

Sustainability and  
impact report 2023



**About this report**

Welcome ..... 4

Introduction from Jeremy and Julian ..... 5

Becoming a next generation law firm ..... 6

At a glance ..... 7

Governance structure ..... 10

Supporting global standards ..... 13

**Our approach**

Materiality: what matters most to our stakeholders ..... 17

Our sustainability strategy ..... 18

**Clients**

Business and human rights ..... 23

Data privacy and cyber security ..... 25

Innovation ..... 26

Technology ..... 28

**People**

Employee health, safety and wellbeing ..... 32

Diversity, equity and inclusion ..... 34

Talent attraction and retention ..... 40

**Society and the planet**

Ethics and integrity ..... 43

Climate change ..... 44

Other environmental impacts ..... 48

Community development and impact ..... 52

Public policy engagement ..... 60

Economic impact and responsibility ..... 61

**Appendix**

Glossary ..... 63



# About this report

---

In this report we set out our commitments and actions as a purpose-led organisation. We acknowledge that we have much more to do and have to set out in this report an honest reflection on the progress we've made. We have more we want to do in the coming years and we hope that we can work in collaboration with our stakeholders to achieve our goals.

## In this section

---

Welcome

Introduction from Jeremy and Julian

Becoming a next generation law firm

At a glance

Governance structure

Supporting global standards

About this report

# Welcome

Simmons & Simmons is an international, purpose-led law firm. We believe that law firms have a strong and positive role to play in addressing some of the issues we all face as a society, for example, tackling climate change and reducing inequality. We do this by advising clients on these issues, reducing our own impacts and contributing to wider society.

This is our first comprehensive sustainability and impact report that details our work to date and the steps we're taking to fulfil our purpose: to become a next generation law firm, we strive to create positive impact and outcomes for our clients, our people, society and the planet.

About this report

Welcome

This report covers our efforts across a range of activities which span our internal operations and the ways in which we engage with our stakeholders externally, including our clients, suppliers and the local communities we work with.

We use the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) to guide and implement our sustainability strategy.

 Goal 5  
**Gender Equality**

 Goal 9  
**Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure**

 Goal 8  
**Decent Work and Economic Growth**

 Goal 10  
**Reduced Inequalities**

 Goal 13  
**Climate Action**

 Goal 16  
**Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions**



We've undertaken work that aligns with our values for many years, ranging from our pro bono work which we started over 35 years ago, to our charitable giving. This includes our work with our local communities and our commitment to the UN Global Compact, to which we became signatories in 2011. In 2022, we stepped up this work to apply a greater focus on our impact and our contribution to society and the planet.

This first sustainability and impact report spans the work carried out since the start of 2022 and into the first half of 2023.

Building on the foundations of our previous progress, we recognise that we have more to do. This report aims to provide an outline of our recent progress, and importantly, to provide a sense of our direction of travel.

From 2024, we will report in line with our financial year on our ongoing performance, progress and impact.

## About this report

# Introduction from Jeremy and Julian

This first sustainability report demonstrates how sustainability has long been embedded in our firm's values, our work and our commitment to doing more. Our Senior Partner, Julian Taylor, and Managing Partner, Jeremy Hoyland, speak about our approach to sustainability and their work to tackle the tougher challenges faced by organisations today.



**Julian Taylor**  
Senior Partner



**Jeremy Hoyland**  
Managing Partner

## About this report

Becoming a purpose-led, next generation law firm involves harnessing our skills and experience to improve our sustainability and impact while helping our clients do the same. We understand that this is not quick nor easy – for us this is a journey. However, we are committed to finding ways to make these goals a reality.

Our ambition to remain a successful and profitable law firm is a prerequisite to making a positive impact. We are proud of the progress we have made as a firm and the trajectory we have set. In uncertain economic and geo-political times, our guiding principles and values will be more important than ever. Among our people, there is great appetite to do more on sustainability in its broadest sense – and colleagues from across the firm have spearheaded initiatives which speak to their passions. What has stood out are the real results we achieve when we work in partnership with our clients.

This first sustainability and impact report provides both an honest reflection on, and public commitment to our priorities and work in sustainability. We are on a journey of development and learning that builds on all the good work we have done to date.

Our commitment to the UN SDGs helps to focus this effort – whether it is offering our legal expertise on pro bono work; funding green innovation among young companies with our GreenTech fund; or working alongside our clients to deliver leading solutions to tackle climate change.

## Introduction from Jeremy and Julian

## Improving inclusion and our contribution to society

Our progress across diversity, equality and inclusion has been fundamental to the success of our past year. We know that diverse teams make better teams who, in turn, service our clients better. We have seen tangible improvements on gender balance – in 2023, 28% of our partners were female and we have received awards for our work on race and social mobility.

The wellbeing of our people is important to us. We launched our renewed employee value proposition offering greater support and flexibility. Investing in our people and enabling them to develop their skills and talents, helps both the firm and the individual to flourish.

Our contribution to society is also an important part of our firm's success. Our pro bono work offers a valuable contribution to individuals and the communities in which we work. We are proud of the contributions made by our Charitable Foundation to support local communities around the world, giving £1m a year to causes internationally – such as Lawyers Against Poverty and Justice Without Borders. We also donated to humanitarian causes, including relief for the earthquake in Türkiye and Syria in early 2023.

## Tackling the tough challenges

There is no doubt that Russia's invasion of Ukraine has been a shocking development that has reverberated across the world. Our people came together to offer help to refugees, both through our pro bono work and through opening their homes to those who needed a safe place to live. We also took decisive action to stop work that may support the Russian government by developing a policy position that went further than the UK government's sanctions. Sadly, this war is not the only one to have affected people and the humanitarian challenges are spread globally. We are committed to supporting humanitarian assistance where it is needed. More widely, our role as a law firm in support of sound governance and the rule of law is increasingly relevant to the challenges faced globally and we are committed to playing our part.

Another huge shift has been to adapt to a post-pandemic world since COVID-19. We believe in the power of technology to deliver better legal services; it helped us to continue to deliver for our clients during this unprecedented period and we have continued to increase our investment.

An ongoing challenge is to reduce our negative impact on the climate. We know that the climate crisis is the most critical material issue for our stakeholders. The verification of our 2030 Science Based Targets marks an important step as it prioritises the actions needed to meet our goals.

In the year ahead, we will continue to strive to be the best we can be as a firm. We have a strong foundation on which to build, anchored in our purpose:

**To become a next generation law firm, we strive to create positive impact and outcomes for our clients, our people, society and the planet.**

About this report

# Becoming a next generation law firm

Our purpose:

To become a next generation law firm, we strive to create positive impact and outcomes for our clients, our people, society and the planet.

About this report

Imagine a future where traditional barriers to innovation within the legal sector are broken down. Where clients work with a firm that is built around them – with access to all the skills, expertise and knowledge on offer, regardless of technical skills or borders.

A firm that believes it has responsibilities to society and the communities in which it operates and seeks to make a positive contribution.

A place where people want to work because its culture reflects their own personal values. Where they are given opportunities to thrive and are embraced for who they are, regardless of their qualifications, experience or background.

Where people are offered flexibility in the way that they work, so that they can perform at their best. Where they feel motivated and can contribute to helping achieve our joint ambitions.

Becoming a next generation law firm

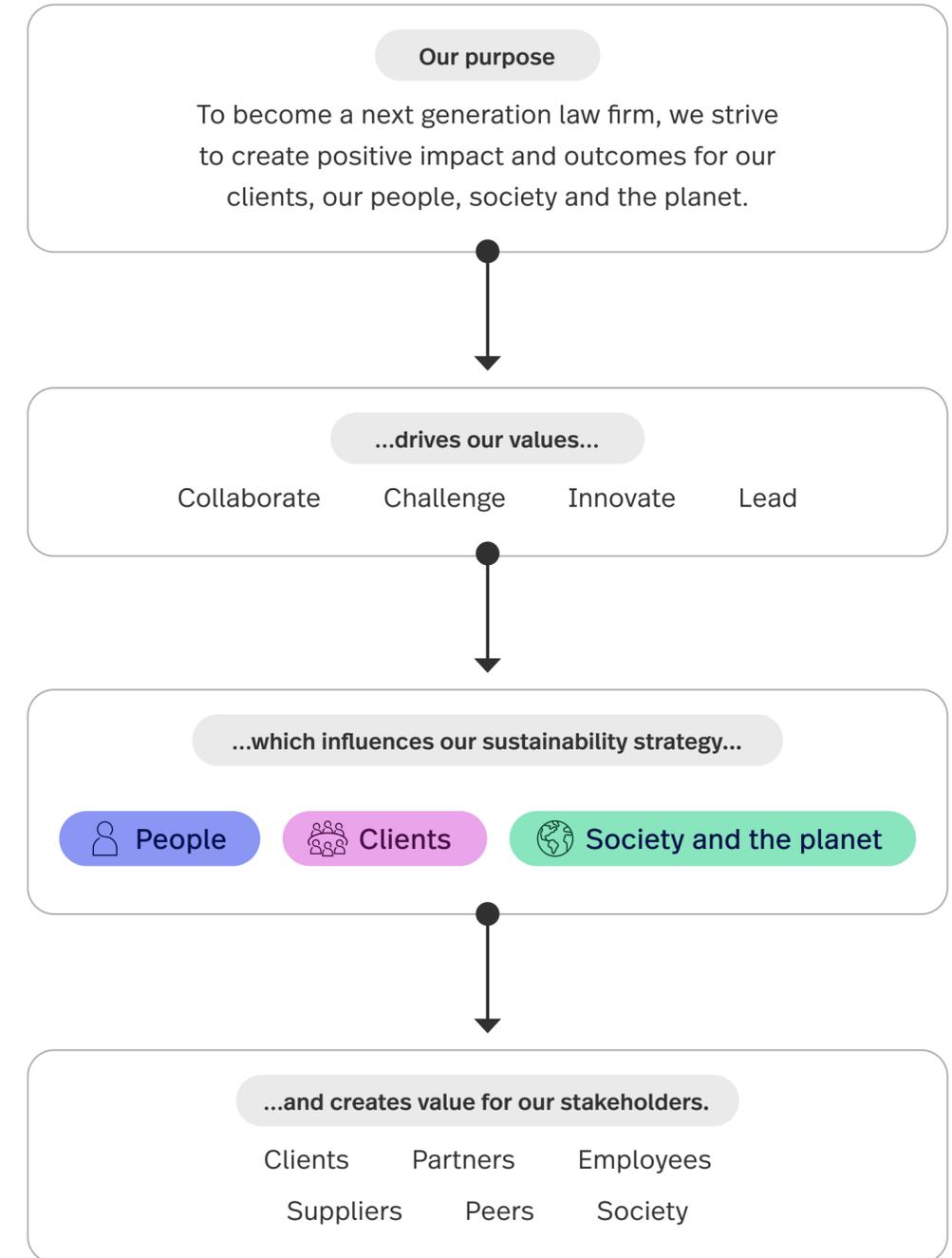
It is a firm where a deep understanding of clients’ sectors underpins the advice given and the support offered – as clients navigate complex problems, looking to increase their positive impact while mitigating harm.

A firm where an innovative mindset drives everyday thinking, in the pursuit of solving problems and helping clients quickly and effectively. This means tapping into skills and specialists from different disciplines to build a truly multi-disciplinary firm, bringing the broadest set of skills and experiences to solve problems.

We’re seeking to become that next generation law firm, striving to create positive impact for our clients, our people, society and the planet. We invite you to come on the journey with us.



## Our purpose framework



## About this report

## At a glance

With a 127 year history, we've grown as a firm to have an international reach, with offices in 16 countries. We pride ourselves on being a global network of colleagues, able to serve our clients wherever they might be. This diversity creates a vibrant and rich culture which informs our values as a firm.

## About this report

## At a glance

## Who we are

Simmons & Simmons is an international law firm, established 127 years ago, working across 22 locations in Europe, Asia, the Middle East and the US.



## What we do

We are a collaborative, agile and purpose-led firm that challenges, creates new possibilities and offers opinions, not just options. Working in partnership with our clients, and drawing on expertise across our international offices, we deliver smarter solutions to address the legal issues of most importance to our clients.

We work with the world's leading companies and institutions, as well as governments and regulatory authorities.

## How we do it

Our purpose requires a multi-faceted programme which involves investing in our people, culture, systems, values and infrastructure, as well as a focus on innovation and technology. We've started to build the foundations of change which we believe will help our clients, enrich our people and play a part in tackling the social and environmental challenges faced by society.

This strategic approach supports our people by embedding new ways of working and thinking across our practice areas, working in teams unbound by traditional practice areas or geographies, to ultimately deliver better outcomes for our clients.

We also have clear targets on climate commitments, enhancing our client listening and putting the interests of those that we impact squarely in the centre of our planning. In 2023, we enshrined a commitment to consider the impact on those people – internal and external – who are affected by our activities, within our global partnership agreement.

Our work begins with our people – by encouraging them to have enquiring minds and share ideas that are thought provoking, spark debate and challenge convention. They are the powerhouse of our future and impact.



## What makes us different

As a leading law firm, we have deep specialisms across asset management and investment funds, financial institutions, healthcare and life sciences, technology, media and telecommunications, and other industries in which our clients operate.

Our work for clients is enhanced by innovation and technology, enabling us to deliver at our best. Our Solutions International Practice Group drives this commitment. It is a place where our data scientists, lawyers, product and legal designers and software engineers work together to create solutions to novel client problems.

Our people are at our core, upholding our values and acting as custodians for future generations. In 2022, we appointed a Global Head of Environment, Social and

Governance (ESG), Sonali Siriwardena, demonstrating our commitment to offering specialised ESG legal services to our clients and supporting the development of guidance in this area. (See ['Our sustainability strategy'](#) on page 18 for more information.)

Our Global Head of Purpose and Impact, Sophia AdamsBhatti, was also appointed in 2022, as part of the firm's commitment to understanding and improving its impact. The internal programme encompasses all aspects of our activities: from the culture we create to support our people, to the targets we set in relation to emissions, from our diversity, equity, and inclusion (DE&I) commitments through to internal ethics and governance standards. Being more purpose-led and considering our impact fully touches on every aspect of our day-to-day.

## Where we are



\*In association with TMI Associates  
\*\*Not practising US law

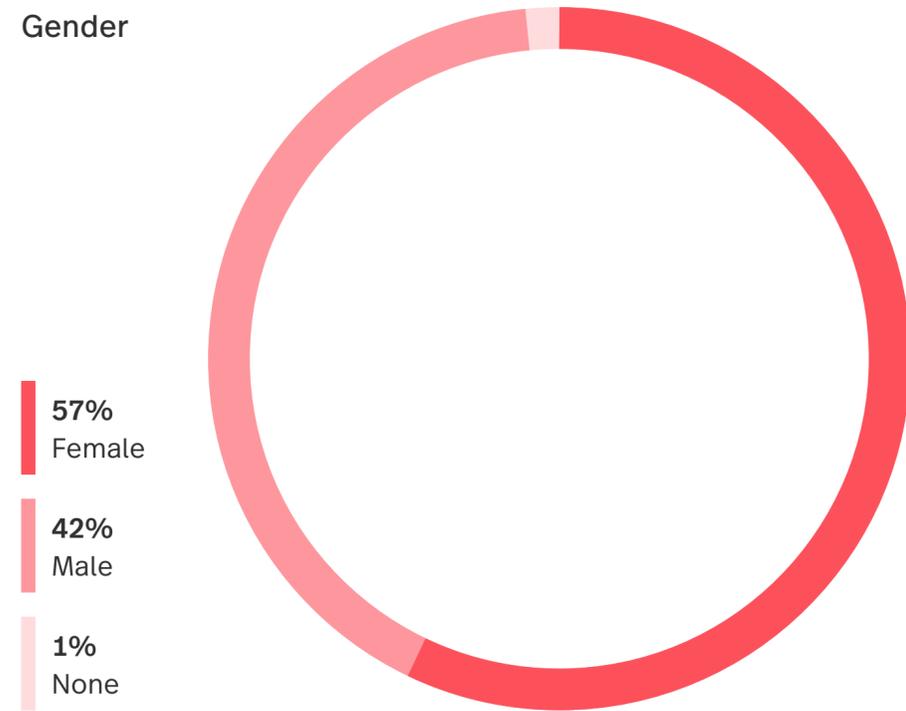
## Our people

Number of full-time and part-time  
(including fee earners, partners and all other staff)



## Our people

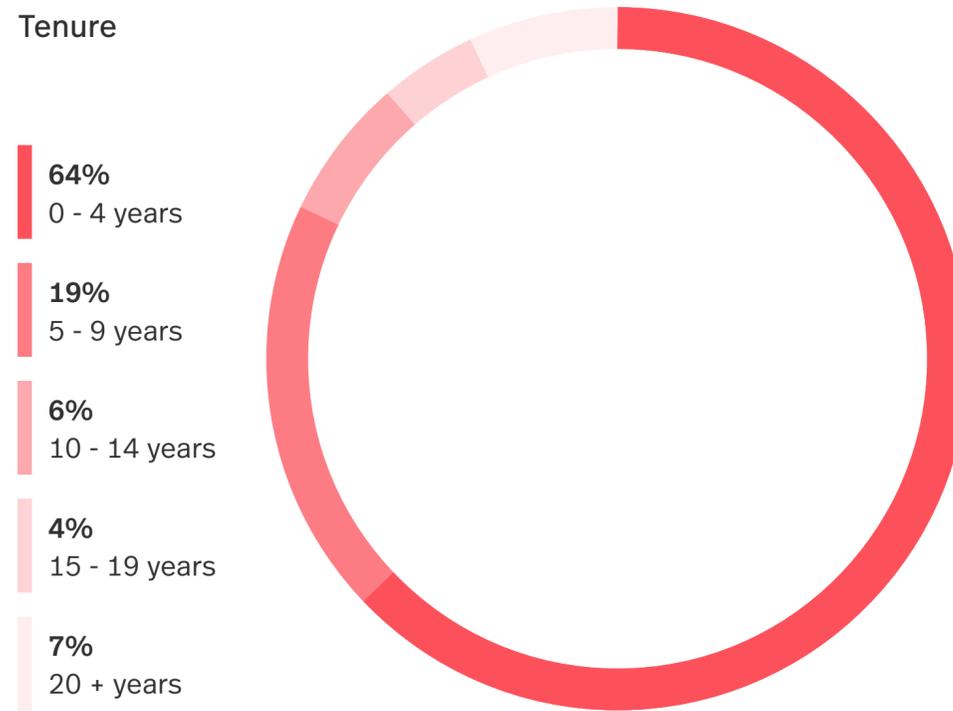
### Gender



Region	Female	Male	None	Total
Asia	123	66	18	207
Europe	417	326	10	753
Middle East	32	19	2	53
UK	626	476	3	1105
US	2			2
<b>Total</b>	<b>1200</b>	<b>887</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>2120</b>

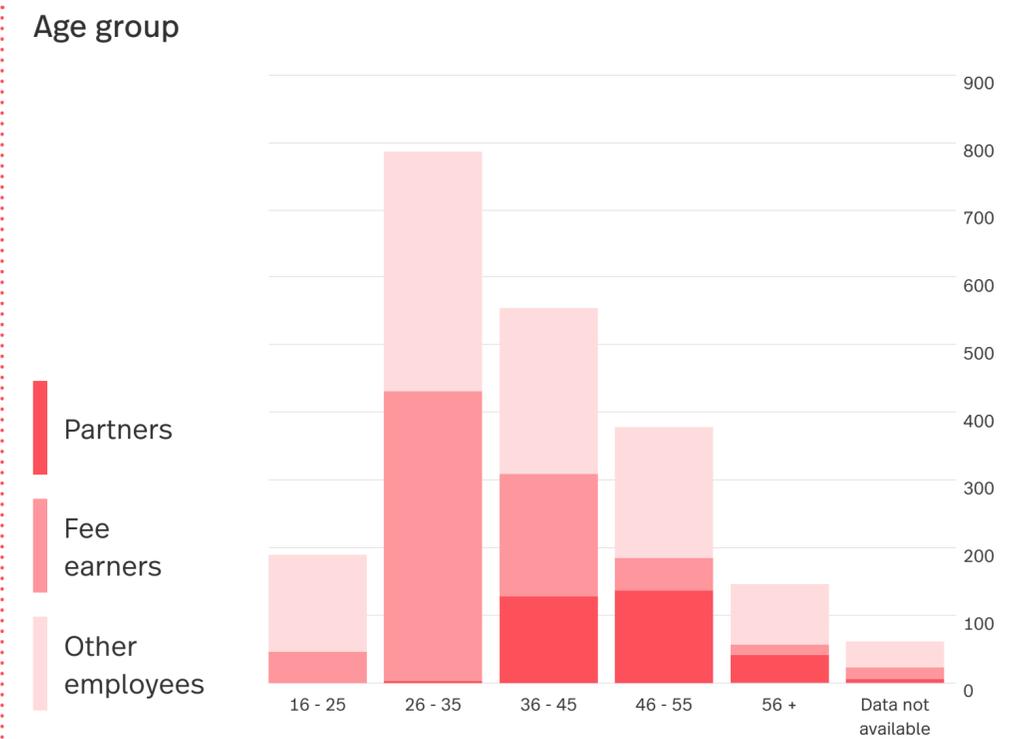
The statistics recorded as 'None' are made up of people who have yet to submit their diversity data. We do not, as a firm, make it mandatory to declare gender.

