



# SQA 2019–20 Responsible Business





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# INTRODUCTION

As another busy year for SQA and its dedicated staff comes to a close, it is time to reflect on the highlights of the year and the prospects for the future. SQA takes its various roles as a responsible business very seriously, and we are committed to doing everything we can for our employees, stakeholders and the wider community. Our first responsibility is to our people. That includes the people who work with and for us, and the people we support. In the next section you'll be able to read about the things we do, the support we offer our staff members, and the many great things they do on their own initiative, not least the fantastic work they do and funds they raise for charity.

As an organisation we have placed equality at the forefront of our values. We believe that a workplace that promotes equality is a better place to work. You can read about our Disability Network, Women's Network and Rainbow Network in the 'Our People' section.

We care about the young people of Scotland. In this report, you can read about the many different ways we have offered opportunities and support to young people. Of course, we do this by providing the qualifications that are our core business, but we also welcome Young Apprentices into the organisation each year, and work to support care-experienced young people. We are a proud corporate parent, as you can see at the end of the 'Our People' section.

We also have much to tell you about the work we do in the wider community and the wider world. The section called 'Our Customers and Communities' reports on our social involvement in the life of communities outwith the organisation's immediate sphere, and the 'Environment' section reports on our impact on the environment. It has been a good year for us as a responsible business. Read on to find out more.

**Fiona Robertson**  
SQA Chief Executive



# OUR RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS VISION

SQA makes a difference to the communities it serves through a shared understanding and sense of being a responsible business that delivers and sustains a positive impact on its customers and communities, environment, and people.



