

# LSA Report – 2019

## SUMMARY

2019 has been another busy year for the LSA as we continue to engage and encourage all members of the legal profession to work collaboratively on actions to address a range of key sustainability issues. We have focused support to LSA members on enabling them to take meaningful action in response to the global climate emergency (for example, the *Legal Renewables Initiative* – a commitment by members to buy their UK electricity from 100% renewable sources by 2025) and understand how this and their other sustainability activities fit into the framework of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (aka the *Global Goals*).

We have developed new partnerships with a range of organisations including UK Stakeholders for Sustainable Development – UKSSD, The Chancery Lane Project, Law with Ethics, The Grantham Institute at Imperial College, and Good Energy for the **Legal Renewables Initiative: getting to 100%**. We continued to build and strengthen our relationship with many others including Client Earth, UK Environmental Law Association, The Bar Council, The Law Society, local Law Societies in Newcastle, Manchester, Devon & Somerset, Bristol and Birmingham. We have had guest speakers at events and meetings of our group of Executive Firm members covering a wide range of topics from green finance, smart cities, sustainable IT and business travel to sustainable finance. Networking and learning from the shared experiences and expertise of others is an essential part of how LSA adds value to the Executive Firms. We have run a number of participative learning workshops, seminars and thought-leadership events throughout the year. We believe that, by working collaboratively as an alliance of like-minded law firms, Chambers, University Schools of Law and in-house counsel, we can achieve so much more together than each member working in isolation.

In addition, we have supported members collectively through the shared resources available via the LSA's website and communicated via our regular eNewsletter and have provided individual members with advice and guidance where requested up to the limit of our capacity. In some cases, we have been able to provide additional paid for input to LSA members via Achill Management (for example, support with carbon footprinting).

Membership of the LSA has increased by almost one fifth in 2019 – now at 179. This is an encouraging sign and reflects a growing recognition by the legal profession of how important it is becoming to be able to demonstrate both a real commitment to and quantifiable action on being sustainable. It is no longer adequate to get our house in order just within the confines of our office walls – we increasingly need to show that the same sustainability thinking is being applied to the way we deal with our clients, suppliers, staff and other stakeholders.

It is often challenging to precisely quantify the direct benefit of the LSA or what value there is in being a member. The data in this report provide some indication which, in the main, show a positive and encouraging direction of travel. The fact that interest in the LSA has grown as it has in 2019 is certainly good news and is, perhaps, a reflection of the influence of a new generation coming through who expect more evidence of action on the issue from our

organisations. However, a lot of the ways in which the LSA adds value and makes a difference – i.e. is part of the solution and not just adding to the “noise” – is less easy to precisely pin down. The following views from some of our leading member firms highlight the value added by the LSA:

*“We continue to evolve our approach to responsible business and incorporate good practice. This has recently included becoming participants in the UN Global Compact and incorporating the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Our participation in the Legal Sustainability Alliance provides us with the opportunity to learn and share with peers and to more objectively consider our role as a legal firm, in the wider sustainability agenda. We appreciate the opportunity to network and connect with others, who are championing sustainability at both the leadership and operational level. Climate change and the future of energy remain big challenges that we will all face globally and the Legal Sustainability Alliance have galvanised collective action over the last decade. Carbon reporting and transparency remains a key priority and we value how the Legal Sustainability Alliance has helped to bring consistency of approach within the legal sector.”*

Kirsty Green-Mann - Head of Corporate Responsibility, Burges Salmon

*“The work of the LSA is integral to the whole firm’s approach to sustainability. From benchmarking our performance against that of other firms, to advising on wider energy saving and environment issues, the support given to us by the LSA is invaluable. In any organisation, all employees need to focus on how they can operate in a more sustainable manner and the LSA’s programme of seminars and workshops has been pivotal in fostering that mindset at Shakespeare Martineau, helping us become a more environmentally-responsible and sustainable business.”*

Kathy Buchanan - Head of Facilities, Shakespeare Martineau

*“The core values of Charles Russell Speechlys LLP include “thinking long” and “being human” by acting with respect and empathy. The concern for our impact on the environment is therefore at the heart of the firm and environmental performance is critical to our success. Whilst we have implemented a range of measures to date, we continue to take important steps to try to reduce our environmental impact as well as engaging with our clients and our people on the subject. We have been members of the Legal Sustainability Alliance for only a couple of years but were delighted to be asked to become Executive Members. Many of the current projects that we are in the course of implementing have been inspired or undertaken with LSA guidance.”*

