

Certified



Corporation

**EMW**

LAW WITHOUT LIMITS

# B CORP IMPACT REPORT 2025

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# CHAIR'S INTRODUCTION

EMW has entered its third year as a Certified B Corporation, and this is our second annual B Impact Report. We are therefore reporting for the first time on the progress we have made against the goals previously set.

Preparing the report has reminded me that the sustainability path isn't linear. We have met some of our goals and not met others. With hindsight, some of them look overly ambitious, but I'm okay with that - I'd rather set the bar too high than too low.

In April this year B Lab published its much anticipated "Version 7 Standards", by which future applicants for certification and re-certification will be judged. The new standards diverge significantly from version 6, on which we were certified in 2023.

Many of the goals we set in our first B Impact Report, using the Version 6 Standards as our North Star, are still relevant to us improving as a business and we have strived, and will continue to strive, to meet them. However, like any good business plan, we need to shift our focus as we transition to the new standards, and this is going to start coming through in our planning.

In the last 12 months we have really started to see the benefit of engaging with the B Corp community, both regionally and within our own profession. Being able to share challenges and opportunities with other B Corp law firms has been hugely worthwhile, as has our engagement with B Corp networks in Northants, Beds, Bucks and Herts. In each case there's a real sense of working together for the benefit of the whole group.

When I think about our sustainability journey and those of many of the clients we represent, the phrase "be the change you want to see" comes to mind.

If (like us) you are a business employing less than 250 people, there's a pretty good chance that most current climate change related financial disclosure and other requirements do not apply to you. With businesses that employ less than 250 people accounting for 99.9% of all UK businesses, it is self-evident that the drive towards a sustainable economy cannot be come solely from the other 0.1%, however large the businesses in that group might be.

What's more, starting a sustainability journey can be a daunting prospect for the SME. There is so much information available, and without a legislative framework it can be difficult to know where to start. Starting (and sometimes not seeing through) unrelated projects without measuring their impact and with no overarching plan knitting them together is common. Been there, got the t-shirt.

I do, however, believe there are reasons for optimism within the SME community. By way of example, roughly 90% of certified B Corps in the UK employ less than 250 people. These are businesses that, by definition, are meeting the highest standards of social and environmental performance, accountability and transparency and they are doing it because they want to, not because they have to. That is an extremely powerful message.

If you want to start your sustainability journey, why not start with B Corps? You don't need to be, or even aspire to be, a B Corp to access the extensive and freely available B Corp material available online that you can use to help frame your own journey.

Privately owned SME businesses must (and in many cases already do) lead the way in addressing the social and environmental challenges that we face today. Be the change you want to see.



**NICK LLOYD**  
CHAIR

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# OUR PURPOSE, VISION AND WHAT WE STAND FOR

Purpose – to be independently EMW.

Vision – to be the outstanding regional firm that people are proud to work for and clients want to instruct:

- Impact – having a positive and long-lasting impact on the communities and environment in which we live and work;
- Legacy – a business for now and for future generations;
- Growth – through organic growth, have profitable business with a turnover of £25m by 2030/31; and
- Magnetic – a business that attracts and retains clients and colleagues because of what it stands for.

## What we stand for:

- Pride – in ourselves and our colleagues, our services, our clients, our work;
- Community – in it together, caring for one another and the world we live in;
- Confidence – We are very good at what we do;
- Integrity – we are consistent, trustworthy and reliable.





# OUR B CORP PROFILE

EMW is a top 200 law firm in the UK with offices in Milton Keynes, Northampton, Watford, London and Brighton. It provides a full range of legal services to clients ranging from start-ups and SME's through to financial institutions, public bodies and household names.

However, EMW identifies itself not by what it does but how it does it. EMW is comprised of talented people who care deeply about its clients and the journey they are on. They want to be the first people clients think of if they have an idea, challenge or opportunity and they take pride in delivering a service tailored to the individual needs of each and every one of them. That delivery also comes with a healthy dose of personality - down to earth and easy to talk to, EMW's lawyers take what they do really seriously, themselves less so.

They are people clients relate to. EMW's values are at the heart of everything it does and everyone it interacts with, from clients, suppliers, and employees to the wider community within which it operates. Its people take pride in themselves, their clients and their work. They believe in community and have integrity, confidence and a humble self-belief in each other and what they are doing. They do not feel the need to conform. EMW is proud to be part of a force for good in the economy.





# CONTEXT

We are reporting by reference to the pillars of the B Corp Version 6 Standards (“**Version 6**”), namely Governance, People, Community, Environment and Customers. We will look at what we said we would do and what we have done and are doing.

In 2027 we will be required to seek recertification on the new B Corp Version 7 Standards (“**Version 7**”) and some of what we do next will need to reflect that. We look at this in Section 10.



# GOVERNANCE

Overall mission, engagement around social/environmental impact, ethics, and transparency.

