



Responsible Business Report

2022-2023



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"FourNet are committed to being a business partner of choice, delivering excellence in our core services and adding significant social and environmental value in all we do."

Richard Pennington

Chief Executive Officer, FourNet

Introduction

As FourNet continues to grow our commercial business and client base, I am delighted to see our commitment to the social and environmental challenges we all face, also continue to grow. As you will see later in this report we are proud to meet all the requirements of internationally recognised standards for quality, information security, safety and the environment but more important is the work and commitment of our people, to not just maintain these high standards but to bring them to life.

Internally the Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Committee have been behind our increasingly focused approach to carbon management, are leading on the ESG agenda with our supply chain, and are helping to shape the way we build social value into our partnerships with our clients. We are also working to ensure FourNet remains a great place to work for our current and future employees through our training and development, our health care, including mental health and wellbeing, and opportunities to volunteer and further support the communities in which we operate.

In short, our social and environmental activities form part of every function of the business, from HR to procurement, from bids and tenders to office management, ESG activity is part of the fabric of how we operate. This approach has been further strengthened by the establishing of a set of Key Performance Indicators formed by our ESG committee to help monitor and measure progress going forward.

These are exciting times at FourNet and our approach to the responsible business agenda has a central role to play in our growth and development.

Richard Pennington
Chief Executive Officer, FourNet



FourNet primarily contribute to UN SDGs 8, 9, 12 & 13



Our people

A great place to work

At FourNet we want our people to feel great about coming to work. We want to support them to achieve their maximum job performance and job satisfaction, ensure they feel valued in their role, and that their health, safety, and wellbeing are central to the way we operate.

We do this in a number of ways including a comprehensive package of support and assistance, 'my Wellbeing' provided for all staff. 'My Wellbeing' enables our people to look after their overall health, fitness, and happiness, providing them with a great range of tools at their fingertips whenever and wherever they are needed. This includes,

- The ability to speak to a GP anytime, anywhere.
- Access to advice and counselling whenever people need it.
- Guidance on keeping general health in check



To help monitor our success on this agenda we undertake the 'Best companies to work for' process. We are due to revisit the process later in the year, and as our last results show, we have set the bar high.

#WalkThisMay

We achieved a great response for the #WalkThisMay challenge with 33 employees achieving a total of 6,573 km walked during the month of May. As a result of everyone's efforts FourNet donated £1,000 to charity, split between the Mental Health Foundation and Mind, both great charities driving improvements in mental health for all.

We expect even more of our people to take part in this great initiative next year.



My team

People in my team go out of their way to help me



My company

I believe I can make a valuable contribution to the success of this organisation



My manager

I feel that my manager talks openly and honestly with me

Our health, safety and wellbeing performance

Although a low-risk sector in terms of health and safety of our people, we are never complacent and in line with our ISO45001 accreditation we constantly monitor and measure our activity.

We report our Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) as part of our overall absence reporting and have only lost 15 working days across the whole company in the last twelve months to OHS related issues.

We have eight trained Mental Health First Aiders, more than one per 25 employees and we are proud to be one of the growing number of companies who have signed up to the Mental Health at Work Commitment. We treat mental health in the same way we treat physical health in terms of its importance and impact on our people's lives.

"Signing the Mental Health at Work commitment was an important step in showing the importance we attach to this agenda at FourNet."

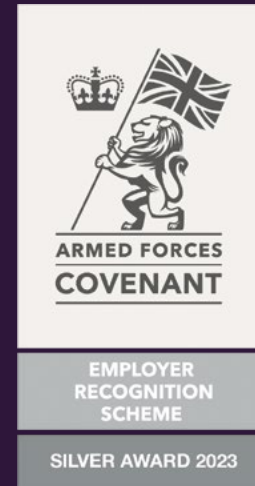
Steph Whittaker
HR Director

Armed Forces Covenant – Silver!

FourNet was delighted to be recognised as a silver Armed Forces Covenant employer, building on our previous status of bronze. We are proud to support the work of the Armed Forces Covenant, ensuring that no member of the armed forces should face disadvantage in the employment market. Those who have served bring an impressive range of skills and reflect many of the core characteristics we look for in our employees, honesty, integrity and teamwork, to name just three!

"I have been employed by FourNet for four years and the company has been very supportive of my transition to civilian life, its great to see FourNet provide the support required to any ex-member of His Majesty's Armed Forces."

