



Morrish Solicitors LLP Corporate Social Responsibility Policy 2021-2022

Our Policy

Our corporate social responsibility (CSR) policy covers community involvement, charity work, diversity, employee wellbeing, ethical business practices, our values and environmental initiatives. The policy aims to integrate social and environmental concerns with our work, our clients and the wider community.

We believe that a commitment to the principles of CSR not only complements our core business strategy and values, but also makes sound ethical and business sense. Our policy is based on the following principles:

- To minimise the impact and maximise the benefits that our work has on the environment and people around us.
- To integrate our CSR considerations into all our business decisions.
- To comply with, and exceed where practicable, all applicable legislation, regulations and codes of practice.
- To review, annually report, and to continually strive to improve our CSR performance.

In developing our strategy and setting out our policy, we aim to deliver gradual but continuous improvements in our performance every year. As a result, our approach continues to evolve as we learn lessons along the way. To help define our policy we have divided it into several key areas:

Our People

Equality and Diversity

We are committed to eliminating discrimination and encouraging equality and diversity amongst our workforce. Our aim is to ensure that our workforce is truly representative of all sections of society and that each employee feels respected and able to contribute fully.



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Our aim is to provide equality and fairness for all in our employment and not to discriminate on grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. As part of our commitment to equality and diversity, we collect and publish data relating to the diversity of our staff. The data is collected bi-annually, anonymously, and on a voluntary basis and then submitted to the Solicitors Regulatory Authority (SRA) to assist them in monitoring the diversity of the legal profession as a whole. We do not publish data which may enable individuals to be identified. In 2021, 50% of our staff completed the diversity survey, which included questions about roles, education, gender, sexual identity, disability and caring responsibilities. The results can be viewed on [our website](#).

All employees are helped and encouraged to develop their full potential. We are committed to delivering a fair employment environment and the opportunity to advance and strive to ensure that everyone in the firm has ready access to development opportunities at all times.

To find out more, [our Equality and Diversity Policy](#) is viewable on our website.

Employee Education

We are committed to providing our staff with skills and resources to improve their employability. This can be seen in the development plans of our trainee solicitors and wider staff. Our current training programme gives the opportunity for trainees to gain experience in several areas of law, including Personal Injury, Medical Negligence, Employment Rights, Property, Wills & Estates, Family and Dispute Resolution, as well as overall training of working in a legal environment. For wider staff, we understand the importance of ongoing professional development, and provide continual training and advancement opportunities to all staff, including MBL courses.

As part of our employee education, we are also committed to making the legal profession more accessible to local students, regardless of their background. That is why we have partnered with various local institutions to provide various mentoring and apprenticeship programmes to young talent.

Mentoring

We have partnered with a local Leeds school with a pool of pupils from mixed residential areas, The Rodillian Academy, to participate in their 'Career Ready' Programme, a scheme which matches employers with students in an attempt to boost their employability. Students will be mentored by members of Morrish staff who will be in regular contact with the students and will have the opportunity to undertake a work placement at Morrish.



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Law Apprenticeships

In 2022 we will be introducing Solicitor apprenticeships with a view to taking on one graduate and one school leaver to:

- support widening access to the profession
- create a talent pipeline by recruiting the best talent, sooner
- provide relevant practical training, focused on a job-specific training plan
- increase staff retention and commitment
- enhance and develop the skills of existing colleagues

Solicitors Apprenticeships

This course provides a viable alternative to university for school leavers who have completed A levels or equivalent, to qualify as a solicitor. The emphasis being on competence, not simply academic qualifications. The programme is also open to existing staff, and at the end of the programme students will be a qualified solicitor.

Solicitor Graduate Apprenticeship

This course is for applicants who have already completed a Bachelor's degree. Upon successful completion, apprentices will become a qualified lawyer ready for Day 1 as a qualified solicitor.

