

Sackers

Our culture:

**from**  
**inside**  
**out**



- 01 **from inside out**
- 02 **our people**
- 04 **our community action**
- 06 **our charitable support**
- 08 **our environment**
- 09 **governance**

### About CSR at Sackers

---

Since establishing a formal approach to corporate social responsibility, or CSR, we have worked hard to reduce our impact on the environment and build enduring relationships with our charity partners and local communities.

Here we explain how we make a contribution to society through our work and our people, showing how what we do **inside** our organisation makes a difference in the **outside** world.

Sackers is a unique business – in terms of the services we provide, and the culture we have created – and we believe this is also reflected in the achievements we highlight in this short review. We understand that by listening to, respecting and involving those groups of people that we come into regular contact with, we can deliver greater social, environmental and commercial benefits.

## from **inside** out

---

Sackers has always been a great place to work. The firm was established in 1966 and, since then, we have worked hard to maintain our inclusive and collegiate culture and tradition of giving back. We take this culture and apply it to the way we interact with our clients, our community and the environment.

We are only ever as good as the people who work here. In order to deliver a high-quality service, we need to secure the best available talent, skills and abilities right across the team. We achieve this by making sure our culture attracts and retains first-class people, and a key to this is our approach to corporate responsibility.

All organisations have their responsibilities to their local community and we are no different. We recognise that our business does not exist in a vacuum. We are committed to playing our part in supporting the community in which we operate and to actively managing our impact on the environment.

We are pleased with our achievements so far, and we want to go further. I hope this document demonstrates this and, crucially, just how far corporate responsibility is an integral part of what we do and who we are.



Ian Pittaway  
Senior Partner  
December 2011

# our people

---

As a specialist practice founded upon long-term client relationships, the quality of our people is key to our success. Our focus on diversity, flexible working and knowledge-sharing has enabled us to foster a cohesive and open working environment that serves our clients' interests well.

## Our approach

Our approach to managing people stems from our distinctive culture. We are a specialist pensions practice, operating on a one-to-one partner to assistant solicitor ratio. This means that experience and knowledge is shared on an ongoing basis, which ensures all our people are specialists in what they do.

In order to foster a culture of quality and expertise for all of our staff, team-working and continual knowledge-sharing are encouraged across the practice. Our size and structure also allows us to attract, retain and develop the best possible people, creating a cohesive and friendly working environment. We promote a culture of respect towards colleagues and invest considerable effort into ensuring that the working environment is pleasant for all members of staff. Our success in this area is displayed by our low annual staff turnover ratio which has ranged between 4% and 7% in recent years.

02/03

## Diversity

Diversity is valued at Sackers. We are committed to providing a working environment which values equality, diversity and inclusion for all. Our focus is on capability rather than difference.

We have a strong track record in supporting gender equality and our diversity figures are among some of the best for City law firms. Women make up 60% of our lawyers and 50% of our partners. We also have a number of policies in place to ensure we cater for those staff with disabilities and have made adjustments around our office to accommodate their needs.

## Flexible working

We assist our colleagues in achieving a better work-life balance by providing flexible working opportunities, such as working from home or working part-time. Between 20% and 25% of our people work flexibly, at all levels of the business. We believe that flexible working improves work-life balance, which in turn helps us reduce employee turnover and to maintain strong working relationships with our clients.

Further to this, we have a number of family friendly policies in place which include enhancements to maternity and paternity leave through pay provisions and a children's Christmas party. We also provide business coaching for lawyers on maternity leave and for new dads.

---

## Supporting our staff in flexible working



One of our solicitors became our first flexible-working male employee after the birth of his child in 2010. He wanted to find a better way of balancing work with the new responsibilities that come with being a dad, which we hope we have helped him to achieve.

---

## Key people facts

- 4%–7%** Annual staff turnover ratio
- 1:1** Ratio of partners to solicitors
- 20%–25%** Staff work flexibly
- 50%** Partners are female



“Sackers has a unique down-to-earth culture that makes it a great place to work. The management style is inclusive and non-hierarchical, and the firm is made up of a mix of friendly personalities from a variety of backgrounds.”

— Chirag Ghelani, Solicitor

# respect

“With approximately one partner to every non-partner, Sackers’ structure is very different from the ‘pyramid structure’ of most City firms, and it’s a real team effort by exceptionally friendly people.”

