Our 2019 sustainability performance
Wrapping up five years of impact

virginmedia.com/sustainability
@VirginMediaCorp #vmsust
For Virgin Media, sustainability is all about doing business in a way that's good for people and good for the environment.

Since 2015 we’ve focused on our ambitious 5 in 5 strategy – that’s five goals over a five-year period.

In that time, we’ve seen sustainability change from a nice-to-think-about into a core part of how businesses are working today. Because now more than ever, consumers, regulators, the Government and society demand more transparency, accountability and action on environmental and social issues – and rightly so.
As we close the book on our 2020 goals, and start work on establishing our 2025 sustainability strategy, it’s clear that our business and the world look and feel very different to the way they did in 2015.

Sustainability going mainstream is most obvious in the growth of social and environmental activism. The rise of Extinction Rebellion, international school climate strikes and trust in public figures like Greta Thunberg and David Attenborough provide us with just a few examples of awareness and action. Simply, more people than ever are pushing for meaningful change.

You can also see this shift in the policy landscape – notably Phillip Hammond’s (former Chancellor of the Exchequer) proposed Green New Deal; the appointment of the UK’s first minister for Loneliness; and the declaration of a climate and environment emergency as Theresa May’s (former Prime Minister) chosen ‘final word.’

The business community’s response to these expectations has come in the form of net-zero targets, programmes to tackle social isolation, and a focus on issues like mental health and reducing single-used plastics.

And, of course, change has happened in society. Five years ago we saw same-sex marriage legalised by the Republic of Ireland in a referendum, the tipping point for similar legislation in liberal states across the globe, and a new era of LGBT rights ushered in. The Western African Ebola epidemic was elevated to the status of ‘global health crisis’. 2015 was also the year the conversation about the carbon bubble went mainstream after the World Economic Forum at Davos. These events marked the positioning of issues that have since risen to prominence on the global agenda, and not just in sustainability circles.

Since 2015, much has changed across the sustainability landscape, too. As we close our 5 in 5 sustainability strategy, we know that beyond the trials and successes presented in this report, there’s still a lot of work to do. There has never been a clearer mandate for a sustainability strategy that supports the business to thrive while delivering positive social and environmental impacts in the communities we serve.
In the last five years, we’ve launched three new products (Hub 3, Hub 4 and Virgin TV V6 box), provided a million customers with a V6 box at no extra cost, launched our flagship Gig1 Fibre Broadband – making us the UK’s fastest major broadband network – and established a series of bespoke measures for vulnerable customers. We’ve also launched 4G on our mobile network, a number of Ultra HD channels, and baked streaming platforms like Netflix and Prime Video right into our TV platform.

In perhaps the most important step of all, 2015 saw us launch Project Lightning, the UK’s single biggest private investment in the UK and Ireland’s digital infrastructure in more than a decade. Through ambitious planning and delivery, our ultrafast fibre network now reaches 2.2 million premises, and we’ve increased our fixed customer base from 5.5 million in 2015 to 6 million customers at the beginning of 2020.

On top of this, in 2019 we introduced our new purpose: Building connections that really matter. It’s a big statement of intent, and reflects how we’re in the business of connecting and improving the digital infrastructure of the UK. With more than 60% of emergency services relying on our connectivity and domestic broadband use increasing sharply during lockdown, right now these connections are more important than ever as we support frontline workers saving lives through the Covid-19 crisis.

In a recent speech at a ‘Rebuilding the UK’ event DCMS Secretary of State Oliver Dowden outlined the principle addressed in the Government’s digital strategy that will be published in the Autumn. The priority of this strategy will be growth, using technology to support the UK’s economic recovery, driving productivity and job creation. As the country responds to the Covid-19 pandemic* and its after-effects, it’s never been clearer that connectivity is an essential part of the country’s fabric.

*At the time of publishing the UK had been in lockdown for 18 weeks. Reliance on broadband and telephone connectivity was fundamental to the functioning of UK society during this period.
There has never been a clearer mandate for a sustainability strategy that supports the business to thrive while delivering positive social and environmental impacts in the communities we serve.
2015 - 2020

Our five-year sustainability strategy focused on where we should and can have the most impact
Our sustainability strategy

2015-2020

Our five-year sustainability strategy focused on where we should and could have the most impact.

We harnessed the power of digital technology to make good things happen inside the business and out. And in 2015, we made five big, bold commitments to achieve our ambitions and gave ourselves five years to achieve them.

This itself was a significant change for us, and saw us move away from 23 short-term targets to five strategic goals to achieve a bigger impact over a longer period of time.