## What we said we would do

We will, in the short to medium-term:

- set performance targets for environmental and social issues;
- measure the outcomes produced by our performance;
- carry out an annual Board review of our key social and environmental performance;
- publish our social and environmental performance on our website; and
- where relevant, incorporate social and environmental issues and performance into job descriptions and performance reviews.

## What we did and what we are doing next

Setting and measuring effective environmental and social targets requires solid foundations and it is these foundations that we are focussing on. We are reviewing our environmental, social and governance policies, checking they are fit for purpose, cover everything they need to cover and operate effectively throughout the business. We then plan to build an umbrella ESG and Sustainability framework policy.

## Environmental

See section 8, Environmental Impact.

## Social

We have established a diversity, equity and inclusion (DE&I) council (the “Council”) which works hard to create a supportive environment where everyone feels valued, respected and can be their true selves. The Council provides a crucial role in raising awareness, organising events and initiatives and providing education and resources that support DE&I. It has 13 members from a wide spectrum of our workforce in terms of role, seniority and office.

The Council has created a DE&I policy and action plan on which it reports to the EMW Board. It is also split into separate areas of focus, namely disability, sex, race, social mobility and LGBTQ+

## DE&I measures have included:

- conducting an internal diversity survey to help us understand what, from a DE&I perspective, is working, what isn't and what needs to change. Using the feedback to help frame the Council's action plan;



- From a recruitment perspective:
  - we use gender decoding for all adverts to remove linguistic and other unconscious bias;
  - we carry out a blind recruitment process, removing all personal details from applications during the selection process;
  - we endeavour to use interviewers from diverse backgrounds;
  - fair and non-discriminatory recruitment methods are used to fill all vacancies.
- In relation to training:
  - Council members have been trained as 'Diversity Champions';
  - all Partners have had DE&I training on inclusive leadership; and
  - the Marketing Team has been trained on inclusive marketing and how to incorporate inclusivity into marketing strategies.
- DE&I events held or attended include:
  - the National Equality, Disability and Inclusion Conference;
  - the Confident Future Skills Show, a careers event aimed at young people and career seekers with special educational needs and disabilities or those facing barriers to entering the workforce;
  - our internal Triple F Club, at which the Council showed a Ted Talk by Kimberlè Crenshaw, a writer on civil rights from the Columbia Law School and then held an audience Q&A session on DE&I generally; and
  - regular attendance at career fairs held by local state schools.
- From an education perspective:
  - using Transgender Awareness Week to raise awareness of the transgender community and advising colleagues to follow Tate Smith, an award-winning activist and speaker on trans rights, social mobility and gender equality;
  - raising awareness of prominent Black pioneers as part of Black History month;
  - Pride month – co-hosting a talk about Pride from a first-hand experience perspective, an article in our internal newsletter about the origins of Pride, decorating the firm and our logo in Pride colours and encouraged the wearing of pride colours to work;
  - an internal newsletter article on social mobility including what it is, why it is important, the firm's social mobility statistics and reaffirming our commitment to offering work experience placements to students from less privileged backgrounds;
  - a webinar on Men's Health Awareness and a Partner sharing his mental health story.
- Setting up of a female networking group called EmPoWer;
- appointing an external consultant to help the Council develop, implement and evaluate strategies that continually promote DE&I in the workplace; and
- registration as a Disability Confident Employer (Level 1). We are currently working on Level 2.

## What else?

- Our Social Mobility campaign, involving surveying our employees on their routes into the law.
- Our work with local charity "Proactive Young People", whose mission is to connect schools with businesses to allow young people to learn employment skills and enhance their CVs.
- The independent, non-executive member of our Board.

# PEOPLE

Contributions to employee financial security, health & safety, wellness, career development and engagement and satisfaction.

## What we said we would do

We will, in the short-term:

- renew our focus on employee satisfaction by surveying our people and listening to what they want; and
- measure and monitor movements in attrition rates.

## What we did and what we are doing next

We arranged for a third-party consultancy firm to hold focus groups with a cross section of one third of our employees. Interviews began in June 2025 with participants given the opportunity to identify benefits they value and offer suggestions for how the business could improve.

We measure and benchmark attrition rates going back to 2018.

## What else?

It is impractical to raise every single measure we have introduced to make EMW a better place to work. Here are some examples:

- our “Tea and Talk” initiative, supporting mental health awareness;
- our “Zestify” platform, helping to equip our people with the tools and support to raise awareness, de-stigmatise and encourage conversation around mental health and our overall campaign for wellness;
- “Lawstravaganza”, our annual firm conference and the use of surveys to help us shape it more to what our people want from it;
- our “People’s Platform” initiative, providing a direct line of communication between management and everyone else in the business, with a specific focus on how employees are treated;
- the social mobility campaign run by the DE&I Council, including surveying employees on their own social mobility and routes into the law;
- the development by our HR team of a program aimed at EMW’s future leaders;
- our “Out of Office” club, regularly hosting employee events and activities;
- our new employee bonus scheme;
- the re-introduction of “free breakfast Friday”; and
- improvements made to the “discount on us” legal services benefit made available to employees.

