

Corporate Social Responsibility

Our corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives focus on caring for the community, supporting sustainability, protecting the environment and promoting staff wellness.

A socially responsible organisation

As a regulator in an international financial centre, we are committed to acting as a socially responsible organisation and incorporating CSR principles into our daily operational decisions and practices.

Reporting directly to the SFC’s Executive Committee, the CSR Committee plans and coordinates our CSR efforts. It is chaired by the Chief Financial Officer and Senior Director of Corporate Affairs, and its members include representatives from units across the organisation.

The committee is responsible for:

- formulating and developing our CSR vision, principles, framework and policies;

- organising and promoting CSR activities; and
- setting objectives, targets and key performance indicators to measure the effectiveness of our CSR efforts.

The three working groups under the CSR Committee—the Commission Volunteers Group (CVG), Green Working Group and Wellness Group—are tasked with planning and implementing initiatives under specific themes.

We explain our CSR goals, principles and activities on our corporate website and intranet, and circulate a quarterly e-newsletter to update staff about our CSR initiatives. The newsletter is also a platform for participants to share first-hand accounts of our CSR activities and for staff to provide feedback.

Our CSR efforts were recognised by the Hong Kong Council of Social Service which has named us a “Caring Organisation” since 2006.

CSR working groups and themes



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Fostering a greener marketplace

As a regulator of Hong Kong's financial markets, we adopt measures to enhance industry-wide operational efficiency and conserve energy. We also promote environmentally-responsible practices.

Supporting a more efficient financial industry

Our fully digitalised licensing platform WINGS¹ 2.0, together with a companion mobile application WINGS Mobile, provides a one-stop, comprehensive service for users to electronically sign and submit licensing applications and other documents and communicate more efficiently with us. As of end-March 2023, about 98% of licensed corporations have activated their WINGS accounts and 208,000 applications and regulation filings have been electronically signed and submitted via the platform, while about \$67 million in fees were paid to the SFC electronically. We no longer accept licensing applications in paper form and over 620,000 sheets of paper have been saved since the launch of WINGS 2.0.



Community

We provide our staff with volunteering and engagement opportunities to make a positive change in the community and offer volunteering leave to encourage staff participation in community service. This year, 99 SFC staff spent a total of 409 hours volunteering which covered elderly caring, youth development, society inclusion, animal protection and environmental conservation.



Our staff support community services through donations and participating in fund-raising events. This year, we raised a total of \$80,156 through our Christmas charity sale and four Community Chest events: Green Low Carbon Day, Dress Casual Day, Love Teeth Day and Skip Lunch Day.

Donating used items to charities helps people in need and reduces waste in landfills. This year, we donated 127 desktop computers to the needy through the Caritas Computer Workshop and collected 12 cartons of toys, clothing and books for the Salvation Army Recycling Programme. To promote a sharing culture and circulate resources, we encouraged staff to join events organised by Swire Properties including the Mooncake Sharing Programme, Books For Love@\$10 charity book sale and Noodles For Love matching donation scheme.



Making hygiene kits from recycled soap for the homeless

¹ Web-based INTeGrated Service.



Computer donation



Shoreline cleanup

We partnered with Soap Cycling to prepare 100 hygiene kits containing recycled soap for the homeless and street cleaners in Hong Kong. In addition, we donated 16,400 surgical masks to the Hong Kong Women Workers' Association. We also collaborated with Fu Hong Society and the Hong Kong Society for Rehabilitation to sell groceries and items made by their members at our in-house Christmas charity sale, where additional funds were raised from the sale of items handmade by our staff.

We joined hands with Neighbourhood Advice-Action Council to launch a one-year "Phone call support to elderly" programme in August 2022. As part of the programme, 14 staff volunteers made phone calls to elderly persons in 28 households at least twice a month to help them feel connected and cared for as well as to check on their health, find out what they need and refer cases to social workers when necessary.

Environment

We strive to manage our consumption and minimise our carbon footprint². An internal protocol, *A Guide to Working "Green" at the SFC*, sets out guidance for staff to protect the environment at the workplace.