### Tenure



Tenure	Partners	Fee earners	Other employees	Total
0 - 4	105	512	738	1355
5 - 9	87	149	172	406
10 - 14	44	36	40	120
15 - 19	35	17	36	87
20 +	59	9	87	152
<b>Total</b>	<b>330</b>	<b>723</b>	<b>1073</b>	<b>2120</b>

### Age group



Age	Partners	Fee earners	Other employees	Total
16 - 25	0	41	151	192
26 - 35	7	431	350	788
36 - 45	128	179	246	553
46 - 55	145	42	187	370
56 +	46	11	95	150
Data not available	4	19	44	67
<b>Total</b>	<b>330</b>	<b>723</b>	<b>1073</b>	<b>2120</b>

About this report

# Governance structure

We're managed and governed by the International Executive Committee (IEC) and the Board. The IEC advises and assists the Managing Partner in the day-to-day management of the firm and has overall responsibility for achieving the firm's business and strategic objectives.

About this report

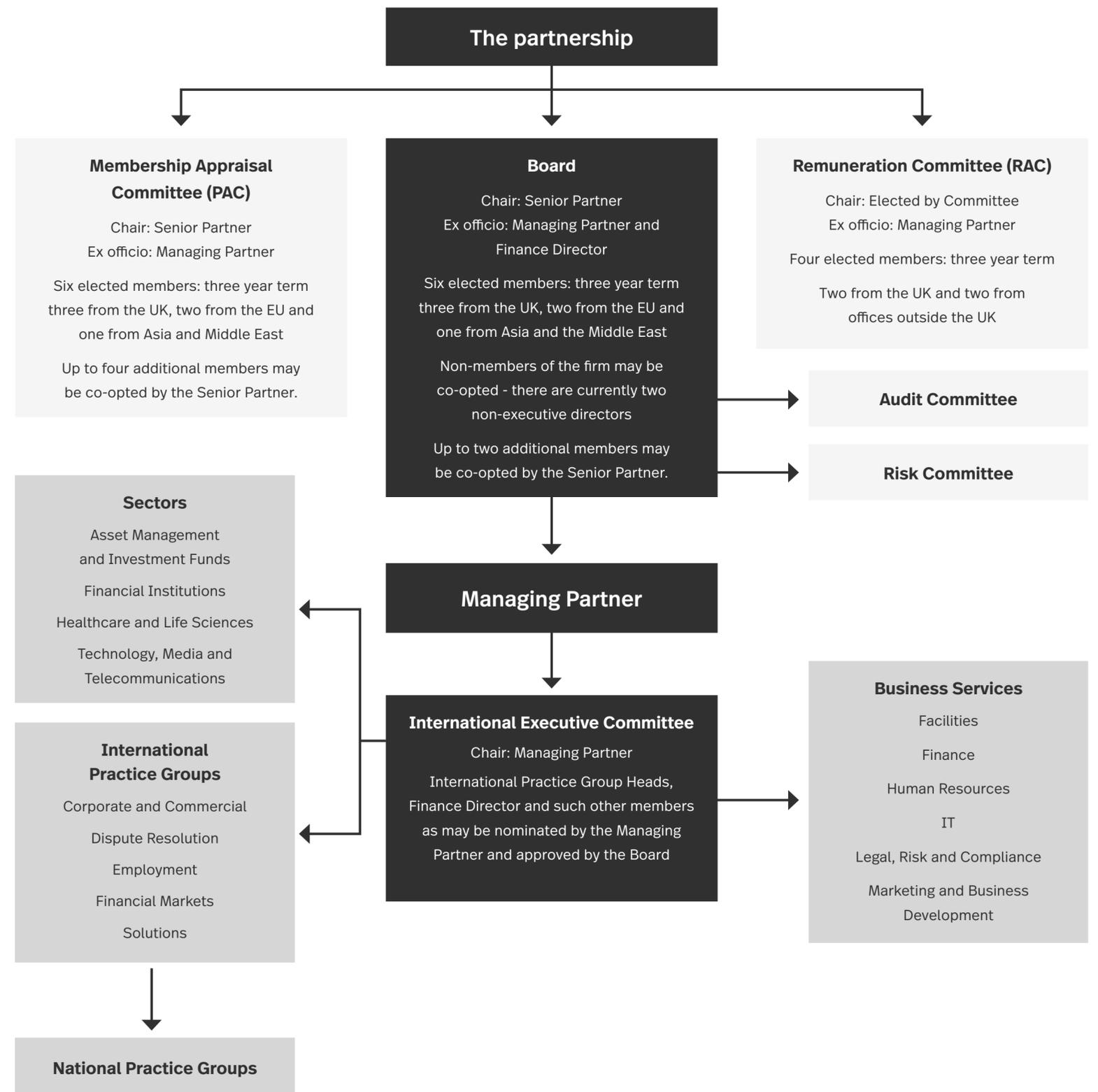
The IEC has nine members, made up of the Managing Partner as Chair, four International Practice Group Heads, the Chief Operating Officer and Finance Director, plus two further representatives from the partnership. The Board reviews the IEC's membership annually.

The Board's role is to act as a supervisory body representing the interests of the partnership. This includes assessing the firm's performance against its business plan and considering any significant proposals relating to the execution of the firm's strategic interests.

The Board is chaired by the Senior Partner and comprises the Managing Partner, six elected members (three from the UK offices and three from other offices), the Finance Director and two non-executive members.

International Practice Group Heads are appointed by the Managing Partner following consultation with the partners in the relevant international practice group and with the Board.

Governance structure



## Board members (as at January 2023)

	Name	Role	Year of tenure
Ex officio	Jeremy Hoyland	Managing Partner, London	2011
Chair	Julian Taylor	Senior Partner, London	2021
Elected members	John Kelsey	Partner, Real Estate, London	2019
	Romeo Battigaglia	Partner, Financial Markets, Milan	2021
	Iain Duncan	Partner, Energy, Natural Resources and Infrastructure, London	2022
	Simonetta Giordano	Partner, Corporate and Commercial, Paris	2022
	Ania Rontaler	Partner, Corporate, London	2022
	Melody Yang	Partner, Financial Markets, Beijing	2022
Non-executive members	David Snell	Non-Executive Director, London	2019
	Ellen van Essen	Non-Executive Director, London	2022
Ex officio	Charlie Mirrington	Interim Finance Director, London	2023

## IEC members (as at January 2023)

Name	Role	Year of tenure
Jeremy Hoyland	Managing Partner, London	2011
Jacques-Antoine Robert	Partner, Dispute Resolution, Paris	2014
Mahrie Webb	Partner, International Practice Group Head – Financial Markets, Bristol	2020
Andrea Accornero	Partner, International Practice Group Head – Corporate and Commercial, Milan	2020
Jason Valoti	Partner, Financial Markets, Singapore	2021
Laurence Renard	Partner, International Practice Group Head – Employment, Paris	2021
Emily Monastiriotis	Partner, International Practice Group Head – Dispute Resolution, London	2022
Darren Mitchell	Chief Operating Officer, London	2022
Charlie Mirrington	Interim Finance Director, London	2022

## Environmental, social and governance oversight

In 2023 we made an important addition to our global partnership agreement, making a commitment to consider the impact we have in relation to all our stakeholders, both internal and external. The day-to-day oversight of decisions is delivered by the IEC which has overall responsibility for all environmental, social and corporate governance (ESG) related matters, including the materiality impact assessment. (See [Materiality: what matters most to our stakeholders](#) on page 17 for more information.) Issues which are deemed to have a significant impact on the firm are reported to the Audit and Risk Committees, as appropriate.

## Audit and Risk Committees

The Audit Committee’s responsibilities include the review of the annual report and financial statements. They also consider aspects of strategy, people, marketplace, ethical, financial, legal and compliance risks, as agreed with the Board.

The Audit Committee has three to five members and is appointed by the Board from among the non-executives and partners, with at least one member having strong financial experience. The Senior Partner, Managing Partner, Finance Director and General Counsel normally attend meetings, which take place at a minimum of three times a year.

The Risk Committee is chaired by an independent member of the Board. It meets four to six times a year. The committee met six times during 2022 - the focus at each session being on individual risk categories and, from 2023, will continue to meet with the sessions mainly dedicated to ‘deep dive’ sessions on risk categories, concluding with a formal meeting at which the results of all previous sessions are reviewed.

## Climate Committee

In 2022, we formed a new Climate Committee that provides additional governance for environmental matters. The committee acts in an advisory role to support on areas such as our compliance with Science Based Targets; regulatory implications for the firm; capacity building and engagement with industry initiatives. A longer-term goal of the committee is to consider further integration of our ESG strategy into the business, such as reward and remuneration aligned to ESG performance metrics. This committee reports into the IEC and is chaired by the Senior Partner.



**Julian Taylor**  
Senior Partner



Like many of our clients, our impact and our ESG footprint is increasingly a priority for us.

## Russia Business Committee

Russia’s invasion of Ukraine has had profound effects on those involved and the global economy. In response to the crisis, in addition to our humanitarian support for those affected by the invasion, we bolstered our governance by establishing a specific committee to provide oversight and guidance in relation to matters which involved Russian economic interests. Our policy guidance was driven by a desire to ensure that we did not play a role in supporting the Russian regime.

## Other committees

We have several other committees, the Partnership Appraisal Committee and the Remuneration Committee, both of which contribute to our governing environment and support our purpose.

## Business Acceptance Policy and Committee

In 2023, we established the Business Acceptance Committee and put in place the Business Acceptance Policy. The policy details our commitments relating to sectors at high risk of climate or social harms, such as modern slavery. All matters, at the point of acceptance, are assessed by the partner leading the work against a number of principles:

1. We will take into consideration ESG factors that have the potential to be impactful, both positive and negative.
2. We will seek to support companies transitioning towards the creation of a more sustainable economy.
3. We will seek to use our advice to our clients to work with them to limit negative impacts and to help support them in delivering better impacts, social or environmental.
4. We will uphold the rule of law and international human rights and will not take on clients or matters which could in our view erode or undermine these principles.
5. We are a politically neutral law firm and we are not affiliated with any political party in any country; we may depart from this position when political decisions impact human rights or the rule of law.

The Business Acceptance Committee’s role is to assist in making complex decisions about accepting new matters and ensuring that these are consistent with our values as a firm and our ESG commitments. The policy will be piloted throughout 2023 and revised, if necessary, at the end of the year.

## About this report

# Supporting global standards

The UN Sustainable Development Goals provide a globally accepted and understood framework of 17 goals, of which we have identified six that most closely align with our work and impact.

## About this report

These UN Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) guide our strategic approach to ESG initiatives across the firm both internally facing and externally, and align with our purpose. (See '[Our purpose framework](#)' on page 6 for more information.) For example, the pro bono work we undertake, our climate action and employee wellbeing, all relate to at least one of these six UN SDGs. We also indirectly contribute to the UN SDGs through our work with suppliers and our collaboration with clients.

Find out more about the [UN SDGs](#).

## Supporting global standards

## The six goals our strategy focuses on the most are:



## Goal 5 Gender equality

We contribute to gender equality directly and indirectly. We seek to achieve more balanced representation across the firm, at all levels. In addition, we work with our clients, suppliers and community stakeholders to support positive gender equality progress.



## Goal 8 Decent work and economic growth

We ensure that each office has decent work and contributes to economic growth through our labour standards, by paying salaries above the 'living wage' across the firm and employing people locally.



## Goal 9 Industry, innovation and infrastructure

We put innovation at the heart of our ways of working and in the support we give to our clients. We work to help clients across sectors and jurisdictions as they move to sustainable industry models.



## Goal 10 Reduced inequalities

Our targets set on diversity, equity and inclusion aim to reduce inequalities in a range of areas, including gender, race, social mobility and neurodiversity.



## Goal 13 Climate action

We are working to reduce our environmental impact, including our carbon emissions and water usage. Our verified and approved Science Based Targets for 2030 are our guide to achieving our climate action goals, monitored internally by our Climate Committee and senior management.



## Goal 16 Peace, justice and strong institutions

As a law firm we play a direct and indirect role in supporting the strengthening of the rule of law, and governance systems. There are many touch points where we are impactful, whether that is through support to our clients, access to justice programmes, or our contribution to wider initiatives.

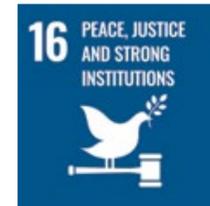
For many years we've used our legal insights and expertise to contribute to wider societal concerns. We do this directly, through programmes such as our pro bono practice which we have offered for more than three decades, and indirectly, by playing our part in supporting global and national standards, to help create a strong governance landscape within which the other challenges, whether they be social or environmental, can be tackled more effectively.

As a firm we're committed to upholding high standards. In support of our ambition and purpose we actively participate in and support the following governing and standard setting frameworks, as we believe it helps us on our journey to improve our impact, but also enables us to contribute to their success.



## Signatories

In addition to our own activities and contributions, we're active supporters and signatories to a number of sector-wide and global initiatives. Some of the most notable are:



- [UK Collaborative Plan](#). A collection of law firms that commit to achieve 25 hours pro bono on average for lawyers. We were amongst the first firms to join this plan. As a signatory, we also pledge to collaborate across the UK to provide access to justice through pro bono work.
- [United Nations Global Compact](#). As long-term signatories since 2011, we support its ten principles covering human rights, labour standards, environment and anti-corruption.
- [Mindful Business Charter](#). Our commitment to promoting better mental health and wellbeing in the workplace. We are working to apply the best practice and behavioural principles within the Charter to tackle and reduce avoidable stress in the workplace.

## Memberships

Our memberships reflect our purpose to contribute to people, society and the planet. Our participation ranges from sector-based alliances to address climate change through to driving greater levels of diversity in business. Our memberships include:

[The Valuable 500](#). A global business collective that innovates for disability inclusion.

[Legal Sustainability Alliance \(Executive members\)](#). A sustainability network run by law firms for law firms, to collaboratively share and support work relating to environment matters.

We are a Dialogue Partner for the [Legal Charter 1.5](#) and commit to its principles, supporting the role of the legal sector in combating climate change.

Corporate Member of the Tortoise Responsible 100 Forum during 2023 that hosts sector-shaping, year-round conversations with senior stakeholders to determine the future of responsible food, investment, AI, and energy.

See also our charity partners in the ['Community development and impact'](#) section (page 52) for more information.



## ESG reporting frameworks and targets

There are many frameworks that we use to measure and improve the transparency of our environmental performance and societal contribution. These include:

**Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi).** Our near-term targets for our emissions reduction plan have been verified and approved.

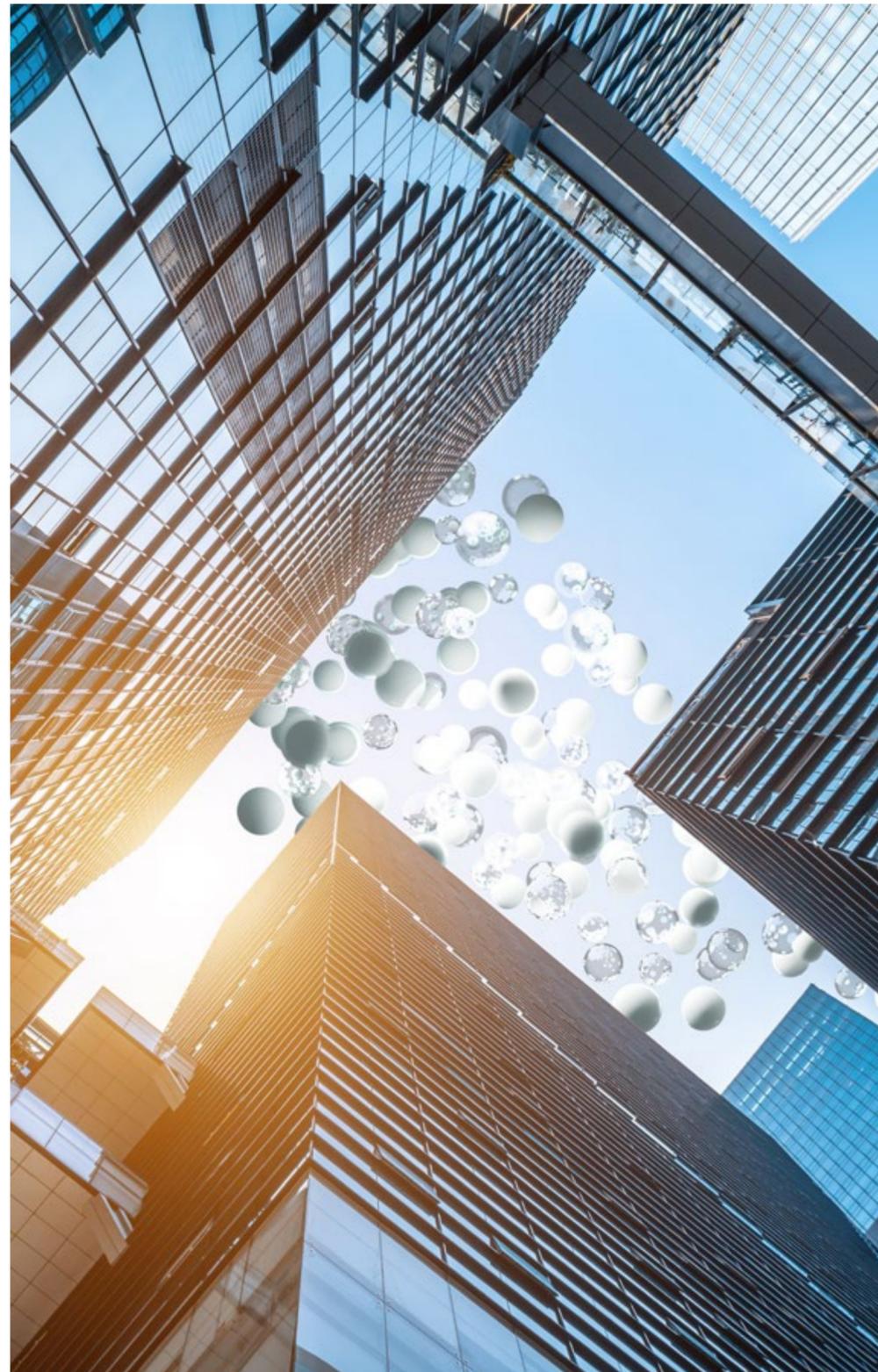
**Non-financial disclosure.** Applicable to Limited Liability Partnership (LLPs) related to climate risks.

**Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP).** Where we disclose and manage our carbon footprint emissions and environmental impacts.

**EcoVadis.** A solution to showcase data on our performance on sustainability issues (environment, labour and human rights, ethics and sustainable procurement). Provided to our clients in our role as their supplier.

**United Nations Global Compact.** Where our firm has a vital partnership role to play in helping to achieve the UN SDGs.

**Stonewall.** We're proud to be part of their workplace equality index.



## Awards and rankings

Awards matter, as they demonstrate our commitment to our people and encourage us to maintain or improve our position across the indices. We're proud to be recognised in the following indices:

British Diversity Awards 2023: **'highly commended'** in the category of 'Social Mobility Initiative of the Year' for our social mobility action plan, which includes our community outreach, recruitment, culture and advocacy initiatives and commitments.

UK's [Social Mobility Index](#) from the Social Mobility Foundation: in the Top 75 Employers in 2022.

One of the **Top 30 Employers for Working Families**, a UK charity, for the tenth year in a row in 2022.

Legal Marcomm 2022: awarded the **'best solidarity initiative'** for our social mobility scholarship in Madrid.

Women in Law Awards 2020: **winner of the diversity project of the year** for our race and ethnicity diversity initiatives and action plan.

Rachel Lobley, disputes lawyer (now an alumni) won Pro Bono Lawyer of the Year at the Bristol Law Society Awards 2022.

[EMpower 100 Executive Role Model](#) named employment partner and co-chair of EMerge, our race and ethnicity network, Fiona Bolton, in its top 100 role model list in 2022.



# Our approach

---

Our approach to understanding and then acting on our impact is grounded in a commitment to consider the impact we have across our stakeholder communities. Guided by our six priority UN SDGs we have used insights from our stakeholders to help us to determine what to act on and how. Although we would like to, we cannot act on everything all at once. To be impactful we need to focus our efforts. Importantly we have made a commitment in our global governing documents which enshrines this commitment to consider stakeholder impact.

## In this section

---

Materiality: what matters most to our stakeholders

Our sustainability strategy

## Our approach

# Materiality: what matters most to our stakeholders

In 2023 we conducted a materiality assessment with input from our core stakeholders to prioritise the key topics that inform our business strategy and planning process.

The aim of the assessment was to prepare for long-term action on sustainability within the firm by identifying key ESG risks, opportunities and insights, clarifying why they are important to the firm and where we should take action. The materiality process has also helped us understand what matters most to our stakeholders, including their expectations and concerns.

The stakeholder groups interviewed were the firm's leadership, employees, clients, regulators, representatives from some of the charities we have supported and suppliers. The results have informed our sustainability strategy.

## Our approach

## Materiality: what matters most to our stakeholders

## Topic selection and prioritisation

The methodology adopted for this impact assessment was designed to deliver a breadth of input and to learn from best-in-class practice in the sector and beyond. We began by reviewing the assessments of peers, clients and professional services firms. These insights were mapped against our UN SDGs priorities (See the ['Supporting global standards'](#) section on page 13) helping us to identify 13 priority topics, which framed the discussion of 36 in-depth interviews, across the six stakeholder groups.

