



Delivering sustainable
growth through
**our Responsible
Business**



Responsible Business Report 2022

Together we'll navigate life's ups and downs

It's our purpose and describes the very core of what we do.

Being a purpose-led organisation means we're committed to creating value beyond profit for everyone we work with and support.

Our aim is to be one step ahead. We'll be known for our curiosity and commitment to our colleagues, clients and communities.

Our pioneering and agile mind-set will turn our curiosity into value to create extraordinary experiences.



Our values have underpinned our purpose as we've evolved and they'll continue to define how we do business.

Andrew Tucker
Group Chief Executive Officer



What's inside

Overview

- 01 Welcome to Irwin Mitchell
- 02 Our business at a glance
- 03 Becoming a leading Responsible Business
- 04 Our purpose and Responsible Business strategy
- 05 Our commitment to the United Nations Global Compact
- 07 Introduction: Building on solid foundations
- 08 Introducing our new Responsible Business Committee
- 08 Measuring our impact
- 09 Our Responsible Business Performance Data

Communities

- 11 Local Communities
- 12 Local Community Investment
- 13 Social mobility and widening access to the legal sector
- 14 Q&A with Kathryn Selby, Satinder Bains and Lorcan Seery
- 15 Celebrating 25 years of the Irwin Mitchell Charities Foundation
- 16 Charities of the year: St Catherine's Hospice Gatwick
- 17 Charities of the year: ENABLE Scotland Glasgow
- 18 Charities of the year: Loose Ends Newbury
- 19 Our focus on increasing access to justice
- 20 Client A and AvMA Helpline
- 21 Our Suppliers: Responsible supply chain management

- 23 Collaborating with Red-Inc to address social and environmental problems together
- 24 Q&A with Kate Rawlings, Sarah Ball and Adam Huddy
- 25 Environment
- 26 Protecting our planet
- 27 Roadmap to Net Zero
- 28 Task Force on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures
- 29 Key climate-related risks and opportunities
- 30 Measuring our environmental performance
- 31 A conversation with Claire Petricca-Riding & Louise Needham

Clients

- 32 Clients
- 33 Building inclusive and sustainable relationships
- 34 Our unique partnership with England Rugby
- 35 Alex's Story
- 36 The evolving role of General Counsel in Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) strategy
- 37 Ensuring our clients' voices are heard through our Human Touch Campaign: Bob's Story

Colleagues

- 38 Colleagues
- 39 An inclusive workplace culture where our colleagues feel they belong and are enabled to thrive
- 40 D&I Governance
- 41 Increasing the diversity of our workforce
- 42 Continuing the conversation about Race
- 44 Our Disability Confident Journey
- 45 Leading the way on gender equality
- 46 Gender Pay Gap for Irwin Mitchell LLP
- 47 A focus on wellbeing
- 48 Raising awareness of and supporting those experiencing the menopause
- 49 Flexible by Choice

Further Information

- 51 Key Contacts

If you need to access this document in a different format, please contact ResponsibleBusiness@irwinmitchell.com outlining the format you require and we will consider your request and respond as soon as we can.



Our business at a glance

We are a multi-award winning legal and financial services firm

What we do

We have a trusted brand built on more than 100 years of exceptional client service delivery supported by our outstanding colleagues and inclusive culture.



Our awards & industry recognition



Leading Superbrand in the legal sector for the second year running



Recognised by Legal 500 as the leading firm for client service in the top 25 law firms in the UK



The Times Best Law Firms 2022

10th

GPTW¹ - UK's Best Workplaces for Women 2022 (Super Large)

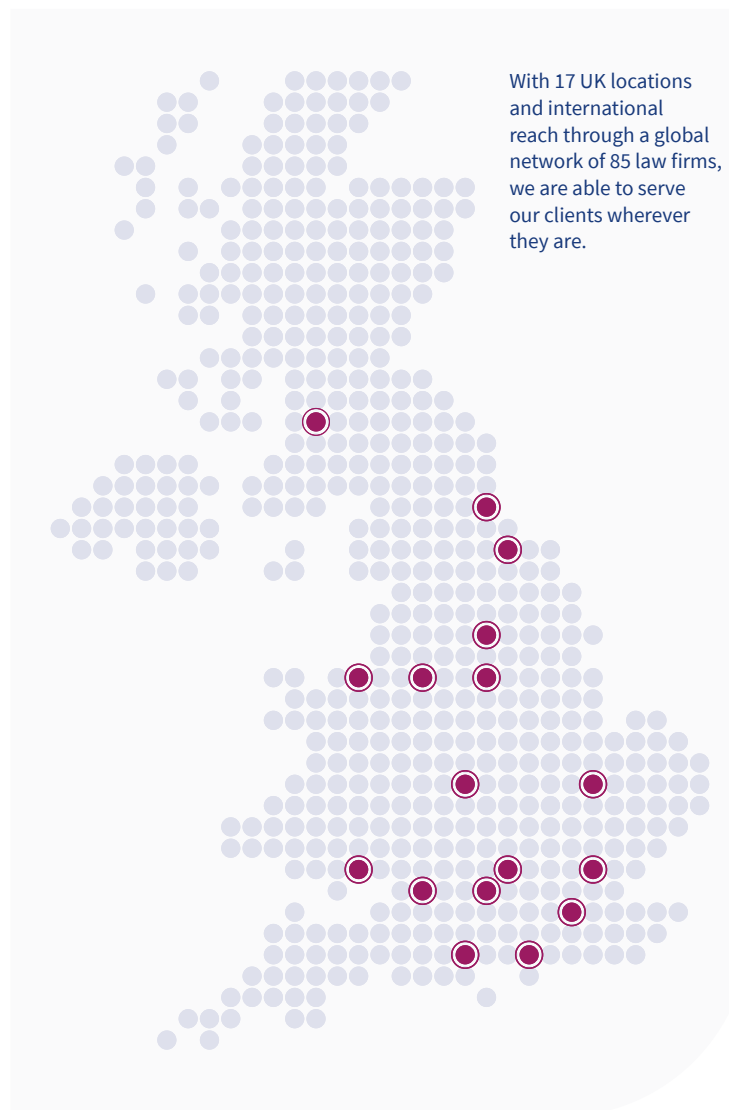
16th

GPTW - UK's Best Workplaces 2022 (Super Large)

15th

GPTW - UK's Best Workplaces for Wellbeing 2022 (Super Large)

We have a differentiated client service proposition that delivers lifetime value and positive outcomes for all our stakeholders.



£266m

Core Revenue

£249m

Revenue pipeline

1,599

fee earners

224

partners

12 years

Average partner tenure

>£1bn

assets under management

4.7

Trustpilot rating

¹ Great Place to Work.



Welcome

Becoming a leading responsible business

We are building on our strong heritage to develop innovative, long-term and impactful relationships with our communities, clients and colleagues. We are proud that our purpose of helping people navigate life's ups and downs is about working together to do the right thing, both now and for the future. And it's that ethos which underpins our entire approach to responsible business.

Our aspiration, in line with our purpose-led strategy and our core values, is to be recognised as a leading responsible business. To us, this means having a strong culture as well as a clear and ambitious strategy to address the environmental, social and governance (ESG) issues which are material to our business. It also means recognising the power of impactful collaboration and developing trusted partnerships with our stakeholders.

In the last two years, we have prioritised our efforts on responding to the impact of the pandemic: from our award-winning wellbeing strategy to the pro bono support we have provided for those who cannot easily access justice, our approach has reflected our very solid foundations and heritage of supporting our communities. As we evolve our approach to doing business responsibly, our aim is to create ever more value and greater potential for long-term sustainable growth for us and our stakeholders.

In the last 12 months, we've made significant progress to achieve our aspiration. This has included welcoming our new Head of Responsible Business, Kate Fergusson, publishing our strategy to become a leading responsible business and establishing an enhanced governance structure, which feeds in insights from a variety of our stakeholders. We've supported the Irwin Mitchell Charities Foundation (IMCF) to establish a fund which will donate £500k to good causes, such as increasing access to employment in our communities over the next five years. And I'm especially proud that we have this year set out our roadmap to transition to Net Zero.

These changes come at a time when ESG issues have risen up the agenda and are of growing concern to our stakeholders: not least of all our clients, who increasingly look towards their legal and financial advisers to provide advice which embodies their own commitment to doing business responsibly. We are well equipped to continue meeting these challenges.

Thanks to our curiosity, commitment to learning and our strong culture of collaboration to generate innovative solutions.

In the following pages, we've shared an insight into doing business responsibly at Irwin Mitchell. I feel privileged to be part of an organisation which balances its long-term commitment to doing the right thing and creating sustainable change while addressing the most urgent and immediate societal issues. We're proud of the progress we've made, but we understand there is much more to do and we are absolutely ready for the challenge.

Garry Dowdle

**Group Chief Information Officer and
Chair of Irwin Mitchell's Responsible
Business Committee**



Our aspiration, in line with our purpose-led strategy and our core values, is to be recognised as a leading responsible business.

Garry Dowdle

**Group Chief Information Officer and
Chair of Irwin Mitchell's Responsible
Business Committee**



Our purpose and Responsible Business strategy

Our Responsible Business strategy is bold in its approach and ambition, setting out two overarching goals of (1) Inclusion, meaning enabling everyone to thrive and (2) Sustainability, meaning making everything we do positively impact our future. This is directly aligned to our purpose and our values.

Our aim is to develop inclusive and sustainable relationships with our stakeholders, from our colleagues and clients to our local communities, suppliers and the environment, working together to navigate life's ups and downs.

In FY21, we began a consultation process to identify the issues which are material to our colleagues and should form the key focus of our Responsible

Business strategy. This resulted in us identifying six priority focus areas – diversity, wellbeing, fairness, resilience, access (to jobs and justice) and environment. All of our work across our Responsible Business commitments aligns to these strategic focus areas.

In FY22/23 our plan is to build on these solid foundations by reviewing and appraising our identified focus areas to ensure they continue to represent the issues which are most material to our business and our stakeholders. We will undertake a comprehensive materiality assessment, working with external experts to run a consultation exercise which engages many of our key stakeholders.



Inclusion

Enabling everyone to thrive

Our focus areas



Diversity:

Understanding and celebrating our differences



Fairness:

Promoting a flexible, fair and unbiased approach



Access:

Improving access to employment and justice

Our priority Sustainable Development Goals



Sustainability

Everything we do positively impacts our future

Our focus areas



Resilience:

Thriving through change



Wellbeing:

Enabling happier and healthier lives



Environment:

Protecting our planet

Our priority Sustainable Development Goals





Our commitment to the United Nations Global Compact

We're committed to working together to help individuals and businesses navigate life's ups and downs – going beyond the provision of technical legal and financial advice to respond to client needs in a holistic way. We support those most in need through our proud heritage of community investment, and strive to create an inclusive workplace, where the wellbeing of our colleagues is a priority.

Our values have underpinned our purpose as we've evolved and they'll continue to define how we do business. They act as the compass guiding our behaviours and decision making and as a barometer against which we hold ourselves to account. The ESG issues facing businesses today are complex, so we will stay true to our values and close to our stakeholders to navigate them successfully.

With this in mind, I am proud that in July 2022, we became a signatory of the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC), committing to its ten principles and to continuing to focus on our ambition to become a leading responsible business; centred on the framework provided by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Andrew Tucker
Group Chief Executive Officer

The Ten Principles of the United Nations Global Compact

Human Rights

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

Principle 2: make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses.

Labour

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

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

Principle 5: the effective abolition of child labour; and

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

Environment

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

Principle 8: undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility; and

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

Anti-Corruption

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



Our commitment to the United Nations Global Compact continued

The 17 SDGs provide a road map for us to work together to achieve a better future for everyone. We believe that businesses have a critical role in achieving the SDGs. In FY20, we went through a consultation process with members of our senior leadership team to map out which goals we felt were most closely aligned to the key focus areas of our Responsible Business strategy: the issues which were identified as most important to us by our colleagues and where we feel we can make the most impact. As you read through this report, you will see different case studies aligned to the SDGs to evidence our commitment.





Introduction

Building on solid foundations

It is often difficult to gain a genuine insight into an organisation's culture and values through a written report but over the next few pages, we have shared some stories and reflections which we hope bring to life what it is like to work with and for Irwin Mitchell.



Positioning Responsible Business at the heart of our Growth team and strategy is a real game-changer, it means that doing business and meeting our client needs in a sustainable, inclusive and responsible way is factored into the most critical decisions we make.

Kate Fergusson
Head of Responsible Business,
Irwin Mitchell



This includes the commitment we have made to our colleagues through our Flexible by Choice and Flexible by Success approach which enable them to decide where and when they choose to work, whilst continuing to meet the needs of clients and our business. It also covers how we collaborate with our clients to raise awareness of critical ESG issues, working with partner schools and charities to widen access to employment opportunities in the professional and financial services sectors and launching our new environmental strategy.

