

Responsible business report 2023

Transitioning from strategy to reality

Responsible business | *Empowering sustainable growth*

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Welcome

Welcome to the second responsible business report from Trowers & Hamlins.

Since we launched our inaugural report last year, we’ve been delighted to see how positively our decision to set out our ambitious strategy has been received by colleagues and clients.

In this report, we outline the steps we’re taking to make a reality of our strategy, building on the natural strengths of our culture whilst always pushing ourselves to go further in key areas of the Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) agenda.

We want to acknowledge the progress we’ve made in the last year, whilst still being open and transparent about the challenges we face. In our view, responsible business is a long-term commitment requiring continuous work and attention.

Sara Bailey

Sara Bailey, Senior Partner

Trowers at a glance



245
years of history



9
offices across the UK,
Middle East and Asia



170+
partners



350+
lawyers



1000+
talented people

In conversation with Sara Bailey, Senior Partner

Sara Bailey reflects on the 12 months which have passed since the launch of Trowers' first responsible business report and discusses the highlights and some of the challenges that lie ahead.

Q: It's been a year since the launch of your first responsible business report. What has the response been?

Sara: Our first report was received enthusiastically by colleagues and clients alike. It has had a significant impact in terms of increasing the visibility of our agenda across the whole business and, in particular, providing a framework against which to measure action and progress – helping to focus minds on this critical agenda.

The challenge now is to build on this momentum and keep steadfastly focused on our goals.

The first year of our strategy has been against the backdrop of a worsening economic environment and this has had an inevitable impact on performance. That's been the story for many businesses and, like them, we've had to tighten our belts. We need to make sure we put the firm on a sustainable footing for the future and that sometimes means making difficult decisions. It's about achieving a balance, always being prepared to make tough calls, but doing so responsibly and in line with our values.

Q: What have been the biggest challenges you've encountered to date?

Sara: Data underpins every area of our responsible business strategy. From revising how time spent on pro bono or social impact activities is recorded, so that it can be properly rewarded, to reducing the existing gaps in our carbon footprint, we are committing to continuously reviewing how to improve the quality of the data we collect.

We have made some great first steps – for example, we have appointed our first full-time sustainability manager who has been leading conversations with our supply chain to help us better disclose our impact across our operations. We understand that as we continue to improve the completeness of our data, our footprint will change. However, we have also been pleased to see that we are moving in the right direction as we continue to see reductions from our baseline.

Later this year, our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I) are planning to launch a data drive to encourage more of our people to disclose their diversity data, so that we can get a more representative picture of the make-up of our firm. It's a sensitive area and we will reflect this in our approach. However, we also believe that collecting this data will help us to refine and ultimately deliver on our ED&I targets, and make more informed choices in relation to the positive improvements we will implement to support and retain our people.

Q: What are your highlights from the last 12 months?

Sara: I'm immensely proud of all the hard work which has been put in over the last 12 months. And, it's been great to see these efforts being recognised externally too. For example, at this year's People in Law Awards, our partner wellbeing programme won Best Health & Wellbeing Initiative (for firms of over 750 employees) and our culture and values project won Best Internal Engagement Campaign. How we look after our people is important to us, so we were very proud to receive feedback from the judges that praised our efforts to understand what our people felt was important, listen to it and act accordingly.

Another standout from the past year has been the introduction of our new responsible business hours target. The target is designed to support and encourage our people to be able to spend time within their working day getting involved in activities that are aligned to our responsible business strategy – be that by working on a pro bono matter, such as those on offer from our new pro bono legal partner LawWorks, or volunteering their time to get involved in any of the external mentoring programmes that we support, like the Girl's Network or City Solicitors Horizons.

How we do business

Growing responsibly in challenging times

In the last 12 months, work has been underway to embed key parts of our strategy.

This work has been carried out in a testing environment. We've had to make tough choices to contend with a prolonged period of high inflation and interest rates and a cost-of-living crisis. Despite these pressures, we've kept our eyes on the future and making progress towards our goals.

Embedding our values and responsible business principles

Last year, we ran a consultation exercise to articulate our values. Now, we are working to make sure that our policies and frameworks fully reflect them, as well as the wider principles that underpin our responsible business agenda.

