



Delivering sustainable growth through
our **responsible business**

IMHL | Responsible Business Report 2024

 irwinmitchell

Contents

3

Our business at a glance

- 4 Becoming a responsible business
- 5 Our materiality matrix
- 6 Evolving our strategy through materiality
- 8 Measuring our progress
- 10 Our Key Performance Indicators

13



Building Organisational Resilience

- 14 Code of Ethics – our commitment to responsible business
- 14 Sharing our expertise with stakeholders
- 15 Responsible procurement and supply chain management

16



Protecting our Planet

- 17 Our vision for a net-zero future
- 18 Roadmap to net-zero
- 19 Our net-zero focus areas
- 20 Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting (SECR)

21



Driving Inclusion & Wellbeing

- 22 Update on our governance and focus areas
- 24 Gender
- 24 Celebrating our role models
- 25 Our data-driven approach
- 25 Race & Ethnicity
- 26 Disability
- 27 Focus on wellbeing

29



Empowering our Communities

- 30 Celebrating our National Charity Partnerships (NCPs)
- 31 Strengthening our partnerships
- 32 Celebrating the Irwin Mitchell Charities Foundation (IMCF)
- 33 Supporting our communities through volunteering and pro bono
- 34 Social mobility and widening access to the legal sector
- 35 Widening access to justice
- 36 Providing pro bono support to our communities



- More responsible business online: www.irwinmitchell.com/responsiblebusiness
- If you need to access this document in a different format, please contact responsiblebusiness@irwinmitchell.com outlining your requirements.

Our business at a glance

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

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

With 24 UK offices and international reach through a global network of 85 law firms, we are able to serve our clients wherever they are.



Becoming a leading **responsible business**

The past 12 months have seen businesses face a wide spectrum of emerging, and ongoing, Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) risks and opportunities; from the growth of AI to continued geo-political tensions and record-breaking global temperatures.

The increased needs and expectations of our stakeholders to respond to these issues, inclusively, sustainably, and ethically, makes upholding our commitment to being a leading responsible business more important than ever.

While the scale of the challenges can be daunting, our best chance of tackling them is through collaboration and prioritisation, and by identifying where we as a business can have the biggest impact which has been the focus of our work in FY24.

On [page 5-6](#), you can read more about how we've used the results of our materiality assessment to refocus our approach to doing business responsibly, in alignment with our commitment to the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

This year's report is structured around our new four areas of focus representing the most material ESG risks and opportunities for our business, and where we believe we can have the greatest impact:

- Building Organisational Resilience
- Protecting our Planet
- Driving Inclusion and Wellbeing
- Empowering our Communities.

And whilst we're immensely proud to share what we have achieved throughout this report, and summarised on [pages 11-12](#), we know there is much more to do.

We remain committed to building on this progress, working in collaboration with our colleagues, clients, and suppliers to maximise our impact.

Kate Fergusson

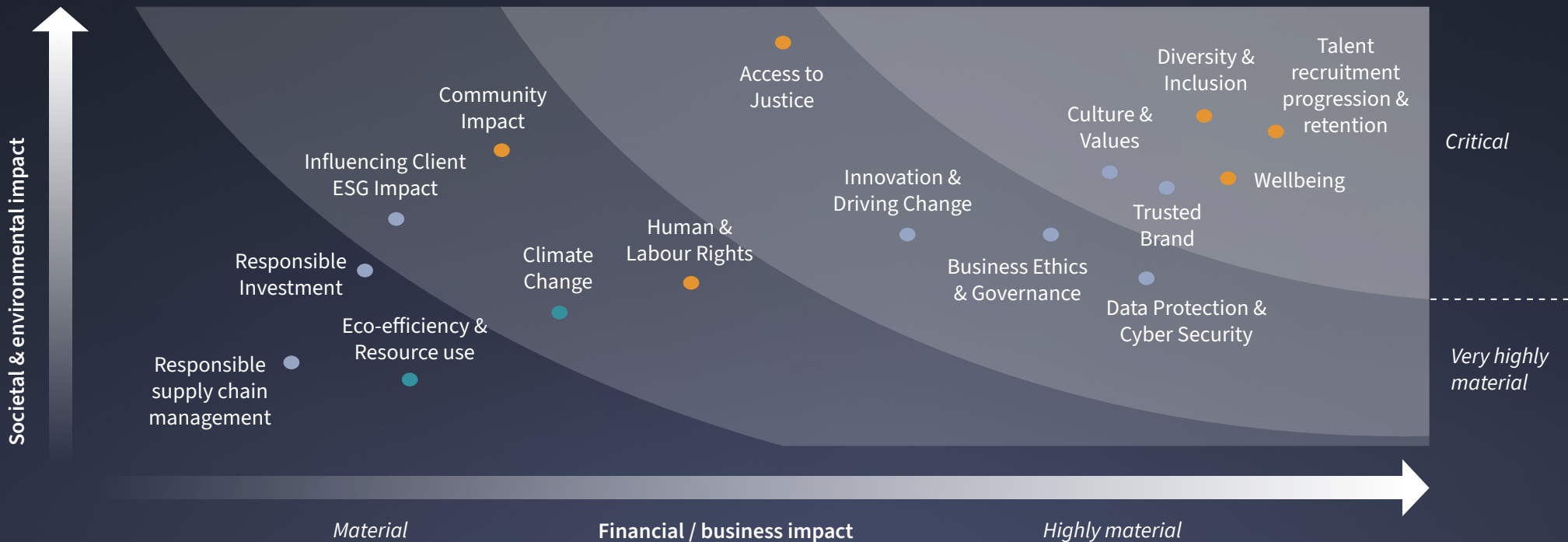
Director of Responsible Business and Sustainability, Irwin Mitchell



Our materiality matrix

In FY24, we engaged over 100 of our stakeholders, ranging from clients and suppliers to colleagues and our community partners, to identify the most significant risks and opportunities for our business, through our double materiality assessment. The materiality matrix is a key output of the assessment, it provides an at-a-glance visualisation of how the stakeholders engaged prioritised each material topic. In this case, the positioning of the topics move from those in the bottom left, which can be considered material to responsible business success, to the top right which are more critical to it.

