

ESG Report

2022-2023



Environmental
Minimising our
environmental impact



Social
Inspiring our people



Governance
Influencing positive
change



CSR
Enhancing our
communities

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Message from the Executive and the Board

We are pleased to present Birketts' ESG report for 2022-2023. The report, a first for the firm, sets out our ESG strategy, which is an integral part of our 2030 strategy, and the measures we have already adopted and will adopt to achieve our ESG strategic objectives. The report also outlines the governance framework that we have in place to support our ESG strategy.

The report covers a period of global economic and geopolitical uncertainty. Despite the pressures of this uncertainty, we have adhered to our values and forged ahead with the transition from CSR to ESG.

As a law firm supporting clients across multiple industries and locations, we recognise that the way in which we operate has an impact on the environment and our communities. With our ESG strategy, we hope to set a strong foundation for our future success and to reaffirm our core value of 'doing the right thing' in all our actions.

In the course of developing our ESG strategy, we took extensive soundings from our internal and external stakeholders, and some of their direct feedback is included in this report. This feedback has highlighted that our ESG strategy and its delivery is important to our people, clients, suppliers, and other stakeholders. As such, we are committed to the regular and transparent communication of our ESG defined KPIs and targets and our performance against these.

Our ESG strategy is managed by our ESG Committee, which reports directly to our Partnership Board. The Committee comprises senior lawyers and business services professionals from across the firm, who are united by a common aspiration to integrate ESG best practice into our decision-making and business activities. This structure supports our belief that everyone at Birketts has an active role to play in the achievement of our ESG objectives, regardless of seniority, role or responsibilities.

We welcome the input of our people at all levels in the successful pursuit of our ESG goals and we also welcome the opportunity to collaborate with other organisations in taking an impact-led approach to all areas of ESG.



A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "JAgar" with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jonathan Agar
Chief Executive
Birketts LLP



A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "GKerr" with a stylized flourish at the end.

Grace Kerr
Head of ESG Committee
Birketts LLP

October 2023

About us

Birketts is a full service, UK Top 50 law firm. With a heritage spanning 160 years, we have more than 500 lawyers and legal professionals based in Cambridge, Chelmsford, Ipswich, London, Norwich and Sevenoaks. We advise businesses, government and public sector organisations and individuals in the UK and internationally.

Our business is divided into four principal practice groups: property (including planning and environmental); corporate services (including banking and finance, corporate, commercial, data protection, employment, immigration, and tax); litigation and dispute resolution (including IP); and private client advisory (including family).

Within these practice groups, we have deep sector expertise, spanning agriculture and landed estates, charities and social enterprise, construction, ecclesiastical, education, energy and utilities, family businesses, food, healthcare and care homes, housebuilding and social housing, leisure and tourism, natural capital, public sector, real estate investment, retail and automotive, shipping and international trade, technology and telecoms and transport and logistics.

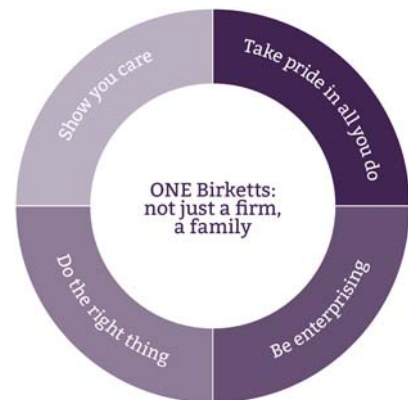
Our innovative delivery of the law is defined by our next level law proposition. Our legal advice is informed by a clear understanding of the specific needs of the sector and the regulatory and political backdrop. We work with our clients as a proactive partner, horizon scanning and thinking ahead to the changes, challenges, or opportunities that they may face.

We seek to innovate in all our practices; our focus is on investing in the right technology to deliver effective solutions to help our clients achieve their objectives.

We enjoy a distinctively collegiate culture based on strong core values. Operating as one collaborative firm, we encourage all our people to be professional and client-focused; to act with transparency and integrity; to be enterprising, and to proactively look for innovative ways to support our clients; whilst taking pride in all that they do.

With our ambition to succeed, comes a strong desire to make a positive contribution to the communities we serve, and we are committed to delivering the objectives set out in our ESG strategy. Diversity plays an integral part in all that we do, with female partners comprising 40% of our partnership.

