

# Responsible Business Report 2024

Responsible business | *Empowering sustainable growth*



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# Welcome

**A warm welcome to the third Responsible Business Report from Trowers & Hamlins.**

Acting responsibly as a business is and will remain core to how we operate, both internally, through our work with clients and in our relationship with wider society.

Our strategy is all about building a sustainable future for the firm and fully addressing the responsible business agenda that is increasingly important to both our people and our clients.

We've always said we will be transparent in our reporting – happy to share where we are making good progress, but equally open about the challenges we have yet to overcome.

We would value your feedback on this report. Please do [get in touch](#) to tell us how you think our responsible business strategy is progressing.



Sara Bailey, Senior Partner

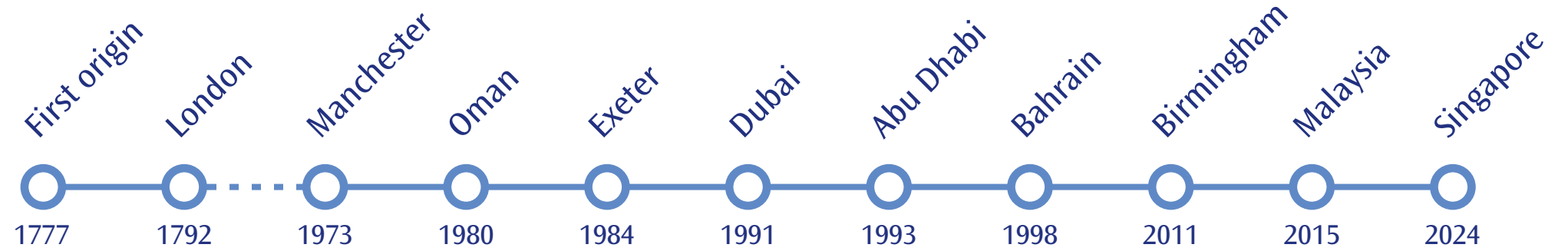
# About us

Trowers is an international law firm with over 170 partners and more than 1000 people located across the UK, Middle East and Asia.

During our long history, we have held fast to the values and characteristics – such as service, quality, integrity and innovation – that have made us not only a leading law firm, but an inclusive and exciting place to work and establish a career. Some 240 years on, these attributes remain solidly embedded in our culture and our ways of working.

We work hard to understand our clients’ businesses and focus on getting to the crux of the issues they face. Our goal is to think like our clients. This gives us the best foundations to extend our thinking beyond the day-to-day delivery of legal services and provide our clients with fresh thinking and commercially driven solutions.

## Our purpose Delivering expert legal solutions through collaboration with our clients



### Trowers at a glance



**247**  
years of history



**10**  
offices across the UK,  
Middle East and Asia



**170+**  
partners



**350+**  
lawyers



**1000+**  
talented people





## Face-to-face with Sara Bailey, Senior Partner

As we launch our third Responsible Business Report, Sara Bailey describes the progress we've made in the last 12 months, the challenges we've faced and the priorities we've set for the year ahead.

### How important is your responsible business agenda, three years on from your first report?

Sara: One of the great things about publishing a Responsible Business Report each year is that it really holds you accountable. That's all the more true in the current climate, where you've got to focus hard on commercial decisions, making sure the business is successful and profitable while staying true to your values.

People sometimes think those two things conflict. But they are – and should be – one and the same thing. We've learnt a lot since launching our responsible business strategy three years ago. It's a steep learning curve but we are making real progress and always learning.

### What do you want this report to achieve compared with the previous two reports?

Sara: We want it to be more data-driven so that we can really understand and show where we're progressing and where our challenges still lie. It's about show, not tell. But that's easier in some areas than others.

We've made great progress on the environmental front greatly helped by the appointment of a dedicated sustainability manager who has overseen a huge data drive and so given us a much clearer picture of where we are.

But better data means the scale of the challenge also becomes clearer and this is the case across all areas. And some of our goals, such as increasing the number of talented people in our business from underrepresented ethnicities, will take time.

### What are your highlights and priorities looking ahead?

Sara: The launch of our Energy and Sustainability practice, bolstered by the hire of two new partners, is right up there, allowing us to bring much greater focus to helping clients meet their own ESG goals. It's a great example of how our responsible business agenda and client offer intersects and I'm excited to see where it leads across both.

This summer we also unveiled our Purpose – "Delivering expert legal solutions through collaboration with our clients" – backed by our vision to be a profitable values-driven firm and a brand and employer of choice. Our values will of course, inform the decisions we make to deliver on this, and these continue to resonate with colleagues, new hires and clients.

Another key area of focus for us, is data. Data drives everything and we need to make sure we keep improving our reporting and analysis and using it to drive and deliver what we want to achieve.

We'll also keep pushing ahead with our ED&I strategy in a pro-active way. We're making progress on social mobility, not least with the launch of our Solicitor Apprenticeship scheme and we will see our first intake in September 2025. And we'll keep building on what we've learnt so far with our Gender and Race Action Plans.

I'm really pleased that we've fine-tuned our approach to pro bono, setting up a dedicated committee to steer our work, and recognising and rewarding pro bono work carried out by our lawyers under our responsible business hours scheme. Over the next year, we want to support our lawyers in really leveraging as much impact and reward as they can through this.

I hope this report shows how far we've come in three years. But we're under no illusions – there's still so much more to do!

### Our values



We collaborate



We savour success



We're not afraid to be human



We are driven by innovation

# How we do business

## Achieving high performance, responsibly

Our responsibility is to build a business that is sustainable for the long term, creating a high-performance culture which brings real and lasting benefits for our people and our clients.

In the last 12 months, we've implemented our responsible business hours scheme, where we recognise and reward colleagues working on social impact, pro bono, equity, diversity and inclusion, innovation and sustainability projects. This work is vital in helping us accelerate our ESG agenda, and creating value for the communities in which we live and work.

