATIONS AND RESTORATION

Surface mining creates new habitats and biodiversity at a scale few other industries can. We operate biodiversity action plans (BAPs) on our sites, which create and manage habitats for wildlife through working and aftercare. At the Shotton and Brenkley Lane sites, our surveys indicate that we have improved the local endangered species populations.



WILDLIFE SURVEYS FROM SHOTTON SURFACE MINE

	SKYLARK (PAIRS)	LAPWINGS (PAIRS)	BROWN HARE	BAT (SPECIES)
Pre - working (2008)	11	6	*None Recorded*	2
Site operational (2015)	30	19	15	12

Significant renewable energy milestone reached



L-R: Banks Renewables' MD, Richard Dunkley and Scottish Government Minister for Energy, Paul Wheelhouse MSP, stand by the plaque at the opening ceremony of Kype Muir Wind Farm, April 2019



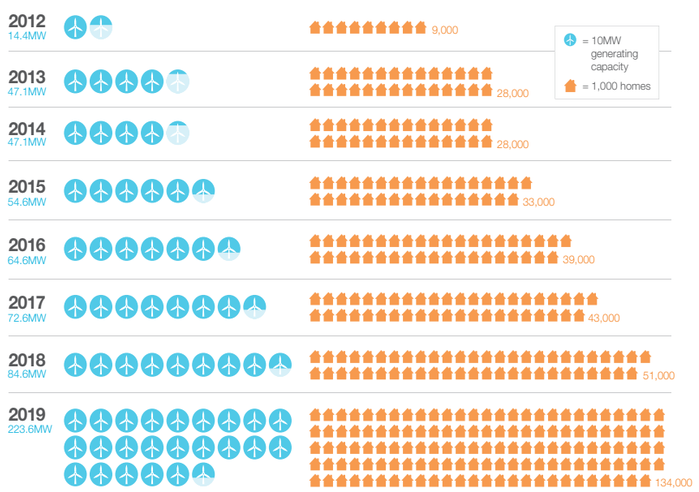
Our Middle Muir Wind Farm, South Lanarkshire

Providing over 130,000 homes with green electricity and local communities with social and economic benefits

From generating enough electricity for 9,000 homes in 2012, Banks Renewables can now provide enough green electricity for 134,000 homes due the Kype Muir and Middle Muir wind farms becoming fully operational during 2019.

Both wind farms are located in South Lanarkshire and built in line with Banks Renewables' Connect2Renewables initiative - a partnership between the local community, Banks Renewables and South Lanarkshire Council that seeks to maximise the social, economic and environmental benefit of the wind farms in the local area.

OUR RENEWABLES EXPANSION (2012-2019)



Using paper responsibly

CARBON CAPTURE PRINTING

This and previous CR publications have been printed using "carbon capture printing". This means that the amount of CO_2 generated in the production, printing and delivery of our publication has been calculated and offset by the planting of the appropriate numbers of trees in the UK by the Woodland Trust to catch this carbon.

By using this new carbon capture method we are allowed to have the official approved Woodland Trust carbon capture logo (a black and white logo featuring acorn leaves) printed on the back cover of the relevant documents, to recognise and demonstrate to others our commitment to this very innovative initiative of planting trees and reducing our carbon footprint.

The Woodland Trust aims to improve the landscape of Britain by planting more trees and protecting our national heritage of precious ancient woodland. Its vision is a UK rich in native woods and trees enjoyed and valued by everyone and they work to deliver three guiding principles:

- To enable the creation of more native woods and places rich in trees
- To protect native woods, trees and their wildlife for the future
- To inspire everyone to enjoy and value woods and trees

For more information about the Woodland Trust please see: *www.woodlandtrust.org.uk*

OFFICE PAPER RECYCLING

We are mindful of the impact that the paper our organisation generates has on the environment so all our confidential office paperwork is shredded on site and recycled. During 2019 we saved around 33 trees which equates to around three tonnes of paper.



Community

Supporting local communities, fundraising for good causes

RELEVANT UN SDGs:



HIGHLIGHTS OF 2019

- Smashing our £5,000 target and raising over £9,500 for the Samaritans as our chosen charity for 2019.
- Supporting national fundraising efforts such as:
  - Macmillan Cancer Care's big coffee morning
  - Royal British Legion's Poppy Day Appeal
  - Save the Children's Christmas Jumper Day

PLANS FOR 2020:

- To award a target of £300,000 Banks Community Fund grants in 2020.
- To help during the Covid-19 pandemic. With the blessing of the Government regulator, ENTRUST, the criteria for grants have been relaxed (on a temporary basis) to include non-capital expenditure to help community groups get food, medicines and other essential supplies to vulnerable people.

Our technical manager, Mark Rowcroft leads a tour for local school children around our Moor House Wind Farm near Darlington.

