



# Responsible Business Report

2021-2022



# Contents

Introduction	3
Our people	4
● A Great place to work	4
● Mental health and wellbeing	4
● Engaging our people on the Responsible Business Agenda	5
● Armed forces covenant	5
Our planet	6
● Protecting our planet	6
● ISO 14001	6
● Carbon literacy	6
● Carbon footprint	7
● Our offset strategy	7
Our communities	8
● Charity of the year	8
● Easyfundraising partnership	8
● The Bread and Butter Thing	9
● Woodland restoration	9
Creating value for all our stakeholders	10
Palatine Positive Equity	10
Awards and accreditations	11

*"This is our first responsible business report building on the great work of earlier years and it will act as a baseline, something from which we can grow and increase our impact on our communities and reduce our impact on the environment."*

**Richard Pennington**

Chief Executive Officer, FourNet

# Introduction

At FourNet we realise the important position that responsible business has taken in winning work and the brand values of a company, but more importantly we realise it's the right thing to do; something that adds to our employees' enjoyment and pride in their work, and something that means as a company we add value to the communities in which we operate.

To ensure our social, environmental and community activity sits as a key element of our strategy and ethos we formed the Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Working Group.

The ESG Working Group has been instrumental in shaping everything outlined in this report, but more importantly is driving us to be better and increasingly innovative and creative in all we do on the agenda.

We are delighted with the results so far. We have established a 'Charity of the Year' and in Ace Grace we have adopted a charity close to our hearts, more staff have volunteered this year than ever before, we have taken the decision to offset our carbon emissions, and we continue to build FourNet as a Great Place to Work.

It's a strong start but it will only get stronger.

This is our first responsible business report building on the great work of earlier years and it will act as a baseline, something from which we can grow and increase our impact on our communities and reduce our impact on the environment.

We also take pride that our social and environmental activities add in a small way to a number of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) a blueprint designed to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all.



**Richard Pennington**  
Chief Executive Officer, FourNet

*FourNet primarily contribute to UN SDGs 3, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13 & 17*



# Our people



## A great place to work

What sets us apart is the human touch, its what propels us and makes us successful. We work in a challenging, fast-paced environment but we also have a lot of fun, and we encourage a culture of teamwork. We support, train, and develop our people to grow their career and maximise both their job performance and job satisfaction.

We were therefore delighted to be awarded the 2 star accreditation by Best Companies reflecting our outstanding levels of employee engagement. At FourNet we place great store on both the inclusion and wellbeing of all our people.

*"I was very nervous joining FourNet after 13 years in my previous job, but I am happy to say it was the best decision I ever made! FourNet isn't just a business, it's like a family, one I am happy and proud to be part of"*

**Helen Dutton**, Service Operations Analyst



## Mental health and wellbeing

FourNet is proud to have joined a growing movement of over 1,000 organisations by signing the Mental Health at Work Commitment. We are committed to achieving a genuine long term positive impact on the wellbeing of our people and in addition to having already trained six Mental Health First Aiders for our workplaces we are starting to roll out half day mental health awareness training for our employees.

*"We all have mental health, the course simply aims to ensure people recognise the warning signs on mental health and manage their mental health to keep everyone in that good space where they enjoy work and home life to the maximum"*

**Mental Health Course Tutor**



## MHFA England

*"The two day mental health first aid course is excellent. It gives fresh insight into creating a 'great place to work' and creating a supportive culture for those around you. I learnt a lot."*

**Sarah Jane Heber Hall**  
Head of Compliance,  
FourNet



## Engaging our people on the Responsible Business Agenda

To encourage widespread participation in our responsible business agenda we set up a Social, Environmental, and Community (SEC) Committee to meet monthly, engage different representatives from across the business and encourage participation.

To help champion this at FourNet, we have added more structure including working on an improved Charitable Giving Policy and giving every employee two days a year where they can volunteer in their community, examples of which are covered later in this report. Feedback on engagement in this excellent agenda has been very positive.

*"Providing a well-structured programme and criteria for engagement is important, but the buzz our employees get after a day's volunteering is the real reward."*

**Shelley Kemp**

Head of Marketing and ESG, FourNet



## Armed forces covenant

Those who have served in the Armed Forces come with a unique range of skills, and many of the attributes they bring reflect the characteristics needed to thrive in our industry, honesty, integrity and resilience to name just three. So, we were proud to commit to the Armed Forces Covenant ensuring that no member of the armed forces should face disadvantage in the employment market and in some circumstances special treatment for the injured or bereaved may be appropriate. The commitment also includes FourNet supporting employees who sign up to Reserve Forces by accommodating their training and employment wherever possible.

# Our planet



## Protecting our planet

FourNet is committed to effective environmental stewardship, tackling climate change, and we consider the environmental impact of all our business decisions. We take a comprehensive approach to managing and reducing our carbon, measuring our carbon footprint, taking the ISO14001 route for managing the full range of our environmental impacts and engaging our people from induction to more detailed carbon literacy training.

