

Corporate Social Responsibility



At Forte Engineering, we are committed to environmental sustainability and the development of society through ethical business activities and excellent employment practices



INTRODUCTION

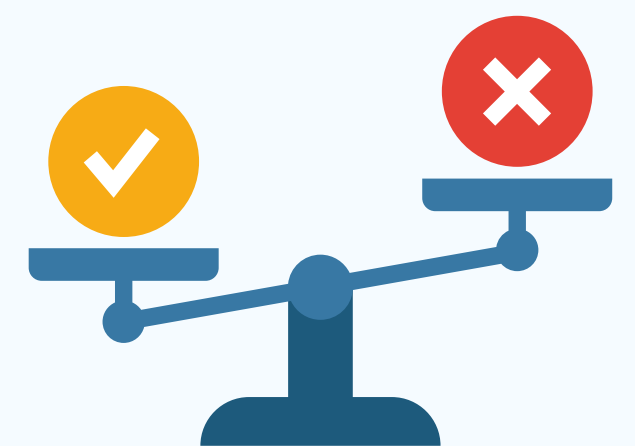
Forte Engineering Ltd seeks to be a good corporate citizen in everything that it does. To demonstrate this, we are committed to environmental sustainability and the development of society through ethical business activities, which includes respect for human rights and excellent employment practices as a core value.

Our Guiding Principles are :

- to comply with all applicable legislation and identify ways to exceed customer expectations and legal compliance
- to operate our business in transparently, so that it is easy for others to see what actions we are taking
- to act in ways consistent with values that are regarded by society and individuals as good and desirable
- to respect and seek opinions and guidance from all parties who have an interest in our business
- to base our business on creating lasting relationships with stakeholders through open and fair communication, building a culture of mutual respect at all levels

Our ethical employment practices include:

- having effective human resources practices in place
- training & briefing all staff in relevant legislation
- understanding our supply chain employment practices
- actions to be taken to ensure that we identify and eliminate modern slavery
- due diligence when we enter new, or extend existing, procurement contracts.



To this end, we have created this CSR policy, which is supported by a number of specific policies below, to ensure that we remain proactive in all aspects of our business that affect people or the environment.

We expect our business partners to support this CSR policy and build their business on an ethical framework in accordance with the broad principles of this policy.

This policy will be reviewed annually as part of the Management Review process, to ensure its continued relevance and adequacy.

It is part of the company's training programme to ensure that this policy statement is briefed, understood and implemented at all levels within the company.

PURPOSE

The purpose of our CSR strategy is:

- to align our operations with our company ethos, to be the most highly trusted partner on the UK railway for electrical and mechanical, telecoms and design engineering expertise
- to do so with a determined focus on delivering maximum benefits in three areas – environmental, social and economic
- to communicate clearly to, and encourage the engagement of:
 - employees
 - management
 - partners
 - clients
 - suppliers
 - external communities
- to set achievable goals and to monitor progress towards attainment
- to reassess goals and refine over time, with a view to setting more detailed key performance indicators
- to ensure that CSR is at the heart of everything that we do
- to be seen as an industry leader in contributing to the welfare of people and the environment
- to support local communities when delivering our projects
- to ensure that relevant CSR training is continuously provided to management to enable them to drive its success, and to our workforce to enable them to contribute effectively and provide meaningful feedback in order to maintain excellence
- to embed all the above in the employee experience from day one – including recruitment, onboarding, career development and career progression through to retirement



SCOPE

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Forte Engineering believes that it has a responsibility to care for and protect the environment in which it operates. We are fully committed to improving environmental performance across all of our business activities and will encourage our business partners and members of the wider community to join us in this effort.

Forte Engineering recognises its key impacts to be in the areas of:

- Energy use
- Raw material use
- Waste generation
- Water use
- Transport
- Procurement



We will strive to:

- Adopt the highest environmental standards in all areas of operation, meeting and exceeding all relevant legislative requirements
- Assess our organisational activities and identify areas where we can minimise impacts
- Minimise waste through careful and efficient use of all materials and energy
- Purchase sustainable products wherever feasible [e.g. recycled, FSC or low environmental impact products and energy from renewable sources]
- Publicise our environmental position
- Train personnel in good environmental practice and encourage personal involvement in environmental action
- Reduce risks from environmental, health or safety hazards for personnel and others in the vicinity of our operations
- Adopt an environmentally sound transport strategy
- Aim to include environmental and ethical considerations in investment decisions where appropriate
- Assist in developing solutions to environmental problems
- Continually assess the environmental impact of all our operations

ACTION PLANS

Forte Engineering has developed a series of action plans to supplement each of its environmental policy objectives. These are as follows:

Energy use

- Ensure offices are properly insulated
- Use energy monitors and thermostats to identify areas of wasted electrical energy
- Encourage the reduction of energy consumption using motion sensitive lighting in our depot, turning off lights and electrical equipment when not in use.

