

## The Birmingham pledge

This Pledge seeks to attempt to outline why the major professional firms in the city value the diversity and community of our city centre and why we will seek to proactively ensure our employees can continue to benefit from all that working and living in the city offers.

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### EXAMPLES OF THE PLEDGES:

Company	Examples
Avison Young	Avison Young are delighted to pledge their support to the Birmingham Business Pledge 2021. As an organisation we will contribute towards the sustainability of the City through our commitment to be operationally net zero carbon by 2030, drive transformational change within our business through our commitment to Diversity and Inclusion (including mandatory unconscious bias training and the establishment of D&I Champions within our offices whilst and continuing to provide Pro Bono support to our cultural offering through the provision of our time and expertise mirroring that which we have done for the Symphony Hall (Making an Entrance Project) and The Birmingham Rep (Open House Project).
CBRE	<b>CBRE Commitments:</b>  <i>Will Ventham, managing director, CBRE Birmingham:</i> "Diversity, equality and inclusion are fundamental to CBRE. One of our most successful means of fostering diversity and inclusion is through our CBRE employee network groups, which are open to all and include the Proud Network, for LGBTQ staff and allies; our Women's Network; our Reach Network, for our people from various ethnic, religious and social backgrounds, as well as our Faith Network, Ability Network, Family Friendly Network and Armed Forces Group.  "We are a proud holder of the National Equality Standard, the first property services provider to achieve this, helping to set standards for other firms within our industry. We were also one of the first Race at Work Charter signatories in real estate, and one of only a handful of Disability Confident Employers.

	<p>“Environmental, social and governance (ESG) issues concern our business, our clients and the communities in which we operate. We have set ourselves ambitious net zero carbon targets and have hired a dedicated ESG Engagement Lead, to ensure we take our people with us on the journey.”</p> <p><b>Specific local Initiatives:</b></p> <p>As part of our commitment to encouraging more people to consider a career in surveying, no matter their social or ethnic background, CBRE Birmingham is involved with Career Ready, the national social mobility charity. A number of employees have signed up as volunteers and mentors to offer students from colleges and universities across the city career advice and support, as well as sharing experiences and insights.</p> <p>A new diversity newsletter is being produced by CBRE’s Birmingham office. The quarterly publication will cover diversity related topics and themes and will be guest edited by a different employee each issue.</p> <p>The business actively fosters its next generation of talent. We have a graduate and apprenticeship programme, at both national and local level. In the Birmingham office we currently have four young people working towards qualification across both programmes.</p> <p>The Birmingham office has a junior board comprising seven members. It has representation on the regional executive board and a representative sits on CBRE’s national junior board which, in turn, has a voice at the top table.</p>
<p>Cushman &amp; Wakefield</p>	<p><b>Digital Detox</b> – every year everyone is required to take a digital detox to coincide with a period of annual leave. In addition to protect “out of hours” for home life, we ask employees not to send internal emails between 7pm – 7am or over the weekend.</p> <p><b>Mental Health Awareness –</b></p> <p>The past 18 months have created many challenges for both businesses and individuals. Looking after everyone’s mental health is important and we are introducing mental health awareness training for our managers.</p> <p>In addition Cushman &amp; Wakefield are sponsoring the GBSLEP/Ahead Growing Talent programme for the 2021/22 academic year, a series of digital resources, recorded</p>

	<p>events and a live brief project to provide young people in the West Midlands with an insight into the Real Estate Sector. It gives us the opportunity to engage with 200 local schools, provides a wide reaching community engagement for our business and hopefully encourages students to take up a career in property.</p>
<p>Deloitte</p>	<p>Hybrid working</p> <p><b>'Deloitte Works'</b> is our hybrid working model and is about giving our people the flexibility and choice in when, where, and how you work. It is our opportunity to design and implement strategies to create the best environments for our people, our clients, and our firm, <b>to make an impact that matters</b>. Our offices are now principally for team collaboration, training and client meetings.</p> <p>Path to net zero</p> <p>Deloitte have launched <b>WorldClimate</b> - our global plan to achieve net zero by 2030 and drive responsible climate choices within our organisation and beyond. Our biggest priority is reducing emissions. We've set and shared ambitious goals that touch on every aspect of our organisation and which are guiding the action our people are taking with clients, alliance partners, suppliers and other stakeholders. Backed by the <b>Science-Based Targets Initiative (SBTI)</b>, they're in line with Paris Agreement ambitions - to keep the world within a 1.5°C temperature increase. We've also joined the <b>UN's Race to Zero campaign</b> - the largest ever alliance committed to achieve net zero emissions.</p>
<p>Eversheds Sutherland</p>	<p><b>Sustainability</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For World Environment Day 2021 we offered colleagues the opportunity to apply for a grant to support a local environmental charity, supporting our Purpose: helping our communities to thrive. We asked them to outline the reasons why this project would support the sustainability or biodiversity of their local community and Birmingham had 5 winners. The projects ranged from tree planting to restoration of heathland</li> <li>• Approved Science Based Targets (SBTs) - reducing Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions by 50% by 2030</li> <li>• Member of the Net Zero Lawyers Alliance (NLZA) - will be a net zero business by latest 2050</li> </ul>

