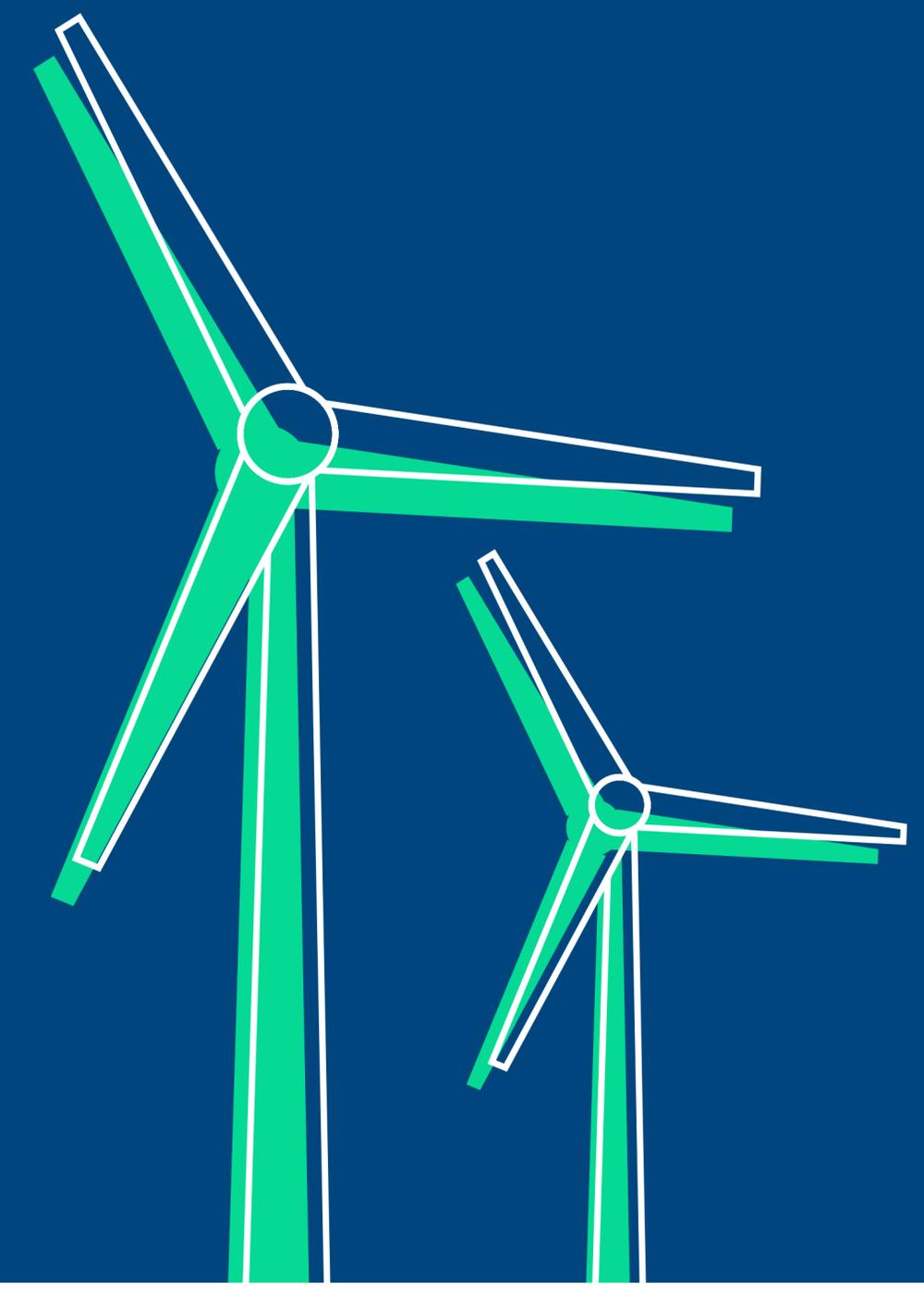
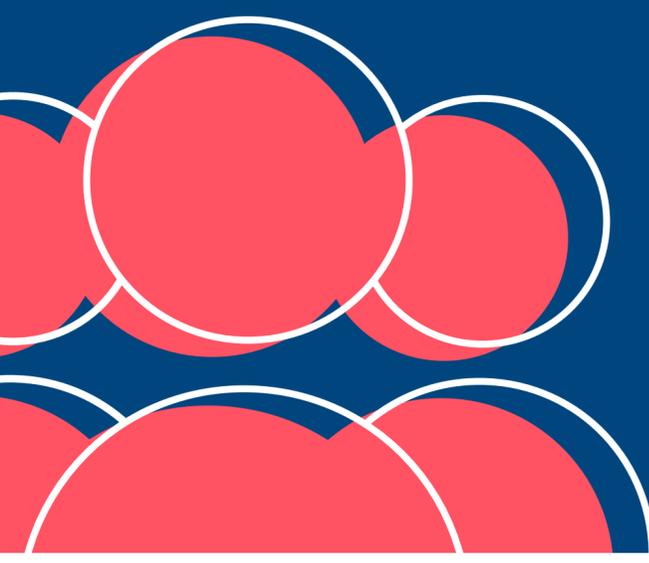


# CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY REPORT

2020 – 2021







## Introduction from Jonathan Forrester, Managing Director

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**I am delighted to share with you our Corporate Social Responsibility Report for 2020. As a leading commercial law firm in Northern Ireland, being a responsible business is top of our agenda. As demonstrated by our culture, actions and outputs, we want to play a positive role in society by supporting our people, clients and the environment.**

2020 was a year like no other, with the Covid-19 pandemic affecting every aspect of life and business as we know it. To say the least, it was an exceptionally challenging year, however, we maintained our focus upon being a responsible business and demonstrating leadership in the local business community.

We prioritised supporting our clients and looking after the health and welfare of our team members. Our team remained fully available and accessible to our clients throughout the pandemic. We established a Covid-19 response team and developed an online business audit which enabled clients to assess the impact of Covid-19 upon their business, which in turn enabled us to offer bespoke and practical solutions.

We committed to helping our team members manage their physical and mental well-being whilst working from home. We maintained our opportunities for personal and professional growth, arranged monthly team wide online meetings, enhanced our health and well-being programme and our HR Director and Line Managers had regular, informal check-ins with team members across the business.

In addition, we found new ways to support our community and continued to promote sustainable business practices at home to reduce our environmental impact.

It has been a year of many highlights. I am delighted to note that we made significant progress in our equality, diversity and inclusion agenda and have been formally recognised by Diversity NI with a Bronze Diversity Charter Mark.

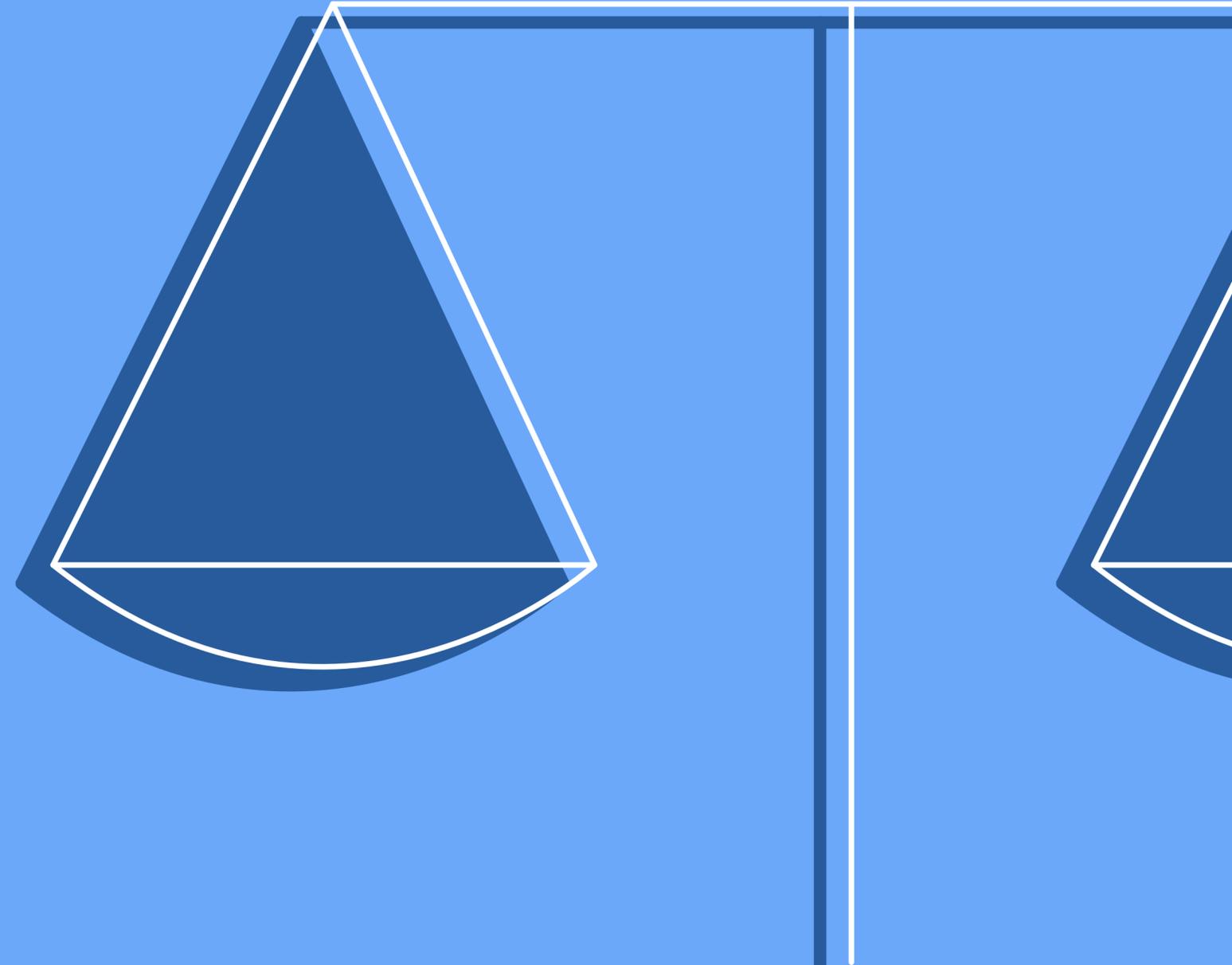
In recognition of Cleaver Fulton Rankin's commitment to excellence across its people management practices, the company surpassed all of the Investors in People legal benchmarks and was nominated by Investors in People for an international Employer of the Year: Accredited 50-249 employees award, alongside 9 other companies from across the globe. Undoubtedly, our proudest moment was being named a Responsible Business Champion by Business in the Community NI in recognition of all our hard work to date.

