

# Delivering on Purpose



## Responsible Business Report 2021

Published January 2022

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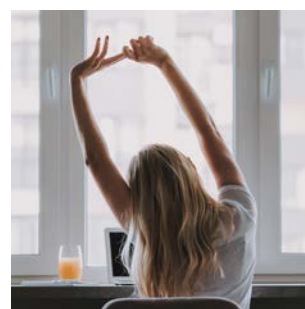
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# A strategic view

## Commitment and Purpose

**Strategic Purpose:** We are an ambitious, sustainable and inclusive firm that ensures our clients, our people and our wider communities flourish.



**Chris Seaton**  
Senior Partner

Chair of the firm's  
Responsible Business  
Committee

**I am delighted to introduce this, our third Responsible Business Report, which details our commitments and progress.**

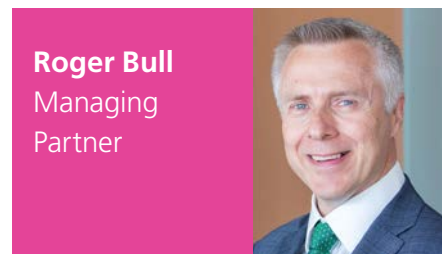
With the ongoing backdrop of the pandemic, this has been another busy year but I'm pleased to have seen and been part of the progress that we have continued to make across the firm and for the recognition that we have received as a responsible business.

There have been a variety of highlights, including achieving the Gold standard with EcoVadis for our environmental, social and governance (ESG) credentials, being named as one of The Times Top Employers for Women, advising some of the UK's largest and most exciting organisations, undertaking some major responsible business initiatives, including our Net Zero campaign and, receiving the highest accolade from Investors in People with a Platinum accreditation, recognising our commitment to our people.

The financial performance of the firm remained strong with a 4% increase in turnover from £104.9 million to £108.7 million. This has been driven by the strengthening of our client relationship management programme, continued growth (in terms of people) in our Bristol, Edinburgh and London offices, the launch of our Intellectual Property practice in Dublin, as well as the continued and concerted effort of our partners, lawyers and business professionals across the firm.

During the year, we undertook a strategic review and launched our new 2021-2026 strategy. Our focus and ambition as a responsible business is a key strand of this new strategy and is now articulated in our Purpose statement as set out above. This year, we have witnessed the ever-growing impact of climate change, the plight of refugees and economic migrants and the challenges posed to mental health, livelihoods and education due to the impact of the pandemic. We recognise these challenges and the fact that there is still much more for us to do.

We seek to fulfil a positive role in addressing such challenges and to fulfil our wider sense of purpose. In this report, you will find more information on our achievements and ambitions. I hope this report is of interest and we welcome your feedback.



**Roger Bull**  
Managing  
Partner

**I have been incredibly proud of all of our people over the past 18 months. They have shown resilience and dedication throughout the pandemic and their can-do attitude has shone through as the world moved rapidly around them and we all adopted to new ways of working.**

In navigating the pandemic, we focused on ensuring we continued to provide an exceptional service to our clients and on putting our people first. Taking a principles-based approach, the wellbeing of our clients (many of whom were making a significant contribution to the global and national response to COVID-19) and

the wellbeing of our people have been paramount. I've seen teams working incredibly hard to enable our new ways of working, facilitated by our investment in the introduction of new technologies and supported by our brilliant Operations and Learning Technology teams.

Our focus on people was reflected by the high levels of engagement reported by our 2021 People Survey and in the feedback I heard in a number of listening sessions that I held across the firm during the year.

It was particularly pleasing for our efforts to be recognised externally, as we received a Platinum accreditation from Investors in People during the year.

Our commitment to responsible business remains as strong as ever and in line with our values. I've been pleased to see continued levels of ambition, particularly against delivering our Net Zero pledge in relation to climate change and the fantastic fundraising efforts across the firm to support our charitable theme 'No Child Goes Hungry'.

We have been fortunate to work with many of our clients to drive our (and their) responsible business agendas. By collaborating with other like-minded organisations, we can have a greater positive impact on our communities.

It's been fantastic to see positive progress with our diversity and inclusion networks, especially in respect of disability inclusion and the advancement of our wellbeing plan. Addressing the mental health impacts of the past 18 months is something that all employers should have at the top of their agenda.

I hope you will find our latest Responsible Business Report of interest as we continue to pursue our purpose and our aspirations as a responsible business.



Preparing for The Big Challenge  
Bristol to Edinburgh (356 miles)  
in aid of 'No Child Goes Hungry'.





# About us



We are an award-winning independent UK law firm competing at the top-end of the legal market. Our head-office is in Bristol. We have a relatively new and growing office in Edinburgh, an established office in London and a small presence in Dublin. We serve clients internationally through our Preferred Firm Network, which enables referrals of legal matters around the world.

Our clients range from large multi-nationals, entrepreneurial businesses and public sector bodies to private individuals and families. We have a breadth of core, specialist and sector legal expertise enabling us to handle complex legal matters and offer innovative solutions that really deliver for our clients.

Our firm comprises some 820 people, of which approximately half are lawyers and half are business services professionals. We pride ourselves on attracting and retaining talent, with 67% of our partners recognised by Chambers UK 2022. We have lawyers who are qualified to work in all three legal jurisdictions in the UK: England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Our people describe our culture as collaborative and inclusive. We place great value on our culture and use our values of ambition, fairness, respect, quality, collaboration and commitment, to guide us in all that we do. These are integral to us as a responsible business and being authentic in our approach.

We provide legal services that are clearly linked to a responsible business agenda and assist our clients with a variety of Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) matters. Our head of ESG is partner, Michael Barlow. Michael is an experienced and highly regarded environmental lawyer. He is at the forefront of ESG, particularly linking our Net Zero, Sustainable Finance and Corporate Advisory regulatory practice

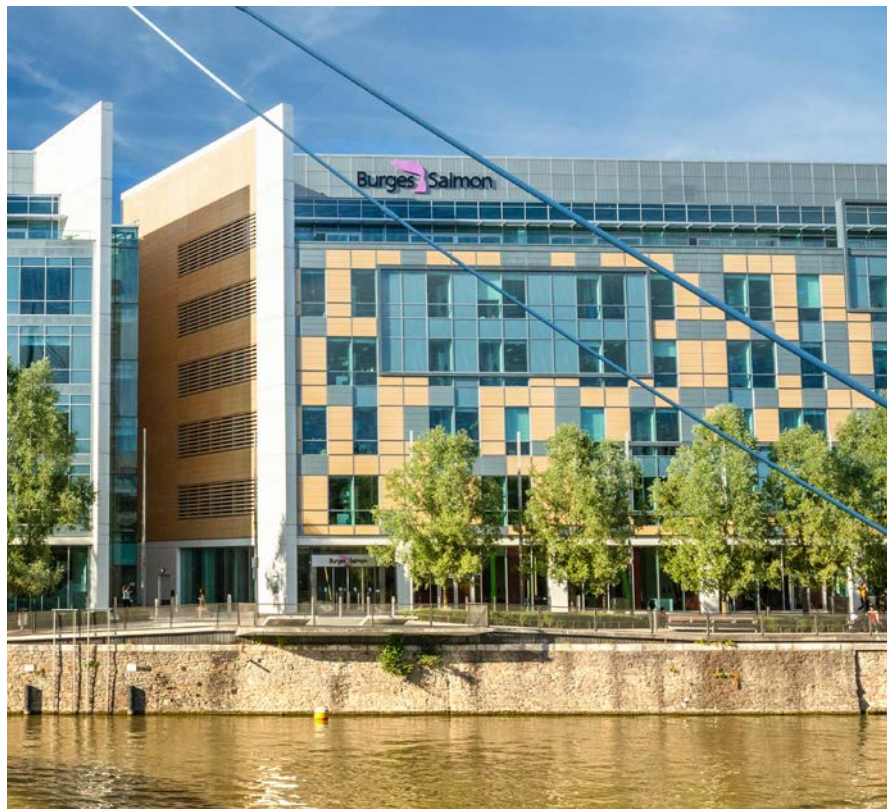
areas in relation to social elements such as employment, modern slavery and GDPR.

Michael says: *"Requirements around ESG continue to be prominent whether that's with developments around the Taskforce for Climate-Related Financial Disclosure (TCFD) or supply chain due diligence for human rights and environmental harm. In advising clients, I see there is extra value in being a firm that takes its own approach seriously and can therefore better relate to the challenges and opportunities in the client context."*

# Award highlights

During the year, we were acknowledged with a total of 65 award shortlists and wins. We value this external recognition of our work, our efforts and commitment. Some of the highlights include:

- Recognised in **The Times Top 50 Employers for Women 2021**.
- Recognised as one of the **top three performing law firms for digital effectiveness** (for our website) in Hitsearch's recent report, which looked into how the UK's top 50 legal firms embraced digital transformation during COVID-19.
- Winner of the **Legal Week Innovation Awards 2021**: Client Management Innovation for our Online Distressed Contracts Toolkit.
- Winner of the **Brandon Hall Group Human Capital Management Excellence Awards 2021** in the 'Best Advance in Learning Technology Implementation' category, for our LAB (Learning at Burges Salmon) platform.
- Recognised as best **#FinTech Law Firm**, UK in the FinTech Awards 2021.
- Highly commended in the **'Best Law Firm for Peer Support'** at the Legal Cheek Awards 2021.
- Highly commended in the **'Best Law Firm for Eco-Friendliness'** category at the Legal Cheek Awards 2021.
- Winner of The Insider **'CSR Team of the Year'** - South West Dealmakers Awards 2021 for our virtual 'Working with Schools Programme' adaptation.
- Acknowledged with a **'Stepping Up Excellence Award'** for our role in supporting the 'Stepping Up' leadership, diversity and inclusion programme since 2018.
- Achieved **'Investors in People' Platinum** held by only 2% of organisations internationally and ranked in the top 10 within the UK.
- Kirsty Green-Mann, our head of Corporate Responsibility, recognised at the Women in Governance, Risk and Compliance series as **'ESG Officer of the Year'**.
- Winner in the **'Community Engagement Law Firm of the Year'** category at the Bristol Law Society Awards recognising our commitment to the 'Working with Schools' programme throughout the pandemic.
- Shortlisted in the **'Sustainable Business of the Year'** category and highly commended at the Bristol Law Society Awards for our commitment and progress on Net Zero.
- Shortlisted for the **Best Talent and Inclusion Initiative** at The Lawyer Awards 2021, recognising our commitment to Diversity and Inclusion.
- Recognised as a **'Top 75 Employer'** in the Social Mobility Employers Index.
- Robert Halton, our chief people officer, recognised by the award-winning diversity and inclusion leadership programme **'Stepping Up'** with a commitment and contribution award.
- Winner of the **'CSR Initiative of the Year'** - Legal Week British Legal Awards 2021 and shortlisted for **'D&I Initiative of the Year'**.
- Winner of **'Employment Law Firm of the Year'** - Personnel Today Awards 2021.





# Responsible business at Burges Salmon

Our responsible business approach has been informed by our membership of Business in The Community (BITC) and as a signatory to the UN Global Compact. We have incorporated the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), completed a materiality analysis and validated our approach and priorities with a round of formal stakeholder engagement. This is detailed in our previous Responsible Business Report 2020 and more information may be found in the responsible business section of our website: [www.burges-salmon.com/about-us/responsible-business](http://www.burges-salmon.com/about-us/responsible-business)

During the last year, we have been accepted as a corporate member of the Institute of Corporate Responsibility and Sustainability (ICRS). This has furthered the firm's responsible business credentials and supports the continued professional development of our Corporate Responsibility team and other relevant colleagues, who are interested in building competence in the field of corporate responsibility and sustainability.

Kirsty Green-Mann, our head of CR and ICRS Fellow, has been appointed to the ICRS Fellows' Hub Steering Committee as part of a supportive network to connect senior professionals and keep pace with a fast-moving agenda.

We have been accepted as supporters of the Scottish Business Pledge, a values-led partnership between government and business in Scotland, where we were deemed to have provided sufficient evidence whilst making the Pledge. This covers a spectrum of criteria including; Real Living Wage, No Inappropriate use of Zero Hours Contracts, Gender Pay Gap, Workforce Engagement, Skilled & Diverse Workforce, Environmental Impact, Innovation, Internationalisation, Community and Prompt Payment.

Our responsible business approach and performance is overseen by our Responsible Business Committee, which is chaired by our Senior Partner. Responsible business is very much embraced by our people and enabled by our internal networks, including those for diversity and inclusion, environmental sustainability, community engagement and wellbeing.

We participated for the first time in the EcoVadis assessment across a broad range of environment, social and governance criteria. We are delighted to have scored well across the board, attaining the



Our responsible business framework

EcoVadis Gold standard, which is only achieved by the top 5% of participants. The assessment identified a number of improvement opportunities that we are addressing, particularly in the area of responsible procurement.

We continue to participate in the BITC Responsible Business Tracker, which is aligned to the UN Sustainable Development Goals and we see as an important benchmark that supports our drive for continuous improvement, putting healthy communities and a healthy environment at the centre of achieving long-term value. This year we scored 71%, which is significantly above the average score of 45% and a marked improvement on our previous score last year of 52%. We scored well across numerous aspects of the benchmark and were pleased to have achieved a marked improvement in environmental aspects including climate action, circular economy and nature stewardship. Improvement areas include setting longer term targets related to

performance measures and enhancing supplier management.

Based on our materiality analysis and integration of the SDGs, we have five core responsible business objectives that guide our priorities considering our legal expertise, our external collaborations with charities and not-for-profit organisations, as well as the actions we take internally. Our responsible business objectives, as an integral part of the firm's wider strategy, are set towards 2026. Furthermore, we have made progress in setting targets, aligned with relevant key performance indicators, so we may track and measure impact against each objective. This in effect defines our ambition as a responsible business towards 2026.