As a purpose-led business, we measure our success according to the impact we have upon key stakeholders, including our people and our planet. In this report, you will see frequent references to our Balanced Scorecard framework which includes a range of both financial and non-financial reporting measures. At Irwin Mitchell, we understand that 'good' or 'responsible' business should also be 'good for business' and a commitment to doing the right thing will in the long-term, create value and enable our organisation to grow in a sustainable and responsible way.

We are proud of the journey we have been on over the last 12 months and the commitments we have made to be recognised as a leading responsible business but we know that there is much more to do and we are embracing the opportunity. This starts in FY23 with our first full materiality assessment and we look forward to engaging with our key stakeholders and sharing our findings with you in 2023.

Kate Fergusson
Head of Responsible Business, Irwin Mitchell



Introducing our new Responsible Business Committee

Our Responsible Business Committee (RBC) is chaired by our Group Chief Information Officer and is accountable to the most senior decision making level within the firm.

The RBC consists of subject matter experts, sponsors and representatives for our key stakeholder relationships including colleague representatives who ensure that colleague voice remains at the heart of our strategy.

The RBC considers all aspects of our Responsible Business strategy and progress made in each of our six focus areas and ensures this is aligned with our purpose and values.

Our D&I Board, National Wellbeing Group, Group Environmental Sustainability, Community Investment and Pro Bono Forums have Executive sponsors and reporting lines in to the RBC.

Measuring our progress

We are committed to measuring the impact of our work to ensure we continue to use our skills, expertise and resources to make the greatest positive impact on our stakeholders. We use a range of external benchmarking tools and key performance indicators to monitor our progress.

We're signatories to:

The Law Society
Pro Bono Charter



Race at Work Charter signatory

We're members or supporters of the following networks:



We participate in a number of external benchmarks to assess progress against our diversity and inclusion strategy, including:



Disability Confident (we are currently Level 2 and aiming for Level 3 in FY23/24)



Stonewall Workplace Equality Index (ranked at 31st in 2022)



Great Place to Work has recognised us as one of the UK's Best Workplaces for Women 2022 - Super Large Employers (ranked 10th) and one of the UK's Best Workplaces for Wellbeing 2022 - Super Large Employers.

Social Mobility
Employer Index

In 2022 we participated in the Social Mobility Employer Index for the first time.



Our Responsible Business Performance Data

GHG emissions and energy usage data for period 01 May 2019 to 30 April 2022

Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting		2021/22	2020/21	2019/20
Environment	Emissions from combustion of gas (Scope 1 – tonnes of CO ₂ e)	40	21	Not reported
	Emissions from combustion of fuel for transport purposes (Scope 1 – tonnes of CO ₂ e)	729	490	1,008
	Emissions from electricity purchased for own use including for the purpose of transport (Scope 2 – tonnes of CO ₂ e)	929	1,074	1,358
	Emissions from business travel in rental cars or employee-owned vehicles where company is responsible for purchasing the fuel (Scope 3 – tonnes of CO ₂ e)	110	16	17
	Total gross tonnes CO ₂ based on above	1,808	1,601	2,583
	Office energy consumption to calculate emissions (kWh)	4,373,038	4,722,421	5,304,469
	Scope 1 tonnes CO ₂ emissions per m ² leasehold office space	0.020	0.013	0.026
	Scope 2 tonnes CO ₂ emissions per m ² leasehold office space	0.024	0.028	0.035
	CO ₂ emissions per colleague - based on the number of employees and Partners at financial year end	0.62	0.52	0.84

In 2022, we published our new environmental targets and we will be reporting on progress made in future reports. To read more about our strategy on Environment, please see [page 26](#).

Communities					
Stakeholder	Performance Indicator/Measure	Progress to date	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20
Local Communities	Percentage of colleagues utilising their volunteering allowance (based on 3,033 average number of colleagues in FY)	Colleagues logged 4,100+ hours of volunteering work for our communities ¹	16.8%	N/A	N/A
	Total Group and colleague charitable donations and fundraising	New charity partnership programme	£289k	£322k	N/A

1. Inclusive of some of our pro bono work.



Our Responsible Business Performance Data continued

Stakeholder	Performance Indicator/Measure	Colleagues			
		Progress to date	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20
Diversity and Inclusion	Percentage of colleagues sharing diversity information (including those selecting prefer not to say)		72.8%	74.2%	75.1%
	Gender Pay Gap (mean) * data for LLP only ¹	Full history of our pay gap reports available on our website	11%	10.5%	10.3%
	Percentage of women in partnership roles	Read our latest insights	52.3%	48.1%	44.1%
	Percentage of partnership promotions made to women		40.9%	81.8%	N/A
	Percentage of women in senior roles (associate and above) in IM Asset Management – Target of 30% by 2025		39.3%	16.7%	12.5%
	Disability Confident level achieved	Level 2 of Disability Confident achieved in April 2022. Target level 3 by May 2023. Read our statement	Level 2	Level 1	N/A
	Ethnicity Pay Gap (mean) * data is only for LLP	Full history of our pay gap reports available on our website	-6.4%	-7.4%	-2.3%
	Percentage of colleagues from minority ethnic backgrounds (excluding White minority ethnic groups) in partnership roles	Read our latest update on progress against the Race at Work Charter	5.4%	5.0%	5.1%
	Percentage of partnership promotions made to colleagues from minority ethnic backgrounds (excluding White minority ethnic groups)		9.1%	4.5%	N/A
	Our ranking in Stonewall's Workplace Equality Index	Gold award received from Stonewall in 2022	31st	N/A	74th
	Number of apprentices in the business		62	19	N/A
	Total number of meaningful interactions with young people in education (from less advantaged backgrounds)		464	N/A	N/A
Wellbeing	Our Great Place to Work Wellbeing Survey Score (based on colleague feedback)		67	64	64

Stakeholder	Performance Indicator/Measure	Clients			
		Progress to date	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20
Clients	EcoVadis Score		Silver	N/A	Silver
	Business in the Community's Responsible Business Tracker Score		52% ²	N/A	50% ³
	Average Trust Pilot Score	Score is out of 5	4.7	4.7	4.6
	Net Promoter Score	Measure of client service (based on feedback from clients about likelihood of recommending our services)	62	71	59

¹ We've improved our reporting process and reviewed our 2020 figures, resulting in a slight amendment to those previously reported.

² Against a 2021/22 cohort average of 45%.

³ Against a 2019/20 cohort average of 43%.



Communities

We are passionate about our work with communities around the UK, from supporting local organisations and charities to our objective of widening access to the legal sector for all.

Local communities

Our priority SDGs:





Local Communities

Local Community Investment

We have a long-standing commitment to supporting our local communities through fundraising, volunteering and providing pro bono legal advice for those who cannot easily afford to access justice.

4,100+

hours of volunteering work provided to our communities¹

84.5%

is the average score colleagues gave us for social responsibility in our annual Great Place to Work pulse surveys

464

interactions with pupils from less advantaged backgrounds to support their career aspirations

Our colleagues raise funds in partnership with the Irwin Mitchell Charities Foundation (IMCF), which is an independent charitable foundation set up by colleagues in 1997 to support those experiencing hardship and distress in our communities. In 2022, the IMCF celebrates its 25th anniversary and continues to be strongly supported by our colleagues and partners.

In FY22, our 13 Charities of the Year received c.£152k thanks to the IMCF and our colleagues. Irwin Mitchell and its colleagues donated and fundraised £289k for good causes.

Supporting our communities through volunteering and pro bono

We encourage all of our colleagues to maximise the opportunity of their 14 hour (pro rata) Community Allowance, by taking part in skills-based volunteering opportunities aligned to our Responsible Business strategy.

Improving access to jobs and justice is a strategic priority and has been a focus of our community investment volunteering programme for many years. We recognise the value that our people's legal skills and expertise can bring to some of the most vulnerable people and organisations in society. We are members of LawWorks and support a number of pro bono legal advice clinics across the UK on an ongoing basis. We work with school partners around the UK who are identified as being in most need of support to provide students with mentoring and skills-based activities focused on numeracy, literacy and careers and to run public speaking competitions.



Linking to our focus areas:



Fairness



Access



Resilience

1. Inclusive of some of our pro bono work.



Local Communities continued



In 2021, we started out with 19 apprentices and now we have 62, with plans to increase this to 89 by September 2022.

Lorcan Seery, Apprentice Manager –
Talent, Irwin Mitchell



Communities



Diversity



Fairness



Access

Social mobility and widening access to the legal sector

In July 2021, the Social Mobility Commission published an analysis of social mobility in the UK. The State of the Nation 2021 report concluded that “... you are still 60% more likely to be in a professional job if you were from a privileged background rather than a working class background¹”.

The survey of diversity in law firms carried out in 2021 by the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) also revealed that “23% of UK lawyers attended fee-paying schools compared to 7.5% of the general population²”.

On the next page, we discuss what Irwin Mitchell is doing to widen access to the legal and financial services sectors.

89

apprentices by
September 2022

62

PRIME students since
2020

1. Source: Social Mobility Commission, State of the nation 2021: Social mobility and the pandemic, Section viii, July 2021 www.gov.uk/government/publications/state-of-the-nation-2021-social-mobility-and-the-pandemic
2. Source: Source: How diverse is the solicitors' profession?, Solicitors Regulation Authority, updated 29 April 2022, www.sra.org.uk/sra/equality-diversity/diversity-profession/diverse-legal-profession/



Local Communities continued

Q&A

Kathryn Selby, Responsible Business Executive, Irwin Mitchell, joined a conversation with Satinder Bains, Partner – Workplace Illness and Chair of Irwin Mitchell's Social Mobility Colleague Network, IM Aspiring and Apprentice Manager – Talent Acquisition, Lorcan Seery, to discuss our journey around social mobility and widening access to the legal and financial services sectors.

Kathryn: What are the most pressing issues in relation to social mobility and increasing access to the legal profession?

Satinder: There needs to be more awareness of what social mobility means in the UK. Young people are facing particular challenges, accelerated by the pandemic. We need to address these issues and our colleagues need to reflect the society that they serve. If we have that diversity, our organisation will be more innovative and creative and we will be able to better serve our clients and our communities.

Lorcan: I still believe we have some more work to do to promote the value of apprenticeships and to show both students and their families that these programmes can be a great alternative to university. Through our 15 offices we have developed strong partnerships with our communities and educational institutions, but we need to do more. It is critical that we continue to spread the word about the opportunities that exist within organisations such as Irwin Mitchell, that may not fit the traditional university route.

Kathryn: Can you explain how our work on social mobility and access links to our aspirations as an organisation and supports our purpose?

Satinder: Making a noticeable difference to our clients, colleagues and communities forms part of our DNA. We know that being a responsible business is vital to our future success. We work with many stakeholders to improve educational and employment outcomes for children in the UK who come from disadvantaged backgrounds. We have been involved in the PRIME programme for ten years now (a consortium of law firms committed to improving social mobility and access to a career in law), and have successfully delivered PRIME placements in the majority of our offices. We have also delivered remote mentoring schemes to a school in Birmingham; rolled out a mentoring scheme to an inner-city school in London; run the Speak Out competition in Sheffield to improve students' confidence around public speaking; and are about to launch a mentoring programme with City University. In 2021, we donated £40k to the Laptops for Kids campaign to help children in Sheffield gain access to essential technology.

Lorcan: For me, apprenticeships can be a great way to enhance the diversity and inclusion of our colleagues. We create real opportunities by having open discussions with our key stakeholders about apprenticeship programmes that are available. As a result, we have already introduced 11 new apprenticeship programmes over the last 12 months. If we continue to be more open-minded about the types of skillsets we are looking for, and attract people that never thought about a career in law - let alone achieve full solicitor status in six years – to our apprenticeship programme, it would really support our overall purpose.

Kathryn: What have been the biggest achievements and challenges over the past year and what is the focus going forward?

Satinder: For me, the highlight has been engaging with younger people and despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, relaunching our PRIME programme as a virtual offering. Since March 2020, we have provided 62 students across the UK with placements across our office network. We now need to move to a position where we connect our outreach programmes to the recruitment pipeline, including apprenticeships. It's really important that we have more conversations about progression and how the legal sector recognises and merits performance. I want to encourage PRIME reps to reach out to local schools and colleges so that we build on our organic roots and feed this into Early Careers.

Lorcan: When I joined Irwin Mitchell in March 2021, we had 19 apprentices and now we have 61, which is an amazing achievement. We are growing this number to 89 by September 2022. In September 2021, we had our largest ever single intake of apprenticeships - 20 paralegals and four business administrators. Of these, 18 had joined straight from leaving school. I make sure they all have a voice and the support they need. We understand that these opportunities can be life changing and we are striving to do more in terms of developing talent.

Kathryn: Finally, what does the opportunity to support this work mean to you personally?

