

INCLUSION AT AG

The 2021 Report



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Illustration: Inclusion by Nic Mac

FOREWORD

OVER THE PAST 12 MONTHS WE HAVE WORKED HARD TO MAKE IMPROVEMENTS ACROSS OUR BUSINESS AND CULTURE SO THAT WE CAN BECOME A MORE INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE.

We've listened, so that our inclusion strategy can develop, and make a positive impact on our culture and we've learnt a lot but, of course, we still have work to do and inclusion remains at the top of our agenda.

By working together and understanding people's lived experiences we hope that we can develop our inclusion strategy yet further so that it will have more impact and enhance everyone's time working with us irrespective of their background.

Last year we launched our first Inclusion Report in which we outlined our new inclusion strategy and set out some pretty challenging ambitions with targets (which we are still working towards) to keep us focussed, accountable and motivated. We now welcome you to our 2021 Inclusion Report which we hope will provide three key things:

- an insight into our activity and achievements over the past 12 months;
- an outline of our future plans; and
- an update on how our achievements track against our ambitions.

We have invested further in our existing D&I employee networks and resources across the business to ensure effective discussion, collaboration and learning around inclusion topics. Together we will continue to nurture this environment to try and ensure that within it everybody can be the best that they can be.

We hope that by sharing this report with you we will inspire further action and discussions on inclusion with all of our colleagues, clients and wider networks.



JOHN JOYCE
Managing Partner



CHARLES PENNEY
Senior Partner

LOOKING BACK

WE ARE HUGELY APPRECIATIVE OF THE EFFORTS OF EVERYONE ACROSS OUR FIRM THAT HAS CONTRIBUTED TO OUR INCLUSION STRATEGY, AND THE WORK, EFFORT AND DEDICATION THAT HAS GONE INTO ENSURING OUR PROGRAMMES HAVE BEEN A SUCCESS.



CAMPAIGNS AND EVENTS

In order to maintain momentum and coordinate our activities, our central inclusion team (in collaboration and consultation with colleagues across the business) have developed an Inclusion Calendar of important milestones and awareness days which our inclusion networks have then helped bring to life.

Below are just **some** of our highlights from the last 12 months...



OCTOBER

Black History Month



Transgender Day of Remembrance



FEBRUARY

LGBTQ+ History Month



MARCH

International Women's Day



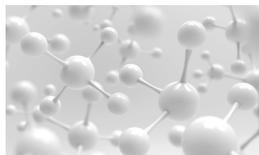
MARCH

Young Carer's Action Day



MAY

Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Day



JUNE

Pride



JULY/AUGUST

South Asian Heritage Month





ROSS MCKENZIE

LGBTQ+ Inclusion
Partner



HAVING A SENSE OF COMMUNITY HAS BEEN CENTRAL TO OUR OPENAG (LGBTQ+ NETWORK) PROGRAMME IN THE LAST YEAR. THE CRUEL NECESSITY OF ISOLATION DURING LOCKDOWN HAS BEEN PARTICULARLY FELT IN MARGINALISED COMMUNITIES AND I'M PROUD OF THE WORK DONE TO BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER VIRTUALLY THROUGH MUSIC, EVENTS AND THE OPENAG CULTURE CLUB TO RETAIN A SENSE OF BELONGING THAT HAS BEEN EVEN MORE IMPORTANT."



JACKIE SMITH

Legal PA and member of
AG Embrace



OUR DIVERSITY AND EXPERIENCES MAY BE DIFFERENT BUT INCLUSION, TALENT AND COMMITMENT TO CHANGE **FOR ALL WILL BE THE REASON WE CAN TRULY CELEBRATE COLLABORATION AND INNOVATION."**

LEARNING AND AWARENESS

Creating awareness and opportunities to learn is key to creating greater inclusion. Where necessary we bring in external providers and consultants to provide training and learning opportunities for our people so that we can move forward together.



TALKING RACE AND BUILDING INCLUSION

We have teamed up with an expert provider who has been delivering mandatory race and ethnicity awareness sessions for all partners and employees in the UK.

These interactive discussions not only raised awareness of issues such as white privilege, microaggressions and institutional bias, but also equipped attendees with the tools to become better allies in the workplace.

To date, around 600 colleagues have attended their Talking Race and Building Inclusion sessions.



IT'S GREAT WE'RE HAVING THESE CONVERSATIONS. WITH OUR TEAM, WE HAVE REGULAR SLOTS AT TEAM MEETINGS TO TALK ABOUT DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION. IT FEELS MORE ACCEPTABLE TO TALK ABOUT THESE THINGS AND COLLEAGUES WANT TO TALK ABOUT THEM."



ANOIJ PATEL

Associate and Co-Chair of AG Embrace (Leeds)



GENDER INTELLIGENCE PROGRAMME

In response to feedback from our colleagues, this year we launched a gender intelligence programme aimed at providing participants with a better understanding of visible and invisible dynamics that affect the workplace and using that understanding to break down gender barriers. This bespoke programme was designed and developed with an external consultant and consists of a series of group and individual coaching sessions. The programme is currently in its third phase and we hope to roll out similar programmes to other teams in the future.



