

Shoosmiths LLP

Communications on Progress for United Nations Global Compact

January 2021

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1. Introduction to the United Nations Global Compact

The United Nations (UN) Global Compact was launched in 2000 and is the world's largest global corporate sustainability initiative. It is a call to companies to align strategies and operations with universal principles on human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption and to take actions that advance societal goals.

The UN Global Compact states its mission is to 'mobilise a global movement of sustainable companies and stakeholders to create the world we want.'

To achieve this, it supports companies to:

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

Signatories commit to and provide an annual report on progress, called a Communication on Progress (COP), providing the opportunity for chief executives to re-commit to the 10 principles and to report on progress and plans.

Shoosmiths is a signatory of the Global Compact; is a member of the UK Network and participates in three of its working groups on Modern Slavery, the Global Goals (SDGs) and Diversity and Inclusion. It also participates in the Climate Action Group. Learning and sharing best practice with other members enables us to evaluate and improve our own approaches.

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

United Nations Global Compact Principles

Human Rights

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

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

Labour

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

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

Principle 5: The effective abolition of child labour; and

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

Environment

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

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

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

Anti-Corruption

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

2. Chief Executive Officer and Chairman Statement of Support

Welcome to our fifth annual Communication on Progress (COP) and re-affirmation that Shoosmiths LLP is a signatory of the UN Global Compact and continues to support the 10 principles related to Human Rights, Labour, Environment and Anti-Corruption. During 2020, it has been a stark reminder for organisations that to ignore these 10 principles would be at society's peril and therefore the future of our planet. That is why we have continued to embrace the principles as we have navigated our way through the pandemic.

WE SUPPORT



Shoosmiths became a signatory on 27 January 2016.

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

To deliver our aspirations we remain committed to responsible business practices, addressing the global SDGs, collaborating with others and reporting against our progress and plans. This includes publication of our annual Communication on Progress (COP) as a signatory of the UN Global Compact.

During the last reporting period, highlights included being one of 94 companies to participate in Business in the Community's Responsible Business Tracker®, launching our **Social Mobility Action Plan**, becoming signatories of the **Mindful Business Charter**, being ranked 38th in the **Social Mobility Employer Index 2020**, committing to a target for our operations to become **carbon net zero** by 2025 as well as committing to set a science-based target through the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi).

This year has been a year like no other and we are extremely proud how everyone has pulled together during the pandemic, proving themselves resilient and responsive. We have changed the way we work, whilst continuing to deliver the excellent client experience we are known for. Everyone has displayed that not only do we embrace agile working and agile systems but that Shoosmiths is a firm of people with agile minds, willing and able to adapt to change.

We quickly embraced a more **remote working model**, including the introduction of our new **Working Principles**. We recognised that communication is critical and utilised different channels, including regular updates from the leadership team and virtual roadshows. We created a Covid-19 Hub, our one stop shop for all communication and resources applicable to the pandemic.

Development of people continued and has remained a top priority with over 100 training courses delivered in 2020, on a range of topics including: our aspiring managers programme, **Shoosmiths Academy**, business systems training and a High Performing Women Programme (helping to identify structural barriers which might impact on progression and help us to see an increased representation of women at senior level). We've also held coaching sessions, reverse mentoring schemes, provided tips of the week and opened up a wealth of online courses and information.

Our Values have never been as important as they have been this year. Not only are they a guide for how we should all behave and communicate but we continue to use them to ensure a best practice approach to recruitment and promotion. Complementing our values is the Shoosmiths Way and it's through this that we recognise and reward those colleagues who have gone Above and Beyond. This year we refreshed our Above and Beyond Scheme to include the Thank Shoo Scheme, a non-financial recognition scheme that allows everyone to acknowledge/thank/appreciate any team or individual with a personalised e-card.

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

Our responsible business programme remains broad in its scope but during 2021 we are particularly keen to progress the establishment of the Shoosmiths Foundation, make a meaningful contribution to social mobility and to progress our target for Shoosmiths' operations to become carbon net zero by 2025 including progressing our commitment to the Science Based Targets initiative. We also welcome the opportunity to work alongside likeminded organisations for a greater collective good.

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



Simon Boss
Chief Executive Officer



Peter Duff
Chairman

3. Introduction to Shoosmiths and our approach to responsible business

Shoosmiths LLP is a leading law firm in the UK, delivering legal services to businesses and individuals since 1845. As at 31 December 2020 we had 215 partners and partner equivalents and 1,495 personnel working together as one team at 13 locations in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland namely Belfast, Birmingham, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Leeds, London, Manchester, Milton Keynes, Northampton, Nottingham, Sheffield, Solent and Thames Valley.

We operate four business units known as divisions:

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

Directorates providing business support are business development and marketing, finance, HR and estates management, information support, knowledge management, projects and innovation and quality and risk.

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

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

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

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

We will deliver our vision by:

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

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

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

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

<p>Our marketplace Working collaboratively in the marketplace with our clients and suppliers to evidence best corporate responsibility practice aligned with our vision to be the leading law firm in the UK famous for its client experience.</p>	<p>Our environment Demonstrating high standards of environmental responsibility in all our operations and minimising the environmental impacts associated with our activities, products and services.</p>
<p>Our workplace Delivering an innovative and market differentiated employee value proposition based upon the firm's values and the Shoosmiths Way.</p>	<p>Our communities Building and maintaining enduring community relationships that achieve positive impacts for the organisations we work with.</p>

As a signatory of the UN Global Compact, we communicate the movement's principles and work including via our intranet, **external website**, LinkedIn, Twitter, our annual CR Report and our CR blog **SHOUTback**.

This, our fifth annual COP, covers the period January 2020 to January 2021 (although some of our activities and data cited relates to our last financial year 1 May 2019/30 April 2020, coinciding with our latest annual Corporate Responsibility Report appendices disclosure). Our COP includes a statement by our Chief Executive Officer and Chairman and a description of actions and relevant policies relating to human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption. Aligned responsible business targets with status against these and key performance indicators are provided in our web published annual corporate responsibility reports.

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

Find out more

Shoosmiths website

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

You can read our CR policies and annual CR and UN Global COP reports on the '**Our responsibility**' section of our website.

Corporate responsibility

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

Diversity and inclusion

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

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

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

Follow us on social media

- [Shoosmiths Twitter](#)
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- [Shoosmiths Serious Injury Twitter](#)
- [Shoosmiths Serious Injury LinkedIn](#)
- [Shoosmiths Grads - Twitter](#)
- [Shoosmiths Grads - Instagram](#)

You can read our annual slavery and human trafficking statement at the landing page of our **Shoosmiths website** <https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/slavery-and-human-trafficking-statement>

Covid-19 risk assessments

England

Northern Ireland

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

4. Human Rights and Labour Principles 1 to 6

Human Rights

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

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

Labour

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

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

Principle 5: The effective abolition of child labour; and

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

Our policies and commitments

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

[Carbon neutral policy](#)

[Community investment policy](#)

[Corporate responsibility policy](#)

[Environment policy](#)

[Health and safety policy](#)

[Modern slavery act – duty to notify](#)

[Privacy notice](#)

[Pro bono policy](#)

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

[Supplier code of conduct](#)

[Volunteering policy](#)

[Waste management policy](#)

[Whistleblowing policy](#)

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

Modern Slavery

The focus of our activity since our 2019 statement was published has been to carry out improvement recommendations identified in 2019 when we employed the Slave-Free Alliance to conduct an independent review of our processes and procedures.

Progress against 2019/2020 priorities

Priority	Progress
Review and develop action programmes based on recommendations made by the Slave-Free Alliance.	<p>Supplier code of conduct updated to provide details of how suppliers can report any concerns to Safecall and asking suppliers to report to Shoosmiths any incidents of slavery or human trafficking found in its business or supply chain.</p> <p>Internal modern slavery duty to notify procedure updated to reflect updated statistics and weblinks.</p> <p>Two appendices have also been added:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • risk assessment to identify priority suppliers for engagement/survey • escalation procedure in the event that a potential incident of slavery was to arise or be reported. <p>Cross referencing has been provided in our procurement and suppliers' management policy to the modern slavery duty to notify procedure.</p>
Brief our designated slavery champions to facilitate a consistent approach.	Undertaken February 2020 explaining the external review undertaken and findings, details of updated policies and procedures, a reminder of the supplier engagement and reporting cycle and our plans for working with the Slave-Free Alliance once more and to request details of any additional colleagues to complete the e-learning training.
Continue to increase understanding of potential risk areas perceived by our priority suppliers within their supply chains. To include an on-site assessment of one of our key suppliers.	The Slave-Free Alliance was appointed to conduct this work but due to the Covid-19 crisis this was conducted virtually in September 2020.
Continue to explore opportunities for collaboration within the business sector and with third sector organisations involved in mitigating and preventing slavery and trafficking within the UK.	Progress not made here so to address again in 2020/2021.
Continue to raise awareness amongst stakeholders.	Progress only made with staff engagement so to address again in 2020/2021.

