

# Positive Impact Report

Annual Review  
2026/27

Walker Morris LLP is a UK-headquartered commercial law firm with international reach.

Our clients include FTSE 350 companies, multinational corporates, financial services and public sector organisations, growing businesses and private individuals.

With specialists across more than 40 areas of law and experience supporting clients in over 70 countries in the last two years, we bring a fresh perspective, ambitious thinking and commercial judgement to every challenge.

# Introduction

As businesses face growing ESG delivery expectations from clients, employees, regulators and wider society, transparency and accountability have never been more important.

We recognise that how we do business is as important as the advice we provide, and we remain committed to being open about the impact we have on our people, clients, communities and the environment.

This is our fifth Positive Impact Report. In 2025/26, we achieved a significant milestone, surpassing £90 million in revenue for the first time. As our business continues to grow, we remain focused on delivering meaningful outcomes for all our stakeholders. That means measuring our success not only through financial performance, but also through the progress we make against our ESG commitments and the positive impact we create.

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# What drives us?

## Our purpose

This is why we're here. It's how we create a positive impact for our people, our clients and our communities.

We believe that everything we do starts with bold thinking. By bringing fresh perspectives, commercial judgement and a practical approach to every challenge, we help our clients, colleagues and communities achieve their goals and realise their ambitions.

Our purpose is simple: to create positive change through the way we think, the way we act and the outcomes we deliver.

In short, **Bold Thinking**. Simply Delivered.



We give 100%. Always.



We rise to any challenge.



We invest in the relationship.



We speak business, not law.



We make change happen.



# Environment

## Our vision

We'll achieve Net Zero by 2040 and be a recognised influencer for positive change in our community.

We continue to measure and monitor our greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and work towards our reduction targets, in line with our SBTi-validated Net Zero Strategy.

While we have set ambitious reduction targets and are fully committed to achieving them, the journey to Net Zero takes time. Our plan follows a downward trajectory in our carbon footprint that is heavily influenced by external factors such as government legislation, national infrastructure (including power supply grid greening), and the work that businesses in our supply chain are doing to reduce their GHG emissions.



## Here's what we've done in the last year

1. Introduced EV charger management software.
2. Worked with our landlord's recommended supplier to implement options for energy reduction systems.
3. Extended our work with our supply chain to gather their emissions information and reduction targets.
4. Renewed our zero-carbon energy supply contract.
5. Included supplier emissions evaluation in our new supplier management process.

## This year's ambitions

- Implement building infrastructure energy optimisation technology.
- Continue to expand the work with our supply chain to understand their emissions and targets.
- Expand the collaboration with our landlord's suppliers to consider additional energy reduction technology.

As we grow as a business, our emissions will increase in the short term in the context of speed of the overall economy reducing emissions, but we continue to work towards overall emissions reduction.

With this in mind, we now measure not only our bottom line GHG emissions, but we also produce "intensity metrics" to provide a truer picture that reflects our impacts relative to our underlying growth in terms of FTE headcount and revenue.

# Social

## Equality, diversity & inclusion

### Our vision

Bold thinking starts with diverse perspectives. We're creating a workforce that reflects our region, a culture where opportunity is open to everyone, and a workplace where people can be themselves without having to leave parts of who they are at the door.

### Where we're at

6%

of our colleagues identify as LGBTQ+ (up from 5% last year and above the UK average).

7.2%

our gender pay gap has reduced from 17% in 2018 to 7.2% in 2025.

13%

of colleagues are from a racial minority background (up from 11% last year).

40%

increase in our disability declaration rate.

9%

of colleagues have declared a disability (higher than the UK average of 6.9%).

### Performance against aims

We set an aim for at least 40% of partner promotions each year to be female. Since the target was introduced in 2023, female representation in partner promotions has been between 40% and 60% each year. Representation of colleagues from racial minority backgrounds has increased by 2% to 13%. Our overall engagement score for diversity and inclusion is 85%, with 91% of colleagues saying they are treated fairly, equally and with respect.

### Here's what we've done in the last year

1. **Been more transparent about our diversity data.** We published full diversity statistics on our website, going beyond the SRA data we are required to publish, to give candidates, clients and colleagues a clearer picture of who we are and where we still need to make progress.
2. **Improved understanding of reasonable adjustments and disability inclusion.** We delivered reasonable adjustment training for partners and managers, with a strong focus on neurodiversity. We also continued to share real stories about disability and working life, covering arthritis, hearing aids, autism spectrum disorder and X-linked ichthyosis. During Disability History Month, our N-Able disability network ran a "Superhero" campaign, sharing stories of well-known disabled people whose achievements challenged assumptions and helped normalise disability as part of the human experience, not a limit on potential.
3. **Increased voluntary disclosure and strengthened the data we use to make decisions.** We completed a voluntary disclosure exercise for partners and

launched an all-staff communications campaign, supported by Marketing, to explain why accurate data matters. The campaign appeared on the intranet and digital screens across the office.

