Osborne Clarke

Osborne Clarke For Good

Responsible Business Report 2024

FY23/24



Start reading

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Osborne Clarke UK

1,420+ people

170+ partners

3 offices

London (HQ), Bristol & Reading

Turnover: **£240.5m**

Message from our Managing Partner

I'm delighted to share our latest responsible business report with you. We've included more detail than ever in this year's report and as such, I hope you enjoy reading about our progress and challenges.

This year, we've come to understand that by really concentrating our efforts on the areas most material for our business – inclusion, wellbeing and sustainability - we can have an even greater impact. It's very exciting to see the results of this increased focus.

The rollout of our Carbon Literacy Training has taught us a lot, both in terms of our own carbon reduction efforts and how it enhances our legal advice where issues touching on environmental sustainability themes are concerned. By being more informed, we can provide more value to our clients, especially those who are shaping the future of key sectors, such as energy, transport and logistics. And the work we do matters. For example, by advising on the energy transition, we are playing our small part in accelerating decarbonisation through assisting our clients' actions.

Our diversity and wellbeing initiatives have also shown us how widely our impact can be felt both by our people and our communities.

We've continued to work towards creating a safe and inclusive working environment, where everybody can be themselves. We've also invested in and grown our apprenticeship programme, by quadrupling our intake from two solicitor apprentices in 2018 to eight in 2024, and created two new employability programmes to support people from backgrounds currently underrepresented in the legal sector. By helping to increase access to careers in law, we're learning about the nuances of supporting a truly diverse workforce and bringing a range of perspectives to our teams. The bigger picture is that we're doing our bit to help strengthen diversity in the legal sector.

Finally, we're seeing how our work with UK Youth, the Rule 39 Pro Bono Initiative, and the National Deaf Children's Society is paying dividends, not just for the people we are supporting (which has been great to learn about), but for our people too. At the same time as increasing our financial support for these organisations, we are providing more of our legal expertise in the shape of pro bono work to help them promote equality and protect human rights. This gives our people the chance to make a difference for those who might not otherwise have legal support, and provides our people with unrivalled experience and a sense of fulfilment that motivates them to do more.

I'm looking forward to the coming year, and to further evolving our programmes for the benefit of all. Doing the right thing by our people, communities, suppliers and clients is at the heart of who we are as a firm, and every year we strive to do better.

For more about our plans and aspirations, don't miss our Head of Responsible Business, Kate Millar's *Looking Forward* piece at the end of this report.



Conrad Davies,
Managing Partner

The verdict

What went well in FY23/24

Carbon Literacy goals exceeded

5% of our UK team certified Carbon Literate, including 16% of partners and more than 50% of the Executive Board.

Wellbeing strategy implementation

Made process improvements, enhanced wellbeing support and recruited a second resource manager to improve work allocation.

£100k invested in youth work sector grants

5,820 young people benefited from funding and supported four UK Youth grantees with pro bono advice through our partnership.

Scope 1 & 2 emissions

From 1,023 tCO_2e to 593 tCO_2e (a 42% drop since our FY19/20 baseline).

Achieved by significantly reducing our fuel and energy purchases, which account for 6.8% of our total emissions, mainly thanks to our new office in Bristol.

Apprenticeship programme growth

- Quadrupled our intake from two solicitor apprentices in 2018 to eight in FY23/24.
- 35 solicitor apprentices working towards a Level 7 qualification across our London, Bristol and Reading offices.
- 96% from non-selective state schools in the last three years.

4,500+ hours of pro-bono advice

Helped to protect human rights for migrants, and assisted deaf children secure places at schools where they can flourish.



Areas that still need focus

- Engaging suppliers on carbon reduction - sharing learnings with our supply chain.
- Improve data quality for Halo office WELL Building Standard® Platinum rating submission.
- Race Action Plan - continue to improve entry level hiring, colleague retention rates and the representation of minoritised ethnic colleagues in our partnership.
- Recruitment review - continue to embed outcomes.

Our values

- **Committed to excellence**
- **Proud of what we do**
- **Curious to know more**
- **Supportive and generous**
- **Free to be ourselves**

Our 2025 strategy

01

Clients

Legal advisor of choice for clients at the forefront of innovation.

02

People

Preserving our unique and inclusive culture and dynamic in the way we attract, develop and retain high-performing people.

03

Communities

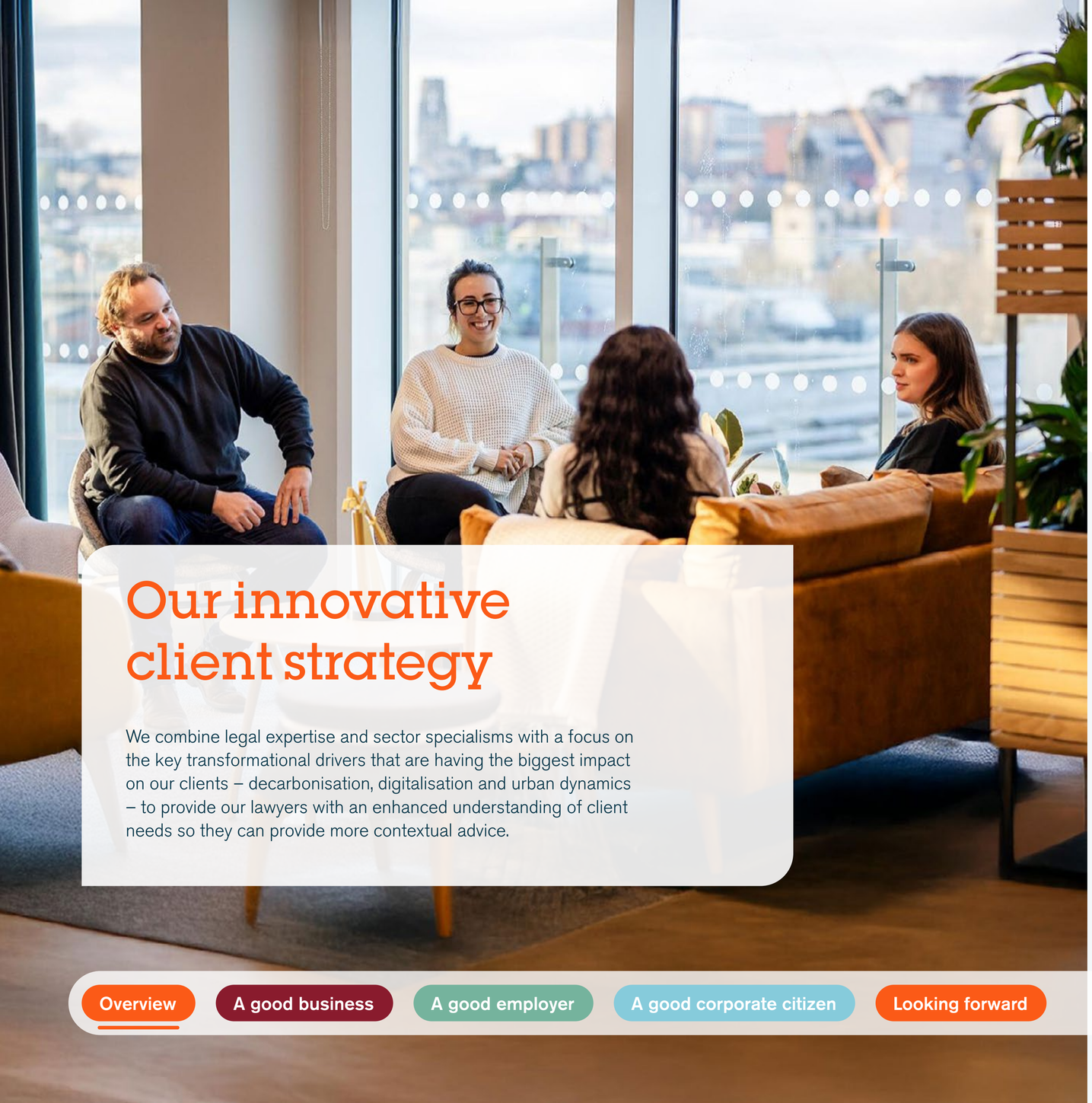
Empowering our people and business to do good.

04

Business

A well-run firm embedding transformation in everything we do.





Our innovative client strategy

We combine legal expertise and sector specialisms with a focus on the key transformational drivers that are having the biggest impact on our clients – decarbonisation, digitalisation and urban dynamics – to provide our lawyers with an enhanced understanding of client needs so they can provide more contextual advice.

Our OC for Good framework

Osborne Clarke for Good is our way of working to operate responsibly, manage our environmental, social and governance risks and harness the opportunity to shape the future of our firm in a positive way. We do this by focusing on our three 'For Good' pillars, which are aligned to the UN Sustainable Development Goals:



A good business: we work to reduce our impact on the environment and support other businesses to do the same.





A good employer: we want our people to thrive, that's why we invest in creating a diverse and inclusive workforce.

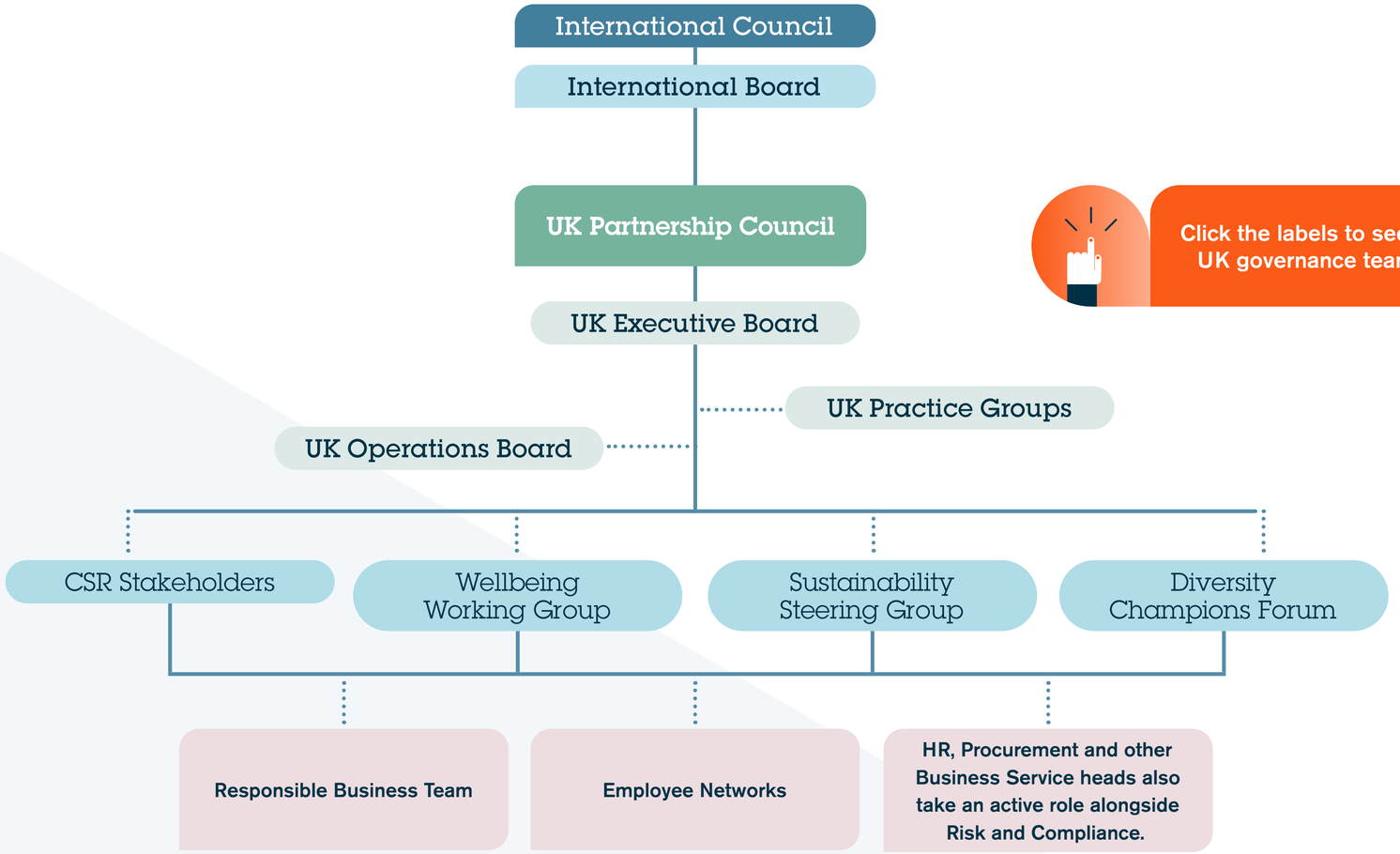




A good corporate citizen: we take our responsibilities to society seriously and try to make a difference across four areas of impact: education, environment, equality and poverty.



Our governance



Click the labels to see the UK governance teams.

In a highly regulated sector like law, it would be easy to take our governance structures for granted.

But it is precisely these structures that help us deliver on our commitment to positive impact for our clients, people, communities and business in general whilst aiming to minimise the risk of any negative impact.

Our Executive Board (EB) is accountable to the UK Partnership Council. The EB oversees the governance of the responsible business pillars, including our Sustainability Steering Group (SSG) and the Diversity Champions Forum, which is accountable for the firm's diversity and inclusion strategy.

The Operations Board (OB) reports into the EB, whilst the Responsible Business Team delivers our programmes and collaborates with various functions of the firm, including all practice groups as well as HR, Procurement, Risk and Compliance and other business service teams.