THE GENDER INTELLIGENCE PROGRAMME IS ALL ABOUT GUIDING OUR PARTNERS TO BE BETTER MANAGERS AND LEADERS OF DIVERSE TEAMS: BETTER EQUIPPED TO SUPPORT WOMEN'S CAREERS, TO RECOGNISE THE PARTICULAR CONTRIBUTION MADE BY WOMEN TO THE BUSINESS AND TO HARNESS THEIR POTENTIAL."



JUSTINE DELROY

Gender Inclusion Partner



ETHNICITY INCLUSION SESSIONS

Throughout the year, Sunita Harley, our Ethnicity Inclusion Consultant, has designed and delivered bespoke workshops across the firm including:

- sessions for senior leaders and partners on “being an effective senior ally” and “holding effective team conversations about ethnicity inclusion”
- a variety of team workshops, including “navigating the different angles of micro-aggressions”, “dispelling the myths about allyship” and “let’s talk about ethnicity inclusion”

Sunita has also co-led team discussions with partners and managers focusing on individual actions to support the ethnicity and wider inclusion agendas important to AG.



THROUGHOUT THIS YEAR, IT HAS BEEN GREAT TO SEE LEVELS OF REAL ENGAGEMENT AT AG THROUGH REGULAR CONVERSATIONS AND PRACTICAL ACTIONS. AS THE FIRM’S EXTERNAL INCLUSION CONSULTANT, I HAVE ALSO WORKED CLOSELY WITH MANY PARTNERS, MANAGERS AND INDIVIDUALS ACROSS THE FIRM WHO ARE GENUINELY KEEN TO LEARN MORE, DO MORE AND BE ACTIVE ALLIES FOR ETHNICITY INCLUSION AT AG.”



SUNITA HARLEY

Inclusion Consultant



BBC 50:50 CAMPAIGN

Gender balance has long been a focus for AG and this year we partnered with the BBC on their 50:50 gender balance campaign. One of the key aims of the campaign was to address gender balance of voices in media communications. As part of this drive we not only gathered data around female representation in our communications documents and client pitches, but we used this data to challenge the status quo and raise the voice of the talented women in our business by pushing for greater gender parity.

This campaign continues to go from strength to strength and has been shortlisted for the Innovation in Diversity and Inclusion award in the FT Innovative Lawyers Europe 2021 Awards.



WE ARE THE FIRST LAW FIRM TO JOIN THE 50:50 PROJECT AS PARTNER SHARING A COMMON COMMITMENT TO MEASURING DATA TO ENSURE A FAIR BALANCE OF VOICES ARE REFLECTED EXTERNALLY. INITIALLY OUR INVOLVEMENT ENSURED THAT THERE WAS A DIVERSITY OF VOICE IN ALL MEDIA CONTENT THAT WE PRODUCED. BUT WE KNOW THAT CLIENT ENGAGEMENT AND INTERNAL INFLUENCE ALSO HELPS GROW A WOMAN’S CAREER IN LAW. SO WE HAVE ADAPTED OUR APPROACH. WE NOW ENSURE THAT OUR PITCHES AND INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS ARE ALSO MEASURED FOR EQUALITY.”



CAROLINE DAVIES

Media Relations Senior Manager



THE NOTICED TOOLKIT

Jamini Raja, Senior Knowledge Lawyer and Chair of AG Embrace (London), worked collaboratively with other law firms to develop the NOTICED Toolkit – a practical guide to help law firms understand more about micro-aggressions and talking about race in the workplace.

Following its launch we have added the NOTICED Toolkit to our suite of D&I resources, and it features regularly in team meetings and awareness sessions as well as on AG’s intranet homepage to ensure it is brought to life. We also refer to the NOTICED toolkit in our induction sessions for AG colleagues.



HAVING MEANINGFUL CONVERSATIONS ABOUT RACE AND ETHNICITY SHOULD FORM PART OF AN EVERYDAY APPROACH BUT, IN ORDER FOR THESE TO BE TRULY SUCCESSFUL, WE NEED TO UNDERSTAND THE BARRIERS THAT PREVENT THESE FROM HAPPENING. A PRACTICAL TOOLKIT LIKE THIS WILL HOPEFULLY GO SOME WAY IN BEING ABLE TO ADDRESS THESE BARRIERS AND HELP THOSE CONVERSATIONS TO HAPPEN IN A CONSTRUCTIVE WAY.”



JAMINI RAJA

Senior Knowledge Lawyer and Chair AG Embrace (London)



FLOURISH

For nearly 10 years we have been running Flourish - our award winning, flagship development programme aimed at supporting the bright female talent within our business and our clients’ organisations. We are pleased to count many of our partners and client contacts as part of the Flourish Alumni, and look forward to welcoming the next cohort of participants in 2022.



BRINGING REAL DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION INTO WHAT HAS HISTORICALLY BEEN A WHITE MALE DOMINATED BUSINESS MAKES IT A BETTER BUSINESS IN EVERY SENSE FOR ALL OF US; IT’S THAT SIMPLE.”



WILLIAM BOSS

Gender Inclusion Partner

INVESTMENT PROGRAMMES: MENTORING, SPONSORSHIP AND COACHING

The research on the power of mentoring and sponsorship is clear – people with effective mentors/sponsors perform better and advance in their careers faster. This year we not only looked at the programmes we could develop internally, but also at how we could support people within our communities who aspire to a career in law.



