



Welcome

I'd like to welcome you to our 2024 ESG (formerly CRS) report.

Many of you will have noticed the extended gap since we last reported on our activities in this area. As the business grows and evolves, we are taking a moment to assess how best to direct our energy and investment in ESG, ensuring it walks hand-inhand with our wider strategic business goals. Ultimately, we aspire to make our ESG approach even more meaningful, impactful and inclusive a forceful expression of our culture, and something over which we each feel a true sense of ownership.

I am immensely proud of how, over the last 18 months, we have continued to mobilise with vigour, intent, and creativity, supporting our communities, and committing ourselves to positive change.

What is clear to me is that ultimately this energy originates not in a boardroom, nor in the pages of an ESG document, but from individuals, and the choices we each make. I believe that we embody this powerful principle.

Our 2024 report comes at a time when the behaviour and culture of large organisations is in the spotlight perhaps more than ever before. So, as a growing business, it feels an opportune moment for us to reflect on who we are, what we stand for. and our 'purpose' in the broadest sense of the word

It is here that I believe our ESG activities have a vital role to play. By empowering ourselves, and one another to think and act selflessly, and with integrity, we can help to safeguard a culture in which our partners, clients, and most importantly each one of us, can continue to enjoy the utmost confidence and belief in our organisation.

We hope that you find the report informative, thought-provoking, and perhaps even inspiring. I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to all of those who have given their time and energy to driving our ESG ambitions forward, and to those currently working hard to define and shape our future vision.



01

Looking back over the last 18 months



A fresh perspective on ESG

In recent years ESG has become a well-established framework for organisations to set out their wider contribution to society.

Not only are elements of ESG policy increasingly legislated, but an organisation's stance on ESG can shape its attractiveness to partners, clients, and employees.

While it is undoubtedly a positive development that 'doing the right thing' in business has become increasingly professionalised, we believe that a truly effective ESG programme cannot be one shaped exclusively by mandated processes, nor by a siloed approach to addressing the 'E', the 'S' and the 'G'.

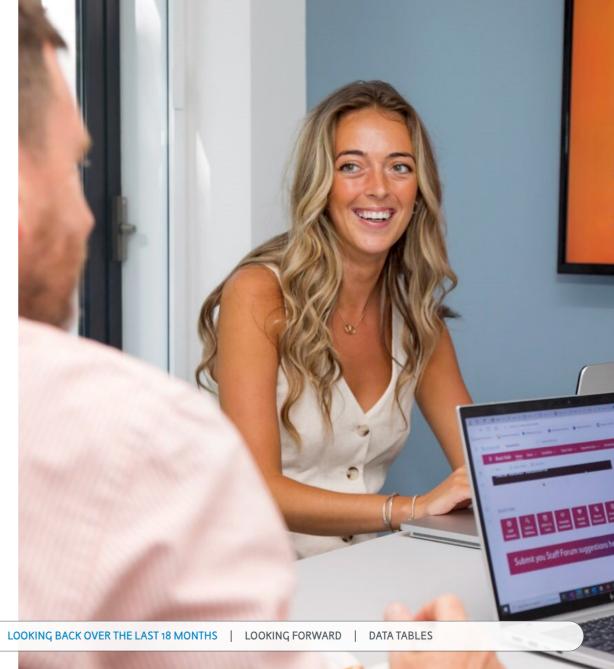
As we begin this new era for our own programme, there are two crucial principles that we believe will be foundational to its long-term success.

The first is an acknowledgement that the three notionally distinct pillars of ESG are deeply interdependent and in some cases almost indivisible. Often it is near-impossible to effectively serve one pillar without conferring a benefit on another, and restrictive thinking is likely to lead us to a restrictive programme.

The second is that, as a growing organisation we recognise that even small changes multiplied across our business can add up to big changes.

For example, the introduction of efficient LED lights throughout the building has so far reduced our CO2 output by almost 30 tonnes.

