

OUR IMPACT

2020-21

resourcefutures 

Certified



Corporation



A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

It is not possible to reflect on the previous year without mentioning the Covid-19 pandemic that has impacted us all across the world. By this point I am sure most of us had hoped the crisis a distant memory, but while vaccines are being administered successfully in many high-income countries, the virus is still prevalent and spreading in many parts of the world.

The pandemic exposed levels of inequality in society, with jobs lost and childcare challenges. We became better connected digitally, with video calls becoming the norm between family, friends and colleagues, but at what cost to our human need for physical connection?

On the other hand, the shared experience also brought us together. It gave people a feeling of belonging and a purpose to help, from volunteering to support those more vulnerable, to taking on challenges to raise money for those in need. We developed a greater appreciation for being outdoors, for our communities, and even for access to food.

Another impact of the pandemic was a reduction in global carbon dioxide emissions – the largest annual percentage decline since World War II – as energy demand decreased due to a halt in economic and social activities worldwide. The reduction was temporary, however, and global emissions of carbon dioxide has since picked up.

Our vision at Resource Futures is to create a sustainable world and to help others understand how to minimise impact of resource use and use their resources in a sustainable way. Last year – once we had ensured the wellbeing of our people and their ability to work safely and effectively from home – we

took a moment to pause and consider how, as a company, we could be best placed to deliver our vision.

We looked at our areas of expertise and our potential for impact, individually and as a whole. We positioned ourselves around seven key workstreams essential to creating a sustainable world: **Behaviour Change, Circular Economy, Community Impact, Evidence, Global Policy, UK Policy and Waste Services Optimisation**. This report highlights how, in a challenging year, we adapted and continued to generate impact across the organisation.

We are always seeking to innovate and improve, and we are very proud to be a B Corp, part of a global community of businesses striving to do good in the world. If we have learnt anything from the last year, it is that our communities and our world needs our help, now more than ever.

Sam Reeve
CEO, Resource Futures



B THE CHANGE

Being a certified B Corp is an important part of our identity at Resource Futures and aligns with our sustainable and ethical approach to work with the purpose of using business as a force for good.

We have been certified since 2016; **our B Impact Score of 117.6 is one of the highest scores given to sustainability consultancies in the UK**, and we are very proud of that. However, we continuously question if what we are doing is having a positive impact. We are driven to do business fairly: we commit to high standards through our [ISO 14001 certification](#); we are a CarbonZero company; we are signed up to [The Prompt Payment Code](#); we are accredited under the [Contractors Health and Safety Assessment Scheme](#); and we are proud to be a [Living Wage Employer](#).

Being a B Corp is so much more than a badge of recognition. It is an opportunity to measure ourselves against the highest verified standards of social and environmental performance and accountability and prove to our people, clients and stakeholders that we are serious about being a better business. It is also a platform to network and learn from a community of shared values.

There is now much more visibility for the B Corp movement compared to when we first became accredited five years ago. This was evident during this year's B Corp Month in March – celebrations took place in more than 70 countries and 1,000 new businesses in the UK got started on the B Impact Assessment. It is fantastic to see the movement gaining momentum and to be a part of that.

HELPING OTHERS TO B THE CHANGE

Because we truly believe in the B Corp movement, we are also supporting others in their own B Corp journey. Whether that is informal conversations to give insight to the B Impact Assessment, being an active part of our B Local networks, or working hand-in-hand with organisations to support them through the process. By working together, we truly believe we can accelerate the much-needed change in our society.

To learn more about the B Corp movement visit bcorporation.net.



BEHAVIOUR CHANGE

Our behaviour change work presents a real opportunity to encourage people and organisations to waste less, recycle more and engage with circular business models. In the last year, our **Behaviour Change team** continued to support clients through workshops, training, insights and interventions.

A STRATEGIC APPROACH TO REDUCING FOOD WASTE BEHAVIOURS

We supported the food waste element of Bristol's Going for Gold initiative looking at innovative and systemic ways to influence food waste reduction across the city, with the aim of moving citizens and businesses up through the food waste hierarchy, from recycling food waste to reducing food waste.