Our supply chain consists of circa 1,300 suppliers and our procurement expenditure in 2019/2020 was approximately £31 million in relation to the purchasing of goods and services that support the operations of our offices and services to our clients. These include office supplies, marketing materials, digital agents, ICT hardware and software, estate services such as cleaning, waste management, office design, office fixtures and fittings during fit out, refurbishments and maintenance, uniforms and catering, hospitality services such as hotels for conferences and training events, security and couriers as well as recruitment agents and temporary staff provision. We purchase professional services and work with other law firms and experts including: barristers, court services and enforcement, tracing agents, vehicle recovery agents, litigation support providers, environmental consultants, surveyors, planning consultants, medical professionals, financial advisors and title indemnity insurance policies from insurance companies and brokers.

Our **whistleblowing policy** sets out the process for reporting any concerns about wrongdoing or breaches of policies, including forced or compulsory labour or human trafficking. If anyone has any concerns about raising a matter internally, they can alternatively use our external, independent whistleblowing service Safecall. Safecall can be contacted to register a concern about any matter by telephone or online. Safecall provides a 24 hour a day, 7 days a week service via the Freephone number 0800 915 1571 or via the website www.safecall.co.uk/report.

During the year no slavery or trafficking concerns were reported by staff.

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

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

We have a policy and guidance on compliance with the **modern slavery act duty to notify regulations**.

Our Head of Corporate Responsibility, who is part of the HR Directorate and who reports to the HR Director, acts as our lead anti-slavery champion responsible for guiding the business on best practice and raising staff awareness supported by designated divisional and directorate champions who are responsible for implementing our compliance procedure. Our Operations Executive has collective responsibility for directing and reviewing this programme and the annual modern slavery statement. The statement is also approved by the Partnership Council, Shoosmiths' highest decision-making body.

We have been a member of the UN Global Compact UK Network Modern Slavery Working Group since May 2016. Members represent a number of industry sectors and share ideas, information and best practice. In July 2020 we took part for the fourth consecutive year in the annual peer review of member slavery and human trafficking statements.

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

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

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

Our recruitment and employment procedures include appropriate pre-employment screening of all staff to determine their right to work in the UK where all our offices are based. Candidate sourcing is predominantly managed directly by the inhouse talent acquisition team. Over the last three years we have greatly reduced our use of recruitment agencies, but when they are required all recruitment suppliers are based in the UK and agree to our terms and conditions.

To the best of our knowledge there are no suppliers using a third party within the process and we deal directly with each supplier who is tasked with delivering the relevant service.

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

Historically Shoosmiths has adopted a devolved approach to procurement with each directorate and division being responsible for the procurement of its goods and services in line with company procedures. In relation to the Modern Slavery Act, a nominated individual in each division and directorate (currently 13 individuals total) has been responsible for leading on such engagement with our suppliers' procedure.

In March 2020 Shoosmiths appointed a dedicated Procurement Manager as part of a continuous improvement plan. The role is to manage our supply chain and to ensure that the organisation continues to conduct supply chain management in a fair and transparent way.

Through our supplier onboarding process, we undertake defined levels of due diligence depending on the size and risk of the supplier and the goods and services they are providing. Suppliers are also asked to sign the Shoosmiths supplier code of conduct, which sets out the behaviours we expect from our supply chain.

A summary of our procedure to identify and manage potential issues associated with the risk of slavery or trafficking in our operations or supply chain can be found [here](#).

Within our estates management function Fisco UK Ltd works with Shoosmiths, directly managing and taking ownership of all second tier Facility Management contract services – cleaning consumables, couriers, landscaping, waste and recycling and all building services contracts. All new suppliers are vetted, and an annual compliance review is undertaken to include pre-employment screening, training, health, safety, environmental and modern slavery compliance.

It is standard practice for estates management to approach all the tier one and two estates management suppliers (excluding tier three sub-contractors not contracted by Shoosmiths). Existing suppliers who signed the original code of conduct are sent the questionnaire on an annual basis. For new suppliers we send out the questionnaire and code of conduct. We pay particular attention to those where unskilled labour is required i.e. cleaning, window cleaners, caterers etc. and we focus on the direct supply of products i.e. stationery and specialist branded products. During the year we issued the updated supplier code of conduct and survey to all suppliers carrying out telephone calls, where needed, to explain the requirements and we hold details on countries that goods are sourced from as well as any published modern slavery statements. We were informed

by four suppliers that they are members of Sedex, which works to improve working conditions in global supply chains. We also took the decision to terminate two contracts and source alternative laundry services suppliers who had failed to respond to our requests for information during the last two years. In some instances, suppliers did not complete the requested survey, instead signposting us to their online slavery statements.

As one outcome of the 2019 review work undertaken by the Slave-Free Alliance it was agreed that during early 2020 the Slave-Free Alliance would undertake an assessment of the potential risks to Shoosmiths in relation to our outsourced estates management functions through the supplier Fisco UK Ltd. This review was intended to enable Shoosmiths to better understand the risk within the tiers of this function and to improve our understanding of the wider tier two supply chain.

Due to the Covid-19 crisis the face to face audit planned in March 2020 instead was conducted as a virtual assessment in September 2020. The assessment entailed the reviewing of Fisco management policies and main cleaning contractors – scope two suppliers.

Documents reviewed included:

- recruitment and selection
- grievance and disciplinary
- employee code of conduct
- supplier code of conduct
- whistleblowing
- responsible sourcing/procurement (including specifically to labour providers)
- employee handbook
- anti-slavery and human trafficking

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

As a professional services firm with office locations solely in the UK, it is considered that the level of risk of modern slavery or trafficking within the business is low but there is no room for complacency.

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

Shoosmiths is unable to determine if its approach is effective but is committed to continued work in this area.

Divisions and directorates have not identified any internal business procedures that could make demands of suppliers or contractors that might lead them to violate human rights and we will continue to keep this under review.

Shoosmiths has not been informed of any incidents of slavery or trafficking during the year but will investigate any allegations should they arise and take appropriate action accordingly.

Our procedures include the steps we would take to investigate any allegations of slavery or trafficking in our business or supply chain.

Slavery and Human Trafficking Related Key Performance Indicators

Key performance indicator	2018/2019	2019/2020
Number of instances of modern slavery identified within Shoosmiths business operation or supply chain	0	0
Number of required staff who have completed e-learning training	67	18
% of required staff who have completed e-learning training	100	78
Number of suppliers who have signed up to the Shoosmiths supplier code of conduct*	169	86
Number of suppliers requested to complete a survey	140	148
Number of suppliers who completed a survey	59	85

*Cumulative figure reported in 2018/2019 but in 2019/2020 relates to number of suppliers to have signed up in that year.

Staff training and capacity building about slavery and human trafficking

E-learning training is made available to nominated individuals within each division and business directorate, overseeing compliance with our slavery and human trafficking requirements. The e-learning training covers four modules, providing an introduction to modern slavery, what are the signs, action to take and an assessment of understanding. Work commenced in May 2020 to review and update this training, but output has been delayed as a consequence of the Covid-19 crisis.

As at August 2020 18 required employees (78%) have completed the training. Our lead anti-slavery champions across the business identified those colleagues who would benefit from raised awareness on this issue, including within business development, estates management, HR and real estate. We did not reach 100% during the year as some staff were subsequently on furlough leave.

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

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

Our advisory role

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

Our employment and corporate immigration teams also advise on illegal working policies and procedures, carrying out prevention of illegal working audits and providing training for staff undertaking checks on illegal working.

To find out more about the advice we provide click **here**. To find out more about our Academy including e-learning training click **here**.

Priorities for 2020/2021

1. Standardise procurement policies and practices across the business that are aligned with Shoosmiths' responsible supply chain management requirements;
2. Continue to increase understanding of potential risk areas perceived by our priority suppliers within their supply chains. To include an on-site assessment of one of our key suppliers;
3. Continue to explore opportunities for collaboration within the business sector and with third sector organisations involved in mitigating and preventing slavery and trafficking within the UK; and
4. Continue to raise awareness amongst stakeholders.

In conclusion, Shoosmiths is committed to better understanding its supply chains and collaborating with stakeholders who wish to improve transparency and address incidents of slavery or human trafficking. This applies not just to our own practices but also to the identification of opportunities in wider society, where we might be able to make a difference. We are particularly keen to hear from like-minded organisations so that we can explore collaborative opportunities.

Diversity and inclusion

Diversity and inclusion continue to be at the forefront of the agenda at Shoosmiths and our activities, and progress, are integral to the firmwide three-year strategy. We rely on our teams to perform at their best and deliver results for our clients, and we know we cannot do that without diverse perspectives, and inclusive practices.

As well as our efforts to advance diversity and inclusion within our firm, we also want to contribute to the progression of the wider legal sector. We seek to engage our colleagues, our clients, and our communities, in all that we do in this area.

We take an iterative approach to our work. Typically, we:

- make a pledge or commitment to a specific focus area, or we benchmark our current performance;
- identify areas where we are doing well, and areas where we need to improve;
- develop action plans; and
- review, seek feedback, and evolve our approach.

We are committed to working in partnership to achieve our goals.

We have been a member of the UN Global Compact UK Network Diversity and Inclusion Working Group since 2018 and continue to value our participation in that forum. In 2020, we joined Target Gender Equality, allowing us access to the accelerator programme; including performance analysis, capacity building, networking with peers, and interacting with other stakeholders who are working towards progress on gender equality.

We look forward to continuing our involvement as the programme progresses in 2021.

