



2021/2022

# Social & Environmental Impact Report

Innovating our impact & patient care





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*"Never felt such ease at a dentist before. The reassurance every step of the way, really made you feel they care. Such lovely staff. 100% recommend."*

**5\* Google Review**

*"Came today after having a traumatic extraction at another dentist. The team were so lovely and kept me at ease, I trusted them 100%. I can't thank you enough for seeing me today."*

**5\* Facebook Review**



# Progress

**The national challenges facing dentistry are well documented and demand for our emergency, referral and private dental care across Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly remains at an all-time high. We can't thank our colleagues, commissioners and other partners enough for their commitment, resilience and support as we continue to navigate our way through the ever-changing dental landscape and respond positively to those changes.**

The pandemic was tough but we adapted our operational and clinical procedures, remaining rightly focused on patient and colleague safety, continually thinking about ways to improve access and make every contact count. Our employee-owners are incredibly creative, keen to contribute their ideas and suggestions for patient care, social and environmental impact and business success. We've retained and embedded many of those innovative changes, seeking to increase our delivery of high quality patient care as much as possible whilst finding new and inventive ways of making a difference for those who need us most.

As you will read in this Impact Report, that innovation extends across all that we do, recognised most recently by our prestigious B Corporation certification. A global

recognition of Smile Together's commitment to using our business as a force for good.

Our collective commitment to tackling oral health inequality for healthier happier communities has never been more important and meaningful for local people and those commissioning our care. We're really bringing our vision and mission to life for our people, our patients, our communities and increasingly our planet.

We hope you enjoy reading our Social and Environmental Impact Report for 2021/22 and are inspired by the difference we make. Perhaps you'll be moved to join or partner with us and become part of our future journey – we can all achieve so much more through an integrated healthcare partnership approach.



**Paul Critchley**  
Managing Director



**John Burchill**  
Chair of the Board



# The challenge and how we tackled it



Over 55,000 people registered on the waiting list for an NHS dentist in Cornwall (for 2020/21 it was 47,000)



A third of 12-year-olds in Cornwall have no dentist



Just over a third of adults and 40% of children in Cornwall have been seen by an NHS dentist in the last year



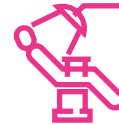
While the number of children seeing a dentist in Cornwall has risen to 40% this remains lower than the national average of 42.5%



Chosen by NHS England to deliver and coordinate emergency treatment through Urgent Dental Care Hubs and contract subsequently extended for emergency and referral service provision



Create : Together patient representative forum established



Over 31,000 patients treated overall



3,434 active private patients registered with us for regular care



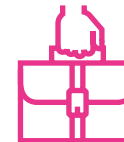
102 children every day have teeth removed in hospital due to decay



3 school days missed on average each year due to dental problems



6,485 children and families engaged in our Brighter Smiles oral health programme in 94 school communities



Brighter Smiles contract extended by Cornwall Council Public Health Team



100% surpluses reinvested



£116k Smile Together investment into Brighter Smiles, Smiles at Sea and other community initiatives



Workforce of 107 with 100% opted-in employee-ownership of eligible employees



The first UK dental practice to become a certified B Corporation

## Awards & achievements

The first dental practice in the UK to receive **B-Corporation certification**

**Winner** of the Business Finance Award in the **Cornwall Business Awards 2022**

**Finalist** in the Business with a Purpose category in the **Cornwall Business Awards 2022**

Our Isles of Scilly Dentist **Michael Twamley** was **winner** of **Nominate a Smile competition** during **National Smile Month May/June 2021**

*"I attended this Newquay dentist today and found the service excellent. A thorough, no nonsense assessment by the excellent dentist after taking X-rays helped me to decide the treatment needed now and in the future. More work ahead, almost certainly, but I will happily stay with this practice."*

**5\* Google Review**

# Our Business

## Resilience, partnership & engagement

### Strategic Objective:

**To generate profit for investment into our services and our communities, benefiting our patients and our people and furthering our impact – 'More Margin, More Mission'**

We're back to meeting and in many cases exceeding our performance and impact targets, generating profit for investment according to how we operate as an employee-owned community interest company and certified B Corporation. This sees us tackling oral health inequality for our patients and our communities and being more environmentally friendly in the way that we do things.