- Signatory to the UN Global Compact and have aligned to all 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGS) – many of which will directly support the sustainable growth of Birmingham city centre, specifically goal 11: sustainable cities and communities
- M&E contractor on site works to identify areas of high energy usage in the building and either improve efficiency of plant or reduce energy usage overall
- Have cycle facilities in the office, including cycle spaces, showers and a drying room. Offer the Cycle to Work Scheme, including e-bikes. Encourage colleagues to travel by public transport by offering them a season ticket loan.
- Have a green wall in the restaurant to improve air quality and introduce green space into the office
- Provide a range of recycling streams including plastics, tins/cans, food waste and sweet wrappers. The office also collects crisp packets and writing instruments as part of the TerraCycle scheme and deposits the items in a collection hub at Aston University which can then convert the weights into points to purchase educational materials.

#### **Inclusivity**

- Social mobility - We reinforce our commitment to Diversity and Inclusion through our Corporate Responsibility and *Pro Bono* actions all over the world, with a particular emphasis on social mobility: our Unlocked programme, for example, has helped 1000+ state-educated students (many of whom are ethnic minorities) access mentoring and work experience from 100+ of our Partners and provides financial support - many participants have secured training roles with us. We have also committed to participate in the 10,000 Black Interns initiative to help address under-representation of Black talent in the legal sector.
- Inclusive Leadership - We rolled out Inclusive Leadership workshops for our UK partners and leaders to support inclusive day-to-day behaviours and practices, including decision-making, hiring, promotions and staffing of client matters/considering opportunities for all team members. By early 2021, 70% of

	<p>our Partnership had attended these workshops. We have recently extended this with Inclusive Teams training, designed to encourage more open conversations about inclusion and belonging, to support our strategy to retain our best talent and build a diverse and inclusive culture.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Working Well with Clients</u> - Earlier this year we launched our “Working Well with Clients” practical guidelines which are rooted in the Mindful Business Charter principles and provide a key opportunity to collaborate with clients to create a meaningful shift in workplace culture and how we work together in a purposeful way to support wellbeing.</li> <li>• <u>Let’s Talk about Race</u> - In conjunction with Business in the Community we delivered a series of <i>Let’s Talk about Race</i> sessions to our UK Partners and equivalent roles and published a guidance document. To mark International Day Against Racism and Discrimination on 21 March 2021, we compiled a video for our people, using real examples shared with us, in order to highlight the work that we all still have to do to create a truly inclusive environment. We adopted the Halo Code – the first Black hair code designed to end hair discrimination – and have recently developed a video, featuring some of our Black colleagues, who share their thoughts on what the Code means to them.</li> </ul>
Gateley	<p>Gateley are delighted to pledge their support to the Birmingham Business Pledge 2021. As a Responsible Business we are committed to supporting the communities in which we work, using the UK’s Levelling Up Goals as our framework to maximise the positive impact we have on people, potential and the planet. We are proud to be headquartered in Birmingham and through our partnership with sports charity SportsAid we are supporting two athletes in Birmingham. Innovation is part of our forward-thinking ethos and we support start-ups in the region through our partnership with BCU STEAMHouse which provides a space for collaboration, innovation and the development of new ideas, start-ups and ventures.</p>
Gowling WLG	<p>We are a people business and, as such, strong relationships are key - with our clients, our communities and each other. We build strong relationships by fostering a culture that is, above all, about people and teams. We create an environment where everyone’s contributions are valued and respected and actively embrace diversity and inclusion in our workplaces.</p>

### **Supporting our Communities**

At Gowling WLG we support and invest in our communities through three priority areas: pro bono, volunteering and charitable giving.

- **Pro bono:** The provision of free legal advice directly to charities and community groups, as well as through legal clinics, at the heart of our community engagement, plays to our core strength. We also recognise that properly supervised pro bono work provides important development opportunities for our colleagues as they progress through their careers.
- **Volunteering:** Each year our people give time to projects in our local communities in Birmingham – focusing on the key issues of homelessness, education and inner city needs. Where possible we ensure our volunteering activities are skills based – deploying the wide ranging skills of lawyers and our business services teams, to maximise the impact they can have for the benefit of others. We give our people 21 hours of paid volunteering leave each year.
- **Charitable giving:** Alongside practical help, we provide financial and in-kind support to charities in a variety of ways. For example, charities and community organisations can use our Birmingham meeting rooms for free, and we have clothing and toiletry donation points on every working floor.
- **Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games:** We are proud to be the Official Legal Advisers to and an official sponsor of the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games. As part of this, we have been working closely with the Birmingham 2022 Organising Committee's Engagement & Legacy Team.

We are engaging across a number of different projects, with our main focus being to deliver a programme that will leave a strong and impactful legacy to the local community.

### **Supporting inclusivity**

The diversity and inclusion (D&I) of our workplace is hugely important to Gowling and reflects our global values.

Over many years we have invested in D&I as a central part of our vision – recognising that we are fundamentally a 'people business' and that attracting and retaining diverse talent is essential to delivering the best service to our clients.

We want to create an inclusive workplace where our people can be themselves, celebrating the fact that we're all individuals.