Michael Wilde - Head of Facilities and Operations, Charles Russell Speechlys

*“Recognising that the firm is in a position to contribute to the legal industry leadership, the firm is proud to be one of the founding executive members of the UK Legal Sustainability Alliance and a member of the Aus-LSA. Through our contribution at Leadership, Task Force and Group level, A&O is continually supporting smaller firms development their environmental management skills, undertaking skills and experience transfer and advocating for improved management of environmental impacts.”*

Alan Sweeting – Global Health, Safety and Environment Senior Manager, Allen & Overy

*“The LSA is the perfect and the only place for sharing knowledge and best practice within the legal sector.”*

Georgios Zampas - Global Sustainability Manager, Herbert Smith Freehills

## FACTS AND FIGURES

### 1. Membership

The LSA has 179 members representing law firms, Chambers, in house counsel and University Schools of Law.

29 new members joined the LSA in 2019, representing a 19% increase in membership this year. Of the new members, 3 are small (<10 employees) and 6 medium sized (between 10 and 49 employees). One Chambers joined this year along with one in house counsel. Four of our new members are headquartered outside the UK (Austria, Italy, India and USA).

#### *Commentary*

*Membership growth is a good sign and highlights continued (and increasing) interest in the issues of sustainability, resonance with LSA's mission and value of our work. However, our current resources limit our capacity to provide the free support which individual members often ask for. We will focus on improving the generic support provided to all members and the way members access this (e.g. LSA website, events, communications), provide a more comprehensive "welcome" information and also offer additional paid for support where needed.*

#### *Ambition for 2020:*

- *210 members of the LSA by year end*
- *Improved "welcome" information to new members*
- *Revised LSA website, including updated and streamlined resources*
- *More events run as webinars to increase participation and reduce travel*

### Membership Criteria

The LSA remains a free resource for Law firms and meets the needs set by the Law Society to offer sustainability advice and support to the sector. There is no appetite or inclination to charge individual firms a membership fee at the present time, however we feel that firms do need to evidence commitment to the LSA in some form. We no longer offer a free reporting tool but we would ask all firms to measure and report on their carbon using one of the many free tools available, or using the LSA guide.

As part of the rebranding of the LSA through the new website Achill Management propose that from January all new members meet the following membership criteria:

- Measure, report and seek to reduce their carbon footprint
- Publish their sustainability commitments and work collaboratively with others to achieve
- Use the LSA logo and branding on all relevant communications

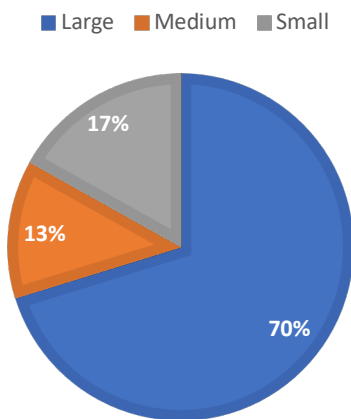
We also recommend firms sign up to the Legal Renewables Initiative – getting to 100%.

Existing members will be contacted to ask them to sign up to the criteria. We will undertake a review at the end of each calendar year to assess whether the criteria have been met.

## Size of LSA member firms

The breakdown of LSA members by size is shown below:

### LSA MEMBERS BY SIZE



Large: >50 employees; Medium: 10 to 49 employees; Small: < 10 employees

#### Commentary

*The LSA is free to join for firms of all sizes thanks to the generosity of the LSA's 15 Executive member firms. To continue to offer free membership and the support that goes with that we need additional firms to step up as an Executive Members. We recognise that there is a balance between adding real value to those firms which fund the LSA (thereby ensuring that the LSA can continue its work with funding assured) and providing support to smaller, less well resourced firms. A package of support for smaller LSA firms is being considered which will be available for a fee.*

#### Ambition for 2020:

- Retain existing Executive Member firms and increase total to 20 by year end
- Bespoke support package for smaller member firms available for a modest fee

## Location of all LSA members

The focus for the LSA continues to be on UK based firms, although we do not deter non-UK organisations from joining. The LSA's message is generically applicable and many of our supporting resources are useful to non-UK members. The breakdown of LSA member locations is:

United Kingdom	159
Mainland Europe	9
USA	3
South America	3
Asia Pacific	3
Africa	2

The location of UK LSA members is shown below:



