



BAC 2021-2022
Annual Report Summary

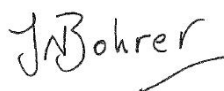


We proudly present our Annual Report Summary for the third consecutive year, offering stakeholders a comprehensive overview of the British Accreditation Council's (BAC) activities and financial position in 2021-2022. As we emerged from the challenges imposed by the pandemic, we successfully adapted to our new normal. We have fully established ourselves at our new premises at Wax Chandlers Hall, where our staff now engage in a hybrid working model. By embracing hybrid inspections, we have continued to effectively carry out our inspection and accreditation activities. The increasing number of inspections and enquiries from institutions seeking accreditation reflects the continued recognition of the value of BAC accreditation.

In an effort to gain deeper insights into the BAC community, this year we have requested that all accredited providers share the number of students enrolled in their courses. This is for statistical analysis and has not affected the calculation method for BAC accreditation fees. To support providers, in acknowledgment of the challenging economic climate, we have made the decision to freeze accreditation and inspection fees for the upcoming year (2023-24).

We have remained committed to implementing our strategic plan and in March 2023, we organised an engaging online event for our stakeholders, featuring insightful case studies from BAC providers. We will continue to foster community engagement and share examples of good practice and noteworthy activities. A significant ongoing activity is the review of all our accreditation schemes. We would like to thank all those who participated in the consultation on the proposed updates to the College and International Centre schemes. All updated schemes will go live on 1 September 2023. We also launched the pilot of a new Micro-credentials Provider scheme last year. This was the result of collaborative work with a European working group, chaired by BAC.

We would like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to everyone involved in the work of BAC. We extend our thanks to our inspectorate, committee members, and staff, as well as those who collaborate with us to enhance standards and strengthen the BAC brand. As a charitable organisation, we are dedicated to meeting our objectives in raising standards and providing assurance to individuals studying and training within our accredited institutions.



Dr Janet Bohrer, Chief Executive



Objectives and activities

The British Accreditation Council for Independent Further and Higher Education is registered for charitable purposes and its objects are:

- providing a system of accreditation for educational and training institutions in order to promote public confidence in such institutions and their programmes of study and
- assisting in the improvement and maintenance of the standards of accredited institutions through the offer of advisory and consultancy services principally in the field of further and higher education.



Governance

The governance structure consists of the Council, which is formed of the trustees, and acts as the Board of Directors. The Council meets three times a year. The Chair of the Council is Prof Phil Cardew, appointed 1 September 2022, who replaced Dominic Scott OBE.

To find out more about our current Council members visit our [website](#) for short bios:

The Council has three sub-committees. The Audit Committee provides financial and regulatory oversight. The Standing Committee meets between Council meetings to provide continuity and support the charity. The responsibility for decisions on accreditation is overseen by the Accreditation Committee (AC). The AC is appointed by the Council and consists of members appointed by virtue of their experience and expertise with regard to educational standards.

