

# CASE STUDY

## SHOOSMITHS IS MAKING WORK WORK FOR PEOPLE AND THE PLANET



As one of Business in the Community's (BITC) 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary Making Work **Work** Partners, Shoosmiths demonstrates in this case study how it is taking action to ensure it is a responsible business – working it Fairer and Greener, and Together with others for the benefit of people and the planet.

### About Shoosmiths

[Shoosmiths](#) is a law firm with 13 locations across the United Kingdom and one in Brussels, 230 partners and over 1,400 lawyers and business support employees. Its offices are based in Birmingham, Leeds, London, Manchester, Milton Keynes, Northampton, Nottingham, Sheffield, Solent and Thames Valley; Scotland – Edinburgh, Glasgow; Northern Ireland – Belfast; and Belgium – Brussels.

Shoosmiths has been a corporate partner of BITC since 2000, supporting a number of its campaigns, programmes, and providing leadership on four regional [Leadership Boards](#). Shoosmiths' chairperson is a member of the [Climate Action Leadership Team](#).

### Fairer, Greener, Together

The examples below illustrate how Shoosmiths' ESG (Environmental, Social, Governance) programme is helping to deliver change by being Fairer, Greener and Together. Additional information can be found on [Shoosmiths' website](#) on its corporate responsibility and diversity and

inclusion pages, in addition to its annual impact report on the firm's website.

### Fairer

Shoosmiths' ambition is to build a diverse and ambitious workforce that reflects all backgrounds and talents, and a workplace that is supportive and inclusive, recognises and nurtures talent, and has a strong sense of community between colleagues. It recognises the importance for data-driven interventions to support equitable outcomes.

These include:

- Developing the firm's talent through its High Performing Women Programme and coaching programmes for ethnically diverse talent at trainee level.
- Launching the Shoosmiths Action Plan for Social Mobility as part of its commitment to the Social Mobility Pledge. The plan proposes 14 recommendations, based on the Pledge team research findings, to identify opportunities where Shoosmiths can uniquely promote social mobility in the firm and in the UK.
- Introducing a reciprocal mentoring programme, and a Shadow Board to encourage diverse



thinking, innovation and open conversations between colleagues at all levels.

- Senior leaders and colleagues hosting open and honest conversations on mental health to break down taboos, supported by a Wellbeing Hub on the staff intranet and underpinned by policy development, such as fertility and pregnancy loss policies.
- Supporting a culture of inclusion through the work of its employee-led networks: Balance, Proud, Embrace and Mental Health and Wellbeing Champions. These networks are an opportunity for colleagues to connect, further their professional development, progress diversity and inclusion ambitions, and create community in the firm.
- Not only fulfilling the mandatory gender pay gap requirements but voluntarily sharing its ethnicity pay gap data (since 2018) and including LGBT+ and socio-economic background pay gap data for the first time in 2022.
- Being signatories of BITC's [Race at Work Charter](#); [The Mindful Business Charter](#) and members of [The Business Disability Forum](#).

## Greener

Shoosmiths is committed to a net zero future, being a signatory to a number of campaigns including the Business Ambition for 1.5°C campaign and has provided support for BITC's [#Challenge2030](#) including financial support towards [The Right Climate for Business: leading a just transition research](#) published in January 2022.

Shoosmiths' net zero aspirations are ambitious. It aims for its operations (Scopes 1,2) to reach net zero by 2025 and has near-term science-based emissions reduction targets validated by the [Science Based Targets initiative](#) (SBTi) namely:

- Shoosmiths commits to reductions across its entire value chain to reduce absolute scope 1, 2 and 3 Greenhouse Gas Emissions 50% by FY2030 from an FY2020 base year; and to increase annual sourcing of renewable

electricity from 74% in FY2020 to 100% by FY2025.

A full value chain net zero target will shortly be submitted to the SBTi for validation.

An ambitious sustainable travel policy illustrates the firm's approach. The 2022/2023 business travel budget was reduced by 50% compared to the 2019/2020 (preCOVID-19) budget. Moreover, any business flight booked incurs an internal carbon levy of £200, rising to £300 for flights of four hours or more. [Read further details about the sustainable travel policy.](#)

Shoosmiths has launched its first formal employee bonus scheme which this year includes a 50% reduced travel spend metric versus 2019/2020 budget.