REVERSE MENTORING PROGRAMMES

In February 2021, we launched our first reverse mentoring programme focusing on ethnicity inclusion. The aim of the reverse mentoring programme was to provide greater awareness of the lived experience of colleagues from an ethnically diverse background, to encourage better allyship and help to remove any barriers that these colleagues face.

Our reverse mentoring programme initially started as a pilot within one division but has now been rolled out to several of our divisions across the business and we are currently scoping out plans to launch similar programmes across our business services teams and with the Board.



WE RECENTLY LAUNCHED THE REVERSE MENTORING SCHEME IN THE LITIGATION DIVISION AND I AM ONE OF THE FIRST GROUP OF MENTEES. I THINK IT IS A REALLY IMPORTANT AND VALUABLE SCHEME. I HAVE VALUED AND LEARNT FROM ALL OF THE CONVERSATIONS THAT I HAVE HAD WITH MY MENTOR SO FAR. THEY PROVIDE A SAFE SPACE TO EXPLORE COMPLEX AND DIFFICULT ISSUES AND HAVE ALLOWED ME TO LEARN ABOUT ISSUES AND THINK ABOUT HOW WE CAN DO THINGS DIFFERENTLY GOING FORWARD.”



MARK MOLYNEUX

Divisional Managing
Partner, Litigation
Division



SOCIAL MOBILITY JOINT MENTORING PROGRAMME

In 2020 we launched a joint mentoring programme with one of our clients supporting undergraduate law students from difficult socio-economic backgrounds.

The aim of the programme was to provide each student with two mentors – one from AG and one from the client organisation, who could share their own unique career insights and lived experience to help that young person overcome barriers in accessing the legal profession.

The pilot has gone extremely well with one student already securing a training contract, and we are currently looking at plans to roll out this programme further.



INCLUDED

We know there is more that we can do to invest in our people and those within our wider communities and we are pleased to announce that in September 2021 we will be launching a pilot trainee solicitor development programme call “INCLUDED” – a pioneering talent development and mentoring programme designed to accelerate growth and empower trainees from diverse backgrounds to reach their full potential.



GRADUATE RECRUITMENT

Last year we made some big changes to our Graduate Recruitment processes. To make them more inclusive we:

Partnered with Rare Recruitment introducing contextual recruitment, enabling us to look at the context and background in which students received their grades

Took measures to limit unconscious bias by implementing a number of changes to our recruitment process: blind recruitment at screening stage and video interviews replaced by voice interviews; unconscious bias training introduced for assessors

Partnered with Aspiring Solicitors and undertook training contract and placement scheme workshops with them which supported ethnically diverse and socially mobile candidates by: giving them insights into the different stages of the firm's recruitment process; providing tips on application forms; and career coaching

Committed to Manchester Metropolitan University's "first generation programme" sponsoring three law students from low income families who are the first generation to attend university within their families; in addition to the financial support we are also offering mentoring and other opportunities to support them through their studies

Removed our minimum A Level grade requirement in recognition that academic performance (particularly at A Level) is not necessarily a key determinant of ability or potential

Attended student engagement events that had more focus on D&I, and we expanded our list of target universities to include non-Russell group universities

Partnered with allaboutlaw on their diversity programme to help individuals from underrepresented communities break into the legal sector

Developed and delivered a programme with the University of Leeds' "Ethnicity.Talent.Law" to support ethnically diverse law students by hosting career insight panel events and providing advice on the Trainee application process and tips on how to complete the application form



IT'S SO ENCOURAGING TO SEE THE PROGRESS WE HAVE MADE THIS PAST YEAR IN RELATION TO SOCIAL MOBILITY AND ETHNICITY, PARTICULARLY AS WE ARE ON TRACK TO SURPASS OUR 2023 TARGET FOR ETHNICALLY DIVERSE TRAINEES. WE NOW NEED TO BUILD ON THESE EFFORTS TO ENSURE CONTINUED PROGRESS IN RECRUITING A DIVERSE PIPELINE OF TALENT FOR OUR BUSINESS."



GRAINNE MITCHELL

Senior Graduate
Manager and Graduate
Inclusion Advocate

IMPACT

PLACEMENT SCHEME (ETHNICITY)



Overall increase in applications of 77%



Offer rates to ethnically diverse candidates for placement schemes rose across all offices



25% of our placement scheme offers were made to ethnically diverse candidates, compared with 8% in the previous year with significant increases in each office



18% of training contract offers made following the placement scheme were to ethnically diverse candidates, compared to 10% in 2020

DIRECT TO TRAINING CONTRACT (ETHNICITY)



23% of applications for training contracts in 2021 came from ethnically diverse candidates, compared to 16% in 2020



39% of the direct to training contract offers accepted in 2021 were from ethnically diverse candidates, compared to 25% in 2020

TARGET (ETHNICITY)



Currently 8% of our trainees are from ethnically diverse backgrounds, none of whom identify as Black heritage



By September 2023, 17% of our trainees will be from ethnically diverse backgrounds, 15% of whom will be of Black heritage



By September 2022, 12% of our trainees will be from ethnically diverse backgrounds

SOCIAL MOBILITY

The contextual recruitment system from RARE which we have integrated with the firm's recruitment system delivers two outputs:



"Flags" to mean disadvantage which takes into account a combination of key factors



"Performance Index" to measure outperformance against students at the same school and considers the candidate's school's performance against other schools nationally

THE RESULTS

In 2021, 48% of candidates who attended the placement scheme had at least one flag on their application

34%

In 2021, 34% of training contracts accepted following the placement scheme were from candidates who had at least one flag

62%

In the direct to training contract recruitment in 2021, 62% of candidates who accepted a training contract had at least one flag on their application

NB. 2020-21 is the first year we have worked with RARE, we therefore do not have any comparative data from previous years.