Satinder: The work we do around social mobility is extremely important to me. My own background is one of disadvantage and limited financial support and I understand the challenges faced by people in a similar situation. I want to be able to give something back as I understand how hard it can be to get that opportunity to fulfil your own career aspirations.

Lorcan: I've always been passionate about Early Careers and I've been fortunate to work with some fantastic people over the years. I've felt extremely privileged to have been in positions where I have been able to offer someone a position and it has literally been life changing for them – and their families. Those are their words, not mine!



Local Communities continued



To mark the Irwin Mitchell Charities Foundation's (IMCF) 25th year, we've evolved our approach to community investment so we can make an even greater impact. This has included working with expert external consultants and hundreds of colleagues who've helped develop a new Charity Partnership programme, which will see us team up with three national charities which make local impact and align to our Responsible Business strategy. They've also helped develop a new fund which will see the IMCF make £100k in donations to local good causes every year, for the next five years. Because our teams care so passionately about making a difference in our communities, we've kept our long-standing tradition of keeping colleagues front and centre of our nomination process for both of the new projects.

Kate Rawlings, Responsible Business Manager, Irwin Mitchell and IMCF Trustee



Communities



Celebrating 25 years of the Irwin Mitchell Charities Foundation



I am very proud to be one of the founding trustees of the IMCF. Back in 1997, we never envisaged that the charity would develop and grow as it has done! We planted an acorn and it's now a flourishing oak tree. We've raised money for, and supported, so many good causes over the years and the commitment and support of Irwin Mitchell's colleagues has been truly outstanding.

This includes year-on-year funding through the firm and colleague donations, which have enabled the IMCF to donate almost £2.9m to good causes since it was founded. Irwin Mitchell's annual Community Allowance also enables colleagues to undertake volunteering activities which support our charities and our wider communities. It's also fantastic that we've been able to support three of the appeals to help alleviate the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine recently, in addition to the donations we've made to our various Charities of the Year in the UK.

Adrian Budgen, Partner, Irwin Mitchell and IMCF Trustee



Local Communities continued

We asked our Charities of the Year (COTYs) to share some of their experiences of working with Irwin Mitchell and the IMCF over the past two years...



Your donations during the pandemic could have paid for 173 patients to receive a visit in their own home from our nurses, allowing them to be close to family and friends at the end of their lives.

Laura Kelly,
Head of Philanthropy,
St Catherine's Hospice

Charities of the Year



Resilience



Wellbeing

St Catherine's Hospice Gatwick

Throughout the pandemic, St Catherine's continued to care for families facing terminal illness and the end of life across Sussex and Surrey. With careful measures in place, the hospice never closed to visitors, allowing families to be together at the most precious time, and our community nursing teams continued to go into people's homes.

Our nursing and bereavement teams also continued to offer people advice and reassurance, day and night, via our phone-lines. The coronavirus crisis had a severe impact on many funding sources that our hospice relies on to provide essential care. All of our shops were temporarily closed and our fundraising events were cancelled.

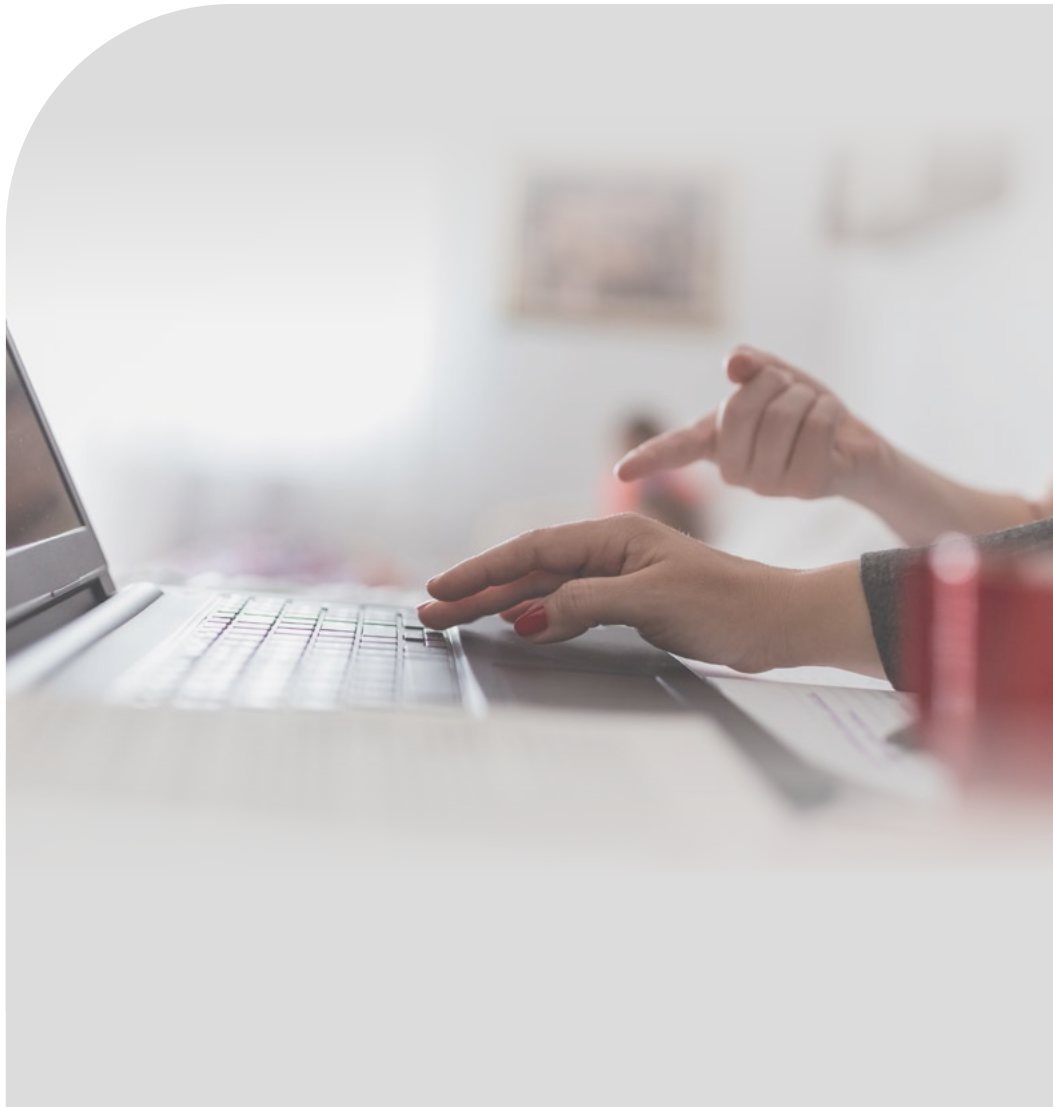
We were determined not to let people in our community down at the most crucial of times and we're all proud that we continued to safely support people. But this was only possible thanks to local supporters like the team at Irwin Mitchell and the Irwin Mitchell Charities Foundation (IMCF). Knowing how much our hospice means to local people kept us going. It makes us determined to keep providing outstanding care and with Irwin Mitchell's and the IMCF's help, to make sure that nobody in our community has to face death and loss alone. We cannot thank the Irwin Mitchell and IMCF team at Gatwick enough for their incredible energy, enthusiasm and commitment to supporting St Catherine's.

Laura Kelly, Head of Philanthropy,
St Catherine's Hospice

ST CATHERINE'S
HOSPICE



Local Communities continued



Charities of the Year



Diversity



Fairness



Resilience



Wellbeing

ENABLE Scotland Glasgow

The impacts of COVID-19 on the 175,000 people who have learning disabilities across Scotland has been devastating – with thousands of already isolated individuals (and their families) struggling with their mental health because of restrictions on community activity, complex guidance and fears over the unknown impacts of the virus on disabled people. Despite this, ENABLE Scotland's membership and advocacy services have continued to support hundreds of individuals across the country with ACE Connect, an online version of our popular group activities, and Family Connect, a peer network for family carers.

Getting support from the IMCF meant that we were able to supply many of our members and their families with digital equipment and support to access the internet, and ran over 300 social, wellbeing and public health information sessions. We also provided opportunities for families to ask questions to expert speakers on topics including health, benefits, finances, and legal rights.

We supported more than 5,000 people to access our dedicated coronavirus hub on the ENABLE Scotland website – with over 1,000 families receiving individual support to understand the impact of the pandemic on their rights in terms of welfare and benefits, and the changes to the law made by the emergency coronavirus legislation.

Jan Savage,
Director, ENABLE Scotland





Local Communities continued



Charities of the Year



Access



Resilience



Wellbeing

Loose Ends Newbury

We had to change the way we operate during lockdown, providing takeaway meals to the hotels housing the homeless and providing takeaway meals at the door. Since reopening, we have seen a steady increase in the number of people who need our services. We now see new people who have lost their jobs and are in financial difficulties as well as new people who are homeless. We are currently providing about 120 to 130 meals a week to around 80 people - but numbers are increasing.

With the support of the IMCF, we were able to buy extra food parcels, toiletries and clothes that were needed. The Food Bank, which donates food to us, is giving out more food to families in need and is likely to have less food to provide for Loose Ends, so the IMCF's generous donation helped us to provide about 300 meals a week to hotels housing homeless people during lockdown. We have also at last moved into our new premises and any donation will also help us to buy anything needed for our new home. The IMCF team have been very generous and have contacted us on a regular basis.

Linda Fergusson,
Chair of Loose Ends, Newbury





Local Communities continued

Our focus on increasing access to justice

We recognise that the pro bono legal advice we provide is one of the most valuable contributions we can make to our communities. Supporting individuals and organisations who are most in need to access justice is a pivotal component in our Responsible Business strategy and in the present climate is needed more than ever. With the skills we have we are in a privileged position to be able to help those most in need and that is something we are focused on doing.



Richard Kayser,
Partner (Medical Negligence) and
National Head of Pro Bono,
Irwin Mitchell



Communities



Fairness



Access



Wellbeing

Working with LawWorks to support access to welfare benefits

LawWorks' Welfare Benefits Advocacy Project supports some of the most vulnerable people in society with appeals in relation to welfare benefits applications to the Social Security Tribunal.

There is a significant need yet a limited supply of pro bono legal advice for individuals facing social welfare issues, with many clients unable to afford legal representation and law clinics being without the resources to support them with their appeals.

Our team has been supporting this LawWorks initiative since 2019 and have, to date, advised 10 clients with appeals in relation to Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), Personal Independence Payment (PIP), and Universal Credit. We have been successful in 100% of these appeals, which has meant the awarding/reinstatement or increase of PIP (in one case indefinitely) and/or Employment and Support Allowance (ESA). We are currently engaged in two active appeals.

The pro bono advice provided by our colleagues includes drafting submissions to the Social Security Tribunal, and supporting and representing the clients at the Tribunal hearing. The clients we have supported via the scheme to date have all been suffering from physical and/or psychological disabilities. On the following page we've shared the story of a client who we supported.



Local Communities continued

Client A



Fairness



Access



Wellbeing

Client A suffered an injury to her foot as a result of an accident, which resulted in mobility difficulties, reduced sensation in her injured foot, and degenerative arthritis. She also suffered with psychological issues as a result of her injuries.

She was initially awarded 0 points for both the daily living and mobility components of PIP, meaning she received no benefits from the Department For Work and Pensions (DWP) despite being unable to walk without assistance. Following a reconsideration of her case, she was awarded the basic rate for mobility, but was still awarded 0 points for the daily living component. Following consideration of the submissions we drafted and a brief hearing, the client was awarded the standard rate for daily living and the enhanced rate for mobility.

Client A told us that she did not know what she would have done without the professional help and guidance of Irwin Mitchell, commenting that:



Your commitment to details and the law were, I'm sure, the reason I won my appeal. You kept me notified throughout, gave me hope and confidence and I am so very grateful. My win means that I had backdated payments and an increased allowance on both ESA and PIP which in turn has made my life so very much easier.

Client A



The Welfare Benefits Advocacy Project offers a vital service to disabled clients who do not have the financial means to pay for legal representation. It has been a pleasure working in collaboration with the pro bono lawyers at Irwin Mitchell, who are all hugely motivated to assist LawWorks' clients to achieve great results at their tribunal hearings. The commitment and dedication of all involved with the project has led to a 100% tribunal success rate to date. The extra financial income that results from a successful case can radically improve the lives of some of the most vulnerable members of society.

Sebastian Lettouche,
Solicitor – Secondary Specialisation Team,
LawWorks

AvMA Helpline



Fairness



Access



Wellbeing

We currently have 14 colleagues from our national medical negligence team who are volunteers for the Action Against Medical Accidents (AvMA) helpline. Each colleague has been vetted and trained by AvMA to ensure they meet their helpline standards and they commit to one or two sessions per month providing advice on a wide range of healthcare issues. AvMA is a charity which supports patients who have suffered from medical accidents and also campaigns to improve patient safety. Irwin Mitchell has a long-standing relationship with the charity.