# COMMUNITY

Engagement with and impact on the communities in which we operate, hire from and source from.

## What we said we would do

We will, over the short-term:

- encourage more employees to take paid time off for volunteer services; and
- monitor movements in annual volunteer hours as a multiple of hours per full time employee.

Over the medium-term, we will target greater female management and Board representation.

## What we did and what we are doing next

Immediately prior to the beginning of the 2024/25, 16% of our Partners were female. At the beginning of the following financial year, it was 25%. So we are working on it, but we have to build our foundations first – female management and board representation will follow on from greater female partner representation.

## What else?

Examples of our many community based endeavours include:

- we hosted a panel Q&A on sustainability to local businesses in April 2025;
- we participated in a panel Q&A at “Beyond the Block” (a regional networking group for B Corps and “B curious” businesses) on the subject of using your B Corp superpower;
- our Managing Partner sleep out event to raise money for YMCA Northamptonshire, which believes every young person should have a safe place called home;
- donations made to the Towcester and Milton Keynes food banks;
- participation in the “Cycle 4 Cynthia” charity cycle ride, supporting the Cynthia Spencer Hospice;
- within the Corporate team, we do a substantial amount of “employee ownership trust” work, which increases the number of people in the community with an ownership stake in the business they work for;
- Co-operating with local charity “Proactive Young People”, whose mission is to connect schools with businesses in order to allow young people to learn employment skills and enhance their CV’s.
- our local purchasing policy; and
- our other charitable donations and volunteer work.

# ENVIRONMENTAL

Overall environmental management practices and impact on the air, climate, water, land and biodiversity.

## What we said we would do

We will, over the short to medium-term:

- assess our environmental impact, set quantifiable targets to improve it, devise a plan for meeting those targets and periodically audit performance against targets;
- monitor and record greenhouse emissions, set reduction targets;
- monitor and record water usage and set reduction targets; and
- monitor and record waste production and set reduction targets.

## What we did and what we are doing next

We are in the process of collating relevant submissions data. This is a fairly straightforward exercise for our Scope 1 and 2 emissions, less so for Scope 3, but we are engaging with a third-party supply chain management tool that will help with this. Once we have the data we will take the following steps in the following order:

- input the data into our Smart Carbon platform for the purposes of measuring our carbon footprint;
- use this to create a carbon reduction plan; and
- implement the plan and measure our progress against the goals we have set.

## What else?

- Our carbon neutral printing, contributing to reforestation projects in Ireland, Dominican Republic and Madagascar. Between May 2021 and April 2025 we offset the equivalent of 1,599,796 sheets of paper consumed by reforesting 192 trees;
- 100% of our energy consumption is from renewable sources;
- Seebeck House, our head office, is certified as an “accredited green building program”;
- the impact on the environment of our remote working policy;
- our paperless files policy;
- the electric vehicle charging points we installed at Seebeck House; and
- the financial incentives we make for car sharing and commuting using public transport.



# CUSTOMERS

Stewardship of customers through the quality of products and services, ethical marketing, data privacy and security and feedback channels.

## What we said we would do

We will, in the short-term, look into measuring client satisfaction and introducing and monitoring targets for improving client satisfaction.

## What we did and what we are doing next

We are measuring client satisfaction and experience including:

- engaging a third-party consultant to design and deliver an ongoing complete client experience programme, including the mapping of client journeys, “mystery shopping” feedback from clients via surveys and interviews, measurement of “net promoter scores” and delivering CX training across the business;
- face to face meetings held by our Managing Partner with clients to discuss service;
- recruiting a client services administrator into our Northampton office to help manage enquiries;
- introduction of “live chat” onto our website.

## What else?

- our service level guarantee, allowing clients to unilaterally reduce out fee by 10% if for any reason they are not happy with the service we provided; and



# WHAT NEXT?

We are at the very start of our recertification journey under Version 7. Version 7 has seven “core pillars”, which are set out below. The following broad-based preliminary objectives are based on the results of an initial gap analysis that we have conducted.

## **Purpose & Stakeholder Governance**

Introduce mechanisms for considering our stakeholders (being our people, suppliers, clients, local community and environment) and representing their interests in our decision making.

## **Fair Work**

Analyse how we seek, consider and address worker feedback on decisions that affect them.

Regularly measure workplace culture.

## **Justice, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion**

Collect data on sex/gender identify for more work-related measurements to identify any variations in impact/opportunities.

Seek stakeholder input on, and choose, plan and implement, positive JEDI action.

## **Human Rights**

Assess potential negative human rights impacts related to our clients and projects and take necessary mitigating action.

Consider actual and potential human rights impacts of our procurement decisions.

## **Climate Action**

Produce and publish a climate action plan.

## **Environmental Stewardship & Circularity**

Assess potential negative environmental impacts related to our clients and projects and take necessary mitigating action.

Consider the actual and potential environmental impacts of our procurement decisions.

## **Government Affairs & Collective Action**

Take part in collective action to advance social or environmental impacts.