During the interviews, stakeholders were asked to give their view on the importance of each material topic. They were asked to consider the direct impact of the topic both to themselves and to the firm – what we refer to as dual materiality.

The top six critically material issues identified were: ethics and integrity; climate change; business and human rights; data privacy and security; employee health, safety and wellbeing; and diversity, equity and inclusion. See the table of the full 13 identified [material issues](#) on page 19 for more information and definitions.



### Sophia AdamsBhatti

Global Head of Purpose and Impact



Undertaking a full materiality assessment in partnership with our clients, people, suppliers and those we work with in our local communities, was hugely informative. Knowing how our priorities align has enabled us to understand how we build a more sustainable future together and what others expect of us.

Our approach

# Our sustainability strategy

Our sustainability strategy is underpinned by our purpose and is therefore based on three pillars – our clients; our people; society and the planet.

The actions within the pillars are informed by our selected UN SDGs (see [‘Supporting global standards’](#) section on page 13 for more information) and the insights gained from the materiality impact assessment (see [‘Materiality: what matters most to our stakeholders’](#) section page 17). This reflects the most significant areas to our business and where we can have the most impact.

Our sustainability strategy is built on three pillars:



## Clients

Our business strategy is client-focused and aligned with our values.

[Find out more](#)



## People

Our people are at the heart of our business, reflecting what we do and how we do it.

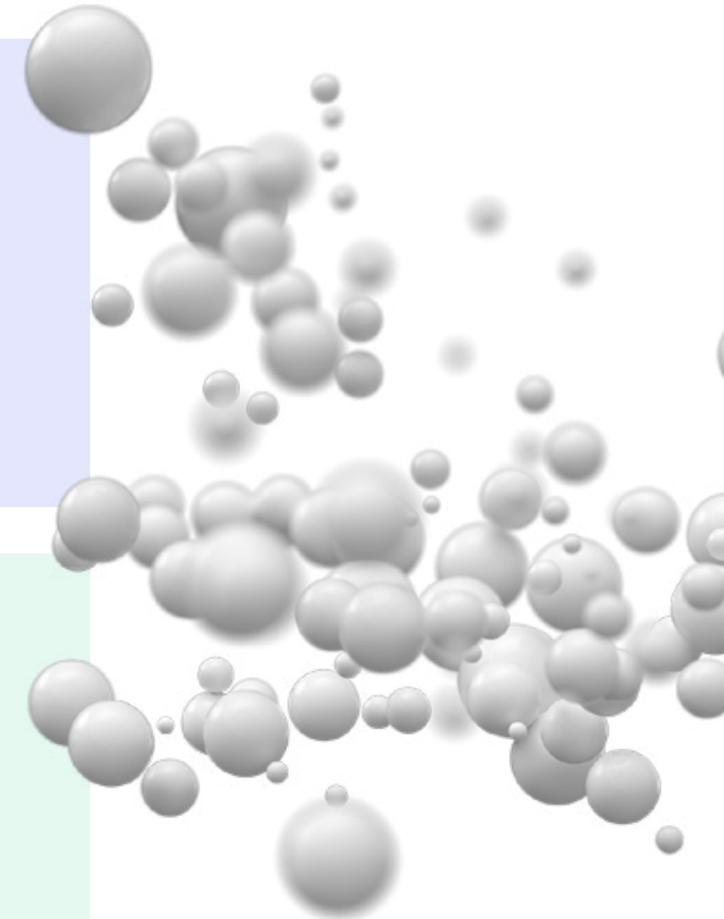
[Find out more](#)



## Society and the planet

Our contribution includes our pro bono work, our DE&I programme and the work of our Charitable Foundation, along with the work we do to reduce our impact on the environment.

[Find out more](#)



## Our materiality issues are aligned to our strategic pillars

Clients
 People
 Society and the planet

Priority	Topic	Description	Main pillar	Supporting pillar	SDG	Page
1	Ethics and integrity	Maintaining the highest standards of ethical business conduct throughout all our activities, along with our commitment to anti-bribery and corruption. Includes new business policies and upholding the rule of law.			16	<a href="#">43</a>
2	Climate change	Contributing to the transition of a net-zero economy through our business, client work and supply chain. Includes advising on and supporting the growth of the renewables sector.			13	<a href="#">44</a>
3	Business and human rights	Upholding human rights throughout our business, client work and supply chain. Includes our work to combat modern slavery.			16	<a href="#">23</a>
4	Data privacy and cyber security	Safeguarding the data of our business, employees and clients with cyber security protection and high standards of data privacy.			5	<a href="#">25</a>
5	Employee health, safety and wellbeing	Ensuring that our people are safe at work and able to stay mentally and physically healthy in a changing business environment.			8	<a href="#">32</a>
6	Diversity, equity and inclusion	Supporting equality of opportunity and diverse representation at all levels, and nurturing a business culture in which all employees feel they belong. Supporting our clients and suppliers on this topic where we can.			5, 8, 10	<a href="#">34</a>
7	Talent attraction and retention	Attracting and retaining talent for our business through fair compensation, development opportunities and a strong business culture.			9	<a href="#">40</a>
8	Other environmental impacts	Promoting responsible environmental practices – including reduction in waste and water, circular economy and enhancing biodiversity - throughout our business and supply chain.			13	<a href="#">48</a>
9	Community development and impact	Contributing to communities through volunteering and pro bono work, campaigns and philanthropy, with a specific focus on access to justice.			9	<a href="#">52</a>
10	Public policy engagement	Promoting social and environmental responsibility through our engagement with regulatory bodies, legal associations, think tanks and NGOs.			16	<a href="#">60</a>
11	Innovation	Innovation-first mindset to deliver against our Next Generation Law Firm mission to deliver better legal services for our clients, across all service lines, product development, culture and ways of working.			5, 8, 10	<a href="#">26</a>
12	Technology	Using technology responsibly to deliver services that address the social and environmental impacts of our clients.			5, 8, 10	<a href="#">28</a>
13	Economic impact and responsibility	Advising clients on making a fair contribution to national economies through taxes and enhancing their contribution to local economies by hiring and purchasing – and reflecting the same standards within our business.			8	<a href="#">61</a>

Note: For ease of understanding all issues have been placed under a main pillar. However, we're aware that many cross over into other pillars due to their expansive content, therefore crossovers are noted as supporting pillars.

## Our progress and goals

This section highlights a few of our recent achievements in each strategic pillar and what we hope to achieve next.

### Achieved

#### Clients

- ✓ Invested in innovation and products such as CtrlTransfer (a data regulation tool) and the Clean Energy Tool (legal and regulatory renewable energy data).
- ✓ Supported clients on many ESG mandates.
- ✓ Conducted a materiality impact assessment to better understand our clients' priorities and formulate our sustainability strategy.

#### People

- ✓ Completed an audit to confirm that employees are paid above the living wage (including the family living wage) in those jurisdictions where benchmarks are available.
- ✓ 9 of our 25 lateral partner hires and 4 out of 13 partner promotions were women.
- ✓ Introduced policies to support more flexible working arrangements.
- ✓ Released gender pay gap results for the UK.
- ✓ Appointed a dedicated wellbeing partner.
- ✓ Launched a new global employee value proposition.
- ✓ Created a partner wellbeing programme to support our partners and help them to support our people.
- ✓ Extended our DE&I strategy to include neurodiversity and advancement on social mobility, with targets in place across key areas.
- ✓ Women comprised 55% of employees across the global firm, up from 51% in 2021, and 40% of the Board, up from 20% in 2021.
- ✓ Supported our clients and people with an extended DE&I programme of insights.
- ✓ Hosted 54 students across various social mobility programmes.

#### Society and the planet

- ✓ We gave more than 12,000 hours of support to charities, not-for-profit organisations and vulnerable individuals.
- ✓ Worked with 134 charities globally as part of our pro bono work.
- ✓ Annual commitment to donate £1m to charity. In 2023 we supported 26 charities globally. In 2022 we increased our donation to £2.4m recognising the dramatic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- ✓ Continued our Access to Justice programme delivering a 98% success rate (see ['Community development and impact'](#) section on page 52 for more information). Between 2022 - 2023 we have completed 40 cases. To date we have undertaken 375 cases, helping to recover over £1.3m in wrongfully withheld benefits payments. For each case there is also a forward award, usually for around three years, meaning the total achieved, to date, for those individuals we help is £4m.
- ✓ Awarded a total of £100,000 (in April 2023) of legal support to five start-ups, via our GreenTech Fund.
- ✓ Our near-term Science Based Targets for 2030 were verified and approved by the Science Based Targets initiative.
- ✓ Introduced an ESG due diligence tool for our new suppliers to enable us to better understand our supply chain.
- ✓ Developed a Supplier Code of Conduct to ensure that our suppliers adhere to the same high standards as we do.

**Next steps** **Clients**

- ✓ Continue to monitor our performance through our Client Listening Programme.
- ✓ Continue investing in innovation and technology development, exploring how to deliver advanced legal services.
- ✓ Allow all third parties to access our whistleblowing policy.
- ✓ Continue to keep on top of, and comply with, the international data protection requirements and client expectations.

**People**

- ✓ Increase representation across five areas: race and ethnicity; gender diversity; LGBT+ inclusion; social mobility; and neurodiversity.
- ✓ Continue to grow our social mobility and neurodiversity initiatives.
- ✓ Roll the employee value proposition out across the firm internationally.
- ✓ Strive to offer best-in-sector wellbeing support for our people across the firm, in all locations.
- ✓ Create a wellbeing champion network and faculty acting as a conduit to embed best practice around the firm.

**Society and the planet**

- ✓ Achieve the target of 25 hours per year pro bono work for all lawyers across the global firm.
- ✓ Continue to support our local nominated charities around the world and disaster relief globally through our £1m Charitable Foundation donation.
- ✓ Implement our supplier engagement tool to step-up engagement with our suppliers to reduce our Scope 3 emissions.
- ✓ Create a responsible sourcing policy to ensure that the life cycle of our suppliers' goods and services have a positive environmental, social and economic impact, more respectful to people and the planet.
- ✓ Develop and roll-out a road map aligned to our near-term Science Based Targets to reduce emissions.
- ✓ Reduce activities identified as causes of pollution or environmental nuisance.

**Longer-term goals** **Clients**

- ✓ Further grow our digital and technology offering for our clients, using innovative data and digital products and solutions, including artificial intelligence, to address their business challenges.
- ✓ Expand our service portfolio and client support in the realm of ESG to effectively manage risks, harness opportunities and amplify positive impact.

**People**

- ✓ Achieve a more diversified workforce that better represents the world we live in.
- ✓ Women to make up 50% of all internal and lateral hires/promotions firmwide by 2026.
- ✓ Increase representation of those from ethnic minority backgrounds to:
  - 15% partners/managing associates;
  - 30% associates;
  - 35% trainees; and
  - 20% business services professionals.

**Society and the planet**

- ✓ Ensure that our charitable giving reflects the needs of communities, locally and internationally.
- ✓ Expand our pro bono contributions across the firm and collaborative work with clients.
- ✓ Engage with our top 40 suppliers on climate mitigation by 2024, reaching 400 suppliers by 2028.
- ✓ Set long-term Science Based Targets that will allow us to reach Carbon Net Zero.
- ✓ Achieve a 60% reduction in our emissions from business travel by 2030.
- ✓ Recycle 70% of all waste.



# Clients

Clients sit at the heart of what we do. Our purpose and ambition directly impact our clients through the service we provide. In addition, we have the opportunity to work in partnership with our clients to extend our positive impact.

Ultimately, everything we do as a firm has a direct or indirect impact on our clients. In this section we draw out the four priority topics, identified by our stakeholders in the materiality impact assessment, which most directly relate to our relationship with our clients.

## In this section

Business and human rights

Data privacy and cyber security

Innovation

Technology

# Business and human rights

As a law firm we are both committed to and are part of the systems which uphold the rule of law. We are committed to upholding human rights across our business, client work and supply chain. It is fundamental to how we conduct our business and underpins our firm's values.



## Our approach

Our work in this area covers international human rights standards, labour standards and compliance with international and local laws and regulations, including those related to social and environmental performance. It is applicable to all employees and contractors, as well as our supply chain – as the conduct of our suppliers is inherent to our own integrity.

The firm is a signatory to the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC), and we reflect its principles in our processes and policies, which include human rights and labour standards. We also advise clients on business and human rights issues. We use a Master Services Agreement that we enter into with clients, where parties agree to most of the terms that will govern future transactions and agreements.

The IEC formally has oversight of human rights and diligence mechanisms. The Board is made aware of any issues. All areas related to pay are overseen by the IEC.

We have a modern slavery statement and are committed to ensuring that no modern slavery or human trafficking takes place within our business or supply chains. Our Supplier Code of Conduct sets out expectations related to fair, safe and healthy working conditions. It includes a ban on the use of forced labour and complying with a commitment to all anti-slavery and human trafficking laws and regulations.



The salaries of our employees across the firm are above industry benchmarks (in jurisdictions where we have a benchmark). A living wage and the family living wage is paid to all of our employees and contractors.

A reasonable salary is not the only way we reward our people. We want them to flourish and, as such, we offer a wide range of benefits, these differ in different offices, and includes bonuses, health and wellbeing support, generous annual leave and learning and development opportunities – both formal and informal.

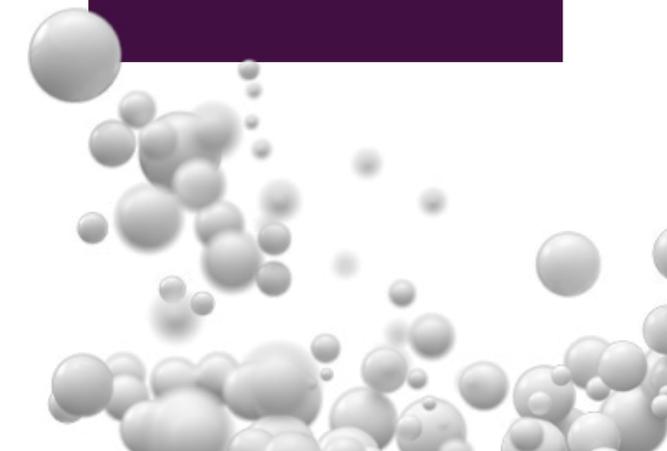
We are part of the UNGC Transformational Governance (TG) Chief Legal Officer working group. TG is a principles-based philosophy that calls on business to be more accountable, ethical, inclusive and transparent to drive responsible business conduct, improve ESG performance and strengthen public institutions, laws and systems.



**Jasmine Lim**  
Senior Risk and Compliance Lawyer



Building a strong framework internally has played a huge role in ensuring that we can then cascade that commitment through the interactions we have with our stakeholders. The reach we have - either through our supply chain, or through the work we do with our clients - is vast.



# 2022/23 Highlights

We extended our data collection to include information on individual and family living wages.



# 100%

of our full-time equivalent (FTE) employees are paid at least the equivalent of a living wage for a family (FY 21/22).

We introduced a supply chain due diligence screening process.



## Responsible supply chain

### Supplier code of conduct

We're working on strengthening our supply chains, focusing on where we spend the most to ensure that we work with suppliers who share our values on human rights and those where we can support them to develop better systems.

Our Supplier Code of Conduct includes environmental and social issues and information for our suppliers with respect to human rights, occupational health and safety and fair labour practices. In 2023 we introduced a new supplier due diligence system and tool, through which we're able to gain better insights about the ESG impacts of our supply chain.

Initially we are rolling this system out across the UK, which is also where we have the biggest spend. Over time we will expand this to the whole of our network.

Our goal is to continuously improve supplier performance, whether that be through working with suppliers to remediate non-compliance with our policies, or working together to better understand how they can make a positive change on issues such as DE&I. This work is complex given our global footprint, but we are investing time to improve our positive influence and reach.



## Case study

# Strengthening the code of conduct among our suppliers

In 2023, we introduced a Supplier Code of Conduct (Code). It defines the standards we expect of our suppliers which, importantly, reflects our own standards.

### Five key areas of sustainability are covered:

1 Labour practices and conditions

2 Sustainability and environmental issues

3 Ethics and anti-corruption

4 Data security and privacy

5 Diversity, equity and inclusion

Each one of our new suppliers must commit to the Code, further underpinned by a screening process to assess the degree of maturity of our supply chain. Our approach is to work with our suppliers to encourage and support those who want to improve their impact. Many of our larger suppliers have the resources and capacity to take positive action, however we have a long tail of much smaller suppliers, and as has been well documented, many small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) struggle to know where to start. We hope that by taking a responsible approach we can have a positive impact through our supply chain.

An example of our approach is our hosting of regular DE&I round tables with our suppliers, which will be expanding to include other ESG issues in the coming year. We will also be collecting new and deeper insights about our supply chain with the aim of identifying the trends and areas where we can work with our suppliers to improve their direct impact and our indirect impact.



**Sophia AdamsBhatti**  
Global Head of Purpose and Impact



Our supply chain has amongst it some of the biggest companies in the world, alongside many smaller suppliers. Regardless of this, our strategy is focused on working in partnership with our suppliers and to support those who need it to achieve the goals we are committed to. We hope that through this strategy of collaboration we can learn from others and in turn help others to improve their impact.

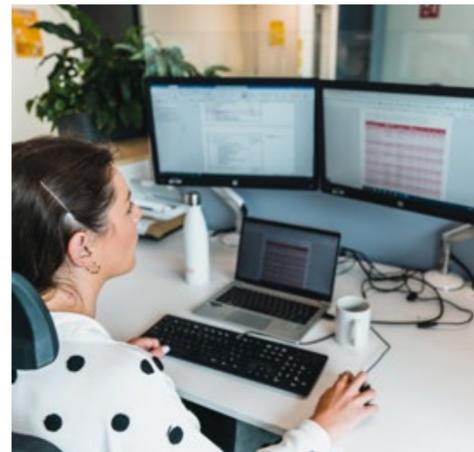


Clients



# Data privacy and cyber security

Confidentiality is the foundation of our relationships with our clients, our partners and our employees. Every day, we work with people's data and confidential company information that is often business critical. We take every effort to protect the integrity of our clients', the firm's and our employees' information.



## Our approach

Both our clients and people are informed of how their data is stored and used. We align with the relevant International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) standards and have policies in place to ensure that there is complete compliance. Data privacy and cyber security is overseen by the Senior Partner, Managing Partner, Finance Director and General Counsel.

We also have a strong international practice that advises on data protection and privacy – advising on areas that range from data protection compliance to transactions and marketing, across all the sectors in which we work.

## Data protection

While, in most circumstances, we are not a processor of personal data, it is necessary to hold some data and use it in accordance with all applicable regulations. Our Acceptable Use Policy requires taking steps to ensure that information is available to authorised individuals, at the right time, in a secure environment so that business operations are maintained. It explains what is expected of employees regarding keeping information safe and secure, including when working remotely.

This policy extends across all our IT systems and information held in any form, processed or stored within the firm. The policy is informed by our Information Classification Policy and Data Handling Standards and covers our general duty to look after all data with an appropriate level of confidentiality and security. Any breach of this Acceptable Use Policy could be investigated, and disciplinary action taken, if a serious incident has occurred.

We make all users aware of information collected, length of time it is preserved, how it is used and whether and how it is shared with other entities (public or private). We comply with all geographically applicable data protection laws, including the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) – for example, our email lists and email marketing strategies are GDPR compliant.

## Managing risk

We have cyber monitoring and controls in place to detect, investigate and respond to any alerts, 24/7. This is supported by reporting mechanisms and processes for reviewing and managing data breaches of all kinds and, where necessary, reporting to clients, individuals and the relevant regulators.



## Standards

We align to ISO27001 (The international standard for Information Security) and use it as a framework for best practice security management, governance and controls.



## Training

Data privacy training is mandatory for every new employee globally, with refresher training for all current employees on a two-year cycle. Training is conducted online with modules covering 'Data Protection: A Practical Overview' and 'Information Security: Background and Best Practice.'

# 2022/23 highlights

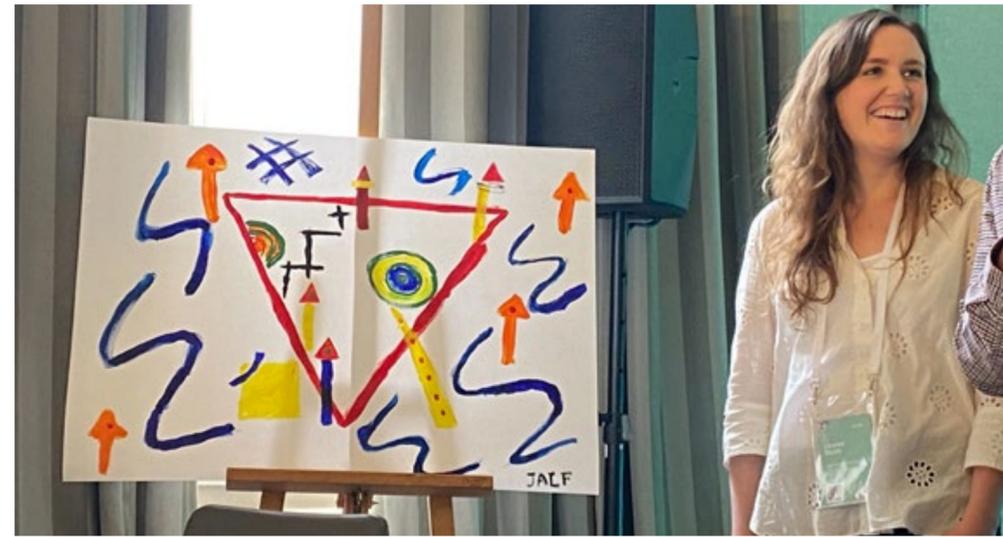
We designed and rolled-out a security transformation programme, which includes aspects of culture, awareness and behaviours. This was approved by the IEC. As part of the programme, the computer-based security awareness training was refreshed and given to all employees.