We maintain the highest professional and ethical standards and are accredited with the UK Law Society's practice management quality standard, Lexcel and hold the Centre for Assessment Customer Service Excellence accreditation. We are also ISO accredited in the areas of quality management (9001), environmental management (14001), information security (27001) and business continuity management (22301).



Developing our ESG Strategy

We are committed to driving continual improvement in the development of our ESG programme. We started our transition from CSR to ESG in 2022, when we engaged an external ESG and sustainability consultancy, Simply Sustainable, to help us to develop a new strategic approach to ESG. The first step was to understand our operating environment and conduct a double materiality assessment involving our people and our clients, to help us identify our priority ESG areas.

Based on sector guidance and ESG standards, 17 ESG topics were identified as potentially important for the firm to address. We tested those topics with more than 350 internal stakeholders and clients and identified five key thematic insights:

- Stakeholders want Birketts to use its specialist skills to create a measurable social impact on the UK economy and to close the gap on access to legal services and help create self-sustaining communities.
- All stakeholders want Birketts to prioritise action on climate change and reduction of carbon emissions and to communicate the work that is completed.
- Some employees feel that although Birketts EDI activities and policy are communicated well internally, there is scope to do more to ensure that all areas

of EDI are prioritised, addressed and improved.

- All stakeholders want to see improved collaboration between Birketts and its the supply chain to work towards collective goals.
- Birketts' employees desire communication and clarity of the firm's ESG objectives across all sites.





In addition to the stakeholder insights, a business impact assessment was conducted to identify the risks and opportunities associated with the ESG topics. The resulting matrix revealed six ESG topics for the firm to address.

We grouped these six priority topics, which form the basis of our strategy, into a four-pillar strategic framework. Our ESG framework addresses concerns that our internal stakeholders and clients identified as being important to them; it also aligns with our commercial risks and opportunities and adheres to universally recognised standards, ensuring comprehensive disclosure in our future reporting. Each of our pillars is complemented by relevant KPIs and targets, enabling us to monitor the progress of the implementation of our ESG strategy over time.

A key component of our ESG strategic framework has been the development of our ESG vision.

Our ESG Vision: Through our actions today and ambitions for a just tomorrow, we are empowering change, leading with purposeful governance, and fostering a progressive culture.

Our ESG Strategic Framework

Vision	<p>Through our actions today and ambitions for a just tomorrow, we are empowering change, leading with purposeful governance, and fostering a progressive culture.</p>			
Strategic pillars	 <p>Environmental Minimising our environmental impact</p>	 <p>Social Inspiring our people</p>	 <p>Governance Influencing positive change</p>	 <p>CSR Enhancing our communities</p>
Pillar lead	<p>Shaun Folan, Operations Director</p>	<p>Shaun Savory, Human Resources Director</p>	<p>Sarah Ralph, Risk & Compliance Director</p>	<p>Grace Kerr, Chair of ESG Committee, Partner</p>
Strategic objectives	<p>Monitor and continuously improve our environmental performance to support the transition towards a net zero economy.</p>	<p>Foster an informed and inclusive culture where all our people feel a deep sense of pride and belonging and feel empowered to be themselves.</p> <p>Enable and encourage people to develop, contribute and progress to their fullest potential by providing a healthy environment promoting wellness.</p>	<p>Engage with internal and external stakeholders to collaborate with and influence our valued partners to share best practice and be more sustainable.</p>	<p>Create and nurture relationships with community and charitable organisations, sharing our resources to support their endeavours and improve the lives of those who need it most.</p> <p>Inspire and support our people to share their time and skills for positive change in the communities in which we work.</p>
Topics covered	<p>Carbon emissions and clean energy</p> <p>Climate change.</p>	<p>Equity, diversity and inclusion</p> <p>Health and wellness.</p>	<p>Sustainable supply chain.</p>	<p>Social impact.</p>
<p>Governance framework</p> <p>Maximise our positive impact on the communities we serve and clients we support through expert advice, good governance, and values-based leadership.</p>				

Delivering our ESG strategy

We recognise that the successful integration and effective management of Birketts' ESG strategy requires a robust governance structure. We have developed an ESG governance structure which:

Locks in commitment from our executive and board members.
Ensure accountability at all levels of the firm.
Aligns with our overall organisational structure.
Is flexible and adaptable.

In integrating ESG considerations into our existing governance structure and processes; we have ensured that the governance structure is in compliance with our ISO 14001:2015 Environmental Management System certification, which necessitates specific criteria for defining roles, responsibilities and authorities concerning environmental impacts.