As well as meeting mandatory pay gap reporting requirements, Shoosmiths voluntarily includes ethnicity data, as well as Partner data across both gender and ethnicity. We have also introduced actions for ethnicity as well as gender within our **gender and ethnicity gender pay gap reporting**.

The firm is currently at 36% female partnership, which is higher than the widely held legal sector goal of 30%. However, we know we can do more. For example, in 2019 we introduced a High Performing Women Programme which combines coaching for senior women in the firm with the identification of any structural barriers which might impact on progress. We are now preparing to run the next cohort.

In our 2020 COP, we reported our involvement in Business in the Community's Race at Work Charter. We continue to make progress, and work on the actions contained within. We recently also participated in the Law Society's roundtables; the remit being to identify best practice in ensuring BAME representation in the profession, addressing poor experiences of the workplace, and ensuring career development. In 2020 we also became corporate members of the Black Solicitors Network.

We continue to be a Disability Confident Employer, reflecting the support provided to disabled individuals during our recruitment processes, and within the workplace.

On social mobility, we moved from 'pledge to practice', with the (Covid-19 delayed) launch of our Shoosmiths' **Social Mobility Action Plan**. This transitioned us from our original Social Mobility Pledge, to a practical framework; evidence based, and aligning with each of our office locations. Working closely with the Rt Hon Justine Greening and her team, the now published plan covers three themes; talent can come from anywhere, being yourself at work, and our clients / our communities.

In 2020, we were proud to be in the top 50 employers nationally in the Social Mobility Employer Index (for the second year in a row). Moving from 63rd in 2018, to 48th in 2019, and to 38th in 2020, is a helpful indicator of progress. The Index is a benchmark of efforts across areas such as work with young people, recruitment, progression, data collection, and advocacy.

We also continue to support our colleagues in the activities they drive through our inclusion working group and networks. These networks are currently Balance, Proud, and Embrace – we are also developing a page on our website to share our approach to inclusion and the networks' activities.

During National Inclusion Week (September 2020), we started the 'People of Shoosmiths' campaign, and will link this to the inclusion webpages referenced above. We continue to regularly provide internal communications opportunities for colleagues to share their career stories.

Wellbeing

The challenges of 2020 have been unprecedented in many ways; the firm quickly recognised that the pandemic, and the new measures put in place, could lead to an increase in feelings of isolation and loneliness, and have a significant impact on mental health – for those who may already have been struggling, and for those who may have experienced mental health concerns for the first time. Prior to the pandemic, the firm had a number of initiatives in place to support mental health and wellbeing, but the events of this year have made it more important than ever to prioritise this.

So, as well as continuing to support our existing national network of mental health and wellbeing champions, in recent months we have developed a Covid-19 mental health and wellbeing plan, shaped by employee feedback. We identified through a survey, early in the pandemic, that the mental health of our employees had deteriorated. We responded to this with increased efforts to support our people and signpost to useful resources.

The plan is reviewed every quarter but has included webinars and resources on topics such as adjusting to working from home, working and parenting, and diversity of experience in lockdown. Engagement with our online Question and Answer platform, Rungway, continues to increase, and we regularly review its usage. We also continue to promote the (confidential) employee assistance programme which is available to employees.

As well as updating content in a dedicated internal Coronavirus Hub, we have continued to evolve the content on our existing Wellbeing Hub. We also updated links to regional and national charities which support individuals with mental health concerns and included an updated section on financial wellbeing. Our leadership have reiterated the importance of looking after mental health and wellbeing through regular communications.

We also engaged external subject matter experts, Mental Health at Work, to deliver workshops on the impact of the pandemic on mental health, for our Champions, and separately for our Partnership / senior leadership group.

All of this was in the wider context of acting on our commitment to Time to Change, the campaign to destigmatise mental health in the workplace. We are currently looking at how we take forward the learnings of the Time to Change Pledge, continue to evolve our approach, and continue to build on a culture which supports open conversations about mental health and wellbeing.

In May 2020, we also signed the Mindful Business Charter, a collective commitment by a range of businesses and law firms to address the avoidable stresses in working practices and promoting more mindful ways of working. We are currently considering how to apply those principles in our evolving working environment.

4a. Helping our clients

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

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

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

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

We are also a founding signatory of the Law Society Pro Bono Charter. Our **pro bono policy** highlights our commitment to support organisations and individuals better understand their rights and gain access to justice.

This is underpinned by an internal practice note setting out our requirements for the taking on and reporting of pro bono work.

Pro bono advice is undertaken as a consequence of approaches by organisations and individuals, via charity trustee roles, through legal advisor connections, by appointment-based pro bono clinics and via brokered programmes managed by charities. Hours recorded by legal advisors are included with their 'matter-related' targets (targets relating to billable hours), meaning pro bono hours count towards achieving these targets. 1,555 pro bono hours were recorded during 2019/2020, representing a 4.8% decrease on the 1,634 pro bono hours recorded during 2018/2019. During 2020/2021, we will continue to encourage legal advisors to undertake appropriate work and publicise outcomes of support provided and are keen to increase the number of initiatives the firm is able to support, particularly which contribute to progress on diversity and inclusion.

We work closely with a number of pro bono partners to provide free legal advice to those in need. Since early 2020 these have switched to virtual advice provision:

- **LawWorks:** We support appointment-based pro bono clinics based on the LawWorks model in Thames Valley, Milton Keynes and Northampton and the LawWorks Not-for-Profits Programme.
 - **CommuniCare Legal Advice Centre:** Our Thames Valley office supports the East Reading-based CommuniCare Legal Advice Centre operated in conjunction with students from the University of Reading School of Law. Last year, Shoosmiths advised at six clinics supporting 13 clients on issues such as employment, consumer, landlord/tenant, personal injury, contract, property and small claims.
 - **Northampton pro bono clinic:** Our Northampton office supports the Northampton pro bono clinic operated in conjunction with Citizens Advice Central and East Northamptonshire and students from the University of Northampton School of Law. Last year, Shoosmiths advised 14 clients at 5 monthly advice clinics on matters such as family, probate, employment, landlord and tenant and general civil matters.
 - **LawWorks Not-for-Profits Programme:** We support the LawWorks Not-for-Profits Programme which delivers free legal advice to charities, voluntary and community organisations and social enterprises. During 2019/2020, real estate advice was provided to seven charities advising on issues such as reviewing a draft hire agreement, reviewing and negotiating heads of terms and leases, registering a lease and advising on property rights.
- **Edinburgh pro bono clinic:** Our Edinburgh office supports Citizens Advice Edinburgh on real estate and employment matters, based on local need. Throughout the year, Shoosmiths advised clients on a one-off basis at monthly advice clinics. This service has continued throughout the Covid-19 pandemic and has evolved to ensure clients receive advice remotely. The Edinburgh office continues to strengthen its pro bono connections and plans to expand the support it provides in the coming years.
- **Manchester Free Legal Pro Bono Clinic:** Our family law team based in Manchester provides monthly pro bono advice at the Manchester Civil Justice Centre. This involved attending 10 clinics advising circa 60 clients on family law issues as well as signposting to other services such as family mediation, social services, and local domestic violence groups. Supervision was also provided to law students at the Manchester University Law Clinic.
- **Milton Keynes pro bono clinics:** Our Milton Keynes office supports the Milton Keynes Housing and Employment pro bono clinics operated in conjunction with Citizens Advice Milton Keynes. Last year, Shoosmiths advised 60 clients at 22 advice clinics which ran twice a month.

Manchester team provide ongoing support for Willowbrook Hospice

Shoosmiths has assisted local Willowbrook Hospice on a pro bono basis since 2018. We have provided real estate advice and transactional support in relation to the acquisition of high street stores and regularising occupational arrangements across the property portfolio of this charity. An electronic database has been set up to provide instant access to deeds and we are on hand to provide ad hoc advice whenever required.

'Shoosmiths has been a fantastic partner to Willowbrook; as a charity we rely heavily on donations to continue to provide our services to the communities of St Helens and Knowsley. By providing pro bono support to us, Shoosmiths is enabling us to direct more of these donations to what we do best – the best care delivered with compassion. Thank you for helping us to do this.'

Alun Owens, Corporate Director, Willowbrook Hospice

Pro bono assistance supports launch of Solent Mind's new wellbeing app

One pro bono project very close to our heart has been advising on the development of Solent Mind's wellbeing app. Business Advisory partner, Fiona Teague led the pro bono advice along with Mark Kramer, Lauren Midgley and Heather Stark from the Commercial practice group supporting mental health charity Solent Mind with the legal aspects of the development and launch of a new wellbeing app. Feedback from the charity demonstrates just how invaluable the team's pro bono support has been.

*'Thank you all again for the incredible work and effort you have put into this for us. It really will help a lot of people in what can only be described as some very difficult times ahead. The Solent Mind wellbeing app is now available to be downloaded for free from Google Play or the App Store **here**.'*

Emma Fernandes, Business Development Director, Solent Mind

Shoosmiths acts as honorary counsel to I Can Be

Karen Howard and Mark Kramer from the London office, with help from colleagues in employment and commercial, continue to advise a new charity, I Can Be as honorary counsel. I Can Be sits squarely within the firm's commitment to social mobility. By introducing disadvantaged primary-aged girls from inner-city London schools to women in a wide variety of jobs and professions the charity seeks to instil curiosity and confidence in the girls, whilst exposing them to jobs that they may never otherwise have been exposed to or may have otherwise dismissed as being 'male' jobs.