Community benefit grants

Supporting the local communities that host our projects



Bee hives at our Moor House Wind Farm near Darlington

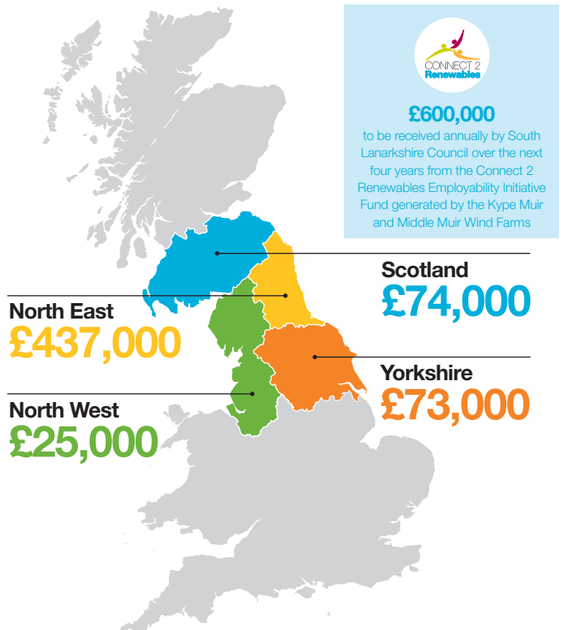
The County Durham Community Foundation (CDCF) helps The Banks Group administer all of its various funds. Between January 2019 and June 2020, £609,000 of community grants were allocated to community groups and projects in various regions.

> “I am delighted to report that in 2019 the Banks Community Fund gave out grants, worth nearly £390,000, from the various funds, to community, voluntary and environmental projects that are located near Banks’ projects, providing real and lasting benefit to the local communities.”



MICHELLE COOPER
CHIEF EXECUTIVE,
COUNTY DURHAM COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

JAN 2019 - JUNE 2020 COMMUNITY GRANT ALLOCATION BY REGION



COMMUNITY GRANT CASE STUDY:
Pavilion room converted to create new village hub

A flourishing County Durham community cricket club has completed the conversion of one of the rooms in its pavilion to create a new focal point for village activity.

Lintz Cricket Club has redesigned and refurbished its existing two-storey lounge and bar area to create a new single-storey community room at its Lumley Gardens ground in Burnopfield with fully accessible doors, corridors and toilet. The project stemmed from the increasing numbers of junior members and families who were making use of the club’s facilities, as well as the recent closure of two pubs within half a mile of the ground which had created a growing need for a new place for local people to come together. As well as using its own resources, the club has received funding for the £30,000 project from Sport England and a £5,000 grant from the Banks Group.

The club is also aiming to work with local schools and use the new community room as a ‘halfway house’ for vulnerable learners who are not attending school and their parents to use as they work towards returning to mainstream education.

Originally founded in 1906, Lintz Cricket Club competes in the Northumberland and Tyneside Cricket League and runs three senior teams as well as five junior sides from under nines up to under 17s.It has also had around 60 local children taking part during the 2019 season in regular Friday night Cricket All Stars sessions, as part of the England and Wales Cricket Board’s national drive to introduce more children aged between five and eight to the game.

Bob Jackson MBE, president at Lintz Cricket Club, says: “Our junior sections are perhaps more popular than they’ve ever been, and having so many young people, parents and families around the club made us think about the facilities we were able to offer them.

“We also already have a number of community groups using our rooms, with more coming in after the pub closures, but it was pretty obvious that the layout wasn’t suitable for all their needs, as well as ours, and that we needed to make improvements.

“We’ve created a multi-functional, accessible all-year round community room that offers lots of floor space that’s suitable for different activities and we’re really pleased with how everything is now set up.

“Having made a big investment in upgrading our changing rooms last year, this whole idea would have remained a pipe dream without the backing we’ve had from Sport England and the Banks Group.

“Bookings are already beginning to come in as local people find out about what we can now offer, especially for Christmas parties, and we expect this project to have a massive positive impact on our community in the years to come.”

The Banks Group is a longstanding supporter of both professional and amateur cricket around its home region, sponsoring Durham Cricket’s Royal London One Day Cup team, Durham Cricket’s youth development squads, seven cup competitions run across the region by the North East Premier League and Northumberland County Cricket Club.

Lewis Stokes, community relations manager at The Banks Group, adds: “Lintz Cricket Club has taken a far-sighted approach to meeting its community’s needs as well as its own and we’re proud to be part of making their plans a reality.

“All our projects are designed to bring a range of benefits to the communities in which they’re based, and we have an unmatched track record of delivering facilities improvements right across our home county.”



ABOVE (L-R): Robert Cook and Bob Jackson, club director and president of Lintz Cricket Club respectively, along with Lewis Stokes of the Banks Group

COMMUNITY GRANT CASE STUDY:

School kids getting closer to nature



With the help from Banks, Morecambe Road School has installed a new decking platform which is enabling pupils to access a wildlife area and dipping pond within its grounds in a safe and supervised way.

A £2,500 grant from the community benefits fund linked to Banks Renewables' nearby Heysham South Wind Farm enabled the school, which teaches local children with a range of special educational needs, to go ahead with the project.