The objectives of our ESG governance structure are to:

Maximise our positive impact on the communities we serve and clients we support through expert advice, good governance, and values-based leadership.
Enhance our brand, reputation, culture, and trust in the profession through our ongoing commitment to transparency, accessibility, and visibility.

ESG governance structure



ESG Roles, responsibilities and accountabilities

- **Partnership Board:** Our Partnership Board is responsible for providing strategic direction to the ESG Committee and is ultimately accountable to the Partnership for the successful delivery of our ESG strategy. The Board is responsible for approving our ESG policy and annual report, conducting six monthly reviews of the progress of our ESG programme, and supporting the ESG Committee to ensure the successful delivery of our strategic goals.

- **ESG Committee:** Our commitment to operating in accordance with our ESG strategy and Policy is managed by our ESG Committee, which reports into our principal governance body, the Partnership Board. Our ESG Committee is responsible for implementing our ESG strategy as approved by the Board, including the integration of ESG principles into our culture through communication, engagement and education, establishing objectives and KPIs, and conducting overarching assessments of our ESG performance. The Committee is also responsible for reviewing our ESG policy, programme, and processes on an annual basis to ensure they are current and relevant, and for the compilation and circulation of our annual ESG report. Additionally, the ESG Committee establishes expectations across each ESG Sub-Committee, approves project objectives and KPIs and is accountable for collating data and achieving set KPIs and targets.

Our ESG Committee meets on a quarterly basis and comprises our ESG pillar leads and representatives from key constituent parts of the firm. The Committee is led by Grace Kerr, who is a member of the Partnership Board and reports to the Board on behalf of the ESG Committee on a bi-annual basis.

Birketts' ESG Committee members



Grace Kerr
Chair, Partner



Sean Savory
Human Resources Director



Shaun Folan
Operations Director



Marieke Schrauwers
Head of Insight and Market Intelligence



Sarah Ralph
Risk and Compliance Director



Laura Shumiloff
Business Development and Marketing Director



Edward Savory
Partner



Abi Trencher
Partner

ESG Sub-Committees: Support on our priority ESG topics is provided by specialised ESG Sub-Committees, which are led by our pillar leads. The Sub-Committee leads report back to the ESG Committee on a quarterly basis.

Our governance structure aligns with our overall organisational structure and ensures that both ownership of, and accountability for, our ESG activities are embedded at all levels of our organisation. By engaging with relevant stakeholders, regularly reviewing progress, and leveraging the expertise of our ESG Committee and ESG Sub-Committees, we aim to drive continual improvement in our ESG performance against our KPIs and targets.

Our accreditations which support the management of environmental and social issues are ISO accreditations for quality management (9001), environmental management (14001) and information security (27001).

We welcome the opportunity to collaborate and engage in information exchange with clients and peers on ESG projects and issues. We are members of the Legal Sustainability Alliance, a collaborative network providing guidance and advice for law firms on sustainability issues and are members of The Woodland Trust, a governing body whose main goal is the preservation and maintenance of UK woodland.

ESG Pillar 1: Environment - minimising our environmental impact

Topics: carbon emissions and clean energy; climate change

The objective of our environmental pillar is to strive to monitor and continuously improve our environmental performance to support the transition towards a net zero economy. In alignment with the UK Government's net zero strategy and the Paris Agreement's goal to limit global warming to below 2°C above pre-industrial levels (with a preference for 1.5°C), we are committed to achieving net zero emissions no later than 2050.

We comply with the Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting (SECR) framework, mandated to report scopes 1 and 2 plus limited scope 3 emissions (specifically, business travel and employee commuting) under the Companies (Directors' Report) and Limited Liability Partnerships (Energy and Carbon Report) Regulations 2018.

In accordance with these requirements, we calculate and disclose our emissions following the GHG Protocol Corporate Accounting and Reporting Standard, adhering to the operational control approach. We have utilised consumption data wherever available, while industry-standard benchmarks have been employed to derive estimates in the absence of precise data. The baseline year for our SECR reporting is the Financial Year 2019/2020 (1 June – 31 May), as it is deemed representative and serves as a reliable reference point against which future emission reductions can be measured.

Our SECR reporting complements our adherence to the Energy Savings Opportunities Scheme (2014); we will be submitting for phase 3 compliance in June 2024.

