



Responsible business



We are committed
to making a positive
impact in our industry,
on society and the
environment.

Introduction

Boult is proud to call itself a responsible business. It's a facet of our business we take very seriously, making commercial decisions which do not solely boost our bottom line, but deliver real benefits to our people, our culture and our wellbeing, as well as the wider community at home and abroad.

The UN Sustainable Development Goals underpin our responsible business strategy. Through our choices, we know we can make a difference to local communities as well as those further afield. Being the first IP firm to sign up for the Legal Sustainability Alliance, the Mindful Business Charter, and Business In The Community demonstrates how seriously we take our responsibility in this area.

Our COO, Andrew Little, holds ultimate responsibility for our responsible business strategy at Boult. In his eyes, being a responsible business is something hardwired into Boult's unique approach.

At a high level, our strategy covers three core headings: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion – EDI (including social mobility and recruitment), Charity and Environmental, Social Governance (ESG), and Wellbeing. Andrew is a strong proponent of all three. The firm has an ambitious programme of initiatives and events to cover all three of our responsible business strands.

Andrew's views on EDI are clear. *"It's vital to keep*



"Fundamentally, we are a caring organisation. Getting that balance right between delivering great client service but also doing that in a way which is fulfilling and rewarding for our staff is key to our culture."

Andrew Little, Chief Operating Officer

**Andrew Little,
Chief Operating Officer**



pushing forward on the EDI aspects of our programme, and not just have it become a tick box exercise," Andrew says. "We want to clearly demonstrate that, provided you have the right qualifications, there should be no barrier to entry, nor to advancement in this profession."

The recent launch of a volunteering policy means Boulton will focus more effectively on charity initiatives. "Revamping the charity committee was a priority," he says, "as was getting the volunteering programme set up, with a full volunteering policy rolled out. We are proactively going to ask our people to go out and do some volunteering."

Andrew is also keen to stress the importance of our wellbeing and wellness strategy for all staff. "To an extent, wellbeing is about communication. We need to let our staff know what help is in place for them as well as creating a safe environment at work so that people who need to can reach out for help and talk to colleagues. We consider that providing a structure to support a proper work life balance, wellbeing and mental health support are core HR priorities."

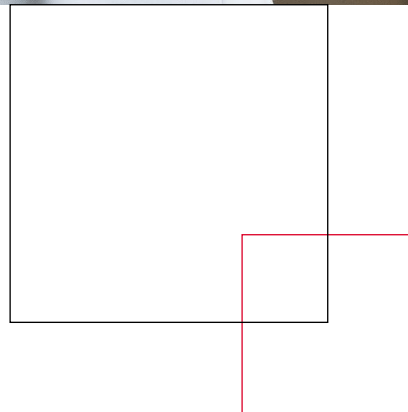
Commercially and socially, we're seeing a

greater demand for tangible reporting of responsible business metrics by existing and prospective clients – something welcomed by Andrew and the Responsible Business board. "We must be willing to reach out to experts to achieve the genuine impact we and our clients expect. Just as our clients come to us for advice, we shouldn't be shy going out and talking to other organisations, getting advice on areas we aren't experts in. We're talking to a number of external bodies, such as the Mindful Business Charter, the Legal Sustainability Alliance and Business In The Community," he says. "They provide us with information on how best to report on metrics and on the best approach to frameworks."

Overall, Andrew is enthusiastic about where the firm is on its responsible business journey. "We are making progress and continue to make progress. Above all, we do what we need to do to preserve the culture of the firm. We are a brilliant firm to work for and we want to make sure the firm is viewed as such by all of our staff."



Dr Susi Fish, Partner and heads up EDI programme



Equality, diversity and inclusion

At Boulton we believe in being inclusive and creating a working environment where everyone can comfortably be themselves. Attracting, developing, and retaining a diverse team and creating an inclusive culture where people feel valued is extremely important to us. The legal sector in the UK has traditionally been seen as the preserve of white, middle-class men. Boulton has a long history of pushing against this stereotype, with women having had major leadership roles in the partnership (including both managing and senior partner roles) and in senior management positions, over many decades. Nevertheless, we have recognised that we can do much more, particularly to expand the range of socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds that we are able to recruit into our fee earning team. Through our collective action, we have achieved tangible change and made a positive impact on our culture. It is something that we are proud of and we will continue to do so in the future.

In 2021 we worked with Focal Point, an organisation dedicated to helping workplaces become more respectful and inclusive environments, to create a staff survey to understand what our people thought about our culture, and equality, diversity and inclusion at Boulton. We wanted to take stock of where we were and where we wanted to go. Our Responsible Business board members were then able to use these findings to help us develop a fresh approach to, and perspective on, equality, diversity and inclusion.