**Last year was the first full year that we used a balanced scorecard to appraise the performance of our partners against three key criteria:**

- ✓ Client service
- ✓ Markets and revenue generation
- ✓ People and leadership

### Managing risk effectively

Risks are managed under a framework that sets out our principal risk areas and we have modified our Risk and Audit committee to keep these risk areas under continuous scrutiny, reviewing and updating supporting documentation.

Our General Counsel and Risk team are working more closely with other teams in the business to capture, manage and report on our ESG-related risks and opportunities.

“We are already effectively monitoring and reporting on our risk to meet key regulatory requirements, including Cyber Essential Plus, the UK Government cybersecurity regime, and Lexcel, the legal profession’s quality mark for client care, compliance and practice management.

We are working towards accreditation to internationally recognised ISO standards on Information Security, Environmental Management and Quality Management and will also be evolving our supplier engagement processes including the refinement of our Supplier Code of Conduct, going forward.”

Adrian Carter, Managing Partner and Compliance and Reporting Officer – London



### Compliance and speaking up

Colleagues across the firm have a role to play in identifying risk and in speaking up with any concerns they may have about how we are operating.

We’ve always had robust know-your-customer and know-your-supplier procedures particularly aimed at identifying money laundering, financial crime, modern slavery, confidentiality and protection of information concerns.

Colleagues are encouraged to speak up about any work-related issues or whistleblowing concerns, either by speaking to their manager, contacting our HR or General Counsel and Risk team or by using our anonymous employee ‘Work in Confidence’ platform.



Completion rates across all compliance courses

### Boosting efficiency, sustaining success

We've launched a new business transformation function to manage increasingly complex firm-wide projects.

“Investing in a new Business Transformation team is a move that will keep us up to speed with rapid changes in technology as well as client demands for ever more efficient services, making our people's lives easier while boosting productivity.

The group – made up of change and project management specialists – are working alongside individual project teams and those using systems day-to-day, to roll out projects efficiently, making sure we bring people along with us when we make changes.

Initially the focus is on fine-tuning current systems such as our billing systems and communication infrastructure, but the team have also been working with our innovation and responsible business teams and will be integral to how we capture more detailed data going forward.”

Paul Marco, Managing Partner and Compliance Officer for Legal Practice (COLP) – London



### A safe and healthy place to work

“Receiving the People in Law award for our partner wellbeing programme in its launch year was an amazing recognition of its success and an acknowledgement of the importance of giving our partners the opportunity to have the time and space to take charge of their health and wellbeing.”

Jacqui Bernuzzi, Senior Reward and Wellbeing Manager – London



We can't succeed as a high-achieving business without providing people across the firm with a safe, healthy and supportive work environment.

Modelled on the successful partner wellbeing programme, launched in 2022, we have now rolled out a firm-wide programme tackling a wide range of physical and mental wellbeing topics, once again working in partnership with Smart About Health. The programme provides an opportunity for people to talk openly about issues they've faced and are invariably very powerful for that reason.

45% of our people attended one or more wellbeing or mindfulness sessions during the year.

### Continuous learning

Alongside formal legal training, delivered in departments by dedicated professional support lawyers and senior colleagues, we have a comprehensive programme of skills training for both lawyers and business support staff, including our two-year Pathways to Partnership programme for aspiring partners.

Since its launch in 2019, we have seen 100 colleagues complete the scheme with 60% of candidates becoming partners, with a 50/50 split between men and women.

On average, colleagues are currently completing nearly 13 hours of training a year, with that figure rising to 16 hours for fee earners.

“Our L&D programme ensures our lawyers and business support staff have the technical and skills training and knowledge to ensure a first-rate service to our clients.”

John Worrall, Head of Learning and Development – London





# People

## ED&I – Preparing the ground for change

The first full year of our new Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I) strategy has been a period of both research and activity as we prepare the ground to meet the targets we have set for 2026. Our ED&I strategy explicitly recognises areas of under-representation in the firm as well as commitments to address – it can be found [here](#) and data against our targets is available online [here](#).

“The first year of our ED&I strategy has been about doing all the detailed groundwork to hit the tough targets we’ve set for 2026. We’ve made a good start, but in an organisation as big as ours, change takes time.”

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

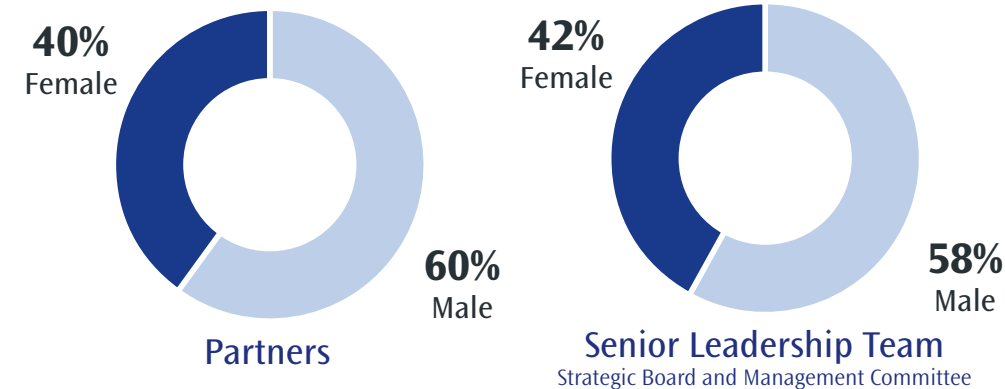


### A strong record on gender – but more to do

Our data on overall gender representation shows that we start in a strong place.

Despite these relatively strong statistics, we want to go much further on gender representation.