This executive report, which will only be produced in digital form, outlines in more detail the progress we have made in four key areas throughout 2020. The crisis isn't over yet but I hope that this report demonstrates best practice in a responsible business in even the worst of times.

In 2021 our people will remain committed to ensuring that we deliver our responsible business targets and objectives. All team members will continue to take an active role in developing, communicating and driving forward CSR initiatives. In the year ahead, we will continue to transform our policies and culture, address societal issues impacting our people such as mental health issues, support our community, advocate diversity and inclusion and implement sustainable business practices to reduce our environmental impact. We want to play our part in helping Northern Ireland transition to a 'net-zero' carbon future and will sign the Business in the Community Climate Pledge. We have also decided to source 100% of our electricity from renewable energy generated in NI. Our team is determined to go even further in the coming year to ensure that we continue to make a positive contribution to the lives of our people and clients, our society and our environment.

Best wishes,  
Jonathan Forrester

# OUR BUSINESS AT A GLANCE



As a leading commercial law firm, working in a socially responsible manner is core to how we operate our business. Cleaver Fulton Rankin has a fundamental responsibility to contribute to the society that we serve and the communities we are a part of.

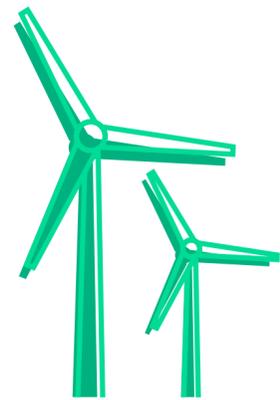
Corporate social responsibility forms part of our strategy. It is an essential element of the firm to support achieving our vision to be known as the most client-focused law firm in Northern Ireland.

Our commitment to a responsible strategy is incorporated in our business plan, embodied in our core values and demonstrated through our culture, our actions and within our processes. We embed responsible thinking into our operations and invest in responsible activity that ultimately supports and positively impacts the areas where we believe we can significantly impact.



# RESPONSIBLE OBJECTIVES

Our long-term objectives, which we hope to achieve by our realistic annual targets, are based on four areas of focus;



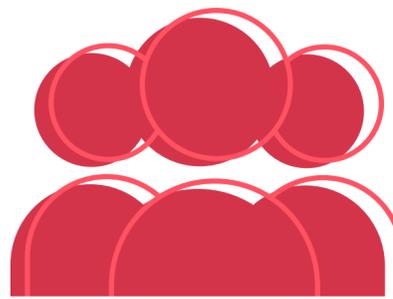
## 1. OUR ENVIRONMENT

We will reduce our impact on the environment year on year by embracing new technologies, working with suppliers who re-purpose waste and inspiring our people to make conscious decisions on whether their behaviour would best fit our environmentally friendly approach.



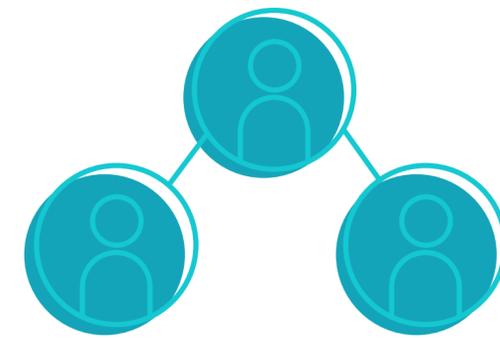
## 2. OUR CLIENTS

We will positively impact our clients through meaningful engagement and delivering a high quality service. We will respect our clients and other stakeholder needs, supporting their activity and developing their skills.



## 3. OUR PEOPLE

We will support our people to thrive by evolving our people strategies, maintaining a safe and healthy working environment, providing the right development opportunities and looking after their well-being.



## 4. OUR COMMUNITY

We will give back to our local community through our charity initiatives, volunteering hours, education and partnerships.

## UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The UN Sustainable Development Goals are the blueprint for achieving a better and more sustainable future for all by addressing the global challenges we face. We contribute to four specific goals through our approach.



**Provide  
Quality Education**



**Protect  
The Planet**



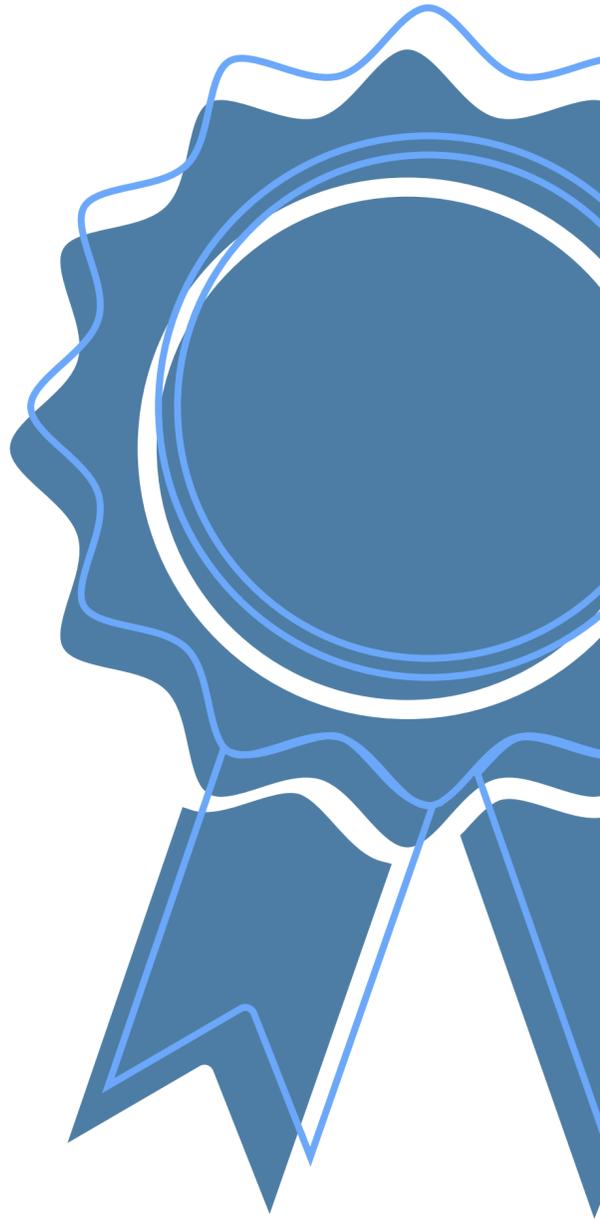
**Ensure  
Gender Equality**



**Promote  
Well-Being**

# COMPANY AWARDS

In recognition of Cleaver Fulton Rankin's commitment to excellence and hard work, we are proud to have received or maintained the following accreditations and awards.



