



# SHOOSMITHS LLP COMMUNICATION ON PROGRESS FOR UNITED NATIONS GLOBAL COMPACT

January 2020

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## 1. Introduction to the United Nations Global Compact

The United Nations Global Compact was launched in 2000 and is the world's largest global corporate citizenship initiative. By committing to sustainability business can take a shared responsibility for a better world. The Global Compact aims to mobilise a global movement of sustainable companies and stakeholders to create the world we want. It is a call to companies to align strategies and operations with universal principles on human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption and to take actions that advance societal goals.

To achieve this, it helps companies to:

- do business responsibly by aligning their strategies and operations with ten principles on human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption; and
- take strategic actions to advance broader societal goals, such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, with an emphasis on collaboration and innovation.

Signatories commit to and provide an annual report on progress, called a Communication on Progress (COP), providing the opportunity for chief executives to re-commit to the ten principles and to report on progress and plans.

Shoosmiths is a signatory of the Global Compact; is a member of the UK Network and participates in three of its working groups on Modern Slavery, the 2030 global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Diversity and Inclusion. Learning and sharing best practice with other members has enabled us to evaluate and improve our own approaches.

Details of our approach to addressing the SDGs have been included in our annual CR Reports from 2015/2016 onwards, setting out our approach and relevant targets related to particular goals.

### United Nations Global Compact Principles

#### Human Rights

**Principle 1:** Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights; and

**Principle 2:** Make sure they are not complicit in human rights abuses.

#### Labour

**Principle 3:** Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;

**Principle 4:** The elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour;

**Principle 5:** The effective abolition of child labour; and

**Principle 6:** The elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

#### Environment

**Principle 7:** Businesses should adopt a precautionary approach to environmental challenges;

**Principle 8:** Undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility; and

**Principle 9:** Encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.

**Anti-Corruption**

**Principle 10:** Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.

## 2. Chief Executive Officer and Chairman Statement of Support

Welcome to our fourth annual Communication on Progress (COP) and re-affirmation that Shoosmiths LLP is a signatory of the United Nations Global Compact and continues to support the 10 principles related to Human Rights, Labour, Environment and Anti-Corruption.

# WE SUPPORT



Shoosmiths became a signatory 27 January 2016.

Our vision is to be the leading law firm in the UK famous for its client experience. This is underpinned by our Corporate Responsibility aspiration to be the leading law firm in the UK famous for its positive contribution to society. Our 2019/2022 strategy reinforces this.

To deliver this we remain committed to responsible business practices, addressing the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), collaborating with others and reporting against our progress and plans. This includes publication of our annual Communication on Progress (COP) as a member of the United Nations Global Compact.

The bedrock for Shoosmiths' success continues to be our people, culture and values which drive a collegiate approach to supporting clients and the delivery of our wider societal aspirations. We empower everyone to play their collective part in order to deliver our marketplace, workplace, environment and community objectives and targets.

We are focused on delivering an innovative and market differentiated employee value proposition based upon the firm's values and the Shoosmiths Way. Our responsible business programme remains broad in its scope but during 2020 we are particularly keen to progress the establishment of the Shoosmiths Foundation, make a meaningful contribution to social mobility and to advance our business response to a UK carbon neutral future. We also welcome the opportunity to work alongside likeminded organisations for a greater collective good.

During the last reporting period highlights included being named National Firm of the Year at the Lawyer Awards 2019, being one of 64 pioneering companies to participate in Business in the Community's Responsible Business Tracker®, progressing our involvement as a signatory of the Social Mobility Pledge, publishing our second pay gap report which included partner and ethnicity data and being ranked 48<sup>th</sup> in the 2019 Social Mobility Employer Index.

Our division and directorate heads recognise the leadership role they play in ensuring the Global Compact and its principles are considered across the firm as part of our strategy and that they are sufficiently embedded in our culture and our operational planning, controls and procedures such that we can demonstrate and report on progress.

This statement is accessible through the United Nations Global Compact website, the Shoosmiths website and is communicated to our key stakeholders including partners and staff, clients and our local communities.



Simon Boss  
Chief Executive Officer



Peter Duff  
Chairman

### **3. Introduction to Shoosmiths and our approach to responsible business**

Shoosmiths LLP is a leading law firm in the UK, delivering legal services to businesses and individuals since 1845. As at 2 January 2020 we had 203 partners and partner equivalents and 1,772 personnel working together as one team at 13 locations in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland namely Belfast, Birmingham, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Leeds, London, Manchester, Milton Keynes, Northampton, Nottingham, Sheffield, Solent and Thames Valley.

We operate four business units known as divisions:

- business advisory which provides commercial, employment, pensions and risk and litigation services;
- corporate which provides banking, company secretarial, core corporate, restructuring and insolvency and tax advice;
- personal advisory which provides wealth protection, court of protection, family and conveyancing, and specialist litigation teams advising on clinical negligence, personal injury, special education needs, residential landlord and tenant issues, contentious probate and other professional negligence; and
- real estate which provides construction, planning, property litigation, and core real estate advice.

Directorates providing business support are business development and marketing, finance, HR and estates management, information support, quality and risk and strategic change.

We are accredited to the ISO 9001:2015 quality standard and ISO 27001:2013 information security system standard, are an Equal Opportunities Employer and were the first top 100 law firm to achieve Gold Standard Investors in People status. We are a member of the World Services Group working with partners to deliver international advice for our clients.

**Our vision to be the leading law firm in the UK famous for its client experience is underpinned by our Corporate Responsibility aspiration to be the leading law firm in the UK famous for its positive contribution to society.**

The Shoosmiths approach to corporate responsibility (CR) is based on our desire to *Shine: Bright Ideas for Positive Change*. Our ability to achieve an overall positive impact on society is determined not just by specific societal aspirations within our business planning cycle but also by our wider goals and the procedures we follow to run our business.

We use our annual CR reports to track and report progress against our objectives and targets, to share with our internal and external stakeholders our approach and as a means of informing everyone at Shoosmiths that responsible business behaviours enable us to improve our performance in our marketplace, our workplace, our environment and our community.

Our business plan reflects our priorities for the 2019/2022 period building on our existing success – great people, clients and locations - to achieve further growth across our business.

We will deliver our vision by:

- a reputation for quality client experience and collaborative working;
- showing increased strength in the diversity of our people and ensuring we remain an employer of choice by offering a rewarding and opportunity filled environment for all our people;
- a strong national presence through our network of offices and locations; and
- our commitment to being a responsible employer is at the heart of our business and wider communities.

Operating to the highest standards of business integrity governs our approach.

To deliver *Shine: Bright Ideas for Positive Change* we provide the necessary tools and guidance to enable colleagues to think and say ‘this is how I shine. This is how I made a difference.’

We will achieve our CR strategy by setting and reviewing targets in four work programmes:

<b>Our marketplace</b> Working collaboratively in the marketplace with our clients and suppliers to evidence best corporate responsibility practice aligned with our vision to be the leading law firm in the UK famous for its client experience.	<b>Our environment</b> Demonstrating high standards of environmental responsibility in all our operations and minimising the environmental impacts associated with our activities, products and services.
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<p><b>Our workplace</b> Delivering an innovative and market differentiated employee value proposition based upon the firm's values and the Shoosmiths Way.</p>	<p><b>Our communities</b> Building and maintaining enduring community relationships that achieve positive impacts for the organisations we work with.</p>
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As a signatory of the United Nations Global Compact we communicate the movement's principles and work including via our intranet, external website, twitter, our annual CR Report and our CR blog SHOUTback.

This, our fourth annual COP, covers the period January 2019 to January 2020 (although some of our activities and data cited relates to our last financial year 1 May 2018/30 April 2019, coinciding with our latest annual Corporate Responsibility Report). It includes a statement by our Chief Executive Officer and Chairman, a description of actions and relevant policies relating to human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption. Targets with status against these and key performance indicators are provided in our web published annual corporate responsibility reports.

Much of our client work is confidential but this submission includes examples where we have acted for clients on CR related matters and the clients have consented to the disclosure of their names. Other client resources include training, workshops, how-to guides, e-learning, legal updates and a quarterly legislative tracker entitled 'Compendium'. This provides an overview of anticipated legal developments, timeframe for implementation and practical suggestions for steps that can be taken.

## FIND OUT MORE

### Shoosmiths website

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/>

You can read our CR policies and annual CR and United Nations Global Compact Communication on Progress (COP) reports on the **'Our responsibility' section of our website**.

