



*Putting Corporate Social  
Responsibility into Practice*

# Corporate governance

Ancon maintains the highest standards of corporate governance, with the Board accepting responsibility and accountability for all the group's operations, including CSR matters.

Excellence in health and safety, environmental and social performance is a key priority for our management teams, and results are reported at the highest level.

All of our operations work in strict compliance with relevant international statutory and regulatory requirements.

The company complies with the requirements of IFRS reporting and with the relevant provisions of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act.

An employee hotline enables information or concerns to be submitted confidentially.

As well as meeting basic statutory and regulatory requirements in each country, the Ancon group globally has:

- ✓ Five-year growth strategy
- ✓ Public and product liability insurances
- ✓ Health & Safety policy
- ✓ Risk management procedures
- ✓ Responsible sourcing policy
- ✓ Purchased product/material inspection procedures
- ✓ Customer satisfaction measures
- ✓ Environmental policy
- ✓ Code of business conduct
- ✓ Dignity at work policy
- ✓ Equal opportunities policy

In addition, our UK operations have achieved:

**ISO9001** – quality management certification

**ISO14001** – environmental management certification

## Contents

<b>Health and safety</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Products and processes</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Materials and suppliers</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Environment action</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>People</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Community</b>	<b>14</b>



ISO 9001:2008  
FM 12226



ISO 14001:2004  
EMS 505377

# Welcome

It's my pleasure to introduce you to the Ancon Group CSR report.

Corporate Social Responsibility is at the very core of our business. Our dedication to excellence in health and safety, environmental stewardship and community investment are the foundations of all our working practices and ethics. Health and safety performance is always the first item on the agenda at Board meetings – taking priority, quite rightly, over our financial performance.

Ancon manufactures high integrity steel components for masonry and concrete construction. We supply customers worldwide in construction sectors from residential to infrastructure. We operate three manufacturing facilities in the UK, including our headquarters in Sheffield, as well as plants and offices in Australia and Switzerland. We also have offices in Germany, Austria and Dubai. All of these operations work to the highest standards of quality, health and safety and environmental management.

Wherever we work, our positive commitment to socially and environmentally responsible practices defines the way we operate. All of our facilities employ strict energy-management and waste-minimisation procedures, following the principles of lean manufacturing. Sustainability is firmly embedded in the business. Our steel products are 100% recyclable and we recycle virtually all of our waste materials, whether from the factory or our offices.

This report provides a brief overview of our CSR activities and commitments, with specific examples of projects we have been involved with and some of our achievements. Our dedication to continuous improvement ensures that we are always building on these successes, creating a thriving, environmentally sensitive, socially responsible business of which our employees, customers and all our stakeholders can be proud.

**Stuart Maxwell**  
Managing Director



# Health and safety

## Taking responsibility

At Ancon, safety is everyone's responsibility – and it's our top priority. Nothing is more important to us than safeguarding the health and wellbeing of our people at work. In practice, that means we all look out for each other.

We engage all employees in taking responsibility for their own and their colleagues' wellbeing, encouraging them to suggest improvements to manufacturing processes or work procedures that could further improve safety.

We believe that a clean and tidy workplace is a safe workplace, so all Ancon factories are maintained to the highest standards of housekeeping.

## International standards of safety

Having achieved ISO9001 and ISO14001, our UK manufacturing operations are working towards the internationally recognised OHSAS 18001 health and safety standard. We have risk assessments in place for all areas of our work, and our operations are fully compliant with far-reaching Health & Safety legislation to protect our workforce. We have thorough near-miss and incident reporting procedures, as well as policies

We pride ourselves on going beyond the demands of legislation to ensure that Ancon provides a safe, healthy, caring environment in which to work.

in place for hazard identification, risk control, staff training, emergency response and performance monitoring.

In addition to meeting basic regulatory standards, our operations comply with the Ancon Group's own strict standards, which are more specific and even more stringent than the statutory requirements. We pride ourselves on going beyond the demands of legislation to ensure that Ancon provides a safe, healthy, caring environment in which to work.

## Reducing incident rates

We believe a single accident is one accident too many. That's why we have a no-compromise philosophy on working safely. We're proud of our consistently low incident rates, but we are constantly striving to improve this performance. We won't be satisfied until we achieve our goal of zero accidents across our operations.