- Social
- Environmental
- Governance / Economic



Evolving our strategy through materiality

Our 16 material issues are now encompassed under four new focus areas. While we recognise we're already making an impact against many of the UN's SDGs, we've also re-examined these against the results of our materiality assessment. This has helped determine which goals hold most relevance to our business, and those we can make the greatest contribution towards. As we prioritise these, we're now exploring the long term organisational specific objectives we can establish in order to measure our impact and progress.



The Ten Principles of the United Nations Global Compact

Human Rights

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

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

Labour

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

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

Principle 5: the effective abolition of child labour; and

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

Environment

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

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

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

Anti-Corruption

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



The content of this publication has not been approved by the United Nations and does not reflect the views of the United Nations or its officials or Member States.



“As a signatory to the UNGC since 2022, we’re proud to reaffirm our commitment to its Ten Principles relating to human rights, labour, environment, and anti-corruption, as well as the universal framework provided by the SDGs. These serve as a call to action for organisations like ours with the aim of ending poverty, protecting the planet, and striving for peace and prosperity for all by 2030.”

Craig Marshall, Group CEO, Irwin Mitchell

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment

Measuring our progress

Collaborating and working with partner organisations

We are committed to collaborating and working with third parties to measure the impact of our work and ensure that we continue to use our skills, expertise, and resources to make the greatest positive impact. We use a range of external benchmarking tools and key performance indicators to monitor and track our progress.

We're signatories to:



We're members or supporters of:



Halo Code

As members of Business In the Community, we participated in [the Responsible Business Health Check](#), and also completed the [Workwell Self-Assessment diagnostic tool](#).

Measuring our progress

We participate in a number of external benchmarks to assess progress against our responsible business strategy, including:



Great Place to Work:



- Recognised as one of the UK's Best Workplaces to Work 2024 (in the Super Large category) by Great Place to Work (GPTW), ranked 24th.
- Recognised as one of the UK's Best Workplaces for Wellbeing 2024 by GPTW (ranked 40th).
- We've also been recognised by GPTW as one of the UK's Best Workplaces for Women 2024 (ranked 22nd) and we're the only law firm to appear in the top 20 Super Large category, for this award.

Our Key Performance Indicators



Stakeholder	Performance Indicator/Measure	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22
Clients	EcoVadis Score – Sustainability Assessment Rating	Gold – placing us in the Top 5% (95+ percentile)	Silver	Silver
	Average Trustpilot Score	5	5	4.7
	Net Promoter Score	+63	59 ¹	62

Communities	Percentage of Group colleagues utilising their volunteering hours (based on an average number of colleagues in a FY)	26.4%	25.9%	16.8%
	Number of apprentices in the business	57	72	67

Colleagues	Our Great Place to Work Wellbeing Survey Score (based on colleague feedback)	67%	68%	67%
	Percentage of colleagues sharing diversity information (including those selecting the 'prefer not to say' option)	69.1%	68.8%	72.8%
	Gender Pay Gap (mean average) data for LLP only	12.38%	9.7%	11%
	Gender Pay Gap (median) data for IM LLP only	22.2%	14.3%	20.5%
	Percentage of women in partnership roles	53.7%	52.8	52.3%
	Percentage of partnership promotions made to women Full Equity Member (FEM)	66.7%	50%	40.9%
	Percentage of women in senior roles (associate and above) in IM Asset Management	33.33%	36.4	39.3%
	Disability Confident level achieved	Level 2	Level 2	Level 2
	Ethnicity Pay Gap (mean average) data is only for IM LLP	-5.5%	-5.3%	-6.4%
	Percentage of colleagues from minority ethnic backgrounds (excluding white minority ethnic groups) in partnership roles	7.9%	5.9%	5.4%
	Percentage of partnership promotions made to colleagues from minority ethnic backgrounds (excluding white minority ethnic groups) (FEM)	33.33%	16.7%	9.1%
	Percentage of colleagues from minority ethnic backgrounds (excluding white minority ethnic groups)	7.9%	8.4%	8.3%
	Our ranking in Stonewall's Workplace Equality Index	51st	36th	31st
	Percentage of colleagues who are LGB+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, or other sexual orientation)	3.9%	4.2%	4.1%
	Percentage of colleagues with one or more disabilities	2.4%	2.2%	1.7%
	Percentage of colleagues from a lower socio-economic background	18.8%	17.7%	18.4%

(1) Following a change in how we collate NPS data, in FY23, we included feedback from a wider range of clients to give us a better representation of our service delivery levels. While the figure has fallen, the comparable figure last year was not computed on the same basis. A score of above 50 is 'excellent' by industry standards.

Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting (SECR)

Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions and energy usage data for FY24, FY23 and baseline year FY20

Total UK GHG Emissions (tonnes CO ₂ e)	FY24	FY23	FY20 Baseline	% change FY24 Vs FY23	% change FY24 Vs FY20
Scope 1 - Gas	2	20	40	-90%	-95%
Scope 1 - Fuel for transport	768	792	1,008	-3%	-24%
Scope 2 - Electricity (location-based)	687	744	1,253	-8%	-45%
Scope 2 - Electricity (market-based)	40	732	1,253	-94%	-99%
Total Scope 1 and 2 (location-based)	1,456	1,556	2,301	-6%	-37%
Total Scope 1 and 2 (market-based)	850	2276	3554	-63%	-76%
Scope 3 - Business travel in rental cars or employee-owned vehicles where company is responsible for purchasing the fuel	233	200	217	17%	7%
Total CO ₂ e emissions	1,689	1,756	2,518	-4%	-33%
Total energy use (kWh)	3,324,898	3,763,227	5,267,662	-12%	-33%
Employee emissions intensity (Tonnes CO ₂ e/FTE)	0.53	0.57	0.82	-7%	-35%
Office space emissions intensity (Tonnes CO ₂ e/m ²)	0.06	0.05	0.06	20%	0%
Revenue emissions intensity (Tonnes CO ₂ e/£m revenue)	5.6	6.4	9.3	-13%	-40%

Theme	FY24	FY23	FY20 Baseline
Black and white sheets printed within leasehold offices	3,904,567	4,260,405	57,119,957
Colour sheets printed within leasehold offices	4,325,112	3,958,033	9,829,217
Total sheets printed within leasehold offices	8,229,679	8,218,438	66,949,174
Travel booked via travel management company Co ₂ tonnes	454	453.29	550.26
Combustion engine vehicles in car fleet	50%	75%	100%
Hybrid vehicles in car fleet	35%	16%	0%
Electric vehicles in car fleet	15%	9%	0%



Building Organisational Resilience

Developing healthy and resilient organisations through a focus on ethical, accountable, and inclusive governance





Code of Ethics - our commitment to responsible business

In FY24, we developed our **Code of Ethics**, which acts as a guide for the people and organisations who work with us, outlining the basic principles and standards which govern the way we do business, which we are proud to uphold and share.

The Code brings together our existing commitments and is built on the foundations of our purpose and values, enabling our colleagues to make the best choices and do the right thing, from onboarding new suppliers or clients, to implementing new technology.

The Code aims to assist colleagues, but we know that questions around ethics rarely have a straightforward right or wrong answer. That is why, along with the Code, we have established an Introduction to Business Ethics masterclass for colleagues to access, and a process for escalating issues to our new Ethics Working Group, part of our Responsible Business Forum, and including senior leaders and subject matter experts. The Code is underpinned by a suite of policies and supporting documents including:

- [Modern Slavery Act Statement](#)
- [Anti Bribery and Corruption Statement](#)
- [Privacy and Data Protection Policies](#)



Sharing our expertise with stakeholders

This year, the Responsible Business team continued to share its expertise and experience to help stakeholders on their own responsible business journeys through a new ESG blog series and focused discussions with clients on inclusion and sustainability issues.

Additionally, Irwin Mitchell launched its new **Business But Better podcast** series featuring our own Responsible Business and ESG legal experts, as well as industry leaders, to discuss issues ranging from greenwashing and AI to the Net-Zero Transition and importance of Diversity and Inclusion (D&I).



[Listen now](#)



Responsible procurement and supply chain management

Embedding inclusion and sustainability within our supply chain is a core part of our commitment to doing business responsibly and building organisational resilience.

Our aim is to ensure we're working with like-minded suppliers that share our values and business ethics. Not only does this help us reduce risk, but it creates opportunities to collaborate and learn from one another as we collectively work towards a sustainable future.

As part of this commitment, our Director of Group Procurement and Supplier Management has been part of our Responsible Business Committee to help drive progress and increase awareness through our existing and robust governance.

During FY24, we have continued to evolve and share our **Supplier Code of Conduct**, which outlines our responsible business values and expected behaviours. We've also updated our procurement policies to create a Sustainable Procurement Policy, alongside reviewing our due diligence process to make it more risk based and to ensure the Due Diligence Questionnaire upholds our commitment to the UNGC's Ten Principles.

Our Environmental & Sustainability Manager, Louise Needham, engaged with 10 key suppliers as part of our work to address Scope 3 emissions from purchased goods and services. This resulted in a better understanding of the role our suppliers can play in helping achieve our target of net-zero emissions by 2040.

Smart Procurement

Looking ahead, in FY25 we are launching a new Smart Procurement tool across the organisation. This system is a significant step towards meeting our goal of achieving greater efficiency, transparency, and sustainability in our operations.

The system will give us better analytics that allow us to track performance of suppliers against ESG benchmarks and will give greater insight into the risks that our supply chain might pose. Longer term, the system will help us build resilience by prioritising suppliers who demonstrate strong ESG practices that contribute to our commitment to being a responsible business.

Our new technology also lays the foundation for us to better engage with the market, ensuring we remove barriers to entry, improve accessibility, and demonstrate our commitment to diversity and inclusion.

[Read more about how we're Building Organisational Resilience.](#)

Lee Mulligan,
Director of Group Procurement and Supplier Management, Irwin Mitchell





Protecting our Planet

Reducing the impacts of climate change through education, responsible consumption and sustainable services





Our vision for a net-zero future

Sustainability and our focus on climate action are key elements of our aspiration to being a leading responsible business and align with the commitments we have made as a signatory to the UNGC.

Following the successful verification of our near and long-term science-based emissions reduction targets with the SBTi in May 2023, we are making positive strides along our Roadmap to Net-Zero.