### Corporate responsibility

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/our-responsibility/corporate-responsibility>

### Diversity and inclusion

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/our-responsibility/diversity-and-inclusion>

Stay in touch with our latest CR news via our blog **SHOUTback**:

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/our-responsibility/shoutback>

### Follow us on twitter

<https://twitter.com/shoosmiths>

<https://twitter.com/shoosmithsgrads>

You can read our annual slavery and human trafficking statement at the landing page of our **Shoosmiths website**

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/slavery-and-human-trafficking-statement>

We would love to receive your feedback on our fourth COP. Please send your comments, questions and suggestions to: **corporate.responsibility@shoosmiths.co.uk**

## 4. Human Rights and Labour Principles 1 to 6

### Human Rights

**Principle 1:** Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights and;

**Principle 2:** Make sure they are not complicit in human rights abuses.

### Labour

**Principle 3:** Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;

**Principle 4:** The elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour;

**Principle 5:** The effective abolition of child labour; and

**Principle 6:** The elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

## Our policies and commitments

We are committed to the highest standards of business integrity and therefore our aspiration to be recognised by our stakeholders as an organisation which is a responsible corporate citizen in all our relationships. Our published responsible business policies include:

[Community investment policy](#)

[Corporate responsibility policy](#)

[Environment policy](#)

[Health and safety policy](#)

[Privacy notice](#)

[Pro bono policy](#)

[Statement about the anti-facilitation of tax evasion](#)

[Supplier code of conduct](#)

[Volunteering policy](#)

[Waste management policy](#)

Our employee policies and procedures set out our requirements on such issues as agile working, disciplinary, dress for your day guidelines, grievance, equal opportunities, flexible holidays, flexible working, harassment and bullying, home and mobile working, mental health and wellbeing and recruitment best practice.

## Modern Slavery

The focus of our activity since our 2018 statement was published has been to conduct an independent review of our processes and procedures. The brief was to employ a third party as a critical friend to conduct a modern slavery threat assessment in order to assess and evaluate the potential exposure to the risk of modern slavery, actions that Shoosmiths would take to mitigate that risk and practical actions to facilitate continuous improvement. Third party expertise was a prerequisite for this gap analysis and the Slave-Free Alliance, which is part of the anti-trafficking charity Hope for Justice conducted this work between April and July 2019.

Hope for Justice's goal is to prevent exploitation, rescue victims, restore lives and reform society. It is an international charity working across four continents running rescue programmes, aftercare facilities for vulnerable children and providing trauma informed care for victims of modern slavery.

The Slave-Free Alliance's findings and recommendations formed part of a briefing to the Operations Executive (which oversees the operational aspects of Shoosmiths LLP) and Partnership Council (Shoosmiths' highest decision-making body), have helped to shape the content and structure of the 2019 statement and guided the setting of priorities for 2019/2020.

Our supply chain entails the purchasing of goods and services that support the operations of our offices and services to our clients. These include office supplies, marketing materials, digital agents, ICT hardware and software, estate services such as cleaning, waste management, office design, office fixtures and fittings during fit out, refurbishments and maintenance, uniforms and catering, hospitality services such as hotels for conferences and training events, security and couriers as well as recruitment agents and temporary staff provision. We purchase professional services and work with other law firms and experts including barristers, court services and enforcement, tracing agents, vehicle recovery agents, environmental consultants, surveyors, planning consultants, medical professionals, financial advisors and title indemnity insurance policies from insurance companies and brokers.

We expect our suppliers to share our commitments and approach and by collaborative working we believe we can jointly have a positive impact on society. Our procurement and supplier management policy underpins our supplier selection process and details a range of environmental, social and ethical issues including slavery and human trafficking for consideration as part of the supplier selection process.

Our priority suppliers are invited to sign up to our **Supplier Code of Conduct** covering laws and regulations, under age and forced labour, freedom of association, discrimination, wages and benefits, working hours, healthy and safe working conditions, environment, business integrity, discipline and grievances.

We have an internal procedure on compliance with the Modern Slavery Act Duty to Notify Regulations. Our Corporate Responsibility Consultant, reporting to the board HR Director acts as our lead anti-slavery champion responsible for guiding the business on best practice and raising staff awareness supported by designated divisional and directorate champions who are responsible for implementing our compliance procedure. Our Operations Executive has collective responsibility for directing and reviewing this programme and the annual modern slavery statement. The statement is also approved by the Partnership Council.

Externally Shoosmiths is a signatory of the United Nations (UN) **Global Compact** and a member of the UK Network. We have been a member of the UN Global Compact UK Network Modern Slavery Working Group since May 2016. Members represent a number of industry sectors and share ideas, information and best practice. In June 2019 we took part for the third consecutive year in the annual peer review of member slavery and human trafficking statements.

Shoosmiths is a partner of the UK Stakeholders for Sustainable Development Network (**UKSSD**). This supports organisations who are working to advance sustainable development and helps to facilitate the delivery of the global Sustainable Development Goals in the UK.

Shoosmiths is also a partner supporter of **tiscreport.org** which it describes as the world's largest open data register committed to ending modern slavery and supply chain abuses. Funds donated are split between administration of the register and the Unseen helpline.

## **Due diligence processes in relation to slavery and human trafficking in Shoosmiths' business**

Our employment strategy is based on attracting, developing and retaining the best talent by reinforcing our values and providing a stimulating and rewarding work environment. We recognise everyone is unique and has special contributions to make in delivering the Shoosmiths strategy. Employee engagement is at the heart of our approach and we want to inspire and empower our people to use their talents positively in our communities, whether that be locally, regionally, nationally or ultimately at a global level.

Our recruitment and employment procedures include appropriate pre-employment screening of all staff to determine right to work in the UK where all our offices are based.

All recruitment suppliers are based in the UK and to the best of our knowledge there are no suppliers using a third party within the process. We deal directly with each supplier who is tasked with delivering the relevant service.

## **Due diligence processes in relation to slavery and human trafficking in Shoosmiths' supply chains**

Shoosmiths does not have a centralised procurement function; instead each directorate and division is responsible for the procurement of its goods and services in line with company procedures. A nominated individual in each division and directorate (10 in total) is responsible for leading on our Modern Slavery Act Duty to Notify procedure.

### **Shoosmiths policy and guidelines to comply with modern slavery act – duty to notify**

The internal procedure provides guidance on:

- background to the scale of the problem globally and the UK, regulations and our legal requirements;
- guidance on how to assess level of risk and therefore selection of priority suppliers for engagement on an annual basis or if a risk arises that requires investigation;
- other sources of information;
- supplier engagement in relation to our supplier code of conduct and supplier surveys;
- engagement with interested stakeholders; and
- procedure in the event of an incident of modern slavery or human trafficking being identified.

We invite priority suppliers to sign up to the Shoosmiths code of conduct and to respond to our supplier survey. As part of the 2019 external review the survey was reviewed and found to be fit for purpose.

### **Shoosmiths modern slavery supplier survey**

**Q1.** For the goods and/or services you provide to Shoosmiths which country/countries are they sourced from? (Please provide details).

**Q2.** Does your organisation operate to any specific due diligence standards? (For instance, Better Cotton Standard System, Ethical Trading Initiative Base Code, Fairtrade Standards, Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority Standards, Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture Standard, SEDEX Guidance on Operational Practice and Indicators of Forced Labour or the Travelife Gold Standard etc).

**Q3.** Have you reviewed your business operations and supply chain during the last twelve months for evidence of any instances of slavery, forced labour or human trafficking? Please describe your approach including going beyond your first-tier suppliers.

**Q4.** Have you identified any goods or services that use modern slavery/human trafficking? If yes please detail.

**Q5.** Do you have a remediation programme in place in the event that modern slavery or human trafficking is found in your operations and supply chain? Please detail including any support provided to victims.

**Q6.** Please describe if you are involved in any collaborative initiatives and also if you have any third-party accreditations in place to check that modern slavery and human trafficking does not exist in your supply chain?

**Q7.** Is your company required to publish an annual statement to comply with the Modern Slavery Act 2015 (Duty to Notify) Regulations SI 1743?

If yes - please provide the web link to your statement or provide further details.

**Q8.** What do you define as other high risk sustainability issues in your supply chain and what approaches are you undertaking to address them?\* Please detail.

\* (Examples of an environmental, ethical, social nature might include but not be limited to climate change, resource use, labour rights, health and safety, supply continuity/disruption).

Within our estates management function FISCo UK Ltd works with Shoosmiths directly managing and taking ownership of all second tier Facility Management contracts relevant to mechanical and electrical, security, cleaning and vending operations. All new suppliers are vetted, and an annual compliance review is undertaken to include pre-employment screening, training, health, safety, environmental and as above modern slavery compliance.

