

“We believe acting on climate change is in our collective interest and that a greater impact can be achieved through collaborative action and the sharing of knowledge and experience than could otherwise be achieved by the efforts of individual companies.”

The Legal Sustainability Alliance

## The Legal Sustainability Alliance Business Case for Sustainability

A practical guide to embedding sustainability for law firms  
In partnership with The Planet Mark™



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## Introduction from the Legal Sustainability Alliance



To mark our first decade, the Legal Sustainability Alliance (LSA) commissioned The Planet Mark™ to analyse the last 10 years of carbon reporting data collected from our LSA members and to use that evidence to help build a robust and dynamic business case for sustainability for law firms. The trends identified in this guide (and explored in greater detail in our 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Report) are encouraging but also highlight some significant challenges. We hope this guide will give law firms across the UK some of the robust arguments needed to convince colleagues that taking a proactive approach to sustainability within the firm is good for business – by helping to cut costs, meet client demands, attract and retain quality staff, engage employees, meet regulatory requirements and build in long term resilience. The guide also provides the practical tools needed to make sustainable business the norm for law firms of all sizes.

“Having done the things that are easy, firms need even more support and encouragement to do the things that are difficult. We need to support our members in finding answers to the difficult questions. In the world around us there are increasing influences that seek to deprioritise action on climate change and resource consumption. In a sector that is driven by pragmatism not ideology, the LSA must ensure that these issues continue to be brought to the fore. Through the effort of many we can achieve more than we can on our own.”

**Jeff Twentyman** Chair of the Legal Sustainability Alliance

## A message from The Planet Mark™

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Our work with The Planet Mark™ takes us across sectors and continents. We certify disparate organisations from corporations to SMEs, from those in the 3<sup>rd</sup> sector to social enterprises. Some are new to sustainability, others are 'long-term achievers'.

No matter what sector, organisation or where they are on their sustainability journey, they have at least one thing in common; they know sustainability is good for their business, and that the more they do the better it gets.

Far from being a drain on resources, your sustainability programme should be delivering financial benefits as well as positive social and environmental impacts. The adage goes that 'where there's carbon, there's cost'. There's no doubt that reducing your carbon, energy, water and waste will save you money. But cost saving is only part of the story.

Embracing sustainability delivers much bigger benefits than saving money. You should be unlocking the benefits associated with your brand. The reputational benefits of 'doing the right thing' say much about your company culture and can help attract and retain clients and talented people alike.

Uniquely, a sustainability programme can integrate your pro-bono work, volunteering days and CSR. By engaging your partners and employees in the process, you'll tap into their passion, knowledge and commitment to contribute to society and the environment.

So, what of the risks? We are living in transformational times. What is acceptable practice now may not be in the future. If sustainability is the ability to sustain for some the biggest business risk is inertia.

For most, it is the opportunities presented by sustainability that drive their strategies. For them the business case for sustainability is overwhelming. And it is helping them contribute to a more sustainable, lower carbon and better way of living.

**Steve Malkin**

CEO Planet First and Founder of The Planet Mark™



eden project

## What is Sustainability?

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In ecological terms, sustainability defines the property of biological systems to remain diverse and productive and self-sustain indefinitely. In business terms, it can be defined as meeting a triple bottom line, i.e. spreading the focus and measurement of success away from just profitability encompassing people and planet.

The hard part, particularly for profit-making enterprises, is striking the right balance. Increasingly, businesses who are doing well have recognised that success in addressing these three aspects of sustainability are interlinked – a positive approach to one is often reflected in benefits to the others.

In the legal sector, much of the focus over the past decade or more has been on improving indirect societal impacts, largely through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) or related programmes and activities such as pro bono legal work. In the second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, the shift is towards more direct social aspects (for example diversity, human rights in the supply chain, elimination of modern slavery) and environmental sustainability with all that entails, from carbon reduction to sustainable travel.

## About this business case and guide

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For the last 10 years, the LSA has been tracking the progress of its members' carbon reporting. An analysis of that cumulative data reveals some compelling evidence and trends. It demonstrates that Sustainable Business = Good Business. For example, it shows that a 15% reduction in carbon emissions per employee over six years correlates to a cost saving of over £140 per employee.

We have used the evidence and experience of our members, their knowledge of what works and doesn't work, as well as the wider professional expertise of The Planet Mark™, to pull together this business case and guide. It is designed to make all aspects of sustainability more accessible to all law firms, whatever their size or specialty.

It is aimed at anyone working within the sector – whether in facilities, CSR, marketing, or at partner level. It provides an introduction to sustainability, pointing the way for those starting a programme and refreshing campaigns for those already underway.

It addresses the key drivers to adopting a sustainability programme in the legal sector and the associated business benefits you can expect.

The guide also contains key steps that should be undertaken to ensure your programme is a success. We've included supporting statistics and relevant case studies from the law firms and other professional services organisations, as well as useful resources to help you on your journey.