Our 5 in 5 goals

Support 1 million disabled people with the skills and confidence to get into and stay in work (by the end of 2020)*

Create the opportunities for 100,000 small businesses to grow through digital

Improve the sustainability performance of every new customer product

Nurture an engaged workforce that represents the diversity of our customers and communities

Grow our business without increasing our carbon footprint

Digital for good

Using our business, brand and people to create positive change for our customers and the communities we’re part of.

Sustainable growth

Making sure that as we grow our business, including our biggest ever network expansion, we’re going beyond compliance and doing it in a way that’s good for our people, our customers and the environment.

*This goal has been extended for an additional year beyond the 2015-2020 strategy period. When we set up the Support to Work employment service 2018, we committed to establishing a best practice service offering and we knew it would take more than two years to deliver the impact we wanted to achieve in partnership with Scope, after we shifted our focus from the direct provision of digital technology to disabled people and their families to disability employment in 2017.
digital that makes good things happen

Our strategy

Our goals

Our impact

1. The five year vision we set out to achieve

Hello Our strategy Transforming lives Boosting business Better products More inclusive Lower impact What’s next

2. What we did - our five big goals

Transforming lives
Boosting business
Better products
More inclusive
Lower impact

3. Summary of the good things we were able to demonstrate

- Tackling big social issues like disability employment needs cut-through to drive urgent change – creating a new transformational digital service has delivered scale and reach while bringing about change across the country.

- Our community – #WorkWithMe – has connected organisations through a common goal to share experiences and support each other in a convenient, practical and accessible way to enable positive change.

- Small businesses can thrive when you harness connectivity and online resources to bring them together – to encourage, develop and offer feedback to each other in a way that resonates.

- Putting digital technology and connectivity at the heart of our long-term sustainability strategy has enabled us to focus our efforts on driving significant social and environmental impact while growing our business during the same period.

4. This work was not only good for society but good for our business too

BASE MANAGEMENT
Disability and vulnerability training delivered to 97% of our customer-facing workforce. The training module received an average score of 4.7 out of 5, one of the highest scores of our company training modules.

ACCELERATING BUSINESS GROWTH
Helping our businesses to thrive while doing good

Over £37m of B2B contracts worked on in 2019 contain social value commitments that we are now delivering.

NETWORK EXPANSION
Investing in communities up and down the country

We have donated more than £7.3 million in strategic community investments over the past 5 years through donations and value in kind, supporting communities.

NEW HORIZONS
Sustainability that makes our people proud and want to work here

Our people have raised £710,000 for Scope in the last 5 years.

In 2019, 5 of the top 10 corporate internal communications articles with the highest employee engagement rates were stories on activity delivered as part of our 5 in 5 sustainability strategy.

Disability and vulnerability training delivered to 97% of our customer-facing workforce. The training module received an average score of 4.7 out of 5, one of the highest scores of our company training modules.

We donated our brand sponsorship of Southampton Football Club to our partner Scope, in 2017. This activation grew their brand awareness by 5.7% and the charity's word of mouth exposure increased from 0.4 to 1.3 on match day.

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Our investment in energy efficiency over the last 5 years has delivered an energy cost avoidance of £13.8m to the business during this period.

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A snapshot of our achievements

Transformed the lives of disabled people in the UK
- Supported 541,549 disabled people with the skills and confidence to get into and stay in work (our work towards this goal continues until the end of 2020).
- Our people have raised £710,000 for Scope.

Supported our business to become more inclusive
- Delivered disability and vulnerability training to 97% of our customer facing workforce. The training module received an average score of 4.7 out of 5, one of the highest scores of our company training modules.
- Delivered training to recruitment teams on how to write inclusive job adverts and how to recognise and avoiding bias throughout the recruitment process.
- Created targeted recruitment campaigns with positive results, that includes hiring equal numbers of men and women on to the Virgin Media Business engineer apprenticeship scheme.

Built connections that really matter
- Founding partner of The Valuable 500, helping to take disability to the main stage at the World Economic Forum in 2018 and 2019 and supporting 500 big brands like us to put disability on their board agenda.
- Awarded best charity partnership at the 2018 Better Society Awards for our partnership with Scope.

Focused on our environmental impact
- Achieved a 42% reduction of our carbon footprint (scope 1 & 2) against our 2014 baseline.
- Took back more than 9.5 million items of old customer kit with 5.3 million being reused and the remainder broken down for recycling.
- Signed up to the RE100 initiative in 2019, committing to purchase 100% of our contracted energy from renewable sources which we achieved in 2019.
- Launched our Virgin TV V6 box, which uses less than half the power of the previous Compass TiVo® box, as well as the Hub 3 which is 15% more energy efficient than the Super Hub 2ac. Between them we’ve saved enough energy to power more than 41,000 UK homes.