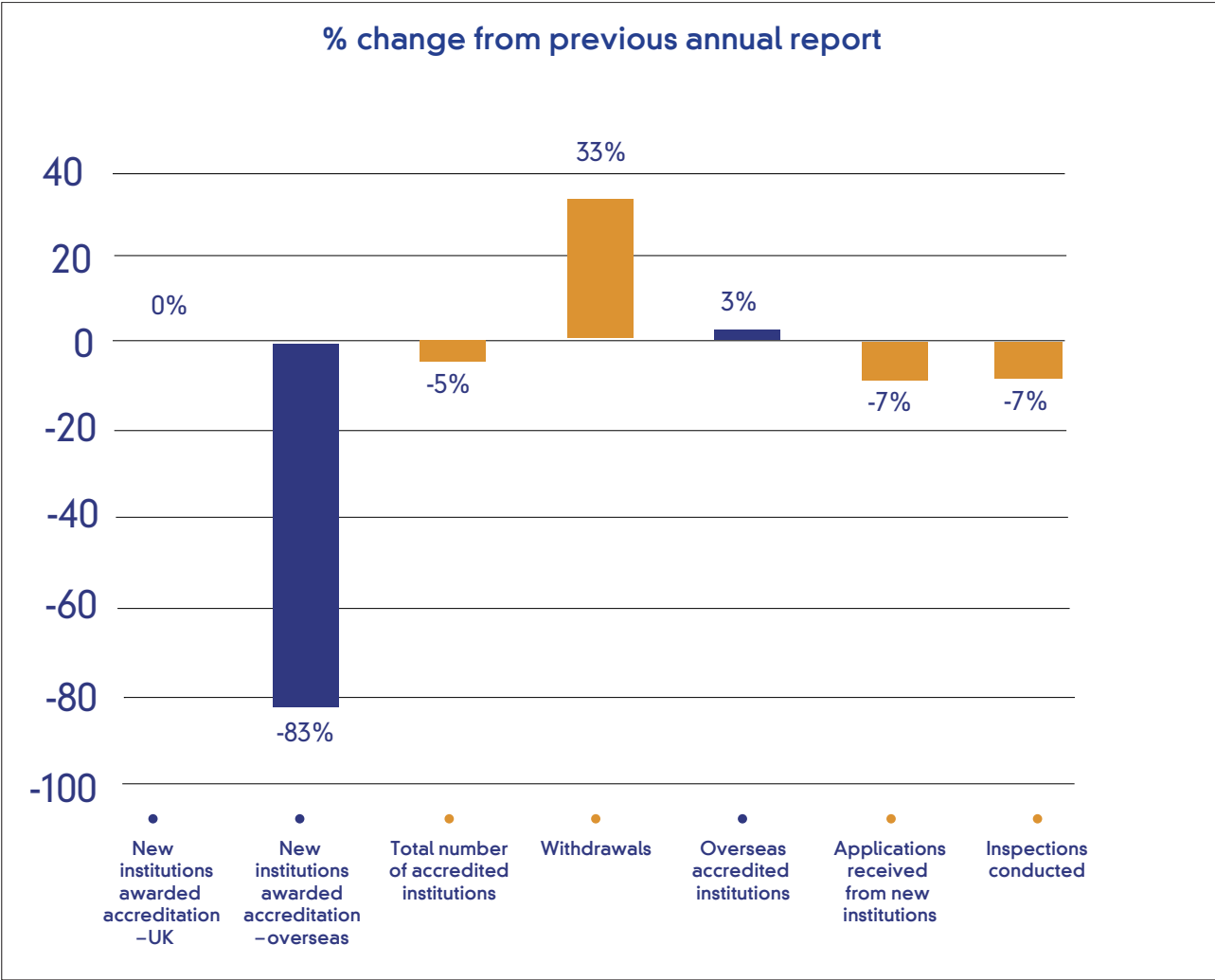
Dr Anthony Manning is the Chair of the Accreditation Committee. The Accreditation Committee receives the reports of completed inspections and takes decisions on the award or withdrawal of accreditation, making its recommendations based on BAC's accreditation policy and procedures. It also regularly reviews the quality assurance criteria used by inspectors in making judgements and recommendations. The Committee had six meetings and three sub-committees this year.



Accreditation and inspection activity

BAC has successfully transitioned to a hybrid inspection model. We use a risk-based analysis to make the final decision on the method of inspection, which can vary from fully online, inspectors undertaking the inspection onsite and online or fully onsite.

The chart below gives details of the applications received, inspections carried out and awards of accreditation in the period September 2021 to August 2022 and compares these with the figures from the previous year.



Income and Expenditure

More financial details can be found in the full annual report available [here](#).

The total income for the year is £620,447, an increase of around £10,000 over the previous year. Given that the current year has been difficult as the organisation feels the effects of global events, this is encouraging.

During the period under review, the Bank of England reported an inflation rate of approximately 10%, which had an adverse impact on the charity's general operating costs. The forecasted year end deficit prompted the board to take proactive measures to address the situation including drawing down £75,000 from investment income allocated to a new Development Fund with the aim of investing in the growth of the organisation. The accreditation and inspection fees were also increased by 5%.

The increase in fees in 2022 has not affected provider retention. BAC will not be increasing the accreditation and inspection fees for 2023-24.

The income from accreditation fees declined approximately 17% from the previous year as some providers had to implement cost-saving measures by withdrawing from accreditation, and some were forced to discontinue operations altogether.

There are indications of renewed interest in BAC accreditation, as there has been a 33% increase in new applications from providers compared to the previous year.