Raw material use

- Check & verify quantities needed to avoid excess materials

Waste generation

- Recycle excess materials
- Train personnel and clients about recycling opportunities
- Use specialist green recycling facilities where possible but always dispose of waste responsibly
- Recycle on site using cuttings for compost or using mulching mowers when appropriate.
- Encourage regular maintenance to reduce waste quantities

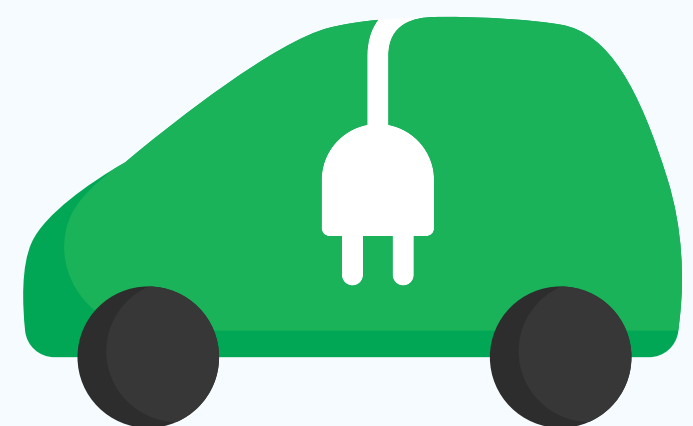


Water use

- Encourage the use of water butts and recycled water
- Use water only when necessary
- Use water at times of the day when minimal evaporation will occur
- Only use as much water as is needed

Transport

- Service vehicles regularly to maximise engine and tyre efficiency
- Monitor and feedback to all staff on driving style & technique using the tracker system installed in our vehicles
- Encourage daily activities to reduce mileage
- Reduce load weight when possible, to reduce fuel consumption
- Move to electric vehicles when time comes to replace, the first being an electric van
- Install electric vehicle charging points



Procurement

- Source from and use local suppliers where and when possible
- Ensure materials are from sustainable sources
- Use companies with strong CSR policies. Monitor this using our procurement policy, which requires annual checks on our top 10 suppliers

SOCIAL IMPACTS

Forte Engineering understands the value of community involvement and acknowledges the need to deliver benefits to the local community as a result of winning a contract that is funded by the taxpayer.

We will always agree a level of input with our clients, aimed at delivering benefits that are commensurate with the value of the contract being awarded.

The following are examples of community benefits that could be delivered under any project that is awarded. It is neither exclusive nor exhaustive:

- Recruit and train long term economically inactive persons and or 16-24-year-olds not in education employment or training
- Agree to a set number of person-weeks of employment/experience per annum (to be agreed upon contract award). A person-week is the equivalent of one person working for 5 days either on site, or through a mix of on-site work and off-site training (paid or unpaid)
- Consider employing an apprentice during the contract period
- Offer work placements to school, colleges and university students as part of their course or for any individual interested in gaining experience in your sector
- Community Initiatives: Volunteering days, contribute to community regeneration schemes, sponsor mini sporting tournaments e.g., rugby or football etc.
- Educational Contributions: Engage positively with school-age children; work placements for secondary-school children and college students , visits to primary schools to engage with younger children, provide educational opportunities to local schools e.g. site visits etc.

EXAMPLES OF COMMUNITY PROJECTS

We support a local charity, Healthy & Active in East Kilbride <https://healthyandactive.org.uk> by fitting linked smoke alarms compliant with Scottish legislation and carrying out garden work.



We have designed, supplied materials, and installed lighting for a footpath, in response to local demand and the budgetary constraints of the local council as part of a community project, which we then handed over to the local authority to maintain.

ECONOMIC IMPACTS

Forte Engineering recognises its' responsibilities to provide first class working conditions and economic rewards for all employees and for all those engaged in working for the company. This contributes to wellbeing and is achieved by:

- Payment of the Real Living Wage as a minimum for all employees, and to industry standards for skilled labour
- Ethical and sustainable business practices
- Ethical sourcing of materials and labour
- Equal opportunities for induction and career advancement for all people regardless of any characteristic
- Continuous training from day one of employment



We are in the process of implementing an Occupational Health scheme for our employees.