As we build back from the pandemic, our creative and committed teams are innovatively finding new ways to deliver even more patient care and wider impact. Our Service Improvement Programmes ensure we identify, embed and sustain positive change across our business to make us more resilient and sustainable.

Our private patients have loyally returned, recognising that alongside excellent routine patient care we're a very different ethical dental provider, and we're thrilled to see demand for our private provision driving further business expansion in Saltash, near Plymouth.

Partnership and engagement remains core to the way we work with our commissioners, funders, supporters and suppliers – an effective, integrated approach to delivering our mission and making every contact count.

We plan and deliver our own business initiatives and proactively support numerous international, national and local oral health campaigns as well as those relating to employee-ownership (EO), social enterprise, sustainability and the B Corporation movement – for example, this year we:

- Engaged in World Oral Health Day, Mouth Cancer Action Month, Fizz Free February and National Smile Month
- Celebrated EO Day in June which once again coincided with National Cream Tea Day (jam first of course!), contributed to an EO Podcast and other case studies on good EO governance and participated in the virtual annual Employee Ownership Association national conference
- Proudly became a certified B Corporation and part of this global movement of business as a force for good, collaborating to make the world a better place. Independent verification that we meet the highest standards of social and environmental performance, public transparency and legal accountability in balancing profit and purpose

# Impact at a glance

**1st**

UK dental practice to achieve B Corporation certification

**122.9**

B Impact Score – in context, 80 qualifies for B Corp Certification

**100%**

surpluses reinvested

**Committed**

real living wage employer

**100%**

opted-in employee-ownership of a total workforce of 107

**£86k**

Smile Together investment into patient facilities

**21**

Elected Shareholder Impact Board representatives and shareholders engaged in the virtual EOA conference

**61**

Partners with whom we regularly deliver our health inclusion initiatives



Certified  
**B**  
Corporation

## Awards & achievements

Our sedation training course for dentists, nurses and therapists is accredited by the Royal College of Surgeons

Sarah Andrews was highly commended as **Dental Nurse of the Year** and Emi-Jo Mawson was shortlisted as **Young Dentist of the Year in The Dental Awards 2022**

Dental nurse apprentice **Corey Wedlake** was shortlisted in the **Community Champion category of the Cornwall Apprenticeship Awards 2021**

*"Came today after having a traumatic extraction at another dentist. The team were so lovely and kept me at ease, I trusted them 100%. I can't thank you enough for seeing me today."*

### 5\* Facebook Review

*"The dentist and staff are fantastic! Dentists are hard to find these days, good ones are even harder. I would recommend them to anyone"*

### NHS Portal Feedback

# Our People

## Great people, reaching & treating

### Strategic Objective:

**To value, develop and reward our people, proudly working in motivated and productive teams**

It's testament to our people that we've delivered such high levels of patient care this last year and found new ways to improve the oral health of vulnerable and hard to reach communities across the county and beyond.

The chair of our Shareholder Impact Board (SIB) of elected representatives attends Smile Together Board and other formal committee meetings, ensuring that our employee-owners voices are heard at the most strategic level. SIB has significantly boosted Health and Wellbeing resources for our people and Patient Hub oral health advice and guidance for our patients.

With Standard Operating Procedures continuing to change on a regular basis, our teams have been trained in these alongside new national protocols, guidance and other safety measures. Our bespoke Training Academy ensures colleagues more than achieve their compulsory training requirements and continuing professional development aspirations. 17 colleagues have now completed their Mental Health First Aid at Work qualification and others have achieved their radiography for dental nurses examination, DSE Assessor training, NEBDN examination in special care dental nursing and apprenticeship in dental nursing.

Our sedation training course for dentists, nurses and therapists is accredited by the Royal College of Surgeons and in training our teams in these techniques we reduce the use of general anaesthetic.

Smile Together goes further too and currently we're sponsoring a former dental nurse through university to become a qualified Dental Therapist, a former receptionist in becoming a dental nurse and a clinical director through his MBA with Saïd Business School Oxford!

Our Head of IT and IG proactively represents us at B Local networking events and our Dental Director has been appointed Chair of the first Urgent Care Managed Clinical Network (MCN) in the South West.

Like any UK coastal and rural community, dentist recruitment remains a challenge but our 'Make Cornwall Your Career Destination' campaign with progressive clinical career opportunities allowing choice and development in our safe, supportive environment is proving a success. We've developed a range of Inside Track case studies featuring colleagues' career success with Smile Together (which has seen a staggering 1,188% increase in views year on year).