Similarly, by committing to working with suppliers accredited under the Environmental Management System ISO14001, we have actively supported more sustainable behaviours across a breadth of partners from cleaning to catering. And not only that, but invested in durable, long-term relationships built on shared values.



Spotlight on... our office refurbishment

In 2022 Buzzacott extended the leases on our existing four floors, and acquired an additional floor at our office in Wood Street. This was a significant and important decision to ensure we remain a single office firm and have sufficient space for our growing teams.

With this decision came with a need to modernise our office to create a collaborative working environment appropriate for our diverse needs.

Recognising the need for change, we enlisted interior designer Thirdway to help us embark on a comprehensive refurbishment plan to address these challenges and create a space that meets the demands of today's dynamic work environment. With sustainability at the heart of the project, we've prioritised creating a more environmentally friendly workspace, incorporating sustainable materials and energy-efficient design elements.



It was obvious that the building required significant upgrades in several key areas, including outdated kitchens, toilets, and inadequate air-conditioning. Additionally, our existing breakout spaces were small and dated, failing to provide our staff with a comfortable environment to relax and collaborate."

Lizzie Gent, Operations Director at Buzzacott

Our new office will feature a refreshed breakout area, with modern facilities designed to enhance productivity and collaboration. There will be a variety of different seating areas to cater to diverse work styles and preferences, from quiet corners for focused work, to communal tables for team discussions. With 100 designated spaces for staff to connect with each other, our teams will be able to enjoy many more opportunities to network, brainstorm, and socialise throughout the day.

Sustainability and environmental considerations were at the forefront of the project. We're introducing an upgraded air conditioning system, along with energy-efficient lighting and appliances, which will all contribute to a more environmentally friendly workspace, reducing our carbon footprint. We are also transitioning to a more energy-efficient infrastructure by introducing Wi-Fi First, reducing powerintensive equipment such as servers, and acquiring energy-saving screens.

Our office refurbishment

The use of sustainable materials and eco-friendly practices throughout the refurb further highlights our commitment to creating a greener and more responsible office environment.

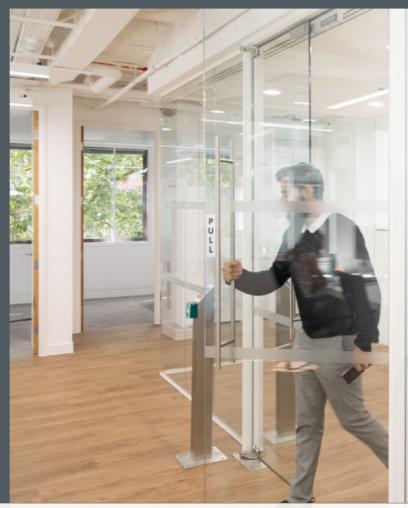
Throughout the project, Thirdway has implemented a comprehensive waste management process to ensure we minimise the impact on the environment during the refurbishment.

"At Thirdway, we are committed to embedding responsible material sourcing into every design." says Lyndsay Blue, Head of Sustainability at Thirdway. "Although materials used in this project are limited, we have made thoughtful and responsible choices where applicable, ensuring that our specifications and suppliers align with our values. Where possible, we have prioritised the retention and reuse of existing materials and infrastructure, opting to refinish rather than replace."

The majority of unwanted furniture has been donated to Diabetes UK and local schools.

100%

of waste materials have been diverted from landfill and recycled responsibly



Nothing has been done purely for aesthetic improvement alone. A significant amount of material retention has been prioritised, which is a strong move from an ESG perspective.

From concept to completion, the project team have carefully considered how to minimise and divert waste from landfill, and all decisions have been made with purpose and with sustainability at the forefront."

Lyndsay Blue, Head of Sustainability at Thirdway

Technology. Smarter, cleaner, and more secure.

Technology is a central enabler of our ESG strategy. It supports a breadth of opportunities for team members to work more flexibly, efficiently, and collaboratively, to further reinforce our governance, and to reduce our carbon footprint. Since our last report we have introduced a number of significant technology initiatives.