And remember, if you need further guidance, we are here to help, so do get in touch.

“Embedding sustainability thinking into “business as usual” provides the legal profession with an unparalleled platform for innovation on strategy, design, service delivery and brand. It also offers massive opportunities to compete and to adapt to a rapidly evolving world.”

**The Legal Sustainability Alliance**

# The business case for sustainability

Sustainability is a global concern - evidenced by the UN's Sustainable Development Goals – taken up by organisations worldwide, and the 2015 Paris Agreement, ratified in 2016 and committing all countries to keep global temperature increases 'well below' 2°C. The UK's commitment is an 80% carbon reduction by 2050, which can only be achieved if more and more organisations adopt the sustainability agenda.

However, it is not all about regulation. Business sustainability can be transformative. There is a growing body of compelling evidence to demonstrate that organisations that fully embrace sustainability derive real value from it. Indeed, there is a 'positive correlation' between sustainability and stock market performance.



## Sustainable Development Goals

The UN Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs), set out 17 goals and 169 targets to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity for all. They were adopted by countries in 2015 as signatories of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The SDGs are designed to enable everyone to contribute to a sustainable future, from government, to the private sector, civil society and individual people.

### The numbers

A recent report on sustainability and business performance from the Smith School of Enterprise and the Environment, University of Oxford<sup>1</sup>, found:

**88%**

of research shows that solid Environmental and Social Governance (ESG) practices result in better operational performance

**80%**

of studies show that stock price performance of companies is positively influenced by good sustainability practices

<sup>1</sup> *Stockholder to the Stakeholder: how sustainability can drive financial performance. 2015 (updated).*

There are many reasons why sustainability is good for business. Impacts cover the triple bottom line with positive economic, environmental and social change. Here are our top six for all law firms:



**1. Cut your carbon emissions**

support global goals



**4. Embrace leadership and innovation**

support transformational change



**2. Save money**

drive resource efficiency



**5. Create a competitive advantage**

differentiate by doing the right thing



**3. Engage your people**

sustainability matters to Generation Z



**6. Go beyond compliance**

reduce the risks of regulation

“Demonstrating that we are able to appreciate, and take a positive and proactive approach, to those concerns that are important to our clients, our employees, our suppliers and partners ultimately provides us with our ‘licence to operate’. Civil society, business and government expect much more from organisations like ours than they did in the past. Rightly so, as we and our people are in a position to make an important contribution.”

**Malcolm Sweeting**, Senior Partner at Clifford Chance  
(Clifford Chance LLP Corporate Responsibility Report 2015)

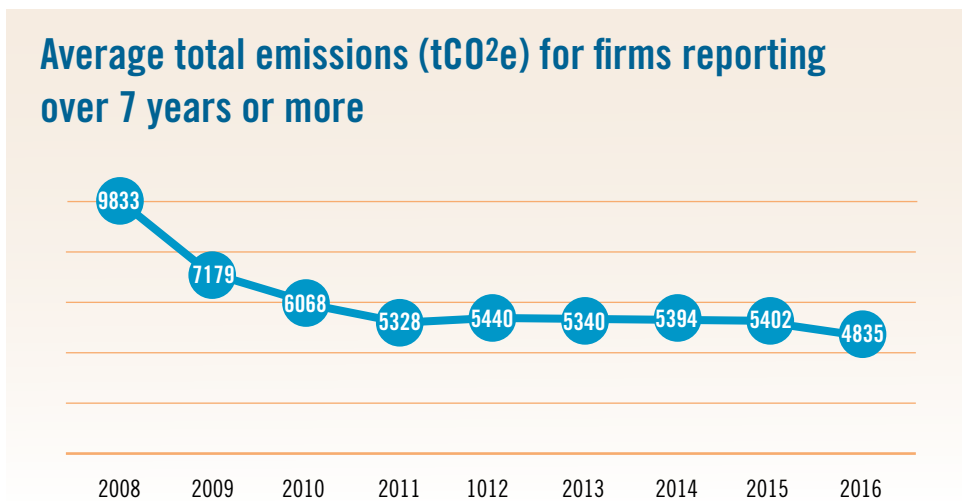


# 1. Cut your carbon emissions - support global goals

Few in business dispute the scientific consensus (97%) that climate change is being precipitated by human activities. That's why so many called – successfully – for a global deal on climate, which resulted in the historic Paris Agreement in 2015 (see box). Now the challenge is to deliver on that goal. That means moving swiftly to a low carbon economy and for every business, as well as Government, to play its part.

The good news is that over the last 10 years law firms have demonstrated they want to contribute individually and collectively as a sector. Our data shows that firms reporting through the LSA have cut their energy consumption and carbon emissions by a meaningful margin (see 'the numbers').

Cutting carbon is not only the 'right thing to do', it also contributes to operational efficiencies within any organisation, which makes good business sense. Carbon reduction also helps align company reporting to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals and the UK's 2050 carbon reduction target.