# KEY BUSINESS CSR HIGHLIGHTS IN 2020

We became **RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS CHAMPIONS**

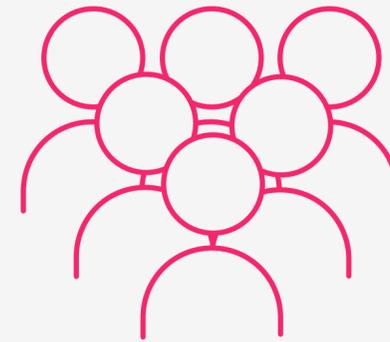


Responsible Business  
Champion  
2020

We were **SHORTLISTED FOR AN INTERNATIONAL INVESTORS IN PEOPLE AWARD**



INVESTORS  
IN PEOPLE



We promoted **6** of  
our team members

We achieved our  
**BRONZE DIVERSITY NI CHARTER MARK**



We completed **100 VOLUNTEER HOURS**



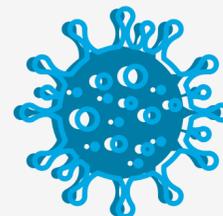
We completed **1300+ HOURS OF TRAINING**



We supported **9 CHARITABLE CAUSES & ORGANISATIONS**



We delivered **25 CLIENT SEMINARS ONLINE** to  
over **500 PEOPLE**



We introduced  
**COVID-19 RECOVERY BUSINESS AUDITS**

We powered our  
office with **100% GREEN ENERGY**



# OUR ENVIRONMENT



At Cleaver Fulton Rankin, we are committed to protecting and enhancing the environment and playing our part in responding to climate change. Our strategic response includes achieving high standards of environmental performance, preventing pollution and minimising the impact of business operations.

The Covid-19 lockdown has had a significant impact on the way that we operate. With the move to remote working, we automatically saw a reduction in energy consumption, waste sent to landfill and carbon footprint, highlighting positive changes we can all make in future.

#### Power Saving

To reduce our energy consumption, all laptops are set up to go into sleep mode after seven minutes and turn off after two hours of inactivity.

Within our office:

- Lights switch off in areas not in constant use (Meeting rooms, toilets, offices etc.).
- Radiators are on a timer and have set degree limits.
- Hot water taps are switched off every evening and over the weekend.
- We only use LED light bulbs which save electricity, last longer and emit more light. LED lightbulbs also help to minimise greenhouse gas emissions.

#### Recycling & Waste Reduction

As a sustainable business, we are committed to responsibly managing our waste throughout our direct operations and our supply chain. We take steps to reduce the amount of waste we produce and divert the waste we generate through recycling, composting and donations.

Covid-19 had a significant impact on the total waste generated at our office. Our office was closed, with employees under mandatory work from home for half the year, with our office partially reopening and some team members returning towards the end of the second half of the year. As a result, we produced less than half of the waste compared to the previous year. However, what we recycle is processed efficiently in the following manner:

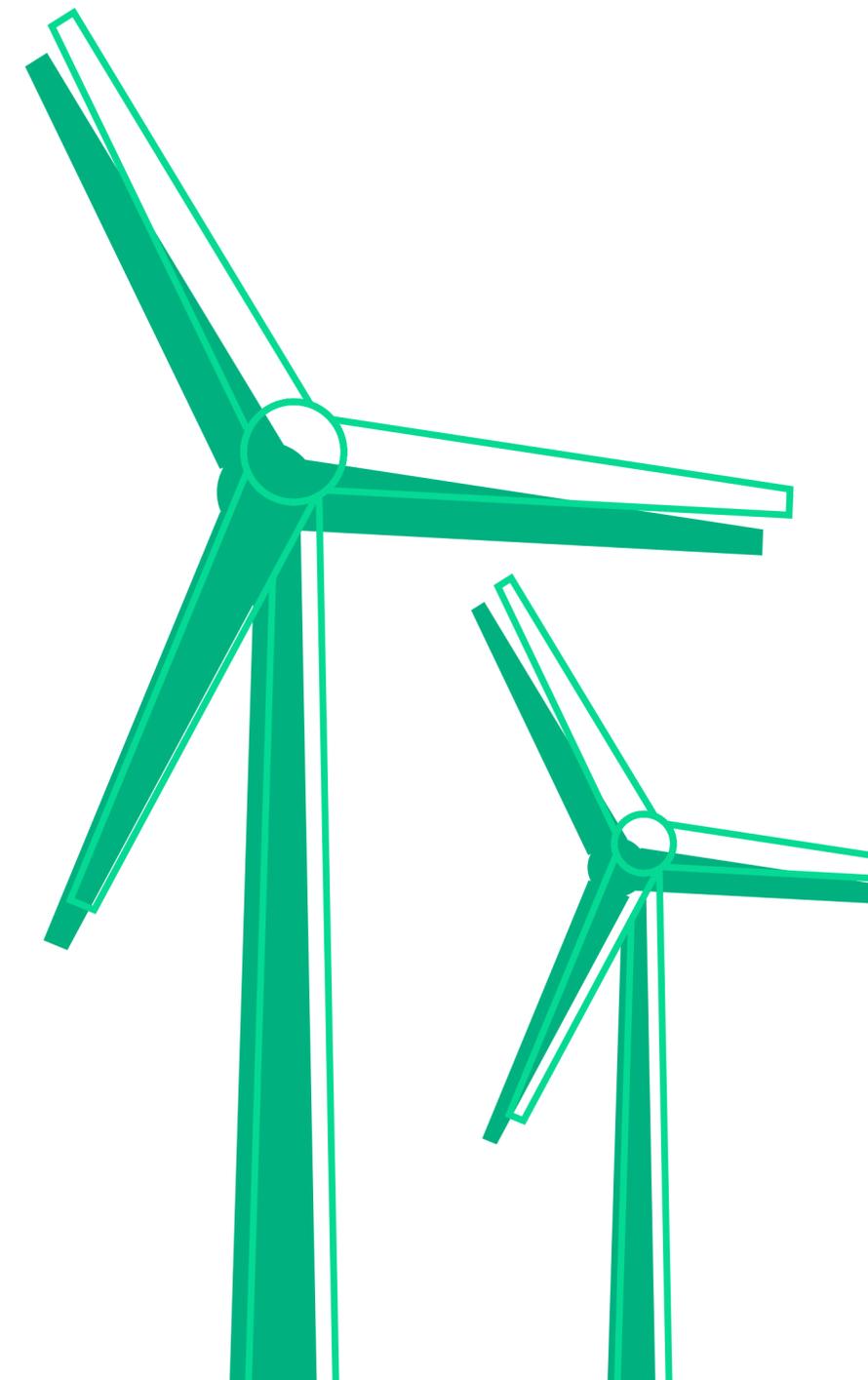
**Mixed Recycling:** All recycling is collected weekly and taken to a facility to be sorted into separate material streams such as plastic, metal and glass, ready to be used in re-manufacturing.

**Plastics:** Our plastics are transformed into pipes for the agricultural, civil engineering and construction industries by Cherry Plastics at their sites in Crumlin, Lurgan and Dungannon.

**Glass:** Our glass is re-purposed to make new bottles for local products such as Bushmills and Baileys by Encirc in Fermanagh.

**Confidential Paper Recycling:** Confidential paper is shredded on-site by 'Shred-Bank' and taken to its accredited facility. Here, it is shredded and pulped before being processed into new, closed-loop office paper.

**Confidential Data:** Confidential data stored on hard drives, USB sticks etc. are also shredded and then incinerated to produce energy.



During the lockdown, each month, our Facilities Manager arranged for team members to drop off any confidential paper, printer cartridges and data drives into our office reception area, an open plan space allowing for social distancing. This ensured the security of data through the correct means of disposal and recycling.

**Electrical Waste:** Assets are reused wherever possible and where assets are beyond economical repair, they are recycled in accordance with the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive (WEEE). Through this, our printer cartridges are collected and then taken by 'Clover Imaging' who re-manufacture and recycle them.

As workplaces went online, so did schools. To help young people get digital access during the pandemic, we donated ten unused desktop devices to the Business in the Community, Digital Donations Appeal.

### Eliminating Paper

As part of a wider digital transformation programme, we have introduced an environment that combines technology with traditional working practices to facilitate a more economical consumption of paper. By using the following innovative solutions, we have reduced our reliance on paper:

- Invested in Signable, an electronic signature package that enables documents to be signed electronically rather than printed and signed.
- Invested in Bundledocs, a software solution to help our legal professionals quickly and easily create court-ready legal briefs. Bundledocs automatically formats multiple documents, creates a full index, orders with sections and page numbers and produces a single PDF brief immediately. Each bundle created is immediately available in PDF format that can be securely shared with team members or third parties.
- Created digital versions of all company brochures to be emailed rather than posted to a client.
- Where hard copies are legally required, we print on recycled paper only.

