Amey and the Buy Social Corporate Challenge

One year in
(Apr 2017 - Apr 2018)
Social enterprises are business which trade for a social purpose. The more of their product of service that is purchased, the more positive impact they can have.

Why does Amey want to work with Social Enterprises?

Amey’s goal is to create better places to live, work and travel. We do this directly through delivering our services but have the ability to increase our impact – bringing greater social value to communities in which we operate – if we partner with social enterprises in our supply chain.

Whilst we feel this is the right thing to do, it also helps us to respond to some of the social, economic and environmental challenges faced by our customers.

Social enterprises also help Amey to meet supplier diversity aims and often bring with them innovation and creativity. The latest research from SEUK shows that they are outstripping small to medium sized enterprises for growth and innovation, are more diverse, creating more jobs for those that need them most, and three times as likely to be working in the most disadvantaged areas.

‘This time last year we a made a commitment – a commitment to be ‘Buy Social Pioneers’ by using our spending power as a driving force for social change. We’ve established new relationships, found new products, new services and continue to be amazed at the impact social enterprises are making to peoples’ lives. Whilst we’re a long way off the £1 billion target the Buy Social Corporate Challenge has set, I’m delighted at the progress we’ve made and hope this short report acts to inspire other organisations to get on board and buy social.’

John Cully
Chief Procurement Officer, Amey

‘Buying Social’ is an initiative I can’t stop raving about and at its core it’s so simple - choosing to buy the products and services we need to run our business, from organisations that put their social mission at the forefront of what they do and why they exist. This year we’ve been introduced to people and to organisations that if it were not for Social Enterprise UK or the challenge we might never have known existed. It’s been a landmark year and one that I look forward building from, knowing that the more we can direct Amey’s spend towards social enterprises the more positive impact we will make.’

Emily Davies
Head of Social Impact, Amey

Amey shows how you can embed social impact into your everyday spend through working with social enterprises. This is so much more than CSR, it is about rethinking supply chains and using the money that is already being spent to transform lives and improve communities – whether that is helping break the cycle of reoffending, creating jobs opportunities for our veterans or supporting clean water projects abroad.

Since joining the Buy Social Corporate Challenge in 2017, Amey’s work building the markets for social enterprises proves that not only is this the right thing to do but it makes business sense as well. We hope more businesses follow Amey’s example and take up the Challenge.”

Peter Holbrook
Chief Executive, Social Enterprise UK
Buy Social Corporate Challenge

The aim of the Buy Social Corporate Challenge (BSCC), run by Social Enterprise UK (SEUK) is to work with a range of well-known businesses across a diverse range of sectors, to act as “Buy Social Pioneers”.

Core aims of the challenge:
1. To get more businesses taking positive steps to spend more with social enterprises
2. To engage businesses across all of the major industry sectors in the UK
3. To get sufficient businesses effectively engaged to spend £1 billion by 2020
4. To demonstrate that businesses in any sector can buy from social enterprises
5. To demonstrate the quality and value that social enterprises can bring to businesses
6. To work together to better understand the positive impact created by the spend.

Why is Amey a member?
Joining the BSCC has focused Amey’s commitment, raised awareness to our employees and wider stakeholders, and provided the leadership platform and network that’s needed for organisations to work together and really make a difference.

- Provides Amey with the tools, training and knowhow on working and engaging with social enterprises
- Enables a structured approach to working with social enterprise, and provides visibility of social enterprises that could be used in our supply chain
- Enables Amey to deliver commitments to support communities and respond to client and customer challenges. In particular, with regards to fulfilling requirements of the Social Value Act 12.
- Engages our employees – supporting recruiting, staff motivation and talent retention.

A target spend of £1 billion by 2020

Britain’s Bravest Manufacturing Company

Owned by military charity Royal British Legion Industries (RBLI), Britain’s Bravest Manufacturing Company is a provider of routine and bespoke permanent signs for commercial applications, public buildings, roads and railways. The company employs more than 100 people – 70% of whom are veterans, have a disability or both – and reinvests its entire surplus to offer greater employment opportunities to its beneficiaries.

The work
‘We have a fantastic partnership with the RBLI who provide many of the signs we use in Kent along with providing us with sign design services. It is important that Amey use social enterprises in their supply chain, however the main reason we chose to work with the RBLI is the excellent, high quality service they provide and the positive “can do” attitude of their team.’
Dave Matthews, Account Director, Kent Highways

The impact
By supporting them and using them within our service, RBLI provide individuals with a range of barriers to employment, including many Armed Forces Veterans, an opportunity to develop their skills and independence.