YAZMIN ELLIOTT

Senior Paralegal and Future AG Trainee



As a member of AG Embrace (AG’s Race and Ethnicity Network), it has been rewarding to see how the team and the firm have “embraced” and developed our diversity and inclusion strategy over the last year. I have personally seen the positive impact that AG Embrace has had across the whole firm from the implementation of ‘Diversity Corner’ in weekly group meetings, to huge participation in office organised events for race and ethnicity. AG Embrace has given individuals a platform to share their personal background with the rest of the firm, highlighting existing diversity across the firm whilst shedding light on individual challenges that people may have faced in entering into the legal profession.”



SARAH MORTON

TST Senior Manager and Inclusion Advocate



Diversity and Inclusion is important to us as a team and our dedicated D&I focus group, TST Identity, has gone from strength to strength over the last 12 months. It has been instrumental in challenging the way we do things in TST to promote D&I and they have also collaborated on various discussions and projects across the business including a conversation with I. Stephanie Boyce, President of the Law Society on the importance of D&I in the legal sector.

As a team, we have also focussed heavily on our recruitment process in the last 12 months, ensuring that it is as inclusive as possible. We have adopted an anonymised recruitment approach and adapted our processes to open up routes into the legal profession, for example via our apprenticeship schemes and our new Discovery programme. We have recruited over 100 new paralegals and apprentices into TST in the last year, and we’re really proud of the increased level of diversity that this has brought to TST, and the fresh perspectives and new ideas that come with it. For many, a role in TST is the first step into the legal industry and we recognise our unique and critical position in the Firm to promote and foster inclusive practices.”