We're also supporting our clients with their own net-zero journeys through our ESG advisory services. We continue to upskill our colleagues via training accredited by The Carbon Literacy Project, expertise delivered by the Cranfield University Team and through in-house sustainability masterclasses.



Read our Beyond Words report which explores how the Retail, Hospitality & Leisure sector's FTSE 350 organisations are making ESG their business.

“We're making good progress across our net-zero focus areas but know that reducing Scope 3 emissions in particular poses a huge challenge. Collaborative working with our colleagues, clients and community stakeholders will be crucial to the delivery of our goals.”

Louise Needham,
Environmental and Sustainability Manager, Irwin Mitchell

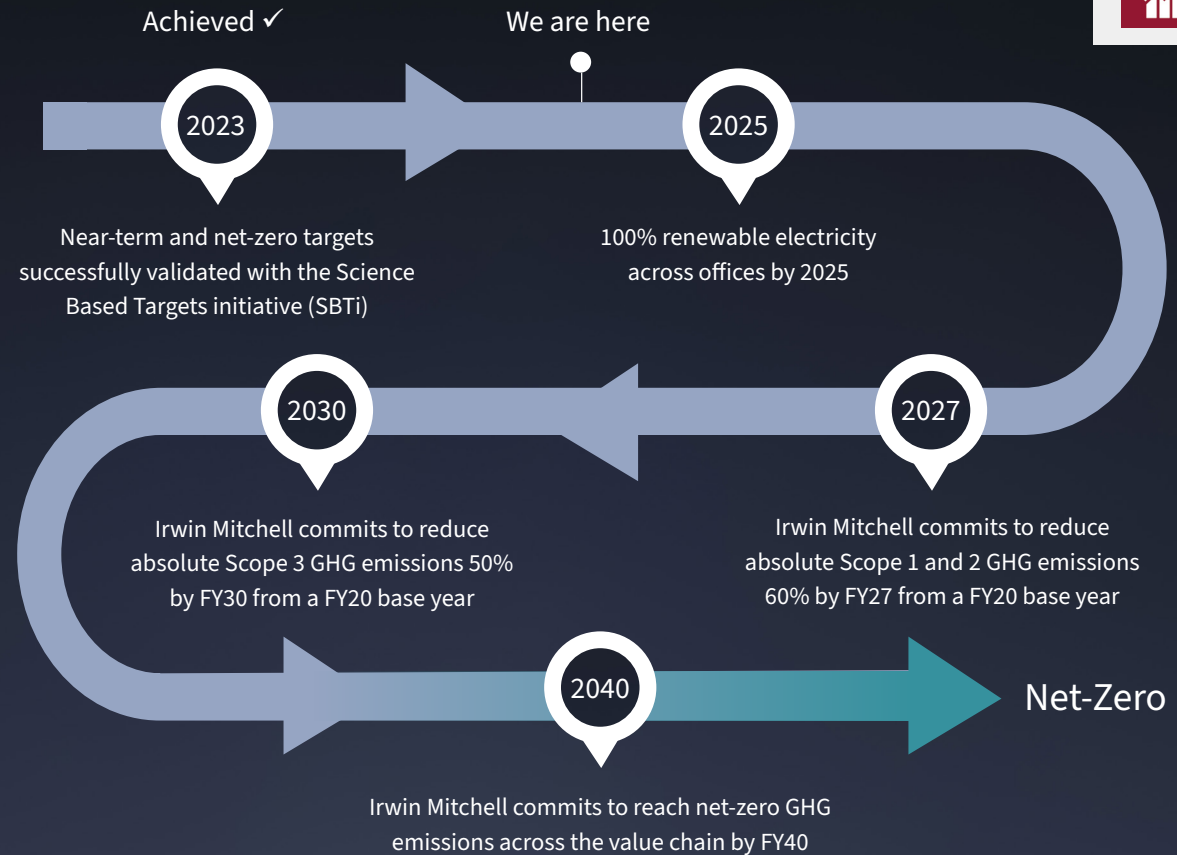




Roadmap to Net-Zero

In FY24, our Scope 1 and 2 GHG emissions reduced by 76% (compared with our baseline year FY20) which surpasses our FY27 target three years early and gives confidence in our ability to minimise our environmental impacts whilst growing our business. We are on track to power all offices with renewable energy by 2025 and will conduct a full energy review to search for further efficiency opportunities.

To continue our progress towards achieving net-zero, we plan to implement further measures across our Scope 3 impact areas; particularly relating to supply chain, business travel and stakeholder awareness.



- Baseline year is FY20 (May 2019 – April 2020)
- SBTi - Science Based Targets initiative
- Scope 1 & 2 - emissions from company facilities, vehicles and purchased electricity
- Scope 3 - broader category of emissions including purchased goods and services, business travel and employee commuting
- Net-zero - achieving an overall balance between GHG emissions released and removed from the atmosphere



“In addition to our own net-zero journey, our environmental strategy recognises the opportunity we have as professional advisers to help our clients with climate action. We are proud to be the first law firm to provide certified Carbon Literacy training for Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) clients.”