It is standard practice for estates management to approach all the tier one and two estates management suppliers (excludes tier three sub-contractors not contracted by Shoosmiths). Existing suppliers who signed the original code of conduct are sent the questionnaire on an annual basis. For new suppliers we send out the questionnaire and code of conduct. We pay particular attention to those where less skilled labour is involved i.e. cleaning, window cleaners, caterers etc. and we focus on the direct supply of products i.e. stationery and specialist branded products.

As at August 2019 169 suppliers had signed up to our supplier code of conduct and we had received 59 supplier responses to our 2018/2019 slavery and trafficking supplier survey.

As part of our third-party assessment work the Slave-Free Alliance reviewed how each part of the business is implementing the modern slavery duty to notify procedure. A number of improvement recommendations were made.

### **Parts of the business and supply chain where there is a risk of slavery and human trafficking taking place and steps taken to assess and manage that risk**

As a professional services firm with office locations solely in the UK it is considered that the level of risk of modern slavery or trafficking within the business is low but there is no room for complacency. Since 2015/2016 when our first slavery statement was published no incident or issue in relation to slavery or trafficking has been reported but the purpose of appointing an independent third party was to help us to determine more robust measures of assessment and therefore greater knowledge of a supply chain that operates in the UK and globally.

Following an independent review of our approach to understanding and tackling the threat of modern slavery in our business and importantly in our supply chain these are the areas we will be exploring in our 2019/2020 work programme:

- developing an escalation and remediation procedure in the event of a report of modern slavery;
- provision of contact details for suppliers to report areas of concern;
- reviewing opportunities for more centralised procurement guidance; and
- looking in more detail at our supply chain, such as goods and services purchased for office use.

### **Effectiveness in ensuring that slavery and human trafficking is not taking place in its business and supply chains and key performance indicator measures**

Shoosmiths is unable to determine if its approach is effective but is committed to continued work in this area. Divisions and directorates have not identified any internal business procedures that could make demands of suppliers or contractors that might lead them to violate human rights and we will continue to keep this under review.

Shoosmiths has not been informed of any incidents of slavery or trafficking during the year but will investigate any allegations should they arise and take appropriate action accordingly. Having reviewed our procedures we will provide additional information on the steps we would take to investigate any allegations of slavery or trafficking in our business or supply chain. We are still determining which key performance indicators we would use year on year.

### **Slavery and Human Trafficking Related Key Performance Indicators 2018/2019**

<b>Key performance indicator</b>	<b>2018/2019</b>
Number of instances of modern slavery identified within Shoosmiths business operation or supply chain	0
Number of required staff who have completed e-learning training	67
% of required staff who have completed e-learning training	100%
Number of suppliers who have signed up to the Shoosmiths supplier code of conduct	169

Number of suppliers requested to complete a survey in 2018/2019	140
Number of suppliers who completed a survey in 2018/2019	59

## Staff training and capacity building about slavery and human trafficking

E-learning training is made available to nominated individuals within each division and business directorate overseeing compliance with our slavery and human trafficking requirements. The e-learning training covers four modules providing an introduction to modern slavery, what are the signs, action to take and an assessment of understanding. As at August 2019 67 required employees (100%) had completed the training.

We raise awareness amongst our staff about slavery and human trafficking which this year had included:

- information on our intranet which describes the scale of the problem, what Shoosmiths is doing and ways in which staff can help;
- inclusion in our quarterly induction programme for new joiners;
- the Unseen App is included as a feature on all new company iPhones and iPads ordered from mid-August 2018 onwards. The App helps to make it easier to report concerns to the free confidential helpline 08000 121 700, operated by Unseen 24 hours a day 365 days a year. The helpline can be used by victims, members of the public and businesses to get help, report a suspicion or seek advice. The **helpline website** also provides resources and a directory of services and helpline providers;
- in the run up to Anti-Slavery Day 18 October 2019 an intranet feature about the scale and challenges posed by slavery and trafficking included ways colleagues can get involved to raise awareness and support the work of organisations tackling the problem; and
- firm wide briefings and articles on our external facing CR blog SHOUTback and inclusion in our annual CR reporting and UN Global Compact Communication on Progress.

## Our advisory role

Modern Slavery Act advice and training is provided to clients by our regulatory, employment and commercial teams including board briefings, compliance checklists, amending and drafting contracts to include anti-slavery clauses, assisting with business deals clients are undertaking – considering if other parties involved are affected by the legislation, inserting anti-slavery clauses in agreements and s.54 transparency statements.

Our employment/immigration team also advise on illegal working policies and procedures, carrying out prevention of illegal working audits and provides training for staff undertaking checks on illegal working. To find out more about our e-learning training click [here](#).

## Slavery and Human Trafficking Progress against 2018/2019 priorities

Priority	Progress
Undertake a third-party modern slavery threat assessment to identify opportunities for improvement.	Slave-Free Alliance appointed with review conducted April to July 2019 and report of recommendations provided for 2019/2020 focus.

<p>Increase understanding of potential risk areas perceived by our priority suppliers within their supply chains.</p>	<p>Based on third party risk assessment recommendations an on-site supplier assessment to be conducted to further increase knowledge and understanding and to identify opportunities for supplier collaboration.</p>
<p>Explore opportunities for collaboration within the business sector and with third sector organisations involved in mitigating and preventing slavery and trafficking within the UK.</p>	<p>Pro bono legal advice provided to Unseen. <i>‘As an anti-slavery charity, Unseen ensures that the majority of the donations we receive are used to bring an end to slavery and support survivors. This is only possible because of the generosity of our partners who kindly donate their time and professional knowledge. Shoosmiths recently reviewed a software development agreement for us pro bono. The review raised some very useful operating points for us to consider and helped us to move towards a stronger overall agreement. Now we are in a better position to develop as an organisation and continue in our mission of ending modern slavery.’</i></p> <p>Operations Director, Unseen.</p> <p>Shoosmiths took part in a Business in the Community roundtable exploring how business can empower survivors to enter employment.</p> <p>Staff volunteering support was also provided to Business in the Community’s Careers Conversations in the West Midlands which helps to break down barriers to work via conversations for survivors of modern day slavery and refugees. The programme assists individuals by helping to build confidence, develop CVs and assist with job interview preparation, ensuring they are ready to go back to work in a safer environment. Similar opportunities are being explored by Shoosmiths in other offices.</p>
<p>Continue to raise awareness amongst stakeholders.</p>	<p>Our main interaction has been with staff and clients during the year explaining our approach and in the case of staff suggesting opportunities for involvement.</p>

## Slavery and Human Trafficking Priorities for 2019/2020

1. review and develop action programmes based on recommendations made by the Slave-Free Alliance;
2. brief our designated slavery champions to facilitate a consistent approach;

3. continue to increase understanding of potential risk areas perceived by our priority suppliers within their supply chains. To include an on-site assessment of one of our key suppliers;
4. continue to explore opportunities for collaboration within the business sector and with third sector organisations involved in mitigating and preventing slavery and trafficking within the UK; and
5. continue to raise awareness amongst stakeholders.

In conclusion, Shoosmiths is committed to better understanding its supply chains and collaborating with stakeholders who wish to improve transparency and address incidents of slavery or human trafficking. This applies not just to our own practices but also to the identification of opportunities in wider society where we might be able to make a difference.

## **Diversity and inclusion**

To thrive as a law firm, we need difference. Difference of thought and perspective, difference in perception and approach to challenges. Our vision is to be a sector leader in diversity, inclusion and wellbeing. We aim to help attract and nurture a diverse group of staff and to create an environment and culture that is genuinely inclusive, where every member of staff feels valued for their contribution to the firm. In doing this we will ensure we have the best people, that they are happy and confident in developing great relationships and are capable of delivering fantastic results and a unique service to our clients.

We have an excellent track record and have achieved significant recognition for encouraging diversity in the legal profession. As founding members of the Law Society Diversity and Inclusion Charter, we are pleased to have achieved Gold standard status. We are committed to working to advance equality both in the firm and in the profession.

We have continued to partner and work with organisations such as the Law Society and Aspiring Solicitors, and maintain affiliation to Disability Confident and Time to Change to advance work on equality, diversity and inclusion.

We have been a member of the UN Global Compact UK Network Diversity and Inclusion Working Group since July 2018. Its purpose is two-fold:

- to bring participating members together to discuss with experts and peers the challenges they are facing in developing and implementing diversity and inclusion strategies within their business; and
- to share good practice and identify concrete actions that companies both individually and as a group, can take to make progress on diversity and inclusion.