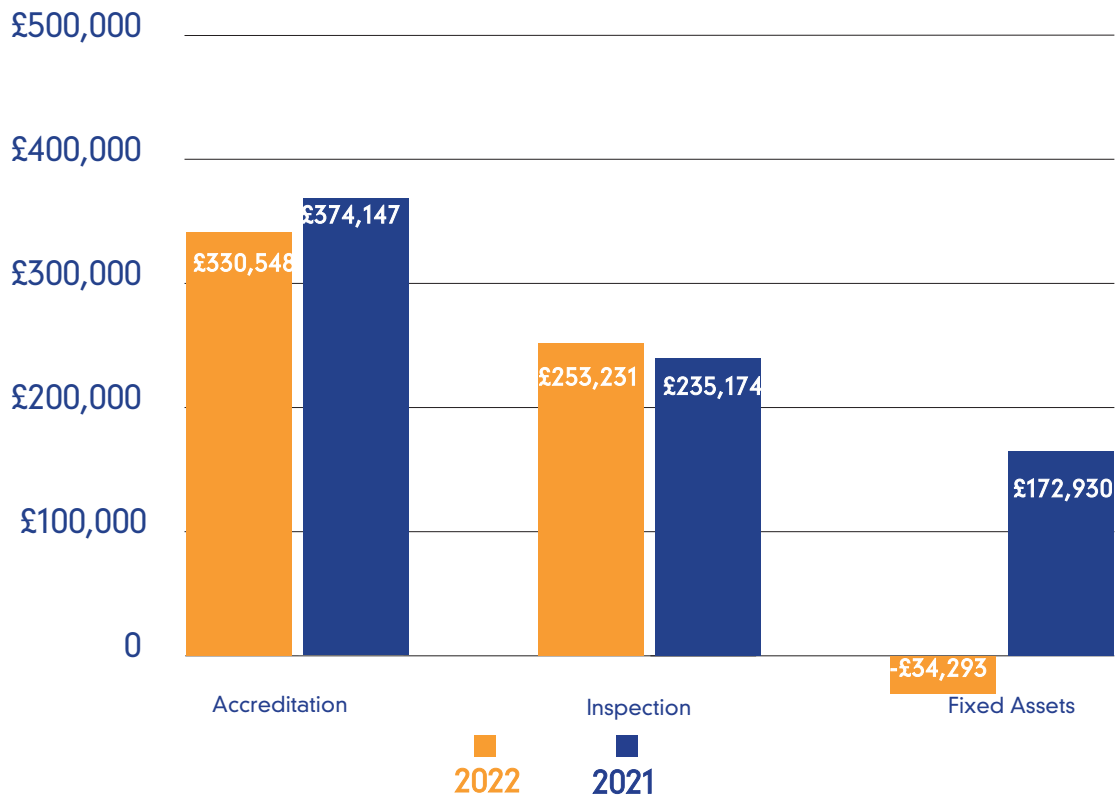
Inspection fee income increased by 24% as inspectors have been able to carry out onsite inspections of larger organisations who had their inspections delayed in previous years and clear up the backlog.

The performance of our fixed asset investment portfolio was below expectations, resulting in a net loss of £34,293 during the period under review. This is attributed to the impact of global events on financial markets.