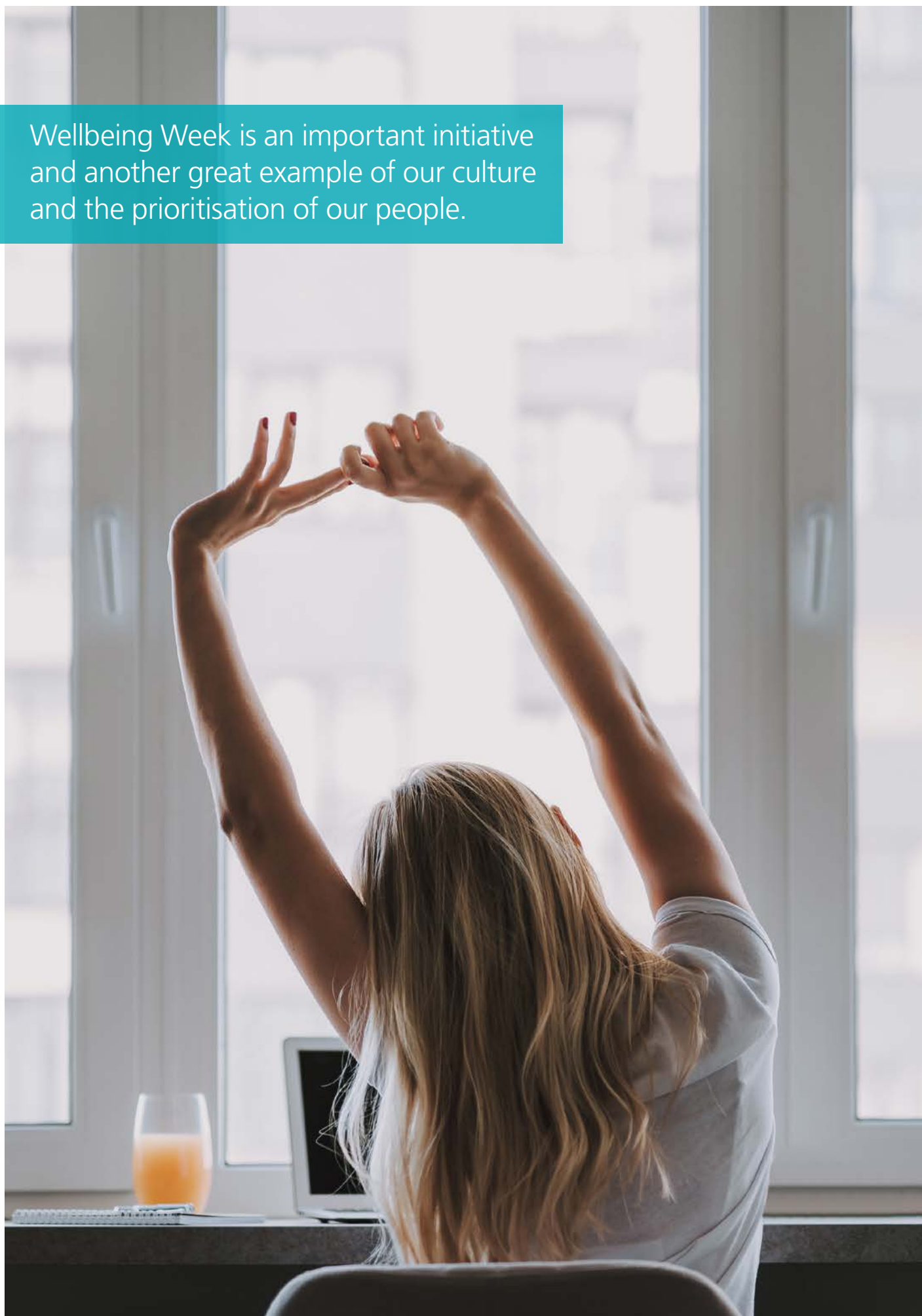
This report is structured to provide you with a progress update against all five of our core responsible business objectives, as illustrated in our Responsible Business framework as shown above.





Responsible business is very much embraced by our people and enabled by our internal networks, including those for diversity and inclusion, environmental sustainability, community engagement and wellbeing.

Wellbeing Week is an important initiative and another great example of our culture and the prioritisation of our people.



# Wellbeing and engagement

All of us at Burges Salmon have a responsibility to create a supportive culture, to be part of a firm that allows everyone to thrive, as well as taking steps to care for our mental, emotional, financial and physical wellbeing. Our aim is to enable wider engagement in wellbeing with a focus on resilience and mental health.

Objectives for 2021	Progress	How we did
Deliver mental health awareness training firm-wide	Delivered	All departments across the firm received our internal mental health awareness training: 'Let's talk about mental health'.  It was further addressed during our annual Wellbeing Week. We created a return to the office video to address potential anxieties about the transition to hybrid working.
Integrate wellbeing and resilience into the learning curriculum review	Ongoing	Resilience sessions form part of the solicitor curriculum and associate induction. Newly promoted senior associates have received access to a resilience and mind-set tool.  We partnered with Mental Health at Work to design and deliver a bespoke programme for our directors and Heads of Business Services.  We created a hybrid toolkit to support our people with adapting to and embedding a hybrid working approach.  We created a wellbeing channel as part of our learning management system, Learning at Burges Salmon (LAB) with access to on-demand resources, recordings from live webinars and signposting support.
Offer partner-only wellbeing sessions	Delivered	We delivered two short series of partner-only sessions, with support from an external provider.
Maintain Investors in People Gold Standard	Exceeded	We achieved a higher recognition with the Investors in People Platinum accreditation.

## People survey

Throughout the past year, we have continued to prioritise the wellbeing and engagement of our people noting the particular challenges of the ongoing pandemic. We are delighted to have received positive feedback from our people via our bi-annual People Survey, as well as running specific 'Listening Sessions' focused on Purpose as part of the firm's wider strategic review and to have achieved the coveted accolade of 'Investors in People – Platinum'.

Every two years, we run our People Survey to understand levels of engagement across the firm and to identify potential areas of improvement. Compared with the previous 2019 survey, the 2021 results show a 10% increase in overall satisfaction to 82%. We are particularly proud of this considering the context and impact of COVID-19. We saw increased scores across the survey, reflecting the actions taken from the previous survey and the continued deployment of our People Strategy.





Insights from the People Survey show changes from the following aspects:

**The Deal:** 9% increase in satisfaction

**Culture:** 8% increase in satisfaction

**Leadership:** 11% increase in satisfaction with the way we communicate with our people

**Flexibility:** 14% increase in satisfaction with the way people work

**Development:** 9% increase in satisfaction with development support offered

**COVID-19:** 98% of people feel the firm responded 'well' or 'very well' to the COVID-19 crisis

**Morale:** 10% increase in satisfaction

**Quality of work:** 12% increase, with 91% of people 'satisfied' with the opportunity to complete high-quality challenging work

**Engagement:** 13% increase, with 87% of people 'satisfied' with the opportunity to have their say on our strategies and plans

## Retaining jobs and morale during COVID-19

Both the firm and our people have demonstrated resilience throughout the ongoing challenges presented by the pandemic. As per the previous year, we continued to protect jobs and prioritise the wellbeing and safety of our people. Our Planning Ahead Team and People Team have had leading roles in providing guidance in response to the changing situation and have worked hard to keep our people as safe and supported as possible.

We continued to check-in with our people, using pulse surveys to strike the appropriate balance between the constraints of the pandemic, our business needs and the preferences and concerns of our people. This led to new guidelines for hybrid working, dress code and return

to the office. These new guidelines have empowered our people to make decisions that balance their needs with those of our clients and colleagues.

From the results of our surveys, we found that having a clear boundary between home and work was a challenge for many. In response, we provided firm-wide webinars alongside specific support and guidance. In addition to the surveys, we used focus groups and feedback from our internal networks as well as external benchmarking to direct the best support for our people. Our efforts were well received and we are pleased that 91% of people reported that they had the tools to work effectively from home and 86% of people know how to raise concerns in relation to their own or others' wellbeing.

Throughout the pandemic our People Advisory team have done an exceptional job providing guidance and support on a one-to-one basis, as people have contacted them with individual concerns, queries on the workplace COVID-related rules and for advice on flexible working, absences and new policies relating to hybrid working and dress-code.

Maintaining morale has been important to us and we worked hard to continue with a number of regular firm-wide annual events, albeit predominantly virtually. One particular highlight was our Bristol to Edinburgh Challenge, which involved

remote teams covering the miles in a myriad of ways, fundraising for our charity theme of the year No Child Goes Hungry and reinforcing the firm's values and team spirit.

We continued to support the wellbeing of our people throughout COVID-19. Wellbeing is a regular feature in our monthly firm-wide newsletter and our dedicated email communications were adapted as we moved through the pandemic. We sent more than 40 of these wellbeing updates and provided over 40 mindfulness sessions, over the course of the year. In addition, we provided partner-specific wellbeing training, recognising their role in supporting others.

## Wellbeing Action Plan

Our core Wellbeing Team are professionally qualified (CIPD or equivalent) and have maintained skills and capabilities via relevant wellbeing and other training. Several members are Mental Health First Aiders and have been involved in our wellbeing priorities for a number of years.

Our internal network of BWell Ambassadors provide an important role in communication and engaging our people, including highlighting sessions that can be attended and keeping the conversation going across the firm.



We use our wellbeing model to provide structure and to deliver a wide spectrum of advice and support. This support is accessible to all and supplemented by individual advice where necessary. Access to wellbeing resources and training are available through our learning management system (LAB). This includes training and guidance for line managers to have open conversations.

Some examples of wellbeing activities during the past year include the launch of our financial wellbeing sessions, held quarterly with 'Nudge', and the delivery of a programme of events focused on menopause support and improved awareness. This included a 'lunch and learn' session hosted by Laughology and the introduction of a regular menopause café for people to share experiences and advice.

Our October Wellbeing Week was again adapted to the virtual world. We offered our people a range of live and on-demand sessions, videos and resources, covering the five ways of wellbeing: keep learning, give, take notice, be active and connect. Sessions and resources included 'How to thrive when you return to work' for people returning to work following a period of leave; a parents' network session; male mental health; wellbeing and nature; managing mental health in challenging times; mindfulness; mental health in an unequal world; Pilates at your desk; and, a menopause café session. We provided healthy breakfasts for those of our people who were in the office. A total of 213 hours was spent on wellbeing during that week by our people. We received positive feedback including *"Wellbeing Week is a great initiative and another great example of our culture."* 85% of attendees found the week enabled them to learn something new about their wellbeing and 95% found it gave them something to take away and share with others.

During the year, we increased our number of Mental Health First Aiders, with greater representation of people across the firm. They have been trained to spot the signs if someone is struggling, to provide a listening ear and to direct them to professional support resources.

**"Our Wellbeing Action Plan for the next five years will shape our ongoing investment in wellbeing. It has been developed with feedback from our people, the latest research, data analysis and input from benefit providers."**

Burges Salmon Wellbeing Team



Every department has received 'Let's talk about mental health' training covering common mental health issues, tackling stigma, tips to look after mental health, spotting the signs of mental ill health and seeking help. Feedback has been positive, indicating that people have valued having the time to discuss as a team how they manage their mental health.

Our Wellbeing Action Plan for the next five years will shape our ongoing investment in wellbeing. It has been developed with feedback from our people, the latest research, data analysis and input from benefit providers. It sets out risks and opportunities with a considered distribution of objectives, measures of success and business impacts, across the four wellbeing pillars. It covers leadership, impacts of COVID-19 as well as community and client engagement. Skills development, tackling stigma and future-proofing what we already offer are some of the areas we are further covering.

Our Wellbeing Action Plan and our Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) Plan have been created in collaboration, recognising that they are integral to the values and culture of our People Strategy.

Our Learning and Development curriculum is available to all leaders and line managers in the firm. It helps them develop their leadership skills, enables them to support people and provides an understanding of the impact of wellbeing in terms of

performance. This includes effective performance discussions, 'how are you really' conversations, spotting the signs and talking about mental health. Our D&I training incorporates anti-bullying and harassment awareness.

We have continued our support for Thrive Bristol, an employer-led initiative looking at a citywide approach to mental health and which has supported the local council's COVID-19 response. We are a core member of the 'policy' group that developed a range of resources and coaching support for SMEs to implement their own wellbeing action plans.

As part of Thrive Bristol, we co-chaired, along with the charity Bristol Mind, the Thriving at Work Bristol Taskforce. Working alongside other businesses, we helped create the Thriving at Work Bristol report. In an ongoing partnership, we worked together to create various elements of the Thriving at Work West of England programme.

More information is available at:  
[www.thrivebristol.org.uk/thriving-at-work-bristol](http://www.thrivebristol.org.uk/thriving-at-work-bristol)

This programme has been developed to offer businesses, and their people, help and support with mental health concerns. It includes free e-learning, guidance, policy support and coaching support.



## Mentoring for social innovation

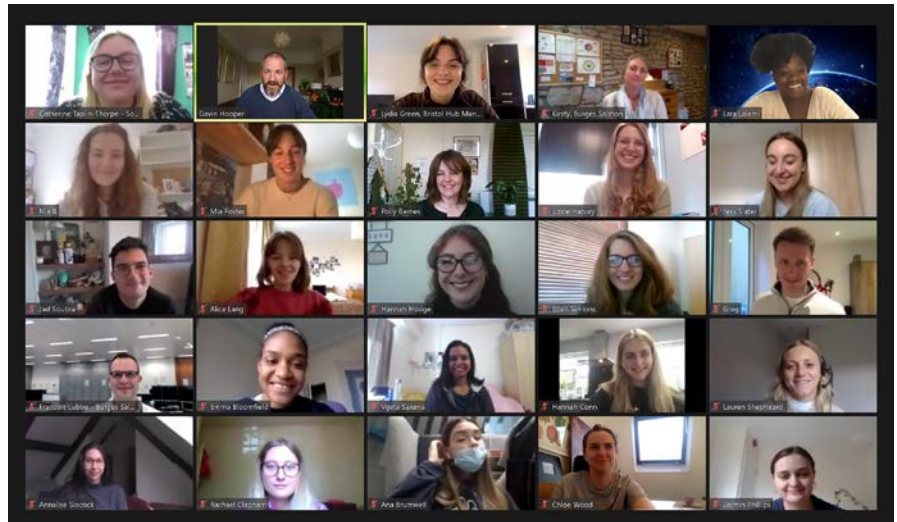
As part of our focus on wellbeing, we encourage and enable our people to volunteer recognising that giving to others contributes to individual feelings of worth and enables human connections. Our people get involved in a range of volunteering activities, one of which is mentoring. Mentoring presents new learning opportunities whereby learning is recognised as another positive driver for wellbeing.

Trainee solicitor **Annalise Slocock** shares her experience of mentoring a group of university students who participated in a Social Innovation Programme (SIP) run by the Bristol Hub, which is a local branch of the national charity Student Hubs. In the programme, teams of students are paired with a local charity that has a specific issue it would like assistance with. We provide mentors to the student-teams to help guide and support them as they investigate and shape their advice and recommendations.