We also attended three national dentistry shows with a 7' surfboard to support our recruitment endeavours and launch our innovative new succession model encouraging others to consider employee-ownership as part of their retirement strategy.

# Impact at a glance

**3x**

as much verifiable CPD as clinicians require

**2,389**

courses completed on our bespoke Training Academy

**17**

colleagues trained in Mental Health First Aid at Work

**Boosted**

our online Health and Wellbeing resources

**£71,476**

invested in individual learning and development

**219%**

year on year increase in usage of our Careers Portal

**153%**

year on year increase in visits to our Vacancies landing page and 'Register with Us' up 179%

**1,188%**

year on year increase in visits to the Inside Track section of our website



## Awards & achievements

Dentist Paula Souto and Dental Nurse Sarah Andrews were winners of the Cornwall People First – Above and Beyond Awards 2022

Finalist in Dental Practice of the Year and Practice Decontamination Award in The Dental Awards 2021

Shortlisted as Practice of the year in The Dental Awards 2022

*"I had a badly decayed and very painful wisdom tooth needing to be removed and I was dreading it, but the team was quick and efficient and the procedure, which took about half an hour, was virtually painless. I'm smiling, grateful and happy. Great service, thank you."*

### 5\* Google Review

*'Always had a consistently high friendly professional service. Very happy with this practice and very happy to recommend'*

### 5\* Facebook Review

# Our Patients

## Prevent, reach & treat

### Strategic Objective:

#### To deliver high quality care based on continuous improvement

We've marked the third anniversary of our purpose-designed, accessible dental centre in Bodmin which has made such a difference to our patients, especially those with complex health conditions. We've complemented the specialist facilities available there with investments into Penzance and Newquay this last year and have committed to expanding our private dental provision in Saltash with works already begun.

Our Service Improvement Programmes ensure we embed best practice and innovations from our Covid response and we're making every contact count, enhancing skill mix and making optimum use of colleagues' qualifications, skills and experience to benefit patients. Whilst prioritising those with the greatest need, we've enhanced patient communications and use of technology, and our web-based Patient Hub has become a well-visited patient resource.

The results of our patient and stakeholder perception survey showed an unnecessary level of complexity in how we structured our business and delivered our patient care. Consequently, we consolidated brands into just Smile Together, carefully phasing out West Country Dental Care and Brighter Dental, and launched a brand-new website, still with the ReciteMe accessibility tool embedded throughout.

Alongside this we launched Create :Together, a patient representative forum to explore ways of co-producing the delivery of oral health services. By working with those who represent particular population groups we are gaining a better understanding of what barriers and inequalities exist and how we can work together to design better pathways to care.

The numbers of patients seen and treated as we've come out of the peak of the pandemic is extraordinary and again, testament to the dedication of our team of clinical and professional support colleagues. We've built even more partnerships to enhance patient care and pathways. Our collaboration with local pharmacies to facilitate antibiotic prescribing was ground-breaking and our involvement with Cornwall Health for Homeless and The Fishermen's Mission is truly inspiring.

There is recognised difficulty in accessing NHS dental care in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly and very often parents haven't visited the dentist for many years so have lost the incentive to take their children.

Data shows that a third of 12-year-olds in Cornwall have no dentist, and just over a third of adults and 40% of children in Cornwall have been seen by an NHS dentist in the last year. While the number of children seeing a dentist in Cornwall has risen (40.9%) it remains lower than the national average of 42.5%.

It's never been a more important time to promote good oral health care, make a difference and tackle oral health inequality across the county and beyond.

# Impact at a glance

**19,448**

urgent and emergency appointments, keeping patients out of pain and A&E

**576**

out of hours sessions (evenings, weekends and bank holidays), 100% on target

**2,405**

children completed courses of treatment with us

**824**

minor oral surgery patients, avoiding the need for a hospital visit

**2,716**

orthodontic patients seen

**3,434**

active private patients registered with us for regular care, 258 on our Patient Plan

**100,714**

inbound calls to our Call Centre (daytime, evening and weekend

**Boosted**

resources available on our Patient Hub



## Awards & achievements

Smile Together shortlisted as Practice of the Year in The Dental Awards 2022

Contributed to a speech in the House of Lords about the impact of dental social enterprises and community water fluoridation with fellow employee-owned dental CIC CDS