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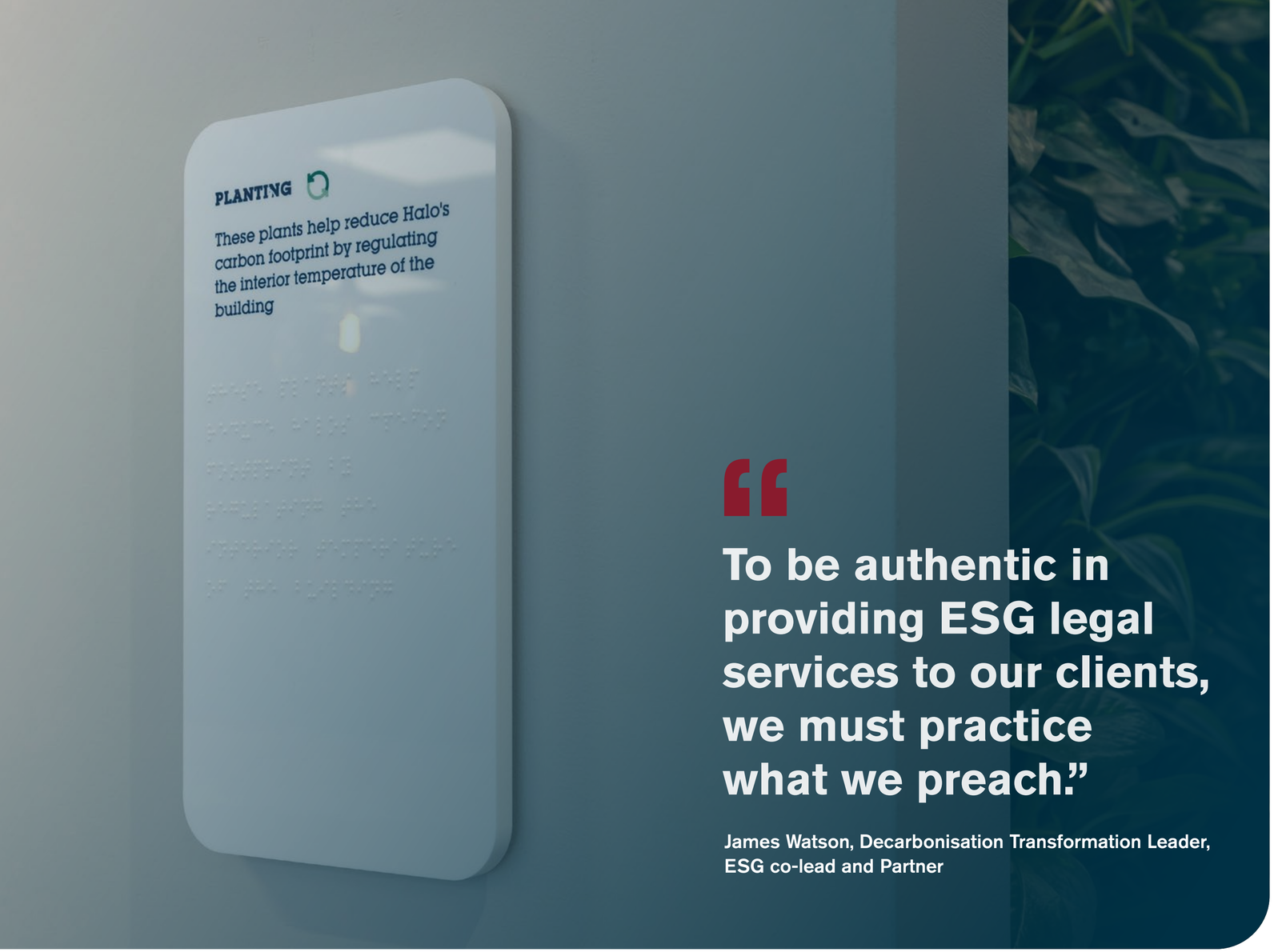


“To be authentic in providing ESG legal services to our clients, we must practice what we preach.”

James Watson, Decarbonisation Transformation Leader, ESG co-lead and Partner

Our Osborne Clarke for Good strategy is key to our leadership structure with clear accountability, and oversight of our decisions and activities.

We seek to prioritise ethical procurement, fair supplier management and open dialogue with our stakeholders.

Beyond this, we recognise that much of our impact is tied up in the type of work we do. Work that helps decarbonising technologies and other ethical markets to grow and thrive is not only rewarding but contributes to enabling the future we are working towards internally.

Summary of progress

Objective: Participate in BITC's Responsible Business Tracker® to benchmark our Osborne Clarke for Good programmes against the legal and other business sectors and begin development of our 2025-2030 strategy

Progress: Our participation gave us an opportunity to intensively review and reflect on all aspects of our framework, from governance and disclosures to delivery and impact. We now have 'quick wins' to work on and longer-term learnings that will feed into our 2025 strategy.

Objective: Begin the rollout of an accredited, bespoke Carbon Literacy Training course, to upskill our leaders and colleagues and accelerate climate action in all areas of our business

Progress: Success! 5% of our UK team became certified Carbon Literate, including 16% of partners and more than 50% of the Executive Board, exceeding our goals.

Objective: Deliver our Decarbonisation Week programme to complement COP28 and leverage climate conversations with clients

Progress: We held a series of webinars including: Investing in Sustainable Innovation, Navigating the Regulatory Landscape and Legal Considerations for Sustainable Funding, and How to Identify and Mitigate Risk Related to Greenwashing and Green Claims. OC Planet hosted a keynote speech with Tom Heap, exploring solutions to the climate crisis.

Objective: Develop our supplier engagement programme and supplier management processes to improve emissions data and reduce emissions

Progress: We have improved our procurement policy and our supplier management framework. We have shared supplier review best practice with people in the business who have relationships with strategic suppliers, including how to assess their environmental impact. We have more to do on our supplier engagement programme in 2024-25.

Objective: Collaborate with clients and external partners to begin looking at the role of business in the biodiversity crisis, and develop nature related goals as part of our sustainability strategy

Progress: We didn't develop our nature related goals this year but have worked with 25+ clients on the subject of Biodiversity Net Gain, providing advice, training sessions and chairing a panel debate as part of our Autumn Biodiversity Fair.

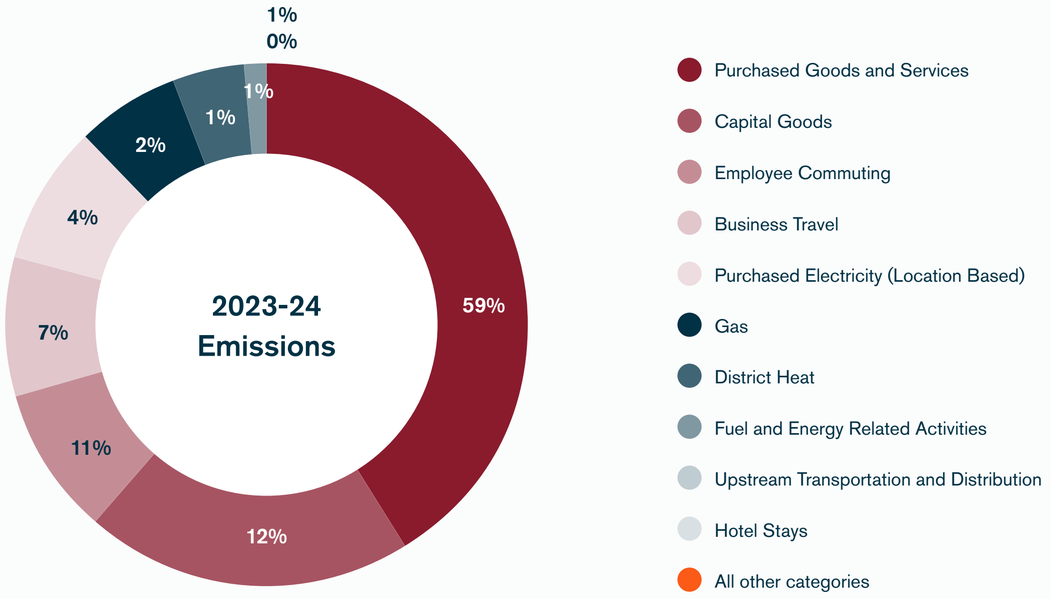
Legend

- **Commitment met**
- **In progress**
- **Off track**

Our emissions

In financial year 23/24, our total UK emissions were 8,824 tonnes of CO_2e[1]. For context, that's nearly 1,100 economy class return flights from London to Sydney[2]. We remain firmly committed to bringing this number down in line with the science to keep global warming within 1.5°C of pre-industrial times.

Our emissions breakdown by Scope:



1 Our data has been verified with a 'limited' level of assurance for relevance, completeness, consistence and transparency and for conformance with the requirements of the GHG protocol standards on 19 September 2024 by Fishwick Environmental Limited, using ISO 14064-3:2019 as a verification standard.

2 Calculated by ecollective Carbon Consultancy.

Our near-term targets, approved by the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi), are to reduce our Scope 1 and 2 emissions by 50% and our Scope 3 emissions by 50% by 2030 from a 2020 baseline year.

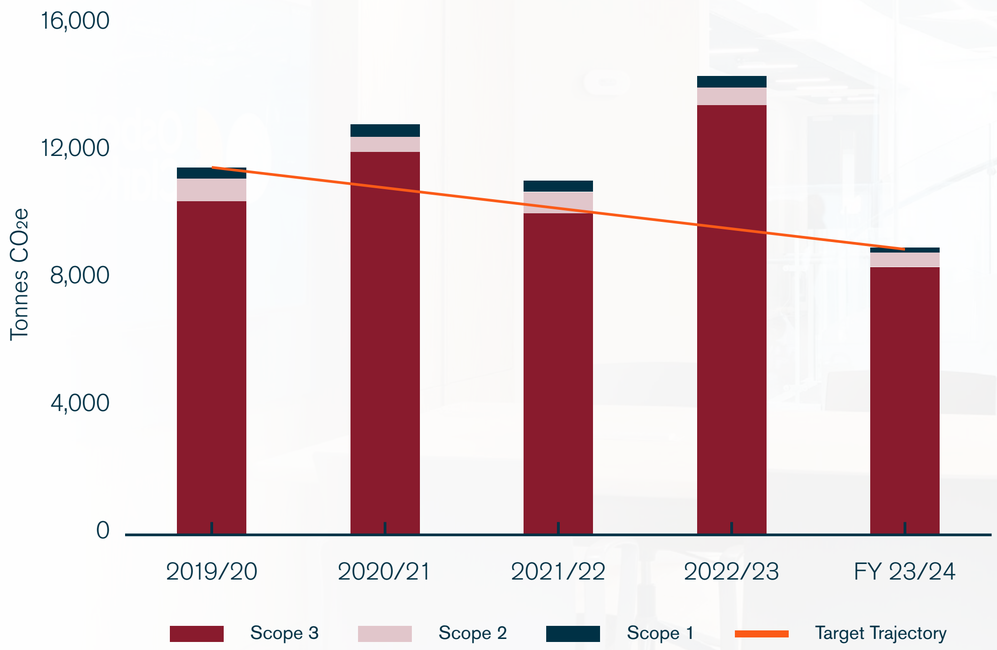
In October 2023, SBTi approved our net zero target of 2040.

Here is a snapshot of FY 23/24:

Scope 1 & 2 emissions

Our Scope 1 & 2 emissions relate mainly to fuel and energy purchased, plus a small amount of 'fugitive emissions' from refrigeration and air conditioning in our buildings. We have reduced our Scope 1 & 2 emissions by 42% since our baseline year (FY19/20) and are on target to achieve our short-term goal. This is mainly thanks to our move to a new office in Bristol, for which heating is provided by a low carbon heat network that sources heat primarily from local high efficiency heat pumps, as well as capturing waste heat from processes including sewage treatment. This reclaimed heat is channelled into various buildings in the city, including ours. Whilst the energy mix isn't yet 100% renewable, the project includes a commitment to add no more gas boilers and to decommission the existing gas boilers that are contributing heat, meaning as our Bristol office continues to decarbonise, our related Scope 2 emissions will continue to decrease.

Annual Total Greenhouse Gas Emissions (including Location Based Scope 2)







Scope 3 emissions

Scope 3 (indirect) emissions represent over 90% of our emissions.. They are produced predominantly from the goods and services we purchase, capital goods, employee commuting, home working and business travel.

Whilst Scope 3 emissions have fallen by 35% since our FY 19/20 baseline year and are broadly in line with our target for this year, the specific category of business travel emissions increased from 510 tCO_2e to 696 tCO_2e in part due to an uptick in business activity.

We more than halved our emissions from capital goods this year compared to last year (from 2,766 tCO_2e to 1,076 tCO_2e). Unfortunately, this drop cannot be attributed to emissions reduction activity in this financial year. It was mainly as a result of the Bristol office move, which caused a spike in last year's emissions.

Since publishing our emissions last year, our baseline (FY 19/20) Scope 3 emissions have been recalculated. They have come down from an initial estimate of 22,097 tCO_2e to 10,584 tCO_2e. This is due to a change in methodology, which saw us switch the source of our emission conversion factors from Quantis to Defra for greater accuracy. We are re-submitting our baseline data to the SBTi and expect to receive validation this year.

Furthering our impact through our work

Our contribution to reducing emissions is not just internally focused. Our legal services work has helped numerous clients move forward with their own decarbonising solutions. In this financial year, we advised OXCCU, a leading carbon-to-value company converting carbon dioxide and hydrogen into industrial and consumer products, on its Series A fundraising round to commercialise cost-effective aviation fuel that produces reduced greenhouse gas emissions when compared to fossil derived aviation fuels.

We are also advising on greenwashing risk mitigation and provided counsel in the Competition & Markets Authority's first sector investigation into greenwashing focused on the fashion retail sector. Our role included advising ASOS on various aspects of the investigation itself as well as the processes it would need to put in place to support and ensure transparency around its voluntary environmental claims going forward. This is to help them comply with the requirements of applicable laws and regulations impacting on the making of environmental claims and guidance issued by the CMA and Advertising Standards Authority which complement the UK's consumer laws that protect customers against 'greenwashing.'

