

# Responsible Business Report

01 April 2022 - 31 March 2023

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# The year in review

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**6,688**  
hours

of pro bono and Responsible Business activity recorded by LS colleagues

**45**  
colleagues

volunteered as part of the LS mentoring scheme

**1,150**  
trees planted

through the Hometree charity in Ireland

**£31,400**  
raised

for Ukraine and Turkey/Syria emergency appeals

**2,000**  
students

attended careers outreach sessions in areas of low social mobility

**£20,000**  
raised

for our charity partner Alzheimer's Research UK (total raised since 2017: £108,000)

**Year 1**  
Planet Mark

business certification achieved

**Top 10**  
law firm

on the Social Mobility Index

**38**  
students

participated in the LS mentoring scheme

**17**  
pro bono  
partnerships

(and 6,125 hours of pro bono activity recorded by our lawyers)

**Silver Ecovadis**  
score for the second year running

measuring our performance in relation to the environment, labour, human rights and procurement

# About us

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As a firm we have a collective desire to be a force for good in the world; not only to do great work for our clients, but also to have a positive impact on our colleagues and in our wider communities. Our ethos of 'bravery and kindness' underpins how we act as a socially and environmentally responsible business.



Our firm is named after Lewis Silkin (b.1889), whose story of social mobility continues to inspire us.

His family were refugees from Lithuania and he was brought up in poverty, but qualified as a solicitor before becoming an MP and eventually sat in the House of Lords. He was deputy leader of London County Council during WW2 and a Minister in Attlee's post-war government when the NHS was created.

Today, improving social mobility is one of the two focus areas of our Responsible Business activity and a key pillar of our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion strategy.



# Welcome



*"I'm proud to be part of a firm that values authenticity and - through our ethos of bravery and kindness - encourages its people to lead the way in creating change. Our approach to Responsible Business is not just a tick-box exercise, but a genuine commitment to making a positive impact on society.*

*Social mobility and sustainability sit at the centre of our Responsible Business strategy, as the areas where we can have the biggest positive impact. As this report shows, our efforts to help improve social mobility have been making real progress, and as a result we are now in the top ten law firms in the Social Mobility Index. We have also taken significant steps forward in relation to sustainability; action on climate change is not a choice, but a necessity. We continue to measure our annual carbon emissions, and during the reporting period committed to setting science-based targets to reach net zero emissions in line with the Science-Based Targets initiative.*

*I know that my colleagues are excited to play a role in the Responsible Business strategy we have set out. We have a lot more to do, but we are committed to playing a part in the creation of a more equitable society, and one which does not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".*

**Michelle Besa, Responsible Business and Sustainability Manager**



*Responsible Business is at the heart of Lewis Silkin. It connects us to our past; it informs the decisions we make day-to-day; and it gives us the opportunity to be part of building a better future. A future that allows people to succeed regardless of their background; a future that is environmentally conscious and sustainable; and a future in which we play our part in ensuring that those who need it have access to legal advice and support. We know that there is more work to be done, but this report demonstrates how working together can make a real impact. If we are all committed, we will move towards lasting change. We are excited by the increasing number of people getting involved with Responsible Business, and particularly pleased by the fact that it is becoming the norm for colleagues to ask whether we have considered sustainability or diversity in the decisions we make. This report demonstrates how working together can make a real impact, and how our Responsible Business activity helps make us brilliantly different. We hope you find reading it as uplifting as we do.*

**Sam Pennington, Partner and Lucy Lewis, Partner**

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# Introduction

**This report serves as a valuable tool for us to demonstrate our dedication to Responsible Business practices, and share both our successes and our challenges. In publishing it, we aim to engage our stakeholders, build trust, and inspire others to join us in our journey towards a more sustainable and equitable future.**

## Structure of our Responsible Business programme

Our Responsible Business programme has two strategic themes, social mobility and sustainability.

- ▶ Education and social mobility – we want young people to aim high and succeed, regardless of their socioeconomic background;
- ▶ Sustainability – helping to protect and enhance the planet for future generations;

Pro bono work, and charity and fundraising activities, are also core elements of our Responsible Business programme. Where possible these are aligned with our two strategic themes.

- ▶ Pro bono – providing legal advice and support to those who would otherwise struggle to access it;
- ▶ Charity and fundraising – helping to equip charities with the skills and resources to carry out their life-changing work.

## Aligning our vision with the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

We support the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals and view these as a roadmap for making progress on global issues. They have informed our Responsible Business Strategy and have enabled us to understand how we can best make positive contributions to society, and where we can reduce negative impact. The two strategic themes of our Responsible Business programme, social mobility and sustainability, align with the following UN SDGs:



## Why we do it

Being a responsible business is important to our people. Not only is it the right thing to do, it also enriches our culture by enabling colleagues to contribute to societal and sustainability goals, providing an additional layer of fulfilment and job satisfaction beyond their day-to-day roles. It also helps us deliver a first-class service to clients, by providing opportunities for our people to develop their own skills in new and exciting ways.