We ran a cyber response exercise with senior management, following our appointment of external consultants to review our cyber incident business continuity plan.



# Innovation

Innovation sits at the heart of building a next generation law firm. This is more than technology and new products; it starts with a cultural shift. We are making conscious choices to think about our ways of working, challenging our defaults and pushing ourselves to think with open minds about how we can improve our service to our clients and how we can make a more impactful contribution to those around us. We strive to have an open culture that encourages our people to think innovatively and widely about problems.



## Our approach

Our open culture of encouraging innovation and putting clients first has enabled us to forge deeper relationships with our clients, to develop market leading products and to blend the best legal knowledge with a range of specialist disciplines, to create solutions in a novel way.

In practice, putting clients at the centre means working in cross-functional, international teams to solve client issues. Our commitment to digital development within our Solutions International Practice Group is also core to boosting innovation – fusing technology and law with a design-thinking approach to create new solutions to client issues. Innovation is also important to meet our sustainability goals: it encourages us to think differently in areas such as increasing DE&I across the firm; to reduce our emissions and environmental impact; and enhance our contribution to society.

Legal Operations is a newly established function, which brings together existing resources to promote innovation within the firm. The team’s role is to catalyse change in the way we deliver our legal services. This involves deploying design thinking to understand client needs and working with our legal practices to create solutions that are aligned to a client’s commercial objectives.

The team aims to bring digital innovation as well as practice management innovation to everyday client work. It is tasked with understanding how established and emerging technologies can augment legal capabilities among our legal teams. This includes pricing innovation and legal project management, alongside digital deployments.

We also encourage our people to stretch outside of their personal comfort zones and go places they had never considered before in the following ways.



### Support for design thinking.

LawWithoutWalls (LWOW) is an online learning initiative that we provide free support to, applying cross disciplinary working and thinking. It teaches students how to use ‘design thinking’ methodologies to co-create solutions that combine law with business and technology. Many of our lawyers participate on a pro bono basis. (See section on ‘Technology’ on page 28 for more information.)

### Online learning.

Our stars skills academy is an internal online soft-skills learning offering. It exposes our people to new knowledge and skills outside of their everyday roles. (See section on ‘Talent attraction and retention’ on page 40 for more information.)

### Cross office collaboration.

We encourage working in cross-functional teams. We’ve introduced a firmwide mini-international secondments policy where a number of people each year can apply to spend a short period of time (one to two weeks) on secondment to another office. This is in addition to our standard international, client or trainee secondment programmes (which are typically for six months or longer).



**Barbara Hamilton-Bruce**

Partner, Legal Operations Director



Legal innovation is at the heart of our mission to become a next generation law firm.



# 2022/23 highlights



**Ben McQuire**  
Partner, Managing Director  
of Solutions



Our Solutions business is predicated on one thing – bringing cutting edge technology, and new skills and capabilities to the delivery of legal services for the benefit of our clients and colleagues.



Our Solutions International Practice Group took part in a two-day team building and knowledge sharing programme, co-designed by neuroscientists. Its goal was to open minds and see the world through a lens of innovation. Part of the Solutions team's success is predicated on having this open mindset, to think innovatively and widely about problems rather than being constrained by existing norms.

A key session on the day was presentation skills training. Presentation and training usually have a standard approach, however we thought differently and collaborated with the artistic team at London's Donmar Warehouse theatre to train colleagues in the art and joy of storytelling in presentations. Pushing our people beyond the traditional is just one of the ways we are changing minds to deliver better. (See the 'Sponsorship' section on page 59 to learn more about our Donmar sponsorship.)

## Case study

# eDiscovery: conceptual clustering

One of the legal teams in the firm was tasked with finding key construction claim dispute documents, relating to events and claims at issue. They needed a way to do this without having to manually review thousands of documents – and with only five days available.

Initially, they identified and collected 138,000 documents from the client's systems. Then, they used a custom data workflow to reduce the volume to 56,000 documents. Further data analytics such as communications and conceptual analysis reduced the document load to 17,000.

The conceptual clustering technique involves grouping together documents that contain similar concepts within the text. This enabled the team to identify specific clusters that contain a high volume of potentially relevant documents. Upon review, 409 key documents were identified as relevant for the defence.

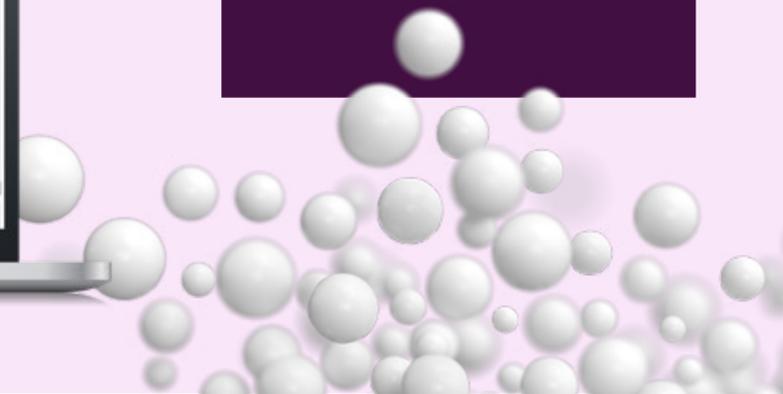
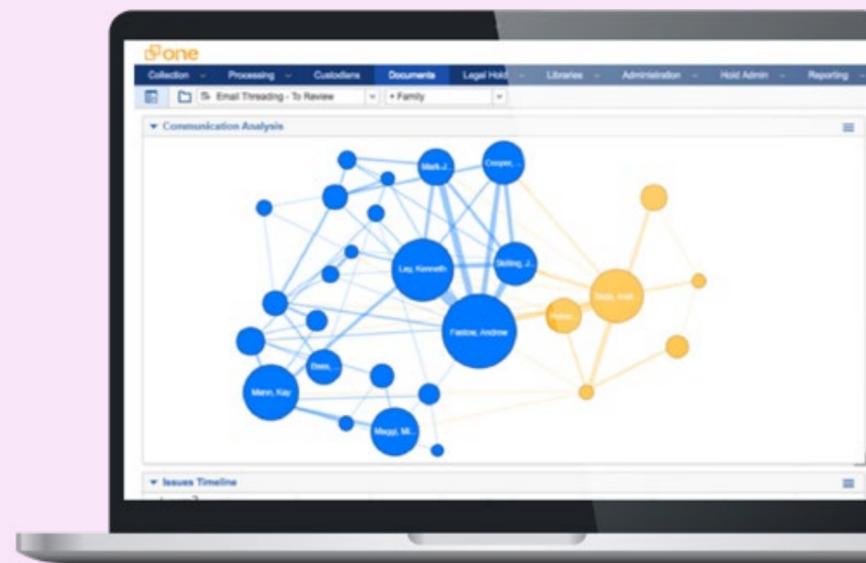
The use of innovative technology and expertise enabled the team to avoid a hugely time intensive and costly manual exercise of the full 138,000 documents and to meet the deadline.



**Tom Quinn**  
Head of eDiscovery



Data is everything, but equally it's nothing if it can't be accessed and analysed in a timely way. Our eDiscovery capabilities have changed the face of discovery in the firm.





# Technology

Technology in legal services is increasing at a fast pace, accelerated by the recent leaps in generative artificial intelligence (AI). We believe that technology plays a central role in building a next generation law firm which can be impactful and deliver the best client response.



## Our approach

Our Solutions International Practice Group is a multidisciplinary team of innovators – data scientists, developers, and designers – all working to adapt the legal services landscape by applying technology. The team offers innovative solutions to legal problems faced by our clients. These range from specific technology products which are designed for direct use by our clients, technology solutions to help colleagues across practice groups in delivering a better service, through to resourcing solutions.

### Solutions International Practice Group teams

Our **Simmons Wavelength** is the world's first regulated firm of legal engineers, helping in-house legal and cross-business teams to improve commercial and operational performance using data, design and legal operations capabilities.

Taking ideas from the business, our clients and the market, our **Digital Products** team supports the creation of a diverse range of products and solutions.



We identify, build and maintain off-the-shelf legal **products**, including our sector-leading navigator subscription service which is a globally trusted resource of key areas of financial services regulation, spanning over 140 jurisdictions.

Our **eDiscovery** team offers clients the ability to combine the firm's deep subject matter knowledge with leading edge data strategy expertise.

Our flexible on-demand resourcing service, **Adaptive**, helps meet the peaks and troughs of demand with technically excellent lawyers and other professionals.

Alongside our Solutions team, our technology and innovation capabilities are further enhanced by our Legal Operations team and our newly formed Generative AI team.

We believe strongly in the positive role technology and innovation can play in our ability to serve our clients and increase our impact. We are committed to growing our investment and our capabilities. This focus and growth was supercharged in 2019 when the firm acquired the legal engineering company, Wavelength. This has enabled us to deliver smarter solutions for clients, drawing on a diverse blend of legal, data, design, and engineering skills from within and outside of the legal profession.

Examples of products on offer to clients include:

**Navigator.** An online subscription service that details regulations applicable to business across various jurisdictions.

**Crypto Reviewer.** Provides clear, up-to-date information about the many crypto laws and regulations in various countries around the world.

**CtrlTransfer.** Supports companies to understand the constraints on transferring personal data outside the UK or the EU.



**Drew Winlaw**  
Partner, Wavelength



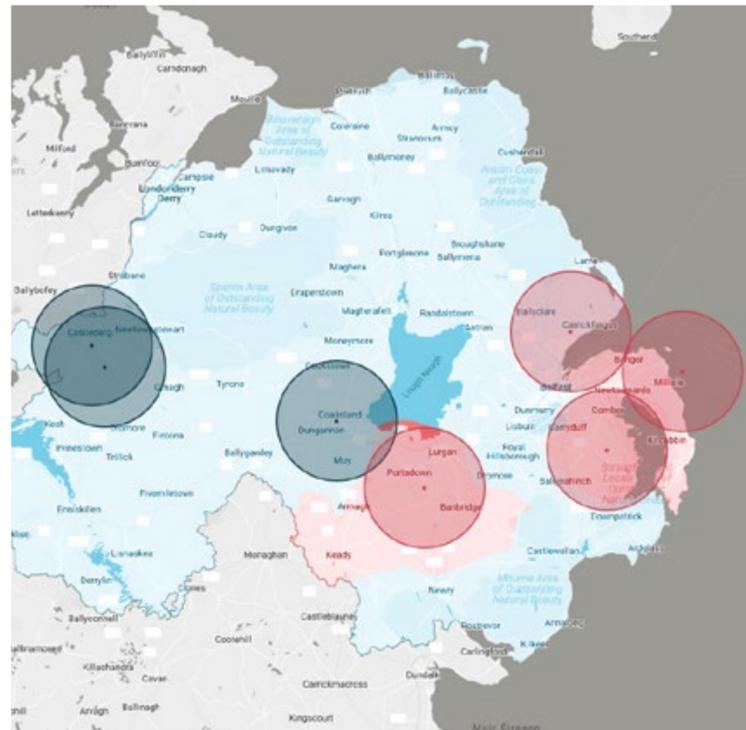
AI has been long talked about as revolutionising legal. The developments in the last year have taken us a step closer to that and the work my team are doing to harness the power of generative AI will set the course for the firm and our clients.

## Deploying data science to solve client problems

Our Wavelength team is able to bridge the gap between lawyers, legal technology, data and design – integrating creative solutions to meet any legal or business challenge.

Their core philosophy underpins the development of our products and services. There must first be a demand for the product - in others words a genuine problem which our clients need a solution for - then the feasibility to build it and finally a viable solution that is aligned with the firm’s strategy and purpose. At each stage – from concept, to prototype, to testing in the market – there are controls and measures in place to assess whether something will work in the market. This creates the space and flexibility for novel ideas to develop.

### Aggregated data analysis and mapping to identify relevance of insurance claims.



**Ben McGuire**

Partner, Managing Director of Solutions



Tackling complex legal and business challenges demands collaboration between clients, technology providers, and the legal sector. This necessitates a cultural shift, with lawyers, data scientists, designers, and developers working together in a novel way. True collaboration, where all parties contribute knowledge, leads to better outcomes.

It’s a novel and very different way of working in the legal sector – and a true collaboration where each side is contributing knowledge to create a better outcome.



## Education and democratising legal information

Our Solutions International Practice Group includes experts in legal design, who make legal concepts and information more accessible. The multidisciplinary team looks at ways to present complex legal information in a more visual and compelling way, where it is relevant to people who do not necessarily have legal expertise or who require legal information to be presented in a more digestible way. (See ‘Case study: Consumer Duty regulations’ on page 30 for more information.)

The team also helps to educate tomorrow’s lawyers about legal engineering and technology. This includes contributing their knowledge and expertise to data science education at

Oxford University (its Law and Computer science course) and to the British Legal Technology Forum, by running guest sessions for students.

The team also works with LawWithoutWalls (LWOW), an online learning initiative that teaches students how to apply ‘design thinking’ methodologies to co-create solutions that combine law with business and technology. Many of our lawyers also participate in LWOW activities, including in the annual showcase hackathon to work collaboratively to develop solutions to real world challenges together with aspiring lawyers, industry experts and innovation coaches.

## Case study

# CtrlTransfer



The need for companies to adhere to regulatory compliance around the world creates a heavy burden on our clients. We’ve been focused on finding ways to reduce the friction points for our clients by applying the best technology deployment and ideas. These are often our most successful software and information products, as they reduce the client burden in response to a specific regulatory driver.

One of our products is the award-winning CtrlTransfer tool. It was created in response to a change in data protection rules, under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), where the transfer of personal data outside the UK or the EU is only permissible if there is an adequate level of protection for the data. Breaching these rules can lead to heavy fines. CtrlTransfer tackles this exact problem to enable companies to send data across jurisdictions, outside of the UK or EU, by identifying the differences between jurisdictions.

The tool can be adapted to client needs and is available 24/7. It’s a cost effective and time saving way to meet regulatory requirements. The tool won an award from Law.com at the Legal Innovation Awards 2023 for the ‘Future of Legal Services Innovation – Large Private Practice’.

## Next gen legal solutions index

Our next gen legal solutions index, released in May 2023, sheds light on the experiences of the legal teams of over 500 companies and their relationships with law firms. In-house General Counsel (GC) expect law firms to offer more diversified skills, capabilities and offerings to help them solve the complex business problems, rather than solely legal issues.



The survey investigated whether the technology that law firms offer GCs is meeting these needs. This included the combined technology and legal expertise needed to solve complex commercial problems, by applying data science. The results indicate that law firms are falling short in their technology offer: over a quarter of GCs surveyed said that the technology being deployed by law firms on client engagements is still inadequate.



## 2022/23 highlights



We participated in a **LawWithoutWalls (LWOW)** three-day hackathon to address global issues in partnership with three clients, Barclays, Haleon and UBS.

## Case study

# Consumer Duty regulations



The UK's financial regulatory body, the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) introduced Consumer Duty regulations in the UK in July 2023, that apply across all financial services. The regulations aim to set higher and clearer standards of consumer protection, by ensuring that banks and financial services make their documentation more accessible to customers – and a lot less complex.

The audiences that benefit from more compelling financial information are broad – ranging from vulnerable consumers to people of different neurotypes or time-poor customers.

In line with this new regulation, our Solutions International Practice Group has worked with some of our financial clients to open mindsets and think innovatively about how information can be presented in a more digestible way. The team's legal design specialists used research insights to take the client's complex legal information – such as bank terms and conditions – and present it in different formats. This included adopting simpler language and visual communication that appeal to consumers.

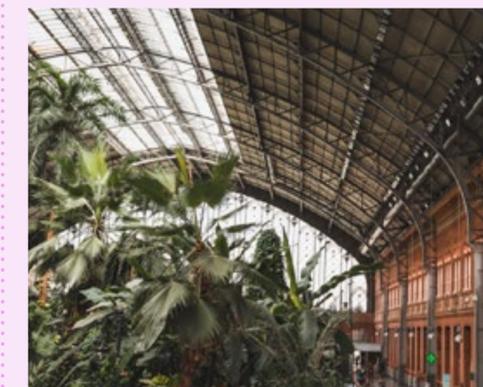
## Case study

# Clean Energy Tool

Renewable energy is in demand, yet the legal and regulatory environment for developing clean energy infrastructure is complex, rapidly evolving and often unclear.

Our Clean Energy Tool is an online tool, developed by our Solutions International Practice Group, which provides clients with access to reliable legal, regulatory and market renewable energy data in a consistent and digestible format. This helps clients speed up their analysis to make informed clean energy investment decisions around the world.

The tool currently includes data for 70 jurisdictions and enables cross-country comparisons. We work on content with trusted local counsel in over 60 countries across Africa, the Middle East, Europe, Asia and Latin America.



**Alex Blomfield**

Partner, Energy, Natural Resources and Infrastructure



The transition to clean energy is crucial for us all, and being able to help our clients to navigate such a complex environment is just one of the ways we can play our part.



# People

.....

We support equality of opportunity and diverse representation at all levels and nurture a business culture that offers employees a sense of belonging. We also ensure that everyone working with us, including our suppliers, maintains the highest standards of ethical business conduct across all activities, through our Code of Conduct, relevant policies and training.

In this section we draw out the three priority topics, identified by our stakeholders in the materiality impact assessment, which most directly relate to our relationship with our people.

## **In this section**

.....

Employee health, safety and wellbeing

Diversity, equity and inclusion

Talent attraction and retention

People

# Employee health, safety and wellbeing

Looking after the wellbeing of our people is critical for maintaining a healthy working environment. Our goal is to ensure that people are able to stay mentally and physically healthy in a changing business environment.

For many, the COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way we work and increased the public discussion on mental health and wellbeing. Based on the feedback from our people, we've taken steps to adopt new working practices across all offices.



## Our approach

The health, safety and wellbeing of our people, including contractors, has two aspects: the physical wellbeing of our people, led by our Director of Facilities; and their broader wellbeing, led by the Director of Human Resources and our new dedicated Global Head of Wellbeing.

In 2018, we were one of the first law firms to sign the Mindfulness Business Charter which aims to remove unnecessary sources of stress and promote better mental health and wellbeing in the workplace. It is a practical framework that encourages people to be more thoughtful about the impact on each other. The Charter promotes a culture within the firm where people can speak up early about any concerns that they might have about their wellbeing, and where action is taken to address these concerns.

We have a full calendar throughout the year of webinars, panel conversations and training, which are open to everyone across the firm. We believe that wellbeing is a collective responsibility and encourage all our people, particularly those with manager responsibilities, to attend the training to better support ourselves, each other and our wider team.

In addition, the firm has launched a partner-specific wellbeing programme, acknowledging that they need support just as much as more junior colleagues. As part of the scheme, partners are taught a range of skills such as how to better understand themselves and their own emotions, how to manage teams, and how to deal with individuals in crisis, among other topics. The programme intends to create a community approach to wellbeing, opening up conversations and allowing the collective sharing of knowledge, skills and understanding.



### Caroline Turner-Inskip

Global Head of Wellbeing  
Partner, Real Estate



As the Global Head of Wellbeing, my role is to embed wellbeing – that includes mental, physical, emotional and economic health – across the firm applying a strategic lens and a holistic approach. This is to create a sense of psychological safety where everyone, no matter their role or location, can thrive.

# 2022/23 highlights

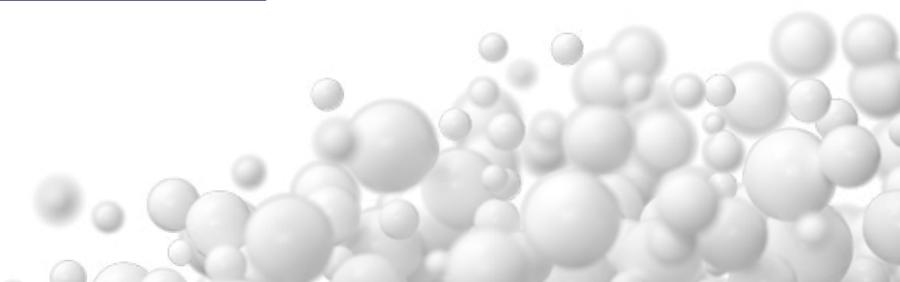
We put in place wellbeing training for lawyers who undertake pro bono work on how to look after themselves when dealing with difficult cases.

We joined up with Smart About Health, a GP-led consultancy group, to run regular training on important aspects of health, wellbeing and performance. This includes a range of topics such as sleep, men's mental health, fertility and supporting the next generation with mental health.

We adopted a new hybrid working policy, meaning the majority of our people now work from our offices two to three days per week.

New family policies were adapted such as shared parental leave policy and an increase in our paternity leave from two weeks full pay to four weeks full pay.

We hosted a 'Think Big' debate to discuss the topic of autonomy and power at work. This is a debating technique we use across the firm to discuss topical firmwide issues.