The helpline is very busy and is staffed by more than 90 volunteers who provide initial advice and support, as well as signposting to specialist solicitors where litigation is considered appropriate. Often the callers to the helpline are facing considerable personal challenges and are unaware of the support that is available and how to access this. AvMA's helpline is a first point of contact for these patients. Separately, AvMA also operates a specialist clinical negligence accreditation scheme. Several of Irwin Mitchell's lawyers have met the rigorous requirements demanded by the scheme and have been appointed to the AvMA specialist panel.



Communities

Over the past year, we've continued to develop our Procurement and Supplier Management teams, evolving our Supplier Relationship Management Framework.

Suppliers

Net Zero

Our priority SDGs:





Our Suppliers

Responsible supply chain management



Resilience



Environment

We want to ensure that the suppliers we decide to work with, and those we currently engage, share our ambition for doing business responsibly and sustainably.

We have put checks in place to ensure that our suppliers have policies for key ESG issues and are working to improve this process so that no matter what stages of maturity our suppliers are at, we can rest assured they are demonstrating progress. We also require our critical suppliers to demonstrate their responsible business credentials, which are evaluated and scored, as part of our tender process or as part of our on-going supplier management approach.

We recognise that the scale of problems facing people and planet require businesses to collaborate to find innovative solutions.

Wherever possible, we aim to develop close working relationships with our suppliers so we can share best practice, learn from each other's experience and overcome challenges in partnership. Over the past year this has included working with suppliers to develop recycling schemes for stationery and IT products and changing the products we use to more sustainable options.



A spotlight on our Human Touch campaign



Diversity



Fairness



Access

In 2021, we launched our Human Touch advertising campaign featuring real Irwin Mitchell clients sharing their powerful personal stories about working with us. This campaign was special for another reason, working with our partners, Merkle B2B, we were determined to reflect inclusion behind the scenes as well as on screen. We set about recruiting a more inclusive production team and made adjustments to create a more inclusive working environment. Our final team included people with disabilities in 60% of its senior roles – over six times the industry average. You can learn more about our campaign and watch our award winning video on our website.



For more information, visit our website /

www.irwinmitchell.com/news-and-insights/in-focus/the-human-touch/an-inclusive-campaign



Our Suppliers continued



We'd love to be able to replicate our relationship with Red-Inc, which is centred on shared values, purpose and a common goal to protect people and planet, across our wider supply chain.

Sarah Ball,
Director of Operations, Irwin Mitchell



Resilience



Environment

Collaborating with Red-Inc to address social and environmental problems together

In the face of critical social and environmental problems, the call to action for businesses to collaborate and innovate with their suppliers is louder than ever. Kate Rawlings, Responsible Business Manager, Irwin Mitchell, sat down with our Director of Operations, Sarah Ball, and Adam Huttly, founder of the B-Corp certified stationery suppliers Red-Inc, to discuss how our unique relationship is helping both organisations step up to the challenge.

4,000

In a typical year we plant 4,000 trees at home and abroad, via projects with our stationery suppliers Red-Inc. Thanks to our partnership we've protected 3,000 acres of rainforest.



Our Suppliers continued

Q&A

Kate Rawlings, Responsible Business Manager, Irwin Mitchell, in conversation with our Director of Operations, Sarah Ball, and Adam Huttly, founder of the B-Corp certified stationery suppliers Red-Inc

Kate: Why are businesses like Irwin Mitchell and Red-Inc paying closer attention to their supply chains?

Adam: As we race to Net Zero, measuring and reducing the emissions created in the supply chain, known as 'Scope 3', will be the biggest challenge. Organisations throughout the value chain will need to work collaboratively to overcome that. There's a far greater emphasis on organisations to be transparent about their supply chains. While that presents a challenge, it's also an opportunity to offer clients like Irwin Mitchell new services like regular sustainability reports and recycling initiatives to support more circular business models. We're at societal crossroads and SMEs like ours risk being left behind if they don't pay close attention to these issues.

Sarah: Although we've got a way to go to mature our supplier management framework, we're increasingly trying to maximise the potential for our suppliers to drive our performance, not just in terms of commercial value but in terms of our impact on people and the planet. We're committed to learning from our suppliers to help us achieve our ambition of becoming a leading responsible business. We see the value developing relationships with our suppliers can add and likewise we want to add value to them in return, especially those in earlier stages of their own sustainability journeys.

Kate: How important were shared values in the initial decision to work together?

Sarah: Shared values are essential. You have to have some difficult conversations with suppliers at times because while money is not always the most important factor, we all have budgets to manage. When you get that connection which takes you beyond a solely cost based approach, it's about exploring what else can be provided that will deliver value into the business - whether that is knowledge, having a supplier who can improve your credentials, or someone who goes above and beyond to support in a time of need.

Adam: Our shared values have allowed us to develop together. You've got to be receptive and open minded because it takes a depth of relationship to solve problems together. Having a shared ambition means we can have those difficult conversations because we are trying to achieve a common goal.

Kate: What have been our biggest achievements and challenges?

Adam: The legal industry is very traditional and heavily reliant on paper, which makes introducing change challenging. However, Irwin Mitchell has welcomed some of the challenges we've thrown at them. Even when we faced resistance from colleagues the team stuck with it when others would have given up. Thanks to our schemes together we typically plant 4,000 trees each year at home and abroad. We've also protected 3000 acres of rainforest by protecting the legal land rights of indigenous people.

Sarah: Not only has Red-Inc helped us buy better products they've also helped evolve the way we order. Avoiding next day emergency deliveries by improving the accuracy of our ordering has increased efficiency and created savings. Typically we avoid 155,000 miles a year and the 66 TCO₂e as a result. Not only has Red-Inc helped us reduce pollution and congestion created by our orders, as much as possible, but they carbon offset the remainder.

Adam: We've also developed a range of schemes that Irwin Mitchell has introduced into their offices such as card, pen and stationery product recycling. Not only are they available to colleagues but they are open to clients and members of the public. That circular approach to business allows us to offer more diverse services.

Kate: What part will Red-Inc (and our other suppliers) play as we deliver our new environmental strategy?

Sarah: We have a target to reduce our environmental impact so we need to develop mechanisms to be able to report on how we're doing that. We'll be using the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi) which will incorporate a 50% reduction by 2030 of Scope 3 emissions (pre COVID-19 baseline). It's a big ambition for us that our suppliers will play an essential part in.

Adam: Although we're only a small business we've signed up to SBTi, voluntarily, because we want to be on that journey so we can understand the challenges and help our clients with theirs. While the scale of the task at hand feels terrifying, we'll face it head on and continue delivering. We are a leader in our industry and we want to stay ahead. Conversations are going to be increasingly about sharing and transparency. We've all got to change, put pride aside and work together on this one goal to achieve Net Zero and make sure our future generations, who expect a lot more, have the right path to follow and the right businesses to enter.



Communities

Environmental sustainability is important to our colleagues, our clients and our communities. Our ambition is to be recognised as a leader within this field.

Environment

Our priority SDGs:





Environment

Protecting our planet

Environmental sustainability is important to our colleagues, our clients and our communities. Our ambition is to be recognised as a leader within this field.

Leading the way requires us to set clear, near and long-term goals to minimise our impact on the environment and:

- Improve reporting and external transparency around our ambitions and achievement;
- Support and educate our colleagues;
- Work with our supply chain to reduce their environmental impact; and
- Seek opportunities to work with our clients on their Net Zero journeys.

Building on strong foundations

Managing our environmental impact is not a new priority, as evidenced by a number of key achievements and a culture across our organisation that recognises the importance of environmental stewardship.

However, we accelerated our position in 2021 as a response to the urgent requirement for all sectors of society to rapidly decarbonise to avoid the worst impacts of climate change.

Linking to our focus areas:



Resilience



Environment

Environment remains a key focus of our Responsible Business strategy and the strategic importance of this area to our business was demonstrated by the appointment of our first Environmental and Sustainability Manager, in 2021.

Our new strategy

In 2021, we worked with leading sustainability consultancy Carbon Intelligence to:

- Baseline our Scope 1 and 2 Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions (pre-COVID-19 FY19/20);
- Conduct a materiality and gap analysis for Scope 3 emissions; and
- Prepare a sustainability strategy diagnostic to evaluate our market position, our internal ambition, our engagement and the level of opportunity.

This project placed us in the best position to prepare and launch an ambitious new environmental strategy for 2022. We have committed to achieving Net Zero by 2040 and have outlined our transition plans, incorporating targets such as 100% renewable electricity across all our offices by 2025 and a 50% reduction in our total organisational footprint by 2030 (versus pre-COVID FY19/20 baseline). Our aim is for our climate targets to be verified by the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi) in 2023.

Our environmental achievements to date:

Founding members of the Legal Sustainability Alliance (LSA) since 2008

Certified annually to ISO 14001 - Environmental Management and ISO 50001 - Energy Management

Signatories to the LSA Legal Renewables Initiative

Silver EcoVadis Sustainability rating in 2022

Environment & Sustainability Manager recruited in 2021

Achieved our environmental targets of keeping printing and travel well below our pre-pandemic levels in FY22

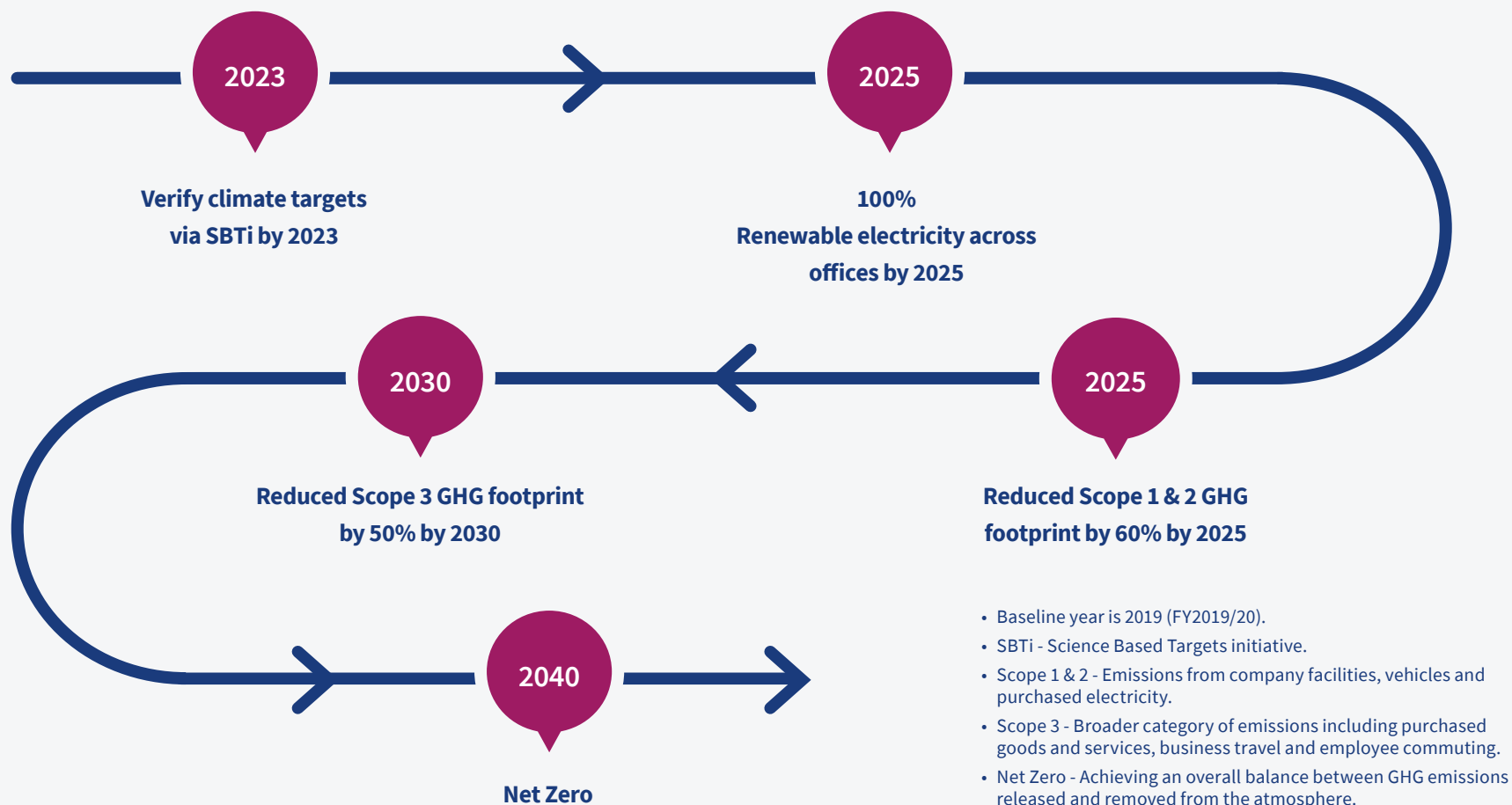
Donated £8k to three UK projects working to protect and develop vital woodlands in FY22 through our supplier, Red-Inc.