## Health and safety policy

The Group's commitment to providing a healthy and safe workplace for employees and contractors, and for taking care of customers and visitors, is set out in our Health and Safety Policy. This document also outlines our commitment to training, instruction and supervision, enabling our people to perform their work safely and efficiently.

Each of our sites has a dedicated Health and Safety Committee, which meets regularly. Representatives from both office and factory operations sit on these committees, which are tasked with addressing safety issues as they arise and communicating new initiatives and practices across the workforce.

## Staying safe on the roads

All Ancon company car drivers in mainland Europe have passed a driver safety training course. Our external sales people clock up, on average, 45,000km per year, so it's important they know how to drive as safely as possible, in all conditions. During the course many of our experienced drivers, some of whom have driven more than a million kilometres, were amazed at how their cars behaved in critical situations, such as on wet or icy surfaces. All are now equipped with the knowledge and skills to deal safely with anything the roads throw at them.







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# Products and processes

## **Pioneering products – improving efficiency and reducing waste in construction**

Ancon designs and manufactures steel fixings, support systems and other essential components for the masonry and concrete construction industries, worldwide. Our products are used in a wide range of applications including houses, schools, hospitals and infrastructure.

In fact, they have been used on some of the most prestigious projects in recent years including London St Pancras Station, the Brisbane North-South Bypass Tunnel in Australia and The Palm, Dubai.

Ancon products facilitate more efficient, less wasteful construction processes by optimising the use of materials and reducing on-site man hours.

Here are just a few examples:

- Reinforcing bar couplers simplify the design and construction of concrete structures by reducing the amount of steel reinforcement needed.
- Ancon masonry reinforcement is located in bed joints, where it can provide the required strength without thickening the wall.
- Shear load connectors simplify the design and construction of movement joints in concrete structures by replacing complicated features such as keyed joints, corbel supports and double columns.

## **Efficient processes – continuous improvement**

Operational Excellence is the driving force behind the efficiency and ongoing improvement of our processes. Encompassing the latest lean manufacturing and Six Sigma principles, our operational excellence programme helps us to continuously improve the quality of our products and reduce waste, operating costs and delivery lead times.

The everyday implementation of process improvement tools and continuous improvement methods means Ancon is well positioned for sustained growth, keeping us at the forefront of the steel fixings industry and minimising our environmental impact. It ensures that our products and our business continue to rise to the challenges posed by the ever-changing economic, environmental and social conditions in which we operate.

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### **Dowel accelerates build times**

Ancon has developed a 'Lockable Dowel' for use at temporary joints in post-tensioned concrete frames. This new product allows movement at the joint, accommodating initial shrinkage of the concrete, and is then locked in position with resin. The locked dowel continues to transfer load but movement can no longer take place, providing continuity in the concrete frame. Use of these dowels eliminates any need to prop the concrete during construction, improving site access and allowing overhead services to be installed without delay.





Our products are used in a wide range of applications including houses, schools, hospitals and infrastructure.



Ancon Lockable Dowels were used in the new Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne, Australia.  
(Photo credit: Children's Health Partnership)



# Materials and suppliers

## Steel – strength, sustainability, endurance

Many of our products are manufactured from stainless steel, which offers life-long corrosion resistance, high ductility and strength, stain resistance and, where required, an aesthetic surface finish. Due to its long-life, low-maintenance characteristics, stainless steel offers whole-life costing benefits, since no remedial or refurbishment measures will be required during the life of the structure.

Not all of our products are manufactured from stainless steel – just those for which its significant anti-corrosion properties offer a real benefit. We use carbon steels for products that will be permanently encased in concrete, such as reinforcing bar couplers and punching shear reinforcement. Crucially, at a time when the building industry is striving for improved sustainability to meet tough Government targets, steel is typically manufactured from around 60% recycled material and is itself 100% recyclable. Our latest wall tie innovation has even taken us away from steel altogether, enabling us to achieve the lowest thermal conductivity value of any product on the market.

## Enhancing the built environment – for life

As well as delivering benefits at the construction stage, Ancon products go on contributing to the efficiency and integrity of the built environment throughout the life of the structure. For example, our MultiJoint system protects against cracking and uneven settlement at joints in concrete floors, caused by high frequency, wheeled traffic.