“Our values programme has been very well received. Now, we are building on it to ensure it is properly embedded and not a flash in the pan. We recognise that to have the greatest impact we need to adopt a step by step approach.”



Paul Robinson, Director of HR – London

We have implemented a new approach to measuring the performance of our partners with the introduction of our Balanced Scorecard. The framework assesses against four criteria (client service, markets and revenue generation, people and partners as leaders) with clear guidance on what we are looking for our partners to achieve. Where appropriate, we have embedded behaviours in each category which are consistent with the firm's values and uphold the principles that define responsible business at Trowers.

We have also introduced a new annual responsible business hours target for all staff to encourage our people to dedicate time within their working hours to activities that support the firm's responsible business strategy. We have revised our reward structures so that relevant activity is counted towards bonus calculations just as other metrics are.

We hope this will stimulate greater engagement and send a strong signal that we see this as a very important part of our business and want to reward our people for supporting our agenda in this way.

Our values

Our values – centred around collaboration, savouring success, being innovative and not being afraid to be human – are integral to everything we do, underpinning our culture and guiding the way we operate and interact with others.

There is a shared understanding of our values across the firm, demonstrating that we are pulling in the same direction, for the benefit of our clients, external stakeholders, and each other.

We collaborate

Our spirit of collaboration underpins all our other values. By working together, adopting an approach rooted in generosity, sharing and mutual trust, we grow great ideas into smart solutions.

We savour success

We build success together, recognising everyone's contributions along the way. It's why people want to work at Trowers and it's why they want to be part of our continuing growth too.

We're not afraid to be human

We value respect and openness and understand that they are key to creating a trusting environment and a sense of community. It's ok to ask questions. It's ok to ask for help. It's ok to be human.

We are driven by innovation

We strive to foster an environment where our people are empowered to try new ways of doing things. By bringing together the right people around the challenges our clients face, we are able to devise new and innovative solutions to enhance our service delivery.

Key highlights



Won Best Internal Engagement Campaign 2023

For our values projects at the People in Law Awards



Named Top 5 employer

In RollonFriday's ranking of law firms with the best culture in 2023



Launched suite of client resources

Building on specialist advice with thought leadership pieces, seminars and training sessions and a podcast series



Advising our clients

Despite tough economic times, there's no evidence that ESG issues are slipping down our clients' agendas as they are increasingly turning to us for advice and guidance. Last year, we set up a Responsible Business Taskforce to give our lawyers the space to think laterally about the responsible business services and products that we can offer.

Since then, our Taskforce has quickly ramped up activity in this area, offering bespoke training and specialist workshops, hosting regular webinars and events, and publishing thought leadership in numerous publications to support our clients. We are working to make sense of the ESG agenda for our clients identifying key issues and the most pressing questions, and developing products and services which directly address these.

ESG-ready questionnaire for clients

We know that not all our clients are coming to this from the same point and that is why we have launched our ESG-ready questionnaire. The questionnaire is designed to help our clients quickly assess where they sit compared to similar sized businesses creating a benchmark to measure performance, offering guidance on what best practice looks like and, crucially, identifying any gaps that need to be filled to improve their position.

Rethinking regeneration: Building resilience and creating positive change

Drawing on our expertise in regeneration across the UK, we are influencing thinking with our new 'Rethinking regeneration' campaign. Looking to improve public perception, which has turned against regeneration in recent years, the campaign emphasises the vital role carefully regenerated housing stock can play in meeting the needs of communities and delivering prosperous growth. Emerging themes highlight the opportunity for regeneration work to evolve both to tackle the immediate housing crisis and to make a reality of the UK's commitment to achieve net zero by 2050.

For more information, please click [here](#).



“There has been such fantastic buy-in and support for our new ED&I strategy, with so many people coming forward with great ideas. There is so much to do, it can get a bit overwhelming at times. To meet this challenge, we need to prioritise. For the next year, in many ways, prioritising is our priority.”

Sharron Webster, Partner and Head of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion – London



People

A strategic approach

Last year, we launched our new Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I) strategy, supported by clear targets.

Since then, our focus has been on embedding and pushing forward the strategy to meet the challenges which we face. It has put us in a strong place to make progress and has really helped provide a focus. But, we recognise that we won't hit these objectives overnight. We're still at the start of a long journey.

