

BANKSGroup
development with care

CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY • 2015 REVIEW

Developing together
Caring together

COMMUNITY
Supporting the communities we work in

ENVIRONMENT
Creating positive legacies

MARKET PLACE
Building local and long lasting relationships

WORKPLACE
Developing and nurturing our talent



Northumberlandia, landform created by the Banks Group and Blagdon Estate near Cramlington, Northumberland. Image taken by Adam Gofton while on summer work experience with the Banks Group.

FRONT COVER:
Sarah Richardson, project procurement co-ordinator, leads outdoor activities for Integrating Children at Northumberlandia



Apprentice Drew Barber named Northumberland College's Student of the Year, September 2015



Show home at Mount Oswald, Durham City



Heysham South Wind Farm, near Lancaster, under construction

Foreword

Banks Group develops land for a variety of uses including surface coal mining, property and renewable energy.

We are a family owned, County Durham based business employing around 400 people across the north of England and Scotland.

Our *development with care* approach is at the heart of all we do; it embodies the Banks Group's values.

Development with care 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 corporate responsibility (CR) approach and work which is why we have a dedicated CR Group, formed from representatives of all central functions of the organisation, our regional offices and operating sites.

Each year our CR Group will produce a report which shares evidence of Banks' delivery of *development with care*.

This report sets out some of the highlights of our CR work in the last year. It is divided into four main sections, covering each of the strands of work that our CR group focuses on:

- COMMUNITY – how we support the wider community both for areas hosting our projects and nationally
- ENVIRONMENT – how we seek to leave positive environmental legacies from our projects
- MARKET PLACE – how we work fairly with our suppliers and promote local businesses
- WORKPLACE – the issues that affect the people who work for us and how we manage those

We hope you find this report interesting and informative. If you would like any further information about the Banks Group please visit: www.banksgroup.co.uk



DAVID MARTIN
COMPANY SECRETARY & CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY GROUP CHAIR
Banks Group

April 2016

Objectives

Corporate responsibility is the term that describes an organisation's commitment to good citizenship.

It demonstrates the organisation's values on issues such as the environment, market place, community programmes and employee welfare.

- To capture CR initiatives and **promote internally and externally**
- To **promote health and wellbeing** initiatives to staff across the organisation
- To promote **best environmental practice** across our activities
- To encourage and **develop relationships** with local communities, customers, suppliers and business partners
- To ensure **effective communication** across the Group to promote and manage CR initiatives
- To **select and promote our annual charity** and to **manage fundraising** events
- To **co-ordinate** and filter ad-hoc **requests for charitable or sponsorship** support
- To identify and prioritise actions and activities that will **promote CR**
- To provide **direction and guidance regarding CR** to the Group Board




Durham based charity Integrating Children visit Northumberlandia


Innovative tunnels that allow newts to travel safely under roads given 'thumbs up' by Scottish Natural Heritage, Glenboig, South Lanarkshire


Independent audit back Banks Mining's operational standards


Local firm Ecofish lands work on Middle Muir Wind Farm, South Lanarkshire


Whiston Brownies, near Rotherham, curling support


In Doncaster, Barnburgh woodland work increased as Banks Renewables extends project support


Students from Singapore breeze in to visit Banks' Penny Hill Wind Farm



South Lanarkshire firm, Drumclog Plant Hire, supports local wind farms

Community

OUR COMMUNITY AIMS INCLUDE:

- To promote the principles of *development with care* within the community, ensuring that employment opportunities are given to the local labour force
- To actively promote the Banks Community Fund to ensure that local communities are able to benefit from our projects
- To assist with the identification of relevant educational establishments in the vicinity of the respective project portfolios of our businesses, and to encourage engagement with those establishments as an integral part of the group's community strategies. Examples would include:
  - Organised site visits
  - Education and training opportunities
- To facilitate the selection of an official company charity, nominated and voted for by the group's workforce each calendar year, and to organise fund raising events and initiatives for the benefit of the nominated charity and other worthy causes.


St Wilfred's, Hickleton receives grant for new lighting


Supporting Avondale Beekeepers, Lanarkshire


Hazlerigg Action Group open new playground

Community benefit grants

The Banks Community Fund was established in 1995 to provide support to community groups, voluntary organisations and environmental projects that are charitable, educational, philanthropic or benevolent in purpose, which are within close proximity to a current or proposed Banks Group development.

The fund comes from a variety of sources including Banks Renewables wind farms, Banks Mining surface coal mines, Banks Property developments and from Banks Landfill Communities Fund ensuring that local communities share the benefits from our presence in their area. The grants are managed by various funding panels, which often include representatives from the local community.

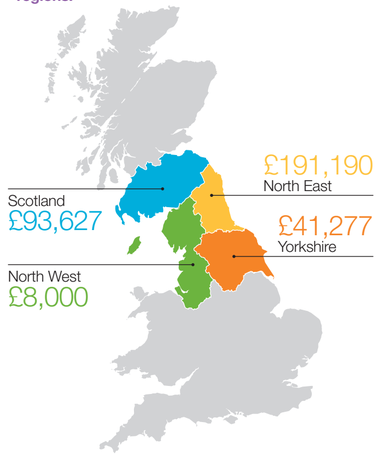
"The Banks Group is one of County Durham Community Foundation's longest supporters, holding funds with us since the Foundation began back in 1995. We work to help match the needs of community groups with the criteria the Banks Group has given us."