In November 2018 we became a signatory of the Race at Work Charter. This was established by Business in the Community (BITC) in partnership with the government to improve outcomes for black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) employees in the UK. The Charter consists of five calls to action to ensure organisations address the barriers to BAME recruitment and progression:

- appoint an executive sponsor for race;
- capture ethnicity data and publish progress;
- commit at board level to zero tolerance of harassment and bullying;
- make clear that supporting equality in the workplace is the responsibility of all leaders and managers; and

- take action that supports ethnic minority career progression.

In November 2018 we also became a signatory of the Social Mobility Pledge to demonstrate the firm's commitment to accessing and progressing talent from all backgrounds. The Pledge calls for steps to be taken in three areas:

- partnership - partner with schools or colleges to provide coaching through quality careers advice, enrichment experience and/or mentoring to people from disadvantaged backgrounds or circumstances;
- access - provide structured work experience and/or apprenticeship opportunities to people from disadvantaged backgrounds or circumstances; and
- recruitment - adopt open employee recruitment practices which promotes a level playing field for people from disadvantaged backgrounds or circumstances.

In February 2019, we published our second **gender pay gap report**. To comply with the legal requirements we are only allowed to report figures for our employees on the government portal, however we feel it is important to be as transparent as possible and so, to give a clearer picture, we also provide information on our self-employed partners. This will help us to better understand the issues affecting the pay gap and we have committed to publishing this additional information each year. We also want to ensure we are improving diversity and inclusion beyond gender, and so included ethnicity pay gap data for the first time. While there is no legal duty to publish this data, we are committed to addressing all forms of inequality, and looking at ethnicity pay data will help us to understand diversity in the firm.

We are aware that we have a long way to go to achieve the balance that reflects Shoosmiths' values and culture. We are disappointed that our pay gap increased this year. The main cause of the gap remains the same: more men in senior positions. This is a problem for the whole of the legal sector and, as we have implemented our ambitious growth strategy, it has meant the pool of talent available to us, particularly at partner level, is restricted and dominated by men.

Diversity and inclusion will remain a priority in our 2019/2022 business strategy. There will be:

- continued focus upon the firm's values as the framework for internal behaviour which will drive inclusivity;
- the requirement for external search agencies to provide us with gender balanced longlists of potential candidates. If they are not able to do this, they are required to provide evidence as to why this is the case;
- targeted support for women to address differences in approach to promotion;
- awareness raising to achieve greater understanding of the views and needs of groups (such as women (in senior roles), our LGBT+ community and those with disability);
- review of parental leave support;
- succession planning;
- improved mentoring support through the launch of Rungway an online space to ask and answer colleagues questions on any work or life topic and anonymously if preferred; and
- improving wellbeing in the workplace for all.

## Wellbeing

We recognise the importance of well-being at work and the impact it can have on productivity.

We want to engage with our staff and develop initiatives that cover a broad range of physical, emotional and social aspects of work. In April 2018, all staff had been given the opportunity to undertake a Care and Resilience Survey, the findings of which informed some of our wellbeing activities during 2018/2019:

- the network of mental health and wellbeing champions expanded to cover all offices in October 2018;
- resilience training sessions offered at every location;
- drafting and implementing two new line manager guidance notes; one supporting colleagues to disclose mental health and a second supporting colleagues with mental health issues in the workplace;
- team coaching implemented with division heads and their teams (direct reports) to create a cultural shift towards 'team thinking' and harnessing the 'collective clever' to drive transformational rather than transactional employee engagement;
- support documents for line managers;
- increased collaboration with internal communications to ensure regular diversity, inclusion and wellbeing engagement; and
- series of personal stories published on the intranet about Shoosmiths colleagues – taking shared parental leave, disability, job sharing and the menopause

### 4a. Helping our clients

Shoosmiths is committed to the provision of legal advice on a pro bono basis in all areas of law that are practised across the business.

The definition of pro bono used by the Law Society and Bar Council is:

***Legal advice or representation provided by lawyers in the public interest including to individuals, charities and community groups who cannot afford to pay for that advice or representation, and where public and alternative means of funding are not available.***

In deciding whether or not to take on pro bono work, the normal procedures apply in relation to due diligence, conflict search checks etc. and if the legal adviser has the capacity and capability to take on. We are a signatory of and abide by the requirements of the Joint Protocol for Pro Bono Legal Work which quality marks legal work by promoting and ensuring consistently high standards of pro bono work. It builds on the professional codes of conduct that set out the standards and requirements that all solicitors must achieve and observe.

We are also a founding signatory of the Law Society Pro Bono Charter. Our **pro bono policy** highlights our commitment to support organisations and individuals better understand their rights and gain access to justice. This is underpinned by an internal practice note setting out our requirements for the taking on and reporting of pro bono work.

Pro bono advice is undertaken as a consequence of approaches by organisations and individuals, via charity trustee roles, through legal adviser connections, by pre-appointment-based pro bono clinics and via brokered programmes managed by charities. Hours recorded by legal advisers are included with their 'matter-related' targets (targets relating to billable hours), meaning pro bono hours count towards achieving these targets.

1,634 pro bono hours were recorded during 2018/2019, representing an 8.8 % increase on the 1,502 hours recorded in 2017/2018. During 2019/2020, we will continue to encourage legal advisers to undertake appropriate work and publicise outcomes of support provided.

We work closely with a number of pro bono partners to provide free legal advice to those in need:

- **LawWorks:** We support appointment-based pro bono clinics based on the LawWorks model in Thames Valley and Northampton and the LawWorks Not-for-Profit Programme.
  - **CommuniCare Legal Advice Centre:** Our Thames Valley office supports the East Reading-based CommuniCare Legal Advice Centre operated in conjunction with students from the University of Reading School of Law. Last year, Shoosmiths advised at eight clinics supporting 27 clients on issues such as employment, consumer, landlord/tenant, personal injury, contract, claims, property, will and probate matters.
  - **Northampton pro bono clinic:** Our Northampton office supports the Northampton pro bono clinic operated in conjunction with Citizens Advice Central and East Northamptonshire and students from the University of Northampton School of Law. Last year, Shoosmiths advised 30 clients at 11 monthly advice clinics on matters such as family, probate, employment, landlord and tenant and general civil matters.
  - **LawWorks Not-for-Profit Programme:** We support the LawWorks Not-for-Profit Programme which delivers free legal advice to charities, voluntary and community organisations and social enterprises. During 2018/2019, real estate advice was provided to four charities advising on issues such as heads of terms, lease renewals, potential liabilities and property disputes.
- **Manchester Free Legal Pro Bono Clinic:** Our Manchester office Family Law team provides monthly pro bono advice at the at the Manchester Civil Justice Centre helping at 10 clinics advising circa 60 clients on family law issues and signposting to other services such as family mediation, social services, and domestic violence groups for example. Supervision was also provided to law students at the Manchester University Law Clinic.

#### **ROYAL COLLEGE OF ART**

In our London office we provide an appointment based pro bono clinic to staff, students and alumni of the Royal College of Art who have queries regarding intellectual property (IP) rights (trade marks, passing off, copyright, designs, patents and confidential information) in relation to commercialising their work and avoiding or dealing with disputes.

*'The pro bono legal support given by Shoosmiths to our community of students and recent graduates really is priceless. It is highly educational and the chance to discuss IP in relation to their own projects / challenges really helps them to grasp legal concepts and get an invaluable insight into how IP can benefit their future careers. Mark and his colleagues very skilfully introduce attendees from a creative background to legal concepts and terminology in a very professional yet informal manner. From my experience of sitting in on the clinics, I can see how they build a very good rapport with the students and avoid overwhelming them with legal jargon. Finally, this experience also gives attendees an invaluable insight into lawyers and how they work and it gives them a greater appreciation of how IP can be of real value in progressing their careers and achieving their ambitions.'*

**Pauline Watkins, Head of IP, InnovationRCA, Royal College of Art**

## **SHOOSMITHS SUPPORTS MANUEL BRAVO PROJECT**

The Manuel Bravo Project is a charitable organisation based in Leeds that aims to provide legal representation to asylum seekers who would otherwise have none. Shoosmiths began to support the project in October 2018. Clients of the Manuel Bravo Project are referred to Shoosmiths who provides assistance on a pro bono basis, enabling clients to navigate what can be a complex and stressful procedure. Shoosmiths prepares and submits applications for successful asylum seekers who are coming to the end of their five year leave to remain to apply for further leave to remain. The work involves meeting with the client, reviewing the original application and the successful outcomes letter, carrying out research (both legal and current affairs) and completing and submitting the application form and supporting evidence on behalf of the client.