## The numbers

Between 2009-15, law firms reporting their carbon footprint to the LSA<sup>2</sup> achieved:

**15%**

average carbon emissions reductions per employee

**36%**

carbon emissions reductions from real estate natural gas

**27%**

carbon emissions reductions from real estate electricity

**+50**

average increase in air travel carbon emissions per employee

<sup>2</sup> The LSA 10th Anniversary Report

## The UK Climate Change Act and the Paris Agreement

In 2008, the UK passed the Climate Change Act. This commits the UK Government to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 80% of 1990 levels by 2050. This commitment was reinforced on a global scale in December 2015 through the historic Paris Agreement, the first climate deal to set out a clear long-term temperature limit for the planet. Partly legally binding and partly voluntary, the Paris Agreement provides a framework for governments as well as business and investors to keep global temperature increases “well below” 2°C and pursue efforts to limit it to 1.5°C.

## 2. Save money – drive resource efficiency

Sustainability programmes enhance profitability by focusing attention on resource efficiency across your business. Sustainable practices, such as buying better and using less, deliver significant cost savings over the short and long-term (see ‘The numbers’). Having a carbon footprint and management plan is a great way to highlight ‘hot spots’ where resources are being consumed and cost saving can be achieved. For example, energy saving measures can more than offset increasing energy costs in your offices and moving towards paperless working can save on paper, couriers and storage. You should always try to calculate savings attributable to the sustainability programme to quantify the business case.

### The numbers

LSA members that have been measuring and reducing their energy usage and reporting their progress<sup>3</sup> achieved:



cost saving of electricity per employee



average saving per employee between 2009-2015



pa estimated cost of electricity per employee (2015)

<sup>3</sup> The LSA 10th Anniversary Report

### 3. Engaging your people sustainability matters to Generation Z

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Sustainability makes your firm more attractive to young talent. Research suggests Gen Z (aged 18-25), is focusing its spending on ethical brands and businesses<sup>4</sup>, while sustainability credentials are of growing importance for millennials when selecting where they work<sup>5</sup>.

Your commitments to sustainability provide evidence of your vision, mission and values in action. Done in the right way a sustainability programme can help develop an environment that embodies engagement, collaboration, open communication and innovation. This, in turn, engenders trust and transparency and a culture where valued people remain in your firm.

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#### The view

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Sustainability is proving valuable for career development, according to LSA member **Bond Dickinson**.<sup>6</sup>

“The lawyer’s professional skillset and position in an organisation is valuable in navigating new territory and facilitating the conversations necessary to find constructive routes forward in the midst of competing priorities. Sustainability is proving a legitimate career development path for senior lawyers looking to broaden their roles within the in-house structure.”

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#### The numbers<sup>7</sup>

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86%

of millennials believe that the success of a business should be measured in terms of more than just its financial performance

76%

of millennials regard business as a force for positive social impact

65%

millennials agree that ‘businesses behave in an ethical manner’

62%

millennials consider business leaders as committed to helping improve society

61%

of Gen Z trust small and local businesses to behave in a sustainable way

31%

of GenZ surveyed by Masdar have boycotted non-sustainable companies.

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<sup>4</sup> Masdar Gen Z Global Sustainability Survey 2016

<sup>5</sup> Deloitte Millennials Survey 2017

<sup>6</sup> Beyond responsibility: The emerging role of legal counsel in sustainable business. Bond Dickinson 2014

<sup>7</sup> From Deloitte Millennial Survey (2017) of almost 8,000 millennials questioned across 30 countries, and Masdar Gen Z Global Sustainability Survey Infographic (2016) based on 4,704 online interviews of 18-25 year olds globally

## 4. Embrace leadership and innovation support transformational change

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Sustainability leadership is about preparing strategies to meet the changing role of business in society and the environment. It presents an opportunity to demonstrate an understanding of emerging trends, embracing issues from natural resources and inequality to climate change.

Going beyond compliance and developing a forward-thinking culture can be a fertile ground for innovation, tapping into a rich source knowledge through employee engagement. It helps motivate staff to move initiatives forward and opens opportunities to create new service lines and products.

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### The view

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In an increasingly disrupted legal market, law firm Norton Rose Fulbright is transforming the way it does business through a flexible working strategy that will encompass “**low cost centres; grey workers and the future possibility of different types of partners,**” according to Chief Executive Peter Martyr.

*Source: The American Lawyer*

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## 5. Create a competitive advantage differentiate by doing the right thing

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Many clients are developing increasingly sophisticated responses to climate change and expect their advisers to do likewise.

Sustainability says much about your culture and the way you do business. It presents an opportunity to differentiate and can be the deciding factor in winning business.

Increasingly, clients are demanding information on environmental policies and practices from their suppliers. By tracking and reporting its carbon footprint a law firm can demonstrate that it has the right processes in place to satisfy clients' needs. Adding carbon reduction targets and third party verification gives it a robust case when answering sustainability questions in bids and tenders.

