

RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS REPORT



2023 / 2024

Table of contents



P.1

Introduction

P.2

Welcome

P.3

Our report
structure

P.4

Highlights

P.5

Environmental

P.7

Social

P.9

Governance

P.12

Our vision for
the future

P.13

Our
accreditations

P.14

Glossary

P.16

Acknowledgements

Introduction

Looking back at 2023 into 2024 at Longmores, we have had another successful year, and this success is reflected by our continued status as one of the leading law firms in Hertfordshire. We are proud of our dedicated team who work hard to deliver exceptional legal services to our clients, and we are excited to continue these services long into the future.

As part of our continued growth and maturity as a firm, we have written our first Responsible Business report. This report highlights how we are integrating environmental, social, and governance (ESG) considerations into our strategy and everyday operations to ensure we have a long-lasting positive impact on people and the planet.

Welcome

Dear clients and colleagues,

Welcome to the first Responsible Business report looking back at what we achieved in our first year with this new approach.

At Longmores people have always been at the heart of everything we do; the firm has thrived for over 200 years because of the relationship between our loyal clients and our exceptional team. We have a proud history of supporting our people and their professional and personal development and of supporting our community through various charitable and social responsibility initiatives.

Now, in a rapidly changing world, the sustainability of our planet has become equally as important to us. As a responsible and forward-thinking firm we are dedicated to minimising our environmental impact. As part of this we undertook a comprehensive review of our carbon footprint.

We have also reviewed our governance to ensure that not only are we compliant but that we uphold the highest standards in governance, risk, legal and compliance issues.

This report represents the start we have made and the steps we will take in integrating ESG considerations into every aspect of our daily life from how we manage our resources to how we engage with our clients, colleagues and community.

As we move forward we will continue to refine and expand our ESG strategies setting ambitious goals and transparently reporting on our progress.

We are excited to share our journey with you and look forward to working together to build a more sustainable future.

Yours faithfully,

Chris Pease, Joint Senior Partner



Our report structure

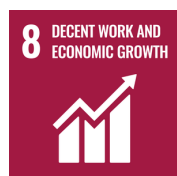
This year to support the development of our first Responsible Business Report and ensure that our ESG programme is targeted and effective, we have conducted a materiality assessment across the firm to identify which environmental, social and governance topics are of importance to us, where there will be a significant financial impact on our business or where we might have an significant impact on society and the environment.

Longmores recognises the positive impact it can have on both people and the environment and it is willing to integrate ESG factors into its core business strategy to make a positive long-lasting impact.

As part of the materiality assessment we have conducted interviews, held workshops and completed surveys within the firm to get an authentic sense of which ESG issues are important to us at Longmores.

This report is built around the findings of the materiality assessment, providing insight into how Longmores is tackling these key issues and how we intend to improve our approach year on year. For each of our material topics, we have also flagged them against the relevant United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs). These are a series of 17 different goals whose aim is to help develop peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future. By aligning our responsible business strategy with these goals we can create a robust plan that will ensure that Longmores continue to play a positive role in society.

The images below represent the UN SDGs Longmores has selected to support as part of our responsible business strategy, and these images will be present at the beginning of each relevant report section.



Highlights

Measuring progress and the success of our initiatives is a key way of identifying how our ESG programme is developing at Longmores. It provides valuable insights into the effectiveness of our efforts, identifies areas that require further attention, and informs decision-making for future actions. In the table below we have highlighted a few of our achievements from 2023 into 2024.

Environmental	Social	Governance
Calculated our Scope 1 & 2 carbon baseline	Donated to 8 different local and national charities	Achieved re-accreditation for Cyber Essentials Plus Certification
Started a programme of supplier reviews to switch to greener products and services	Launched 2 new staff benefits	Paid a 5% bonus to all staff
Engaged a building consultant who specialises in low carbon solutions	Published our annual employee diversity data	Integrated ESG risks into our standard risk register

Environmental

Environmental impact



At Longmores our environmental impact as a law firm is focused on the operations we conduct within our own offices, as well as a small amount of business travel. This year we have managed our environmental impact by ensuring that our key suppliers are supporting us on our sustainability journey. As part of this process, we have reduced the environmental impact of the following:

1

One office

We consolidated three office spaces in Castle Street all into number 24, our “head office” since 1894. With hybrid working and an office rota, everybody still has their own desk without the need for much hotdesking and we have reduced our operational costs and energy consumption whilst bringing the whole team under one roof.

