



REPORT
2025

I am delighted to share this, our first annual report on our Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) commitments.

At HGF, our values – People, Excellence, Teamwork, and Progressive – are the foundation of everything we do. These principles not only guide our day-to-day operations but also inform our approach to ESG.

Our company vision is clear: to be Europe’s IP firm of choice. Integrating ESG into our values and strategy is essential to achieving our ambitions and to creating long-term value for our clients, colleagues, and communities.

The report highlights some of our achievements and shares our commitments to ESG.

To help us deliver on these commitments, we established HGF’s first ESG Steering Committee in 2025. The Committee ensures that the business actively progresses its ESG priorities and serves as a strategic forum to monitor, guide, and champion ESG initiatives across HGF. We have also appointed Focus Area Leads, who are responsible for driving these initiatives, tracking progress, reporting outcomes and acting as ambassadors for their respective ESG areas. Highlights from each Focus Area are included in this report.

This first annual report reflects the progress we have made to date, and it also marks an important milestone in setting out our future ESG ambitions.

Lucy Johnson – COO and HGF ESG Board Sponsor



People Highlights



This area focuses on the well-being, engagement, diversity, equity, and inclusion (DE&I) of our colleagues. It includes strategies for colleague retention, development, and fostering a positive workplace culture.

Great Place To Work® Employee Engagement Survey

In September 2025, for the first time, we partnered with an external colleague engagement platform provider (Great Place to Work®) to gain deeper insights into how our colleagues feel and to create meaningful actions that strengthen engagement across the firm.

We were delighted to achieve an 85% response rate, which exceeded expectations for a first survey. The overall engagement score was 70%, earning us certification as a Great Place to Work in the UK.

While this recognition is an important milestone, our primary focus remains on listening to feedback and acting on it.

To ensure transparency and continued progress, action plans will be developed and shared, and colleagues will be kept informed through a dedicated "You Said, We Did" intranet page and other internal communication channels. We are committed to continuously improving HGF as a great place to work across the business, and the results will provide valuable insight to support this.

Survey Engagement



Overall Engagement



People Highlights

Improving Gender Balance

Some of the measures we have taken at HGF to improve gender balance include:

- Equal Parent Pay Policy - Introduced 26 weeks of full pay for all eligible parents, regardless of gender, to balance childcare responsibilities
- Shared Parental Leave Enhancements - Aligning shared parental pay with enhanced maternity pay to reduce career penalties for women
- Salary Benchmark Reporting- Regular reviews against industry surveys to ensure fairness and competitiveness
- A Genuinely Flexible Workplace- HGF operates a highly flexible working model, with hybrid working in place since 2021 to help support our employees' work-life balance
- Gender Pay Gap Reporting - Our 2024/25 Gender Pay Gap Report can be found [here](#). The mean 2024 gender pay gap at HGF is 16.06% (20.76% in 2023) and the median 2024 gender pay gap is 12.02% (18.07% in 2023)

Results showing improvements in Gender Balance from our 2024/25 Report:

- At Senior Leadership level, we aimed to increase to 38% women – and we achieved 50%
- In the Partner group, we aimed to increase to 30% women – and we achieved 36%
- Of new joiners in 2024, 27% are men and 73% are women. This represents a 4% increase in women new starters compared to 2023

Affinity Groups

Groups organised around diversity categories where colleagues can come together to chat, ask questions and support each other. They are run by colleagues for colleagues, provide a safe space to share ideas and experiences.

One of our most active Affinity Groups this year has been our Menopause Affinity Group. Its purpose is to share knowledge, hints, tips and experiences of Peri-menopause/Menopause in a psychologically safe space.



42 members
(around 10% of our total headcount)



13 work-funded consultations
(and follow up) with a qualified pharmacist specialising in menopause.



Women & Diversity in Law Awards
Nomination list



x6 Webinars
(Partner: • Livve)



x2 Events in Leeds & Manchester
(Partner: Over the Bloody Moon)

Social impact



Crankstart Internship Programme

Crankstart Scholars at Oxford University were invited to apply for two internships with HGF's London Chemistry Team. To qualify for a Crankstart Scholarship at Oxford University, the student must be a UK resident commencing their first degree with a household income of £32,500 or less. For our internship, the students must be studying for a degree in Chemistry or Biochemistry. The internships last for two weeks during which the students gain experience working in the field of intellectual property law. The internship provides real-world work experience and allows the students to "test drive" a career as a patent attorney.



