



RPC

Responsible business report

2023/24



Our progress so far

“Two years ago I put ESG at the heart of our four-year strategy. In two years’ time I want to take it out.

My vision is that, by 2025, being a responsible business should no longer need singling out as a strategic priority for RPC, but should simply be an intrinsic part of who we are; permeating all of our operations; embedded in our DNA. An ambitious target, for sure, but one which – as this report demonstrates so compellingly – we have made huge strides towards achieving.

That achievement stems from nurturing our inclusive culture; that’s critical, now so more than ever. We need not just to learn to live with difference, but celebrate and embrace it. It’s what unites us.

It’s no coincidence that our firmwide proposition is underpinned by a commitment to responsible growth. Working in the right way to achieve the right outcomes, for our people and our clients, is fundamental to our success.

We are under no illusions that this is a journey without end. But this report illustrates the significant distance we have already travelled. I’m looking forward to seeing how much further we can go, into 2024 and beyond.”



James Miller,
Managing Partner

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Our strategy and approach

At the end of 2022, RPC launched its new bold, holistic, and long-term ESG/responsible business strategy, embracing our own position in the global community and meeting our individual and collective responsibilities to ensure our business is more sustainable for the next generation of RPC people and clients.

Our goal is to continue to ensure that our strategy is understood and embedded across the whole business and contributes to our firm vision by engaging and empowering our people (of today and tomorrow) and enabling us to support our clients on the same journey.

UN Sustainable Development Goals and Integration

We continue to align our ESG/responsible business strategy with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs are a call for action by all countries to work together in support of our planet and its people. We have chosen to focus on the following eight SDGs at this point in our journey as these are most relevant

to our business and our responsible business programmes in relation to the environment, diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging (DEIB), health and wellbeing, charity, pro bono, and ethics and governance.



These SDGs underpin our ESG/responsible business activity, and all programmes are specifically created with SDG-impact and progress in mind. This means we can embed responsible business into our core activities.

Culture

2023 saw the launch of our new Ambition for our People, AmP. The firmwide people programme that empowers and energises you to achieve your career ambitions. AmP is designed around our employees' roles, wellbeing and life's twists and turns. Our business is our people, they are our greatest asset. We pride ourselves on our culture, and how uniquely human the firm is. Our culture is built on really strong foundations. As part of AmP, we have four signature strengths:

- 1. never stop growing:** lifelong learning and development
- 2. empowered to be your best:** inclusive and supportive culture
- 3. take the initiative:** trust and flexibility
- 4. work with purpose:** ability to make a difference in my role.

Policies

We have a number of policies and processes in place to ensure that we are supporting our colleagues and maintaining the culture that we have spent years building. Our enhanced maternity has no minimum service requirement, and we have a number of policies to support our people, from trans inclusion policies to pregnancy loss.

Flexible working patterns

At RPC we believe that hybrid working can increase motivation, promote a better quality of life, reduce stress and improve performance and productivity. We have embraced the opportunities offered by a more varied and flexible way of working, balancing work in the office with work elsewhere. Saying that, we also want to hold onto the benefits of spending time together in our offices, fostering a community by giving a common place for collaborative interactions, innovation and learning. Importantly, we want our way of working to enrich the RPC experience for our people and our clients and so we have adopted a hybrid way of working which means people will have more choice about where they work. At RPC we recognise that we must allow for individual and collective differences. We have chosen, therefore, not to set down strict rules, including the proportion of time each of us should spend in or out of our offices.

Listening to our people

At RPC, we biennially ask our people across all four of our offices their experiences about working at the firm, in our 'People Survey'. This supports the firm to best look after its people, by asking questions on topics such as; Do you feel like you get meaningful work? Does RPC offer a positive environment? Are you fairly rewarded? At RPC, we take this survey seriously, and meaningfully implement change based on the results of this survey.

Pay gap reporting and monitoring

In addition to our Annual Gender and Ethnicity Pay Gap Reporting, our in House Legal Employment Counsel reviews equal pay on an annual basis as part of the salary review process before going to the Board.

"We are thrilled to have launched Ambition for our People (AmP) this Autumn to ensure that everyone at RPC, regardless of job role or seniority, feels their career development and wellbeing are supported. The launch of AmP has seen the introduction of a new career framework, with culture at it's heart. Fostering an environment where we can have open conversations about career progression, encourage our people to continually develop, and harness their strengths is key to maintaining a happy and productive workforce."



Rachel Street,
People & Talent
Development Director

Environmental

In line with SDGs 12, 13 and 17, we have been actively working to promote greater environmental responsibility at the firm and amongst its people. We understand the importance and our responsibility to address environmental issues.

The environmental performance of our firm holds significant importance for our clients, people, and stakeholders. We demonstrate our commitment through our environmental reporting and sustainability policies, which encompass assessments of energy efficiency, waste management and utilisation of our office facilities. Our strategic agenda includes the ongoing review of our buildings, the energy we use, and taking proactive measures to reduce carbon emissions associated with both our business travel and engaging with our supply chain.

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RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

13

CLIMATE ACTION

17

PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

Where we are and the road to improvement

Our partnership with the Planet Mark

The Planet Mark certification is a UK accreditation and certifies that RPC has achieved the Planet Mark by reporting a reduction in our carbon footprint and engaging with our stakeholders. Planet Mark also aligns to the Science Based Targets Initiative Net Zero Standard. 2019 was RPC’s first year of carbon footprint reporting and certification to The Planet Mark. Reporting parameters encompassed the carbon footprint of RPC’s London and Bristol operational sites and associated emissions from purchased electricity, transmission and distribution losses, natural gas, water, waste, business travel and printing paper. In 2021, we also included our Hong Kong and Singapore offices in our Planet Mark reporting.

In addition to the Scope 1 and 2 emissions review that we have been conducting since 2019, in 2023 we undertook a Scope 3 review, supported by the experts at Planet Mark to help us in setting realistic targets in support of our wider firmwide environmental strategy. A Scope 3 review includes all the indirect emissions not included in Scope 2, including employee commuting and emissions within the value chain. 2024 will see us set bold and achievable targets in line with these findings.