- Andy Stylianou, our UK Chairman, is our firm's D&I champion
- We have board sponsors for gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, parents and carers and for mental health, wellbeing and disability
- We have a dedicated D&I team led by a Head of D&I, reporting to our HR Director and Chairman
- Our latest D&I strategy, Inclusion for All, being rolled out in 2021, empowers leaders and colleagues at all levels to play an active role in making progress on D&I
- Our wider HR team plays a crucial part in delivery of inclusive practices day to day, ensuring that key processes such as recruitment, promotion and talent development are inclusive and designed to eliminate bias. In November 2020 we launched our Inclusion Allies programme, which was the result of our networks recognising the important role allies play in making progress
- Increasing the representation of women: Across the legal profession, there is a visible lack of female talent at the top, and we have focused on changing this at Gowling WLG for a number of years. In 2016, when 18% of our partners were female, we set targets to increase representation of female partners at our firm, with the aim to reach 25% female partners by 2021 and 30% by 2026. This is by no means our end goal, but by setting targets, we focused our efforts. As of October 2021, 26% of our partners are female.

#### **Supporting the planet**

In 2017 we launched our PLANET+ policy commitment, which includes six public goals to achieve by 2030.

The policy and approach reflect the UN Global Compact Principles and draw on the SDGs as well as international standards ISO 14001 (environmental management) and ISO50001 (energy management).

#### **Achievements to 2020 include:**

- State of the art recycling stations on all floors, removal of desk bins and waste reduction particularly in hospitality. For example, we adopted compostable plastics, removed single use/disposable items and composted food waste.
- A partnership with our catering providers has led to more plant-based food choices and quicker response times to ideas.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All A4/A3 copy paper used is recycled from 100% post-consumer waste</li> <li>• Carbon emissions from corporate travel have been offset for more than ten years.</li> </ul> <p>Consolidation of occupied space and action to improve energy efficiency have also led to significant carbon reduction.</p>
HSBC	<p><b><i>Ian Stuart, Chief Executive of HSBC UK</i></b> said <i>“Birmingham’s growth as an attractive hub for business, culture and people continues, and we are incredibly proud to be headquartered here at the heart of the UK as we build a bank fit for the future.</i></p> <p><i>“We are playing a leading role in supporting the UK’s transition to net zero, embedding new and flexible ways of working across our business, and using our position in society to champion diversity and inclusion in all its forms. We are here to open a world of opportunity for our customers, people, communities and the planet we all share.”</i></p> <p><b><u>Proof points:</u></b></p> <p><b>HSBC UK’s headquarters in Birmingham:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HSBC UK’s head office opened its doors at 1 Centenary Square at the heart of the city centre in July 2018. An investment of over £200 million in Birmingham, it was the first building in the city to be constructed to LEED Gold accreditation. Also home to HSBC University, the bank’s Europe, the Middle East and Africa hub for learning and development.</li> <li>• We have reorganised our offices to support our transition to a new hybrid way of working – more flexible, collaboration space for teams, bookable desks, and new technology to support colleagues. One size does not fit all – we will enable colleagues to find the balance that works for their role, teams and, most importantly our customers.</li> </ul> <p><b>Playing a leading role in the UK’s transition to net zero by 2050:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting businesses of all sizes to innovate and grow: including a £1.1 million fund for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Birmingham and the West Midlands (part of a £15 billion lending fund to support SMEs across the UK)</li> <li>• Global ambition to reduce financed emissions from our portfolio of customers to net zero by 2050 or sooner, in line with the goals of the Paris Agreement, and achieve <b>net</b> zero in our own operations and supply chain by 2030 or sooner.</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expect to be fully powered by renewable sources in the UK by 2023, reducing CO2 per FTE from more than 1 tonne to zero tonnes. CO2 consumption per FTE is down more than 75% since 2012.</li> <li>• Partnered with the University of Birmingham and Imperial College London to accelerate the growth of clean tech start-ups (ann. May 2021). 150 UK start-ups are expected to participate in the accelerator programmes over the next four years.</li> <li>• HSBC Bank (UK) Pension Scheme, one of the largest corporate pension schemes in the UK, committed to net zero greenhouse gas emissions across its £36bn of assets under management by 2050 or sooner (ann. Oct 2021).</li> </ul> <p><b>Championing diversity and inclusion in all its forms:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Founding member of the UK's <i>Race at Work Charter</i>, and one of the first financial services companies to publish ethnicity pay gap data in the UK (Feb 2021), four months after publishing its UK ethnicity representation data for the first time.</li> <li>• In July 2020 HSBC set out a series of global ethnicity commitments to improve opportunities for Black, Asian and ethnic minority employees and boost the diversity of our senior leadership, including at least doubling the number of Black employees in senior leadership globally by 2025.</li> <li>• First employer in the UK to be awarded <i>Menopause Friendly Accreditation</i> (2021).</li> <li>• Part of <i>The Valuable 500</i> -- a worldwide call to action which strives to place disability inclusion at the top of business agenda; founding member of the <i>Purple Light Up Campaign</i>; achieved <i>Carer Confident Standard</i> with Carers UK and <i>Business Disability Forum Silver Standard</i> in 2020.</li> <li>• One of two founder employers for the <i>West Midlands Combined Authority Apprenticeship Levy Transfer Fund</i>, and long-time supporter of the <i>Prince's Trust</i> (including the launch of its skills centre in Digbeth/2018).</li> <li>• Working with the University of Birmingham and PwC on the <i>Birmingham Digital Futures</i> programme, and a proud sponsor of <i>Birmingham Pride</i> as well as the <i>Birmingham Royal Ballet</i> and <i>City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra</i>.</li> </ul>
JLL	<p>JLL is delighted to support the Birmingham Business Pledge 2021. With a purpose to shape the future of real estate for a better world, we have an ambitious UK sustainability strategy which seeks to have a positive impact at both a national and local level. In line with our global net zero carbon 2040 commitment, we will be net zero carbon in</p>