### Carbon Footprint: Shifting To Virtual Events & Meetings

In our 2019 report, we advised you of how we intended to reduce our overall emissions. We explained that where air travel is necessary, to negate the impact on the environment, we introduced a business funded carbon offsetting programme. All travel was to be tracked and the firm was to contribute a fee to a company to counterbalance our climate pollution by investing in an environmentally friendly project. With non-essential travel banned in March 2020, we were unable to progress with our programme, however we did take steps to keep our carbon footprint in front of mind.

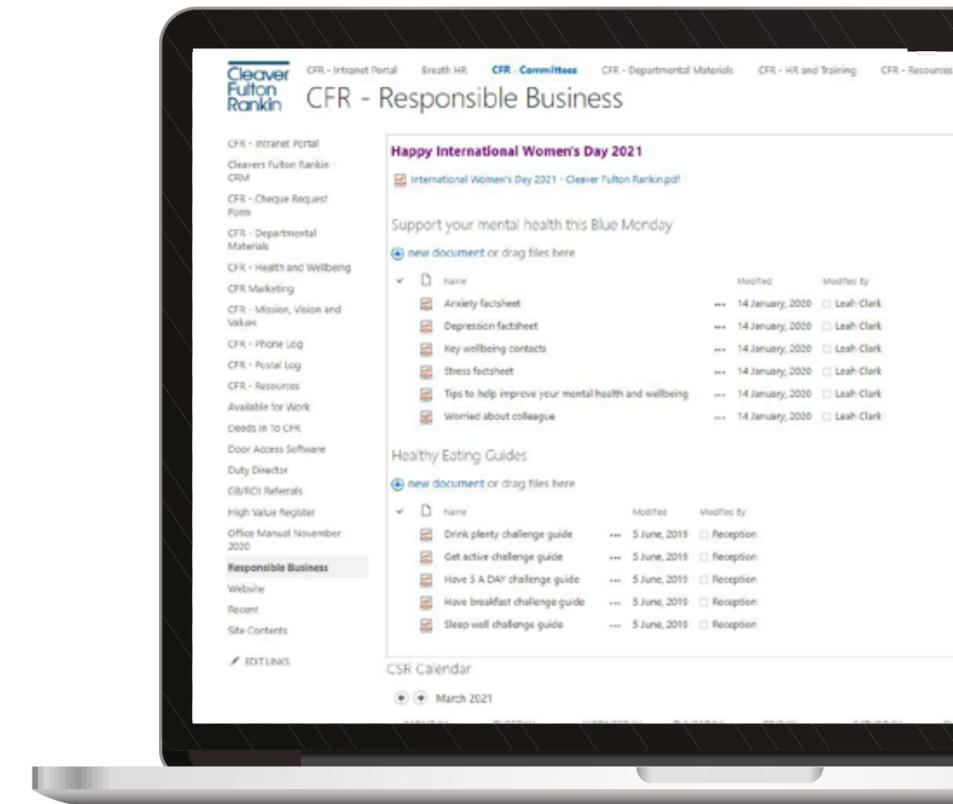
We began shifting events to a virtual format using Zoom. We now hold all of our events and meetings virtually, including client seminars, team building sessions and client meetings. We relied on Zoom, finding new ways to operate seamlessly and collaboratively – and are beginning to calculate the carbon benefits of this approach. When employees do again start to travel, we want to use our travel options wisely and in support of greener methods.

### Employee Engagement

We engaged our people to think of their environmental impact while at home. We hosted events, ran campaigns and had one-to-one conversations to raise awareness and create a sense of community around sustainability. We actively encourage our people, where possible, to cycle and walk to work or meetings. Over the past year, we have continued to promote greener commuting amongst our team members for essential travel to shops or fitness. We also continued to educate our people on the impact of unnecessary travel. This is to ensure when we can return to the office and attend client meetings, they are encouraged to make intelligent and informed choices when considering how to get to work or whether to attend or host a long-distance meeting, which can instead be facilitated by video conferencing.

### Cycle To Work Scheme

Cleaver Fulton Rankin supports the Cycle to Work Scheme, which ensures our team members reap the benefits of cycling. The scheme promotes cycling as a sustainable mode of transport to encourage healthier journeys and reduce environmental pollution.



## Investing In Green Energy

Each year we review our electricity suppliers. In 2020, we chose to move to 3T Power who provide 100% green energy generated in Northern Ireland from the sun, wind, waves or waste. 3T Power have brought together independent wind farms and emerging renewable technologies across Northern Ireland to create a growing network of generators who produce clean, green electricity to power our renewable future.

## Our Climate Change Journey

The Covid-19 lockdown has had a significant impact on how we operate, highlighting positive changes we can make in the future. While most of our workforce continues to work remotely, we are thinking ahead to necessary protocols as employees return to the office. For example, we have a longstanding ambition to reduce paper use and become a paper-lite law firm, which we are even more committed to encouraging now.

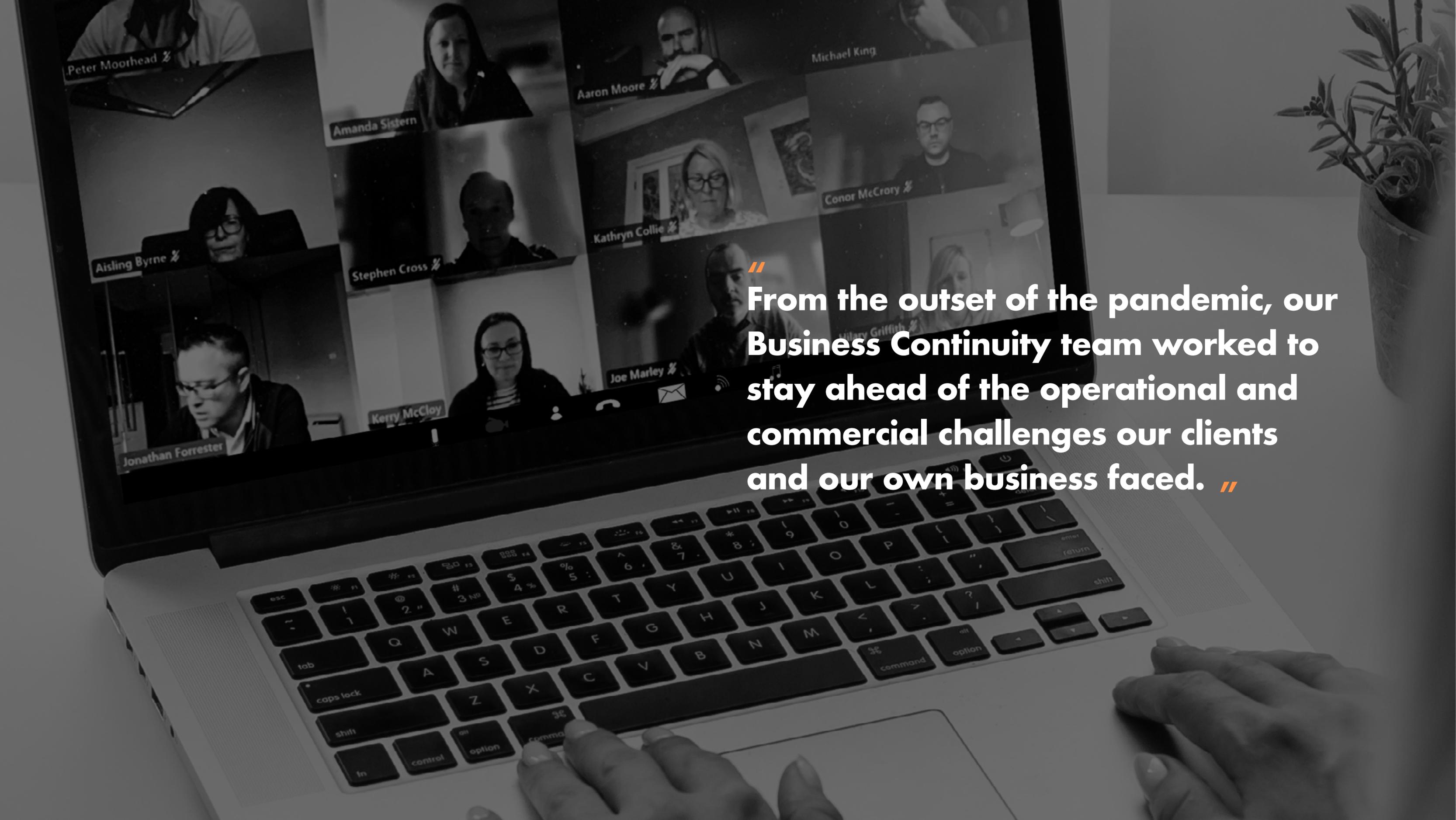
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In 2021, we will build on new habits established during the pandemic. We have an opportunity to accelerate climate change progress and keep it that way by changing the way we work, travel and consume goods.