Our support included free consultancy to Bristol businesses looking to find ways to reduce their food waste. These food waste conversations became increasingly challenging during the Covid-19 pandemic. With employees moving to remote

working, what role can an employer take in influencing food consumption and waste habits in the home environment when this is easily perceived as intrusive intervention?

We developed an Individual, Social and Material (ISM) workshop to work out the behavioural levers for influencing employee behaviours in the home and reframe perceptions of intrusiveness on the basis that home working would likely continue as an ongoing work model. We brought together leading Bristol businesses, business networks and Bristol City Council and ran a workshop to understand how ISM related to this context.

THREE POTENTIAL CAMPAIGN MESSAGES THAT EMERGED:

EATING BETTER

Encouraging healthy, mindful and less wasteful eating.

COME BACK GREENER

An opportunity to be more sustainable.

CLIMATE ACTION

Understanding the carbon footprint of food consumption.



“ It was useful to think about behaviour change through this lens. ”

“ Very useful, helped me understand why we have so many challenges getting the public to recycle! ”

“ Clear understanding of behavioural change steps and what's required relating to this subject. ”

Feedback from ISM workshop participants

“ Resource Futures played an instrumental part in securing our start-up grant from Zero Waste Scotland. ”

Pauline Smith, Director,
Total Homes Cooperative

CIRCULAR ECONOMY

The circular economy tackles inefficient resource use and lessens the impact of waste on the environment. Throughout 2020 and into 2021, our **Circular Economy team** provided organisations with a range of support services to help them transition to more circular products and business models.



CIRCULAR ECONOMY BUSINESS SUPPORT

We supported 12 businesses of varying sizes to explore how to embed circularity at an organisational level and to explore circular business models including reuse, refill, leasing and waste valorisation. The bespoke support is focused on businesses advancing their circular thinking so they can confidently make informed decisions and secure future support funding.



CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY SUPPORT

Our construction offering provided 1-2-1 support to 10 construction projects looking at design and onsite circularity opportunities, as well as developing five circular economy best practice checklists for different audiences in the Irish construction sector. We also ran five industry engagement events and contributed to a review of construction policy in India.



MAPPING AND ACTION PLANS

We conducted an extensive sector mapping project with the Irish Food and Drink Manufacturing sector to help the Environmental Protection Agency better understand the levels of food waste generated and the guidance needed to increase sector reporting. We also developed a predictive model to quantify the impacts of Covid-19 on the volumes of office furniture predicted to become surplus in the Welsh public sector to help inform future decision making.



CIRCULAR PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY CHAIN SUPPORT

We supported six public bodies to embed reuse and recycled content within their procurement processes which will help create a framework for future tenders. We also developed a myth busting guide and an online training presentation for clients and the supply chain to raise awareness on circularity in procurement.



CARBON FOOTPRINTING & MODELLING

Our carbon offering is growing steadily and this year we supported eight projects with carbon footprinting or modelling to help inform business decisions around circular product and business model development and Net Zero Carbon aspirations.

COMMUNITY IMPACT

Our community impact work is an important part of our business and despite the challenges of the last year, our **Community Impact team** adapted to new ways of working to continue the positive work they are doing within communities across the UK.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE REAL NAPPY PROJECT

Focused on interacting with parents via online videos and social media groups and the reaction has been fantastic. 7% of parents in Gloucestershire made the switch to reusable nappies in 2020-21.

DEVON EDUCATION PROJECT

Developed eight Covid-secure workshops on composting, litter and materials. Bookings went ‘through the roof’ – securing 53 school bookings in just one term (the target for the year was 60!).

WASTE & RECYCLING ADVISERS

Continued to reach residents on the doorstep when it was safe to do so and then turned their attention to supporting with guides, research and videos for the local authority partners.

COMMUNITY ACTION GROUPS (CAG) DEVON

Welcomed six new groups and helped groups to pivot to Covid-secure models such as click and collect repair cafes. Quadrupled the volume of waste prevented and (almost) quadrupled the carbon emissions avoided through the groups’ activities.