Partner Susi Fish, heading up the EDI programme at Boulton, has a wealth of expertise in this area. She co-chairs the Women in IP group of IP Inclusive (a UK profession-wide initiative) and sits on the Diversity and Inclusion and Women in IP committees of the Intellectual Property Owners Association. Her work was recognised when she was nominated as one of only 20 Global Diversity Champions in WIPR's Diversity 2021.

"Having the right governance is key to maintaining and promoting equality, inclusion and diversity. To drive positive change that gets results we need the right leadership. In 2022 we changed the way we approached Responsible Business and as part of this new strategy, we created an EDI committee of volunteers, staffed from a wide variety of departments, offices and levels of seniority. The committee is responsible for setting the firm's EDI strategy, for implementing initiatives and is accountable to the Responsible Business board. Having a group of committed members of staff that are eager to achieve our objectives is key to providing momentum and accelerating the pace of change. I am very proud of what this committee has achieved so far, and I know their energy will sustain the change in the future."

Our EDI strategy continues to develop. We have revised policies, recruitment procedures, development strategies and leadership and accountability courses to ensure our approach encourages diversity and values differences. We have run educational sessions to raise staff awareness of unconscious bias and



Jodie Bates, IT Trainer

neurodiversity, to help people understand and engage with these issues. We have taken proactive steps to address EDI concerns in our industry and beyond, joining supportive networks and organisations such as WorkLife Central, IP Inclusive, General Counsel for Diversity and Inclusion (GCEDI). We have also signed charters and made commitments to organisations whose values and aspirations we share such as the IP Inclusive Charter, the IP Inclusive Senior Leadership Pledge.

Susi sees a lot of potential to make a tangible difference to aspiring members of the IP industry, to our staff more generally, and to our wider community. *"I am very proud of what this committee has achieved so far, and I know their energy will sustain the change in the future."*

Case study

Jodie Johnson, IT Trainer, has an active role in EDI and social mobility both internally at Boulton and externally, via IP Inclusive.

"I was introduced to the work of IP Inclusive via a talk at the firm. I'm involved with the EDI and Wellbeing committees at Boulton, and IP Inclusive felt like a great opportunity to make a difference not just with our internal equality,

diversity, inclusion and wellbeing initiatives but to the IP industry as a whole.

The IP Inclusive advisory board is an initiative which brings people together from across the IP sector in pursuit of a common goal: to promote and improve equality, diversity, inclusion and wellbeing within our community. Our networks are IP and Me (for ethnic minority IP professionals), IP Ability (for disabled people, their carers and allies), IP Futures (for early career and trainee stage IP professionals), the IP Non-traditional Family Network (for sole parents, blended families, adoptive families, LGBT+ families and other non-traditional families in the UK), IP Out (for LGBT+ people and their allies), and Women in IP (for women working in the IP profession).

I sit on the IP Inclusive advisory board, helping to guide the activities of the group. I'm passionate about improving the representation of non-fee earners in industry groups and bodies, as well as getting a greater number of non-fee earners involved in the IP Inclusive programme. I recently gave a speech on the same topic at an industry event, which was well received."

Wellbeing

Maintaining the wellbeing of our people is of critical importance to Boulton. We have always prided ourselves on our warm and collegiate culture, and in supporting the physical and mental wellbeing of those who work for us.

HR Director Angela McCleave is head of the wellbeing committee at Boulton. *"I am passionate about people," she says, "and in particular enabling others to be the best possible versions of themselves and to be able to tackle any obstacles along the way."*

The purpose of the group is to assist in providing wellbeing support to anybody in the firm, acting as a point of contact and signposting for anyone experiencing a mental health issue or suffering emotional distress. The volunteers in the group attend regular Mental Health First Aider training on an annual basis to achieve this.

There is still also a serious stigma surrounding mental health. Even if people outwardly say they are willing to talk and share their problems, inwardly the reluctance to talk can persist. Angela is determined to break those boundaries, *"wherever I can, and to continue to develop a real culture of openness and supportiveness here at Boulton."*

Investment in this area is something which Angela strongly approves. *"Looking at it holistically, it also makes complete sense to do what we can to improve the mental and physical wellbeing of our staff. Our people are at the heart of our work and our service to our clients. Supporting the mental and physical*

health of our people both in and out of the office will in turn enhance our performance as a firm and the service we offer to our clients."