Keith Davidson,
Partner, Irwin Mitchell



Our net-zero focus areas

Scope 1 and 2 Greenhouse Gas emissions	Key activities
Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote energy efficiency and digitalisation of processes across our office estate. • Use net-zero as a central principle of our property strategy and data centre plans. • Ensure sustainability is a key factor in all office leasing, fit-outs and operational decisions.
Vehicle fleet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement policy changes that will enable the transition to a more sustainable car fleet.
Scope 3 Greenhouse Gas emissions	Key activities
Business travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the Greenstone platform to enable more granular detail regarding our emissions impact and identify potential efficiencies. • Review our business travel policies and continue to leverage the benefits of hybrid working. • Investing in technology to support with virtual and hybrid meetings.
Supply chain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with our strategic partners on climate action. • Formalise our supply chain sustainability activities through further development of our sustainable procurement procedures - for example by integrating environmental indicators into new systems. • Reduce supply chain transport – for example of our paper and office supplies deliveries and as we continue the move to digital and paperless processes.
Stakeholder engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support our clients with their own net-zero transition, via our ESG proposition and services (page 14). • Promote climate awareness to our key stakeholders – our clients, colleagues and across our communities. • Inspire our colleagues to take climate action – for example via paperless working, waste reduction and community volunteering.



Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting

Our SECR reporting data is disclosed on [page 12](#).

We report our GHG emissions using the revised edition of the GHG Protocol Corporate Accounting and Reporting Standard, the GHG Protocol Scope 2 Guidance and the UK Government Guidance on Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting.

Some elements of the reporting methodology have been adjusted in FY24, aligned with best practice and with previous years updated where applicable to allow for accurate comparisons over time. This was to incorporate office energy consumption where only estimated data is available and includes both location and market-based emissions, where 'market-based' reflects electricity supplies backed by Renewable Energy Guarantees of Origin certificates ('REGO'). An additional intensity metric of per group revenue has been adopted to illustrate the GHG emissions produced against the Group's financial performance.

We continue to develop our approach to calculating full Scope 3 emissions and to present a full GHG inventory in future years.



Further energy efficiency opportunities will be explored in FY25 in line with Phase 3 of the Energy Savings Opportunity Scheme (ESOS) and to target improvements in carbon emissions per m² office space. 98% of our office energy is now backed by REGO certificates.

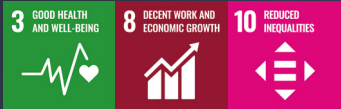
As our business has grown and evolved post-pandemic, we have seen an increase in business travel emissions. We are committed to reviewing our ways of working to identify viable reduction opportunities in FY25. [On page 19](#), we describe our net-zero focus areas and the activities we have planned to deliver against our targets.

[Read more about how we're Protecting our Planet.](#)



Driving Inclusion and Wellbeing

Improving wellbeing and diversity through our services, values-driven culture, and sustainable and inclusive employment





Update on our governance and focus areas

Our approach to D&I continues to be a key facet of our commitment to being a responsible business and was outlined as one of the most critical factors in our materiality assessment. **The five pillars of our D&I Plan are now:**

<p>Inclusive Communities</p>	<p>Client Experience</p>	<p>Inclusive Culture</p>	<p>Inclusive and Visible Leadership</p>	<p>Fair and Equitable Policies and Processes</p>
<p>Drive alignment between network groups, volunteering, and Early Careers priorities to support underrepresented young people</p>	<p>Proactively engaging clients on D&I, sharing best practice, and providing clear information about our approach and performance</p>	<p>Empowering colleagues to be themselves at work, be active allies, and feel comfortable raising concerns</p>	<p>Helping our leaders and colleagues integrate inclusiveness into what they do and how they do it</p>	<p>Ensuring that our internal processes are fair and consistent and providing equal opportunities</p>

“We recognise the need to ensure that diversity and inclusion is embedded throughout our policies, processes and daily decision making, both internally for our colleagues and externally for our clients and communities. We have evolved our central diversity and inclusion goals in light of this, providing an additional focus on client experience and inclusive communities (to provide a holistic approach to working with our key external stakeholders).”

Will Noel-Flint,
Diversity and Inclusion Manager, Irwin Mitchell





Our expanded ambitions have been put into practice in a number of key areas. Our external D&I offering, led by our ESG Advisory team, includes a D&I Assessment service which allows clients to identify, understand and address areas of improvement relating to diversity, inclusion and belonging.

We continue to embed diversity and inclusion into our community investment activities:

- We have supported The Catalyst Collective to empower young Black women, by hosting a law insights day in our London office ([see page 34](#)).
- Our LGBTQ+ network group, IM Equal, marked Birmingham Pride (alongside representatives from our National Charity Partners) by marching together in the parade.

[Read more about how we're Driving Inclusion and Wellbeing](#)

“It’s great to see the positive things that many clients are doing to create strong workplace cultures that embrace D&I. We work with them to make sure this is captured within a clear strategy so performance and progress can be monitored and areas for further improvements can be identified.”

Fergal Dowling,
Managing Partner, Irwin Mitchell



“My role is all about developing relationships with clients and intermediaries and our conversations are increasingly focussing on our shared commitment to inclusion and social mobility. By identifying ways to work collaboratively, we can create greater impact, and widen access to the workplace - at the same time as deepening our working relationships.”

Siri Siriwardene,
Director of Business Growth, Irwin Mitchell





Gender



72.3% of our **colleagues** are women



53.7% of **Partners** are women



45.3% of **FEMs** are women



66.7% of **FEM promotions** were women in FY24

Celebrating our role models

In recognition of her commitment to improving gender equality for over 30 years, our London Managing Partner, Alison Eddy, was recognised with the Lifetime Achievement: Women in Law Award at The Legal 500 ESG Awards 2024.

The awards champion diversity, inclusion and sustainability in the legal sector, which Alison has advocated for throughout her career.