Each year, our Planet Mark Report is communicated to internal key stakeholders through Planet Mark engagement workshops and externally through the Group’s Planet Mark page on the Planet Mark website found here: [RPC – Planet Mark](#).

Since 2020, RPC has set a target to reduce carbon emissions by a minimum of 5% every year.

In 2023, RPC took part in the ESOS assessment. ESOS provides a mandatory framework for organisations to identify opportunities to implement energy efficiencies. The assessments audited the energy use of our buildings, industrial processes, and transport to identify cost-effective energy saving measures.

Some achievements

- In 2021, RPC won the Planet Mark award for “Absolute Carbon Reduction” in the reporting year 2020. This award, sponsored by Tre Office, is for the business that made the greatest percentage reduction in absolute carbon in 2020.
- Awarded Platinum status (the highest tier) in Hong Kong as part of the Swire Properties Green Performance Pledge.
- First official corporate partner of the charity, UOcean – a BAME led registered UK environmental conversation charity fighting against ocean plastics and climate change in the UK.

Emissions and energy usage – total carbon emissions



Auditing our own environmental credentials

Over the past year we have worked with two third-party environmental consultants, Citizen Good and Planet Mark who have helped us assess our current activity and support us in shaping our environmental strategy.



Charity

In line with all eight SDGs to which we have aligned our strategy, our charity programme is focused on supporting firmwide partnerships as well as individual charitable endeavours, which allows us to support a wide-ranging number of organisations in the communities in which we operate.

2023 saw us launch our new approach to charity. It is an integral component to how we use our time and resources to ensure all our people can best use their skills and time to support causes aligned to our UN Sustainable Development Goals and broader ESG strategy.



Our strategy takes on a three-tiered approach. This focuses on our global charity partner, office and ESG stream partnerships and individual volunteering opportunities.

Our global charity partner

This year, we embarked on our first strategic global charity partnership with the charity UOcean. We have been working with UOcean since early 2021, however decided to promote the charity to RPCs official partner in 2023. UOcean is a pioneering, practical and grass roots non-profit solution to clean, protect and restore the world's oceans by 2050 working with an array of individuals, businesses, and communities on solutions to forge a circular economy with the removal of marine plastics and ocean health. Since working with the charity, they have provided ample opportunity for our people and clients to be involved with its mission, including through volunteering and education.

During our partnership so far, we have:

- contributed over 397 hours of volunteer time
- had 134 RPC employees volunteer
- collected plastic waste from our local waterways.

UOcean has also supported RPC on its environmental journey, through educational sessions and talks with both employees and clients alike.

"RPC Law firm emerges as an exemplary paragon of ethical and responsible business conduct. Our collaborative efforts in spearheading ESG and CSR initiatives focused on eradicating plastic pollution from the United Kingdom's waterways with their staff, from Partners to summer interns, everyone has shared the responsibility equally. Their sponsorship to us has illuminated their unwavering commitment to giving back, especially to an underrepresented B.A.M.E led charity like ourselves, their actions align with their deep rooted values, which has allowed us to flourish. RPC Law firm epitomises the essence of socially conscious commerce with integrity, an organisation that diligently dedicates itself to making a meaningful impact on society while remaining steadfast in its pursuit of growth. I personally cannot ever thank them enough for supporting us, it really does mean the world."

Quote from Global Project Director – Chris Desai UOCEAN 2050 by The Vayyu Foundation

Office and ESG stream partnerships

Across our four offices, our people choose which charities and how to support causes close to their communities.



Bristol and the Teenage Cancer Trust

Our Bristol office has been supporting the Teenage Cancer Trust Unity at Bristol Haematology and Oncology Centre. The office has taken part in a number of initiatives to both fundraise and volunteer for the charity including:

- Bristol quiz in aid of World Cancer Day
- Bristol Balloon Fiesta volunteering
- Step Challenge
- Insurance charity quiz

Hong Kong and Hands on Hong Kong

In our Hong Kong office, we have partnered with the charitable organisation, Hands on Hong Kong. The organisation supports communities in need in Hong Kong through a number of volunteering opportunities. In 2023 employees in our Hong Kong office have taken part in the following volunteer initiatives:

- making and delivering soup to elderly Hong Kong residents in need with the charity Food Grace
- supported Kelly Animals Shelter through a range of tasks including cleaning, feeding and love and attention
- recycling soap with Soap Cycling to distribute to disadvantaged communities throughout Asia
- supporting young people with motor dysfunction through sports.



Charity (continued)

Time Auction in Hong Kong

To further recognise and reward our volunteers' dedication in making contribution to the community, the Hong Kong office has partnered with Time Auction – a charity platform where individuals can volunteer skills (both legal and non-legal) for NGOs and redeem different experiences with their volunteer hours.

The platform enables our people to record the number of hours they have spent volunteering or working on a pro bono project, and see the impact they have had, while receiving a small reward in the form of a one-off experience or voucher once they reach a certain number of hours.

Opening Doors and RAIN – our LGBTQ+ Community

RPCs RAIN (LGBTQ+) community has been working with Opening Doors since 2021. Opening Doors is the only dedicated national charity connecting LGBTQ+ people over 50 with activities, events, support, and information. We have supported them in a number of ways including:

- sponsored the float for Opening Doors in London Pride 2023. RPC volunteers also helped on the day, supporting the members of Opening Doors
- sponsored Opening Doors LGBTQ+ History Month Exhibition at the historic Bishopsgate Institute
- invited members of Opening Doors to our LGBTQ+ History Month Drag Bingo event, with proceeds of our raffle going to the charity.