BARBARA GUBBINS
CHIEF EXECUTIVE
County Durham Community Foundation

The County Durham Community Foundation (CDCF) helps the Banks Group administer all of its various funds.

Between January and December 2015 £334,094 of community grants were allocated to community groups and projects in various regions.



Community fund case studies

IT boost for Midlothian village

A vital Midlothian charity was boosted by a sizeable donation towards IT equipment – which has the potential to transform the lives of many in the community.

The Banks Community Fund has awarded a £4,760 grant towards vastly improving computing facilities at the Rosewell Development Trust.

Consisting of two high speed computers, four tablets, a printer and a range of software, the new equipment will provide local job seekers with the necessary tools to apply for jobs online and attend courses to gain skills attractive to employers.

The technology will also be a vital resource for local senior residents to learn computing skills – encouraging them to use tools such as Skype and connect with friends and relatives from across the globe.

"...without [this Banks Community Fund grant] we simply couldn't have considered buying all this new equipment anytime soon."

DAVE MACKAY
VOLUNTEER
Rosewell Development Trust



L-R: Computer club members Robert Wilson, Michelle Kerr, Isabelle Henderson and Banks Group community relations manager Lewis Stokes



L-R: Banks Group communications manager Chris Kelsey, voluntary diggers Cath Taylor and Joe Gifford and TW Museums Dr Nick Hodgson at Benwell in front of the interpretative board

Interpretative boards to provide historical record of Hadrian's Wall community archaeology

A successful community archaeology project that's unearthed exciting new information about Hadrian's Wall is set to have a permanent record of its findings in the areas where work has been undertaken.

The WallQuest project was set up in 2012 by Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums (TWAM) to explore some of the less iconic remains of the Wall that are found in the modern day urban areas towards its eastern end. Now, thanks to a £10,000 grant from the Banks Group, via its Banks Community Fund, interpretative boards will be placed at various project locations showing what work has been done and what has been learned in each place.

The boards, which are designed to be as weather and vandal-proof as possible, are being put in place as soon as local research has been completed. Among the project's findings was the exact location of the bathhouse at the Segedunum Roman fort in Wallsend, which hadn't previously been identified, and on which further investigations will now be carried out until the end of 2016 after extra funding was secured.

Ellington gardeners sitting pretty on new benches at community allotments

Users of a Northumberland community allotment project are now able to sit back and enjoy their work more easily thanks to a grant from the Banks Group.

The Ellington Allotment Association manages a site off Lynemouth Road in the village that contains 40 plots, all of which are used by local residents to grow a range of fruit, vegetables and flowers. The allotments were opened in 2013 after the completion of work by a dedicated group of volunteers to transform a piece of land formally owned by Rio Tinto and gifted to the Allotment Association by Ellington Parish Council into its present form.

A £750 grant from the Banks Group, via its Banks Community Fund, paid for the purchase of three high quality wooden benches that have been placed around the site. Ellington Allotment Association was recently named as runner up in the Best Urban Project category of the 2015 LOVE Northumberland Awards, which aim to celebrate the very best in community and voluntary environmental work across the county. Any spare produce grown at the allotments, all of which are currently occupied, is given away by the gardeners to local residents, neighbours and passers-by. Eight raised beds were installed at the site to allow older or disabled gardeners to have a piece of land to work, a small number of which are currently available, and there is also a sensory garden created to encourage even more members of the local community to visit the site.



Jeannie Kielty, development relations co-ordinator in between two Ellington Allotment Association members sitting on one of the new benches



L-R: Wood Pile founder Karen Stubbings, Catherine Hinds (Banks Group); Wood Pile administrator Gemma Marshall and Lucy Hinds (Banks Group)

"I don't think we'd be where we are without everything Gavin's done."

KAREN STUBBINGS
FOUNDER
The Wood Pile

Banks Group funding helps key man Gavin keep his place at the wood pile

The Wood Pile team repair and renew old, damaged and discarded furniture to either make it look as good as new or give it a "Shabby Chic" look before selling the items in its shop, with the revenues generated through sales and the furniture workshops it runs being put back into the company to support the services it provides to clients.

Its work aims to support local people who have barriers to work, such as disadvantage or disability, move into and towards employment. They do this by having their clients work alongside their volunteers to gain new transferable skills in areas such as customer service, retail, furniture restoration, joinery and business administration.

One member of the team, Gavin Tones, who has only 20 per cent vision, was facing losing his job with the organisation as the funding stream which supported his work at The Wood Pile since he joined in December 2014 was about to run out. A £5,408 grant from the Banks Group through the Banks Community Fund, means Gavin's role at The Woodpile, which involves marketing, updating the website, social media activity, basic administration and helping some of The Woodpile's clients with job searches, has been secured for another year.

Local coal to fuel first steam-hauled train at Alnwick in 50 years

The first steam train journey for almost 50 years on an historic Northumberland railway took place in the autumn after the Banks Group donated local coal to fuel the locomotive.

The volunteer-led Aln Valley Railway Trust has been focused on the restoration of the former Alnmouth to Alnwick railway line for almost two decades, with a view to reopening it first as a tourist attraction with additional commuter services for people living in the area.

A four-month project to overhaul and refurbish the boiler of the Trust's 0-6-0 steam locomotive 'Richboro' was completed with the first run on the station track at the end of October.

> *"Being able to run the locomotive on North East coal adds an extra dimension to the project."*
>
> **CHRIS FREEMAN**
> FOUNDER MEMBER/DIRECTOR
> Aln Valley Railway Trust

To provide the fuel required to undertake the testing work, Banks Mining donated coal from the Shotton Surface Mine in Northumberland and also reached an agreement with the Trust to provide further coal supplies in the future.