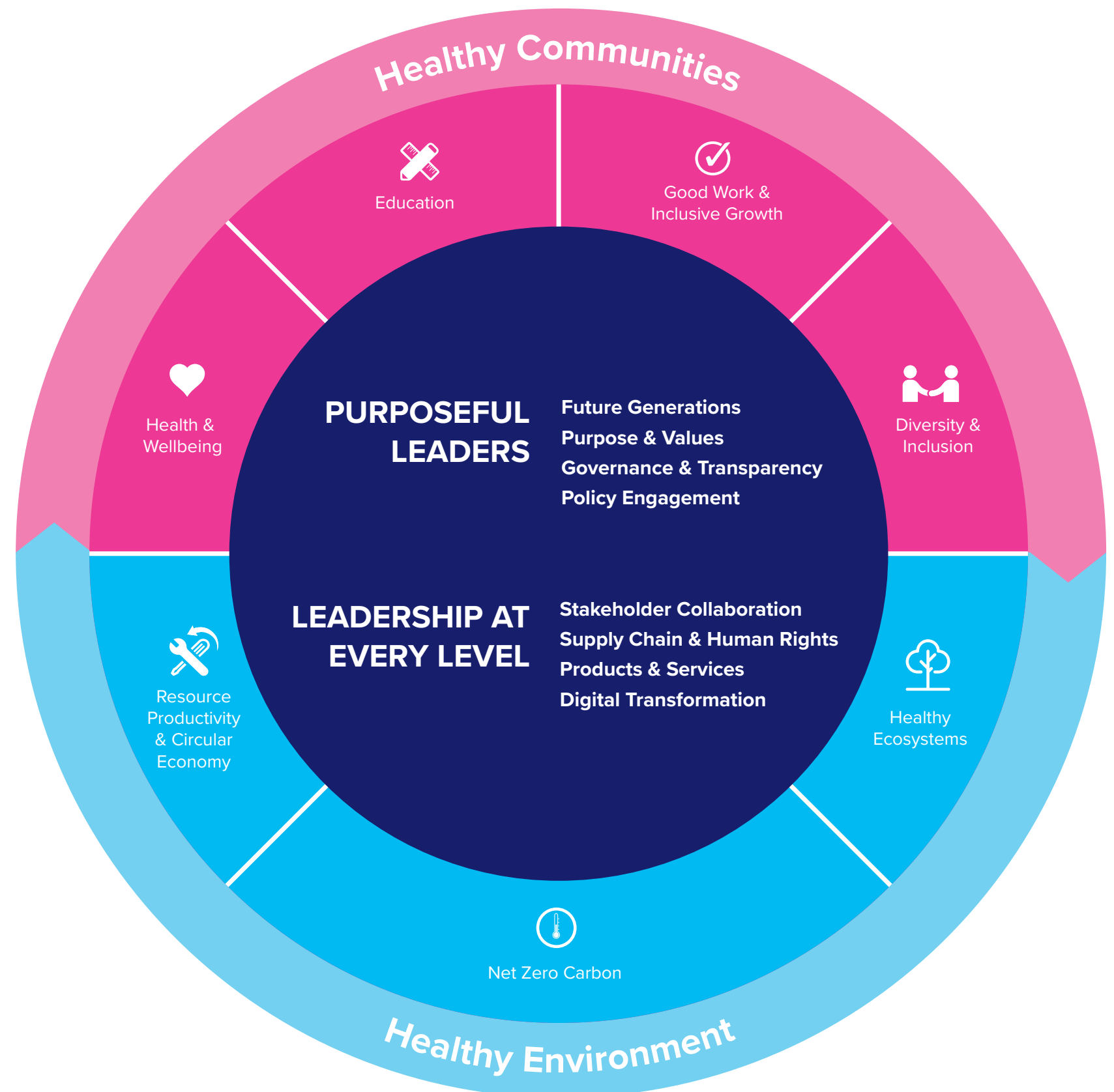
# BUSINESS IN THE COMMUNITY

SQA is a member of Business in the Community Scotland (BICS). BICS believes that the prosperity of business and society is inextricably linked.

BICS helps businesses put the creation of healthy communities and a healthy environment at the centre of their strategies. It encourages them to use the BICS Responsible Business Map to navigate and make progress towards their goals, while ensuring long-term financial value. It tackles critical societal issues and drives change in workplaces and communities by unlocking the ambitions of business for a fairer society through programmes, events and research.

“**SQA continues to build on its longstanding membership with Business in the Community. Their continued focus on strategy has seen them begin to make real headway on their responsible business agenda to support their workforce, communities and the environment. Their employees’ engagement over the last five years in the Paired Reading programme has been a highlight. We look forward to what we can achieve together in 2020.**

— Alan Thornburrow, Director,  
Business in the Community Scotland







## OUR PEOPLE

Nurturing talent and helping people to fulfil their potential is at the heart of what we do at SQA. We recognise that people work at their best when they feel at their best, so our colleagues' mental and physical health is very important to us. In this section we look at how SQA looks after its staff, what our staff do for others, and outline some of our wellbeing initiatives.





# LET PEOPLE FLOURISH

Our people are our most valuable resource. We recognise their humanity as well as their hard work, and know that they have other obligations, worries, and interests beyond their role in SQA. Overlaying our HR procedures and organisational development policies are a wide range of programmes and initiatives that enable us to support, advise, and reward our colleagues.

In this way, we are creating a workplace in which people are treated with dignity and respect, where our people can build on their skills, realise their ambitions, and achieve a ‘work/life balance’.

**SQA offers its staff a considerable range of benefits, including:**

**SQA  
employees  
saved £49,100  
using SQA  
Lifestyles**

**94% of  
colleagues use  
SQA Lifestyles  
discount  
website**

**All colleagues  
can access  
Employee  
Assistance  
Programme**

**All colleagues  
can benefit  
from SQA’s  
flexible  
working  
options**

**222  
colleagues  
benefited  
from  
in-house flu  
vaccinations**

## MODERN APPRENTICESHIP CHALLENGE

### SQA APPRENTICES ARE A WINNING TEAM

SQA's very own Modern Apprentices **Lindsey Burke, Anna McGowan, Lauren Graham** and **Eve Cunningham** were named as the winner of the 2019 Glasgow Apprenticeship Challenge.

The competition, co-ordinated by Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) Glasgow challenged teams of apprentices to deliver projects using the skills they have developed through their apprenticeships.

Our team partnered with Cherry Road Learning Centre in Bonnyrigg, which provides a day service for adults with learning disabilities.

The team built a close working relationship with service user Craig Pentland, who went on to complete work experience at the Lowden office.

“Our Modern Apprentices have embraced this challenge with maturity, and a compassion that has really impressed us, and I am delighted that they have been named as the winners of 2019 Glasgow Apprenticeship Challenge.

— Sarah Anne Rooney, Employee Development Programme Manager



Lindsey, Lauren, Eve and Anna receive their award



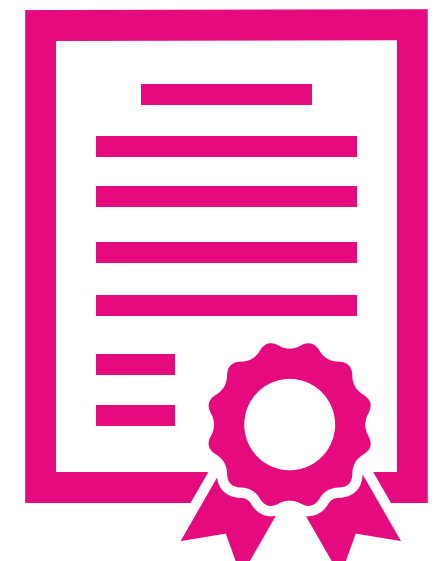
Roseanne McCuish celebrating her 40 years Long Service along with her colleagues Nicola McGregor and Alison Heron.

## LONG SERVICE AWARDS 2019

Every year SQA celebrates our members of staff who have reached their long service milestones of 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, and 40 years.

This year's Long Service Awards took place on Thursday 3 October at St Andrew's in the Square, Glasgow.