“ Becoming a member of CAG Devon has enabled us to exist! We were provided with support, advice and fantastically free insurance so we can contribute as a community to reduce food waste and, most importantly, share what we can with each other. ”

Silverton Community Larder

COMMUNITY REPAINT

Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, the Community RePaint team provided a variety of support to help its 65+ schemes navigate unprecedented changes and new legislation. As a result, many schemes continued to operate and provide affordable, reusable paint to individuals and organisations in their local community.

What’s more, the schemes introduced new ways of working including setting up appointment systems for customers, providing click and collect options, setting up online shops, and paint deliveries.

COMMUNITY REPAINT BY NUMBERS 2020

**4 NEW
SCHEMES**

were welcomed.

**250,747
LITRES**

of leftover reusable
paint redistributed.

**297,541
LITRES**

of leftover reusable
paint collected.

**174,436
LIVES**

brightened by using
leftover reusable paint.



EVIDENCE

Our **Evidence team** conducts waste and recycling composition analysis studies that inform improvements to local collection services and to national-level policy making across the UK. With the Covid-19 pandemic halting the majority of their fieldwork, the team adapted to new and innovative ways to help Governments, local authorities and the private sector understand resources and waste.

ADAPTING WASTE SERVICES TO COVID-19

In October 2020, we supported ReLondon (formerly the London Waste and Recycling Board – LWARB) in delivering a waste composition analysis of London flats, to help London authorities understand the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. We consulted with our fieldwork site managers, and after refining approaches, rolled out new training to our teams. The work provided ReLondon with the first figures to give a better understanding of the impact of Covid-19 on the composition of waste and recycling capture rates.

ENRICHING THE SECTOR WITH INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGY

In 2020, we introduced handheld Near InfraRed (NIR) analyser technology and a rapid onsite identification method to identify plastic polymers, offering new levels of granularity to composition studies.

We supported the Circular Economy for Flexible Packaging (CEFLEX) with NIR analyser technology to provide in-depth knowledge of the proportions and types of different polymer combinations of multi-material plastic packaging on a large scale.

We are very pleased to be able to support clients by providing important data on the plastics making up our waste streams.

PROVIDING DATA FOR A CIRCULAR ECONOMY

We supported clients looking to close the loop on what are often referred to niche materials, providing them with robust primary data to inform future initiatives and procurement needs. Specific studies were carried out with a focus on the composition and arisings of textiles and absorbent hygiene products (e.g. nappies).

“The data will be key to understanding what collection, sorting and recycling solutions are needed to deliver a circular economy for flexible plastic packaging.”

Liz Morrish, Workstream Consultant, CEFLEX

GLOBAL POLICY

While contending with Covid-19 restrictions, our **Global Policy team** continued to work with international agencies, governments and NGOs to develop waste and resource management systems that protect the environment and positively contribute to livelihoods and local economies.

ADDRESSING E-WASTE MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES IN DELHI

The E[co]work project addresses inequalities faced by informal e-waste dismantlers in Delhi, India, by adapting the co-working concept to design a socially inclusive workspace. We collaborated with the E[co]work Association, Sofies and Curry Stone Design Collaborative to understand Delhi's e-waste dismantling networks and business models. Study insights will enable the project partners to make informed decisions in developing a financially sustainable and fit-for-purpose E[co]work facility.

ERADICATING MARINE LITTER IN KERALA

In partnership with the University of Leeds, we supported the World Bank and the Government of Kerala in their plan to improve regional waste management by conducting an analysis of plastic waste management in Kerala, India. Our models assessed plastic waste flows, costs and benefits of intervention strategies, and we created a roadmap strategy for radically improving the circularity of plastic waste management over the next 20 years.

