

FORSTERS

Sustainability Policy



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SUSTAINABILITY POLICY

Forsters is committed to running a business that is environmentally sustainable. We continually strive to minimise our impact on the environment and sustainability is a core consideration in our operations.

We have made significant [external sustainability commitments](#) and are members of the Legal Sustainability Alliance, Business Declares a Climate Emergency, and the Achilles Carbon Zero accreditation programme.

This policy outlines the approach we take to sustainability governance and to areas of operation where a sustainable approach is key.

1. SUSTAINABILITY GOVERNANCE

1.1 Sustainability Board

Our sustainability work is governed by our Sustainability Board, which is chaired by our CSR Partner and comprises our Managing Partner, Heads of Finance, Operations and Risk and Compliance, and CSR Manager.

The board ensures that sustainability is at the heart of the firm's operations, including monitoring implementation of our sustainability work, approving new initiatives, ensuring wider decision-making is aligned with our sustainability commitments, and reviewing all new and updated policies from a sustainability perspective.

1.2 Green Impact Group

The firm's Green Impact Group is responsible for encouraging good practice, through regular communications and events that align with our sustainability priority areas. These are: business travel and commuting; printing; courier usage; waste and recycling; reducing energy usage; and reducing food waste and reliance on single use catering items. The group has partner-level leadership and members from across the firm.

1.3 Action at group/team level

All groups/teams in the firm have team-level sustainability targets and individual sustainability commitments, which are aligned with our sustainability areas of focus and reviewed annually by the Sustainability Board.

Groups/teams are provided with team level data for business travel and printing activity, to help them monitor their progress.



1.4 **Sustainability Hub**

The external-facing Sustainability Hub, hosted on the firm's website, brings together insights and legal expertise on a broad range of environmental matters that affect our clients' business and personal affairs. A Sustainability Group, comprising lawyers drawn from the firm's key practice areas, oversees the Sustainability Hub and continued content development. The Commercial Real Estate team also has a separate workstream for sustainability work, and lawyers from all teams are encouraged to use Passle and other external channels to share sustainability-related content.

2. **EMISSION REDUCTION AND OFFSETTING**

We have set a 'near term science-based target' and committed to reducing our absolute scopes 1, 2 and 3 greenhouse gas emissions by 50% by 2030, from a 2019-20 baseline, as part of our journey to net zero emissions.

We have been a carbon neutral firm since 2007, and will continue to offset our emissions in line with Achilles Carbon Zero programme requirements as we work towards our target, using high quality, Verified Carbon Standard offsets.

3. **OUR OFFICE MOVE**

We are currently based in three offices: 29-31 Hill Street, Berkeley Square House in Mayfair, and South Quay Plaza in Canary Wharf. Berkeley Square House and South Quay Plaza are multi-tenanted buildings. We are the only occupier in our Hill Street office.

In 2024, we are moving to 22 Baker Street (22BS), and sustainability is a priority in the fit-out and running of the new building. This includes BREEAM Excellent and NABERS ratings.

22BS will replace our Hill Street and Berkeley Square House locations from early 2024 for a 15-year lease period. Our South Quay Plaza office lease runs until the end of 2025 and we will not renew our lease.

4. **OUR EXISTING OFFICES AND FACILITIES**

We continually look for where we can improve our sustainable practices within our current offices, particularly in our Hill Street office, which is our largest building and where we have the most control over operations.

4.1 **Energy and resource consumption**

Since 2020, we have sourced renewable electricity for our offices where we have control over the supplier, in Hill Street and Berkeley Square House.



In our Hill Street office, energy saving measures include:

- movement sensors in the lavatories, showers and basement delivery store;
- LED lights systematically being fitted throughout the building, replacing less sustainable versions; and
- tap aerators, to reduce water flow.

We report on emissions related to our consumption of water, electricity, gas and waste removal services as part of our annual externally verified emissions audit, and we plan to set consumption reduction targets in our new office.

4.2 **Recycling**

We have no waste going to landfill from any of our offices. Almost all the firm's tech equipment is broken down into its component parts and recycled, after we can no longer use it, and larger items, such as furniture we no longer need, are also always responsibly recycled.

We have WRAP signage on our bins in our offices, to aid recycling, and our recycling practices are regularly monitored by our Green Impact Group and Sustainability Board.

4.3 **Cycling facilities**

We have showers and bike storage facilities available in all our offices for those cycling into work, as well as a Cycle to Work bike purchase scheme. We provide resources about cycling safely, to incentivise travelling by bike.

4.4 **Catering and food waste**

We aim to reduce food waste through regular communication about not over-ordering food for internal and external events. Any leftover food from internal events is made available to all staff in our communal kitchens, to reduce waste.

