

Introduction from our Chairman and Chief Executive

Using the power of
communications to
make a better world.



People are using more data, in more places and on more devices than ever before. Ten years ago, there were just three connected devices in the average UK home. In five years' time, it could be as many as 50.

The UK aims to be a leading digital economy, but faces a major digital skills challenge that's costing an estimated £63bn a year.

BT's expertise and reach make us uniquely qualified to help tackle this. That's why we've put digital skills at the heart of our new strategy on digital impact and sustainability. It will help grow the pipeline of digital talent and, over the long-term, increase demand for our products and services.

We have set a goal to reach 10 million people in the UK with digital skills training by 2025, building on our work in primary schools.

Through our Barefoot Computing programme, we've already trained over 70,000 teachers over the past five years, enabling more than two million children to get a head start on computational thinking. And more young people than ever took part in our Work Ready programme, gaining hands-on tech skills and experience to help them as they enter the world of work.

And we're stepping up our efforts.

This year, we worked with Code First: Girls to train more women as software developers, and BT Sport partnered with Google Digital Garage to provide digital training for small businesses.

The UK is not alone in lacking digital skills and we aim to extend our impact in other key markets. In India, for example, we're working with the British Asian Trust to empower half a million adolescent girls through technology and education.

Building better digital lives is one of the biggest contributions we can make to society and to the UN Sustainable Development Goals, together with championing human and digital rights, and tackling climate change and environmental challenges.

We remain committed to upholding the principles of the UN Global Compact and are helping to drive the conversation on human rights issues like privacy and free expression. We're also exploring how technology can be used to combat human trafficking, and a new smartphone app we helped to develop is enabling the charity, Unseen, to extend the reach of the UK Modern Slavery Helpline.

The urgent need for action on climate change was underlined by the latest report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change this year. We responded by leading the industry with a new ambition to become a net zero carbon business by 2045. Decarbonising our energy use will help us achieve this and 87% of our electricity now comes from renewable sources.

Our digital impact and sustainability strategy is underpinned by strong foundations: keeping people safe and healthy, behaving ethically and developing diverse talent. It's no coincidence that these foundations focus on our people. Our people are our biggest strength, and will be key to enabling us to achieve our ambitions as we transform BT and use the power of communications to make a better world.

Jan du Plessis
Chairman

Philip Jansen
Chief Executive



“Business has an important role in delivering long-term value for stakeholders and society. BT's focus on digital skills will help to prepare people for an increasingly digital world, equip them for the jobs of the future, and support the UK's productivity.”

Jasmine Whitbread
Non-Executive Director and Chair of BT's
Digital Impact & Sustainability Committee