The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide a platform to align with your clients' mission and values. And you can add value to client relationships by hosting knowledge-sharing seminars as part of your firm's sustainability programme.

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### The view

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“At Linklaters we mapped what we already do against the SDGs that are most relevant for us, and then published those on our website. This external publication acts as an additional lever to gain internal engagement and traction and has led to conversations with clients and others which in turn generate interest and involvement internally.”

**Matt Sparkes**, Head of Corporate Responsibility, Linklaters LLP

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## 6. Go beyond compliance reduce the risk of regulation

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The failure of the market to prevent climate change will almost certainly result in increased taxation and regulation with direct financial liability for those businesses exceeding their limits. According to the World Bank, some form of carbon markets – many of which involve taxes on firms exceeding carbon limits – are now present on almost every continent. Additionally, new legislation is being introduced to promote carbon and energy efficiency, such as the UK's Energy Savings Opportunity Scheme (ESOS) and new minimum standards for privately let commercial property from 2018<sup>8</sup>.

Whilst certain business benefits may resonate, ultimately sustainability is about ethical practice and doing the right thing for your organisation, the environment and society.

<sup>8</sup> *Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property (England and Wales) Regulations 2015)*

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### The view

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“The food service industry is highly regulated. The risk of non-compliance in our sector is not an option. At Bidfood, we strive to go beyond compliance and our sustainability strategy and policies reflect that ambition. By way of example, we launched [www.plate2planet.co.uk](http://www.plate2planet.co.uk) which is an online resource centre where anyone in the foodservice industry from customers, suppliers and competitors, can upload and share information to help improve sustainability across the sector.”

**Shirley Duncalf**, Head of Sustainability, Bidfood

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“The legal profession has a critical role to play in the fight to combat climate change, which I believe to be the greatest challenge of our time. From the articulation and adoption of the domestic and international laws necessary to mitigate and adapt to climate change, to the interpretation, implementation and enforcement of those rules, to advising governments, businesses and NGOs on creative solutions, the international legal community has been – and will continue to be – integrally involved at each step of the process.”

**David W. Rifkin**, Co-Chair, Debevoise & Plimpton LLP International Dispute Resolution Group and Immediate Past President, International Bar Association

# 7 steps to sustainability quick wins for your campaign

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We have made the case that sustainability makes good business sense. In this section we identify 7 steps to sustainability you can take in your firm.

The 7 steps are designed to help you overcome common challenges experienced in law firms, typically resistance to change and inertia. They will help kick-start your programme or revitalise an existing campaign.

In the legal sector, changes in attitude are often driven either by client demand or when a new generation of partners gain traction. With ambassadorial support from senior partners, and alignment with your mission and vision, you can quickly embed sustainability into your firm's culture.

Our recommendation is to get started. By following these 7 steps, you will be able to get a great programme going. Keep it simple, you will learn along the way, and you won't regret it.

- STEP 1** **Win senior support** – the secret is to get buy-in from the top
- STEP 2** **Create a team** – join the club
- STEP 3** **Make a plan** – set your strategy, objectives and timeline
- STEP 4** **Work the plan** – agree sustainability initiatives and measure progress
- STEP 5** **Bring it to life** – involve your people and your clients
- STEP 6** **Spread the word** – marketing and communication
- STEP 7** **Grow your business** – sustainability and your legal specialism



# Step 1: Win senior support

## the secret is to get buy-in from the top

The most successful sustainability programmes have strong support from the top. Visible commitment from senior partners sets the tone for your sustainability programme and encourages company-wide buy-in. This also reflects the inclusive culture of your firm, so benefits can extend beyond the success of the programme itself, translating into employee well-being, brand enhancement and competitive advantage.

### Here's how to facilitate and maintain senior partner buy-in:

1. Present the business benefits of sustainability to senior partners
2. Identify a senior partner to be the ambassador for your sustainability programme
3. The ambassador's role is to:
  - i) Secure senior partner support and engagement
  - ii) Ensure sustainability programmes are aligned with company strategy, mission and objectives (Step 3)
  - iii) Commit to attending sustainability champions meetings
  - iv) Provide or facilitate two-way communication between senior partners and sustainability champions.
4. Senior partners, should where possible lead by example, and visibly support the sustainability programme and initiatives.

## Business benefits



Engage your people



Embrace leadership and innovation

## Resource

LSA members' Case Studies	Category: "Achieving buy in within the firm"
The Planet Mark™ Setting Up a Sustainability Champions Programme*	A guide to unlocking the talent in your workplace and importance of senior team support.

\* Available to holders of The Planet Mark™

“Support from the CEO and managing partner has been vital. Budget constraints are always a challenge but the benefits are recognised by the board. Environment is now part of our Regional CSR Committee with updates given every quarter which are then shared with the board by our environmental partner.”