‘We’ve met people within Amey who deal with us on a day to day basis from the depot level, right up to Andy Milner, the CEO. At every level we have great engagement, we’re hugely grateful.

‘Our long-standing relationship with Amey was catalytic in our expansion into the road signs market which paved the way for us to improve the lives of countless individuals.

‘Amey’s commitment to the Social Enterprise UK Buy Social Corporate Challenge is nothing short of outstanding and they should be immensely proud to say that their business choices have directly benefitted the lives of ex-service personnel and individuals with disabilities.’
Geoff Streetley, Managing director of RBLI’s Britain’s Bravest Manufacturing Company
**Year 1 Activities and Progress**

**Leadership**
2017 has been a landmark year for Amey working with social enterprises – notably, with our Executive Committee committing to become signatories of the BSCC. We marked our joining of the BSCC, attending the Yr 2 Launch event in the house of commons attended by member of our Executive Committee including CEO, Andy Milner.

Throughout the year a number of our Senior Leadership teams have been on visits to social enterprises – including our Managing Directors of Environmental Services to Clarity and our Chief Procurement Officer to The Forward Trust, Beating Time and Paperworks.

**Diagnostics**
Having become signatories to the BSCC, the first task we undertook was to understand our current spend with social enterprises. Working with SEUK, we completed an analysis of our 2016 spend, providing an understanding of both current spend and future opportunity.

**Regional approach**
In addition to reviewing the potential categories of products and services we procure, we have also worked with the BSCC partner organisations to take on a regional approach. We took part in a speed networking event to raise awareness of Social Enterprise within the Built Environment and vice versa, and to explore supply chain opportunities within the West Midlands. Together, we aim to generate greater social impact than any one organisation could achieve alone.

**Training and Communications**
We quickly recognised a key group of stakeholders in the success the challenge, was our Procurement teams. We undertook some basic training, and introductory presentations.

Wider communications went out to our Account Managers, and using our internal communication channels such the Hub and ‘Mangers Need to Know’.

Along-side internal activity, we have also sought to spread the news, acting as advocates to the wider industry. A number of thought leadership articles have been published.

- John Cully, CPO – ‘Procurement can be a driving force for social change’
  www.amey.co.uk/a-better-future/2017/may/procurement-can-be-a-driving-force-for-social-change/
- Emily Davies, Head of Social Impact – ‘Access for all: promoting an inclusive society with social enterprises’
  www.socialenterprise.org.uk/blog/access-for-all-promoting-an-inclusive-society-with-social-enterprises
- John and Emily also spoke at the GEL Summit, hosted by Wildhearts – and joined a panel to debate the benefits, and future of working with SEs.
  www.wildheartsgroup.com/gel-summit

**Keep Britain Tidy**
Keep Britain Tidy is an independent charity with three goals – to eliminate litter, end waste and improve places. This means more to us than just picking up litter. It means creating clean beaches, parks and streets. It means creating sustainable practices and eliminating unnecessary waste.

**The work**
We are using KBT to door knock the entire borough to engage residents on recycling – encouraging behaviour change to recycle right. They dispel myths on what can and cannot be recycled, answer questions and take orders for recycling bins/compostable bags. They also attend community events and work with local social housing providers to engage hard to reach tenants.
Year 1 Results

The work completed to-date has resulted in a combined social enterprise spend of £930,000 (2017 spend).

What’s next? 2018/19 plans

We have set ourselves a number of key objectives:

- set an absolute target for social enterprise spend
- To develop a mechanism for regular internal reporting on spend and progress
- To undertake a series on ‘Road Show’ events – engaging both internal employees and external stakeholders.
- Measure our impact – undertake an evaluation of the impact working with Social Enterprises has in the communities in which we operate
- To be an active partner of the Buy Social Corporate Challenge, and advocate for social enterprise – working with our supplier, customers and other external stakeholders.

BlueSky (now the Forward Trust)

The Forward Trust empowers people to break the often interlinked cycles of addiction or crime to move forward with their lives. For more than 25 years they have been working with people to build positive and productive futures. They believe that anyone is capable of lasting change. Their services have supported thousands of people to make changes to create better lives with jobs, family, friends and a sense of community.