HAROLD BRAKO

Ethnicity Inclusion Partner

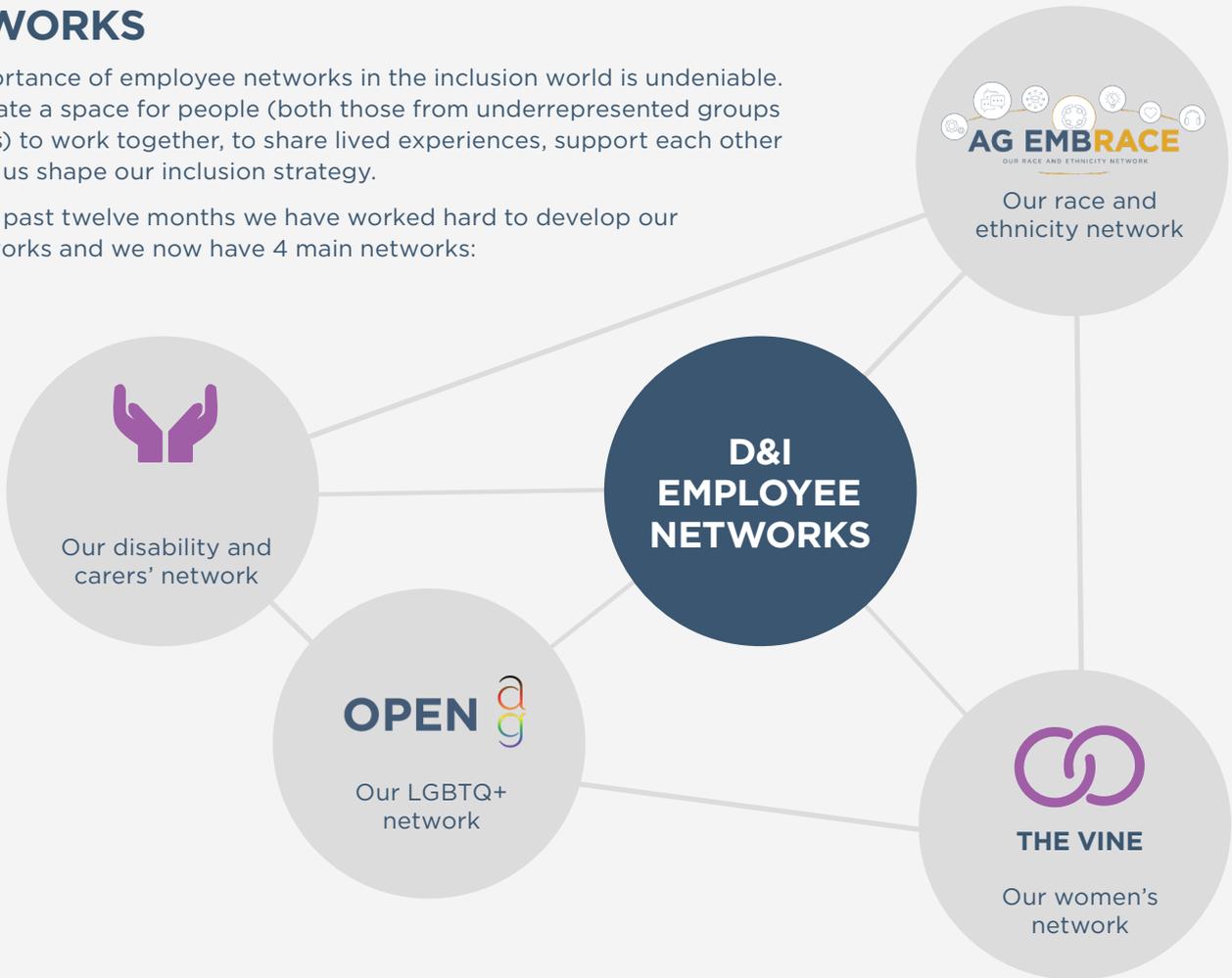


Given all of the events over the last 2 years, AG’s 2021 Inclusion Report shows a significant amount of positive activity in all of AG’s priority areas, whilst also emphasising how much there is still to do. AG is committed to ensuring that it has a diverse workforce and to continue building relationships with a diverse society and a diverse client base.”

NETWORKS

The importance of employee networks in the inclusion world is undeniable. They create a space for people (both those from underrepresented groups and allies) to work together, to share lived experiences, support each other and help us shape our inclusion strategy.

Over the past twelve months we have worked hard to develop our D&I networks and we now have 4 main networks:



Below are some thoughts from those involved in our D&I employee networks about their experiences and where they would like the firm to focus next.



Upon joining AG earlier this year, one of the first things I did was to make contact with OpenAG. Needless to say that I immediately received a very warm welcome and, following the first meeting, I realised that I have met friendly, genuine and like-minded people. This has definitely eased my transition within the Firm.

Whilst I believe the Firm is doing great in the D&I space, if I could change one (or actually two) things, this would relate to (i) financial support to employees who have to use fertility treatment (this is particularly important to members of the LGBTQ community who are willing to become parents). Some law firms have already introduced a new “family-forming” perk to its staff and I sincerely hope to see it more across the industry; (ii) eliminate the need to be “coming out” all the time as this creates repeated and unnecessary awkwardness.”



VALERI BOZHIKOV

Managing Associate and committee member of OpenAG



Having the networks, coffee catch-ups, and D&I corner discussions at team meetings makes the working environment more inclusive and hopefully encourages and reassures people that they can bring their full self to work rather than having to hide a key part of their being/self. If uniqueness is more valued, people are also more likely to stay with a firm.”



SAJIDA HUSSAIN

Managing Associate and Co-Chair of AG Embrace (Manchester)

RECENT ACHIEVEMENTS

During the past 12 months we have worked hard to make positive changes and through these efforts we hope we have helped improve the experience of our colleagues and our guests in the business. Although there is much more work to do, we are proud of the external recognition we have received which is the result of an enormous effort by people from across the business!



BEING LISTED IN THE TIMES
TOP 50 EMPLOYERS FOR WOMEN 2021
FOR THE 11TH TIME IN 13 YEARS!



BECOMING THE FIRST LAW FIRM TO
PARTNER WITH THE BBC ON THEIR
50:50 CAMPAIGN TO HELP ADDRESS
GENDER REPRESENTATION.



ACHIEVING "EMPLOYER" STATUS
AS PART OF THE DISABILITY
CONFIDENT SCHEME.



I want to know that I work for a firm who 'does the right thing', and I think it's incumbent upon all of us to roll up our sleeves and make that happen, by getting involved in our various networks and forums. As a head of department, I also feel that I should lead by example, stand up for my own values, and speak for those who may struggle to be heard. Being part of the Ability Forum is a great opportunity to do all of these things and more.

For me, an overwhelming positive to come out of our inclusion activities so far has been realising how alike we all are in our differences. I don't quite feel entitled to the word 'disabled', but chronic illness means I don't consider myself to be 'normal' - the Ability Forum has made me realise that actually, there's no such thing as 'normal', and that many of my colleagues feel the same as I do. I am now even keener to make sure that we are a kind and considerate employer, for everyone at the firm.

One thing I'd like to see pro-actively introduced at AG is a suite of easily accessed tools (be they furniture, IT hardware, software etc.), which give people everything they need to excel in their roles."



LIZZIE TINKLER

Head of Procurement and member of the Ability Forum



Gender (im)balance is a topic I'm particularly passionate about. I am enjoying being part of The Vine and seeing it grow as I hope it will create opportunities, expand knowledge and inspire change for women.

If I could change one thing, it would be parental leave - a lot of clients seem to do this better than law firms. In my view, having a generous parental leave policy is one of the most important factors in achieving a diverse, inclusive culture.

Ultimately, if I can play a tiny part in helping us get to a place where everyone has equality of opportunity within the firm; that seems like a worthwhile endeavour to me."



RACHEL DAVIES

Managing Associate and steering group member of The Vine

LOOKING FORWARD

WE ARE PROUD OF THE ACHIEVEMENTS AND IMPROVEMENTS WE HAVE MADE OVER THE LAST 12 MONTHS BUT WE ACKNOWLEDGE WE HAVE MORE TO DO TO BECOME A TRULY INCLUSIVE BUSINESS.