A new strategic partnership

Supported by leading infrastructure provider Softcat we have comprehensively reviewed our IT strategy. This has enabled us to support our transformational work anywhere, secure everywhere' initiative including improved office Wi-Fi coverage, enabling more flexibility of office layout. We have also improved the lifecycle management of our hardware and are developing an ambitious device recycling programme.

Lower carbon, today and tomorrow

An integral part of our office refurbishment is transitioning to a more energy-efficient technology estate. Through measures including a reduction in energy-hungry infrastructure such as servers, and the introduction of energy-saving screens and laptops, we are constantly working towards a smaller carbon footprint.



LOOKING BACK OVER THE LAST 18 MONTHS



Data security

Data security is integral to strong governance. In recognition of this we have recently approved a new role of Chief Information Security Officer, responsible for the security of our data, wherever in the world it is being used. This includes a risk-balanced approach to data security for those working outside the UK, incorporating a Red / Amber / Green (RAG) system that applies additional rules and responsibilities in certain countries, such as those with a more sensitive geo-political climate.

Like any organisation, we face ever–evolving risks and threats, which we must balance against the need for flexible working and operational agility.

Recently we upgraded the security model behind our network, re-housed our servers in a dedicated secure environment, upgraded Wi-fi security, and introduced advanced new security at a device level.

Ethics and compliance

We are passionately committed to safeguarding the integrity and public perception of the accountancy profession. Our dedicated Ethics Partner, Catherine Biscoe, is accountable for ensuring our adherence to the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW)'s five fundamental principles of integrity, professional competence and due care, objectivity, confidentiality, and professional behaviour.

Within our organisation we have implemented comprehensive policies and procedures outlining our obligations. These include an annual statement of integrity, behavioural guidelines, and a hospitality and gift register.

Our rigorous compliance framework aligns to the requirements set out by the ICAEW, and we also adhere to the Consultative Committee of Accountancy Bodies' anti-money laundering guidance. Our digital approach to client onboarding is not only highly secure, but ensures a smooth and streamlined client experience.

Buzzacott Stuart Defries Memorial Fund

Volunteering, fundraising, and giving back

Giving back to communities and causes is something we have supported proudly and passionately throughout our long history.

After 20 years of dedicated service, Amanda Francis stepped down from her position as trustee. One of the fund's founding partners, Amanda remained a custodian until her recent retirement. Her charity sector experience, and her commitment to supporting young people, saw her champion causes to improve educational opportunity, lessen the impact of child poverty, provide support for young women and mothers, and facilitate the rehabilitation and intervention of young offenders and high-risk young people.

Amanda's successor, Simon Wax joined as a trustee in October 2023. He shared that: "Becoming a trustee was driven by my desire to make a meaningful difference beyond the day-to-day responsibilities of my work. I was also keen to help our people to better understand the work that the trust is doing to support children and young people in London. There are some amazing local organisations out there providing essential services to some of the most vulnerable young people in our community, and seeing how they transform lives is truly inspiring.

Ensuring that the charities have the resources they need to continue making an impact is an extremely rewarding part of my role.

Simon Wax Partner and Trustee of the Buzzacott Stuart Defries Memorial Fund

"Ultimately, becoming a trustee is about more than just governing a fund, it's about standing behind the amazing work these charities do every day and playing a small part in helping them succeed."

Reflecting the firm's growth, the fund has donated more to charitable causes over the last 18 months than ever before A significant contribution to Bow Foodbank, including the start of a multiyear funding partnership, typifies the Fund's onward approach to increase our philanthropic activity in communities local to our office.



Further contributions to organisations that alleviate poverty and support people experiencing hardship and destitution contributed significantly to our overall giving. First Love Foundation. The Spires Centre and several localised foodbanks received continued support, as well as projects that seek to improve educational opportunities like Literacy Pirates, Go Beyond, and The Gifted Organisation.