Gary Fuller
Account Director



Collaborating with customers and suppliers

At FourNet we are increasingly building positive social and environmental impacts into our customer and supplier relationships. This is both around key industry issues including cyber security and the training and skills agenda, and also wider society issues such as health and wellbeing and addressing the digital divide in the communities in which we operate. We hope that through a more collaborative approach our positive impacts, and those of our customers and suppliers, can be increased and enhanced.

"Positive social and environmental benefits are forming an ever-increasing part of the bids and tenders process and delivering these benefits in collaboration with our customers and suppliers is bringing a real sense of added value to our commercial relationships."

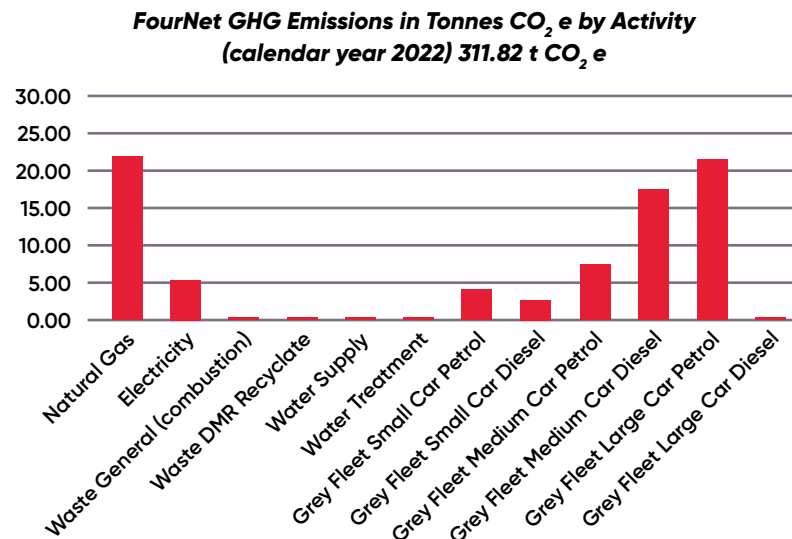
Karen Wentworth
Head Of Sales Operations

Our planet

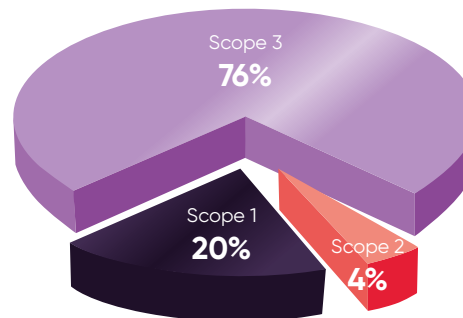
The Road to Net-Zero

In order to properly map our roadmap to net-zero and produce a Carbon Reduction Plan to meet the Government's requirements in relation to public procurement. FourNet has taken a more in-depth approach to measuring our Carbon Footprint especially in relation to our Scope 3 impacts, where our business travel and staff commute account for the vast majority of our footprint.

Our Key Performance Indicators for carbon reduction, outlined on page 10, are set against our 2022 Carbon Footprint of 312 tonnes CO₂e as detailed opposite.



**FourNet
GHG Emissions
311.82 t CO₂e 2022**



Operating to internationally recognised standards

We believe every individual has a part to play in the battle against climate change, but it is still important to us that we put those actions within a recognised and credible framework, such as that offered by ISO14001. We are also basing our carbon reduction objectives on the science-based target of keeping global warming to a maximum of 1.5%.

Our Offset Partner

FourNet work with the Gold Standard to offset our carbon emissions. The Gold Standard is one of the most widely respected carbon standards available on the market. It was established in 2003 by WWF and other international NGOs to ensure that projects that reduce carbon emissions meet the highest levels of environmental integrity and also contribute to sustainable development. FourNet is proud to partner with the Gold Standard.

Environmental stewardship

Putting theory into practice



Creating the framework

FourNet's Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) Committee has representation from all key functions of the business helping keep the spotlight of responsible business focussed on all aspects of our operations. To further shape the agenda going forward the ESG Committee has introduced a range of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to help capture and monitor our progress. This initial set of KPIs is likely to evolve further in future years.



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. A Carbon Literate Organisation is an organisation that has been accredited by The Carbon Literacy Project as having a substantial commitment to Carbon Literacy.