*"Our direct carbon impacts are relatively small, but every individual action can count towards tackling climate change and we are committed to playing our part."*

**Stephanie Whittaker**  
Head of People, FourNet



## ISO 14001

Since achieving ISO 14001 accreditation, we intend to use this international standard to enhance our environmental performance across all of our operations.

Our environmental management system commits FourNet to the following:

- Compliance with legal and statutory requirements
- Reduction of our carbon footprint
- Reduction in the overall amount of waste generated
- Ensure waste is managed in accordance with environmental best practice
- Decreased business mileage
- Investment in FourNet employees training and development
- Management of risk, risk avoidance and risk mitigation
- Bi-annual process audits
- Quarterly management reviews
- Procurement through local supply chains, where possible
- Partake in voluntary environment related projects



## Carbon literacy

FourNet has met the bronze level of the Carbon Literate Organisation Standard, designed to showcase dedication to organisational carbon literacy. Accepted worldwide as one of a 100 Transformational Action Programmes (TAP). A Carbon Literate Organisation (CLO) is an organisation that has been accredited by The Carbon Literacy Project as having a substantial commitment to Carbon Literacy.

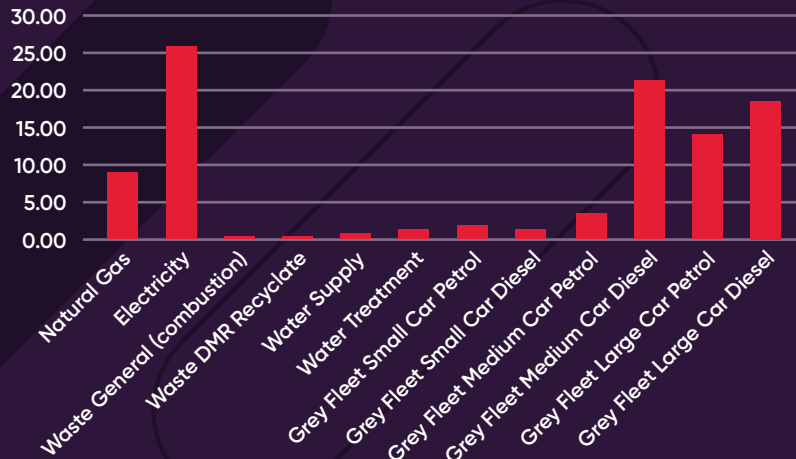
**Carbon Literate Organisation**  
Bronze



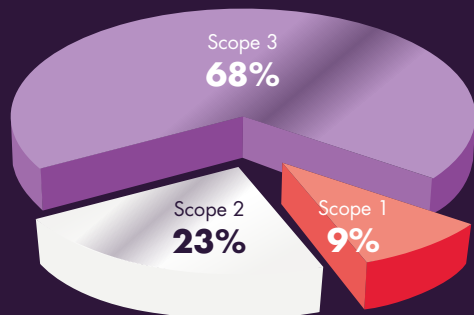


## Carbon footprint

FourNet GHG Emissions in Tonnes CO<sub>2</sub> e by Activity (calendar year 2021) 83.01 t CO<sub>2</sub> e



FourNet  
GHG Emissions  
83.01 t CO<sub>2</sub> e 2021



Our Carbon Footprint was produced independently by Collins McHugh CSR Limited using the following internationally recognised methodology.

### Methodology

The World Resources Institute Greenhouse Gas Protocol Corporate Accounting and Reporting Standard (2015) and UK Government GHG Conversion Factors for Company Reporting Year 2021 Version 1 have been used to convert activity emissions into tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO<sub>2</sub>e). The methodology also complies with ISO14064-1:2018 Greenhouse gases – Part 1: Specification with guidance at the organisation level for quantification and reporting of greenhouse gases emissions and removals.



## Our offset strategy

In early 2022, we produced our first baseline carbon footprint report for the calendar year 2021 (above) which states our scope 1 and 2 emissions and selected scope 3.

By investing in a certified offsetting scheme we have offset our scopes 1 and 2 and selected scope 3 emissions which totals 83.01 tCO<sub>2</sub>e. We have chosen 'The Gold Standard' which is considered the most rigorous climate standard by many NGOs, including WWF and the David Suzuki Foundation. This means that every pound we spend offsetting creates more value for local communities and ecosystems and contributes in a measurable way to the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Our aim now is to develop a carbon management plan that will see us reduce emissions year on year in line with science-based targets and working towards net zero carbon by 2050 in line with UK governments targets.