Energy-conserving features in our office include motion and daylight sensor lighting. The office layout was designed to allow more natural light. Recycling bins collecting a range of materials are available at convenient locations across the office.

We use electronic processes for internal procedures to reduce our paper consumption. Meeting materials are shared on tablet computers. To encourage eco-friendly printing habits, we explain to staff the environmental impact of colour printing and remind them to consider the environment before pushing print. Starting from last year, our annual report is only published online as a digital version.

Contributions

	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21
Number of staff participating in volunteering activities	99	39	20
Total volunteering hours	409	120	40
Funds raised for community causes	\$80,156	\$86,922	\$47,739
Corporate sponsorships for community causes [^]	\$24,185	\$2,000	N/A

[^] Including donations in lieu of corporate gifts made in the names of guest speakers invited to our in-house training seminars.

² See Sustainability on pages 91-100.

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Volunteering events

Month	Activity	Purpose	Outcome
June 2022	Soap recycling session with Soap Cycling	To improve the personal hygiene of the less privileged and promote a greener lifestyle	22 staff volunteers helped reprocess soap discarded from hotels and prepared 100 hygiene kits for the homeless and street cleaners
August 2022- August 2023	Phone call support to the elderly with Neighbourhood Advice-Action Council	To provide emotional support to the elderly	14 staff volunteers were paired with elderly individuals and checked in on them over the phone at least twice a month
August 2022	Computer donation to Caritas Computer Workshop	To give away items to those in need and reduce electronic waste in landfills	Donated 127 desktop computers
August 2022	Shoreline cleanup at Bayside Beach	To raise awareness of plastic pollution in oceans	15 staff volunteers participated in the beach cleanup
November 2022, February 2023	Care for abandoned animals at Hong Kong Dog Rescue (HKDR)	To raise awareness about abandoned animals' welfare and promote kindness to animals	20 staff volunteers visited HKDR's homing centre and raised \$3,050 for the charity
December 2022	Christmas charity series	To raise funds and spread Christmas joy to the underprivileged	Six staff volunteers made pastries and handicrafts for the charity sale
January 2023	Storytelling with kindergarteners with the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals	To help kindergarten children develop a good reading foundation	28 colleagues and their family members spent a morning with 25 kindergarteners reading story books and decorating cookies at a bakery operated by a social enterprise
March 2023	Surgical masks donation to Hong Kong Women Workers' Association	To help frontline workers stay safe and healthy	Donated 16,400 surgical masks



Storytelling with kindergarteners



Care for abandoned animals



Rooftop farming

Other green practices adopted in our workplace to use resources more efficiently include:

- sharing recycling tips and information with staff;
- recycling coffee grounds;
- reusing stationery by providing stationery refills;
- automatically turning off desktop computers every weekend;
- setting black and white printing as the default for all staff; and
- reducing the number of rubbish bins in common areas.

We organise activities for our staff and their family members to raise environmental awareness and promote a low-carbon, sustainable lifestyle. We partnered with the Conservancy Association to organise a guided eco-heritage tour of Tai Tam Country Park for our staff. In August 2022, 15 staff and their family members joined the Shoreline Clean-up Day at Bayside Beach, Sai Kung, where the participants gained a better understanding of marine protection from the representatives of the Environmental Protection Department.

A total of 128 staff participated in green workshops on urban farming, microgreens and kitchen herbs organised by Swire Properties. We also held a Kokedama workshop for staff to learn a Japanese method for growing indoor plants. To reduce waste and help protect the environment, staff recycled used red packets in support of Greeners Action's campaign and encouraged staff to donate mooncake boxes, old books and clothing.

We support the World Wide Fund for Nature's global warming prevention and environmental conservation causes.

- No Shark Fins Policy: We have in place an organisation-wide policy pledging not to serve shark fins at any SFC event.
- Earth Hour 2023: We took part in this annual energy conservation event for over 20 years. We encouraged staff to switch off lights for one hour and made a pledge as a corporate supporter.

To raise awareness of global warming and promote wise use of air conditioning, we supported Green Sense's No Air Con Night, which called on households to switch off their air conditioning for 12 hours.