Chris Freeman, Aln Valley Railway and Clive Pearman, Banks Mining



Some of the young Methley Warriors with Lewis Stokes, Banks Group

A change for the better for young warriors

Young rugby league players at a West Yorkshire community club have at last got their own changing room thanks to a £5,000 grant from the Banks Community Fund.

> *"Having the new changing room in place is a big boost for everyone associated with the club."*
>
> **ANDREW WARD**
> METHLEY WARRIORS COACH

Methley Warriors ARLFC is based at the village's Church Lane Rugby Fields and has around 120 members aged between six and 17, most of whom are drawn from the local area. Until now, the teams have had to share facilities with the local football team, but thanks to the funding provided by developer Banks Property, via the Banks Community Fund, a new portable changing room has been installed at the ground.

Methley Warriors ARLFC was started 15 years ago by coach Andrew Ward, who was playing for another club in the area and noticed that lots of their junior players weren't getting much time on the pitch. It currently runs teams at under 7, 8, 10, 12, 13 and 17 levels in the Yorkshire Junior League, and it is hoped that the new facilities will attract even more local young people to try out with the club.

Sponsorship of awards

In line with our *development with care* approach and values, the Banks Group is very committed to supporting regional awards to encourage businesses and other organisations to be environmentally sensitive and to support and "give back" to the local community as much as possible.



Chris Kelsey (Banks Group) presenting the Champion Volunteer Award to winner Cath McNicol, at the North East Charity Awards 2015



Banks Group's Andy Liddell (far left) presented the Apprentice of the Year Award at the Lanarkshire Business Excellence Awards

IN 2015 THE BANKS GROUP SUPPORTED THE FOLLOWING AWARDS:

- **GREEN CHAMPION AWARD**
  The Best of Northumberland Awards
- **GREEN AWARD**
  Chronicle Champions Awards
- **GREENER VOLUNTEERING AWARD**
  Durham Community Action
- **APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR AWARD**
  Lanarkshire Business Excellence Awards
- **MAIN EVENT SPONSOR**
  LOVE Northumberland Awards
- **CHAMPION VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARD**
  North East Charity Awards
- **BEST GREEN BUSINESS AWARD**
  The Journal/Chronicle Durham Business Awards
- **GREEN BUSINESS OF THE YEAR AWARD**
  Newcastle Business Awards
- **BEST GREEN BUSINESS AWARD**
  Northumberland Business Awards
- **GREEN CHAMPION AWARD**
  The What's On Where in Northumberland Awards

Raising funds for good causes

Throughout the year we support key national charity fund raising campaigns such as the Royal British Legion's Poppy Appeal, the BBC's Children in Need appeal, Red Nose Day and Save the Children's Christmas Jumper Day amongst others.

In addition to this, each year our staff nominate a charity to support. Staff are free to put forward any charity they like to be considered as the Banks Group nominated charity. All they need to do is fill in a nomination form stating their reasons for wanting to nominate the charity. The staff then vote. The charity with the highest number of votes is selected and main fundraising efforts go towards the cause.

PREVIOUSLY SUPPORTED CHARITIES INCLUDE:

Bloodwise

Butterwick Hospice Care

debra – for people whose skin doesn't work we do

epilepsy research uk

MACMILLAN. CANCER SUPPORT

MAKE-A-WISH.

Zoe's Place Baby Hospice

children with cancer UK



Integrating Children site visit to Shotton Surface Mine

STAFF NOMINATED CHARITY 2015:

Integrating Children and Young People

Integrating Children and Young People is a charity based in the North East that organises group activities for children and young adults with various forms of disability and promotes inclusion within the local community.

Banks staff organised a number of events (pictured opposite) and raised **£16,500** for Integrating Children and Young People. The range of, and enthusiasm for, the events are a testament to the commitment of our staff in raising money for our chosen charity.

"On behalf of Integrating I really would like to thank your staff who have played such a personal part in raising this money...

...Banks Group has shown just how a company with imagination and heart can make corporate responsibility so much more than just offering money."

RICHARD TAYLOR
CHAIR OF TRUSTEES
Integrating Children & Young People


'Banks Warriors' raise funds by completing Total Warrior, Leeds


Cake sale



Sarah Richardson, Banks Group, received the Fundraiser of the Year Award at the North East Charity Awards 2015 for her work with Integrating Children



Druridge Bay 10K run


Valentine's raffle prize

£16,500

RAISED THROUGHOUT 2015 BY BANKS STAFF


The Gruffalo turns up to help fund raising


Baltic Zip Wire Challenge


Integrating Children visit Northumberlandia for a scavenger hunt organised by Banks staff

Acknowledgement of support

Here is a selection of the companies that kindly helped with our fund raising efforts in 2015. They gave donations, offered us goods and services for free or at huge discounts or simply gave us their time and encouragement. All were very much appreciated. **THANK YOU!**

CATERPILLAR

LEE'S COACHES LTD

NoiseMap – NoiseMap User Forums

prevailing – wind form analysis

wardhadaway lawfirm

Workwear EXPRESS – TRUST US WITH YOUR NAME


Sponsored walk at Hamsterly Forest, Durham

Environment and Sustainability

It is essential that sustainable development and environmental management are at the core of all our activities. We use rigorous sector leading environmental management systems to help us manage, measure, monitor and report on our environmental performance.