Moving forward, the fund intends to focus on working with organisations that have a reputation of delivering positive outcomes with target groups. Changes to the funding strategy will allow for larger one-off funding to be offered, which in turn will facilitate improved impact reporting and storytelling.

Volunteering

We encourage our team members to volunteer in their own time with our flexible volunteering programme, as well as supporting larger group projects.

Our volunteers donate their time to make an impact in our local communities on projects that improve the environment, support improved educational outcomes, foster improved mental wellbeing, alleviate food poverty, improve physical wellbeing and support charity fundraising.

1,000+

hours of time given by Buzzacott team volunteers over the last 18 months

Volunteering activities our people have participated in include:

- Innovative charity Strength and Learning Through Horses received hands-on support from our team members at their North London stables (photo 1). We learned about their work with young offenders and educationally isolated young people.
- Five groups worked alongside our partner Bow Foodbank (photo 2), packing and distributing food items. Our team members saw the foodbank in action, witnessing the levels of need within our local community. Read more on p13-14.
- Several groups from across the firm worked at Hackney City Farm (photo 3), a community hub bringing the countryside into the city, creating learning opportunities for school-age children.

- Mentors supported Local Village Network's Amplify Me programme, guiding 15- and 16-year-olds through various sessions addressing network poverty, career pathways, employment skills and building resilience and professional identity. We also welcomed the students to our offices to practice their new skills (photo 4).
- Our long-standing partnership with The Switch enjoyed its strongest attendance in years. Volunteers went into schools to support reading and comprehension, wrote letters to pen pals, and shared their experiences at World of Work days.
- SportInspired welcomed a team who helped introduce primary school children to a variety of sports.







LOOKING BACK OVER THE LAST 18 MONTHS



Fundraising for the Royal Marsden Hospital



In September 2023, to raise funds for Royal Marsden Cancer Charity, a group of 20 team members from all corners of the business participated in the Thames Path Challenge, with nine completing the full 100km distance and the rest a very impressive 25 - 50km.

In exchange for some tired legs and a few blisters, the team raised £8,731 with a further £2,230 coming from matched donations by the Buzzacott Stuart Defries Memorial Fund.

Partner David Jarman reflects on the value of working with a collective purpose. "Every one of us achieved something we hadn't done before, a huge mental, and physical challenge, but we supported each other throughout and never lost sight of why we were doing it."

In addition to our more strategic and co-ordinated approach to fundraising, we have continued to support team members' personal fundraising and charitable donations through our matched giving programme, raising a total of £147,608 between October 2022 and March 2024.

As an organisation, we believe wholeheartedly in the value of fundraising events as an opportunity to support one another, and further grow our spirit of togetherness. Historically, fundraising initiatives have been organised at a team level, and for a variety of causes. However, as we continue to grow in numbers, it is our intention to begin harnessing our firm-wide strength behind a more focused and strategic approach.

This was a challenge that brought the team together under the common goal of raising money for a charity that had helped save the life of a team member."



Spotlight on... our partnership with Bow Foodbank

Throughout our years of working with food banks we noticed that some organisations, such as Bow, had the potential to provide support beyond food provision and make a greater impact by addressing the underlying issues of poverty.

Our staff also regularly volunteer at Bow, which has given us a firsthand insight into the immediate and long-term needs of the community. These experiences cemented our decision to commit to a multi-year grant."

Katharine Patel, Partner and Chair of the Buzzacott Stuart Defries Memorial Fund



A core part of our culture is contributing to charities where we can make a genuine difference and whose values align with our own. Staying informed about the social issues affecting our local communities allows us to adapt and remain responsive to their evolving needs.

In recent years, the growing demand for necessities, especially food, has intensified as a result of the pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis, and child poverty rates are unfortunately higher than ever. Over the past seven years, we have funded several food banks to address immediate food provision needs.

Through the Buzzacott Stuart Defries Memorial Fund, we have developed a strong partnership with Bow Foodbank, and over the past four years we have donated £52,650 to support their efforts. In addition, we committed to a multi-year funding agreement of £75,000 over three years to ensure sustained support for their important work.