2

Electricity consumption

We switched to a Zero Carbon Energy for Business tariff. This tariff produces 0g of carbon dioxide for every kWh of electricity Longmores uses, effectively ensuring our carbon emissions are zero for any electricity usage on site.

3

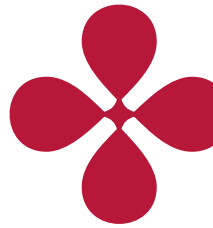
Paper usage

We completed a project to reduce the amount of paper we use in the office, digitising client records and sending more documents electronically rather than by post. By switching to hold/release printing solution software we saved approximately 75 kg of carbon dioxide by not releasing accidental printing jobs.

4

Waste management

We work with the UK’s leading waste management company who announced in 2023 that their Scope 1, 2 and 3 emission targets have been validated by Science Based Target Initiative, a collaboration of global leaders in sustainability. This means we expect to see our waste emissions from their services reduce over time and have started tracking how much of our waste goes to landfill versus recycling.



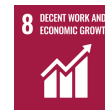
We also calculated our Scope 1 and 2 carbon emissions for the first time. Scope 1 includes the fuel we burn, and Scope 2 covers the energy we buy for both our oil and electricity consumption at our office. In the table below you can see that the most significant portion of our emissions is attributed to the oil-powered boiler on site which provides heating for the office.

Scope	Activity	Year	Location-based emissions (tCO ₂ e)	Market-based emissions (tCO ₂ e)
Scope 1	Oil	2023	28	28
Scope 2	Electricity	2023	9	0

To improve further our environmental performance we have engaged an engineering consultant to guide us through the refurbishment of the office. The office is a landmark building in Hertford that has become entwined with the Longmores brand. The site dates back to medieval times however the current building that you see from Castle Street is a mixture of 18th and 19th century architecture with a 1960s extension at the back. The whole building is Grade II listed meaning it is classified as of special interest and warrants every effort to preserve it. Any work will be managed with care and where we can, we will improve the office's energy efficiency to reduce our carbon footprint whilst improving working conditions and maintaining the historic integrity of the building.

Social

Employee engagement, diversity and inclusion



With our roots in a family business, the culture at Longmores has grown through collaboration and friendship over the generations. Fostering a culture that allows our colleagues to be their authentic selves is central to ensuring Longmores remains a desirable place to work and a pillar of our society. To achieve the levels of productivity necessary in a law firm, we encourage everybody to think about their own and others' wellbeing as we all play a part in creating an environment that is beneficial to all.

Employee engagement, diversity and inclusion is led by our People team. To develop a socially inclusive and welcoming environment they launched two new benefits to support ongoing wellbeing. These were a cycle to work scheme and paid for parking. The new benefits sit alongside the existing wellbeing budget for each individual to use on activities that benefit their health or wellbeing and fitness. In addition, the firm has existing benefits for physical and mental health that are available to everybody such as a private health care scheme.

All staff are offered the chance to discuss career progression with their manager. Training options are available to anybody who wants to enhance their skills. Each year we support a trainee solicitor via the LPC (Legal Practice Course) or SQE (Solicitors Qualifying Examination) route with what is often referred to as a training contract. During the two-year period each trainee spends time in different teams on their route to qualification.

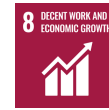


We are proud to have supported paralegals by funding their CILEX (Chartered Institute of Legal Executives) qualifications which support their route to becoming qualified lawyers. Several team members have also progressed their careers by achieving internal role changes across teams.

Our social programme was a huge success across the firm with the committee organising twelve events. There was something to suit all tastes from the summer boat party to Oktoberfest, theatre trips, and bowling. By socialising together we hope to encourage engagement across teams who may otherwise not work together.

Social

Human rights, community and client relations



Longmores has a long tradition of being active members of the community. Historically, partners have held roles in public service; now many of our solicitors are trustees of different charities, the firm prioritises donations to local causes and we provide a small amount of pro bono work.

Trustees

Five solicitors hold positions as trustees for 14 local charitable organisations. They are committed to ensuring that any money donated to these charities is used wisely and supports the intended beneficiaries of the charities. We believe in using our skills as lawyers to support society where we have the knowledge and the capacity to be useful.

