

2023

Responsible Business Report



Our mission:
helping people to
a better future

Our vision:
To be the firm of choice for
exceptional service, quality of life
and doing **business responsibly**

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Welcome

In 2022, Professor Colin Mayer, Professor of Management at the University of Oxford's Saïd Business School invited businesses to reshape capitalism by rethinking the purpose of business, stating: "The purpose of the business is to produce profitable solutions to the problems of people and planet, not profiting from producing problems".

Tees does not need to re-think its purpose – for over 100 years, our mission is, and always has been, to 'Help People to a Better Future'. Doing Business Responsibly is in our DNA.

We are proud to be a firm that has always taken its Environmental, Social and Governance responsibilities seriously.

Our vision is to be recognised as the firm of choice for doing business responsibly. Why? Because doing the right thing matters. To our colleagues; to our clients; to our communities.

To enhance transparency and accountability, we have now:

- codified our commitment in these areas in our new firm strategy
- undertaken a strategic review of the impact we are having on the environment; our communities, colleagues and clients; as well as our governance
- identified key areas of focus, in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals, where we believe we can have the greatest impact; and
- decided to track and report our baseline and progress in these areas using the GRI and WEF reporting frameworks and standards.

This report contains examples of what we have done so far and a firm commitment to continue to do more.

In the last year, we have built on solid foundations and made significant progress. We have:

- undertaken an audit of our impact on the environment and have set ambitious targets to achieve not just carbon neutral, but net zero by 2028.
- launched the Tees Better Future Fund, the Tees Volunteer Day and a new pro bono legal advice clinic to enhance the ways we already partner with and serve our communities
- invested in pay and benefits, health and well-being, learning and development for our colleagues
- worked with our clients to understand their needs and deliver services that meet the highest standards whilst prioritising client satisfaction
- reviewed our corporate governance, to include building and enhancing our Risk and Compliance Team and requesting independent audits in numerous areas to ensure that we are not only compliant, but we excel in governance, risk, legal and compliance issues.

We know that there is still much more to do, but we are ready for the challenge.

Here's to a
Better Future
for all!



Leading the drive to be a responsible business is an extraordinary privilege – it is a profound opportunity to make a lasting positive impact on the world. Guided by my vision for a better future, I am honoured to hold the roles as both Co-Head of ESG and Co-Chair of the Community Investment and Development Board – they afford me the chance to make a positive contribution to economic, environmental and social progress. I believe that business has the power and responsibility to create lasting change. Through ethical practices, environmental stewardship and a commitment to social justice we can shape a future where compassion, sustainability and equality flourish. By embracing this, one responsible decision at a time, we become the catalysts of progress, shaping a legacy that reverberates far beyond our own successes.



It's an honour to help curate Tees' journey towards responsible business practices as we develop our ESG credentials. Every one of us in the business has an opportunity of profound significance, to leave a legacy of positive impact on how we do business.

We want to be recognised as leading the way in embracing responsible business practices, in order to protect and safeguard our local environments. I'm grateful to have this unique opportunity to promote inclusivity and sustainability and to ensure we live up to our green commitments. Responsible business holds the key to a sustainable future.

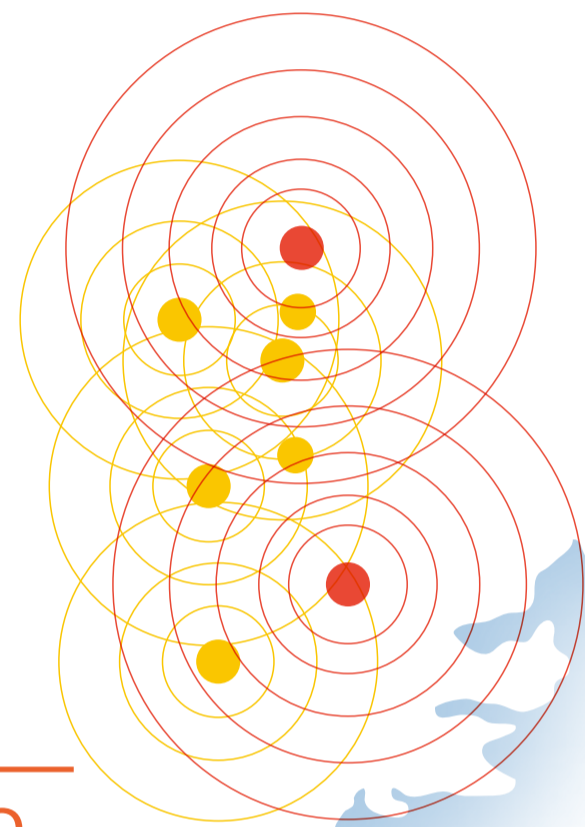
Who we are



We are a purpose-driven, multi-award winning legal and financial services firm, trusted advisers to our clients and our communities.

What we do

For over 100 years, our renowned experts have helped people to a better future, delivering exceptional service and personalised legal and financial advice.



£28.9m

Group Revenue
2022-2023

£373m

Assets under
advice*

372

Total number of
UK employees*

4.5*

Trustpilot rating

25

Partners

6

Locations
in UK

Great

NPS Score

21st

Best law firm to
work for in the UK

Very Good Levels
of Workplace
Engagement

Best companies

*as at 31 March 2023



#21
Best Law Firm to
Work
For in the UK



Key areas of focus



The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs), also known as the Global Goals, are a set of 17 interconnected and ambitious objectives adopted by all UN member states in September 2015. They serve as a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity and well-being for all by 2030. The SDGs cover a wide range of economic, social and environmental issues and aim to create a more sustainable and equitable world.



The UN SDGs we are focussing on and why

We have carefully considered the context in which we operate, including:

- The socio-economic environment
- Present and future environmental concerns
- The services we offer
- The geography and markets we serve
- Our business relationships
- The views of our colleagues, clients, communities and other stakeholders

We have taken a thoughtful approach to assessing both the current and potential consequences – both favourable and unfavourable – resulting from our actions as well as the significance of these outcomes.