Green energy for our offices

As part of our commitment to the planet, we use green energy, backed by a Renewable Energy Guarantee of Origin (REGO) certificate. Our Manchester offices are supplied via Octopus Energy, who only supply green energy and the landlords at our London offices are also on a green tariff. We will be moving our Derby offices onto green energy if due course.



Electric vehicles and e-bikes

This year saw FourNet introduce its electric car salary sacrifice option, in collaboration with Octopus Energy, to all our employees offering them the opportunity to purchase an electric car. The take up has been very good with 10% of employees already having made the change within the first 3 months and further people having expressed interest when their current car deals come to a conclusion.

For those early adopters the feedback has been really positive, helping spread the word within FourNet!

Our communities

Easyfundraising

FourNet is signed up to Easyfundraising, giving our employees the opportunity for their everyday spending to deliver charitable donations to causes of their choice.

This great model was devised 20 years ago around a kitchen table in 2002 and went live in 2005. Since then over £42 million has been donated to charitable causes via spending with over 7,000 well-known brands, who simply want to give something back.

FourNet is also using the platform for corporate purchases such as travel and accommodation bookings and office supplies, raising even more for some fantastic causes.

We plan to further promote this great initiative to our people on the approach to Christmas.



Volunteering

We are proud to offer all our employees two paid days every year to volunteer for organisations close to their hearts and their communities. Ensuring we continue to communicate this widely and increase the take up of this great opportunity forms one of our Key Performance Indicators

The potential benefits of our volunteering policy are widespread, providing an opportunity for our people to use their skills and talents outside the direct scope of their day-to-day work, allowing them to support local organisations, and collectively allowing FourNet to play a supportive role in the communities in which we operate, especially at a time of such challenging economic circumstances.

We see our engagement in our communities as a two-way process and realise we can learn from the skills and expertise that exist in so many of the Community and Charitable organisations which deliver great work on a daily basis

"We are driven to turn the everyday spending of daily life into a force for good so that giving can become part of our lives, not separate from it. Because when everyone gives everyday, the impact can be extraordinary."

www.easyfundraising.org.uk

Charity of the year

Supporting the Ace Grace Foundation

Our Charity of the Year is one that is close to our hearts; the Ace Grace Foundation. 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. She was treated for three and a half years at Royal Manchester Children's Hospital on Ward 84. Gracie lost her battle to cancer on June 20th 2017. The Ace Grace Foundation raises money for the ward to help support the brave children and their families who are still fighting cancer today.



Going forward

ESG pillar improvements from baseline to 2023

Palatine Pillars



Pillar 1



Pillar 2



Pillar 3



Pillar 4



Pillar 5



Pillar 6

| Pillar | Current Performance 22/23 | Strategic Focus Going Forward |
|--|---|--|
| P1: Climate | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual carbon footprint calculated that include employee commuting, business travel and waste generation. Committed to net zero by 2050. An ESG working group and carbon champions have been appointed to drive reductions. Bronze level carbon literate organisation. Offset 100% of emissions to be a certified carbon neutral company. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 of our 3 offices are on a Green Tariff. Switch Derby office to a Green Tariff as soon as practical. Develop a more detailed carbon reduction plan with targets and publish on website. Our KPI's published in Responsible Business report and are science based. |
| P2: One Planet | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental awareness training incorporated into induction. Refresher training is conducted periodically. Green travel policy in place. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain carbon literacy by offsetting all scope 1 & 2 emissions Continue to promote both our Electric Vehicles and e-bike Salary Sacrifice schemes. Continue to promote our Green Travel Plan. |
| P3: Supply Chain | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued to improve governance of supply chain by introducing additional screening to assess improvements made by suppliers and gather quantitative information. Increased screening on cyber security. Scoring system introduced to support in better evaluating the supply chain. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue the supply chain project to fully embed and integrate it across the whole business. Introduce Eco-Vardis process to measure and promote suppliers sustainability performance. Introduce a framework to better monitor and manage risk including parameters for reliance/spend with any single supplier. Digitalising vendor records for better visibility and real time information. |
| P4a: People (HSW) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued to have a robust system in place to manage health, safety and wellbeing. Signed the Mental Health at Work Commitment, which commits FourNet to achieving better mental health outcomes for employees. Health and Safety education initiatives - 10 this year (3 last). Employee engagement on wellbeing - 15 initiatives this year (6 last). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8 mental health first aiders in place (1 per 25 employees) Consult employees on wellbeing themes and initiatives. Ensure H&S training needs have been identified for all employees (in particular, those working on site, driving for work or working in higher risk locations). Risk assessments to be fully compliant and shared on Atlas. |
| P4b: People (HR) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewed and improved the appraisal process. Developed an approach to blind recruitment. Enhanced its family friendly policies. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> D&I strategy to be developed and implemented, which is to be informed following the collection of diversity data. With this, ensure that HR policies are inclusive and progressive. |
| P5: Customers & Community | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Great customer focus ensuring that FourNet delivers a reliable, secure, high quality and accessible service. Salesforce now includes a compliments and complaints section. High level commitments in place regarding digital inclusion, mentoring, cyber security and mental health awareness. A volunteering policy is in place with charitable and community activities led by the Social, Environmental and Community Committee (SECC). Established a charity of the year 'Ace Grace'. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch the customer feedback plan and integrate a way to collate information on how FourNet helps clients operate sustainably. Develop a social value strategy to increase positive impact and strengthen tenders (to deliver the high-level targets set out). Commence measuring our Social Value annually. |
| P6a: Leadership | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong governance performance with robust systems in place to manage risk and compliance. A comprehensive risk register has been developed and is reviewed regularly by the SLT. As a result, a crisis comms plan has been put in place. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep Board diversity in mind, as it presents an opportunity for diverse thinking and perspectives. |
| P6b: Commitment to Sustainability | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A 'Responsible Business' report was made publicly available for 2021-2022, which covers achievements in carbon, wellbeing and community activities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An overarching ESG / sustainability strategy and policy would support the public facing report, providing focus on guidance for ESG improvements and communications. |