Looking to the future, Angela and the team have a number of programmes on the horizon to keep driving our wellbeing strategy at Boulton. *"We're looking at additional ways of improving how we support staff, via continued use of mental health tools from Vitality, Simplyhealth and Health Assured, our Employee Assistance Programme," she says. "We've also established a training programme for all staff on equality, diversity and inclusion topics, which includes wellbeing topics to raise awareness of potential underlying factors in mental distress so employees can recognise them in themselves, and in their team-mates."*

Ultimately for Angela: *"None of us are immune from experiencing problems with our mental health, whatever level we are within the firm. This is not empty rhetoric at Boulton. We look after our people because without them, there is no Boulton."*

Case study

"When I became aware of the wellbeing committee here at Boulton I really had to get involved. Helping people doesn't get much more real than mental health support. To be honest another reason I got involved was because the statistics for men in my age demographic are stark. Suicide is the biggest killer for men under 50 years of age. How many of those deaths are preventable? How many people did each passing affect? The



Tarik Chaibi, Trade Mark Manager, Records and Renewals

Boult Wellness Group, led by Angela McCleave put me on an excellent mental health first aid course in 2022. The course taught me all aspects of mental illness, how to provide initial support and what resources are available to us all. I am now fortunate enough to say that I am a qualified Mental Health First Aider with MHFA England. None of us are alone and it's okay to not be okay. Boult has been revolutionary in its approach and tone with regards to mental health support and I'm privileged to be a part of it." **Tarik Chaibi, Trade Mark Manager, Records and Renewals**

Jonathan's Voice and Boult

Boult recognises the importance of good mental health, in order to build a happier, more efficient and better-balanced workplace. There is a lot of potential stress in the profession, not all of which can be removed entirely. Boult looks to allow these stresses to be shared and so hopefully lessened, by providing a workplace that promotes discussion between colleagues and different people in different teams and at different levels. This allows workload to

be balanced, worries to be shared, and open discussion to take place to suggest and implement changes in working practices that can help relieve the burden.

We also have structures in place to recognise where others may be having difficulties (at home or at work), and to provide a supportive organisation in which people can be frank about issues that may affect them without encountering stigma. We are open to working with external institutions and charities to support this – one of which is Jonathan's Voice.

Jonathan's Voice was established in 2017 in memory of Jonathan McCartney, a Patent Attorney who tragically took his own life that year. They help to promote mental wellbeing and mental health awareness with a particular focus on the IP industry and those at an early stage in their careers.

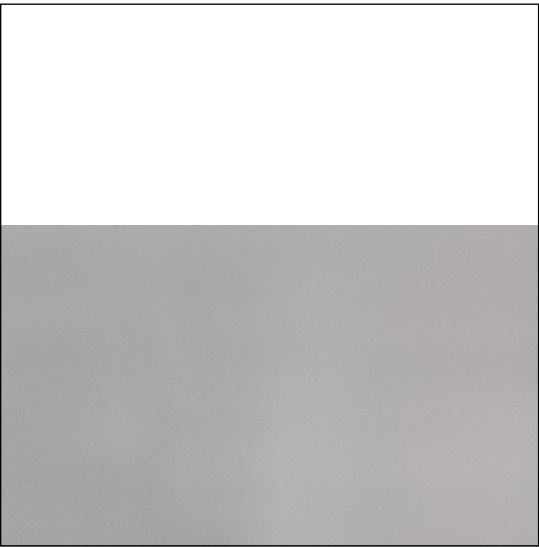
The charity aims to reduce the stigma associated with mental health issues and to empower people to speak up and ask for help when they need it. They work closely



with organisations such as CIPA, CITMA and IP Inclusive as well as individual companies, to raise awareness and support them to develop better mental health and wellbeing practices in the workplace. They offer various resources on their website, to assist IP Professionals, but also managers and supervisors in IP organisations.

Victoria Russell, a Senior Associate, has played a role in introducing Jonathan's Voice to Boulton. *"I have been aware of Jonathan's Voice through their involvement with IP Inclusive," she says. "I was encouraged to get in touch and Graham and Katie from Jonathan's Voice came and gave an engaging talk about the charity and the work that they do."*

That talk was held for staff as part of our Movember series of events. The talk emphasised why it is so important to support good mental health within the workplace, and why that should be a priority for employers. Although still in the early stages, Boulton are keen to continue to develop our relationship with Jonathan's Voice. *"There's a willingness to do more to promote good mental health within Boulton, and to develop the ethos within our firm for a healthy workplace."*



Dr Victoria Russell, Senior Associate

Social mobility

The UK IP profession has, for many decades, had a reputation for being overwhelmingly white, male and middle-class. Increasingly, clients are demanding broader representation in their legal teams. Matthew Spencer, Partner, helped launch our partnership with The Sutton Trust to ensure a diverse set of candidates comes through our doors.