LSA member Dentons

## Step 2: Create a team join the club

Sustainability champions help you to deliver improvements to your organisation by promoting and implementing actions to achieve your aims. Being a sustainability champion offers opportunities for personal and career development, innovation and creativity.

Champions work best if they are at all levels and across all departments in the business. They are likely to be self-selecting, but if you are struggling, try using The Planet Mark™ Sustainability Survey to identify people you might like to approach.

### Here's how to create a sustainability champions team:

1. Nominate a sustainability coordinator, e.g. a sustainability manager or someone within the business with a strong interest and infectious enthusiasm – a good communicator and motivator
2. Invite employees to volunteer as sustainability champion, across departments, vertically and horizontally through the firm
3. Set clear expectations for participation, including the parameters of your team, roles and responsibilities of each member and meeting frequency
4. Recognise and reward participation in the team. A “thank you” goes a very long way, and ongoing participation can be encouraged by simply providing food and drink at meetings
5. Consider further recognition through KPIs and personal reviews.

### Business benefits



Engage your people



Embrace leadership and innovation

### Resource

LSA Employee Engagement Toolkit	A brief guide to setting up a green team
LSA Guide to Running a Green Week	A brief guide on running a green week to engage your employees
The Planet Mark™ Personal Sustainability Survey (with Defra)	A five-minute online survey developed by Defra which will reveal what your employees think about sustainability
The Planet Mark™ Setting up a sustainability champions programme*	A brief guide to the steps to setting up a sustainability champions programme.

\* Available to holders of The Planet Mark™

“ We created a ‘Green Team’ including both lawyers and administrative staff for purposes of implementing our firm’s environmental policy and updating it in accordance with best practices in our industry. The Green Team meets once every two months and regularly advises on new measures aiming to further reduce our overall carbon footprint. ”

LSA member Miranda & Associados, Sociedade de Advogados (Portugal)

## Step 3: Make a plan set your strategy, objectives and timeline

To be truly successful at embedding sustainability in an organisation, your sustainability programme should support the mission, values and objectives of your business, and place sustainability at the heart of all your policies and procedures. Perhaps, most importantly, this fosters a culture of sustainability. The plan can be created by the sustainability champions, but will need guidance, support and input from the senior ambassador, and sign off from the top. If sustainability champions are tasked with managing and delivering the plan, they will need to be granted authority to do so.

### Here's how to create a robust sustainability plan:

1. Identify and agree business objectives and priorities
2. Align your sustainability strategy with the firm's vision, mission and values
3. Set targets and consider KPIs
4. Create an annual plan, and a three to five-year plan, prioritising initiatives based on budget and impact  
Keep it simple, and ensure it is achievable
5. Break initiatives into actions, and assign responsibilities
6. Secure senior partner and ambassador sign-off
7. Give sustainability champions authority to implement the plan.

## Business benefits



Engage your people



Embrace leadership and innovation



Create a competitive advantage



Go beyond compliance

## Resource

LSA Membership Principles Survey	A short SurveyMonkey survey to help members see how they are doing at meeting the LSA's Seven Membership Principles
The Planet Mark™ Carbon Savings Calculator	A useful tool to help identify quick wins on carbon footprint reductions
The Planet Mark™ Carbon Reduction Strategy Template*	A template strategy document which can be used when designing your own sustainability strategy

\* Available to holders of The Planet Mark™

“Planning is essential to integrate sustainability across our business units. The measures and actions within our CR programme are applicable to all operating companies, essentially as a common set of objectives, and a means of internal benchmarking. Our commitment is reflected through our actions and within our comprehensive suite of corporate policies, processes and procedures. Our decision making is based upon our corporate values, compliance with legal requirements and our respect for people, communities, and the environment.”

Adrian Shah-Cundy, Corporate Responsibility Director, VolkerWessels UK

## Step 4: Work the plan

### agree sustainability initiatives and measure progress

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Sustainability initiatives are actions that can be taken to improve the environmental and societal impacts of your business. They range from those requiring capital investment to those involving employee engagement and behaviour change. Measuring and monitoring is key to showing the progress and success of your sustainability programme. Good measurement provides a feedback mechanism to help you better manage your programme. Your business carbon footprint is a good indicator of progress, because measurement is well defined, encompasses business operations and company reduction targets that can be aligned with national goals.

#### Here's how to get the most out of measuring your progress:

1. Identify what to include in your measurement, otherwise known as 'the boundary' of your carbon footprint (i.e. energy, water, waste and travel)
2. Collect data systematically, and regularly. It's a good idea to use spreadsheets or an online platform such as Greenstone, which is provided for free through the LSA. Analyse the data and create your carbon footprint report annually
3. Each year, review your reduction targets and focus areas based on performance
4. Communicate your progress to your employees, and consider reporting in the public domain for greater transparency and accountability
5. Consider reporting on other aspects, such as CSR and social value.