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We’re a big business with big ambitions. But we’re also committed to growing in a responsible and sustainable way. At the heart of it all are our customers and people – we want our customers to love what we do and our people to be proud of how we do it.
Governance & responsibility

We work in partnership with people and organisations to achieve our goals. Here’s who does what.

Sustainability Team
- 5 in 5 goals
- Credit 360 data collection
- Supporting B2B contract bids for sustainability and social value requirements
- Sector collaboration – Working with the Responsible Media Forum, Virgin Group and Internet Matters
- Managing charitable partnerships – Scope, The Valuable 500, Royal National Institute of Blind People and the British Paralympic Association

Virgin Media
- Supplier code of conduct / responsible supply chain
- Responsible Marketing
- Accessibility of products, services and communications
- Carbon reduction
- Principles of open internet
- Modern slavery statement
- Gender pay gap report
- Data privacy and security – Privacy Policy*

Liberty Global
- Improving energy efficiency through digital technology
- Digital inclusion and education
- KPMG limited assurance statement
- Annual submission to the Dow Jones Sustainability Index
- CDP Climate Programme Annual Submission

Virgin Media Ireland
- Improving energy efficiency through digital technology
- Digital inclusion and education
- KPMG limited assurance statement
- Annual submission to the Dow Jones Sustainability Index
- CDP Climate Programme Annual Submission

* We take the safeguarding of our customer’s information very seriously. We have a clear policy on when we collect information, how we use it and how we keep it safe.

** We don’t report on Virgin Media Ireland’s strategy and case studies but do report on their carbon footprint data to ensure consistency in the disclosure of carbon footprint data across the Liberty Global group and other disclosure requirements. For example, our membership of the CDP RE100 renewable energy source initiative requires the disclosure of Virgin Media Ireland’s data as well as Virgin Media UK’s.
Our strategy from 2015 to 2020

What's changed in 5 years

**2015**

Before we set our 2020 strategy

- **23** annual goals
- **31** individual, short-term charity relationships

**Virgin Media sustainability**

**THEN...**

- **13,498** employees
- **£4,214.2** million total revenue
- **5.5** million cable customers

**Project Lightning** (network expansion) announced in February

**NOW...**

- **11,239** employees
- **£5,168.2** million total revenue
- **6** million cable customers

- **2.2 million premises** reached with Project Lightning

(Source: Q4 full year results 2019)

**Virgin Media**

**THEN...**

**NOW...**

**Across the world**

**THEN...**

- **Prime Minister:** David Cameron
- **Bestselling UK album released in 2015:** 25, Adele
- **Ebola outbreak** is classified as a global health crisis for the first time
- **Carbon bubble** set to go mainstream after the World Economic Forum

**NOW...**

- **Prime Minister:** Boris Johnson
- **Bestselling UK album released in 2020**: Heavy in the Head, Stormzy
- **Established global public climate crisis movement**
- **Global lockdown in place as countries tackle the covid-19 pandemic**

*at the time this report is published*
5 in 5 strategy: the results are in

### Transferring lives
- **Goal achieved**
  - Support 1 million disabled people with the skills and confidence to get into and stay in work by the end of 2020
  - Create the opportunities for 100,000 small businesses to grow through digital
  - Improve the sustainability performance of every new customer product
  - Nurture an engaged workforce that represents the diversity of our customers and communities.

- **Goal achieved**
  - Supported 420,024 disabled people with the skills and confidence to get into and stay in work in 2019 with strategic partner Scope.
  - 65 big businesses signed up to #WorkWithMe, an active community of businesses committed to thinking and acting differently about disability.

- **Goal achieved**
  - Launched 3 new customer products since 2015, each more sustainable than the last. We’ve achieved this through the creation and consistent application of the product scorecard for the development of new products, along with focusing on the quality of product packaging, in particular the reduction of single-use plastics.

### Boosting business
- **Goal achieved**
  - Launched new business services including a business-to-business platform set up for support to tackle disability inclusion because when we don’t have a genuine business to business platform set up, we don’t have an opportunity to create those connections.

- **Goal achieved**
  - Produced a series of resources co-created by the community, established member resource submission as part of the member on-boarding process and ran three face-to-face events including a networking event and a roundtable series.

### Better products
- **Goal not achieved**
  - Created opportunities for 14,089 small businesses to grow in 2019.

- **Goal achieved**
  - We had planned to compare our internal activity with the Hub 4, which is 39% more power efficient when taking its increased functionality into account. It also uses 27% less electronic components and 36% less plastic components than the Hub 3.

### More inclusive
- **Goal achieved**
  - Gender: Increase percentage of women in the workplace – working towards 50:50 gender balance by 2025.
  - Disability: We’ve put the building blocks in place to reach Disability Confident level 3.