The aim of our environmental policy is to ensure the Banks Group operates to the highest environmental standards of performance in line with the Banks' *development with care* approach.

OUR ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY AIMS INCLUDE:

- **Complying with the Energy Saving Opportunity Scheme (ESOS) and ensuring that our ESOS assessment was completed and submitted to the Environment Agency by December 2015**
- **Waste Management – Continuing to apply the recognised waste hierarchy by minimising material usage, re-using or recycling whenever possible whilst maximising waste derived income for the business**
- **Reducing the carbon footprint of the company through the use of technology, efficient working practices and internal policies. We will continue to reduce CO_2 released from our plant and vehicle fleets by selecting fuel efficient vehicles and effectively monitoring fuel use through initiatives such as the Fluid Management Systems for mining plant. Other opportunities for lowering our CO2 production will also be identified wherever possible.**

ESOS
energy
savings
opportunity
scheme

Energy Saving Opportunities Scheme (ESOS)

In a drive to reduce our carbon footprint we conducted ESOS assessments of our energy use and energy efficiency standards.

THESE ASSESSMENTS:

- Measured our total energy consumption of all buildings, processes and transport fleet
- Helped us then identify areas of significant energy use
- In turn this helped us identify cost-effective energy efficiency measures to be adopted to reduce our carbon footprint and keep our energy bills low
- We then had to submit a report to the Environment Agency

OUR ESOS SUBMISSION WAS COMPLETED IN DECEMBER 2015.



Coal being loaded onto a Banks Transport HGV


All our HGV drivers adhere to our strict fuel efficiency standards

Emission data

Through a sustained programme of capping the CO_2 emissions of all road vehicles deployed by the business we have lowered CO_2 emissions by an average of 13 and 20% across the car and light commercial fleets since 2013.

Our car and light commercial vehicle fleet covers around 2.1 million miles per year. The effect of our investing in cleaner vehicles was a reduction in CO_2 emissions by five tonnes in 2015. Staff are also encouraged to use video conferencing and Skype to reduce the need for travelling to external meetings where ever possible. Our HGV fleet covers in excess of 600,000 miles per year. As our 'Euro 5' units are gradually replaced by 'Euro 6' engined vehicles CO_2 and NOX emissions will continue to be reduced.

In 2015 we participated in the Department for Transport's fleet consultancy programme which is delivered by the Energy Savings Trust.

> *"The Banks Group has made great strides in ensuring that more efficient vehicles are selected and that they are procured efficiently."*
>
> **ENERGY SAVINGS TRUST**
> FLEET REVIEW REPORT 2015

Key emission figures for 2015:

13%
CO_2 REDUCTION ACROSS CAR FLEET

20%
CO_2 REDUCTION ACROSS LIGHT COMMERCIAL FLEET

2.1M
MILES COVERED BY CAR AND LIGHT COMMERCIAL FLEET



Kevin Taylor (LMS) with maintenance supervisor Martin Raine at Brenkley Lane Surface Mine

> *"It has been a real pleasure to work with every individual from Banks Mining, from the company's management team through to the fuel bowser drivers. The dedication and focus to improving fuel efficiencies across their operations is clearly visible and commendable, and indicates a strong management focus to invest in proven solutions to control its annual fuel spend."*

KEVIN TAYLOR
MANAGING DIRECTOR
Liquid Management Solutions

Fuel efficiencies

We are constantly looking at ways of reducing our fuel burn, to use energy more efficiently and reduce our emissions. In 2015 we replaced large dump truck engine control units with more fuel efficient 'electronically controlled' engine control units.

Case study: Technology investment fuels operational improvements

Fuel management specialists Liquid Management Solutions Ltd (LMS) were appointed to develop and implement a comprehensive system which provides real-time data on every aspect of our fuel supply chain across our three active surface coal mines.

The six-figure project investment is being made after the successful completion of a two-year trial at the Rusha surface mine in West Lothian, Scotland.

As well as enabling Banks Mining to more accurately control its fuel usage, the system is also helping secure new operational efficiencies and decrease plant and vehicle emissions, and it will also assist in achieving compliance with the government's Energy Savings Opportunity Scheme, a new energy assessment scheme for businesses.

The LMS system provides accurate web-based access to all inbound bulk fuel deliveries from the company's fuel suppliers through to daily fuel transfers from static storage tanks to mobile fuel bowsers.


Shotton coal yard water spray system

Keeping dust to a minimum

To keep dust from our coal mining and coal sorting operations to an absolute minimum we have developed and installed a coal yard water spray system at our Shotton surface coal mine.

We have turned four of our large dump trucks into water spraying vehicles for the main haul roads, supported by six smaller water bowsers for use in more confined areas.


Water bowser

Keeping noise on the down-low

Through 2015 measures to reduce noise have been further improved including sound deadening blankets (like huge duvets - see below) being fitted to all dump trucks.

Case study: Changing from air starts to electric starts on our large dump trucks

In 2015 the Banks Group's plant department initiated a project to convert our large Caterpillar 785 and 789 dump trucks from air start to electric starts. The air starters create a lot of noise when starting the engines. The new electric starts are much quieter. This has reduced noise intrusion for both people on site and in the surrounding area.




New lighting array on site

Light intrusion

At our mining sites we have designed and built lighting arrays, using energy efficient components, to replace a number of smaller lighting towers. This has resulted in more efficient control of light intrusion and reduced energy use - giving an average cost saving of £4,000 every year.