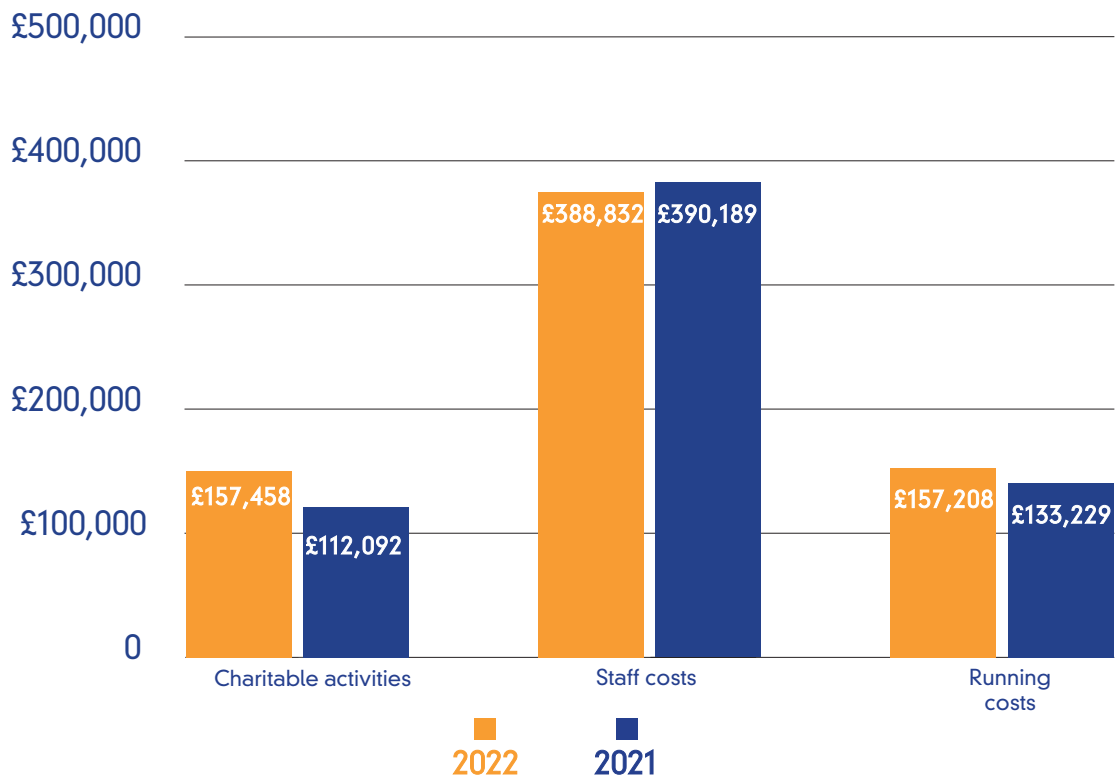
Direct expenditure has increased by approximately 40% as predicted in the previous year, largely due to an 18% increase in operational costs.