Challenges & learnings: emissions reduction

Emissions data and management

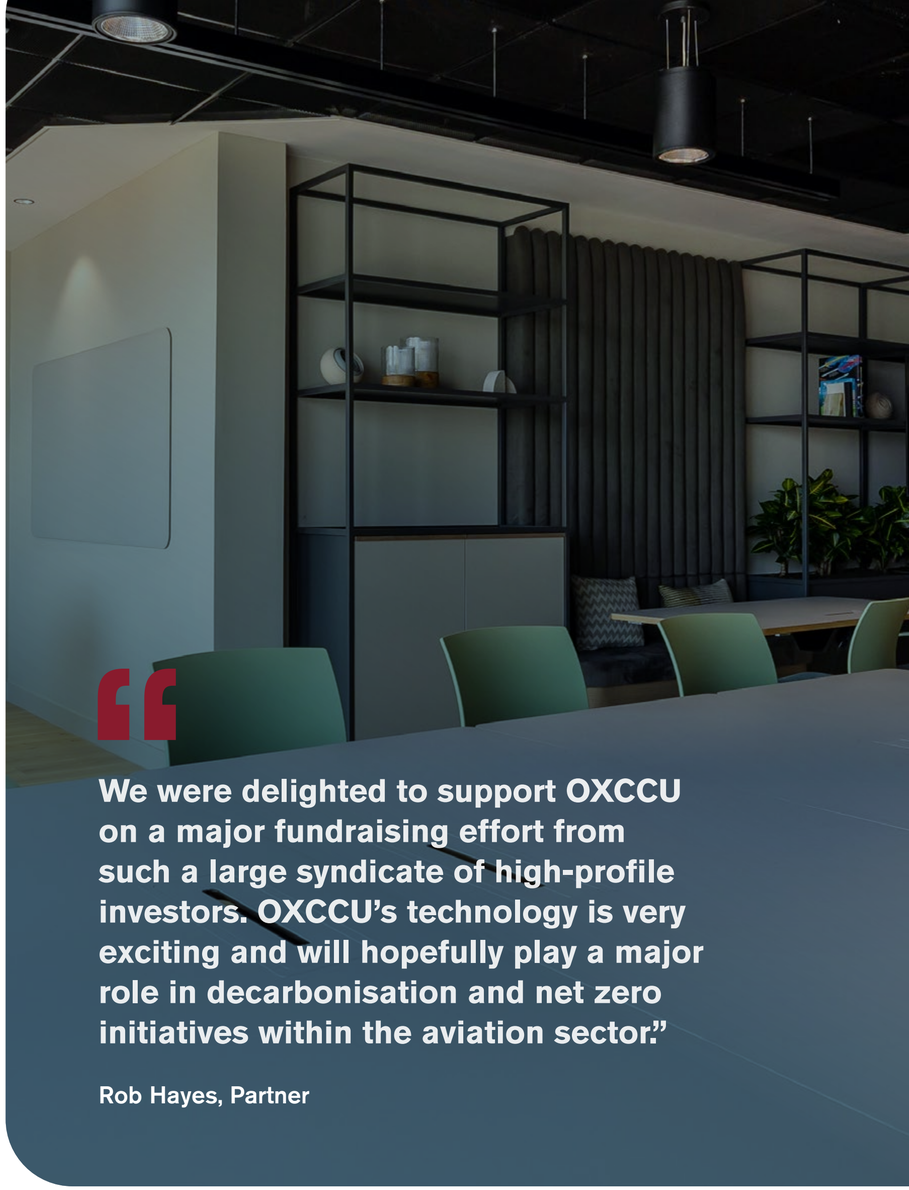
We have learned that good data is fundamentally important, not just for reporting emissions for compliance purposes but for monitoring our progress and shaping our carbon reduction strategy throughout the year. Since Scope 3 represents over 90% of our emissions profile, we'll need to invest time and money over the next financial year to get this data management right.

Business travel

As a global business with global clients, reducing our business travel emissions is one of our biggest challenges. Research indicates that in-person (as opposed to online) meetings can have a positive effect on our peoples' wellbeing and creativity, yet we are acutely aware they come with a carbon cost - our travel emissions have increased to pre-pandemic levels this year. To tackle this, we are piloting a business travel carbon budget which we will be able to report on next year.

Supplier engagement

Another challenge relates to how we manage our suppliers of goods and services. This year, our priority has been conducting a more detailed review of carbon emissions in our supply chain. We have improved our policy and supplier management framework, for example by supporting people in the business who have relationships with strategic suppliers with best practice around supplier reviews, including how to assess their environmental impact.



"We were delighted to support OXCCU on a major fundraising effort from such a large syndicate of high-profile investors. OXCCU's technology is very exciting and will hopefully play a major role in decarbonisation and net zero initiatives within the aviation sector."

Rob Hayes, Partner

Sustainability Linked Loan

Our Sustainability Linked Loan (SLL) links the interest rate of our business loan to the sustainability performance of the business over three years.

In 2023 Osborne Clarke renewed its £15m revolving credit facility as an SLL with HSBC, tying the interest rate to our performance on gender diversity in partnership, pro bono and employee volunteering hours and greenhouse gas emissions reduction.

Our key performance indicators are scrutinised at both EB and OB level for accountability and transparency. These commitments sit within our values, our culture, our people and our work with both clients and suppliers.

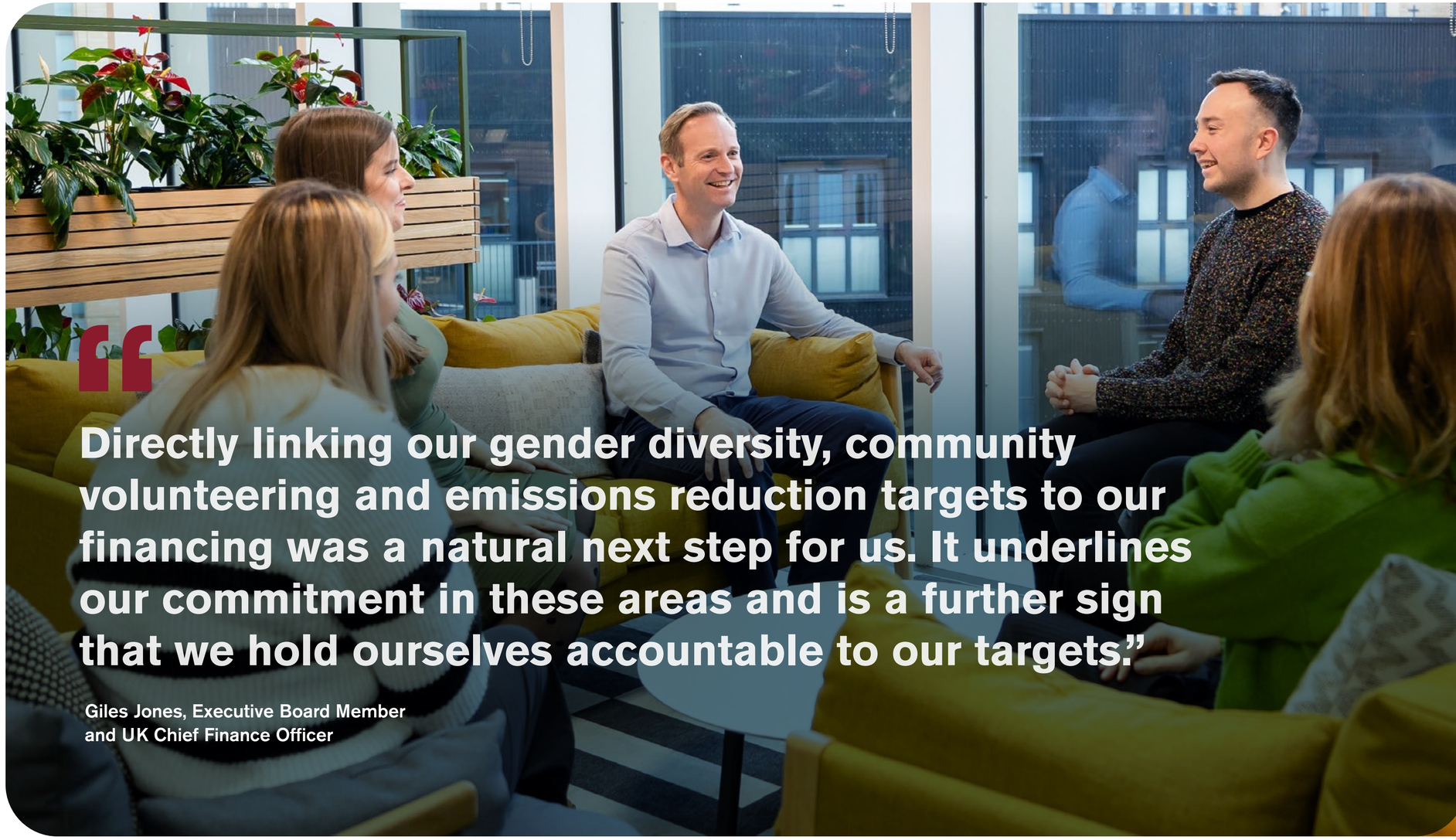
SLL performance targets:

- To reduce our greenhouse gas emissions by 5% per year from our FY 19/20 baseline year
- To increase the number of employee volunteering hours and pro bono work by 500 hours per year (to achieve a target of 8,773 hours by FY 25/26)
- To achieve 31.7% female partners by 2026

Sustainability Linked Loan Performance Target	What is the KPI?	How will this target be achieved?
Greenhouse gas emissions	An absolute reduction of scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions (tCO_2e) aligned to our SBTi-validated targets	• Colleague and supplier engagement programme: engaging with suppliers and working to incorporate emissions reductions into our most carbon-intensive contracts; and delivering Carbon Literacy programme for leaders and colleagues • Business travel: support increased uptake of virtual events and implement carbon budgets for business travel • Employee commuting: continue support for hybrid working and encourage low carbon commuting travel • Waste and water: introduction of a waste management and minimisation plan
Gender diversity in partnership	Achieve 31.7% proportion of women in partnership by end of FY 25/26, aligned to OC's public commitment on gender diversity	• Provide 'Inclusive Hiring Skills' training to those with hiring responsibilities • Review the language used in job advertisements to ensure accessibility and inclusivity, and provide clarity on the essential skills needed for the role • Work with practice areas to recruit and promote women to partnership • Review all family and related long-term leave and benefits to support better gender inclusion • Invest in and growing our Inclusion Allies programme to educate leaders and the business about everyday sexism and gender inclusion
Sustainable communities	Achieve an increase of 500 employee volunteering and pro bono hours per year	• Embed new pro bono and volunteering processes, including promoting them during employee induction • Recognition of contribution to ESG activity now embedded into new reward strategy • Target of 50% participation among fee earners and year on year growth included in Board KPIs • Bespoke programmes designed to encourage participation

An unexpected benefit

Committing to the SLL has led to us improving our data management processes since performance against targets must be independently audited. While we have already been undertaking external verification for emissions data, this is a new layer of governance for the other two metrics (gender diversity in partnership and communities).



“Directly linking our gender diversity, community volunteering and emissions reduction targets to our financing was a natural next step for us. It underlines our commitment in these areas and is a further sign that we hold ourselves accountable to our targets.”

Giles Jones, Executive Board Member and UK Chief Finance Officer

OC Planet

OC Planet is an employee-led forum that works with the Sustainability Steering Group to encourage the firm to be innovative and bold in its sustainability approach.

Mission: to facilitate engagement on environmental matters with our people, communities, and key stakeholders to help us represent their collective priorities and ideas.

Vision: to be the voice of our people, challenging our business to target being the most authentic, educated, and invested law firm in the drive to net zero.

Purpose: to recognise Osborne Clarke's responsibility as an international business to take action against the climate crisis, holding it accountable in facilitating the transition to a low carbon future.

Introducing Carbon Literacy Training was a key project of the group. They produced the business case, tested content, became Carbon Literate themselves and several members are now Carbon Literacy Facilitators.

OC Planet ran a keynote event with environmentalist Tom Heap to coincide with COP28. The audience heard about technologies that some of our clients are actively working on: solar-thermal engineering for heat generation, low carbon farming and food production, why seagrass is more effective than tree-planting for carbon capture and innovation in cooling for nuclear power stations.

OC Planet also held events in June 2023 for World Environment Day, which included an art exhibition displaying work of Year 9 students from a Bridge partner school, clothes swap in association with OC Pride, our LGBTQ+ network, drop-in bike mechanics for our cycling commuters and a webinar with one of our employee benefits providers looking at home energy efficiency.



"Tom provided some truly thought-provoking and inspiring insights from his career in broadcasting and investigative reporting. His perspective as a 'natural optimist' was particularly impactful, highlighting that while we are at a critical tipping point in addressing climate change, we possess the right tools and human ingenuity to succeed."

Tessa Garner, Senior Knowledge Lawyer

Carbon Literacy Training

The business case presented by OC Planet was accepted this year which led to the rollout of our tailored Carbon Literacy Training. Our course was approved by Carbon Literacy Project at the beginning of this financial year and training began with our UK Executive Board, followed by a broader rollout to employees.

OUR ACTION IN NUMBERS

Target: to train **50%** of EB and OB members

10 people from these boards were trained as well as our international CEO, who chairs our International Board

94 people including **26 partners** became Carbon Literate in FY 23/24

Target for FY 24/25:

15% of UK headcount trained by investing in putting on more courses, training more of our people to deliver the course, and sharing the outcomes of action taken by our learners to encourage more colleagues to take part.

The course is instrumental in upskilling our people to have a deeper individual and collective impact in tackling the climate crisis. Participants undertake a full day's worth of learning delivered in conjunction with Speak Carbon Collective, which covers:

- **Science and impacts** - the causes and effects of the climate emergency, the risks to UK and international businesses, and the issue of climate justice.
- **Policy** - the role of the UN and COP frameworks, UK policy and regulation on emissions, Osborne Clarke's targets and strategy, the meaning of 'net zero.'
- **Action** - how we calculate carbon footprints, what makes them high or low, how to communicate about the climate crisis, our 'levers of influence', individual and group climate action.

In addition to an overview of the latest science and impacts around climate change, the course informs attendees about what the firm is doing to measure, report and reduce its emissions. We also explore what levers of influence attendees have in their role and the tools available to them to take action and accelerate Osborne Clarke's decarbonisation in the UK.