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### Business benefits

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Cut your carbon emissions



Save money



Embrace leadership and innovation

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### Making the case

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#### Holman Fenwick Willan

As an LSA member Holman Fenwick Willan (HFW) is committed to measuring, managing and reducing the impact of its operations. In 2016, HFW took the further step of becoming accredited to The Planet Mark™ and committed to reduce its carbon footprint by 5% within 12 months.

The firm's two main areas of impact are business travel and electricity usage. Therefore to reach its reduction target HFW begun a major LED lighting upgrade at its London office with the aim of reducing its annual energy usage by 50%. HFW also plans to extend the use of video conferencing to reduce travel emissions.

Source: *The Planet Mark™*

Continued

**Step 4: Work the plan**  
agree sustainability initiatives and measure progress

## Resource

LSA Carbon Reporting Tool	Tool designed explicitly for LSA members to measure and report all aspects of their firm's carbon footprint
LSA Month by Month data spreadsheet	A useful spreadsheet for keeping track of your data
User Guide to LSA Carbon Reporting Tool 2017	The latest guide to the LSA Carbon Reporting Tool developed for the LSA by Greenstone.
LSA & Greenstone 'How To' webinar	A webinar showing step by step how to use the LSA Carbon Reporting Tool
The Planet Mark™ Beginners Guide to Carbon Footprinting	An overview of a business carbon footprint and how to get started
The Planet Mark™ Guide to Managing Your Carbon Footprint	Aimed at facilities and energy managers, a brief look at all emissions sources and how to reduce them
The Planet Mark™ Practical Carbon Reduction Plan*	An overview document, which links to The Planet Mark™ toolkits series
The Planet Mark™ Toolkits*	Includes toolkits for achieving reductions in: <b>Data quality, Energy, Travel, Waste, Water</b>

\* Available to holders of The Planet Mark™

## Step 5: Bring it to life

### involve your people and your clients

Employee engagement is an excellent way to develop a culture of sustainability. In addition to your sustainability champions, you must aim to communicate and encourage sustainable behaviours across your business. As set out in the business case, it can lead to opportunities for personal and professional development, as well as leadership and innovation. It is also a great first step to reducing carbon emissions and generating quick wins without capital investment.

#### Here's how to engage your people and clients in sustainability:

1. Identify the best communication channels for different stakeholders, and use multiple channels for each audience. Consider notice boards, areas in the office with dwell time (e.g. kitchens, bathrooms, common rooms), intranet, website, social media etc.
2. Organise campaigns to promote your programme and encourage participation, linking to national / international awareness days
3. Organise seminars, workshops and 'lunch and learn' sessions to engage employees in sustainability initiatives. Consider inviting clients
4. Consider inviting external speakers to support and enhance your campaigns (also see Step 7)
5. Incentivise employee engagement and feedback results
6. Integrate sustainability into company policies and processes, such as employee on-boarding, training and personal development.

### Business benefits



Engage your people



Embrace leadership and innovation



Save money

### Making the case

#### Lyons Davidson

LSA member Lyons Davidson has 'Staff Environmental Responsibilities Posters' in every office and on every noticeboard to raise awareness of its programme. The practice also sends out bi-annual reminders to all staff. And as part of its induction process for new recruits, the law firm highlights its environmental responsibilities and commitments as "essential reading".

"We also have the [Environment] Policy displayed in every office in a prominent location and available on both the intranet and the external website. We check they are following it through our internal auditing processes on an annual basis, plus regular ISO 14001 compliance checks," the firm says.

*Taken from the LSA 2017 Principles Survey, with permission*

**Step 5: Bring it to life**  
involve your people and your clients

**Resource**

LSA Employee Engagement Toolkit	A brief guide to setting up a green team
LSA Guide to Running a Green Week	A brief guide on running a green week to engage your employees
The Planet Mark™ Personal Sustainability Survey (with Defra)	A five-minute online survey developed by Defra which will tell your employees how they think about sustainability
The Planet Mark™ Setting up a Sustainability Champions Programme*	A brief guide to the steps to setting up a sustainability champions programme. Available to holders of The Planet Mark™
The Planet Mark™ Event Calendar 2017	A list of dates for national and global sustainability events which can be used when planning your engagement events

\* Available to holders of The Planet Mark™

**Step 6: Spread the word**  
marketing and communication

Sustainability provides an opportunity for your company vision, mission and values to come to life. Communicating sustainability often comes with challenges, but there are rich rewards for those that do it well. Discussing your sustainability programme, targets and success stories in the public domain will draw clients to your business, as well as talent.

**Here's how to communicate sustainability better:**

1. Enrol the support of your in-house communications and marketing team
2. Define your sustainability messages and make sure they are clear, consistent and aligned with your company vision and mission
3. Use all communication channels, both internal and external, at your disposal i.e. website, newsletters, events, annual reports and social media
4. Consider all departments and documentations that might benefit from a sustainability message
5. Create a communications calendar to ensure your content plan stays on track
6. Measure and monitor the impact of your communications.