From this, we have identified and prioritised key areas of focus – those where we believe we can have the biggest impact:

Environment	Social			Governance
12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION	3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING	4 QUALITY EDUCATION	8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH	16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

Delivering our responsible business strategy

At Tees, we view governance as essential to any sustainability strategy. A clear system of governance is vital for the successful implementation of our environmental and social goals.

We always strive to do business responsibly. As part of this, we are transparent and accountable in everything we do.

The Partnership is committed to doing business responsibly.

Our Board of Directors (including both non-executive and executive directors) provides strategic oversight, oversight of risk, and ensures that we operate with integrity, ethical conduct and compliance with applicable laws and regulations. The Audit and Risk Committee reports into the Board.

Our two passionate and knowledgeable Co-Heads of ESG report to the Trust Tees Board and work alongside not only the Director of Human Resources; Director of Risk and Compliance; and Director of Operations, but also other

dedicated groups, including:

- our Green Team;
- our Community Involvement and Development Board (CIDB);
- our Better Future Funding Panel;
- our Events & Challenges Committee;
- our Volunteering Committee; and
- our Working Well Committee.

These groups comprise a diverse range of colleagues from all offices, job roles and experience.

The Partnership provides a 'check and balance' to ensure that the firm upholds its commitment to be a force for good, positively impacting the environment and helping our clients, our colleagues and our communities to a better future.



It is an honour to be involved in the Community Involvement and Development Board and to watch Tees embrace ESG so passionately. As deputy for tracking and reporting, I see how our commitments translate into measurable impact – the figures are astounding and something we should all be proud of building on these year on year as we endeavour to interweave Tees' successes with social betterment.

Rachel Benton, Associate Solicitor, Tracking and Reporting Deputy, CIDB & Better Future Fund Panel Member



Being involved in the Community Involvement and Development Board at Tees has allowed me to be at the forefront of driving positive change in our local communities. By virtue of being a member of the Board, I am honoured to also be a part of the team responsible for deciding which of the amazing projects will be the recipients of grants made from the Better Future Fund. I am thrilled to have already witnessed the impact Tees is having on our local communities and I look forward to seeing what the future holds for the Better Future Fund and the charitable projects benefiting from it.

Charlie Neal, Trainee Solicitor, Communications, CIDB & Better Future Fund Panel Member



I am incredibly proud to be part of Tees Community Involvement and Development Board. It is very inspiring to not only know how environmental social governance and community relations are at the forefront of the firm's values but more importantly clearly see the very real world impact this vision has had. I see this through the many worthy projects to receive funding through the Better Future Fund and more directly in my role as Chair of the Volunteering Committee. In the first year of this initiative we provided over 800 hours of community voluntary service to dozens of organisations through over 100 Tees members of staff and I am sure that these figures will continue to grow and grow.

James Robinson, Client Care Manager, Volunteering Lead, CIDB & Better Future Fund Panel Member

The environment

Tees is committed to reducing our impact on the planet. To do so, we have pledged to:

- 1. Adopt an environment-first based approach to business decisions**
- 2. Implement a green supply chain network and use local suppliers wherever possible**
- 3. Achieve net zero by 2028.**

These goals interlink with our social and governance commitments. We believe in doing business responsibly. We aspire to be a force for good, positively impacting the environment and helping our clients, our colleagues and our communities to a better future.

Tees is committed to carrying out business in a responsible and sustainable way, by minimising impact on the environment through an awareness of the resources used, the waste produced and the carbon emissions for which we are responsible. The business seeks to contribute actively to sustaining natural resources wherever we can.



We are members of the Legal Sustainability Alliance (LSA). The LSA is a collaborative sustainability network for law firms and the UK legal sector.

It exists to help law firms to commit to 'net zero' by putting sustainability at the heart of their businesses. The LSA develops best practice and advises on effective approaches for law firms and encourages the sharing of ideas and information among its members, to help them play their part in tackling climate change.

A climate pioneer

Tees is a founding signatory of the Brentwood Environmental Business Alliance (BEBA), which brings together local businesses across the borough to encourage more sustainable and environmentally friendly business operating practices by supporting businesses to collaborate, learn and find information about 'going green'.



The progress made on this so far is as follows:

- **Baseline carbon footprint has been mapped for the year 2022-23**
- **Energy suppliers of all of six offices were moved to those supplying renewable energy**
- **Renewable products sourced for all office renovations**
- **Green Team of engaged colleagues established, with a view to addressing office based and local initiatives**
- **Commitment made to producing an Annual Report, setting out commitments from the strategic plan**
- **Commitment to appointing a non-executive director board member to oversee ESG**
- **Commitment to achieve net zero by 2028**

Carbon footprint analysis

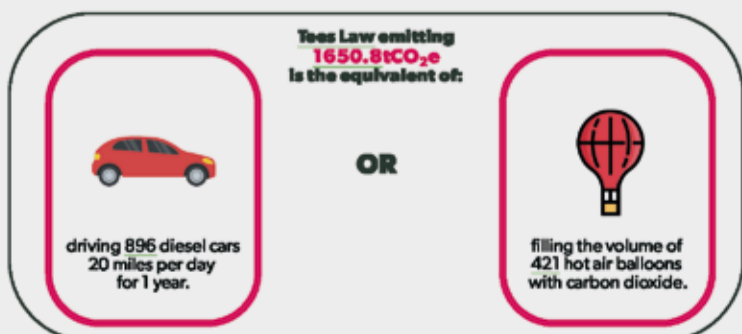
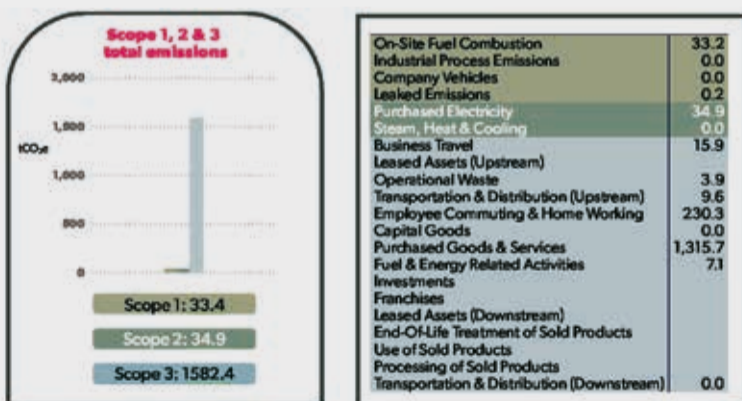
As part of Tees' commitment to openness and accountability, we arranged for carbon footprint measurements and analysis to be carried out by Positive Planet.