Our product portfolio is particularly well placed to support CO<sub>2</sub> emission reduction strategies and improve the energy efficiency of buildings. Our low thermal conductivity wall ties, for example, minimise heat loss between the external and internal leaves of cavity walls, while our Isolan balcony connectors create a thermal break between the external balcony and the structural frame.

## Supply chain management

Ancon purchases stainless and carbon steel direct from the steelmakers. Our supply chain management ensures that all aspects of the production and distribution of our raw materials are ethically sound. The majority of our material is sourced within Europe, and our major European-based suppliers hold ISO9001 and ISO14001 accreditations. To remain competitive and ensure an uninterrupted supply of material, whatever the demand, we also source materials from further afield. Representatives from Ancon recently visited a mill in India to audit performance before adding it to our supplier database in line with our responsible sourcing policy.


We manage an efficient supply chain by purchasing direct from the mill. Some of our products are bespoke. This means each component is value engineered to suit each project, reducing waste. We also manufacture standard products which are stocked at distribution outlets. This enables our customers to source Ancon products locally, helping to reduce the carbon footprint associated with construction activities.

## TeploTie boosts energy efficiency

To service the growing demand for more energy-efficient homes, Ancon now supplies the new TeploTie wall tie, manufactured from basalt fibres. This ground-breaking new product offers extremely low thermal conductivity. In fact, it is the most thermally efficient wall tie on the market. It improves the energy efficiency of masonry cavity walls by minimising heat loss through thermal bridging. With a thermal conductivity of just 0.7W/mK, TeploTie is excluded from U-value calculations, minimising insulation thickness and valuable wall footprint.







Ancon products go on contributing to the efficiency and integrity of the built environment throughout the life of the structure.

Ancon Isolan connectors provide a thermal break at the balcony locations on the Daisy Spring Works residential development in Sheffield, United Kingdom.

# Environmental action

## Sound environmental stewardship

Ancon is firmly committed to reducing the impact of our operations on the environment. This commitment is manifested in our rigorous recycling procedures, strict energy-efficiency schemes and effective waste-minimisation practices.

## What goes around...

The culture of recycling is firmly embedded across all Ancon manufacturing and administrative operations.

Ancon products are manufactured from steel – one of the most easily and effectively recycled construction materials. Steel is 100% recyclable and can be recycled over and over again without detriment to its properties or performance. What's more, steel recycling is an economically viable, self-sustaining process.

Steel can be extracted from any building reaching the end of its life and recycled via the steelmaking process into new products.

At Ancon, we recycle all of the scrap steel generated by our manufacturing operations – so nothing is wasted. We recycle all wood, paper and card waste too. Our waste lubricants are collected by a specialist contractor to be reclaimed. The pallets on which materials are delivered are dismantled by another contractor and reconstructed into useful containers for our products. Even organic waste such as fruit skins and tea bags are composted and used to enrich the grounds around our buildings. It's all part of our drive to eliminate waste throughout our operations.

## Energy and waste management

Ancon's manufacturing processes have a relatively low environmental impact – we use electricity to power our machines and gas for heating, but we are not an energy-intensive business. That doesn't mean we are complacent about reducing our environmental impact.

Our factory operations follow the principles of lean manufacturing, adopting processes to fabricate our products as efficiently as possible while generating the minimum possible waste. Continuous improvement programmes are in place to ensure we keep getting better and more efficient every year.

In every part of our business, from the factory floor to the boardroom, we strive to minimise energy consumption. From switching off lights where they are not needed to running our machinery at optimum efficiency, everyone in the business plays a role in ensuring we use our resources as carefully as possible.