#### *Commentary*

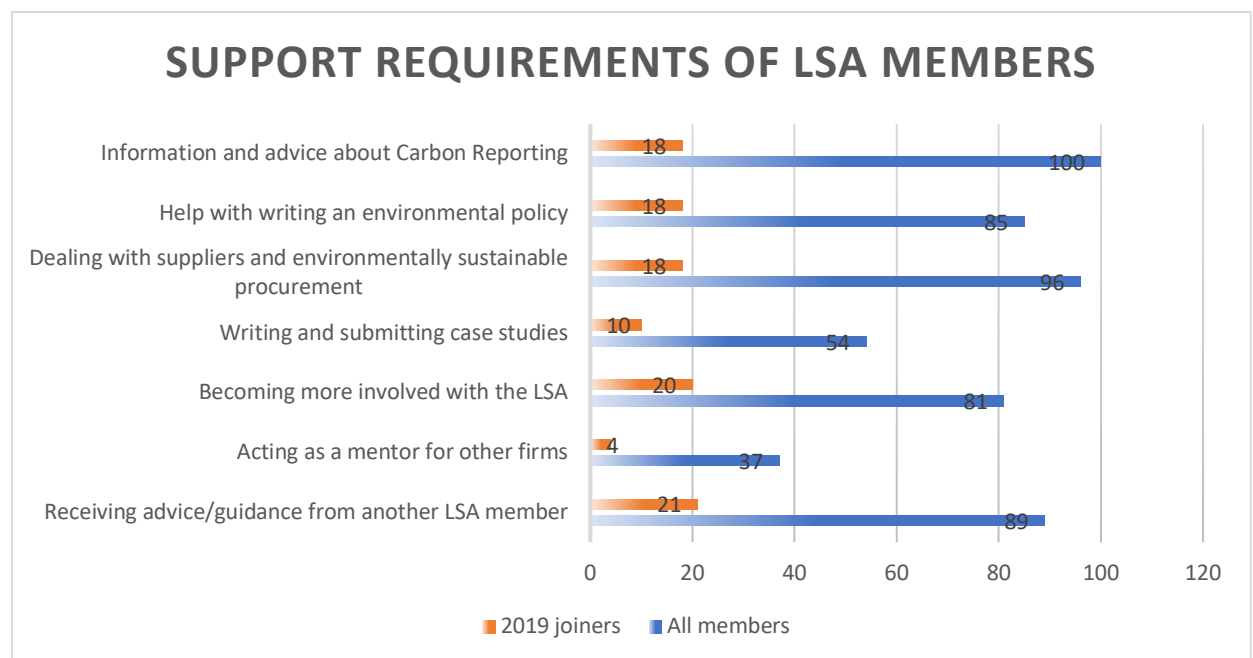
*Supporting UK based LSA members remains a priority, although we will not discourage membership from other geographies – there is always something to learn and be inspired by. In 2019 we ran several workshops around the UK (see Support) but our resources make it difficult to do this on a regular basis. We have also continued our work with a number of regional Law Societies and will continue to strengthen relationships with them. We will endeavour to run events in UK regions where there is a real demand for these events and we are able to secure a host and channel for engaging local firms. We have had preliminary discussions about establishing LSA Scotland and will progress this idea, provided funding can be secured for this.*

#### *Ambition for 2020:*

- *Run regional LSA events where demand exists – subject to host and local engagement support*
- *Establish LSA Scotland*
- *More events run as webinars to increase participation and reduce travel*

## 2. Support

The breakdown of what support LSA members indicate they need (on joining) is as follows:



Much of this support is provided through the LSA website and events. Specific areas of support are covered below.

### Carbon Reporting

Toward the end of 2018 we announced the decision to discontinue offering the free LSA Carbon Reporting Tool to LSA members. This was due to (1) the increasing cost of maintaining this member benefit coupled with reducing income to the LSA; (2) the recognition that many LSA members already use some other method to calculate their carbon footprint and do not make use of the footprint and associated benchmark data generated via the LSA tool and (3) there are several free carbon footprinting tools available.

During 2019 it has become clear that some LSA members need additional support with measurement and advice on reporting and reduction. We have provided guidance on this as part of LSA membership and also highlighted where additional (paid for) support is available.