*'Since August 2018 we have provided two training sessions at both our offices for the Shoosmiths legal volunteers. We also have dedicated one of our caseworker team to be their immigration adviser who is available to check, support and answer any queries during the process.'*

*'This agreement has been very successful and beneficial to our organisations as it's providing a wide experience to the Shoosmiths team, and it's also strengthened our capacity.'*

*'We at Manuel Bravo Project are very grateful to work together in assisting refugees, and very thankful to Shoosmiths for its efficiency and hard work.'*

**Muhammed Albordaini, Project Manager, Manuel Bravo Project**

## **FIRST YEAR TRAINEES DELIVER SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS PRO BONO CHALLENGE**

'Every year we issue a CR challenge to our 1<sup>st</sup> year trainees and for the third consecutive year our 2018/2019 project was to instruct our trainees under appropriate supervision to provide legal advice to organisations that are addressing any of the global SDGs in the UK.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is based on 17 global priorities for sustainable development to be achieved by 2030. Together the global goals set out an ambitious agenda for a better world by 2030 – fairer, safer, healthier, more prosperous and in better balance with nature. The 17 goals and 169 targets are interdependent.

During the challenge projects included:

- establishing a new fortnightly housing and employment pro bono clinic at Citizens Advice Milton Keynes;
- monthly pro bono clinic appointments at Citizens Advice, Edinburgh employment and property advice;
- a social media law pro bono conference focused on staying safe online organised by Aston University and BPP Law School.
- lease renewal advice to an Essex based charity and to a Birmingham based charity;

- advice and support for a community service; and
- a tax presentation researched and provided to Prospect School in Reading.

*'The trainees have both supported our existing pro bono programmes and initiated new projects. The trainees involved a number of colleagues across our offices and as well as providing assistance to our clients have demonstrated the importance and ease of giving back to our local communities pro bono.'*

**Nicola Ellen, Corporate Responsibility Consultant, Shoosmiths**

Legal updates are published on our Shoosmiths website and articles during the year relevant to the human rights and labour agenda covered such issues as:

**Care homes:**

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/care-home-providers-get-new-guidance-from-the-cma-on-terms-of-service>

**Data protection:**

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/data-subject-access-request-series-personal-data>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/turbocharging-your-privacy-policies-incorporating-data-protection-by-design>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/personal-data-breaches-by-employers-when-do-you-have-to-own-up>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/breaching-the-gdpr-wont-fly-with-the-ico>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/springing-forward-look-ahead-to-changes-in-employment-law-from-april-2019>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/turbocharging-your-privacy-policies-putting-them-into-context>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/turbocharging-your-privacy-policies-maximising-their-effectiveness>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/can-an-employer-say-no-to-a-data-subject-access-request>

**Diversity and inclusion:**

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/lgbtq-the-new-pay-gap-and-what-employers-need-to-do-about-it>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/when-worlds-collide-which-belief-is-right>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/gender-stereotyping-stamping-it-out>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/the-hidden-epidemic-of-sexual-harassment-of-lgbt-people-in-the-workplace>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/happy-pride-month>

**Education:**

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/ombudsmans-report-says-parents-face-tougher-fight-to-secure-sen-provision>

**Employment:**

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/reasonable-adjustments-in-the-workplace-checklist-for-employers>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/data-subject-access-requests-data-redaction-in-an-employment-context>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/quarter-4-employment-case-law-update>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/drafting-master-class-sabbatical-agreements>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/employment-law-plans-in-the-pipeline>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/common-pitfalls-in-handling-redundancies>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/how-to-draft-secondment-agreements>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/quarter-3-employment-case-law-update>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/so-you-think-youve-blown-the-whistle-and-the-boss-is-mad-now-what>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/drafting-employment-documents-a-new-series-for-2019>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/employing-international-students>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/what-do-employers-need-to-consider-before-suspending-an-employee>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/warning-to-employers-of-the-financial-cost-of-discrimination>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/should-employers-equalise-shared-parental-pay-with-maternity-pay>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/flexibility-v-certainty-working-time-woes>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/quarter-2-employment-case-law-update>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/drafting-employment-documents-a-new-series-for-2019>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/drafting-masterclass-zero-hour-contracts>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/a-conservative-victory-what-does-this-mean-for-employment-law>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/the-10-employment-myths-of-christmas>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/apprenticeship-levy-update-are-you-about-to-start-throwing-money-away>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/quarterly-employment-case-law-update>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/drug-testing-in-workplace-warning-for-employers>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/zero-hours-contracts-common-pitfalls-employers>

#### **Pensions:**

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/esg-and-investment-governance-for-pension-scheme-trustees>

#### **Wellbeing:**

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/top-tips-for-employers-mental-health-awareness-week>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/reducing-stress-on-relationship-breakdown>

We also provide e learning courses on a range of topics including:

#### **Data protection and General Data Protection Regulations compliance:**

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/expertise/connected-services/academy/elearning/data-protection-and-gdpr-compliance>

**Employee misconduct:**

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/expertise/connected-services/academy/elearning/employee-misconduct-taking-disciplinary-action>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/expertise/connected-services/academy/elearning/conducting-a-thorough-disciplinary-investigation>

**Equality and diversity:**

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/expertise/connected-services/academy/elearning/equality-and-diversity>

**Introduction to unfair dismissal:**

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/expertise/connected-services/academy/elearning/introduction-to-unfair-dismissal>

**Modern slavery - transparency in supply chains:**

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/expertise/connected-services/academy/elearning/modern-slavery-transparency-in-supply-chains>

**Prevention of illegal working:**

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/expertise/connected-services/academy/elearning/prevention-of-illegal-working>

**4b. Organisations we have worked with**

In addition to fundraising during the year for a number of organisations focused on aspects of human rights or labour we also participated in:

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
Access to Justice Foundation wants a society where everyone has access to justice, and it increases the support available to vulnerable people requiring access to the legal system through strategic grant making and supporting the advice sector.	Our London office hosted the charity's away day meeting in October 2018.
Aspiring Solicitors is committed to ensuring that the most talented candidates with the greatest potential as lawyers maximise their chances of success.	Shoosmiths has been a partner of Aspiring Solicitors since November 2016.
Birmingham Cathedral Wrap Up Brum Appeal distributes items to homeless people around the city to keep them warm in winter.	Birmingham colleagues donated 20 coats, scarves and hats in November 2018.
Business in the Community (BITC) is the Prince's Responsible Business Network. Members work together to tackle a range of issues that are essential to building a fairer society and a more sustainable future.	We are a corporate member of BITC and a member of the East Midlands and West Midlands Advisory Boards. We became a signatory of the Race at Work Charter in November 2018 and were one of 64 pioneering companies to complete the inaugural Responsible Business Tracker® in 2019.

Central and East Northamptonshire Citizens Advice provides advice to people on a wide range of problems.	Our Northampton office has provided pro bono services since November 2011 via a monthly appointment-based pro bono clinic operated in conjunction with the University of Northampton School of Law.
CommuniCare is a support centre in East Reading that provides advice on a range of issues.	Our Thames Valley office has provided pro bono services since November 2009 and holds a monthly legal clinic operated in conjunction with the University of Reading School of Law.
Contact supports families with disabled children, with the best possible guidance and information, bringing families together to support each other.	Shoosmiths co-presented a webinar with the charity about special education needs and education, health and care plans. The webinar went out to an audience across the country and is available on YouTube: <a href="https://youtu.be/iMlkX4HzYss">https://youtu.be/iMlkX4HzYss</a>
CSR Legal Network is a forum for CSR professionals in the legal sector.	Shoosmiths has been a member since September 2010.
Ethical Reading is a not-for-profit organisation launched in January 2018 championing healthy, sustainable and ethical workplaces in the Reading and wider Thames Valley area. Its vision is to make the Reading area a better place to live and work.	Shoosmiths is a founding partner of Ethical Reading, a member of its Advisory Council, has provided pro bono legal advice, and hosts meetings.
Foundation for Social Improvement provides learning and fundraising opportunities for small charities to enable them to be more efficient, effective and accountable to develop a more sustainable small charity sector in the UK.	On 19 June 2018 we participated in the charity's Big Advice Day which took place during Small Charity Week. Our Corporate Responsibility Consultant was one of more than 80 expert advisors drawn from the public, private and charity sectors that provided 456 hours of advice to 79 charities on the day.
LawWorks works in England and Wales to connect volunteer lawyers with people in need of legal advice.	Shoosmiths has been a member of LawWorks since 2009. We support pro bono clinics operating to LawWorks' clinics models. Our Real Estate Division supports the LawWorks Not-for-Profits Programme whereby small not-for-profit organisations are provided with legal advice on a pro-bono basis.
The Law Society is the representative body for solicitors in England and Wales.	Founding signatory 2009 of the Diversity and Inclusion Charter. Founding signatory November 2016 of the Pro Bono Charter.
The Mental Health Foundation is committed to good mental health for all and believes the social challenge of our time is to reverse the growing level of mental ill health. Mental Health Awareness Week took place 14-20 May 2018 and its main focus was helping to combat stress.	Offices took part sharing tips and advice on how to alleviate stress both within the workplace and at home. During the year we also worked with Mental Health at Work CIC, a subsidiary of the charity which provided training sessions for our HR managers and estates managers, focusing on understanding mental health in the workplace.