Annalise says: *"It was extremely rewarding to be a part of such a beneficial scheme and to work with a motivated and passionate group of students. The experience really opened my eyes to the meaningful work our local charities undertake and provided the opportunity to help not just the community but also the personal and professional development of a group of students."*

*"This was my first role as a mentor and I was pleasantly surprised by how much I too was able to take away from the experience. I have found that my own attitude towards leadership has changed and being involved in the scheme was a great way to learn how I can use my business knowledge to support the community."*

*"It was particularly satisfying to be able to see the members of the team and their work progress throughout the weeks. The group were very committed and were able to come together and form practical solutions*



Bristol Hub celebration event 2021

*to tackle any issues that they faced. We regularly communicated, which included weekly meetings and I can honestly say that I looked forward to meeting the group each week.*

*"It was also great to hear feedback from the group's charity partner that the work was very valuable and was implemented straight away by Help Feed Bristol."*

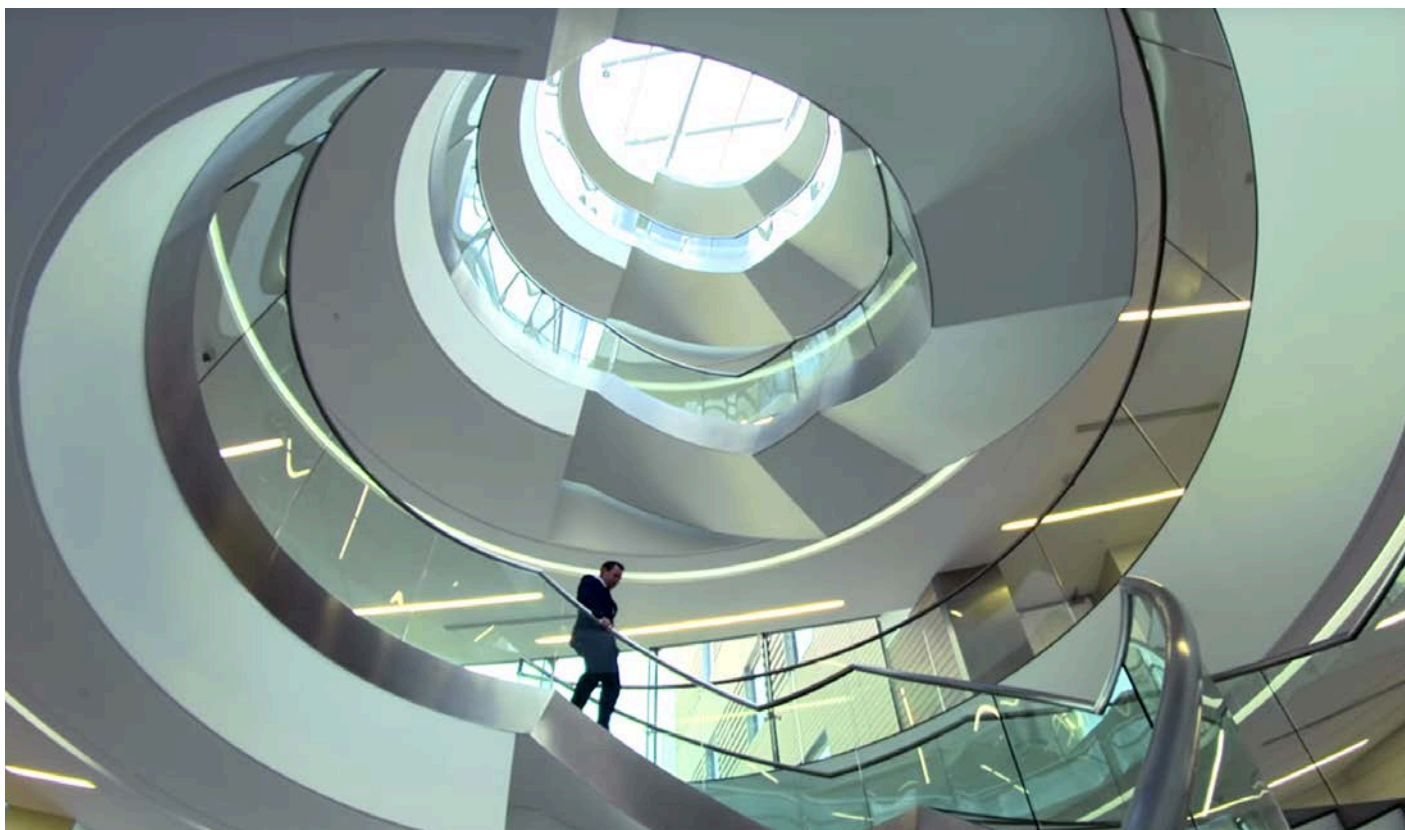
*"Each group should be proud of the high quality and impactful pieces of work they completed for their respective charities. I would encourage everyone to get involved in such valuable opportunities."*

**Gavin Hooper**, learning and development specialist, Mental Health First Aider and Burges Salmon co-ordinator for the Bristol Hub programme, says: *"I have been delighted to co-ordinate Burges Salmon's role as part of the Social Innovation Programme, and have been consistently blown away by the engagement and quality of work produced."*

*"Having previously worked in the third sector for a decade, I know how impactful the reports and their findings are, and in my three years supporting the programme I have been particularly pleased that we have been able to support community partners working across food poverty, social mobility, STEM and a wide range of community initiatives, with the student teams working diligently, all the while supported by the firm's mentors."*

*"As Annalise says, the mentors gain invaluable skills and greater understanding of the importance of responsible business in the Bristol area, and by adding a gentle guiding presence to their teams, the mentors gain confidence in developing their professional skills and insights into supporting the team's wellbeing too."*





## Investors in People (IiP) Platinum award

We are delighted to have achieved the Investors in People Platinum accreditation. IiP is the international standard for people management, defining what it takes to lead, support and manage people effectively and to benchmark against the best. Platinum is the highest accreditation available and only 2% of organisations achieve this level of recognition.

In receiving this IiP accreditation, we were applauded for our commitment to high performance through exceptional people management, which underpins our collaborative and inclusive culture. Other areas highlighted in the accreditation assessment included: our approach to learning and development; our wellbeing strategy; our benefits package; our family friendly policies and, the provision of coaching and mentoring across the firm.

The three-year accreditation follows an in-depth assessment carried out by Investors in People through one-to-one interviews, focus groups, observations of key meetings and people surveys.



Robert Halton, Chief People Officer

**"We are incredibly proud to have been awarded a platinum accreditation by Investors in People. It is of huge importance that our unique, collaborative culture has prevailed and strengthened through such testing times."**

Jenny Goward, IiP Practitioner, comments: *"Congratulations to Burges Salmon for achieving Platinum in their recent 'We Invest in People' assessment; platinum level is not easy to achieve and demonstrates excellence and high performance. Platinum clients are our superstars, with their people management and the way they continuously improve in everything they do. Burges Salmon has a unique and strong organisational culture that is highly collaborative, purpose driven with strong organisational values that are at the heart of everything they do. It is a pleasure to work with them."*

Achieving IiP Platinum is testament to the importance we place on developing our people. Our learning management system

'LAB', which was launched during 2020, is proving to be a great asset and enables our people to direct their own professional development and career. Our investment in LAB has won us the Brandon Hall Group Human Capital Management Excellence Award 2021 for the Best Advance in Learning Technology Implementation. Additionally in our 2021 People survey, 77% of responses stated our people are 'satisfied' with their development, which is an increase of 10% on the previous year.

**INVESTORS IN PEOPLE®**  
We invest in people Platinum

## Legal practice insight: Health and Safety

The management of health and safety has been brought into sharp focus during the last 18 months, as we all seek to manage the risks presented by COVID-19. However, health and safety risks are something that all employers are required to manage under the Health and Safety at Work Act (HSWA), whatever the cause. Whilst our Health and Safety legal team supports clients when things have gone wrong, it also shares its learning from those incidents with clients, to help them to deal with risks proactively.

Over the course of the last few years, we have been able to share learning in interactive sessions with safety teams and boards of directors, to help them explore the areas within their health and safety arrangements to work out where they may need to do more. The HSWA rightly sets

very high standards of safety performance and effectively requires continuous improvement. However it is not always clear to duty holders what that means in practice.

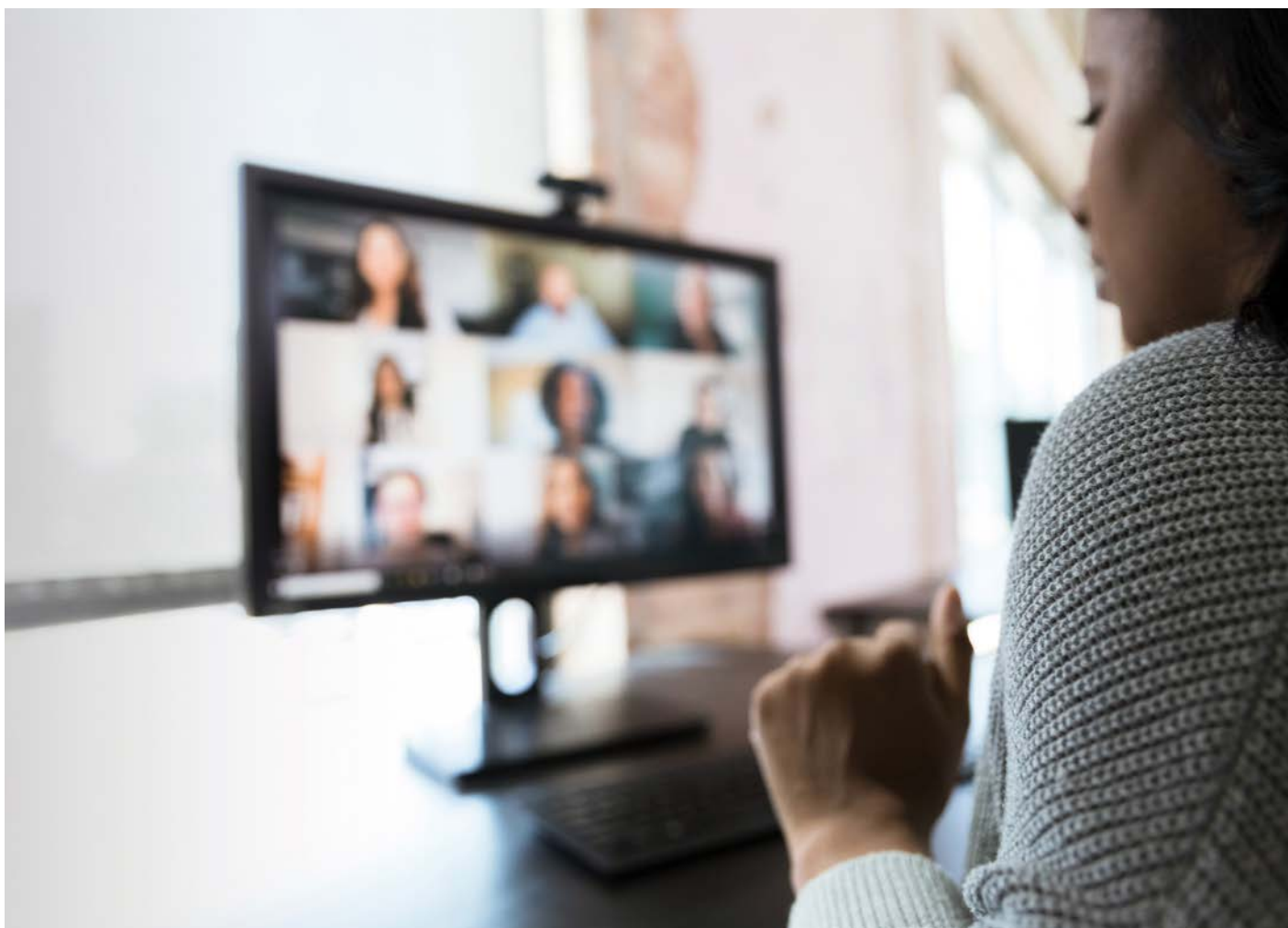
In busy businesses there can be some temptation to just tweak health and safety procedures and arrangements during reviews, rather than pausing and reflecting more widely. We have shared our insights with those in decision-making positions, to help them understand the expectations that safety regulators have on business leaders. This includes challenging the status quo and asking whether the risks can be eliminated entirely by doing the activity a different way, or even in some cases realising it's not needed at all. The leadership are also responsible for creating environments where these questions are naturally posed. We are keen to persuade duty holders to think and be proactive before an accident and therefore avoiding unnecessary harm.



### 2026 Responsible Business Ambition

To have enhanced our 'Investors In People' Platinum status (received by <2% of businesses) and achieve an overall engagement score of at least 80%.

To have enabled our people in their on-going development by investing in at least 19,500 hours per year of instructor led learning and training, and to facilitate 14,000 visits a year to informal learning resources on the learning management system.



## WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

Investors in People  
**Platinum**  
Accreditation

**INVESTORS IN PEOPLE™**  
We invest in people Platinum

**1%**

absence through sickness



**86%**

of people know who  
to raise concerns in  
relation to wellbeing



**8%**

turnover of our people



**82%**

Overall Satisfaction  
Engagement Score



**14**

Mental Health  
First Aiders trained



## Objectives for 2022

- To become a signatory of the Mindful Business Charter and create an action plan to implement their requirements.
- To embed a set of wellbeing metrics that we can report to both internal and external stakeholders.
- To create a wellbeing curriculum with a mix of instructor-led and on-demand resources, for people to access resources that best suit their wellbeing requirements.



UN Sustainable  
Development Goal



UN Global  
Compact Principle

**Principle 1**  
Respect of Human Rights



To assist our D&I agenda in the recruitment of new talent our Resourcing teams have been trained in unconscious bias.



# Inclusive workplace

We want to attract and enable the widest pool of talent, have a culture where people feel they can be themselves at work and contribute to a society that is inclusive and cohesive. Our aim is to enable the progression of talent in an inclusive workplace and in the pursuit of social mobility.

Objectives for 2021	Progress	How we did
Progress D&I strategy, strengthening action plans with our inclusion groups for gender balance, race, sexual orientation and disability	Achieved	Created new D&I Plan for 2021-26, developed and implemented gender and race action plans, developed disability action list and, utilised Stonewall consultancy to identify improvements regarding LGBT+ inclusion.
Work with Rare Vantage to increase applications from candidates from disadvantaged backgrounds	Delayed	Due to COVID-19, we have not been able to progress our plans to work with Rare Vantage during 2021. Going forward, we plan to use the database to highlight our current opportunities and events to under-represented groups.
Improve diversity representation on the firm's website and social media channels	Achieved	New campaigns around D&I, recruitment and client work have seen us significantly increase our representation through our website and social media channels.

Diversity and inclusion are of paramount importance to our firm-wide strategy and remain embedded in our commitment to our people. We have been involved in a number of collaborations with clients on D&I initiatives, reinforcing the importance of our D&I work externally as well as internally.