#### *Commentary*

*The LSA continues to encourage members to measure, reduce and report their carbon footprint. Doing so is a tangible way in which the sector, through LSA members, can demonstrate leadership in tackling climate change. We intend introducing a commitment to doing so as part of the LSA membership criteria and an expectation that LSA members will let us have their carbon data at the end of 2020. We will continue to provide advice on how members can measure their carbon footprint.*

#### *Ambition for 2020:*

- *Make commitment to carbon measurement and reporting a condition of LSA membership*
- *Offer a simple (free) carbon calculator for members and a more comprehensive paid for service if required*
- *Encourage LSA members to consider setting a Science Based Target for carbon reduction and provide support with this*

## Events

During 2019 we have run 10 separate events for LSA members, some in conjunction with partner organisations, with over 450 individuals registered to attend. We have been able to secure stimulating expert speakers and offered useful content for each of these:

- **Air Quality Breakfast Briefing** (with Hubbub) (26.3.19) – 33 attendees
- **SDG workshops** x 4 – 85 registrations in total [London (1.5.19) – 36; Manchester (23.5.19) – 15; Newcastle (4.6.19) – 12; Bristol (12.6.19) – 22]
- **Climate Conversation** (4.7.19) – 61 attendees + 5 speakers
- **Climate Strike Week Event** (25.9.19) – 76 attendees + 4 speakers
- **Public Health and the Legal Principles** (with UKELA) (7.11.19) – 57 registrations
- **Chancery Lane Project hackathon** (8.11.19) – 120 participants -50 organisations LSA facilitated two tables
- **New LSA Joiner “Lunch and Learn”** (29.11.19) – 28 registrations to date

Our thanks to the firms who hosted these events – Slaughter and May, Eversheds Sutherland, Simmons & Simmons, Allen & Overy, Womble Bond Dickinson, Norton Rose Fulbright, Macfarlanes, Reuters & Practical Law, and Fieldfisher.

### *Commentary*

*Whilst events can be informative and engaging, they also take significant resource to organise and run. Because they are offered for free we have had a number of “no shows”, which is particularly frustrating for all. The subject matter needs to be carefully matched to audience need in order to attract attendees. We will be selective in the types of events run by the LSA in 2020, focusing on key practice areas and selective thought leadership events for partner level attendees. We will also investigate how to make events more accessible to LSA members based outside London and explore the award of CDP for attendance.*

### *Ambition for 2020:*

- *Events – 3 regional and 3 thought leadership events*
- *Investigate potential attendance via webinar*
- *Explore registration for CDP for events*

## Legal Renewables Initiative – getting to 100%



As part of the LSA's remit to drive behaviour change across the legal sector and following discussions with RE100 we decided to set up an initiative specifically aimed at law firms to encourage our members to swop to 100% renewable electricity by 2025 for all UK locations. Many firms are on a 'green tariff' but as there is considerable green washing in the energy sector we are encouraging firms to do due diligence and check their suppliers to ensure the energy they use comes from purely renewable sources.

With support from Good Energy we have been able to secure favourable business rates for firms as well as discounts on domestic supply for staff irrespective if the firm is a business customer.

Members of the *Legal Renewables Initiative – getting to 100%* are given access to information and briefings, as well as using the specific logo on their communications.

In the words of one of the first signatories:

*“Allen & Overy are proud to be early signatories to the LSA 'Legal Renewables Initiative - getting to 100%' which encourages law firms to commit to sourcing all electricity from 100% renewable supply by 2025. It's a necessary and achievable goal in order for the legal sector to contribute to sustainable development and addressing climate change”*

For more on the Legal Renewables Initiative visit the [LSA website](#)

**Commentary:**

*The LSA’s Legal Renewables Initiative – Getting to 100% is, we believe, both ambitious yet achievable. It sends a clear signal to LSA members that there is an active expectation upon their organisations which goes beyond the simpler steps. We also believe that, by shopping around (and taking advantage of the discount offered by Good Energy), LSA members can benefit financially as well as being part of a tangible group of organisations helping the UK to achieve net zero carbon by 2050. We have not made this a condition of LSA membership but strongly encourage all members to consider signing up to the Legal Renewables Initiative – Getting to 100%.*

*One challenge we know several members face is how to make this commitment when they are tenants in a property and have little or no influence over where electricity is sourced by the landlord. This is something we will continue to work on to support LSA members in 2020.*

**Ambition for 2020:**

- *Achieve a significant sign up (target – 25 members) to the Legal Renewables Initiative – Getting to 100%*
- *Provide support to members in rented office space to influence landlords*
- *Positive media profile for the LSA via the Legal Renewables Initiative – Getting to 100% initiative*



### 3. Executive Firm Support

As of December 2019 the LSA Executive consists of the following members all making an equal financial contribution:

Addleshaw Goddard	DLA Piper	Norton Rose Fulbright	Taylor Wessing
Allen & Overy	Eversheds Sutherland	Simmons & Simmons	The Law Society
Burges Salmon	Hogan Lovells	Shakespeare Martineau	Womble Bond Dickinson
Charles Russell Speechlys	Linklaters	Slaughter and May	

Irwin Mitchell and Herbert Smith Freehills did not renew membership in May 2019.