Alison’s career highlights include:

- Specialising in equal pay and race and sex discrimination law early in her career
- Helped set up Irwin Mitchell’s London office, focusing on Medical Negligence, in 1995
- Is a trustee of Group B Strep support, a charity that campaigns to eradicate Group B Strep which is the main cause of death and brain injury in neonates
- Is a business ambassador for Meningitis Now, a charity dedicated to fighting meningitis and supporting those affected

- Helped set up Irwin Mitchell’s Diversity & Inclusion Board in 2008
- Became the first woman at Irwin Mitchell to hold the post of Regional Managing Partner, in 2012
- For many years led IMPowered, Irwin Mitchell’s colleague network focused on gender and inclusion
- Co-leads The Female Voice, a new initiative empowering and inspiring women from across our networks to connect and collaborate
- Contributed to research by Encompass Equality into Why Women Leave the Workplace and gained valuable insights into what most matters to women in business generally, but also specifically at Irwin Mitchell
- Works collaboratively with the inspirational Next 100 Years project, founded by Dana Denis-Smith, and is one of their #PavingTheWay patrons, sponsoring scholars whose research examines women’s legal history.



Alison Eddy,
Regional Managing Partner, London, Irwin Mitchell



Our data-driven approach

While we have implemented activities to drive inclusion across a wide range of protected characteristics, based on our diversity data which is consistently reviewed, our strategic focus remains on disability and race and ethnicity. We continue to plan interventions to support the recruitment, development, and retention of colleagues from these minority groups, as our data shows this is where we need to continue to prioritise.

Our latest [Gender and Ethnicity Pay Gap Report](#)



Race and Ethnicity

We have relaunched our reciprocal mentoring scheme for colleagues from minority ethnic backgrounds.

This programme pairs more junior, minority ethnic colleagues with leaders from within the business, with the aim of raising awareness of barriers, empowering leaders to feel more confident to discuss and address sensitive topics and opportunities for development.

Building on the pilot, we have created additional guidance and structure around the programme to assist the mentoring pairs to have more productive, focused discussions.

Moreover, whilst our faith, race and ethnicity network, IM Respect, is heavily involved in shaping and communicating this programme, this iteration has been developed, led, and implemented by the business and sponsored by our CEO, with strong input from our Organisational Development team, as we recognise this is a priority area for our business.

This follows a series of anti-racism leadership sessions that were delivered by an external consultant throughout summer 2023, which over 50 of our most senior leaders attended. A large number of those leaders will also be taking part in the mentoring programme.



Chani Dhaliwal

Partner and IM Respect
Co-Chair, Irwin Mitchell

“Our refreshed reciprocal mentoring programme highlights Irwin Mitchell’s continued commitment to its data-led approach and acting on colleague feedback. The engagement from leaders has been incredibly positive and we look forward to seeing the benefits the programme brings in terms of cultural competency and the development of our minority ethnic colleagues.”



Leena Savjani

Partner and IM Respect
Co-Chair, Irwin Mitchell



Disability

We are currently focused on reviewing and improving our workplace adjustments process, as we understand this is of critical importance to our disabled and neurodivergent colleagues.

We want all colleagues to feel supported in their role from day one with Irwin Mitchell. We have taken recommendations from Business Disability Forum on how our processes can be improved and made smoother for colleagues and will be implementing several changes throughout the year.



A concerted effort has also been made on our ability to recruit and retain disabled talent, largely through our partnership with disability jobs board and career support service, Evenbreak, and work with the Business In The Community Opening Doors campaign.

Since FY22, we have seen a 96.4% increase in the percentage of applicants declaring a disability and adjusted our reasonable adjustments question to be more inclusive and explicit about the types of support that we can offer through the recruitment process.



Evenbreak very much values partnering with Irwin Mitchell, who take their commitment to disability inclusion very seriously. As well as advertising all their vacancies on our accessible job board, they do a lot of work internally and externally to promote best practice.

Internally, by reviewing their practices to ensure inclusion is built in and upskilling their people, and externally by promoting best practice to other employers. They are clearly on a continuous improvement journey and are leading the field in the legal sector in this respect.

Jane Hatton,
Evenbreak CEO



Focus on wellbeing

Creating a healthy working environment, that supports the wellbeing of our people, was identified as one of our most critical issues in our materiality assessment and remains a priority.



We have been externally recognised for our efforts once again, being ranked 40th by GPTW as a top employer for Wellbeing in the Super Large organisation category, in June 2024. This means we have maintained our position as the highest ranked law firm in the category for a second year running and illustrates how our commitment and approach to wellbeing continues to evolve with our business.

To ensure continuous improvement, this year, we conducted an internal audit to evaluate the governance, oversight, and operational effectiveness of key wellbeing practices.

We've also completed BITC's 'Workwell Self-Assessment' and taken on board their expert advice to further strengthen our organisational approach. This prompted a refresh of our Healthy Mind Advocates programme and increased connectivity between our wellbeing team and D&I networks.



75 colleagues trained as Healthy Minds Advocates and Mental Health First Aiders.

In light of the recent well publicised impacts of stress in the legal sector, and our own recognition of the need to better address the root cause of this, we have placed an emphasis on training to reduce and manage work related stress – specifically supporting colleagues to effectively manage their workload and prioritise activities better.

To ensure our wellbeing culture and programme continues to evolve to meet the current and future needs of our people, we regularly monitor management information and issue colleague surveys and feedback mechanisms - the results of which are analysed and regularly reported to our senior leadership teams. This allows them to stay ahead of any wellbeing trends

so they can update our strategy, ensuring the right support is provided and allowing them to continue to be the driving force in advocating and fostering a healthy and productive working environment.