The night was filled with fun and laughter as awardees and their guests enjoyed a musical performance from a young student from Cathkin High School.







# MACTASTIC

SQA's Make a Change (MAC) Group brings colour and dynamism to our health and wellbeing ethos. MAC Group volunteers meet regularly to develop and deliver creative, innovative, and informative health and wellbeing activities and initiatives, which are eagerly anticipated from one year to the next.

Our campaigns in 2019 ranged from our Body Image campaign supporting Mental Health Awareness week, National Smile month with eco friendly toothbrushes for staff, in-house flu jags for staff, top tips on alcohol awareness, and our Christmas campaign highlighting the health and wellbeing campaigns that run throughout the year.

“**The MAC group are passionate about health and wellbeing, they aim to raise awareness and provide healthy opportunities for colleagues to make a change in their day to day lives.**

— Gemma Law, Chair MAC Group

## HEALTHY WORKING LIVES GOLD AWARD

SQA is proud to maintain our gold award for Healthy Working Lives.



## A YEAR IN THE LIFE OF THE MAC GROUP

**Water bottles provided to our people during hydration week**

**Colleagues enjoyed in-house therapies and classes, from Reflexology to HITT Classes**

**170 steppers clocked up 24,770 miles in one month**

**222 colleagues given flu vaccinations**

**Brighter smiles advice for our people on World Oral Health Day**



# INVESTING IN GOOD MENTAL HEALTH

As a responsible employer, SQA has taken significant steps to identify and signpost support for the health, wellbeing, and safety of all our employees. As part of our commitment to the Fair Work Framework, we are encouraging staff to invest in their own good mental health through a series of events, including mental health first-aid training. Mental Health first aiders are offering their support across the organisation — over 30 staff members have completed their Scottish Mental Health First Aid (SMHFA) training. They have not been trained to be mental health workers, but to develop related knowledge and understanding, which in turn helps to remove stigma and fear, and gives them confidence to help others.

**“Raising awareness of mental health issues is so very important in the workplace. The workshop delivered to my team provided an awareness of a broad spectrum of mental health issues, and genuinely made me stop and think, and most importantly, reflect. The activities and video consolidated this — and were excellent and gave us the time to realise how these issues impact on us all directly and indirectly, in our work and personal life.**

**— Julie Kobiela, Qualifications Officer**







Colleagues presenting a cheque of £11,000 to SAMH



## PUTTING THE FUN IN FUNDRAISING

SQA's Informal Committee — our charity fundraising group — organises a colourful calendar of social events throughout the year in our Optima (Glasgow) and Lowden (Midlothian) offices. These events offer opportunities to see new sides to our talented, dedicated, and quirky colleagues. They also raise an extraordinary amount of money for causes close to SQA people's hearts.

## CHEQUES FROM SQA STAFF TO CORPORATE CHARITIES

The Informal Committees held their cheque presentations with Scottish Association for Mental Health (SAMH) and the British Heart Foundation (BHF) in June.

SQA staff in Glasgow raised an amazing £11,000 for SAMH and staff in Lowden office raised £3,058.47 for BHF. This amazing amount of money was raised through various fundraising events. A huge thank you to all staff who contributed to this fantastic total over a two year partnership with both charities.



## 2019–21 CHARITY PARTNERS REVEALED

Following a staff vote for our new charities, between 2019 and 2021, SQA's Lowden staff will organise fundraising activities for the [Edinburgh Children's Hospital Charity \(ECHC\)](#), whilst colleagues in Glasgow will be fundraising for [You Are My Sunshine \(YAMS\)](#).



# WORKING TOWARDS GREATER EQUALITY

SQA is committed to equality of opportunity and promotes a respectful and inclusive culture. We believe that, as an employer and public body, we can play a leading part in the promotion of equality, diversity and inclusion.

In this section we share some of the achievements of our internal employee network groups. Co-ordinated and supported by employees across SQA, our members do this work on top of their day jobs. Underpinning all their activities are SQA's values: Progressive, Trusted, and Enabling.

## OUR RAINBOW NETWORK SQA'S LGBTI+ STAFF NETWORK GROUP

Our Rainbow Network's goal is to ensure that SQA is a workplace that promotes, embraces and welcomes LGBTI+ diversity, dignity, inclusion and talents. In practice, the Rainbow Network discusses LGBT+ issues, shares resources, and organises events such as awareness-raising campaigns and charity fundraising days.

Key highlights from the year include, being an 'Official Sponsor' of Dundee Pride in September 2019. Representation at the Stonewall Workplace Conference 2019 — Members attended Stonewall Scotland's Workplace Conference



Fiona Robertson, Chief Executive along with members of the Rainbow Network celebrating Ally week.



## OUR DISABILITY NETWORK

SQA's Disability Network provides a welcoming, confidential and safe environment for colleagues to share ideas and information relating to disability equality in the workplace. The Network offers employees peer support and guidance and aims to raise awareness of disability-smart practice.