*"Fishing is one of the most dangerous jobs in the UK and dental pain can impact upon your ability to do your job and be safe. Fisherfolk are a hard working yet underserved community who find it difficult to make and keep health care appointments due to the nature of their work. Seeing how you interact with them, overcome their nerves and come back out with big smiles is just fantastic".*

**Mike Dale, Fishermen's Mission Area Officer for Cornwall**

# Our Community & Environment

## Resilience, partnership & engagement

### Strategic Objective:

To make a sustainable difference in our local communities

In 2021 Public Health England published a report which, for the first time, described the current oral health inequalities nationally. In Cornwall the highest single cause of hospital admissions for children between the ages of 5 – 9 remains tooth extraction under general anaesthetic. An average of 3 days each year are missed from school due to dental problems with further economic impact of days lost from work whilst caring for these children. Extraction of teeth with general anaesthetic is often a child's first introduction to dental care which can lead to anxiety with lifetime consequences.

In the last year 6,485 Cornish children regularly participated in our Brighter Smiles programme of toothbrushing clubs, fluoride varnish application and oral health education and we engaged with hundreds more teachers, parents/carers and family hub workers. Our ambition is to influence thousands more local people.

The self-help virtual resources on our Patient Hub now include four oral health education films and two popular animations of Dylan our Dragon thanks to University of Plymouth Media Arts students.

In September/October 2021 we delivered our fifth Smiles at Sea tour, providing free dental treatment to fisherfolk who rarely visit the dentist due to the demands of their work. We visited 4 harbourside locations in 5 days treating 102 fishers and their dependent family members, 40% of whom hadn't visited a dentist for 5 years or more (10% for more than 10 years). We did 20 fillings, 10 extractions, 4 scale and polish and 6 x-rays, with 2 patients referred for emergency treatment and another for complex urgent minor oral surgery.

We support Cornwall Health for Homeless pop-up clinics across the county providing dental treatment or oral health advice and guidance alongside other services including health screening, liver scanning, sexual health, mental health support, Covid and other vaccinations and support for those in temporary accommodation. We proudly hosted the December 2021 pop-up in our Bodmin Dental Centre for which our teams also collected warm clothing donations and made up Christmas food and gift boxes for those attending both this and the pop-up in Camborne before Christmas.

Our teams generously volunteer their time to make up oral health packs for donating to Foodbanks, homelessness and other local charities best positioned to reach those families and individuals most in need across the county. These include toothbrushes for the whole family, toothpaste, two-minute toothbrushing timers, a brushing chart and a wealth of information on looking after your oral health and accessing emergency dental care. To date almost 5,000 packs have been donated.

We've recently acquired our own Mobile Dental Unit to help us reach further into the heart of local communities and enhance health inclusion. We are planning to use this for Smiles at Sea 2022 and in supporting future Cornwall Health for Homeless pop-ups.

Each year, we invite our employee-owners to nominate and choose our corporate charity of the year but our collective giving goes even further:

- We raised £1,400 for our 2020-2021 Charity of the Year Penhaligon's Friends, who support bereaved children, young people, parents and carers throughout the county and provide training and advice for childcare professionals. Our current charity is Children's Hospice South West, who provide care and support to local families who have children with life-limiting conditions.
- Our teams supported Cornwall Christmas Box Appeal, donating Christmas dinners in a box for the poorest families in Cornwall
- Whenever we upgrade something, we try to rehome any unwanted items. In the last year we donated 130 pairs of trousers and 25 unbranded tops to [www.jacobswellappeal.org](http://www.jacobswellappeal.org) destined for Sierra Leone and, building on the success of our Laptops for Children programme, we're midst rolling out our PCs for Colleagues programme in return for a donation to our Charity of the Year

# Impact at a glance

**6,485**

children and families engaged with Brighter Smiles oral health activities

**94**

school communities supported by Cornwall Council Public Health team and 23 other Brighter Smiles supporters

**1,257**

YouTube Views of our Dylan the Dragon animations and virtual oral health resources, 185% increase from last year

**£1,400**

raised for our Charity of the Year, Penhaligon's Friends

**102**

fisherfolk engaged in our Smiles at Sea 2021 harbourside tour

**>4,500**

oral health packs donated to foodbanks, homelessness and other local charities

**44**

Christmas boxes donated to Christmas Food Box Appeal and Cornwall Health for Homeless