The pond is already successfully being used as the setting for lessons including science and art, as well as a relaxing location in which pupils, families and teachers can spend time observing the natural environment.

The new facilities remained in use over the summer through the holiday club that the school runs for the wider community. Morecambe Road School has just over 150 pupils aged from 3-16 years old on its roll, and holds the Eco-Schools Green Flag, an internationally recognised award for excellence in environmental action and learning.

This accreditation involves the development of a detailed action plan and external assessment of the school's policies, procedures and caring culture, with an Eco Council involving pupils from years five to 11 working together on a range of environmental and well-being projects, including around horticulture, recycling and healthy lifestyles.

Fiona Gill, school business manager at Morecambe Road School, says: "We have quite large grounds which include a fenced-off pond area that wasn't really playing any useful role and wanted to find a way to use it as a learning resource, as well as to provide a more hands-on way for the children to find out about their local environment, the wider natural world and biodiversity.

"There's a real sense of excitement among the children when they're going to spend time at the dipping pond – it's a new interactive way of learning for them and everything they're seeing at first hand really brings to life what they're covering in the classroom.

"Our pupils are already developing a real appreciation of and connection with the natural world and they will be able to closely observe how the environment changes as the seasons pass.

"There are always lots of essential costs to cover within schools, meaning this sort of project can get left behind without outside help. It would probably have taken another five years of fundraising to bring in the money required to do this on our own and the support we've had from Banks Renewables will make a terrific difference to our school and the children we'll be teaching for many years to come."

Lewis Stokes, community relations manager at The Banks Group, adds: "This is a fantastic project that will open up a whole new view on the world for the Morecambe Road children and will give them the chance to find out so much more about the environment around them.

"It's a brilliant use of some of the revenues generated by the Heysham South wind farm and exactly the sort of positive community scheme we had in mind for the benefits fund."

ABOVE: Morecambe Road School pupils and teachers on the new decking area with (back, right) Lewis Stokes of the Banks Group

COMMUNITY GRANT CASE STUDY:

£9,000 awarded to community groups located near Bradley

Medomsley Methodist Church, Dipton War Memorial Group and Dipton Community Association are amongst the first to benefit from the Bradley community benefits fund.

The fund is independently administered by the County Durham Community Foundation, and a funding committee comprised of community representatives is responsible for ensuring the money is spent in ways which meet local priorities. Cllr Ivan Jewell of Durham County Council chairs the committee, with Andy Plant of the Leadgate Area Partnership acting as its vice chair. Eligibility for funding is normally restricted to projects and activities within the closest communities to the Bradley site, which are Dipton, Leadgate and Medomsley, but projects in neighbouring areas may also be eligible if they can be shown to benefit people living within the closest communities.

Lewis Stokes, community relations manager at The Banks Group, says: "The fund is just one of the ways in which the Bradley surface mine delivers tangible benefits to the local community and we were very pleased with the number and quality of the initial applications we received.

"The committee members have picked out some very interesting and valuable local projects and were keen to ensure they have as many applications to consider when their next meetings come around. The fund is primarily designed to support capital projects, but we're keen to hear as many ideas from as many different local groups as we can.

"As well as generating both money for the benefits fund and local employment opportunities, the high-quality coal that is being produced at Bradley is helping to meet the UK's continuing demand for it for a range of essential commercial, industrial and electricity generation needs, and is also reducing the country's ever-increasing reliance on importing coal from overseas to meet this enduring need."



ABOVE: Members of the Bradley Community Fund Committees

COMMUNITY GRANT CASE STUDY:

Cricket club aiming to be cut above the rest

Blagdon Park Cricket Club has brought in a specialist new Protea wicket/square mower to replace a predecessor that was reaching the end of its working life and was needing increasing amounts of maintenance and repair from the volunteer team that looks after the ground.



ABOVE: Jeannie Raine of the Banks Group (centre) with members of Blagdon Park CC

The project has been supported with a £1,162 grant from the Brenkley Lane surface mine community benefits fund. And the club is hoping that the improved practice and match wickets that the new mower will help them prepare will have a positive impact on their teams' performance and will help younger players to better develop their techniques.

Founded in 1888, Blagdon Park Cricket Club has two senior men's teams completing in the Northumberland & Tyneside Cricket League, as well as a thriving junior section which runs teams at U9, U11 and U13 level. It has also a growing girls' section, with U14s and U15s teams competing in the Northumberland Women's Cricket League.

"The mower we've been using for the last decade was also funded by a grant from the Banks Group, and while it did a good job for us for a long time, it was beginning to wear out and wasn't really up to the job any more. We were desperate to replace it but would have had to make do and mend for the foreseeable future if Banks hadn't generously stepped in to help us once again."

RON BLYTH
SECRETARY, BLAGDON PARK CRICKET CLUB

Staff nominated charity 2019

Raising £9,500 to support the Samaritans











SAMARITANS

The Samaritans is a registered charity aimed at providing emotional support to anyone struggling with mental health issues - whether at home or at work.