**Business benefits**



Engage your people



Embrace leadership and innovation



Create a competitive advantage



Go beyond compliance

## Making the case

### Warwickshire College Group

Warwickshire College Group has been measuring and reducing its carbon footprint for the last three years with The Planet Mark™. Recently its media and marketing teams created a short video. The film features the Principal talking about the importance of sustainability to the college, reinforced by excerpts from their green team kick off workshop with contributions from staff, students and The Planet Mark™ experts. The video has been used on their intranet as an awareness raising tool for staff and students across seven campuses, as well as on their website and you tube to attract students, enhance their brand, and show leadership in their sector. Social promotion has pushed this excellent marketing tool out to an even wider audience.

“Warwickshire College Group is delighted to have achieved The Planet Mark™ and it’s a reflection of an awful lot of hard work of the whole organisation and all the people in it to have reduced our carbon emissions by 25% over the last three years.”

**Angela Joyce**, Principal and CEO, WCG

## Resource

LSA 10 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Report	An overview of the first 10 years of the LSA and a look ahead to what the future holds
The Planet Mark™ Communications Toolkit*	How to communicate your sustainability credentials
The Planet Mark™ Procurement ebook – Sustainability in Bids and Tenders*	Guidance on how to talk about sustainability in bids and tenders if you hold The Planet Mark™
The Planet Mark™ – Case study: Chapters Financial	Detailing how Chapters Financial were selected for a CSR award on the strength of their sustainability marketing

\* Available to holders of The Planet Mark™



# Step 7: Grow your business

## sustainability and your legal specialism

The issues, risks and opportunities associated with sustainability and climate change are no longer a niche environmental specialism. We have highlighted in this guide the strategic importance and value of sustainability for legal practices. They are relevant to organisations across sectors and beyond, into the fabric of society and, of course, within the wider environment. Sustainability presents an opportunity to develop skills and services to meet a current and future demand.

### Here's how to use sustainability to grow your business:

1. Consider how sustainability impacts your legal specialism
2. Explore how you can use sustainability to add value to client relationships and services
3. Investigate the business case for new service lines and opportunities to innovate
4. Note that this can generate opportunities for Partner career development.

## Business benefits



Engage your people



Embrace leadership and innovation



Create a competitive advantage



Go beyond compliance

## Making the case

### Harper Macleod

Every year, LSA member Harper Macleod hosts and organises the Scottish Highland Renewable Energy Conference in Inverness. The event welcomes 200 delegates to hear about climate change, the Energy Bill, Community Renewables and Land Reform. The event regularly attracts high profile Energy policy makers, including the energy Minister. Harper Macleod also engages in other specialist events including the WS Energy Law Conference and Scottish Renewables Annual Conference in Edinburgh.

“We have also supported Local Energy Scotland on the drafting of the Scottish Governments Best Practice Guidance for Onshore Renewable Energy projects, “ the firm says.

*Taken from the LSA 2017 Principles Survey, with permission*

## Resource

Beyond Responsibility: The Emerging Role of Legal Counsel in Sustainable Business

A detailed analysis of how the legal sector can benefit from sustainability, including taking your practice in new directions.

# Resources

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The LSA and The Planet Mark™ have a number of free-access resources online. The Planet Mark™ also has additional resources available for any certified businesses.

## LSA resources

on the members' login site

### MEASURE

- LSA Carbon Reporting Tool
  - User Guide from Greenstone (2017)
  - Month by month data spreadsheet
  - 'How to' webinar
- LSA Annual reports
- LSA 10th Anniversary Report

### MANAGE

- LSA Guide to Sustainable Procurement

### IMPROVE

- LSA guide to Sustainable Travel
- LSA Employee Engagement Toolkit
- Guidance and Best Practice for Sustainable Travel
- Running a Green Week

## The Planet Mark™ resources

From The Planet Mark™ website [www.theplanetmark.com](http://www.theplanetmark.com)

- The Beginners Guide to Carbon Footprinting
- Practical Guide To Cutting Carbon Emissions
- Carbon Savings Calculator
- Sustainability Events Calendar 2017

Available to holders of The Planet Mark™

- Carbon Data Collation Template
- Data Collection and Data Quality Toolkit
- Carbon Reduction Strategy Template
- Practical Carbon Reduction Plan
- Energy Toolkit
- Sustainable Procurement Toolkit
- Travel Toolkit
- Waste Toolkit
- Water Toolkit
- Setting up a Sustainability Champions Programme
- Procurement e-book – Sustainability in Bids and Tenders
- Communications toolkit

## Other sources referenced in this guide

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**Beyond Responsibility: The Emerging Role of Legal Counsel in Sustainable Business. 2014**

[www.bonddickinson.com/insights/publications-and-briefings/beyond-responsibility-emerging-role-legal-counsel-sustainable](http://www.bonddickinson.com/insights/publications-and-briefings/beyond-responsibility-emerging-role-legal-counsel-sustainable)

**Deloitte Millennials Survey 2017**

[www2.deloitte.com/global/en/pages/about-deloitte/articles/millennialsurvey.html](http://www2.deloitte.com/global/en/pages/about-deloitte/articles/millennialsurvey.html)

**From the Stockholder to the Stakeholder: How Sustainability can Drive Financial Performance.**

2015 (updated) Prof Gordon L. Clark, Andreas Feiner, Dr Michael Viehs.