ProBono work

We try to help anybody who contacts us and although pro bono work is not part of our structured offering, we always recommend where else to look for help if somebody is not able to pay for legal advice. We have an ongoing commitment to the Law Clinic at the University of Hertfordshire; a Senior Solicitor within our Employment team regularly spends time providing legal advice to individuals and companies, whilst being shadowed by university students to support their development.

Charitable support

During 2023/2024 Longmores donated to three local and five national charities all of which had a connection to the firm. In particular, we supported Helping Herts and the Hertfordshire Community Foundation who collectively represent numerous local charities. Ten staff participated in the Helping Herts Coronation Walk alongside the charities and other supporters for which the firm donated £1000.

Client feedback

We are open to what clients think about the service we provide so we request reviews which are published publicly on the Review Solicitors website and accessible from ours. We learn from this feedback and use it to improve our services if we do not meet the high standards we set. This helps to maintain positive relationships with our clients and offers an honest view to potential clients.

Governance

Customer privacy and data security



At Longmores how we handle customer privacy and data security is critical to our business. Often we are helping our clients to manage some of the most challenging periods of their lives and how we process their personal information is key to ensuring that we protect their interests. In an increasingly digital world, maintaining customer privacy is aligned with having robust data security and at Longmores we are proud to have held the Cyber Essentials Plus certification since 2019. This certification is government-backed and is awarded to companies that demonstrate they take cyber security seriously. As a result, Longmores' data security procedures are capable of defending against the majority of common cyber-attacks and a technical verification of the firm's systems is carried out annually by an independent auditor.

We work with an expert IT service provider who support our cyber security processes and IT infrastructure. They are accredited to ISO27001 which is the universal standard for information security.

Governance

Business ethics



Good governance and business ethics are critical to client and staff satisfaction at Longmores, and our Senior Partners, Chris Pease and Richard Gvero, ensure that it is embedded into the ethos and operational processes of the firm. The firm's four core values underpin everything we do.



This value-based approach to business ethics is supported by firm-wide policies and procedures which communicate how to manage compliance and issues across the firm. Key policy topics include General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), anti-corruption and bribery, anti-money laundering, and anti-facilitation of tax evasion.

Longmores has been recognised for its commitment to good business ethics by holding the Lexcel accreditation since 2011. This accreditation is a legal practice quality mark for client care, compliance and practice management and is awarded by The Law Society. To achieve this accreditation Longmores undergoes assessments by an independent body on an annual basis.

Governance

||

Business resilience



At Longmores, business resilience is a cornerstone of our long-term strategy, ensuring that we can continue to deliver exceptional legal services in the face of emerging and existing challenges.

Managing Business resilience

Central to our approach is a firm-wide risk register, which is reviewed every 12 months to identify and mitigate potential risks. Our horizon-scanning across all practice areas keeps us attuned to emerging trends and potential disruptions, enabling proactive adjustments to our strategies.

Effective communication with our extensive network ensures that we remain responsive and adaptive, fostering a collaborative environment that supports resilience.

On a day-to-day basis, each file we open undergoes a thorough risk assessment, categorising it as low, medium, or high-risk, allowing us to allocate resources and oversight appropriately.

Principle business risks

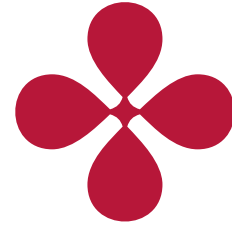
We recognise that staff recruitment and retention are principal challenges in maintaining a resilient and productive workforce.

Aligned with our firm values of working together and valuing people we look to engage with everyone in the firm to enable them to have input into projects (such as our ESG strategy and client experience). Our values are reflected in the way we do business with others and the way we deal with and interact with each other in our daily working lives. By focusing on retention and living up to our values we aim to ensure that we have the talent necessary to navigate complex legal landscapes and sustain our operations.

The firm officially introduced hybrid working in 2021 after many staff told us they benefited from better work/life balance with a mix of days working remotely and in the office. The ongoing challenge is to ensure that staff have the support, training and resources they need when they are less visible at times to their manager or wider team. Some of our colleagues chose to work in the office every day, and we have identified specific roles for which hybrid working is not suitable in order for duties to be fulfilled.

By adapting to these new workplace trends, we aim to be robust and prepared for future uncertainties.

Our vision for the future



Having started our ESG journey, next year we aim to formalise our approach within the firm. This will be led by the formation of an ESG committee dedicated to prioritising and progressing different ESG initiatives. The committee will be made up of colleagues from differing teams and levels of seniority to provide varying perspectives on how ESG should be integrated and advanced within the firm.