The work

We work together to identify contracts (household waste collection, materials recycling, grounds maintenance) where we can place ex-offenders. Blue Sky recruits from the local community, working with probation services, prisons, Job Centre Plus, and community groups to identify candidates. Blue Sky pre-screens referred candidates on the phone to discuss their past convictions, assess risk, and explain the roles available. They are then interviewed face-to-face. Successful candidates are supported in sourcing proof of ID (or opening bank accounts) and fully inducted on Health & Safety.

The impact

25% of the job numbers of Blue Sky comes from Amey. We have a significant impact on Blue Sky and hence the ex-offenders who want to live a normal life. The amount of impact is expected to be doubled in the coming years by Blue Sky. Amey looks at hiring more and more varied roles and more and more geographical location from Blue Sky. They are influencing the possibilities of having certain type of skilled staff as well at Blue Sky. For eg. Facilities Management staff is something Amey is looking for currently and Blue Sky is looking at developing those skills. To date, Amey has hired more than 400 employees from Blue Sky’s route.

Blue Sky is not just providing employment but also reducing re-offending rates considerably in Blue Sky’s operating regions. Where the national average is generally 60% re-offending rates, Blue Sky boasts of a 15% only re-offending rate. Blue Sky has been operating for 11 years and has helped approximately 1400 individuals of which 40% have gone to full-time employment. Blue Sky are competitive when compared to High Street agencies and provide employment to variety of needs.
This year we’ve also been working with the following organisations.

Jericho Foundation

The Jericho Foundation was established in 1993, to help support local people in finding employment. In 2017, it now operates eight Social Enterprises and provides employment and training for marginalised individuals, across Birmingham.

They actively seek out and engage people who have significant barriers towards being Fulfilled, Skilled and Employed. They do this through providing real work experience in one of our social enterprise businesses and combine this with an individually-tailored package of personal support, guidance and training.

Belu Water

Belu champion the environmental benchmark, and trade with the purpose of investing 100% of their profits into ending water poverty through their partner, WaterAid.

Success at Belu is measured by the reduction of overall environmental impact, successful and sustainable trading, and the number of lives transformed in poor countries through access to safe water.

Clarity

CLARITY Employment For Blind People is a registered charity and one of the UK’s foremost social enterprises, employing, training and supporting people with disabilities to create high-quality toiletries, soap and cleaning products.

Their mission is to create employment, to provide training and to help visually impaired people to build skills, confidence and independence.

Wildhearts

WildHearts believe that business can and must be a force for good. Their social initiatives are diverse; from addressing social mobility in the UK, to addressing gender inequality in the developing world. WildHearts will be delivering all of Amey’s office supply needs going forward – this marks a considerable opportunity to make a difference.

‘By working with WildHearts, Amey has transformed their business supply spend into a social investment, driving significant social value. As a result, thousands of lives will be empowered each year, locally and globally. This is the epitome of ‘Business of Good.’

Kris Bryson, Wildhearts

Recycling Lives

Recycling Lives is a multi-award-winning recycling business using its commercial operations to support and sustain its own charitable programmes. They offer training, employment, accommodation and bespoke support to ex-offenders, veterans, the homeless and the long-term unemployed.

Recycling Lives will be providing recycling services to Amey contracts.

‘At Recycling Lives we create social impact from every commercial contract. We’re now looking forward to an even stronger partnership with Amey as we work to recycle some of its waste streams through our prisons, where we’ll process waste while support offender’s rehabilitation.’

Simon Edwards, Commercial Director

Change Kitchen

ChangeKitchen is an award winning event caterer and thriving social enterprise. They’ve been catering for corporate events, weddings, community gatherings and their own hugely popular pop-up cafes since 2010. The ChangeKitchen food philosophy is a simple one – they create and serve delicious, nutritious and ethical dishes that can be shared and enjoyed by all. We have been working with ChangeKitchen to support our catering needs across the West Midlands.

‘I have really enjoyed working with various Amey teams across the Midlands to ensure their specific catering needs is met for the type of event they are putting on. It was great to hear teams that the food was a success and that we managed to pitch the type of menus right for the different groups. We hope to work with Amey teams across the Midlands and beyond in future.’

Dr Birgit Kehrer, Founder and Director ChangeKitchen CIC

NEW for 2018/19 - we’re pleased to have developed relationships with the following social enterprises, and will be working with them going forward and continuing to make a difference.
We’re the faces behind the services the public use every day and we’ve been in the business of creating better places for nearly 100 years — it’s our purpose and passion — and it’s what drives us to keep improving our services every day.

Creating **better places**
to live, work and travel

- Engineering
- Facilities
- Environment
- Utilities
- Transport
- Defence
- Justice