Below are the next steps that we want to take in our inclusion journey across our 5 priority areas:



DISABILITY

SHORT TERM

- Finalise and launch our carers policy to ensure that anyone with, or who acquires, caring responsibilities has the support they need to thrive
- Create a programme of campaigns celebrating key disability awareness days including Disability History Month and Young Carers Action Day
- Breakdown stigma and introduce resources and development programmes designed to support our neurodiverse talent

MEDIUM TERM

- Implement a review of our internal processes which cover workplace adjustments to ensure that they are streamlined and accessible to anyone that may benefit from a workplace adjustment
- Affirm our commitment to disability inclusion by making additional changes to working practices so that we can work towards achieving “Leader” status within the Disability Confident Scheme

ONGOING

- Build on the success of our disability and carers network to ensure we maintain authenticity in our approach to disability inclusion and have a greater understanding of people’s lived experience
- Partner with our clients and members of the Valuable 500 to help promote disability inclusion across different sectors and share learnings in a collaborative way
- Continue to profile positive role models with disabilities or caring responsibilities to help raise awareness and reduce stigma
- Work within the principles of the WeThe15 movement to initiate change and achieve greater representation of persons with disabilities across our organisation



MY SON IS DYSLEXIC. IN DEVELOPING MY UNDERSTANDING SO I CAN HELP HIM, I REALISED THERE IS ALSO SO MUCH AS AN EMPLOYER THAT WE CAN DO, TO SUPPORT ALL THOSE WHO ARE A PART OF OUR BUSINESS WITH ANY RANGE OF SPECIFIC LEARNING DIFFICULTIES (SPLD) AND MORE. HAVING A SPLD GIVES PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONS AN AMAZING OPPORTUNITY TO BENEFIT FROM THE STRENGTHS THAT THEIR DIFFERENCES OFFER, AND IT IS PLEASING TO SEE CHARITIES AND ORGANISATIONS STARTING TO RECOGNISE THE STRENGTHS AND GIFTS OF PEOPLE WITH SPLD. IT’S REALLY IMPORTANT TO ME THAT WE MOVE AWAY FROM ONLY SEEING THE LIMITATIONS OF THESE DIAGNOSES. FOR THIS REASON I BECAME INVOLVED IN THE ABILITY FORUM AND DISABILITY STEERING COMMITTEE.”



JESSICA HILL

Head of HR Operations and Reward/
Head of International HR



ETHNICITY

SHORT TERM

- Establish plans for the next cohort of reverse mentoring schemes
- Launch the Board reverse mentoring scheme focused on ethnicity inclusion
- Agree the key AG Embrace network events for the next 12 months
- Continue to promote the aims, progress and achievements of the AG Embrace network
- Monitor progress against our goal of all AG partners and colleagues attending our race and ethnicity awareness sessions

MEDIUM TERM

- Work with Rare Recruitment to adapt and grow our strategy for change and improvement
- Identify opportunities for internal or external mentoring schemes to support the careers of ethnically diverse colleagues at AG
- Work with the internal recruitment team and external suppliers, to ensure we can access a more diverse pool of talent for fee earning and business services roles at AG
- Consider what else is required to retain and develop the AG careers of colleagues from ethnically diverse backgrounds

ONGOING

- Establish relationships with universities with a strong ethnically diverse student population
- Work with clients and within the sector to promote and effect positive changes across the legal profession
- Establish a programme of thought leadership and ensure AG colleagues are equipped to discuss the importance of race and ethnicity inclusion at AG



WE ALL HAVE A ROLE IN CREATING A MORE INCLUSIVE CULTURE. IT IS THE SMALL THINGS DONE CONSISTENTLY THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE. I WOULD ENCOURAGE EVERYONE TO CONTRIBUTE IN SOME WAY NO MATTER HOW SMALL THAT CONTRIBUTION IS, AS IT ALL MATTERS TO CREATING A MORE INCLUSIVE CULTURE.”



HEMAL KOTECHA
Ethnicity Inclusion Partner



CONTINUING THE DIALOGUE ON RACE AND INCLUSION IS AN IMPORTANT PART OF OUR FUTURE AIMS, NOT JUST FOR THE SAKE OF A DIALOGUE BUT IN ORDER TO CREATE IMPACTFUL CHANGE, PUTTING SPECIFIC STRATEGIES IN PLACE TO SHAPE THE LANDSCAPE TOWARDS A MORE ETHNICALLY DIVERSE WORKFORCE.”



PERVINDER KAUR
Ethnicity Inclusion Partner



GENDER

SHORT TERM

- Build on the success of our female partner sponsorship programme and extend this support to our talented female Managing Associates and Legal Directors to help women on the path to partnership
- Break down taboos and introduce policies designed to ensure women going through the menopause, or those working with or supporting women going through the menopause, have the necessary training and education they need
- Implement our review of parental policies and support package promoting equality to all with child caring responsibilities
- Launch a new Gender Brochure to promote the work we are doing in this area, that can be used to support clients and provide a platform for discussion
- Launch a new series of regional networking sessions in our offices, inviting female partners, experienced lawyers and senior women from business services, to informally network and share ideas with more junior colleagues

MEDIUM TERM

- Partner with our clients to share successes and challenges faced so that we can learn from each other and benefit from cross-industry innovation
- Review how we support women returning to the legal workplace to overcome any challenges that they might face
- Review and evaluate our client allocation, work allocation and promotion processes within all of our teams to ensure that any gender bias is stamped out
- Explore opportunities to support International Men's Day and other key commemorative dates across the year