During the year, we developed our comprehensive D&I Plan for 2021–2026, which was agreed having carefully considered the risks and opportunities related to D&I. The Plan extends beyond our operations and covers collaboration with clients and community partners. We continue to direct our focus on race, gender balance, LGBT+, disability and social mobility. Our Diversity and Inclusion Group helps set direction whilst activity is led by our people through our internal D&I networks known as BCultured, BBalanced, BProud and BEnabled.

We monitor the impact expected from the D&I Plan, in terms of the D&I scores, through our internal engagement survey as well as a set of D&I statistics. These statistics relate to the protected characteristics of our people over a

specified timescale. We are pleased that in our latest survey, 98% of our people feel we have an open and inclusive culture and 94% feel they can be themselves at work.

During the year, we launched our new D&I campaign called *'The power of inclusion'*. This showcases what we are doing to enhance our inclusive culture and how our people feel about working at Burges Salmon. With D&I increasingly of interest for clients, future talent and our people, the videos (posted on LinkedIn and Twitter), have helped us raise our profile and showcase our approach.

To assist our D&I agenda in the recruitment of new talent our Resourcing teams have been trained in unconscious bias. In terms of process, we apply the principles of blind recruitment, as well as Rare contextual recruitment practices.

## Social mobility

We are signatory to PRIME, a legal sector commitment to widen access to the profession. This is particularly relevant to attracting and enabling talent from lower economic backgrounds. To help inform

our approach and improvement action planning, we participate in the Social Mobility Foundation Employer Index. We are pleased to have had our actions recognised and be named yet again as a Top 75 Social Mobility Employer.

Recognising that university is not for all and may present financial barriers to those wishing to pursue a career, we provide legal and business professional apprenticeships. During the last year, we



had 13 legal apprentices and 7 business professional apprentices. All apprentices are given time to pursue their academic and professional qualifications whilst earning a good wage. For university recruitment, we reach out beyond the Russell Group and support a variety of inclusion initiatives and bursaries.

Another element of our approach to enabling social mobility is our multi-award winning 'Working with Schools' programme. The programme is directed primarily towards less advantaged students aged 14 – 18 and is a combination of in-house activities as well as external collaborations with schools and not-for-profits. Our programme aims to raise and build aspirations, confidence and workplace skills. During the pandemic we have worked hard to adapt the programme: providing financial support, deploying volunteers, hosting online sessions, creating new virtual content, establishing new collaborations and making various donations of books and IT equipment.

To track the impact of the programme, we monitor relevant performance indicators and seek feedback particularly from the students. During the pandemic, we have collaborated with 21 educational and employability organisations, shared opportunities with 184 schools and reached 596 student beneficiaries with 147 of our own volunteers.

Of the students who participated in our 2021 Career Insights sessions: 82% rated their session 'Excellent' and the remaining 18% 'Good'; 99% deemed the session to have broadened or reinforced choice of career/future study; and 96% would recommend the event.

We are pleased that virtual delivery has made the programme more accessible and increased our geographic reach. Going forward we plan to maintain a virtual element. Our virtual adaptation of our 'Working with Schools' programme won The Insider 'CSR Team of the Year' at the South West Dealmakers Awards 2021, was shortlisted for 'CSR Programme of the Year' at The Legal Business Awards 2021, won the 'Bristol Law Society Community Engagement Award' 2021 and won the 'CSR Initiative of the Year' at the Legal Week British Legal Awards' 2021.

## Race at Work

We signed the Race at Work Charter and the Race Fairness Commitment in 2020, which has assisted us by providing best practice guidance. Our internal network BCultured continues to drive forward the BAME agenda, raising awareness across the firm, supporting community outreach and participating in relevant external forums. Within the past year, we have supported the Black Young Professional Network, the West of England Black Interns Project and 10,000 Black Interns, amongst others.

We have held listening sessions with our BCultured network, annually since 2019, to inform our approach to inclusion. Outcomes from these sessions have included acceleration for the adoption of blind recruitment practices and the publishing of our ethnicity pay gap, which has improved over the last three years and is currently -7%.

During 2021, we launched a reverse mentoring scheme, devised by BCultured, to share ethnic minority experiences with senior management. Reverse mentoring allows us to understand how we can amend processes and policies to ensure everyone feels welcome and comfortable to be themselves at work. This work links with the development of the firm's BAME Action Plan, and our Senior Partner Chris Seaton being appointed as our Executive Sponsor for race.

In terms of community outreach, in 2021 we joined other local businesses and employers to form the Bristol Future Talent Partnership. The Partnership drives equal opportunities for careers in the region, through increased access to work experience and jobs particularly for BAME students. As part of our commitment to the Partnership, we have introduced an additional week's work experience for BAME students primarily aged 14–18, to give them a rich experience across the legal and business professional side of the firm. This was successfully delivered in the October half-term.

**"We have introduced an additional week's work experience for BAME students primarily aged 14–18, to give them a rich experience across the legal and business professional side of the firm."**

Burges Salmon Resourcing Team







We are delighted to have been recognised in The Times Top 50 Employers for Women.

Wembley High Technology College approached us following our recognition in the Social Mobility Index. The college is based in London and the majority of its students are from BAME backgrounds, with 85% speaking English as a second language and with 89% of the students having had at least one offer to study at a Russell Group university. The college requested support so that students could gain an understanding of what a legal career involves. In response, members of BCultured delivered several virtual career presentations.

## Gender balance

We have a strategic focus addressing gender balance. During the year, we gave all departments a briefing on gender balance alongside their specific departmental data from the firm-wide gender balance survey. Responsibility for progressing gender balance has been assigned to each departmental head. This is further supported by a shared responsibility for progressing D&I that is held by all partners.

We collect gender data on all levels of role and assess promotions, performance grades awarded and pay by gender. Through our firm-wide gender balance survey, we collected qualitative and quantitative data. We will establish our trend data by repeating the data collection, annually.

Following internal consultation, we developed our Gender Action Plan (GAP), which is being driven by our senior leadership team. This underpins our commitment to ensuring our female colleagues can see: demonstrable evidence of a clear route to senior roles; equality in terms of pay and recognition; and, a strong support network including our internal gender balance group, BBalanced.

Inclusion objectives are integral to our partners' review process. We are now more actively managing the talent pipeline to ensure that we bring forward all talent. In 2021, we set a target to achieve 33% female partners by 2026. Our Gender Pay Gap report, which is published on our website [www.burges-salmon.com/about-us/inclusive-workplace/diversity-and-inclusion](http://www.burges-salmon.com/about-us/inclusive-workplace/diversity-and-inclusion) has improved over the last

three years and is currently 17.9%. Female representation within the partnership has risen from 20% in 2019 to 23% in 2021.

With our firm-wide focus and departmental prioritisation, the GAP has contributed to a significant improvement in our gender statistics and career opportunities, as well as clear progress of related objectives. We are delighted to have been recognised in The Times Top 50 Employers for Women.

In March 2021, we celebrated International Women's Day with a week of events organised largely by BBalanced and under the theme #ChooseToChallenge. These included: a 'How to Grow a Grown Up' session with the award-winning guest speaker GP Dr Dominique Thompson; a Menopause Lunch & Learn session in collaboration with Laughology; a Lights Camera Action session with Martel Maxwell; and, several panel events where people from across the firm shared their career and work experiences. BBalanced hosted events highlighting role models (male and female) who illustrate the different modes of career success and experiences of Shared Parental Leave.

# Celebrating Black History Month

Black History Month takes place in the UK in October every year. It is a time that people from diverse backgrounds come together to commemorate and celebrate the history, achievements and contributions that people of African and Caribbean heritage have made, and continue to make, to the social, political, economic and cultural development of the UK.

BCultured, our internal network for race and ethnic diversity, led a successful programme of celebration. Internal communications gave accounts of the origins of Black History Month in both the US and the UK, and a number of virtual and in-person events were made available and highlighted to our people.

These included:

- Black Voices in the Legal Sector: Sharing Experiences and Empowering Allies
- Black Lives Matter: Readings and Conversation – John Wesley’s New Room – Art Tickets
- UWE Bristol Black History Month: An intersectional exploration of Black Joy #ProudToBe
- Public Talk: Bristol’s Inconvenient Black History of Musical Theatre
- Chineke! Chamber Ensemble: A characteristically wide ranging and tantalising concert
- Breaking the Silence on the Slave Trade

A number of events were also run by our clients, in particular the ‘Government Legal Department’. Our people were provided with a specific password to attend a number of the virtual sessions including ‘The Impact of COVID-19 on Black communities’.

One of the highlights of Black History Month was a virtual panel discussion held jointly by Burges Salmon’s race and ethnicity networks with our client Costain. The event brought hundreds of people together to hear Mental Health First Aider

(MHFA) England Instructor Bianca Jones, Careers Advisor Stephanie Ozuu and Paralympian Vanessa Wallace discuss their experiences with race, disability, neurodivergence and mental wellness.

**To mark Black History Month, Burges Salmon’s BCultured network joins the Costain REACH and SCS RaCE networks to explore the intersection between race, disability, neurodivergence and mental wellness with a virtual panel discussion.**



**“It is great to see such a range of events in celebration of Black History Month. The move to a virtual format has made it even easier for BCultured to collaborate with others, and has meant that the events are accessible to a much wider audience.”**

Priscilla Osoba, Solicitor and member of BCultured



## Disability Confident

A significant amount of disability inclusion work has been progressed during the year. An internal audit undertaken by people with experiences of different disabilities and health conditions led to a number of practical changes and improvements to our office spaces.

In 2021 we achieved Disability Confident level 2. This is a government accreditation that demonstrates the increased support we now provide in terms of access and adjustments to the workplace. We are working with the charity, West of England Centre for Inclusive Living (WECIL), to move to the final stage of accreditation and become a 'Disability Confident Leader'. WECIL is helping us to further strengthen our processes and firmly demonstrate our commitment to disability inclusion.

*"As a disability organisation, we pride ourselves on providing support services to disabled people as well as providing guidance to businesses and organisations on their inclusive journey. In 2019 WECIL*

*began a working relationship with Burges Salmon on its initiative to look at diversity and inclusion and making sure their services and working environments are inclusive to all.*

*As part of this work, we delivered an access audit of its Bristol office and Burges Salmon has been proactive in implementing our recommendations and striving for access consistency by looking further afield at its other offices. We continue to develop a strong working relationship by providing bespoke training and support to help obtain Disability Confident Leader status. Burges Salmon has also been very supportive of our efforts as an organisation by providing meeting spaces for several of our users groups, important staff meetings as well as hosting our AGM. We're excited about what the future holds for this working relationship and would like to commend Burges Salmon on its efforts towards inclusion for all."*

Kinny Chinangwa, Business Support Services Manager, WECIL

Our internal network for disability inclusion, BEnabled, has delivered a number of learning sessions aimed at increasing understanding of disability issues. As part of our focus on neuro diversity, and to mark World Autism Week, we held a 'lunch and learn' session on Living with Asperger syndrome where Asperger champion and public speaker, Alex Manners, spoke about his experiences.

Through BEnabled, we involve the people who will be affected by changes to the operation of our business, in the decision-making processes and their implementation. Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy includes sections: regarding our commitment; recruitment and selection; terms and conditions of work; promotion and career development; and, promoting and communicating equality and diversity. BEnabled has been engaged in and consulted on specific projects including the move to hybrid working and the deployment of new technology such as Teams Voice.



## LGBT+

We utilise guidance from Stonewall and other LGBT+ organisations as a tool for continuous improvement and to enhance our inclusion of LGBT+ colleagues. Every few years, we participate in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index to gain insight into the inclusiveness of our processes and policies. Our last submission was in 2020 when we ranked 101 in the Stonewall Index and within the Top 25 in the legal sector.

Our internal network for LGBT+ awareness and inclusion, BProud, has driven a series of activity throughout 2021. This included our continued engagement with Pride, now both in Bristol and Edinburgh, as a key part of community outreach and visible celebration of diversity.

We collaborate with charities and youth groups such as Brigstowe, an HIV/Aids awareness and support charity, and Freedom Youth. They provide additional opportunities for our people to better understand the issues that matter within the LGBT+ community. We have participated in events such as the LGBT+ history walk and held an HIV/AIDs 'lunch and learn' session for our people to develop further understanding. A number of our people raised money for Brigstowe by running in the Great Bristol 10k.

Recognising intersectionality and that diversity and inclusion has many facets, our internal diversity networks constantly collaborate with each other. An example of this is the introduction of our 'B-Inklusive' sessions, which aim to improve people's understanding of various diversity and inclusion issues and importantly spark debate. In the second quarter of 2021, BProud led the B-Inklusive session where conversation was stimulated by cultural LGBT+ references and literature.

Throughout the year, BProud produced firm-wide communication materials to raise awareness in connection with Trans Day, Non-binary Peoples' Day and national Coming Out Day.

## Legal practice insight: Children's services

Our Projects team has supported the Department for Education (DfE) with its implementation of children's services interventions, pursuant to the Education Act 1996, where a local authority's children's service provision has been rated 'inadequate' by Ofsted and there is sufficient evidence of persistent or systemic failure. We have supported the DfE with the creation of two separate 'first of their kind' 'Alternative Delivery Models', through which the relevant local authorities' delegate the performance of specified children's services functions to 'operationally independent' Children's Services Companies/Trusts. We have supported the DfE on the implementation of this extremely important policy area over the last eight years, since its inception, starting with the creation of Doncaster Children's Services Trust (2014) and most recently with the creation of Northamptonshire Children's Trust (2020).

Through this work, we have recognised the significant barriers that children and young people in the care system are likely to encounter and, we have liaised with a number of the organisations that we have helped establish, to understand what we could be doing (on a value-added basis) to support them with the children for whom they are responsible. Initial feedback has suggested that career insight sessions to build confidence, raise aspirations, develop employability skills, as well as mentoring

and work experience opportunities are of benefit.

This fits well with our existing 'Working with Schools' programme, which already includes support for an initiative called Careers Coach. Careers Coach matches a volunteer to a young person, aged 13 – 14 who is under the local authority care. The aim is to provide the young person with a consistent adult who is not part of the education system or their formal care but can help coach and mentor them and provide specific opportunities such as access to a professional network. We have provided Careers Coach with a number of lawyer and business professional volunteers and host supervision sessions for volunteers at our offices.

Careers Coach is a five year commitment to support the young person through those important and transitional years into early adulthood. It aims to:

- Develop their interpersonal skills, to take responsibility and to build self-efficacy and self-belief;
- Develop or increase their career ambitions and expectations; and
- Increase their information and knowledge about future pathways, including careers and education options.



## 2026 Responsible Business Ambition

To have achieved at least 33% female partners, on the road to parity.