<p>MK Arts for Health charity works with local artists to organise the exhibition of art in healthcare premises and the wider community.</p>	<p>With one of our partners acting as a trustee for the charity, we have exhibited artwork in our Milton Keynes office since October 2010.</p>
<p>Northampton Borough Council</p>	<p>Northampton colleagues provided information on a career in law during St. David's Week of Action August 2018. The event gave young people employment and education ideas.</p>
<p>On Your Feet Britain Challenge unites workers across Britain to participate in a variety of fun and simple activities to #SitLess and #MoveMore.</p>	<p>A four-week cross office steps challenge was launched 'On Your Feet Britain' day 26 April 2019.</p>
<p>The Social Mobility Foundation aims to make a practical improvement in social mobility for young people from low-income backgrounds.</p>	<p>The Social Mobility Foundation publishes the annual Social Mobility Index. The index ranks employers on the actions taken to ensure they are open to accessing and progressing talent from all backgrounds and showcases progress towards social mobility. Shoosmiths completed the index for the second consecutive year and was ranked 63 out of 106 participating firms.</p>
<p>Talk, Listen, Change charity offers a range of services from counselling to family mediation, parenting support and domestic violence prevention.</p>	<p>In July 2018 our Manchester office hosted a 10-year celebration event for the charity to mark 10 years of service delivery of the Bridging to Change Domestic Violence Programme. The service helps men and women who have been violent or abusive in their intimate relationships to change their behaviour, whilst offering their partners/ex partners and children support. The event also marked the launch of the programme in Salford.</p>
<p>Time to Talk Day aims to get as many people as possible talking about mental health and is led by Mind and Rethink Mental Illness.</p>	<p>Time to Talk Day 7 February 2019 was marked across Shoosmiths. Our network of mental health and wellbeing champions sent office wide emails encouraging colleagues to take the time to talk, either by asking a colleague how they were or telling a colleague how they felt. The champions also organised 'tea and talk' drop in sessions.</p>
<p>The UN Global Compact is a voluntary initiative based on Chief Executive Officer commitments to implement universal principles on human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption and to undertake actions that advance societal goals.</p>	<p>Shoosmiths joined 27 January 2016, is a signatory and is a member of the UK Network and three working groups on modern slavery, SDGs reporting and diversity and inclusion.</p>
<p>Women's International Networking 2018 Conference celebrated the marking of 100 years of suffrage for women in the UK with the theme 'Realising Your Power and Leading Change – Differently.'</p>	<p>Shoosmiths was a speaker and sponsor of the event 7 June 2018.</p>

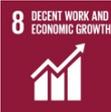
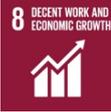
#### 4c. Our 2018/2019 human rights and labour targets

Appendix 2 of our annual CR Reports includes key performance data from 2013/2014 onwards relating to number of partners, personnel by management grade, full and part time employees, number of promotions at each grade, work shadowing placements, employees by gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief, socio-economic background: school and higher education, pro bono and volunteering hours.

**Key:**

- √ – achieved
- IP – in progress
- X – not achieved

Objective			
Attracting, developing and retaining the best talent by reinforcing our values and providing a stimulating and rewarding work environment.			
Objectives and targets		Performance and status	
  	Conduct training and development of staff to ensure ongoing competency and provision of sound customer support and legal advice.	Achieved via mandatory training courses and provision of training resources to aid staff personal development.	√
	Conduct regular engagement with staff on their contribution to the 2030 SDGs.	1st year trainees completed a pro bono challenge to advise third sector organisations addressing the SDGs. We also used Earth Hour Day 30 March 2019 to highlight SDG 13 and the selection of each office charity partner 2018/2019 was aligned with the SDGs.	√
	Progress integration of environmental management into an improved health and safety management system.	Engagement of a new EHS consultant to work with us to redesign our guidance.	IP
	Establish a mental health champion network across all offices.	Launched in October 2018 following trial in several offices.	√

  	Continue to develop our work on diversity and inclusion including addressing the gender imbalance in senior roles.	See page 14.	√
  	Expand data published as part of gender pay gap reporting beyond the legal requirement, to include information on partners.	Our 2018 statement reported on gender, self-employed partners and ethnicity. See: our statement <a href="#">here</a> .	√

#### 4d. Our 2019/2020 human rights and labour targets

Targets	Related SDGs
<b>Objective</b> Working collaboratively in the marketplace with our clients and suppliers to evidence best Corporate Responsibility practice aligned with our vision to be the leading law firm in the UK famous for its client experience.	
Conduct a third-party assessment of our processes and procedures in relation to the potential for slavery and human trafficking in our operations and supply chain.	
<b>Objective</b> Attracting, developing and retaining the best talent by reinforcing our values and providing a stimulating and rewarding working environment.	
Conduct regular engagement with staff on their contribution to the 2030 SDGs.	
Progress integration of environmental management into an improved health and safety management system.	
Enable employees who champion positive mental health and wellbeing to better support colleagues; introduce more consistency, structure and best practice sharing across the network, and introduce enhanced signposting to external resources and organisations as appropriate.	
Continue to refine our approach to diversity and inclusion and define how Shoosmiths can uniquely contribute to greater levels of social mobility in the firm, and in the UK.	 
Continue to build our employee network model; introduce a BAME network and develop guidance on how Shoosmiths can best support BAME employees.	

Conduct a review of interventions to date which aim to address gender and pay gap, and which promote greater diversity in senior roles, building on those which are proving most successful.



## 5. Environment Principles 7 to 9

### Environment

**Principle 7:** Businesses should adopt a precautionary approach to environmental challenges;

**Principle 8:** Undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility; and

**Principle 9:** Encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.

Continual improvement forms part of our approach in order that we can achieve an overall positive environmental impact as a result of the way we do business.

Our published environmental policies are:

[Environment policy](#)

[Energy policy](#)

[Waste management policy](#)

Our environment programme for the period 2019/2022 concentrates on:

- demonstrating high standards of environmental responsibility in all our operations and minimising the environmental impacts associated with our activities, products and services;
- deepening our relationships with suppliers that have the greatest potential to impact on our CR performance.

The most material issues for our business are: procurement and resource use; energy consumption and carbon emissions associated with our buildings, IS systems and employee travel; and waste and recycling. Solutions lie in the management of our operations, investment in new, and alternative technologies, working with our suppliers and encouraging behavioural best practice across our teams.

### Our environmental management system

Our environmental management system (EMS) is based on the ISO 14001:2015 standard. Our environmental policy statement defines our approach in striving to achieve balance in the three pillars of sustainability - environment, society and the economy.

Our procurement and suppliers' management policy sets out our approach to managing our indirect environmental and social impacts and we work with our suppliers to identify opportunities to reduce impacts. Shoosmiths operates an incident reporting system which includes environmental incidents. No environmental incidents were recorded during 2018/2019.

We measure and minimise the environmental impacts associated with our use of resources (including energy use) and the waste we generate from our buildings and as a result of the services provided to clients.

Our 13 offices include both single lease and multi-tenanted buildings. Our Birmingham office (multi-tenanted) at Colmore Square holds an 'excellent' BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Methodology) rating as does the Manchester office in the X,Y,Z building in Spinningfields, occupied from June 2017. The Apex Plaza building (multi-tenanted), Thames Valley is ISO 14001:2015 certified and our Leeds office is EPC A rated.

Where we have direct control of our offices, for example buildings where we are the sole tenant, we have a greater ability to influence change. Where we do not have direct control, we liaise with our landlords to identify opportunities, for example through tenant sustainability working groups.

During 2018/2019, employed an external consultancy to conduct one-day site audits of our Manchester (multi-tenanted) and Northampton (sole tenant) offices to assess environmental legislative and best practice compliance. Findings were that the sites were well managed, staff showed a good understanding of requirements and were committed to continual improvement. Minor improvement opportunities mainly related to aspects of waste and refrigerants and at the Northampton office also in relation to surface water drainage.

## **Energy**

Shoosmiths has been reviewing its contribution to a carbon neutral future and will be presenting recommendations including targets to the board in early 2020. It also employed an environmental consultancy to review our carbon footprint data including accuracy and extrapolation of where data was not available

Shoosmiths occupies sole and multi-tenanted buildings and consumes electricity and gas for heating, ventilation, air conditioning, lighting and IT equipment. We track electricity and gas consumption at our offices through monthly reporting.