In response to the feedback received to the Group's disability survey in 2018, members worked with HR and other groups across the organisation to collate a 'compendium' of information on policies, workplace adjustments, and sources of advice and support in SQA and externally to support disabled employees and line managers.

Members supported UK Disability History Month 2019 — an annual event that provides a platform to raise awareness and promote disability equality. Members organised and promoted disability and health awareness sessions in Glasgow and Lowden delivered by Remploy and launched the Network's compendium.



# OUR WOMEN'S NETWORK

## INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2019

SQA Women's Network provides a welcoming space for women across the organisation. Through open meetings and events there are opportunities for women to get to know one another, offer and receive support, and influence SQA policy development in areas of equality and inclusion. This network is exploring exciting developments such as informal mentoring and liaising with other staff networks.

The SQA Women's Network agreed to present annually to an individual the Woman of the Year Award, running in conjunction with International Women's Day. The Award recognises support and commitment to equality. In 2020 the group opened nominations for Woman of the Year award. The 2020 award was presented to Yazmin Raven. Yazmin, who is the Founder and Chair of the group received the Award in recognition of her hard work and dedication in setting up and leading SQA's Women's Network during 2019-20.

Yazmin's passion for the Women's Network has been instrumental to the group's success in its first year.

## FIRST MINISTER'S NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS

Throughout 2019, a small number of members participated as part of the First Minister's National Advisory Committee for Women and Girls Spotlight Circle events to support the national agenda for gender equality.

## FINANCIAL INDEPENDENCE

Following feedback from members, another theme for the Network related to financial independence. Members organised input from the Strathclyde Pension Fund to provide support and advice to female employees on topics such as the impact of maternity leave and reduced hours on pension accumulation.

In January 2020, on the theme of Financial Independence and Retiring Early (FIRE), our members arranged their second financial independence talk. We welcomed author David Sawyer, who delivered a very engaging presentation about his bestselling book titled 'RESET'.



Anna David, SQA Board Member presents Yazmin Raven with Woman of the Year Award



“I'm blown away to have been nominated as Woman of the Year by my colleagues across SQA! Thank you to everyone who nominated me. It's made me really reflect on the positive impact the SQA Women's Network has had. We've achieved a huge amount in a short space of time. I hope this award becomes a longstanding tradition at SQA that enables us to recognise and reward all of the excellent efforts women in the organisation are making to ensure SQA is an even better place to work than it already is. I want to say thank you to all of the SQA Women's Network members, and to the board members in particular — we've all worked incredibly hard to make this network succeed. I couldn't have achieved so much with this network without the support and the hard work of members, which was forthcoming from the very early days of when I first started pitching this idea about the benefits of a women's network.

— Yazmin Raven, Chair of Womens Network





# SQA AS A PROUD CORPORATE PARENT

## WHO CARES? SCOTLAND

SQA has a very special partnership with Who Cares? Scotland — a national voluntary organisation providing a range of advocacy, advice, and support services for care-experienced children and young people aged 25 or under.

## KILTWALK FOR WHO CARES? SCOTLAND

On Sunday 28 April, members of staff along with friends and family braved the Glasgow Kiltwalk as Corporate Parents supporting and raising funds for Who Cares? Scotland.

Over £37,000 has been raised so far in total for Who Cares? Scotland from the Glasgow Kiltwalk alone.



“Taking part in the Kiltwalk for Who Cares? Scotland felt like a very small contribution to an organisation whose purpose is to support these kids. It was great to see so many people in the blue t-shirts with the large white love heart on the back.

— Tracey McCorkell, Head of Service Delivery

“SQA is a big part of the work we do. If it wasn't for our amazing corporate parents, young people wouldn't be achieving and believing in themselves.

— Laura Mullarkey, Fundraising and Partnership Support Officer, Who Cares? Scotland

“This was our third year taking part in the Glasgow Kiltwalk. I was so proud to see so many people walking for Who Cares? Scotland. Thank you once again to the wonderful people from SQA who donned a bit of tartan and chose to #walkwithloveforlove, not forgetting the volunteers who helped with walker packs.

— Gavin Sinclair, Fundraising and Partnership Manager, Who Cares? Scotland



Tracey McCorkell and Sue Pope taking part in the Glasgow Kiltwalk



# CHRISTMAS SPARKLE

**SQA's staff showed their generosity by supporting various charities over the Christmas period. Aberlour Child Care Trust, Who Cares? Scotland, Midlothian & Renfrewshire Trussell Trust Foodbanks and Food Facts and Friends Foodbank. They helped make Christmas a little bit more special for the people of Scotland. This year:**

**We donated  
121 gifts to  
Aberlour Child  
Care Trust**

**We sent 2000  
handwritten  
Christmas cards  
to Who Cares?  
Scotland**

**70 SQA  
volunteers  
came together  
to support the  
foodbanks**

**We contributed  
a substantial  
number of  
donations to  
the foodbanks**

**We formed a  
strong customer  
& communities  
partnership**



# SQA AS A PROUD CORPORATE PARENT

## CARE DAY 2020

Care Day celebrates, champions and connects the care-experienced community with each other and those who care about them. As corporate parents, we are extremely proud to support care-experienced children and young people through our involvement with Who Cares? Scotland.