/HGF FUTURES

HGF Futures days are promoted across a wide range of university career portals, including non-Russell Group Universities, to ensure a broad and inclusive reach. 5 trainees have been recruited into full time patent trainee roles in the past 2 years.



In²science^{UK}

HGF has supported In2Science for 6 years. In2Science promotes diversity and inclusion in the sector and provides life-changing opportunities for young people to thrive in STEM fields.

Our partnership has made a difference in the lives of young people from underrepresented backgrounds in the In2Science programme, which empowers young people from these backgrounds to achieve their potential through life-changing opportunities that give them insights into STEM careers and research and boost their skills and confidence.

Planet Highlights

This area focuses on our environmental commitments, including sustainability, resource management, and initiatives to reduce our environmental impact. HGF’s sustainability strategy is framed around the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We are helping to pave the way to a zero-carbon economy, boost innovation, and drive sustainable growth by setting ambitious, science-based emissions reduction targets. We are on track to reduce our Scope 1 and Scope 2 GHG emissions by 46% by 2030 from a 2019 base year. We have a target of making a meaningful reduction in Scope 3 emissions associated with travel.

Energy Efficiency

HGF is committed to year-on-year improvements in its operational energy efficiency. Measures we have taken towards this include:

- **Expansion of LED Lighting** - Successful LED lighting installations at York, Manchester and Birmingham offices to enhance energy efficiency
- **Travel** - Considering international travel priorities – where these are a suitable alternative we make group client visits and host online meetings, contributing to lower transport emissions
- **Reducing Printer Energy Consumption** - Replaced outdated printers in London and Manchester, and transitioned to digital workflows, saving approximately 20 boxes of paper per month and reducing energy demand
- **Waste reduction** - New Food Waste Bins introduced in our UK offices – helping reduce our environmental impact
- **Green Energy Procurement** - London office achieved 27% green energy procurement in FY2025, with a target of 80% for FY2026. Our new Leeds office is using 100% Green electricity

Reporting Year: May 2024 – April 2025*

HGF’s Scope 1 direct and Scope 3 indirect emissions (combustion of natural gas and transportation fuels) for this reporting year are 28.81 tCO₂e, resulting from the direct combustion of 134,668 kWh of fuel. This represents a carbon reduction of 24.63% from last year ending April 2024.

Scope 2 indirect emissions (purchased electricity) for this reporting year are 48.22 tCO₂e, resulting from the consumption of 231,031 kWh of electricity purchased and consumed in day-to-day business operations. This represents a carbon reduction of 7.76% from last year ending April 2024.

HGF’s operations have an intensity metric of 0.0219 tCO₂e per total floor area (m²) for this reporting year. This represents a decrease in the operational carbon intensity of 11.51% from last year ending April 2024.

	FY25	FY24	YOY CHANGE
Total Location-based Emissions (tCO₂e)	77.03	90.51	-14.89%
REASON FOR CHANGE Combined impact of all measures			
Total Energy Consumption (kWh)	365,699	430,247	-15.0%
REASON FOR CHANGE Downsizing, equipment upgrades, energy saving measures			
Carbon Intensity per Total Floor Area of All Offices (tCO₂e/m²)	0.0219	0.0248	-11.51%
REASON FOR CHANGE Improved efficiency, less carbon per m ²			



*Data and calculations follow the GHG Protocol, ISO 14064, and UK Government guidelines. Market-based emissions are calculated using supplier-specific fuel mix and residual grid factors and showed a 13.65% decrease. Only 2.44% of FY2025 data was estimated, reflecting improved data quality. Scope 3 consumption and emissions reported here result from grey fleet business travel undertaken in employee-owned vehicles only. We are committed to monitoring Scope 3 emissions, for example from business airmiles, in the near future.