Key achievements

Over the years, we have achieved significant progress, including:

- Use of renewable energy resources.
- Adoption of LED lighting and sensor lighting.
- Promotion of the Green Car Scheme (electric vehicles).
- Promotion of car share and bike to work schemes.
- Hybrid working scheme encouraging working from home and less travel.
- Reduction of waste to landfill through recycling schemes and training.
- Promotion of awareness and application of the waste hierarchy.

As a result, we have successfully achieved a 20% reduction in location-based carbon emissions compared to our current baseline (FY 19/20), alongside a 23% decrease in our emissions intensity ratio (tCO₂e/1000m² Floor area).

To ensure the efficient management of our carbon and energy objectives, we have integrated our targets within our ISO 14001:2015 (Environmental Management Systems) accreditation. This comprehensive integration ensures that carbon and energy considerations are firmly embedded within our decision-making process. This is in addition to embedding carbon and energy management within the roles and responsibilities of our ESG Committee and ESG Sub-Committee, thereby establishing a robust framework for effective governance and implementation.

Key commitments - KPIs and targets

Objective: Monitor and continuously improve our environmental performance to support the transition to a net zero economy.	
KPIs:	Targets:
Scope 1, 2 (market based) and limited scope 3 emissions (tCO₂e)	<p>Understand and recalculate scope 3 emissions by 2025.</p> <p>Reduce Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions by 50% by 2035 (tCO₂e) against a 2023 baseline.</p> <p>Reduce Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions by 90% by 2050 (tCO₂e) against a 2023 baseline.</p> <p>Make a commitment by 2025 to apply to SBTi for validation.</p> <p>Apply to SBTi by 2025 to validate net zero targets.</p>
Total energy consumption within the organisation from renewable sources (kWh)	<p>Reduce 50% of total energy consumption from non-renewable sources by 2035.</p> <p>Increase participation in building forums.</p>
GHG emissions intensity ratio for Birketts, per full time employee	Reduce GHG emissions intensity (GHG emissions per full time employee) by 10% annually.
Total amount of waste generated (tonnes)	75% of waste diverted from landfill by 2030.
Total amount of waste diverted from landfill and incineration (tonnes)	
% waste recycled	75% paperless by 2030.
% waste prepared for reuse	To achieve a waste reuse/recycling rate of at least 75% by 2030.
% of total employees who have undertaken climate change and net zero training	100% of new starters to undertake climate change and net zero training by 2024.
	Mandate 100% of existing employees to undertake climate change and net zero annual training with 80% completion rate from and including 2024.
	Raise awareness on climate change for both internal as external stakeholders through initiatives (e.g. website, ESG committee).
	Develop partnerships with organisations and existing and future clients focused on climate change.
	Assess Birketts' climate related (both physical and transition) risks and opportunities by 2025.
	Measure Birketts' financial impact of the significant climate-related risks and opportunities.
Accreditations and certifications associated with the environment	Identify the most appropriate certifications to align to by the end of 2024.

In order to ensure that we continue to drive carbon reductions, in 2024 we intend to engage a third-party expert to collaborate with us in developing a comprehensive carbon footprint that will extend our operational boundary to encompass more scope 3 categories. This expanded footprint will serve as our new baseline against which we will measure our progress. We are also committed to setting a science-based net-zero target that is grounded on the globally recognised Science Based Targets initiative's (SBTi) Net Zero Standard. We aim to submit our commitment letter to SBTi by 2025.



Climate change agenda and carbon reduction is very important for partners and suppliers. We want to see Birketts having the same aspirations. ”

External stakeholder

Applicable policies:

ESG policy
Environment policy

ESG Pillar 2: Social – inspiring our people

Topics: equity, diversity and inclusion; health and wellness

Birketts is dedicated to building a supportive and inclusive work environment. We listen to our colleagues, and value their happiness and wellbeing in all aspects of their lives. We encourage people to be themselves at work and appreciate the unique talents and contribution every individual can bring to the success of the firm, our clients and community.

To help focus and measure our efforts we are addressing two priority areas, equity, diversity, and inclusion; and health and wellness.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

Our EDI objective is to foster an informed and inclusive culture where all our people feel a deep sense of pride and belonging and feel empowered to be themselves. Our People and Culture Committee plays a key role in delivering against this objective and aims to raise awareness, support and affect change, enhance quality and ensure all colleagues are treated, listened, and responded to equitably. In particular, we are keen to embrace inclusion as a means to naturally becoming more diverse and have identified five important focus areas:

- Gender diversity
- Working parents
- Social mobility
- Race and ethnicity
- Physical and mental health and wellbeing

Key achievements

We also have a number of established networks representing the focus areas above as well as additional areas (e.g. LGBTQ+, Neurodiversity). Employee networks are voluntary groups of employees that collaboratively come together based on shared identity or life experiences to provide a support system and offer a collective voice to the People and Culture Committee.