There is so much to do and deliver on all this, we need to prioritise. Our strategy is supported by our networks who play a critical role in developing and pushing forward our strategy. They are a great – “from the ground up” – source of fresh thinking and new ideas.

Our nine networks are:

- Allyship
- Disability
- Gender, work and family
- International
- LGBTQ+ and allies
- Physical and mental wellbeing
- Race, ethnicity and heritage
- Religion and belief
- Social mobility

Tackling barriers to legal career entry

Our graduate recruitment programme continues to support candidates to overcome barriers to legal career entry. In the last 12 months we've:

- Continued our affiliate partnership with **Aspiring Solicitors** supporting their work to increase diversity and inclusion in the legal profession.
- Offered 40% of training contracts to candidates with non-legal backgrounds.
- Continued using **Rare Recruitment's** contextualised recruitment system putting candidates' achievements into context. This year, the adjustments we made meant 25% of candidates met criteria and benchmarks that they would not have otherwise.
- Recruited from 16 different universities – 20% of which were non-Russell Group.

Key highlights



Ranked 2nd by number of female partners and 4th by number of LGBTQ+ partners
In Law.com ranking of UK law firms



Partnering with The Stephen James Partnership
An inclusive recruitment consultancy



Adopted contextualised recruitment system and Race Fairness Commitment
From Rare Recruitment



Supporting non-graduate route to qualification
With CILEx qualifications and Solicitor Apprenticeships

Safe Space Discussions

Our networks run an ongoing series of thought-provoking, and often heavy hitting, Safe Space Discussions focused around key ED&I subjects, such as the challenges of holding primary caring responsibilities and experiencing or witnessing microaggressions. The discussions are very well attended and create a forum for people to share their stories and openly discuss lived experiences. The sessions have proven powerful in raising awareness and creating shared learning experiences.



“It has been moving and powerful to hear these stories, as well as to see participants create a supportive environment in which all questions are welcomed – attendees may have differing perspectives, but in listening to each other with respect and compassion they start the process of putting equity into action.”

Jessica Arczynski, Partner – London

Building a more diverse pipeline of talent

We know that individuals from the black ethnic group are underrepresented at senior levels within our business and recognise that if we want to see more black colleagues in senior positions, we need to look at our talent pipeline. In the last year, much of our work has focused on increasing the number of black candidates joining the firm at the entry level to strengthen our talent pipeline and help us improve representation in this area.

Key achievements in the last 12 months:

- ✓ Granted greater oversight and scrutiny powers to the group leading our Race Action Plan to hold those across the business accountable for progress being made
- ✓ Reviewed how we test and assess candidates to identify and eliminate potential equity concerns
- ✓ Launched an informal Black Heritage network to create a safe space for discussion by black and mixed black heritage colleagues about their particular issues and experiences
- ✓ Committed to offering a minimum of three places to candidates from a black heritage background on future summer vacation schemes in partnership with **The Stephen James Partnership**
- ✓ 14% of training contracts accepted in 2023 were accepted by applicants from a black heritage background

Addressing the complexity of disability

One of the most exciting developments this year was the creation of a new Disability Network set up to focus attention on the complexities around disability. Despite only having come into existence earlier this year, the network has already hosted a “Disability 101” webinar, produced a guide to digital accessibility and begun looking into how to improve data capture around disability, which remains one of the areas with the lowest rates of disclosure.

We hope that the network can help to encourage more people to disclose any disabilities but recognise that many people may be reluctant to disclose.

“Telling people you are disabled feels risky. You fear you might be judged. At Trowers, we want to take that feeling of risk and discomfort away, but it will take a lot of work.”

Ginny Butcher, Trainee and Chair of Disability Network – Exeter



Going even further on gender

This year we will implement a Gender Action Plan as we look to build on female representation at partner level – an area of strength for us already, but somewhere where we want to continue making progress.

The group behind the plan are now carrying out a detailed assessment of the barriers that stand in the way of women progressing in the firm and are examining possible interventions. For example, the group are looking at obstacles that might prevent women joining or staying on our Pathways to Partnership programme or if any of our policies and procedures around parental leave and flexible working have any inequity built into them.

ED&I in action across our offices

Each year, colleagues across our offices come together in honour of important dates in the ED&I calendar. From cultural lunches to speaker events and book clubs, our networks have hosted a range of events to mark Black History Month, International Women's Day and many more. We know our people really value these events as they create an opportunity for people to connect with colleagues beyond their day to day work, learning more about the myriad of histories and stories that exist across the firm.