'We are incredibly fortunate to have Shoosmiths as our honorary counsel – and we are reminded of this every time we work with Karen, Mark and each fantastically helpful colleague brought in for their specialism. As well as having this amazing opportunity to have access to such top legal expertise, the guidance we are given is always very clear and carefully tailored to our very specific needs – the relationship has been a huge asset to the charity.'

Anastasia de Waal, Director, I Can Be

Pro bono assistance supports Tollerton Playgroup Committee

Partner Michael Briggs and principal associate Natalie Aldread have been providing ongoing support to Tollerton Playgroup Parent Committee – a charity requiring employment and property litigation advice on a complex legal issue relating to the lease of their premises.

'Natalie, Michael and the team at Shoosmiths have been a pleasure to work with. Their service, knowledge, professionalism and attention to detail were second to none. The team worked with us to unpick the issues and offer advice on all aspects of the problem.'

Clare Farley, Joint Chair/Trustee, Tollerton Playgroup Parent Committee

Shoosmiths supports Manuel Bravo Project

The Manuel Bravo Project is a charitable organisation based in Leeds that aims to provide legal representation to asylum seekers who would otherwise have none. Shoosmiths began to support the project in October 2018. Clients of the Manuel Bravo Project are referred to Shoosmiths who provides assistance on a pro bono basis, enabling clients to navigate what can be a complex and stressful procedure. Shoosmiths prepares and submits settlement protection applications (SET(P)) which are applications made on behalf of refugees who are coming to their initial five-year refugee status. If successful, the refugee is granted indefinite leave to remain. Between May 2019 and October 2020, the Shoosmiths team has worked on 19 cases involving clients from Eritrea, Cameroon, Gambia, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Somalia, Iran, Afghanistan and Nigeria. From these 19 cases, we have received 18 successful outcomes and have one pending outcome.

'Shoosmiths has been highly competent and hardworking throughout the time of our partnership to date and has made a huge difference to us and our clients. Up to now they have had a 100% success rate with their applications. Without their contribution we could not offer our SET (P) service. This would leave refugees with the unenviable options to struggle to find money to pay a private solicitor for assistance (often not an option at all), risk submitting an application without legal oversight or simply remain as overstayers at risk of removal. Our SET (P) partnership project is the only chance many refugees have of submitting a sound, well-researched application to remain safely in the UK.'

Emma McKee, Volunteer Coordinator, Project Manager, Manuel Bravo Project

First year trainees deliver sustainable development goals pro bono challenge

Each year Shoosmiths issues a CR challenge to its first-year trainees and our 2019/2020 project was to ask our 28 trainees under appropriate supervision to provide legal advice to organisations that are addressing any of the global SDGs in the UK. This was the third consecutive year the challenge has been pro bono focused.

Just some of the work our trainees undertook included:

Our Milton Keynes trainees continued the operation of pro bono clinics run by Milton Keynes Citizens Advice, providing alternating fortnightly advice on housing and employment matters. The trainees also introduced a serious injury clinic service and the clinic switched to a virtual service as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic.

Our Manchester trainees assisted in advising on family law matters at the Legal Advice Clinic set up in the city and which takes place on the last Friday of every month at the Civil Justice Centre. The trainees developed a comprehensive crib sheet to gather basis information from the client during an initial interview by one of the trainees or student volunteer, to enable the legal advisor to focus more time on advising rather than on gathering facts. The clinic has also now switched to a virtual service.

Our Leeds trainees have been supporting the Manuel Bravo project. The charity provides legal representation to asylum seekers who would otherwise have none. Again, virtual support continues to be provided during the crisis.

Our London trainee has been assisting a charity with the proposed granting of a lease for a Victorian walled garden at a hospital for the benefit of visitors and patients as well as the local community.

Our Edinburgh trainee has been co-ordinating the Edinburgh office's continued involvement in the pro bono clinic service operated by Edinburgh Citizens Advice with advice provided to clients on real estate and employment matters.

Our Thames Valley trainees created and presented an employment law briefing for 16 and 17-year-olds at a local school in Reading. The briefing included addressing differences between the types of employment contracts, rules on sick pay and mandatory work breaks, protections against discrimination, and the efforts to tackle the proliferation of Covid-19 in the workplace.

The challenge has helped the trainees to practise and develop new skills that will equip them well for the future when they qualify. These include client-facing opportunities and taking ownership of client matters as well as soft skills such as interview techniques, having empathy with the client and team working in order to collaborate and manage projects.

'Pro bono provision has always been important to Shoosmiths and never more so than now. We thank our first-year trainee group for helping us to step up our approach to pro bono. We encourage them to continue providing free legal advice to individuals and organisations in need throughout their careers, thereby making effective use of the lawyer's unique skills.'

Nicola Ellen, Head of Corporate Responsibility, Shoosmiths

During the year advice to clients included:

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/news/leading-yorkshire-based-nutritional-supplement-firm-purchased-as-part-of-european-expansion-plans>
<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/news/shoosmiths-advises-in-acquisition-of-isams-school-management-system-by-iris-software>
<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/news/software-company-lingit-announces-latest-acquisition-as-part-of-international-growth-strategy>
<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/news/shoosmiths-advises-gresham-house-ventures-5m-investment-nhs-digital-triage-provider-econsult-health>
<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/news/shoosmiths-advises-moorfield-group-on-125-million-care-home-partnership-with-allegra-care>

Insights, articles and commentary are published on our Shoosmiths website and during the year the following relevant to the human rights and labour agenda covered such issues as:

Care:

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/bbc-panorama-review-ehcp>
<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/comment/covid-19-use-of-dnrs-do-not-resuscitate-and-acps-advance-care-plans>
<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/covid19/covid-19-paying-for-carers-furlough-and-direct-payments>
<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/how-will-the-coronavirus-act-affect-special-educational-needs-sen-provision>
<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/covid19-shopping-for-essentials-for-the-most-vulnerable>
<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/shared-care-movement-restrictions-clarified-for-separated-divorced-parents>
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<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/coronavirus-school-closure-impact-on-contact-and-shared-care-arrangements>

Charities:

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/the-kruger-report-a-charities-perspective>

Data protection:

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/supreme-court-guidance-for-charities>
<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/covid19/new-covid-19-guidelines-and-data-protection-what-businesses-need-to-do-now>
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<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/could-data-be-the-key-to-unlocking-social-mobility>
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<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/leading-effective-change-in-charities>
<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/covid19/more-than-grades-what-employers-can-do-to-champion-social-mobility>
<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/covid19/covid-19-and-its-impact-on-women-at-work>
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<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/celebrate-lgbt-history-month>
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<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/comment/social-mobility-in-2020-an-update>

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Employment:

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<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/extension-of-the-coronavirus-job-retention-scheme>
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<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/national-employment-law-update-october-2020>
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<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/how-to-avoid-covid-19-redundancies>
<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/support-for-employers-more-questions-than-answers>
<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/careers/careers-early/early-careers-blog/blog/could-coronavirus-change-the-way-we-work-forever>
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<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/is-your-business-prepared-for-the-end-of-free-movement>
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<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/case-law-update-whistleblowing>
<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/bitesize-brexit-2-tips-on-what-to-do-now-labour-market>
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<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/can-discrimination-be-justified-on-the-grounds-of-costs-alone>
<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/5-key-imminent-immigration-changes-a-recap>
<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/12-employment-law-developments-of-2020>
<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/beware-out-of-sight-out-of-mind-on-homeworking-employees>

Pensions:

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/defined-benefit-consolidation-the-rise-of-the-pensions-superfund>
<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/covid19/impact-on-defined-benefit-pension-schemes-contributions-holidays>
<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/covid19/conducting-pension-scheme-business-in-socially-distant-times-part-2>
<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/covid19/coronavirus-job-retention-scheme-pensions-aspects>
<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/dealing-with-covid-19-practical-considerations-for-trustees>

Privacy and data protection:

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/covid19/covid-19-privacy-considerations-of-contact-tracing-apps>
<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/covid19/regulating-data-protection-in-a-crisis-what-the-ico-is-doing-now>
<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/covid19-and-data-protection-key-tips-to-stay-compliant>
<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/preemployment-vetting-data-protection-and-criminal-records>
<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/managing-your-data-risk-with-data-minimisation-when-less-is-more>
<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/guides/gdpr-data-breach-notification>
<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/guides/gdpr-data-subject-access-requests>
<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/comment/2020-predictions-data-privacy-and-protection>
<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/is-your-workforce-privacy-notice-pandemic-proof>

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<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/our-responsibility/shoutback/shoosmiths-supports-national-pro-bono-week>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/careers/careers-early/early-careers-blog/blog/how-pro-bono-is-making-me-a-better-lawyer>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/our-responsibility/shoutback/trainees-provide-pro-bono-legal-advice-aligned-un-global-sustainable-development-goals>

Wellbeing:

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/comment/career-wellbeing-how-to-create-boundaries-on-social-media>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/careers/careers-early/early-careers-blog/blog/mental-wellbeing-for-trainee-solicitors-during-coronavirus>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/getting-the-balance-homeworking-and-employee-mental-health>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/getting-the-balance-covid-19-and-employee-mental-health>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/covid19-its-homeworking-but-not-as-we-know-it--employee-wellbeing-is-key>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/returning-to-work-and-employee-mental-health>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/covid-19-vaccination-what-every-employer-needs-to-know>