From pledge to reality

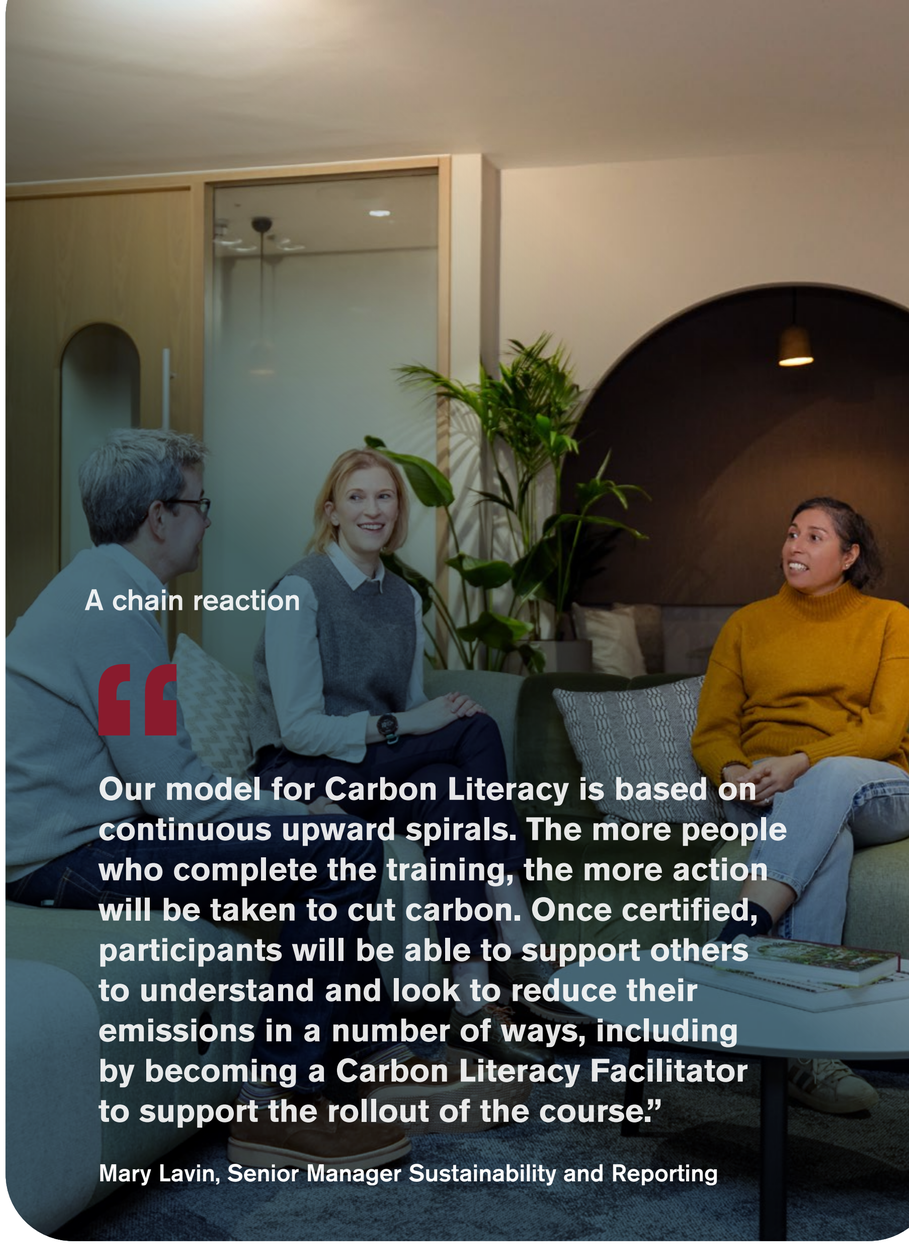
After attending the Carbon Literacy training course, I made a personal pledge to reduce the carbon emissions associated with my work. This commitment includes becoming a certified Carbon Literacy Trainer so I can share this valuable knowledge with my colleagues. By helping others understand and implement carbon reduction strategies, I hope to inspire a collective effort within our organisation to embrace sustainability and make a meaningful impact on the firm's carbon footprint."

Dipika Keen, Head of Business Transactions Knowledge

Carbon Literacy benefits our clients

I found the Carbon Literacy course to be very useful by focusing on what we can do in our business lives to make a difference and also to understand in more detail how we calculate and impact our science-based targets. Shortly after attending the course, I had the opportunity to successfully test my new-found understanding when engaging with a client who is a carbon expert. I would really recommend the course to everyone at Osborne Clarke."

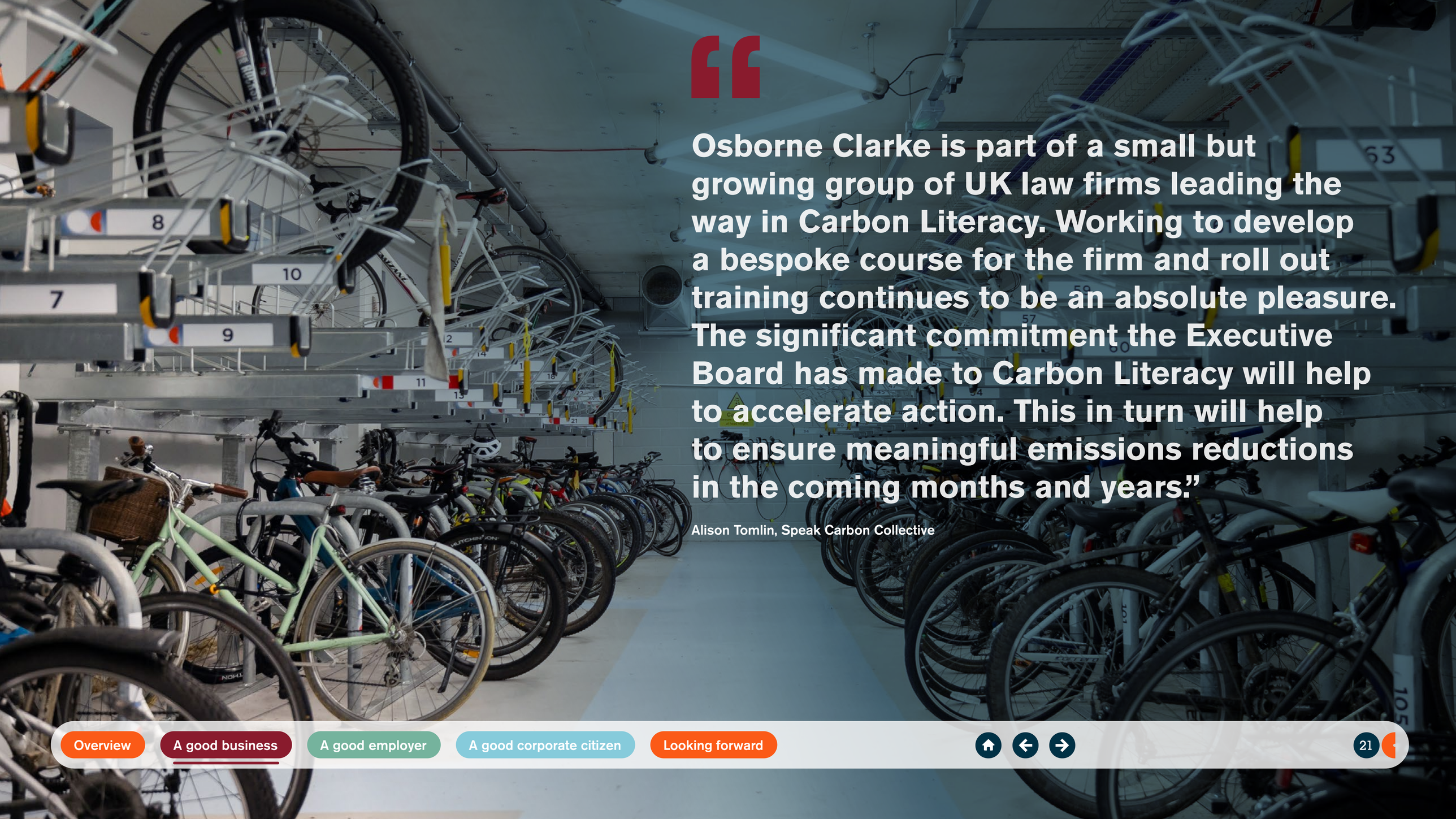
David Ferris, Partner



A chain reaction

Our model for Carbon Literacy is based on continuous upward spirals. The more people who complete the training, the more action will be taken to cut carbon. Once certified, participants will be able to support others to understand and look to reduce their emissions in a number of ways, including by becoming a Carbon Literacy Facilitator to support the rollout of the course."

Mary Lavin, Senior Manager Sustainability and Reporting



“Osborne Clarke is part of a small but growing group of UK law firms leading the way in Carbon Literacy. Working to develop a bespoke course for the firm and roll out training continues to be an absolute pleasure. The significant commitment the Executive Board has made to Carbon Literacy will help to accelerate action. This in turn will help to ensure meaningful emissions reductions in the coming months and years.”

Alison Tomlin, Speak Carbon Collective



Challenges and learnings: Carbon Literacy

We have learned to oversubscribe courses since client work and other engagements can present challenges to preserving time to engage in this learning. Participating in our responsible business programmes contributes to the firm's long-term success and we use investment codes to track, record and recognise these contributions by our people.

Clients value the knowledge gained, with one client commenting how knowledgeable a partner was about climate change.

The focus for this year was on course delivery. Going forward, we hope to develop tools to deepen the impact of the training and help our people turn their pledges into reality.

Developing nature and biodiversity-related goals

As part of our Autumn Biodiversity Fair we ran a well-attended in-person event with leading environmentalist Tony Juniper and Lara Burch, Head of our Bristol Office, to discuss business and nature. Read about the discussions here.

We have also worked with 25+ clients on biodiversity net gain requirements. A Biodiversity Gain Plan is a condition of planning permission and must be approved by the planning authority before work begins. This regulation was significantly amended in 2024. To keep our clients up to date, particularly lenders and investors, we have run a number of training sessions and workshops.



Our commitments for FY 24/25

- 15% of UK headcount certified Carbon Literate by investing in putting on more courses, training more of our people to deliver the course, and sharing the outcomes of action taken by our learners to encourage more colleagues to take part
- Develop and recertify Carbon Literacy training to offer to clients and suppliers and begin with a trial for clients in the tech sector
- Research and develop appropriate commitments to enhancing biodiversity and nature recovery, with a view to incorporating them into our strategy
- Achieve sub-goals in Net Zero milestone plan
  - Continue to source 100% renewable electricity (we purchase electricity from our provider via the National Grid, and they purchase the equivalent amount from 100% renewable sources)
  - Work with our Change and Transformation team to establish net zero as a fully integrated change programme across the business
  - Deliver the pilot carbon budget with the Projects, Real Estate and Finance (PREF) practice group, aiming to reduce business travel emissions by 10%
  - Review the impact of the PREF business travel carbon budget pilot and agree targets for FY 25/26, ready to launch firm-wide
  - Launch supplier engagement programme to increase communication and collaboration with suppliers on sustainability and net zero
- Invest in developing our data management resource and technical solutions to better monitor our emissions and inform decisions that will reduce them. We will recruit a data analyst into our Responsible Business team, and work with our Solutions team to improve our data monitoring capabilities.



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We work to deliver a safe, healthy and enriching environment that recognises the importance of wellbeing and the ever-changing ways people engage with the workplace. Our people get to work on exciting projects for top clients, we offer competitive rewards and benefits and opportunities for development and career growth.

Inclusion is everyone's business, and we all benefit from it."

Victoria Parry, Head of Advisory Practice Group and Chair of Diversity Champions Forum



Summary of progress

Objective: Launch of a long-term scholarship programme and growth in our 10,000 Interns (10KI) partnership

Progress: Launched UWE Futures in collaboration with University of West England and leading Bristol law firms.

Launched Osborne Clarke Scholars as a pilot multi-year scholarship programme to provide financial support, work experience and mentoring to university students from minoritised ethnic communities.

Expanded number of clients involved in 10KI programme from two to eight. They include ITV, OVO, British Land, Hargreaves Lansdown, Pension Protection Fund, Linkcity (Bouygues UK), Sovereign and the University of Bristol.

Hosted London collaboration day with interns and OC client Ofei Kwafo-Akoto, a leading real estate lawyer and Head of Legal (Europe) at GLP.

Became a member of the 10KI law firm collaboration network and hosted a session on navigating imposter syndrome for interns across the network.

Objective: Deliver against our Race Action Plan

Progress: Made good progress on outreach programmes to support recruitment; however, we have more work to do on retention and progression.

Objective: Recruit resource to deliver our wellbeing strategy, including key projects from year one of the three-year action plan

Progress: Recruited a fixed term wellbeing strategy lead role to help accelerate projects across our four wellbeing pillars, with a significant focus on mental wellbeing.

Objective: Deliver against our Gender Action Plan

Progress: Redesigned our inclusive hiring training and engaged a specialist recruiter for female talent.

Reviewed succession plans through a diversity lens to identify a more diverse pool of talent for leadership.

Facilitated the promotion of women to senior positions by improving family, carer and flexible working policies and benefits.

Objective: Complete our submission to the International WELL Building Institute and aim to achieve a Platinum rating for our Halo office fit out against the WELL Building Standard®

Progress: Submitted our application and awaiting feedback to confirm if we're on track for platinum rating.

Objective: Participate in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index and Social Mobility Employer Index, aiming to improve on our 2021 rankings

Progress: Participated in Stonewall Workplace Equality Index, results published July 2024. Jumped to Top 20 in 2023 Social Mobility Employer Index.

Legend

- **Commitment met**
- **In progress**
- **Off track**



Continue to grow our Inclusion Allies Programme

Participation in the Inclusion Allies programme jumped from 23% of UK colleagues to 35% this year compared to last year.

Achieve Disability Confident accreditation

Received the **Disability Confident Employer Accreditation** and launched the new Guaranteed Interview Scheme, which covers provisions for physical disability, long term health conditions, mental health conditions and neurodivergence.

Reduce our gender pay gap

Our mean gender pay gap has reduced by 3% on the 2022 analysed[3] mean gap of 20.3%.

Female representation in our upper pay quartiles has improved. Women made up 57% of Senior Associate hires compared with 31% in FY 2022 and 75% of Associate Director hires compared with 63% in FY 2022, for example, and we saw female progression within the partnership improving. Our mean Partner gender pay gap reduced to 10% in FY 23/24 compared with 12% in FY 22/23 and 29% in our FY 17/18 baseline year.

3 This analysis removes highly paid 'outlying employees' who are usually retired male Partners who return as consultants to the business and fall into the 'employee' category. This provides a more accurate assessment than the reported figure.

Gender Action Plan

Launched in 2022, our Gender Action Plan set out to improve the gender balance in our senior positions and embed gender inclusivity into business decision-making.

The plan was developed with senior women at Osborne Clarke and with the full support of our Executive Board. It is inclusive of all women, including trans women and non-binary colleagues.

We are pleased to report improved female representation in the upper pay quartiles and a reduction of 10% in our gender pay gap at partner level.