“It was really enjoyable being part of our Abu Dhabi office's Black History Month event. It created a lot of conversation and was really insightful – it was great to see so many people engaged in the discussion about prominent black figures and we learnt a great deal that we may not have otherwise.”



Hannah Chima and Iain Blackwell,
Trainee Solicitors – Abu Dhabi

Focus on wellbeing – taking our programme firmwide

We have created a high-performance workplace and are focused on helping colleagues achieve their best as we pursue an ambitious growth strategy. But, we can't hope to achieve our ambitions unless we provide a healthy, safe and respectful work environment in which everyone has the support and tools to fulfil their potential. In a nutshell, that's what our “people first” approach is all about.

In 2022, in partnership with Smart About Health, we ran a hard-hitting wellbeing programme specifically aimed at partners, encouraging them to share personal stories about a wide variety of physical and mental wellbeing issues. Sessions touched on a range of difficult topics including dealing with losing someone to suicide, imposter syndrome and how to role model wellbeing as a leader.

“It was highly fulfilling to develop and deliver a progressive health and wellbeing programme for the partners. They embraced difficult topics, were engaged and cultivated openness through shared personal experiences and strategies to navigate common health challenges.”

Dr Laura David, CEO and Founder of Smart About Health



The programme closely reflects our values, not least our declaration that: “We're not afraid to be human.” We were delighted that it won the People in Law award for Best Wellbeing Initiative.

Now, we are encouraging partners to take what they've learnt from their experience and share their stories more widely with the rest of the firm. To do this, again working with Smart About Health, we've launched a firmwide wellbeing programme closely modelled on the partner programme. The difference now being that sessions are being co-led by senior leadership as they discuss their own struggles. It is our hope that this approach will further help to breakdown some of the barriers and stigmas which exist around these topics.

Creating new ways to train, learn and develop

We run a comprehensive programme of learning and development and actively encourage colleagues to continue updating their skills throughout their careers. But we are always looking for new ways to develop and train colleagues, particularly where it supports the core principles of our responsible business strategy.

We have been given the green light to launch a new Solicitor Apprenticeships scheme offering a route into law for non-graduates as part of a six year apprenticeship programme. During the programme, the apprentices would obtain their law degree and would complete their SQE exams creating an opportunity for participants to earn whilst they learn.

“The Board has approved the Solicitor Apprenticeship scheme with the very clear proviso that it must genuinely support social mobility and our ED&I objectives.”



John Worrall, Head of Learning and Development – London

Many of our other programmes are also directly linked to responsible business strategy. For instance, we are running regular Inclusive Management courses to help foster a diversity of talent and perspectives by equipping our people with the tools to manage diverse talent inclusively.

The sessions have been road-showed around our UK offices and have been held in person to encourage debate and discussion. Next, we are planning to roll out active bystander training to help leaders and managers call out unacceptable behaviour or behaviour that falls short of our values.

Social impact

Finding new ways to create social value

Our refreshed social impact strategy is helping us harness the skills and experience of our people to deliver even greater social impact.

An ambition to create real social value has always been a defining feature of our culture at Trowers and is integral to how we think about ourselves in relation to the wider world. We recognise that we don't operate in isolation and that the work we do and how we do it has an impact on society at large.

With that in mind, in the last 12 months, we have been refining our approach in this area and have launched a refreshed social impact strategy focused on three priority areas for action. As such, we are committed to doing our bit to:



Ensure fairness and access to justice, in the UK and internationally.



Advance social mobility and diversity and inclusion in our profession and more widely in society.



Help build a world that is environmentally and socially sustainable.

These new priorities are closely tied to our overall responsible business agenda and are designed to create a framework around which we can focus our skills and expertise to support a culture of social responsibility.

“We wanted to bring our strategic priorities up to date to reflect the world as it is now and we wanted to tie them in with other aspects of responsible business – social mobility, diversity and inclusion, environmental sustainability and access to justice – more explicitly.”