During the year events included:

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/case-studies/leading-effective-change-in-charities-a-case-study>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/social-mobility-from-pledge-to-practice>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/podcast/shoospeak-hr-podcast-episode-3-innocent-isolator-or-regulation-rulebreaker>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/podcast/shoospeak-hr-podcast-episode-2-the-rise-of-the-cyberbully-in-the-workplace>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/charity-governance-in-the-age-of-covid-19>

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

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/essential-webinar-series-for-employers-mental-health-and-the-role-of-the-manager>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/podcast/shoospeak-hr-podcast-episode-1-farewell-furlough>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/the-kickstart-scheme-are-you-eligible>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/covid19/the-new-how-keep-your-distance>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/being-proud-webinar>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/covid19/shared-and-halved-ihl-series-are-you-getting-enough-sleep>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/podcast/podcast-homeworking-the-future>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/covid19/shared-and-halved-ihl-series-bringing-the-workforce-back>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/covid19/essential-webinar-series-for-employers-homeworking-the-future>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/covid19/essential-webinar-series-for-employers-flexible-furlough>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/covid19/shared-and-halved-ihl-series-employment-issues>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/covid19/essential-webinar-series-for-employers-reopening-your-workplace>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/covid19/shared-and-halved-ihl-series-privacy-issues-in-ending-the-lockdown-remote-marketing>
<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/covid19/embracing-the-change-in-psychology-of-working-from-home>
<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/covid19/shared-and-halved-planning-for-a-safe-return-to-work-pt2>
<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/covid19/shared-and-halved-planning-for-a-safe-return-to-work>
<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/covid19/shared-and-halved-ihl-series-key-global-privacy-issues-of-covid-19>
<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/covid19/how-to-lift-the-lockdown>
<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/podcast/national-pensions-briefing>
<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/covid19/employment-consequences-guidance-on-furlough-statutory-sick-pay-and-right-to-work-checking>
<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/covid19/shared-and-halved-keeping-workers-safe>
<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/covid19/shared-and-halved-ihl-series-working-remotely>
<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/covid19/shared-and-halved-employment-issues>
<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/past-webinars/essential-webinar-series-for-employers-handling-senior-exits>
<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/past-webinars/right-to-work-check-changes>
<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/podcast/shoospeak-hr-podcast-episode-6-the-christmas-crackers-of-2020>

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

Data protection and General Data Protection Regulations compliance:

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

Employee misconduct:

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

Equality and diversity:

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

Introduction to unfair dismissal:

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

Modern slavery - transparency in supply chains:

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

Prevention of illegal working:

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

4b. Organisations we have worked with

In addition to fundraising support, which is reported in our annual CR Report, we also supported the following organisations focused on aspects of human rights or labour:

Organisation	Outcome
ATD Partners are experts in leadership coaching, women's development and diversity.	The firm engaged ATD Partners to deliver the first cohort of the 'High Performing Women' programme, combining group coaching with increased understanding of the barriers to female leadership progression and actions that can be taken.
Birmingham Law Society is the largest regional society of its kind, representing more than 5,000 legal professionals across Birmingham and the Greater Midlands.	In January 2020, the Birmingham Law Society's Disability Sub-Committee held its first panel event at Shoosmiths' Birmingham office.
Business in the Community (BITC) convenes a unique network of purposeful leaders to share insight, expertise and create innovative programmes that deliver impact.	We are a corporate member of Business in the Community and during the year were members of the East and West Midlands Leadership Boards with plans to extend support to additional boards in 2020/2021. We are a signatory of the Race at Work Charter. We have provided support to the National Business Response Network which was launched at the onset of the Covid-19 crisis. We also took part in the Responsible Business Tracker® for the second consecutive year selecting climate action and health and wellbeing as two material issues for deeper analysis.
The C-19 Business Pledge aims to harness the power of business as a force for good in tackling the coronavirus pandemic.	In March 2020, Shoosmiths became a signatory of the C-19 Business Pledge, which has been signed by over 300 organisations committed to being part of the national business response to Covid-19, as well as being committed to the recovery effort.
Central and East Northamptonshire Citizens Advice provides advice to people on a wide range of problems.	Our Northampton office has provided pro bono services since November 2011, via a monthly appointment-based pro bono clinic operated in conjunction with the University of Northampton School of Law.
Citizens Advice, Edinburgh provides free, confidential, independent and impartial advice on a range of issues.	Our Edinburgh office has provided pro bono services since 2019 and assisted at eight appointment-based pro bono clinics during the year.
Citizens Advice, Milton Keynes helps the people of Milton Keynes overcome the problems that affect their daily lives.	Our Milton Keynes office has provided pro bono services since 2019, via fortnightly appointment-based housing and employment pro bono clinics. Last year Shoosmiths advised 60 clients at 22 advice clinics.
City Legal Diversity and Inclusion Network brings together diversity and inclusion professionals from	We continued our active involvement with this group in 2019/2020.

leading law firms to discuss topical issues and share best practice across the sector.	
CommuniCare is an advice and support centre based in the community of East Reading.	Our Thames Valley office has provided pro bono services since November 2009 and holds a monthly appointment-based pro bono clinic operated in conjunction with the University of Reading School of Law. Last year Shoosmiths advised 13 clients at six clinics.
CSR Legal Network is a forum for CSR professionals in the legal sector.	Shoosmiths has been a member since September 2010.
The Disability Confident employer scheme supports employers to make the most of the talents disabled people can bring to the workplace, encouraging employers to commit to recruitment, retention and development actions for disabled people.	The firm continues to be a Disability Confident employer. On our website, we explain what this means, and encourage people to contact us if they have any questions about our accreditation.
Ethical Reading is a not-for-profit organisation launched in January 2018 championing healthy, sustainable and ethical workplaces in the Reading and wider Thames Valley area. Its vision is to make the Reading area a better place to live and work.	Shoosmiths is a founding partner and a member of Ethical Reading's Advisory Council.
His Church is an emergency goods redistribution charity focused on providing food and supplies to those who need it most.	Shoosmiths worked with Business in the Community and a number of companies to assist the charity when it urgently required additional warehousing in Lincolnshire after it had received significant deliveries of food for sorting and sending out to food banks.
Institute for the Inclusion of Legal Professionals and the National Conference of Women's Bar Association (NCWBA).	At the beginning of March 2020, our Birmingham office was part of a "GOOD Guys" collaboration – a panel discussion to specifically look at men's role in advancing gender equality. On International Women's Day, colleagues across the UK discussed the #EachforEqual theme, showed and discussed TED talks, and more. For further details see here .
LawWorks works in England and Wales to connect volunteer lawyers with people in need of legal advice.	Shoosmiths has been a member of LawWorks since 2009. We support pro bono clinics operating to the LawWorks clinics model. Our real estate division supports the LawWorks Not-for-Profits Programme whereby small not-for-profits organisations are provided with legal advice on a pro bono basis.
The Law Society is the representative body for solicitors in England and Wales.	Founding signatory 2009. of the Diversity and Inclusion Charter. Founding signatory of the Pro Bono Charter in November 2016.
Legal Cheek provides legal news, insider insight and careers advice.	In March 2020, one of our Partners joined a panel hosted by Legal Cheek at the University of Law Nottingham. Titled 'Secrets to success Nottingham: mental health and wellbeing special', the discussion included personal insights and thoughts on mental health considerations for junior lawyers.

<p>The Mental Health Foundation hosts Mental Health Awareness Week which takes place in May each year.</p>	<p>The firm supported Mental Health Awareness Week in 2019. Full details of our activities can be found here.</p>
<p>Notts LGBT+ Network and Nottinghamshire's Rainbow Heritage LGBT History Project provide training and workshops for organisations, as part of their wider network activities.</p>	<p>During LGBT History Month (February 2020), the firm ran a workshop for colleagues developing the LGBT+ Network (since rebranded as PROUD). This was coordinated via connections to Notts LGBT+ Network and Nottinghamshire's Rainbow Heritage LGBT History Project.</p>
<p>P&P Coaching is an organisation which works with companies to support their employees through the transition of becoming a parent, at work and beyond.</p>	<p>In 2019/2020, the firm engaged P&P Coaching, to pilot an online parental portal; a resource for employees to access pre-, during, and post-periods of parental leave.</p>
<p>Scottish Football Association (SFA) is the governing body for football in Scotland.</p>	<p>In August 2019, Shoosmiths announced a partnership with the Scottish Football Association. The partnership will run over four years and supports the development of girls' and women's football.</p>
<p>Shine charity provides specialist advice and support for spina bifida and hydrocephalus across England, Wales and Northern Ireland.</p>	<p>In September 2019, we gave a legal update on disability rights for young people (health and education) at the charity's annual staff seminar.</p>
<p>Social Mobility Foundation aims to make a practical improvement in social mobility for young people.</p>	<p>We entered the Social Mobility Employer Index for the third consecutive year (the Index is facilitated by the Social Mobility Foundation). It assesses the actions taken by businesses to ensure they access and progress talent from all backgrounds, as well as efforts to promote and advocate for social mobility. In October 2019, we were pleased to move from 63rd to 48th in the rankings. In 2019, 125 organisations took part.</p>
<p>Social Mobility Pledge represents a powerful and pioneering shift towards being a truly purpose-led organisation committed to social mobility.</p>	<p>We first signed up to the Social Mobility Pledge in 2018, but since then have worked closely with the initiative to develop a Shoosmiths Social Mobility Action Plan. In April 2020, Simon Boss our Chief Executive was also featured on the Social Mobility Pledge website see here.</p>
<p>Talk, Listen, Change is a relationships charity offering a range of programmes and services to help people have safe, healthy and happy relationships.</p>	<p>Our Manchester family team offered their services and support to the key workers of Talk Listen Change to answer and provide information and guidance with regards to children moving between two homes during the Covid-19 crisis. A video conferencing Questions and Answers briefing session was hosted in April 2020, for key workers and personnel at the charity, so they were clear on the legal implications of co-parenting during the crisis where they are co-parenting children subject to or without a family court order.</p>