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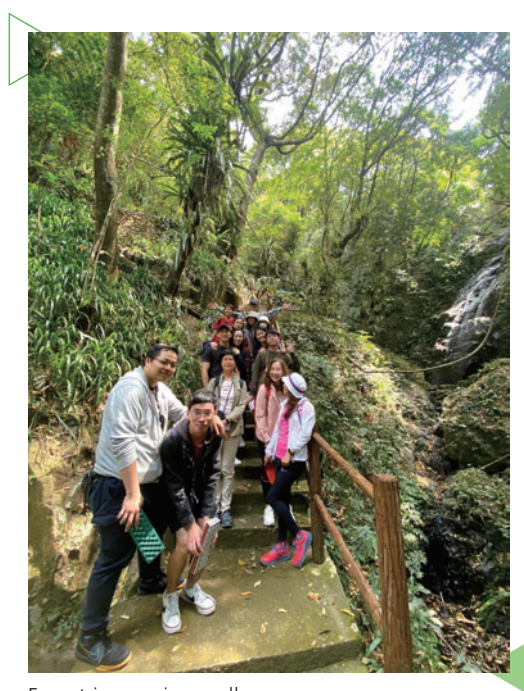
Consumption and recycling

	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21
Consumption			
Paper (pieces/head)	5,429	5,421	7,321
Electricity (kWh)	2,924,902	3,322,576	3,055,590
Recycling			
Paper (kg)	25,095	19,669	66,464
Toner and printer ink cartridges	637	715	897

Wellness

We are dedicated to creating positive mental health for our staff and the wider community as well as promoting best practices for corporate policies. In April 2022, we introduced a flexible wellness benefit in our staff medical insurance plans which entitles staff and their family members to a yearly maximum of \$2,500 to be used to help maintain a healthy work-life balance. Clinical psychology and counselling services for staff and their immediate family members are offered as part of our Employee Assistance Programme. We organise yoga classes and encourage staff to try out a range of wellness activities in our office.

As a founding member of the City Mental Health Alliance Hong Kong (CMHA HK), we actively participate in its activities. During the year, we took part in the CMHA HK Mental Health in the Workplace Surveys to help better address and support mental health and wellbeing in the business community.



Forest immersion walk

We also promoted free webinars and articles offered by CMHA HK and Mind Hong Kong to provide staff with more resources for maintaining both physical and mental health and organised a talk with Family Development Foundation on how to relieve stress and maintain a positive parenting style. To support both World Mental Health Day and World Suicide Prevention Day, we promoted related events via email and shared useful links and information.

Other activities were organised during the year to promote physical and mental health:

- two nutrition talks introduced the Keto diet and intermittent fasting, and shared tips on boosting immune systems and post COVID recovery respectively;
- a "Drink Healthy and Walk for Wellness" initiative encouraged staff to exercise more and consume more vegetables every day;
- a mental health talk promoted positive parenting styles, shared tips to relieve stress and maintain a balance between work and home;
- a home organising and decluttering workshop helped discourage hoarding;
- an online skincare talk shared tips on addressing common skin problems during the pandemic;
- a forest immersion walk provided staff and their family members with an opportunity to connect with nature; and
- a Zentangle art workshop provided staff a relaxing time experiencing the mesmerising and creative art form.

A sense of purpose

The job of organising our staff CSR activities involves more than choosing a cause and taking care of logistics. Leane Ma, a member of the CSR Committee which oversees our CSR efforts, and Jenny Chak, CVG co-chairperson, explained that activities must align with our corporate culture and be suitable for our staff as well as their family members.

During the pandemic, social distancing measures created uncertainty and posed additional challenges. In response, "we simply changed for the change," said Jenny. They were deeply touched by how much colleagues were willing to give back to society throughout the crisis. "At the most critical times, the overwhelming response to our fund-raising and donation initiatives was particularly encouraging and drove us to expand our charity efforts," Leane added.

More fundamentally, organising activities that connected colleagues and made a positive impact on the wider community was highly rewarding to both of them personally. "We definitely felt a sense of purpose," they agreed.



Leane Ma (left), CSR Committee member
Jenny Chak, CVG co-chairperson