	<p>operation by 2030 in the UK and have key commitments on ensuring a diverse supply of quality housing in the UK and promoting the real living wage. Alongside a commitment to social mobility, we have set specific employee targets on gender and race, and continue to provide significant support to a range of community and charity partners.</p> <p>Specifically we have run a reverse mentoring scheme for over 50 people from our senior leadership group. We also ran this year and will continue to do so, our Access to Property Programme. This is where we provide a one week Work Experience programme and we offered 100 places this year from predominantly under privileged/under represented backgrounds.”</p>
<p>KPMG</p>	<p><b>The Young Rep Committee</b></p> <p>KPMG is hugely proud to support The REP and we have just embarked on our 3rd year as their official Youth Theatre Sponsor providing support in many ways as part of our unique partnership. The Young REP Committee are Birmingham REP's youth governance group, representing the 150 young people aged 7-25 engaged in our youth theatre.</p> <p>Our KPMG colleagues are helping to host sessions with the Young Rep Committee in the form of a panel discussion about their respective roles, career journeys and advice for young people accessing the world of work.</p> <p>Through a Q&amp;A following panel introductions we can identify key topics for further 'surgeries' that the same KPMG staff might then offer to the wider Young REP members, perhaps including public speaking, CV advice, interview technique etc.</p> <p>Our aim is that the Young REP Committee will start to take an active role with The REP's board in the near future, so we are also considering upskilling necessary for meaningful engagement with things like finance, business planning and governance.</p> <p><b>Black Lives Action Plan:</b></p> <p><b>In 2020, we launched our Black Lives Action Plan - a commitment to redoubling our efforts</b> at every level, pushing harder for faster and more significant change in our firm across five priority areas:</p>

	<p>We've introduced dedicated resources to work on Black inclusion full-time, reporting directly to our UK Chair and the Head of People.</p> <p>We've brought in external expertise, to support our efforts and to constructively challenge us. We know we can't accelerate change if we act alone.</p> <p>We've committed to at least doubling our Black population in leadership positions by 2022.</p> <p>715 colleagues in the UK have signed up to join our Allyship programme, to help us all learn from each other and act as role model sponsors of our black talent.</p>
Liquid	<p><b>Working groups</b></p> <p>In 2020, Liquid established 8 working groups with the aim to identify areas where we can grow or improve our ways of working. Some examples included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Values and culture</li> <li>- Wellbeing, resilience, diversity and inclusion</li> <li>- Internal communications</li> </ul> <p>Direct results of these working groups consisted of enrolling members of the team on mental health awareness first aid training, as well as access to company yoga, the Liquid book club, the Liquid pet club and weekly buddy groups. Plus, we also provide breakfast for all team members, so they start the day fuelled.</p> <p><b>Work experience</b></p> <p>During the height of the pandemic, Liquid held virtual work experience for more than 200 university and sixth form students undertook virtual work experience with Liquid in 2021.</p> <p>We also provide mentoring to the Government Communications Network, UCB and the Kick Start Programme.</p> <p>We believe in constantly developing people whether via Source, our graduate training programme, or Liquid Leaders which was developed for our senior team.</p> <p>In 2020, the team collectively benefitted from 1,250 hours of training.</p> <p><b>Community support</b></p> <p>Over the last two years, Liquid has supported charities and causes close to our hearts, donating over £145k in kind and in donations, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Organ donation via the British Transplant Games</li> <li>-Homelessness via Change into Action</li> <li>-Health and the vaccination efforts via St John Ambulance</li> </ul>