For the past 10 years, Bow Foodbank has operated with the constant threat of having to move facilities at short notice. Our recent funding has facilitated Bow's relocation to a new, more permanent home, and will enable them to offer additional support services like dental check-ups, counselling, and housing assistance.

"We've always tried to be good tenants and share our space well, but coming with thirteen tonnes of food in tow can be a little overwhelming for our neighbours." says Jo Read, Executive Director of Bow Foodbank.

"Moving to our new space will enable us to serve our quests week in and week out, offering them consistency. We'll be able to increase from offering two sessions a week to four or five. We hope not to see more people, but rather serve those that we work with better. Previously, people would spend over an hour queuing at the foodbank, spend one minute with a volunteer and then go on their way. In our new space, we hope that people will spend less time queuing, and more time spending meaningful time with volunteers. Chatting with neighbours is important to feel connected to their community."

Bow Foodbank's main mission is to create a community that tackles poverty. Their team of five manages over 1,000 volunteers a year, and trains them to understand and support people in the broader context of poverty, in addition to supplying food. Their focus is also on building partnerships with other local charities. As demand rises and workloads increase, they recognise the need to work together to make a lasting difference for their communities.

"We are particularly proud of securing micro-grants for some of our quests - supporting them to get out of fuel debt, or getting cots and prams for children living in refuges." says Jo. "In one case, we got a grant for someone to get his glasses replaced, allowing him to continue working as a delivery driver."

lo continues. "As well as offering financial support to help us move forward with our vision of our own space. Buzzacott have also been along and volunteered alongside our quests, packing bags. More than this, they have been an excellent sounding board for what we can do to increase our impact locally. Bow Foodbank's values are to create a community that tackles poverty. We believe this community should include our quests and our corporate partners, all working together."

The relationship with Buzzacott has been brilliant. Thank you for being part of the journey with us."

lo Read, Executive Director of Bow Foodbank



Supporting our people

Above all else, we are a people business. Everything we are, and all that we do for our clients and one another, begins and ends with our dedicated team members.

We are resolutely committed to providing the support and services that enable balanced, secure, and fulfilling lives to be lived, both at work and away from it.

We approach our commitment to team members' wellbeing in a structured and inclusive way. We ensure resources and support are available on a yearround and firm-wide level. Our monthly Wellbeing Calendar offers benefits including discounted gym passes, workout classes, and provides a wide range of self-help resources and spotlights initiatives and programmes designed to meet specific needs and life-stages, that are aligned with national and international events

We also believe that by engaging team members in the provision of support, for example our 49 Mental Health First Aiders, we have further embedded our commitment to this invaluable part of our culture.

Over the last 18 months we have also continued to offer our 24/7, 365 days a year, Employee Assistance Programme to all team members, and worked to ensure that our dedicated Wellbeing Hub provides comprehensive and up-to-date information on the growing number of services and support available.

Mental health first aiders across the firm



Wellbeing events







To further broaden our wellbeing programme and increase its inclusivity, we have actively participated in a number of key events. These have included National Grief Awareness Day, World Menopause Day, International Men's and Women's Days, and Mental Health Awareness Week.

For each we have enlisted the support of expert speakers, who have visited us to share their insights and discuss the associated issues and challenges for those affected.

We have used the events as opportunities to highlight where team members can access additional services and support as part of their benefits package, for example the annual Menopause Plan provided as part of our BUPA health checks.

As the world continues to continues to present new challenges and demands, we will continue striving to ensure that the support our team members need and deserve is always available to help them remain happy, healthy, and fulfilled.

Rewards and Benefits

To convey our appreciation for our team members' continuous efforts we have continued to broaden and enhance our Rewards and Benefits programme.

And as our headcount number continues to grow, so does the uptake of what's on offer.