"Working with RPC has been a pleasure and has made a huge difference to the charity in delivering key and exciting events. Having RPC sponsor Pride in London was immensely rewarding as the team were enthusiastic and dedicated to supporting our members and ensuring they had the most memorable day possible. RPC have also been huge advocates for our members with having pledged donations as well as raising funds for Opening Doors through various events and campaigns such as LGBTQ+ History Month and the Big Give Christmas Challenge. We can't thank RPC enough for their ongoing generosity over the years and their passion to improving the lives of LGBTQ+ people over 50. We look forward to continuing working with them in the future"

Opening Doors



Hope in Haringey and our Social Mobility Community

In London, we work with Hope in Haringey, a community-based charity that works across Haringey and the surrounding areas to provide young people with support, mentoring and access to opportunities. This year, in addition to financial support, we worked with Hope in Haringey to run a Career Insight Day for 25 students currently studying for the A Levels, BTEC qualifications or equivalent to provide them with an insight into different careers in the legal sector. The students not only got to hear from Partners and employees at the firm but were also given the opportunity to hear from some of our clients at Aviva, who were able to provide an overview of the insurance sector and what it means to be an in-house lawyer.

"I just wanted to send a huge thank you for organising the Taster Day at RPC. The students so enjoyed it and learnt so much. None of the students had ever been to a law firm before, however the welcome and care you gave each of them made them feel truly welcome; the delicious refreshments, the tour of the whole building and above all the insight into the career paths was fantastic. They all really enjoyed the speed networking as well, I think it gave some of the ones who were more shy the opportunity to ask the questions they wanted to ask as well. It was so encouraging to see so many staff from RPC and Aviva giving up their time on the day to help and want to support the students."

Quote from Hannah from Hope In Haringey

Students survey:

- 100% of students who took part in our Hope in Haringey Insight Day said their knowledge of the legal sector improved after the insight day.
- 100% of students who took part in our Hope in Haringey Insight Day said their knowledge of business services and other roles in the legal sector improved after the insight day.

Individual volunteering opportunities

As a firm we are committed to supporting our people's charitable activity and, as such, every member of the firm is allowed to take one volunteering day (or two half days) each year to dedicate time to a charitable cause of their choice.

In 2023 we have dedicated 761.5 hours to charitable causes.



DEIB (Diversity Equity Inclusion and Belonging)

In line with SDGs 4, 8, 10 and 17, we have been actively working to promote greater diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging at the firm and amongst its people.

4

QUALITY
EDUCATION

8

DECENT WORK
AND ECONOMIC
GROWTH

10

REDUCED
INEQUALITIES

17

PARTNERSHIPS
FOR THE GOALS



Awards

2022

Top 25 Law Firm
42nd overall
Gold ranking

STONEWALL

2022

Top 75
Employer

UK SOCIAL MOBILITY
EMPLOYER INDEX

2022

Silver Award

ECOVADIS

2022

Silver Award

ARMED FORCES COVENANT
EMPLOYER RECOGNITION
SCHEME

2022

Winner
Pro Bono

CHINA BUSINESS LAW AWARDS

2022

Winner, Silver
Inclusion
and Diversity
Award

NATIONAL INSURANCE
AWARDS

2022

Highly
Commended
Faith initiative
of the Year

WOMEN AND DIVERSITY
IN LAW AWARDS

2022

Winner
Mental
Health and
Wellbeing
Initiative of
the Year

WOMEN AND DIVERSITY
IN LAW AWARDS

2022

Winner
Kelly Thomson
Ally of the Year

WOMEN, INFLUENCE &
POWER IN LAW UK AWARDS

2022

Winner
Alexandra
Anderson
Lifetime
Achievement

WOMEN, INFLUENCE &
POWER IN LAW UK AWARDS

2022

DISABILITY
CONFIDENT
LEVEL 2
EMPLOYER

DEIB (cont)

Employee communities

At RPC, we have eight DEIB employee resource groups which we call ‘Communities’.

Our DEIB Communities provide an open forum whereby individuals who are passionate about particular areas of DEIB can come together to share ideas and experiences. Our Communities are instrumental in helping us form and implement elements of our DEIB strategy.

All of our Communities are open to everyone at the firm, across all our offices and meet regularly throughout the year with our responsible business team to ensure we are marking key awareness-raising days and themes that are important to our people at RPC.

We currently have the following Community Groups:

- Belief
- Disability (ENABLE)
- Ethnicity
- Families
- Gender
- LGBTQ+ (RAIN)
- Mental Health
- Social Mobility

To ensure that we are having consistent open and honest conversations, and that we have transparent communication between our Communities and Senior Leadership, each of our Communities has a Partner Sponsor, and a Partnership Executive (PEX) sponsor who help facilitate conversations across the business, act as champions and support the responsible business team in taking an intersectional approach to our DEIB activity.

Key activities:

Belief

- To mark Holocaust Memorial Day in January, we took part in the national campaign, *Light in the Darkness* – to light up our office purple in a moment of commemoration. We also donated to The Holocaust Educational Trust & 45 Aid Society Limited.
- To mark Easter in our offices this year we shared mini Easter eggs.
- To celebrate Eid al Fitr we had traditional snacks in UK offices, alongside posters pulled together by members of our Ethnicity Community to give an insight into Ramadan and Eid celebrations.
- In keeping with RPC’s love of food, we also celebrated Diwali with traditional South Asian foods.
- Many members of our Community also wrote blog posts to share their personal experiences of celebrations throughout the year.
- Highly Commended Award at the Women in Diversity in Law Awards for our Holocaust Memorial Day event with Robert Rinder and Mala Tribich.

Disability (ENABLE)

- To mark Remembrance Day, volunteers from our London and Bristol offices took to local train stations and public spaces to sell poppies to raise funds for the British Legion.
- We worked closely with the Business Disability Forum to strengthen our position as a Disability Confident Employer (Level 2).
- RPCs Head of responsible business, Rachel Pears, took part in IFN & GAIN’s parent/carers panel event on ‘How to advocate for your Neurodivergent child’.
- We have produced Accessibility Documents to share with candidates and clients for our London and Bristol offices.
- International Day of Persons with Disabilities – To mark the day, we held informal coffee catch ups (along with some KitKats) to encourage everyone to have a break, and share experiences – whether around disabilities or caring responsibilities. Not all pressures are visible and it is important to take a break, and check in with one another.

