

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S STATEMENT

"THE WORK WE DO HAS THE POWER TO BRING ABOUT CHANGE - IN THE WAY PEOPLE FEEL, THE WAY THEY THINK AND THE WAY THEY BEHAVE. AND IN TODAY'S WORLD, THE ABILITY TO INSPIRE, MOTIVATE AND ENGAGE IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER."

Mark Read
Chief Executive Officer



When we set out our new strategy in December 2018, we also described a new purpose for WPP: to build better futures for our people and clients. That statement applies to our wider communities, too.

The work we do has the power to bring about change – in the way people feel, the way they think and the way they behave. And in today's world, the ability to inspire, motivate and engage is more important than ever.

Organisations around the world face an array of challenges – from constant technological disruption to political uncertainty and the growing physical impacts of climate change. While people trust less, they expect more.

As our own research shows, sustainability is increasingly a non-negotiable with consumers. Many are trying to live more sustainably and believe that companies and brands have a responsibility to take care of the planet and its people too. For these new mindful consumers, values should drive behaviour and choices – but there's a gap between intentions and behaviour which has been long identified by researchers. People are increasing the pressure on brands to make it easier for them to close that gap.

Many of our clients are already responding – often with the support of WPP’s insight, technology and creativity. A recent survey of our client leads found that 80% have discussed sustainability with their clients in the last year – and the successful results of those conversations are clearly visible in the many campaigns featured in this report. We expect to have ever more of these conversations with our clients in the years ahead.

I’m especially proud of our pro bono work, one of the most significant contributions our business makes. From human rights to health, equality and the environment, these partnerships with NGOs, charities and the UN can help increase their impact and support progress on the global Sustainable Development Goals. Notable this year was the launch of our strategic partnership with UN Women, and our campaign featuring David Attenborough that helped millions engage with the UN climate talks.

Collectively, our pro bono work, donations and negotiated free media space had wider benefits worth an estimated £331 million in 2018. Pro bono work benefits our business too, providing rewarding creative opportunities and often resulting in award-winning campaigns that raise the profile of our companies and people.

Within WPP we are stepping up as well.

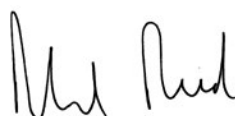
2018 saw the start of our three-year plan of “radical evolution”, designed to improve performance across the business. Central to this plan is investment in our people. To continue to attract the best and brightest, we will be clearer about who we are and what we stand for. This includes championing a new culture, characterised by the values of openness, optimism and a commitment to extraordinary work.

We expect all our working environments to be inclusive, respectful, collaborative and diverse in every sense. We have made some good progress, but we are not yet where we want to be. Our newly appointed Chief People Officer and Head of Culture will spearhead the effort to change that.

We remain committed members of the UN Global Compact and support its 10 principles for human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption. This report shows the progress we’re making on embedding these principles into the way we work.

All companies have a responsibility to take climate change seriously and we are pleased with our record in this area. We have cut our carbon intensity by 61% since we started measuring it in 2006. Now we have set an ambitious new target to make a further 50% reduction by 2030 (from a baseline of 2017).

Our work on sustainability will continue to play an important role as we implement our strategy in 2019 – contributing to a better future for WPP, and all the communities we serve.



Mark Read
Chief Executive Officer

A-
rating for our climate change strategy and reporting in the CDP climate change programme

Gold
in the EcoVadis CSR rating for the fourth year in a row

Industry Leader
in the Bloomberg Gender-Equality Index