ONGOING

- Ensure that intersectionality is at the heart of our strategic plans going forward, using all opportunities to build gender balance into other inclusion work streams at AG- recognising unique perspectives of women from different backgrounds and communities
- Continue to identify and celebrate female role models across our business to acknowledge their success and inspire others
- Continue to review our recruitment processes to ensure gender bias does not play any role in determining who we hire, particularly in the lateral hire process



WE ARE PROUD OF OUR RANGE OF INITIATIVES DESIGNED TO SUPPORT BETTER GENDER BALANCE IN OUR BUSINESS. THESE INCLUDE NOT ONLY OUR FEMALE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES, BUT ALSO OUR COMMITMENT TO FLEXIBLE WORKING PRACTICES, ADDRESSING OF UNCONSCIOUS BIAS, AND FAMILY-FRIENDLY POLICIES SUCH AS ENHANCED SHARED PARENTAL LEAVE WHICH IS HELPING TO NORMALISE THE ROLE OF MEN IN CHILDCARE.”



NIKI LAWSON

HR Director and
Exec Inclusion Sponsor



LGBTQ+

SHORT TERM

- Launch our internal LGBTQ+ mentoring programme (the Rainbow Connection) to help empower the junior members of our LGBTQ+ community so they can be the best they can be
- Implement our Trans and Non-binary policies and create gender neutral bathroom options in all of our UK offices
- Refresh our LGBTQ+ internal intranet pages to ensure we are sharing useful resources and updates to create greater understanding of LGBTQ+ inclusion

MEDIUM TERM

- Continue to identify LGBTQ+ role models within our community and celebrate their success to help inspire others
- Partner with our clients on LGBTQ+ campaigns and networking opportunities to ensure our LGBTQ+ inclusion strategy is more imaginative and has more impact
- Collaborate with others across the firm working on family support and network programmes, including changes to parental leave policies

ONGOING

- Continue to raise awareness and provide education and training for all our staff on LGBTQ+ issues so that together we can remove barriers
- Further develop and diversify our LGBTQ+ network (OpenAG) and explore opportunities to work with our other D&I networks on intersectional events and campaigns
- Review the support we provide our LGBTQ+ colleagues and guests across all our locations to ensure that all our colleagues and guests feel a sense of belonging
- Work with our pro bono teams to explore LGBTQ+ pro bono opportunities to support people within our wider communities



I WANT TO PLAY MY PART IN ENSURING THAT EVERY MEMBER OF OUR LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY FEELS INCLUDED AT AG. AND I'D LIKE US TO LEARN FROM, AND SHARE EXPERIENCES WITH, OUR OTHER VIBRANT NETWORKS AND THOSE OF OUR CLIENTS AND STAKEHOLDERS IN THE SECTORS, COMMUNITIES AND COUNTRIES WE OPERATE IN. PRIDE IN LGBTQ+ INCLUSION IS SOMETHING WE NEED TO SHOW AND LIVE AT ALL TIMES. I AM PROUD TO HAVE TAKEN UP THE ROLE OF AN INCLUSION PARTNER AT AG AND TO HOLD OURSELVES ACCOUNTABLE FOR DELIVERING ON OUR AMBITIOUS INCLUSION STRATEGY."



JAN GRUTER

Inclusion Partner LGBTQ+



SOCIAL MOBILITY

SHORT TERM

- Review and enhance our programmes with schools and universities to ensure that we have strong outreach programmes within our wider communities
- Partner with our clients to identify opportunities to support young people within their regions as part of the wider social value commitments they might have
- Expand our virtual Legal Access Week programmes as part of our PRIME commitment to reach more students

MEDIUM TERM

- Build on the success of our joint mentoring programme and explore opportunities to run similar programmes with our clients, supporting undergraduate law students from difficult socio-economic backgrounds
- Develop an AG mentoring portal for eligible students to receive mentoring and career advice from our colleagues
- Develop relationships with sector organisations to explore more innovative and inclusive ways of developing student engagement within the 16-18 year old age bracket

ONGOING

- Develop our internal volunteer network of colleagues to support our schools programmes, mentoring opportunities and student outreach initiatives
- Continue to review our graduate and apprentice recruitment processes to help remove certain barriers and ensure that our pipeline recruitment is as diverse and strong as it can be
- Explore ways in which we can invest in the diverse talent we attract to enable them to overcome barriers and flourish in our business



AS A FIRM, AG HAS GREAT EXAMPLES OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE SUCCEEDED FROM DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS IN THE PAST BUT, WITH BARRIERS TO ENTRY INCREASING, WE NEED TO FIND NEW WAYS OF REACHING MORE PEOPLE IN IMPACTFUL WAYS.”



ANNA HEATON

Social Mobility Inclusion Partner



AS TIMES CHANGE, SO DO OUR PEOPLE, AND IT’S INCREDIBLY IMPORTANT OUR BUSINESS CHANGES WITH THEM. OUR WORKPLACE IS WHERE WE SPEND THE VAST MAJORITY OF OUR TIME, SO WE SHOULD ALL FEEL WE CAN BRING OUR TRUE SELVES TO WORK, AND BE ACCEPTED FOR THAT. OUR INCLUSION NETWORKS DO AN INCREDIBLE JOB OF EDUCATING OUR FIRM ABOUT THE MANY UNCONSCIOUS HABITS AND WAYS OF WORKING THAT WE ARE ALL GUILTY OF, BUT MAY HAVE AN ADVERSE EFFECT ON OUR COLLEAGUES, AND I CAN HONESTLY SAY IN MY TIME HERE I HAVE LEARNED AN ENORMOUS AMOUNT ABOUT MY COLLEAGUES AND THE THINGS I CAN PERSONALLY DO AND CHANGE TO MAKE OUR BUSINESS AND ITS COMMUNITY A MORE DIVERSE AND ACCEPTING PLACE.”