For example, our updated Flexible by Choice policy supports the work/life balance of colleagues, we have continued to provide financial wellbeing advice through webinars delivered by HSBC, and we have increased support available for colleagues through Aviva Digi+ Care (to provide advice and support from GPs and nurses specialising in dealing with menopausal issues).

Looking ahead, we're now working with BITC to establish the long-term goals we want to achieve for our wellbeing programme, to ensure the support we offer is tailored, visible, and, most importantly, addresses the needs of our people.

This will include suicide prevention training, the development of a domestic abuse support network, and additional wellbeing benefits made available to colleagues and their families.



1300 colleagues provided vital insights during our Wellbeing Check-in to help us understand how our working environment and culture supports psychological health and wellbeing, which identified a need to focus on resilience, performance, and job satisfaction.



184 colleagues and 111 line managers attended our Capacity, Prioritisation and Resilience Workshops designed to address colleague feedback on the top causes of workplace stress.

[Read more about how we're Driving Inclusion and Wellbeing](#)



“Our approach to wellbeing continues to evolve with our business. Our well-established programme ensures that colleagues and line managers have access to support and resources they need. By listening to our colleagues and enhancing support around workloads and prioritisation, we’re creating an environment where everyone can come to work, enjoy what they do, and deliver great results for our clients.”

Amy Scott,
Head of Organisational Development,
Irwin Mitchell





Empowering our Communities

Reducing inequalities through education, employability and by widening access to justice





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



We sat down with our three charity partners to discuss the great work they do and the importance of making a difference in the community.

[Read more about how we're Empowering our Communities.](#)

Celebrating our National Charity Partnerships

Since launching our NCPs initiative in March 2023, we have continued to strengthen our relationship with Maggie's, Teenage Cancer Trust, and National Literacy Trust. Colleagues have undertaken a range of volunteering opportunities with our charity partners including taking part in gardening at Maggie's centres, stewarding events with Teenage Cancer Trust, and working with the National Literacy Trust to support literacy programmes in Birmingham.

During FY24, a total of £221,000 was donated to our three national charity partners (Maggie's, the National Literacy Trust, and Teenage Cancer Trust). This included £60,000 donated by Irwin Mitchell; £135,000 donated by the IMCF and £26,000 raised by colleagues.

Evidencing our commitment to sustainability as well as inclusion, £30,000 was also raised towards this total (by recycling old IT equipment), enabling our charity partners to invest in projects that support digital inclusion, including improved online support for young people with cancer, digital literacy support aimed at girls facing exclusion from school, and new IT suites at Maggie's centres at NHS sites across the country.



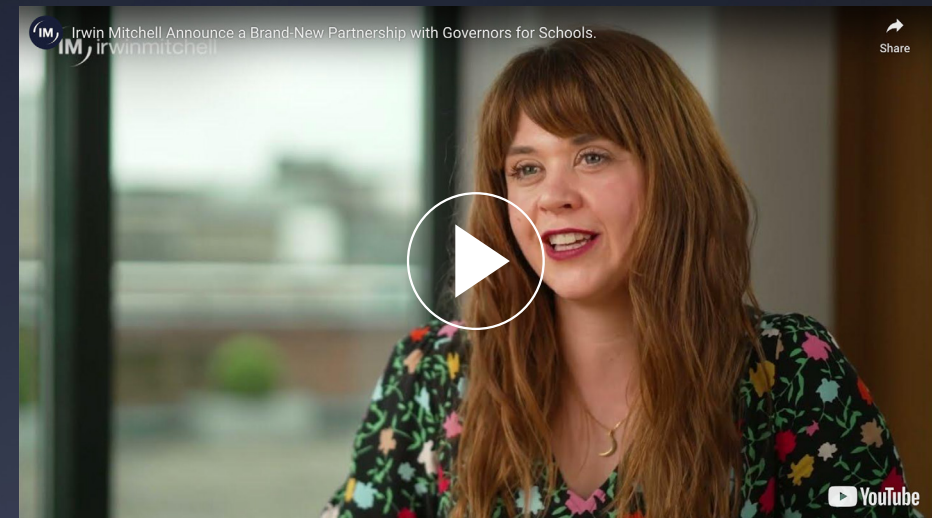
£365,000

Group and colleague charitable donations and fundraising, in FY24¹.

(1) This figure includes funds donated by colleagues and Irwin Mitchell to the IMCF and other charities. It excludes funds donated to good causes by the IMCF.

Strengthening our partnerships

Our new partnership (launched in June 2024), with the national education charity, Governors for Schools, will enable Irwin Mitchell colleagues to be placed as school governor volunteers on the boards of state-funded schools across England and Wales.



“It’s been inspiring to work closely with our three charity partners, learning more about the challenges they are facing and collaborating to come up with creative ways to use our skills and expertise to support each other. I’m beyond proud of our colleagues who’ve helped make a positive impact on these organisations whether it be through fundraising, raising awareness or volunteering.”

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





Irwin Mitchell Charities Foundation

The IMCF is an independent registered charity, established in 1997 by colleagues to relieve poverty, hardship, and distress in the communities we operate in.

Since then, over £3m has been donated to good causes. In August 2024, Irwin Mitchell donated £500,000 to the IMCF, ensuring the foreseeable future of the foundation.

The IMCF Fund

Testament to our aspiration to be recognised as a leading responsible business, in 2021, Irwin Mitchell donated £500,000 to the IMCF to enable the creation of a grant making mechanism (the IMCF Fund) to support charities close to the hearts of our colleagues, and which make an impact on wellbeing, access to education, employment or justice in our communities.