Many of the benefits we offer were introduced to support our team members with everyday life, and we are pleased to share that we have recently extended our enhanced maternity, paternity and adoption leave pay offering.

In addition, we encourage team members to take up to two paid volunteering days per year, this not only allows them to give back to causes of their choice, but also provides an opportunity to break up a working week with a different activity.

*Health Assessment vouchers (excluding EP health assessments) From 1 October 2022 - March 2024, the HR team have supported the following:

flexible working requests

Eye Care vouchers **BUPA** Assessment

requests to buy or sell annual leave

vouchers*

Season

Ticket loans

Cycle to Work loans



Trainee Interest Free loans



Trainees

Looking to the future, and preparing for it, is central to our organisation's purpose. This applies as much to our work supporting our clients, as to helping develop the next generation of finance professionals and leaders.

Creating opportunities for our people to learn and flourish is one of the most valuable and impactful things we can offer, and something to which we are deeply committed. We were extremely pleased to be ranked 22nd in 2024's Top 100 Apprenticeship Employers, and named by PQ Magazine as having 2024's best Training and Apprenticeship Programme.

trainees studying across nine pathways

We take a holistic approach to helping our trainees establish a strong and stable foundation, centred around a structured career path, and a competitive salaries and benefits package. To this we add a mentoring programme, financial planning advice, volunteering opportunities, social events, and resources to support their mental health.

With trainees studying across multiple pathways, and with the support of our training providers, our organic growth strategy is central to our future success. We recruit for attitude: we train for skill.







Spotlight on... our EDI Strategy progress



In November 2022 we took a significant step towards creating a more inclusive workplace, by launching our first ever EDI strategy.

This stemmed from discussions with our Executive Committee, Inclusive Employers and our EDI forum which offers all our staff the opportunity to share their thoughts on workplace inclusion. It was recognised that a comprehensive EDI strategy was essential for creating an environment where all our people feel valued, respected, and empowered to contribute their best.

Since its launch, we have made significant progress with our EDI strategy. In October 2023, we launched nine staff networks to encourage connection and community within the firm. As our firm grows, we believe prioritising service to our diverse internal communities is fundamental to our success. Our networks are made up of groups of team members, often with shared heritage, experience, or characteristics, and provide platforms to support each other whilst raising awareness about inclusion within the firm. Each network has a Chair and a Partner or Director sponsor to help champion their initiatives and lead their events.

Over the past 18 months, we have successfully embedded and advanced our firm-wide ED&I strategy. It has been incredibly rewarding to witness the engagement and enthusiasm from all levels and specialisms within the firm in driving this forward.

With the ongoing support of our partnership with Inclusive Employers and the introduction of our dedicated staff networks, we are continuously fostering an inclusive workplace where everyone has a safe space to build community, connections, and a sense of belonging."

Catherine Walsh. Partner - HR





We currently have over one fifth of team members taking part in at least one network:

- Christian Network
- Disability & Neurodiversity Network
- Expatriate Network
- LGBTQ+ Network
- Mental Health Network
- Parents & Carers Network
- Muslim Network
- Race & Ethnicity Network
- Women's Network

"Our Race & Ethnicity network creates a space where the diverse voices across our firm are valued and amplified." says Keya Patel, Marketing Apprentice and member of the Race & Ethnicity Network. She adds "Since joining, I've participated in thoughtful discussions about race and identity, and worked on the planning and organisation of cultural events."

Over the past 18 months, our Executive Committee, Staff and EDI forums have influenced positive action within the firm in many other ways, including the introduction of flexible Easter bank holidays to enable members of all faiths to take leave when it best suits their needs. We've also introduced a dedicated Wellbeing Space and Prayer Room within our building, providing a space for our people to engage in personal meditation or prayer during the workday.

I think it's important for Buzzacott to have networks like these because they help to create a space where we all feel like we belong."

Keya Patel, Marketing Apprentice and member of the Race & Ethnicity Network

I signed up to be the Chair of the Women's Network at Buzzacott, because I am passionate about creating and nurturing equality and equity in a diverse workplace. It's important for us to recognise the different challenges people face, some of which are specific to being a woman.