We actively encourage the use of sustainable caterers, organic food and vegetarian-only menus.

4.5 **Single use catering items**

We have committed to phasing out single use catering items by the time we move to our new office in early 2024. We have removed single use cups and napkins from our employee kitchens, and do not use single use items at external-facing events hosted in our offices. Where we are still using single use items (at some internal events), we always aim to use recyclable and sustainable options. We work with catering suppliers to encourage reduction in single-use items in their work too.



5. **TRAVEL**

Our Travel Policy (available on the intranet home page) outlines our approach to sustainable travel, which includes a Train-First policy for journeys within the UK mainland and to destinations served directly by Eurostar. We encourage and incentivise people to make sustainable travel choices.

We have a Travel Working Group, which actively works on initiatives that support sustainable travel.

6. **PRINTING**

6.1 **Printing settings and policies**

We use modern, energy-efficient printers in all our offices. All printers have default settings to print double-sided and black and white. Printing documents at home contravenes our Information Security Policy.

6.2 **Document printing**

We have a range of measures in place to encourage thought before printing:

- we have reduced the number of printers in our buildings, which has both cost and sustainability benefits – we are not maintaining so much equipment, and we are using much less ink, toner and paper;
- the cost of printing is displayed alongside each print job; and
- all printers require users to scan a pass /enter a code rather than printing documents automatically.

We regularly remind the firm about how to reduce printing, and ask all the firm to implement the following practices:

- consider where your personal or team's processes are causing others to need to print, and work to reduce this;
- become familiar with digital tools available, which include Adobe Acrobat Reader DC, pdfDocs, and DocuSign, as well as tools like OneNote within Microsoft Office, and seeking guidance from the IT Training Team and BSC Document Production Team where required;



- always aim to review documents digitally, and only print final or near to final drafts if necessary;
- always confirm with external parties whether documents can be shared/signed digitally before providing hard copies, and use digital signing as the default;
- use laptops or Surface Pro in meetings as far as possible, rather than printing meeting material and handwriting notes; and
- print longer documents two pages to a side (as well as double sided) where documents are still legible, to reduce paper use.

6.3 Large printing requests

Due to the nature of our work, we do at times need to print large bundles of documents, e.g. for court cases. Our Reprographics team manages large printing requests, and actively challenges how necessary the printing is before completing the request.

6.4 Other printed materials

All business services teams are continually looking to reduce printing associated with their team's processes – particularly internal forms – and this is included in team level sustainability targets. Other policies on printed materials include the following:

- our Learning & Development team does not print out course materials;
- our Business Development & Marketing team always seeks to produce digital rather than printed documentation about the firm, only providing printed materials in exceptional circumstances; and
- we have a policy only to provide printed business cards when requested by individuals, rather than as standard.

6.5 Managing our printing

We have a Printing Working Group, which actively monitors our printing and implements printing-reduction initiatives, and individual groups/teams and the Sustainability Board receive group/team level printing data at least annually.

7. COURIERS

We use e-couriers wherever possible, and actively encourage groups/teams to avoid use of express courier services, which are less sustainable, unless this is unavoidable. We also encourage use of Royal Mail Special Delivery rather than couriers wherever possible. Where



there is a significant cost difference using Royal Mail rather than couriers, we encourage use of e-couriers.

8. **FINANCE AND PENSION PROVISION**

Our pension provider, Scottish Widows, has an ESG pension investment option available to all employees. Employees are informed about this on joining the pension scheme and in ongoing communications from Scottish Widows about investment options. They can opt to have their pension invested in this fund at any point.

Our banking services are provided by C. Hoare & Co., which is a B Corp and is therefore implementing sustainable practices.

9. **WORKING WITH SUPPLIERS AND CLIENTS**

We encourage selection of suppliers with strong ESG credentials and communicate about these suppliers to the firm.

All larger suppliers complete an ESG questionnaire as part of the tender process, which is reviewed alongside their other credentials. We will soon be introducing the questionnaire to existing as well as prospective suppliers, to encourage ongoing reviews and improvement of ESG performance. We also require our larger suppliers to provide emissions information for our scope 3 emissions reporting.

We also have an ESG checklist available for use on an ongoing basis with suppliers, which highlights next steps that can be taken to improve ESG performance.

We also actively work with suppliers, clients and other key stakeholders through sustainability collaborations, which test new sustainable approaches to work with the aim of incorporating these into working practices on an ongoing basis.



FORSTERS

Any questions

Please contact:

CSR Partner, CSR Manager

Any member of the Sustainability Board