<p>Thomas' Fund charity provides music therapy in Northamptonshire for children and young people with life-limiting illnesses, or a disability which, for medical reasons, means they are too ill to attend school for extended periods.</p>	<p>Our Northampton office donated £200 in February 2020, to help the charity raise money to pay for a music therapist to work across Northamptonshire.</p>
<p>Time to Change is a campaign to change the way people think and act about mental health problems.</p>	<p>In 2019/2020 we continued to act upon the commitments within our Time to Change Employer Pledge Action Plan – including facilitating our national network of mental health and wellbeing champions and developing our internal resources. We also encouraged colleagues to mark the 2020 Time to Talk campaign 'choose talk, change lives' by taking the time to talk, either by asking a colleague how they were or telling a colleague how they felt. Some champions also organised 'tea and talk', drop-in sessions and we engaged with the campaign on social media. In 2020/2021 we will be looking at how we can take the learnings from the Time to Change Pledge and continue to evolve our approach, and to talk openly about mental health at work, and ensuring our culture is supportive.</p>
<p>Transformation West Midlands is a scheme to build the employability of local students and graduates and support the West Midlands talent pipeline.</p>	<p>Colleagues involved in diversity and inclusion, recruitment, and trainee development participated in a reverse mentoring scheme with a group of students representing local universities in the West Midlands. The group discussed how businesses (including Shoosmiths) can be more accessible to talented individuals from diverse backgrounds; what already works well and potential next steps.</p>
<p>Trussell Trust supports a nationwide network of food banks to provide emergency food and support to people locked in poverty and campaigns for change to end the need for food banks in the UK.</p>	<p>Our Birmingham office donated 9 boxes of food and non-food items in December 2019, to the Birmingham City Church Food Bank. Our Leeds office provides a food bank collection point for staff to donate food and hygiene supplies to local foodbanks in Leeds. These items help families and individuals in crisis that need support by way of a food parcel. 600 Easter Eggs originally intended for staff were donated to Manchester Central Food Bank.</p>
<p>United Nations Global Compact is a voluntary initiative based on CEO commitments to implement universal sustainability principles and to take steps to support United Nations goals</p>	<p>Shoosmiths joined 27 January 2016, is a signatory, produces annual Communications on Progress reports, is a member of the UK Network, three UK working groups on modern slavery, global goals and diversity and inclusion and participates in the Target Gender Equality accelerator programme.</p>
<p>Wellmind Health provides an online course for reducing stress, depression and anxiety. It guides you through the elements of mindfulness based cognitive therapy.</p>	<p>Shoosmiths provided employees with access to Be Mindful, an online mindfulness course.</p>

World Mental Health Day is observed on 10 th October every year, with the overall objective of raising awareness of mental health issues around the world and mobilising efforts in support of mental health.	In October 2019, colleagues supported World Mental Health Day with different activities across the offices. This included 'tea and talk' drop ins, 'miracle morning' sessions, 'walk and talks', and other mental health and wellbeing signposting.
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4c. Our 2019/2020 and 2020/2021 human rights and labour targets

Appendix 1 of our **2019/2020 annual CR report** details progress against our 2019/2020 human rights and labour related targets and our 2020/2021 targets.

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

5. Environment Principles 7 to 9

<p>Environment</p> <p>Principle 7: Businesses should adopt a precautionary approach to environmental challenges;</p> <p>Principle 8: Undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility; and</p> <p>Principle 9: Encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.</p>

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

Our published environmental policies are:

- Carbon neutral policy
- Environment policy
- Waste management policy

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

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

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

Our environmental management system

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

Our procurement and suppliers' management policy sets out our approach to managing our indirect environmental and social impacts and we work with our suppliers to identify opportunities to reduce impacts. Shoosmiths operates an incident reporting system which includes environmental incidents. No environmental incidents were recorded during 201/2020.

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

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

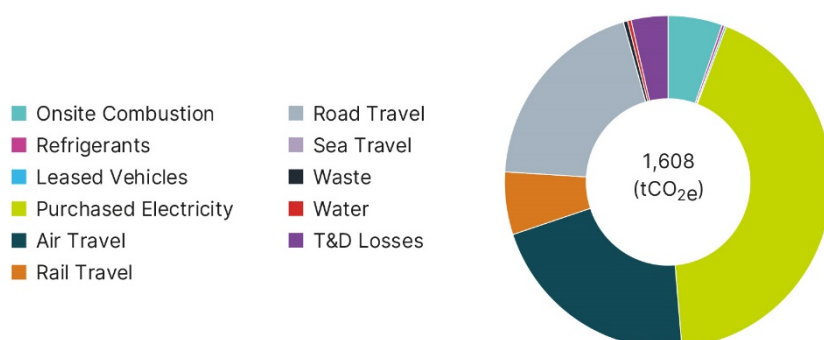
Where we have direct control of our offices, namely at the Lakes where we are the sole tenant, we have a greater ability to influence change. Where we do not have direct control, we liaise with our landlords to identify opportunities, for example through tenant sustainability working groups.

Energy

Shoosmiths's carbon reduction agenda is ambitious, and a carbon neutral future is a key part of that. In January 2020 our Board agreed the target that our operations are to achieve net zero emissions by 2025. This followed the establishment of a carbon neutral working group in November 2019 with members including the Chief Executive, corporate responsibility, estates management, IT, HR, internal communications, solicitors and partners from across the commercial divisions.

In January 2020, Shoosmiths became a signatory of the **Legal Renewables Initiative**, launched by the Law Society's Legal Sustainability Alliance. It commits signatories to achieve the aspiration for all their UK electricity use to be sourced from certifiable renewable sources by 2025. We already purchase renewable electricity from sites where we control the energy contract. Across the rest of the estate we are reviewing the status of our landlords' use of renewable electricity in line with the above aspiration.

Our 2019/2020 carbon footprint was 1,608 tonnes CO₂e - a 23% reduction on 2018/2019. Reasons include moving out of offices with gas heating and electricity consumption falling in most offices. The largest carbon emissions and therefore areas that we must focus on during 2020/2021 relate to building electricity consumption, air travel and road travel.



The estates management team continue to play a key part in helping us move towards a carbon neutral future and are establishing action plans for their areas of influence (energy consumption, landlord relationships/contracts, building specifications - including air conditioning - and waste).

Our approach to travel, whilst governed by ongoing restrictions, is giving us a unique opportunity to reinforce the best of our virtual working practices adopted over the last few years. In November 2020 we also introduced a new online travel booking platform which is operated on Shoosmiths' behalf by the travel management company Inntel. Centralising domestic and overseas travel will deliver a number of benefits with plans for the portal to include the provision of environmental information such as carbon emissions associated with travel options.

We have prepared our Shoosmiths' first annual energy and carbon report, included in our 2020 Directors' report. This is a legal requirement of the Companies (Directors' Report) and Limited Liabilities (Energy and Carbon Report) Regulations 2018 no 1155 (SECR).

Externally Shoosmiths is supporting appropriate campaigns including Business in the Community's Challenge 2030 campaign calling on bold leadership from business to increase the speed of action, scale of ambition and scope of influence as well as the One Planet Pledge which aims to encourage as many companies as possible to commit to helping the UK reach net zero emissions and publicly specify their target date.

In December 2020 we committed to setting a science-based target through the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi). Shoosmiths has committed to set science-based emissions targets across the entire value chain that are consistent with keeping global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. Shoosmiths has also committed to a long-term target to reach net-zero emissions by no later than 2050.

Our carbon footprint reporting plans for 2021 will extend our scope 3 emissions, including our supply chain and impacts of a workforce working from home during the pandemic.

Agile working

80% of our offices based on amount of square footage office space were converted to working agile by the end of April 2020. All but critical workers moved to working from home in March 2020.

With the conversion of our new Milton Keynes office to agile working in March 2020, we now have two remaining offices which are not agile, Edinburgh and London and our Northampton office which is 40% agile.

Donation of used IT equipment

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

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

During 2019/2020 441 IT assets were donated (2,313 kg) to Computer Aid. Of the 441 items donated 338 units were re-used (1,584 kg) and 103 (729 kg) were recycled with the re-used assets sent to six projects in Africa and 21 in the UK, with some being sold through Tier 1 to raise funds for other Computer Aid projects. (47% to the UK, 35.6% sold for funds, 6.4% to Ethiopia, 4.5% to Angola, 3.8% to Zimbabwe, 1.5% to Burundi, 0.8% to Malawi and 0.4% Ghana). No assets went to landfill as Computer Aid's downstream partners operate a manual disassembly process, breaking down items to their constituent parts which are then sent to specialist refiners for re-use and recycling.