They help people in emotional distress, struggling to cope or at risk of suicide, for free, throughout the United Kingdom. They do this through their free phone telephone helpline: 116 123 or free email service: jo@samaritans.org

The Durham Samaritans work with us to help improve mental health at work across our business. The Ashington Samaritans work with Banks' employees based at Brenkley Lane and Shotton surface mines. The Hamilton Samaritans (who have already received a Banks Community Fund grant) is available to support employees in Hamilton.

During 2019 we raised **£9,500** for this excellent organisation.

FUNDRAISING EVENTS INCLUDED:

- Brew Monday event *(above bottom right)*
- Cake sales
- Charity Golf Day
- Christmas card salary donation
- Christmas carols by Banks Choir *(above centre middle)*
- Christmas raffle
- Cumbria Way Ultra *(above top right)*
- Durham City Run 10K *(above left)*
- Easter Raffle
- Grand National sweepstake
- Great North Run
- Halloween raffle
- Home grown vegetables sale
- Monthly dress down Friday
- Northumberland Plate Race Day
- Salad lunch *(above centre top)*
- Tuck shops

MORE THAN £125,000 HAS BEEN RAISED OVER THE PAST THIRTEEN YEARS FOR THE CHARITIES WE HAVE PREVIOUSLY SUPPORTED, WHICH INCLUDE:

Alzheimer's Society · Bloodwise · bright red · Butterwick Hospice Care · children with cancer UK · debra · epilepsy research uk · Integrating Children & Young People · MACMILLAN CANCER SUPPORT · MAKE-A-WISH · tiny lives · Zoe's Place Baby Hospice

Raising funds for good causes

As in previous years, throughout 2019 we supported and raised funds for a number of national charity fundraising campaigns which amongst others included:

- Alzheimer Society - World Alzheimer's Day
- Macmillan Cancer Care Big Coffee Morning
- The Royal British Legion's Poppy Appeal
- BBC Children in Need appeal
- Save the Children Christmas Jumper Day



Macmillan Big Coffee Morning 2019 at Inkerman House

Supporting regional awards



ABOVE: Chris Kelsey, Banks Group (far right) presents awards at the Chronicle Champions Awards 2019

Continuing with our policy of supporting regional awards/attractions in 2019 we supported:

MAYOR'S BALL
Darlington Mayor
Supported since 2017

CORPORATE PARTNER
Durham Cathedral
Supported since 2010

GOLD SPONSOR
Durham Environment Awards
Supported since 2013

EVENT PARTNER
Lumiere - Durham
Supported since 2009

CHAMPION SCHOOL OF THE YEAR AWARD
Chronicle Champions
Supported since 2014

ENVIRONMENT VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARD
Harrogate District Volunteer Oscars
Supported since 2016

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARD
North East Charity Awards
Supported since 2014

BEST GREEN BUSINESS AWARD
Northumberland Business Awards
Supported since 2011

Over £14.5M was spent with local businesses in the surrounding 30km around our Kype Muir Wind Farm, South Lanarkshire, thanks to our Connect2Renewables initiative - which prioritises local companies in the winning of contracts. These contracts vary from groundworks and cleaning to fence building and track maintenance.

Business partners

Building local and long lasting relationships

RELEVANT UN SDGs:



HIGHLIGHTS OF 2019

- BANKS MINING: Sold around 614 kilotons (kte) of high-quality coal to our customers.
  - Total coal sales to industrial customers (e.g. UK steel, cement, food, domestic heating, heritage railway) during calendar 2019 = 383kte (c62%).
  - Total coal sales to power stations during calendar 2019 = 231kte (c38%) - enough to power around 100,000 homes for a year.
- BANKS PROPERTY: Sold four sites for much needed homes. There will be a total of 622 homes built on these four sites.
- BANKS RENEWABLES: Generated and supplied 200 GWh to the National Grid from our current ten operational wind farms in Scotland and the north of England.
- BANKS RENEWABLES: Kype Muir Wind Farm funded an new advanced radar system for Glasgow airport.
- BANKS PLANT SOLUTIONS: Launched and formed service and product partnerships with leading industry brands.

PLANS FOR 2020:

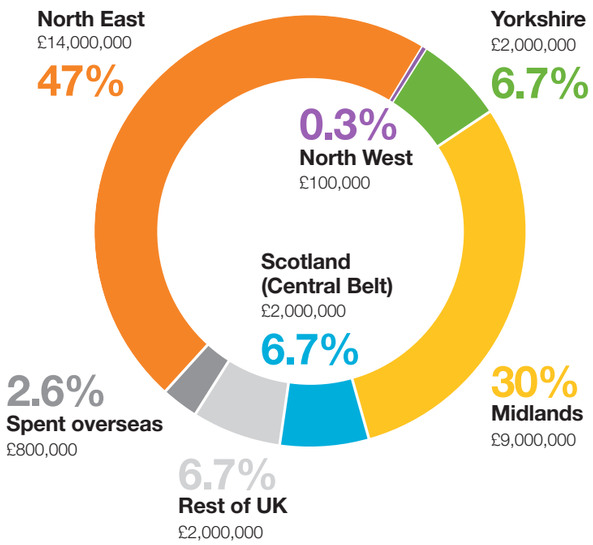
- To add over 100 new – mainly local – companies to our supplier database.
- To encourage opportunities for improving safety and quality performance with our suppliers.