Our network is a safe space for women within the firm to support each other to overcome their challenges, but also a space for us to create a plan for the future, by educating others and spreading awareness in a non-judgemental and proactive way. We are very much at the start of our journey as a network, and I look forward to seeing what impact we can bring."

Kerry Furey, Senior Talent Manager and Chair of the Women's Network



02

Looking forward



An exciting new horizon

Reflecting on the transformational work of the last 18 months gives us all plenty to feel proud of, and encouraged by.

However, a huge amount of work continues to take place across the firm in support of our ambitious future ESG plans, and to build on our growing momentum. This applies as much at a strategic, firm-wide level, as from the energy and dedication of individual teams.

ESG touches every part of our organisation, and affects everyone in it. The principles of inclusivity and collective ownership will remain central to its success.

Over the coming months we will be continuing to focus on the priorities we have outlined in this report.

From increasingly impactful charitable giving initiatives to offering a workplace that truly works for all, we will make our wholehearted commitment to ESG an indivisible part of our culture and identity. We must also remain attentive to new ideas and activities that benefit our communities, and the world beyond them.

We recognise that ESG is a journey without an end, and as such we must remain ready to hold a mirror up to ourselves, identifying areas where we can do better. We are part of a dynamic marketplace and as our environment and priorities shift, so we must work to adapt our approach to ESG.









03

Data tables

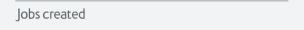


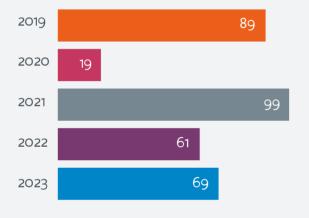
Measuring our impact

We have robust systems in place to ensure continuous measurement and evaluation of the impact of our ESG endeavours. Details of our attainments are set out over the following pages.



Talent attraction and retention: Jobs created and employee turnover



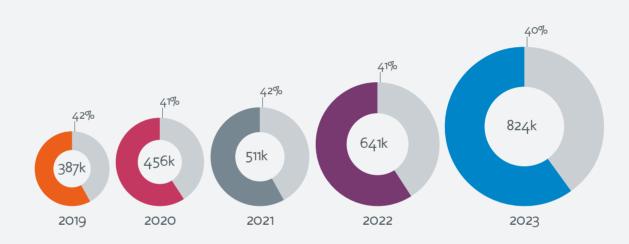




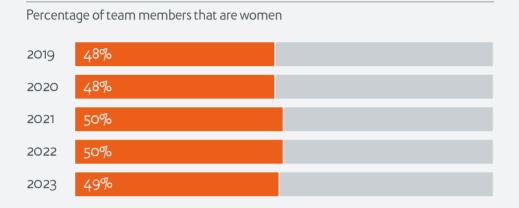
Talent attraction and retention: Hours trained and worked

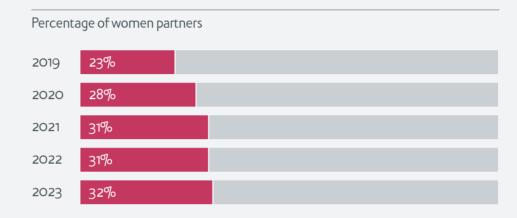


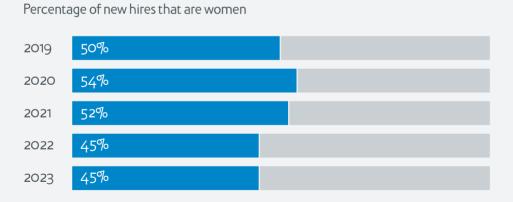




Diversity: Women







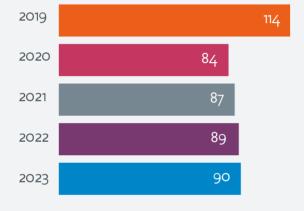
Diversity: Gender pay gap and minority ethnic groups