Shoosmiths donates to computer projects in Africa and the UK

Aberdeen Foyer, UK

The Foyer was launched in 1995 with a clear charitable mission and a vision to provide; a safe place to stay for young people who were homeless or at risk of homelessness; enable people to move towards and into work; improve access to health services and promote healthy lifestyles and to be enterprising; develop and operate businesses to support our work. 25 years on it remains aligned to that founding vision but in recent years it has also sought to broaden its reach, to move 'upstream', to work with younger people to prevent crisis in later years and also work with older people, particularly in moving into employment and in supporting recovery.

Apna Haq, UK

Apna Haq exists to support black and minority ethnic (BME) women and girls in Rotherham, South Yorkshire who are experiencing any form of violence against women and girls (VAWG). Its long-term support helps women heal from the trauma of abuse and make the transition from crisis situations to safe, independent, violence-free lives.

Blantyre North Relief Project, Malawi

Blantyre North Relief Project (BNRP) is a family charity organisation registered under the Malawi Non-Governmental Organisation Act. BRNP started its operations in 1985 providing food and clothing to a handful of children and elderly persons. The work expanded and currently BNRP serves 700 children. BNRP is guided by principles of love and service, and the Malawian philosophy of human dignity (umunthu). BNRP doesn't institutionalise orphans. Instead, BNRP builds houses for orphans in their own villages. BNRP is the only independent and private non-governmental organisation in Malawi to build houses for orphans in their own villages.

Bloomsbury Football Foundation, UK

Bloomsbury Football Foundation uses the power of football to improve the lives of young people in London. It offers sustainable programmes that support active lifestyles, promote positive impacts and pursue full potentials. It provides the opportunity for every child to experience a professional environment, with the highest calibre coaches and facilities in Central London. Those that can afford to, support those that cannot.

Bulawayo Library, Zimbabwe

The library runs a public Internet Corner within the library. The machines offer a space for the public to access the internet and to conduct research. The library also provides support for first time users, making a great space for people to learn IT skills and get online for the first time.

CARAS, UK

CARAS (Community Action for Refugees and Asylum Seekers) is a community outreach charity based in Tooting. It supports people of refugee and asylum-seeking backgrounds who live in South-West London. It has a range of group activities that support people of all ages to develop their English skills, access services and opportunities, build supportive social networks and to feel welcomed. It works with individuals to make sure that people get the specific support that matches their situation no matter how complex.

Code Academy: Girls, Angola

Code Academy: Girls is a social initiative with the objective of encouraging the participation of women in the technological sphere, thus guaranteeing sustainable economic growth in Angola. It offers an eight-week course with the purpose of investing in coding education for women, diversifying their career options. It believes in a world where all women have the skills to confidently pursue technological careers.

Coin Street, UK

Coin Street Community Builders (CSCB) is a development trust and social enterprise which seeks to make London's South Bank a better place in which to live, to work, to visit and to study. Since 1984 CSCB has transformed a largely derelict 13-acre site into a thriving mixed-use neighbourhood. It promotes enterprise, creativity and lifelong learning through providing employment, volunteering opportunities, nurturing enterprise or delivering programmes and activities.

Dream for the Future, Ethiopia

Dream for the Future provides educational opportunities to underprivileged children and youths in developing countries. Its mission is to help children and youth to break the cycle of poverty through computer education and reach those in the most remote locations.

Ethical Apparel Africa, UK

The frontier of apparel manufacturing is moving to Africa. Ethical Apparel Africa Lean-focused Frontier Factory Programme develops emerging African factories to produce internationally competitive products while empowering workers. Its goal is to prove ethical and cost-effective production is not mutually exclusive.

Home-Start Exeter East and Mid Devon, UK

Home-Start Exeter, East and Mid Devon recruits and trains volunteers from Exeter City to Axminster, including Exmouth and Cranbrook. It carefully matches volunteers with an appropriate family. All of the families it supports must have at least one child under five. The volunteer visits families in their own homes once a week. Families have reported what a huge difference it makes to their lives to have that support at a time of need, often describing volunteers as a ray of sunshine or a lifeline.

Jewish Council for Racial Equality (JCORE), UK

Since 1976, JCORE has worked both inside and outside the Jewish community to provide a Jewish voice on race and asylum issues. It engages the Jewish community in social action in the wider society, focusing on race equality and justice for refugees and asylum seekers. It works in three main areas: education on race and asylum issues; campaigning and practical support for refugees and asylum seekers; and Black/Asian/Jewish dialogue.

Local Food Links, UK

Local Food Links was established in 1999 by the West Dorset Food and Land Trust to run Farmers Markets and other food initiatives. These initiatives included Bridport Food Festival, the Grow It, Cook It, Eat It Project, cookery workshops and an NVQ training in catering for young people. Local Food Links now focuses on its school meals service. Its kitchens in Bridport, Blandford, Shillingstone and Weymouth provide freshly prepared meals daily to over 50 schools and nurseries.

Look Ahead, UK

Look Ahead supports thousands of people across London and the South East with a diverse range of needs, helping them to make individual choices, achieve goals and take control of their own lives by providing tailor-made support, care and accommodation services.

North Somerset Training CIC, UK

North Somerset Training offers free or low-cost courses for adults aged 19 or over with few or no qualifications. Courses aim to improve employability, health, wellbeing and confidence. It works within the Community Learning West Consortium, along with Bristol City Council and South Gloucestershire Council.

Parent Promoters Foundation, UK

The Parent Promoters Foundation (PPF) was created by a mixed group of parents in South London, who

didn't know one another well before-hand, but who had all come to recognise that their community desperately needed a new secondary school. The group of parents chose to join forces with their local authority – Lambeth – to create a new kind of school – a school which would be accountable as one of the family of local authority schools, but which was also parent-promoted meaning that parents would play a greater role in the creation and direction of the school than in other schools. The Elmgreen School opened in 2007 and has deservedly become very popular. The school is a lively and engaging community, with students who are proud of their school and strong proponents of its values.

Pathways to Work, UK

Pathways to Work helps individuals to understand their capabilities and potential and supports them in moving closer to work. Its vision is to work with local communities and grass-root organisations, helping develop self-belief in individuals and to be the provider of choice for all stakeholders. It is committed to helping new and existing claimants to establish and clarify their employment needs, to understand their barriers to work and prepare specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound (SMART) goals.

Sir Oswald Stoll Foundation, UK

Some veterans struggle to adapt to civilian life when they leave the Armed Forces. At Stoll, it supports the most vulnerable veterans by assessing an individual's needs and then arranging appropriate support. This can include a new affordable home to rent, developing people's skills to enable a veteran to get a job and supporting people's health needs. Once a veteran is living independently, on firm foundations, it supports them as they move on from Stoll and always encourage this where possible.

Skills Enterprise, UK

The Skills Enterprise is an innovative community organisation in East London, working in one of the most deprived boroughs in the UK. Each week it supports local residents to learn new skills, improve their health and wellbeing, find employment and develop the confidence to achieve their goals and transform their lives.

St Giles Trust, UK

St Giles is a charity using expertise and real-life past experiences to empower people who are not getting the help they need. People held back by poverty, exploited, abused, dealing with addiction or mental health problems, caught up in crime or a combination of these issues and others. It shows people there is a way to build a better future – for themselves and those they care about -and help them create this through support, advice and training.

SUFRA NW London, UK

Sufra NW London addresses both the causes and consequences of extreme poverty, homelessness and social isolation in the community. Its emergency interventions and innovative courses provide a lifeline to people in crisis – empowering them to improve their wellbeing, learn new skills, find work and become financially stable.

The Separated Child Foundation, UK

The Separated Child Foundation is a charity that provides for the needs of child refugees and asylum seekers in the UK that have been separated from their families because their parents have been killed or otherwise unable to leave. It offers emotional, social, financial and physical support to separated children and young people in Britain up to the age of 21. It also engages in educational activities that raise awareness of their needs and encourage positive responses to them.

Universite de Ngozi, Burundi

The University of Ngozi was set up within the framework of a community and private project whose aim is to develop local communities and higher education in Burundi. Working for peace, the University of Ngozi

promotes equal opportunities and inter-religious diversity. It responds to a real and concrete request from the communities and promotes training that generates jobs by encouraging the entrepreneurial spirit of the students. In collaboration with its public and private partners, the teams of the University of Ngozi make every effort to contribute to the success of the students and their professional lives.

Vineyard Compassion, UK

Vineyard Compassion is a charity based in Coleraine, Northern Ireland. The aim of the charity is to support people 'from crisis to full potential', by providing practical support for the poor in the local community, whilst empowering them to tackle the underlying root causes of poverty.

WasteAid, UK

WasteAid is an independent UK charity (non-profit), set up by waste management professionals to share practical and low-cost waste management know-how with communities in low-income countries.

Wells for Zoë, UK and Malawi

Wells for Zoë (WfZ) is a small, personal, Irish, voluntary organisation, working in Northern Malawi since 2005. Its main focus is enabling the rural poor to access clean, safe drinking water, and over 500,000 people have clean water as a result. It manufactures a simple plastic hand pump in Mzuzu (the main city in Northern Malawi) which can be maintained by village women and costs €80 to make. Villagers dig wells, provide sand and bricks and all labour. The completed well costs €150 as WfZ also provides the cement and pipes. This pump can then supply up to 500 people with clean water for life.