LIBERTY CHRISTMAS

Senior Corporate Communications Executive

OUR DIVERSITY DATA: THE RESULTS

DATA IS ESSENTIAL FOR US TO IDENTIFY THE AREAS WITHIN OUR BUSINESS WHERE WE NEED TO EFFECT CHANGE AND PROVIDE FURTHER INVESTMENT.

This summer we again ran our diversity audit and are pleased to confirm that we now hold diversity data for **88%** of our UK colleagues, an increase of 6% from last year. Our aim is that through continued campaigns over the coming years we can increase the data we hold to at least 90% of our UK colleagues by 2023.

To help deliver on our strategy and establish accountability across the business, last year we set 2023 diversity targets for both gender and ethnicity.

The tables below show where we are against those targets.

ETHNICITY TARGETS (UK)

	2020	2021	2023 TARGET
All	9%	10%	14%
Partners	3%	5%	10%
Equity Partners	4%	4.5%	8%
Associates/MA/LD	9%	9.5%	14%
Trainees	7%	8%	15%
TST/Paralegal	13%	19%	20%
Business Services	12%	12.5%	16%
Secretarial Services	6%	7%	12%

GENDER TARGETS

	2020	2021	2023 TARGET
Partners (firmwide)	28%	27%	32%
Equity Partners (firmwide)	19%	22.5%	26%
Partners (UK)	30%	30%	33%
Equity Partners (UK)	20%	23.5%	26%
Board Members (voting)	27%	40%	40%
Exec Members	33%	33%	40%
Business Services Heads	38%	42%	50%
Divisional Exec members (ex BS)	29%	32%	39%



COLLEAGUES COMMENTED THAT SEEING THE FIRM INVESTING IN ITS INCLUSION JOURNEY HAD PROMPTED THEM TO COMPLETE THE DIVERSITY AUDIT FOR THE FIRST TIME THIS YEAR, WHICH IS GREAT TO HEAR AS IT INDICATES THAT OUR CULTURE IS MOVING IN A POSITIVE DIRECTION WHERE PEOPLE FEEL COMFORTABLE SHARING THEIR PERSONAL DATA WITH US AND UNDERSTAND HOW IT CAN HELP DRIVE CHANGE.”



MARY PETERSON

Head of Talent & Learning

When we set our 2023 targets last year we knew they were ambitious, and these figures are a timely reminder of that fact. Whilst in some areas we have shown significant progress towards our targets (for example our Board and Equity Partner gender targets), it is easy to find areas where we still have a long way to go.

Whilst capturing data on Ethnicity and Gender is more straightforward, our progress in our other priority areas (Disability, LGBTQ+ and Social Mobility) is measured through inclusion engagement surveys as well as feedback from our firm networks and other relevant data.

Our annual diversity audit indicated that 3.4% of our colleagues identify as having a disability (an increase of 0.7% from 2020), and that 3.4% of our colleagues identify as being part of the LGBTQ+ community (an increase of 0.2% from 2020). The audit also revealed that 37% of our colleagues were first generation university attendees, compared to 19% in our 2020 audit.

Given the nuances and sensitive challenges in these areas we are unsure to what extent

these increases reflect a change in our firm's population, versus an increased willingness or confidence in sharing data with us, although it is clear that our continued efforts to increase the level of disclosure to improve our understanding explains at least part of the impact.

In addition to our annual audit, our new Inclusion Survey (launched in March 2021) had 1459 responses – 74% of our UK firm population. This survey included measurement of more qualitative KPIs – such as sense of belonging – and we will be re-running the survey in early 2022 to give us our first set of comparable data. Our hope is that this information will give us a broader, more informed view, taking into account perspectives of colleagues who may for whatever reason not feel comfortable making full disclosure in our audit.

Overall, then, whilst some of the data suggests we have taken some important steps, this is no time to be complacent and we look forward to working with our colleagues and clients to continue this progress, and are committed to reporting again next year with our results whatever they may be.



IT IS FAIR TO SAY THAT THE IMPACT OF WHAT WE HAVE BEEN DOING WILL TAKE TIME TO FLOW THROUGH INTO THE DATA. IT IS EQUALLY CLEAR THAT WE STILL HAVE A LOT TO DO, AND BY NO MEANS HAVE ALL THE ANSWERS, HOWEVER, IN MOST CATEGORIES WE ARE MOVING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION AND I AM PROUD OF OUR EFFORTS AND OPTIMISTIC FOR THE FUTURE.”



MIKE HINCHLIFFE

Head of Private Equity and
Board Inclusion Sponsor

MORE DIVERSITY.

MORE INCLUSION.

MORE IMPACT.

**PROBLEMS. POSSIBILITIES.
COMPLEXITY. CLARITY.
OBSTACLES. OPPORTUNITIES.
THE DIFFERENCE IS IMAGINATION.**

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