Environment continued

Roadmap to Net Zero



For data in relation to our Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting, please refer to our Performance Measures on [page 9](#).



Environment continued

Reporting against the Task Force on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) Framework

Understanding our resilience to climate change

As part of our new strategy, we're continuing to integrate the identification of climate-related risks and opportunities into our work. This will form a fundamental part of our industry-leading approach to risk and resilience, leaving us better placed to adapt to the challenges that the climate emergency already poses and will continue to do, in the coming years.

This year we're voluntarily reporting our initial identification and disclosure of those risks and opportunities against the framework provided by the TCFD. We'll evolve this by conducting a climate scenario analysis upon a subset of our material risks in our next report.

Governance

In March 2022, we launched a new governance approach to ensure the effective assessments and management of climate-related risks and opportunities. Responsibility for the overall strategy has been delegated by the most senior decision making level in the firm to our Responsible Business Committee (RBC). Oversight of climate-related risks and opportunities is provided to the RBC on at least a quarterly basis.

Our newly-formed Group Environmental Sustainability Forum (GESF) is made up of strategic leads accountable for the main elements of our environmental strategy, representatives of our colleague sustainability network IM Green, and our suppliers.

The Group Executive Committee (GEC) and the RBC have approved our environmental strategy and therein, our commitments to environmental performance improvement and climate action targets, including achieving a status of Net Zero by 2040. The RBC oversees progress against our targets and alignment with our overall Responsible Business strategy.

Strategy

Our Group strategy is purpose-led and underpinned by our commitment to work together to navigate life's ups and downs. This is perfectly aligned with the theme of remaining adaptable to the challenges brought by climate change. We consider ourselves to be well structured to anticipate potential impacts on our business and to grasp the opportunities presented.

Becoming a leading responsible business is fundamental to our future success. Sustainability, and our goal, to make everything we do positively impact our future, is one of the two key principles of our Responsible Business strategy. Environment and Resilience have been identified as material issues for us and represent two relevant and interconnecting focus areas which help us achieve the aims of the strategy (see [page 4](#) for an overview of our Responsible Business strategy).

Our new environmental strategy and the frameworks and structures described here enable the effective identification, assessment and overall management of material climate-related risks and opportunities.

Risk Management

The Group employs a Three Lines model to delineate responsibilities and coordinate activity in the management of risk, ensuring adequate segregation in the oversight and assurance of risk.

As part of effective first line risk management, we will continue to work collaboratively with leaders across the Group to identify, assess, treat, monitor and report all climate-related hazard and opportunity risks. Key Risk and Control information is recorded within the Group's Risk Management System (Origami), which forms the basis of ongoing risk management reporting.

We have first line forums in place, including our GESF and RBC, which support the identification and management of risks and opportunities associated with our environmental performance via regular review of KPIs and periodic input from external stakeholders (e.g. third-party consultancy, supply chain partners).

In addition, there are first line risk forums/committees which provide oversight and assurance regarding the management of key risks, including a regular report on the Group's Principal Risks.

Linking to our focus areas:



Resilience



Environment



Environment continued

Key climate-related risks and opportunities

Climate-related risks	Financial risks	<p>Investments Growing risk of investments being impacted by stranded assets linked to fossil fuels.</p> <p>Strategy and revenue Potential financial loss from failure to adapt our core services to consider the impacts of climate change.</p> <p>Energy Higher energy costs due to transition to renewables, take-up of low carbon technologies, rising temperatures increasing energy and water consumption for cooling across operations (offices and data centres) could impact operational costs and supply chain.</p>
	Regulatory risks	Changing regulations will increase compliance requirements.
	Market risks	Potential changes to markets as supply and demand shifts for certain commodities, products and services due to climate-related risks and opportunities being taken into account.
	Reputational risks	<p>Stakeholder perception The ESG approach and in particular climate action strategy of an organisation is a potential source of reputational risk tied to changing stakeholder perceptions.</p> <p>Attracting and retaining talent Lack of new talent attracted to or retained by the Group due to poor perception / reputation based on environmental performance.</p>

Physical risks	Health, safety and wellbeing risks	Posed to our colleagues, clients and communities as climate patterns change and extreme weather events become more commonplace.
	Disruption and physical damage	Service to clients, offices, operations, business travel and supply chain face disruption as they are impacted by acute physical events such as flooding.

Climate-related opportunities	Litigation	Rise in climate-related litigation claims by property owners, states, insurers, shareholders and public interest organisations. Reasons include failure of organisations to mitigate against or adapt to climate change and poor disclosure around material financial risks. Rise of accusations of 'greenwashing'. As the value of loss and damage arising from climate change grows, litigation risk is also likely to increase.
	Financial	<p>Resilience Improved financial resilience and confidence in short, medium and longer-term business plan and investments by applying a 'climate lens' to the firm's business model and financing decisions. Collaborate with like-minded organisations supporting the transition (e.g. clean tech and infrastructure innovations) and phase-out inherent risk areas including fossil fuels.</p> <p>New propositions Respond to the growing market for ESG solutions by developing ways to support clients on their decarbonisation journeys.</p> <p>Resource efficiency Lower operating costs due to improved efficiency of buildings, equipment and transport e.g. energy, materials, water and waste management.</p>
	Climate justice	Law firms are perfectly placed to use their influence and expertise within the community to combat social inequalities and represent those most affected by climate change. Strategies include directing pro bono hours to issues directly or indirectly linked to climate change.
	Supply chain	Tackle broader GHG impacts and partner with like-minded organisations by collaborating with key suppliers to support their transition.



Environment continued

Metrics and Targets

This year we've announced a set of challenging targets and objectives in line with our vision to lead the way in corporate sustainability and to be recognised as a leading responsible business. Our Roadmap to Net Zero (pictured on [page 27](#)) includes targets for Scope 1, 2 and 3 GHG emissions. We have committed to verifying these targets with the SBTi by 2023.

In support of our initial Roadmap to Net Zero, we will further develop our measurement, monitoring and reporting capabilities relating to the following KPIs:

- Scope 1 and 2 GHG emissions (tonnes CO₂e): Absolute and relative measures, market and location-based analysis.
- Scope 3 GHG emissions (tonnes CO₂e): Absolute and relative measures, developing further our understanding of our indirect GHG impact following a gap analysis conducted in 2021 working with Carbon Intelligence.

- Renewable energy: % contribution of purchased renewable and non-renewable electricity for our offices.

Our Balanced Scorecard (BSC) measures include the monitoring of printing volume and travel emissions with a target to maintain significantly below pre-pandemic levels.





A conversation with **Claire Petricca-Riding & Louise Needham**

The journey ahead for corporate sustainability

Kathryn Selby, Responsible Business Executive, Irwin Mitchell, sat down with our Head of Planning and Environment and Partner, Claire Petricca-Riding and Environmental and Sustainability Manager, Louise Needham, to discuss our journey towards becoming a leader in corporate sustainability.



Kathryn: Why is it more important than ever before for businesses to be taking climate action?

Claire: We are beginning to see the effects of climate change globally, and we must respond to these challenges. There are two things that we need to do: 1) ameliorate the effects of climate change and 2) prevent any worsening of climate change. The UK has signed up to the Paris Agreement and is working towards ensuring that global temperatures don't rise by 1.5 degrees. It's about taking control of what we can change, both as individuals and as business owners, and by advising our clients through these challenges.

Louise: There is also the moral question – the fact that this is a climate emergency. We have less than ten years now to make some huge inroads in relation to climate change. In the corporate world too, sustainability is having a transformative effect, both in the way that business is done, but also in the way that success is measured. Put simply, businesses won't work with you if you cannot prove to them the progress you are making on these kinds of issues.

Kathryn: Claire, what trends are we seeing from clients or in regulations in relation to the environment? How are we supporting them with this?

Claire: The regulatory regime is tough. There are mandated requirements alongside an almost self-reporting regime for certain companies. The major change we are seeing from a regulatory point of view is the growth of self-regulation and the different processes and data that are being used by organisations in their sustainability reporting. Another trend is a growing focus on biodiversity and nature conservation, particularly in terms of developments. These developments must adhere to a biodiversity net gain of 10% - a legal requirement that's now included within the Environment Act and the Agriculture Act. This is leading to greater instances of nature recovery i.e. rewilding. The challenge for us and our clients is ensuring that this is maintained for the longer term and included in strategic aims.

Kathryn: Can you talk us through the strategic focus for the last year, and the challenges and opportunities it has presented?

Louise: Having joined Irwin Mitchell as Environmental & Sustainability Manager in September 2021, it was clear that we had strong foundations to build on. Yet we have made significant investment in accelerating this position further and the last 12 months have really demonstrated a step-change in Irwin Mitchell's approach to environmental sustainability.

In 2021/2022 we worked with an external consultancy, Carbon Intelligence, to conduct a thorough assessment of our organisational footprint in order to capture that pre-COVID19 baseline year, which is so important as you begin to plan your Net Zero roadmap.

We are also getting to grips with the metrics and measures that will define our progress and that's the way we prove to our stakeholders that we are doing what we said we would do.

Claire: One of the biggest achievements has been growing our team and really trying to provide that consolidated approach to advice through the strength, breadth and depth of the client service offering that we have in the Planning & Environmental team. We have grown into a team of 12, including three environmental solicitors. Our expert lawyers continuously work to understand the environmental impact of the cases they deal with and how the planning system can help to achieve this.

Kathryn: What will be our key areas of focus in the next year and how will we deliver our strategy?

Louise: It is an exciting time to be part of the journey towards helping Irwin Mitchell to become a leader in corporate sustainability. We now have a clear vision and strategy in terms of what we want to achieve. For example, we will be aligning our climate targets with the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi) and basing our environmental roadmap around the SBTi. We are building a central data platform to ensure that we've got that clarity and confidence in our own quantitative data. We have also moved from having workshops and engaging our colleagues around sustainability issues, towards a new governance approach.

Claire: Building the resilience of our team of experts and our client services is a particular focus for the team and we want to become market leaders in the renewable energy space. We have also established a team to bring together all of the expertise from around the firm on ESG and sustainability and ultimately take a sector-led approach.

Linking to our focus areas:



Resilience



Environment

My aim is for every person in this organisation to know the part that they can play in tackling climate change, given it is one of the biggest challenges of our time.

Louise Needham,
Environmental and Sustainability Manager,
Irwin Mitchell



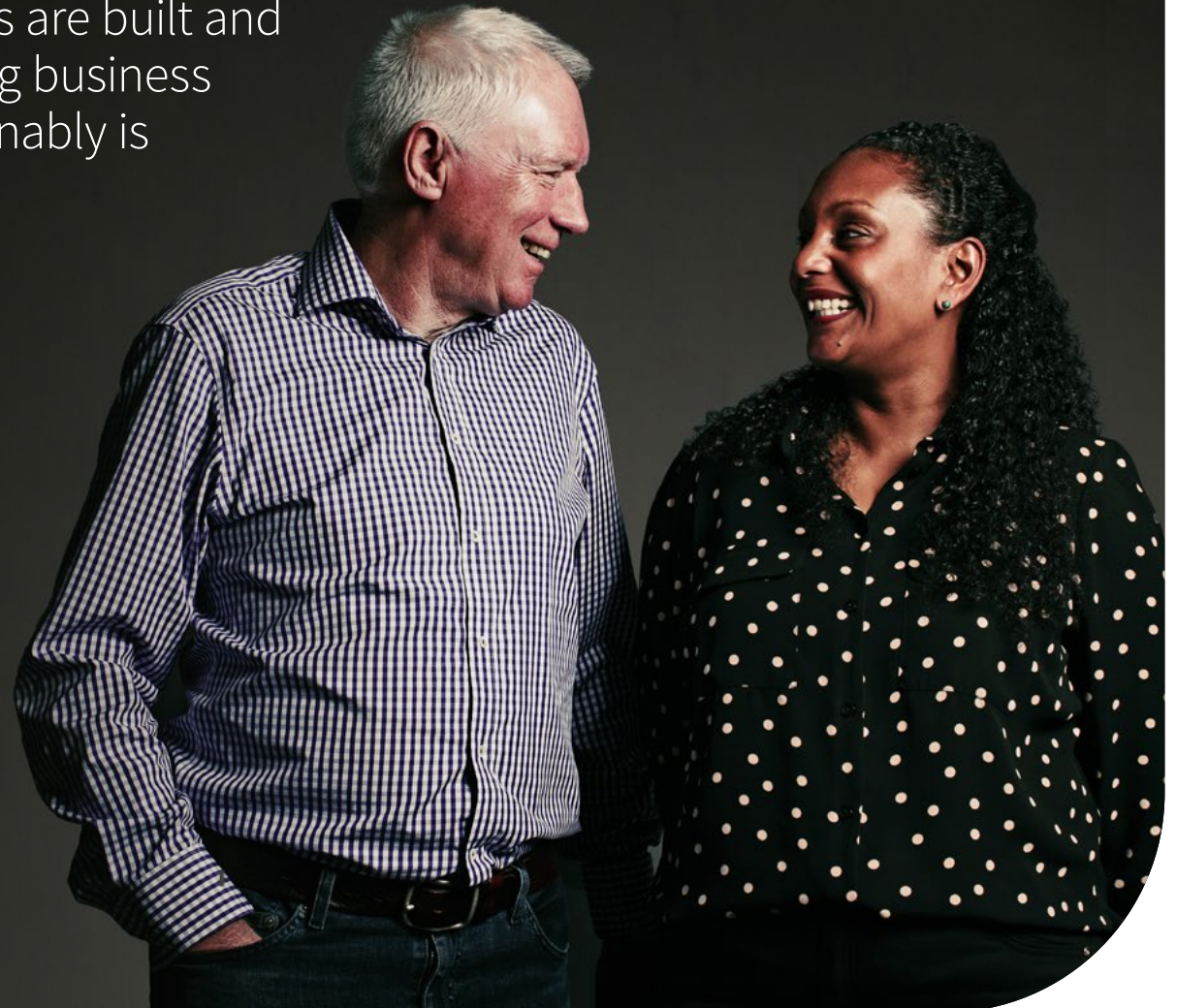
Claire Petricca-Riding,
Partner and Head of Planning and
Environment, Irwin Mitchell



We recognise that trust is the foundation upon which all of our client relationships are built and to which our commitment to doing business responsibly, inclusively and sustainably is inextricably linked.