#CareDay20 #Reimagining  
@WhoCaresScot

A LIFETIME OF  
EQUALITY,  
RESPECT  
AND  
LOVE  
FOR CARE EXPERIENCED PEOPLE



## HIGH-FLYING DUO HEAD FOR HARVARD

Two care-experienced young women from Scotland embarked on a potentially life-changing summer adventure at Harvard University thanks to the support of Who Cares? Scotland, local authorities, and SQA.

Andi Stannard, 17, from Orkney, and Lauren Tenn-Mills, 18, from Bo'ness went to Boston, USA, for a seven-week residential stay at Harvard University's Secondary School summer programme.

This was the tenth year Who Cares? Scotland has sent students to Harvard for the summer, giving care-experienced young people the opportunity to experience student life at an Ivy League university.

Lauren, a student at Forth Valley College, said 'Chances like this give children in care hope for a brighter future. I believe it is so important for every child in the system to realise that they have the potential to achieve whatever they put their mind to.'

Janet Brown, former SQA Chief Executive said 'Staff from across SQA are immensely proud of our relationship with Who Cares? Scotland. Like any corporate parent, we take great pride in the achievements of the young people we encounter.'

Kevin Browne-MacLeod, Director of Care Experienced Membership at Who Cares? Scotland, said 'The Harvard Summer School programme, and the support of corporate parents like SQA, help us to show young people that there are fantastic opportunities out there, and their background should not define their future.'

## SQA RESULTS DAY CELEBRATION EVENT

On results day we hosted our annual celebration event for care-experienced young people. The candidates were presented with their SQA certificate by First Minister Nicola Sturgeon MSP.

As a dedicated corporate parent, SQA worked closely with Who Cares? Scotland, and MCR Pathways — charities that support young people from care-experienced backgrounds — to deliver an event that offers young people from a variety of backgrounds the opportunity to celebrate their successes and be congratulated for their achievements.

**“I am inspired by the young people I have met today — and the achievement their results represent across the range of qualifications SQA offer. Many congratulations from everyone here at SQA!”**

**— Fiona Robertson, SQA Chief Executive**



SQA Results Celebration Event





## OUR CUSTOMERS AND COMMUNITIES

'Giving something back' is what being a 'responsible business' at SQA is all about. Over the past year, we have reinforced existing relationships and embarked on new ones.

SQA continues to initiate and reinforce relationships — with our customers and our local communities.

We have acknowledged and rewarded ambition, promoted equality, improved more young people's chances of employment, and actively supported local charities.



# WINNERS SHINE AT SQA STAR AWARDS

SQA learners and centres dazzled at our annual [Star Awards](#), which took place on 15 November at Glasgow's Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum.

Former HND Retail Management student Dean Clark received the individual Pride o' Worth award for setting up Edinburgh College's first student-led shop. His aim was to give fellow students experience of running a business, and to provide local people with employability skills.

A partnership between Dumfries and Galloway College, and The Usual Place — a social enterprise café that provides young people with additional support needs the chance to secure relevant work-based qualifications — lifted the Pride o' Worth for Centres award.

The highest accolade, the SQA Fellowship, was presented to Dr Paul Thompson, Rector of Jordanhill School in Glasgow.

**“The SQA Star Awards are a fantastic celebration of the commitment and talent of young people from across Scotland,” said Fiona Robertson, ‘and of the dedication of the teams at SQA centres that deliver our courses and qualifications.**





## HERALD DIVERSITY AWARDS

SQA celebrated employers who are providing inclusive learning opportunities at the [Herald Diversity Awards](#). The awards showcase innovative ways that organisations are allowing everyone in society to achieve their potential.

In sponsoring the [Diversity through Education](#) category, SQA helped recognise those in the Scottish education sector who have gone the extra mile in championing greater diversity and inclusion for students, staff or local communities.

We were delighted to present the award to two finalists — MCR Pathways and the University of Strathclyde.



## SQA AT MÒD GHLASCHU

SQA hosted a drop-in event as part of An Latha Litreachais (Literature Day) at Mòd Ghlaschu. It was great for SQA to celebrate Gaelic language and culture with a wide range of people throughout the day, and also to showcase our provision for Gaelic, Scots and BSL.

Check out this [video from Condorrat Primary school](#) giving an overview of the Mod.





## SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE: MCR — THE RIPPLE EFFECT

MCR's Pathways mentoring programme works with disadvantaged and care-experienced young people in our community — helping them grow their confidence, overcome their challenges and build a positive future. Across Scotland, people from all walks of life are choosing to mentor for just one hour a week.