To date, £300,000 has been donated to 23 good causes across the UK over the last two years, via the IMCF Fund. As we enter the third year of the Fund, a further £200,000 is set to be donated by the trustees. In FY24, over 100 colleagues nominated charities to receive a grant of up to £20,000 via the IMCF Fund. **Following an application and shortlisting process, 13 charities were successful:**



In addition, recognising its unique position and responsibility to widen access to justice and the urgent societal need, the IMCF donated £20,000 to Support Through Court, a charity that helps people facing the court system alone.

£137,500

donated to 28 foodbanks and homeless charities across the UK by the IMCF, in December 2023.





7,000 hours of volunteering

Supporting our communities through volunteering and pro bono

Colleagues from across the Group are encouraged to use their 14 hours (pro rata) community allowance by taking part in skills-based volunteering.

During FY24, colleagues undertook over 7,000 volunteering hours to support their local communities, including our NCPs, an increase of 17% compared to FY23.

We continue to develop and promote our volunteering programme, focused on providing skills-based opportunities where we can create the biggest impact, aligned to the key focus area of education, as identified through our materiality assessment.

“Our firm has a strong tradition of community support through volunteering. To maximize our impact, we aim to empower colleagues to use their skills and knowledge to assist the most vulnerable, developing programmes that align with our strategic goals.”

Clementine Burch,
Pro Bono and Volunteering Programme Manager, Irwin Mitchell





Social mobility and widening access to the legal sector

Our aim is to improve the life-chances of children and young people, especially those living in social mobility cold-spots across the UK, by helping them prepare for life after education, whilst widening access to careers in our sector.

To complement our ongoing commitments and programmes, highlights of which are on this page, we have developed a new work experience programme aimed at Y12/13 students with the pilot launched in Sheffield in August 2024. In addition, we have developed a new partnership with Governors for Schools, and you can read more about the impact this will have on [page 31](#).



24 young people

supported by 12 colleagues providing 106 hours of mentoring through Envision's Programme. This initiative is designed to empower young people from less advantaged backgrounds to develop their skills and confidence.



54 PRIME students

provided with high quality work experience across eight offices. PRIME helps students from lower socio-economic backgrounds and by continuing our support of the initiative, our aim is to make the legal industry more accessible and inclusive.



13 young Black women

supported by The Catalyst Collective attended a law insights day in our London office in October 2023.

"Delivering a law insight day to 13 Catalyst Collective mentees was deeply rewarding for us as practitioners and for the students. It was wonderful to see their excitement at the prospect of pursuing legal careers and that this is completely within their reach."

Angela Jackman KC (Hon),
Partner, Irwin Mitchell





Widening access to justice



Providing pro bono legal advice to those who cannot afford access to justice, is one of the most valuable contributions our lawyers can make to empower our communities and is a key focus area of our responsible business strategy.

We continue to be signatories to the Law Society’s Pro Bono Charter, members of LawWorks and Pro Bono Connect, gaining access to more pro bono opportunities for our lawyers to support in our communities. Through Pro Bono Connect, we’ve supported individuals with cases relating to property disputes and provided advice through LawWorks Not-for-Profit Programme which is aimed at supporting small not-for-profit organisations that need legal advice but struggle to pay for it.



Irwin Mitchell are active members and valuable contributors to the Pro Bono Connect scheme. This is the only scheme that enables solicitors and barristers to work on litigation cases together to provide clients with a complete pro bono service resulting in earlier settlements, more favourable outcomes and effective access to justice.

Fatima Bula,
Pro Bono Connect Executive Officer, LawWorks



Pro Bono Recognition List England & Wales

We’re delighted that seven of our lawyers have been named in the inaugural Pro Bono Recognition List, developed to acknowledge the valuable contribution made supporting those in need of help.

Published for the first time in June 2024, the Pro Bono Recognition List featured those solicitors and barristers who have devoted 25 hours or more of their time to pro bono work during the previous calendar year. As we seek to champion pro bono through our internal committees, our aim is to build on this in FY25, with more lawyers being recognised for their work.



Providing pro bono support to our communities

As a full-service law firm, the types of cases we support on a pro bono basis vary. This year we've provided advice to charities such as Ten Little Toes, a charity which provides support to families in crisis by helping them to secure new premises. Our lawyers have also supported a family at an inquest with the unexpected death of their son who lacked mental capacity.

Our lawyers continue to support a wide range of pro bono clinics and initiatives, including City Community Legal Advice Centre at City St George's, University of London. Our Family Team have also established a clinic, working with a charity to provide specialist legal advice in London.

[Read more about how we're Empowering our Communities on our website](#)

"The happiness you get from using your legal skills to make a constructive difference to individuals in society who have experienced real hardship is incredible."

Jo Bryan,
Chartered Legal Executive – Associate, Irwin Mitchell



"Access to justice is vitally important, especially when it concerns the death of a loved one. While there are families who feel able to represent themselves, it gives me great pride to be able to support those who do need that extra support at what can be one of the most devastating times of their lives."

Sinéad Rollinson-Hayes,
Associate Solicitor Advocate, Irwin Mitchell



"It's thanks to the tenacity and dedication of colleagues from across the business, who are passionate about supporting our communities, that we've been able to support a number of individuals and charities on a pro bono basis this year. Without their support the individuals that they help would not be able to afford to access the legal advice that they need."

Richard Kayser,
National Pro Bono Partner, Irwin Mitchell



Key contact

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



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