# Our communities

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



These are challenging times and the pandemic brought even more into focus the role that communities play in people's

lives, from support with mental wellbeing, to the role of foodbanks, or simply taking time to chat to a neighbour. By giving each of our staff two paid days volunteering every year it allows them, and FourNet as a company, to play a part in supporting the communities in which we live and work. Our community strategy looks to support our people's aspirations to support their communities, our customers desire to add value through their procurement and, of course, our communities themselves.

The following are just some examples of how we get involved.

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



## Charity of the year

The Ace Grace Foundation is a charity close to our hearts. Gracie was the daughter of a FourNet colleague who was diagnosed with Rhabdomyosarcoma, a rare form of soft tissue cancer, a few weeks before her third birthday. Gracie was treated for three and a half years at Royal Manchester Children's Hospital on Ward 84, before losing her battle to cancer on 20th June 2017.

We are proud to support the great work of Ward 84 via the Ace Grace Foundation through a variety of fundraising events, and we will also be donating money towards 'Gracie's Gifts' where children on the ward receive a gift on Gracie's birthday in February.

Ace Grace Foundation



17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



## Easyfundraising partnership

Easyfundraising's purpose is to help people support charities and good causes through their everyday purchases. They do this by using smart technology to connect online shoppers with over 6,000 different brands and retailers. Each year, their technology helps supporters to raise over £5m for their favourite causes.

FourNet employees support our Charity of the Year by raising donations through everyday shopping. Easyfundraising turns their everyday online shopping into free donations. We're also using the platform for corporate purchases such as travel and accommodation bookings and office supplies, raising even more for our fantastic cause.





## The Bread and Butter Thing

In December 2021, we were delighted to help out at *The Bread and Butter Thing* (TBBT) in Manchester. This fantastic food charity makes life more affordable for people on a low income. They get supplies from supermarkets, factories or farms that would otherwise go to waste – perfectly good food that just isn't needed. Not only supporting local communities but helping the planet too by reducing emissions from rotting food waste.

FourNet colleagues used some of their corporate volunteering hours to lend a hand and thoroughly enjoyed getting stuck in packing bags of kitchen cupboard essentials.



## Woodland restoration

Our partner *City of Trees* are supporting the green recovery and tackling the climate emergency head on, through planting trees and restoring woodlands for the people and wildlife of Greater Manchester. They work with communities, organisations, and businesses to build an ambitious movement, dedicated to planting a tree for every citizen within just five years.

In January 2022, nine willing FourNet volunteers spent one of their paid volunteering days helping to improve the urban woodland areas at Kickety Brook in Stretford, close to our Head Office in Trafford.



# Creating value for all our stakeholders

---

At FourNet we take great pride in being a solutions driven company, creating digital transformation for our customers and ultimately their customers. We bring the same passion to our responsible business agenda; we do not just go through the motions but look for long term partnerships which can really make a difference while reflecting the values and passion of our people.



## Going forward

Although delighted with our progress, we are constantly looking to improve and next year we will look to build on our performance by considering:

- Rolling out further mental health training for employees
- Implementing our carbon management plan targeting 50% reduction in emissions (from our 2021 baseline) by 2030
- Building a social value offer for customers around:
  - Digital inclusion
  - Mentoring
  - Cyber security
  - Mental health awareness

We will update you next year on the progress of these exciting initiatives.

# Palatine Positive Equity

---

In June 2021, leading mid-market investor Palatine Private Equity acquired a majority stake in FourNet. Palatine are keen to further develop our already strong Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) credentials. We thank them for the support and encouragement around the activity outlined in this report and their commitment to value creation in our communities.

Palatine has embedded an award-winning and pioneering ESG framework into its value-creation model and we're delighted to work with Palatine developing our responsible business strategy in the coming years.

Not just private equity,  
positive equity



# Awards and accreditations

## Our most recent awards



*Reseller Technical Support & Engineering Team Award*



*Top 100 Fastest Growing*



*One of the best performing privately-owned tech businesses*



*Named as a top 40 UK tech and telecoms company*



*An outstanding company to work for*



*Comms Business Enterprise ICT Solution of the Year*



*Triple win at the Avaya Partner Summit*



*Prestigious ranking in Sunday Times*



*Another triple win at the Comms National Awards*



*One of Europe's fastest growing companies*

## Accreditations





**FourNet**<sup>®</sup>

# Let's start working together

---

**Manchester Office (HQ)**

3 Scholar Green Road,  
Cobra Court,  
Manchester. M32 0TR

Tel: 0845 055 6366

**Burton Office**

First Floor, Unit 10 Barberry Court,  
Burton-on-Trent,  
Staffordshire. DE14 2UE

Tel: 01283 519020

**London Office**

83 Victoria Street,  
London. SW1H OHW

Tel: 0203 503 0003

**FourNet PR & Media Office**

Tim Reid

e-mail: [treid@fournet.co.uk](mailto:treid@fournet.co.uk)

[www.fournet.co.uk](http://www.fournet.co.uk)