SQA staff members volunteer for the mentoring programme. They are committed to supporting the young people with developing their life skills. All find it worthwhile: not only do the young person and the mentor gain from the experience, but our schools also see the difference, communities feel a change, and organisations see the impact in the next generation of employees.



## SQA HELPS YOUNG PEOPLE GET WORK READY

SQA's employability workshops benefit students and ties in with the Scottish Government's Developing the Young Workforce programme. The employability workshops are for S4–6 pupils and help prepare students for the world of work. This includes staging mock interviews and developing CV writing skills.

Fiona Robertson, SQA chief executive, joined pupils at a workshop. She said: 'SQA is a local employer and many of our staff regularly volunteer to work with local schools. The workshop I attended gave young people at Dalkeith High School a real insight into what may be expected of them in the workplace or when applying for a job.'

Mark Harris, pupil support leader at Dalkeith High School, said: 'On behalf of Dalkeith High School I would like to thank the SQA for delivering our employability session.'

**'It was fantastic to see how engaged our pupils were in the event and how much they took from the session. It was also great to see one of our former pupils delivering the session and to hear about his successes.'**



## LAUNCH FOODS

[Launch foods](#) is a small Glasgow charity, set up by two local Glasgwegians with a social conscience. Their moto is 'Surplus food doing good'.

They have linked in with local Glasgow Primary Schools to focus on making best use of surplus food by feeding kids in our communities with free hot nutritious food after their school day and during holidays. They have partnered with some of the biggest food producers in the UK to make best use of surplus. SQA staff have been using their volunteer time to get involved.

'Launch Foods is an amazing initiative,' said one SQA volunteer. 'Being able to use my volunteer time to help prepare the food and then go along to the local school and serve food to young kids and see their faces light up was just the best thing I've done this year!'





# SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITIES

## BEAUTIFUL BEACHES

SQA on behalf of the Marine Conservation Society's joined the annual Great British Beach Clean event to be part of the most influential fight against marine litter in the UK.

The beach clean has been leading the way in tackling ocean pollution for 26 years, helping make some of the most significant impacts on beach litter ever— the plastic bag charge, banning microplastics in personal care products, better wet-wipe labelling, and supporting a tax on single-use plastic items.

The Great British Beach Clean 2019 saw 437 beach cleans and litter survey take place with over 10,800 volunteers getting involved to remove 10,833 kg of litter from the UK's beaches...That's almost 11 tonnes of litter in one weekend alone.





# SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITIES

## MIDLOTHIAN VOLUNTEER AWARDS

In June, SQA sponsored the 'Volunteer Manager of the Year Award' at the Midlothian Volunteer Awards 2019 at Newbattle Abbey College.

The event celebrated volunteers from the Midlothian area. SQA presented the award on the night to Mark Wells. He has been a volunteer for Food Facts Friends Foodbank in Penicuik for two years.

Mark spoke about his volunteering, and in particular about his Christmas round. On Christmas Eve Mark hires a van and visits all the major supermarkets when they close, where he collects donations of leftover food. He then takes the food back to the foodbank and gives out Christmas food parcels to those who would not have anything to eat on Christmas Day, staying open until 10 pm to ensure no one goes hungry at Christmas.

Rosemary Mooney, Responsible Business Manager, said 'It was a privilege to help Volunteer Midlothian celebrate the volunteers who are making such a positive contribution to the local area. Our Volunteer Manager finalists are doing a fantastic job inspiring people to volunteer and giving them the confidence to make a difference in their community.'

Our staff members wanted to support the foodbank even more, and collected items which we donated at Christmas.



Laura Gemmell and Rosemary Mooney present the award to Mark Wells.

## SQA CELEBRATES VOLUNTEERS, CREATIVITY AND INSPIRING PARTNERSHIPS

In 2019, SQA helped recognise fantastic work taking place in schools, and the dedication of volunteers, as well as innovative partnerships between employers and Scotland's colleges and universities. We attended the Herald Higher Education Awards to present the Outstanding Business Engagement in Universities and Colleges awards. The category finalists are providing students with key skills, whilst delivering employers' workforce development needs.

The university category was won by Robert Gordon University's Innovation@RGU project, while the college category went to the A.C. Whyte Skills Academy, in partnership with West College Scotland.

'The nominees are excellent examples of what can be achieved when colleges and universities work with employers,' said Janet Brown (SQA's Chief Executive until June 2019). 'Through their creative and innovative partnerships, they are giving learners the best possible start to their careers, as well as meeting the needs of employers.'

We also sponsored the Employability and Creativity across Learning category at the Scottish Education Awards. Newbattle High School, who were announced as category winners, were commended for their excellent approach to inclusivity, skills development and innovation.