Award

Legal500 ESG Awards (2024). Women in Law: Osborne Clarke won Best Initiative to Improve Female Representation within Senior Ranks.

Our actions included:

- Redesigning our inclusive hiring and talent identification training in conjunction with Clear Company. Continuing to look for opportunities to engage with specialist recruiters for female talent not only to fill roles but also provide insightful feedback and training to our hiring managers.
- Reviewing all levels of the promotion process for lawyers for example by using data to review how representative the longlisted promotion candidates are, an emphasis on using objective data to inform promotion decisions both at longlisting stage and during interviews, providing interviewers with training on how to identify and mitigate bias, and ensuring the promotion panel is as diverse as possible.
- Facilitating the promotion of women to senior positions by improving family, carer and flexible working policies and benefits. For example, we created a number of manager and individual guides around maternity leave in particular and reviewed our communications.

Read our 2023 Gender Pay Gap report

Women in senior leadership	21/22	22/23 Year 1	23/24 Year 2	24/25 Goal Year 3
What percentage of people in our partnership are women?	25.9%	27.2%	28.7%	30%
What percentage of people promoted to partnership were women? (average over three years)	38%	50%	36%	50%

“It’s been encouraging to see an increase in the proportion of women in higher paid roles, for example by investing in the specific development support that women need at crucial stages of their careers. I’m looking forward to seeing our Osborne Clarke Careers programme continue to grow its impact for all our people.”

Lara Burch, Partner and Head of Bristol office

Race Action Plan

In 2023 we launched our Race Action Plan. We introduced a number of measures to improve minoritised ethnic representation in the firm and help us reach our target of 6% of partnership identifying as being from an minoritised ethnic background by 2025. The integrated change programme focuses on three areas: recruitment, retention and inclusion, and progression.

While we have made progress, the data tells us that our progress is slow and inconsistent. Under-representation persists in the firm generally, the pipeline into partnership and the broader legal sector.

We have actively invested in encouraging early-stage talent which has helped to diversify our graduate recruitment through programmes like Osborne Clarke Scholars, the Talent Programme and 10,000 Interns Programme.

Like many other businesses, we continue to struggle with retention. To address this, our OC Race, Ethnicity and Cultural Heritage (REACH) employee network hosted a number of listening sessions to understand the lived experiences of colleagues first-hand. The feedback from results of these listening sessions have been shared with our Executive and Operations Boards, who are working with the support of our Responsible Business team to turn what they heard into meaningful action in FY24/25.

Read our Race Action Plan



Representation in partnership

What percentage of people in partnership identify as being from a minoritised ethnic background?

23/24 Actual	24/25 Goal
4%	6%

Outreach programmes

Outreach programmes create opportunities and networks for people from backgrounds currently under-represented in the legal sector. This year we launched two new programmes – UWE Futures and Osborne Clarke Scholars – and expanded two existing programmes, our Talent Programme and the 10,000 Interns Programme.

UWE Futures

The University of West England collaborated with leading Bristol law firms including Osborne Clarke, Burges Salmon, Clarke Willmott, and Simmons & Simmons to launch UWE Futures, a legal services work experience and mentoring programme for final year undergraduate Black, Asian and minoritised ethnic students from low-income backgrounds, studying at the university.

Students participated in a paid one-week internship, received mentoring support for one year, and have the opportunity to either secure an extended internship with participating firms or be offered a guaranteed interview for suitable roles.

Osborne Clarke Scholars

We launched Osborne Clarke Scholars, a multi-year scholarship, mentoring and personal development programme for minoritised ethnic students from lower income backgrounds who are interested in pursuing a career in private practice. The pilot programme is funded by our client Microsoft as part of its Law Firm Diversity Programme (LFDP), which granted funding following our success and progress on diversity and inclusion programmes in 2022. Osborne Clarke Scholars provides participating students with financial support, paid work experience, a place on Osborne Clarke's vacation scheme and mentoring with a junior and senior mentor throughout their university degree.



We're thrilled to be launching this pilot programme, reinvesting the LFDP bonus from Microsoft in a diversity and inclusion initiative to enable greater diversity at entry level in law firms for aspiring solicitors. It's only by working together and collaborating with clients, like Microsoft, that we can broaden access to the profession."

Catherine Wolfenden, Partner and EB Member

Apprenticeships: Offering a different route to a career in law

A university degree followed by training has long been the route to becoming a lawyer. But the rising cost of higher education is a barrier for many young people, particularly those from low income backgrounds. Students are looking for alternative paths and our apprentice programme supports them every step of the way. We currently have 35 apprentices working towards level 7 qualifications, 96% of which are from nonselective state schools over the past three years.



When people join our apprenticeship programme they:

- start earning a salary straight away
- can work towards a university degree without incurring student debt
- are supported by our Future Lawyer team who are dedicated to their learning, development and success
- can have the opportunity to take part in available client secondments at that time and build professional connections
- gain confidence and commercial awareness by working in a professional environment
- benefit from the expertise and guidance of our lawyers
- have access to coaching, mentoring and regular career conversations

By bringing their fresh, innovative perspectives to the firm, they also reinvigorate our teams and help us build a more diverse and inclusive business. Our apprentices often become our best ambassadors, reaching out to their schools and local communities, inspiring others to consider an apprenticeship. We're excited that in the long term, our apprenticeship programme contributes to greater social mobility and a more diverse legal sector.



Success story

Influenced in part by legal TV show, Suits, 17-year-old Maryam Tariq set her heart on becoming a lawyer. But thoughts of university and finding a training contract were daunting. Despite submitting her UCAS application, she decided to try the apprenticeship route. It made sense to her to gain on-the-job experience and earn a salary whilst working towards her law degree. Four months into her apprenticeship with Osborne Clarke, she couldn't be happier with her decision.

"The knowledge I have gained in such a short period of time is quite unbelievable. The firm has provided a secure support system for my transition into the big wide world of law and I couldn't be more grateful."

"I'm consistently amazed by the incredible talent of our solicitor apprentices each year. Many firms are beginning to see the benefits of training young talent, widening access to the legal profession, and helping to diversify the people and mindsets in law firms."

Olivia Sinfield, Partner

Social Mobility Employer Index

We know that increasing social diversity narrows the progression gap, strengthens our business and benefits the wider economy. For the third year in a row, we improved our performance in the Social Mobility Employer Index, jumping seven places from 26th in 2022 to 19th in 2023. We maintained our place in the top 75 UK organisations across all sectors leading the way on social mobility.

Awards

Bristol Law Society 'Law Student of the Year' 2023:

While successfully balancing work, study and a secondment, Mia Clothier, one of our solicitor apprentices, was also part of the Solicitor Apprentice Strategic Sounding Board for City Century.

The Lawyer Hot100 2023:

Partner Olivia Sinfield was recognised for her work in shaping our legal apprenticeship programme.

City Century

Osborne Clarke is one of six founding member firms of 'City Century', a collaboration with the City of London Law Society that aims to increase the number of solicitor apprentices entering the City of London.



Wellbeing at Work: Turning strategy into action

At Osborne Clarke, positive wellbeing is seen as the foundation for strong performance and is an integral part of creating "a standout culture." We ask our people to provide the highest standard of service for our clients and, in return, we look to create a working environment where everyone feels they belong, understands expectations, can be healthy and is able to achieve their best at work. Failing to build this type of sustainable, high-performance culture is viewed by our leadership as a people and business risk and is therefore a priority for the firm.

Our Osborne Clarke For Good 2022 report outlined the listening exercise we conducted with our people to identify how they were feeling at work and, importantly, why.

Our findings formed the basis of our Wellbeing at Work Strategy (launched April 2023) which focuses on driving out unnecessary workplace stressors, sharing good working practices, building line manager capability and ensuring our package of support is effective and value for money. The actions in our strategy are underpinned by formal reporting and measurement of wellbeing across the firm, with quarterly progress reports provided to the Operations Board to make sure we continuously improve and deliver for our people.

We are now at the end of Year 1 of our three-year strategy, having recruited a wellbeing strategy lead to oversee the action plan. Our approach covers four wellbeing pillars: mental, financial, physical, and social/cultural.

In Year 1, we have:

- Made process improvements and enhanced support around career "moments that matter": for example upon promotion providing mentoring and coaching support and line manager guidance for those returning from parental or other long-term leave;
- Enhanced wellbeing support and reduced the stigma of discussing wellbeing at work: for example integrating wellbeing check-ins into our employee review process, providing easy access to online therapy, streamlining workstation assessments so that people are comfortable at their desks, introducing pensions and money coaching, increasing the number of trained Mental Health Champions and First Aiders, engaging colleagues in our Inclusion Allies Programme; and
- Appointed a second resource manager who will use better data to manage work allocation within a particular Practice Group and engage more with lawyers one-to-one on work levels, thus reducing unnecessary stress and demands. Learnings will be rolled out to other Practice Groups in Years 2 and 3.

Fertifa

"I would recommend Fertifa to anyone seeking advice about the menopause. The expert recommended alternative medication more suitable for my needs and provided a written summary to forward to my GP. Result!"

Breige Murphy, Legal Director

HelloSelf

"I've used HelloSelf a couple of times now and have found having easy access to a therapist valuable. Most recently, I had four sessions because I wasn't sure how to navigate a situation in my personal life. The therapist was good at guiding the conversation to be about me - how I felt, what I wanted to work on for myself – rather than focusing on the other people involved. The conversations we had broadened my perspective and led me to have a breakthrough in my thinking."

Zofia Cartlidge, Digital Content Editor

Virtual GP

"I've used the Virtual GP on several occasions. It's an amazing service as you can get appointments outside of working hours."

Mo Toqeer, Associate

Octopus Money

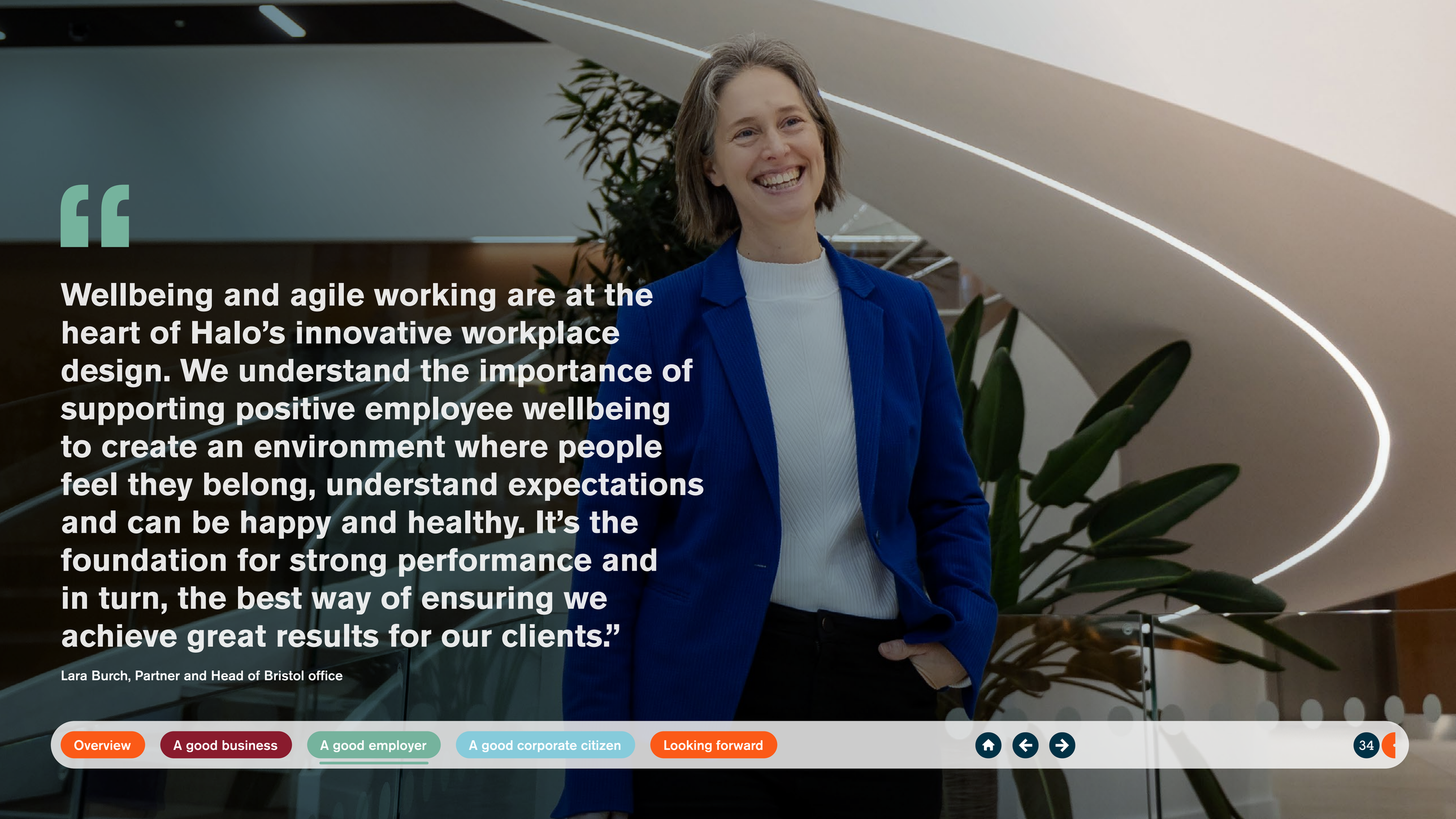
"It took me from a place of being comfortable, to how to optimise my finances. I used a tracker - I input what I earn, what I spend, what I want to save – and it drew a graph to help track where I want to be. It was really helpful."

Angharad Jenkins, Recruitment Manager



Office move: Bristol

This year, we moved our Bristol office to Halo as part of the award-winning Finzel's Reach regeneration project.



Wellbeing and agile working are at the heart of Halo's innovative workplace design. We understand the importance of supporting positive employee wellbeing to create an environment where people feel they belong, understand expectations and can be happy and healthy. It's the foundation for strong performance and in turn, the best way of ensuring we achieve great results for our clients."

Lara Burch, Partner and Head of Bristol office

Diversity and inclusion networks

Free to be ourselves is one of our firm's most dearly held values. To have this freedom means feeling we belong. That's why we invest in strong, visible, and active employee networks that celebrate the diversity of people at Osborne Clarke, challenging and inspiring us to strengthen our inclusive working environment.