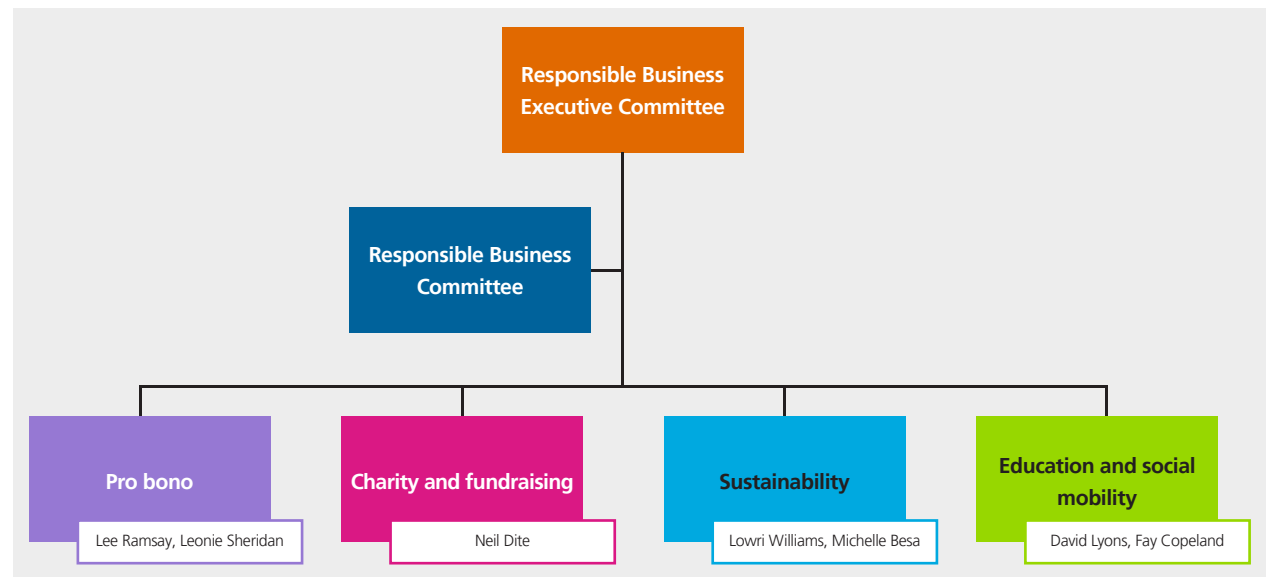


### **Our Responsible Business Committee**

Our Responsible Business Committee is chaired by our Head of Responsible Business, Sam Pennington. Additionally, Responsible Business is represented on our firm's strategy board through Lucy Lewis. The committee is made up of colleagues from each of our Responsible Business groups; pro bono, charity and fundraising, sustainability, and education and social mobility. All levels and roles are represented in these groups, ensuring that a range of employee voices feed into the decisions taken by the committee.

### **Our Responsible Business Executive Committee**

Our Responsible Business Executive Committee includes our joint Chief Operating Officers, Matt Johnson and Fay Copeland, and our Chief People Officer Julia Paulding as well as Sam Pennington and Lucy Lewis. This ensures that Responsible Business is represented at the highest levels of the firm.



# Progress vs Plan

We have set five strategic goals and are proud of our progress to date, while also recognising there is more to be done.

## 1. Centre our Responsible Business programme around two key strategic themes where we as a business and as individuals can make the most positive difference: social mobility and sustainability.

Key milestones	Status
Share our Responsible Business strategy in our 2021 Responsible Business Weeks, focusing on our 'collective priorities, individual responsibilities' to give our people shared understanding and ownership of our vision	Completed
Align all internal and external Responsible Business materials and communications with the UN Sustainable Development Goals	In progress
Host internal events and share materials to raise awareness and boost engagement with these two themes across the firm	In progress

## 2. Reduce our carbon footprint from gas and electricity by 21% by 2025 (average of a 4.2% reduction per year) and from flights by 30% by 2025 compared to our baseline year (2019-20).

Key milestones	Status
Launch carbon reduction targets internally and externally <sup>1</sup>	Completed
Reduce carbon footprint from flights by 25% compared to 2019-20 as part of our return to the 'new normal'	Completed
Measure our carbon footprint and continue to increase the efficiency of our offices on a year-on-year basis	Completed
Focus on sustainability in the design of our new London office	Completed

## 3. Engage and collaborate with our supply chain on social and environmental values, using our purchasing power to reduce negative impacts and increase the positive value of our operations.

Key milestones	Status
Produce a supplier code of conduct setting out our firm sustainability and DEI values	Completed
Introduce a procurement policy to guide our decision making when purchasing goods and services	In progress
Include sustainability questions in tender documents for potential suppliers	In progress
Engage with our top suppliers and encourage them to reduce their environmental impacts	In progress
Measure the carbon footprint of our supply chain	Completed





**4. Engage and empower our people to make a difference and support personal development through participation in Responsible Business activities, with an aspirational firmwide target to record 10,000 hours of Responsible Business activity across our four strands each year by 2024.**

Key milestones	Status
Increase number of Responsible Business hours our people are empowered, encouraged and expected to complete to 30 hours per year	<b>Completed</b>
Include 20 hours of pro bono time in fee earners' billable hour targets	<b>Completed</b>
Optimise and formalise time recording processes and issue guidance to encourage effective time recording in legal and business services teams	<b>Completed</b>
Include contributions to Responsible Business in appraisals for all roles and at all levels	<b>Completed</b>
Highlight and celebrate those making significant contributions to Responsible Business	<b>In progress</b>
Expand on the range of volunteering opportunities available to our people	<b>Scheduled</b>

**5. Build our profile within our community as a firm that genuinely cares about being a socially and environmentally responsible business and enhance client experiences through engagement with our firm initiatives.**

Key milestones	Status
Launch a Responsible Business Collaboration Plan detailing the opportunities we can provide clients to get involved in our firm initiatives	<b>Scheduled</b>
Share details of our Responsible Business programme, strategy and targets on our website and in pitch materials	<b>In progress</b>
Produce a detailed document explaining how and why Responsible Business, and particularly social mobility, is in the firm's history and DNA	<b>Scheduled</b>
Involve clients in volunteering programmes and fundraising events	<b>In progress</b>
Raise external profile of Responsible Business at Lewis Silkin through regular LinkedIn posts and membership of relevant networks and organisations	<b>In progress</b>



# Sustainability

We support SDGs 12 (responsible consumption and production) and 13 (climate action) through our firmwide carbon reduction targets and commitment to decarbonise our operations. During the reporting period we took the significant step of committing to set Science-Based Targets to reach net zero emissions.