To have reached at least 4,400 student beneficiaries through our 'Working with Schools' programme, targeted towards state schools.

**"Recognising intersectionality and that diversity and inclusion has many facets, our internal diversity networks constantly collaborate with each other."**

Borges Salmon Diversity and Inclusion Group

## INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE HIGHLIGHTS

Times Top

50

Employer for Women



94%

of our people feel they can be themselves at work


 Burgess Salmon  
Diversity and Inclusion

60%

Female promotions  
to Partnership

Disability Confident

Level 2



20

Number of  
Apprentices

Top

75

Social Mobility Employer

Objectives  
for 2022

- To introduce firm-wide training on D&I mini topics, to support our values and ensure a base level of understanding across our workforce.
- To deliver a leadership D&I reverse mentoring programme.
- To enable hybrid delivery of our 'Working with Schools' programme as a future model to widen access and maintain the different advantages of in-person and online delivery.

UN Sustainable  
Development Goal

WE SUPPORT

UN Global  
Compact Principle

## Principle 6

Elimination of discrimination  
in respect of employment



Our Net Zero legal services team was established to assist our clients in driving decarbonisation.





# Environmental sustainability

We recognise the current climate and ecological crisis, and the need to take urgent and best practice action for environmental stewardship, future generations, the health of our planet and to mitigate the worst effects of climate change. Our aim is to take action for an environmentally sustainable future that positively impacts the community.

Objectives for 2021	Progress	How we did
Make progress towards our Net Zero commitment for 2026, including submitting a Letter of Commitment to the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi)	Achieved	Our Letter of Ambition, to follow a pathway to limit global warming to a 1.5°C reduction pathway, was accepted by the Science Based Targets initiative. Working with Carbon Intelligence we have made significant progress in Science Based Targets work.
Investigate the environmental impacts related to increased home working and the options for supporting our people in reducing these impacts	Achieved	We set a project for a student team from the University of Bristol. This has provided insights on the impact of home working compared with those in the office. Recommendations are being incorporated into our environmental plans.
Focus on the reduction of paper usage and ways to maintain less reliance on hardcopy documents	Achieved	We reduced our paper usage by 79% over the course of a year enabled by new ways of working and investment in technological solutions.

Through the ongoing pandemic and with the majority of our people now working by way of our hybrid working model, we have seen significant shifts in the way we work and in the environmental performance indicators that are regularly reviewed by our Environment Committee.

The majority of our office-based environmental indicators have moved in a positive way across waste, energy, carbon emissions, plastics and paper consumption. There was a slight increase in gas utilisation as we were still required to heat tap water and the closed water system used in heating. Both operate in-line with minimum temperature requirements to avoid bacteria, independent of office occupancy. In addition, COVID-19 meant that the air flow within our buildings needed to be increased and run continuously compared to normally being reduced outside of working hours. Since the increased air flow cools the buildings, more gas was required to heat the offices to the minimum temperature.

Whilst the majority of indicators showed improvement, these did not account for the impact of home working. We therefore set a project for a student team from the University of Bristol to consider and to identify further support we may give our people to reduce such impacts. Positively, preliminary results suggested that the overall impact of home working is less than that of being full-time office based, particularly considering the impacts of travelling to work. These insights have given us useful information and are particularly relevant as we embrace a hybrid way of working. We will continue to build on this work, recognising the linkages with our climate strategy and our Net Zero commitment i.e. where we are balancing out the carbon emissions we are putting into the atmosphere, after all possible reductions, with those we take out.

We continue to engage our people in our environmental agenda with regular and dedicated communications and with the support and involvement of our internal

environmental network BSustainable. In September 2021, we had our ISO 14001 surveillance audit for our environmental management system accreditation with SGS. We are pleased to report that the firm continues to be certified.





## Net Zero

Throughout the year, we continued to make progress towards our target of being Net Zero by 2026 and the development of our Science Based Targets. We recognise that science based reduction targets are required if we are going to make a meaningful contribution towards a Net Zero economy and help the world prevent the worst effects of climate change by limiting global warming to no more than 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.

In January 2021, our Letter of Ambition for 1.5°C was accepted by the Science Based Targets Initiative (SBTi). Since then, we have been working with the external consultancy Carbon Intelligence to analyse our direct scope 1 & 2 emissions and indirect scope 3 emissions, to help us set meaningful reduction targets. The work has highlighted the progress we have made in a variety of areas as well as the need to focus on sustainable travel and reduce the emissions associated with the purchase of goods and services.

Matt Cvijan, associate director: Financial & Professional Services, at Carbon Intelligence, says; “Carbon Intelligence is proud to partner with Burges Salmon as the firm further strengthens its position as a responsible business through the

*development of robust near-term science-based targets. Burges Salmon has fully embraced its role as a leader and continues to demonstrate best practices through its climate commitments.”*

In 2021, we made our first climate change submission to the CDP. The CDP (formerly the Carbon Disclosure Project) is an international non-profit organisation that helps businesses, organisations and cities disclose their environmental impact. Our CDP climate submission enables us to be independently scored against CDP methodology by disclosing our climate-related environmental reporting and providing information on our risk management.

Our participation in the CDP has reinforced awareness of our improvement

opportunities, particularly in relation to target setting and undertaking a more detailed risk and opportunity analysis.

In pursuing Net Zero, we are focusing on energy efficiency, the utilisation of renewables and for the emissions we cannot avoid, investment in high quality accredited carbon offset projects. This is supported by the fact that all our offices are BREEAM excellent rated and we have now completed our switch to 100% renewable electricity across all office locations.

During the year, we finalised our Carbon Offset Policy, aware that there are various options for carbon offsetting. We envisage this will lead to a portfolio of projects, allowing for the delivery of multiple benefits in terms of biodiversity





**“With the climate crisis alongside the pandemic it’s important we continue to pursue ambitious targets and galvanise collective action. It has been really important to me at this time to see our environmental agenda go from strength to strength and how it is a priority across the firm as reflected in our purpose and strategy.”**

**Suzanne Padmore, Partner and Chair of the Environment Committee**

and conservation, onshore and offshore. During 2021, we invested again with our carbon offset partner Trees for Life, valuing its reforestation, rewilding and conservation work in Scotland as well as being UK Carbon Woodland Code Accredited. In July, marking Net Zero national awareness week, we highlighted our ongoing commitment to taking positive action on climate change and to supporting the UK’s transition to Net Zero. This included our role with the Legal Sustainability Alliance, our own action on climate change and our Net Zero services cross-sector legal team.

The firm is a well-respected leader for legal advice in environmental and low carbon projects. Our Net Zero legal services team was established to assist our clients in driving decarbonisation in the key sectors of transport, energy, land use and food production and the built environment.

We regularly produce thought leadership pieces on Net Zero regulation and our Road to Net Zero roundtable series addresses the challenges and opportunities of achieving the UK Government’s Net Zero 2050 target and the Scottish Government’s 2045 target. Our events have focused on land use and agriculture, hydrogen and the decarbonised built environment, vertical and innovative methods of farming, decarbonised transport and decarbonised energy.

Our Net Zero blog continues to act as a key platform to share the latest insights and news with clients and contacts. Posts have covered a wide range of topics including:

- Delivering low carbon heat and how the Construction Playbook can help by James Horton, director; and

- Solving the puzzle of procuring high quality renewable energy by Emma Andrews, director.

We released several Burges Salmon Net Zero podcasts, to raise the profile of our Net Zero services and our market-leading expertise, in the key sectors, which need to work together to achieve the UK’s 2050 target. Our launch episode featured Ross Fairley, partner and chair of Net Zero Services, Lucy Pegler, director in our Transport team, Sian Edmunds, partner for Agriculture and Food Production and, Ross Polkinghorne, partner for the Built Environment, who discussed some of the current challenges and opportunities.

The firm marked the 26th UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) with the Net Zero team releasing a number of thought leadership articles which were shared on social media channels including LinkedIn.

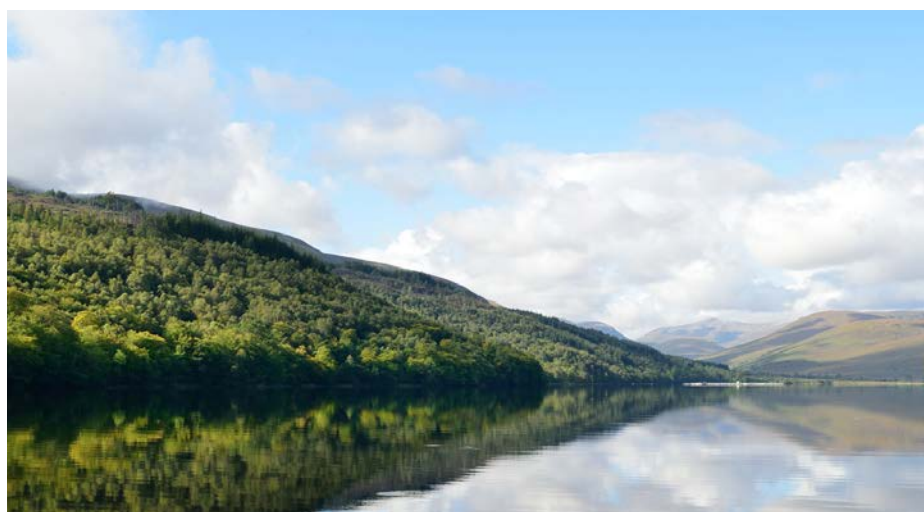
## Legal sector collaboration

We have continued with a number of external collaborations and have developed new areas of focus. In addition to our continued support of the Legal Sustainability Alliance, we have become increasingly involved with The Chancery Lane Project (TCLP) and joined as a founding member of the new Net Zero Lawyers Alliance.

As a founding and executive member of The Legal Sustainability Alliance, we have continued to share best practice and advocate within the legal sector for the reduction of carbon emissions and sustainable solutions.

TCLP is a legal sector pro bono initiative that tackles climate change through precedent contract clauses and model legislation. Its focus is to create climate change conscious drafting that can be added into commercial contracts, with the aim of creating new market norms.

We now have a TCLP team within the firm. The team’s objective has been to raise awareness, which it has done by delivering departmental presentations, training sessions and a firm-wide webinar.



**We invested again with our carbon offset partner Trees for Life, valuing its reforestation, rewilding and conservation work in Scotland.**



## Virtual Green Week

During June 2021, our internal network, BSustainable, delivered Green Week virtually. The event provides our people with the opportunity to participate in a number of events and competitions, raising awareness and sharing ideas on being more environmentally sustainable. Each day of the week has a specific theme and attendance at an event during Green Week gave our people the opportunity to be entered into a prize draw to win a Fairtrade hamper.

Starting with *Money Matters Monday*, we hosted two sessions covering our involvement with The Chancery Lane Project and Sustainable Finance. This followed an earlier webinar developed by our pension provider Hargreaves Lansdown on 'Responsible Investing'.

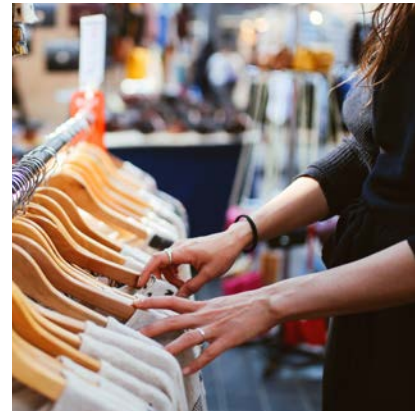
During *Travel Tuesday*, we highlighted favourite local walks and route ideas in and around Bristol and Edinburgh, whilst highlighting some sustainable shops along the way. We also hosted a speaker event about sustainable travel.

*Wildlife Wednesday* introduced our poetry and wildlife photography competitions, as well as a talk from

our carbon offsetting partners, Trees for Life.

*Throwaway Thursday* provided ideas and top tips on how to create less waste and we hosted a vegan cook-along! This followed a previous 'taco party' vegan virtual cook-along, resulting from a collaboration between our internal networks BSustainable and BWell.

Closing the week, was *Fashion Friday*. We hosted a panel event, providing industry insight and encouraging our people to consider what changes they could make regarding clothes shopping and slowing down the wasteful fast-fashion trend.



#GreenWeek2021

Burges  
Salmon

**Burges Salmon Green Week**  
**7-11 June 2021**

We participate in the various drafting sessions TCLP organises and have held our own internal drafting event, to encourage our lawyers to think of climate conscious drafting for their specific sectors. We have contributed further by hosting TCLP drafting workshops and conducting peer reviews of the resulting clauses for inclusion in the TCLP playbooks. We are now beginning to work with clients to adopt climate conscious drafting (including TCLP clauses) into their contracts and framework agreements.



Along with the coalition of inaugural members, we have become founding members of The Net Zero Lawyers Alliance, which is a coalition of law firms aiming to reinforce, accelerate and support the implementation of internationally coherent legal frameworks and guidelines for the transition to Net Zero by 2050. The alliance is approved by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Race to Zero, which designed new commitments related to the provision of advice to help organisations get to Net Zero.

At the end of June 2021, a number of leading litigation firms, plus barristers' chambers, launched a new initiative called The Greener Litigation Pledge, to which we became a signatory, with the support of our Dispute Resolution team. The pledge covers a number of issues in terms of reducing environmental footprint including sustainable travel, as well as disputes-specific targets such as the use of electronic bundles rather than paper and utilising video links for putting forward evidence whenever possible and appropriate.



## Sustainable communities

We have developed and nurtured a number of community and environmentally focused partnerships to further our impact, to engage our people and to learn from others. We are members of the Bristol Green Capital Partnership and are supporters of local wildlife trusts, community farms and other charities.

Through our engagement with the Bristol Green Capital Partnership, we have become a Climate Leader, sharing insights and know-how with other organisations, contributing to the city's Net Zero ambitions as well as supporting climate action at a community level. We have increased our support to the Avon Wildlife Trust, with a view to enabling its new vision for a Grow Wilder Engagement Hub.

We are sponsors of Catalyse Change, a Bristol-based social enterprise that supports girls and young women to develop sustainability skills and

knowledge. Our support provides a bursary, allowing access to those from less advantaged backgrounds. We made further environmental considerations relevant to young people by setting an environmentally focused legal work experience project that we used with a number of Bristol schools and assigned to participants in our Bright Sparks work experience programme.

We continue to support the Fairtrade Foundation and in February 2021, we promoted our 10th Fairtrade Fortnight. This included securing an external speaker on 'Fairtrade, the climate and you'.

During the year, we were excited to introduce two bee hives on the roof of our Edinburgh office, recognising that honeybees play a vital role in the ecosystem, pollinating flowering plants, trees and crops. We have entered a new collaboration with Edinburgh Zoo in support of its 'Giraffe About Town' campaign and became supporters of the Scottish Wildlife Trust.