CREATING PLASTIC WASTE MANAGEMENT GUIDANCE FOR GOVERNMENTS

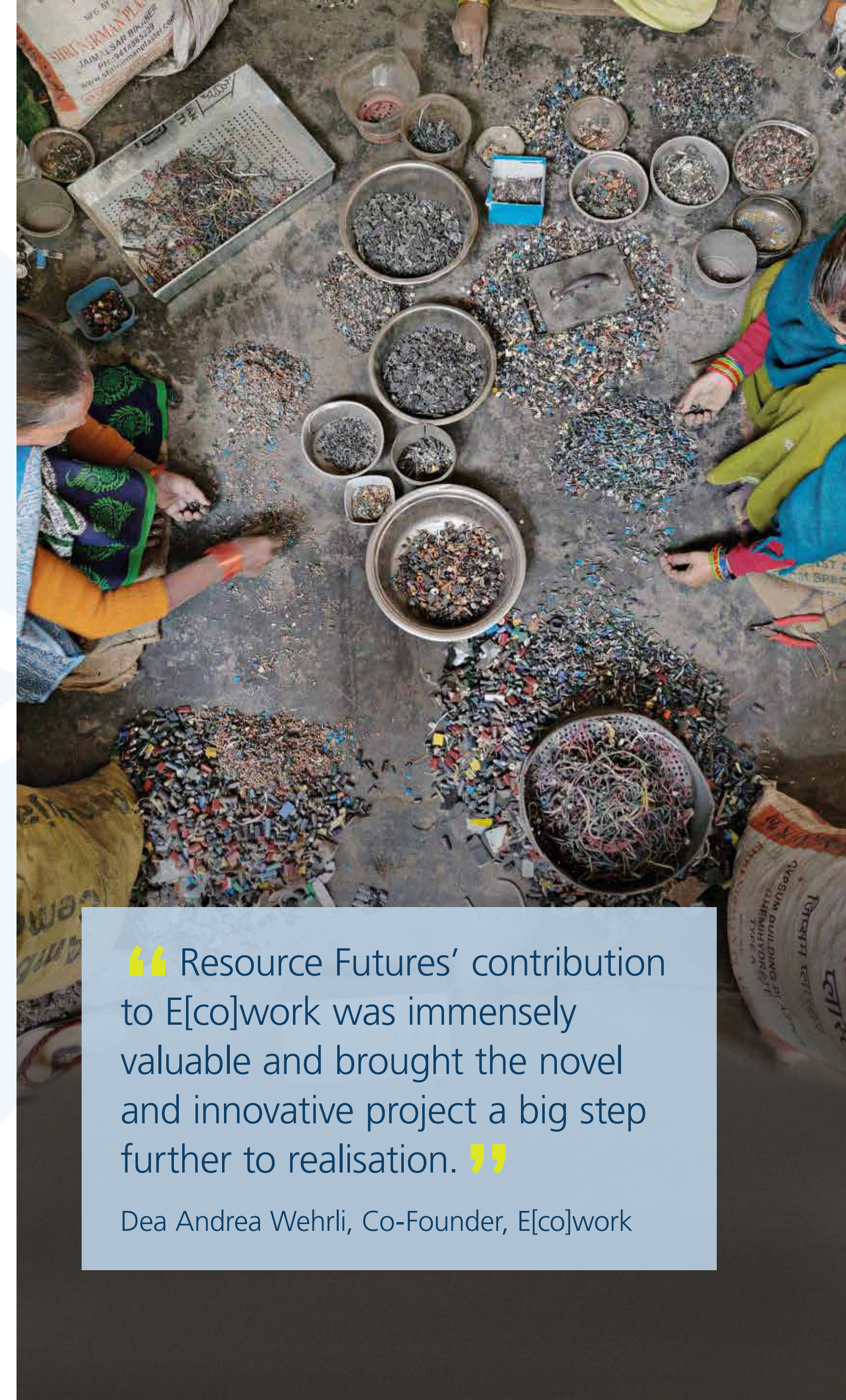
In support of the United Nations Basel Convention Secretariat's efforts to reduce marine litter, microplastics and their effects, we created a national-level plastic waste inventory methodology and guidance on the environmentally sound management (ESM) of plastic waste. Piloted in Ghana, the methodologies helped inform a national ESM strategy for Ghana's plastic waste management. The approach will be applied to other countries and regions facing a plastic pollution crisis.

DEVELOPING M&E METHODOLOGY FOR MONROVIA

We supported the Monrovia City Corporation to develop monitoring and evaluation (M&E) methodology that tracks performance indicators used to help finance improvements to waste management in Greater Monrovia, Liberia – where less than half of the population receives a waste management service. The methodology will provide a foundation for collecting improved data on Greater Monrovia's waste management system.