## Year 1 Planet Mark Business Certification

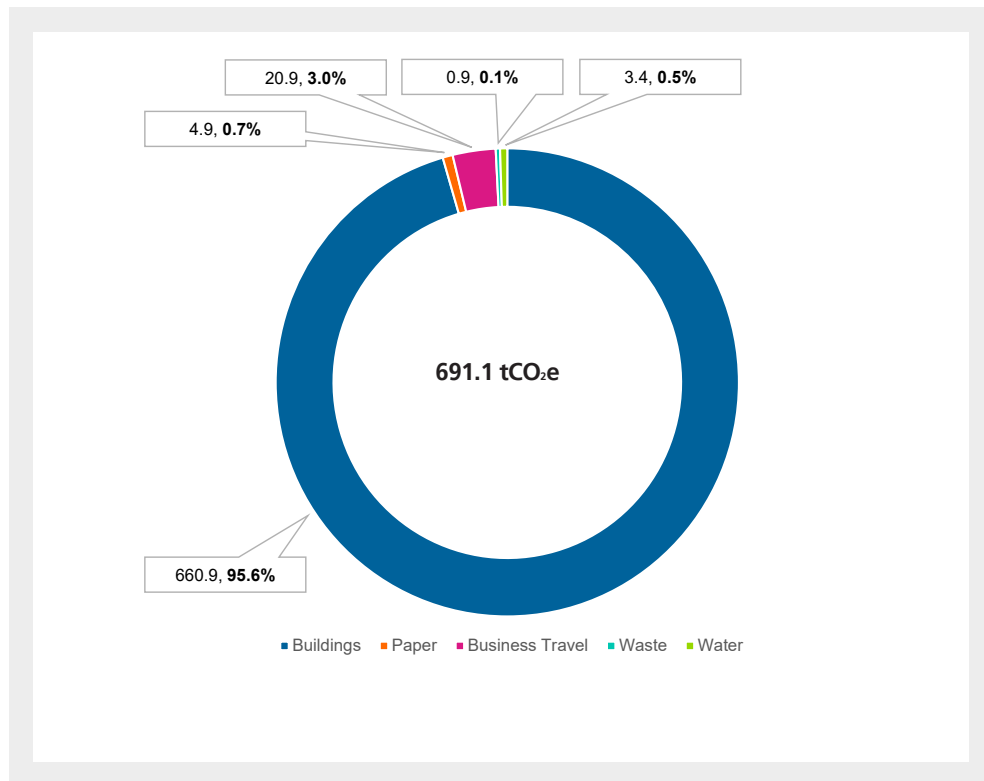
Planet Mark is a sustainability certification that verifies and measures carbon data to reduce emissions. The certification process provides us with a clear understanding of our environmental footprint and the steps we need to take to reduce it, while engaging our people in the process. In addition to our commitment to annual emission reductions, we are proud to be helping protect endangered rainforest through Planet Mark's partner Cool Earth – the award-winning charity that works alongside indigenous communities to halt rainforest destruction. Cool Earth aims to support communities, prevent carbon emissions, preserve wildlife, and keep Earth's climate in balance. Our pledge through Cool Earth goes directly towards supporting the Asháninka community in Central Peru.



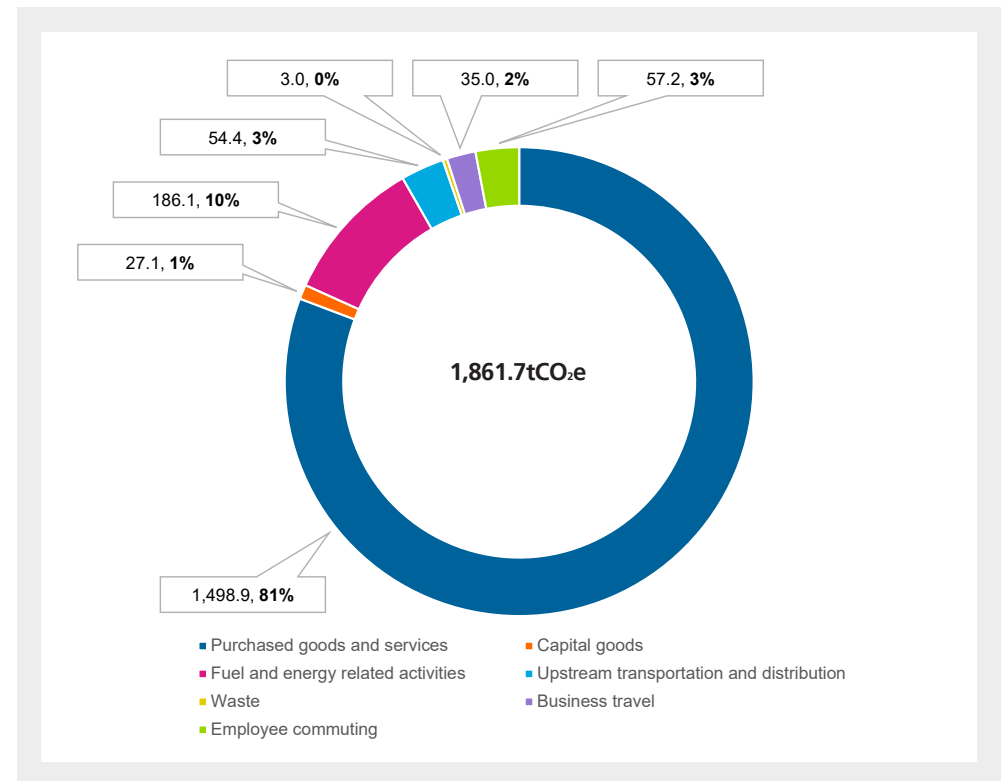
### Measuring our emissions

As part of the process to determine our baseline for setting our science-based targets, during the reporting period we undertook work to calculate our emissions. We measured our scopes 1 & 2 emissions along with business travel to determine our carbon footprint to be 691.1 tCO<sub>2</sub>e, a 31% decrease compared to our FY 2019-2020. We went on to measure our full scope 3 emissions to enable us to have a full understanding of the emissions across our value chain. Our scope 3 emissions account for 75% of our overall carbon footprint. Goods and services purchased from suppliers make up 81% of our scope 3 emissions, and we look forward to engaging with our suppliers on our journey to net zero.