- **Goal achieved**
  - Achieved our RE100 target to source 100% of our electricity from renewable sources.
  - 13% year-on-year reduction in emissions from our fleet (full-year impact of lightweight driver software as well as better fleet utilisation and truck roll reduction.

### Lower impact
- **Goal achieved**
  - Worked with our waste contractor to identify alternative routes for waste removal at some of our key sites, reducing waste to landfill.
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### What’s next
- We’re currently Disability Confident Level 1 but on track to achieve Level 3 by 2021. We fell short of our goal to reach level 3 by 2020 but our focus to date has been on implementing policy internally before seeking external validation.

### Additional Notes
- Since the launch of the Support to Work service in 2018, we’ve supported 54,549 disabled people with the skills and confidence to get into and stay in work (this is the only goal that extends to 2030, we’ve track on it to)
- We knew there was a need for business-to-business support to tackle disability inclusion because when we set out to tackle it ourselves we found there was no genuine business to business platform set up for this purpose alone.
- The fact we surpassed our target in 2019 and are seeing significant engagement from the community continuing through the Covid-19 crisis is proof that more than ever, businesses need to be proactive in their measures to support disabled colleagues. There’s significant demand for peer support and engagement to achieve this.
- We’ve seen a trend in 2019 of more businesses reaching out to us for support and those we refer to work with us.
- The production and application of the product scorecard has delivered significant efficiencies on all new customer products. Now this has been embedded, we’re seeking to fast track our progress with an aim to drive circularity throughout the product lifecycle.
- The widespread interest and innovation around reducing single-use plastics has also sharpened our attention to product materials and packaging, work on that continues in 2020.
- **Key:**
  - Goal achieved
  - More than 5% off target
Transforming lives

Our 2020 goal:
Support 1 million disabled people with the skills and confidence to get into and stay in work by the end of 2020
Transforming lives: 2019 performance

Our 2020 goal: support 1 million disabled people with the skills and confidence to get into and stay in work by the end of 2020*

- We supported 420,024 disabled people with the skills and confidence to get into and stay in work through Support to Work, the digital employment service we set up with Scope, surpassing our 2019 partnership target of 400,000.

- 65 businesses signed up to #WorkWithMe, an active community of businesses committed to thinking and acting differently about disability.

- From 2015 to the beginning of 2019, our people fundraised £660,000, so in April we challenged them to come together and go after the remaining £340,000 by the end of 2020, a goal of raising £1 million across the lifetime of our partnership. In 2019 our people raised £125,000 for Scope of which £108,000 was raised after the challenge was set in April. All of the money raised by our people goes towards growing and enhancing the Support to Work service, making sure that everything Virgin Media contributes (not just corporate donations) will have a tangible impact on the disability employment crisis that we’re tackling through our partnership with Scope.

- We’ve also celebrated disability in the public sphere. Our COO Jeff Dodds took to the stage at One Young World alongside the founder of The Valuable 500, Caroline Casey to talk to future leaders about Virgin Media’s decision to back The Valuable 500 and to focus on disability inclusion. We also created and sponsored the touring purple taxi on #PurpleLightUp day carrying Caroline Casey and Kate Nash, CEO of Purple Space, around London to interview business leaders on the UN’s International Day of Persons with Disabilities.

- Supplier outreach saw us go one step further this year and engage our supply chain with our ambitions to tackle disability unemployment – we ran a campaign on why it’s time to make disability your business, to support executives and practitioners respectively to drive change on disability inclusion in their own organisations.

*This goal has been extended for an additional year beyond the 2020 strategy period. When we set up the Support to Work Service in 2018, we committed to establishing a best practice service offering and we knew it would take more than two years to deliver the impact we wanted to achieve in partnership with Scope.
Transforming lives: 2020 reflections

Our 2020 goal: support 1 million disabled people with the skills and confidence to get into and stay in work by the end of 2020

When we first partnered with Scope, our focus was on providing digital technology to give disabled people more independence. Two years in we shifted our focus to disability employment. The disability employment gap of 30% had not changed in a decade and the barriers disabled people faced getting into and staying in work was a critical factor inhibiting independence for so many.* We couldn’t ignore the issue and we were right to change our focus.

We set out to prove that a new model for the delivery of employment support, specifically targeted towards disabled jobseekers, can provide much better employment outcomes. Since the launch of the Support to Work service in 2018, we’ve supported 541,549 disabled people with the skills and confidence to get into and stay in work.**

Similarly, the growth of the #WorkWithMe community in 2019, in both size and member engagement, has surpassed our expectations. This proves there’s real need for support, advice and resources to support change-makers in businesses as they become more inclusive for disabled people.