Income

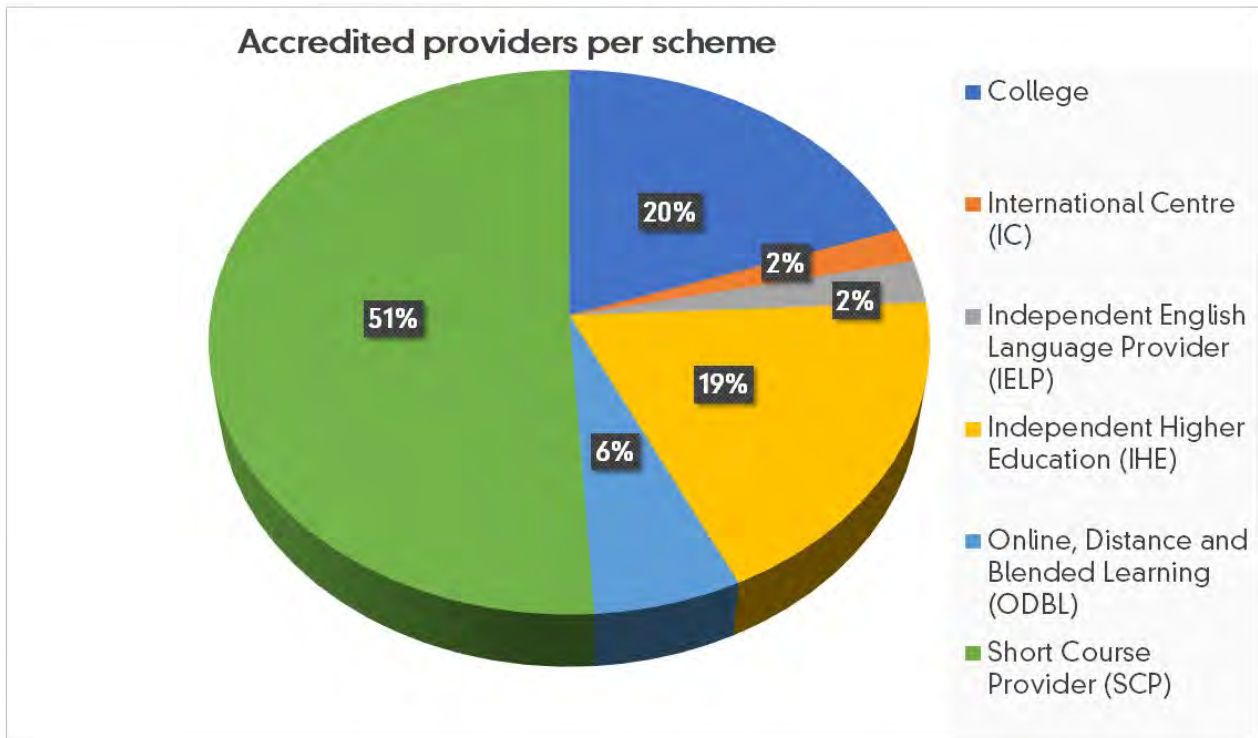


Expenditure



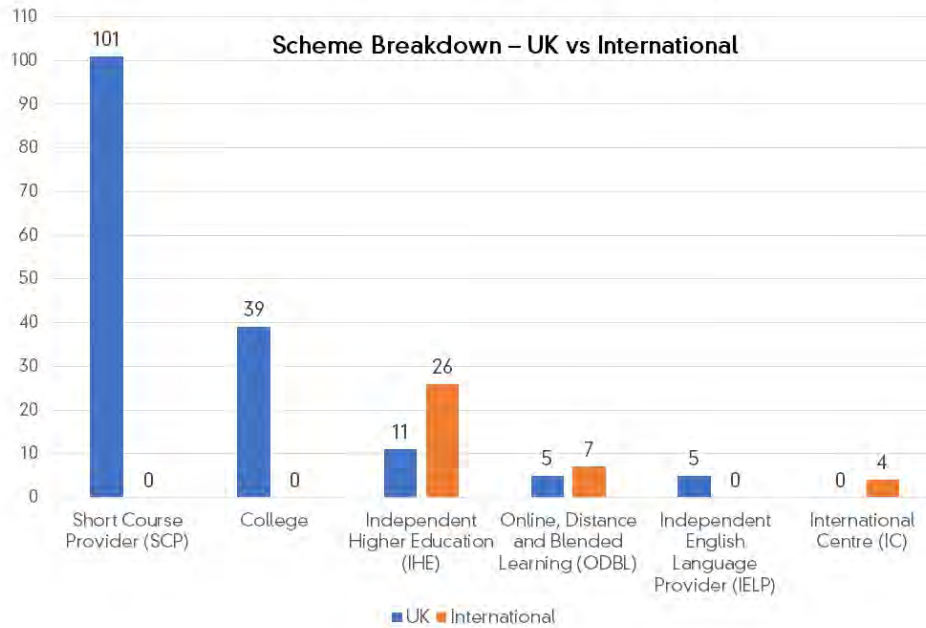
BAC Provider Analysis

In 2021-2022, BAC had 198 accredited providers across the six accreditation schemes. The majority of providers were accredited under the Short Course Provider scheme.



Where are BAC providers based?

In 2021-2022, providers accredited under the Short Course Provider (SCP), Independent English Language Provider (IELP) and College schemes were all based in UK, providers accredited under the Independent Higher Education (IHE) and Online, Distance and Blended Learning (ODBL) schemes had bases in both the UK and internationally and International Centre (IC) scheme have only international providers.



82% of providers were located in the UK, with the remaining 18% spread across 21 different countries

The largest clusters of providers were in Greater London (41.8%), Oxfordshire (9.8%) and Cambridgeshire (7.8%).



Student numbers

Using data submitted by providers in the annual return (used to calculate the BAC accreditation fees), BAC has been able to undertake some analysis on the number of students studying at BAC accredited providers.

It should be noted that as the IC, SCP and IELP schemes do not submit student numbers to BAC (with the exception of students studying online or through distance learning) in the annual return, the analysis is based on the student numbers provided from the IHE, College and ODBL schemes.

BAC will ask all providers to submit information on student numbers in the future to allow more detailed analysis to take place although there is no intention to change the method used to calculate accreditation fees.

According to data received from BAC providers there are 183,860 students studying at BAC accredited providers with the bulk of students registered on providers accredited under the IHE scheme.

	College	IC	IELP	IHE	ODBL	SCP
Number of students (FT)	8,246	Not collected	Not collected	93,683	0	Not collected
Number of students (PT)	3,859	Not collected	Not collected	12,736	0	Not collected
Number of students (Online)	814	972	0	24,594	35,346	3,610
Total	12,919	972	0	131,013	35,346	3,610

Due to some countries having only one provider located there, we cannot release a full breakdown on student numbers as this would breach the confidentiality of provider data. It can be seen however that the majority of students are studying at BAC accredited providers located in South Africa (37.7%) and the UK (24.5%).



Profile of BAC providers

As a community, BAC providers are very varied in size, subject specialisms, methods of delivery and location. Having undertaken a brief textual analysis of BAC inspection reports there are some interesting commonalities across the schemes.