Gender

- International Men’s Day – Speaker event with Mark Foster on men’s mental health.
- At the start of 2023 we held self-defence sessions in Bristol & London for all employees to attend.
- International Women’s Day – We held an event on ‘Embracing Gender Equity through finance’ with Emma Cowley, Investment Manager and Emily Rice, Financial Planner who are both from RBC Brewin Dolphin.
- We have a Menopause Working Group which has evolved from our Gender Community. This group has organised a number of activities to raise awareness about the impacts of menopause. These include
 - Event with Dr Mukherjee at the start of the year on understanding the menopause and how to access support.
 - Individuals bravely shared their experiences of menopause to help encourage more open conversation about the impacts of menopause and how we can better support one another
 - Introduction of Menopause Cafés as informal forums for those going through menopause to share experiences.
- Gender Pay Gap reporting.
- Sponsor Women in Tax.
- FIG (Female Insurance Group).
- Part of the 30% club mentoring programme.

Families

- Lunch & Learn webinar on ‘Family financial wellbeing at every stage’ through WorkLifeCentral.
- Introduction of our new fertility intranet page to consolidate information around our policies, which include:
 - Fertility Treatment (IVF) Policy.
 - Maternity (no qualifying period for our enhanced maternity pay in our UK offices).
 - Paternity.
 - Enhanced Family Leave.
 - Shared Parental Leave (including matched SPL pay).
 - Adoption and Surrogacy Leave.
 - Pregnancy Loss Policy.
- Fertility and pregnancy loss discussions on The Work Couch podcast with RPC Partners and employees.

- Return to Work buddy scheme for new parents to link up with someone else in the firm who may have a similar experience.
- Working with WorkLife Central which offers resources, webinars and peer support groups for everyone around wellbeing, caring and inclusion.
- Working with Bright Horizons whereby we offer six free sessions of emergency backup care to everyone at RPC, as well as a bank of support resources and vetted childcare and eldercare providers.
- Coaching available for returning parents through Bright Horizons.

Bring your child to work day

In August 2023, as part of one of our Families Community initiatives, we held our first Bring your child to work day in our London office for all employees and Partners. In collaboration with Employees Matter, the day was designed to provide the children of RPC parents and carers with an insight as to where their parents/carers work, and what they do! We welcomed 25 children between the ages of 6-12 for a fun-filled day where the children were able to take part in team-building activities, tours of the building, and the opportunity to create a podcast all about RPC. To create the podcast, the children had to create a name, a brand and most importantly of all, conduct several interviews in their groups with Partners and employees across the firm to find out more about their roles. At the end of the day, the children delivered a presentation to their parents and carers about what they learnt and were able to leave with their personalised t-shirts.

Children are often curious about their parents and loved ones’ jobs so we wanted to provide a fun and informative day to help children better understand where their parents and carers work and what their job might involve.



The appropriately named RPC Kids: A podcast by kids, for kids has been a great success on our intranet and we’re looking forward to running the day again!

“[My child] had an absolute blast and it meant a lot to her to be able to join my world for a day. The team was absolutely great – would highly recommend doing it again.”

“Thank you all. [My child] had the best day – she was buzzing about the whole experience. Such a lovely idea and really well executed. Nice work! Thank you to everyone who made it happen and run so smoothly.”

“[My child] really enjoyed it and loved seeing where daddy disappears off to work!”



DEIB (cont)

LGBTQ+ (RAIN)

- Member of Stonewall Diversity Champions Programme and currently ranked 42nd in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index Top 100 Employers.
- To mark Transgender Awareness Week, we hosted a training session with Global Butterflies called Trans 101 - The trans and non-binary space in 50 minutes. This session was to help employees understand the trans and non-binary space further, raise awareness about some of the challenges trans and non-binary people face and point out the ways people can support as allies.
- LGBTQ+ History Month – We held Drag Bingo events in both UK offices to support and raise money for Opening Doors.
- LGBTQ+ History Month – We sponsored Opening Doors Art Exhibition at the Bishopsgate Institute to help support LGBTQ+ artists and raise money for the charity.
- Pride Month – We sponsored the Opening Doors Pride Parade Bus as part of London Pride this year, with many of our RAIN Community volunteering on the day to support members of Opening Doors throughout the parade.

myGwork

To further promote LGBTQ+ inclusion at RPC we work with myGwork, an LGBTQ+ networking community which offers a recruitment platform, webinars, training, and support resources.

All of our jobs are advertised on the myGwork recruitment platform to highlight that we are an LGBTQ+ friendly employer to those who may be using the platform to look for new opportunities. We have also worked closely with myGwork over the last year to create profiles of people at RPC who are happy to be contacted as a 'friendly face' for anyone who might have any questions about the firm, as well as create articles about particular topics of interest to our RAIN Community – for example, Travelling Abroad as an LGBTQ+ person.

In addition to recruiting with myGwork, we're proud to have been part of their annual WorkPride Fair in June, as part of Pride Month. Every year, myGwork runs a virtual conference full of content about a variety of DEIB and workplace-related content, open to everyone across Europe. We were proud to sponsor and take part in the 'How to support your colleagues with mental health' workshop, reaching an audience of over 200 people.

We're looking forward to strengthening our relationship with myGwork, taking part in more panel events and further analysing the way in which we use the recruitment function.