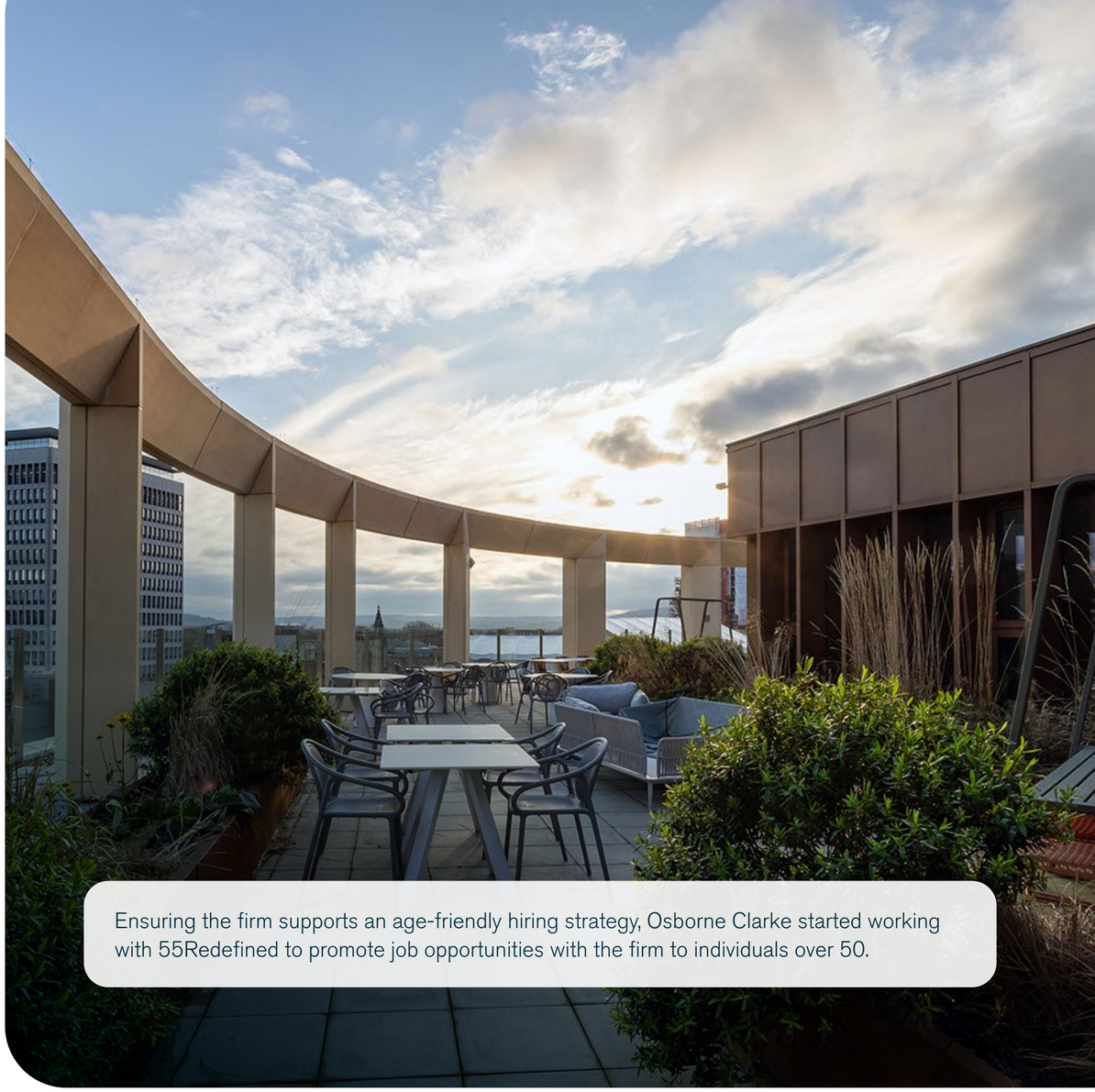
OC Age

The OC Age Network looks at common age-related issues affecting all of our people. Our pro bono collaboration with the Centre for Ageing Better, saw us become an early adopter of the Age-friendly Employer Pledge in 2022, which commits us to promoting supportive environments for older workers. The network hosted an event at which Lucy Kellaway, Financial Times journalist and age specialist, spoke about how age discrimination is widespread and goes largely unnoticed, from our turns of phrase to our assumptions and biases.



Success story

Julian Hemming, an Employment Partner and advocate for an age-friendly workplace, shared insights on video about the Age-friendly Employer Pledge. Another significant achievement this year has been the publication of our report, Providing for tomorrow today: understanding an ageing workforce. It explores the importance of being age-inclusive, offers practical steps organisations can take, and highlights the positive impact age inclusion can have on individuals.



Ensuring the firm supports an age-friendly hiring strategy, Osborne Clarke started working with 55Redefined to promote job opportunities with the firm to individuals over 50.



OC Gender

OC Gender is our network focused on championing inclusive values from a gender perspective. To support International Women's Day, OC Gender hosted a panel discussion with clients Microsoft, Starbucks and PGIM on the theme of 'inspiring inclusion' in the legal sector.

It looked at topics such as recruiting, retaining and developing talented women, supporting women and girls into leadership, decision-making, and business. The Family and Carers sub-group also collaborated with our Age Network to provide additional support to colleagues experiencing menopause.



Success story

Supporting girls to believe in themselves as leaders, feel confident, and aim high.

To celebrate International Day of the Girl, Osborne Clarke welcomed Nada Benbarka, a sixth form student from one of our Bridge partner schools, Skinners Academy, to shadow Peter Day, Partner and London Office Head, for the day. During her action-packed day, she met some of the firm's senior leaders and attended meetings to get a real feel for both Osborne Clarke and working in a senior position.

"We hope that by inviting Nada to step into my role as London Office Head for the day, our people will reflect on the importance of breaking down gender stereotypes. We want young girls to believe in themselves, see themselves in leadership roles, and gain the confidence to aim for those."

Peter Day, Partner and London Office Head

OC Pride

OC Pride network supports the LGBTQ+ community and champions inclusion both inside and outside the firm so that everyone can bring their whole self to work. OC Pride's launch of pronoun badges this year was met with great enthusiasm, with over 600 people adopting them, promoting a culture of respect for individual identities. OC Pride's efforts are evident in the firm's trans inclusion policy, dedicated LGBTQ+ mental health support, inclusive benefits offering and improved ranking in the Stonewall UK Workplace Equality Index.

Network Video:
What fills you with Pride? Watch here

Award

Legal500 ESG Awards 2024:
LGBTQ+ Initiative of the year.

OC Pride, our LBGTQ+ employee network, was recognised for its outstanding work in raising awareness and promoting inclusivity.



OC Mind and Body

OC Mind & Body, our disability, neurodiversity and mental health network, supported the firm in achieving the government's Disability Confident Employer accreditation, demonstrating our commitment to breaking down employment barriers for people living with disabilities. We also launched our new Guaranteed Interview Scheme, through which candidates who self-identify as having a disability are guaranteed an interview provided they meet the basic job requirements listed on the job advert.

"We recognise that conditions such as physical disabilities, hidden disabilities, long-term conditions, mental health conditions, and neurodivergence affect people in many different ways. We also acknowledge that many people may not identify as "disabled," but could benefit from adjustments. We want to be as inclusive as possible so no one gets left behind."

Angharad Jenkins, Recruitment Manager





Experience: Why did you become a mental health first aider?

Gemma Rowland, our People Development Manager, is a dedicated Mental Health First Aider and is qualified to support the mental health needs of the LGBTQ+ community.

"I grew up with an eating disorder and didn't get the support I needed to help me deal with it. I had nobody to talk to and felt ashamed of what I was going through – so I hid it for as long as I could, until it started having serious implications on my overall health and wellbeing. It worries me that people could still feel ashamed to talk about their mental health. I wanted to be a Mental Health First Aider to help create a safe space for people to share what they're going through, without fear of being judged. A space where people feel listened to, heard, and understood, and have the opportunity to ask questions or seek support."

OC Social Diversity

Our Social Diversity network is dedicated to ensuring that individuals from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds have equal opportunities to access and progress in their careers. It supports the firm's partnership with organisations addressing social diversity, including The Bridge, our community schools outreach programme, the Social Mobility Business Partnership, UK Youth, and the City Century Initiative. These efforts have contributed to our improved performance in the Social Mobility Foundation's Employer Index (SMEI). In the 2023 index we proudly ranked 19th out of 75 organisations leading the way on social diversity.

OC REACH

The REACH (Race, Ethnicity and Cultural Heritage) network supports the firm to foster an inclusive and integrated environment for minoritised ethnic colleagues at Osborne Clarke.

The network ran an in-conversation session with Partners Anika Chandra and Rob Adjetey, Osborne Clarke's first promoted black Partner, discussing his career. They are actively involved in supporting the work experience and mentoring programmes for minoritised ethnic students including, the Talent Programme, 10,000 Interns Programme, UWE Futures and reverse mentoring.



As part of its Black History Month activities the network invited I. Stephanie Boyce, the first person of colour and sixth female President of the Law Society of England and Wales (2021-22), to speak at an event for our people and clients. She encouraged the audience to celebrate all that has been accomplished but emphasised we still have a long way to go to achieve racial equality. Stephanie stressed the importance of thinking about equity and taking deliberate and targeted action to address different issues faced by individuals or groups.

Watch the Path to Law video where Rav Sagar, a senior associate and OC REACH network committee member, interviewed the Immediate Past President of the Law Society of England and Wales, Lubna Shuja. In this insightful conversation, Lubna shares her journey into law, the family influences that shaped her path, the importance of allies, and her perspectives on diversity and the evolving landscape of the legal profession.

Inclusion Allies

We're proud of the growth in our Inclusion Allies programme. Participation in the programme to build an inclusive workplace culture and support colleagues from diverse or marginalised groups has increased from 22% to 36% in the last year.

"Being an ally is an ongoing journey. It involves being comfortable with feeling a bit uneasy, truly listening to others, and continuously learning to understand their experiences better. Many of us want to support our colleagues but might not always know the best way to do so. Our Inclusion Allies programme is a fantastic resource to help us learn, prepare, and feel confident in recognising and addressing non-inclusive behaviours."

Rajindh Mangat, Partner Champion OC REACH



Awards

Osborne Clarke was highly commended for our ongoing commitment to diversity and inclusion and was named as a diversity and inclusion champion by its client BT Group alongside BCLP, CMS and Addleshaw Goddard.

LexisNexis Legal Awards 2024: Diversity and Inclusion Category winner. We were recognised for our equity-focused vision that supports the recruitment, retention and progression of diverse talent across our business.



Challenges and learnings

Although representation of minoritised ethnic groups is growing from our recruitment efforts in recent years, we know that, on average, colleagues from minoritised ethnic backgrounds stay with Osborne Clarke for less time than their white counterparts. We must keep listening to our colleagues and acting upon their feedback to create a workplace that is truly inclusive for people from all backgrounds.

On gender, we achieved 50/50 representation among employees who were promoted to the partnership in 2023, but in 2024 we did not. This means we are off track with the sub-targets in our Gender Action Plan to achieve 50/50 partner promotions. We have planned a number of actions to help us address this disparity such as:

- delivering sessions to demystify the partner role for women lawyers, attract more female applicants and create a more diverse pipeline;
- hosting listening sessions for our women senior associates and associate directors in our BTG practice group to identify and address barriers to female progression;
- working with HR to refine the promotion process to ensure it is fair for all and delivers inclusive outcomes;
- introducing mandatory hiring skills sessions that will also support to dismantle bias in our promotion processes; and
- continuing to work with recruitment agencies and firm leadership to produce diverse shortlists for all partner recruitment opportunities.



Our commitments for FY 24/25

We are aiming to:

- Launch a new iteration of our reverse mentoring programme, including our executive and operational board members, with a particular focus on gender and race.
- Run Demystifying Partnership sessions across our three UK offices to encourage more women to consider progressing into partnership.
- Launch mandatory Talent Identification Programme for partners and senior leaders by FY 24/25 that aims to equip our firm with the right skills to identify the best talent in today's competitive market while addressing and understanding our inherent biases.
- Continue addressing our attrition gap – following the listening exercises held this year we will be working to review our Race Action plan based on our colleague feedback, put in place resource and regular monitoring process to ensure this is delivered.
- Reintroduce exit interviews for colleagues from minoritised ethnic backgrounds and use these insights to direct our actions.
- Set a target for minoritised ethnic representation in our trainee and apprenticeship pool.
- Ensure regular, proactive reviews of minoritised ethnic talent by local leaders to identify opportunities for growth and reduce risk of attrition/stagnation.
- Further expand the Inclusion Allies programme by introducing a firm-wide allyship week encouraging colleagues across the firm to commit to at least one allyship action they want to take in 2025 to drive change and create inclusive teams and environments.
- Launch our longer-term wellbeing projects to build line manager capability, address unnecessary workplace stressors, and create thriving teams. This includes:
  - tailoring wellbeing actions for each department;
  - integrating wellbeing for high performance training/coaching into manager development programmes;
  - enhancing development opportunities for Business Services colleagues;
  - improving work allocation processes in remaining Practice Groups; and
  - embedding 'small change, big impact' sustainable working practices into everyday working life by launching a smart performance campaign such as standardising meetings to 25 or 50 minutes and introducing two hours of focus time a day for all colleagues.