— Tom Jackman, Solicitor

# our community action

---

**We recognise we have the opportunity to use our resources and expertise to positively impact the lives of the people who live in our local community.**

## **Our approach**

Our approach to volunteering capitalises on our strengths both as individuals and as a business. All members of staff are encouraged to participate in community projects and, as a firm, we seek to support this by allotting all staff seven hours of volunteering time to use over the course of each year. This time can be used to participate in either a Sackers' co-ordinated project or for an individual's own volunteering commitments.

Our CSR Committee co-ordinates our involvement in volunteering projects run by organisations such as the Tower Hamlets Education Business Partnership and the East London Business Alliance.

## **Working in partnership with local schools**

We regularly support local community projects and initiatives. We partner with the Tower Hamlets Education Business Partnership and are actively involved in volunteering for their 'Head to Head' skills programme. The programme assists students aged 15 to 17 in developing interview skills through participating in a number of one-to-one workshops.

We visit schools and colleges in the Hackney area to conduct mock interviews, providing advice and offering support so that students can develop their employability skill sets as they make the challenging transition from school to a working environment or further education.

We have also participated in a programme to prepare local students for the next stage in their lives operated by a similar organisation. The 'Insight into Industry Day' welcomes presenters from a range of businesses to talk to students about the career options open to them. For example, members of our business development and secretarial teams, as well as two of our lawyers, spoke to the group about what they could expect from a career in these areas.

## **East London Business Alliance**

We became involved with the East London Business Alliance (ELBA) in 2010. ELBA has an established number of programmes in east London which address the needs of the community and target support to key areas through employee volunteering, such as supporting enterprise or local projects. This relationship has given us the opportunity to get involved in a number of projects across east London.

04/05

## **Helping out at Hackney City Farm**

---



Last year, staff volunteered to help out at Hackney City Farm, a community project that allows visitors to experience farming in the city. Our staff spent an enjoyable day creating an area at the farm where fruit and vegetables can be grown.

## **Key community action facts**

---

- 291** Hours spent in community and pro bono work in 2011
- 7** Hours per year allotted to all staff for voluntary projects



“Sackers have supported our Head to Head Practice Interview Programme over the last five years and we are pleased to have developed such a strong partnership with them. It has been a pleasure to work with them and we look forward to building on our close relationship.”

— David Burgess  
Tower Hamlets East London  
Business Alliance

# involve

“I have volunteered at Hackney City Farm for the past two years and have thoroughly enjoyed it – it’s extremely rewarding to do and a lovely way to give back to the area.”

— Tracey Jarman  
Legal Secretary

# our charitable support

---

**As a responsible business, we are committed to investing in local causes. From youngsters to pensioners, our focus on charitable donations, coupled with hands-on support, has enabled us to make a tangible and enduring impact.**

## **Our approach**

Although we support a range of charities, we enjoy particularly close links with two charities operating in the local community: Richard House Children's Hospice, a purpose-built children's hospice in east London, and Contact the Elderly, a charity working with older people who live alone and have limited contact with the outside world.

Our CSR Committee co-ordinates a variety of fundraising initiatives each year in support of our chosen charities. We are planning to add different activities throughout 2012 to ensure staff remain engaged so that their support continues.

Our charitable giving programme is not just limited to financial donations. We take part in a number of projects developed by our chosen charities, with our support ranging from the use of our facilities and conducting pro bono business support, to organising fundraising events and volunteering our time.

Members of the firm also participate in races organised by charities for businesses and organisations working in the City of London, such as the Standard Chartered Great City Race, which raises funds for a charity for the blind, Seeing is Believing.

## **Contact the Elderly**

We are extremely proud of our continuing relationship with Contact the Elderly, a charity that helps to tackle loneliness and isolation for older people by organising tea parties. The afternoons are full of fun and laughter and make a real difference to the lives of those who attend. We take out a group that meets locally for Christmas and Easter lunches, as well as co-ordinating an annual fundraising bingo. We provide practical support too, such as office space for when the charity hosts large meetings or providing computer facilities. We also work alongside the charity on its marketing and fundraising strategy.

## **Richard House**

We are also proud to be affiliated with Richard House, a children's hospice in east London that provides care for terminally ill children and children with complex healthcare conditions. Staff have undertaken a wide range of fundraising activities for Richard House over the years, including taking part in the Annual Ball and charity auction, regularly finishing towards the bottom in the Richard House football tournament, running marathons, raffles, sweepstakes and even jumping out of aeroplanes.

06/07

## **Running a marathon for Richard House**

---



When our facilities supervisor committed to running the London Marathon in 2010, the whole firm was there to help him raise over £1,800 for Richard House, an amount which certainly helps focus the mind when running over 26 miles.