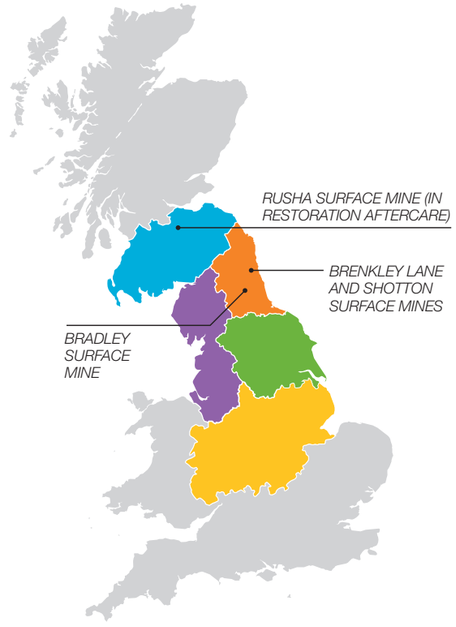
Keeping things local

Investing in the local economies close to our projects

A huge part of *development with care* is that we provide local benefits wherever possible with the appointing of contractors and the employment of local labour being a major consideration when awarding contracts across our projects. In 2019, nearly half of Banks Mining's spend stayed in the North East - with over 97% of the total spend staying in the UK.

BANKS MINING % OF TOTAL SPEND BY REGION - 2019
(£29,900,000)







Graham Allen - from John F Hunt Power (Chester-Le-Street) have benefited from Banks contracts - with Lewis Stokes

KEY FIGURES OF SUPPLIERS, APPOINTMENTS AND TENDERS FOR 2019:

27
NEW SUPPLIERS ADDED TO OUR APPROVED SUPPLIER LIST

352
NEW APPOINTMENTS MADE

13
NEW TENDERS ISSUES

Local training provider wins training contract at local mine



ABOVE (L-R): Alan Hodgen, Robert McNiven, Mick Gray , David Collinson and Stu Thompson

In the summer of 2019, Banks Mining appointed SIM Academy (based near Tanfield Lee, Stanley) to help further enhance the workplace skills of the plant operations team at our Bradley Surface Mine near Leadgate.

Mick Gray, who runs SIM Academy, is now working with members of the team at the Bradley site as they progress towards a total of 19 Level 2 NVQs in Mobile Plant Operations.

The nationally-recognised qualification covers a wide range of the plant equipment used at the Bradley site, including excavators, dozers, shovels, dump trucks and graders, and combines observations of practical work with one-to-one instruction on areas such as site safety procedures, small maintenance tasks and standard operational procedures.

Each individual's work is recorded electronically and collated into an e-portfolio that is used to provide evidence of the tasks they've completed that are required for the qualification. Mick Gray set up SIM Academy six months ago after spending 20 years working as a plant operator himself, as well as in training and demonstrator roles with UK Coal and Caterpillar.

The company works across the construction, mining and agricultural sectors.

"The work I'm carrying out ensures the team's skills are fully up-to-date and that each person has the key elements of their roles and responsibilities fresh at the front of their minds at all times. The Bradley team is already highly skilled, and they're all taking to the tasks in hand extremely well. Much of SIM Academy's work is outside the North East and involves significant travel, so it's really beneficial to have this sort of work happening on our doorstep."

MICK GRAY - SIM ACADEMY

New radar upgrade cleared for take-off

Glasgow Airport benefits from state-of-the-art radar system upgrade as a result of our Kype Muir Wind Farm

Kype Muir Wind Farm near Strathaven, South Lanarkshire is a 26-turbine ultra-efficient wind farm – that went live in April 2019. A key aspect of the planning process for Kype Muir was to provide a solution for the air traffic control systems at Glasgow airport, situated around 28 miles from the site. Current systems are unable to differentiate between the 'radar signatures' of moving turbine blades and those of aircraft.

Now, thanks to the implementation of a solution by Terma System, Glasgow has become one of just a handful of UK airports benefiting from this advanced level of radar technology. The system was recently installed at the facility operated on behalf of the airport by National Air Traffic Services (NATS) and opened by Michael Matheson MSP, SNP Falkirk West and Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity, in the Scottish Government.

"It's great to see Glasgow Airport hosting the launch of this new radar system, which is a significant development for aviation safety. The new radar is able to distinguish between aircraft and wind turbines and this technology will be invaluable with the ever-growing sustainable energy sector."

MICHAEL MATHESON MSP
CABINET SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, INFRASTRUCTURE AND CONNECTIVITY, SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

"We're especially thankful to Glasgow Airport for engaging with us to deliver the new radar. This means that not only will our new wind farm stay clear of any radar detection – but other new wind farms may also benefit from this regional solution. We also acknowledge how proactive and instrumental the Scottish Government has been in helping deliver such a positive outcome."