Principles (of Governance) Highlights

This area focuses on our governance framework, including ethical standards, compliance, transparency, and accountability in business operations.

Some of the ways we have improved transparency, accountability and regulatory adherence across our operations during the reporting period include:

- Implementing a unified compliance training calendar, ensuring all colleagues complete required courses on a set schedule, reducing training fatigue and supporting transparency and accountability
- Meeting as a Professional Standards Committee bi-monthly to discuss how we maintain high standards of quality, excellence, and accountability to regulators and clients throughout our professional work
- Proactively managing risk through regular risk management meetings and reporting and by creation of a new role managing risk and compliance, operating across the business
- Regularly reviewing and updating core policies and procedures, including anti-money laundering, data protection and anti-bribery and corruption, introducing related training
- Proactively monitoring for changes in IP law and professional regulations, updating policies and procedures to ensure continuous improvement

Raising awareness and training

- 100% of colleagues transitioned to a new compliance training schedule from July 2025
- Careful scheduling means the average number of compliance courses per colleague per month has been reduced from 2.3 to 1
- 83% of colleague have attended anti-corruption and bribery training, which aligns with an updated policy. 95% have completed Data Protection and GDPR training – HGF has had **zero notifiable data breaches and zero reports of bribery and corruption in the period**



Protection Highlights

This area focuses on safeguarding HGF's digital assets and data, ensuring robust cyber security and compliance with regulations.

Cyber Security

In 2025 we achieved **Cyber Essentials Plus certification** and initiated an ISO 27001 compliance roadmap. We delivered a Cyber Training Month in October 2025, engaging staff across the organisation.

We have made a significant investment into M365 E5 so we have the technology to align with our security ambitions. 100% of endpoints are covered by Sophos MDR, a 24/7/365 service to provide manage detection and response to cyber threats.

Firmwide bespoke HGF Data Safeguarding training has been created and is mandatory for all colleagues. Zero Cyber Security incidents have occurred in the reporting period.

Sustainability & IT

HGF's IT Team work alongside Techbuyer for our secure IT device disposal. Techbuyer are committed to reducing the environmental impact of the IT industry - **Techbuyer Sustainability Report 2024**

"Completing the Cyber Essentials Plus certification was a proud moment for our team. It demonstrated our commitment to robust security practices and gave us confidence that we're protecting client data to the highest standards"

Matt Bamford,
HGF IT Infrastructure and Security Engineer



Our Commitments

People

Retain and Develop Female Talent:

- Partner with colleague affinity groups to raise awareness, launch initiatives, and foster an inclusive culture – this is key to progressing women into partner roles and attracting men into positions for balanced gender representation
- Continue to embed and promote our new parent policy to support work-life balance, helping retain and develop female talent

Strengthen our commitment to accessibility and inclusion:

- Achieve Disability Confident accreditation
- Implement blind recruitment for 2026 vacancies to reduce bias and improve diversity in hiring, including training recruiting managers in unconscious bias to ensure fair and equitable hiring decisions
- Continued anti-bullying and harassment training to reinforce a safe, respectful workplace for all colleagues

Planet

Energy Efficiency:

- Always consider green energy credentials when selecting our buildings for planned relocations
- Drive further electricity savings through office space optimisation

Enhanced Reporting:

- Improve reporting accuracy by reducing reliance on estimates. For Scope 3, committing to monitor and reduce Scope 3 emissions associated with airmiles from business travel
- Explore formal alignment of ESG strategy to relevant SDGs

Principles

Risk Reporting and Management:

- Embed risk and compliance reporting into the agenda of our Senior Leadership Team
- Introduce an annual internal compliance report

Effective Training for good Governance:

- Monitor and refine the compliance training aligned to our Regulatory Codes, scheduled for efficiency and effectiveness

Protection

Continuous Improvement of Information Security Management Systems:

- Enhance our comprehensive framework for managing information security across the organisation
- Focus on identifying, assessing, and mitigating risks systematically
- CIA Triad - Confidentiality, Integrity, and Availability of information

Achieve ISO 27001:

- This will enforce a greater level of standardisation in process but importantly, whilst also raising our defensive capability with increasing use of leading tools

For any additional
information please contact:

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