# OUR CLIENTS





“ From the outset of the pandemic, our Business Continuity team worked to stay ahead of the operational and commercial challenges our clients and our own business faced. ”

Cleaver Fulton Rankin's vision is to become the most client-focused law firm in Northern Ireland. We are committed to putting our clients at the heart of everything we do. Throughout the pandemic, our priority was the health and well-being of all of our stakeholders and ensuring that we remained in a position to meet their business or personal requirements, albeit with some unavoidable changes to our operations.

### Digital Leadership

At the heart of our business is a desire to deliver an exceptional legal service to all our clients and offer legal solutions relevant to them. The firm's significant investment in IT systems and security put us in a position of strength when faced with unprecedented demands due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Our commitment to digitally enable our firm, backed up with strong risk, cybersecurity and compliance processes, meant that we seamlessly adapted to remote working.

### Business As Usual

From the outset of the pandemic, our Business Continuity team worked to stay ahead of the operational and commercial challenges our clients and our own business faced. We aimed to ensure client experience of Cleaver Fulton Rankin remained positive throughout. Our clients were aware that our services remained fully operational and our team were available at all times. We issued a clear statement from our Managing Director to ensure all clients were advised of how Cleaver Fulton Rankin would operate during the period of uncertainty.

We felt it was very important to help people feel safe, connected and supported. We wanted to keep our clients well informed during this difficult time. We also put a lot of thought into the channels we used, being respectful of working hours and how often we would communicate.

### Providing Essential Services & Tools

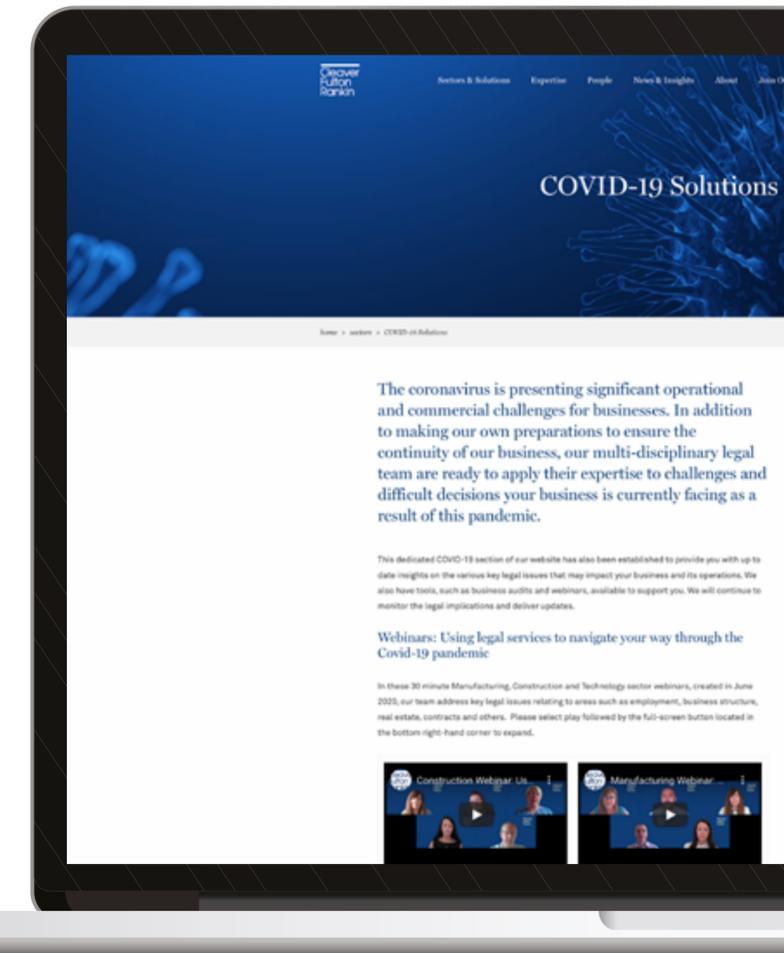
We established a Covid-19 response team and developed an online business audit that enabled clients to assess the impact of Covid-19 upon their business, which in turn helped us to offer bespoke and practical solutions. We also delivered a series of webinars and podcasts, sharing recent updates and insights.

In addition, with the UK formally leaving the EU in January and entering into an 11-month transition period during which the UK and EU were negotiating the terms of their future relationship, 2020 was characterised by Brexit-related uncertainty for businesses. Our Brexit team monitored developments closely and prepared our clients for different scenarios, including the potential implications of a 'no trade deal' Brexit. We provided information on Brexit webpages and through articles, webinars and social media commentary.

## BUSINESS AS USUAL AT CLEAVER FULTON RANKIN

Our solicitors are contactable via:

- Email addresses & direct dial phone numbers found on our website: [cleaverfultonrankin.co.uk/people](https://cleaverfultonrankin.co.uk/people)
- Our office switchboard on 028 9024 3141, or
- The **mobile number** your primary contact has provided



### Resolving Client Disputes With Online Mediation

Mediation has long been considered a more effective way of resolving disputes, potentially avoiding the costs and delay involved in court proceedings. Whilst traditionally Mediation sessions involve a qualified mediator helping to resolve disputes in an office or meeting room, or on site, the Coronavirus pandemic made that impossible.

At Cleaver Fulton Rankin we did not let the restrictions deter us from delivering an exceptional service to our clients. We continued to lead the way in alternative dispute resolution by embracing the latest legal tech, the Consumer Code for Online Dispute Resolution (CCODR) platform, to resolve a client dispute using remote mediation. This enabled us to deliver our dispute resolution services seamlessly and without interruption.

### Developing Client Knowledge

We pride ourselves in adapting to changes in the business environment through continuous learning, development and training of our employees who subsequently educate clients on the impact these changes may have.

In 2020, we aimed to help businesses grow out of the crisis with insights and knowledge that would help them re-shape and future proof their businesses for what lies ahead. Our team delivered 25 free tailored seminars, webinars and workshops to over 500 business people, shared 127 educational articles through client newsletters and online channels, introduced informative legal question and answers series of videos to help clients adapt to changes in the economy and legal landscape.

### Providing The Right Experts

We strongly believe in Continuing Professional Development (CPD) to ensure consistent improvement in client care, business development, compliance and customer service. We go over and above what is required for our team members' continued personal development to ensure we deliver the best opportunities to grow their knowledge and skillset. This year we ensured the education of our people remained a priority.

Our HR and CPD Director sought out digital options for training, including utilising our own in-house expertise to educate others through webinars and online knowledge sharing sessions. By supporting our people in developing their knowledge and expertise, we ensure our clients are benefiting from industry-leading professionals.

### Quality & Client Feedback

Our commitment to our clients is at the centre of what we do. We strive to provide our clients with the highest quality service and legal advice. Our quality accreditation, ISO 9001:2015 LQS, covers the management and administration of the firm's legal services. We listen to our clients in many different ways – through online meetings, telephone conversations or emails, and encourage engagement through our social media channels. We provide clients with a client satisfaction survey and regularly review and analyse the data and trends. All feedback is discussed at monthly meetings with senior management. Any training requirements are identified and implemented to continually improve our service offering and approach for our clients.

### Keeping our Clients Safe - Data Security

We are aware of the importance of data security. It is our priority to keep our clients' information safe through continual investment in our IT security systems and the education of our staff. This year;

- Cleaver Fulton Rankin team members received updated in-depth Data Protection training facilitated by our Data Protection officers.
- We have maintained the UK Cyber Essentials Security standard, IASME and ISO27001 certifications for the Information Security Management System, the scope of which covers the entire firm.
- We invested further in updating our email security with advancements in our Mimecast cybersecurity solution.



## Financial Crime

As a firm, we are committed to preventing and taking measures to guard against being used as a medium for money laundering, terrorist financing and any other financial crime. In line with laws on financial crime and the Financial Conduct, we have appropriate systems and controls in place to counter the risk of Cleaver Fulton Rankin being used to further financial crime or of any client or counter party being associated with criminal activity. All Cleaver Fulton Rankin team members received updated training on Anti-Money Laundering and suspicious activity reporting in the last 12 months.