We regularly engage with our employees using anonymous Microsoft Forms surveys. This allows them to raise any concerns without reservations about being identified, and alerts Forte Engineering to issues that need to be addressed.

We have an open door policy that encourages employees to raise personal development and/or HR issues at any time, and to have representation if they believe it would be beneficial to them.

IMPLEMENTATION

For each action that we take, we will assess in advance:

- Why we do it
- How we do it
- Resources required to make it happen

We will monitor outputs:

- Benefits to the community
- Benefits to the business
- Opportunities for improvement

CSR is to be delivered as a specific toolbox talk as part of our induction process and will be repeated as part of our regular toolbox talks programme.

Employees will be expected to include CSR outputs as part of their daily reports.

Annual appraisals will include CSR performance.

We will add Corporate Social Responsibility as a standing item in our regular management meetings and will create reports that will enable us to monitor performance.

This will be an evolving process. We expect change to happen on an ongoing basis and we will constantly review and refine our key performance indicators, employing innovative solutions as they become available, and adjusting our goals in light of experience, legislation and advances in technology.



SUPPORTING POLICIES

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

Forte Engineering is fully committed to providing a harmonious working environment in which employees can maximise their full potential and to contribute to business success, irrespective of gender, race, disability or marital status. We adhere at all times to the requirement of the Equalities Act (Scotland) 2010

Forte Engineering is committed to identifying and eliminating discriminatory practices, procedures and attitudes throughout the organisation.

Forte Engineering believes that all employees are entitled to be treated with dignity and respect while at work and also when representing the business in any capacity outside of work. Forte Engineering expects employees to support this commitment and to assist in all possible ways.

The aim of this policy is to prevent discrimination, provide guidance to resolve any problem should it occur and prevent recurrence.

Preventing Discrimination in Employment

Forte Engineering endeavours to ensure that no individual or job applicant is discriminated against, either directly or indirectly, on the grounds of gender, race, nationality, ethnic origin, marital status or disability. This commitment applies to all the aspects of employment outlined below:

- Recruitment and selection, including advertisements, job descriptions, interview and selection procedures
- Training
- Promotion and career development opportunities
- Terms and conditions of employment and access to employment-related benefits and facilities
- Grievance handling and the application of disciplinary procedures
- Selection for redundancy



Equal Opportunities Awareness

All employees will be informed of Forte Engineering's expected standards of conduct in respect of equality of opportunity at the induction stage of employment. This will outline the need for equality in the workplace, the impact that discrimination may have on fellow employees and what the consequences of derogatory conduct or remarks may include.

Where necessary, Forte Engineering will take additional steps to ensure there is an appropriate awareness amongst employees of the effects of discriminatory behaviour.

HEALTH & SAFETY

Forte Engineering has always had health & safety at the heart of all we do, and it is an integral part of how we aim to deliver each project we are involved in. From staff induction, training & development, to the ongoing focus we strive to maintain across all areas of the business, combined with the communication that is aimed at reminding, reinforcing and developing all staff's awareness and understanding of H&S and their part in delivering that vision every day, down to our daily site reporting process that can quickly and accurately highlight areas of potential concern, or simply allow management to maintain close relationship with each site and all staff, whilst managing projects from a distance.

Business Management System (BMS)

We maintain and operate using a comprehensive BMS that is fully compliant with and certified by RISQS & ISO 9001, 14001 & 45001. The full BMS is reviewed and audited on a regular, diarised & scheduled basis throughout the year and additionally on an ad hoc basis if anything is highlighted by legislation, good working practices, and current industry thinking that would warrant a change to any of our processes. This forms the basis of our understanding and compliance with health & safety processes across all we do.

Training

Training and development of all staff is monitored closely by our project team, who can highlight project specific training requirements, and by our workforce themselves, where they identify a potential gap or need in their knowledge or competence.

This is reviewed during appraisals but can be reviewed at any time for both staff development and company requirements with a view to develop their skills and knowledge, thereby maximising their own worth and value to the company

This is closely linked to their overall understanding of H&S which is continuously backed up & reinforced by all the other methods we employ.

As part of our focus on training, an emphasis is placed on making sure staff are aware of their own qualifications, competences & limitations. No member of staff should carry out any task they are not trained & qualified to complete - not only is this a breach of H&S, it could compromise the integrity of the overall project and potentially create huge reputational damage to the company.

Our commitment to a WorkSafe environment means that all staff have confidence in their own and their colleagues abilities as well as their limitations.