**Carbon footprint emission source for FY 2021-2022:**



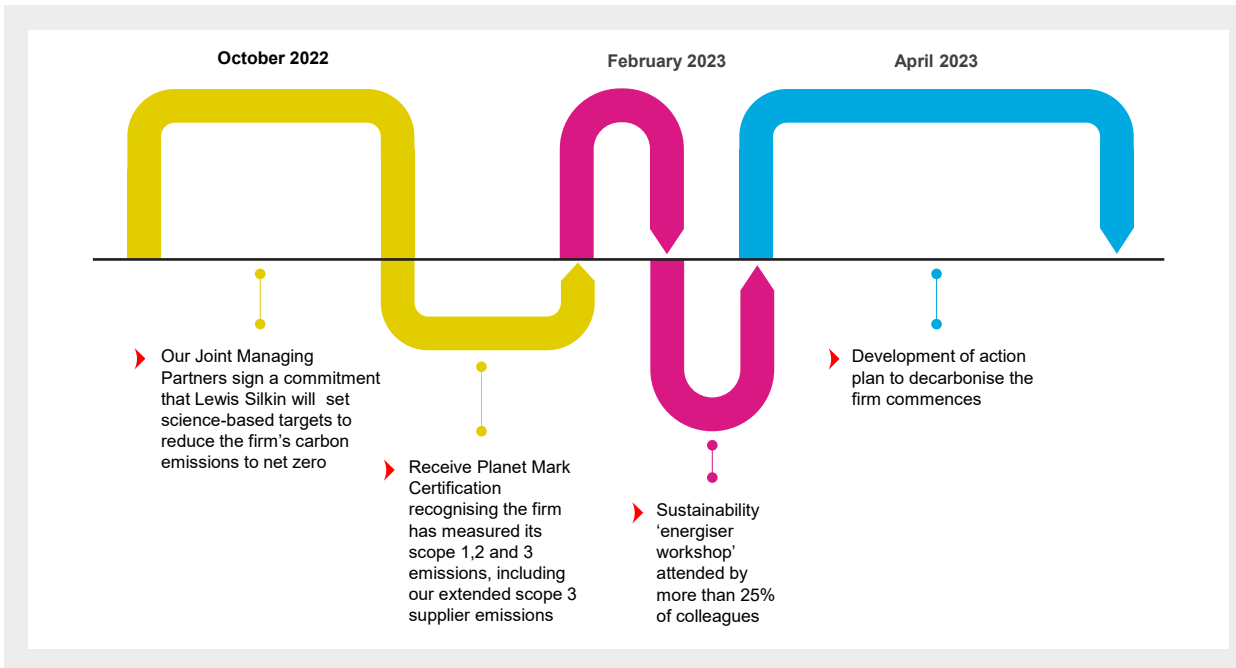
**Total scope 3 carbon footprint by emission source for FY 2021-2022:**



## Science-based Targets

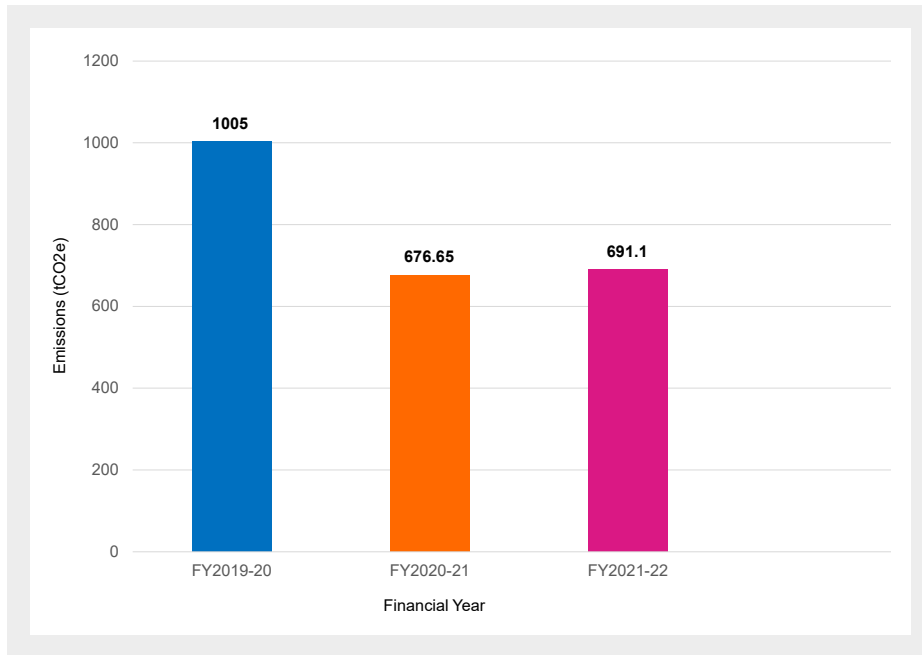
To align with the most ambitious aim of the Paris Agreement, Lewis Silkin has committed to reaching net zero value chain greenhouse gas emissions by no later than 2050, in line with the Science-Based Targets initiative's Net Zero Standard<sup>2</sup>.

Science-based targets provide our firm a clearly defined pathway to future-proof growth by specifying how much and how quickly we need to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions.



## Our emissions reduction progress

The figures in the chart below encompass the following sources of emissions - site gas; refrigeration and AC; electricity generation, transmission and distribution; business travel; water and wastewater; waste disposal. Emissions data for FY2022-23 will be available in our next annual report.



The decrease in our carbon footprint during FY2020-21 was largely due to a reduction in business travel due to the restrictions in place during the pandemic. A reduction in flights accounts for 52.8% of the reduction.

As expectations around business travel changed as a result of the pandemic, there is scope to re-evaluate our business flights policy.



## Engaging our people

In conjunction with Planet Mark, we hosted a sustainability-focused 'energiser workshop' in February 2023 in order to engage our workforce in our sustainability goals. 25% of LS colleagues joined the workshop, and submitted their ideas through group discussions.



### Ecovadis

During the reporting period we completed our second Ecovadis assessment. Ecovadis measures our performance across four areas - environment, labour and human rights and sustainable procurement. Our score gave us a silver rating; we are proud that our overall score has increased since the last financial year. We are performing well above average in comparison to others within the legal sector, scoring 63 against a sector average of 44.

## The Chancery Lane Project

We are members of The Chancery Lane Project, a collaborative movement of legal professionals working together to draft and review contract clauses and laws to enable solutions to climate change. As well as participating in drafting 'hackathons' we are currently undertaking a project to incorporate climate clauses from The Chancery Lane Project into our precedents.



### St Mary's Secret Garden

In the 12 months covered by this report several volunteer groups from Lewis Silkin undertook gardening work for St. Mary's Secret Garden, an urban community garden in Hackney, London. St. Mary's provides ecotherapy activities and helps those in need combat isolation, develop valuable employment skills, gain qualifications and contribute to a greener, healthier, happier community.