We publish an annual diversity report which is available internally and externally; this report includes information concerning other protected characteristics, such as disability, ethnicity, and religion. We also monitor and report our gender pay gap information annually.

Female gender diversity



EDI is communicated as a priority, but there is such a long way to go...Birketts needs to do everything to ensure they are recruiting diversely. ”

Internal stakeholder

We have made strong progress against our female gender diversity targets. Our ‘Gender Diversity: The Pathway to Partnership’ workshop, is aimed at empowering female associates in their career progression and has been attended by more than 60 female lawyers. As a result of this and other initiatives, in 2023, 41% of our partnership are female, an increase of 13% since 2020.

Social mobility

We are committed to supporting the UK ‘Levelling Up’ programme and are developing a bespoke action plan aimed at improving opportunities and social mobility in the East of England and within the broader legal profession.

A number of our offices, notably Ipswich, Cambridge and London are located in areas of severe economic deprivation, and we have implemented several social mobility initiatives that are leading to positive

outcomes for our local communities. These initiatives include our partnership with The Careers and Enterprise Company as a ‘Cornerstone Employer’, legal apprenticeships, and inclusion monitoring. As a designated Cornerstone Employer, we collaborate with other employers to develop employability and skills in schools and colleges and act as an ambassador for social mobility, leveraging our network and those of other Cornerstone Employers.

Key commitments – KPIs and targets

Objective: Foster an informed and inclusive culture where all our people feel a deep sense of pride and belonging and feel empowered to be themselves.	
KPIs:	Targets:
Female partners (% of total partners)	Increase the % of female partners within the business to 45% of the total number of partners by 2026, and to 50% by 2030.
% of ethnic minorities representation at partner level	Create the baseline of ethnic minorities representation in Birketts using 2021 census by 2024.
% of ethnic minorities representation at all levels	Identify a target to increase the % of ethnic minorities representation at all levels to reflect regional ethnic diversity by 2028.
% of lower socio-economic backgrounds representation at all levels	Develop the methodology to gather baseline for lower socio-economic background by 2024. Increase the % of people from a lower socio-economic backgrounds at all levels across the business.
No. of individuals impacted through initiatives aimed at reducing inequality across the UK legal sector	Create definitions to define which individuals to engage with and which inequalities to focus on. Develop a target for the number of individuals assisted and the number of employees involved in the initiatives.
% gap pay between gender	Reduce gender pay gap between colleagues. Measure gender pay gap within partnership by 2024.
Social Mobility Employer Index ranking	Sign up to social mobility index employer ranking.

Health and wellness

We prioritise our workforce's health, safety, and wellbeing. Our strategic objective is to enable and encourage our people to develop, contribute and progress to their fullest potential by providing a healthy environment promoting wellness.

Key achievements

In October 2020, we launched the THRIVE health and wellbeing programme, which provides our colleagues with access to various interactive activities, events and resources centred around four crucial areas of positive health and wellbeing: mental health, diet and nutrition, physical health, and sleep. In October 2022, we appointed a dedicated wellbeing nurse to assist and support our colleagues in these areas.

Our Health and Safety Committee, which comprises management and elected staff representatives and our Health and Safety Policy provide a comprehensive framework for managing health and safety across the firm. The Committee is responsible for discussing health and safety issues, reviewing related procedures, monitoring and reporting on health and safety matters, and keeping abreast of relevant legislation.

Key commitments – KPIs and target

Objective: Enable and encourage people to develop, contribute and progress to their fullest potential by provide in a healthy environment promoting wellness.	
KPIs	Targets
% of men taking paternity leave and shared parental leave	Measuring % of men taking paternity leave and shared parental leave.
% of women returning to work after maternity leave	Measuring % of women returning to work after maternity leave.
Employee satisfaction score (%)	Achieve above 40 on eNPS by 2025.
Accreditations associated with health and wellness	Identify health and wellness accreditations to align to 2024.
% of line managers who are mental health first aiders	Achieve 1 mental health first aider per 50 employees by 2025.