In total, some 96% of Tees' emissions (1650.8 tCO₂e) were made up of Scope 3 (upstream) emissions. This includes things like purchased goods, travel and waste.

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As a modern and forward-thinking firm, our colleagues have a range of home-working and hybrid arrangements to maximise efficiency and sustainability, reducing the burden of travel. Our commitment to implementing a green supply chain network and using local suppliers ensures that our purchased goods are becoming increasingly emissions light.

Our Carbon footprint



Our social responsibility

Partnering with our communities ...

We play our part in our communities by:

- Establishing and awarding grants from the Tees Better Future Fund – grants of up to £5,000 are available to support local projects that are meeting key areas of need in our local communities: Learning & Education and Health & Well-being
- Giving time (through the Tees Volunteer Day)
- Providing access to justice through pro bono advice
- Sponsoring community events and organisations
- Inspiring the next generation through our work with local schools and colleges
- Promoting work and economic growth
- Creating employment opportunities and decreasing inequality
- Supporting local foodbanks to reduce poverty and hunger
- Sharing our spaces with the third sector.



The Tees Better Future Fund

In partnership with Cambridgeshire Community Foundation, we set up the Tees Better Future Fund to meet two key areas of need across our local communities:

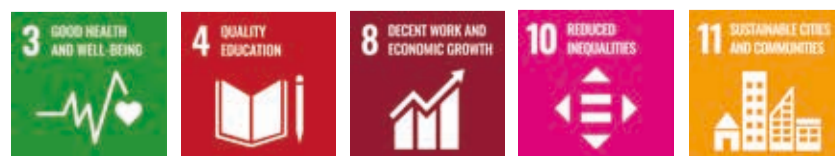
1. Learning and Education (building skills, raising confidence)

We believe in improving the life chances of the younger generation through learning and education. By promoting talent, improving social mobility and creating opportunities to thrive, people can fulfil their potential.

2. Health and Well-being

We support community cohesion, reduce isolation, help to improve physical and mental health and promote healthy lifestyles through increasing access to sports and exercise and bringing children, young people and families people together.

Total raised:	£33,183.90
to 31 March 2023	
Internal fundraising:	£5,655.19 plus £381 gift aid
Corporate supporters:	£970.31
Tees:	£25,200.92
Other:	£976.48
Total distributed so far:	£25,000 to five projects



Partnering with our communities ...



Sports Connections Foundation (Basildon, Essex)



Sports Connections Foundation (SCF) received a grant of £5,000 to help fund their project, which supports the good health & well-being of children and young people through sport and physical activity.



The work of SCF promotes children participating in healthy activities and having fun, whilst also helping them to learn the importance of supporting each other and the community around them.

"We are very grateful to the Tees Better Future Fund, which enabled us to deliver fantastic sporting and educational outcomes for hundreds of children in Basildon. It was amazing to see so many happy children at our summer camp at Great Berry Primary School this year." Junior McDougald, SCF Founder.

The Expert On Myself (Cambridgeshire)



The Expert On Myself (TEOM) received a grant this year to plan and create a training programme for organisations about the issues that those with autism face; to help them to improve their services, communications and work environments for people with autism.



TEOM is a community interest company that helps people speak and organisations listen. They create valuable opportunities for people to educate professionals about the issues that affect them. Their expertise is from personal experience and from many years of working with people.

"We are delighted to be able to use this funding from Tees Better Future Fund to help organisations better meet the needs of local autistic people. We have already had enquiries from autistic people wanting to get involved in the project, and from organisations who are keen to have training from autism experts." Lisette, TEOM Director.

Child integrated Play Scheme (Bishops Stortford)



CHIPS create safe spaces for children with additional needs to play together and support their parents'/carers' well-being by offering them short breaks from their caring responsibilities.



CHIPS now supports over 200 families, of which there are some 230 children with additional needs and their siblings.

CHIPS will use the grant from the Tees Better Future Fund to fund additional hours of staffing, which will provide the 1 to 1 support that the majority of the children with additional needs require. The children will be able to attend the play scheme more regularly on Saturday mornings and during the school holidays, to meet up with their friends and enjoy fun and new activities.

"CHIPS is very grateful to the Tees Better Future Fund for its generous donation which will enable us to run extra play scheme sessions for our children. Without the play schemes, too many children coming to CHIPS would miss out on the simple joy of playing with other children." Graham Nickson, CHIPS Chairman.

Partnering with our communities ...



Cambridge Junction (Cambridge)



Cambridge Junction was campaigned and fund-raised for and by local people in the 1980s to create a space for young people and the arts in the city. Cambridge



Junction's learning team has a particular focus on working with young people with complex needs and barriers to education.

With support from the Tees Better Futures Fund, Cambridge Junction worked with pupils at the Castle SEN School and Cavendish autism specialist school on creative film making projects.

The pupils at Cavendish created an entertaining comedy 'Monkey Trumps' and Castle School students made 'Zombie Busters'. These films were screened at the 2023 Total Arts Film Festival at the Light Cinema in June. Together these films supported by Tees won three of the ten 'Oscars' awarded at the Festival after party.

"It builds on what we have already done with the pupils, the outcomes for our students have been everything we strive to nurture in them: confidence, the ability to express themselves creatively; opportunities to work with professionals; a sense of joy and pride in their work and the chance to have a voice within their community. Thank you so much to all who support us. Students and staff remain inspired, excited and truly grateful."

Lead teacher from one of the schools.

Action for Family Carers (Chelmsford, Essex)



For more than 30 years, Action for Family Carers has been providing information and support to carers who have unpaid, caring responsibilities for others.



Their mission is to make a positive difference in the lives of carers including young carers, which is achieved by offering activities such as young carer club nights, young adult carer transition support, counselling for carers and activity groups for vulnerable older people and people with dementia and memory loss. These programmes have helped over 1000 families and that number continues to grow every day.