Sustainable supplies

All our suppliers have to sign up to our environmental policy and standards. In our offices we print our documents on paper from sustainable sources.


Cleaning staff, Shirley Howe and Sharon Kell, recycling at Meadowfield

Recycling

At our head office in Meadowfield we have designated recycling bins for cans, paper and plastics. Glass goes in to the general waste but is removed and recycled by our waste management provider SUEZ Environment at the waste processing plant.

Our IT department oversee the recycling of printer cartridges separately.

Batteries are collected and taken to battery recycling points.

Market Place

Part of our mission is to directly support local businesses by encouraging them to join the company's many supply chains.

OUR MARKET PLACE AIMS INCLUDE:

- Building close professional relationships with our supply chain and customers by ensuring fair, ethical and respectful treatment
- Assisting with the identification of suppliers and contractors that exist closest to our projects through "Meet the Buyer" events etc. providing tendering opportunities to those businesses and applying principles such as those defined in the Connect2Renewables Charter
- Ensuring that key suppliers have been through the organisations pre-qualification process in order for them to demonstrate appropriate levels of competency, financial stability and compliance with all relevant health, safety and environmental practices and legislation

Key figures of suppliers, appointments and tenders for 2015:

151
NEW SUPPLIERS ADDED TO OUR DATABASES

232
APPOINTMENTS ISSUED FOR PURCHASING SERVICES

66
TENDERS ISSUED ACROSS DEVELOPMENTS

Ensuring standards are met

Our procurement team have developed a number of new internal processes to ensure cost effective, high quality goods and services are obtained from both external suppliers and internal project teams.

The most successful initiative and tool rolled out during 2015 was the Supplier Management System known internally as PIMS (Procurement Information Management System). This online procurement system allows supplier information to be stored easily and a number of search functions can be applied by individuals to identify key suppliers near projects, widening and capturing the opportunity for local suppliers.

Another key improvement rolled out in 2015 is that the system aids the performance and development of supplier relationships by helping internal project teams monitor and manage contracts more effectively.

ETHICAL PROCUREMENT

The project procurement team have a number of processes that ensure contracts are awarded ethically, and include the following key actions:

- Fair tenders
- Ensure all our suppliers have a safe track record
- Ensure suppliers are socially and environmentally responsible
- Suppliers to our renewable projects must actively embrace Connect2Renewables, which encourages the use of local sub-contractors whenever possible



L-R: Robbie Bentham, Plant Director, Banks Mining with members of the Pirtek on-site team

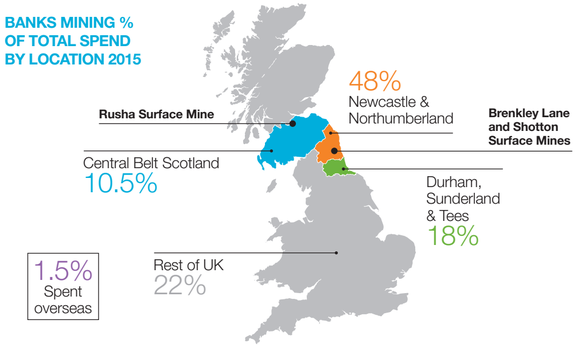
Case study: Local repair services

Banks Mining awarded a two-year contract to locally based Pirtek Tyne & Wear to provide a new on-site repair service at our Brenkley Lane and Shotton sites near Cramlington to reduce down time and help the machinery work as efficiently as possible.

Keeping things local

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.

BANKS MINING % OF TOTAL SPEND BY LOCATION 2015





Local suppliers building the turbine bases at the Heysham South Wind Farm, Lancaster



Hall Construction appointed main contractor for the £14m Hook Moor Wind Farm



Kris Harrison, district commercial manager at Hope Construction Materials from Teeside with Lewis Stokes

Connect2Renewables

This initiative between Banks Renewables and South Lanarkshire Council seeks to maximise the social, economic and environmental benefit of our developments to the local area.

THIS WILL BE ACHIEVED THROUGH:

- A commitment from Banks to deliver as high a percentage as possible of the contracted construction value to companies local to the site
- A commitment to localise any economic activity throughout the life cycle of the development
- The Connect2Renewables scheme focusing on helping local people gain apprenticeships and workplace learning placements with the aim of improving their employment credentials
- The Connect2Renewables scheme being administered by the local planning authority for the benefit of their nominated communities



OUR CONNECT2RENEWABLES CHARTER STATES THAT WE SHALL DELIVER ON THESE COMMITMENTS BY:

- Working with local authorities and the local Chambers of Commerce to identify local businesses capable of undertaking work on our wind farm construction projects
- Ensuring the tender lists for main and sub contracts include local firms identified through this process
- Requiring that tenders for work must include a statement of local economic benefits which will be a material consideration in the awarding of contracts
- For the first five years of operation of any wind farm we develop in South Lanarkshire (including the approved Kype Muir and Middle Muir Wind Farms) to provide funding for and deliver in partnership with South Lanarkshire Council a scheme to enable local unemployed people (without age restriction) to reduce the financial barriers that they are experiencing by giving them the opportunity to access grant funding to support them with an apprenticeship, work-based learning programme or further education to improve their prospects of employment
- During the development, construction and restoration of our wind farms to maximise the number of direct employment and/or training opportunities for local people
- Considering the scope for a local consortium of firms to deliver major contracts

A vision for renewables in Scotland

On 22 September 2015, in the Scottish Parliament, Banks Renewables gave a commitment to roll Connect2Renewables out across all its onshore wind projects in Scotland.