4. **Taken a more intersectional approach to inclusion.** We refined our approach during the year. Rather than separating learning by individual demographic groups, we moved towards a broader model that opens up shared learning on leadership, progression, work-life balance and lived experience. This will shape the redesigned Women in Law programme. We also invited Reagan Persaud, the UK's first transgender judge from an ethnic minority background, to speak to colleagues about her journey and experiences in law. Our updated approach also saw the introduction of our mandatory Proactive D&I training and we began bringing our staff networks together to discuss shared priorities and collaborate on joint events.

### This year's ambitions

- Review and relaunch Women in Law as a focused masterclass programme, keeping the best of the original format while making it more flexible, practical and accessible.
- Create a menopause action plan that also considers wider menstrual health and the intersection with sex and disability.
- Work with our staff networks to run more intersectional events, helping colleagues understand how different identities and lived experiences can overlap.
- Build on external partnerships, including Stronger Together, Club Out Together and the Law Society, to share good practice and create joint events with wider reach.



“

Progress only matters if it changes people's day-to-day experience. While the numbers show that we're moving in the right direction, the real test is whether colleagues feel respected, included, able to be themselves and do their best work here. That's where we'll continue to focus our efforts.”

Jeanette Burgess,  
Managing Partner



# Social

## Our people

### Our vision

Our people are at the heart of **Bold Thinking. Simply Delivered.** We are creating a workplace where everyone feels supported, included and treated fairly, so they can reach their full potential. By developing talent, encouraging new perspectives and providing opportunities to grow, while being transparent about who we are as an employer and what we expect, we will help our people deliver better outcomes for our clients.



### Employee Engagement Survey update

Employee engagement is not an annual exercise. We listen through our engagement survey, new-joiner check-ins, leaver conversations, employee forums and targeted focus groups, so we can understand what is working and where we need to push harder.

**The 2025 Employee Engagement Survey showed strong progress, including:**



The results also show progress in areas where we have focused our attention: communication, wellbeing and inclusion. Colleagues scored the firm highly for understanding its strategy and goals, receiving firm-wide updates, being treated fairly and with respect, and feeling able to be themselves at work.

The message is clear: people value flexibility, career opportunities, quality work and strong relationships with colleagues and managers. By listening properly and acting on what we hear, we are building a stronger, more resilient firm for our people, our clients and our communities.

### Here's what we've done in the last year

1. **Acted on engagement feedback.** We focused on the priorities colleagues raised: greater Board visibility and support, better IT systems, clearer leadership expectations, stronger manager confidence, and more transparency around business development bonuses and interaction.
2. **Used the apprenticeship levy more effectively.** We used our apprenticeship levy to open up more training across the firm, supporting development in both legal and non-legal roles.
3. **Strengthened support for new managers.** We designed a dedicated induction programme for managers who are new to Walker Morris or newly promoted, helping them understand our expectations and feel confident from the start.
4. **Made management development more practical and accessible.** We evolved manager development into a cyclical, modular learning approach aligned to core management responsibilities. Essentials for Managers is now embedded as a business-as-usual programme, with multiple attendance dates to improve access. We have also introduced a recurring management development item at Director meetings for 2026, creating a flexible route for managers who cannot attend the main programme.
5. **Celebrated contribution across the firm.** We hosted our first firmwide awards dinner at the First Direct Arena, bringing colleagues together from across legal and business teams to recognise achievement and celebrate the people who make the firm what it is. The turnout was fantastic, and the feedback since has made it clear how much the evening meant to our people.

### This year's ambitions

- Launch the WM Learning Academy. A central platform for legal, technical, professional, management and leadership development. It will give people clearer development pathways, easier access to learning and more ownership of their growth.
- Implement new HR and recruitment systems that make day-to-day processes simpler, faster and better for employees, managers and partners.
- Expand People & Culture business partnering with departments, giving leaders sharper insight, more practical support and clearer people development plans.
- Introduce Disability Passports and improve reasonable adjustment processes for new starters, so support is clearer from day one.
- Run listening focus groups to make sure colleagues have meaningful input to the firm's strategic decisions.
- Integrate cyclical manager training into the wider WM Learning Academy, combining facilitated sessions with self-directed, on-demand content for busy managers.

# Social

## Our community

### Our vision

We'll understand the obstacles people in our community may face and work hard to make sure everyone has the best chance to achieve the life to which they aspire.