"The support we get from local charities like the Tees Better Future Fund is essential to allow us to do the work we do, supporting young carers across Essex and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for such a generous donation."

Chris Vince, Young Carers Service Manager for Action for Family Carers.

Partnering with our communities ...

30% used their Volunteer Day

Over 800 hours given back to numerous different and diverse organisations

100% said they would recommend their volunteering activity to other people

68% said the volunteer day helped them feel like they were making a difference

8% improved own mental health

5% facilitated personal growth

Employee Supported Volunteering

Being part of the Tees community means being part of a culture built on generosity, care and a desire to do good. Part of Tees' culture of giving back to our communities is the volunteering days that Tees supports each of our colleagues to complete. In addition, every colleague also has one day each year of paid leave to volunteer at a charitable project of their choice.

Many are engaged with local charities, for example volunteering as trustees, as school governors and/or providing pro bono advice.



Sanctus



Last year, Sue Buxton-Smith used her volunteering day to help at Sanctus, a charity supporting homeless and vulnerable people in Chelmsford with a café and support hub that opens every weekday (including bank holidays and Christmas).

"I enjoyed the volunteer day so much I have been volunteering at Sanctus every Wednesday since January 2023. My role is varied, but always interesting. I primarily spend time in the café; I speak to the café users, serve snacks and meals, wipe tables and wash cups." Sue Buxton-Smith, Legal Executive.

"The Charity relies heavily upon our volunteers to run efficiently and to that end Sue has become a regular and most regarded member of our team of volunteers. She is a hard worker and always has a smile and time to talk with our service users, many of whom are troubled, in addiction or just lonely." Sanctus.



Tree-planting with BEBA (Brentwood Environmental Business Alliance)



"We had a fabulous day volunteering with BEBA at Warley Country Park to benefit our wonderful local community here in Brentwood. I personally planted about twenty trees, which I am very proud of! It was great to get out of the office with the team and get involved volunteering." Gemma Ball, Associate

BEBA (Brentwood Environmental Business Alliance) is a new initiative bringing together businesses across the borough to encourage them to be more sustainable and environmentally friendly in an attempt to battle climate change. Tees have signed the "BEBA Pledge" and made a business commitment to minimise the environmental impact of business operations, and our very own Sally Powell is on the Board.

To support the BEBA Pledge, a 12-strong Tees' volunteering group attended a tree planting day at Warley Country Park. The day was led by Brentwood Borough Council's arboriculturist, Alan Marsh, who provided a talk on the benefits of woodland establishment and organised very insightful demonstrations of tree harvesting and a whole tree chipping operation.

Overall 650 trees were planted.



Partnering with our communities ...



The monetary value of pro bono legal advice delivered in 2022-2023 is over £500,000.

Pro-bono work and campaigning

We believe that we have a responsibility to serve the public interest and uphold the rule of law and this includes promoting fairness and equity in the legal system.

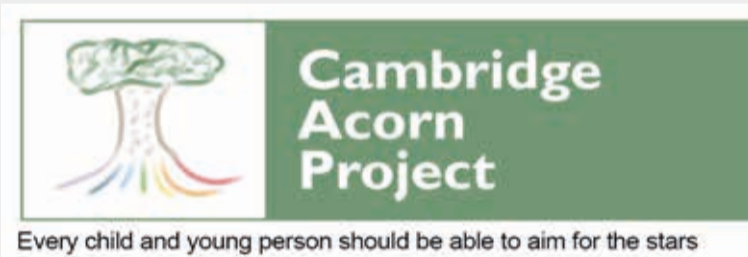
With the availability of legal aid diminishing, pro bono legal advice is crucial for vulnerable populations such as low-income individuals, refugees, immigrants and victims of domestic violence – it can help protect their rights, safety and well-being.

In recent years, our colleagues have generously donated their time, offering pro bono legal advice through legal clinics such as Citizens Advice Bureaus and the Anglia Ruskin Law Clinic to ensure that those who could not afford to do so, have access to legal expertise and guidance. This helps bridge the justice gap and ensures that legal rights and remedies are available to all.

Over the last year, we have continued to support the CAB and ARU Law Clinics, whilst also setting up a new pro bono legal clinic in conjunction with the Cambridge Acorn Project.



Cambridge Acorn Project



Cambridge Acorn Project is a local front-line charity making a tangible difference to the lives of children, young people and families who have experienced trauma and who are facing financial hardship.

In 2023, Tees partnered with the Cambridge Acorn project to launch a legal clinic – part of Cambridge Acorn Project's Well-being Hub called Frazzled Fridays, run in partnership with Abbey People and located in the Abbey ward of Cambridge City an area which is amongst the 20% most deprived neighbourhoods in the county (Indices of Deprivation, Gov, 2019).

By providing free legal advice and support through this clinic, Tees is actively supporting Cambridge Acorn Project to ensure that families who need legal advice but who face significant barriers have access. Critically, this will, empower disadvantaged families to advocate for their rights around SEN, debt, housing, and family law. This help will make a tangible difference to the lives of children and families and redress inequalities in accessing legal advice.

The demographics of those assisted included:

- 90% of sessions delivered to clients considered to be facing financial hardship
- 10% of sessions involved a child with a Special Guardianship Order.
- 10% of sessions involved adopted children.
- 40% of sessions involved children with formal SEND diagnoses.

“Anna from Tees Law went above and beyond and has done more for me during two consultations than my Legal Aid solicitors did in almost a year. You guys helped me to keep it together when I didn't know what to do and where to turn. I am still waiting on the court date but now have full Legal Aid and [new] solicitors which is a big achievement. I cannot thank you enough. You all were my saving grace in times of huge distress and difficulty when I was not able to find someone to hear my concerns. You are doing amazing work.” Parent

Partnering with our communities ...



Sponsoring community events and organisations



We believe that sponsoring community events and organisations helps to build sustainable cities and communities. Community events and organisations bring people together, fostering a sense of belonging and social cohesion. They often promote physical activity and healthy lifestyles and contribute to the overall well-being of community members. They can stimulate economic activity, attracting visitors and encouraging local spending. Without sponsorship many of these events simply would not happen, and organisations would not exist. We take pride in giving crucial financial support to many local initiatives, across all our locations – sponsoring the events and organisations which reflect the values that Tees believes in.