- **Specialisms:** Most providers specialised in the subject areas that they offered (College 66.6%, IELP 100%, SCP 54.5%, ODBL 75%) with the providers on the remaining two schemes, the IHE and IC schemes being more evenly split with 48.6 specialising on the IHE scheme and 50% specialising on the IC scheme.
- **Short courses:** 70.2% of providers offered short courses with a high proportion of them (48.9%) having a primarily academic focus.
- **Other accreditation:** Over a quarter of all providers (27.8%) held additional accreditation, either with another accreditation agency or through a Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB).
- **Adult education:** BAC providers focus on education for over 18s with only 7.6% of providers having a focus on under 18s. Where the provider focuses on under 18s this is due to them having a summer school primarily linked to offering a university experience.
- **English language provision:** While providers on the IELP scheme exclusively offer English language training in total 15.2% of providers do offer English language training as an element of their provision.

When analysing each of the schemes there are some findings relevant to report. On the **College scheme** most providers offered academic (53.8%) or vocational and technical (30.8%) courses with 61.5% of providers also offering short courses, with the majority of courses (41.7%) being academic in nature.

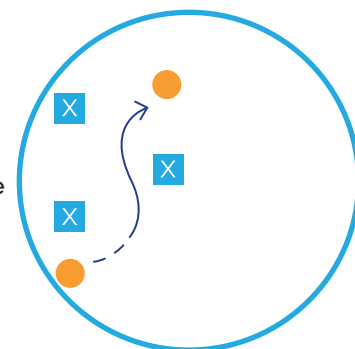
On the **IHE scheme** 75.7% of providers offered both undergraduate and postgraduate courses. When offering those courses, 40.5% of them had their own degree awarding powers and 59.5% awarded degrees through a university partnership, such as a validation or franchise agreement.

The **SCP scheme** does tend to have more providers specialising in a subject area and almost a quarter of providers (24.8%) are either summer schools or have a summer school in addition to their other provision. The majority of courses (47.2%) are academically focused with the remainder having courses directly linked to specific professions or practical in nature.



Future plans

The Strategic Plan 2021-2026 is a five-year plan and detailed objectives and activities are monitored through an internal three-year action plan.



1

BAC will **invest in its growth** by expanding products and services to add value to current accredited providers and to attract a wider range of new providers.

Proposed actions:

- The review of all accreditation schemes will be completed, and the annual cycle of reviews will continue.
- The pilot liaison initiative will be completed, and a service introduced based on what we have learnt.
- The MC scheme pilot is due to end January 2023 and if successful will be added to our existing suite of schemes and marketed as necessary.
- We will update the website and develop a plan for long term improvements.
- We will develop further support for providers e.g., potential training module

2

BAC will continue to promote and be active in the quality assurance **Community**.

Proposed actions:

- We will continue our schedule of webinars.
- The Annual Stakeholder Event.
- We will look for opportunities to attend conferences and/or contribute papers.

3

BAC will continue to **Grow and Diversify** especially Global and European activities.

Proposed actions:

- We will define our growth strategy and identify regions and countries to target.
- We will hold a deep dive for trustees around international growth and organise an international event.
- We will work with a consultancy company to actively pursue work internationally in 2023.
- We will continue to build on successful international inspections, developing regional activities and potential working with ministries through free and paid projects.
- We will continue to develop a portfolio of activities to actively promote BAC.



4

BAC will actively engage in the development of its **Ethical responsibilities**

Proposed actions:

- We will calculate our carbon footprint and take steps towards zero carbon emissions.
- We will look to implement ways in which we can lead in the promotion of environmental responsibility and being open about our sustainable development goals.
- The review of our working practices will continue including updating our Data Protection policies and procedures and business continuity and cyber security plans.
- We will continue to review value for money from our suppliers whilst also recognising London Living Wage hourly rates.

5

BAC will continue to develop good practice in its use of **integrated use of the data and information** collected from BAC inspections and other work.

Proposed actions:

- The implementation of the CRM will be complete, and we will monitor its use and look for further ways it can improve our operations.
- We will focus on the report process for inspections and look to process them through using Sharepoint and all information uploaded to an online portal.
- We will produce thematic reports and use them to influence the direction for development of inspection methodologies as well as themes for enhancement workshops.
- We will conduct governance reviews as endorsed by Charities Good Practice and as preparation for increased work with a potential growth of activities





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