## Together

Shoosmiths works hard to be a good corporate citizen and to enable its team to work together with others in the community, For example:

**Volunteering:** Shoosmiths encourages teams to share their skills and time in ways that assist local communities, and this can take the form of the provision of legal advice on a pro bono basis and/or volunteering.

For example, Shoosmiths supports appointment-based pro bono clinics for individuals. These are operated with local charities, such as Citizens Advice, and it often partners with University Law Schools enabling students to be given the opportunity to build both their legal and client relationship skills.

Everyone in Shoosmiths is able to volunteer a day a year in the community. Colleagues have the opportunity to support causes that are aligned with Shoosmiths' business ESG priorities, however, there is also flexibility to enable teams or individuals to support causes that matter to them personally.



The Prince's  
Responsible  
Business Network



## SHOOSMITHS AND BITC TACKLE HOMELESSNESS

Shoosmiths selects charity partners in each of its offices and during 2021/2022 took the decision in Manchester to fundraise and provide firm donations in support of a BITC homelessness research project.

With funds from Shoosmiths, BITC commissioned a local employment research project to complement existing support provided to individuals. The research aimed to identify employers who are recruiting, mainly in entry-level jobs.

The research on local employers has allowed BITC to build strong relationships with five new employers who have been able to offer jobs to people with experience of homelessness. All employers identified in this research were invited to the re-launch of the Manchester Homelessness Partnership scheduled in September 2022.

Funds are used to help people overcome common barriers to secure jobs. In addition to the case studies provided in the report, it has enabled people to access education and apprenticeships by having the right IT equipment in place, supporting people with travel fares for the first month's employment, paying for PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) to secure jobs in construction and paid for ID to access jobs at the airport.



**SHOOSMITHS**  
F O U N D A T I O N

### Shoosmiths Foundation beneficiaries

[The Shoosmiths Foundation](#), launched in June 2021, is a grant-making body working to help

address societal issues, to empower sustainable change and to improve the lives of the people and the environment in the UK. The three areas for focus are advancing social mobility, advancing a net zero future and access to legal justice.

The inaugural funding round focused on the social mobility theme with grants awarded to End Youth Homelessness and Street League. Funding to End Youth Homelessness will provide circa 2,174 hours of employability support from Employability Coaches and help 42 young people back into Employment, Education or Training.

Funding to Street League will support 53 unemployed young people, living in some of the most deprived communities across Leeds and Sheffield, to gain qualifications they need to secure meaningful job opportunities.

## IMPACTS AND OUTCOMES

- Ranked 42nd in the 'Top 75' employers in the Social Mobility Employer Index 2021
- Winner of the 2022 People in Law Awards for Best Social Mobility Initiative
- Scope 1, scope 2 (location-based) emissions = -25% 2021/2022 versus 2019/2020
- Scope 1, scope 2 (market-based) emissions = -62% 2021/2022 versus 2019/2020
- The 2022/2023 business travel budget has been reduced by 50% compared to the 2019/2020 (pre-COVID-19) budget
- 1,571 hours legal advice provided pro bono in 2021/2022
- 1,304 hours of employer supported volunteering in 2021/2022
- £7,772 plus gift aid funding provided for Homeless research project. April - June 2022, BITC have supported 39 people, with 14 people being invited to interview, 13 people gaining employment, 5 people sustaining employment for more than 3 months, 10 people accessing training and 2 people achieving accredited qualifications. Shoosmiths investment has significantly contributed to these outcomes
- As of June 2022, End Youth Homelessness has surpassed its target of supporting 42 young people. The funding has enabled 46 young people to progress with employment, education or training. Young people were surveyed to see how they felt after engaging with the programme, 88% felt more confident, 87% reported that they had developed employability skills, 88% felt more independent and 86% felt more positive about their future
- Thanks to Shoosmiths Foundation funding as of 1 August 2022 Street League is ahead of target. In Leeds, based on 99 young people starting a programme since November 2021, 12 young people have achieved qualifications (Maths, English, Progressions Award) and 25 young people have moved into an outcome, e.g., employment, training or education. The majority of these have been into employment. In Sheffield, 55 young people have started the programme since November 2021, with 13 young people achieving qualifications and 17 moving into an outcome – again the majority of these have been into employment. A total therefore of; Starts – 154, Qualifications – 25 Outcomes – 42 (32 Employment, 8 Training, 2 Education)