Food banks

Despite its status as a developed country, many people in England struggle to make ends meet and foodbanks step in to provide food assistance to those unable to feed themselves or their families. By distributing free or low-cost food to those in need, food banks help alleviate the immediate impact of poverty and reduce hunger. Access to nutritious food is essential for good health and foodbanks provide individuals and families with access to balanced and nutritious food, contributing to improved health outcomes, especially for vulnerable populations. Tees' offices have long-standing relationships with local foodbanks.



Reverse Advent Calendar

The Bishop's Stortford office has actively engaged in the 'Reverse Advent Calendar', where, instead of counting down the days to Christmas by opening a window & receive a treat, you give something instead!

Colleagues contribute basic items such as beans, pasta, women's hygiene products and nappies, resulting in an entire car full of donations. Last year, some staff took the idea to a new level by making around 50 little stockings and bags filled with sweets to be hung on the tree.

Abbey People Foodbank

The Cambridge Office donates to the Abbey People Foodbank, and made some hampers (including food and gifts) at Christmas time for those most in need. The Abbey People's vision is for healthy, happy people, living in a thriving community. Abbey People aims to develop community cohesion, make Abbey a better place to live, and support the most at-risk in this deprived area through targeted community projects, provision of general support such as a food hub and community fridge, supporting access to education and employment and developing a culture of volunteering in the community.

Partnering with our communities ...



Inspiring the next generation through work with schools, colleges and CICs

We are committed to enhancing the prospects of the next generation through education and learning. By fostering talent, improving social mobility and forging pathways for success, young people can unlock their potential and thrive.

We work with multiple schools and colleges, offering careers talks, advice and guidance on CV writing, and interview practice to help prepare the next generation for employment.

Last year, we also worked with Turtle Dove, a CIC to offer work experience to a young lady from an at risk background; and welcomed a 15-year old Ukrainian refugee for a two week work experience placement.



Tees was an amazing work environment, I am so grateful to Turtle Dove for managing to get me this opportunity to work in my dream job. I learnt many skills in the trade and improved my own skills which will significantly help me in my future.



Sharing Spaces

We welcome not-for-profit community organisations to our offices to use our meeting rooms spaces, without charge.

Not for profit community organisations are often working to address critical social and environmental issues. By providing them with free meeting space we are directly contributing to their ability to carry out their mission, helping them to save cost and use their limited financial resources to deliver front-line services to make a positive impact in the community.

Six organisations used our meeting spaces, over three locations for 66.5 hours.



“By providing access to meeting spaces, Tees is actively helping Cambridge Acorn Project to funnel vital funds into front line services rather than using this money to pay for overheads such as hiring rooms. For every hour of free room hire that Tees gives to Cambridge Acorn Project this enables Cambridge Acorn Project to give an extra hour of therapeutic support to a child or family.”

Hannah Chapman, Charity Manager,
Cambridge Acorn Project

Serving our clients ...

Inclusion and diversity



We pride ourselves on creating an environment that is welcoming for all and making our services inclusive, available and accessible to a diverse range of clients.

We recognise that a diverse workforce is more likely to understand the needs and perspectives of a wide range of clients and that training helps us to understand and communicate with clients from diverse backgrounds, with diverse needs.

All of our offices are now fully accessible to clients with mobility challenges, with Saffron Walden being the last to be adapted in the 2023 refurbishment.

Accessibility includes ramps, lifts, other physical accommodations in our offices and, where parking is offered, disabled parking. The layout has also been carefully considered.

Training programmes are delivered, usually by those with lived experience, to improve awareness of the difficulties that some face, and to educate on how best to respond to their needs. For example, training around sight loss has taken place and training in neurodiversity and specifically, how this affects how

we communicate with and deliver services to our neurodiverse clients, is scheduled.

We encourage client feedback about their experiences with Tees and use this rich input to inform improvements to our service delivery, to improve inclusivity and accessibility.

We accommodate client communication preferences (email, phone, video calls, in-person meetings, home visits). The format of all documentation can be individualized and we use plain language when communicating difficult technical concepts to clients to enhance understanding.

We engage in outreach efforts and partnerships in our communities to connect with under-served and under-represented populations, and we participate in legal clinics, provide workshops and training and collaborate with local community organisations.

Over the next year, we will work to ensure that our website and online resources are accessible to people with disabilities and adhere to accessibility standards like WCAG (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines) to make sure our online presence is user-friendly for all.

Expertise and accreditations

Our lawyers and wealth advisers are renowned experts in their field, helping clients to a better future day in, day out. Our advisers are not only experts in their area, but also adhere to high ethical and professional standards.

Whilst clients are able to judge the level of service provided, it is often impossible for a client to assess the quality of the advice they are given.

We therefore believe independent accreditation schemes are essential to protecting clients and the wider public interest.

We have specialist industry-leading experts who have achieved independent accreditation in their areas including:



What our clients say about us

Excellent Service
★★★★★

"We have been dealing with Kieron Willis of Tees for our financial planning and pension investments for the last two years. We are very pleased with the service we have received. Kieron is very patient and clear with his advice and comes highly recommended."

- Nick

Trustpilot ★★★★★

First class service
★★★★★

"Prompt, friendly and professional service. They do what they say they're going to do and always communicate in a timely manner. I have used Tees to both sell and buy a property on 2 separate occasions and the service has been first class. Would highly recommend Tees."

- Deb

Trustpilot ★★★★★

Understanding and knowledgeable
★★★★★

"Polly Kerr at Tees Law has been incredibly supportive to our family, professional, understanding and knowledgeable. Polly kept us informed every step of the way and her expertise helped us get results quickly."

-Hannah

Trustpilot ★★★★★

Serving our clients ...

Legal Services

Acquisition improves waste management and construction recycling



Experts in our Corporate team advised on a complex shares transaction, where a company sold its shares in a leading recycling and waste company in London and the South East, to a company which is a leader in the collection,

recycling, processing and sale of waste products from the building and construction sector, across northern Europe. This company offers all the services and products a building and construction company need to manage waste in the most environmentally and cost-effective way.