	<p>-The environment via Whitley Fund for Nature          -Inner city communities via the Cyrille Regis Legacy Trust</p> <p><b>Environmental credentials</b></p> <p>From our carbon neutral flooring to our demonstration kitchen made from sustainable wood we ensure as a company that we reduce our carbon footprint and support the environment.</p> <p>We also source all ingredients for recipe development, food photography and client entertainment from local suppliers and make a conscious effort to reduce food waste as much as possible.</p> <p>Liquid is also setting up a specific ESG division at the business to help clients realise their ESG credentials.</p>
<p>Lloyds Banking Group</p>	<p>As one of the UK's largest businesses, Lloyds Banking Group will focus on the substantial contribution it can make to many of today's most pressing challenges: accelerating the transition to a low-carbon economy; expanding the availability of affordable and quality homes; helping to rebuild households' financial health and wellbeing; supporting businesses to recover, adapt and grow; and building an inclusive society and organisation. Our focus of Helping Britain Recover will allow the Group to play our part in rebuilding the economy and society with commitments that will support a recovery that is sustainable and includes all the nations and regions in our society.</p> <p>Lloyds Banking Group continues to promote the importance of bringing new skills into industry and support apprenticeships by launching a new apprentice support service in conjunction with the Advanced Manufacturing Training Centre (AMTC) for manufacturing companies across England. Established in 2015, the Lloyds Bank AMTC is a state-of-the-art training centre designed to create a new generation of engineers and technicians to help the UK realise its potential in advanced manufacturing. The Lloyds Bank AMTC connects apprenticeships with high[1]calibre manufacturing and engineering employers who are looking to employ the best talent in the industry. During 2020, the Group has continued with its long-term investment of £10 million over 10 years in the AMTC, which is on track to support the training and upskilling of around 3,500 apprentices, graduates and engineers by the of 2024. Through our annual investment in the AMTC, based in the Midlands, we have trained 1,211 manufacturing apprentices, graduates and engineers in manufacturing since 2018. Lloyds Banking Group and AMTC apprenticeships have teamed up to create a new partnership to deliver fully funded high-value engineering apprenticeships to SMEs in Coventry, Warwickshire and the surrounding areas. The Group has agreed £9 million of support over three years to help SMEs to invest in apprenticeships through our Levy Transfer initiative. By sharing</p>

	<p>our apprenticeship levy we have already committed over £5.4 million of this funding, helping 230 businesses and 450 apprentices with the costs of training and development of critical STEM and digital skills in London, West Midlands and Greater Manchester, contributing towards the UK's recovery.</p> <p>In 2020 2,787 charities were supported as a result of our £100 million commitment to the Group's independent charitable Foundations.</p> <p>Lloyds will help at least 185,000 small businesses boost their digital capability through our regional academies, partnerships and digital mentoring.</p> <p>In 2021 Lloyds set new aspirations for a leadership team that reflects the society we serve, of 50 per cent women, 3 per cent Black and 13 per cent Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic colleagues in senior roles by 2025.</p>
<p>NatWest</p>	<p>We fully back the Birmingham Business Pledge and celebrate its commitments to ensuring the city continues to thrive. At NatWest we are committed to supporting enterprise and ensuring our communities reach their full potential. We are a learning organisation and have recently launched a Careers Pilot for colleagues from underrepresented groups in the West Midlands, whilst also supporting financial education across Birmingham through programmes such as MoneySense – a free financial education programme that aims to help 5-18 year-olds towards a better financial future.</p> <p>In addition to this, we remain committed to supporting businesses in their growth. Our recent Springboard to Recovery Report has highlighted that SMEs could create up to 130,000 new jobs, produce around 30,000 new businesses and result in a £160 billion opportunity for the UK economy, and that the UK's six million SMEs can achieve 50% of the UK's net zero decarbonisation goals, if they receive the right support through funding, knowledge, and training. We look forward to working with businesses across Birmingham in achieving their future climate and business goals.</p> <p>As principal partner for the upcoming COP26, we are working to ensure businesses, communities and our colleagues are ready to tackle the challenges posed by climate change. Many of our colleagues have undertaken academic course with the Universities of Cambridge and Edinburgh to ensure they have the knowledge they need to support businesses around climate issues.</p>

	<p>Our Accelerator programmes also continue to support small businesses as they scale and grow. These businesses are the lifeblood of further economic development in Birmingham, and our tailored programmes aimed at Climate, High Growth, FinTech and Purpose-Led businesses meet the diverse needs of emerging businesses and the entrepreneurs who run them.</p>
<p>Pinsent Masons LLP</p>	<p>Pinsent Masons is one of the founding members of the Net Zero Infrastructure Coalition and are committed to net zero science-based targets which are years ahead of the UK government’s mandatory 2050 deadline. You can read more about how we worked with the <b>Science Based Target initiative (SBTi) to establish our targets</b> which are to cut absolute carbon emissions by a minimum of 50% and to source 100% renewable electricity across our global network by 2030, a goal we’re almost 80% of the way to achieving already. Our commitment as a signatory to the UN Sustainable Development Goals extends to working with our clients too. We aim to support those who create, deliver and implement low carbon solutions and technologies, to support the transition to a lower carbon world.</p> <p>The Mindful Business Charter, developed by Barclays, Pinsent Masons and Addleshaw Goddard, and launched in 2018, is the first time banks and their legal services providers have come together to reach a shared agenda for supporting mental health and wellbeing. All of the signatories have committed to a set of principles centred on improved communication, respect for rest periods and considerate delegation of tasks. Performance against these principles will be monitored as part of relationship review meetings. In signing, these organisations pledge to promote a culture of openness about mental wellbeing, ensure responsible business is included as an area of assessment during significant procurement processes and drive forward the actions and necessary change in support of the principles of the Charter.</p>
<p>PwC</p>	<p><b>Net Zero and ESG</b></p> <p>Purpose sits at the heart of our strategy and integrating the fundamentals of ESG into our work is key to helping organisations improve their impact on the environment, and on society, to become more resilient, agile and sustainable. We’re launching an ESG platform and committing to upskill our people to build ESG into our client services, which is part of our <b>global net zero commitment</b>.</p> <p>We’re also using our role as an employer to support a fair and just transition, for example we have been ranked as the top employer for social mobility in the Social Mobility Foundation’s Employer Index (2019 &amp; 2020).</p>

We have kept the spotlight on tackling inequality through a number of our initiatives - our **Future of Government programme** looks at how government and business can work together to address inequality. And our **Women in Work Index** is our annual assessment of female economic empowerment across 33 OECD countries.