## Case study

# Think Big debates

Think Big is a debating method we use across the firm to break down barriers. We select a topic that touches on an evolving discussion which is debated by office teams. The insights help to develop particular attributes related to our purpose, such as reconsidering how we work, what we do, why we do it and, importantly, the impact on our clients, our people, society and the planet.

For example, the topic debated in 2022 was whether individuals should be given the autonomy and freedom to choose the hours of work that suit them best and be trusted to deliver their work.

Insights from the debate fed into the policy development of the firm, informing the approach taken. The debating technique provides a successful way to involve the whole firm in the development and implementation of policies which matter to our people.



**Delphine Mailloc**

ESG Marketing and Business  
Development Lead



It was nerve-racking at first to speak in front of the whole firm, but it was also empowering - I got the chance to voice my opinion on what is a hugely important issue to people. It really was such a different and energising way to engage people across the whole firm.

## Case study

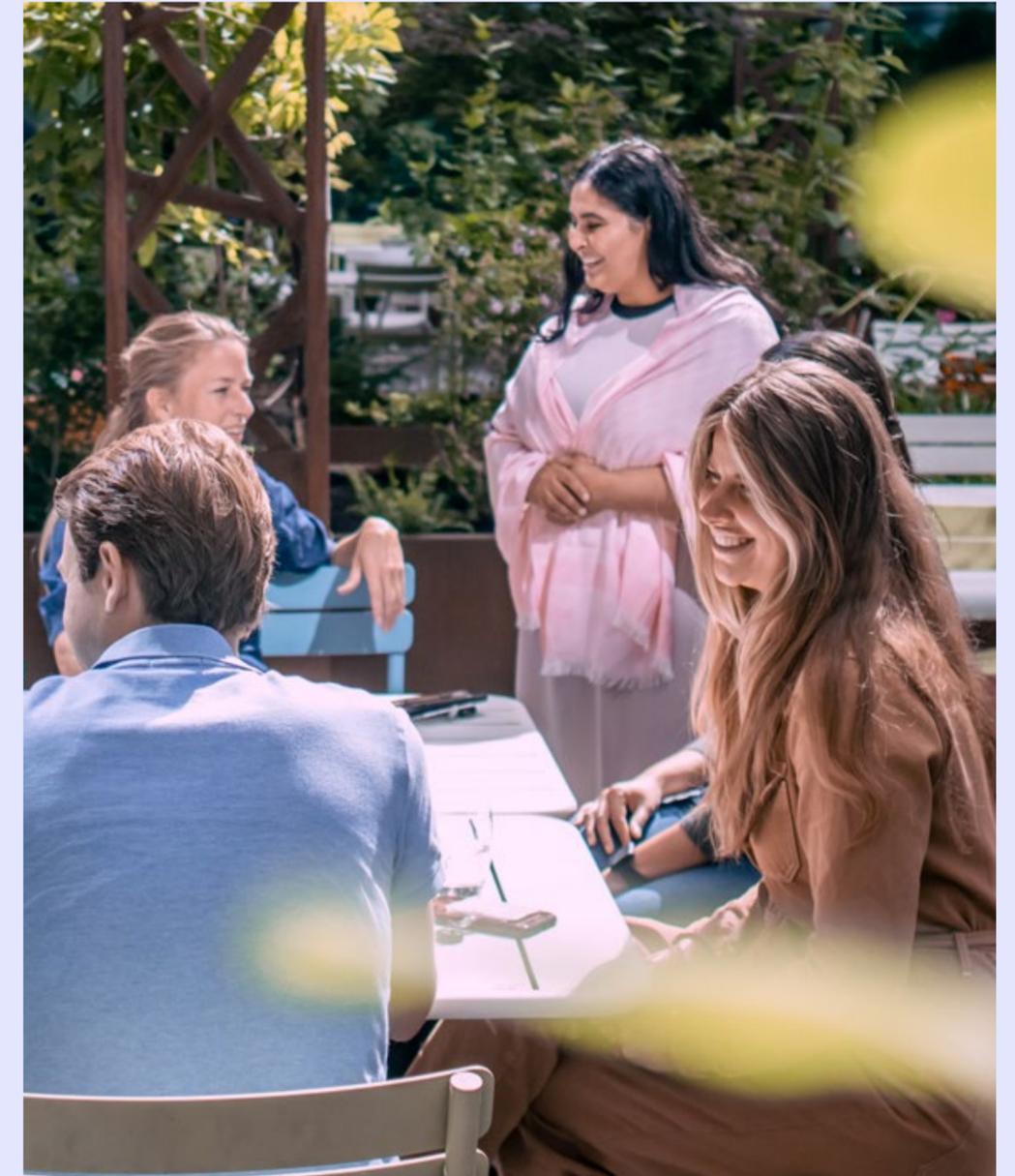
# Progressing DE&I in our Netherlands office

DE&I policies are created at a global level, with local offices encouraged to adopt and focus policies to their local needs, provide local partnerships and support. The first step for many offices is to identify the areas of support needed, based on data, insights and feedback from their office colleagues.

The Amsterdam office initially focused its DE&I programme on gender diversity, particularly at the senior levels within the firm. The firm identified that this was often a leadership issue and that changes could be made by supporting women with role models, making people aware of career possibilities and encouraging a growth mindset. After thorough analysis of the HR data and interviews across the board, one of the conclusions was that in order to achieve the desired results there needed to be more open and honest conversations at all levels. To facilitate this the office started a personal leadership training programme, initially for partners, which was later rolled out to associate level. This training programme is now embedded within the local learning and development curriculum. Since late 2018 the office has also partnered with Dutch female lawyers'

association "Legal Women" which provides a platform to share information, transfer knowledge and share experiences as well as networking. Each year on or around International Women's Day, the "All Inclusive" event is organised. Over this period the percentage of female partners has increased from 5% to 26%.

Since we began our partnership, the programme has been broadened to other areas of diversity. The office collaborates, for instance, with "Bridges Network". Their aim is to build a bridge between law students from multicultural backgrounds and the commercial legal profession to increase ethnic diversity within the legal profession. The office has also joined "Stichting Lequal" which aims to provide a platform for legal professionals from multicultural backgrounds and "allies" where they can meet and exchange experiences. The Amsterdam office is one of the founding members of "Stichting Forward" which aims to promote the acceptance, recognition and visibility of LGBT+ lawyers and exchange experiences and best practices.



# Diversity, equity and inclusion

A more diverse firm leads to an inclusive environment, bringing about increased output and creativity. The legal sector has often suffered from the under-representation of different groups, such as women and minority ethnic groups, particularly at senior levels. More diversity is needed to increase mobility across the legal sector.



## Our approach

In support of UN SDGs 5 and 10, diversity, equity and inclusion (DE&I) is central to the values of our firm. We support equal opportunities and diverse representation at all levels across the firm. This involves creating and nurturing a business culture in which all employees feel they belong.



DE&I is also a core issue for most of our clients and suppliers, as borne out in our materiality impact assessment research. (See section on 'Materiality: what matters most to our stakeholders' on page 17 for more information.) Therefore, we look to work with these stakeholders where we can, as we believe we can achieve more when we work together on common areas of interest and exchange DE&I best practice. To enable this, we make our DE&I targets publicly available, including reporting on gender diversity and pay gaps in the UK.

Our DE&I policy underpins our commitment to promoting diversity, preventing discrimination and providing an inclusive and supportive working environment and is overseen by the IEC and the Board. Our strategy is focused on five pillars and has specific, measurable diversity improvement goals that are reviewed by our Board.

- 1 Race and ethnicity
- 2 Gender diversity
- 3 LGBT+ inclusion
- 4 Social mobility
- 5 Neurodiversity

Each of these pillars has an appointed lead partner and is supported by diversity employee networks. The work done by these networks helps to shape our workplace culture.

We have mandatory inclusive leadership and unconscious bias training and analyse DE&I data for individuals who are part of multiple under-represented groups.

### Our targets are:

#### By 2026...



...will be from an ethnic minority (target relates to the UK)

#### By 2026 roles to be held by women (Global)

**50%** of all internal and lateral partner promotions and appointments to be women by 2025.

**At least 30%** of all senior leadership roles to be held by women by 2026.

## Our employee value proposition

In 2022 we spent six months conducting a listening exercise, globally, to understand what it meant to people to be a part of our firm. The exercise involved approximately 11% of our employees, from across the firm’s different geographies and demographics.

We explored topics such as what connects people to the firm, their values and the values they expect of the firm, with the goal of being able to understand what our people wanted from a progressive workplace. The outcomes of this research informed the basis of our new global employee value proposition (EVP).

### Our new EVP has three core principles:

Work that matters

Everyone’s voice is heard

Do things you never thought were possible

These principles inform decisions and policies across the firm, further enhanced by the insights from our employee survey. Combined, these have provided each of our offices with a deeper understanding of the needs of their people and how to create the most effective working environments. Some of the resulting actions were quick wins, and others will take time to deliver on.



## Employee DE&I survey and pay gap analysis

We conduct an annual anonymous DE&I employee survey that tracks the diversity of our workforce, gathering data in relation to gender, race, ethnicity, disability and social mobility. In 2023, the survey was conducted in 13 offices, including our offices in Germany, UK, the Netherlands, Ireland and across Asia and the Middle East, with questions adapted to be sensitive and appropriate to cultures and local laws. This included 82% of the firm’s employees.

In the UK, our largest country presence, we also conduct a pay equity analysis, examining gender and race and ethnicity, along with other demographic factors. As a result, we have developed plans to close the gaps.

## Employee networks

We are taking action to achieve greater diversity and inclusion through our employee networks. These are run by our employees, providing support and a voice, and feed into the direction of the firm. Their activities and events are often participated in and attended by clients as well as employees. Sometimes, clients are invited to speak at events.

**Allies.** Launched in 2011, it is open to everyone at the firm who wants to champion equality and inclusion in the workplace. Our colleagues can perform better if they can be themselves and the allies community supports us to make this happen, taking an active role in supporting all diversity networks at the firm.

**TNOC.** Our gender network supports progression for both women and men across the firm with chapters in Dubai, Germany, Hong Kong, Italy, Luxembourg, Spain and the UK. The network’s objectives are to deliver internal events (open to women and men) to promote development, retention and wellbeing, connecting people in the firm and supporting the firm’s gender balance initiatives. It drives collaboration opportunities with our clients on shared objectives to address and improve gender balance and leads on business development opportunities with our clients’ own gender networks.

**Neurodiversity.** A new network which champions neurodiversity. The network works across the firm to consider and encourage change, to become more neuro-inclusive and provide an avenue for new joiners as well as parents and carers who may need support. Ayo Sokale, an external speaker, launched the network at the end of 2022 and spoke of her neurodiverse condition and her journey to become a Chartered Civil Engineer.



**Andrea Tompkins**  
TNOC Co-chair  
Partner, Corporate Public Markets



The firm’s commitment to gender equality is deeply embedded in our culture and the role that the network plays in supporting that progress is vital.

**Religious networks.** There are three religious networks covering Christian, Jewish and Muslim faiths. Each network brings together colleagues who have an interest in that faith, offering socialising and learning. They also each mark key events and festivals throughout the year.



**LGBT+.** This network raises the profile of LGBT+ inclusion in the firm and provides practical assistance in addressing LGBT+ issues. As well as providing opportunities for colleagues to connect virtually across the firm, it also offers mentoring for trainees who join the firm and wish to be paired with a mentor who is also from the LGBT+ community, to help navigate their journey at the firm. Last year the network led celebrations for Pride in the London office, with a breakfast for members and a Drag Bingo event jointly organised with our gender network. The network hosts events in collaboration with our clients, such as an LGBT+ parenting event hosted during 2022 LGBT+ History Month.

**EMerge.** Our race and ethnicity network supports our firm’s objective to increase race and ethnicity diversity and representation. The network contributes to the firm’s progress on our ‘race at work’ action plan, which was built on the principles of the Race at Work Charter from Business in the Community in the UK. Our EMerge partner co-chairs and the network is leading the discussion to address the issues of race at work, and support our focus to achieve greater racial inclusion and equality. Their aim is to ensure that everyone can feel comfortable and safe in bringing their

whole selves to work and that the systems and processes in place at the firm are not unconsciously biased or racist. The network also runs a reverse mentoring programme where mentors from an ethnic minority background educate on race and ethnicity issues at work and more widely, and mentees can learn and understand more about ethnic minority colleagues’ perspectives. Since its founding in 2019, 128 colleagues have taken part in this programme including our Senior Partner, Managing Partner and group heads.



**Social mobility.** The aim of our social mobility network is for employees to champion social mobility, so that those from a lower social-economic background experience a true sense of belonging whilst working at the firm. The network enables employees to inspire and be role models for participants of our numerous social mobility outreach programme. It also provides education and resources to help us have informed conversations and explore partnering opportunities with our clients.

## Supporting young people with mentorships, apprenticeships and internships

We support DE&I initiatives externally, using our position as a well-resourced global organisation to work with our local communities. We offer opportunities to students from under-represented groups to work with the firm and participate in mentorship programmes. Not only does this help the individual students, but also enriches our experience as a firm.

### Our programmes

- Young Talent Programme
- Future Lawyers Programme
- Solicitor Apprenticeship Programme
- Envision
- 10,000 Able Interns Programme

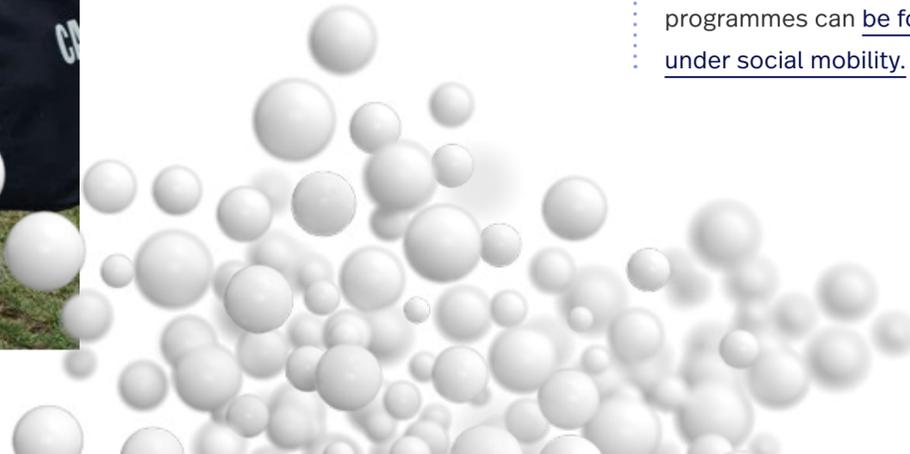
These programmes offer a breadth of support such as studying, bursaries for universities, work placements, mentoring and internships at our firm or with client companies. Further details on these programmes can [be found on page 38 under social mobility.](#)



**Rishley Permalloo**  
Solicitor Apprentice



Accessing a legal career has always been my goal and having the opportunity to do so, supported through the apprenticeship scheme, has been life changing.





### DE&I initiatives

#### 1 - Race and ethnicity

Our ambition is to enhance the diversity of races and ethnicities, as well as foster greater inclusion across our firm, in accordance with our action plan.

Included in this:

- We are founding partners and signatories of the 10,000 Black Interns programme which offers paid work experience to black students across a range of sectors each year. The aim of the initiative is for over 20 industries to join together to provide a total of 10,000 internships over five years.

#### Over 25%

of students on the 10,000 Black Interns programme, across all participating companies, have been offered permanent or graduate roles when they finish university.

- We are a member of Legal Core in the UK, supporting the mission to increase the representation of ethnic minority individuals in private practice and creating a fundamental shift across the legal sector by working collectively.



#### 2 - Gender diversity

Striving for gender equality is a key business priority and includes commitments to improve the representation of women in the partnership and in senior management roles. Women currently make up 28% of our international partnership – this has almost doubled in the last decade. Our programmes and processes that support career development and opportunities for women are:

- **Sponsorship.** All female and male managing associates on their route to partnership are assigned a senior equity partner sponsor to provide support.

- **Gender balance committees.** We have committees responsible for driving organisational change to help us achieve our gender diversity targets. They hold relevant partners to account for meeting specific targets and objectives related to gender balance within the firm, including increasing the representation of women in the partnership and senior leadership roles within the firm.
- **Inclusive leadership.** This is promoted as a way to influence and support people in their careers. This means that our female partners offer their time and expertise to mentor others in the firm.

#### 3 - LGBT+ inclusion

We are committed to LGBT+ equality and seek to provide a safe and inclusive environment for our people regardless of where they work.

We have previously been recognised as a Stonewall Top Global Employer for five consecutive years, and we have local relationships with external LGBT+ organisations across Asia, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and the UK.



**Emma Lim**  
Head of Talent and Diversity

“Our networks play a vital role in supporting our people in whichever community they connect with. It’s a grass root set of networks - they help to make our ambitions as a firm more achievable.”

4 - Social mobility

We place great value on widening access to the legal profession and career opportunities. By running a variety of programmes we give students experience at the firm and access to a career in law, and run a variety of social mobility programmes to support this:

Young talent programme

Is an award-winning programme working alongside Frederick Bremer School, Walthamstow, London, designed to raise students' aspirations through a series of ongoing, longer-term initiatives that provide access to the legal profession and wider work opportunities. The programme has been running for more than a decade.

Future lawyers programme

Supports students who want to pursue a career in law, in collaboration with Brampton Manor Academy Sixth Form in London. The programme offers work experience, mentoring and skills sessions over two years.

Solicitor apprenticeship programme

Offers access to a wider talent pool within a broader socio-economic group by offering candidates an opportunity to earn while learning. Apprentices complete a six-year programme to qualify as solicitors. They gain practical work experience and spend one day a week studying with BPP University.



Big city bright future initiative

We take part in hosting internships for students from ethnic minorities and under-represented groups, in collaboration with IntoUniversity. We offer a three-week paid work experience programme each year for school leavers, before university, who aspire to work in law.

10,000 Able interns programme

An initiative to support university students from a disability background. It stemmed from the success of the 10,000 Black Interns programme and applies the same framework, offering paid work experience to disabled students across a range of sectors each year.

Social mobility real estate programme

The Real Estate and Real Estate Finance groups jointly support the Academy of Real Assets's social mobility programme, helping provide access to the industry for those from a diverse background.



Nawal Bin-Sheikh

Solicitor Apprentice



I've learnt so much already, the team here at Simmons have supported my learning and growth. I couldn't have hoped for a better place to start my legal career.

Envision mentoring programme

Has been working with the firm for over a decade, to support young people from Redland Green school, Bristol, UK. Each year we provide 15 young people from disadvantaged and neurodiverse backgrounds with group mentoring sessions to help develop soft skills such as creativity, teamwork, determination and confidence, to equip them for the work environment.



City solicitor horizons

We provide work experience and opportunities to students from lower socio-economic backgrounds. As part of this initiative, we provide mentoring support and work experience for three students per programme year.

5 - Neurodiversity

In late 2022, we started to implement a plan to proactively create a neuro-inclusive culture. We have partnered with a workplace assessment provider that offers comprehensive reports, including recommendations to support neurodiverse employees reach their full potential. We have provided training across the firm and to our recruitment teams to raise awareness and create a hiring and onboarding process that attracts and supports neurodiverse candidates.



# 2022/23 highlights

The DE&I survey in 2023 was conducted in 13 offices, inviting 82% of our global employee network to participate.

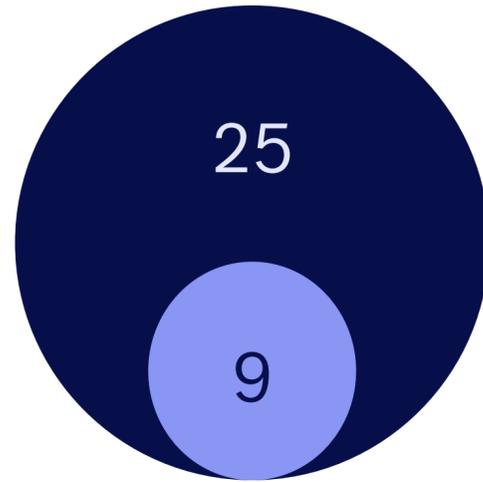
We recruited three solicitor apprentices in London in September 2022 and recruited a further two in Bristol in September 2023.

The firm expanded the Future Lawyers programme by increasing its annual cohort size to ten students per year.

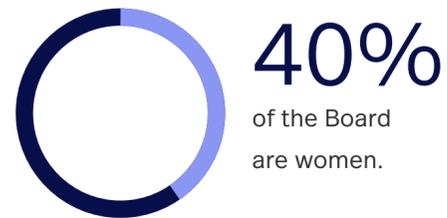


We hosted a total of 54 students in our social mobility programme.

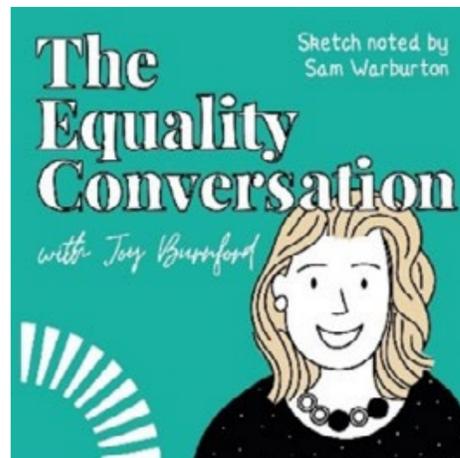
## Gender highlights



In 2022, 9 of our 25 lateral partner hires and 4 out of 13 partner promotions were women.