- We made financial donations to London Pride, Bristol Pride, Black Pride and Trans Pride.
- To mark Pride Month internally, we held a webinar on mental health within the LGBTQ+ community with Yeme Onoabagbe, who spoke about how we can better support our LGBTQ+ colleagues and what some of the additional mental health challenges may be for LGBTQ+ people.
- We are partnered with myGwork, a global LGBTQ+ networking and recruitment platform.
- Throughout the year we have taken part in a number of myGwork activities:
 - Contributing to the myGwork article series, submitting articles on experiences of travelling to different countries as an LGBTQ+ individual.
 - Rachel Pears was a panellist on 'How to support your colleagues with mental health' for WorkPride, an annual week-long virtual conference on a variety of DEIB topics.
 - Advertising all our jobs on their recruitment platform to signal that we are an LGBTQ+ inclusive employer.
- To mark World AIDs day, we supported the Red Ribbon campaign in our UK offices. A Red Ribbon is worn on World AIDS day as a universal symbol of awareness and support for people living with HIV and AIDS.

Social Mobility

- We have a longstanding mentoring programme with Oasis Academy Brislington School in Bristol, mentoring for Year 8 students and Year 11 students. We have also supported the school by running development days with the students at one school grounds for over 320 students.
- We have supported Ablaze this year, a social mobility organisation based in the South-West that supports young people, and primary schools to provide help around extra literacy and numeracy support. Our support has included a donation and hosting a poetry competition for Year 5.
- Jo Richardson Community School Mentoring Programme. Our relationship with Jo Richardson has spanned 15 years and involves our employees mentoring Year 10 Students as well as dedicated skills development sessions.
- Hope In Haringey Career Insight Day – we ran an interactive work experience ay with Hope in Haringey to provide students from schools and colleges across Haringey with the opportunity to find out more about careers in the legal sector, and network with RPC employees.

- To mark Social Mobility Awareness Day, and to raise awareness about the importance of Social Mobility, we heard from inspirational speaker Karl Lokko about his journey.
- We have remained in the Top 75 of the Social Mobility Employer Index

Mental Health

- To mark Blue Monday and encourage people to explore our clinical psychology benefit we held a Q&A with a Clinical Psychologist at HelloSelf to demystify the process
- Mental Health Awareness Week – Choir performance in Bristol to encourage people to engage in hobbies and take breaks
- Mental Health Awareness Week (in collaboration with Families and Belief) – We held a power webinar on coping with Grief and Bereavement with Rosie Gill-Moss, creator of the podcast Widowed AF
- We ran 'Know you Numbers' health checks with our Healthcare Provider, AXA in UK offices to ensure people are looking after their physical and mental health
- To raise awareness for World Suicide Prevention Day we heard from powerful speakers Jonny Benjamin & Neil Laybourn about their experiences and how we can check in on one another
- For World Mental Health Day, green ribbons were available in all offices to show our support and allyship in ending the stigma around mental ill-health. The green ribbon has become a symbol for good mental health and around mental ill-health.
- We launched our new global wellbeing platform, Unmind, to continue offering our easy-access clinical psychology benefit in addition to a number of additional wellbeing resources
- We now have 50 Mental Health First Aiders trained across our London and Bristol offices
- Everyone at RPC is invited to take part in our regular Coffee Roulette sessions where individuals around the firm are randomly paired for a short, informal coffee catch up to encourage connections and conversation.
- Winner of the Mental Health Initiatives of the Year for our relationship with R;ppl at the Women in Diversity In Law Awards.

Ethnicity

- To mark Lunar New Year, traditional sweet treats were served in our offices.
- Launched our #MyNamels Campaign following the campaign by Race Equality Matters to encourage more awareness around the importance of pronouncing and spelling someone's name correctly.
- We took part in the AS Elevate programme which aims to support and engage with Black Talent.
- We signed up to the Halo Code – a pledge to commit to embracing all natural, protective and cultural hairstyles in the workplace.
- We took part in the 10,000 Black Interns programme again this year, welcoming a total of seven interns, four of whom had legal placements and three who sat with our business services teams (HR, Finance and Marketing).
- To celebrate Black History Month this year we welcomed Dr Maggie Semple and Jane Oremosu to talk about their book, My Little Black Book: A Blacktionary – 'a pocket guide to the language of race' to help broaden everyone's knowledge about language and the impacts it can have.
- We hosted authentic Caribbean lunches in both our London and Bristol offices as part of our Black History Month celebrations.
- Donation to the Sickle Cell Society to help support and raise awareness about the impacts of Sickle Cell in the UK.
- Reporting on our UK Ethnicity Pay Gap.
- We have continued to work on and progress our Race & Ethnicity Diversity Plan. This plan was created in consultation with our Ethnicity Community to identify actions we can take to improve racial and ethnic diversity at RPC..

"The skills I have learnt and connections I have made have not only helped me grow career wise, but I feel like I've grown as a person, which I feel is really special. I decided to enter this programme to broaden my understanding of how a business operates. Spending my time in the People & Talent Development team has helped me gain a greater interest into HR. I feel, once I have finished my degree, I would like to pursue a career in business/occupational psychology or HR/People consultancy."

Quote from an RPC intern

DEIB (cont)

Jo Richardson Community School mentoring programme

Feb-Jun

100%

of students who took part in our Jo Richardson mentoring programme said their confidence has improved from taking part in the programme

100%

of students who took part in our Jo Richardson Mentoring Programme said they felt more prepared for the next steps after school upon completing the programme

Oasis Academy Brislington mentoring programme

Jan-Apr

100%

of students who took part in our Oasis Academy Brislington mentoring programme said they felt more confident about themselves and their abilities after taking part in the programme

100%

of students who took part in our Oasis Academy Brislington mentoring programme said they were better at taking part in discussions after taking part in the programme

100%

of students who took part in our Oasis Academy Brislington mentoring programme said they learned about skills needed for work after taking part in the programme



Training

Introducing Reciprocal Mentoring Programme

This year we have introduced our first Reciprocal Mentoring Programme across all four of our offices. After discussions with our Communities and following a successful listening programme in years previous whereby senior leaders heard from more junior members of staff around the firm, we decided to launch a two-way mentoring scheme to help increase conversation around the business. The aim of the programme is to give more junior members of staff, or those from underrepresented backgrounds, the opportunity to engage with a senior leader to share their experiences and potential challenges that they may have faced. In turn, more senior members of staff can share their experiences, guidance and help champion different strands of DEIB.