Applicable policies:

ESG Policy
EDI Policy
Health and Safety Policy
Learning and Development Policy

ESG Pillar 3: Governance - influencing positive change

Topic: Sustainable supply chain

We recognise the importance of fostering a sustainable supply chain and comply with all laws, regulations, and rules relevant to our business. Through our 'Influencing Positive Change' ESG pillar, we aim to engage with internal and external stakeholders to collaborate with and influence our valued partners to share best practice and be more sustainable.

Key achievements

Internally, we invest significantly in educating our employees through a comprehensive training programme designed to enable them to recognise potential risks in our business and supply chains, and to encourage them to report any potential breaches of our policy on anti-slavery and human trafficking. This training programme is available to all staff and is deemed mandatory for key employees involved in procurement and contracts.

We publish our Anti-Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement annually and our risk and compliance team is responsible for ensuring that our systems and controls prevent slavery and human trafficking from taking place anywhere in our supply chain. We also have a whistleblowing policy which enables the safe and confidential reporting of any concerns or breaches in policy. In the previous financial year (2022/2023), we did not encounter any modern slavery risks in our supply chain.

Responsible short-listing is at the heart of our procurement process. We carefully evaluate every material new supplier and conduct a risk analysis based on the product or service's nature and value. Our material suppliers must comply with all local and national laws and regulations, and we request information on monitoring tier 1 and 2 suppliers for unfair practices, responsible sourcing policies and corporate social responsibility. We actively communicate any concerns or non-compliance to our suppliers and if suppliers fail to meet our expectations or show reluctance to make necessary changes, we may cease to engage with them.



Birketts could provide more support to their supply chain to upskill the work force and work with their suppliers and communities. ”

External stakeholder

Key commitments – KPIs and targets

We are committed to improving our procurement processes. Integrating ESG criteria into our procurement processes is pivotal to realising our commitment to a more sustainable supply chain. To this end, we are working to implement climate-aligned clauses within our contracts and evaluate the ESG performance of our suppliers to ensure strict alignment with our core principles and objectives by 2024.

Objective: Engage with internal and external stakeholders to collaborate with and influence our valued partners to share best practice and be more sustainable.	
KPIs:	Targets:
% of suppliers assessed using an external assessment tool	<p>Identify an external assessment tool.</p> <p>100% of Tier 1 suppliers assessed using an external assessment tool on ESG criteria.</p> <p>75% of Tier 2 suppliers assessed using an external assessment tool on ESG criteria.</p> <p>50% of Tier 3 suppliers assessed using an external assessment tool on ESG criteria.</p>
% of suppliers with ESG improvement plans	100% of Tier 1 and 75% of Tier 2 to have ESG improvement plans in place by 2030.
Social value generated through supply chain	
% employees completion rate of ESG e-learning training	85% of colleagues to complete mandatory ESG e-learning training per annum.
% of new contracts to contain ESG aligned clauses	Embed ESG into procurement processes by 2024.
% of new contracts to contain climate aligned clauses	50% of new contracts to have climate aligned clauses.
% of procurement spend on suppliers local to Birketts' offices	Identify an approach to gather and assess supplier data for procurement spend by 2024.
Procurement spend on suppliers that are SMEs	
% of suppliers paid in accordance with the Prompt Payment Code	Pay suppliers within the payment terms of the contracts.

Applicable policies and procedures:

ESG Policy

Anti-Slavery Policy and Human Trafficking

Procedure for Outsourcing and Managing Supplier Relationships

Cyber security programme

ESG Pillar 4: CSR - enhancing our communities

Topic: social impact

As an employer of more than 1,000 people across the UK, we aim to make a meaningful social impact both within our organisation and in the communities where we operate. We recognise our vital role in widening access to the legal profession and positively impacting our local communities through our recruitment, business practices and external community activities.

Key achievements

Creating sustainable relationships with local communities

We have a long-standing commitment to supporting our local communities through our pro bono programme and the Birketts Charitable Fund.

Pro bono

Many of our people give large amounts of their time to help people and organisations who would not otherwise be able to afford legal advice. We are involved in law clinics and centres across London and East Anglia, providing advice on a range of topics including family law, employment, and property law. Our regular pro bono commitments include:

Suffolk Law Centre – managed by two of our second-year trainees, a pool of volunteers provide thirty minute appointments to people who approach the Centre needing legal advice, usually on housing, family law or employment matters.

