



Stakeholders

Better World – Our Commitment to Society

Stakeholder Dialogue

BT has important relationships with a wide range of stakeholders, including employees, customers and suppliers.

Effective communication with each of these stakeholder groups is essential to our business success. The more positive and mutually beneficial these relationships are, the more successful our business will be.

We engage with our stakeholders in numerous ways.

Employees

We offer our employees the opportunity to express their views and opinions on a range of issues at local, divisional and company level through an annual employee satisfaction survey.

Customers

A relentless focus on customer satisfaction is central to BT's new three-year strategy. This is why we have initiated a survey of all 19 million residential customers to find out what BT can do better for them.

Suppliers

For our key suppliers we have put in place a supplier relationship management programme to ensure coherent and constructive two-way communication.

All the above consultation exercises are embedded into BT's core activities and influence policy, strategy and decision-making within the company. They also guide the content of this report.

You can read more about how we consult with each group by following the links above.

We also seek the input of specialists in social and environmental policy through our European Stakeholder Advisory Panel, our Social Report Independent Advisory Panel and through the debates we host around our series of Occasional Papers. These papers consider the complex inter-relationships between companies and the societies in which they operate.

This site is itself part of BT's dialogue process, which is why we host a number of e-mail and live on-line debates on issues of interest and concern to our stakeholders. Readers can also provide feedback on BT's social and environmental performance directly by e-mail.

Better World Links:

- Employee relations
- Customer satisfaction
- Supplier relationships
- European Stakeholder Advisory Panel
- Social Report Independent Advisory Panel
- Occasional papers
- Online debates
- Feedback

European Stakeholders Panel

The European Stakeholders Panel brings together a diverse mix of academics, business and CSR (corporate social responsibility) professionals from all over Europe to help maintain and evolve BT's social policy strategy across Europe.

The panel, made up of 14 members, three from within BT and 11 external members, meets twice a year to share insights into and understandings of societal trends that will help BT better reflect these expectations in its policies. The external and international dimension of the Panel offers a valuable perspective into the engagement process around issues of corporate social responsibility.

Recent meetings have covered issues as varied as the digital divide, the gap between commercial drivers and those for social change, targets for social reporting and the positioning of social management within the restructuring of BT.

The Advisory Panel members act in a personal capacity – the organisational affiliations below are listed for identification purposes only:

- **Maria Buitenkamp** – Independent consultant on strategies and innovation for sustainable development
- **Jon Cousins** – Formally an educational e-entrepreneur and managing partner in Fundango
- **John Evans** – Member of the International Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD
- **Claude Fussler** – Vice-president of Dow Chemical Europe, currently on secondment to the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) as Director for Stakeholder Relations.
- **Adrian Hosford** – Director of BT's Group Social Policy Team
- **Dr. Caroline Lucas** – Member of the European Parliament (Green, South East Region, England)
- **Jane Nelson** – Director, Business Leadership and Strategy, Prince of Wales International Business Leaders Forum
- **Robin Pauley** – Director of Group Communications BT
- **Dr Jonathon Porritt** – Chair of the UK Government's new Sustainable Development Commission
- **Dr Jorgen Randers** – Professor, The Norwegian School of Management, Oslo
- **Richard Sandbrook** – Co-founder of Friends of the Earth
- **Rita Kellner-Stoll** – Senator for Building and Environment, Bremen City Council
- **Dr Chris Tuppen** – BT's manager of Corporate Accountability and Sustainable Development
- **Jan Walsh** – Principal of Crescent Consultants.

Decision Making

We believe that it is important to be explicit about what BT is trying to achieve with each stakeholder group, and to deepen our understanding of what they expect from us.

For this reason, our Statement of Business Practice, The Way We Work, makes the commitment to be “truthful, helpful and accurate in all our communication”.

It also sets out the specific aspirations and commitments, which apply in our relations with our customers, employees, shareholders, partners, suppliers and communities.

Therefore, our stakeholder consultation activities are embedded into our company's core activities – they are not token exercises undertaken for the sake of this report.

Practice

BT's performance against these specific principles, aspirations and commitments can be found via our site index based on the Statement of Business Practice.

It is virtually impossible to make direct links between a specific consultation exercise and a particular company decision.

Nevertheless, the sections on employee relations, customer satisfaction and supplier relationship management describe the various channels through which each of our stakeholders can and do influence company policy, strategy and decision-making. For example:

- how the Consumer Liaison Panels helped design the new-style BT bill
- how BT managers work with their teams to analyse employee feedback to formulate and carry out action plans.

Better World Links:

- [Statement of Business Practice Index](#)
- [Employee Relations](#)
- [Customer Satisfaction](#)
- [Supplier Relationships](#)

Influencing the Better World Report

Whilst our stakeholder consultation activities are not token exercises undertaken for the sake of this report, they do have significant bearing on its content.

For example, using selection criteria approved by our Independent Advisory Panel, we trawled various opinion polls, company stakeholder consultations and press coverage to identify issues of concern to both BT and society. This resulted in the Digital Divide, E-Business and Quality of Life being chosen as “Hot Topics” for the report.

Additionally, the section of this site targeted specifically at investor audiences was developed following close consultation with analysts taking a specific interest in the social and environmental performance of companies.

In deciding which indicators to use in the report we have chosen to follow the Global Reporting Initiative Guidelines. As a multi-stakeholder initiative, we feel that these guidelines provide the most comprehensive and independent insight into the interests and concerns of our stakeholders.

Ultimately, the Independent Advisory Panel has been recruited to ensure that ‘the right things are in our report’ – that difficult or uncomfortable issues are not neglected.

Better World Links:

- Social Report Independent Advisory Panel

See also:

- Global Reporting Initiative www.globalreporting.org