## Looking ahead

During the year we made preparations to move to our new London office. Sustainability was at the heart of the selection process for our new London home, which is in the Arbor building, part of the Bankside Yards development. Bankside Yards is the UK's first fossil-fuel free major mixed-use development, running carbon neutral in operation from year six and has achieved BREEAM excellent status. The development features an energy sharing network which transfers surplus energy around the estate to increase efficiency.



# Social Mobility

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



Social mobility is one of our two strategic themes. We are working to support targets 10.1 and 10.2 of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with our social mobility work, which is part of our commitment to widening access to the legal profession and supporting young people to fulfil their potential.

PRIME

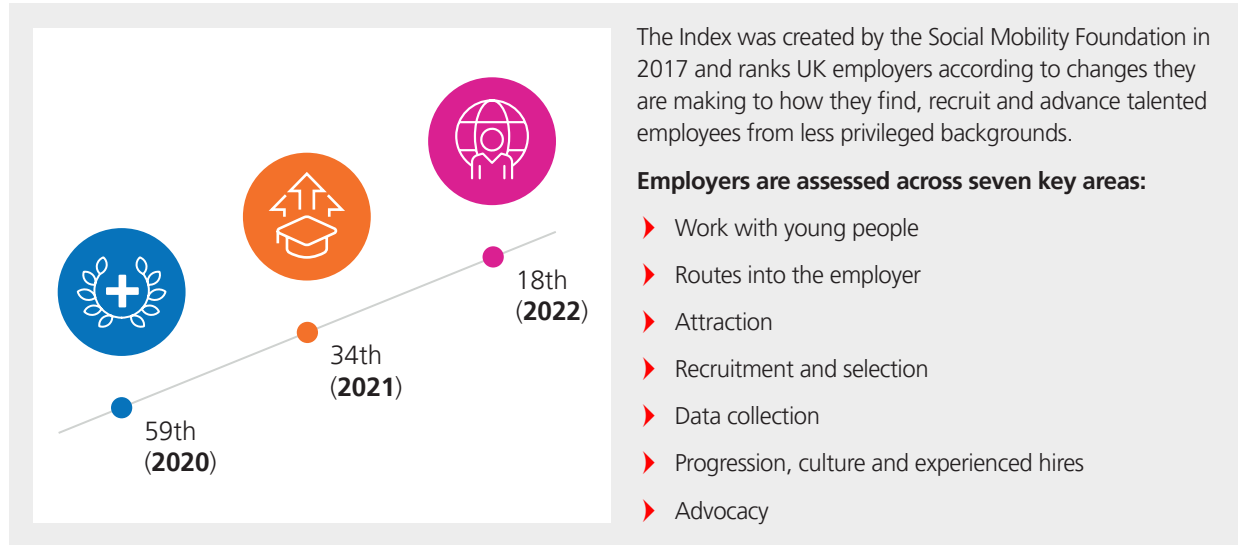
FAIR ACCESS TO QUALITY WORK EXPERIENCE

We are a member of PRIME (an alliance of law firms across the UK and Republic of Ireland determined to improve access to, and socio-economic diversity within, the legal profession). We held a social mobility week in January 2023, which included an event where individuals from across the firm (including many partners) shared their social mobility stories and openly discussed the challenges they have faced in their careers.



## Social Mobility Index

For the third consecutive year, we have improved our ranking in the Social Mobility Index, rising to 18th place – up from 34th last year. We now fall within the Top 10 law firms in the UK.



*“Everyone should have the same life chances, regardless of their socioeconomic background, and improving social mobility is a core element of our commitment to Responsible Business and DE&I at Lewis Silkin. Many people in the firm are actively involved in this area.*

*Our cold spot outreach presentations and school mentoring initiatives support students in areas of low social mobility across the UK, while our solicitor apprentice scheme is helping open up the opportunity to practice law to all. Our improved ranking in the 2022 Social Mobility Index is illustrative of the importance we attach to these efforts, and I’m very proud of the rapid progress we are making.”*

**Richard Miskella, Joint Managing Partner**





## Lewis Silkin's Mentoring Scheme

38 students from five schools in London, Norfolk, Blackburn, Kent and Corby participated in the Lewis Silkin Mentoring Scheme, nine-month programme for students aged 16-18. The schools we work with are in areas with low social mobility (known as social mobility 'cold spots'). Volunteer mentors from Lewis Silkin meet regularly with their mentees and help them with their career aspirations (legal or otherwise) by offering advice, information and resources about various paths, whether related to university, apprenticeships or job experience.



*"I have thoroughly enjoyed my experience as a mentor. It is so rewarding to know that your time is being invested in someone else's growth and personal development. The scheme also gives mentors a great chance to develop invaluable skills such as the ability to give feedback, communicate effectively or dealing with difficult unforeseen situations."*

**Cristiana Barone, Associate and mentor**

*"The Lewis Silkin mentoring scheme gave our students the opportunity to reflect on their academic and career choices, develop the confidence to approach competitive and difficult situations and develop skills to help with their organisation, time management and application writing. Students enjoyed meeting their mentors and found sessions challenging and supportive. We can't wait to start again next year."*

**Matthew Sprake, Principal at Broadland High Ormiston Academy**

## Cold spot outreach

We deliver remote and in-person careers events to students in Year 10 and upwards in social mobility cold spots. These events aim to raise aspirations and provide the advice and support needed to achieve them. We build lasting relationships and attendees at our cold spot events have gone on to subsequently win our social mobility essay competitions, take part in our mentorship scheme and carry out work experience at the firm. During the year 2,000 students from 11 schools attended our outreach sessions.

