Environmental & Social Responsibility newsletter

Issue 01 Autumn 2026

Beyond the Brief.

'Peace of Mind' for People and Planet



Welcome to Beyond the Brief

A warm welcome to Gardner Leader's latest newsletter, summarising the efforts we are making for people and planet.

It is becoming increasingly obvious that businesses play a key environmental and social role. Where previously the sole purpose of most businesses was to maximise profit for the owners, there has been a shift in recent years towards the interests of the wider stakeholders including staff, clients/customers, third party suppliers, communities, and the environment.

We can all play an important role. We can all share our experiences and how we are trying to make an impact. We can create a powerful movement of responsible business behaviour. This regular newsletter shares some of the ongoing initiatives and successes at Gardner Leader, in the hope that we can widen our impact. So, take a break, grab a coffee and dive in!

Gardner Leader

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'Beyond the Brief' is published by Gardner Leader LLP to share our Environmental & Social Responsibility work with clients, partners and local businesses.
Gardner Leader is a law firm providing trusted legal advice and peace of mind to individuals, families and businesses across a wide range of personal and commercial matters.

Updates from the firm.

Our recent exciting news, and our most recent carbon measurements.

We are now a B Corp™!

After an incredibly tough journey that Gardner Leader started back in December 2024, we are proud to announce that we became a certified B Corporation in July this year. B Corp certification is awarded to 'for-profit' businesses across the globe that meet a high standard of environmental and social performance. There are currently around 40 other law firms in the UK who have achieved certification.

The thorough assessment reviewed the firm in 5 key areas:

- **Governance** – *high level operations and decision making*;
- **Workers** – *how the organisation treats its staff and benefits*;
- **Community** – *positive impact in our local communities*.
- **Environment** – *Emissions and environmental improvements*;
- **Customers** – *Our service levels and client protection*.



For us, certification is just the beginning. We view B Corp as external scrutiny of our efforts, so that we can continue the momentum of our environmental and social improvements.

17%

Of our overall carbon footprint in our base year measurement was due to employee commute.

50%

We aim to engage with at least 50% of our suppliers for their emissions data by 2031.

£11,500

Raised for our previous nominated charity during two years of support.



Measuring our Footprint

We first measured our Carbon Footprint in 2023/24, giving us our base year measurement. We are currently calculating our latest measurement year – 2025/26, which should show us the direction of (hopefully fossil fuel-free!) travel.

For those who have not yet conducted this exercise, it involves collecting data in relation to carbon emissions created across the business and its value chain. This is typically categorised over three 'Scopes' as follows:

- **Scope 1** - Direct emissions from sources you own or control.
- **Scope 2** - Indirect emissions from purchased energy.
- **Scope 3** - All other indirect emissions across your value chain.

Watch this space for our comparison figures!

Four pillars, one purpose.

The firm's Impact Project brings together everything we do to make a positive difference, under four pillars.



Nature and Environment

Gardner Leader recently contributed sponsorship towards 'Green Fest', a local sustainability awareness event hosted at a local school in Newbury. We also switched our external printing to Seacourt, a B Corp printing company with Planet Positive Printing. We are still waiting for residents in the swift bird boxes fixed to our buildings last year...



Wellness at Work

Our Wellness at Work group helped organise our regular staff breakfast club, getting people together to socialise before work. They also helped put together thoughtful 'Employee care packages' as a lovely surprise. Their focus remains on supporting the mental and physical health of our people.



Diversity and Inclusion

We believe that the diversity within our organisation makes Gardner Leader what it is today. Our Diversity and Inclusion group help raise awareness, through messaging and events like our recent Black History Month celebrations with delicious food from different cultures and important messaging.



Community and Charity

Our recent staff charity Bake Off competition raised a great amount of money for our nominated charity – Bridge For Young People. We have a new staff Volunteering Policy to try and maximise impact in our local communities. We are always looking for volunteering opportunities, so please get in touch!

Charity partner spotlight

Bridge for Young People

Based in West Berkshire, Bridge for Young People gives young people aged 16 to 25 who are leaving care or facing homelessness a safe place to call home. Many have faced real difficulties in childhood. The charity runs four housing projects across West Berkshire, offering a stable, family-style home alongside emotional support and practical help, so each young person can build the confidence and skills they need to live independently. Our various initiatives throughout the year will aim to raise awareness and funds for the organisation.

Find out more: Home - Bridge For Young People



AI – How can we embrace it responsibly?

We are constantly bombarded with the benefits and threats of Artificial Intelligence, but how can we use it considerately and responsibly as a business?

Responsible use of AI



It is easy to be swept up in the AI (Artificial Intelligence) hype, a technology that is advancing and improving at frightening speed. Much of the software and tools that we use every day now rely on it, without us even knowing. We must think about the confidentiality of the information we are inputting, potential bias in the outputs, and importantly consider the environmental impact of each prompt. A useful question for any organisation is not simply, "Can AI do this?" but also, "Is AI the right and proportionate tool for this task?

Simple tips to support wildlife this Autumn

01

Leave a mess!

Fallen twigs and leaves under hedges and in borders can provide valuable shelter for hedgehogs, toads and insects, and rot down to feed the soil.

02

Plant bulbs for Spring

Spring bulbs such as crocus, snowdrops and alliums give vital food to queen bumblebees emerging from hibernation. Always use peat-free compost!

03

Help Hedgehogs

In urban areas, create a small gap at the bottom of fences (around 13cm by 13cm) to help create a highway between gardens for hedgehogs to roam and forage.

Did you know?

90%

Over 90 per cent of a typical law firm's carbon footprint comes not from its own offices, but from its supply chain and wider value chain.

How you can get involved

There are lots of ways to work with us:

- Sharing your own ideas and good practice with us;
- Consider joining the B Corp network;
- Supporting our charity partner, Bridge for Young People, in West Berkshire.

Get in touch

We would love to hear from local businesses, charities and community groups who share our ambitions. Contact our Environmental & Social Responsibility Manager, Chris Dale, at c.dale@gardner-leader.co.uk or visit our Environmental & Social Responsibility page at Environmental & Social Responsibility - Gardner Leader

Offices in Newbury, Thatcham, Maidenhead, Swindon, Oxford and London