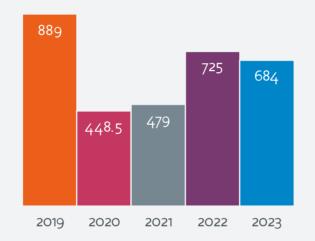


Community: Volunteering

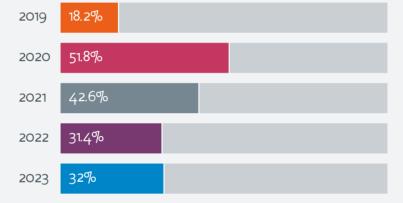
Number of volunteers



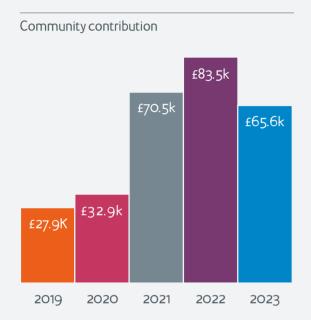
Hours of volunteering time

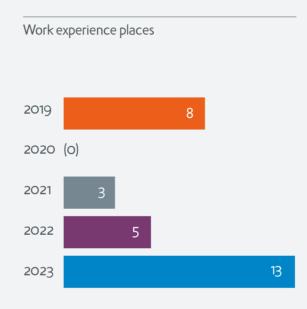


Percentage of skills-based volunteering



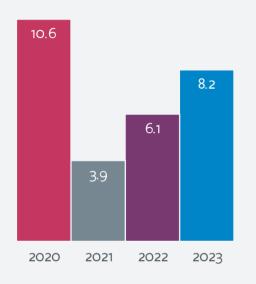
Community: Contribution and work experience places

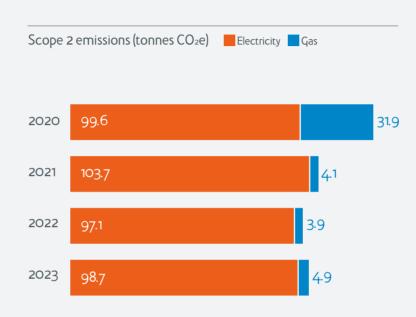




Environment: Carbon emissions and energy

Total Scope 1 emissions (tonnes CO₂e)

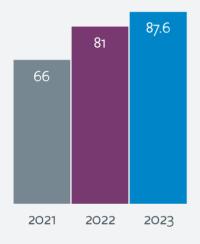




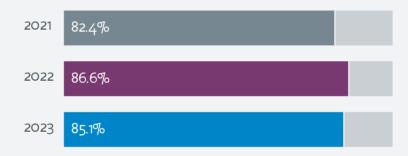
of the energy and electricity we used came from renewable sources from 2019 to 2023

Environment: Waste generated in operations

Emissions from waste generated in operations (tonnes)

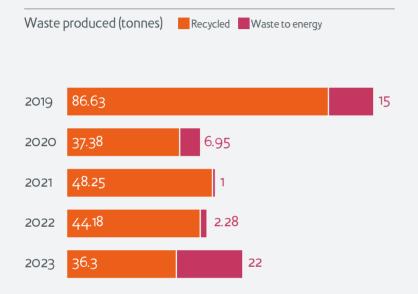


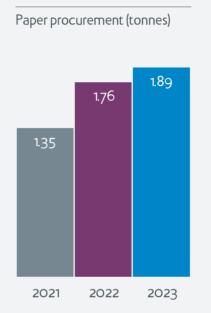
Percentage of waste generated in operations that is recycled

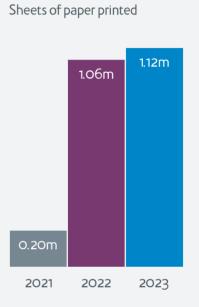




Environment: Waste management and materials







Buzzacott

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