Nicola Ihnatowicz, Partner and Head of Social Impact – London



Supporting careers in law



We have been visiting local schools and colleges in Exeter to deliver a series of presentations and talks to students interested in future careers in the legal sector. The sessions have provided insights into the routes into legal and professional services roles within the sector to help students understand more about the range of opportunities available and decide whether law is the right choice for them.

In the last 12 months, we've spoken to over **500 students** and have been delighted to offer several work experience placements to students who have attended. When asked about the programme, feedback from the schools and colleges has described it as having **“provided fantastic insights”** and **“having a significant impact on the students in the audience”**.

Key highlights



Signatories of The Law Society's Pro Bono Charter



Supported 90+ work placement opportunities
With local students across our offices



450+ iPhones donated to Every Child Online
Helping to close the digital divide



2500+ hours volunteered
By our people in support of charitable organisations

Advancing social mobility

We continue to support a number of flagship social mobility programmes which are linked to our strategic priorities. These include a range of social mobility and mentoring programmes designed to increase access to our profession, including:



Prime – alliance determined to improve access to, and socio-economic diversity within, the legal profession.



City Solicitors Horizons – programme aimed at improving access into the legal professions for first year undergraduates from low socio-economic backgrounds.



Aspiring Solicitors – organisation working to remove barriers to legal career entry for underrepresented groups.



The Girl's Network – mentoring scheme connecting girls from the least advantaged communities with a mentor and a network of professional role models who are women.



Care Leaver Covenant – national inclusion programme that supports care leavers aged 16 – 25 to live independently.



CityCentury – solicitor apprenticeship initiative supporting talent in London.



Social Welfare Solicitors Qualification Fund – initiative to provide financial assistance to aspiring solicitors working in social welfare law for organisations serving disadvantaged communities.

Routes returns

This year, we were delighted to see the return of the Routes to Work programme after a three-year hiatus forced by the pandemic. The programme is run in partnership with **L&Q** – a key client of the firm. The scheme offers people who are unemployed and struggling to get back into work the chance to complete two-week work placements with us and we aim to run the programme twice a year. It's an intensive programme which relies on being able to work closely with colleagues in our offices – something that just wasn't possible during the pandemic.

The programme creates an opportunity for participants to gain valuable experience across a number of different business functions and there is the possibility for participants to be offered a permanent position at the end of the placement.

Alongside this, we also run a series of workshops focused on the participant's professional development, such as personal branding or networking.

The candidates are diverse in age, experience and background. Some may never have been in an office before or may have limited IT skills. It's always inspiring to see their confidence skyrocket during the programme.

“For more than 15 years, we have been delighted to work in partnership with Trowers & Hamlins to deliver a robust work experience programme which inspires participants and helps them to reach their career aspirations and potential. We have developed an excellent working partnership through the programme as it continues to go from strength-to-strength every year. We look forward to continuing this amazing programme.”

Shehla Kadri, Employment Support, L&Q Foundation



Providing local support

We encourage people across all our offices to get involved in our charitable programmes. Traditionally, we've tended to support local organisations and causes which have resonance in the communities where we are based. For us, this is where we believe we can make the biggest difference.

A Box of Goodness

In Bahrain, we have been working with an incredible charity, **A Box of Goodness**, helping them to raise donations and put together and distribute food parcels to migrant workers in local labour camps.

This year, during Ramadan, the funds raised helped provide a meal for nearly 200 workers which volunteers were on hand to deliver.

“It was heart-warming to work alongside the Trowers & Hamlins team who visited the camp. The generosity and enthusiasm displayed was inspiring and we look forward to working with them again in the near future.”

Miro Dole, Founder of A Box of Goodness.

“I've done lots of different things in my time, but this really struck a chord with me as some of the workers are incredibly young. It was quite an experience.”

Debbie Howard, Partner – Bahrain



Importance of pro bono work and the benefits for those who undertake it

Many of our lawyers relish the opportunity to bring their professional skills to create social value and we want to make sure we continue to find new opportunities for them to do that.

We continue to support **Action for International Development (A4ID)** and are also now members of **LawWorks**, an organisation which matches lawyers with pro bono opportunities and is the driving force behind the London Legal Walk which is organised in support of free legal advice agencies.

As well as being an opportunity to complete important charitable work, involvement in pro bono projects is also a great training opportunity, giving our lawyers the chance to expand their skillset.

Partnership with Exeter Law Clinic

We're really proud of the relationship we've built with the **University of Exeter**.