Clients

Our priority SDGs:





Clients



Our strategy for sustainable growth is underpinned by our commitment to doing business responsibly. In the same way that we work with clients to understand their needs and ensure that our products and services focus on meeting those needs, it is essential that we understand the ESG issues which are material to Irwin Mitchell. Only then, can we identify where our skills and resources can be utilised to make the greatest impact for all of our stakeholders.

Victoria Brackett,
Group Chief Commercial Officer, Irwin Mitchell



Diversity



Fairness



Access

Building inclusive and sustainable relationships

We recognise that trust is the foundation upon which all of our client relationships are built and to which our commitment to doing business responsibly, inclusively and sustainably is inextricably linked.

We are committed to working with our clients, not only to ensure that the advice we provide is informed by ESG considerations and how they impact their businesses and sectors, but to identify where we can collaborate to make a difference in our communities or to generate new ideas or solutions. In the last 12 months:

- We've launched our Human Touch campaign, providing our clients with a platform to share their personal stories. They've raised awareness of Action for Brain Injury Week, World Down Syndrome Day and many of their own fundraising and charity initiatives. This has all been focused around the emotional transitions our clients have gone through, how we've supported them and the impact it's had on their lives.
- We've continued to work in partnership with England Rugby to provide the Irwin Mitchell Mentoring Club, which aims to offer skills development and support for aspiring coaches and over 35,000 teenagers across the UK.
- We have been working with General Counsel and partner organisations to facilitate conversations and provide thought leadership on the unique role that legal advisers play in helping businesses to navigate ESG issues within their organisations and sectors.

4.7

Average Trust Pilot Score

Silver

EcoVadis sustainability rating 2022



Clients continued



Official Legal Partner



Access



Resilience



Wellbeing

Our unique partnership with England Rugby

We're proud to be England Rugby's official legal partner but more than that, we're proud that our relationship extends to working in collaboration to help to grow the game across the country and address a real need within our communities. The Irwin Mitchell Mentoring Club helps young people stay involved in rugby for longer and take the next step to progress in the sport.

Working with England Rugby, we are empowering and equipping adults who work with rugby players aged 14-18 in our communities to become mentors. The Irwin Mitchell Mentoring Club provides access to digital training resources,

webinars and a support network. We've developed a community of mentors across grassroots rugby which aims to offer 35,000 young people from different backgrounds and with different skillsets the opportunity to develop both on and off the field.

We know that the shift to adult rugby can be tricky for players, particularly with the ever-increased demands of modern life and the impact of the pandemic. Our aim is to support mentees to maintain their engagement in team sport and access the multiple benefits for health, wellbeing and personal development that this provides.

35,000

Total number of young people our mentors aim to support



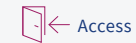
Clients continued



Alex embraced everything we've given him and is a credit to himself and I'm really proud that I've helped him on his journey.

Sean Noone,
mentor, Trinity Guild RFC

In our role as official legal partner, we're pleased to be helping the RFU and its community clubs with their own legal issues. We're ranked number one for sports law in the independent Legal 500 rankings and work with a wide range of governing bodies, sports clubs, athletes, and sports industry businesses.



Access



Resilience



Wellbeing

Alex's Story

Alex's love of sport helped build confidence and break down barriers.

As a mentee involved in the Irwin Mitchell Mentoring Club, Alex has worked with his mentor Sean Noone since he was 13 to develop as a player, a coach and a person. Alex's autism means that communication is a barrier for him. As a young person he lacked confidence and was shy.

This made him frightened of making mistakes. He worked with Wasps Community Foundation which encourages young people with disabilities to give rugby a go and get more out of sports. Having graduated from that programme, he has now joined his local club Trinity Guild RFC to play the adult game.

His confidence has grown through the programme and he's now happy to recognise mistakes as an opportunity to learn and see how he can do better. The power of sport and a different environment allows him to express himself and not only is he embracing adult rugby but he has an apprenticeship coaching members of his former youth team – helping them to learn and grow as he does so himself.



Clients continued

The evolving role of General Counsel in Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) strategy

While ESG is currently a hot topic, the issues it relates to have long been on the agenda within businesses. However, there is now an enhanced focus particularly from customers, shareholders and investors, and regulators. General Counsel (GC) and in-house legal teams play a crucial and unique role in understanding their business' approach and risks in relation to ESG.

Over the last year, we have partnered with organisations including Legal 500 and The Lawyer to create conversations designed to help in-house legal teams approach ESG smartly, and balance ESG priorities with their existing responsibilities.

Our projects help General Counsel map out where they are on their ESG journey, and navigate the way ahead in the face of growing needs for businesses to address their material issues facing people and planet.

Our work together, which included roundtable panel events and workshops, culminated in the 'ESG Risk Research Survey Report: 2021' in partnership with the Legal 500's GC magazine. The study gauged the ESG outlook of leading corporate counsel across Europe and the United States and documented the thoughts and opinions of more than 190 in-house lawyers. We found that 69% have an ESG plan in place, with a further 27% stating they're in the process of developing one.

Emma Curtis, our Senior Business Development Manager working on the project, said:

"Primarily, our aim is to support clients to manage risk and horizon-scan ESG issues before they become challenges, this is no mean feat given the breadth of upcoming legislation and lack of universal measurement. And of course, there is a bigger picture here in terms of the benefits: we all gain from businesses' ESG initiatives from impact on the environment to creating equity through D&I initiatives.

Our approach has been to listen, we're not claiming to have all the answers, so we're instigating conversations in different settings to learn as much as possible about how corporates and institutions are tackling ESG challenges, and sharing these ideas.

Our report with Legal 500 provided an overview of a huge topic, and the feedback was that people wanted and needed to drill down into specific areas. We've been partnering with The Lawyer, Legal 500, FLI and Hays on events, taking an active role in panel discussions, workshops and webinars covering topics including climate change litigation, transition to Net Zero and the role of in-house lawyers and implementing a smart approach to ESG.

Our next report with Legal 500 will drill down into getting the G in ESG right. Aimed again at in-house counsel, this report will provide practical guidance for implementing ESG strategies, based on the experiences of those people that have been there and embraced the challenge."



Linking to our focus areas:



Fairness



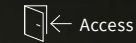
Resilience



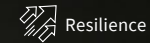
Environment

Clients continued

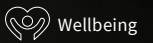
Ensuring our clients' voices are heard through our Human Touch campaign: **Bob's Story**



Access



Resilience



Wellbeing

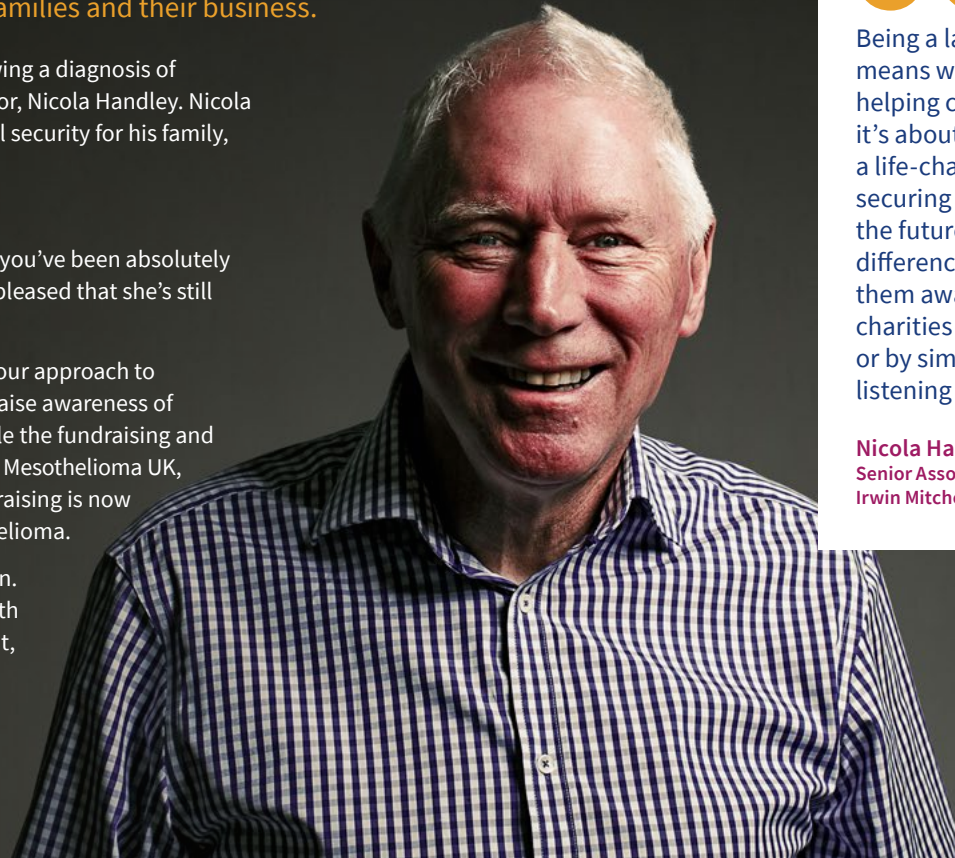
Our Human Touch campaign focuses on our clients and the difference that expert legal and financial support has made to their lives, their families and their business.

Bob is one of the many clients whose stories has been featured. Following a diagnosis of mesothelioma, Bob sought advice from Irwin Mitchell specialist solicitor, Nicola Handley. Nicola helped Bob to secure a negotiated settlement which provided financial security for his family, enabling Bob to access private medical treatment.

"If I could say one thing to Nicola," Bob said, "I'd say thank you Nicola, you've been absolutely amazing." She's become a good friend to me, and to my family. I'm so pleased that she's still my solicitor and still working for me.

By sharing Bob's story, our hope is not only to raise awareness of how our approach to client care differentiates us from other legal advisors but also seek to raise awareness of mesothelioma. In particular, we are pleased to have been able to profile the fundraising and awareness- raising which, despite his condition, Bob has undertaken for Mesothelioma UK, a charity which has supported him throughout his journey. Bob's fundraising is now supporting other people across the UK who are suffering from mesothelioma.

"Live your life to the full," is Bob's advice to other people in his situation. "Having cancer is not necessarily the end of the world. Get involved with good, positive people. I'm still here, still doing sport, taking the dog out, all those sort of things. Yeah, life's good."



Being a lawyer at Irwin Mitchell means we offer so much more than helping clients seek justice. For us, it's about supporting clients after a life-changing diagnosis or injury, securing care and treatment for the future and making a positive difference. That might be by making them aware of statutory services or charities available to support them, or by simply providing a friendly listening ear.

Nicola Handley
Senior Associate Solicitor,
Irwin Mitchell



We understand the importance of creating healthy and inclusive workplace cultures where our colleagues feel they belong and are enabled to thrive.

Colleagues

Our priority SDGs:





Colleagues

Our Diversity and Inclusion strategy underpins our commitment to creating an inclusive workplace culture where all of our colleagues feel a sense of belonging and are enabled to thrive.