Our TNOC gender network hosted talks on fertility and menopause.



## Case study

# Young Talent Programme



### Year 10 (14-15 years old)

A week of work experience which includes workshops and group projects.

### Year 11 (15-16 years old)

Students return to the firm after their GCSE exams to undertake a week's paid internship.

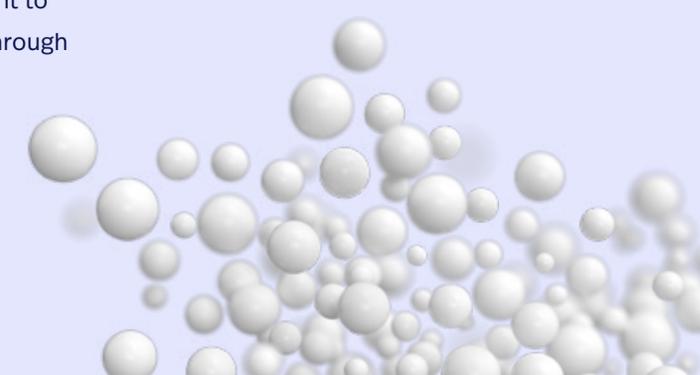
### Years 12 and 13 (16-18 years old)

Mentoring sessions, application support for UK university submissions and the opportunity to apply for a bursary at the firm.

Our clients often partner with us on the programme, offering students access to various workplace environments. In the past five years, 12 students have completed their summer internships at client organisations. Clients have also delivered skills sessions during student work experience placements, offering insights into different aspects of law.

We've been attracting young talent from the Frederick Bremer School in Walthamstow, London, for more than a decade. The Young Talent Programme was set up in 2012 and has enrolled over 140 students in the past ten years, having a lasting positive effect on many students. Since its inception, we have supported 17 students with a university bursary, totalling more than £150,000 and we have employed two alumni students.

Each year, a group of Year 10 students (14-15 years old) are selected to join the programme. The school has an above average percentage of free school meal recipients with 25% of students eligible and over 40 languages spoken by pupils. We offer a seven-year commitment to each student, supporting them through school and higher education.



People

# Talent attraction and retention

Employees are the fundamental asset to any law firm, so finding the right people is critical to our long-term success. We attract, value and retain talent by offering fair compensation, development opportunities and a strong business culture that reflects all elements of sustainability – from promoting a diverse workforce to addressing our carbon footprint.

Our senior leaders participate in our training and development initiatives, to demonstrate leadership by example.



## Our approach

### Training and development

We provide mandatory firmwide online compliance training and offer training to support career progression – beginning when someone starts at the firm and developing throughout their career. This includes:



Formal onboarding process for new employees.



Ongoing training on core job responsibilities as well as external professional development opportunities, such as attending conferences or online training.



Access to coaching, mentoring and 1:1 support.



Sponsorship for programmes of intensive continuing education (for example, degrees or professional licensures).



As part of our ongoing training, we support our people with training and skills development so that they can do their job effectively. For example, our promotion schools are development programmes tailored to specific legal career stages. The schools are designed to support our lawyers at key transitions in their career, providing them with the knowledge, contacts and skills to help them progress and succeed in their new role. Training is delivered virtually or in-person and includes people, financial and business skills for the relevant level.

In January 2023, we introduced a new firmwide mandatory online learning

module on inclusive workplace and culture. It discusses our policies, duty of care, people’s responsibility including partners and line managers, behaviour towards other people, raising a concern and the support available.

There is more we can do and we are actively looking at different ways to support and enable our people to flourish. We’re looking at developing better career pathways for our people who work in specialisms other than law, recognising that the future of our firm lies in harnessing a diverse range of talent.

## stars skills academy

In Autumn 2022, we launched stars, a global soft-skills academy for our people – with a particular focus on emerging talent – to create long-lasting, positive impact for the firm. The academy covers eight areas of learning;

1 - Leadership

2 - Impact

3 - Wellbeing

4 - Sales

5 - Commerciality

6 - ESG

7 - Innovation

8 - Technology



stars\*

The goal is to develop key professional skills from an early stage and empower our people to do things they never thought were possible, aligned with our employee value proposition.

The content is co-produced by leaders and subject matter experts from both within and outside the firm, applying a peer-to-peer learning model with contributions from clients, as well as external trainers and experts. The format of training includes workshops and webinars, podcasts, TED style talks and practical learning experiences. Training is mostly online, with sessions available to everyone across the firm, with around three live sessions a month.



## Employee terms and advancement

Our policy is to encourage internal promotions and hiring for advanced positions before advertising externally. We offer full-time employees up to four paid days of professional development in a single year, as well as 30-35 paid days off as annual leave (including bank holidays).



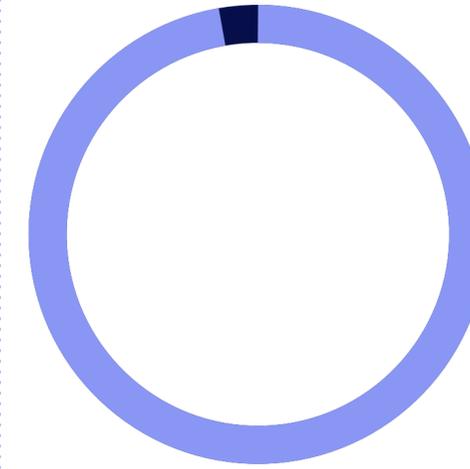
**Barbara Minich**

Senior Training Lead



stars has been so well received by colleagues across the firm. The content is so topical, as it's wide ranging and because of the way it's designed.

## 2022/23 highlights



Nearly

# 100%

of employees received specialised training on policies and procedures concerning aspects of labour or human rights during 2023.

Since its launch in October 2022 until July 2023 the stars skills academy has delivered:

# 31

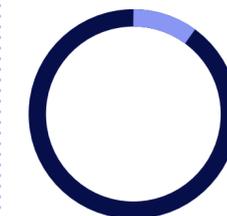
live learning sessions

# 24

on-demand learning modules

# 45%

Reaching 45% of employees and partners



Approximately

# 10%

of UK staff were promoted in the last year.





# Society and the planet

---

We contribute to society by undertaking work within the communities where we operate, and we annually donate money to support disaster relief across the world. We also have a strong commitment to reducing our impact on the planet.

In this section we draw out the five priority topics, identified by our stakeholders in the materiality impact assessment, which most directly relate to our relationship with society and the planet.

## In this section

---

Ethics and integrity

Climate change

Other environmental impacts

Community development and impact

Public policy engagement

Economic impact and responsibility

Society and the planet

# Ethics and integrity

Ethics and integrity are hardwired into how we conduct ourselves professionally. We're a strongly regulated profession and even though specific regulations may differ in each global region, an ethical environment applies internationally.

## Our approach

Our Code of Conduct underpins what is expected from our people as well as in our client relationships. Every employee must adhere to the Code of Conduct. There are also a number of supporting policies, such as an Anti-bribery and Corruption Policy, Whistleblowing Policy and our Business Acceptance Policy, which help to define our desired responsible business behaviour. These standards are replicated in our expectations of our supply chain and are hardwired into our Supplier Code of Conduct.

We prohibit bribes in any form, including kickbacks or gifts, on any portion of contract payments or soft dollar practices. We do not give financial or in-kind contributions to political parties, politicians or lobby groups. We have a Charitable Foundation through which all of our charitable support is managed.

We ensure that all our people are fully aware of our anti-corruption system – all employees must complete online anti-bribery training each year.

We have a global whistle-blower procedure in place for people to report any potential unlawful, unethical, or anti-competitive practices. The complainant can choose to remain anonymous. The procedure may relate to the conduct of partners, other employees or clients.



We also have an internal complaints process, providing a formal system for employees to raise problems or concerns about their work, working conditions, or relationships with colleagues. This grievance procedure aims to resolve any issues in the most appropriate and fair manner.

The IEC formally oversees and receives reports of material breaches of the UK Solicitors Regulation Authority Code of Conduct or equivalent in the other jurisdictions where we operate.

Any internal or external review that is undertaken (including investigations) is reported directly to the IEC with results – however, to date, no reviews have been necessary. The work is led by the General Counsel who has the ability to report directly to the Board and, where relevant, are included in the Regulatory Risk register and discussed with the Risk Committee during deep dives. The IEC

also has formal oversight of reporting, monitoring and preventing corruption.



**Ian Hammond**  
Partner, General Counsel



We put a huge premium on operating ethically. It is expected of us as a regulated law firm, but we also do this because it is part of our values.

# 2022/23 highlights

- 0 reports relating to the whistle blower procedure.
- 0 confirmed corruption incidents.

While complaints were made, none were upheld by the UK Solicitors Regulation Authority or equivalent in the other jurisdictions where we operate.

We instigated a new Russia Business Committee to vet any work related to Russia. The goal is to ensure that we will not inadvertently support the Russian government.

We established the Business Acceptance Policy and Committee.

We put in place a Supplier Code of Conduct which explicitly requires commitment to high standards of business ethics.

Comprehensive anti-bribery training was completed by all employees across the firm.





# Climate change

We have long committed to reducing our carbon footprint. We were the first international law firm in the UK to become Carbon Neutral back in 2006. Today, the expectations on businesses are much higher and more urgent, as the world seeks to reduce global emissions in line with the Paris Agreement to keep climate warming within 1.5°C. Therefore, as we are serious about our environmental impact, we have decided to increase our ambition and commit to achieving near-term Science Based Targets (SBTs).



## Our approach

We recognise that our business activities have global and local environmental impacts. To reduce these impacts, we are committed to the protection of the environment, continually improving our environmental performance and preventing pollution through proactive management and regular communication with stakeholders. Our environmental policy supports our participation with the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC) and is a cornerstone of our environmental management system.

Emissions reduction and climate change are leading sustainability issues for our clients, and we recognise our role in reducing emissions as part of their supply chains.

In 2023, the Science Based Targets Initiative (SBTi) verified and approved our near-term Science Based Targets for 2030, with a supporting roadmap that has been endorsed by the IEC. We worked with Carbon Intelligence to measure our full Scope 1, 2 and 3 carbon emissions. Our Scope 1 and 2 include electricity, gas, company-owned vehicles, and refrigerant gasses.



Our Scope 3 is our supply chain, business travel, employee commuting and transportation. Our goals are to:

Reduce our absolute Scope 1 and 2 greenhouse gas emissions by 50% by 2030 (from a 2019 base line).

Achieve a 47% reduction in our Scope 3 emissions by 2030.

In 2023, we introduced new responsible supplier guidelines, which include environmental criteria and we launched a due diligence system, enabling us to make better choices when selecting suppliers. The next step is to gather more accurate Scope 3 data for emissions disclosure. Our goals for Scope 3 include:

Engage with our top 40 suppliers on climate mitigation by 2024, reaching 400 suppliers by 2028.

Achieve a 60% reduction in our emissions from business travel by 2030.



**Ali Crosthwaite**  
Environmental lead  
Partner, Real Estate



The climate emergency demands urgent action and accountability. Setting our near-term Science Based Targets this year was a step forward for our firm but much more work is still left to be done.



## Achieving our near-term Science Based Targets

We have a number of processes and incentives in place to help us meet our reduction targets. This includes offices that are designed to facilitate the use of public transportation, biking or electric vehicles (for example, where able, by providing electric chargers, free and secure parking/storage facilities for bicycles and shower and locker facilities in the basement). Employees are also incentivised to use public transportation, carpooling or to cycle to work. We have a cycle to work scheme in place in some offices. We also encourage the use of virtual meetings to reduce in-person meetings.

These may seem like small actions, but we believe that every action matters and we know from our people that they want to have the opportunity to contribute through their day-to-day activities.



**Rose Wiewel**

Chief Operating Officer, Amsterdam

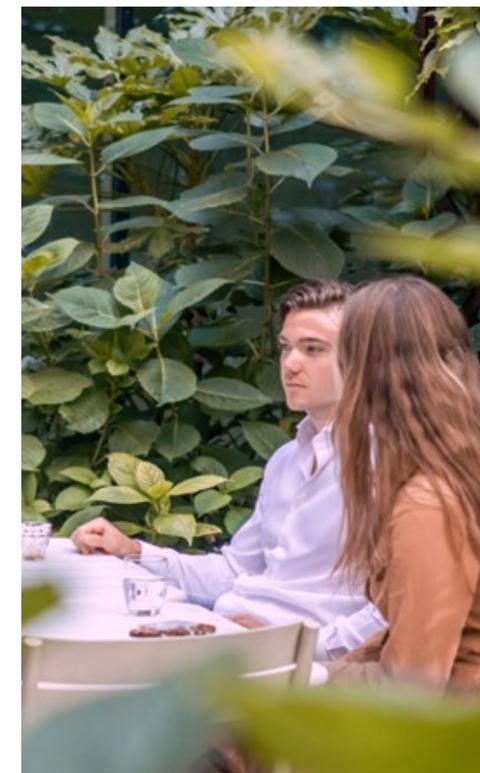


Individual actions matter, both because in real terms they build into something greater and also because it gives us each something concrete that we can do. As a firm making those individual choices easier is just one thing we can do to improve our impact.



## Reducing carbon in our built environment

We include sustainability criteria into our building selection criteria, such as leasing buildings with Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM), Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) and good energy performance ratings. Where possible, we switch to renewable electricity tariffs and alternatively, consider Power Purchase Agreements and Energy Attribute Certificates. This is in addition to transitioning from natural gas heating and cooling systems to electric and reducing our occupancy of gas-heated buildings.

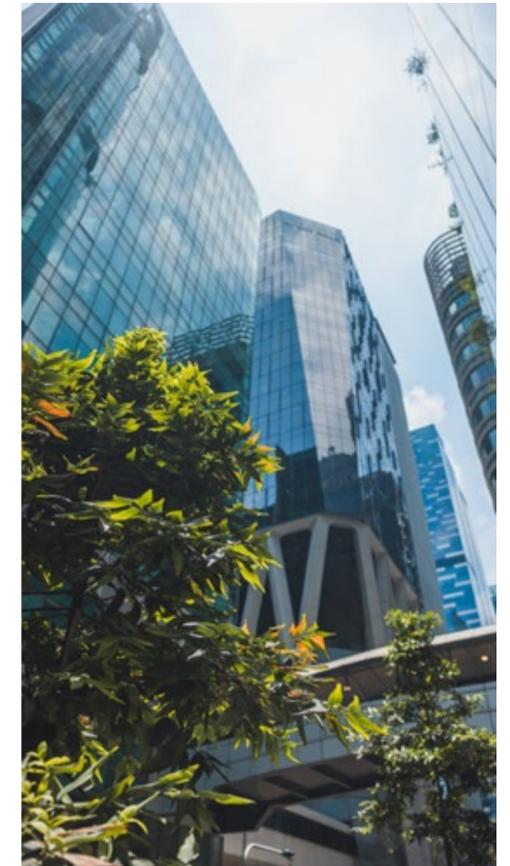


## Shaping a collaborative community

We have developed a number of global climate-related initiatives, products and services that help us to collaborate on climate goals and support our clients.

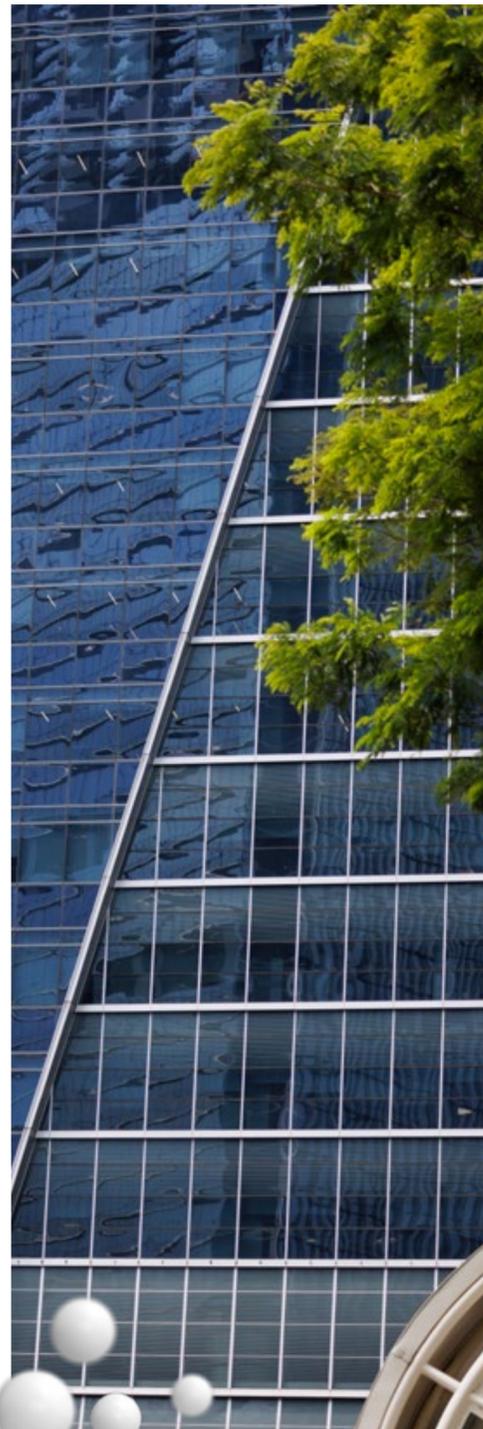
**The Green Room.** Our firmwide environmental sustainability network works to build engagement throughout the firm and provide us with a forum to pursue initiatives internally and with clients. Led by three partners and the firm’s environment manager, the network encourages action and awareness. For example, in 2022, volunteers from the London office spent a day with the London Wildlife Trust to assist with a wildlife restoration project in Sydenham Hill Wood park, and in Dublin, volunteers cleaned the shores of Sandymount beach of plastics and other litter, with the charity Flossie and The BeachCleaners.

**The GreenTech Fund.** Our programme offers capped free legal advice to green technology companies. (See [‘GreenTech fund case study’](#) on page 51 for more information.)



**Our Solutions International Practice Group.** Develops new products and services that support our clients and the legal profession. For example, our Clean Energy tool helps our clients make informed decisions on renewable investments. (See the [‘Technology’](#) sections on page 28 for more information.)





## Climate related regulations and compliance

We regularly monitor and record emissions to meet our specific targets, reporting them and our environmental objectives to the UN Global Compact each year. We also report against the non-financial disclosure requirements that apply to Limited Liability Partnerships (LLPs) in the UK, which came into force in April 2022. The Task Force on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures (TCFD), which recommends the types of information on climate disclosure that companies should support, is not a mandatory requirement for LLPs in the UK. However, the non-financial disclosure regulation is aligned with the TCFD recommendations.

We voluntarily disclose our annual carbon footprint emissions and performance to the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP) and report our business activities in the UK, annually, under the UK's Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting (SECR) regulations.

Our Climate Committee provides governance on environmental matters. It has an oversight role to ensure compliance with our Science Based Targets (see 'Governance' section on page 10 for more information).



**Darren Mitchell**  
Global Chief Operating Officer



Like many businesses we are coming up to speed with the changing regulatory environment. It has helped us articulate the approach we take and will hopefully enable our clients to trust they are working with a firm that takes its commitments and impact seriously.

## 2022/23 highlights

We participated in many climate initiatives.

We formed the **Climate Committee** within our firm's governance structure. (See 'Governance' section on page 10 for more information.)



We worked with **Legal Response International** to provide free legal support to climate vulnerable developing countries as well as civil society observer organisations, during COP27 and the Bonn Climate Change Conference in June 2023. (See 'Case study: Legal Response Initiative (UK)' on page 47 for more information.)

We contributed to the **Law Society** guidance on the impact of climate change on solicitors.



We are a dialogue partner for the **Legal Charter 1.5** and commit to its principles. The charter recognises the critical role that the law and lawyers have to play in restricting increases in global temperatures to no more than 1.5°C and in reducing biodiversity loss, social injustice and supporting the UN SDGs.

We took part in **London Climate Action Week**, hosting the London Schools Climate Summit reception that brought together London's school sector as a force for climate action.



**BBP**

We contributed to the **Better Buildings Partnership Green Lease Toolkit** as part of our pro bono work. The Toolkit enables owners and occupiers of commercial buildings to work together to reduce the environmental impact of their buildings.

We adhere to the principles of the **NetZero Lawyers Alliance**.



We measured our full **Scope 3 emissions** for the first time and identified our supplier chain as the biggest contributor to our emissions.

Case study

# Legal Response International (UK)

International negotiations under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) are among the most complex multilateral law and policymaking processes. Negotiators from poor and climate-vulnerable developing countries struggle to follow technical jargon, legal principles, and procedural norms; in negotiations they are regularly outgunned. The Legal Response International (LRI) provides free advice during negotiations to create a more level playing field.

As part of our pro bono work, we teamed up with the LRI during the COP27 in November 2022 and the Bonn Climate Conference in June 2023. This involved setting up a ‘situation room’ in our London office to provide legal research assistance in response to questions raised at the summit.



**Jonny Elliott**

Associate, Banking  
Volunteer during COP27



It was fantastic to work with the LRI on such an important project. Working with volunteers from within and outside the firm was a great experience. It encapsulated the firm’s dedication to working with clients who share our passion to make a difference while supporting social and economic development, sound legal institutions and human rights defenders.