Alasdair MacRae, Head of Business Development at SQA, presented the award. 'In creating a positive and progressive ethos, our category finalists are giving pupils new opportunities to reach their full potential,' he said. 'It has been fantastic to be part of an event which recognises the positive impact of schools' dedication to their learners.'







# ENVIRONMENT

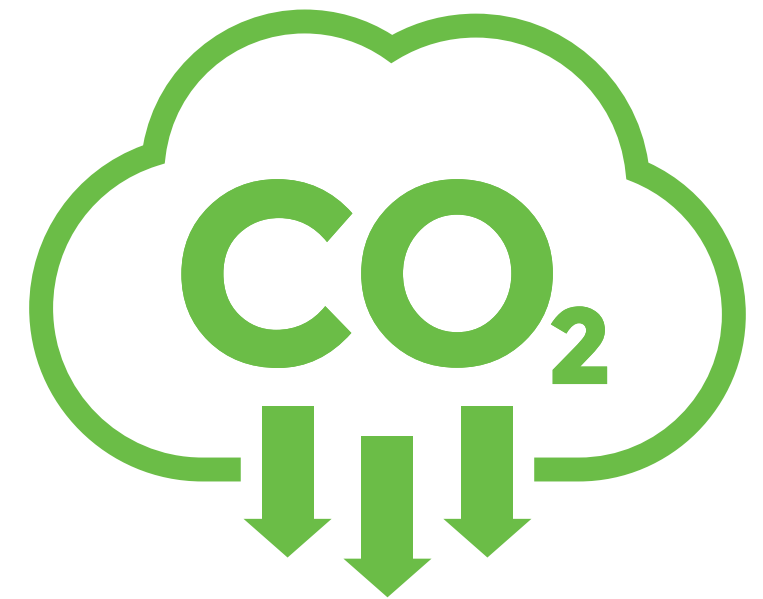




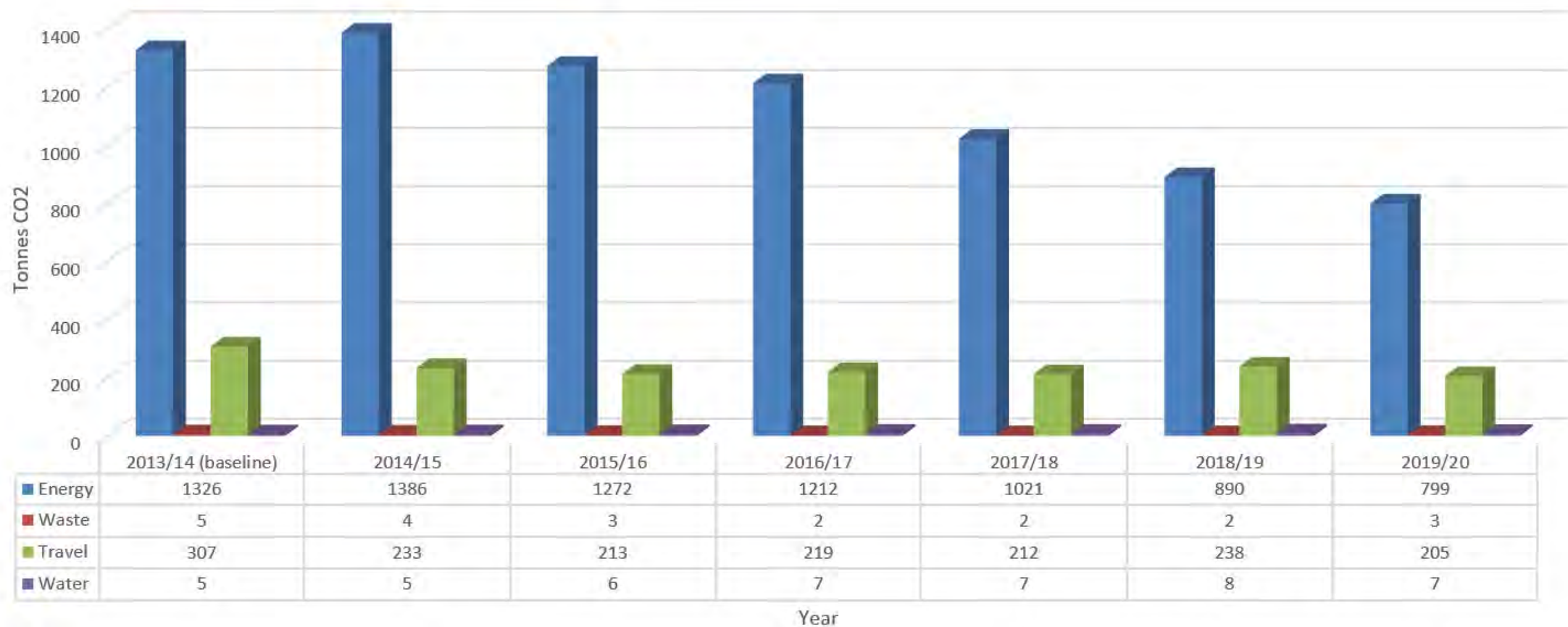
# REDUCED CARBON EMISSIONS

SQA's carbon footprint is made up of emissions from energy use, travel, disposal of waste and water use. We aim to reduce the consumption of resources and production of waste, reducing our impact on the environment and our contribution to climate change.