“Resource Futures’ contribution to E[co]work was immensely valuable and brought the novel and innovative project a big step further to realisation.”

Dea Andrea Wehrli, Co-Founder, E[co]work





“ Working with Resource Futures has unlocked the power of The 2 Minute Foundation’s Beach Clean app data. We are now able to quantify findings and present powerful evidence to engage stakeholders. ”

Nicola Green, COO, The 2 Minute Foundation

UK POLICY

Despite the UK being in lockdown for much of 2020, the environmental policy agenda moved forwards at an unprecedented pace. Our **UK Policy team** continued to work at the very forefront of policy research, impact assessment and consultancy; helping to develop an effective and fair policy environment on the latest issues and continuing to support businesses to stand out from their competition on environmental matters.

AT THE CUTTING EDGE OF POLICY

We are focusing on some of the most pressing and difficult issues in waste and resources such as deposit return schemes (DRS), extended producer responsibility (EPR) and marine litter, and exploring innovating solutions to move towards a circular economy. We are proud to work with Defra, Marine Scotland, WRAP, Zero Waste Scotland, environmental NGOs and private sector clients, and support them in influencing change in the world.

ACTION ON SINGLE-USE PLASTIC

England’s ban on single-use plastic straws, stirrers and cotton buds – commonly found on beaches – came into force in October 2020. Our research and policy impact assessment for Defra underpinned Government action and the public consultation, and our work for the Welsh Government looks set to lead to further action.

INNOVATION, DATA AND INSIGHT

In a world of big data, it is easy to feel overwhelmed without clear data visualisation. We helped WRAP and the 2 Minute Foundation to better navigate their data by developing interactive data dashboards that provide insight and analysis at the click of a button. Building on this success, we are working on innovative tools to support circular economy decisions throughout the supply chain.

FISHING AND AQUACULTURE GEAR

A previously overlooked waste stream, fishing and aquaculture gear is becoming a hot topic due to recent focus by the EU and UK Governments and popular interest sparked by Netflix’s controversial Seaspiracy. We are supporting UK Governments to understand what can be done to improve waste management and reduce marine litter.

WASTE SERVICES OPTIMISATION

Over the last year, our **Waste Services Optimisation team** supported an increased demand in local and national governments and waste industry bodies wanting to understand the policy landscape and how this might impact and shape waste collection services.

DESIGNING FUTUREPROOF WASTE COLLECTION SERVICES

We continued to support UK local authorities in identifying cost-effective waste and recycling collection services that maximise recycling performance.

In addition, we supported a local authority to develop a long-term plan to maximise recycling rates over the next 30 years. Our roadmap identified short-, medium- and long-term options to increase their recycling rate using a composition-based waste flow model that enabled key policy measures to be 'overlaid'.

PROCURING WASTE SERVICES

We assisted a local authority in their process of tendering and awarding the Green, Food, Bulky and Wood waste handling contract, ensuring materials collected are handled effectively with capacity for growth.

SHAPING POLICY

We worked with national organisations, WRAP, Defra and Alupro, to assess UK policy implications, including:

- Impact of a DRS on existing recycling behaviours.
- Peer-reviewing EPR business payment mechanisms.
- Developing tools/guidance for complying with legislation.

SUPPORTING THE SECTOR THROUGH THE PANDEMIC

We supported a local authority in re-negotiating and extending their Environmental Services contracts to ensure service resilience through the pandemic.

We also contributed to a national advisory board to help maintain the safe running of services, keep materials flowing through the system and the economy circular.

11 LOCAL AUTHORITIES WERE SUPPORTED WITH OPTIONS APPRAISALS THAT COLLECTIVELY IDENTIFIED:

£5 MILLION+

combined annual saving.