This includes significant wind farm projects such as; Lethans (88MW), Birneyknowe (51MW), Kype Muir (88MW), Kype Muir Extension (51MW) and Middle Muir (51MW).

By doing this we will create community funds totalling over £41m and job/training initiative funds of more than £4m and more than 1,000 new jobs, apprenticeships and training opportunities.



"[In South Lanarkshire] Connect2Renewables will give a minimum of £69 million of local economic benefits for the area. It will give us a £1.74 million jobs and training fund that will support 400 plus local unemployed people into work, provide further education or workplace training – by breaking down the financial barriers that may be holding people back.

"I wish Banks well in its plans to roll this idea out across Scotland and I thank our local communities and South Lanarkshire Council for realising the great benefits this partnership brings to our local economy."

CHRISTINA MCKELVIE MSP
SPEAKING AT THE LAUNCH OF THE CONNECT2RENEWABLES CHARTER (PICTURED ABOVE)



L-R: Jason McCall,Banks Group; Kathryn Saunders, Grontmij and Anne Baxter, Raeburn Drilling & Geotechnical

Case study: Local drilling firm strikes gold with £800K for two Lanarkshire wind farms work

In October 2015 Banks Renewables appointed Hamilton headquartered drilling firm, Raeburn Drilling, to help it deliver Kype Muir and Middle Muir Wind Farms.

CEO of Raeburn Drilling and Geotechnical, Anne Baxter, said: "It is plainly evident when dealing with Banks that there is a genuine commitment to the local area, something that we hold dearly ourselves, providing sponsorship and support to local groups, and partly why we were so keen to be involved. From our headquarters in Hamilton we employ around 100 people, with the majority coming from North or South Lanarkshire and despite working throughout the country, local work is so important to our future and for the team." Raeburn have taken on apprentice drillers and it has also helped them create new graduate positions with the firm.

"Through the contracts gained, we have been able to take on apprentice drillers."

ANNE BAXTER
CEO, Raeburn Drilling & Geotechnical



L-R: Ian Lavery MP with James Stafford from Groundwork North East & Cumbria at the official opening of phase 2

Case study: Putting down roots

Banks Mining has established a £93,000 endowment fund to support the future management of the Pegswood Country Park in South East Northumberland, while Groundwork North East & Cumbria (which has a 99 year lease on the site) is now looking at ways in which it can be developed in the future for ever-wider community use.

Groundwork has a proud tradition of working with and employing ex-offenders on its projects. By offering real jobs, Groundwork has a good record of breaking the cycle of re-offending and challenging perceptions about ex-offenders. This kind of initiative will be rolled out at Pegswood Country Park.

Banks Mining has been working to complete phase two of the Pegswood Country Park since additional landscaping works were agreed with Northumberland County Council and Pegswood Parish Council in 2014.

Bedlington based landscape and environmental contractor W L Straughan & Son Ltd was appointed to work on the project alongside Banks' landscape management team.

Over 1.4kms of new public footpaths have been added around the site, along with new park benches, while 575 bushes and trees have been planted along one side of the pond. Nectar-rich grasses have also been sown to encourage and support greater biodiversity among the insect population in the area.



Case study: Improving landscape and drainage at North Tyneside housing development

L-R: Richard Hutchinson with Marc Cavens and Jordan Blake from W L Straughan & Son

Going back to nature to help manage the drainage requirements of our Forest Gate, Palmersville residential development.

Banks Property's landscape management team worked with Bedlington based landscape and environmental contractor W L Straughan & Son Ltd to place more than 600 new plants, to take the numbers in the bed up to around the 1,500 mark. The reeds, having been grown from seed, are regionally sourced and planted as cell grown plants. They help to filter the water that comes from around the Palmersville development, with the pond providing a means of managing water run-off from land adjacent to the houses. As the reeds grow and strengthen in the years to come, the bed will become even more effective at managing water leaving the area. Wild flowers seeding has also been undertaken as part of the landscaping work, in order to enhance what the area has to offer in terms of habitats for birds, insects and other local wildlife.

"The reed bed and landscaping work we've undertaken has both aesthetic and practical reasons behind it, and adds to the overall quality and setting of the Palmersville development."

RICHARD HUTCHINSON
LANDSCAPE MANAGER
Banks Group



L-R: Neil Thornton, Noel Johnstone and Mick Hull in front of the 777s

CATERPILLAR

Developing long term supplier relations

We have worked with CAT for the whole of the company's 40 year history. In March 2015 Banks Group took delivery of three Caterpillar 777G off-highway dump trucks, which are being used to move overburden material at its Brenkley Lane site near Cramlington.

With a capacity of 100 tonnes, the CAT 777G is acknowledged as one of the 'best in class' for the surface mining industry, and provides a range of fuel efficiency and operational improvements on previous models, as well as lower noise emissions, improved durability, and easier control systems for operatives.

The new trucks have been procured through the Boldon branch of plant and equipment supplier Finning in South Tyneside and Banks has also agreed a repair and maintenance contract for the trucks with the local Finning team for the next five years.

Workplace

Our people are key to the success of our business.

We respect and value the individuality and diversity that every employee brings to the business and seek to create a positive, open, working environment wherever we operate.

All our employees have an ambassadorial role – demonstrating the *development with care* values of the business to the world at large.