Key Performance Indicators

| KPI's | Current Performance | Time | 2023 | | 2024 | | 2025 | | R/A/G |
|---|--------------------------|----------|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-------|
| Environment | 2022 | Frame | Target | Actual | Target | Actual | Target | Actual | |
| Reduce Company Carbon Footprint by 50% by 2030 | 312 tonnes CO2e | Dec 2023 | 6% reduction | | | | | | |
| Reduction of Company Business Mileage by 50% by 2030 | 205,470 miles | Dec 2023 | 6% reduction | | | | | | |
| Increase the use of train travel for Business during 2023 | 182,869 miles | Dec 2023 | 10% increase | | | | | | |
| Increase the mileage use of EV vehicles during 2023 | 54 miles | Dec 2023 | 500% increase | | | | | | |
| People | | | | | | | | | |
| All employees to receive the Real Living Wage | Currently being achieved | Ongoing | Maintain | | | | | | |
| 2 Star Rating in Best Companies to Work For | Currently 2 star | Ongoing | Maintain or improve | | | | | | |
| Increase take up of annual volunteering days allowance | 39 days utilised in 2022 | Dec 2023 | Increase by 10% | | | | | | |
| Social/Community | | | | | | | | | |
| Increase Charitable Giving to £10,000 (cash and in-kind) by 2025 | £6,627 | Dec 2023 | Increase by 5% | | | | | | |
| Measure Social Value Impact | Not currently measured | Dec 2023 | Baseline Report | | | | | | |
| Supply Chain | | | | | | | | | |
| On-Boarding of Suppliers | Undergoing review | Dec 2023 | All Suppliers to go through appropriate screening | | | | | | |
| More formal QBR | Undergoing review | Dec 2023 | Standing items on QBR to include: Financial stability Security of Supply Cyber Security | | | | | | |
| Sustainable Procurement | Undergoing review | Dec 2023 | Using Eco-Vadis to cascade sustainability principles and monitor performance | | | | | | |

Where next

Our path on the responsible business agenda is one of continuous improvement and in the coming year we will work strategically with all our stakeholders to:

- Implement the Eco-Vardis process and pilot with our top 10 suppliers
- Measure, monitor and report on delivering social value in partnership with our customers and suppliers
- Continue to engage with our employees on the responsible business agenda particularly in relation to our Green Travel Plan, volunteering and health and wellbeing
- Work to deliver our Key Performance Indicator (KPI) targets
- Maintain and where appropriate enhance our accreditations
- Publish our Carbon Reduction Plan on our website

FourNet will continue to work closely with Palatine and frame our progress within the six pillars of their Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) Strategy and share best practice with other companies in the Palatine portfolio. We will also consider whether B-Corp accreditation is an appropriate future path for the company.

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



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



Comms Business Enterprise ICT Solution of the Year

Accreditations





Let's start working together

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