### Here's what we've done in the last year

1. Continued to build on our strong relationship with Bishop Young Academy in Leeds. Laura Lister, Partner in our Banking & Finance team, continues in her role as the school's Careers Governor.
2. Rolled out events for the Year 9 to 11 students which have gained positive feedback from the students and school. Volunteers from across the firm's legal and business services teams supported the students in their mentoring and work experience sessions.
3. Introduced a new 'Open Doors Day' event. We invited some of our clients and some Year 8 students for a session introducing the students to different professions. This involved workshops and networking practice to help them feel confident, inspired and prepared for their future careers.
4. Welcomed back an ex-student from Bishop Young who has now moved on to sixth form college for some work experience. This is a testament to the success of the scheme.
5. Supported young people in our local community through our partnership with Leeds City College.



6. Hosted 28 students from Leeds City Academy for an interactive insight day on personal brand and how to present to future employers as part of the Sector Experience and Employability Days programme.
7. Organised a mock interview workshop at Leeds City Academy as part of the Stronger Together network. Alongside other legal and accountancy firm volunteers we interviewed over 25 students, helping them build confidence for future interviews.

### This year's ambitions

- Continue collaborating with Ahead Partnership to develop tailored training modules for volunteers, with a particular focus on safeguarding, to enhance their knowledge, confidence and skills, ensuring the greatest possible impact for students.
- Further develop the Open Doors Day programme by increasing client volunteer participation and placing greater emphasis on showcasing the diverse organisations our clients represent.
- Continue raising awareness of our work with Bishop Young across the firm to increase volunteer participation from a broad range of teams, including non-fee-earning functions, showcasing the diverse roles, skills and career pathways available at Walker Morris.
- Deepen our local education partnerships, including the year-long Leeds Beckett programme.
- Create more sustained support for students through insight days, mentoring and, where possible, work experience opportunities.

“

Walker Morris' programme to support students at Bishop Young Academy continues to go from strength to strength. The sustained nature of the firm's engagement and sharing of knowledge from volunteers in both legal and non-legal roles at all levels of the firm really benefits students who have potentially never seen their place in the world of work.

We continue to see students grow in confidence, and the introduction of the Open Doors Day has meant that Year 8 students now start to consider what their future could be. This is happening at a very important time as there is more recognition of starting workplace encounters early, and Walker Morris is leading the way with its long-term commitment to Bishop Young.”

Andy Clarke, Ahead Partnership





# Governance

## Our vision

We'll govern Walker Morris in a way that builds trust from our stakeholders, mitigates and manages risk, and unites all our people behind one vision of success.

## Here's what we've done in the last year

1. Continued to invest in AI and legal technology, recognising the opportunities these developments present to enhance client service, improve efficiency and support sustainable growth. Our approach is based on the principle that successful transformation requires a balanced combination of people, process and technology. We have rolled out Microsoft Copilot across the firm, together with Lexis+ AI (Protégé) to enhance our legal research capabilities and we are trialling Legora, a specialist legal generative AI platform, to assess its potential to further enhance legal service delivery and embed AI across our team-specific legal workstreams.
2. Evolved our AI governance framework and published our AI Policy and AI Usage Charter to ensure that innovation is supported by appropriate governance,

professional oversight and effective risk management. We have also invested significantly in training and AI literacy, equipping our people with the skills, knowledge and confidence to use emerging technologies effectively while maintaining the highest standards of professional judgement and client service.

3. Collaborated with clients, via innovation workshops and technology-focused initiatives, to explore how legal technology and AI can help address real business challenges and deliver practical, measurable benefits. By combining legal expertise with technology, effective processes and a culture of continuous learning, we aim to deliver meaningful and sustainable value for both our clients and the firm.
4. Made positive progress in embedding our IT strategy and advancing our transition to a modern workplace, with four of the five Microsoft 365 (M365) delivery phases now complete. Through the successful relaunch of Microsoft Teams and the rollout of M365 tools, we have strengthened digital enablement, collaboration and resilience across the firm. The remaining external file-sharing phase is now in design

to further improve how we work together and collaborate securely with our clients.

5. Restructured our information and cyber security team to continue the focus on protecting the firm's data and systems. We continue to perform strongly against ISO 27001:2022 standards.
6. Recruited additional expertise into our AML team to continue our strong defences against financial crime and sanctions breaches.
7. Made significant progress in enhancing our supplier management capability through the introduction of a centralised supplier management platform. This will ensure we consistently capture information relating to information security, governance, risk and environmental matters during supplier onboarding, providing greater oversight and supporting the firm's compliance, risk management and ESG objectives.
8. Launched our refreshed brand, **Bold Thinking. Simply Delivered.**, establishing a clear and consistent framework for how we make decisions, advise clients and represent the firm.

## This year's ambitions

- Develop, agree and begin to implement our new strategy after our current Ambition 27 three-year strategy period ends.
- Continue to invest in responsible innovation, scaling AI and legal technology to enhance client service, efficiency and sustainable growth through practice and client-specific AI workflows.
- Implement our new supplier management process by rolling out and using the new platform.



# Our ESG Steering Committee

For more information, please contact our ESG Steering Committee. We look forward to updating you in 2027.

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