A good corporate citizen

44 Summary of progress

45 Working for inclusion and accessibility

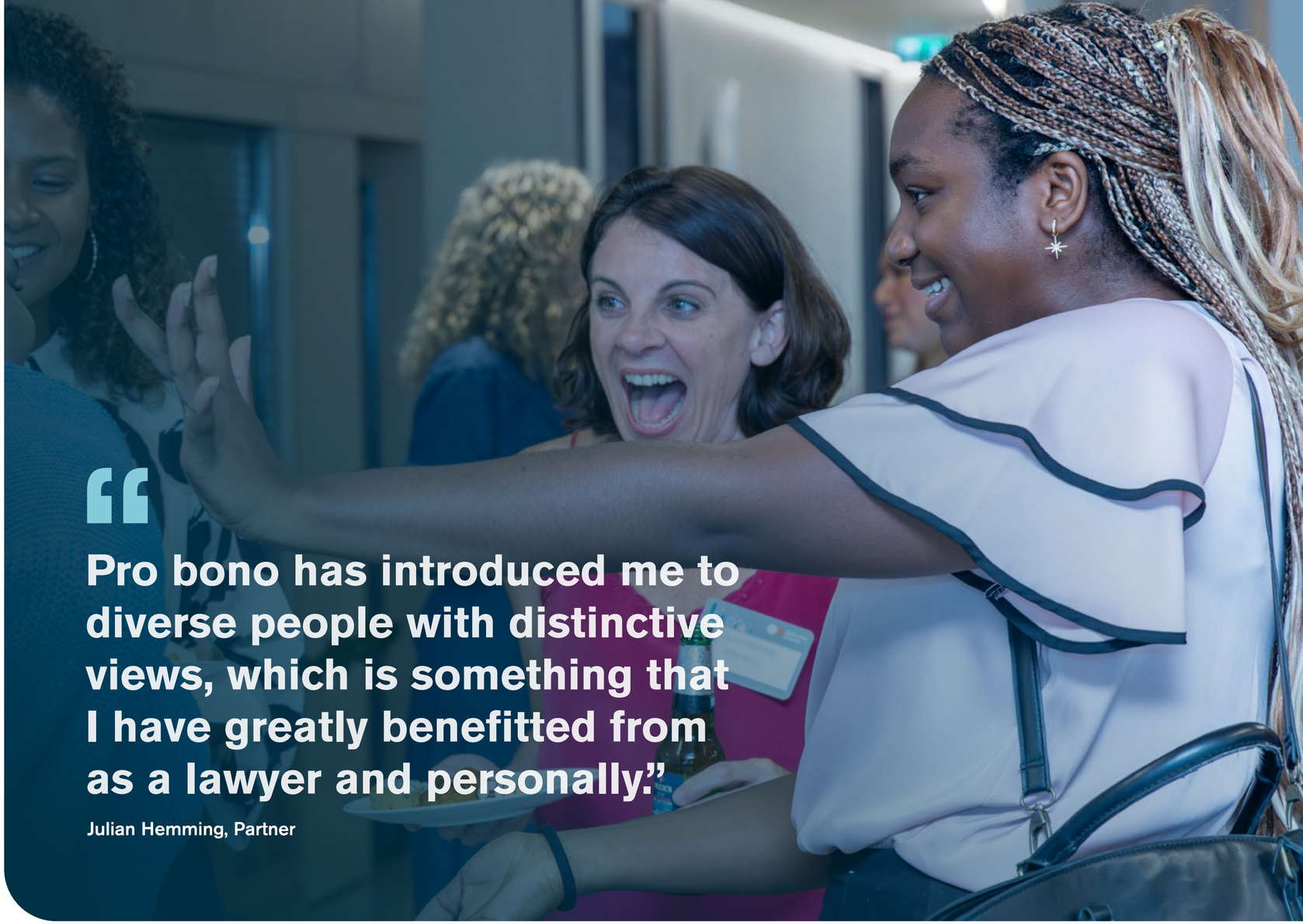
49 Protecting human rights

50 Working for equal opportunities for deaf children

51 Empowering communities through free legal advice

52 Our commitments for FY 24/25

We take our responsibilities to society seriously, focusing on what's important to our business, our people and our communities. By using our skills and expertise for good, we strive to make a positive contribution by delivering impact across four priority areas: equality, poverty, education and environment.



> "Pro bono has introduced me to diverse people with distinctive views, which is something that I have greatly benefitted from as a lawyer and personally."
>
> Julian Hemming, Partner

Summary of progress

Objective: Deliver 4,500 hours of pro bono support in FY 23/24, with a 50% participation rate for >2 year qualified lawyers and an 80% participation rate for trainee solicitors

Progress: Contributed a total of 5,773 pro bono hours, supporting 90 organisations. This work is valued at £2.3m.

Objective: Grow employee volunteering to 3,500 hours in FY 23/24

Progress: The firm has contributed a total of 3,541 volunteering hours.

Objective: Welcome new school partners in Reading and Bristol as part of The Bridge education programme, and deliver a full engagement programme to support student aspirations

Progress: Partnered with City Academy Bristol and St Brendan's Sixth Form College (Bristol) and The WREN in Thames Valley (TVO).

Objective: Launch three new Location Charity partnerships and set fundraising targets for each of our offices to achieve by 2025

Progress: Colleagues nominated, selected and are now supporting Feeding Bristol, Magic Breakfast and Berkshire Women's Aid. We set a cross-office target for location charities of £24k by April 2025.

Objective: Award grants that total at least 80% of the funds available in the Osborne Clarke Charitable Trust to causes that align with our social impact themes, and to causes supported by our colleagues

Progress: Excluding the funds we have committed to our UK Youth partnership, we awarded 90% of the remaining charitable trust fund during the reporting year. This equates to over £95,000 in small donations to charities that align with our social impact themes and other causes supported by our employees.

Objective: Support UK Youth grantees into their second year of work to address digital poverty, and invest additional funds into research to unlock support for digital inclusion in the youth sector

Progress: Supported UK Youth grantees to buy digital hardware, covering core costs and broadening their horizons.

Provided pro bono support for four youth grantees totalling 191.4 hours.

Legend

- **Commitment met**
- **In progress**
- **Off track**

Working for inclusion and accessibility

Our work to make our apprenticeship programme as accessible and diverse as possible has opened our eyes to the barriers many young people face simply entering the workforce, let alone finding meaningful employment. That's why we've chosen to invest our time, expertise and resources to promote inclusion and accessibility, and reduce the barriers young people face.

OUR ACTION IN NUMBERS

We have:

funded **20 youth organisations** with **£100k of grants**

reached **5,820 young people**

supported **4 UK Youth grantees** with **191 hours of pro bono advice**

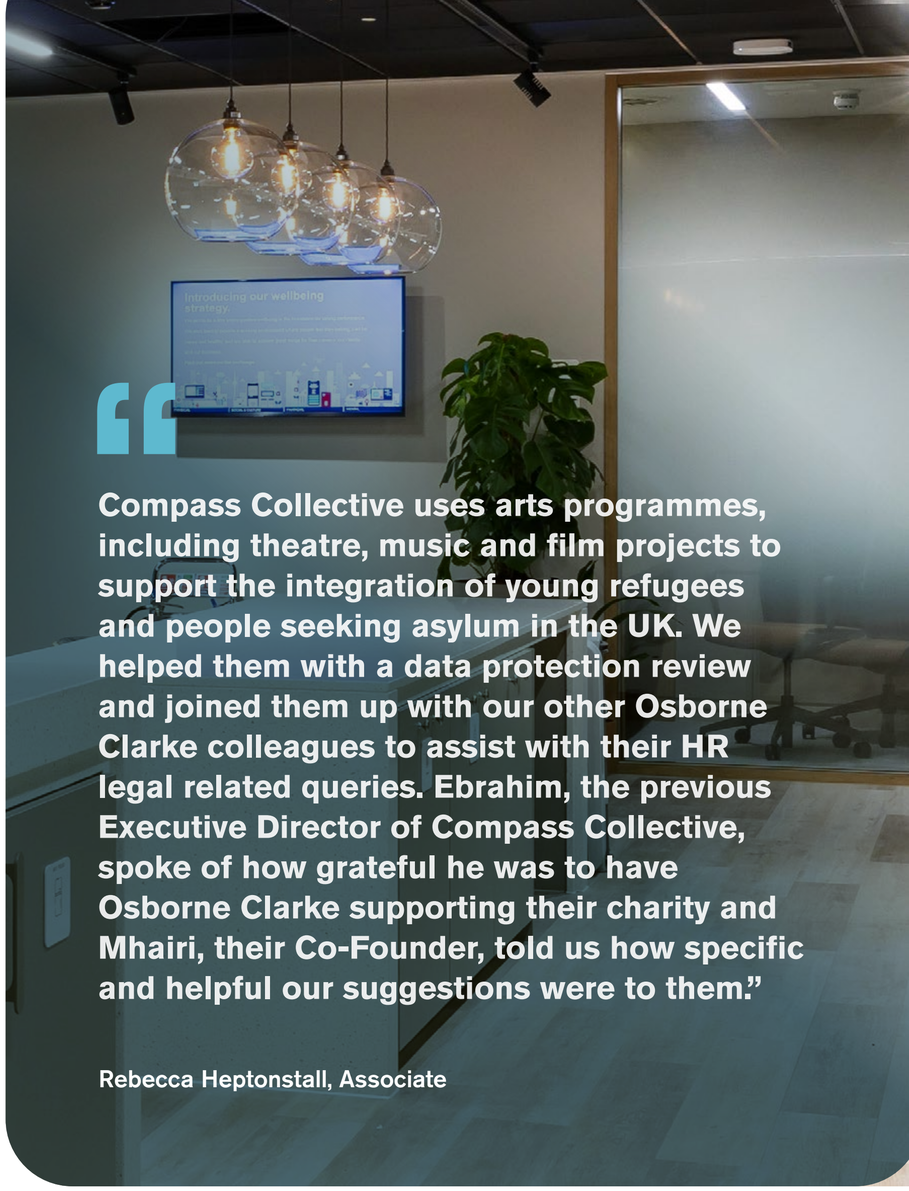
UK Youth

Millions of young people live in digital cold spots (without reliable access to the internet or a computer). This makes it difficult for them to gain the skills required by employers, putting them at a disadvantage in the job market and limiting their opportunities in life.

Our partnership with leading youth work charity UK Youth is our single biggest investment in our communities. We've been working together since 2022 to expand digital inclusion, support digital literacy and power social mobility. By providing funding and pro bono advice to youth organisations, we're helping young people break through social barriers and fulfil their potential.

Compass Collective

Compass Collective (a UK Youth charity) in London has used their first grant of £5,000 to purchase laptops for young refugees and asylum seekers, enabling them to access their online classes and professional development support.



"Compass Collective uses arts programmes, including theatre, music and film projects to support the integration of young refugees and people seeking asylum in the UK. We helped them with a data protection review and joined them up with our other Osborne Clarke colleagues to assist with their HR legal related queries. Ebrahim, the previous Executive Director of Compass Collective, spoke of how grateful he was to have Osborne Clarke supporting their charity and Mhairi, their Co-Founder, told us how specific and helpful our suggestions were to them."

Rebecca Heptonstall, Associate

Joined Up Initiative

The Joined Up initiative by UK Youth recognises the need for young people to have the right connections to give them insight into a profession and to help them into a career. The programme enables young people to have valuable career conversations with people outside of their network and encourages more diverse thinking in organisations like ours. As a founding partner of Joined Up and a member of its steering group, we will be supporting the project's delivery and creating a legacy beyond our three-year partnership.

"This year alone, our digital inclusion grants in partnership with Osborne Clarke have reached over 5,820 young people nationally. That is 5,820 young people who are now better equipped for their futures thanks to Osborne Clarke. That is a really valuable contribution in our fight against digital poverty and reducing the barriers of opportunity for young people. And it doesn't end there. Osborne Clarke has become a founding partner of our Joined Up Institute, which will bring cross-sector professionals together to share insight, best practice and help create solutions - only by working together can we tackle the systemic problems letting young people down. We are immensely grateful to be partnered with Osborne Clarke who are leading the way with this investment into innovative solutions."

Ndidi Okezie OBE, Chief Executive Officer, UK Youth

Lawyers for Digital Inclusion

Lawyers for Digital Inclusion is an action group we founded to work with the legal teams of our clients to share best practice, explore new initiatives and, above all, take action to help combat digital exclusion and promote digital inclusion.

We have realised that one of our superpowers is connecting our clients, across different sectors. We're working with leaders in this space including Vodafone and others who are promoting inclusion through website accessibility measures, digital skills training and questioning what information people need to be able to harness the power of AI.

"By collaborating with and connecting our clients that have made significant progress in this area with those starting out on their accessibility journeys, we can have more impact than if we act alone."

Katherine Kirrage, Partner and Global Head of Tech



The Bridge

The Bridge is our flagship education and employability programme. Working with Visionpath, we build long-term relationships with local secondary schools and sixth form colleges, providing tailored sessions, work experience and mentoring. The programme addresses our beliefs that a young person's background shouldn't be a barrier to a professional career and that the more diverse the legal industry is, the better it serves everyone.

The schools we work with have higher than average levels of socioeconomic deprivation, which can lead to poorer educational outcomes. This approach ensures we help the students who need it most.

When young people interact with our team, it helps them:

- aspire to follow a career in the professional services sector;
- understand what steps they need to take to pursue a career in business;
- feel confident that there are people 'like them' working in the industry;
- gain knowledge of what types of careers are available in the legal sector and the skills needed for different roles;
- enter the profession on the path that is right for them, whether that be university or an apprenticeship;
- give them the best chance of success when applying and interviewing for opportunities; and
- get one-to-one support when they need it.

OUR ACTION IN NUMBERS FY 22/23	OUR ACTION IN NUMBERS FY 23/24
140 Hours volunteered	**218** Hours volunteered
950 Students supported	**692** Students supported
250 Students engaged four or more times	**398** Students engaged four or more times



My mentee and I discussed the various options for his next steps after school and the pros and cons of each. He is now set on going to university and has successfully applied to the Osborne Clarke work experience programme. For students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, these mentoring and work experience programmes are vital to give them a strong foundation to reach their potential."

Chris Flach, Associate



Challenges and learnings

It is not always easy to create a culture of contribution across the business, where everybody participates. To achieve this, we are working on a programme of rewarding and recognising participation through our contribution reviews, where every team member has objectives linked to the firm's priorities outside of fee-earning work.

We have learned that we can have a positive impact on inclusion and diversity in a myriad of ways. From donating time and money to providing expert pro-bono advice and creating cross sector action groups that focus on areas of need. We recognise that the impact happens through collaboration, whether it be with clients, charitable organisations or directly with young people themselves.

Protecting human rights

The Rule 39 Pro Bono Initiative

Osborne Clarke is collaborating with seven other UK and European law firms to provide life-altering support to individuals to stop impending and severe human rights abuses. Together, we are providing legal expertise to non-governmental organisations and legal aid lawyers who support vulnerable applicants to help them prepare and file Rule 39 requests. These are requests for urgent orders issued by the European Court of Human Rights that provide protection to basic human rights, for instance to migrants who face abuses while trying to access the asylum system.