ANDREW LIDDELL
TECHNICAL DIRECTOR, BANKS GROUP



BELOW (L-R): Andrew Liddell (Banks Group), Michael Matheson MSP, Mark Johnston (Glasgow Airport) and Paul Beat (NATS Glasgow)

Service partnerships

Working together safely, efficiently and responsibly



ABOVE: Stephen Banks and Daniel Guest from BPS

At the start of 2019 we launched Banks Plant Solutions (BPS). Benefiting from nearly 45 years of experience, BPS provides plant and equipment service, maintenance and management for the businesses of the North East of England, Cumbria and North Yorkshire.

Offering both workshop and mobile services - our experienced and skilled mobile plant and equipment engineering team have extensive experience with many original equipment manufacturers' machinery. Our team regularly work on equipment ranging from large 500 tonne hydraulic excavators to small ancillary plant. We'll care for, repair and maintain your plant and equipment if it were our own.

Throughout 2019, we have expanded our service capabilities and created partnerships with leading industry brands such as ZF Aftermarket Off-Highway applications.

ZF Group are a global leading manufacturer of axle, gear box and transmission componentry suitable to various off-highway applications including quarrying, mining, construction, extraction, material handling, waste and recycling sectors.

ZF componentry is installed in various branded machinery: Liebherr, Volvo, Bell, JCB, Doosan, Hyundai, CNH, Hydromek, Hydrema, Luigong, Terex, Demag, Terberg, Kalmar, Linde and many more.

BPS have the resource, knowledge and expertise to supply, install and service ZF driveline and chassis componentry from a wide range of heavy plant and equipment applications. As well as supply and installation. We can also provide customers with componentry diagnostics, maintenance, repair and rebuild support.

We've also teamed up with industry leading brands to offer cost effective premium quality products to compliment our services. All our partner products are suitable to a wide variety of plant and equipment operating in the construction, extraction, demolition, material handling, port, waste and recycling sectors.

OUR PARTNERS:

Donaldson · FUCHS · Oil Analysis Laboratories – for when failure is not an option · ZF

Local lads win full-time roles at our Bradley Surface Mine after completing 12 month plant operator apprenticeships.

Providing employment and training opportunities for local people was always a core part of the development of the Bradley project.

Workplace

Developing and nurturing our talent

RELEVANT UN SDGs:



HIGHLIGHTS OF 2019

- Supporting the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative.
- Gaining year three of Maintaining Excellence level for the Better Health at Work award in Northumberland and achieving Continuing Excellence Year Two in County Durham.
- Maintaining a minimum of 10.5 hours health and safety training throughout the year, exceeding our target of six hours.
- Launching Banks Plant Solutions.
- Signing the *'Time to Change'* employer pledge.
- Working with NEFirst Credit Union to provide better money management and workplace saving opportunities across our workforce.

PLANS FOR 2020:

- To facilitate the availability of health and well-being initiatives to all employees, with a target of delivering six initiatives per year.
- To communicate our mental health policy and plan to all employees.
- To support national mental wellbeing initiatives including Time to Talk Day and Mental Health Awareness Week.
- To work towards Continuing Excellence Year Three level of the Better Health at Work programme for Durham.

Training academy investment

Tackling the plant mechanic skills gap



We have converted facilities at our Thrislington depot, County Durham, into a new classroom and conference facility that will act as a dedicated base for plant mechanic traineeships and upskilling programmes to help ensure we have continuing access to a skilled team of plant mechanics.

The eight-week mechanical traineeship is planned to run up to three times a year and will act as a talent identification process and feeder for the company's plant apprenticeships programme, with successful candidates being offered longer-term training programmes to develop the technical skills needed by our plant management team and Banks Plant Solutions subsidiary.

Banks worked with Ixion Holdings, a subsidiary of major UK employment and skills charity The Shaw Trust Group, on the construction of the new training facility and engaged 11 people from Spennymoor, West Cornforth and other parts of County Durham through Ixion's Legacy Project employability scheme to help carry out the work required under the supervision of the Banks project team.

The Legacy Project is designed to give the participants essential skills leading to the attainment of a Construction Plant Competence Scheme (CPCS) card through their work, which will help them in their efforts towards finding jobs in the construction and allied industries, as well as an NVQ Level 2 qualification that was gained through a mixture of modular and practical assessments.

One of the Legacy Project team members has already secured a position on the Banks Mining plant team, while the details of the others are being kept on file in case any suitable vacancies arise in the future.

Keith Tarn, group human resources manager at The Banks Group, adds: "We're continuing to invest in creating and sustaining skilled jobs right through our different divisions, and had identified a particular issue regarding the training opportunities available within the wider heavy plant mechanic sector which are essential to our operations. With fewer providers offering students the chance to develop the skills we require and the average age of the available workforce creeping ever upwards, we realised that we have to take our own steps to ensure we have the right sorts of skills in our team.