## Legal practice insight: Energy and Infrastructure Finance

Within a string of impressive deals delivered to clients by our Energy and Infrastructure Finance team, the firm advised Lloyds Bank PLC, in relation to the £50m financing of a major Net Zero project installing at GlaxoSmithKline's Irvine production site at Ayrshire, Scotland, a subsidy-free 20MW solar photovoltaic generating station, along with a subsidy-free 8MW wind generating station. The projects will be built by the Farm Energy Company.

The Irvine production facility currently accounts for 40% of the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of GSK's UK manufacturing facilities, due to its large-scale fermentation and distillation operations. However, once built, the projects will save 10,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> each year, as they involve an innovative grid structure, combined with GSK committing to purchase the power generated by each project under long-term power purchase agreements.

As lead partner, Graham Soar puts it: *"In another great example of successfully delivering our Net Zero services to clients, this major investment will help GSK secure renewable power generation to support the target of sourcing 100% of global electricity usage from renewables by 2025 and we're pleased to have played our part in achieving this ambition."*



## 2026 Responsible Business Ambition

To have made progress on our science-based targets towards a 50% reduction in Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions by 2030 and achieved Net Zero by 2026 (Scope 1, 2 & 3 Business Travel).

To have achieved a waste reuse/recycling rate of at least 80%.



## ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY HIGHLIGHTS

100%

Renewable  
Energy Sourcing

Net Zero

Lawyers Alliance



4,990

Accumulative Rate  
Reafforestation Trees

Greener

Litigation Pledge



74%

Recycling and Reuse Rate

Science Based Targets  
Business Ambition for

1.5°C

Objectives  
for 2022

- To introduce new initiatives to reduce water use.
- To agree our science based targets reduction pathway by the end of the year with the Science Based Targets Initiative.
- To initiate work to commence meaningful engagement with our suppliers on climate action.

UN Sustainable  
Development Goal

WE SUPPORT

UN Global  
Compact Principle

## Principle 7

Precautionary approach to  
environmental challenges

## Principle 8

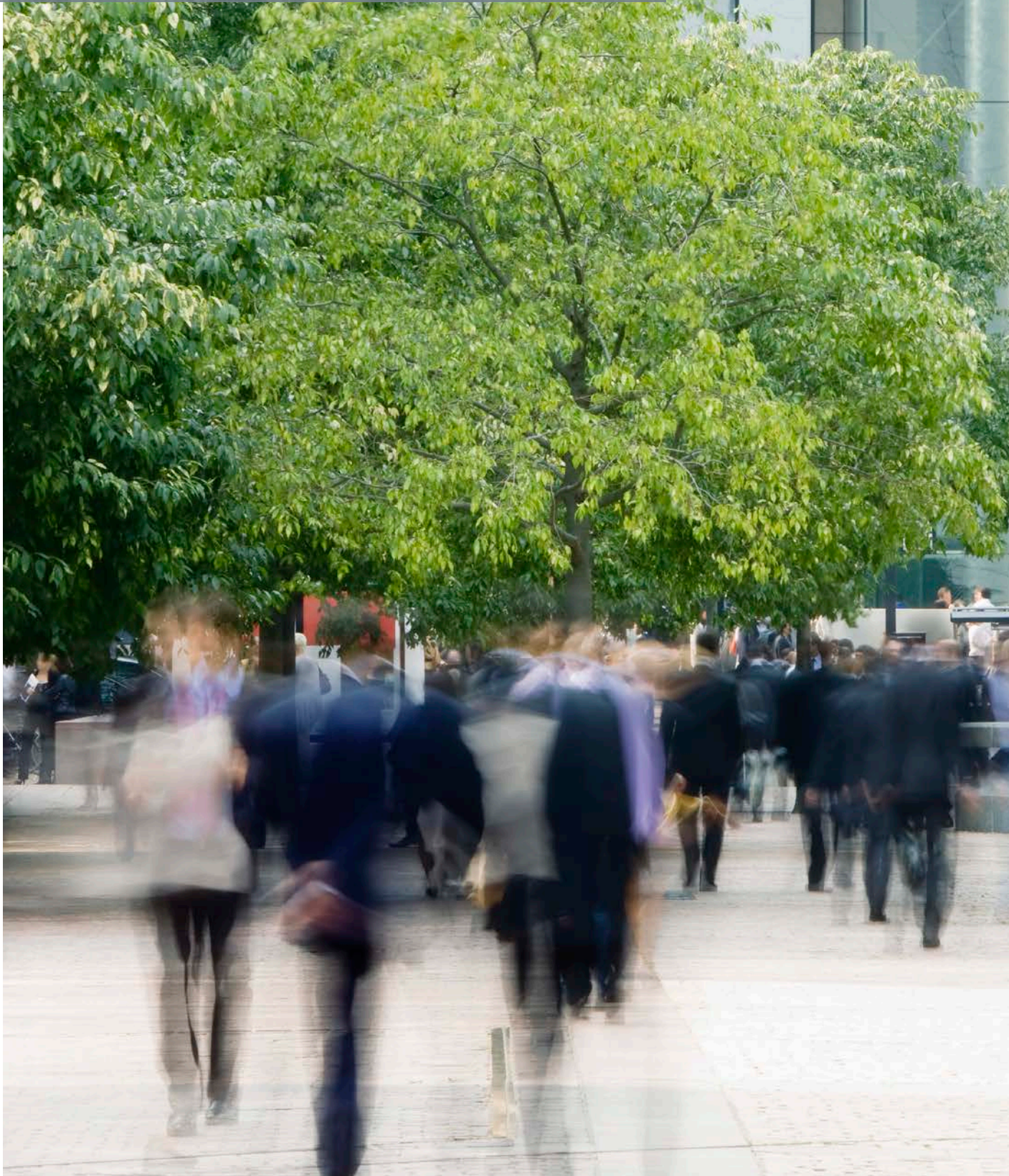
Promote greater environmental  
responsibilities

## Principle 9

Diffusion of environmentally  
friendly technologies



We have been keen to support our people with an appropriate balance, recognising the benefits of both office and home working.





# Employment and human rights

We contribute to the provision of jobs and employment as a large local employer in Bristol and a new entrant in the Edinburgh marketplace, through the economic stimulus associated with a number of our legal matters with clients and through our procurement spend on goods and services. Our aim is to contribute to the provision of employment opportunities that are inclusive and fair. Fundamental to this aim is the respect of human rights.

Objectives for 2021	Progress	How we did
Issue an enhanced procurement policy to better reference and encapsulate labour rights of workers in the supply chain	Delivered	We now have a responsible procurement policy which is being communicated as part of enhancements to our supplier assurance, internally and externally. It is available on our website: <a href="https://www.burges-salmon.com/about-us/how-we-work/working-with-suppliers">https://www.burges-salmon.com/about-us/how-we-work/working-with-suppliers</a>
Contribute as part of the Business in The Community (BITC) South West Leadership Board for a clear focus on employability and skills, as part of the region's post COVID-19 recovery	Delivered	Our head of Corporate Responsibility has stepped in to lead the BITC South West Task Force for Employability and Skills. The Task Force is supporting the BITC job coaching programme and progressing 3 key areas of focus.
Introduce a new bonus scheme for our people ready for the next Financial Year 2021/22	On-going	We modified our firm-wide bonus scheme to reflect the contribution made by all of our people during COVID-19. We have launched a new five year strategy and will introduce new bonus arrangements aligned with this strategy, to be implemented during Financial Year 2022/23.

We subscribe to internationally recognised human rights in line with the principles and guidance of the UN Global Compact, the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the core conventions of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs). We have a specific Human Rights policy and have identified our most salient human rights. For more information, please refer to our website: [www.burges-salmon.com/about-us/responsible-business/human-rights](https://www.burges-salmon.com/about-us/responsible-business/human-rights)

## Employability, inclusion and skills

Enabling employability and skills with disadvantaged groups has two main facets. It is about how we can be a more welcoming and attractive employer as

part of our D&I strategy and how we can help disadvantaged people develop skills and find employment more broadly. With this in mind, we have directed our community outreach and developed partnerships that align with our priority areas of focus for D&I.

During the pandemic, we have considered the support of inclusive employment of even greater importance. This has comprised those having experienced long-term unemployment, homelessness, disability and race discrimination. In terms of inclusive employment, we have charitable partnerships with and support for a wide range of organisations including the Woman's Work Lab, Babbasa, St Mungos, the West of England Centre for Inclusive Living (WECIL), Independent People 1625, as well as providing volunteers in support of Kickstart.

Our support is helping to provide opportunities for work experience, employability skills and building confidence in applying for work. This is in addition to our previously mentioned 'Working with School' programme and focus on social mobility.





**As a responsible business, we understand the importance of positive relationships with suppliers so that we can work together to achieve high supplier standards and exert influence down the supply chain.**



For the second year, we enabled a work placement through the Woman's Work Lab. This charity helps unemployed mums from challenging backgrounds build confidence and find meaningful work. We are delighted to have seen their organisation grow, extending geographically as well as with placements attracting the support and positive attention from the Department for Work and Pensions.

Throughout 2021, we continued our support of the award-winning diversity and inclusion leadership programme 'Stepping Up', which aims to unlock potential and develop talent while ensuring a fair representation of BAME, disabled people and women in positions of leadership. Our support is delivered as members of the Board, with funding, by interviewing applicants and the provision of leadership coaches. We were honoured in September 2021 when we were given the 'Stepping Up Excellence Award', acknowledging our role in supporting the programme since 2018. Our Chief People Officer, Robert Halton, is a member of the Governance Board for Stepping Up and was the first Chair of the Board.

Recognising the importance of employment as a key contributor to cohesive communities and the disruption to jobs particularly in specific sectors in light of the pandemic, we have been pleased to contribute to a new Business

in the Community (BITC) South West Leadership Board's Task Force for Skills and Employability, chaired by our head of corporate responsibility, Kirsty Green-Mann. Through this taskforce, we are working with other businesses to amplify the skills and employability campaigns led by BITC as well as the schemes run and offered by the businesses involved.

## Responsible procurement

As a responsible business, we understand the importance of positive relationships with suppliers so that we can work together to achieve high supplier standards and exert influence down the supply chain.

During the year, we initiated a new work-stream with a view to enhance our responsible procurement practices and approach. This includes an updated procurement policy, a more robust process for supplier engagement and an enhanced supplier assessment with new scoring criteria. We are developing this with a view to pursuing continuous improvement with our key suppliers.

This work-stream builds on our existing supplier management practices that already enable us to engage and monitor across a range of responsible business issues such as modern slavery, the environment, information security,

quality and business continuity. From our work in this area, we know that further engagement with suppliers will be vital in tackling the climate crisis. As part of our engagement with suppliers, we hold Supplier Engagement Days where we invite our key suppliers to participate in a business update that enables us to share information on specific issues.

This year, we held a virtual supplier engagement session with a specific focus on the address of modern slavery. After the general business update, the session was held as a workshop with our charitable partner organisation Unseen, an award-winning anti-slavery charity. Its work includes operating a helpline, helping survivors and advocacy for wider and meaningful action.

We were pleased the virtual event went well and received positive feedback from the suppliers. The modern slavery topic resonated, particularly as it was approached in the spirit of collaboration. Following the event, a number of the participant suppliers have since engaged with Unseen to deliver awareness training to their own organisations. To find out more about our address of modern slavery please read our latest modern slavery statement, which is available on our website: [www.burges-salmon.com/about-us/responsible-business/human-rights](http://www.burges-salmon.com/about-us/responsible-business/human-rights)

*"We were delighted to be part of Burges Salmon's supplier event and present on the issue of modern slavery. We had some very interesting conversations and it was fantastic to see so many people engage with the issue and want to work collaboratively to tackle forced labour and exploitation."*

Carrie Brassley, [www.unseenuk.org](http://www.unseenuk.org)

During the year, we continued our collaboration with Unseen. In addition to the supplier engagement event, Unseen delivered a number of training sessions with colleagues whose roles are important in helping to mitigate the risk of modern slavery and human trafficking. The training included what modern slavery and human trafficking are (to reinforce their e-learning); the nature and scale of modern slavery in the UK as well as legal definitions and the Modern Slavery Act.

We made a donation to support the ongoing provision of Unseen's 24/7 helpline, which celebrated its fifth anniversary during October. We jointly marked Anti-Slavery Day by holding a

webinar with Unseen, to educate more of our people about modern slavery and human trafficking.

In terms of supplier payments, we paid 83% of our suppliers within 60 days. This was up by 6% on the previous year. We understand the importance of prompt payments and have an ambition to join the Prompt Payment Code with a target of at least 95% of payments being made within the 60 days following invoice receipt.

## Workplace respect

As a law firm, we are governed by the Solicitors Regulatory Authority and the Law Society of Scotland. Our regulators stipulate Codes of Conduct but we recognise that this is more than compliance. It is about our values and our actions for a fairer and more inclusive world.

Throughout the pandemic, there have been numerous challenges. Our Leadership and Planning Ahead teams have continued

to review the situation and lead on the business response, keeping our values front-and-centre. A principles-based approach guided key decisions that included the returning of furlough money to the government, honouring salary increases, paying bonuses, ramping up the focus on wellbeing and protecting jobs, whilst maintaining commitments with community partners.

As a firm that puts people first, we have achieved various accolades including achieving Platinum status with our Investors in People accreditation (which is awarded to only 2% of employers), being an accredited Living Wage Employer and being named UK Law firm of the Year 2020, amongst others.

Towards the end of 2021, as COVID-19 restrictions eased, we moved to a new hybrid way of working for our people and introduced new guidelines for increased flexible working and a more relaxed office dress code. We have been keen to support our people with an appropriate balance, recognising the benefits of both office and home working.

Flexible working relates to the number of hours worked whether full-time or part-time and when and where people work. The firm offers a range of secondments. We have broadened our workforce with the introduction of Burges Salmon Flex, which allows us to engage individuals for whom a non-traditional working arrangement is attractive. Members of Burges Salmon Flex are deployed both internally within the firm, and externally with our clients.

We have various internal networks led by our people that enable a broad spectrum of issues to be addressed, to focus on creating an inclusive working environment where people can be themselves at work. In addition to our engagement surveys and listening sessions, people may raise any issues or concerns through the related procedures that we have in place. Our People team facilitates annual performance reviews and development conversations. We provide an independent Employee Assistance Programme and have a Whistleblowing Policy.