We regularly communicate with all staff using the following methods:

- Weekly Staff Bulletin – This is circulated to all staff, it was launched as a H&S Bulletin and has developed into a broader forum of H&S, TBTs, Training, Industry Updates, Technical Briefings, Reminders, and features on subjects like Project Management, 'Nudge Theory', Leadership, Driver of the Month, Unconscious Bias, Technical Briefings, Fatigue, Management Styles, etc. with all being linked back to the H&S message for all staff in all they do, at all levels from Apprentice to MD
- Daily Site Diary – Project updates are submitted daily by the site supervisor covering all works being planned & carried out, this details all aspects of H&S, Close Calls, Delays,

- Outstanding Works, and works identified out with the scope of contract. It includes detailed photographs covering the work allowing a management review to be carried out covering any aspects of what is happening on site. The diary also allows staff to access the latest paperwork (CPP, WPP, Task Briefs, Drawings, etc. for each project through hyperlinks to our cloud-based storage of these documents). This approach and the detail provided has had gained positive feedback from clients & Principal Contractors alike, and work is ongoing to develop it further
- Staff Meetings – We hold regular monthly staff meetings both in person and via Teams or Zoom. The agenda of each meeting is flexible depending on the projects we are involved with at the time, but always has a H&S Section covering a topical subject, as well as a H&S based Toolbox Talk delivered by one of the members of staff to their peers
- Driving & Driver of the Month – Based on recent accident figures driving to and from work presents a higher statistical risk than the hours in between, so in addition to our Driving for Work Policy we introduced a ‘Driver of the Month’ competition based on tracker information available for each van in our fleet, this is promoted and seen as a light-hearted but serious way to keep the H&S message surrounding travel & driving to the forefront for all staff



Risk Assessment

Risk identification and assessment is crucial to all we do, we maintain a Top Ten Risk Assessment Register and a suite of generic risk assessments to be tailored and adapted to whatever project we are working on. In addition, we hold numerous COSHH, Age Related, Young/Older Persons, Sight, Premises, Covid-19 risk assessments built up from situations & experiences encountered.

Focus

We are always looking for ways to maintain and improve our focus on H&S, keeping things fresh and relevant for staff at all levels, above all recognising and trying to address the potential dangers of complacency within the ranks.

Behavioural Based Safety Culture

We regularly meet with staff and encourage feedback to reinforce and instill behaviours to protect and improve health and safety.

ISO Continuous Improvement

A requirement of our ongoing ISO 9001, 14001 & 45001 certification is our commitment to continuous improvement, which we try to encourage and develop across all staff, using all the above initiatives.

MODERN SLAVERY

- Modern slavery is a crime and a violation of fundamental human rights.
- It takes various forms, such as slavery, servitude, forced and compulsory labour and human trafficking, all of which have in common the deprivation of a person's liberty by another in order to exploit them for personal or commercial gain.
- Forte Engineering has a zero-tolerance approach to modern slavery, and we are committed to acting ethically and with integrity in all our business dealings and relationships and to implement and enforce effective systems and controls to ensure modern slavery is not taking place anywhere in our own business or our supply chain.
- We are also committed to ensuring there is transparency in our own business and in our approach to tackling modern slavery throughout our supply chain. We expect the same high standards from all of our associates, contractors, suppliers and other business partners.
- As part of our contracting processes, we include specific prohibitions against the use of forced, compulsory or trafficked labour, or anyone held in slavery or servitude, and we expect that our suppliers will hold their own suppliers to the same high standards.
- This policy applies to all persons working for us or on our behalf in any capacity, including employees at all levels, directors, officers, associates, agency workers, seconded workers, volunteers, agents, contractors, external consultants, third-party representatives and business partners.
- This policy does not form part of any contract of employment, and we may amend it at any time.



Responsibility for the Policy

- The Managing Director has overall responsibility for ensuring this policy complies with our legal and ethical obligations, and that all those under our control comply with it.
- The Managing Director has primary and day-to-day responsibility for implementing this policy, monitoring its use and effectiveness, dealing with any queries about it, and auditing internal control systems and procedures to ensure they are effective in countering modern slavery.
- Management at all levels are responsible for ensuring those reporting to them understand and comply with this policy and are given any required training.

Compliance with the Policy

All employees must ensure that they read, understand and comply with this policy.

The prevention, detection and reporting of modern slavery in any part of our business or supply chain is the responsibility of all those working for us or under our control. All employees are required to avoid any activity that might lead to, or suggest, a breach of this policy.