*"My students found the presentation really inspiring. I was talking to one student who is currently in Year 10 and whilst in conversation about her life and career, she brought up the 'law talk'. It obviously had a really big impact on her. She is a disadvantaged student, but was inspired about the possibility of a career in this field."*

*The student starting expressing to me how she wanted to improve her grade in English because she realises that you need to be able to read, write and express yourself in an intelligent manner to be a lawyer so she said that now she is going to work really hard."*

*Personally, I felt that this talk had a really positive impact on our students. Speaking to people that are currently in that field and how they got there was inspirational. I love the fact that they were women too and this was really important for our female students."*

**Teacher, Corby School**

### **Schools outreach webinar with I. Stephanie Boyce**

*“Our cold spot outreach programme of virtual career webinars is designed to demystify the legal profession for young people from social mobility ‘cold spots’ (areas recognised as having low social mobility) and to inspire young people who might otherwise think that a career in law is out of reach to them.*

*In June 2022 we held a virtual event on legal careers for all the schools involved in our cold spot outreach sessions and we were privileged to be joined by I. Stephanie Boyce (President of the Law Society at the time). Schools from around the country joined to hear from Stephanie and two Lewis Silkin partners, Jo Farmer and Cliff Fluet. The event provided an insight into their backgrounds and career paths into law, and the obstacles they overcame along the way.*

*Cliff commented ‘I know how important it is for today’s leaders to tell their stories, show their journeys and inspire the next generation of talent’.*

*Stephanie has now finished her term as Law Society President but remains heavily involved in outreach work and improving access to the legal profession, and as a firm we have continued to collaborate with her.”*

**Emily Atkinson, Senior Associate and Sophie Jamieson, Associate**

### **Careers talk with I. Stephanie Boyce**

*“I didn’t receive much support at school in relation to my ambitions for a legal career, so I’m passionate about inspiring young people and letting them know that anyone can reach their goals if they want to. As part of National Apprenticeship Week in February 2023 I was lucky to be invited to join I. Stephanie Boyce on a visit to her old secondary school.*

*Our purpose was to inform students about different pathways into a career in law; I shared my experience as a solicitor apprentice. We were also joined by a trainee solicitor as well as an LPC student who shared their experiences in following a more traditional route into law. The students we spoke to were very engaged – they were keen to hear our stories and had a lot of questions for us throughout the session.*

*I explained how I had secured my solicitor apprenticeship role, what it involves on a day-to-day basis, and provided information about the degree apprenticeship course and the advantages of taking this route. It was a very rewarding session and demonstrated to me that there are many young students interested in learning about non-traditional routes into law.”*

**Angel Skyers, Apprentice**



### Primary School reading scheme

We work with St Alban's Primary school in London to help improve the reading skills which are essential for cognitive and emotional development, improving language skills and expanding knowledge. Many of the school's pupils are refugees who have recently arrived in the UK, and often face significant barriers to education and social integration. By reading with these pupils, we are not only assisting them to succeed academically, but are also helping provide them with a sense of belonging and community in their new home.

In Belfast, we have started working with St Joseph's Primary School, reading to six pupils weekly on the Time to Read initiative. The initiative, developed by Business in the Community and supported by the Department of Education, aims to improve literacy, foster a love of reading and build confidence and social skills of children at Key Stage 2. 100% of participating schools would recommend the programme to another school.



## The Responsible Business Network Northern Ireland

### World Book Day

For this year's World Book Day, we collected 312 books to donate to children in our partner schools in London (Ark Globe Academy and St Alban's Primary). We purchased a further 50 books to donate and made donations of £250 to all of our partner schools including St Mary's Primary School in Cardiff. For some children this was the first time they had been given books of their own.



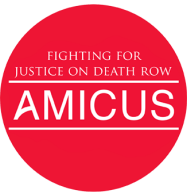
# Pro bono

16 PEACE, JUSTICE  
AND STRONG  
INSTITUTIONS



Total pro bono hours in FY2022-23: **6,125**

**We understand that Sustainable Development Goal 16, access to justice, is a fundamental human right and a cornerstone of a fair and just society. As a law firm, we have a unique responsibility to use our skills and expertise to help those who would otherwise be unable to access justice.**



## Amicus

Amicus<sup>3</sup> is a small UK-based charity that helps provide legal representation for those facing the death penalty in the United States; we have provided pro bono support to the organisation since April 2022. Amicus believes that the death penalty is disproportionately imposed on the most vulnerable in society who may not know their rights or be unable to access adequate representation.

During 2022-23 Lewis Silkin provided remote support to a defence team defending capital charges for one particular individual. Our team spent more than 600 hours combing through hundreds of pages relating to our client's case and with many more pages to go. Our client's defence team was refused costs to review these pages by a judge. Without the work of the LS Amicus caseworkers it is likely that these documents would never be reviewed; it is entirely possible that there is information in these documents that could have a material impact on his appeal and help to save his life.



## Amicus case studies

*"I attended Amicus' comprehensive five-day training course and I was fascinated to learn more about the difference in process between the US and the UK. For example, there are marked differences with the mitigation phase (where the court considers relevant factors which could potentially reduce an individual's sentence). In the UK this rarely takes more than an hour whereas on a death row case in the US it typically lasts two weeks or longer. Carefully prepared mitigation is vital; if representation is ineffective, it is more likely that the death penalty will be imposed.*

*In the process of reviewing documents, I discovered that our client had had serious learning difficulties at school. This could be a key piece of information because it is unconstitutional in the US to impose the death penalty on someone with an intellectual disability."*

**Steven Lorber, Consultant Partner**

*"I have been involved in producing case digests for Amicus. Every fortnight I receive a set of papers with certain pages earmarked for me. I review these papers and write a paragraph for each page, picking out important factors which I think are relevant and helpful.*

*Personally, I have enjoyed being part of this project and it has given me a sense of purpose to assist with something that has real life consequences. It is interesting work and it makes a welcome change from my day to day work. I didn't think I could help as I am not a qualified lawyer, but I was able to use the skills I have learnt through working in a law firm to support this important work. I feel quite proud that I pushed myself to do something which was beyond my usual remit!"*

**Tracey Gunner, PA**

*"I first volunteered with Amicus as an intern in 2019 and I was thrilled when, as a newly qualified solicitor, Lewis Silkin agreed to support Amicus' work and help me launch our pro bono death penalty project. I am so proud to work in a law firm that fully lives up to its ethos of bravery and kindness in supporting this true pro bono work. I'm even prouder of the amazing volunteers from across the firm who dedicate their hard-pressed time and energy to our client's case as we work together to play a small part in the fight to save someone's life."*

