



**Corporate
Social
Responsibility**
Making it
our business

Our commitment

Riverside has been committed to regenerating neighbourhoods and providing affordable homes for more than 80 years. We invest millions of pounds in community projects and the hundreds of new homes built each year, and we aim to be the partner of choice for major regeneration projects.

Our commitment to CSR is evident through our environmental approach, with an emphasis on sustainable development and adaptation to climate change. It is also reflected in our investment in communities and our engagement with tenants, employees and other stakeholders. Our belief in these principles is reflected in both our vision and our approach to corporate planning and continuous improvement.

Embedding CSR

We are committed to embedding CSR right across our operations. To do this, we have taken the following important steps:

We have developed a thorough and wide-ranging approach to CSR, which forms an important strand of our corporate strategy.

We have an identified CSR sponsor at Executive Director level – Ronnie Clawson, Executive Director, Corporate Services.

In 2016 we gained a place in the Sunday Times 100 Best Not-For-Profit Organisations to Work For.

We are creating a diverse yet equal workplace with three employee working groups: Action for Disabled (Enable), Black Minority Ethnic (BME) group and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (Spectrum) group.

Corporate Social Responsibility at Riverside

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is an extension of Riverside's traditional role and links closely with our vision and values. It lies at the heart of our business and is synonymous with our vision of **transforming lives, revitalising neighbourhoods**.

As a business, CSR reinforces the need to act with integrity. It is about embracing our wider responsibilities; looking at how we can make a positive impact on the broader community, environment and marketplace: and how this can be achieved by creating a happy workplace where our employees feel valued and involved.

As a leading national provider of social and affordable housing, Riverside is about so much more than bricks and mortar. We have an impressive track record of investing in added-value activities for both individuals and communities to deliver measurable positive outcomes; and we will continue to operate within and beyond this framework across the areas in which we work.

How we make an impact

Our CSR framework aims to integrate responsible practices into everything we do, whilst measuring our CSR achievements through four key impact areas:



Community

- Building thriving communities and a stronger business
- Raising money for our nominated charity as well as local initiatives
- Ensuring our community work has sustainable outcomes



Environment

- Protecting and enriching the environment
- Recognising the business benefits of a strategic approach to the environment
- Respecting our responsibilities



Marketplace

- Responsibly managing our supply chain
- Treating customers and suppliers fairly and with respect
- Allying ethical procurement with value for money




Workplace

- Valuing and investing in our staff
- Unlocking talent by developing current and future employees
- Tackling discrimination

How we deliver CSR

Supporting our tenants through difficult times

We continue to help our tenants cope with the impact of welfare reform.

A photograph showing a woman with her hair in a bun, wearing a black sleeveless top, smiling and looking towards a man. The man is seen from the back, wearing a bright pink t-shirt. They appear to be in a casual setting, possibly a living room, with a bicycle visible in the background.

Many of our tenants are losing income and struggling to sustain their tenancies. We support them by making sure we outline good quality information on their options and helping them to maximise their income through employment and training opportunities, as well as financial and affordable warmth advice.

Managing our assets in a sustainable way

We are improving the energy efficiency and comfort of our homes.



We are revitalising our estates to make them better places to live. By involving residents and the wider community in the transformation of green and open spaces we aim to nurture and strengthen neighbourhood identity and create well-loved spaces.

Our planned maintenance programme includes energy efficient boilers and double-glazing. We also work to targets for the energy efficiency of our properties based on the SAP (Standard Assessment Procedure) methodology.

Neighbourhood management helps develop and maintain cleaner, safer and greener places to live. Financially unviable properties are brought back to use through our Own Place Project, so the local area gains a physical and economic boost.

Responsible procurement

We maintain an ongoing commitment to CSR in centralised corporate contracts through tender opportunities.



Every Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ) or tender includes our standard requirements on Social Value and CSR.

Key guiding procurement principles, rules, procedures and templates enable a consolidated and professional approach. We have both processes and procedures in place to support CSR, including a menu of 'Social Value Services', which aims to incorporate tenant work experience and training, apprenticeships, charitable support, and the use of Social Enterprise within the supply chain.

Our 'Whole Life Costing Guide' helps with the assessment of ongoing ownership and disposal costs, product life expectancy, and the social, economic and environmental impact of a product or service.

Energy efficiency and accreditation

We deliver energy efficiency measures across our diverse housing stock and achieve environmental accreditation for our successes.