## **Agile working**

During 2018/2019, we moved to new agile working offices in Solent and closed our Victoria House, Northampton office with our IS team relocating to the Northampton office. By the end of April 2019 52% (versus 80% target) of our employees had transitioned to agile working and 45% (versus 60% target) of our offices converted to support task working.

By the end April 2020 we aim to transition 65% of our employees to agile working and 80% of our offices with agile working plans for Belfast, Edinburgh and Milton Keynes. Our Glasgow and Sheffield locations will be agile too.

## **Resource management**

Environmental champions were established in six offices (Northampton, Leeds, London, Manchester, Solent and Thames Valley). Agreed priorities during 2018/2019 were to increase streams of waste recycled, to raise staff awareness, to identify opportunities to replace single-use plastic with either re-usable plastic or other material, and to identify opportunities to use more sustainable refreshment options for client meetings.

Initiatives introduced during the year included:

100% recycled paper napkins

Switching to milk in glass bottles in our Nottingham office.

In Northampton (our largest office):

- competitions, quarterly newsletters and weekly environmental 'hack' e mails providing updates on new initiatives, advice and tips on best practice in the workplace and at home, and encouraging staff suggestions;
- replacement of single use plates, cups and cutlery with re-usable options in our staff break out areas; and
- new waste streams collected for recycling including food and batteries.

In our Thames Valley office disposable cups and crisp packet recycling introduced and sandwich deliveries for client meetings switched to cardboard.

## **Stationery**

Our approach is to use recycled stationery where we can and copier paper, which is our highest usage paper is Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified. We will continue to investigate new opportunities during 2019/2020.

During 2018/2019, Shoosmiths used 1,025 lines of stationery, of which 252 have a defined environmental benefit. Of these lines, 29 products have 100% recycled content and 223 partial recycled content. We used six FSC-certified paper products, which constituted about 84% of our paper spend.

## **Donation of used IT equipment**

We work with partner organisations to ensure that equipment that can no longer be used within the business is re-used or recycled by others.

Since 2008, Shoosmiths has donated redundant IT equipment to Computer Aid International, a charity that helps disadvantaged communities to access digital equipment that will improve their lives. Computer Aid takes the equipment, wipes the data from it and donates it to different programmes across the world. Our computers typically have a five-year life and by donating them in this way we can extend the life of our equipment by another three to four years.

During 2018/2019 83 IT assets were donated (546 kg) to Computer Aid. Of the 83 items donated 52 units were re-used (338 kg) and 31 (208 kg) were recycled with the re-used assets sent to four projects in Africa and one in the UK. (43% to Zimbabwe, 27% to Malawi, 15% to Burkina Faso, and 15% to the UK). No assets went to landfill as Computer Aid's downstream partners operate a manual disassembly process, breaking down items to their constituent parts which are then sent to specialist refiners for re-use and recycling.

**SHOOSMITHS DONATES TO COMPUTER PROJECTS IN AFRICA AND THE UK**

### **Zimbabwe Open University**

The Zimbabwe Open University is a distance education university in Zimbabwe. Established in 1999, it is the only distance education university in the country and in terms of enrolment it is the largest university in Zimbabwe.

### **Soche Technical College, Malawi**

Soche Technical College is the oldest public Technical College in Malawi and its mission is to be a leading institution in providing technical, entrepreneurial and vocational education and training through modern technology and training in Malawi. The college has four departments namely Commercial, Construction, Automobile Engineering and Mechanical Engineering.

### **Malawi University of Science and Technology**

The Malawi University of Science and Technology (MUST) was established with the aim of promoting the development, adaptation, transfer and application of science, technology and innovation for macro- and micro-economic development of Malawi. Its vision is a world class centre of science and technology education, research and entrepreneurship which is being realised through the provision of a conducive environment for quality education, training, research, and entrepreneurship, and outreach activities.

### **The Association Evangelique D'Appui Development (AEAD), Burkino Faso**

AEAD is a West African non-governmental organisation that has operated in Burkina Faso for over 20 years. AEAD addresses the root causes of poverty by fully involving and empowering the local community. A core part of its programme is the provision of education opportunities. It runs and manages over 80 schools and literacy programmes.

### **St Cuthberts Talk English, UK**

St Cuthberts is a vibrant Preston church - part of the Church of England in the Diocese of Blackburn in Lancashire. Each week, a dedicated team of volunteers from St Cuthbert's and many other Preston churches work with asylum seekers and refugees from around the world in order to teach them the language skills that are needed for life in a new country.

*'Shoosmiths' ongoing donations of equipment have helped us to create access in schools and communities both here in the UK and in Africa. We are so thankful for the continuing support they have given us in our mission to bring technology access to the world.'*

**Alice Walker-Mitchell, Marketing Officer, Computer Aid International'**

## **Bottled water**

We use the Ecopure Waters on-site water purification system in nine of our offices to provide freshly filtered water, both still and sparkling for our client and internal meetings. This has a lower carbon footprint than bottled mineral waters and because the bottles are re-used it reduces waste. Between May 2018 and April 2019, we consumed 23,314 litres of water<sup>1</sup> and avoided 4.21 tonnes of glass.

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<sup>1</sup> Data excludes Belfast, Glasgow, London and Sheffield.

## Smart travel

Efficient driving techniques can help to reduce fuel use and associated emissions. Every driver who undertakes more than 5,000 business miles annually, carries out frequent business journeys or who is a newly qualified driver must complete online driver training every three years.

We participate in the government's Cycle to Work scheme. This initiative, co-ordinated on our behalf by the consultancy Gemelli Employee Benefits, seeks to encourage take-up of cycling as a more sustainable mode of transport that also improves general health and fitness.

## Waste management

FISco, our Estates Management provider, manages our office waste (general and recyclable) in our Northampton and Sheffield offices as well as our former Solent office until we moved offices in September 2018. In 2018/2019 these offices produced 33.3 tonnes of general waste of which 6.93 tonnes (20.8%) were recycled and 26.37 tonnes (79.2%) were incinerated with heat recovery). No waste was sent to landfill from these recorded locations. Some wastes at our Northampton office are managed on our behalf by a provider. At our other offices the landlords are responsible for managing waste contracts. Here we work with landlords alongside other tenants to identify better ways of managing our waste.

FISco also manages confidential waste from all our offices, with the exception of Belfast (which it will manage from August 2019), through a specialist company, Shred It, with 144.34 tonnes collected in 2018/2019. (Compared to 143.79 tonnes collected in 2017/2018.) The waste was shredded and recycled into the approximate equivalent of 169.8 tonnes of recycled fibre – tissue and toilet paper. By recycling confidential waste, 424.5 m<sup>3</sup> of landfill space was avoided. We continue to focus effort to improve accuracy of recording waste.

We continue to focus effort to improve accuracy of recording waste.

## Water management

Shoosmiths' sites do not abstract or impound water and water management controls are within landlord controls and procedures. Shoosmiths ensures that relevant consents are in place and all conditions are complied with.

Appendix 2 of our annual CR reports include data on our annual water consumption in buildings at locations under Shoosmiths' control, namely Northampton (Lakes, and until its closure in September 2018 Victoria House premises) and until September 2018 Solent.

## 5a. Helping our clients

During the year we published environmental updates on such topics as:

### Energy:

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/consultation-on-tightening-measures-for-commercial-buildings>  
<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/amended-measures-rules-for-residential-landlords-now-in-force>

## Planning:

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/full-speed-ahead-the-accelerated-planning-green-paper>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/potential-issues-remain-with-introduction-of-infrastructure-levy>

## Pollution:

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/european-court-clarifies-rules-on-air-quality-sampling-and-citizen-rights>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/nitrate-pollution-concerns-halt-housebuilding>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/property-owner-prosecuted-spread-japanese-knotweed>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/nitrate-pollution-solutions>

## 5b. Organisations we have worked with

In addition to donations to environmental focused organisations we also participated in:

Organisation	Outcome
Computer Aid International charity takes used IT equipment and sends it to disadvantaged communities across the world.	In 2018/2019 83 IT assets were donated (546 kg) to Computer Aid. Of the 83 items donated 52 units were re-used (338 kg) and 31 (208 kg) were recycled with the re-used assets sent to four projects in Africa and one in the UK. (43% to Zimbabwe, 27% to Malawi, 15% to Burkina Faso, and 15% to the UK).
The Legal Sustainability Alliance (LSA) is an inclusive movement of law firms and related organisations committed to working collaboratively to take action and to improve the environmental sustainability of their operations and activities.	Pioneer member of this Law Society initiative in December 2008, signatory to the seven climate change principles.
The UK Stakeholders for Sustainable Development (UKSSD) provides a space to mobilise organisations so they can play their part to create a sustainable UK.	Shoosmiths became a partner in July 2017.
The Woodland Trust plants trees and protects woods to create havens for wildlife all over the UK.	Shoosmiths donated £17,825 in October 2018 to support the Trust's planting of new native woodland at Langley Vale Wood in Epsom, Surrey. Approximately 750 trees (one acre) were planted which will have the capacity to absorb approximately 160 tonnes of carbon over 50 years, rising to 200 tonnes after a century. Langley Vale is part of the Trust's Centenary Woods project which has created a living legacy to all of those affected by the First World War.
WWF UK is a charity that aims to stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment.	Our offices supported the Earth Hour campaign on Saturday 30 March 2019 by switching off unnecessary lights, highlighting the impact climate

	change has and asking staff to suggest actions Shoosmiths could focus on.
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## 5c. Our 2018/2019 environment targets

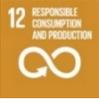
Appendix 2 of our annual CR Reports include key performance data from 2013/2014 onwards relating to carbon footprint, electricity and gas consumption, waste and water consumption.