All employees must notify the Managing Director as soon as possible if they believe or suspect that a conflict with this policy has occurred or may occur in the future.

All employees are encouraged to raise concerns about any issue of suspicion of modern slavery in any parts of our business or the supply chain at the earliest possible stage.

If any individual believes or suspects a breach of this policy has occurred or that it may occur, they must notify the Managing Director as soon as possible.

If any individual is unsure about whether a particular act, the treatment of workers more generally, or their working conditions within any tier of our supply chain constitutes any of the various forms of modern slavery, they must raise it as soon as possible with the Managing Director.

We aim to encourage openness and will support anyone who raises genuine concerns in good faith under this policy, even if they turn out to be mistaken. We are committed to ensuring no one suffers any detrimental treatment as a result of reporting in good faith their suspicion that modern slavery of whatever form is or may be taking place in any part of our own business or in any part of our supply chain. If an individual believes that they have suffered any such treatment, they should inform the Managing Director immediately.



Communication and Awareness of Policy

Training on this policy, and on the risk our business faces from modern slavery in its supply chain will be given where needed.

Our zero-tolerance approach to modern slavery must be communicated to all suppliers, contractors and business partners at the outset of our business relationship with them and reinforced as appropriate thereafter.

Breaches of Policy

Any individual who breaches this policy will face disciplinary action, which could result in dismissal for misconduct or gross misconduct.

We may terminate our relationship with other individuals and organisations working on our behalf if they breach this policy.

DRUGS & ALCOHOL

Forte Engineering has a comprehensive drugs & alcohol policy.

For the purpose of CSR, it is supported by direct assistance for any employee that requires it, as follows:

- Forte Engineering will endeavour to ensure that advice and help are made available to any employees who feel they have a problem with alcohol or drug misuse. In the first instance, individuals will be encouraged to seek advice from their General Practitioner.
- Under these circumstances and with the individual's consent, a referral will be made to the Occupational Health service.
- It may occasionally be necessary for the individual to refrain from work temporarily or undertake restricted duties to ensure their own and others' safety, and safeguard the quality protect business interests.
- Forte Engineering may also allow additional time off (normally unpaid) for employees to obtain treatment or attend support groups. Any individual who seeks the assistance of the company in finding treatment for a drugs or alcohol problem has the company's complete assurance of confidentiality.

Useful Links

As stated above, an individual on recognising an issue with either drug abuse or alcohol should speak with the Managing Director and their General Practitioner. The following links are also recommended as good places to find information or support:

Alcoholics Anonymous

<http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/>
0845 769 7555

Advice on Alcohol & Drugs

<http://www.acad.org.uk/>

FRANK. Friendly, confidential drugs advice.

<http://www.talktofrank.com/>
0300 123 6600

NHS 24: provides comprehensive health information and self-care advice.

nhs24.scot

Call free on 111



FAIR WORKING PRACTICES

We adhere to the seven principles of Fair Work First:

- We recognise every employee's right to trade union membership and representation, and to have the ability to make their voices heard
- Training and staff development is conducted in line with our Equality & Diversity Policy, providing employees with opportunities to develop their skills and experience.
- We do not operate "zero hours" contracts
- We monitor pay levels and we are open with all staff regarding pay structures – equal pay for equal work, regardless of gender or any other characteristic
- Forte Engineering is a Living Wage Accredited employer
- Staff can work flexibly in order to balance work and childcare/family/education. This right is available from day one of employment
- We never fire and rehire

Our recruitment process is open to all, no discriminatory questions or minimum requirements are imposed that would exclude individuals on grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic

The Forte Engineering management team are directly involved in developing and delivering ongoing training and personal development for all staff.

At induction we provide:

- Introduction to company procedures/code of conduct
- Training on the products Forte Engineering supplies, and our customer service standards
- A copy of the company's Equality & Diversity Policy, with full explanation

On Health & Safety:

- Staff are provided with copy of company H&S Policy and procedures, along with H&S awareness booklet
- Training is provided for staff and drivers on manual handling, emergency procedures, risk assessments, accident reporting, safe driving, slip/trip, first aid, fire safety

We conduct annual reviews with all staff to check on requirements for refresher/new training.

Processes are in place to check hours worked do not exceed working time directive limits. Suppliers and subcontractors are also required to self-certify for this requirement.



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If you have any questions about the working practices and CSR policy of Forte Engineering contact Derek Riddell, Managing Director, Forte Engineering at info@forte-engineering.co.uk.