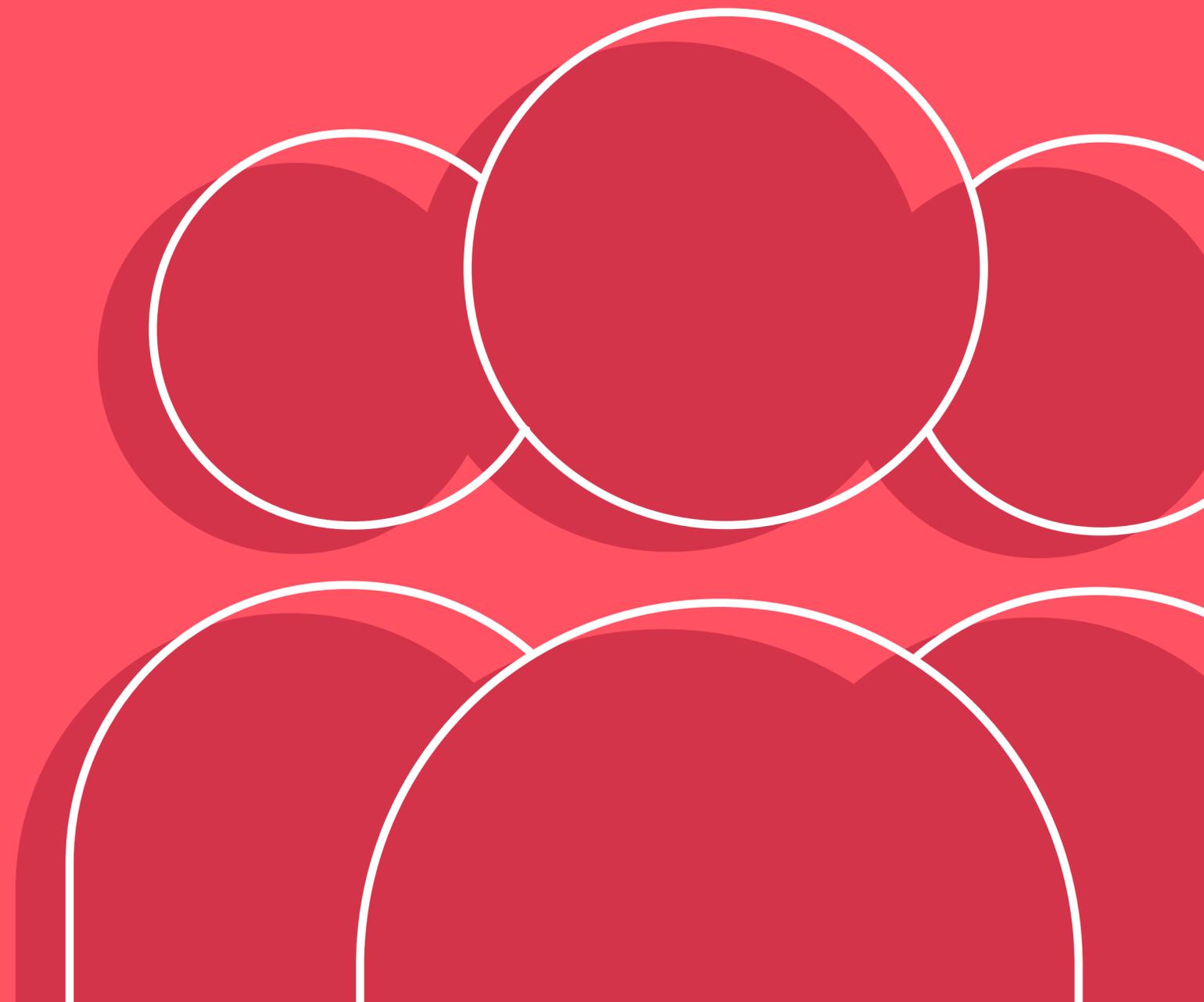
## Adapting Our Office For A Safe Return

The changes brought by the pandemic are likely to be in place for the foreseeable future. At Cleaver Fulton Rankin, we have made changes to our office space and meeting areas to adhere to all guidelines and protect our clients and team members. This includes new layouts, screens, hygiene precautions, cleaning procedures and record-keeping to enable track and trace.

Face-to-face meetings, when unavoidable, are available at a client's request.



# OUR PEOPLE





manda

CFR

Tim Rankin

Jennifer Rankin

Jenny Robinson

lisa boyd

Nathan Campbell

Sharon

// **2020 was a year of unprecedented change. Our colleagues responded by showing exceptional resilience, agility and commitment to serving and delivering for our clients.** //

Rachael Gamble

Peter Moorhead

Johnny Forrester

Ann McClmonds

Paula Gibson

Brid McColgan

Caroline MacLaughlin

Cleaver Fulton Rankin

Karen Blair

HMS

MF

Kathryn Laverty

Michael Graham

Patrick Fleming

Brendan Martyn

At Cleaver Fulton Rankin, we pride ourselves on being a responsible employer. Our people are our greatest assets and each play a key strategic role in developing our team, our services and the growth of our business. We, therefore, invest in them. We provide meaningful careers and development opportunities and resources to help them be healthy, empowered, and purposeful in all aspects of life.

### Health & Well-being

At Cleaver Fulton Rankin, we understand the importance of our employee's health and well-being and have actively engaged with health professionals, external bodies and charity partners that provide solutions that can best support them. We;

- Promote exercise within our firm - we offer our staff discounted gym memberships and provide lunchtime yoga classes to promote health and wellness.
- Provide health services such as BUPA health care and Specsavers eye care.
- Offer a CSR Day – to improve physical and mental health, each employee is entitled to spend a day each year volunteering during working hours.
- Provide all team members with Law Care membership, an organisation who promote mental health and well-being in the legal community.
- Host socials every month for our staff to engage with one another.
- Understand the importance of work-life balance and provide tailored working arrangements to support family life without impacting business needs.

- Offer a competitive employee benefits package to all employees and trainees, which includes: annual leave entitlement (increased based on years' service).
- Implement internal health and well-being awareness campaigns throughout the year.

Throughout the pandemic, we focused on keeping colleagues safe, healthy and connected, building resilience and supporting all team members as they adapted to new challenges and working practices. We focused on well-being in the broadest sense, helping colleagues manage their physical and mental well-being through education, external support and easy access to information and advice.

### Connecting Our People & Having Fun

We used technology to keep our people connected. We established virtual employee discussion groups and hosted monthly firm-wide catch-ups, team tea breaks, and fun games and quizzes via Zoom.



## Supporting Families

Working from home arrangements are not conducive for all and many team members had to juggle working from home with home-schooling or caring responsibilities. We supported them by offering additional flexibility and allowing them to choose how, when and where they work, where possible.

## Physical Well-Being

Movement breaks are also essential for physical health. We encouraged our employees to get up and move throughout the day. This helped with physical health and ensured our employees felt refreshed and engaged while working from home.

## Mental Well-Being

In 2020, we worked harder to create an environment where we can all speak openly about mental health, listen with compassion, and ask for help without fear of judgment. We sought out new ways to deliver our activities to support emotional well-being and resilience. This included listening to our team members' feedback and concerns, communicating regular updates using team meetings, video messages and internal announcements, implementing regular employee one-to-one HR check-in calls and using innovative ideas to continue delivering our health and well-being campaigns such as employee appreciation day and Blue Monday.

In addition, we actively encouraged our teams to participate in volunteering and fundraising, providing new challenges in a normal working day.

## Support & Resources

All team members have access to our Responsible Business Hub, a central online hub where everyone can access a wealth of information and find additional support from third party organisations.

## Diversity & Inclusion

We are an equal opportunities employer and committed to fostering a culture which supports the unique and diverse needs of our people, clients and stakeholders. We aim to provide a harmonious working environment which reflects the diverse community at large, values the individual contribution of our people, and ensures everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

In 2020, we commenced our work with Diversity Mark NI, which encouraged us to develop our strategy, enhance a positive working environment and make positive action plans. As a result, we are absolutely delighted to have received our Bronze Diversity Mark.

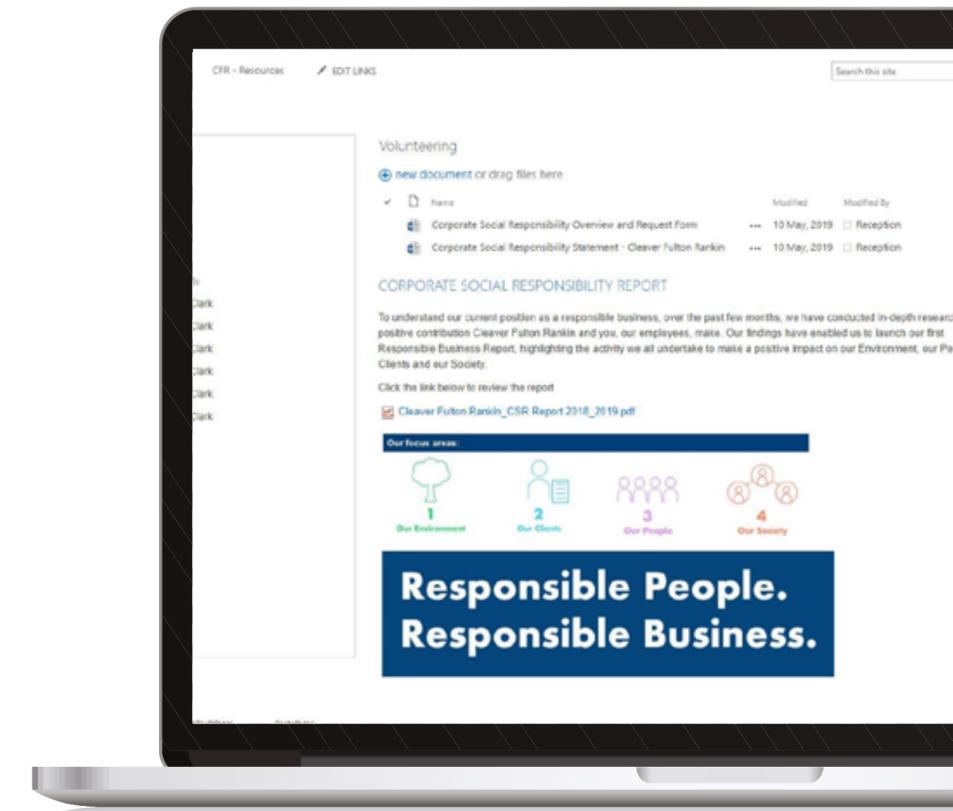
## Learning & Development

We believe in investing in our people through learning and development to ensure they reach their full potential and benefit from great opportunities to pursue their career goals. Personal growth is the key to success and maintains our high performance and status as one of the leading commercial law firms in Northern Ireland.