We support their community law clinic, which is run as part of their LLB programme, with a roster of Trowers volunteers attending the clinic to mentor the students and help them triage cases. Each week our lawyers provide the students with support on the cases that they have been allocated and check that the advice being given is sound. For our lawyers, it's a chance to get involved in broad range of disputes and guide the students through their first experience of advising clients.

“Trowers back up their promises with action. Your generosity of time volunteering with the Community Law Clinic enriches the student experience and helps train the next generation of lawyers. We are grateful for your commitment.”

Natasha Bellinger, Exeter Law Clinic



Volunteering at the Employment Law Tribunal

The **Employment Law Tribunal Litigant in Person Support Scheme (ELIPS)** is another great pro bono project. ELIPS provides much needed assistance to unrepresented litigants in employment tribunals. Volunteers from our employment team meet with individuals to discuss their concerns during 45-minute online sessions. Previously, we have helped people to prepare for preliminary hearings, discussed contractual relationships and witness statements and helped applicants to collate evidence.

“We don't usually act for individuals, so being able to support an individual who was quite distressed helps develop skills on the human side as well as the technical side. You have to help manage their expectations and understand the legal framework in which their claim sits. There's a lot to be gained from it. It is the right thing to do, and I would definitely do it again.”

Jake Wilkie, Associate – Birmingham



“A4ID provided a really good opportunity to do something charitable and expand my skillset in the field of data protection. The organisations are super interesting and so are the people that you deal with. It is often very different from the typical work that we do.”



Bahez Talabani – Birmingham

Sustainability

Plotting the path to net zero

One year ago, we announced our net zero target – to achieve a 50% reduction on our baseline emissions by 2030 and a 90% reduction by 2050.

In the last 12 months, we've taken steps to drive our progress by:



Building up a more detailed and accurate picture of our greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by improving the quality of our data capture and calculation methodologies



Right-sizing our office space and investing in more efficient technology and operational measures to drive energy efficiencies



Engaging with and facilitating partnerships to play our part in tackling the enormous climate and sustainability challenges that we collectively face

Achill Management, the organisation behind the Legal Sustainability Alliance, also continue to advise us on our sustainability journey, as we continue the process of developing and shaping our key priorities

“This is not a challenge that we can or have to solve on our own. There’s a risk in viewing sustainability as the responsibility of the few, we all need to be pulling together in support of the same goal. We’re at an exciting stage in our strategy where we are getting more ownership and engagement from across the business and we want to continue building on this.”



Chris Paul, Partner and Head of Sustainability – London

“We continue to be impressed with Trowers’ commitment to tackle difficult conversations and make meaningful decisions to change behaviours. Led by senior leadership, there has been measurable progress across the business towards embedding sustainable working practices which will be essential to meeting their net zero goals.”

Amanda Carpenter, CEO Achill Management



Why data matters

The quality of our data is crucial in underpinning our decision-making capability – helping us to identify our priority areas for action, the gaps in our footprint that we need to close, and ultimately, how we are progressing against our target. Without credible data it is very hard to set achievable targets and it presents a risk that we focus on the wrong areas for emissions reduction.

We are under growing scrutiny from new and existing clients to evidence that our performance and progress is aligned to their own sustainability objectives, whilst increasing regulatory drivers are also likely to require us to disclose more non-financial performance data than ever before. Trends that are only likely to grow as voluntary and non-voluntary reporting standards and frameworks continue to mature.

And there's a third and equally important expectation from our people and the talented people we want to recruit, who increasingly want to know that we are playing our part in tackling the climate crisis.

It's clear that we need to get the data right and so we will be continuing to develop and mature our reporting capability, particularly in relation to improving the breadth of our Scope 3 emissions. This will require us to increasingly engage with our key suppliers and continue to work with internal teams and landlords and managing agents to further improve the quality and frequency of data collection.

Key highlights



Listed as a recommended firm in Legal 500 Green Guide

Spotlighting the key firms contributing to a green transition



100% of UK electricity is renewable

Backed by Renewable Energy Guarantee of Origin (REGO)



30% increase in electric cars in car fleet

Over the last 12 months with a target to transition to all electric vehicles by 2031

Working with our Sustainability Committee

There's a growing awareness across the firm that the success of our sustainability strategy will require us all to take a look at the way we work to identify what we all need to do to reduce our carbon footprint.