#### Meetings

Our thanks go to the firms who kindly hosted meetings during the year.

##### Leaders Group

*12.2.19 (Hosted by Taylor Wessing) – 15 LG attendees*

Guests:

**Agamemnon Otero** MBE, CEO Repowering London, Founder Energy Garden

**Elizabeth Mercer**, Chief Strategy Officer, Rockefeller 100 Resilient Cities

*7.5.19 (Hosted by Slaughter and May) – 13 LG attendees*

Guests:

**Trewin Restorick**, CEO Hubbub

**Sue Riddlestone** OBE, CEO Bioregional, founder of One Planet Living

*10.9.19 (Hosted by DLA Piper) – 13 LG attendees*

Guest:

**Professor Michael Mainelli**, Chairman Z/Yen Group and Sheriff Elect City of London 2019/20

##### Task Force

*26.2.19 (including IT & Sustainability Workshop)(Hosted by Allen & Overy) – 18 TF attendees*

Guests: **3 Step IT**

*14.5.19 (including Sustainable Energy Workshop)(Hosted by Womble Bond Dickinson) – 17 TF attendees*

Guests: **Good Energy**

*1.10.19 (Hosted by Charles Russell Speechlys) – 15 TF attendees*

Guests: **Hubbub** (Air Pollution Campaign) and

**Climate Perks** (Avoiding Air Travel)

## 4. Communications

### MailChimp Updates

The LSA produces regular news bulletins and topical updates about LSA activities and events (eNewsletters). These are sent via email using MailChimp to a subscriber list of 949 individuals from LSA member and non-member firms as well as other “friends” of the LSA.

We sent out 10 regular updates in 2019. The average “Open” and “Click Through” rates achieved were:

	Subscribers	Average Opens	Industry Average	Average Click Through	Industry Average
Members	320	33.2%	12.7%	4.9%	1.4%
Non-members (law firms)	142	16%	12.7%	0.9%	1.4%
Non-members (others)	360	16.6%	12.7%	0.7%	1.4%

The LSA’s eNewsletter has had a positive response with several individuals contacting us directly in response to an item they have read or signing up to a highlighted event.

### Website

The LSA’s website ([www.legalsustainabilityalliance.com](http://www.legalsustainabilityalliance.com)) is an important platform to engage new members, give updates on key programmes and activities and provide access to a range of support resources for LSA members. Whilst the use of the LSA website has increased compared with 2018 (e.g page views to date up 4.6%) the site has become cluttered. We do not feel it provides the best support to members or “shop window” for the LSA. A new LSA website is being developed and will be launched in early 2020.

Website statistics for 2019 to date compared with last year are as follows:

	Users	Sessions	Page Views	Bounce Rate	Session Duration
1.1.19 to 18.11.19	6637	8958	26873	60.46%	2m 16s
1.1.18 to 18.11.18 (i.e. equivalent period to above)	5703	7633	19385	61.08%	2m 00s
Last calendar year (2018)	6626	8750	22033	62.03%	1m 57s

## Other communications

We have had a number of guest blogs on the website during 2019 and always welcome contributions from LSA members and partners. Achill Management writes a monthly column for Manchester and Liverpool Law Society Bulletins, guest columns for DASLS bulletin and other publications.

The LSA now has an active Twitter and LinkedIn presence and following a break over the summer we are steadily increasing our posts and followers.

### Twitter

Measurable metric	Jul-19	Sep-19	Oct-19
Total no. of tweets (not including RTs)	9	48	77
Engagement interactions incl;			
1. No. of Retweets this month	3	26	38
2. Likes this month	24	50	83
3. Replies this month	0	1	1
Link clicks this month	3	27	97
Impressions this month	7600	15400	24900
Engagement rate % this week	0.2	1	0.9
Total Twitter followers (final number)	396	411	425

### LinkedIn

Measurable metric	Jul-19	Sep-19	Oct-19
Engagement interactions incl;			
Total no. of posts	3	4	21
Total no. of posts shared	2	11	13
Number of posts reactions	1	12	23
Number of clicks on posts	6	25	88
Number of page views	28	54	111
Number of new connections	3	13	20
Number of total Followers (overall)	#VALUE!	114	130