#### Female representation across the whole firm



### Our gender action plan

We have set a target to increase the proportion of female partners from 39% to 42% by 2026. As of 31 March 24, the figure stands at 40%.

Our gender action plan is all about finding and removing the barriers that stand in the way of female progression through the partnership. The plan covers embedding ED&I into equity partner appraisals; training; and supporting flexible and part time working.

In recognition of the fact that equal parenting is essential to achieving gender equity, in May we enhanced our family leave entitlements and pay by 30% and by 50% in the case of co-parental leave – a decision made in conjunction with feedback from our networks.

**Our record on advancing the careers of women stretches way back and we’re continuing to build on that legacy today:**



Maud Ingram joined our firm as the first ever woman to be articulated as a solicitor in England and Wales

**11**  
Years

We’ve been led by successive female Senior Partners

**July**  
**2024**

Raya Al Harthy became the first Omani woman to become a partner in an international law firm operating in Oman



We had the second highest proportion of female partners of any UK law firm in 2023, according to Law.com

### Attracting the best talent for a more ethnically diverse workforce

While colleagues from an ethnic minority background made up 16% of our total staff at the end of March 2024, representation of lawyers and business support staff of black heritage remains lower than we would like. The challenge of attracting and retaining black talent is sector-wide and through our Race Action Plan, we are working to change this by tackling two main issues:

- Improving the pipeline of early talent
- Understanding why colleagues of black heritage tend to leave the firm earlier in their careers than their white counterparts, and what support we can offer to encourage them to extend their careers with us.

Our target is to increase representation of black fee earners from 3% to 6% and black business support colleagues from 5% to 7% by 2026.

Representation amongst fee earners slipped last year and we know that where representation is low to start, small changes can have a big impact on our data. We recognise the importance of building a strong pipeline of black lawyers and business support staff and improving support through the early stages of the employee lifecycle if we are to meet our 2026 targets.

As part of our Race Action Plan, our Black Heritage network, a subgroup of our Race, Ethnicity and Heritage network, will be leading our efforts to develop more insightful “stay gap” data and how we can foster as inclusive an environment as possible.

We’re also using a more robust system to track and analyse our data on the lateral hire of more senior black recruits, a requirement under the Race Fairness Commitment which we have signed and are committed to.

### Supporting black businesses

“Through our Race Action Plan, we’ve identified a lot of work to do to dismantle systems and adjust the way we’ve done things in the past.

With initiatives around contextual recruitment and external campaigns such as sponsoring the the Black Business Collective, I hope that we can attract the best talent out there and through internal data and listening drives make the changes needed to retain it.”

Yetunde Dania, Partner, Head of Birmingham Office and Chair of the Race Action Plan group – Birmingham



We are a founding partner and sponsor of the Black Business Collective. We were instrumental in the creation of this initiative, launched in June 2024 by the Greater Birmingham Chambers of Commerce. The initiative champions the growth and development of Birmingham-based black entrepreneurs and black-owned businesses.

We continue to support the Black Business Show in Birmingham and were delighted to be a judge on Launchpad, an annual Dragon’s Den-style pitch competition for black-owned start-up businesses committing to provide the winner with legal consultation and support across areas of their choice.



### Building the right pipeline

We have been working with key partners to help build a stronger pipeline of black talent. They include:

- In our last recruitment cycle (2022/23) we worked with The Stephen James Partnership to recruit for our summer vacation scheme where participants can explore life as a trainee and team member at our firm. Three participants joined the scheme in 2023, and one was offered and accepted a training contract and will join the firm in September 2025.
- 10,000 Black Interns is an exciting new partner for us and has helped us launch a six-week internship programme this summer with four participants getting a hands-on taste of life at Trowers, two in London and two in Birmingham. We have offered training contracts to two of the interns and they will join us in September 2026
- We’ve rolled out training on using contextualised recruitment techniques and tools for the summer vacation and 10,000 Black Interns schemes to overcome unconscious bias on interview panels.
- Aspiring Solicitors will be helping us analyse our anonymised diversity reporting to help us understand where we are losing early black talent, how to boost retention and how we compare with other firms.



### Networks play a vital role

Our nine networks play a vital role in helping to shape and deliver our ED&I strategy. They include:

- Allyship
- Disability
- Gender, Work and Family
- International
- LGBTQ+ and Allies
- Wellbeing
- Race, Ethnicity and Heritage
- Religion and Belief
- Social Mobility

All of our networks run Virtual Safe Space Discussion and Trowers Stories webinars which provide a powerful setting for people to share personal stories around important ED&I issues.

Our ED&I Safe Space Discussions and wider initiatives often result in action being taken across the firm such as the introduction of a broader range of soft drinks at our internal and external events.

“There’s a growing move for events to be less focussed on alcohol and following a discussion at the ED&I committee and a talk organised by our Wellbeing and Religion and Belief networks, we have now introduced a wider range of soft drinks at our internal and external social events.”

Nicholas Barrows, Director of Marketing – London



To celebrate International Women’s Day, the Gender, Work and Family network ran events in collaboration with Buy Women Built, a network of female entrepreneurs, and one with The Girls’ Network, a mentoring initiative supporting girls from disadvantaged backgrounds.

“When I started Buy Women Built, I only knew 35 female founders – we now have 1,800 in our network. Working with Trowers, I find they really speak the same language as our founders, and that empowers us to make the right decisions and overcome challenges.”

Sahar Hashemi OBE, Founder of Coffee Republic, Co-founder of Buy Women Built (BWB)

Our Disability network continues to ensure that our workplaces are accessible to disabled and chronically ill colleagues, leading our efforts to become a Level 2 Disability Confident employer. Education is also a key deliverable and the network hosted an event in Disability Pride Month (July 2023) where activist, Dr Amy Kavanagh, talked about her lived experience navigating the societal and attitudinal barriers faced by disabled people.