### Key:

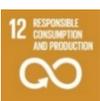
√ – achieved

IP – in progress

X – not achieved

<b>Objective</b>			
Demonstrating high standards of environmental responsibility in all our operations and minimising the environmental impacts associated with our activities, products and services.			
<b>Objectives and targets</b>		<b>Performance and status</b>	
	At sites where we control building energy use, reduce electricity consumption by 3% in 2018/2019 versus 2017/2018. Where we do not control the building, liaise with the landlord to identify opportunities to reduce electricity consumption.	24% decrease in electricity consumption across the estate.	√
	At sites where we control building energy use, reduce gas consumption by 3% in 2018/2019 versus 2017/2018. Where we do not control the building, liaise with the landlord to identify opportunities to reduce gas consumption.	23.3% decrease in gas consumption at sites we controlled.	√
 	Review potential to source electricity from renewable sources at sites under Shoosmiths' control subject to pricing objectives being satisfied.	Agreed and introduced in August 2018.	√
 	By the end of April 2019, transition 80% of our employees to agile working and convert 60% of our offices to support task working.	52% of employees were agile working by the end of April 2019 and 45% of our offices had converted.	X
	Using an external organisation, undertake a second-party audit of two offices to assess legislative and best practice compliance, identifying opportunities for improvement.	Completed with site audits undertaken at our Manchester and Northampton offices.	√
	Trial introduction of environmental champions to evaluate opportunities for local environmental attention and improvement including office recycling, single-use plastic and client-facing refreshments.	Established in six offices including the Northampton office where 30% of our workforce is based.	√

## 5d. Our 2019/2020 environment targets

<b>Objective</b> Demonstrating high standards of environmental responsibility in all our operations and minimising the environmental impacts associated with our activities, products and services.	
 	Determine Shoosmiths' contribution to a pathway to 1.5 degrees.
	At sites where we control building energy use, reduce electricity consumption by 3% in 2019/2020 versus 2018/2019. Where we do not control the building, liaise with the landlord to identify opportunities to reduce electricity consumption.
	At sites where we control building energy use, reduce gas consumption by 3% in 2019/2020 versus 2018/2019. Where we do not control the building, liaise with the landlord to identify opportunities to reduce gas consumption.
 	By the end of April 2020, transition 65% of our employees to agile working and convert 80% of our offices to support task working.
	Using an external organisation, conduct a second-party audit of two offices to assess legislative and best practice compliance, identifying opportunities for improvement.

## 6. Anti-Corruption Principle

<b>Anti-Corruption</b> <b>Principle 10:</b> Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.
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We are committed to the highest standards of business integrity.

Shoosmiths is fully compliant with the UK Bribery Act 2010 and during the last 12 months has not been subject to any investigation, legal claim or criminal action.

We have defined policies, processes, practices and control structures by which we ensure appropriate behaviour and consistent standards across the firm. Our compliance monitoring officers (within our Quality and Risk team) review compliance with those policies, systems and controls and report the results through our governance framework. The independent internal auditor who reports to the Chairman/Compliance Officer for Legal Practice (COLP) ensures that the second line of defence operates effectively.

Our Practice Standards set out the minimum standards which must be met by each part of the firm to drive quality, manage risks and meet legislative and regulatory requirements. The internal auditor monitors the teams' compliance with these standards.

Our management systems are accredited to the quality management system ISO 9001:2015 (accredited since 1995) and the information security system ISO 27001:2013 (accredited since 2010), Cyber Essentials Plus (re-accredited in October 2019) and are based on the health and safety management system OHSAS 18001:2007, the environmental management system ISO 14001:2015 and the guidance on social responsibility ISO 26001:2010.

## **Business conduct**

We are committed to conducting our business with honesty and integrity and we expect all partners/directors and staff to maintain high standards. All colleagues are expected to behave as ambassadors of the firm and we have clear procedures in place for how to do this, which are communicated and reviewed on an annual basis.

As part of the preparation for the implementation of the Solicitor Regulation Authority's Standards and Regulations 2019, our offices undertook inter office quizzes about ethical behaviour.

We take pride in being an ethical, transparent firm which acts with integrity at all times. We have a zero-tolerance approach to bribery and corruption and comply with our other statutory obligations.

Our policies cover such issues as anti-money laundering, data protection/General Data Protection Regulation, information security, anti-bribery and corruption, gifts and hospitality, quality and risk management, Criminal Finances Act 2017 and supplier management procedures. All colleagues complete regular training on these issues to ensure they are fully aware of their obligations. This includes a requirement for all new starters to complete our anti-bribery course during induction plus anti-money laundering and data protection courses as well as a number of other risk-management courses. All employees were required in 2019 to complete a refresher course on anti-bribery and corruption.

Our **supplier code of conduct** sets out our supplier expectations regarding under age and forced labour, freedom of association, discrimination, wages and benefits, working hours, healthy and safe working conditions, environment, business integrity, discipline and grievances.

## **Whistleblowing**

We have a clear whistleblowing policy which sets out the process for reporting any concerns about wrongdoing or breaches of policies. This takes account of the requirements set out in chapter 10 of the SRA Code of Conduct and the requirements set out in the FCA's Senior Management Arrangements, Systems and Controls (SYSC) 18, in relation to the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

Staff are encouraged to report suspected wrongdoing or dangers in relation to activities including criminal activity, miscarriages of justice, danger to health and safety, damage to environment, forced or compulsory labour or human trafficking, bribery, failure to comply with any professional obligations, financial fraud or mismanagement and any breach of the SRA Handbook, SRA Accounts Rules, FCA Handbook, the Law Society of Scotland Rules, or the Law Society of Northern Ireland rules, unauthorised disclosure of

confidential information and deliberate concealment of any of the above matters. An external whistleblowing helpline, Safecall is available to employees. Any concerns can be reported via the telephone number 0800 915 1571 or via the website at: <http://www.safecall.co.uk/report>

## 6a. Helping our clients

We provide an e learning course on anti-corruption:

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/expertise/connected-services/academy/elearning/anti-corruption>

## 6b. Our 2018/2019 anti-corruption targets

As a firm of solicitors regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority, the Law Society of Scotland, the Law Society of Northern Ireland and the Financial Conduct Authority, not only must we comply with anti-bribery legislation but we must ensure that we have robust systems and controls in place to satisfy our regulators that we are compliant with our legal and regulatory obligations.

Shoosmiths has a zero-tolerance policy to bribery and corruption. All gifts and hospitality in excess of certain minimum levels must be reported to the Quality and Risk team in accordance with the gifts and hospitality policy and employees are reminded of their obligations. We continue to remind employees of these requirements. If there are concerns about a proposed gift or hospitality the Quality and Risk team will discuss these with the employee and the relevant partner. The Quality and Risk intranet pages detail policies and procedures.

### Key:

√ – achieved

IP – in progress

X – not achieved

Objective			
Committed to the highest standards of business integrity			
Objectives and targets		Performance and status	
Insert a gift and hospitality reporting form on the Quality and Risk intranet page.	Completed		√
Require all employees to undertake mandatory refresher anti-bribery training.	Completed		√

## 6c. Our 2019/2020 anti-corruption targets

Objective	
Committed to the highest standards of business integrity	
Continue to raise awareness through guidance, videos and face to face training about ethical behaviours.	
Require all employees to make an annual declaration about compliance with the anti-bribery and corruption policy and the gifts and hospitality policy.	