We have also driven significant progress on our **environmental commitments**, and achieved a platinum Ecovadis sustainability rating.

We have colleagues currently seconded to the United Nations High Level Climate Champions Team to support on COP26. This is a clear sign of our commitment to support the market transition to net zero, and a demonstration of our purpose in action.

And in the run up to COP26 we're empowering our people to take positive action themselves through supporting and promoting the **Count Us In** programme. This is a global initiative which aims to inspire a billion people to significantly reduce their carbon footprint whilst challenging leaders to set and deliver bold climate commitments at COP26 and beyond.

Additionally, PwC is delivering two flagship climate programmes - the **Climate Ambition Support Alliance (CASA)** and **Climate Finance Accelerator (CFA)** - for the UK Government to be profiled at COP26.

### **Diversity and inclusion**

#### **Building a more diverse and inclusive workplace**

This is our seventh year publishing our gender pay gap data and we are pleased to report that our key metrics, the median pay and bonus gaps, have all reduced further, continuing the downward trend. This reflects our commitment to taking action to ensure we deliver our gender targets. You can use the data explorer below to find out more about our progress against these targets and our Diversity Pay Report to find out more about our gender pay gap.

We have made good progress this year in strengthening our pipeline of female talent, particularly at manager and senior manager level, and we're delighted that women made up 41% of internal partner admissions this year. All of this means we are on track to achieve our gender targets across all grades by July 2025.

**Our diversity data** plays an important part in helping to shape the steps we're taking in our **five point action** plan to build an even more diverse and inclusive culture within our firm where everyone feels they belong and valued for who they are.

In addition to this, we have been delivering a **targeted racial equality action plan** that we announced last year to help accelerate the pace of change in improving racial equality both within our firm and in wider society. Our **ethnicity data** includes our progress against our targets and our ethnicity pay gap, which we're publishing voluntarily for the fifth year running. We've broken down our ethnicity pay data even further this year to include Chinese data in addition to the Black, Asian, and Mixed Ethnic Background data we shared last year.

And because we believe in the power of transparent data in driving real change, we are also voluntarily publishing our socio-economic background and disability pay and bonus gaps for the first time this year - you can find this on our **diversity data page**.

#### **Social Mobility and Skills**

PwC has created and continues to create new jobs and training opportunities for generations of talented young people. The firm's work with educational institutions is a long term commitment and is at the heart of its social mobility strategy.

This year in the Midlands we welcomed **276 new joiners**, including graduates, technology degree apprentices, business placement students and school leavers in its autumn intake.

From this, 54% are from non-selective state schools, 44% are from minority ethnic backgrounds, 40% are female and 38% have come from households where neither parent has completed higher education studies. Nationally, the firm has recruited over 1,300 graduates.

The recruitment figures also include 70 undergraduates onto PwC's degree programmes with the University of Nottingham and the University of Birmingham.

Thirty Four students joined the Flying Start programme - a degree course run in conjunction with PwC, ICAEW, University of Nottingham Business School, University of Reading, Newcastle University and the University of Manchester Business School. The programme allows students to study at university, as well as gaining practical paid work experience with PwC.



In addition, 36 students joined its fourth cohort of the technology degree apprenticeship programme with the University of Birmingham, where students enjoy a fully-funded degree, work placements with PwC and employment beyond.

Recognised as the number one employer for social mobility in the ***Social Mobility Foundation's Employer Index*** for the past two years, we have a targeted action plan in place to increase social mobility through our recruitment, development and progression, community and advocacy activities.

Some highlights from the past year include:

- Continuing to invest in its school and college leaver programme throughout the pandemic, with 124 people joining the programme in 2020, and a similar number joining through this route this year, having had their offers guaranteed regardless of their A Level results. The programme offers people the chance to train and take professional qualifications while earning, setting applicants on the same career trajectory as graduates.
- Recruiting for the firm's first 'New World New Skills' paid work experience programme ringfenced for year 12 (or equivalent) students from lower socio-economic backgrounds. Working with partner organisations, PwC recruited around 200 students to join the week-long programme. All of the students offered places on the programme met the firm's social mobility criteria - 45% are eligible for Free School Meals, 84% attend non-selective state schools, 75% come from an ethnic minority background and 33% are Black.
- Over 200 students joined 'Flying Start Accounting' degree programmes nationally in the last financial year, bringing the total number of students on this programme to around 650.
- Launching the first 'Flying Start Financial Bursary' available to students across all of PwC's accounting degrees. Successful applicants from lower socio-economic backgrounds will be supported with the day-to-day costs of university life through a £10,000 bursary split across their four-year degree.
- Partnering with the Refugee Council on a number of programmes including an employability skills development series programme run quarterly for Refugee