The LGBTQ+ network’s Pride Portrait fundraiser in London - where members of staff paid to have Pride portraits of members of the firm painted, culminated in an office wide exhibition in support of Stonewall Housing Trust. In Manchester, the fundraising continued as they held a Pride Village Fete with all proceeds donated to Life Share.

“Our leaders play a crucial role in delivering our ED&I strategy but we need to give them and the firm the right tools and education. Over 2022/23 we ran around 30 ED&I training and online sessions across a range of settings including induction for new joiners, trainees, newly qualified lawyers, insight days and our vacation training schemes, and we’ve extended diversity and inclusion training for partners and managers.”

Rebekah Gougeon, ED&I Manager – London



### Managing what we can measure

Last year, we ran a data disclosure campaign and have seen an increase in the number of our people disclosing information about sexual orientation, disability and socio-economic background. We included “prefer not to say” (PNS) data to identify where people may be hesitant to disclose and why this is.

- Disability disclosure increased from **61.5% to 73%** (86.6% to 91% including PNS).
- Sexual orientation disclosure went from **61.5% to 72%** (86.6% to 91% including PNS).
- Socio-economic disclosure, where people are asked about parental occupation at age 14 a metric recommended by the Social Mobility Commission – climbed from **39.5% to 57%** (64.4% to 76% including PNS).

### Alternative routes into the legal profession

We want to recruit people from as wide a talent pool as possible, knowing that this will enhance the quality of our work and enrich our culture.

Our new six-year Solicitor Apprenticeship scheme is aimed at non-graduates, targeting high performing students from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

“The Apprenticeship scheme offers a great new way into our profession. Specifically aimed at boosting social mobility, it recognises that to recruit the very best talent we need to offer alternative ways into the law beyond the conventional routes.”

Paul Robinson, Director of HR – London



It allows participants to earn while they learn, gaining a degree and qualification as a solicitor at the end of the programme. We will begin recruiting for the scheme this autumn with eight solicitor apprentices joining us from September 2025.

We will be working in partnership with Uptree and the Sutton Trust to help us reach schools across the country in search of talented apprentices.

In the last three years, 10 apprentices have joined the firm, five of whom remain with us today, working across our business support teams.

“Studying for my Level 4 Marketing Executive qualification while working alongside highly skilled professionals contributed to achieving my qualification. The continuous opportunities for knowledge and career advancement, coupled with the unwavering support and encouragement from my peers, continue to motivate me to stay at Trowers.”

Grace Blé, Marketing Assistant – London







# Social impact




Using our time and skills to create value for society



**8250+** Responsible business hours were logged last year. Meaning approximately 2.5 days per fee earner.

Creating real social value has always been a key part of our culture at Trowers and over the years we have had great success supporting the communities we live and work in thanks to the hard work and effort of colleagues across the firm.

Our Social Impact strategy is on our [website here](#) and is built around three priority areas:

-  Ensure fairness and access to justice, in the UK and internationally.
-  Advance social mobility and diversity and inclusion in our profession and more widely in society.
-  Help build a world that is environmentally and socially sustainable.

## Sharing the load, measuring the impact

We are encouraging greater participation in our social impact work through our responsible business hours scheme, and we've set a soft target for colleagues across the firm to complete 25 responsible business hours each year. Work that colleagues do on social impact projects or on supporting our ED&I, innovation and sustainability strategies is recognised in individual performance appraisals and bonus calculations.

We've appointed a new and expanded leadership team in each of our regional and international offices, so that our efforts are centrally joined up but locally relevant and we are developing new means to capture data on our impact.

## Supporting causes close by

Each of our UK offices supports charities and organisations doing great work in their immediate locality.

In London, for instance, we continue to provide reading support for children at St Monica's Primary School, supported by Inspire, while colleagues in Manchester have staged events to raise funds for Lifeshare, a local homelessness charity. In Birmingham, a key focus is food banks and specifically Let's Feed Brum while our people in Exeter run a busy school outreach programme with local state schools.

### Building our international programme

We continue to expand our social impact work across our international offices.

Each office is either working on projects, or close to getting initiatives off the ground, and opportunities to work on newly agreed projects are emerging.

In Oman, we've teamed up with Madaar, a tech start-up incubator, to offer regular mentoring for the entrepreneurs it is investing in, and quarterly workshops where we can introduce these new business owners to our clients.

So far, 40% of our fee earners in Oman have signed up to provide mentoring and we are looking to extend the project to other jurisdictions where we and Madaar have offices. The project dovetails with our responsible business goals as most of the start-ups are community-based enterprises serving sectors such as education, environment and healthcare.

“I'd been looking for ways to participate in programmes that line up with our responsible business agenda but in Oman opportunities are limited or already saturated. I heard about Madaar and arranged a meeting where we agreed a way forward. We have now fully rolled out the programme in Oman with plans underway to take it to our other Middle East offices.”

Raya Al Harthy, Partner – Oman



“Social Impact work in our international offices is going from strength to strength and we have a number of exciting initiatives coming up. Good progress – with more to come.”

Deborah Howard, Partner – Bahrain



### Access to justice – a push for Pro Bono

Increasingly, we are looking for ways to harness our legal skills to create social value by expanding our Pro Bono work, for instance offering free legal advice and services in a wide range of settings.

We have now established a Pro Bono committee, led by Partner Hendrik Puschmann, to co-ordinate opportunities, communicate them to interested colleagues and bring the right people together from across the business to deliver advice.

We are signatories to the Law Society's Pro Bono Charter and already partner with several leading organisations, including Law Works and Advocates for International Development (A4ID), who source Pro Bono work.



“Pro Bono is a priority for us and a way we can really add value as it's directly relevant to our skill set. So, it's rewarding and the diverse range of cases means the work is interesting too.”