**Rachel McNally**

Trainee Solicitor, FS Regulation  
Volunteer during Bonn  
Climate Conference



It has been a wonderful opportunity, I have met wonderful lawyers, scientists and climate activists. I have had the opportunity to see how the skills we learn as lawyers can have an impact in the climate sphere and for climate action.



Case study

# The Chancery Lane Project

We’re a part of The Chancery Lane Project in the UK – a collaborative initiative of international legal professionals whose vision is a world where every contract enables solutions to climate change.

Law firms contribute their knowledge to the project to create a databank of clauses that other lawyers or legal teams can then use in their work. The aim is to create model clauses to promote better environmental impacts.

In 2022 we supported the project by creating a new template clause relating to the procurement of renewable energy by landlords and tenants in corporate tenancy agreements. We are also part of their voluntary committee drafting key energy transition clauses.

The Chancery Lane Project is currently the largest global network of lawyers and business leaders using the power of climate contracting to deliver fast and fair decarbonisation.



🌍 Society and the planet

# Other environmental impacts

The management of our environmental impact is key to our role in society and is aligned to the values of our firm. It is also a high priority for our clients. This includes reducing our emissions, water use, managing waste and preventing biodiversity loss.



## Society and the planet

We do not own any commercial real estate (for our offices) but are able to reduce our energy consumption and implement ways to manage waste.

Some of the programmes instigated across our offices include restrictions on corporate travel, using alternative sustainable means of travel (such as trains), controlling electricity usage, reducing paper usage and eliminating plastic and using suppliers with eco-credentials.

We track our environmental performance covering carbon emissions, waste management and water usage. We also undertake everyday efforts such as the reuse and recycling of materials, implementation of energy and water efficiency actions and travel reduction. Since 2006, we have had an external specialist consultant to assess our carbon impacts across Scopes 1, 2 and a portion of Scope 3. From 2021, for the first time, we instructed our environmental consultants to measure our Scope 1, 2 and full Scope 3 emissions.

The reduction and meeting of our environmental targets is guided by our verified and approved Science Based Targets and overseen by our Climate Committee (read more in the [‘Governance’](#) section on page 10 for more information).

## Other environmental impacts



**Ariadna Andriano**  
Environmental, Health and Safety Manager



Meeting our published near-term Science Based Targets is our key goal. We have plans to lessen our broader environmental impact such as developing a low carbon travel policy and engaging with our supply chain to reduce our Scope 3 emissions.



## Our approach

We’re committed to reducing our environmental impact and meeting our Science Based Targets. We’re rolling out our action plan and policy across the firm including looking at the use of business travel and engaging with our suppliers to ensure they are on the same environmental journey as us.

We have firmwide training to educate our people about reducing environmental impacts. Basic awareness across the firm is high due to the following activities:

New staff attend a **mandatory induction session on the environment** within the first two weeks of their employment.

**Our environmental sustainability network, The Green Room**, offers people the opportunity to be involved in our environmental action and increase their knowledge. Its work is promoted and showcased across the firm and includes running internal events with speakers as well as volunteering activities such as beach cleans and tree planting.

Our internal soft-skills training academy **stars**, includes sessions on environmental issues.

We have an **internal network of ESG champions** across the firm who share their expertise internally so that the entire firm stays at the cutting edge of ESG.

**We believe in transparency** and publish our environmental data online.

Our large internal events include **sessions on environmental impacts** and our role.

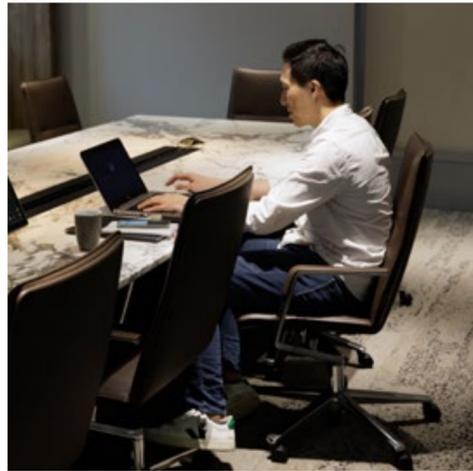
## Supply chain

Our Supplier Code of Conduct covers environmental issues, such as carbon reduction, energy consumption and waste management. We introduced a new due diligence process for our supply chain, to enable us to understand the impacts we have through the purchasing decisions we make. (Read more about our supply chain under [‘Business and human rights’](#) on page 23.)



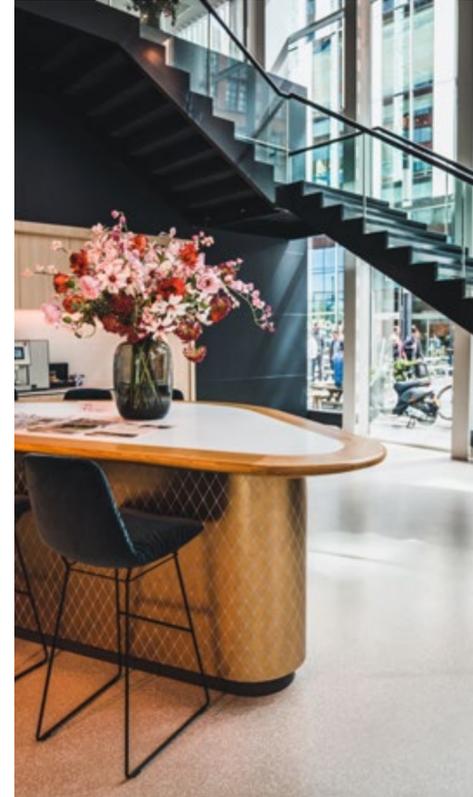
# 2022/23 highlights

**ISO 14001:2015 certification** awarded to the Bristol and London offices.



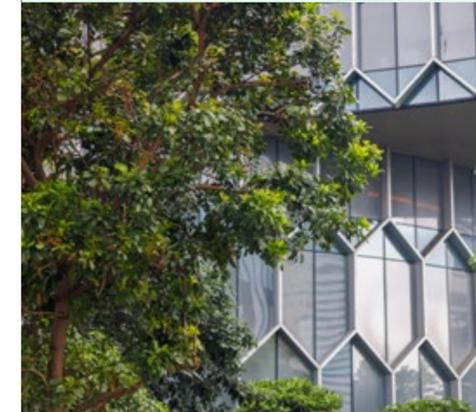
We're committed to the **'One Million Hours'** project where members of the legal industry pledge one million hours to halting climate change and preventing biodiversity loss.

We provided pro bono support to the **Better Buildings Partnership** to update its toolkit that enables owners and occupiers of commercial buildings to reduce the environmental impact of their buildings. (See [‘Climate change’](#) section on page 44 for more information.)



In some of our international offices, **we have implemented initiatives to drive down our emissions.** In Amsterdam for example, we have lowered the temperature from 21°C to 20°C within our office and meeting rooms and have replaced the lighting on the ground floor from old gas lamps to LED lights. In the Paris office, we've started using bike couriers instead of motorbikes and we have implemented a new waste recycling scheme which segregates our waste in a more accurate way.

All of our offices globally took part in the **Earth day initiative** which involved turning off our office lighting for one hour (8.30-9.30 pm) to support World Wide Fund for Nature's Earth Hour and display our commitment to tackling urgent environmental issues and protect our planet.



We invested the emissions arising from our Scope 1, 2 and a portion of Scope 3 in the following carbon offsetting projects: **Mangrove Restoration Project in Pakistan, a renewable energy Soubré Hydropower Project in Côte d'Ivoire and in a UK nature-based project.**



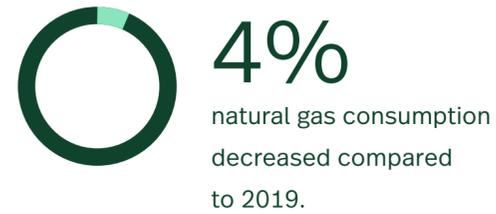
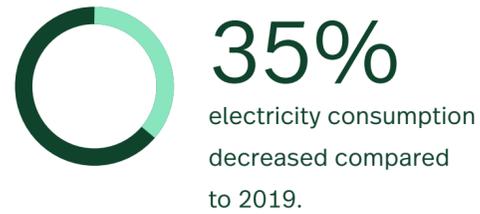
**The Green Room** organised many events in 2022, including their highest attended webinar to date in April 2022 with Jojo Mehta, the Co-Founder and Executive Director of 'Stop Ecocide International'. The session explored what is meant by ecocide, how the NGO and its campaign aim to criminalise it and what it would mean for individuals, businesses and governments.



## Data

### Emissions

This data relates to our emissions for the full calendar year 2021. During this period:



Our targets for 2021 were as follows:

**To reduce electricity consumption by 5%** compared with 2019 usage.

**To reduce gas consumption by 2%** compared with 2019 usage.

**To reduce absolute carbon footprint by 5% per employee** compared with 2019 emissions.

**To reduce our travel emissions 2%** compared with 2019 emissions.

For the first time, our full Scope 3 emissions were included in our measurements. Our assessment showed that our 2021 Scope 3 emissions make up 97.13% of our total global emissions. From this, 90.13% of our total emissions belong to our suppliers: category 1 (purchased goods and services) and category 2 (capital goods) of Scope 3.



Emissions	Units	Notes
Scope 1	858 tCO2e	This increased by 2% compared to 2019. This increase is due to the purchase of new refrigerants in the Luxembourg office. However, our Scope 1 emissions account for less than 1% of our total carbon footprint.
Scope 2 (location-based)	1,555 tCO2e	A decrease of 35%.
Scope 2 (market-based)	377 tCO2e	An increase of 8%.
Scope 3	41,702 tCO2e	
Total gross footprint	44,114 tCO2e	
Total net footprint	42,937 tCO2e	Minus renewable energy.



## Water

We regularly monitor and record water usage but have yet to set reduction targets.

In 2021 our total water usage was  
**27,953 m<sup>3</sup>**

## Waste and buildings

The following figures are estimates as some offices lack advanced waste measuring systems and in others we have limited ability to reduce waste, due to landlords having full control of our waste management systems. Advanced waste systems are in place in our London and Bristol offices.



\*based on 2022 data

Total amount of waste generated 115.72 tonnes	Landfill 33.84 tonnes
	Incinerated 25.75 tonnes
	Recycled 56.12 tonnes

## Case study

# GreenTech Fund

Each year we look for emerging climate-tech and clean-tech organisations to apply to our GreenTech Fund. These are start-up technology-based companies that are trying to mitigate the climate and biodiversity emergencies with new innovations (climate-tech) or by enabling renewable energy solutions (clean-tech). The fund, which is in its second year, awards up to five start-ups £100,000 of legal support from us in total, with advice tailored to the specific needs of each organisation.

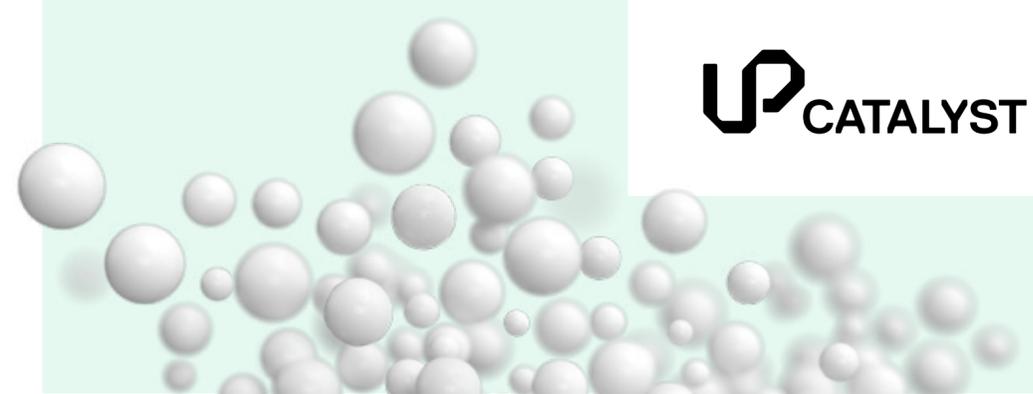
The winning businesses in 2023 are seeking to address a wide range of climate and biodiversity challenges. They've been selected following an open application and interview process involving partners and employees across different business areas.

The businesses are:

	<b>SaferPlaces.</b> A global platform that offers AI-based digital solutions for flood risk intelligence in urban areas.
	<b>Sunsave.</b> Helps households take control of their energy bills and make solar and storage accessible to all.
	<b>Supercritical.</b> A clean-tech startup that is developing an efficient electrolyser to produce low-cost, clean hydrogen.
	<b>The Far Out Thinking Company.</b> Develops a tracking tool for biodiversity.
	<b>UP Catalyst.</b> A start-up focused on producing sustainable carbon nanomaterials and graphite out of CO2 and biomass.

**Robert Allen**  
Partner, Disputes and Investigations Member of the GreenTech judging committee

“  
The quality of all of the businesses we saw this year was extremely high, but this year's winning cohort stood out. We have an exciting variety of companies working hard to meet the challenges of the climate and biodiversity emergencies head on and we are looking forward to helping them address their legal needs in doing so.





# Community development and impact

We strive to be both a good employer and a good neighbour. As a law firm, we're able to contribute our expertise to support communities with pro bono work and have been doing this for more than 30 years. We also offer other legal advice – such as advocating for the adoption of improved social and environmental policies and performance.

We also contribute to the communities close to our office locations around the world with charitable giving, financial donations (excluding political causes) and community service. This is enabled by partnering with charitable organisations each year, that are closely aligned with our SDG goals and by engaging with organisations in the community.



## Our approach

Our community impact across the firm comes in the form of:

1 Pro bono work

2 Charitable giving via the Simmons & Simmons Charitable Foundation

3 Sponsorship

4 Volunteering

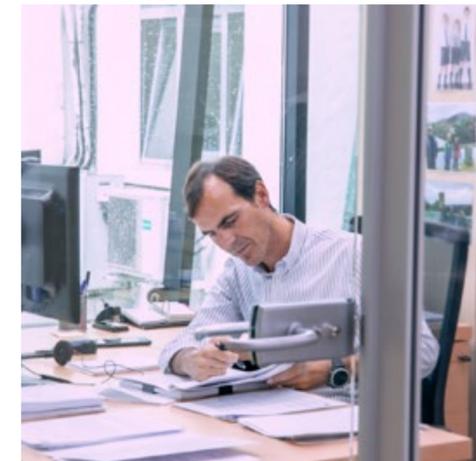
All these efforts are anchored in our focus on the UN SDGs to maximise the positive effect we can have as a firm. We often work with partners, whether that is community organisations or our clients, to galvanise contributions and increase the sum of the collective impact we can have.

### 1 - Pro bono work

Our firm has a long history of providing free legal services to clients in need, and the charitable organisations and non-governmental organization (NGOs) that support them. We believe, as lawyers, that we have a professional responsibility to assist the most vulnerable in our global community and are committed to providing support.

To ensure that our work has impact and purpose, we've launched a new UN SDG+ Global Pro Bono Policy which embeds the UN SDGs into our decision-making process when taking on new pro bono matters and developing pro bono relationships. We believe this alignment will enhance our practice and bring our work in line with the goals of the firm. Additionally, making our projects more aligned with the UN SDGs helps us look at the firm's output, focusing on what we are achieving as opposed to just the hours we are putting in.

By implementing a UN SDG+ model, there is flexibility in our practice. This means in addition to undertaking strategic work which aligns with the SDG goals, we also have the discretion to do pro bono work that doesn't fit neatly into the UN SDGs framework as well. Thus creating a diverse and impactful pro bono practice for our fee earners, as well as for vulnerable individuals and society more



generally. As part of this commitment, we're increasing our participation in a number of areas with new projects being launched within the climate and biodiversity sphere, alongside traditional areas of addressing societal need.

For our lawyers, pro bono can be a capacity-building tool used to boost their training and skills development. For example, the pro bono environment gives junior lawyers the opportunity to hone their client care skills and practice interviewing and advising, while more senior lawyers can develop knowledge in areas that impact our clients, such as climate change and biodiversity. Pro bono work in the legal sector has also been recognised by the Trust Law Index, compiled by Thomson Reuters Foundation, as key to attracting and retaining top talent. The 2022 survey stated that 38% of firms surveyed undertake pro bono for staff retention, while 96% are driven by a desire to support the community.



Laura Jones  
Pro Bono Manager



Our work on pro bono for FY 22/23 shows the firm's commitment to providing essential legal support to our global communities. We are proud to have worked on projects which have focussed on responding to ongoing global crises such as assisting those who have been displaced by war, natural disasters, or political unrest. It is a privilege to work with such dedicated and passionate individuals.

We invest in and encourage our lawyers across the firm to participate on pro bono programmes, with a goal, across all our offices, for each fee earner to contribute a minimum of 25 hours each year. This aspirational target has senior level support and full commitment from the IEC and Board.



## Access to Justice

Our award-winning Access to Justice programme (A2J) was launched in 2015 after legal aid was cut within areas of UK social welfare law. It offers vital assistance to the most vulnerable individuals in the UK. The A2J programme challenges disability benefit decisions by assisting with:

**Personal Independence Payments (PIP)**

**Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)**

**Universal Credit (UC)**

**Disability Living Allowance (DLA)**

**Attendance Allowance (AA)**

Our lawyers, alongside in-house teams from a number of clients, provide free end-to-end legal support to appeal these decisions. Diane Sechi, an experienced social welfare lawyer, leads the programme. Over eight years, we've helped more than 375 people receive backdated payments totalling over £1.3m, providing them with essential financial support. This represents a 98% success rate. The total of backdated disability benefits increases to £4m when forward awards are factored in. The programme has won an 'Excellence in Pro Bono' award from The Law Society in the UK. Its success is testament to the importance of pro bono work, by using the skills of corporate lawyers to assist society's most vulnerable.



**Emily Hooper**

Paralegal, Real Estate



I worked on a personal independence payment (PIP) appeal where the tribunal's decision was life changing for my client. This has meant so much to me as I used my skills to make a real difference to someone's life. I'm continuing to work on PIP appeals with the Access to Justice pro bono programme because it has been so impactful knowing that my work and the money these clients will receive makes such a difference to their quality of life.



## Kids in Need of Defense UK

Through our partnership with Kids in Need of Defense UK we've helped three children and their families regularise their immigration status. We also work with Kids in Need of Defense in Ireland where volunteers from our Dublin office have provided legal assistance to 12 children who have entered Ireland, been given refugee status, and wanted to exercise their right to family reunification.

## Advice to charities and not-for-profit organisations

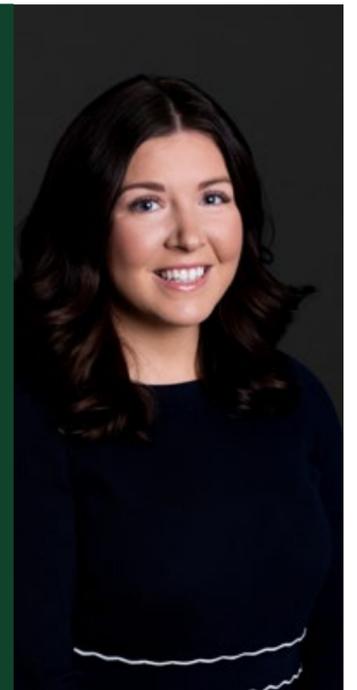
This financial year we have continued to provide free legal advice and support to over 134 charities and not-for-profits to help them advance their missions and impact their chosen communities.



**Cristine Quigley**  
Supervising Associate



I have really enjoyed working with KIND this year and found the work very rewarding. I look forward to continuing working with KIND and volunteering on our global pro bono projects more broadly.



## Working Families

We're pleased to continue to support Working Families where volunteers provide employment advice to parents and carers who are experiencing problems, poor treatment and injustices at work.



## Refugee Legal Support Family Reunification Project (Europe)

We work with Refugee Legal Support (RLS) on their Family Reunion from Europe project. Our volunteers assist people who have been forcibly displaced across Europe to be reunited with their family members.



### Efi Stathopoulou

Programme Manager, Refugee Legal Support



Apart from a supportive and dependable project partner, Simmons & Simmons has always been there for us, immediately understanding our need for specialist support in areas that are really hard to source high quality advice for a charity like RLS. For us, being able to secure expert legal advice on real estate, intellectual property and data privacy has been vital - it has meant that we have been able to focus our attention and spend our resources directly supporting people in search of sanctuary. The level of client care and expertise is of extremely high calibre and we are so grateful to have such a reliable firm to lean into.



### Yoram Goodman

Trainee Solicitor, Intellectual Property



I have assisted RLS with both exceptional case funding and family reunification applications. The work involved develops skills vital to a legal professional – legal research, drafting, interviewing, project management, and communicating directly with vulnerable clients – and provides excellent opportunities to learn about human rights and UK immigration law, collaborate with colleagues from different departments, and help those in genuine need to reunite with their loved ones. Working with RLS has been enjoyable and extremely rewarding, and I highly recommend getting involved.