We have had an overwhelmingly positive response, with over 100 people signing up across the firm, ranging in levels of seniority, job role, departments, and backgrounds. The programme consists of training, and monthly meetings where pairs can discuss shared topics of interest relating to DEIB and allyship. We're looking forward to seeing the outcomes of conversations over the six-month programme and how conversations can contribute to us building a transparent and inclusive environment.

Launch of our Respect at Work Training

At RPC we strongly believe in fostering a culture of respect, understanding, and empathy. We want to continue to be the firm where support for our people enables them to achieve their ambitions and contribute fully to the firm and its business.

As part of our ongoing commitment to this, we have developed a mandatory training program called Respect at Work, as an evolution from our existing Diversity & Inclusion training. This training aims to enhance awareness, knowledge, and skills related to respectful behaviour, equality law, diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace.

Early talent

Early Talent at RPC encompasses our trainee and apprentice populations across all our offices.

We work with a number of different organisations, such as Rare, Aspiring Solicitors and SEO, to ensure we are consistently reaching and considering a more diverse range of candidates through our application and recruitment processes:

- We have used Rare's contextualised recruitment tool since 2015 to help us reach and consider more diverse candidates for our apprentice and training contract opportunities.
- 42% of our UK 2023 Training Contract offers were made to Aspiring Solicitors members, and the same percentage were Rare candidates.
- We currently have 10 legal apprentices (seven solicitor apprentices and three paralegal apprentices) having celebrated our fifth anniversary of running the programme this year.
- In addition to our legal apprentices, we also have seven Business Services apprentices across the business.
- RPC is a Partner Sponsor of The British Inter-University Commercial Awareness Competition (BIUCAC) which is designed exclusively for students from non-Russell Group universities with the aim of allowing them to showcase their talent to leading law firms.
- We run an 'anonymous' recruitment service within Early Talent to ensure bias is avoided within our processes.
- We have worked with Aspiring Solicitors (AS) since 2018. Aspiring Solicitors works to increase diversity in the legal profession through workshops and programmes aimed at students from underrepresented backgrounds. For the past couple of years, we have been involved in AS's 'Elevate' programme which was designed to attract, engage and develop talented Black (and mixed Black) heritage AS members in their first year of university.
- We are a Corporate Sponsor of SEO, an organisation that supports and provides opportunities to students from ethnic minority or low socio-economic backgrounds. RPC offers legal and business services apprenticeships (for example, solicitor, paralegal and finance) across our UK offices. In December 2023 we'll be running an exclusive workshop for SEO members.
- We work with Bright Network, a platform that connects undergraduates and graduates with employers and we take part in their Diverse Legal Leaders event every year.

Online Work Experience with Forage

We work with Forage to provide online work experience for students at school, from Years 10-13, and for undergraduates. This online platform is accessible from anywhere and allows us to provide work experience opportunities outside of our office locations in the UK, reaching social mobility cold spots across the country, and providing students who might not have access

to opportunities with the chance to engage with some work experience. The platform gives students the opportunity to undertake pre-set hypothetical tasks, compare their work with model answers, learn more about RPC and receive a certificate of completion at the end.

In our time working with Forage, we have had:

4,790

individuals complete our university-level programme

Within that population:

62%

of students attended a non-fee paying/state school

42%

were the first generation in their family to attend university



Health and Wellbeing

In line with SDGs 3 and 17, we recognise that our people are our most valuable asset and their health and wellbeing is paramount.



To support health and wellbeing we have a number of benefits available including private medical and dental insurance, Check4Cancer, Know your Numbers health checks, online exercises, gym subsidies and additional ad hoc health services throughout the year, such as flu jabs and mole checks. In addition to our overall benefits package, we have a number of platforms available to further support our people on demand, available through our intranet, via apps and online.

Unmind

We are thrilled to have partnered with a new global workplace wellbeing platform called Unmind. The platform offers confidential, flexible appointments with a choice of accredited therapists, across multiple time zones and in 50+ languages, as well as a suite of expert wellbeing tools rooted in neuroscience, cognitive behavioural therapy, mindfulness and positive psychology.

This platform is an exciting step in the evolution of our mental health and wellbeing support, offering tailored support for all our people across all four of our offices. Unmind is available online and through an app, so that support is readily accessible and available on demand.

LawCare

All employees at RPC can access free, confidential, emotional support through LawCare online or on the phone throughout the working week. Support is not only available for lawyers, but business services and concerned family members.

Peppy

Peppy is an app that offers support around menopause, fertility, men’s health and early parenthood. In the UK, all our employees have access to the app for free for themselves and their partner. The app provides individuals with access to 1-to-1 private chats and 40-minute video consultations with health experts, live virtual events and in-app workouts, wellbeing courses to help build healthy habits for life and on-demand videos, articles, audio and more.

EAP

Our Employee Assistance Programme continues to offer 24/7 support should someone need it.

AXA Stronger Minds

AXA PPP’s Stronger Minds programme via the firm’s Private Medical Insurance – access to counselling and mental health support.

R;pple

We were the first law firm to introduce R;pple to our systems. R;pple is a suicide prevention software, aimed at redirecting a person to supportive resources should they search for harmful content online. We were delighted to have received the Mental Health Initiative of the Year Award for our work with R;pple at the Women and Diversity in Law Awards.

Coffee Roulette

Coffee Roulette is about meeting someone in the firm who an employee has been matched with randomly via a roulette wheel. It connects people across the firm with someone who they may not know, may not have seen for a while or even someone you know well where you are able to talk about things other than work.

In addition to this, some of our Communities also hold informal coffee catch up sessions to support those who may want to share personal experiences around particular topics, to offer support or to meet someone who may be able to lend a listening ear. These are especially popular for our Menopause Working Group and our Families Community.



Pro Bono

In line with SDGs 16 and 17, we are committed to sharing our legal and business services expertise with those communities that may not have access to advice or representation.