## **Key charitable support facts**

---

- Over £25,000** Raised for Richard House since 2007
- 6** Tea parties organised for Contact the Elderly
- 10** People in Team Sackers that completed the Standard Chartered Race in 2010
- 1** Penpal friendship formed with a Contact the Elderly guest

“Contact the Elderly has enjoyed a wonderful two-year partnership with Sackers – for which we are extremely appreciative. This kind of support is invaluable, ensuring we have the funding to reach more elderly people who find themselves alone and in need of friendship.”

– Keith Arscott  
Contact the Elderly

# listen

“Sackers have supported Richard House Children’s Hospice for over five years. This is exactly the kind of support that we require in order to continue to provide and deliver services free of charge to life-limited children and their families.”

– Alex Speke  
Richard House



# our environment

---

As a professional services firm with around 100 employees, our direct environmental impact is relatively small. However, as a responsible business, we strive to minimise our impact wherever possible.

## Our approach

As with all businesses, we have a duty to minimise our impact on the environment. We promote environmental responsibility through the provision of appropriate recycling facilities and consistently monitor and manage how we use our energy and water.

Having recently relocated to new premises, we are now in a much better position to manage our impact more effectively. The design of the building incorporates current best practice principles in sustainable office specification and has been assessed under the BREEAM (BRE Environmental Assessment Method) office scheme and rated 'Very Good'.

The building provides a range of environmental benefits such as:

- a strong energy rating;
- efficient energy heating, lighting and ventilation systems; and
- light and time sensors which help ensure that electricity is only used when required.

Our building also features an impressive urban beekeeping hive on the roof, as well as planting to encourage song birds, established in line with the Mayor of London's Biodiversity Guidelines in an attempt to encourage nature back to the City.

Over the past year we have made significant improvements to our waste management practices and have introduced additional recycling bins to recycle paper, glass, cardboard and printer cartridges.

We also use double-sided printing to reduce paper usage. We are currently seeking to broaden our measurement and monitoring of our energy use, waste management and recycling to set clear future targets for further reductions in these areas.

In addition to managing our effect on the environment, we recognise the importance of sourcing products sustainably. We use sustainable products wherever possible, including fair-trade tea, coffee, sugar and other products. Employees are also encouraged to consider how they can help the firm meet its responsibilities towards the environment.

“The beehives on the building's roof are a creative way to bring nature into the city. Bees thrive in an urban environment, so it is good to know that we are playing a part to help protect the bee population.”

—Sinead Geraghty  
HR Officer

## conserve

“Recycling stations are in place across the office and their use is strongly encouraged.”

—David McMasters  
Facilities Supervisor

08/09



# governance

---

**Our Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Committee was created in 2006 as a way to develop a cohesive policy in this area and to bring together employees from across the business to better co-ordinate and measure our CSR activities.**

## **Our approach**

The Committee consists of seven members of staff, comprising business support staff, solicitors and partners. The Committee meets each month to discuss policy and initiatives. Topics of discussion focus predominantly on charity and volunteering programmes plus office environmental management. The Committee is also responsible for our annual budget and acts as the primary contact point for all members of staff who wish to raise and discuss CSR related matters.

Corporate responsibility is a standing agenda item at the monthly partners' meeting, where the Committee reports back, and provides updates, to the partnership.

Over the last 12 months the Committee raised the following points for discussion:

- developing a programme of community projects that appeals to, and engages all, members of staff;
- developing our relationship with our chosen charities;
- ensuring our level of corporate donations corresponds with our Bribery Act 2010 policy; and
- ensuring appropriate accreditation is in place for our efforts in environmental policy.

## **Our aims**

Our objectives for the next 12 months are to:

- enhance our support for our two chosen charities by developing new fundraising initiatives;
- identify additional and alternative community activities that engage more staff members; and
- achieve formal certification that recognises our efforts in managing our environmental impact, with a variety of accreditation systems under active consideration.

# Sackers

**Sacker & Partners LLP**

20 Gresham Street

London EC2V 7JE

**T** +44 (0)20 7329 6699

**F** +44 (0)20 7248 0552

DX 42615 Cheapside

[www.sackers.com](http://www.sackers.com)

[www.sackerssupport.com](http://www.sackerssupport.com)

Sacker & Partners LLP (Sackers) is the UK's largest specialist pensions law firm, advising both trustees and employers in relation to pensions law and its associated areas.