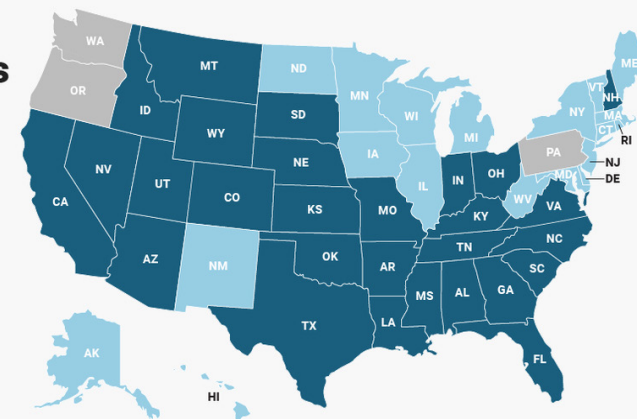
**Leonie Sheridan, Associate**

## Death penalty in the United States

■ States with the death penalty

■ States without the death penalty

■ States with a Governor-imposed moratorium



## Pro bono case studies

### **Theatre Peckham investigation**

*"Social mobility is a key theme for us at Lewis Silkin and we were therefore pleased to be asked to help Theatre Peckham, an award-winning cultural venue. Theatre Peckham provides young people with affordable access to high quality performing arts training (from ballet to street dance to music production) and prides itself on championing underrepresented voices and opening up careers in the performing arts to those from a diverse range of backgrounds.*

*In an effort to support their staff and promote a positive working environment, Theatre Peckham requested support with a culture review. Over the course of a couple of months, our investigations team conducted a staff survey and spent time interviewing members of staff in order to produce a report highlighting various aspects of the current organisational culture, along with practical recommendations for changes which could be made.*

*We were pleased to play a role in enabling Theatre Peckham to continue supporting the local community and better achieve their charitable objectives. It also felt good to get back to our roots - the firm's first office was in Peckham, and Lewis Silkin (after whom the firm is named) was MP for Peckham for over a decade."*

*Theatre Peckham's feedback following the review was:*

*Your pro bono contribution to our organisation was truly invaluable, and something that we could not have achieved without this generous offer.*

*Your team's thorough investigation and comprehensive report have provided us with critical insights and recommendations that will help us improve our operations and better serve our community. We are now in the process of implementing the outcomes and recommendations, and we are already seeing positive results.*

**Karen Baxter, Partner and Frances Simm, Managing Associate**

### **Paramedic tuition fees dispute**

*"The most rewarding moment of my career to date would have to be helping a group of five nurse-paramedic students to overturn the decision made by Student Finance England to revoke their student loan offers. The decision rested on a technicality and a legal anomaly. Students who have already completed a first undergraduate degree are only entitled to a further student loan if they are studying an exempt course. Nursing is considered an exempt course while a paramedic degree is not. Our clients were studying a new combined degree, but had received confirmation from Student Finance England that the combined course would be considered exempt before accepting their places on the course. As a result, they would receive full funding. Student Finance England then reneged on that assurance and withdrew funding after the students had begun their courses.*

*Having exhausted all other options, they initially approached us with a view to getting their fees crowdfunded, so I was delighted that we were in fact able to represent them on a pro bono basis.*

*We sought pro bono support from specialist barristers and wrote to the Department for Education and Student Finance England advising them that the decision made on the student's funding was incorrect and threatening judicial review.*

*Our letters led to a reversal in the funding decision and the students' loans being reinstated (amounting to approximately £80,000 per student). This was a wonderful outcome and a fantastic result for the students, meaning they could continue the courses which they were passionate about and which, ultimately, would see them making a positive contribution to society through their roles as paramedic nurses."*

**Ben Smith, Senior Associate**

# Featured pro bono projects at Lewis Silkin



## Human Dignity Trust

The **Human Dignity Trust** is the only organisation working globally to support strategic litigation to challenge laws that persecute people on the basis of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity. The Trust works with LGBT activists around the world to defend human rights in countries where private, same-sex, consensual sexual activity is criminalised. Local activists and lawyers always lead and inform the Trust's work. They set the pace, to ensure that legal interventions are timely, and complement wider calls for change.



## TrustLaw

**TrustLaw** supports NGOs and social enterprises that address a wealth of different issues, including women's rights, human trafficking and slavery, refugees and forced migration, LGBT rights, freedom of expression, environmental and land rights.



## Cardiff Employment Law Clinic

Our volunteers attend the **Employment Law Clinic** as advisors or administrators, where they support clients with legal advice on employment matters, such as dismissals, long-term sickness absence, disciplinary, or any other issues they may have with their employer.



## Citizens Advice Bureau Oxford

Volunteers from our Oxford office provide employment law advice at the local **Citizens Advice Bureau**, handling queries across the full spectrum of employment law issues.



## Mary Ward Legal Advice Centre

Volunteers attend regular clinics to provide employment advice to clients at **Mary Ward Legal Advice Centre** in London, pairing up with a student from City Law School. The issues they cover include unfair dismissal, redundancy, sickness absence and discrimination.



## Online Employment Tribunal Litigant in Person Support Service (ELIPS)

We volunteer for the Online **ELIPS**, which has been launched following the closure of in-person clinics. Each clinic is available to unrepresented litigants from any of the four participating tribunals: London Central, Cardiff, Bristol and Midlands.

# Featured pro bono projects at Lewis Silkin



## Protect

Protect offer free whistleblowing advice to individuals on how best to raise a concern and on what protection they have. We have joined Protect's legal support network to help with pro bono advice.



## Rights of Women Advice Line

The Rights of Women advice line gives free employment legal advice to women in England and Wales experiencing sexual harassment at work including identifying sexual harassment, how to bring a complaint against their employer, the Employment Tribunal procedure and settlement agreements and NDAs.



## Working Families

Working Families is an online platform which helps working parents, carers and their employers balance their responsibilities at home and in the workplace. Working Families helps these individuals by providing free legal advice on their rights at work.