We have been successful in reducing our carbon emission every year since setting a baseline figure of 1,643 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO<sub>2</sub>e) in 2013-14. Emissions of 1,013.6 tCO<sub>2</sub>e were recorded in 2019-20, 11% down from the 1,138.4 tCO<sub>2</sub>e that SQA was responsible for in 2018-19, and a huge 38% below our baseline level.



## Yearly CO<sub>2</sub> statistics





# CAMPAIGNS AND INITIATIVES

## CLIMATE WEEK

SQA played an active part in Scotland's annual [Climate Week](#). We continued with our theme of waste reduction, looking at zero waste alternatives for everyday items. Staff were actively involved in activities reinforcing good waste and recycling practices.

Activities included Soap Making, Ecobricking, and Love Food, Hate Waste workshops — getting people involved in fun tasks while giving them the tools, skills and information to make waste-aware decisions.

We have received some great feedback and many people have identified changes they are going to make to help reduce waste:

**Has the campaign inspired you to make any changes and if so what will they be?**

- 'check my packaging for recycling or try to buy plastic free shopping'
- 'reduce plastic, switch away from bottled shampoos & bodywashes'
- 'using ingredients lying around the house'



## GREENER WASTE MANAGEMENT

In September we ran a multi-day campaign across both sites focusing on waste reduction. We introduced food waste caddies throughout our offices and battery recycling at both sites, and piloted the Walkers Terracycle crisp packet recycling scheme which was then further rolled out after initial success. In the first two months of the scheme over 400 crisp bags which would otherwise have gone into the general waste stream were collected for recycling.

We also began to collect pens for the Bic Terracycle recycling scheme. These are melted into plastic pellets and turned into everyday items and playground equipment.

## PAPER WASTE CAMPAIGN

In May, our Paper Waste campaign targeted our paper usage by encouraging staff to ask, 'Do I really need to print?' We supported this message by offering guidance on a wide range of digital options to support file sharing and, for when printing is required, on formatting and print settings to help reduce the length of documents. what was the outcome??

## MUGS FOR LIFE AND REUSABLE WATER BOTTLES

As part of our waste reduction theme we offered Mugs for Life to all staff. We have successfully distributed a total of over 600 Mugs for Life.

We also distributed over 200 reusable water bottles made from recyclable plastic, eliminating many one-off uses of single use plastic. Single use plastic cups have been removed from our offices.





## SCOTTISH WORKPLACE JOURNEY CHALLENGE

SQA takes part in this annual [environmental campaign promoted by Sustrans](#) every March. The challenge is an online competition in which participants log their sustainable and active journeys and compete to clock up the most walking, cycling, public transport and car-sharing journeys. It is designed to encourage employees of organisations in Scotland to reduce the impact of their work-related journeys.

We held events to promote the challenge and encourage people to sign up, and set up workplace teams to inspire healthy competition. We also worked with other staff groups to highlight the health benefits of active travel.



## EARTH HOUR

SQA demonstrated commitment to the environment during [WWF's Earth Hour](#). In March we joined the worldwide community raising awareness of the need to take action on climate change by switching off non-essential lighting for one hour and invited staff to also take part in this inspirational global campaign.





# THE FUTURE

**SQA's responsible business strategies have gone from strength to strength over the last year. Our ambition continues to be one of the best public sector organisations in Scotland.**

**As we look to the future, like every other part of society, we do not know the full eventual impact of the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic. However, we will endeavour to find creative ways to continue to nurture our relationships in our local communities, and encourage our volunteering opportunities, to ensure that the positive influence of SQA's responsible business practice helps to meet the challenges that we are all facing.**

**We will maintain a pivotal role in supporting Scotland's education and training system and will support Scotland's learners, teachers, lecturers and trainers as effectively and efficiently as we can in the delivery of our core business operations. And we will continue to highlight and recognise the achievements of young people across Scotland and support them through initiatives such as work placements, volunteering and through our Corporate Parenting responsibilities, by whatever means are available to us.**

**Finally, we will continue to take our responsibility for SQA's environmental impact very seriously, and focus on reducing emissions, cutting waste and making green business decisions, as appropriate.**

**Support  
our young  
people to  
reach positive  
destinations**

**Deepen SQA's  
relationships  
with local  
communities**

**Drive down  
emissions in line  
with our Carbon  
Management  
objectives**

**Nurture our  
colleagues'  
health and  
wellbeing**

**Build on our  
corporate  
parenting  
achievements**





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