LandAid – Cambridge-based Legal Director, Sophie Thornley, is on the Eastern Region board of this charity run by professionals in the property sector. All requests for pro bono property advice in the region come to her for distribution to appropriate professionals. Birketts takes on these cases where we have the relevant skills.

Norfolk ProHelp – Birketts is part of this network of professional businesses in Norfolk. We are notified of specific projects where pro bono legal advice is required, and the co-ordinator in our Norfolk office then finds an appropriate lawyer to give advice and support to that project.

We have also held a legal advice clinic for the charity **Lighthouse Women's Aid**. Having seen how well it was received, we have recently set up another clinic for **Compassion**. Both charities support women, young people and children who are affected by domestic abuse.

Charitable giving

Launched in 2006, the Birketts Charitable Fund is administered by the Community Foundations in Cambridgeshire, Essex, Norfolk, Suffolk, and the East End of London. We do this so our funds generate income, which each office can then use to donate to various charities recommended by their local foundation; in the previous financial year (2022/2023),

we distributed £67,120 to charitable causes, which has had significant social impact in our local communities.

In addition to the funds that are disbursed by the Community Foundations, we encourage our people to support cross-firm charitable fund-raising initiatives. In 2023, our cross-firm charitable fund-raising initiatives will include the Cumbrian Challenge in aid of Walking for the Wounded and the Great Birketts' Sleep Out in aid of charities working to tackle homelessness.

At the local office level, each office has a Charities Committee, which is responsible for nominating a local charity of charities of the year and organising fundraising activities in support of these charities as appropriate.

Inspiring our people to share their time and skills

We expect our people, where possible, to take an active involvement in projects benefiting the community in which we live and work. Members of the firm at all levels play an active role in the running or operation of a large number of local charitable and voluntary organisations. Our people are allowed time off work to enable them to carry out work in support of their chosen charities and are encouraged to engage with local communities and groups for mutual benefit.

We seek suggestions for social impact projects from all quarters and particularly from people within the firm. We will consider any scheme which we believe will give a tangible benefit and which is safe and appropriately structured.

Under our CSR Day programme, all employees are entitled to take one day per calendar year to undertake a community project, and involvement in these activities is regarded as a positive factor in performance review and career progression.



Birketts could so some innovative thinking on how they can help communities and move forward and create communities that can serve themselves. ”

External stakeholder

Key Commitments – KPIs and targets

Our two primary social impact objectives are:

Create and nurture relationships with community and charitable organisations, share our resources to support their endeavours and improve the lives of those who need it most.

Inspire and support our people to share their time and skills for positive change in the communities in which we work.

Our full KPIs and targets are:

Objective: Create and nurture relationship with community and charitable organisations, sharing our resources to support their endeavours and improve the lives of those who need it the most.	
KPIs:	Targets:
No. of social impact assessments and development programmes	<p>Identify an organisation to assist with the social impacts assessments.</p> <p>Conduct one impact assessment in each of Birketts locations.</p> <p>Establish Birketts position and industry benchmark to identify our impact on members of our communities.</p>
Community investment against revenue (%)	<p>Define community investment for Birketts.</p> <p>Identify current baseline for community investment by May 2024.</p> <p>Agree a target for community investment.</p>
Social value generated (£)	<p>Identify an organisation or partner specialising in social value to help Birketts decide on their focus areas for social value, and methodology for calculating social value.</p> <p>Set a target for social value generated in the future.</p>
Establishment of community giving strategy	<p>Establish a company-wide community giving strategy by 2024 (*in line with our bribery policy etc.).</p> <p>Increase the no. of individuals supported from lower socio-economic backgrounds.</p>
Direct and indirect charitable contributions (£)	<p>Increase number of Pro Bono hours per employee per year which support agreed upon beneficiaries.</p> <p>Identify a baseline measurement of CSR days.</p>
No. of apprentices and trainees employed	100% of apprenticeship levy spent on apprenticeships.

Applicable policies:

ESG Policy
 CSR Policy

Looking ahead

We have a clear and ambitious ESG strategy, supported by a robust governance framework and a clear communications programme. We look forward to reporting our progress against our targets to our internal and external stakeholders in our next ESG report, which will be issued in October 2024.



There needs to be more communication about what's happening...we need to share knowledge with all staff on ESG and environmental impact. ”

Internal stakeholder

About this report

This report covers the time period of September 2022 to September 2023. Any queries or requests for further information should be directed to:



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