The Rule 39 Initiative has already championed justice for more than 700 migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers across 10 member states of the Council of Europe. Human rights are being protected and lives are being saved. In addition, we are creating greater awareness of the issues faced by migrants and a fairer justice system for everyone.

Case study

Finding safety in Ukraine

A group of migrants and asylum seekers were being held in a detention centre that was dangerously close to the frontline in Ukraine, putting their lives at imminent risk. Using Rule 39, they were moved to a relatively safer area. Days after our successful intervention, the centre they had been held at was bombed. Through follow up exchanges with state and diplomatic authorities, Rule 39 Initiative enabled some of the people to safely leave Ukraine.

Awards

Winner of PILnet Global Partnership Award:
The Rule 39 Initiative was recognised as the best, most innovative pro bono legal project undertaken as a cross-sectoral collaboration, with an impact felt in more than one country.

Winner LawWorks Annual Pro Bono Awards:
The Rule 39 Initiative won Best International Pro Bono Award in partnership with A41D.



We often deal with delicate legal issues for our clients, but initiatives like these remind us of the positive impact our work can have on people's lives. The combined efforts and teamwork of all the firms and partners involved genuinely help those who need it most."

Iman Virji, Associate



Working for equal opportunities for deaf children

Deaf children are often disadvantaged, being placed in schools that do not meet their needs. This can result in slower development, social exclusion and a lack of opportunity. Osborne Clarke has been working with the National Deaf Children's Society, using our legal expertise to help parents appeal local authorities' decisions through the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal.

During the reporting period, 30 of our lawyers provided professional advocacy, resulting in six children being placed in the right schools for them. This has led to them learning to talk, communicating independently, forming friendships and continuing into higher education.

In addition to the support we give to families, we invest in training sessions to ensure our lawyers who volunteer with the Society understand the issues involved with this area of advocacy and to encourage more lawyers to volunteer.

OUR ACTION IN NUMBERS

1,218
pro bono hours on this project

"Her mum said to me that the child loves her school so much that in the first week she wore her cochlear implants for nearly 40 hours. She used to refuse to wear them at home! After the case was completed, the mum sent us a thank you card. She said that her daughter was so happy, she could not stop smiling."

Galina Borshevskaya, Associate

"The boy and his family have been so grateful. They've told us many times how much it means to them that we took on the case – not only was there little time left for him to receive the support he needed before he becomes too old, but they wouldn't have been able to afford to defend their case without Osborne Clarke and the National Deaf Children's Society. It was great to hear that the boy has received praise for his development from the school, including a certificate awarded for his achievement. It's deeply rewarding to be able to use my legal career, which I am very privileged to have, to help others."

Zoë Hughes-Nind, Associate

Empowering communities through free legal advice

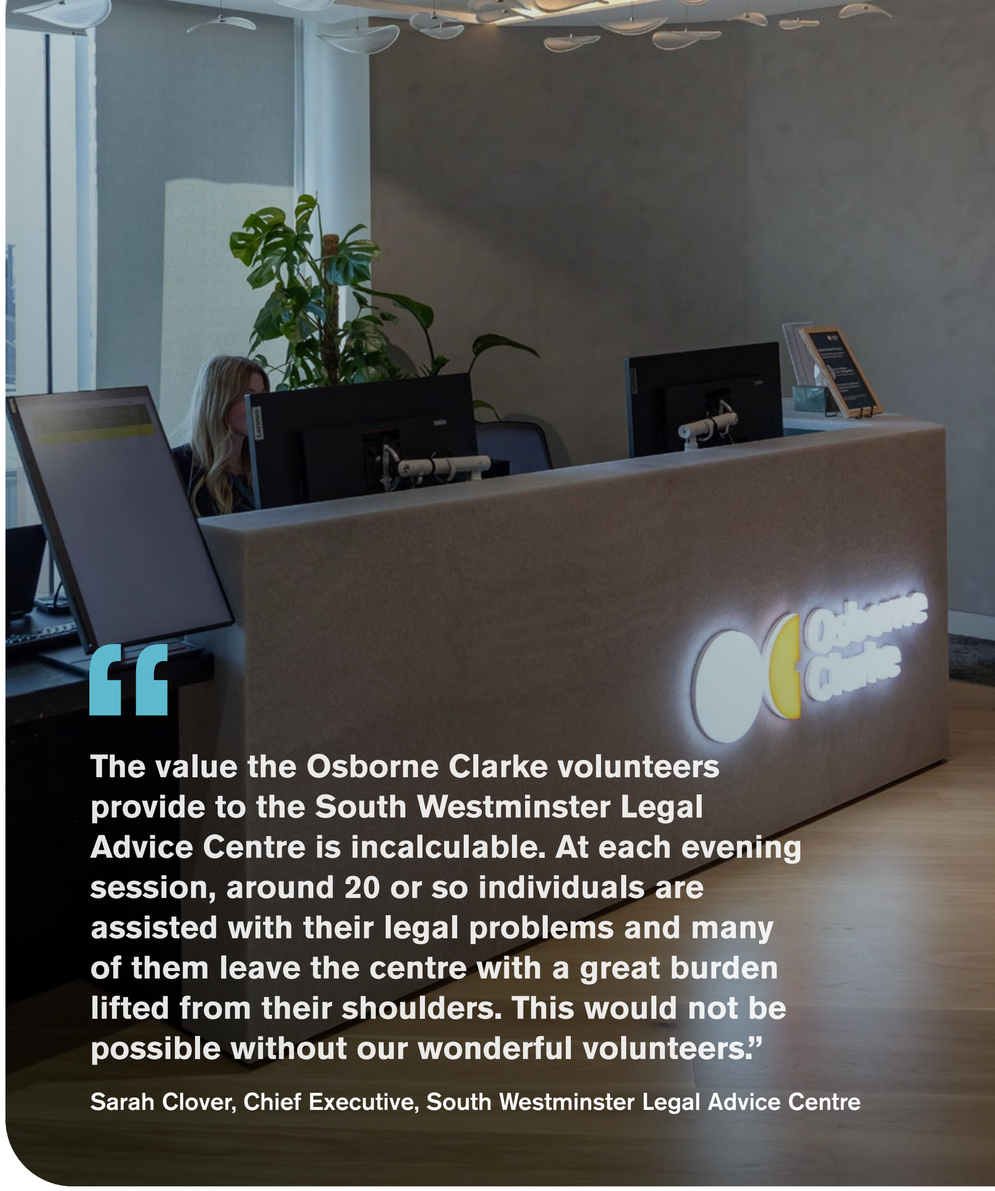
South Westminster Legal Advice Centre (SWLAC) is one of the clinics where our lawyers volunteer their skills to provide people living on low incomes with free legal advice. The centre's approach is to empower clients by informing them of their rights and options, rather than fostering dependency.



Working with SWLAC allows us to use our legal skills to widen access to justice by giving people the information they need to make a decision or defend themselves in a dispute, regardless of their financial situation. Our commitment goes beyond legal assistance; we support the centre to provide a compassionate and understanding environment where clients feel at ease.

At SWLAC we help with issues relating to:

- housing and landlord and tenant (including leases)
- employment and dismissal
- contracts and consumer issues
- bankruptcy and insolvency (including Individual Voluntary Arrangements)
- family law
- wills and probate
- personal injury and civil litigation



"The value the Osborne Clarke volunteers provide to the South Westminster Legal Advice Centre is incalculable. At each evening session, around 20 or so individuals are assisted with their legal problems and many of them leave the centre with a great burden lifted from their shoulders. This would not be possible without our wonderful volunteers."

Sarah Clover, Chief Executive, South Westminster Legal Advice Centre



Our commitments for FY 24/25

- Deliver the final year of our UK Youth Partnership and begin the legacy research project to support the work of the Joined Up Initiative
- Deliver the third year of The Bridge programme and begin to evaluate the impact with our partner schools
- Connect six of our partners and senior leaders with senior leaders in local schools, to embark on peer mentoring as part of Inspiration for All
- Continue to grow participation in our CSR programmes, delivering 5,000 hours of pro bono time and 3,500 hours employee volunteering



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Looking forward

Looking ahead, our commitment to doing business responsibly is unwavering. In the context of Osborne Clarke's growth, we recognise that continuing to develop our purpose and impact is key to our commercial success.

In terms of our environmental actions, I'm delighted to be able to share that next year we will publish our global climate targets and are working to embed net zero into all our decisions and collaborate across the business to achieve our reduction targets.

We remain fully engaged in improving diversity at Osborne Clarke and are transparently sharing our progress on partner representation, together with our Race and Gender Action Plans. These goals are achievable, but will require real commitment over the next year across our three levers of recruitment, retention and progression to bring them to fruition. As Conrad said in his introduction, our pro bono work and outreach programmes this year will further enhance and help us accelerate progress against our diversity and inclusion strategy.

On wellbeing and inclusion, our focus this coming year is to integrate our approach into the core of the way we operate. We will be using behavioural science and research to drive innovation in the way that we work and interact – and allow us to improve colleague wellbeing, inclusion, performance and operational excellence.

For our clients, we will continue to draw on our firm's long history, future-focused identity and international reach, delivering a diverse range of services and specialisms to respond to their needs. By bringing our responsible business experience into our client service offerings, we create opportunities to add more value to our clients and scale up our impact through the advice we provide. We will accomplish this by nurturing long term partnerships to achieve meaningful results whilst being bold and innovative in our approach.

I hope you join us in our excited anticipation for the progress, learnings and challenges ahead.



Kate Millar,
Head of Responsible Business

About Osborne Clarke

Osborne Clarke is an international legal practice. We've been providing strategic and on-point advice for more than 250 years and we have a presence across Europe, Asia and the US.

We horizon scan and foster an understanding of the issues that matter and how they are evolving. Our goal is simple: to help our clients, people and communities succeed in tomorrow's world.

Strong client relationships, deep community connections and the size of our firm increase the impact we can make. We are committed to building lasting partnerships to achieve meaningful results and, because we are at the forefront of innovative thinking, we're bold in our approach to being a responsible business.

Acknowledgements

The OC for Good Responsible Business Report 2024 was a collaborative effort, and we thank everyone who contributed to making it a true reflection of our responsible business journey.

Thank you to all the OC people quoted in the report and featured in the photos, you have helped bring our stories to life.

We also thank our agency partners, including Rebecca Faith, Lee Funnel and Interaction for photography, Epigram for design and Keartland & Co for consultancy and copywriting.



*Services in India are provided by a relationship firm

Governance structure

UK Partnership Council



Peter Clough
Senior Partner



Pippa Byrne
Partner



Rajindh Mangat
Partner



Peter Day
Partner, Head of London Office



Lara Burch
Partner, Head of Bristol Office



Rob Hayes
Partner, Head of Reading Office

UK Executive Board



Conrad Davies
Managing Partner



Catherine Wolfenden
Head of Disputes and Risk Practice Group and Wellbeing Champion



Tim Simmonds
Chief Operating Officer



Giles Jones
Chief Financial Officer and Business Services Diversity Champion



Graham de Guise
Chief People Officer



Ashley Hurst
Head of Client Strategy



Michelle McGurl
Head of PREF Practice Group and Sustainability Champion



Mark Wesker
Head of Business Transactions Practice Group



Victoria Parry
Head of Advisory Practice Group and Chair of Diversity Champions Forum

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Governance structure

UK Operations Board



Alison Bilgin
Director of Change & Transformation



Charlotte Neighbour
Senior Business Manager



Grace Baldry-Burman
Director of Property and Workplace



Dan Wright
Partner, Osborne Clarke Solutions



Giles Jones
Chief Finance Officer



Keegan Drage
International Director of
Information Technology Services



Graham de Guise
Chief People Officer



Jennie Thomas
Operations Director,
Projects, Real Estate & Finance



Shelagh Sorensen
Director of Operations & Strategy



Nick Thody
Director of Knowledge



Sarah Dobson
Chief of Staff



Tim Simmonds
Chief Operating Officer



Craig Jones
Director of Risk and Compliance

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Governance structure

CSR Stakeholders



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Senior Partner



Lara Burch
Partner, Head of Bristol Office



Peter Day
Partner, Head of London Office



Rob Hayes
Partner, Head of Reading Office



Julian Hemming
Partner, Bristol office Pro Bono lead



Greg Fullelove
Partner, London office Pro Bono lead



Justin Starling
Partner, Reading office Pro Bono lead



Matthew Germain
Partner, Chair of Sustainability Steering Group



Kate Millar
Head of Responsible Business

Wellbeing Working Group



Jo Forbes
Health, Safety & Wellbeing Strategy Manager



Sarah Twite
Wellbeing Strategy Delivery Lead



Louise Chapman
Health, Safety & Wellbeing Advisor



Catherine Wolfenden
Head of Disputes and Risk Practice Group and Wellbeing Champion

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Governance structure

Sustainability Steering Group



Matthew Germain
Partner, Chair of Sustainability Steering Group



Rebecca Plummeridge
Programme Manager, Change & Transformation



Giles Jones
Chief Financial Officer



Pranjal Mathur
ESG Data Analyst



Michelle McGurl
Executive Board member



Alan John
Consultant



Rob Beel
Strategic Procurement Manager



James Watson
Partner, Decarbonisation transformation leader



Dan Wright
Operations Board Member



Kate Millar
Head of Responsible Business



Mary Lavin
Senior Manager Sustainability and Reporting

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Governance structure

Diversity Champions Forum



Victoria Parry
Chair of Diversity Champions Forum and Executive Board Member Head of Advisory Practice Group



Leona Briggs
Partner and Race Champion



Danielle Kingdon
Partner and Age Champion



Ian Hyde
Partner and Age Champion



Rajindh Mangat
Partner and REACH Champion



Katherine Kirrage
Partner and Social Diversity Champion



Tom Harding
Partner and Social Diversity Champion



Paula Goggins
Operations Director and Mind and Body Champion



Colin Stratton
Partner and Gender Champion



Jonathan Hazlett
Partner and Pride Champion



Nick Price
Partner and Pride Champion



Kate Millar
Head of Responsible Business



Caroline Gregson
Partner and Gender Champion



Giles Jones
Chief Financial Officer



Anika Chandra
Partner and REACH Champion



Mareen Birresborn
Responsible Business Manager

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