The Banks Group has made a range of significant investments in staff training and development over recent years, including the appointment of a full-time trainer and the creation of a modular training programme which provides a framework for skills and career development opportunities for over 200 operational employees.

ABOVE: Gavin Styles, Banks Group (far left) and Jacqueline Oughton, Ixion Holdings (far right) with Legacy Project participants

Training highlights

Continuously developing our employees knowledge base

In 2019 our human resources department conducted internal training, and testing (via our online inSTRUCT system) on the following issues and policies:

- Apprenticeships: We successfully took on and trained 23 apprentices
- Coal compound management
- Data protection
- Expenses policy
- Environmental permit (Bradley Surface Mine)
- Fleet system planned component change out
- Human rights policy
- Lone working policy
- Non operated plant breakdown
- NVQs: 112 NVQ Level 2 qualifications have been successfully completed – representing the majority of the mining workforce
- Operated plant breakdown
- Plant movement at the workshop
- Requesting and tracking of component parts
- Safeguarding policy (offsite at Northumberland College)
- Traineeships: We successfully trained 11 new plant operators
- UN Sustainability Goals/*development with care* roll out
- Warranty tracking
- Water management (Bradley Surface Mine)
- Working on ladders and platforms plus gantry inspections
- Workplace familiarisation (Bradley Surface Mine)



Mental health awareness training provided by Samaritans

Training providers

During 2019, a number of employees across the organisation undertook training provided by external professional institutions and training providers in subjects as diverse as global logistics, public affairs, payroll management, minerals extractive technology, mental health and real estate. These organisations include:

azure · Bishop Auckland College · cipp · CITB construction skills · Civil Aviation Authority · CIPR · darlington college · University of Derby · heightec · icsa · IQ The Institute of Quarrying · iosh · kt · MHFA England · New College Durham · northumbria University · Northumberland College · QUESTLINE · RECOVERY4LIFE · RICS · RTPI · SAMARITANS · ShawTrust Ixion · SIM ACADEMY · tdr · Trainbase · University of Worcester

Health and safety

Keeping our employees safe and well

2019 KEY HEALTH & SAFETY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

6,016
TOTAL HEALTH & SAFETY TRAINING HOURS ACROSS GROUP (2018/19 FINANCIAL YEAR)

10
TRAINED MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AIDERS

593
DAYS WORKED WITHOUT A LOST TIME INJURY -
BRADLEY SURFACE MINE

502
DAYS WORKED WITHOUT A LOST TIME INJURY -
BRENKLEY LANE SURFACE MINE

149
DAYS WORKED WITHOUT A LOST TIME INJURY -
SHOTTON SURFACE MINE

546
DAYS WORKED WITHOUT A LOST TIME INJURY -
BANKS PLANT SOLUTIONS

398
DAYS WORKED WITHOUT A LOST TIME INJURY -
BANKS TRANSPORT

2,100
DAYS WORKED WITHOUT A LOST TIME INJURY -
BANKS PROPERTY

2,100
DAYS WORKED WITHOUT A LOST TIME INJURY -
BANKS RENEWABLES

2,100
DAYS WORKED WITHOUT A LOST TIME INJURY -
BANKS CONSTRUCTION

Figures correct as of 01/07/2020

We are extremely committed to creating and maintaining a safe working environment for our employees. Their safety is absolutely paramount. Training and employee briefings or "toolbox talks" as we call them are regularly carried out across the business.

TOPICS COVERED INCLUDED:

- Abrasive wheels
- Control of substances hazardous to health (COSHH)
- *Development with care*
- Display screen equipment (DSE)
- Drug, alcohol and wellbeing
- Drug testing process
- Fire safety
- Hand arm vibration
- H&S Management System roll out (Property)
- Incident reporting
- Lightning strikes
- Lock on/lock off and energy isolation
- Maintenance and housekeeping
- Manual handling
- Mental health awareness
- Pedestrian safety
- Pennyvennie incident
- Personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Positive money management
- Pre operational brake tests
- Samaritans - Coping with stress and troubles
- Site radio protocol
- Senvion XM evacuation and rescue concept (wind farms)
- Skin protection
- Slips trips and falls
- Smoking at work
- Stored energy
- Unintended movement of plant
- Winter working
- Site Welfare



Employee communication and engagement

Creating dialogues across our businesses

Communication with our employees is of the utmost importance as it helps maintain morale, share ideas, improve health and focus on business objectives. Recent exercises have included a series of end of year away days to provide an overview of where the business is heading during 2020.