The use of digital technology to deliver the service has achieved the direct cut through needed, quickly and effectively reaching disabled jobseekers, a group of people who’ve been chronically overlooked. The immediate and growing demand for this service highlights the significant hole in public provision, not to mention the importance of the continued growth and enhancement of this service. We’ve now committed to support and help sustain this beyond the remit of our 2020 strategy.***

Our experience with all of these partners has taught us the importance of working with others who share the same values and level of ambition.

Notably, we donated our shirt sponsorship of Southampton Football Club to Scope, giving them a platform to launch their new brand identity and Disability Gamechangers Campaign. This simultaneously placed disability on the agenda of football fans, commentators and the media alike.

We know that disability inclusion is an issue that some businesses still feel awkward engaging with, often for fear of saying or doing the wrong thing. That’s why we’ve worked together to build credibility as a partnership in this area over time, using Scope’s expertise and Virgin Media’s brand and platforms to provide practical resources for other businesses and shine a light on the challenges facing disabled people, particularly in employment.

We’re supporting disabled people directly through the Support to Work service and helping businesses become more inclusive for disabled people through the #WorkWithMe community.

Similarly, the growth of the #WorkWithMe community in 2019, in both size and member engagement, has surpassed our expectations. This proves there’s real need for support, advice and resources to support change-makers in businesses as they become more inclusive for disabled people.

We’ve also used our brand and our platforms to change the way disability is viewed in the public. We became a gold tier sponsor of the British Paralympic Association (BPA) in 2018 and a founding partner of The Valuable 500, which launched at the World Economic Forum in 2019. We’ve used our channels and our people to promote both partnerships.

Our experience over the last 5 years has taught us that a strategic approach to collaboration with a charity partner over a longer period of time can deliver a more profound social impact.

*Source for disability stats on employment: Scope commissioned Opinium to conduct 2,000 online interviews with UK adults with a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities and 2,002 online interviews with UK adults who are not disabled between 4 to 8 September 2017.

**In order deliver a transformational employment service we committed to an additional target for one year beyond the 5 in 5 strategy period. We report our performance up to the end of 2020 on this target.

Our experience with all of these partners has taught us the importance of working with others who share the same values and level of ambition.
In 2020 we've taken the #WorkWithMe community online, running webinars to maintain the conversations, learnings and reflections on disability inclusion between members during Covid-19's social distancing measures.

We're investing in a brand new website and defining a new community impact measurement structure so we can better understand the impact of #WorkWithMe.

The Support to Work service has gone from strength to strength as a digital service, in part thanks to a well-trained and equipped team who can provide a unique service to disabled jobseekers who want support with their specific employment ambitions online – something that's especially important while other face-to-face services are unavailable.
Virgin Media purpose  | Building Connections That Really Matter

Virgin Media digital for good strategy  | Transforming the lives of disabled people in the UK

Specific focus area  | Disability employment and inclusive workplaces for disabled people

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<th>Partnership and Strategy</th>
<th>Virgin Media purpose</th>
<th>Virgin Media digital for good strategy</th>
<th>Specific focus area</th>
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<tr>
<td>#WorkWithMe with Scope</td>
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<td>Tackle the barriers disabled people face in the workplace (UK)</td>
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<th>Goal</th>
<th>Activity and Audience</th>
<th>Delivery</th>
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<tr>
<td>To support 1 million disabled people to get into, stay in and progress in work by the end of 2020</td>
<td>To inspire 250 UK &amp; Irish businesses to create more inclusive businesses for disabled people - harnessing and releasing their economic potential and providing practical resources to help them do so</td>
<td>Tailored support (12 week programme with advisor)</td>
<td>Disabled people gain skills, confidence and tools to get closer to job market.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Fund new Support to Work service FOR DISABLED PEOPLE</td>
<td>Online content (self-service digital access)</td>
<td>Support to Work service is regarded as the ‘go-to’ service for employment information advice for disabled people and continues to grow in scale and impact year on year.</td>
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<td>Work With Me Community FOR CHANGE MAKERS (i.e. middle managers or function leads)</td>
<td>Call to action for businesses to become more inclusive for disabled people</td>
<td>More employers employ more disabled people and improve business practices.</td>
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<td>Leadership Accountability FOR C-SUITE</td>
<td>Collaboration and sharing of resources for middle managers</td>
<td>Business voices, case studies and evidence is harnessed to inform policy change.</td>
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<td>The Valuable 500 Resources for C-Suite leaders C-Suite network</td>
<td>The Valuable 500</td>
<td>Businesses know how to become more inclusive for disabled people.</td>
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<td>Resources for C-Suite leaders C-Suite network</td>
<td>250 UK &amp; Ireland board level commitments to action in 2019.</td>
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<td>ParalympicsGB Using our brand as a platform to change attitudes towards disability and drive disability equality</td>
<td>Sponsorship and marketing FOR THE BRITISH PUBLIC</td>
<td>Senior global business leaders are educated and accountable for creating more inclusive workplaces.</td>
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<td>Marketing and brand activation PR activity</td>
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<td>Business resource is unleashed from the top.</td>
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<td>Marketing and brand activation PR activity</td>
<td>Brand awareness and improved customer sentiment towards Virgin Media.</td>
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<td>Marketing and brand activation PR activity</td>
<td>Virgin Media is a brand leading on disability.</td>
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<td>Marketing and brand activation PR activity</td>
<td>Notable shift in attitudes of the British public towards disabled people as result of Tokyo 2021 and our activity.</td>
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<td>Marketing and brand activation PR activity</td>
<td>Heightened awareness of disability inequality triggers the need for more businesses to engage in disability.</td>
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Transforming lives: How we’ve made disability our business
Boosting business