Zimbabwe Open University, Zimbabwe

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

'Shoosmiths' ongoing donations of equipment have benefited more organisations than ever before, as well as helping us with our educational projects. We would like to thank everyone at Shoosmiths for supporting our mission to create a world where everyone has equal access to technology.'

Alice Walker-Mitchell, Marketing Officer, Computer Aid International

Bottled water

We use the Ecopure Waters on-site water purification system in nine of our offices to provide freshly filtered water, both still and sparkling for our client and internal meetings. This has a lower carbon footprint than bottled mineral waters and because the bottles are re-used it reduces waste. Between May 2019 and April 2020, we consumed 22,134 litres of water¹ and avoided 3.99 tonnes of glass.

Waste management

Fisco, our Estates Management provider, manages our office waste (general, recyclable and food) in our Northampton and Sheffield offices. In 2019/2020 these offices produced 28.84 tonnes of general waste of which 8.81 tonnes (30.27%) were recycled and 20.03 tonnes (69.73%) were incinerated with heat recovery (18.95 tonnes of general waste and 1.08 tonnes of food waste). No waste was sent to landfill from these recorded locations. Some wastes at our Northampton office are managed on our behalf by a provider. At our other offices the landlords are responsible for managing waste contracts. Here we work with landlords alongside other tenants to identify better ways of managing our waste.

¹ Data excludes Belfast, Glasgow, London and Sheffield.

Fisco also manages confidential waste from all our offices through a specialist company, Restore, with 208.01 tonnes collected in 2019/2020. (Compared to 144.34 tonnes collected in 2018/2019). By recycling confidential waste, 480.51 m³ of landfill space was avoided.

Water management

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

5a. Helping our clients

During the year advice to clients included:

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/news/shoosmiths-supports-octopus-energys-continued-expansion-with-the-acquisition-of-upside-energy>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/news/shoosmiths-advises-extreme-e-in-further-funding--for-all-electric-suv-race-series>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/news/shoosmiths-advises-on-38m-debt-and-equity-raise-for-yorkshire-wildlife-park>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/news/shoosmiths-advises-spicer-consulting-on-spin-off-of-biotechnology-business>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/news/shoosmiths-advises-algenuity-partnership-deal-unilever-develop-microalgae-food-ingredients>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/news/ancala-makes-first-investment-into-social-care-sector>

During the year we published environmental insights, articles and commentary on such topics as:

Cities:

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/covid19/will-covid-19-change-how-we-use-our-cities-for-the-better>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/mipim-2020-what-next-for-uk-cities-built-environment>

Climate change and energy:

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/news/tough-decisions-are-essential-for-the-uks-electric-vehicles>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/news/financing-for-electric-vehicles-adapting-finance-in-a-new-world>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/a-waste-of-energy>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/covid19/do-we-need-a-green-recovery-from-covid-19>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/covid19/public-or-private-transport-after-covid-19>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/covid19/energy-performance-certificates-and-coronavirus>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/heathrow-expansion-halted-or-merely-delayed>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/mees-deadline-of-1-april-2020-for-residential-landlords-is-fast-approaching>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/news/tough-decisions-are-essential-for-the-uks-electric-vehicles>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/news/financing-for-electric-vehicles-adapting-finance-in-a-new-world>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/the-dawn-of-a-green-industrial-revolution>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/government-launches-long-awaited-energy-white-paper>

Enforcement:

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/the-environment-agencys-2020-enforcement-priorities-and-your-business>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/sentencing-for-environmental-offences-a-more-flexible-approach>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/avoided-costs-of-removing-waste-from-land-are-proceeds-of-crime>

Infrastructure:

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/implementing-the-national-infrastructure-strategy>

Planning:

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/placemaking-on-the-south-coast>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/solving-the-housing-crisis-more-than-just-a-numbers-game>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/legal-challenge-to-the-governments-radical-planning-reforms>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/first-homes-to-become-a-mandatory-affordable-housing-requirement>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/planning-for-the-future-the-environment>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/comment/the-planning-white-paper-august-2020>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/planning-for-the-future-brownfield-development>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/planning-white-paper-tightening-of-green-belt-protection>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/development-in-the-green-belt-back-to-planning-by-appeal>

Pollution:

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/environment-bill-reintroduced-into-parliament>

During the year events included:

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/comment/sustainability-in-the-new-world>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/video/video-the-future-of-uk-cities-a-fresh-view-on-the-future-of-cities>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/video/video-future-of-london-london-at-a-crossroads>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/podcast/podcast-future-of-southampton-the-recovery-period-better-together>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/comment/a-better-future-what-next-for-edinburgh>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/podcast/podcast-future-of-leeds-digital-health-the-future-is-now>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/podcast/planning-environment-podcast-additional-environmental-approvals-under-the-business-and-planning-bill>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/biodiversity-net-gain>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/podcast/planning-and-environment-podcast-identifying-highlights-absences-latest-mhclg-announcements>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/podcast/planning-and-environment-podcast-impact-of-covid-19-on-the-cpo-process>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/podcast/planning-and-environment-podcast-planning-for-the-future-and-pd-rights>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/comment/councils-step-up-on-regeneration>

5b. Organisations we have worked with

In addition to fundraising support, which is reported in our annual CR Report we supported a number of environmental focused organisations:

Organisation	Outcome
Business in the Community (BITC) convenes a unique network of purposeful leaders to share insight, expertise and create innovative programmes that deliver impact.	We are a corporate member of Business in the Community We took part in the Responsible Business Tracker® for the second consecutive year selecting climate action and health and wellbeing as two material issues for deeper analysis.
Computer Aid International takes used IT equipment and sends it to disadvantaged communities across the world.	In 2019/2020, 441 IT assets were donated (2,313 kg) to Computer Aid. Of the 441 items donated 338 units were re-used (1,584 kg) and 103 (729 kg) were recycled with the re-used assets sent to six projects in Africa and 21 in the UK, with some being sold through Tier 1 to raise funds for other Computer Aid projects. (47% to the UK, 35.6% sold for funds, 6.4% to Ethiopia, 4.5% to Angola, 3.8% to Zimbabwe, 1.5% to Burundi, 0.8% to Malawi and 0.4% Ghana). No assets went to landfill as Computer Aid's downstream partners operate a manual disassembly process, breaking down items to their constituent parts which are then sent to specialist refiners for re-use and recycling.
WWF UK is a charity that aims to stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment.	We supported the Earth Hour campaign on Saturday 28 March 2020, by highlighting to staff the impacts of climate change.

5c. Our 2019/2020 and 2020/2021 environment targets

Appendix 1 of our **2019/2020 annual CR report** details progress against our 2019/2020 environment related targets and our 2020/2021 targets.

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

6. Anti-Corruption Principle 10

Anti-Corruption

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

We are committed to the highest standards of business integrity.

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

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

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

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

Business conduct

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

As part of the preparation for the implementation of the Solicitor Regulation Authority's Standards and Regulations 2019, our offices undertook inter office quizzes about ethical behaviour. Further training and guidance have been issued to the firm.

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

Our policies cover such issues as anti-money laundering, data protection/General Data Protection Regulation, information security, anti-bribery and corruption, gifts and hospitality, quality and risk management, Criminal Finances Act 2017 and supplier management procedures. All colleagues complete regular training on these issues to ensure they are fully aware of their obligations. This includes a requirement for all new starters to complete our anti-bribery course during induction plus anti-money laundering and data protection courses as well as a number of other risk-management courses. There is an annual programme of mandatory refresher training, all of which is tracked for follow up purposes, with clear deadlines. The training includes anti-bribery, anti-money laundering, data protection and information security

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

Whistleblowing

We have a clear **whistleblowing policy** which sets out the process for reporting any concerns about wrongdoing or breaches of policies. This takes account of the requirements set out in chapter 7 of the SRA Code of Conduct for Solicitors 2019 and the requirements set out in the FCA's Senior Management Arrangements, Systems and Controls (SYSC) 18, in relation to the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

Staff are encouraged to report suspected wrongdoing or dangers in relation to activities including criminal activity, miscarriages of justice, danger to health and safety, damage to environment, forced or compulsory labour or human trafficking, bribery, failure to comply with any professional obligations, financial fraud or mismanagement and any breach of the SRA Codes of Conduct 2019, SRA Accounts Rules, FCA Handbook, the Law Society of Scotland Rules, or the Law Society of Northern Ireland rules, unauthorised disclosure of confidential information and deliberate concealment of any of the above matters. An external whistleblowing helpline, Safecall is available to employees. Any concerns can be reported via the telephone number 0800 915 1571 or via the website at: <http://www.safecall.co.uk/report>

6a. Helping our clients

Insights, articles and commentary are published on our Shoosmiths website and during the year the following relevant to the anti-corruption agenda was covered:

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/covid19/covid-19-fraud-and-the-importance-of-a-robust-compliance-programme>

We provide an e learning course on anti-corruption:

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

6b. Our 2019/2020 anti-corruption targets

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



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

Key:


✓ – achieved

IP – in progress

X – not achieved

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

6c. Our 2020/2021 anti-corruption targets

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