## Listening sessions to define Purpose

We understand giving our people a voice is an important part of ensuring workplace respect and it is important to canvass opinions and views on the direction of the firm. This year, the firm undertook a strategic review to set direction, ambition and priorities between 2021 - 2026. Wanting the firm to be more than a sum of its parts, a collective and identifiable sense of purpose is important. Rather than the firm's Partnership Committee determining 'Purpose' with external consultants, our preferred approach was to explore this with our people recognising that 'Purpose' must be authentic to the culture of the firm and have a shared sense of ownership.

As a result, our Managing Partner and Chief People Officer held a series of 'listening sessions' where everyone, regardless of role or seniority, had the opportunity to share their thoughts and views to a series of questions. Focusing on what makes the firm different, what is really cherished and should be maintained, what could be better, what makes people feel proud and what people's thoughts are regarding responsible business and a wider purpose.

Results from the firm-wide listening sessions demonstrated the importance of wellbeing and inclusion in our culture and purpose, and were communicated back in our strategy update. The sessions resulted in our Purpose being defined as: *We are an ambitious, sustainable and inclusive firm that ensures our clients, our people and our wider communities flourish.*

Word clouds were used to pull together and help analyse the key messages from our people.



Listening sessions' word cloud for culture and identity



**"The listening session I was given the opportunity to attend was a prime example of how Burges Salmon engages its people. Our inclusive culture ensures everyone's thoughts and ideas are welcomed. Individuals feel part of the wider team and that their values are important. Having the opportunity to actively influence the culture and direction of the firm irrespective of your day-to-day role is important to Burges Salmon. The fact that our leaders take the time to listen to feedback and act on it makes Burges Salmon a positive and fulfilling environment in which to work."**

Julia Davies, Solicitor





## Access to justice and pro bono

The pandemic has disproportionately affected those on lower incomes, which has driven an increase in the need for advice and guidance, particularly in relation to employment and housing issues. We have provided extra support to organisations like the Bristol Law Centre and provided pro bono legal advice in Edinburgh and Bristol.

We provide pro bono support to charities either in response to direct approaches or through our successful partnership with LawWorks. We run an Associate Development Programme (ADP) within which we invite charities to present an issue on which they would like solutions or recommendations. This year, participants in the ADP made welcomed recommendations to several charities including the Avon Wildlife Trust, Babbasa, Changes Bristol, IntoUniversity, Lawrence Weston Farm and Trees for Life.

We support a number of organisations and collaborations that are focused on enabling and improving access to justice and helping challenge unfair decisions and treatment. Our support is financial as well as providing pro bono legal advice. Annually we support the Access to Justice Foundation, which organises a legal walk. We make a financial donation and encourage our people to participate.

During the year Michael Hayles completed his 6-year term as Pro Bono Partner with the mantle now passed to Partner Matthew Sims.

Matthew says, *"I'm excited to take on this role knowing the value that our lawyers can add through the use of their legal expertise. With the additional pressures of the pandemic and exacerbation of inequalities I'm determined that our pro bono offer is as comprehensive as it can be and that we deliver advice and support within the community where it is needed most, building on all our work to date".*

## Legal practice insight: Employment pro bono

COVID-19 has obviously raised many employment law issues, including for people who may have been secure in their jobs and suddenly found themselves in uncertain and unexpected positions.

The Bristol Law Centre (BLC) and the Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB) help thousands of people each year to keep their jobs, homes, income and independence. Lawyers from our Employment team support the CAB and the BLC and their services. This is key to enabling members of the public to seek advice on any aspect of employment law on a pro-bono basis. Our Employment lawyers offer advice on a range of employment issues including contractual issues, disciplinaries, grievances and employment disputes. We offer support to the Employment Tribunal Litigant in Person Support Scheme, operated through the Employment Lawyers Association, whereby lawyers offer unrepresented claimants assistance for employment tribunal claims.

This includes providing advice on claims and the tribunal process, and representing individuals at tribunal hearings.

This is what one of our Employment solicitors, Katie Hayes, had to say followed by feedback from the Bristol Law Centre:

*"I advised an individual on a number of issues arising from their return to work after a period of sickness absence. The individual had a long-standing injury and felt the business had failed to follow the recommendations within a risk assessment (putting them and others at risk) and had given them new duties that exacerbated the injury. They had separately been falsely accused of breaching company policy on an unrelated matter and offered a settlement to leave the business.*

*"We discussed next steps in terms of returning to work, seeking alternative employment, pursuing a tribunal claim and negotiating a possible settlement. As the individual did not want to return to work, we focused on the types of claim they might bring and how they could negotiate a higher settlement package.*

*"Speaking to this individual about their concerns at work and advising them on their employment rights was a hugely*

*rewarding experience. I hope that they found it helpful and were able to use the advice to feel more confident in their rights and to use this to negotiate a better settlement package from their employer.*

*"Getting involved with this type of work, which involves a short phone call with little background of the matter, teaches you to carefully listen to the individual's concerns, hone in on their objectives and to focus your advice on what they really need to know in order to help achieve those objectives. Not only was it personally very rewarding to help an individual who might not necessarily otherwise have access to legal advice, it was invaluable in developing my skills as an employment lawyer."*

Evi Economou from the Bristol Law Centre said:

*"We are incredibly grateful for the long-standing and ongoing support that Burges Salmon offers to the Bristol Law Centre. Their involvement in our Employment Law Clinic has meant that we can facilitate weekly sessions to bring specialist legal advice to local people in need, who would otherwise be financially excluded from accessing legal advice. We are lucky to have several Burges Salmon pro bono volunteers*

*involved in delivering advice to individuals, all compassionate and thorough in their approach, to ensure that those facing issues or unfair treatment within the workplace get expert advice, at the right time, in order to progress their situation.*

*"Advice recipients are always relieved at the opportunity to speak with someone who can make them feel heard and understood, and can concisely explain available options to move forwards with their legal issue.*

*"We regularly receive feedback that speaks for the value that pro-bono advice brings to people's lives, such as:*

- *"The advice and support I received from Bristol Law Centre has been precious."*
- *"The lawyer we spoke to was very informative and able to develop a good rapport on the phone so we felt comfortable and more able to communicate the details of our situation. The detailed notes are extremely helpful."*

*"We look forward to continuing our collaboration with Burges Salmon and are appreciative of the commitment and support they've shown us so far."*



## 2026 Responsible Business Ambition

To have invested in emerging talent including school leavers, apprentices, graduates and trainees enabling at least 300 new career opportunities.

To have at least 95% of suppliers being paid within 60 days.

## EMPLOYMENT AND HUMAN RIGHTS HIGHLIGHTS

**87%**

Modern Slavery  
e-learning completion



**83%**

Suppliers paid  
within 60 Days



**73%**

of Modern Slavery Due  
Diligence return rate



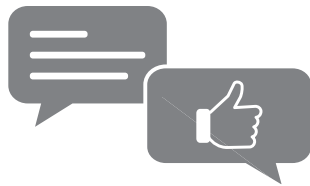
**97%**

anti-bribery and corruption  
e-learning completion

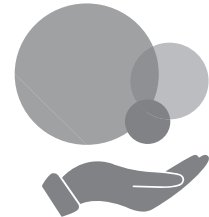


**97%**

of our people would  
recommend the firm  
as a place to work



**Living Wage**  
accredited employer

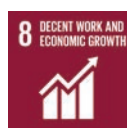


### Objectives for 2022

- To enhance approach to inclusive employment focusing on priorities as identified from analysis of D&I statistics and development of community outreach.
- To invigorate and enhance the firm's focus on pro bono to increase the community offer and the number of pro bono hours undertaken by our people.
- To clarify quantitative performance measures for disclosure in the firm's 2022 Modern Slavery Statement.



UN Sustainable  
Development Goal



UN Global Compact Principle

**Principle 1**

Respect of Human Rights

**Principle 2**

Not complicit in human rights abuses

**Principle 3**

Freedom of association and collective bargaining

**Principle 4**

No forced or compulsory labour

**Principle 5**

Abolition of child labour

**Principle 10**

Work against corruption and bribery



BScale provides legal services for start-ups, scale-ups, founders and investors, to support fast-growth companies in the technology sector throughout their life-cycle.



# Collaboration and innovation

Collaborating with other organisations is one of the key ways that we can accelerate and amplify the impact we can make as a responsible business. This is about collective impact, stimulating innovation and being more than the sum of our parts. Our aim is to work together and with others for a greater collective impact.

Objectives for 2021	Progress	How we did
Engage at least 25% of our people in virtual volunteering opportunities	Not achieved	The restrictions presented in the context of COVID-19 meant our volunteering options were limited. We achieved a rate of 16% of our people volunteering.
Further embed the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through participation in the UN Global Compact SDG Accelerator Programme	Achieved	We participated in the UN SDG Accelerator programme delivered by UN Global Compact UK. We have identified the SDG benchmarks most relevant to our Responsible Business strategy, intensifying focus.
Participate in relevant forums to accelerate collective responsible business action by sharing insights and through advocacy	Achieved	We participated in a variety of forums including with Business in The Community and the UN Global Compact. Our people were invited to share insights at a number of conferences, events and through a short film about Net Zero.

## Supporting the community during COVID-19

Community engagement is an important part of our culture and is something we actively encourage our people to participate in, through volunteering opportunities, charitable fundraising, donations, in-kind donations, pro bono legal advice, as well as Board-level trustee and school governor opportunities.

We know the pandemic has exacerbated inequalities and our work in the community has been even more important. We adapted our approach to continue to provide much-needed support. We sought to focus on the activities that have the greatest impact and forged new community links and relationships.

During the year, we continued to raise money in support of our charitable theme 'No Child Goes Hungry'. In May, we asked our people to participate in our Big Challenge. This saw teams from across the firm cover the distance between our

Bristol and Edinburgh offices, 356 miles, by walking, running, cycling or other means, within the government guidelines in place at the time.

The challenge drew significant participation across the firm and by the end of the event, over 19,300 miles had been collectively covered. A considerable fundraising effort supported the participants' endeavours and the total amount of money raised reached approximately £23,500. This was put towards the support of charities including Feeding Bristol, FareShare South West, Help Feed Bristol, and the Scottish children's charity, Aberlour.

The challenge event was then proceeded by our Christmas fundraiser where this year we introduced for the first time a 'Masked Singer Event'. Colleagues were invited to make donations and put in for golden tickets to attend the event in person. Further funds were raised again as enabled through the donation of last-hours' earnings. Our Christmas efforts raised a sum of around £16,000.

Through most of the year, our volunteering activities were restricted by the pandemic. However, we continued to identify new opportunities including a reading recovery programme (in collaboration with the Bristol Sports Foundation), mentoring with Action Tutoring, a new partnership with St Mary Redcliff and Temple School, being a joint founder member of the Bristol Future Talent Partnership and establishing a new partnership with the literacy charity Bookmark.

**Burges  
Salmon**

**£44,000**

raised in support of our  
charitable theme 'No Child  
Goes Hungry'

Action Tutoring is an education charity supporting pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds to achieve a meaningful level of academic attainment, helping them to progress to further education, employment or training. We're pleased to provide several volunteers as online tutors, who have committed to weekly sessions, during term time, in English or Maths.

With Bookmark, our people volunteered in a six week programme to deliver 30-minute reading sessions to 5-9 year olds who had been falling behind with their reading. Sessions combined reading stories and playing interactive games. The sessions took place virtually through a secure, online, child-friendly platform so people could volunteer from their desks.

*"Burgess Salmon and Bristol Sport Foundation are united in their desire to engage and inspire our community, to make a positive difference to those often living in disadvantage. We are most grateful to Burgess Salmon for supporting our Reading Recovery pilot programme, the feedback so far from everyone involved has been fantastic."* Paul Glanville, Corporate Partnerships Manager, Bristol Sport Foundation

During the year, we were pleased to see many of our people volunteer with charities and non-profit organisations tackling loneliness and helping those in the community who were feeling isolated, particularly in light of the pandemic.

These organisations included the Marmalade Trust, Hello and WECIL (West of England Centre for Inclusive Living). In June, we supported the Marmalade Trust's Loneliness Awareness Week, a campaign to raise awareness of loneliness and get people talking about it.

Towards the end of year, we were pleased to be able to reintroduce face-to-face volunteering for teams of our people undertaking outdoor activities and we began to welcome back members of the community to use our office facilities as part of our in-kind community offer.

## Innovation

Our third B-Innovative Week took place during January 2021, run by our Innovation and Learning & Development teams. It provided an opportunity for our people to find out more about what we are doing around innovation and advanced technology, through a variety of live events including webinars, workshops and pre-recorded content, such as a hands-on opportunity to build a prototype app. The week was varied and included a focus on the skills needed in a remote environment, design thinking as well as advanced technologies such as Autto's no code platform. Autto helps users to automate business processes into simple workflows without the need for coding nor a software developer.

We subsequently launched our internal technology ambassadors group (TAG), which focuses on client-facing innovation, internal technology and process improvement. Each ambassador acts as a champion for their department, feeding back on new technology, cascading and communicating initiatives and updates to their teams.

During October 2021, we launched an innovative new technology platform, BScale. BScale provides legal services for start-ups, scale-ups, founders and investors, to support fast-growth companies in the technology sector throughout their life-cycle and includes a suite of automated documentation available for free through our Document Generator app.

As part of the firm's ongoing commitment to legal tech and innovation, we were one of the key sponsors of the Bristol & Bath LegalTech 2021 report, launched following a research project over several months. The report looked at a number of different areas including; the legal sector, technology, innovation, LegalTech, people skills and education, connectivity as well as funding and investment. Featuring analysis, stakeholder perspectives and case studies looking at all of these areas. The report can be accessed at: [www.whitecapconsulting.co.uk/publication/bristol-bath-legaltech-2021/](http://www.whitecapconsulting.co.uk/publication/bristol-bath-legaltech-2021/)

**Towards the end of year, we were pleased to be able to reintroduce face-to-face volunteering for teams of our people undertaking outdoor activities.**







With the majority of our people working remotely during the pandemic, our Knowledge Information Services team ensured our lawyers continued to have access to the resources they needed. We completed a review of all our essential hard-copy materials to check if they could be replaced by online equivalents, giving easier access to those who need them. One of the key successes has been the migration of over 50 books and hardcopy documents. A similar key project was the selection and sourcing of e-Bundling tools to assist our various departments involved in creating large bundles electronically that meet the exacting requirements of the courts.

We introduced DocuSign, which enables us to prepare and send documents for signature electronically, making the process faster, secure, more efficient, and convenient for our clients. We also welcome the environmental benefits. Since the introduction of DocuSign we have saved at least 3,860kg of wood, 94,849 litres of water, 9,060kg of carbon and 627kg of waste.