The company buying the shares, places sustainability and improved environmental performance at the forefront of its growth strategy. Through covering the entire value chain from collection, sorting, treatment and disposal, the company performs services that make a difference to the environment for thousands of companies and individuals in northern Europe; the company's acquisition of these shares in this deal, expands this sustainability plan even further.

As a result of this deal, waste management and construction recycling in Essex will greatly improve with investment providing safer and more sustainable methods for local construction businesses.



Josh's story ...



We helped a family in a tragic case of a young man who died while receiving in-patient care at a specialist mental health

unit in West Suffolk. This case is an example of the firm's work that helps to achieve a wider public benefit for all.

After a lengthy inquest, the jury concluded that Joshua Sahota died at a mental health unit as a result of asphyxia, by deliberately placing a plastic bag over his head and the use of a bed sheet around his neck.

The jury were unable to determine Joshua's state of mind at the time of his death but concluded that contributing factors that led to his death were: insufficient staffing, insufficient

observations and 1 to 1s, inadequate documentation, no psychologist available and unclear restricted items policy.

As a result, the Coroner raised a 'Prevention of Future Deaths Report' not only directly with the Trust but, unusually also with the government minister for Mental Health and Patient Safety. This shows how important the outcome of inquest was, not only to the family, but at a national level for all users of mental health services.



Joshua Sahota

A twin story ...



We acted for identical twin boys with identical disabilities, which were complex. Their needs could not be provided for

in mainstream school. Despite this, the Local Authority (LA) placed both boys into a mainstream primary school, where they were not safe, and could not be educated.

All efforts to highlight this to the LA fell on deaf ears. Although the parents started the appeal themselves, they soon ran into difficulty dealing with the LA.

We were instructed and ran parallel proceedings for the boys, which were heard one day after the other. In the judgment the tribunal panel highlighted that the LA had ignored the concerns of professionals working with the boys and that they were in an unsuitable setting.

We were successful at tribunal, securing the provision the boys so desperately needed, most importantly, securing them placement at a special school, which could meet their needs, keep them safe, and where they are now thriving.

Serving our clients ...

Legal Services

Renewable energy



Tees is at the heart of a vital renewable energy industry which is making significant contributions to efforts to combat climate change.

Our work includes legal advice on the property aspects of solar projects such as early lease negotiations, helping secure funding and offering ongoing assistance with the operation of solar sites throughout the term of the lease.

Solar farms (also known as solar fields or solar parks) are the large-scale application of solar photovoltaic (PV) panels to generate green, clean electricity at scale, usually to feed into the national grid. Solar farms can cover anything between 1 acre and 250 acres and are usually developed in rural areas.

The renewable energy team acts for a global clean energy company on the funding and operation of a range of solar and battery storage installations on sites across the UK. The company is the world's largest solar developer and the

majority of the installations have involved the leasing of solar farms of around 250 acres to provide 50MW of capacity to the national grid.

Environmental benefits: one of our clients: a solar farm and battery storage facility in Nottinghamshire

We assisted a developer client to bring their largest project to date online. The clean energy produced will:

- Power 14,230 homes per year
- Save 14,550 tonnes of carbon emissions
- Take 3,230 cars off the road per year (equivalent)

Approximately £560,000 will be spent by the global company on the implementation of the bespoke Biodiversity Management Plan and the landscape planting plan during construction and development. A total of 10 acres of the site will remain free from panels and will instead be turned into wildflower meadows to enhance local biodiversity.

Wealth Services

Our bespoke ESG advice planning process for clients



Building a strategy around our clients' personal core beliefs aimed at delivering financial success is central to our planning process.

One of the challenges with ESG investing is that it's highly subjective; whilst a client may want to prioritise the social impact companies can have, others may be more concerned about the environmental effects.

At Tees, we work with our clients to take the time to truly understand their values, including any 'red lines' they may have and where they may be willing to compromise. We take account of their financial aspirations and plan for how these

Charlie's story ...

Teenager Charlie* underwent what should have been straightforward and routine surgery. Tragically, during the surgery, he suffered a massive stroke, which affected his ability to communicate effectively and left him with weakness in one side of his body, some sight loss and post-stroke epilepsy.

Charlie had been advised by a number of other solicitors that this was an unfortunate, but not negligent outcome of the surgery. Our medical negligence team, however, dug deeper, and helped Charlie secure a settlement which included a seven figure lump sum payment, as well as an annual payment for Charlie's life to ensure that he was able to access appropriate rehabilitation, support and accommodation.

With the help of our specialist Private Client advisers, Charlie set up a Bare Trust to hold the damages award for his benefit.

can be delivered via an ESG investment strategy, that is tailored to them, so that they can feel comfortable with the investment decisions they are making.

We will also seek to understand the balance between our clients' views and the overall financial performance, as well as what impact they want their investment to have - i.e: to 'do no harm', or to 'do good'.

We focus on our clients' overarching investment goals to ensure that we maximise their investment returns whilst continuing to invest in companies that work hard to manage their legacy and impact on the world.

As independent financial advisers, we are able to continually monitor and benchmark the investment managers that we recommend and hold them to account to ensure that their investment strategies remain in line with the policies and beliefs for which their investments were selected on our clients' behalf.

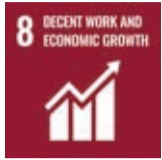
He then sought advice from our Wealth Team as to how best to look after the funds. Following a full review, our Wealth Management Team advised Charlie of his options. He decided to invest a lump sum for capital growth on an ethical basis. Charlie feels passionately about the environment, social responsibility and the strong governance of the companies that he is prepared to invest in. Tees has a strong track record in ethical investing and a bespoke tailored ethical portfolio was built with a Discretionary Fund Manager to meet Charlie's objectives. The portfolio is reviewed on a regular basis to ensure it meets his needs and to ensure it is on track.

Tees Financial is a member of the UK Sustainable Investment and Finance Association (UKSIF). Their goal is to advance sustainable development through financial services.