**94%**

increase in subscribers to our monthly e-newsletter since 2020/21



## Awards & achievements

Featured in the 'Best 23 Top Cornwall Healthcare Companies'

Generated significant national profile through the **Employee Ownership Association** by supporting with a case study on the role of our Shareholder Impact Board, a Podcast on Good EO and publishing 'Our EO Story' celebrating EO Day in June 2021

*"Just want to say a big thank you for all you did to help him and try and save his teeth. It's fantastic that you saw him so quickly on a Bank Holiday"*

**Patient email**

*"Been here twice in the past two years and cannot recommend them enough. All the staff are fantastic, treatment and service faultless. Great dentist, wish I could use them all the time."*

**5\* Google Review**

# Our Community & Environment (cont.)

## Resilience, partnership & engagement

### Strategic Objective:

**To make a sustainable difference in our local communities**

At Smile Together we are proud of our exemplary track record in social impact and our B Corporation certification has inspired us to better balance this with environmental impact. To consider 'people, planet, profit' in all that we do. We partner with those in our supply chain to, wherever possible, source and procure more sustainably and colleagues are proactively encouraged to consider any sustainable changes where they work, with any local successes rolled out across the whole company for maximum impact.

Dentistry is already tightly regulated in terms of clinical waste but we've undertaken further clinical and other waste audits, the results of which are helping us further enhance recycling levels whilst generating a thoughtful reduction in general waste. Our teams are considering sustainable eco-switches in the clinical environment and the effectiveness of suppliers 'green ranges'.

Our Harleigh Road Dental Centre in Bodmin is a registered Colgate TerraCycle location for patients and the local community to deposit their old toothbrushes, empty toothpaste tubes and other oral care product packaging for recycling. This is complemented by smaller recycling points in each of our locations and in many of our Brighter Smiles school communities plus we have a collection bin during our annual Smiles at Sea harbourside tour. So far we've collected 20kg kilograms which has earned us Terracycle points redeemable into a financial return for us to ultimately reinvest back into our communities – a real win:win initiative!

We recognise there's much, much more for us to do. However, complementing the environmental achievements highlighted last year, we can also now report that:

- We're upgrading our fleet and not only is our new Brighter Smiles car a hybrid, we also have a fully electric decon/courier van on order
- We've installed EV charger units at our Harleigh Road Dental Centre in Bodmin where we're locked into a three-year green electricity deal
- The brand new contemporary dental practice that we're currently developing in Saltash will source 100% renewable electricity from Drax and be a beacon for Smile Together sustainability impact reporting
- We have adopted a green IT policy and our website is powered by Krystal internet service provider, using 100% renewable energy
- We have reduced in-house printing by 19% in the last year with the bulk of commissioned print, including this report, procured from a local carbon-balanced printing company

# Impact at a glance

11,500

compostable bags used, negating single use plastic

19%

reduction of in-house printing since 2020/21

46

colleagues regularly involved in our oral health donations project

92,014

items of dental equipment decontaminated in-house

1

mobile dental unit purchased

20kg

oral health items collected for recycling generating further funds for reinvesting

248k

audience reached from our social media accounts, 10% increase on 2020/21

30%

increase in visitors to our Smile Together website since 2020/21



# Patient Plaudits



*"Absolutely delighted with my results! On my recent visit I found the entire team to be friendly, professional and highly organised. They did an amazing job of transforming my chipped and misshapen teeth into a smile that I can be proud of. On the day, I felt absolutely no pain or discomfort during the process. I would 100% recommend using Smile Together!"*

Patient email



*"As an extremely nervous person who has a seriously bad fear of dentists since childhood, the team at Smile Together Saltash are so very friendly, helpful, non-pressured and calming. I'm glad I decided to join as a patient, they are giving me my smile and confidence back."*

5\* Google Review



*"I just wanted to drop a line to say how impressed and grateful I am for the fast and excellent quality treatment my son is receiving from the orthodontist. I'm based on the Isles of Scilly and you have put a treatment plan together for the straightening of my son's teeth quickly and providing really clear information. I'm really thankful for this service"*

Patient email



*"Many thanks for the treatment you performed on me today. You made me feel at ease which was really good of you. The treatment was painless, so much so that I didn't realise you had taken the tooth out. Once again thank you very much"*

Patient email

**(Smile:Together)**

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