Employee Wellbeing

We recognise that our staff are our most important resource. We actively seek to offer our staff a positive and healthy working environment. We recognise that we cannot remove all sources of stress, but as a mindful firm, we have a responsibility to try do things differently. With this in mind, we are currently considering the Mindful Business Charter which aims to promote better mental health and wellbeing in the workplace. We continually take steps to ensure our offices are comfortable and supportive environments for our employees, have suitable conditions for those with disabilities, and breakout areas for anyone to use at any time.

Our Office Manager has also completed the i-act course for managers which aims to manage and promote positive mental health and wellbeing in the workplace:



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i improve wellbeing and identify wellbeing issues

a advocate and access further help and support to help themselves and others

c connect and communicate with people, particularly if they are in distress

t take tools and use them and seek further advice when needed

Our Community

We are dedicated to being a responsible contributing member of society, seeking to build strong relationships with the local community, and supporting local and national charities.

We endeavour to share successes with the local community and seek to work in co-operation with the voluntary sector and other bodies in the local area to see where investment (in financial or other terms) can best be made. Particularly in the smaller communities surrounding our branch offices.

Our CSR policy outlines our support for a broad range of activities locally and nationally. Participation is both by individuals and as a firm, and typical activities include:

- Supporting initiatives aimed at assisting businesses in the local community.
- Volunteering in community projects.
- Supporting and sponsoring community work by employees is encouraged.
- Supporting initiatives aimed at assisting vulnerable individuals in the community, such as Will Aid.
- Supporting community events by working closely with community ambassadors and offering donations towards the running of these events such as the Yeadon Gala and Christmas Fayre.
- Our Wills and Estates team includes solicitors that are members of Solicitors for the Elderly which helps potentially vulnerable people with help and advice should they need it.
- Our Employment team assists individuals who have suffered discrimination, including those with disabilities, physical and mental.

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- Our personal injury and clinical negligence teams assist individuals with significant, severe injuries, including those with disabilities.
- Paul Scholey, Partner, has extensive involvement with matters appertaining to the Labour Party and is Chair of Leeds Grand Theatre and Opera House Ltd.
- Providing advice and support to national charities such as Headway (the organisation representing victims with all aspects of head injury) and Age UK.
- Our team members regularly support various local and national charities throughout the year, undertaking various fundraising projects. More information about our charitable partners can be found our website.

The Environment & Reducing Our Carbon Footprint

We take our responsibilities towards the environment very seriously and encourage all staff members to adopt ethical principles. We are taking continuous steps to minimise our impact on the environment through reduction of waste and energy consumption.

We have introduced a number of environmental practices and will continue to do so. These practices include:

- Recycling all shredded paper.
- We intend to phase out ICE vehicles and use electric vehicles as a firm, and have halved the number of vehicles we send out on the road.
- Use of local and UK-based, employee-friendly, unionised, sustainable suppliers which supports the UK economy and job creation, reduces carbon from shipping costs, and provides employee well-being.
- Purchase of recycled products via our stationary suppliers.
- PCs are turned off at night when staff leave the building, not left on standby, unless required for software upgrades.
- Office waste, e.g., leaflets, magazines, and cans, are recycled.
- Our used toner cartridges and other office waste, such as mobile phones that have reached their end of life, are sent for recycling.

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Reducing the volume of paper waste we produce

We're aware that in our industry paper filing, printing and posting correspondence has been the general way of working, but we are making positive steps to reduce the amount of paper we use as a firm. These steps include;

- Wherever possible, and to suit the needs of our clients, we send our correspondence via email instead of letter.
- We file our documents electronically where possible to reduce the amount of paper files we store.
- Where appropriate, our clients can sign documentation electronically, meaning there is no need to print out contracts and send them back to us.
- For cases with multiple claimants, we use electronic surveys to gather information and store this information electronically.
- We're in the process of implementing a new Practice Management System, app, and client portal, meaning our processes will use even less paper as we move towards an increasingly digital way of working.
- Our printing and postage costs have reduced, in line with our commitment to becoming a paper-light firm.



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