Our 2020 goal:
Create the opportunities for 100,000 small businesses to grow through digital
Boosting business

Our 2020 goal: create the opportunities for 100,000 small businesses to grow through digital

2019 performance
Supported an additional 14,089 small businesses to grow through digital in 2019. We proudly hit our 2020 target a year early, so in 2019 we focussed on continued support for the VOOM community and started planning future activity.

Supported 127,036 businesses to grow through digital since 2015.

From 2010, VOOM from Virgin Media Business grew into a unique and powerful community of small business owners sharing their expertise, finding peer-to-peer support and competing for their final chance to pitch to Sir Richard Branson. Since launch, 15,162 members have used the VOOM Pioneers digital platform to start conversations, offer advice and meet at face-to-face events we’ve hosted.

In the last five years the community has been packed with opportunities to network and get great advice from successful start-ups, business leaders and leading brand partners like Virgin Start-Up, Crowdfunder.co.uk, Paypal and LinkedIn.

We launched a revamped digital platform in 2016 to allow crowdfunding alongside voting with support from Crowdfunder. This raised over £1.1m for VOOM entrants. During Global Entrepreneurship Week event in 2016 we set a new Guinness World Record with 160 businesses pitching non-stop for 29 hours. In 2017 and 2018, we completed a VOOM bus tour of the UK. We visited over 40 different cities (same year on year) and offered over 4,000 one-to-one consultancy sessions.

In 2018, we held the last annual VOOM Pitch to Rich competition with more than 3,500 businesses vying for a chance to pitch to Sir Richard Branson and win a share of a £1 million prize fund.

Over the years, Virgin Media has invested millions of pounds in prize funds to support innovative small businesses across the country.

In 2017, Virgin Media launched Voom Fibre – a new superfast broadband service designed to help small businesses thrive.

While we surpassed our nominal target with more than a year to go - and are proud to have supported so many small businesses to grow - we haven’t been able to effectively capture the specific impacts we’ve had on the businesses we supported through VOOM or tell a bigger socio-economic impact story as we’d originally intended to do.

As we revisit the basics of the Theory of Change methodology for our next strategy, this is a big learning point; going forward we must ensure a structure for capturing data on the impact of our interventions, not just the reach, is established from the outset.
Continuing to deliver social and economic impact through the services and opportunities we're creating for small businesses with ways to better understanding our impact in place.
As we revisit the basics of the Theory of Change methodology for our next strategy, we’ve recognised going forward we must ensure a structure for capturing data on the impact of our interventions, not just the reach, is established from the outset.
Better products

Our 2020 goal:

Improve the sustainability performance of every new customer product
Better products

Our 2020 goal: improve the sustainability performance of every new customer product

2019 performance

• Commenced the roll out of our Hub 4 router, which is 39% more power efficient than the Hub 3 when taking into account. It also uses 28% less electronic components and 36% less plastic components than the Hub 3. Our product scorecard methodology has been applied throughout the development of new products. This includes a focus on improving the environmental impact of product packaging and removing single-use plastic packaging. This work continues into 2020.

• Took back over 1.8 million items of customer equipment, with more than 1.1 million items being refurbished and reused.

2020 reflections

• We’ve launched three new customer products and created a product scorecard methodology, which lets us compare the sustainability performance of all our products. Over the last five years we’ve recognised the importance of embedding the scorecard methodology right the way through development, which means each product is more sustainable than the last. It’s also highlighted the value our parent company applying the same methods – this way there are efficiencies at all levels.