Our training approach is carefully designed to provide support to all team members at every stage of a career. In 2020 we;

- Developed an annual training calendar to keep a record of all training across the firm.
- Hosted internal seminars before lockdown; upon then, we moved to facilitate online and specialist talks to engage our employees in many types of training.
- Provided additional opportunities for employees to take training courses externally to gain specialist knowledge and skills.

The growth of our talent is vital. Learning never stops at Cleaver Fulton Rankin, and we actively encourage an ethos where knowledge is shared and our people help one another to learn new skills and expertise. In total, our team completed 1300 training hours in 2020.





### Trainee Solicitor Programme

We provide learning and development opportunities for those who wish to become the next generation of lawyers. Each year we recruit up to four trainees who complete a full 2-year training programme with the firm. In 2020, we continued our training programme with four trainees, albeit virtually.

### Virtual Recruitment

The Covid-19 pandemic changed how we recruit. We conducted interviews for roles during the lockdown, recruiting and inducting people virtually.

To ensure all new starts received a valuable induction and made a connection with the firm, key representatives from legal and professional services teams, including our Managing Director, recorded induction videos explaining all business departments, tools, systems and processes they'd need to be productive.

Feedback on the new virtual induction experience was very positive, with new starts commenting that they appreciated that the firm took the time to ensure they got off to a good start while also protecting their health and safety.

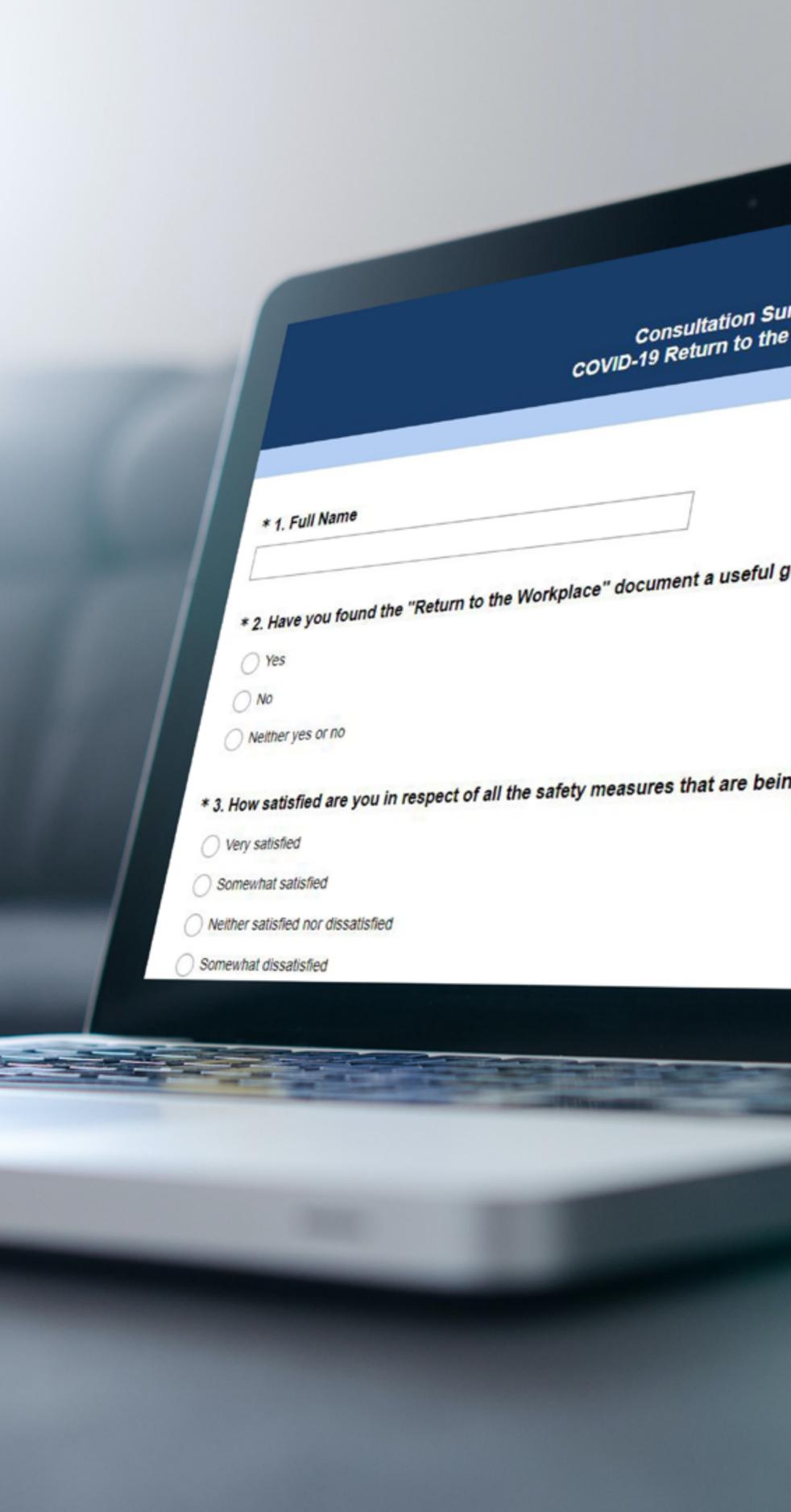
### Performance Management

As a business, we ensure we support and provide the right opportunities for our people. We work with each employee to set realistic objectives aligned with our vision and approach and conduct meaningful two-way performance conversations, which are supported by relevant personal development plans that are reviewed and appraised regularly.

Having previously embedded new technology for our people to track their performance digitally, throughout 2020, everyone maintained full sight of their targets and a good understanding of progression and achievements. This enabled the firm to continue with our performance procedures, conducting 6-month and full-year reviews virtually.

While the Covid-19 pandemic created uncertainties and challenges, we remained focused upon our team's career progression and the future success of our business. We were delighted to have promoted 3 of our people and offer full time roles to our trainees on their completion of a two-year solicitor training programme.





### Engaging Our People

Communication is at the heart of our firm and our CSR approach. Our commitment to a responsible strategy is incorporated in our business plan, embodied in our core values and we aim to demonstrate these values through our culture, our actions and within our corporate policies and communications.

Our leaders encourage openness with all team members through continuous and effective communication using firm-wide bi-annual updates, led by our Managing Director, regular staff portal communications and monthly department and team meetings.

Members of the wider business take an active role in developing, communicating and driving forward new initiatives through representation within our Marketing & CSR Committee, Staff Discussion Group and Diversity & Inclusion Committee, who meet regularly. All activity continued virtually in 2020.



