

# "Three Year Reflections"

October 2020

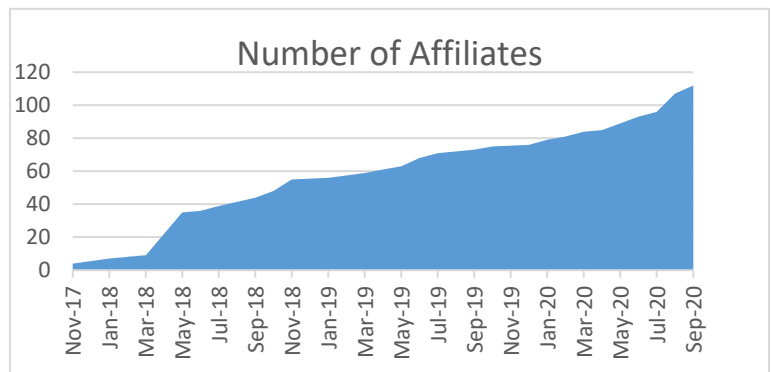


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This blog by Karen Shackleton is part of a weekly series from the Pensions for Purpose team. This week, she reflects on Pensions for Purpose's first three years and some of the milestones achieved.

I can't quite believe that we have just passed the three-year mark. It seems only yesterday that I was discussing the concept of a collaborative information platform with our founding Influencer members, AXA Investment Managers, Baillie Gifford Positive Change Team, Big Society Capital, Bridges Fund Management and Resonance. Today we have nearly 90 firms posting thought leadership on ESG, sustainable and impact investment, with 200 case studies, 130 blogs and a staggering 800 thought leadership articles now listed on the platform. This provides investors with an extensive library of research to feed into their decision-making when considering a more sustainable and impactful investment strategy.

As well as growing our [Influencer](#) membership, the chart shows that we have seen continued growth in our [Affiliate](#) membership. Affiliates are pension funds, independent advisers and trustees, government representatives and academics. They join the platform free of charge and are able to access the restricted content (most of our thought leadership is available for all to read, however).



Most of our 113 Affiliate members prefer to keep an anonymous profile, but we are grateful to the 13 pension funds and advisers who have been willing to acknowledge their interest in this agenda publicly, including South Yorkshire Pension Fund, Worcestershire Pension Fund, PGGM, HESTA, the London CIV and Brunel Pensions Partnership. This list shows that we have expanded beyond the UK to Europe and Australia.

Other milestones that we have noted include our annual conferences, in partnership with DG Publishing, which have seen between 100 and 150 pension funds and advisers attending a one-day event focused purely on impact investing. (It's not too late to sign up for this year's virtual conference, "[Investing with Impact Summit](#)", on 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> November!) One of the insights from last year's conference was that 72% of pension funds present wanted to be investing impactfully within the next three years. That represents a huge shift in capital over the next few years.

We have supported many external events by providing speakers and moderators. These have included the GSG Global Summit, LGC conferences, LAPF events, the IPE global summit, and (this week) an IMF/World Bank meeting.

However, perhaps our biggest achievements during the pandemic have been our Afternoon Teas. These small group one-hour virtual discussions allow pension funds to discover more about sustainable and impact investment by spending time discussing a topic over a cup of tea. We are now booked up until the New Year for these events, which allow the sponsor to continue afterwards with more focused dialogues with delegates.

Finally, our workshops for pension funds are also a valuable tool for funds wishing to move to a more sustainable investment approach. We initially help trustees understand the difference between ESG, sustainable and impact investing, and we then use the Sustainable Development Goals as a framework for a facilitated discussion about the ESG priorities that they feel need to be introduced into their investment beliefs. These discussions are very much considered through an investment lens so that trustees' fiduciary responsibilities are not compromised.

Our team continues to expand, and we now have Charlotte, Alex, Stephanie and Karen all very busy building the platform, with support from Joe, an intern helping us with our social media. We are also working in partnership with the Impact Investing Institute, Make My Money Matter, CBN and other network supporters to leverage our collective impact within the pensions' community. It's so exciting to see change really beginning to happen...

Karen Shackleton

1<sup>st</sup> October 2020