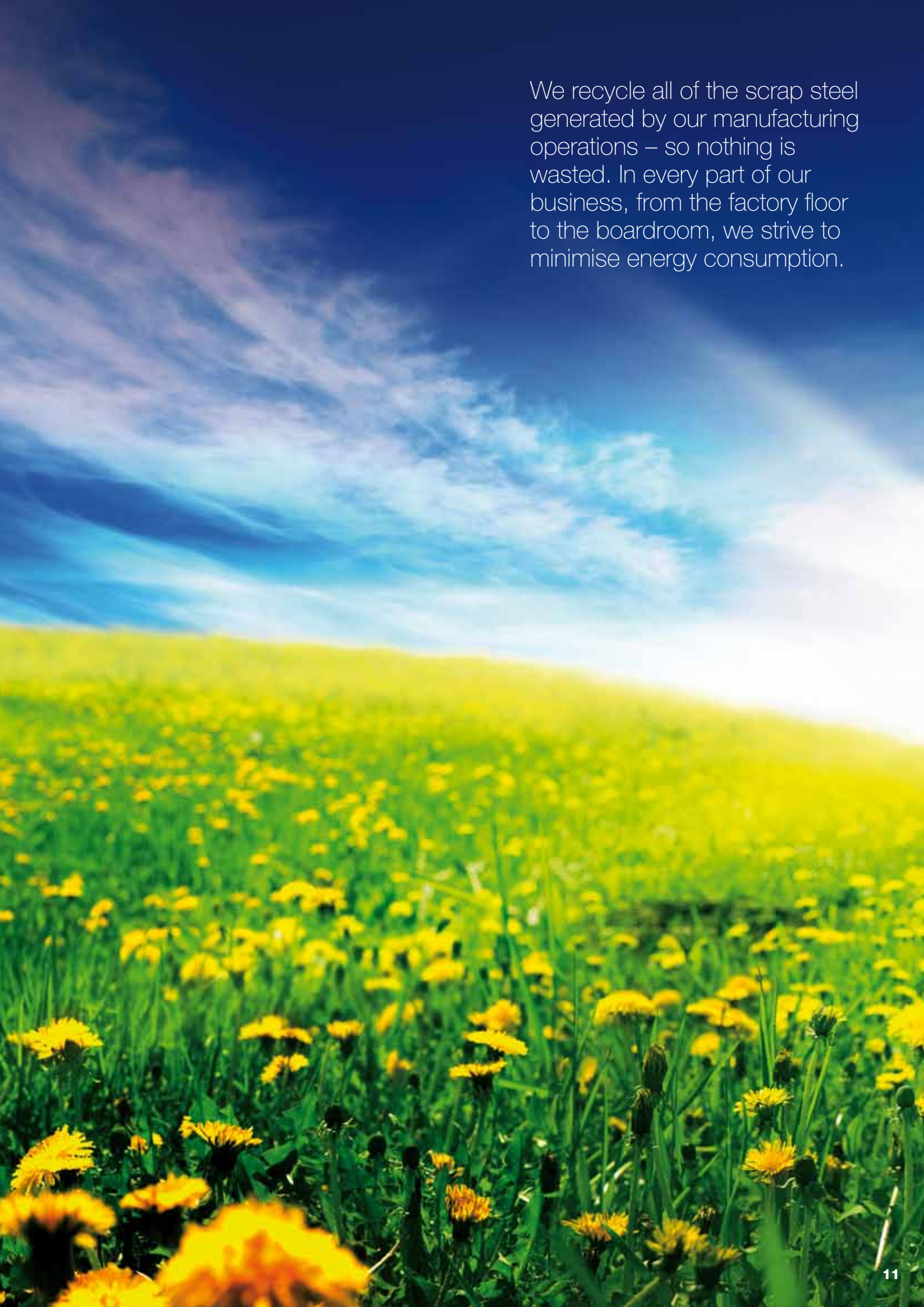
In our offices we strive to minimise paper usage. Double-sided printing is standard and we print our marketing materials on paper that is 80% recycled and 20% FSC-certified virgin pulp. All documents are also made available in electronic format, removing unnecessary delays and cost when responding to customer enquiries.

## Committee keeps eco-performance in check

The Ancon Environmental Improvement Committee meets regularly to implement and progress environmental improvement projects across the business. The committee, which comprises representatives from all areas of our operations, discusses new initiatives and plays a vital role in communicating our environmental strategies and performance to all employees and the Board.





A vibrant field of yellow dandelions under a blue sky with wispy clouds. The field is in the foreground, and the sky is in the background. The text is positioned in the upper right corner of the image.

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# People

## Putting people first

Caring for our communities is all about looking after our employees, being a good neighbour to people living near our operations and supporting the wider community in the areas where we're based.