"We want to challenge the perception that law is elitist and help generate interest in the profession from a wider community. The Sutton Trust works with students who are yet to determine their choices in terms of university course and profession. That is the optimal time for us to engage with these young people. The Trust organises various programmes, including Pathways to Law and Pathways to Engineering. We were the first patent and trade mark firm to join The Trust. It is our goal to improve awareness of, and access to, the wonderful profession in which we work."

We have delivered several Pathways programmes for both patents and trade marks. It has proven a significant success so far: *"Based on our interaction to date we are confident that, together with The Trust, we can help to break down barriers and inspire people from all backgrounds to join the IP profession,"* Matthew says. *"Of course, this benefits us, but it also benefits our clients because they want to work with the best people, no matter where they come from."*

It's a good start, but Matthew acknowledges it is a long-term commitment that requires concentrated effort, not just a short-term goal. *"We have pledged to support those who face challenges entering and succeeding in the IP profession because of their socioeconomic or ethnic backgrounds. We are all committed to fulfilling this promise over the coming months and years."*

"I was able to gain valuable insight into IP and was able to gain a greater understanding into the different routes into law, e.g. through STEM." **Sutton Trust participant**

"It really opened my eyes to the world of IP and opened up to another way of tackling higher education. I really got to see how skills and knowledge are actually applied."

Sutton Trust participant

"We are delighted to work with Boulton who offer an incredibly valuable opportunity to Sutton Trust students giving them a unique insight into IP Law and a brilliant chance to meet with Lawyers in person, which will be instrumental in increasing the social mobility of IP Law. We are looking forward to continuing our partnership with Boulton over the coming years."

Katy Hampshire, Director of Programmes, Sutton Trust



Dr Matthew Spencer, Partner and heads up the social mobility programme

What The Sutton Trust students thought of their placement with Boulton

- 100% of participants either strongly agreed or agreed that the work placement was beneficial.
- 100% of participants either strongly agreed or agreed that the work placement was interesting.
- 89% said that going on the placement had made it more likely that they would enter the IP profession.
- 100% said they had a better understanding of the qualifications and skills needed to achieve a career in IP.

Our open day programme

As part of our ongoing strategy to reach the broadest and most diverse pool of excellent talent, we've created an open day for university students who have completed at least the first year of their degree.

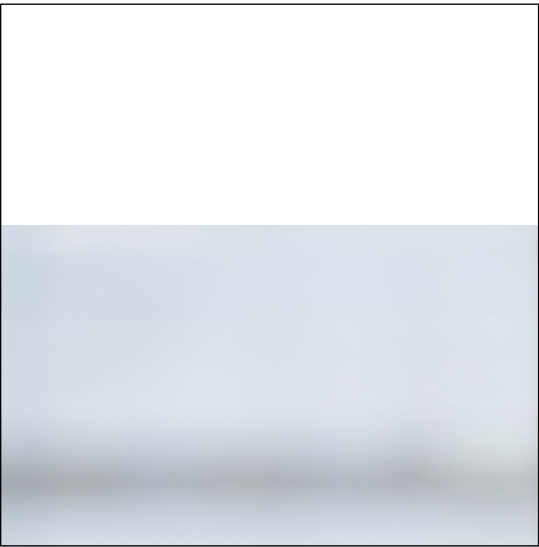
Being a virtual event, we're not limited to reaching only those who are geographically close, and we can accommodate many more people than would be practical for an in-person event. The aim is to reach not only those who are sure that a career in IP is for them, but also those who are earlier in their career decisions and so might be considering a range of potential options. We've seen a good uptake in the programme since it was launched and we expect about 100 attendees to attend each open day.

Nick Widdowson, Partner, oversees our recruitment strategy and the open day programme for Boulton. *"The open day allows us to reach the best talent possible, early in their career journey,"* he says. *"We want to help attendees in deciding whether the IP profession would suit their skills, interests and passions. To increase our reach, we've worked hard to promote the open day widely and engaged with third parties to target STEM candidates. Our equality, diversity and inclusion objectives underpin all our recruitment initiatives. On our most recent open day, over 64% of attendees were state educated; 64% were female; 41% were non-white; and 28% were first generation university students."*

The open day is relaxed and informal.