**anonymised to protect client confidentiality*

Helping our colleagues to a better future ...

Recruitment



We are a growing firm who continue to provide increased employment opportunities, thereby contributing to economic growth within the geographies in which we operate.

Our recruitment practices are inclusive and non-discriminatory. We prioritise candidates with

strong interpersonal and communication skills, who demonstrate a commitment to our mission and values and have strong ethical values.

Promoting social equity and diversity is key, and we offer a number of entry points, including apprenticeships, across the business.

Diversity and inclusion



Our culture is one of equal opportunity for all – from our hiring process, to promotions, reward and recognition and development opportunities, decisions are made purely on capability and potential.

We are proud to have a diverse, inclusive, ethical and sustainable workforce and seek always to cultivate a culture where everyone is valued, has a voice and can be themselves.

Compensation and benefits

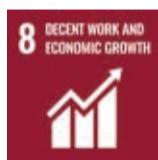


We reward our colleagues fairly, striving to eliminate wage gaps based on gender, race or other demographics and contributing to a more just and

equitable workplace. In addition to pay, we offer a range of benefits to support our colleagues' physical, mental and financial health.

In the last year, we invested an additional **£1.3 million** in improving our compensation and benefits package. We are committed to growing our benefits further.

Learning and development



Our Learning and Development Programme helps our colleagues acquire new knowledge, skills, competencies and behaviours to equip them with the tools and knowledge they need to support their continued growth and progress in their careers.

We provide a comprehensive range of opportunities for learning and development. This includes both technical and soft skills, as well as opportunities for enhancing management and leadership capabilities. These resources are accessible both internally and externally, through workshops, seminars, webinars, online courses or in-house training. In 2022-2023, we invested £175,000 on training, and the amount of time invested in training was valued at nearly £2.5m.

We support career development for all, including specific professional development training and apprenticeship opportunities, by application.

Regular personal development dialogues take place throughout the year and at appraisal time.

Colleagues are also encouraged to take ownership of their own development through resources such as on-line courses, articles, books and mentoring.



In 2022, Tees Financial launched its very own Academy to train aspiring Financial Advisers. The two-year apprentice programme combines studying for the CII's Diploma in Financial Advice, with hands on experience of the day-to-day role of a financial adviser.

James Appleby, Managing Director of Tees Financial commented **“The Academy at Tees Financial is a key part of our long term growth strategy, and we’re proud to be investing in young talented individuals who represent the future of financial advice. We have a highly professional and experienced team of financial advisers at Tees and The Academy is a chance for them to share their wealth of knowledge with people at the start of their careers”**

“It’s a great way to gain first-hand experience of the work” he says. **“For four days a week, I get to shadow financial advisers, then one day a week I’m following the structured online learning.”** Guy Pearson, Apprentice

Working well



Our Vision is to be the firm of choice for quality of life.

We prioritize the physical, mental and financial well-being of our colleagues. We offer competitive compensation, benefits and a supportive workplace environment.

There is a very intentional focus on creating a work environment where our colleagues can be their best and we support this by providing management time, appropriate staffing levels, technical tools and equipment, and space for development and health and well-being.

Through our Working Well Committee, our colleagues are involved in identifying opportunities to improve the working environment with a particular focus around mental health. We have trained 15 mental health first aiders.

With a focus on giving back to the communities we serve, our colleagues are encouraged to seek out opportunities to contribute to good causes, share their expertise for the benefit of others and to volunteer their time to do their bit to make a difference to others.

Employee Engagement



Every year, to inform our programme of continual improvement, we seek the views of our colleagues through an employee engagement survey. In 2022, completion rate was > 90%. We ranked the 21st UK Law Firm to work for. Responses indicated strengths in the Company, Leadership, Management, Personal Growth and Team. Areas for development included Well-being, Fair Deal and Giving Something Back.



#21
Best Law Firm to Work For in the UK



Receiving such rich data has enabled us to focus, strategically and operationally on how and where we can do better.

372 UK employees, of which
78% Female 22% Male
25 Partners (58% female)
64% Women in Senior Management (Trust Tees Board, Exec Board, Partnership)
7 Apprentices
10 Trainees
44% Employees earning > £35,000
42 Average employee age

Neurodiversity Celebration Week

Being Neurodiverse and working for Tees

“Starting my training contract with Dyslexia has been a unique and exciting challenge. It’s so important to work in an open, inclusive and communicative environment and I’ve discovered that at Tees. We’ve collaboratively crafted a Workplace Passport which details reasonable adjustments that support me to work to the best of my ability. It’s made a huge difference and is helping me to build a strong foundation for my future career.”

Charlotte Middleditch, Trainee Solicitor

Neurodiversity Celebration Week

Being Neurodiverse and working for Tees

“Having not been diagnosed with ADHD until 21, expressing and explaining my condition to others has been quite challenging, as it is still so new to me. My colleagues at Tees have not only shown me support, but also a keenness to understand ADHD and educate themselves on it further, which makes me feel reassured, and comfortable in sharing my experiences”.

Niamh McCole, Marketing Assistant

Governance

At Tees, we view governance as essential to any sustainability strategy. Our governance goes beyond compliance – strong principles of governance are embedded in our core values and operational framework. This proactive approach aligns with our belief that doing business responsibly, is not just the right way to do business, but is essential for long-term success.

Our main Board – the **Trust Tees Board** – plays a pivotal role in the business structure which is built to ensure that Tees is transparent, accountable, equitable and inclusive and operates with integrity, compassion and humanity.

The Board is chaired by Non-Executive Director Catherine Spitzer and includes both non-executive and executive directors who bring diverse perspectives and expertise to the Board on strategy, risk management and ESG matters. Non-Executive Directors ensure a balanced and objective approach to decision-making, promoting transparency and accountability. The Board is given the responsibility for running the business by the shareholders and has oversight of the strategy and of risk and has a blend of knowledge, skills, perspectives and backgrounds to enable it to monitor and evaluate performance effectively, with a view to continuous improvement.

The Executive Board reports to the Trust Tees Board and executes Board-approved strategies day-to-day.