16 PEACE, JUSTICE
AND STRONG
INSTITUTIONS



17 PARTNERSHIPS
FOR THE GOALS



2021

Winner
CHINA BUSINESS LAW
AWARDS – PRO BONO

At RPC, our Pro Bono Activity is driven by our Pro Bono Committee made up of representatives across the firm who are passionate about Pro Bono work. Representatives include Associates, Trainees, Partners and members from our Business Services teams who help support coordination of activities both in the UK and Asia.

This year, we have two new Partner Sponsors for our Pro Bono activity who act as champions across the business, to encourage more people to get involved in pro bono work.

Pro Bono Opportunities

We have a weekly round up of pro bono opportunities that are advertised through our firmwide weekly newsletter. Opportunities are regularly updated on our intranet page by members of our Pro Bono Committee who lead on different projects to support ad hoc cases that arise – these often include matters around employment and real estate which our teams regularly assist on.

Launch It

We have worked with Launch It for a number of years and had great success with our continued legal advice programme. Launch It, are a charity that supports young entrepreneurs from disadvantaged backgrounds start a business through the provision of workspace, mentoring and training. Our lawyers run an annual programme of workshops on a variety of different topics – both legal and non-legal – including topics such as IP, brand and marketing, commercial contracts and data protection, financial planning/ budgeting, incorporating a company, funding options for start ups, employment law and customer services. RPC also provide a pro bono legal advice service where, after the workshops, we answer a discrete number of follow-on questions from the young entrepreneurs.

LawWorks

RPC is a member of the solicitors' pro bono charity, LawWorks, an organisation that connects law firms with individuals, charities, and NGOs that require pro bono legal assistance. Our UK-based lawyers provide pro bono advice to members of the public on matters of consumer debt and employment law through a LawWorks platform.

Justice Without Borders

Our Hong Kong and Singapore offices have continued to strengthen their award-winning partnership with Justice Without Borders (JWB). Over the last 5 years, lawyers in our Hong Kong and Singapore offices have worked to provide legal advice and services to victims of labour exploitation and human trafficking in the region. Our work includes providing training and ad hoc legal support to migrant workers who face challenges accessing justice, as well as Hong Kong corporate governance advice to JWB itself.

Liberty Human Rights Information Line

We support Liberty, an independent membership organisation and human rights campaign group that works to challenge injustice and protect civil liberties. Our lawyers volunteer to help run Liberty's weekly advice line - a service that offers free advice to members of the public on a variety of topics, including human rights, police complaints, surveillance, data protection and related issues such as privacy concerns and employee rights.

CLIX (PILNet)

CLIX is supported and administered in Hong Kong by PILNet and Equal Justice. It disseminates pro bono opportunities and matches organisations with those who can help them.

CLIX provides a variety of opportunities (both non-contentious and contentious), and allows users to give expressions of interest in helping with an opportunity, to connect with organisations directly, and provides analytics on the pro bono opportunities for which a firm has submitted an expression of interest.

It is a very helpful tool for disseminating and tracking the valuable pro bono work our lawyers do in Hong Kong.

Case studies

Our cleaning company for our UK offices

Our cleaning company's head office and its warehouse energy usage is monitored and managed in line with ISO 50001 and certified with ISO 140001.

Their carbon footprint is certified with Planet Mark and they have a net zero target for 2025.

From April 2022 they are officially a carbon neutral company through offsetting with Gold Standard certified projects.

Electrification of their fleet is a top priority and they have already converted 1/3 to electric.

They have a number of initiatives in place at client sites, including RPC. They encourage the use of aqua smart systems which provide the same effectiveness as traditional cleaning products but save up to 90% of toxic chemical usage and plastic waste. This in turn saves on the emissions from the manufacturing and transportation of traditional products. For areas where aqua smart cannot be used, they prioritise Eco Label products in concentrated forms and dilute them on site, avoiding unnecessary transportation.

For their consumables and materials, they prioritise UK made products that fit the circular economy principles (eg toilet paper made from office confidential waste and have a social impact).

Mortgage surgeries

We currently partner with a company that offers mortgage advice to our people in the UK. The company plant a tree for every mortgage that is redeemed with them. As a result of offering this service we have helped them plant 64 trees. A great way to support the environment while helping our people access financial support or guidance, especially as we navigate the cost of living crisis.

UK catering

Our UK catering supplier set up a sister company with the purpose of celebrating authentic, small, local enterprises, helping them to build their business and bring unique food to new audiences. During the pandemic in particular, this scheme was able to support a number of small businesses that would otherwise have struggled to stay afloat.

RPC have been thrilled to work with this company and have already brought in businesses such as Jollof Mama (Nigerian cuisine) Loki Poke (Poke bowls) and Hanoi Ca Phe (Vietnamese Pho and Banh Mi) for pop ups in our London and Bristol offices.

Our UK catering supplier also sources coffee from Lofbergs. Their roastery is carbon neutral, roasting huge volumes with a state of the art automated facility that recycles all energy generated in the roasting process, and has electric trains to move all product. The packaging is compostable, in an industry where aluminium lined containers is common, and the packaging is designed to lay flat to enable efficient and optimised transport.

The catering supplier has made its entire coffee range carbon neutral by engaging a life cycle analysis consultant "Climate partner" to assess their impact, and to offset. The milk and packaging is offset in gold standard projects from the oxford mix, and includes fast growing bamboo crop in coffee growing regions. This was launched alongside a marketing campaign to raise awareness for customers in the impact of their choices, to divert to reusable cups, and more sustainable milks.

New Sanitary Products

Across all our UK offices, we work with Grace & Green to supply the sanitary products in our toilets. Grace & Green was founded to create environmentally sustainable products, tackle the taboo that still exists around periods, and bring dignity to all. Through their sustainable, organic, safe and effective products made of biodegradable materials, Grace & Green make a conscious effort to factor sustainability into every part of the production process.