INTERNAL SURVEYS

In 2019 we also ran internal conducted surveys around the following issues:

- Administration team
- Internal software systems
- Internal procurement software systems
- Information Technology (IT) Service Desk

HEALTH CAMPAIGNS

- **JANUARY** – Brew Monday and Dry January
- **FEBRUARY** - Promoting corporate gym membership
- **MARCH** - National salt awareness week
- **APRIL** - Pilates taster session
- **MAY** - Supporting mental health awareness week
- **JULY** - Skin cancer awareness
- **SEPTEMBER** - MacMillan cancer care coffee morning
- **OCTOBER** - World menopause day
- **NOVEMBER** - Pancreatic cancer awareness
- **DECEMBER** - Winter wellbeing drop in session

ABOVE: Banks Mining Day held at Northumberland College, Ashington - January 2019

DRUG AND ALCOHOL TESTING

2019 saw the company undertake over 400 drug and alcohol tests across the group covering all areas of our business including contractors. A programme of training also took place – with our new partner Recovery4Life – increasing our internal drug and alcohol testers from nine to fourteen including two of our employee safety representatives. Recovery4Life is a specialist testing, training and treatment service for substance misuse and mental health for business and for individuals.

Training has taken place within our line management teams to help them understand the signs and symptoms of drug and alcohol misuse. 2019 will see us educate employees on the links between drug and alcohol use and mental health.

Encouraging better money management

Teaming up with local credit union



We've teamed up with a successful North East-focused credit union to provide better money management and workplace saving opportunities across our workforce.

NEFirst Credit Union was formed four years ago by the merger of several smaller regional-based Credit Unions which had been providing savings and loan accounts to members for more than two decades.

It is now working with us to provide new opportunities for more than 300 North East employees to save and invest within the region, as well as to access loans at lower interest rates that are offered by many financial services providers.

NEFirst Credit Union covers County Durham, Northumberland and Tyne & Wear, and has offices in Gateshead, Durham, North Shields and Birtley, as well as a number of regular service/collection points around the region. It is authorised and regulated by both the Prudential Regulation Authority and the Financial Conduct Authority, and the capital it holds is only ever loaned or invested within the North East, meaning that wider regional benefits also arise from its use.

Lou Lightfoot, group HR director at the Banks Group, says: "It's widely acknowledged that putting money aside through your payroll is an extremely effective way of building up your savings, and as a responsible employer, we wanted to extend the provisions we make for allowing our staff to take advantage of this sort of opportunity.

"The fact that the money that NEFirst Credit Union looks after remains within the North East fits with our *development with care* approach of investing in the communities in which our projects are located and was an important additional factor in our decision to set up this new partnership.

"NEFirst Credit Union's values and clear commitment to the North East very much reflect our own, and their financial expertise will be of great benefit to our employees."

Sid Rooke, director at NEFirst Credit Union, adds: "We are delighted to be working with The Banks Group to encourage the savings habit and offering low cost loans to employees across the North East."

ABOVE: Sid Rooke and Lou Lightfoot



Gavin Styles (centre) signs the 'Time to Change' pledge alongside members of our mental health strategy team

Highlighting mental health

Taking steps to improve mental health in the workplace

'TIME TO CHANGE' PLEDGE

To coincide with World Mental Health Day in October 2019, we signed up to the Time To Change campaign to enhance the mental health support we provide for our employees. We aim to change the way people think and act about mental health in the workplace by implementing action plans that help them open up about mental health issues. Our mental health provisions are underpinned by support from The Samaritans, an organisation which Banks' employees voted to adopt as their dedicated charity for 2019.

"Mental health problems can affect any one of us at any time, and we want to ensure that we provide a working environment in which people feel comfortable speaking openly about mental health and asking for help when they need it. Taking steps to underpin the health and well-being of our staff is not just the right thing as a responsible employer to do, but is also essential to their chances of long-term, sustainable success."

GAVIN STYLES
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, BANKS GROUP



Eight of our ten trained Mental Health First Aiders. BACK ROW L-R: Sara Whittaker, Chris Harris, Michelle Cairns and Ewan Cowie. FRONT ROW L-R: Paul Waddell; Catherine Fabi; Andrew Mallen and Olivia Turnbull.

MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AIDERS

Mental Health First Aiders are not trained to be therapists or psychiatrists, but they can offer initial support through non-judgemental listening and guidance. We now have ten trained Mental Health First Aiders. The training, provided by MHFA England is aimed to give a deeper understanding of the issues that impact on and relate to people's mental health and teach practical skills that can be used every day. 'MHFAiders' are taught to spot the signs and symptoms of mental health issues and to feel confident guiding people towards support.

BANKSGroup
development with care

HEAD OFFICE: Inkerman House, St John's Road, Meadowfield, Durham DH7 8XL

TRANSPORT & PLANT DEPOT: West Cornforth, Ferryhill, Durham DL17 9EU

SCOTTISH OFFICE: 2nd Floor, Block C, Brandon Gate, Leechlee Road, Hamilton, Lanarkshire ML3 6AU

YORKSHIRE OFFICE: Unit 2, Harewood Yard, Harewood LS17 9LF

BANKS PLANT SOLUTIONS: West Cornforth, Ferryhill, Durham DL17 9EU

0191 378 6100 banksgroup.co.uk enquiries@banksgroup.co.uk

The Banks Group @The_Banks_Group youtube.com/TheBanksGroup

BANKS

HJB/0/1847. Published July 2020. Printed on paper from sustainable sources. © The Banks Group Ltd 2020. All rights reserved.