	<p>Council clients. In addition, two candidates were provided with a paid six week training course followed by an 18 week paid work placement in the firm's IT team. They have since been offered permanent roles with PwC.</p>
<p>Shoosmiths LLP</p>	<p><b>Shadow Board</b></p> <p>In 2021 Shoosmiths introduced a 'Shadow Board' with committee members from groups that are underrepresented in senior leadership roles / leadership teams. They offer new and diverse perspectives to the Board's meeting topics and review the business of the main Board with recommendations for courses of action. The Shadow Board contributes to Shoosmiths' inclusive culture so that more of their people are able to meet their full potential and flourish.</p> <p><b>Fair Working Principles:</b></p> <p>Adopting fair working practices through agile working is central to how Shoosmiths operate as a firm. Our strategic approach helps provide the majority of our staff with access to flexible working arrangements trusting our colleagues to work in a way that best suits their needs (whilst always ensuring client service expectations are met or exceeded). This is designed to improve retention and attract a diverse pool of talent e.g. flexible hours and home working options for working parents and / or carers.</p>
<p>SimkissGuy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Flexible working approach:</b> SimkissGuy Recruitment are committed to ensuring the best possible work/life balance for their employees by supporting hybrid working, making sure employees have the tools to work in a way that best supports their needs. This includes providing all of the equipment to work from home as well as the space in the city centre to come together as a team to collaborate, share ideas and socialise.</li> <li>• <b>Inclusive working principles:</b> Taking the time to understand and support the diverse needs and requirements of each current and new employee in order to retain and grow the company while promoting equality and inclusion. This includes developing flexible hours and part-time working policies to better support those with childcare and carer commitments.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Supporting our city:</b> At SimkissGuy Recruitment we have always been passionate about supporting the independent restaurants, cafes, shops and cultural venues that make our city so unique and we acknowledge this has never been more important. As an organisation, we are committed to holding regular internal and external meetings in various independent venues across the city, as well as hosting a series of regular networking events in local restaurants and encouraging employees to catch-up and come together as a team on a monthly basis in a different venue to make sure we are supporting the local economy.</li>   <li>• <b>Investing in our people:</b> As a business, we want to encourage our employees to be more well-rounded and to become more invested in our city and community. We support this by offering every member of the team training, mentoring and development opportunities as well as dedicated time during the working week for volunteering and supporting local non-for-profit organisations.</li> </ul>
Trowers & Hamblins LLP	<p>Trowers &amp; Hamblins is proud to support The Birmingham Business Pledge. Over the ten years since we opened our office the team has been proud to become an integral part of the business community and we are committed to demonstrating the positive power that we can have by working together to create an even stronger, inclusive and vibrant community.</p> <p><b>Contribute to the sustainability of the city</b></p> <p>Environment, social and governance (ESG) concerns and responsible business approaches are key drivers for our business and are embedded into our Governance with our Strategic Board setting key milestones and monitoring our progress. We are passionate about helping businesses and government to adapt how they operate and adopt innovative ways to reduce their environmental impact and deliver social value including around net-zero, energy use, electrification, procurement and green finance to name a few.</p>

Examples include our advice to Transport for West Midlands on the UK's first 5G connected Road Sensor Network. The new Road Sensor Network will also deploy environmental sensors to gain greater insight into noise levels, CO and CO2 counts, as well as weather and humidity data. This information will support TfWM and the West Midlands Councils in meeting air quality objectives and help reduce the regions emissions footprint.

**<https://www.towers.com/news/2021/june/towers-advises-transport-for-west-midlands>**

### **Social value and social equity**

Serving our local communities is important to us and we have a long history of delivering social value to them. In addition to our commitments as a business we want to support conversations about social value in the sectors in which we operate. For example, for many years we have been facilitating discussions across markets to look at the link between social or societal value and the built environment. Here are examples of our work in this area:

Investing in social good:

**<https://www.towers.com/insights/2021/september/investing-in-social-good>**

Positioning cities for inclusive growth:

**<https://www.towers.com/insights/2021/april/report-birmingham--positioning-cities-for-inclusive-growth>**

Real value:

**<https://www.towers.com/insights/2018/march/the-real-value-report>**

Highly value, hard to value:

**<https://www.towers.com/insights/2016/march/highly-valued-hard-to-value---towards-an-integrated-measurement-of-real-estate-development>**

### **Be inclusive leaders**

TowersIncludes is our award-winning diversity and inclusion initiative through which we are active supporters of inclusion. We have hosted talks with recognised ambassadors and organisations across the region including Common Purpose, Core Education trust and the University of Birmingham. We continuously investigate new

ways to show our support for and solidarity with inclusion initiatives. For example, we have recently committed to **The Race Fairness Commitment** and The Vision for Literacy Business Pledge with the National Literacy Trust. TrowersIncludes is organic, self-perpetuating, and reaches out to our clients and suppliers too.

We recently partnered with Former Education Secretary Justine Greening on her social mobility pledge. Through the commitment, Trowers will work with Justine on the development of an Opportunity Action Plan to level up Britain in the wake of Covid-19 as well as working alongside universities with the aim of creating wider pathways from higher education into the legal sector.

All of the partners are committed to upholding and demonstrating our commitment to inclusion. By way of example Head of the Trowers & Hamblins Birmingham office, Yetunde Dania, has been recognised for her work both inside and outside the organisation in embracing inclusion and for being an inspiration to the next generation of aspiring lawyers. Yetunde was recently given special recognition with an award presented to her by **Birmingham Black Lawyers** for being an outstanding role model.