Grace & Green are also dedicated to tackling period poverty. One in 10 young people in the UK cannot afford period products and can affect people from all different backgrounds, in all different situations. As part of their Period Dignity Scheme, launched in 2022, Grace & Green are campaigning for free period products in all public spaces and 2% of revenue goes towards providing free period products to charitable partners across the UK.

Providing free period products at work also supports the Period Dignity movement, aiming to make the working environment more supportive and equal for those who menstruate.

From Babies with Love

We are thrilled to have partnered with From Babies with Love this year as our new gifting provider. From Babies with Love share our commitment to positive ethical, environmental and social impact, with 100% of the profits from their ethically sourced products being donated to benefit orphaned and abandoned children across the world.

The partnership with From Babies with Love not only allows us to support, celebrate or commemorate significant moments in the lives of our colleagues, but also aligns with our aims to support sustainable practices that can have a wider impact on the environment and society.

We have also had the opportunity for members of RPC to get involved in awareness-raising events with From Babies with Love around surrogacy journeys through roundtables and publications to help with further education about different paths to becoming a parent.

Ethics and governance

We are using the SDGs as a framework to embed our responsible business principles into how we operate as a firm.

Governance structure

The Partnership Executive (PEX) is a team of Partners selected by the Managing Partner to work with them in managing the firm. PEX's primary focus as a central management and strategic board is:

- to provide leadership, central direction and facilitate decision making on major issues
- to influence the firm's standards, ethos, style and development
- to adopt budgets and monitor use of the firm's resources
- to be aware of the needs and aspirations of the firm's Partners and employees.

The Partnership Committee (PC) is an elected and impartial body which ensures fair working practices of the Partnership. PC's primary focus as a central management board is:

- to combine with PEX to deliver the annual partner review which sets Partners' individual remuneration levels
- to combine with PEX to propose the appointment of new Partners

The Executive Committee focuses on operational matters and comprises the leaders of the Business Services departments. The Risk and Compliance team, led by our General Counsel, Reshma Raja, assists in the management of risk throughout RPC operations and to promote compliance with the increasingly complex and various legal and regulatory obligations on us as a firm. The team are involved in a wide range of areas from SRA regulatory and conduct queries, data protection and AML (Anti Money Laundering) to client engagement, firm operations and training.

Our ESG Advisory Group

As responsible business is a firmwide priority, governance of our responsible business programmes sits with an Advisory Group of Partners and the firm's Head of Responsible Business. There is a direct line of communication to the firm's Partnership Executive Board, Executive Committee and Risk and Compliance team.

Policies and codes of conduct

We have a number of global policies which deal with ethical business practices, including policies on anti-bribery & corruption, modern slavery, gifts and hospitality, whistleblowing, information security, IT, anti-money laundering, conflicts of interest and supply chain accountability.

Additionally, as a regulated law firm, all our staff have to comply with the Solicitors Regulation Authority Standards and Regulations (and our local regulators in Hong Kong and Singapore) which include principles, amongst other things, such as acting with honesty and integrity. We also take our obligations in relation to our people seriously and ensure robust compliance with legislation regarding equality and broader employment law, health and safety, pay gap reporting and data protection.

Our supply chain

We aim to work with suppliers who have strong responsible business strategies in place, including suppliers who are aligned to our culture and values. As part of our onboarding processes, we conduct targeted due diligence of suppliers, request that key suppliers sign up to our supplier code of conduct and use our supplier standard terms and conditions with enhanced compliance requirements where appropriate. We have implemented controls within our finance function to verify that the above processes have been completed. We are regularly reviewing and developing our supplier onboarding processes and are currently expanding the due diligence that we undertake on strategic suppliers. We have implemented controls within our finance function to ensure that new suppliers are not onboarded until verification that the above processes have been completed. We aim to work with suppliers who have strong responsible business strategies in place, including suppliers aligned to our culture and values such as minority owned and sustainably minded businesses.



For more information, please contact:



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"It has been such a privilege to watch our responsible business programme go from strength to strength over the years – a real testament to the commitment and passion our people hold in this area. Meaningfully engaging with our individual and collective roles in creating a more sustainable environment – both locally and globally – is a key part of what makes RPC unique. We have cleaned up waterways, walked and run races for a variety of charitable causes, marched in solidarity with the LGBTQ+ community, mentored students from underfunded schools. We have listened to and learned from some incredible experts around topics such as race and language, mental health and suicide prevention and disability inclusion and disrupting stereotypes. We have had difficult conversations and challenged ourselves because this essential work is never done. responsible business is not just important, it is a strategic priority for the firm, and I cannot wait to see what we do next."

Rachel Pears
Head of Responsible Business



Kelly Thomson
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"We're excited to deliver our second responsible business report, documenting another exciting chapter in RPC's ESG story so far. Our overarching ESG goals remain the same and they continue to inform and focus the big and small behavioural and system changes, day-to-day and strategic work and internal and external collaborative initiatives driven by our responsible business team and so many of our people across all areas of our business and all of our offices. This year our people have generously shared their personal experiences of faith, menopause and pregnancy loss; cleaned up rivers; made and delivered soup to those in need; donated their time and skills; marched; mentored; volunteered; celebrated; won awards and more. As a firm we have embarked on our first strategic global charity partnership with UOcean; sponsored organisations doing great work in different communities; launched our #MyNameIs campaign; launched our new global wellbeing platform; held our first bring your child to work day; introduced a firmwide reciprocal mentoring programme; launched our new Ambition for our People (AmP); collaborated with clients and much, much more besides! But we are impatient to do more, to achieve more and to have even greater, lasting impact for our people, clients and communities. Just a few of our plans for this coming 12 months include: refreshing our gender balance plan; finalising our Scope 3 supplier review to enable us to move forward meaningfully with our environmental goals; working further and deeper on embedding our ESG strategy across the whole business; and collaborating with the United Nations Foundation and our clients, coalescing around the Sustainable Development Goals. I for one can't wait to see what else we can collectively achieve"

Kelly Thomson, Partner
Employment Engagement & Equality
and ESG Partner Lead