## Engaging and empowering employees

Communication is key to engaging and empowering employees, and we keep our people fully informed about company developments through regular newsletters and briefings. Our employees' personal and professional development is supported by performance reviews and individual training plans, including NVQs in subjects such as lean manufacturing for our production staff.

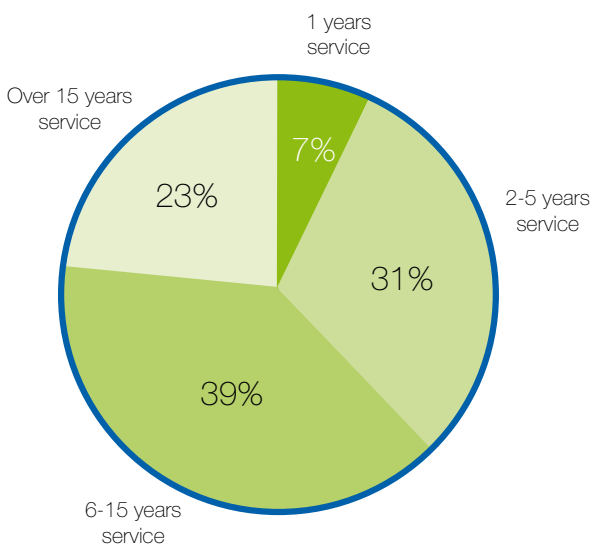
We're extremely proud of our high staff retention rates, which are testament to the rewarding, supportive and friendly environment we nurture in our workplaces. Almost a quarter of our people in the UK have been with us for more than 15 years, and more than half have been with us for more than six years. Such commitment is celebrated by our long-service awards.

## Talent management

As well as developing our existing skills base, we're keen to attract and develop new talent. We offer apprenticeships to school leavers, in conjunction with local training providers and colleges, which lead to technical qualifications. We're proud of our track record of taking people from our apprenticeship or training schemes and developing them through the business over many years. In fact, our Operations Manager and Special Projects Manager both started out with Ancon on youth training schemes back in the 1980s.

We value our employees' opinions too. And we don't just pay lip service to employee involvement. Our suggestion scheme welcomes ideas for improvement from anyone in the business, and rewards people whose suggestions are put into practice.

## Length of service - UK employees



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As a Business Language Champion, we encourage school children to embrace language learning.

# Community

## **Championing local communities**

Community involvement runs deep at Ancon. Whether we're sponsoring a charity event, hosting work experience students from local schools, donating materials for construction projects in the voluntary sector or helping to enhance our neighbourhood for the benefit of local people, we're proud to play our part in building strong, cohesive communities.

## **Race night fundraiser**

All Ancon employees are encouraged to volunteer their time to raise funds for charities close to their hearts. Ancon sponsors the venue hire and catering at an annual charity race night in Sheffield, making the event free to attend to assist the fund-raising effort. This popular evening regularly raises more than £2,000, with past beneficiaries including the Sheffield Children's Charity, Weston Park Cancer Research Centre and the special care baby unit at Rotherham General Hospital.

## **Languages at work**

Ancon has achieved Business Language Champion status for our work with secondary school students in Yorkshire and Humberside. We host groups of students to demonstrate the essential role that language skills play in today's global business

environment. It's part of a national 'Routes into Languages' initiative that aims to encourage language learning beyond secondary school. Visiting students spend time with our multi-lingual employees who use their language skills at work every day. Students are tasked with translating documents and conversing in their second language, giving them a chance to build confidence and practise their language skills in a real-world setting.

## **Preserving an icon**

When severe gales damaged an iconic monument in Sheffield, Ancon was quick to donate materials and technical support to help restore the historic structure. The Cholera Monument, erected in 1834, is a slender 22-metre high sandstone structure. Following the storm, which caused serious structural damage, Ancon provided reinforcing bars, couplers and support cleats to stabilise the monument and help preserve it for future generations.

## **Support for autism care**

Ancon donated 4,000 wall ties and insulation retaining clips to the Daisy Chain charity in Teesside. The components were used in the construction of a unique new day care centre for children with autism and their families. The centre provides a sensory play area, IT and music suites, art and craft areas and conference facilities.

Ancon is proud to play our part in building strong, cohesive local communities.





We donated materials to the build of a new day care centre for the Daisy Chain charity in Teesside, United Kingdom.



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