Rory Stracey, Partner and Head of Social Impact – Exeter



### Finding a new home – for London's oldest pub theatre

It started with a tweet from playwright Mark Ravenhill asking for Pro Bono advice. With the curtain coming down on the 53-year old King's Head Theatre, famous for promoting new talent, legal help was needed to move to a new multi-storey site, with a 200-seat auditorium, a cabaret venue, purpose built bars, meeting spaces and offices.

We were quick to respond and over 18-months our property lawyers helped review documents and negotiate crucial agreements and licenses.

“It was a pleasure to know we were doing some good and helping a local theatre that we love. I am excited to see how the theatre settles into its new home and we are proud to have been part of its journey.”

Leanne Griggs, Senior Associate – London





### Legal clinics

We've continued to build strong links with Exeter University's Access to Justice clinic, where we mentor law students providing free legal advice, and we're fostering a similar relationship with the University of Law in London, our chosen provider of Solicitors Qualifying Examination (SQE) legal training.

We've joined other firms in providing in-person advice at the Royal Courts of Justice and have partnered with the Cardiff-based LGBTQ+ law clinic, which provides free legal advice remotely on matters relating to identity and discrimination.

Plans are also in place to open a legal advice clinic for homeless people, building on our long association with the Whitechapel Mission in London, where our volunteers have been working or making donations for years.

"I couldn't be more excited about Trowers setting up a free clinic at the Whitechapel Mission, bringing legal advice to homeless people who have least access to it, but often need it the most. I have been volunteering at the Mission ever since I was a trainee – so I know firsthand the impact this will have."

Hendrik Puschmann, Partner and Pro Bono Champion – London



### Helping care leavers make their way

We are passionate about supporting our young people who come out of the care system. We have been involved from its inception with the Care Leavers Business Council and have signed up to the Government's Care Leavers Covenant, helping young people coming out of care between the age of 16 to 25, to find work and a settled life.

Partner and Head of Employment and Pensions, Rebecca McGuirk, worked with Spectra Connect, the organisation that delivers the Covenant, producing an easy-to-use FAQ sheet to help companies of all sizes understand the legal implications of joining the scheme.

"The FAQ factsheet for employers has been years in the making – Trowers' contributions have been integral to this project. We're delighted to reach this important milestone and, crucially, give more employers the confidence to stride forward with care leaver support."

Gareth Evans, Director of Operations at Spectra Connect

SPECTRA



Rebecca was also able to allay fears that companies taking positive steps to employ care leavers might face claims for unfair discrimination, explaining that giving leavers a leg up would be seen as a form of contextualised recruitment rather than discrimination.

"I've always wanted to give something back, and this was an opportunity to use my legal skills. It was a challenge because you have to talk about complicated employment discrimination issues and objective justification but in an accessible way. But that's what we look to do at Trowers – provide solution driven advice to all of our clients, in clear language."

Rebecca McGuirk, Partner and Head of Employment and Pensions – Birmingham



### Working towards a level playing field

Flagship social mobility programmes remain a major focus for our social impact work, closely tied into our ED&I ambitions to increase access to our profession for talented young people from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Programmes we support include:



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



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



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



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



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



**Routes to work** – a scheme we've run for 16 years with the housing group L&Q, a key client, offering quality work placements to people of all ages to get back into work.



**ReImagine Law** – an organisation making podcasts to help people navigate their way into the legal profession.

We benefit directly from taking part in these schemes. In our most recent complete cycle (2022/23), 43% of the training contracts we awarded went to talent coming through the Aspiring Solicitors programme.

“It’s brilliant that we are taking so many trainees from schemes like Aspiring Solicitors and working on other initiatives which will give them a level playing field to display their talent and skills. We want our profession to change and become less stuffy and more inclusive, so it’s a win-win for everyone.”

Helen Fysh, Partner and Head of London Social Impact – London



Mentoring plays a huge role in these programmes, and we are looking at providing training to prepare more of our colleagues to take on this time-consuming but highly rewarding work.

“Mentoring new and more experienced talent is a great privilege. Our mentoring team have engaged with students, professionals and wider talent to provide active and practical support. We are keen to empower people to get the most out of their careers and chosen paths.”

Chris Plumley, Partner and Deputy Head of Social Impact – Birmingham







# Sustainability

## Advancing towards a net zero and circular world

As an international law firm, we recognise we have a role to play in addressing the climate crisis – both through how we operate and the advice we give to clients.

Our [environmental policy](#) outlines our commitment to decarbonising our operations and supply chain and how we are integrating circular economy principles into our use and management of resources.

To support these goals, we have recently begun work towards ISO 14001 Environmental Management System accreditation. This internationally recognised standard will help us set ambitious yet achievable targets to continuously improve our environmental performance.

“Data-driven insights enable us to set meaningful goals, track performance, and engage with our people. Partnering with a leading carbon software provider has enhanced our emissions reporting, giving us, for the first time, a comprehensive view of our Scope 1, 2, and 3 emissions, including the impact of our supply chain.”

Lee Collier, Sustainability Manager – London

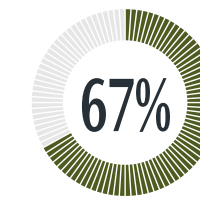


### Net zero

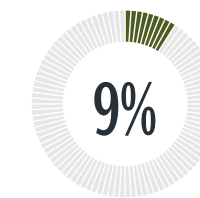
We are committed to reducing our absolute GHG emissions by 90% by 2050, targeting a 50% reduction by 2030 relative to our 2019/20 baseline year. To date, we have reduced our absolute Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions by 20%.