[www.smithschool.ox.ac.uk/library/reports/financial-markets.php](http://www.smithschool.ox.ac.uk/library/reports/financial-markets.php)

**Masdar Gen Z Global Sustainability Survey, 2016**

[www.masdar.ae/en/initiatives/GenZSurvey](http://www.masdar.ae/en/initiatives/GenZSurvey)

**UK's 2050 Carbon Reduction Target**

[www.theccc.org.uk/tackling-climate-change/reducing-carbon-emissions/carbon-budgets-and-targets/](http://www.theccc.org.uk/tackling-climate-change/reducing-carbon-emissions/carbon-budgets-and-targets/)

**UN Sustainable Development Goals**

[www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/](http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/)

# About the LSA

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The Legal Sustainability Alliance (LSA) was founded in 2007 by a group of leading law firms to take positive action on climate change by measuring, reducing and reporting on their carbon footprint. Since that time the LSA has grown both in size and scope. We are now a collaborative network of 120 firms across the UK with members varying from small practices to multinational global firms. Membership is free thanks to the generous contribution of the LSA Executive Firms and The Law Society who provide both financial support and strategic leadership.

The shift of our name from the Legal Sector Alliance to Legal Sustainability Alliance reflects this new wider remit. LSA member firms are committed to looking at and acting on all areas of sustainability.

## Our Mission

To facilitate collaboration and sharing between UK-based law firms in order to support them in taking action to improve the environmental sustainability of their operations and activities.

To achieve this we have set ourselves some overarching aims for the next two years. These are:

- To enhance LSA impact and influence across the legal sector
- To lead the debate on environmentally sustainable business practice from the law firm perspective
- To support, encourage and engage with the widest group of law firms by expanding LSA membership
- To embed good practice on environmental sustainability (including carbon reduction) through measurement and reporting.

The day-to-day work of the LSA to deliver these aims falls into three main areas: Communication and Influence, Engagement and Support and Measurement, Reporting and Sustainability – each with a series of clearly defined and targeted objectives to ensure we are as active and effective as possible.

Membership of the LSA is free to all UK-based law firms regardless of their size. To join we ask firms to commit to our seven membership principles:

- Measure, manage and reduce the impact of our operations
- Work with external stakeholders to reduce our indirect impact
- Integrate awareness of climate change across our business
- Advise clients on the opportunities and obligations arising from and under climate change law
- Work collaboratively to engage in the public debate on climate change and to develop, apply and promote best practice across the sector
- Report on our progress and be accountable
- Adopt and pursue a challenging emissions reduction target appropriate for our own organisation and needs, achievement of which will deliver over stated time periods a meaningful and progressive reduction in our emissions.

Find out more by visiting the LSA website:

[www.legalsustainabilityalliance.com](http://www.legalsustainabilityalliance.com)

## About The Planet Mark™

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Founded by sustainability consultancy Planet First in association with the iconic Eden Project, The Planet Mark™ is a sustainability certification awarded to businesses, properties, new developments and projects that are committed to reducing their carbon emissions. It's mission is to empower organisations and their people to make year-on-year progress on sustainability.

It's developed a unique three-step programme that:

- 1. Measures** your carbon footprint and environmental performance
- 2. Engages** your employees and suppliers to help drive improvements
- 3. Communicates** your achievements through toolkits, promotional materials and marketing channels.

It is a low resource programme that is proven to work. On average, holders of The Planet Mark™- make a 5% carbon saving each year per employee through energy use, waste, water, travel and procurement.

We are bringing sustainability and the values of the Eden Project into the heart of organisations. Together we are working to put climate change and the environment at the top of the business agenda.

Find out more by visiting The Planet Mark™ website: [www.theplanetmark.com](http://www.theplanetmark.com)

Contact us on [info@theplanetmark.com](mailto:info@theplanetmark.com)

This business case and guide has been written by **Planet First**,  
the creator and custodian of **The Planet Mark™**  
for the **Legal Sustainability Alliance** 2017

For further information, contact:

**Legal Sustainability Alliance**

[www.legalsustainabilityalliance.com](http://www.legalsustainabilityalliance.com)

**The Planet Mark™**

[www.theplanetmark.com](http://www.theplanetmark.com)

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“If we want to develop our societies we need to ensure that we can maintain a stable, natural environment, as well as preserving the natural capital we need for sustained growth.”

Sir Nigel Knowles, Global Ambassador, DLA Piper