We achieved silver in the SHIFT (Sustainable Homes Index for Tomorrow) environmental accreditation process for two consecutive submissions.

We have been accredited with OHSAS18001 (health and safety management), and awarded Gold by The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA).

Our joint-venture company, Caribou, is owned and managed by Riverside, Helena Partnerships and Starfish Group to deliver energy efficiency services to homeowners, registered providers, local authorities, ALMOs (Arms-Length Management Organisations), and private landlords.

It was set up following the success in North Bransholme where we secured Energy Company funding to carry out retrofit and energy efficiency works to existing stock. Caribou secures commitments from Energy Companies for carbon reduction measures and covers the remainder of the cost through client contribution.

Fundraising

We adopt a three-layered approach to corporate fundraising.



At Riverside, corporate fundraising brings together staff volunteering, awareness raising, and monetary contributions.

Together with our staff, we choose a corporate charity, working in partnership with a range of international and national charities such as WaterAid, Alzheimer's Society and Cancer Research UK. We set ambitious targets to raise a set amount working in partnership, usually for two years, and have always surpassed this.

The Riverside Foundation is a registered charity that is part of, and supported by, Riverside although it is legally independent. It funds a number of projects to complement and extend Riverside's own activities, including:

- Community Development Fund: a neighbourhood-focussed fund that supports local projects to benefit the community as a whole.
- Intensive Support, Younger Households: support for younger tenants with multiple economic and social needs who are facing tenancy difficulties.
- Service delivery: funding for ten frontline Employment & Training Project Officers.

Valuing and rewarding employees

We are committed to making continual improvements for our employees and customers.



It's our people who make the difference to our organisation through delivering great services to our customers and each other.

Our employee benefit programme is our way of saying thank you. The benefits on offer include enhanced annual leave, flexible working, family leave, various learning and development opportunities, and a programme of wellbeing.

We also reward employees through quarterly and annual awards, whilst giving individuals lots of opportunities to have their say through a range of channels.

Our volunteering programme has been created to help employees understand that days spent volunteering are a unique opportunity to develop themselves, whilst at the same time having an impact on the lives of those who need our support. Activities include team challenges, mentoring or coaching, and fundraising. The benefits of employee volunteering are well established – employees have the opportunity to develop skills and improve knowledge, and the business benefits from enhanced job satisfaction and improved employee engagement.

Adopting our One Riverside approach

'One Riverside' is about us pulling together in a single direction – using both our scale and diversity to maximum advantage.



By working in a smart way we can improve value for money, reduce carbon emissions and release money to invest in the community.

We need to offer a fair deal to customers and colleagues, wherever they live or work, and in whatever circumstances. This means being consistent in our underlying standards, systems and processes, and modern in their deployment. But we also need to recognise where different approaches matter because of locality or particular customer needs, doing this within a framework of 'justified difference'. By being mature enough to reconcile this fundamental tension, we can do more by driving efficiency, whilst being nimble, flexible and innovative.

We are modernising the way we work, providing new tools and systems to our staff to help support customers. We are also looking for opportunities to embed our CSR approach and reinforce best practice right across Riverside.

As part of our 2014–17 corporate plan, which is also named 'One Riverside', we have set ourselves the following challenge: By 2017, we will have connected customers with resilient lives, living in better places, whose needs are met by a great team, working together as part of an effective business.

The future of CSR at Riverside

Riverside strives to be an excellent landlord, employer, partner and client. We believe that we will best serve our customers by providing excellent services and helping to sustain communities. And we will continue to deliver our CSR programme by realising our vision; transforming lives, revitalising neighbourhoods.

We will continue to work with tenants, residents and employees to increase awareness of environmental and wider CSR objectives and our programme of employee engagement is helping us to create a great quality workforce.

Procurement activities will focus on achieving value for money, whilst remaining both ethically and socially accountable.

Our Community Engagement activities sit at the heart of our business, helping to support those individuals experiencing financial hardship, unemployment and fuel poverty. This is an area for particular focus in the wake of the Government's changes to welfare benefits.

In the current environment – with both testing times for the sector and the wider economy – it will be a challenge to sustain our CSR programme. However, the business and moral case for these activities is sound. We look forward with optimism and determination that we will continue to make a positive difference to the lives of our communities, tenants and residents.



Our latest CSR figures

If you want to know more on our CSR policies, visit www.riverside.org.uk/csr

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