• Over the past five years we’ve taken back more than 9.5 million items of customer kit with 5.3 million being reused and the remainder broken down for recycling. This saves a huge amount of materials being used to create new products as we seek to keep our products in use multiple times between customers.
Better products
Stats on new customer products launched since 2015

- SET TOP BOXES
  Launched Virgin TV V6 box

- ROUTERS
  Launched Hub 3
  Started rolling out Hub 4

- Made from 21% less material – saving 341 tonnes of plastic, metal and electronics since the V6 box launched

- Uses less than half the power of the previous Compass TiVo® box – saving enough electricity to power over 23,000 UK homes since it launched in 2017

- Saved 740 tonnes in packaging

- Uses over 90% of recyclable, easily segregated materials

- 5% more energy efficient than the Super Hub 2ac, saving enough energy to power over 18,000 UK homes

- Adjusting for functionality, uses
  - 36% less plastics
  - 28% less electronics
  - 39% less power in use
  - 26% less power in idle
We'll carry on using the product scorecard methodology to improve how we design and engineer new products. This includes stipulating the amount of recycled content in each unit. We're also setting more ambitious circularity targets a part of our new strategy, and renewing our focus on removing single-use plastics from our packaging.
Better products: team reflection

Publishing our product scorecard methodology was a real turning point. We’ve made the most progress on our strategy by equipping teams across the business with the tools they need to deliver on our goals.
More inclusive

Our 2020 goal:

Nurture an engaged workforce that represents the diversity of our customers and communities
When we set our 5 in 5 goals we initially intended to tackle inclusion in the broadest sense and wanted to be able to show, in a measured way, how we are representing the customers and communities we serve. However, one year into our 2020 strategy it became clear we needed to concentrate our efforts to drive real impact. So we focused on creating a more gender-balanced workforce where we employ and retain more women who can thrive at all levels of the business. In line with our strategic partnership with Scope, we’ve also made disability inclusion our big focus, but being straight up we did not hit the mark on our original goal.

Disability inclusion
Started to work with Microlink to further improve the efficiency of our workplace adjustments process from end to end. Announced a new, industry leading set of vulnerable customer measures. During National Inclusion Week, we empowered our people (including some of our disabled employees) to share personal experiences. This acted as a springboard for a successful campaign to drive up disclosure on our people’s diversity characteristics. We also launched a series of Belonging panels across our core sites, bringing people together with panels of experts to discuss inclusion in our business and beyond. We’re still working towards Disability Confident Level 3.

Gender balance
We’ve taken positive steps in 2019, recruiting more women in apprenticeship, graduate and engineering roles, while offering more flexible and part-time working for returning mums. We also took action to get more women into senior roles across the organisation. However, we didn’t increase the percentage of women in our workforce in 2019.

Our 2020 goal: nurture an engaged workforce that represents the diversity of our customers and communities

2019 performance
Disability inclusion
Over the last 5 years we’ve delivered a series of impactful and wide-ranging initiatives, which included revamping our priority fault service; training recruiters on writing inclusive job adverts and screening for bias; launching a disability network; delivering disability and vulnerability training to 97% of our customer facing workforce; appointing Jeff Dodds, Chief Operating Officer, as the executive sponsor of disability; and overhauling our workplace adjustments process, reducing the time for workplace adjustments in volume recruitment from 12 weeks to one week. This is progress we’re proud of, but it certainly hasn’t happened overnight. We’ve learnt that building a more inclusive culture takes years not months, and requires a company-wide approach. Getting the foundations right is vital, and establishing effective policies and processes across people and customer operations, like an easy-to-access, provide the foundations on which you can build trust among employees and a genuine culture of Belonging.

Gender balance
Being straight up, we’ve not hit the mark on this one. When we set a 50:50 gender parity target back in 2015 we knew it was incredibly ambitious. We’ve implemented a series of initiatives including targeted female shortlisting for recruitment into senior roles, training recruitment teams on unconscious bias, and focusing on the recruitment of women into field roles, particularly with STEM backgrounds. Despite this, only 28.3% of our workforce was female at the end of 2019. We have a lot of passionate people, but we haven’t always been equipped with the tools, knowledge and support structures to drive change on a large scale – and perhaps this goal proved too ambitious. Our experience over the last five years has taught us that a much smarter, more targeted approach is needed to deliver progress towards gender parity. Our focus now is on business areas where there’s a greater gender disparity. We’ve got a lot of work to do, but we’re up for the challenge.

Our aim was not only to build a more inclusive workforce but a more engaged workforce. At the end of 2019 our employee engagement score was 79%.
We've just launched our new Belonging strategy which has three core pillars: building a diverse workforce, creating a safe working environment where voices are heard and valued and creating belonging across our people, products and society. This is our Belonging vision:

At Virgin Media, we're building connections that really matter.

We're building a place where everyone belongs. A place where everyone is empowered to bring and be their whole selves at work. It's the only way we can truly work as one team, creating a high-performing culture that'll bring business results like we've never seen.

We really want to understand our people and customers to see them as the diverse and unique individuals that they are, with varied backgrounds, experiences, races, gender identities, sexualities, ages, religions and abilities.