OUR WORKPLACE AIMS INCLUDE:

- **To follow on from the achievement of the Gold Standard Better Health at Work award in Northumberland by gaining the Continuing Excellence award and achieving the Bronze Standard of the award in Durham, our regional offices and the Rusha Surface Mine**
- **To facilitate the availability of health and well being initiatives to all employees, with a target of delivering eight initiatives per year**
- **To maintain Investors in People status across the business to a minimum standard of Bronze**
- **To keep our Group sickness absence rate under five per cent per annum**
- **For all staff to maintain a minimum of six hours health and safety training per financial year.**
- **To work towards achieving one near miss/risk observation per person per financial year.**
- **To strive to achieve zero RIDDOR events**

Health and safety

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



Site staff celebrate reaching 1 million working hours accident free across all three sites in 2015

The topics covered in the Health & Safety 2015 "toolbox talks" included:

- Control of substances hazardous to health
- Manual handling
- Development with care
- First aid
- Winter working
- Employee duties
- Warning signals
- Importance of wearing seatbelts
- Slips, trips and falls
- Substance misuse
- Dangers of legal highs
- Complacency



Case study: Chloe Scales

Chloe (pictured above), a receptionist from our Meadowfield office, undertook first aid training towards the end of 2015. She found the course engaging and very informative. The course covered a plethora of conditions and basic treatments from anaphylaxis to sprains and even strokes.

"It was an excellent course. Really well put across. I would recommend it to anyone and everyone. It has armed me with the information to treat most minor injuries that occur in the workplace and at home confidently should the need arise."

CHLOE SCALES
RECEPTIONIST
Banks Group

Key H&S performance indicators for 2015:

0.25
GROUP LOST TIME INJURY FREQUENCY RATE
(Number of lost time injuries in a workplace per one hundred thousand man-hours worked)
INDUSTRY AVERAGE: 0.3

1
RIDDOR INJURY
(An injury recorded under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases, and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations Act)

3,755
TOTAL H&S TRAINING HOURS ACROSS GROUP



Staff at Shotton Surface Mine

Staff development

We are 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 Bronze level in 2014. Every member of staff has a training and development plan which is monitored every year during the appraisal process. We also provides high-level health and safety and IT training to all the plant operators at its surface mines. Banks employees are also encouraged to further their careers through professional chartered qualifications, degrees and specialist training courses.

Contracts training

PROVIDED BY MUCKLE LLP

All Banks staff who are involved in negotiating and agreeing contacts took part in off-site training in 2015. The training was given by Muckle LLP – a leading north east commercial law firm.

The training covered procurement and contractual best practice and EU and UK regulations and the legislation that underpins the regulations. The intention is to have regular refresher sessions on this to ensure the staff are up-to-date with the latest regulatory frameworks.

Internal training

Our operator training approach, in Banks Mining, consists of three key areas and is carried out by qualified in-house trainers/assessors who are experienced on the type of equipment we operate:

- **Interactive induction and testing** – Theoretical learning and testing facility using "job packages" and multiple choice questions
- **Internal licensing scheme** – Practical and theoretical training programmes for new starters and experienced members of the team
- **Modular training programme** – Learning programmes are identified in accordance with the job requirements

All staff are offered training. Training modules are identified, in relation to the job role, for each staff member to complete. Training requirements and progress are recorded on each individual's competency matrix.

In Banks Mining we hold regular training days for our employees and utilise "rain off days" for modular training delivery.

Inductions

On site induction programmes help new employees understand site rules, health and safety policies and specific policies around the various types of machinery they work with. In 2015 we moved our induction process away from a predominantly paper based system to an online system.



Inductions for staff on our operational sites and in our offices follow a process of acclimatisation and familiarisation, then goal setting and the identification of training needs.

Banks Mining's skills licensing scheme

Banks Mining has its own full time in-house heavy plant trainer/assessor who is certified to train and assess the competency of plant operators under the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) training scheme and has experience of operating all items of plant normally found on surface mining projects.

Our in-house trainer has played a key role in developing and setting up the Banks Mining licensing scheme for plant operators. We have developed 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 operation of all our mobile and non-mobile plant.

In devising our own scheme and employing an accredited trainer/assessor, we have been able to raise the bar on the national standards and provide a bench mark for staff to continually develop their skills in plant operating and associated site based skills.

The Banks Mining training and licensing scheme has been presented to both the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and the Institute of Quarrying. We received positive feedback and endorsement from both organisations.



Dump truck at Shotton Surface Mine

External training

During 2015, a number of employees across the organisation undertook training provided by external professional institutions and training providers in subjects as diverse as public affairs; payroll management; minerals extractive technology, real estate and global logistics. These organisations include:



Mark Wilkinson

Payroll administrator, Mark, took and passed a number of modules in 2015 as part of his Chartered Institute in Payroll Professionals' (CIPP) Foundation Degree in Payroll Management.



Jeannie Kielty

2015 saw Jeannie finish and pass – with distinction – her Diploma in Public Relations run by the Chartered Institute of Public Relations (CIPR) at Leeds Beckett University.



Neil Cook

Neil, site manager at Shotton Surface Mine, was awarded the Institute of Quarrying Diploma in Quarry Technology after completing a three year course run by the University of Derby. The course included regular tutorials at the East Midlands education institution. This is a great achievement for him and we are very proud of his commitment to undertaking this course.



Jessica Holt

Jess is currently studying for her masters degree in Real Estate and Planning at Heriot Watt University, Edinburgh. This course is both Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) and Royal Town Planner Institute (RTPI) accredited and will be a major milestone on her way to becoming a chartered surveyor and planner.