### Our highlights so far

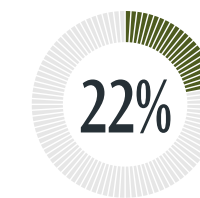
Between 2019/20 and 2023/24 we have achieved a:



67% reduction in Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions



9% reduction in Scope 3 emissions



22% improvement in energy efficiency across our offices reducing our energy usage intensity from 377 to 295 kWh/M<sup>2</sup>

We have delivered this through a combination of:



**Energy efficiency**

Investing in our building management systems and more efficient technology to deliver an absolute 17% reduction in electricity and 35% reduction in natural gas use respectively.

**What's next:** We will continue to implement new energy efficiency measures based on the recommendations from our ESOS Phase 3 audit wherever feasible. This includes optimising our office space in response to the shift to hybrid working.



**Renewable energy**

79% of our electricity comes from renewable sources, and 100% is backed by Renewable Energy Guarantees of Origin (REGO) certificates across our UK offices.

**What's next:** While we continue to explore opportunities to phase out the use of natural gas, we aim to transition our London tariff from a carbon offset and RGGO (Renewable Gas Guarantee of Origin) mixed tariff to a 100% RGGO matched supply.



**Company cars**

54% of our company cars are now EV or hybrid up from 9% in FY19/20.

**What's next:** We will continue to encourage the adoption of EVs and hybrids under our company car scheme.

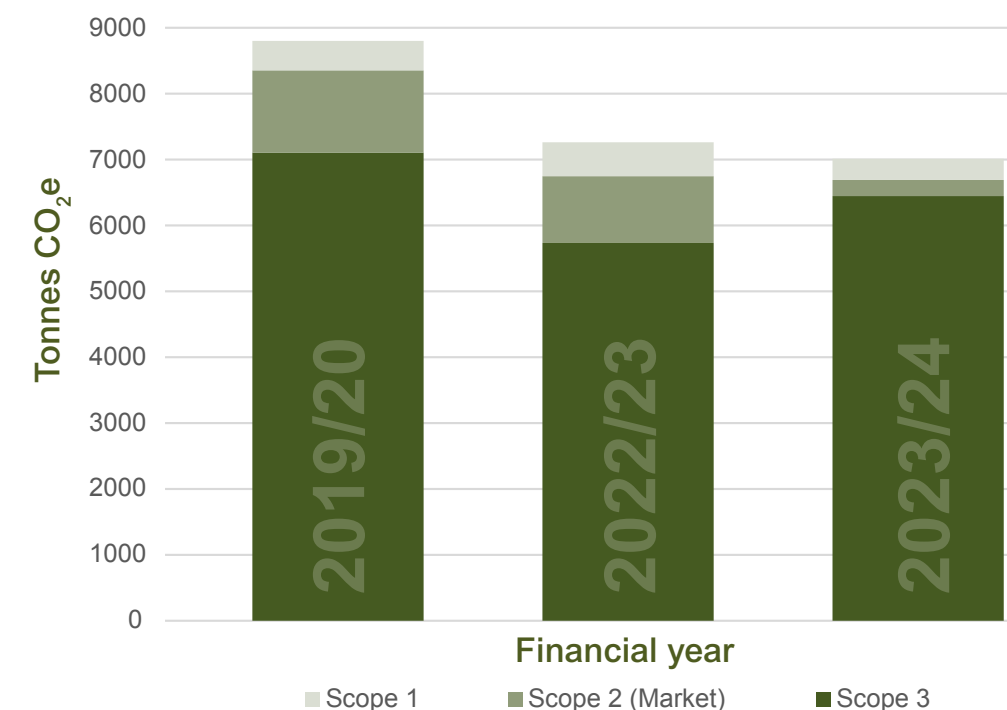


**Audio-visual**

We have upgraded our audio-visual systems, improving the quality and availability of remote meeting capabilities across our offices.

**What's next:** We will be reviewing our business travel policy to align with sustainability best practices and exploring ways to improve the availability and reporting of travel data.

Firmwide <sup>1</sup> Greenhouse Gas (GHG) inventory (tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> e)	2019/20 <sup>2</sup> base year	2022/23	2023/24	Trend since last year	Trend since base year
Scope 1: Direct GHG Emissions	452	517	328	37%	27%
Scope 2: Indirect GHG Emissions (Market) <sup>3</sup>	1,247	1,016	241	76%	81%
Scope 2: Indirect GHG Emissions (Location)	933	800	749	6.4%	20%
Scope 3: Indirect GHG emissions <sup>4</sup>	7,124	5,746	6,462	12%	9%
<b>Total GHG Emissions<sup>5</sup></b>	<b>8,822</b>	<b>7,279</b>	<b>7,030</b>	<b>3.4%</b>	<b>20%</b>
Total GHG Emissions Per FTE <sup>6</sup>	10.3	7.3	6.8	7.3%	34%



The [appendix](#) provides a detailed breakdown of our Greenhouse Gas (GHG) inventory and environmental performance data. We are aligning our environmental reporting with the World Economic Forum (WEF) Planetary Metrics and have reported on the core metrics where data is available.

1. Reported for our Abu Dhabi, Bahrain, Birmingham, Dubai, Exeter, London, Malaysia, Manchester, Oman offices | 2. Our reporting year runs from 1st April to 31st March | 3. Where contractual instruments were not in place or could not be verified then market-based emissions have been calculated using a residual mix electricity factor, if available for that country. In all other instances, the local grid factor has been applied. | 4. Includes Category 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 13. Category 2 and 4 are currently reported under Category 1. | 5. Calculated as 'Scope 1' + 'Scope 2: (Market)' + 'Scope 3' | 6. FTE = Full Time Equivalent Employees. Calculated as total 'Total GHG Emissions' / 'FTE'



## Delivering real social value with HACT Retrofit Credits

Our primary focus is and will continue to be reducing our own emissions but we also recognise that there are actions we can take to address the climate crisis beyond our immediate impact.

This year we have supported an innovative UK carbon credit scheme certified by the Verified Carbon Standard and delivered by The Housing Associations' Charitable Trust (HACT) and PNZ Carbon.