# INVESTORS IN PEOPLE

### Open To Feedback

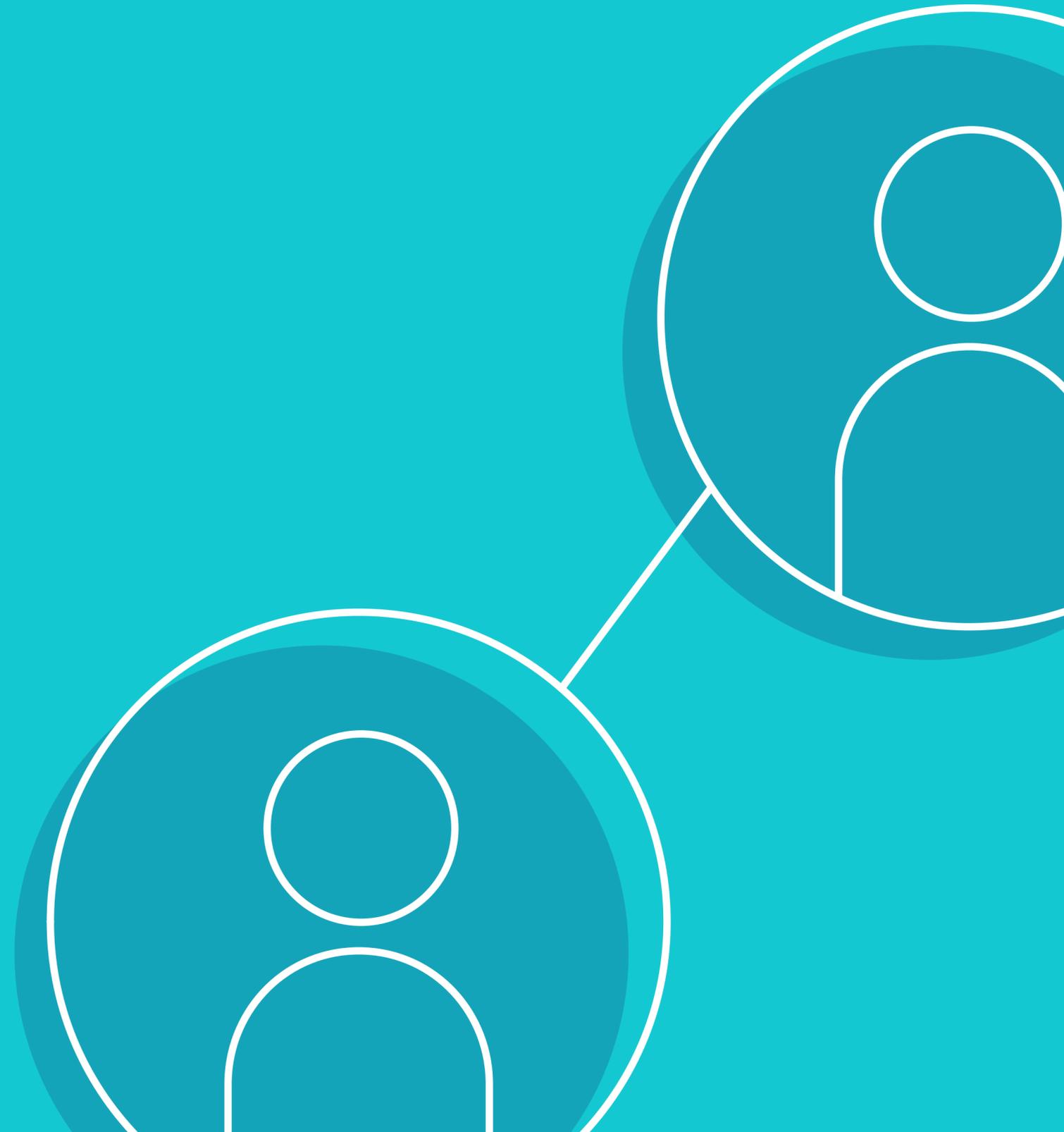
We regularly ask our employees for feedback to understand how they perceive their work environment. We learned about employee confidence in, satisfaction with, and trust in their direct leaders handling of the Covid-19 pandemic through surveys. This helped us understand our team members' views and increased engagement in our return to work plans.

### Investors In People Accreditation (IIP)

In recognition of Cleaver Fulton Rankin's commitment to excellence across its people management practices, the firm was awarded a position as one of the top nine finalists in the 2020 Investors in People Awards for the international Employer of the Year: Accredited 50-249 category, alongside companies from across the globe.



# OUR COMMUNITY





// **In 2020, our people  
volunteered 100 hours  
to 9 charitable causes.** //

We have been in business in Belfast since 1893 and take our role in the community very seriously. We make a positive impact on local communities through our charity initiatives and volunteering our time and skills to help others.

**The Covid-19 pandemic, with its periods of lockdown, school closures and requirements for social distancing, had a significant impact on the delivery of our community initiatives. We prioritised our team members and our clients' health and well-being, and adapted our programmes to respond to the crisis and be a force for good.**

### Education & Employability

The firm not only invests in the on-going training of our professionals, we also enhance our communities' employability through our involvement with schools and universities, our work experience opportunities and our Trainee Solicitor Programme. In 2020 learning never stopped. We saw the shift toward digital education accelerate in real-time and we moved to;

- Virtually recruit and induct five new trainees to our firm, one of which had been on work placement a few years before.
- Guest lectured remotely for Ulster University, supporting course co-ordinators with the delivery of modules using legal presentations and taking classes on ADR and social media. This also included the QUB Institute of Professional Legal Studies.

### Volunteer Programme

We are pleased to report that our volunteering initiative continues to be a success and has positively impacted our people and the community. The Covid-19 lockdowns and social distancing requirements meant that most volunteering activities had to be paused.

However, we enabled colleagues to volunteer in different ways and play their part in supporting people and communities during the pandemic.

Our team has impacted local schools by facilitating remote workshops, helped combat loneliness through telephone calls, assisted at vaccine centres across NI, supported people completing forms, and got their hands dirty gardening.

### Supporting Appeals

We have supported our teams' fundraising activities throughout the year, including taking part in a range of remote marathons and runs. We believe in encouraging charitable giving and giving back to our local community by supporting and promoting each other. Most recently, to support the Simon Community Northern Ireland, a leading homelessness charity, we donated goodies and essential items to their Christmas Hamper appeal. With business support, the charity surprised their clients on Christmas morning, ensuring they also experienced a season filled with generosity.

We also supported the Cash for Kids Christmas Gift appeal, encouraging our team members to donate one gift to a disadvantaged child in NI and volunteer at their warehouse.

### Digital Donation

To help young people get digital access during the pandemic, we donated unused desktop devices to the Business in the Community, Digital Donations Appeal. The devices were repurposed and provided to children and young people in NI who require digital access to complete schoolwork or connect to their friends or teachers.



“Because of support from companies like Cleaver Fulton Rankin, we have many reasons to celebrate and be thankful this year. In a year like no other, thank you for stepping up and standing with us. I cannot begin to tell you how grateful we are as an organisation for your generosity towards our Christmas Appeal.”

Volunteer Co-ordinator, Simon Community NI.

# WRITE YOUR WILL ONLINE TODAY

Legal advice at a **discounted rate** for Health & Social Care Trusts & Emergency workers.

Start your Will at [Bequeathed.org/cfr](https://Bequeathed.org/cfr)

Cleaver  
Fulton  
Rankin

## THANK YOU FOR DONATING



Lesson 5 of 7

### Navigating the office

#### Meetings

Ideally, you should use remote working tools to avoid face-to-face meetings as much as possible. If you do need to hold meetings in

### e-Learning

Through our e-learning platform, we have helped local businesses maintain their employee training programmes. In addition, we developed and added a new 'Returning to the Office' module to our range. This training module supports employees transitioning back into working in the office after working from home or extended leave. It aims to ensure that employees understand the precautions and controls in place that must be adopted before and during their return and working day.

### Online Will Writing Partnership

80% of adults in Northern Ireland do not have a will. In 2020, this figure hit home with individuals as it became more important than ever to get their affairs in order.

At Cleaver Fulton Rankin, we launched a free will-writing service with Bequeathed, an online will-writing provider, to give everyone across Northern Ireland an opportunity to secure their loved ones' futures when unable to visit a solicitor. The platform allows individuals to write a will at a time that suits them, with the option to save work in progress and complete it over a period of time. It also provides the option to review and keep it up to date.

### NHS Discount

In support of launching the Bequeathed partnership, our Private Client team offered legal advice at a discounted rate for NHS staff and emergency workers, if they required further guidance to complete their will. We wanted to help give peace of mind to essential workers by ensuring they had plans in place to distribute their estate to their loved ones in the event of their death.

### Partnerships

Cleaver Fulton Rankin work with a range of bodies, charities and businesses in the local community. We have strong ties with Will to Give, which was established to promote charitable giving or gifts through wills. Michael Graham, Director of Private Client at Cleaver Fulton Rankin, was a founding member of this charity and hosts regular online training sessions for members.

We also enjoy a strong relationship with Belfast City Council and are members of both their US and Chinese Stakeholder Groups which promote Belfast and strengthen our connection with our sister cities.

We are pleased to be part of the Business in the Community NI network of responsible businesses and to have partnered with Diversity Mark NI to publicly declare our commitment to building a more diverse and inclusive workplace to benefit all our team members.

### Pro Bono

Our legal professionals sit voluntarily on boards and provide pro bono services to help those in need of legal advice, but are unable to cover the costs of legal fees. Our pro bono work is directed at clients who we consider to be very deserving or who face legal issues that we believe are especially important to our communities or to society as a whole. We particularly use and apply our legal expertise to assist small charities with issues such as lease negotiations and advice on administrative responsibilities.



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