Supporting these firmwide efforts to tackle climate change is our Sustainability Committee who have played a key role in helping articulate the realities of our strategy putting words into action. We have recently refocused the committee into four key taskforces to support a more co-ordinated approach and drive engagement even further.

Taskforce	Remit and objectives
Communication	Whilst all committee members act as Sustainability Champions, this group is focused on deploying more formalised tactics to engaging with departments and teams.
Education	Charged with improving climate literacy across the business, so that we all understand the key issues and our role in tackling them.
Policies and best practice	Tasked with reviewing existing policies to ensure they are aligned with the firm's sustainability strategy and net zero target, and proposing new policies or more informal guidance aimed at encouraging behavioural changes.
Technology and data	Working to identify and fill existing gaps in our carbon footprint by liaising with internal teams and external suppliers to gather more data and improve transparency.

“It is refreshing to be a part of a committee where broad representation is championed and people are committed to doing all they can to minimise our impact on the environment. We have taken our first steps to try and drive a change in behaviours. Whilst this is no mean feat, hopefully, these small steps taken by individuals will help to lead us to our net zero target.”

Matt Whelan, Associate – Birmingham



Supporting our clients on their sustainability journeys

A crucial part of our overall sustainability strategy is continuing to embed ESG and sustainability guidance as part of our advice and service offering to our clients. We also recognise that there is huge value in bringing clients together. Sharing ideas and collaborating to find solutions and demonstrating that none of us are alone in tackling key issues.

We are continuing to work with The Chancery Lane Project (TCLP) – a global network helping organisations access the clauses and tools they need to align contracts with net zero. We have launched a climate-related drafting working group who are working to filter through what has been published by TCLP to identify the clauses which are most relevant for our client base and making them achievable and proportionate for our clients.

In support of a circular approach, we have also fed back our analysis to TCLP and have met with in-house lawyers to talk about the clauses that we have worked on.

“The key benefit of our working group is that it brings together firmwide expertise to review and adapt the available tools and clauses to help our clients introduce provisions into their contracts that reflect their individual sustainability strategies.”

Megan Coulton, Senior Associate – London





Managing our buildings and offices sustainably

One way we can show that we are walking the walk on sustainability is by managing our own offices sustainably.

We've had some important wins in terms of reducing our electricity usage, not least by rolling out LED lighting and moving to 100% renewable REGO certified electricity in all of our UK offices. We are also transitioning to a renewable gas arrangement in our London office.

Where we manage the buildings our offices are in, we have also been able to make changes to how the buildings are run – moving away from 24/7 operating hours to better align with our building occupancy. This is a really positive step forward and one that we are already seeing have a positive impact on reducing our energy usage.

Milestone: Achieved a 10% reduction in electricity and 15% reduction in natural gas emissions across our UK offices.

As we move into new offices, we are looking much more closely at the sustainability credentials of our buildings, including environmental standards and energy supply, as well as the provision of facilities which support colleagues cycling or walking to work and if there are any charging points for electric vehicles.

We're also thinking hard about how the move to hybrid working can support our net zero objectives, as we look to right-size the space required when we move or when opportunities arise where we are staying put.

“In the last few years, we have made great improvements in the completeness of the data we've collected in the Middle East and Asia, particularly, in relation to the electricity and water and waste in our offices. Being involved in this exercise has been very interesting, but it has also shown me the progress we still need to make in some of our jurisdictions.”



Gimhani Senaratne, Finance Manager – Bahrain

Working with Lexington

We are beginning to work with a number of our key suppliers to ensure sustainability considerations are embedded across our operations. Working with Lexington, the catering supplier for our London office, we have started the process of identifying key opportunities for improvement, including:



Data and reporting

We want to better understand our food waste generation, both in terms of leftovers from food served and the preparation waste generated in the kitchens, to improve reporting on wastage and target opportunities for improvement.



Training

We are rolling out sustainability training for the Lexington team focused on best practices around energy and water efficiency, the use of resources and waste management.



Awareness and Engagement

We are working to better educate colleagues on the responsibly sourced products and produce that our catering team use. We are aiming to provide the carbon impact associated with different menu choices, so that our people can make informed choices.

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