The HACT Retrofit Credit Scheme unlocks additional funding to retrofit the UK's social housing stock with improved insulation and low carbon heating systems, delivering both environmental benefits and tangible social value. By using the UK Social Value Bank to calculate and put a financial value on the positive impact on residents' lives, this initiative matches up with the highly regarded work we've been doing in the affordable housing sector for many years.

“Trowers & Hamlins' support has created a real, tangible difference, and positively impacted the environment and the lives of residents with the part funding of the retrofit measures undertaken on 188 UK homes, resulting in the reduction of 120 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> in 2022 and facilitated £69,480 worth of positive social value impact on the people who live in them.”

Antoine Pellet HACT | Head of Retrofit Credits



### Circularity

We aim to manage our use of resources sustainability. That means driving down waste and maximising opportunities to recycle and re-use wherever possible to keep materials in use for longer in-line with the principles of the circular economy.

The waste we generate has been cut by 55% since FY19/20, 71% of which is currently recycled, and we're looking to improve further on that achievement.

#### Recent actions we have taken

#### Purchasing products and services with circular credentials

- **Paper:** We've cut paper use by 64% since FY19/20 by embracing digitalisation and insisting on double-sided and black-and-white printing as the default. We've also switched all our UK office paper from 80gsm to 75gsm (Forest Stewardship Council) FSC-certified paper, which means it is made using fewer natural resources.
- **Hand towels:** Our London office washroom hand towels are collected as a separate waste stream and are sent for 'closed-loop' recycling back into new hand towels, equivalent to 13 trees worth of paper in 2024.
- **Single-use disposables:** We've phased out single-use plastics and disposables from our on-floor vending areas and client meeting rooms, providing compostable disposables in our London restaurant where required.

- **Cleaning materials:** We've reviewed our cleaning products and have transitioned to more sustainable alternatives.

#### Recycling, refurbishing and re-using

- **Stationery and IT equipment:** We've introduced stationery and IT re-use containers across our UK offices to capture and reuse as much equipment as possible.
- **Office furniture:** Our office chairs are reused, reupholstered, and refurbished to extend their lifespan, whilst we re-use our office furniture wherever possible.
- **Laptops and mobile phones:** Whenever possible, our laptops and mobiles are first re-used internally, or refurbished either to be resold or donated for re-use.

#### Raising awareness and educating our people

- **Choose to Reuse:** We are running a "Choose to Reuse" campaign, encouraging colleagues to use reusable cups in place of disposables. So far this has avoided the use of over 2,000 single-use cups since January 2024
- **Fight Food Waste Fridays:** We're trialling "Fight Food Waste Fridays," where leftover food that would otherwise be wasted is offered to employees.

## Circularity Key KPIs – Progress between FY19/20 to FY23/24

Reduction in total waste generated by **55% - 248 to 113 tonnes**

**289 kg to 109 kg** waste generated per FTE

A **64%** reduction in office paper purchased, from **46 kg to 14 kg** per FTE.

Our recycling rate has dropped from **81% to 71%**, primarily due to reductions in our paper use, so is an area for us to look at opportunities for improvement.

Water use has decreased by **1.3%**, from **13,877 to 11,374 Liters per FTE**, but has increased year on year, indicating this is a potential area for improvement.



## Commuter and homeworking survey

Our technology and data sustainability taskforce recently conducted our first firmwide commuter survey, achieving a 64% engagement rate. This survey allowed us to model our commuter and homeworking emissions on an office-by-office basis for the first time, rather than relying on national travel statistics and assumptions about homeworking trends.

Key findings from the survey include:

- **59%** of commuting is undertaken using public transport, totalling 3.32 million miles per year.
- The average return journey commuting distance is **35 miles per day**.
- Cars account for **60%** of our commuting carbon footprint, despite only covering 27% of the distance travelled, with electric vehicles (EVs) comprising 3% of car trips.

In light of these findings, we are currently exploring the possibility of introducing an EV salary sacrifice scheme for UK employees who are considering switching to an electric vehicle.

## Engaging our people

We have a highly engaged sustainability committee comprised of colleagues from across the firm who are passionate about advancing our environmental initiatives. This committee is now driving our sustainability efforts on the ground.

Over the past year, our education and communication taskforce organised three firm-wide awareness and training sessions, which were attended by over 750 participants.

These sessions, led by the Legal Sustainability Alliance, along with our Sustainability Manager, Lee Collier, and Chris Paul, Partner in Energy and Sustainability, focused on why sustainability is crucial for law firms, what it means for Trowers, and how we can support our clients in achieving their sustainability goals.

Participants gained valuable insights, including an overview of the latest climate science, practical actions they can take both in the office and at home, and a quick reference crib sheet to help our lawyers speak confidently to clients about our sustainability strategy and key areas of focus.

In July, we celebrated Net Zero Week by sharing tips on how our people can contribute to our net zero goals. We communicated the results of our first commuter survey, announced our partnership with HACT, and hosted a lunchtime awareness session with them, discussing their Retrofit Credit Scheme and our role in supporting it since its inception.

“I’m really proud that we didn’t start by simply telling our colleagues what we wanted to do but created a committee at all levels and across all offices, both lawyers and support staff, to get a bottom-up understanding of what people want the firm to be in terms of sustainability.”

Chris Paul, Partner, Head of Energy and Sustainability and Head of our Sustainability Committee – London



## Looking ahead

While we are making progress, there is still much more to do. In the coming months, we’ll be focusing on several key areas, including:

**ISO 14001:** Working towards achieving certification to this international standard, starting with our UK offices, aligning us with best practice approaches to environmental management. Accreditation will allow us to set objectives and targets addressing our key risks and opportunities, while ensuring continuous improvement.