100,000 TONNES

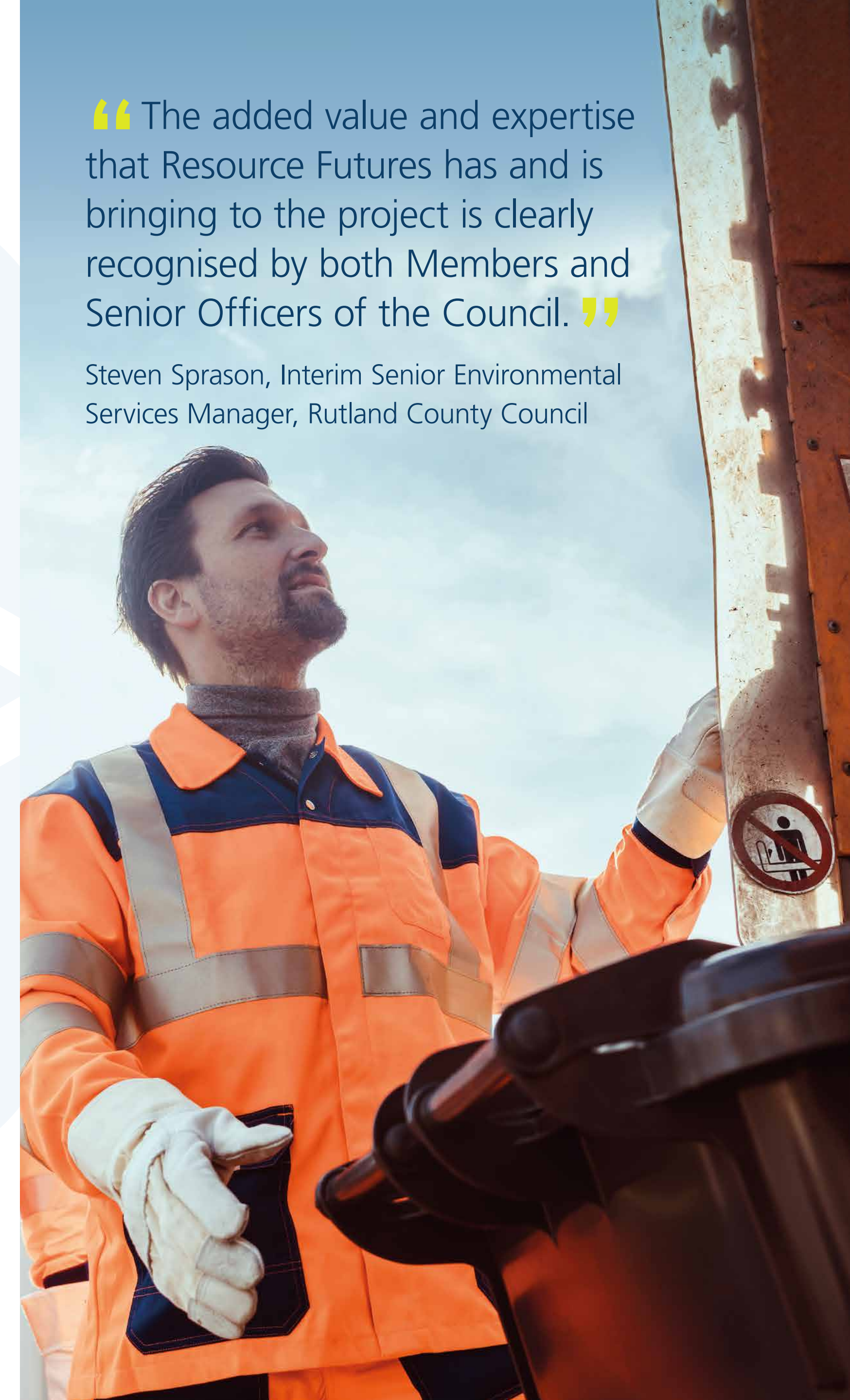
of residual waste recycled or minimised (including 66,000 tonnes of food waste diverted for recycling).

17,000 TONNES

of carbon saved; equivalent to carbon emissions from almost 49 million road miles by car.

“The added value and expertise that Resource Futures has and is bringing to the project is clearly recognised by both Members and Senior Officers of the Council.”

Steven Sprason, Interim Senior Environmental Services Manager, Rutland County Council



SUPPORTING STAKEHOLDERS AND THE COMMUNITY

We are hugely committed to providing a healthy work culture, positive impact and quality in our work. This comes about through actions, large and small, which we wanted to give a flavour of here.