The strategy is implemented across all aspects of the employee lifecycle:

- We are committed to increasing access to the legal sector through apprenticeships and other routes. Our Early Careers team has implemented a number of measures to create a more inclusive recruitment process including 'blind' screening of applicants, working on careers events with our D&I networks and engaging with a range of university societies focused on diversity. We also have a dedicated apprenticeship manager and offer work experience placements through the Prime legal sector initiative. We have provided inclusive recruitment training for our Talent Acquisition team to support our hiring managers to reduce any bias in the recruitment process.

Our Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) strategy



- Our commitments to diversity and inclusion and our zero tolerance approach to bullying and harassment are supported by our Diversity and Inclusion Policy, Bullying and Harassment Policy and mandatory D&I training rolled out to all new starters during their induction.
- We offer a wide menu of learning opportunities to engage our people on D&I and support line managers to create inclusive teams. This includes Let's Talk about Race and Let's Talk about Disability sessions and training on Disability in Action, Anti-Racism and Unconscious Bias. In addition, we offer a range of diversity-related mentoring opportunities.



Being an inclusive employer where all talent feel they can succeed and contribute and become the best they can is at the heart of our culture. Our Board and senior management as well as all our colleagues are totally focused on engineering a culture of fairness and diverse mind-sets and we believe that this is a business goal that will continue to enable us to best serve our clients and be a high performing organisation.

Susana Berlevy,
Group Chief People Officer,
Irwin Mitchell

Linking to our focus areas:



Diversity



Fairness



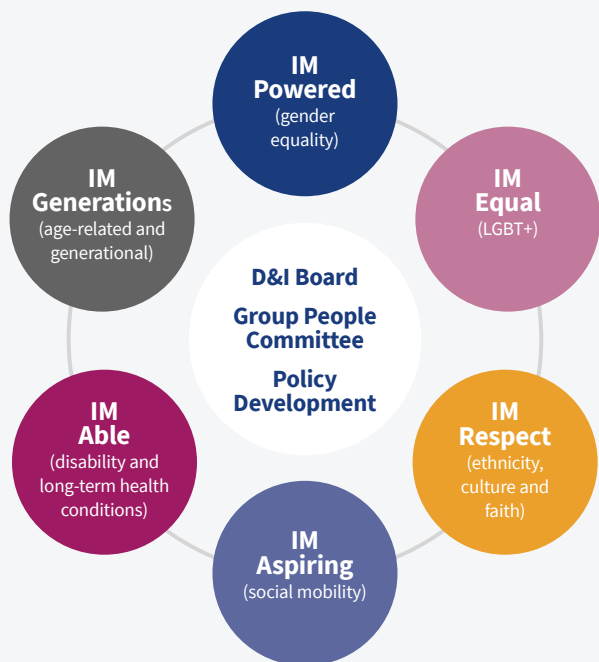
Access



Colleagues continued

D&I Governance: Our D&I strategy and activity is overseen by our D&I Board, chaired by our Group Chief People Officer. Our Head of Responsible Business, D&I Manager and the chairs of each of our six colleague led D&I network groups are also members of the D&I Board.

All colleagues are welcome to join our D&I networks and their events. It's a great way to increase understanding as active allies by promoting conversation and sharing ideas and resources, which helps embed inclusion into everything we do and helps guide our decisions about policy development. The Group People Committee oversees the execution of our Colleague Commitment (our people strategy) which is underpinned by four pillars – brilliant basics, great leadership, organisational agility and organisational health. Our D&I strategy is a component part of the organisational health pillar.



We've continued to strengthen our commitment to diversity and inclusion, through the following D&I charters, frameworks and partnerships:



2022 D&I highlights



Ranked 31st in Top 100 Employers for LGBT+ inclusion and Stonewall Workplace Equality Index Gold Award



Ranked 10th in UK's Best Workplaces for Women 2022 - GPTW



New Support and Workplace Adjustments guidance launched



Disability Confident Level 2 achieved



Halo Code adopted



IM Respect Reciprocal Mentoring Scheme launched



Colleagues continued

Increasing the diversity of our workforce

We're committed to improving the diversity of our workforce, so that it mirrors the communities we serve. As part of this, we're one of the Foundation Law Firm Participants in the UK Model Diversity Survey.

1.7%

Percentage of colleagues with **one or more disability**

8.3%

Percentage of colleagues from **minority ethnic backgrounds** (excluding white minority ethnic groups)

4.1%

Percentage of colleagues who are **LGB+** (lesbian, gay, bisexual or other sexual orientation)

18.4%

Percentage of colleagues from a **lower socio-economic background**

In May 2021, we published our target to increase the proportion of women in Asset Management roles at Associate and above. Our aim was to increase this to 30% by 1 May 2025 (see gender case study for more details).

As part of our commitment to improve the diversity of our workforce, in 2022-23, we'll be looking at setting targets for the Group as a whole across other diversity characteristics.



Our latest diversity data can be found on our website / www.irwinmitchell.com/about-us/social-responsibility/diversity



As well as improving our productivity and performance, we know that creating a diverse and inclusive workplace will help us understand and be more responsive to our clients' needs and increase our innovation and creativity through diversity of thought.

That's why we're focussing our efforts on improving our insight to help identify the actions we need to take to become more diverse and inclusive and equipping our leaders and colleagues with the tools they need to integrate inclusion and become active allies.

Charlotte Delaney,
Diversity and Inclusion Manager,
Irwin Mitchell

Linking to our focus areas:



Diversity



Fairness



Access



Colleagues continued

Our race inclusion journey

Irwin Mitchell's Diversity and Inclusion Manager, Charlotte Delaney, sat down with Angela Jackman, QC Hons, Public Law and Human Rights Partner and D&I Board Member, and Chani Dhaliwal, Partner – Serious Injury and IM Respect (our colleague network for ethnicity, faith and culture) co-Chair to discuss our racial inclusion journey and where we need to focus our attention in FY23.

Charlotte: Following the murder of George Floyd in 2020, attention was rightly focused on racial disparity and injustice in society. We now need to ensure we do not lose momentum and continue to drive change.

Chani: I've been involved with IM Respect since its inception many years ago, and there has been a great amount of work we have done, particularly over the last ten years. However, it was the 'Let's Talk about Race' initiative in 2020 that really kick-started our race, diversity and inclusion agenda. The aim of these sessions was to obtain qualitative data in relation to our colleagues' perception of race, diversity and inclusion. It has been an opportunity for us to reflect and be honest, to identify the

challenges – but also agree that we have to tackle the issues raised as a collective. Over 300 of our colleagues took part in the discussions supported by the Executive Board. Since the initiative was launched, we've run bespoke sessions with various leadership groups within the business and the IM Respect network is now the largest D&I network in the business.

Charlotte: One of the challenges is the lack of senior minority ethnic role models and the measures needed to address that. We know that mentoring is key for example, and we took part in the Business in The Community (BiTC) cross-organisational mentoring programme. We also took part in the BITC Race At Work Survey, which helped us to identify career progression as a key focus.

Chani: Research conducted by the Law Society¹ revealed that little appears to be changing in terms of the experience of solicitors from minority ethnic backgrounds. When we look at the Let's Talk about Race findings, we found similar challenges in that our offices didn't represent the communities that we served; there was a lack of role models, particularly, at senior leadership levels; and there was a feeling of affinity bias. We are on a journey to address some of these challenges. We have worked with various stakeholders to focus on improving

the quality of our data and insights, we are working to develop our education and our training, and we are working with recruitment teams to address the issues at the early careers stage. For example, we have developed a reciprocal mentoring scheme and the business has recently launched a solicitor apprentice programme. I believe these will have a huge impact on both race diversity/inclusion and also on social mobility. We are members of the Black Solicitors Network and have created the Black Talent group, and we are working to identify role models from minority ethnic backgrounds and celebrate their success. We are also signatories to the Race at Work Charter.

Angela: One of the things that has come out of the global movement in terms of Black Lives Matter is that feeling that people from minority ethnic backgrounds are given a really important platform for the first time. Many people thought they could talk about experiences that they hadn't felt able to openly discuss before and there was a real sense of empowerment and moving forward to bring about long standing change. I think also, that allyship was an important outcome of Black Lives Matter and seeing that there was a response from across the whole of society. I felt a real sense of hope

that at last people were recognising our lived experiences and how important it is to listen and to also understand.

Charlotte: Why is this work really important to you?

Angela: I am a Black woman who works in the legal profession - and just having those experiences of being the only black person or the only black female in a meeting – you become really immune to that. For me, I have to take a step back and think “why is this the case in 2022?” The momentum of the global reaction to George Floyd's death has given us the platform to make sure that we can try to maximise what happened – we could simply not allow this moment to go to waste.

It's also just part of who I am, and particularly as you become more senior and better equipped to help contribute to change and help pave the way for those coming after you – it is really important to me. That's irrespective of being a parent and seeing through the lens of your own children, their friends or other relatives – just how challenging it is for them. You're in a position where you can use your voice and it's really important to do so.

1. Source: Race for inclusion: the experiences of Black, Asian and minority ethnic solicitors, The Law Society, 9 December 2020. www.lawsociety.org.uk/en/topics/research/race-for-inclusion-the-experiences-of-black-asian-and-minority-ethnic-solicitors



Colleagues continued

Chani: I was lucky to get the very best training, mentoring and development throughout my early career – and I want to ensure that all of our colleagues, regardless of their race or background, get the same experience and the same opportunities. It's important not to forget our colleagues from minority ethnic backgrounds, who are already in leadership roles. They will have their own challenges and we must support them. I am one of the very few Partners from a minority ethnic background in my practice area and I want to see that change. At a recent conference I was the only Sikh lawyer there and one of very few minority ethnic lawyers – and that cannot be right. I'd like to use my experience to help others thrive and flourish in our business.

Linking to our focus areas:



Diversity



Fairness



Access



For more information, visit our website /
<https://www.irwinmitchell.com/news-and-insights/newsandmedia/2022/july/a-progress-update-on-our-race-at-work-commitment>



I want to ensure that all of our colleagues, regardless of their race or background, get the same experience and the same opportunities to progress.

Chani Dhaliwal,
 Partner and IM Respect co-Chair,
 Irwin Mitchell



I think that allyship was also an important outcome of Black Lives Matter - seeing that there was a response from across the whole of society. I felt a real sense of hope that at last people were recognising our lived experiences and how important it is to listen to that.

Angela Jackman, QC (Hons),
 Partner, and D&I Board Member,
 Irwin Mitchell



We've renewed our commitment to Business in the Community's Race At Work Charter, which was enhanced this year, to include more action on allyship and developing inclusive supply chains. To hold ourselves accountable we work closely with our networks and publish our progress [on our website](#) each year.

Charlotte Delaney,
 Diversity and Inclusion Manager,
 Irwin Mitchell



Colleagues continued

Our Disability Confident journey

2019:

- Pledged to take action to recruit, retain and develop people with disabilities.
- Became a Disability Confident Committed Level 1 organisation.

2021:

- Pledged to accelerate our plans on disability inclusion with our public Disability Confident statement.

2022:

- Achieved our goal of becoming a Disability Confident Employer (Level 2) organisation.
- Disability inclusion identified a key priority for our D&I strategy and plan, as we work hard to become a Level 3 Leader organisation.



As we look back on the great progress made, it's important to reflect on what more we can do to become disability inclusive and to recognise when change is needed. We're committed to being a workplace where our colleagues feel comfortable sharing their disabilities, conditions and/or caring responsibilities and all our colleagues, as allies, feel equipped to support them to be at their best.

Hannah Clifford, co-chair of IM Able
(our colleague network focused on disability)

We know there's still a long way to go before our workforce mirrors the communities we serve. Only 1.7% of our colleagues have shared with us that they have a disability, compared to almost one in five working age adults in the UK. Under-representation of people with disabilities within our workforce, the legal sector and the UK workforce more generally, as well as concerns about satisfaction rates among colleagues with disabilities, prompted us to increase our efforts on disability inclusion over the last year. We've taken action to make our careers and our working environment more inclusive and accessible, including:

- Reviewing our application process to ensure we offer an interview to people with disabilities who meet the minimum criteria for the job, as part of our Disability Confident commitment.
- Advertising vacancies on Evenbreak to attract more candidates with disabilities and developing guidance for hiring managers on inclusive and accessible recruitment processes.
- Launching Flexible by Choice to support our colleagues to choose where and when they work best, subject to clients' needs.
- Working with IM Able, our disability inclusion network, to publish guidance on language and behaviours to support people with disabilities and running webinars focused on increasing awareness.
- Sharing client and colleague experiences of disability, as part of our Human Touch campaign and as part of an IM Able event for International Day of People with Disabilities.

- Improving our guidance on support and workplace adjustments (sometimes referred to as reasonable adjustments) for our candidates and colleagues and launching a new personal workplace adjustments 'profile' for colleagues. We've improved this, as we recognise that everyone works and processes information differently and may need adjustments to the way they work or more support at some point in their working lives to be at their best.
- Increasing understanding about disability through IM Able's newsletter and the development of a dyslexia support group.
- Hosting a series of Let's Talk About Disability sessions to provide a safe space for colleagues to find out more about disability and the importance of allyship.