This is our moment, our chance to make a permanent change, at scale, to improve our impact on the world and make sure no one is left behind on our journey to build meaningful connections.
Getting the right foundations is vital, and establishing effective policies and processes across people and customer operations, like an easy-to-access workplace adjustments process, provide the foundations on which you can build trust among employees and a genuine culture of Belonging.
Lower impact

Our 2020 goal:
Grow our business without increasing our carbon footprint
Lower impact

Our 2020 goal: grow our business without increasing our carbon footprint

2019 performance

Achieved a 42% absolute reduction of our carbon footprint (scope 1 and 2) against our 2014 baseline. Worked towards zero waste to landfill, now only 3% to landfill down from 9% in 2018.

Virgin Media also signed up to the RE100 initiative, committing to purchase 100% of contracted energy from renewable sources, which we achieved in 2019.

We've steadily reduced our carbon footprint against the 2014 baseline while significantly growing our network and our business over this period:

- **Power:** Electricity forms 83% of our scope 1 and 2 footprint with the majority of usage in our technical estate and access network. A reduction in usage has been achieved through our continued investment in energy efficiency and reduction – delivered in large part through Project OREO (overall room energy optimisation) – at our technical sites; investment in new more efficient equipment across all sites; and the replacement of old equipment in street cabinets.

- **Vehicle fuel:** The majority of fuel is used by our 3,200 service and install vans. We've significantly reduced fuel consumption in this section of our fleet and achieved our target for our car fleet, to be below 100gCO2 per KM, through a series of initiatives:
  - **Route planning:** Implementation of new route planning tools.
  - **Equipment delivery:** Shifting delivery of new equipment allowing customers to install their own devices (where possible).
  - **Vehicle leases:** Maintain short leasing periods on all vehicles to make sure we regularly bring in new, more efficient vehicles.
  - **Driver monitoring software:** Introduced Lightfoot, driver monitoring software which has resulted in an 11% reduction in fleet emissions and an 11% increase in MPG since 2017.

2020 reflections

You can find our carbon footprint data [here](#).

Our 2020 goal: grow our business without increasing our carbon footprint.

You can find our carbon footprint data [here](#).
Lower impact

Our 2020 goal: grow our business without increasing our carbon footprint

A word on waste

In 2014, 25% of our office waste went to landfill. At the end of 2019 this was down to 3%. We’ve achieved this by:

• Working closely with our waste contractor to identify sites where waste was going to landfill and establish alternative destinations.
• Communications campaigns introducing new bin signage across our core people sites.
• Tackling single-use plastics.
• We’ve removed all plastic cups across 27 sites, reducing usage by 900,000 plastic cups a year.
• We’ve given all of our people a reusable bottle.
• We’ve started to roll out big changes across our catering services, starting with our new head office in Reading, where we’ve introduced a tax on takeaway boxes, removed plastic cutlery, provided more crockery, removed reusable cups and given everyone a reusable coffee cup. With these changes we’re aiming to reduce by 3 million disposable items a year.
• Maintained a zero waste to landfill logistics supply chain.
• Reduced paper use by 78% across the business since 2014, a reduction of over 10,045 tonnes and the equivalent of 240,000 trees.
We’re working with experts on a carbon mapping and reduction exercise to understand our full carbon impact across scope 1, 2 and 3. With this insight we’ll establish a carbon reduction strategy underpinned by science-based targets, placing us on a robust path to net zero. We’re also looking at introducing electric vehicles into our fleet in line with improved infrastructure and technology to enable their widespread use. Stay tuned for more on that...
Lower impact: team reflection

Connect your targets to individual responsibility and actions so that everyone knows the role they can play in hitting that big ambition.
Where we go from here
We are now working on our next comprehensive five year sustainability strategy. This will enable us to once again address the key material social and environmental issues that matter to our people and customers. We've been out and about listening to their views.

Our new strategy will ensure we continue to do the 'responsible business basics' well and ensure that no one is left behind through our new inclusion strategy, Belonging. We're also working with experts on how we set ambitious environmental commitments, including a science-based target.

As part of this we have also identified a hero cause where we can make a unique positive contribution that's inspiring, distinctive, relevant and credible, that focuses our unique capability to make a big impact. The issue we will be tackling is what we are currently defining as "Community Connectedness": we see this as a positive opportunity, collective endeavour and about unlimiting people’s potential. At Virgin Media, we build connections that really matter for our communities, people and planet and now we want to build a lasting sense of togetherness in communities up and down the country.

We will bring our lightning-fast connectivity, people and partner power and our big brand voice to ensure digital connectivity for all, inclusive community networks and drive active local participation. This will be focused around one big ambitious goal. Stay tuned for more to come on our website soon.
That’s a wrap, drop us a line

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