SUPPORTING OUR PEOPLE

Throughout the last year we:

- Provided the flexibility for employees to manage their new working situation safely and effectively.
- Offered five days fully paid carers leave to all employees.
- Provided a wellbeing package for employees including an Employee Assistance Programme.
- Continued to run our learning and development programme and organised 12 workshops on subjects including wellbeing, governance and the circular economy.
- Implemented a new project management system to help improve the ease and efficiency of our employees' work.
- Updated our business strategy to grow all seven workstream areas alongside delivery of a healthy work culture.

SUPPORTING OTHERS

Throughout the last year we:

- Joined the Bristol & Bath B Local Group to support the growth of the B Corp movement in the South West.
- Implemented a new project management system to provide more transparency for clients.
- Continued to develop our tools to help clients measure their greenhouse gas emissions and to help clients design lower carbon products and business models.

DONATING PPE TO THE AMBULANCE SERVICE

When our Evidence team fieldwork was on hold in the initial UK-wide lockdown, we had a stock of high-specification personal protective equipment (PPE) that was not being used. Through our connections we contacted the ambulance service and donated approximately 850 masks and 175 paper suits which were distributed to frontline ambulance staff across the South West.

STORIES FROM OUR PEOPLE



**LAURA SNOULTON,
PRINCIPAL CONSULTANT**

I had been back at work following a yearlong maternity leave for just two weeks before the Covid-19 pandemic forced us all to work from home. Freshly back to work and with three children suddenly at home, I was really worried about how I was going to cope.

However, I need not have worried as Resource Futures was quick to introduce a range of measures to help: flexible working, a bespoke emergency carers leave package, and the option of a temporary reduction in hours, were all swiftly put in place.

I was able to change my working hours pattern to have a better work/home balance, starting early and finishing early. This meant I could spend the late afternoons home schooling and having some fun with the kids too.

As the weeks rolled by, this new arrangement worked brilliantly; I felt supported and it helped to reduce a lot of anxiety, especially as work was still very busy.



**OLIVIA SWEENEY,
JUNIOR CONSULTANT**

Following a move to Bristol, I started my job at Resource Futures on 9 March 2020. I had four days in the office before Boris Johnson announced the first lockdown and 'stay at home' order. I had also just moved into a shared house with two housemates I had never met before and weak internet in

my loft bedroom. Shared living can be challenging at the best of times; throw into the mix two of us being on furlough for a few months and all-in-all I started to question if I had made the right decision.

However, the support I received at Resource Futures was more than I had expected, especially in comparison to the experiences of my housemates and friends. As a junior employee you can sometimes 'fall through the cracks', but this was not the case. Resource Futures was brilliant at keeping everyone in the loop and explaining 'the why', as well as offering flexible working times, support with the right office equipment and with getting my internet to cope with the many team calls.

My line manager went above and beyond as well, calling each week for general and work chats, and even dropping around bits I needed for my new house. Despite being thrown into an unprecedented situation surrounded by strangers, I quickly felt I could go to the team for anything, making the crazy time that little bit more manageable.





LOOKING AHEAD

As well as reporting on our impact each year, an important part of being a B Corp is reviewing where we could do better and putting in place actions to make that happen.

Unfortunately, *the best-laid plans of mice and men often go awry* and the challenges of the last year meant we were unable to implement all of our intended plans from 2019-20.

Over the 2021-22 financial year, we will continue with and build on our previous plans while also focusing our efforts in the following areas:

OUR PEOPLE

We will focus on evolving our way of working to become hybrid and ensure that this works for both the business and our people in achieving a healthy life/work balance.

OUR IMPACT

We will focus on sourcing goods and services from local sustainable suppliers.

OUR QUALITY

We will focus on providing a learning and development strategy to support our people to be productive, to excel and, most importantly, to enjoy their work.

OUR GROWTH

We will focus on our seven workstreams and clients that align impact with sustainable financial returns.

Find out more at resourcefutures.co.uk

[Sign up to our newsletter](#) to receive insights on resources, waste, the circular economy and related behaviour change.



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