Our disability inclusion work is championed by IM Able, our network on disability and long-term health conditions. This network advocates for improvements, provides invaluable insight on colleague experience and is helping us shape our strategy. To support IM Able and to help drive our progress on disability inclusion, we've appointed Ed Tomlinson, as senior sponsor for Disability Confident.



To support us in our journey to disability inclusion

Linking to our focus areas:



Diversity



Fairness



Access



Wellbeing



Colleagues continued

Leading the way on gender equality

Our Commitment to Gender Equality

For the second year running, we were recognised as one of the best firms in the UK for women to work for by Great Place to Work. This ranking is based on the views of women on their workplace experiences.



Ranked 10th in UK's
Best Workplaces for
Women 2022
(2021: 9th)

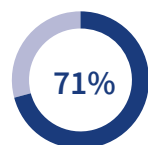
**Great
Place
To
Work®**

We are recognised externally by Law.com International as the leading UK Top 50 law firm for UK female partners (equity and non-equity), with 54.8% of female partners in our LLP¹.

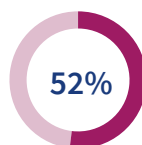
This year, as part of our commitment to gender equality, we enhanced the support we provide to our colleagues to work flexibly and to manage their work-life balance. Following on from the launch of our Flexible by Choice approach in 2021, we have introduced improvements to our inclusive, family-friendly policies, including enhancements to paternity leave, shared parental leave, parental bereavement leave and support for fertility treatment.

Gender representation at Irwin Mitchell

This year, women made up 52.3% of our senior leadership across our Group companies, e.g. partnership roles, including Full Equity Members, Fixed Share Members and Associate Directors.

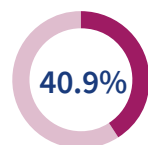


of our
colleagues
are women

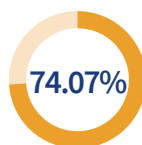


of our
partners
are women

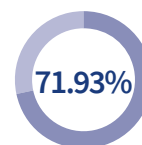
We're committed to building on this, creating opportunities for women to progress and improving our gender balance at senior levels, as shown by the proportion of women promoted this year.



of our **partner promotions**
were women



of **promotions into senior associate** roles were women



of **promotions into associate** roles were women

1. Source: Revealed: The U.K. Law Firm Female Equity Partnership Scorecard, Law.com International, May 27, 2022; <https://www.law.com/international-edition/2022/05/27/the-best-law-firms-for-female-equity-partners-2022/>



As we lead the way on gender diversity at partner level, we continue to push the boundaries of inclusivity within the legal sector for all our colleagues, whatever their gender. Over the forthcoming year, IM Powered network will be helping to challenge any potential barriers to progression, whilst seeking to promote our family and carer friendly policies for everyone.

Hayley Hill and Sally Sargesson,
co-chairs of IM Powered
(our colleague network focused on gender)

Linking to our focus areas:



Diversity



Fairness



Access



Colleagues continued

Our focus is of course on balance, fairness and creating an inclusive workplace for all our people. We are committed to continually improving our data analysis, identifying areas where there is a lack of gender diversity, including areas where men are under-represented.

We're making improvements to address the gender balance in our Group companies too. Last year, IM Asset Management pledged its commitment to gender balance across financial services, by signing up to the HM Treasury's Women in Finance Charter. This year, working on an action plan focused on recruitment, progression and retention, we've already seen improvements to the gender diversity at senior levels, exceeding our original target, with 39.3% of women in senior roles (associate or above) in Asset Management.

Increase in number of women in senior roles (associate or above) in Asset Management

FY22: 39.3%

FY21: 16.7%

FY20: 12.5%

FY19: 6.7%

FY18: 0%

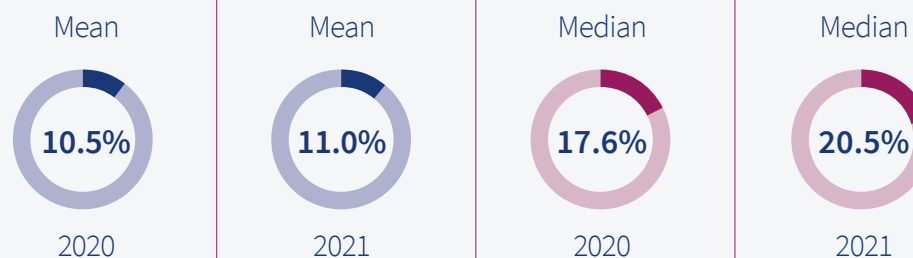
**Target:
30% by May 2025**



Gender Pay Gap for Irwin Mitchell LLP

Our own analysis suggests that our gender pay gap figures are below market average for similarly sized law firms.

Employee Gender Pay Gap¹



1. We've improved our reporting process and reviewed our 2020 figures, resulting in a slight amendment to those previously reported.



Colleagues continued

A focus on wellbeing

With the global pace of change increasing, the health and wellbeing of our people forms a vital element of our 'Colleague Commitment' and Responsible Business strategy.

Our goal is to improve organisational resilience by proactively promoting and supporting wellbeing at all levels of our business. We have based our approach on Great Place to Work's 'Excellence in Wellbeing' model and have been recognised by them as a top UK employer for our efforts in this important space for the second consecutive year in 2022.

This includes consideration of:

- Fulfilment at work
- Work/life balance
- Financial security
- Work environment
- Mental and physical health
- Interpersonal relationships

We have a number of mechanisms in place to regularly gather feedback and insight from colleagues. This allows us to tailor our approach and measure our effectiveness. In the past year, we have taken steps to strengthen our governance, introducing a National Wellbeing Team to design and deliver our approach, supported by two executive sponsors. We have launched our Wellbeing Principles which set the foundations for how colleagues can best help themselves and support others. As well as educating even more of our leaders to support psychological health, we've also enhanced our benefits that focus on flexibility and inclusion.

The purpose of our Wellbeing strategy is to : proactively promote and support wellbeing and improve resilience across our business. Colleague wellbeing and maintaining good psychological health is at the heart of our colleague value proposition (CVP) and is essential for our sustainability and positive business performance.

Linking to our focus areas:



Resilience



Wellbeing



Some of our highlights include:

- Flexible by Choice approach (Flexible by Success for our Ascent colleagues).
- Great Place to Work Trust Index Score increased from 68% to 77% over the last five years.
- Signed up to the Menopause Workplace Pledge campaign.
- Suicide Protocol launched providing support to colleagues having thoughts about self harm.
- Monthly advice and guidance delivered to colleagues via our Wellbeing Hub and internal channels.
- Established a Let's talk about Menopause Group to support colleagues and to enable them to support colleagues, friends and family.
- In collaboration with our IM Powered group, we shared an article focusing on Men's Health and hosted a webinar where male colleagues from across the business openly explored the topic of mental health.
- Continued commitment to the principles of the Mindful Business Charter (MBC).



Colleagues continued

Raising awareness of and supporting those experiencing the menopause

We recognise that there is often still a stigma attached to talking about the menopause in the workplace and this may act as a barrier to prevent colleagues from accessing support when they need it most. This year, we have focussed on increasing knowledge and raising awareness of all our colleagues so they can better understand the menopause.

This has resulted in a range of activities and resources being launched to provide guidance to colleagues and line managers on how best to support colleagues before, during and after menopause.

Linking to our focus areas:



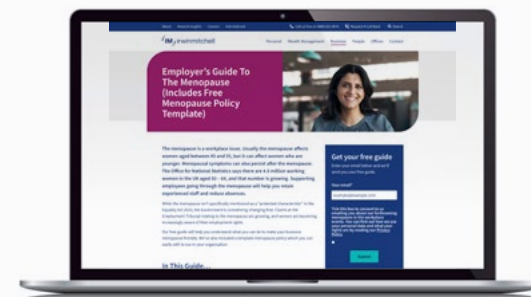
Diversity



Fairness



Wellbeing



Some of our highlights include:

- The launch of a page of resources about the menopause on our intranet and accessible to all colleagues.
- We've partnered with colleagues from our IM Generations and IM Powered colleague network groups (which focus on age related and generational diversity and gender respectively) to launch a dedicated menopause support group which now has over 160 members.
- We regularly share colleagues' experiences of the menopause to raise awareness. This includes publishing intranet articles and social media posts and hosting a quarterly 'Let's talk about menopause' session where we have invited in external experts.
- We carried out specialist menopause training with line managers from across the organisation.
- We have also signed up to the 'Menopause Workplace Pledge' which highlights our commitment to recognising that menopause can be an issue in the workplace. This was shared both internally with our colleagues and externally with our clients and communities.

Our pledge highlights the importance of ensuring colleagues suffering with menopausal symptoms are given the right support and feel empowered to ask for adjustments at work to ease symptoms without embarrassment.

It also signifies the importance of all colleagues being familiar with the impacts of menopause so that we are able to support one another.

Through our website, clients can request to speak to our employment solicitors about wellbeing issues in the workplace, and recognising the need for businesses to have support in this, we've provided free events on wellbeing matters for clients to access and offer extended benefits such as access to Employee Assistance Programme as part of our retainer service. We have also published practical support, insight and top tips including an employer and employee guide and policy on issues such as menopause in the workplace that our clients can access for free.



Colleagues continued

Flexible by Choice

Our Flexible by Choice initiative reflects our commitment to trusting each other to deliver for our clients, at the right time, in the right way

Our colleagues have had to make many changes to adapt to the evolving external environment over the past two years, and never has the sentiment of navigating life's ups and downs been more relevant. We have introduced Flexible by Choice (and Flexible by Success for Ascent colleagues) to give colleagues flexibility about where, when and how they work whilst continuing to meet the needs of clients and our business.

This year was our first full year since adopting a Flexible by Choice approach to hybrid working.

Our offices remain open – and we're expanding our number of locations across the UK – but we know that since the pandemic many colleagues have chosen to work from home for the majority of their time to improve their work / life balance.

We've carried out research among both colleagues and clients to determine the best approach to working in the future with the vast majority preferring a hybrid approach to working, spending some time in the office and at home or even other locations. The approach is also consistent with our Responsible Business strategy to encourage travel only when necessary and continuing the shift to more digital ways of working, reducing the reliance on paper.



Linking to our focus areas:



Diversity



Fairness



Wellbeing



Colleagues continued

Flexible by Choice continued

We asked some of our colleagues what difference Flexible by Choice had made to them and their wellbeing.



Personally, my energy levels wax and wane from day-to-day and so by being able to work flexibly, I can maximise my own performance by changing when I work and the time of day I tackle a particular task. I can also take longer on lunch breaks so I can fit in a session at the gym without having to rush it all through. In terms of location, I love having the option of going into the office or staying at home. The Flexible by Choice style of working means I can save myself nearly two hours of commuting time and redirect that as needed. For me, Flexible by Choice has been such a success it's hard to imagine life without it.

Kaz Khan,
Trainee Solicitor,
Irwin Mitchell



I had been concerned about how I might juggle work and family life as a first time mum returning to work in October 2021. Flexible by Choice has given me the flexibility to be able to pick up and drop my daughter off at nursery without needing to enlist the additional help of family or childminders. Seeing my little girl's face light up when she sees me at pick up time is absolutely priceless. I feel Irwin Mitchell embraced the changing world during the pandemic by putting new virtual communication technology in place to allow me to see my clients and colleagues in a safe manner through a very unsettling time. With many clients choosing to continue meeting virtually, it has provided me with greater flexibility to accommodate appointments throughout the week.

Michelle Morris,
Financial Planner,
IM Asset Management Limited



I really like the freedom the Flexible by Choice approach gives me. I'm going through the menopause and the tiredness often wipes me out by mid-afternoon. It has empowered me to take a decent break during the day and pick work back up again in the evenings or at weekends. I'm much more productive and can get on with the detailed stuff when I am rested and know that I'm not going to be disturbed by emails coming in or interrupted by Teams calls.

Joanne Moseley,
Practice Development Lawyer, Operations,
Irwin Mitchell



Key contacts

If you would like to continue the conversation about doing business responsibly and embedding environmental, social and governance principles into business, please contact:



Kate Fergusson,
Head of Responsible Business,
Irwin Mitchell

Kate.Fergusson@IrwinMitchell.com
0370 1500 100 (Switchboard)



Garry Dowdle,
Group Chief Information Officer,
Irwin Mitchell

Garry.Dowdle@IrwinMitchell.com
0370 1500 100 (Switchboard)



Irwin Mitchell Holdings Limited

26 New Street

St Helier

Jersey

JE2 3RA

www.irwinmitchell.com

Designed and produced by **emperor** 
Visit us at emperor.works