**Supply chain:** We are in the early stages of understanding our supply chain emissions and identifying the best strategies to address them. Improving the quality of our emissions data will be a top priority, as our current emissions are based solely on spend value, the least accurate method. In future, we will focus on engaging with our supply chain to gather more precise data to develop a clearer, more accurate picture of our emissions.

**Business travel:** Business travel will always be a necessary part of doing businesses, especially as we continue to grow. However, we recognise the need to moderate travel, particularly air travel, wherever possible. To support this, we will focus on educating colleagues about responsible travel practices. We are also reviewing our business travel policy and exploring ways by which we can collect more detailed and accurate travel data.

**Sustainable workplaces:** Sustainable fit outs, the efficient use of space and resources, waste management and improving our energy efficiency will continue to be a key part of our decision making. We will continue to explore and implement initiatives that reflect our commitment to sustainability.



# Client service

## Legal excellence with an ESG focus

With the need to tackle climate change so urgent, and with so much new sustainability-related regulation being developed, ESG and sustainability are at the top of the agenda in boardrooms.

Clients turn to us to support them in managing their risks and capitalise on opportunities to achieve their ESG and sustainability ambitions and we are responding with a growing range of tailored services.

### Targeted energy transition support

In April, we launched a dedicated Energy and Sustainability practice – a nine-person team led by partner, Chris Paul, who also chairs our internal sustainability committee.

“The energy and sustainability sector is undergoing rapid growth and change. Energy costs, ESG and Net Zero remain high on the agenda. Our new practice helps us support our clients as they face up to the challenges and opportunities.”

Chris Paul, Partner and Head of Energy and Sustainability – London



Our Energy and Sustainability practice works closely with specialist lawyers across our UK and international offices as well as external consultants. We advise on all aspects of the energy transition from decarbonisation through to renewables and you can find more on this [here](#).

Acting for owners, sponsors, lenders, bidders, developers and investors across the full range of energy projects, we also offer support as clients structure or negotiate corporate financing and strategic investment opportunities and navigate an increasingly complex regulatory environment.

### Sustainability in focus in our international markets

We advised on one of the first investments by an Asian developer in rooftop solar energy after the Dubai Electricity and Water Authority launched its solar/green initiative. And we continue to advise on ESG and sustainability-related cases across our international jurisdictions.

“We are increasingly working with clients across our international offices to help them manage the energy transition, both from advising on projects, such as solar, wind, biomass and energy from waste, and helping clients meet new ESG requirements coming into force. As Middle East economies diversify away from a dependence on hydrocarbons, this work will only intensify”

Cheryl Cairns, Resident Managing Partner – Dubai



## Our expertise in the energy sector

Heat networks are a key part of the Government’s Net Zero policy, with plans to expand market share to 20% of the overall heat market by 2050. With significant experience in the heat sector, we advise clients on the procurement, operation and decarbonisation of heat networks.

Recent highlights include advising Berkeley Homes on the appointment of Vital Energi to design, install and operate a large-scale ground source heat pump system at the Plumstead West Thamesmead site.

We are also advising Barking Riverside Limited on the implementation of its planned decarbonisation strategy for the heat network serving the Barking Riverside development, supporting the project team on the negotiation of a heat offtake from an adjoining energy-from-waste plant.

The recent energy price spikes have created renewed interest in renewables and battery storage. We recently advised Farnborough Airport on their procurement of Solivus to install large-scale rooftop solar arrays across multiple buildings at the airport including the hangars, terminal and airport hotel. Not only does this form an integral part of the airport’s sustainability strategy, but it will also generate a significant proportion of the energy required by the airport’s operations.





## Climate legal risks tracked

We're taking a lead on climate-related legal risks, commissioning Climate Vulnerability searches on all property acquisitions by clients, unless they specifically opt out.

A first in the legal industry, the searches help clients identify key climate risks, such as ground stability and coastal erosion, heat stress and increased risk of flooding. It means developers can take account of likely climate-related changes up to 60 years ahead as they plan and design their projects.



## Making the case for regeneration

After an 18-month campaign and produced in collaboration with our data partners EvaluateLocate and Commonplace, we published our Rethinking Regeneration report in May with nine key recommendations, sharing best practice and ideas on how to deliver better futures for communities across the UK.

“The Rethinking Regeneration initiative builds on 10 years of work to demonstrate the positive social and economic value that can be generated in communities by having the right physical environment. It’s been a fascinating 18-months and we’re just at the start of seeing how the ideas it has generated will impact on what is built on the ground.”

Suzanne Benson, Partner and Head of Real Estate – Manchester



## New tools for sustainable procurement

Achieving real value – financial, environmental and social – from public sector construction contracts can be difficult, and measuring it is harder still.

We’ve worked as part of an industry and government group to create a new national Value Toolkit that seeks to change the way the construction industry thinks about and measures value. Recommended in the UK Construction Playbook, it helps clients and policy makers to make value-based procurement decisions, supporting the environmental, social and financial outcomes they want to achieve.

We’ve also engaged with The Chancery Lane Project to support organisations in using climate aligned contracts, by reviewing and embedding climate-related drafting in our precedents across the business.

## Advancing sustainable finance in social housing

We’re a leading player in the field of green, social and sustainable finance and are at the vanguard of advising clients in the social housing sector.

Our standout achievements include:

- Being the only firm involved in the creation of the Sustainability Reporting Standard for UK Social Housing and the Equity Impact Reporting Project.
- Collaborating with the find Loan Market Association (LMA) on developments in sustainable finance, including co-authoring [an article on sustainable finance for social housing](#), leveraging our experience as sector-leading counsel on new product development in this area.

We’re also helping clients secure and deliver grant-funded decarbonisation measures, and navigate innovative, financed retrofit offers including “energy as a service”, comfort charges, private wire and bundled services.





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