L-R: New apprentices Jake Adkins from New Hartley, Owen Carr from Ashington and Max Anderson from Red Row with Drew Barber (mentor and a member of our 2012 apprentice intake) from Newbiggin-by-the-Sea.

Apprenticeships

Banks Mining and Northumberland College have worked together to develop a bespoke apprenticeship scheme. It includes a comprehensive three-year training programme at the College as well as on-site work, and offers qualifications up to NVQ level three that are specifically relevant to the skills we require.

During 2015, three young people joined our Mining staff as apprentices: one in welding and two in plant mechanics.

Daniel Hardy completed his apprenticeship at Banks Mining in February 2015 and is now a full time plant mechanic. Carl Millican also passed his apprenticeship in July 2015 and is now a full time electrician.

"It's especially pleasing to be able to give young people from nearby communities this chance to start building successful careers."

JOHN WELSH
PLANT ASSETS MANAGER
Banks Mining

Work placement and students

The Banks Group is committed to giving the next generation experience of work to help them get into work when leaving training or education; to break that "catch 22" of not being able to get a job without experience and not being able to get experience without having a job.

We had a number of work experience students join us throughout the year in 2015. The students were given a full induction which included sessions on different parts of the business. Areas covered included project management, planning, human resources and procurement. Students worked in disciplines ranging from photography to accounting.



Charlotte Kelly from Durham developed project management skills while on student placement

Drug and alcohol testing

The Banks Group operates a zero tolerance policy on drugs and alcohol across its businesses.

This policy is enforced by random drug and alcohol testing.

Sickness absence rates

We are proud to report that in 2015 our sickness absence rates was 3.2%. Below the national average of 3.3% for the year.



L-R: Better Health at Work advocates; Sara Ellis, Debbie McWilliam, Catherine Fabi, Nicola Coultas and Christine Hogarth celebrate receiving the Bronze Award

Better Health at Work Award

Our Meadowfield office achieved the bronze level Better Health at Work Award in 2015 and we are now working towards our silver level. The Better Health at Work Awards encourage organisations to promote healthy lifestyles amongst their employees.

Our team at our surface coal mines in Northumberland have been taking part in the Better Health at Work Award for a number of years and gained Gold level in December 2014 and Continuing Excellence in 2015.

Health days

In Northumberland, with help from health trainers from the NHS, we have carried out a number of health days ensuring all employees got the chance to attend.

Our occupational nurse attends site on a weekly basis and carries out health surveillance for Mining employees. She is on hand to give health advice to individuals and employees are encouraged to drop in if they have a health issue.

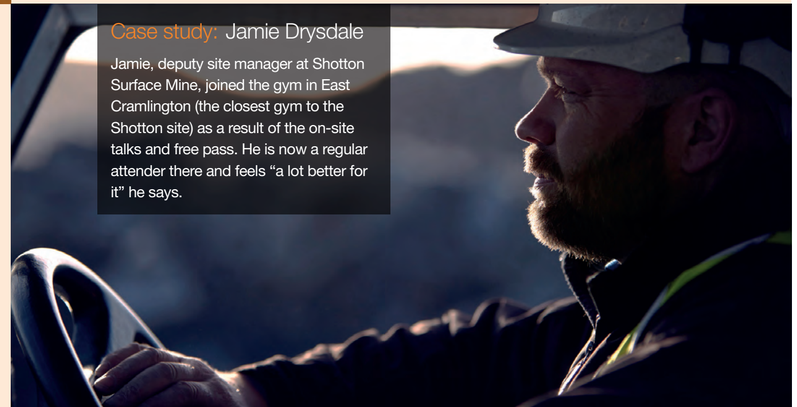
A local gym came onto site and gave health checks to some of the workers. Included in the promotion was a one week free pass to try out the facilities and as a result a number of staff have since joined the gym.

Healthy eating events

One of the initiatives that contributed towards the bronze award was a healthy eating taster day which was held in March 2015. Healthy eating events have taken place throughout the year on site serving homemade soup, homemade quiche and salad. This enabled workers to choose something different for their lunch, whilst at the same time donating to our chosen annual charity.

Other initiatives include:

- Dry January - for alcohol limit awareness
- Wear It Beat It - for heart disease
- Know Your Numbers - for blood pressure



Case study: Jamie Drysdale

Jamie, deputy site manager at Shotton Surface Mine, joined the gym in East Cramlington (the closest gym to the Shotton site) as a result of the on-site talks and free pass. He is now a regular attender there and feels “a lot better for it” he says.

Communication and staff engagement

The CR team produces a quarterly newsletter, providing staff with updates on all the CR work across the Banks Group.

THE CR TEAM ALSO COMMUNICATES WITH STAFF IN A NUMBER OF DIFFERENT WAYS INCLUDING:



- Work site posters displayed showing current initiatives within the group are placed on noticeboards and in rest areas in all offices and site cabins
- Emails from the CR team to all staff
- Intranet articles showing the latest news and events
- Team briefing sessions
- Health and Safety newsletters which are produced and distributed every month. Topics range from winter driving to anxiety awareness. These newsletters continue to be well read by staff across the organisation and staff have been proactive in suggesting monthly topics to cover
- Each month, an individual member of staff is featured in our Staff Spotlight newsletter. The goal of this is that we get to know each other a little better, so we can work together more effectively and find out about the varied roles people carry out across the business.



BANKSGroup

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Celebrating...

1976 - 2016
40
YEARS

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