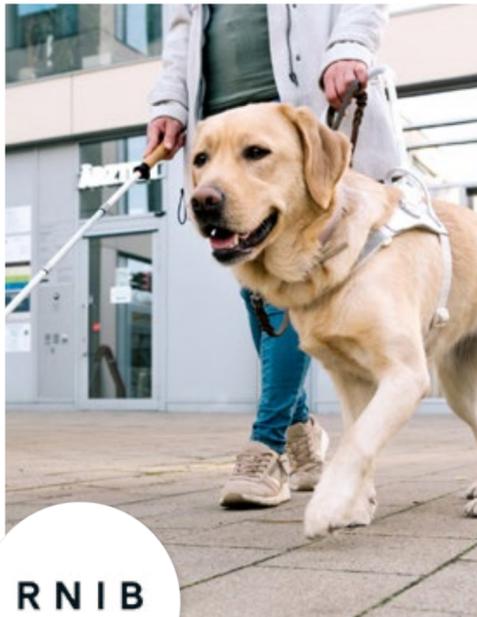
## Amicus

This year we have continued to support Amicus by working with the Florida Centre for Capital Representation and Florida International University to conduct monthly reviews of all open death penalty cases in Florida. This enables the lawyers in the US to provide the necessary legal representation to those who most urgently require it. Our volunteers have also assisted Amicus on their representation work for individuals facing the death penalty in the US.



## JUSTICE (UK)

We are a corporate sponsor for the JUSTICE working party on 'Outsourcing and Administrative Justice'. The working party was set up at the end of 2022 to examine the impact of government outsourcing on administrative justice within the United Kingdom and how the rights of individuals (particularly those in vulnerable circumstances) are being affected. The goal is to publish a report in 2024, making a set of practical recommendations to ensure that outsourcing better upholds the public law principles at the heart of administrative justice: in benefits and social security; homelessness assessments; prisons, immigration and detention; and social care. This should ultimately lead to individuals having better outcomes, greater understanding and more confidence in outsourced decision-making.



### Royal National Institute of Blind People

In early 2023, we acted with the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) – a longstanding pro bono partner – to successfully make a discrimination claim against a restaurant who refused entry to a blind person with a guide dog. Our volunteers continue to assist the RNIB to advise claimants on making claims under the UK’s Equality Act, including in relation to accessibility and discrimination.



#### Emily Monastiriotis

Partner, Insurance and Construction International  
Head of Dispute Resolution



We are really pleased to have assisted our client in successfully bringing a claim in respect of the discrimination they encountered on this occasion, but we are aware of the ongoing discrimination faced by people living with a disability. We hope this sends a strong message that discrimination is unacceptable and reminds businesses of their obligations under the Equality Act 2010.



### Safe Passage International

In response to the global crisis created by the war in Ukraine, we’ve been supporting Safe Passage International to provide on-the-ground support to individuals who have been displaced. Seven volunteers have travelled to Warsaw to provide face to face advice and practical casework support on the UK’s two entry clearance schemes. Our volunteers have also assisted individuals in vulnerable circumstances, such as unaccompanied minors and LGBTQ+ partners, to challenge negative or delayed Home Office decisions and collect data to highlight potential discrimination.

#### Safe Passage



It has been a true pleasure working with the lawyers at Simmons & Simmons. They have made my life so much easier and have done amazing work for our clients. I really hope they will be involved in the future with Safe Passage again. Thank you for lending them to us for a short period of time, they truly have made a huge positive impact!

### Pro bono partnerships

We’re privileged to work with many amazing pro bono partners and are proud to provide support for their ongoing, impactful work. Our partners include:



2 - Charitable giving via the Simmons & Simmons Charitable Foundation

In 2009, we established the Simmons & Simmons Charitable Foundation, a registered charity (Charity Commission registration: 1129643), which seeks to provide support to smaller charitable organisations which are local to the firm's offices and contribute to humanitarian aid.

The trustees:



Julian Taylor  
Senior Partner



Richard Dyton  
Partner, Bristol



Fiona Loughrey  
Partner, Hong Kong

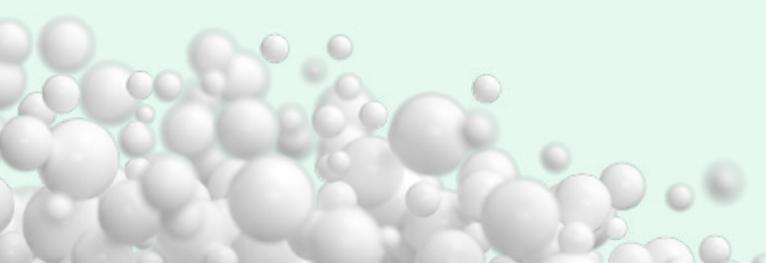


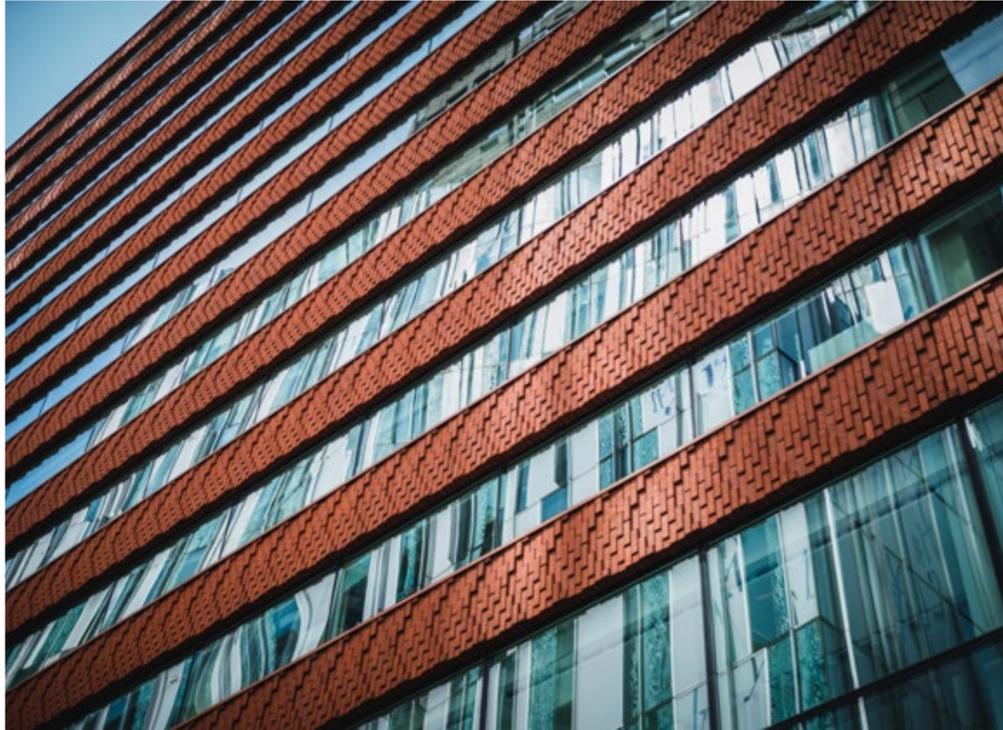
Stefania Bergia  
Partner, Milan



Devarshi Saksena  
Partner, London

In 2022 the Charitable Foundation supported the following charities:





### Charitable Foundation giving aligned to UN SDGs

In total we give £1m to charities across our office locations each year. Part of this money is reserved to support disaster relief. In early 2023, we adapted the funding criteria for the Charitable Foundation to align with our six priority UN SDGs (see our [‘Supporting global standards’](#) on page 13 for more information). Employees can now nominate a charity in their community that fits within the UN SDGs criteria to support for the year.

The change has taken place to enable our colleagues to have a direct impact on the firm’s sustainability goals. The distribution of donations across all offices has an international impact. The charities nominated by our colleagues support women and children, the homeless, human rights, improving welfare and the environment. Each office receives a proportion of the charitable funds, to distribute to local charities.

Country where office is based	Charity Supported	
UK	Women’s Aid	Book Trust
	Envision	Safe Passage International
	The Passage	
Ireland	Voice Ireland	ISPCC – Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
Spain	UNICEF (Spain chapter)	
Qatar	Sport for Development and Peace (SDP), Qatar Fund for Development & Qatar Charity	
Dubai / UAE	Malawi: The Sparkle Foundation*	
The Netherlands	Plastic Soup Foundation	Movies that Matter
	Instituut voor Natuureducatie	F Fort Foundation
Hong Kong	Food Angel	Boundless Hong Kong
Singapore	ItsRainingRaincoats	Willing Hearts
China	Han Hong Love Charity Foundation	
Japan	Katariba	
Germany	Bundu Bundu	
Italy	Associazione Donnestrada	Macass APS
	Associazione Oltre la Felicità	Libra
Luxembourg	Croix Rouge Luxembourgeoise	SOS Village d’Enfants
	Foundation Caritas Luxembourg	
France	Archery Esperance	Banlieues
	Reves	

In addition to our annual donations to charities nominated by our offices, we recognise the ongoing need for international humanitarian assistance in the event of crisis. In recent years we have seen desperate need for help, caused by natural disasters and war. Each year we look to support those in need through our Charitable Foundation. Below is a summary of some of the causes we have supported.

### Ukraine

To support those in need during the Ukraine-Russia war, we donated £35,000 of our charitable funds to UNICEF’s Ukraine appeal to help them deliver humanitarian support and aid.



### Morocco

Earlier this year, Morocco was hit by a 6.8 magnitude earthquake, the biggest in the country since the 1960’s. Thousands were killed and more injured, with swathes of buildings and infrastructure destroyed. We donated £35,000 to the British Red Cross Society in order to support their on-the-ground aid relief programme which helped to look after the survivors of the disaster.



### Libya

Libya saw catastrophic flooding following a powerful storm causing dams to collapse. UNICEF estimates that 3,500 people were reported to have died with a further 9,000 reported missing. This alongside the impacts of loss of homes, power and clean drinking water, caused huge suffering in the region affected. We supported UNICEF’s Libya Floods appeal by donating £35,000 to help fund their support and relief operations on the ground.

### Türkiye and Syria earthquake

In early February 2023 a 7.8 magnitude earthquake, followed by another quake a few weeks later, struck Türkiye and Syria, affecting millions of people. Many thousands of people were killed and injured, and many more left homeless. In the aftermath of the quake our colleagues undertook fundraising activities, in addition to which the Charitable Foundation donated £75,000 to Save the Children to help fund their humanitarian ground relief programme.



#### Julian Taylor

Senior Partner and Chair of Charitable Foundation



The Charitable Foundation is an important part of the way that, as a firm, we can help those most in need across the world.



### 3 - Sponsorship

Sponsorship can make a difference to organisations in the community. We have supported many different organisations. For over 10 years we have supported the arts as an associate sponsor of the Donmar Warehouse theatre in London. The Donmar is a charity whose mission contributes to building a thriving and cohesive society. It works with schools in the inner London area, just as we do, to help support children who might otherwise not have access to the arts.

## 2022/23 highlights

In 2022 we had

# four

full-time members of the pro bono team (three of which are legally qualified) supported by two pro bono partners.

# £2,447,086

donated to registered charities for the financial year 2022, including donations made to UNICEF for COVID-19 support.

We provided over

# 12,000 hrs

of pro bono support in 2022 to charities, not-for-profits and vulnerable individuals.

# £1m

donated in 2023, supporting 26 charities.

Two donations equalling

# £75,000

to UNICEF and Save the Children as part of humanitarian support in the Türkiye and Syria earthquake and the war in Ukraine.

Total Global Hours  
**12,357.20**

Total UK Hours  
**9,796.40**

Average hours per lawyer (global)  
**9.6 hours\***

\*We recognise that this a lower figure than our aspiration. Consequently, our senior leadership has announced support for a firm-wide aspirational target for all fee earners to record a minimum of 25 hours.

### 4 - Volunteering

In addition to our pro bono target, our people receive 20 hours of paid time off for community service. Activities have included tree planting, beach clean-ups and local community volunteering. There are no set rules, rather we want our people to choose something meaningful to them, providing the dual benefit of personal satisfaction and helping our local communities.



### Case studies



#### Internal furniture auction, Spain

The Madrid office held an internal auction of office furniture when the firm moved offices. People in the office could participate by bidding the amount they wanted for an item.

All funds raised were donated to Asocación Española Contra el Cáncer (Spanish Association against Cancer).

#### Wildlife restoration project, London

Volunteers from the London office spent a day with the London Wildlife Trust to assist with a wildlife restoration project in Sydenham Hill Wood park.



#### Beach clean-up, Dublin

Volunteers from our Dublin office cleaned the shores of Sandymount beach of plastics and other litter, with the charity Flossie and The Beach Cleaners.



 Society and the planet

# Public policy engagement

Public policy plays a key role in accelerating ESG adoption across various sectors and advancing legal protections for vulnerable groups. We're often involved in supporting the development of public policy in a legal advisory capacity. This may involve contributing to policy within a sector (such as finance or real estate); working with international organisations or bodies, such as the UN or acting as a legal partner for charities.

Supporting the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals



**Monique van Herksen, Partner in our Transfer Pricing practice,** supported the UN Tax Committee to advance the work of the Subcommittee on Transfer Pricing on developing guidance for the benefit of developing countries.



**Penny Miller, Head of Financial Services Regulatory practice,** is a trustee of Surviving Economic Abuse (SEA), a UK-based charity that provides support to individuals who have experienced economic abuse. SEA works in partnership with the frontline organisations that directly support victim-survivors and supports them to identify and respond to economic abuse. They campaign and lobby for policy changes that will help tackle and end economic abuse and we also support them with pro bono work.



**Sonali Siriwardena, Global Head of ESG,** became a member of the UK Financial Conduct Authority's (FCA) new ESG Advisory Committee. Sonali is also a member of the City of London Law Society ESG Committee and recently joined the UK Sustainable Investment and Finance Association (UKSIF) Board in the Legal specialist function.

**Stephen Shepard, Director of Facilities,** and Sophia AdamsBhatti, Global Head of Purpose and Impact, joined the ESG Board of the Culture Mile Business Improvement District (BID). The Board oversees the implementation of the £9.8m investment plan across the 'Culture Mile' area in London working closely with the community. Its goals include creating a more environmentally sustainable business district and facilitating partnerships that drive positive change in the wider community. Sophia also advises the City of London Lawtech Sounding Board and is on the Board of Lawtech UK.



**Sophia AdamsBhatti, Global Head of Purpose and Impact,** took part in the UNGC Transformational Governance (TG) Think Lab - Chief Legal Officer Working Group.

We believe firmly in the importance of SDG 16, Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions and we are looking forward to continuing to support the work of the Think Lab.

**Contribute to best practice and knowledge to encourage business sector action on TG aligned to SDG 16.**

**Develop a TG toolkit for business.**

**Support the engagement of the legal profession.**

Sophia was also appointed to the Board of LawTechUK a government-funded programme supporting the digital transformation of legal services.

Our real estate legal team contributed its expertise to the Better Buildings Partnership. They continue to be part of a working group that is updating the Better Buildings Partnership's Green Leasing Toolkit. The toolkit enables owners and occupiers of commercial buildings to work together to reduce the environmental impact of their buildings.



Society and the planet



# Economic impact and responsibility

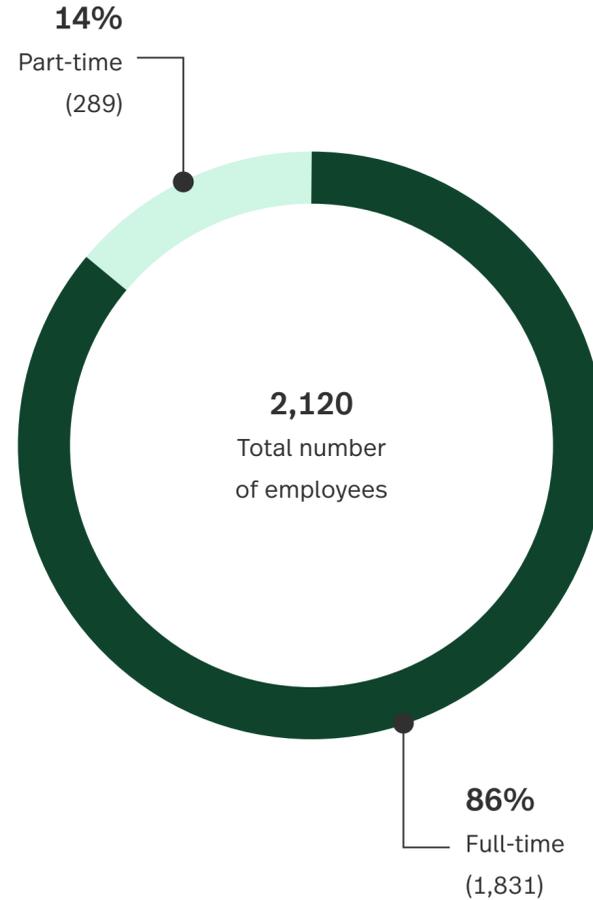
Through being a thriving firm we have the opportunity to create economic wellbeing and make a positive impact – directly through our own actions as an employer, purchaser and tax paying entity, and indirectly through the support we provide to our local communities and the support we provide our clients to enable them to flourish and to do likewise as employers and contributors to national economies.

Supporting the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals



## Number of people in our firm

Number of full-time and part-time (including fee earners, partners and all other staff)



100%

Number of staff paid the living wage across the firm

(Circa)

10,000

Number of clients across global network

## Our supply chain

Across our network we have over 5,500 suppliers ranging from global companies to smaller bespoke local providers of services.

### Top 10 categories of suppliers (2021 data)



### Headline financials 2022-2023

£189m

Profit

£511m

Turnover

£1m

Donated to charities and humanitarian aid in 2023

£2.4m+

Donated to charities in 2021-2022

## Tax

At Simmons & Simmons (the Group), we operate according to the highest ethical and professional standards, consistent with our reputation as one of the world's leading and most trusted law firms. The Group is committed to operating in a manner that ensures compliance with all relevant laws and regulations, including those relating to its tax activities.

We're committed to paying the right amount of tax, in the right countries, at the right time. We claim tax reliefs and incentives where appropriate, but we do not operate in a manner that knowingly contradicts the true objective of any legislation. Where a tax position is uncertain we seek advice from professional advisors and/or raise the issue with the relevant tax authorities (HMRC in the UK). All actions undertaken are based on sound commercial reasoning and economic substance; we do not engage in any artificial structures or contrived transactions.



# Appendix

---

## In this section

---

Glossary

**Biodiversity**

The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) defines biodiversity as all the different kinds of life found in one area—the variety of animals, plants, fungi, and microorganisms that make up our natural world. Each of these species and organisms work together in ecosystems to maintain balance and support life. Biodiversity supports everything in nature that we need to survive: food, clean water, medicine, and shelter.

**Carbon Net Zero**

To achieve this status, businesses must reduce company-wide and value-chain carbon emissions in line with limiting warming to 1.5°C. This consists of setting near-term Science Based Targets and long-term Science Based Targets. Once these targets have been achieved, the residual emissions must be balanced through purchasing carbon removals (to remove the remaining carbon dioxide from the atmosphere).

**Carbon Neutral**

This status can be achieved by balancing carbon emissions with an equivalent amount of carbon offsets that avoid or remove emissions. This is normally obtained by investing in carbon offsetting projects. The key difference between carbon neutrality and carbon net zero is the emphasis on reduction in relation to Net Zero.

**DE&I**

An acronym for diversity, equity, and inclusion (DE&I). The term is used to describe three core values that underpin our approach, as a firm, to meet the needs of people from all walks of life. Importantly, DE&I promotes the fair treatment and full participation of all people, particularly those people from groups who have historically been underrepresented or subject to discrimination based on identity or disability.

**ESG**

Stands for Environmental, Social and Governance, representing key factors used to evaluate a company's sustainability and ethical impact. Environmental factors encompass a company's ecological practices, while the social aspect involves its interactions with society and employees. Governance examines the company's decision-making structure and ethical leadership.

**ISO standards**

ISO standards are internationally agreed by experts. The standards cover a huge range of activities and are, effectively, a formula that describes the best way of doing something. This could be about making a product, managing a process, delivering a service or supplying materials. ISO 14001:2015 covers environmental management.

**Pro bono**

Comes from Latin phrase pro bono publico which means “for the public good”. It refers to professional work undertaken voluntarily and without payment. At Simmons & Simmons, no fee is requested for any pro bono advisory work.

**SBTi (Science Based Targets initiative)**

It is a collaboration between CDP (Carbon Disclosure Project), the United Nations Global Compact, World Resources Institute, and the WWF to drive ambitious climate action in the private sector by enabling organisations to set science-based emissions reduction targets.

**Science Based Targets**

Commitments that are global best practice for corporate climate action. The aim is to ensure companies globally follow a pathway that is consistent with addressing the climate crisis and keeping warming to 1.5°C. These targets must be verified and formally approved by the Science Based Targets initiative.

**Scope 1 emissions**

These are direct emissions arising from sources that are controlled or owned by our organisation (for example, emissions associated with fuel combustion in boilers, hot water systems and company cars, etc).

**Scope 2 emissions**

These are indirect emissions associated with purchased electricity from a utility provider.

**Scope 3 emissions**

These are indirect emissions from our wider value chain and that are outside of our direct control, such as business travel, courier and postage, employee commuting, waste disposal and those emissions associated with our supply chain (for example, our IT suppliers, cleaning, or catering services).

**Sustainability**

To fulfil the needs of current generations without compromising the needs of future generations, while ensuring a balance between economic growth, environmental care and social wellbeing.

**UN Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs)**

The United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs), which are an urgent call for action by all countries – developed and developing – in a global partnership. The UN states that the goals recognise that ending poverty and other deprivations must go together with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth – all while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests.