"Our aim is not to deliver a day of dry lectures," says Nick, *"but instead to welcome attendees into our culture and help them to understand what makes a great patent attorney or trade mark attorney. We aim to give attendees access to a range of people here at Boulton so they can ask the questions they need to, to help them understand what it's like to be a patent attorney or trade mark attorney."*

Nick sees the success of our open day as a stepping stone in recruiting the best possible talent for our firm. *"Recruiting the best talent is the single most important element for maximising the future success of our business,"* he says. *"We work with an enormously diverse range of clients with varied business cultures and intellectual property needs. We can't just have everyone at Boulton fit one and the same mould. By recruiting diverse talent, it helps us to meet the diversity of our clients' needs more effectively. Equality, diversity and inclusion aren't peripheral objectives for us - we need all these elements to ensure we deliver excellent service to meet the diverse needs of our clients."*



Dr Nick Widdowson, Partner and heads up the open day programme



Dr Oliver Rutt, Partner and heads up the charity and ESG programme

Charity and environmental, social and governance

With the UN suggesting we have until 2030 to radically change our habits and reduce our carbon consumption, improving our approach to sustainability is a matter of importance for Boulton. Having signed up for the Legal Sustainability Alliance (LSA), Business in the Community (BITC) and One Tribe, we are committed to improving our ecological and community impact for the long term. We aspire as a business to become carbon neutral in due course.

Oliver Rutt, Partner, leads on Charity and Environment, Social and Governance (ESG) initiatives for Boulton. As he sees it, *"I head up our charity and environment committee which is staffed by volunteers across the firm. Our role is to lead on and make a difference in these areas for the firm."*

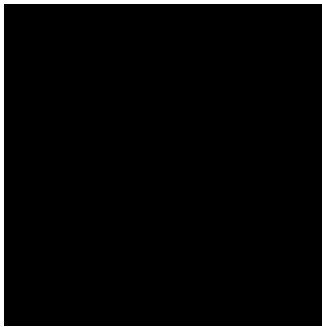
"It's the right thing to do," he continues. *"We should be responsible for our impact on society and for our environmental footprint, to try and do our best to reduce any negative impact. It's something our employees are passionate about."* He sees our ability to make a positive contribution to environmental issues as far greater when we act as a firm, rather than just acting alone. *"We can achieve more in a group than individually. With a big group of us it's a lot easier to make a difference."*

Heading up our charity and ESG activities is a natural fit for Oliver from a personal and professional standpoint. *"From a chemistry perspective, so much of the technology we get involved with over the years is more and more to do with reducing the environmental impact of products, we do a lot of emissions control aspects. Previously technology used to be how*

can we achieve x; now it's how can we achieve x while reducing our carbon footprint. We're seeing it time and time again."

As with all areas of our business, the pandemic had a profound effect on our ESG programme. *"A lot of our immediate sustainability initiatives happened automatically in lockdown,"* Oliver says. *"We're pretty much paperless now!"* Our move to our new building at Salisbury Square has supported this. It's a BREEAM Excellent accredited building, the recipient of a Green Apple Award in 2021, and features helpful carbon-reduction automatic lighting, for example, in the bathrooms and meeting rooms.

On the charity side, the volunteering policy and strategy is a key priority for the firm. We offer two fully paid days a year where staff can volunteer for a good cause in our wider community. To ensure such good deeds are supported and recognised these hours are fully paid. Oliver is keen to keep our approach to volunteering as flexible as possible for Boulton employees. *"We don't want to be too prescriptive. We see two strands to this. There are people who have organised their own involvement; and there are people who want to do something but don't necessarily have a contact. For the latter case, the firm will aim to provide placements for them."* In 2022, we made some good steps in establishing a firm volunteering programme that Oliver is keen to expand on.



To close out our thoughts on responsible business and what this means for Boulton, we asked Alex Frost, Partner, to sum up its importance to him personally and to Boulton as a firm.

"Boulton has always been guided by a clear set of ethical values that keep us firmly grounded and true to our core principles. We use this to make decisions for the greater good, even when it might not be to our short-term personal gain."

One key element of our wellbeing strategy he's keen to reinforce is that of work-life balance.

"Striking the right work-life balance has for many years been important to us. Someone who has time to dedicate to pursuits outside of working hours – be that a hobby, family, exercise, or voluntary work – will, we think, be a more rounded and happier individual, leading to a more fulfilling working environment, increased job satisfaction and productivity, as well as better client relationships."

Ultimately, Alex is adamant that being a responsible business is not just a nice to have: it's a core element of what makes Boulton a success. *"Our responsible business strategy is fundamental to our business because it demonstrates our commitment to creating a positive impact on society."* Alex says. *"It promotes employee engagement and boosts morale and increases client retention and loyalty. It is a 'win-win' - it's self-evidently the right thing to do."*



Dr Alex Frost, Partner



Boult Wade Tennant LLP

Salisbury Square House
8 Salisbury Square
London
EC4Y 8AP
www.boult.com

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