#### **Embrace the city's unique offering / Celebrate our city**

Here are some recent examples

#### **Birmingham Tech**

Trowers & Hamblins has partnered with not-for-profit tech hub and think tank Birmingham Tech to help promote startups and scaleups across the region. Birmingham Tech strive to raise the profile of the Birmingham and West Midlands tech scene by helping tech and digital businesses successfully scale by providing them with valuable knowledge, insight and support.

#### **Region in renaissance**

In 2019 Trowers & Hamblins launched an initiative entitled Region in Renaissance to provide a platform for organisations to celebrate Birmingham and the wider region as a destination of choice for business on a global scale. As part of our ongoing campaign celebrating and supporting the region, we met and discussed how the Midlands can continue to grow and cement its position. We looked at the new narrative emerging for the region and the role businesses have to play in it. Exploring strengths and recent successes, we looked ahead at creating step- changes for business, institutions and

	<p>inhabitants, and considered how best to open up opportunity through embracing diversity, technology and structural change.</p> <p>Now in 2021 we took the opportunity to shine a light on ten key areas of the local economy and business covering topics from the Commonwealth Games to manufacturing and sustainability and truly celebrating ten years of our office in the wonderful city of Birmingham in a series of podcasts. <a href="http://www.trowers.com/">www.trowers.com/</a></p>
Turley	<p>Our commitments as a business:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- We are an employee-owned business and part of the Employee Owned Association (EOA)</li> <li>- We have two Senior Director champions for inclusion and diversity</li> <li>- We established a group called Embrace in 2017 to support co-owners to promote an equitable workplace where we can all be our authentic selves at work</li> <li>- We provide support and resources for expectant co-owners to support transition and return to work</li> <li>- We are piloting a sponsorship programme to support greater diversity in senior positions in the company</li> <li>- We are offering 2 internships in 2022 as part of #10000BlackInterns</li> <li>- We committed in 2015 to a strategy to give co-owners the “freedom to flourish” introducing flexible working well ahead of our industry and continue to monitor wellbeing and ‘happiness’ through regular employee surveys</li> <li>- We are a Carbon Neutral company having obtained certification in 2020 and are working with Natural Capital Partners to reduce our carbon footprint further and support offsetting projects</li> <li>- We established a Charitable Trust in 2009 which continues to top-slice profit to invest in projects in the UK and overseas, including support for Ladywood Foodbank and SIFA Fireside in Birmingham</li> </ul>
Wesleyan	<p>New sustainability commitments, including <b>all Wesleyan directly managed investment funds meeting a new set of sustainable investing principles</b>; a set of clear criteria that helps determine where we invest customers money, designed entirely with their wishes in mind.</p> <p>The Wesleyan Foundation has awarded more than £3.5m to good causes, helping more than 100,000 people to date, many of which are in and around the City.</p> <p>We have committed to being operationally carbon neutral by the end of 2023, and for our whole organisation, including our investments portfolio, by 2050 at the latest.</p>

	<p>We are active participants and mentors of the 30% club, who are aiming to increase gender diversity at board and senior management levels</p>
<p>EY</p>	<p>Creating and contributing to an inclusive, diverse, sustainable, and socially mobile business environment, where our people and clients can thrive is of the utmost importance to EY, which is why we're supporting the Birmingham Business Pledge. Working with change makers and thought leaders, we endeavour to contribute to the entrepreneurial nature of Birmingham and the wider Midlands economy, which has for generations led the way in innovation and industry. For over 20 years we have also looked to recognise and celebrate Midlands-based entrepreneurs through our Entrepreneur Of The Year programme.</p> <p>At EY, we are committed to diversity and inclusion and have set ambitious targets of reaching 40% female Partners and 20% Partners from ethnic minority backgrounds by 2025. We recognise the significance and importance of achieving equal representation at senior levels of the firm and have also made a commitment for 15% of our ethnic minority Partners to be Black. We are making changes in our own business, as well as working with other organisations in Birmingham to accelerate change across our economy.</p> <p>We remain focussed on doing the right thing for our local communities, which includes nurturing early-stage talent through our graduate and apprentice programmes. We're also investing in future skills through our hugely successful career development programmes run by the EY Foundation, our independent charity.</p> <p>The EY Foundation established its Midlands Hub in 2020, to support more young people from low socio-economic backgrounds with skills development, employability skills and access to quality and sustained employment. Through its employability programmes, the EY Foundation worked with 178 young people in the Midlands over our last financial year. We will be going even further this year with plans for the EY Foundation to support over 300 young people through its programmes in the region.</p> <p>In 2021, EY became a carbon negative business globally, which is an important step as we strive towards our aim of becoming net-zero by 2025. We are also focussed on supporting our clients and suppliers with their own strategies, using our experience and services to help others decarbonise and transition to a greener future.</p> <p>We aim to recognise and celebrate uniqueness, innovation, and commit to promoting Birmingham as a great place to do business for all. Creating a future where Birmingham and West Midlands-based businesses can thrive and where entrepreneurs can innovate and diversify is the responsibility of everyone in our business community. We have an important role to play in creating an innovative, inclusive and sustainable environment for all.</p>