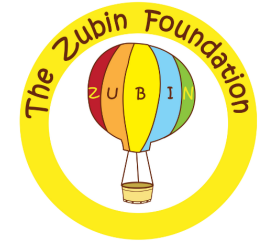
## Business in the Community

We have joined **Business in the Community**, a membership organisation working with businesses to benefit communities and make long-term, sustainable change. As members we now have access to a list of skilled volunteering and pro bono opportunities for legal teams and business service teams. These opportunities cover legal advice as well as marketing, HR, finance, IT, project management, operations and facilities issues.



## Public Interest Lawyers Association

The Lewis Silkin Dublin team are participating in the Irish Regularisation Scheme for long-term undocumented migrants.



## Helpdesk with the Zubin Foundation

In conjunction with **The Zubin Foundation**, the Lewis Silkin Hong Kong team has set up a helpdesk to provide pro bono legal advice to underprivileged ethnic minorities in Hong Kong.



# Charity and Fundraising



Alzheimer's Research UK (ARUK) has been our firmwide charity partner since April 2017. ARUK is the UK's leading dementia research charity, dedicated to making life-changing breakthroughs in diagnosis, prevention, treatment and cure. With the recent news that the Lecanemab drug has become the first to show both the reduction of the disease in the brain and slow memory decline, the firm can be proud of its contribution to Alzheimer's Research.

Since our partnership began in April 2017 we have raised over £108,000 to date. During the 2022 - 2023 financial year, we raised £20,000 for ARUK across a range of fundraising events led by our colleagues across the business.

## **Annual trainee fundraiser**

*"In September 2022, our trainees embarked on a series of challenges to raise funds for ARUK.*

*Each year, first-year trainees at Lewis Silkin are tasked with raising as much as they can for the firm's charity partner. Working together, we had to decide on a theme and host a series of events over the course of the summer, culminating in a bigger sponsored challenge event in September.*

*The main activity was a weekend hike in the Brecon Beacons, attempting either four or five of the peaks, a feat which took 24 Lewis Silkin colleagues the best part of eight hours to complete. We upped the stakes by allowing anyone who sponsored us to nominate walkers to complete an additional challenge, such as carrying a brick in their rucksack for the duration of the walk!*

*In the preceding weeks we hosted various other activities across the offices including a firm-wide quiz, cake sales, a fancy-dress challenge and the infamous 'pie-a-partner' challenge.*

*All in all, it took almost six months of careful planning and teamwork between the trainees to pull it off and we were delighted that our efforts raised £8,407."*

**Cristiana Barone, Associate & Despina Stoimenidi, Associate**



## Skills workshops

20 attendees per session

During the 2022-2023 financial year, we worked with ARUK to pilot pro bono skills sessions - four workshops covering data privacy, digital marketing, financial management and strategic planning. These sessions involved colleagues from both our legal practice groups and business service teams.

*"In October 2022 I helped to facilitate an interactive workshop on strategy and planning for senior staff members at ARUK.*

*During the session we discussed the principles of strategy, how to conduct strategic planning exercises, and also explored specific strategic planning techniques (e.g. PESTLE, SWOT and GAP analyses). I helped guide a discussion on specific issues the charity is facing and the group considered how to address these. After the session we were able to share some of the key themes that had arisen with ARUK as a starting point for the wider planning exercise they were undertaking at the time.*

*I thoroughly enjoyed having the opportunity to share some of my expertise with our charity partner and give them a head start on future discussions around strategy."*

**Daniel Solomon, Portfolio Lead**

## Greenwich foodbank

We have been supporting members of our community through supporting Trussell Trust, Greenwich Foodbank, providing our resources through volunteering.

*"Lewis Silkin have been a shining example of how the private and third sectors can come together to make something truly beautiful happen. ...It has been clear to me what an impact the teams have made. Just yesterday I overheard our Operations Officer speaking with one of the volunteers saying 'we are ahead because of all the work Lewis Silkin got through for us'. The team can consider that a job well done."*

**Jamie Ginns, CEO, Greenwich Foodbank**



With a record number of people in the UK using foodbanks, we were keen to strengthen our connections with Greenwich Foodbank, part of the Trussell Trust network of foodbanks. Nick Buckland (Legal Director) introduced us to Greenwich Foodbank; his association with them began during the pandemic when he set up the Greenwich Foodbank Fund, helping them to raise more than £50,000. Nick has been assisted by Amy Earnshaw (Trainee) in developing the relationship.

Greenwich Foodbank's mission is to provide nutritionally balanced food and support to locals who are referred to them and they estimate that they give out approximately 7,000 meals a month.

In the summer of 2022, Nick arranged for the CEO of Greenwich Foodbank to come and speak to colleagues to raise awareness of the issues facing foodbanks and the ever-increasing need for support and employees from across the firm have volunteered at the foodbank on six occasions since then, with eight volunteers attending each session. Volunteers assist with sorting and organising donations, as well as preparing the boxes of food to be delivered.



*"I am so proud of the relationship between Lewis Silkin and Greenwich Foodbank. Foodbanks are busier than ever, with not only financial but also logistical demands increasing sharply since the pandemic. Lewis Silkin staff have been amazing, generously giving up their time to volunteer and I know the foodbank is hugely grateful. It is humbling to know that every minute spent by a Lewis Silkin member of staff at the foodbank, every tin labelled and every box packed, is going to make a massive difference to someone's life".*

**Nick Buckland, Legal Director**



*"I have really enjoyed helping Nick organise volunteering days. Although the morning I spent volunteering myself was a sad reminder that such services are needed (with demand only increasing), it was also rewarding seeing the difference we could help make".*

**Amy Earnshaw, Trainee**

### **Responding to emergencies**

We understand the importance of recognising and responding to emergency needs. During the year we ran two matched funding campaigns. We raised £20,000 for the Disaster Emergency Committee's Ukraine Appeal and £11,400 for their Turkey/Syria Appeal.



# Appendices

## 17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



### Our memberships

- ▶ PRIME
- ▶ Support Through Court
- ▶ Aspire
- ▶ Legal Sustainability Alliance
- ▶ CSR Legal Network
- ▶ Business in the Community
- ▶ Working families
- ▶ Amicus
- ▶ Inspire
- ▶ Ecovadis
- ▶ Law Works
- ▶ Living Wage
- ▶ Sustainable Recruitment Alliance
- ▶ Greener Litigation Pledge





# Key Contacts

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