We expect each initiative to be structured under headline commitments, with progress for each of our ESG initiatives monitored using specific measures and time-bound targets, allowing us to track our progress over time.



Longmores is dedicated to integrating ESG principles into our business operations to create a positive impact on society and the environment. By aligning our strategies with the UN SDGs and continuously improving our practices, we aim to lead by example in the legal industry.



Our accreditations

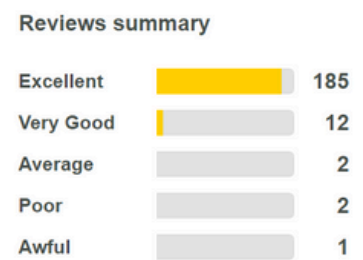
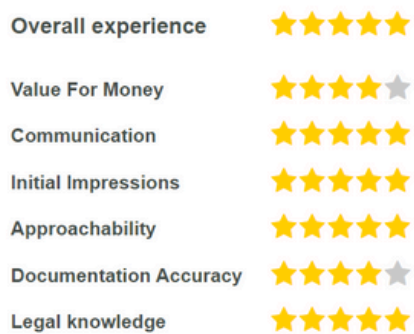
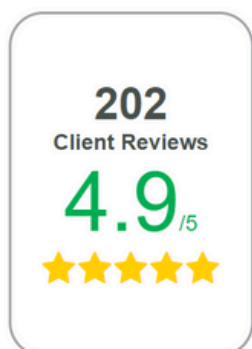


At Longmores we maintain a number of accreditations that reflect our dedication to exceptional legal services. These accreditations cover different parts of our business, demonstrating how we embed excellence in every aspect of our work, including key areas such as customer service, cyber security, quality management as well as recognitions for specific service specialisms at Longmores.



Our ratings on Review Solicitors

As part of our work at Longmores, we actively encourage clients to provide us with feedback on our work. Below is a short overview of how we are rated online by our clients.



Glossary

This glossary provides concise definitions of key terms and concepts related to sustainability and the legal profession, offering a clear understanding for readers navigating these topics in the context of the report.

Term	Definition
ESG	A framework used by companies to measure their sustainability and societal impact, focusing on environmental, social, and governance factors.
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation. A European Union regulation that governs data protection and privacy for individuals within the EU and the European Economic Area.
kWh	A unit of energy representing the amount of electricity consumed or produced over one hour at a rate of one kilowatt.
Location-based emissions	Greenhouse gas emissions calculated based on the average energy mix in a specific location, measured in metric tons of CO ₂ equivalent.
LPC	Legal Practice Course. A postgraduate course in England and Wales that is one of the main routes towards qualification as a solicitor.
Market-based emissions	Greenhouse gas emissions calculated using specific emission factors from electricity suppliers or contracts, measured in metric tons of CO ₂ equivalent.
SBTi	Science Based Targets initiative. An organisation that helps companies set targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions in line with the latest climate science.
Scope 1, 2 & 3	Categories used to classify a company's direct and indirect greenhouse gas emissions. Scope 1 covers direct emissions from owned or controlled sources, Scope 2 covers indirect emissions from the use of electricity, and Scope 3 includes all other indirect emissions in a company's supply chain.

Glossary

Term	Definition
SQE	Solicitors Qualifying Examination. A relatively new and alternative route to the LPC to qualify as a solicitor in England and Wales.
tCO ₂ e	A standardised unit used to measure the impact of different greenhouse gases on global warming, expressed in terms of the amount of CO ₂ that would have the same warming effect. It allows for comparison of the emissions of various gases based on their global warming potential (GWP).
UN SDGs	United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. A set of 17 global goals established by the UN to address global challenges, including poverty, inequality, climate change, and environmental degradation, to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all.
Zero carbon	Refers to achieving net-zero carbon dioxide emissions by balancing the amount of carbon released with an equivalent amount offset or eliminated from the atmosphere.

Acknowledgements

We extend our gratitude to everybody within the firm who has contributed to the launch of our ESG plan. Your dedication, support and willingness to learn have been instrumental in advancing our sustainability goals and starting to drive change. We remain committed to our core values of being open and honest, working together, valuing people and taking pride in what we do. Now we are also striving for a more sustainable and equitable future.



Contact

24 Castle Street
Hertford
SG14 1HP
www.longmores.law
enquiries@longmores.law
01992 300333