In May 2021, the firm was recognised as winners at the Legal Week Innovation Awards 2021 in the category of Client Management Innovation for our Distressed Contract Toolkit that we created and made available to clients at the start of the pandemic. This accolade is awarded to firms working on precedent-setting, game-changing projects and initiatives.

During the year, we introduced our first mobile app to be featured on the App Store: ResiCheck. Developed by our Tax, Trusts and Family team, in collaboration with our Innovation team, the app provides an easy and quick to use tool that helps clients to plan ahead and identify their tax residency status.

## Robust cyber security

We know as a law firm, as with other professional services businesses, we may be targeted by cyber criminals. We take the protection of our systems and the data that we hold incredibly seriously and invest in providing robust defences. We do this through investment in technology, internal expertise, management systems and the training of our people.

Whilst we have a dedicated IT team, to keep the firm safe and secure, we recognise that it is important that everyone in the firm contributes to security in the daily work we undertake. During the year, we launched a new Cyber and Information Security Education platform, designed to help our people identify and prevent potential threats.

This platform is not just a requirement for our ISO 27001 Information Security certification but is part of how we meet our clients' requirements for the safeguarding of their information and data. The platform provides our people with 'nano' learning (short, interactive and to-the-point) modules throughout the year.

We have signed up to a Dark Web monitoring service, where regular scans help reduce the risk of security breaches and scams using our Burges Salmon credentials. We have also invested in new technology to better protect against phishing emails. Our PhishAlarm reporting tool allows our IT security team to analyse and respond quickly to potential phishing emails and allow for their removal from mailboxes, prior to them being opened.

We also use a security monitoring tool to further enhance security relating to client information within our document management system.

## Stakeholder priorities

We recognise a number of different stakeholder groups in connection with our firm. These include our clients, our people, our suppliers, the regulators, the communities in which we live and work, the wider legal sector, the wider business community and representatives for the environment.

We have dedicated personnel within the firm who are primary contacts for each of these stakeholder groups and undertake engagement activities. This helps us understand what is important to our stakeholders and enables us to be as responsive as possible. Through our stakeholder network we participate in relevant collaborations, external forums, benchmarks and pursue relevant accreditations, standards and pledges to help us meet and exceed stakeholders' expectations.

In 2019, we undertook a formal round of stakeholder engagement to specifically obtain feedback on our responsible business approach and priorities. We plan to do this on a three year cycle unless there is reason to do sooner. Engagement with our stakeholders has contributed to the articulation of our Purpose that was agreed this year as part of our firm's strategic approach. It states: *We are an ambitious, sustainable and inclusive firm that ensures our clients, our people and our wider communities flourish.*

We welcome our stakeholders in holding us to account against our Purpose and our responsible business objectives.

## Extending community reach in Edinburgh

Since opening our Edinburgh office in 2019, the number of people based there has grown to around 40. Community engagement is very much part of our culture so it has been just as important to enable a community focus in Edinburgh, as we have had in our Bristol head office for many years.

Extending community reach in Edinburgh has undoubtedly been helped by specific colleagues who have stepped up to take a lead, including Robert Forman, partner; Marlyn Sharp, operations manager; Eilidh Wood, solicitor and Lauren Winters, senior associate. Robert has helped to champion community involvement and steer the direction for Edinburgh as a senior leader in the firm. Marlyn has been an active member of our internal community network 'BEngaged'. Eilidh has helped to facilitate pro bono activities and Lauren has been involved with the firm's fundraising drive for 'No Child Goes Hungry'.

Sarah Hamnett, CR advisor, who has responsibility for enabling volunteering, the firm's 'Working with Schools' programme and community relationships, has worked with the Edinburgh team to identify new opportunities and liaise with Edinburgh based charities.

One of the first focus areas for extending community reach in Edinburgh was the firm's prioritisation of social mobility and the Burges Salmon 'Working with Schools' programme. We have held a number of our own law career information sessions in connection with the Edinburgh office and have been working alongside IntoUniversity, one of our outreach collaborations that has opened a new centre in Edinburgh, with a view to involve our people in its activities. We have made a contribution toward a LawScot bursary that supports a student from a disadvantaged background in qualifying as a solicitor.

After engagement with colleagues in Edinburgh, helping children, addressing homelessness and environmental issues were recognised as important to our people. A number of Edinburgh-based charities have been identified with which we are establishing new links. These include The Yard, a charity that supports disabled children and young people and their families through adventure play and, Turning Point, a provider of services to people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

We have confirmed our support as sponsors of 'Giraffe About Town', an initiative from Edinburgh Zoo and creative producers Wild in Art, to present a large-scale public art event in Edinburgh in the summer of 2022.



'Giraffe About Town', Edinburgh 2022

The event will feature more than 40 sculptures that will form a free, family-friendly trail of discovery for local people and visitors to explore and enjoy, all while raising funds for the Zoo and the vital conservation work of the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland (RZSS). The RZSS has protected threatened species in Scotland and around the world for over 100 years.

Robert Forman says: *"We're absolutely delighted to be supporting this initiative from Edinburgh Zoo. It's a great way to engage people and improve environmental awareness whilst having an element of fun. It particularly resonates with our commitments to the environment and the community. It has been very much welcomed by our people and our Edinburgh team is looking forward to volunteering at the zoo too!"*

## Advocacy

We seek to be an advocate for responsible business and are willing to share our insights and experiences where possible and appropriate. We're pleased to be invited to participate and share our approach in relevant forums. Some examples from throughout the year include our chief operating officer, Emma Dowden, speaking as part of a panel at 'The Lawyer BLS Webinar: What does ESG mean for law firms?', our head of Corporate Responsibility speaking at three UN Global Compact events including the UN Global Compact Sustainability Leaders' summit and our Diversity and Inclusion manager, Roxanne Ratcliff, speaking at a Women in Sustainability network event.

In relation to COP26 we were approached by Bristol City Council in collaboration with the Bristol Green Capital Partnership to provide video content highlighting our climate action work to demonstrate the action businesses can take on addressing the climate crisis. This was launched at a special event designed to call other businesses to action and helped to provide a case-study to attract further funding for the climate advocacy and guidance campaign.

This year, we participated in the UN Global Compact SDG Accelerator Programme. The programme has been designed to enable businesses to really focus tangible action on their contribution towards and integration of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Extensive research has gone into focusing guidance for businesses, which has resulted in ten SDG benchmarks and a suite of guidance and support materials.

The SDG Accelerator Programme encourages ambitious and creative thinking and requires a highly collegiate approach, with peer-to-peer learning. The programme focuses on system change informed by data flows and performance measures along with stakeholder dialogue and storytelling for effective communication. Of the ten benchmarks, we found strongest alignment with gender balance, living wage, science-based emissions reduction and zero bribery. We see the greatest opportunity for us as a responsible business in terms of the sustainable sourcing benchmark.

We participated in the first cohort of the SDG Accelerator Programme. This involved around 600 companies globally and some 30 in the UK including a number of other law firms. We shared insight into our experience at the Sustainability Leaders' Summit and have advocated for the programme.

We continue to be active members of Business in the Community to further its campaigns and to extend the responsible business network.

## Legal practice insight: Introducing BScale

In October 2021, we were pleased to announce the launch of an innovative, new technology platform 'BScale' which provides legal services for start-ups, scale-ups, founders and investors, to support fast-growth companies in the technology sector throughout their life-cycle.

The BScale platform:

- supports high-growth businesses through the sharing of knowledge;
- provides free of charge legal documentation through the BScale Document Generator;
- provides high-quality legal advice at a price point that is realistic for early stage businesses; and
- enables Burges Salmon to build lasting and strategic relationships with the most exciting and innovative technology companies and their investors.

The dedicated BScale team is able to offer the depth of knowledge to work through mission-critical funding rounds, the inevitable regulatory, tax, employment and commercial challenges that come with scaling a business, and the expertise to protect value when the time comes to exit.

Alex Lloyd, a director in our Corporate Finance team, says: *"There is real value in high-growth businesses forming a long-term relationship with their lawyers. We recognise that we need to flex our pricing and invest our time, expertise and contacts on those early projects. We understand that is how we will build relationships with the most promising and exciting scale-ups in our core sectors. This is why we're launching the BScale platform."*



**"We are thrilled to launch BScale and continue to strengthen our relationship with emerging technology companies and their investors. BScale will enable us to grow with our technology clients as they scale and we are looking forward to forming strategic and long-term partnerships with some of the UK's most innovative and progressive companies."**

David Varney, Director, Burges Salmon, Technology and Communications Team



## The BScale Document Generator

As part of BScale, Burges Salmon is offering companies a range of legal documents for free, which can then be created and downloaded instantly from the BScale Document Generator.

Alex continues: *"We are fully aware that start-ups operate under significant financial constraints and for that reason, we're delighted to provide a suite of automated legal documentation suitable for use by start-ups at no cost."*

Companies are able to use the firm's BScale Document Generator to create any of the following legal documents:

- Subscription and Shareholders' Agreement
- Articles of Association
- Disclosure Letter

- Founders' IP Assignment Agreement
- Website Terms of Use
- Website Privacy Policy
- Website Cookie Policy
- Employment Contract
- Confidentiality Agreement

As Ed Fellows, investment director at Octopus, puts it: *"We have worked closely with Burges Salmon for several years and they have proven themselves as a valuable business partner to us during this period of rapid growth. They have helped us navigate new investment sectors, as well as providing support, firepower and expertise in more established areas of our business."*

Our BScale team is drawn from across the firm and includes senior lawyers from each of its core practice areas with a particular focus on supporting high growth businesses in the technology sector.



### 2026 Responsible Business Ambition

To have invested at least £4m into the community including direct financial funding and financial equivalents.

To have donated more than 25,000 volunteering and pro bono hours.



## COLLABORATION AND INNOVATION HIGHLIGHTS

65

Award Shortlists  
and Wins



554

Working with  
Schools beneficiaries



16%

Volunteering  
participation rate



67%

of Partners recognised  
by Chambers



2003

volunteering and  
pro bono hours



100%

Client Satisfaction score



### Objectives for 2022

- To have at least 35% of our people participating in volunteering activities as we move towards pre-pandemic participation levels.
- To undertake a next iteration community impact review noting the key community relationships in alignment with our five core responsible business objectives.
- To embed our new digital academy with a view to upskill our people, particularly those involved in direct client service delivery.



UN Sustainable  
Development Goal



UN Global  
Compact Principle

**Principle 1**  
Respect of Human Rights

# Our stakeholder network

## Wellbeing and engagement



## Inclusive workplace



## Environmental sustainability





Employment and human rights



Collaboration and innovation



# Performance summary – KPIs

We have key performance indicators to measure our progress against each of the areas of our responsible business framework. Our financial year is from 1st May to 30th April.

Key Performance Indicators			
COMMUNITY	FY 2018/19	FY 2019/20	FY 2020/21
Volunteering (% of total workforce)	62%	53%	16%
Volunteering (hours)	3,754	3,061	1,165.25
Pro bono (hours)	1,028	1,467	838
Community investment against operating profit	2.18%	2.39%	1.40%
Total community investment	£699,000	£838,588	£570,035
Community hosting (number of visitors)	2,656	3,667	0
Working with Schools programme: Student beneficiaries	963	845	554
Charity and educational trusteeships	73	87	48
Charity and educational trusteeships (% of headcount)	9%	11%	6%
Social Mobility Employer Ranking	63	39	56
ENVIRONMENT	CY 2018	CY 2019	CY 2020
Electricity use (KwH)	2,734,452	2,876,309 *	2,214,467
Gas use (m3)	115,166	115,166 *	126,028
Business travel emissions (tCO <sub>2</sub> )	336	350 *	112
<b>Total CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (tCO<sub>2</sub>)</b>	<b>1,559</b>	<b>790</b>	<b>400</b>
Green commuting (% of people)	77%	77%	N/A
Paper use (sheets)	8,493,739	8,786,897	3,047,900
Hospitality waste (kg)	843	1,141	190
Plastic usage (items)	103,417	104,568	No data
Water usage (m3)	11,289	10,540	4,158
MARKETPLACE	FY 2018/19	FY 2019/20	FY 2020/21
Awards shortlisted for or won (number)	36	40	65
Partners recognised by Chambers UK	64%	67%	67%
CRM: Clients either 'extremely satisfied' or 'very satisfied'	100%	88%	100%
ISO Standards (number)	4	4	4
Code of conduct (Anti-Bribery) e-learning completion rate	93%	99.5%	97%
Modern slavery e-learning completion rate for firm	56%	89%	87%
Suppliers paid within 60 days in financial year ending 30 April	81%	77%	83%
Business in the Community Responsible Business Tracker	N/A	52%	71%
WORKPLACE	FY 2018/19	FY 2019/20	FY 2020/21
Headcount	833	822	855
Female partners (% of partnership)	17%	21%	23%
Female partner promotions (% of total promotions)	40%	50%	60%
Female directors and senior associates (% of workforce)	50%	51%	57%
Stonewall Equality Index (ranking)	77	101	N/A
Absence through sickness (% of working hours)	1%	1%	1%
Turnover of our people	13%	16%	8%
RollOnFriday	7th	9th	8th
Investors in People	Gold	Gold	Platinum

\* Figure updated to previous report so figures are consistently based on calendar year.  
Environmental data is reposted 4 months in arrears.



What has continued to make a real impression on me both this year and throughout the pandemic is how much responsible business is a priority and how my colleagues get involved. Responsible business is really part of who we are. I've seen the leadership team taking a values-based approach to key decisions, which has undoubtedly resulted in people being put first and ambitions for our environmental action grow.

Throughout the year, we received numerous awards short-listings and wins in relation to our work on Net Zero, our 'Working with Schools' programme and our commitment to diversity and inclusion. This has made me proud and pleased to see the team effort across the firm be recognised.

Our responsible business credentials were strengthened further by our participation in the EcoVadis assessment and I was delighted to see us placed in the top five percent of participants for our response and the evidence provided. However, we are not complacent. We have challenges in terms of our Net Zero commitment, continuing to enhance our suite of performance indicators, strengthening our approach to responsible procurement and seeing better representation within the partnership. We also need to ramp up our community engagement, which has undoubtedly been hindered by the restrictions of the pandemic.

With the firm's new strategy to take us through to 2026, with responsible business as a key strand, I feel confident that we will step up to these challenges with the support, commitment and involvement of everyone across the firm.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all my colleagues and our external collaborators, for what has been achieved, and our stakeholders, who ask for more.

**Kirsty Green-Mann, Head of Corporate Responsibility**





Follow us on Twitter **@BurgessalmonCR**

We welcome comments and feedback on our Responsible Business Report, please contact a member of the Corporate Responsibility Team or email us at **corporate.resp@burgess-salmon.com**

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