The Partners, as stakeholders in the firm, play an integral role in governance. They give responsibility to Trust Tees Board to run the business but actively participate in the decision-making process, own the firm's strategy, and ensure that ESG principles are integrated into daily practice. Our governance model encourages partner engagement in ESG initiatives, making sustainability a collective effort.

A cornerstone of our governance model is unwavering compliance with regulatory bodies. We recognise the significance of adhering to the stringent standards set by the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) and the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) to ensure ethical and professional conduct. Our commitment to regulatory compliance is reflected in four key aspects of our operations:

1

Adhering to the SRA's Code of Conduct (and that of the FCA), which both set out the principles and behaviours expected of solicitors and financial advisers.

These codes emphasise the importance of integrity, confidentiality and client care, aligning seamlessly with our commitment to ethical and responsible legal and financial practice.

2

Client protection – we maintain comprehensive professional indemnity insurance, as mandated by the SRA, to safeguard the interests of our clients.

This ensures that clients have recourse in case of any professional negligence, enhancing their confidence in our services.

3

AML and CTF compliance – we diligently comply with Anti-Money Laundering (AML) and Counter-Terrorist Financing (CTF) regulations, conducting thorough due diligence on clients and transactions.

This not only fulfils legal obligations but also plays a crucial role in preventing financial crime and maintaining the integrity of the legal and financial services professions.

4

Data protection – in an era of increasing data privacy concerns, we rigorously adhere to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and other data protection laws.

Our commitment to safeguarding client data reinforces our ESG commitment to social responsibility.

The legal business has been Lexcel accredited since 2000. Lexcel is the Law Society's quality mark for client care, compliance and practice management. It sets the standard for client care, risk management, people management, structure and strategy, information management and file and case management. Tees Law is also accredited with Customer Service Excellence. Many departments or individuals hold other memberships and/or accreditations.

Tees Financial Limited has been awarded corporate Chartered Financial Planners status by the Chartered Insurance Institute. Every firm that holds Chartered status adheres to an ethical code that underpins broader commitments to professional

values. These commitments include putting customers' interests first, investing in ongoing development of their people's technical skills and knowledge, plus supporting wider initiatives that benefit society as well as the growth of the profession.

Our governance model integrates ESG principles into our day-to-day operations. This holistic approach reflects our belief that responsible business conduct is not only a legal requirement but also a moral imperative. As we move forward, we remain dedicated to upholding these principles, fostering a culture of sustainability, responsibility, and accountability within our firm.

Trust Tees Limited is the holding entity of Stanley Tee LLP and Tees Financial Limited. Stanley Tee LLP operates as a licensed alternative business structure (ABS) and it is authorised and regulated by the Solicitors Regulatory Authority (SRA number 464615). 'Tees' is a trading name of Stanley Tee LLP. Both the Trust Tees Board and the Executive Board report to the Partners of Stanley Tee LLP, who set and own the strategy and provide yet another 'check and balance' to ensure that the firm does business responsibly. Tees Financial Limited is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority (FRN 211314). The Tees Financial Board is chaired by Non-Executive Director, David Redfern, and includes both executive directors and non-executives. 'Tees' and 'Tees Wealth' are trading names of Tees Financial Limited. Tees Financial Limited reports to the Trust Tees Board. Price Bailey LLP are the appointed auditors for the Tees Group of companies.

Our commitments

As we reflect on the past year's achievements and challenges, we are energised by the progress made and remain dedicated to continuous improvement. Our responsibility toward sustainability is ongoing and as we navigate the challenges and opportunities of an ever-changing world, we remain steadfast in our commitment to creating a positive impact on society and the environment and contributing to a more sustainable and equitable future. We thank our colleagues, partners and shareholders, clients and communities for their continued support on this journey and look forward to another year of progress and innovation in pursuit of our ESG goals. Together, we can build a world that is more equitable, resilient and environmentally conscious and help people to a better future.

Environmental commitments

- **Carbon Neutrality:** We will achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2028
- **Renewable Energy:** We will use renewable energy sources in our operations.
- **Resource Efficiency:** We will implement measures to reduce resource consumption
- **Waste Reduction:** We will reduce waste generation, increasing recycling rates, and minimizing single-use plastics
- **Sustainable Supply Chain:** We will promote sustainability throughout the supply chain, including responsible sourcing and ethical procurement practices.

Social commitments

- **Diversity and Inclusion:** We will engage in diverse hiring practices, promote inclusivity in the workplace, and ensure equal opportunities for all colleagues.
- **Labour Rights:** We will uphold fair working practices, including fair wages and safe working conditions.
- **Community Engagement:** we will invest in and engage with local communities, supporting initiatives that address social issues and promote community well-being.
- **Health and Safety:** We will prioritise the health and safety of our colleagues, our clients and our communities.
- **Client Data Privacy:** We will safeguard client data and respect their privacy rights.
- **Ethical Marketing and Advertising:** We will ensure marketing and advertising practices are truthful, transparent, and ethical.

Governance commitments

- **Ethical Leadership:** We will promote ethical behaviour and transparency among the leadership and executives.
- **Board Diversity:** We will appoint diverse and independent directors to the board.

- **Anti-Corruption:** We will take anti-corruption measures and comply with all relevant laws and regulations.
- **Shareholder Engagement:** We will engage with shareholders on ESG matters.
- **Data Security and Privacy:** We will safeguard sensitive corporate and client data while respecting privacy laws.
- **Transparency and Disclosure:** We will provide transparent reporting on ESG performance, risks, and opportunities.

Investment and financial commitments

- **Responsible Investment:** We will implement responsible investment strategies, considering ESG factors in investment decisions.
- **Social Impact Investment:** We will invest in projects with positive social impacts, such as health and well-being, learning and education initiatives.

Innovation and technology commitments

- **Innovation for Sustainability:** we will commit to efforts that advance environmental and social sustainability.
- **Tech Ethics:** We will develop and adhere to ethical guidelines for emerging technologies like artificial intelligence.

Supply chain commitments

- **Supplier Code of Conduct:** We will develop and enforce a supplier code of conduct that aligns with ESG principles.
- **Supply Chain Audits:** We will conduct regular audits and assessments of suppliers' ESG performance.

