



IMPACT REPORT

2025

A photograph of two men sitting on a grey and yellow couch in a modern office setting. The man on the left is wearing a pink shirt and glasses, and the man on the right is wearing a white shirt and glasses. They are both smiling at the camera.

business as a force for good

hello

Muckle LLP achieved B Corp certification in 2023. At that stage, we were already actively pursuing the concept that business can be a force for good. We were doing so through volunteering, pro bono advice and our Muckle Community Fund at the Community Foundation North East. But we knew we had to go further, and B Corp has provided a great framework in order to give better structure to what we do. It's a way to keep ourselves accountable and to build on the values we've always stood by.

It's also helped sharpen our focus in some areas, including, for example, our environmental work. We've worked with SmartCarbon for the past few years to understand our environmental impact – establishing our carbon baseline and putting a clear plan in place to improve.

It's a journey, but we're on it, and we're committed to making meaningful progress. That's the great thing about B Corp – it isn't about perfection, it's about committing to the journey, being transparent, and constantly pushing to do better.

This year, we've spent time bringing B Corp to life inside the firm, helping our people understand how their actions can have an impact – whether that's working on initiatives to improve our client service or getting involved in the causes they care about through volunteering and pro bono.

We've also started looking at how to share the message more widely – with our clients and the North East business community. A recent report from the Charities Aid Foundation showed that 41% of North East businesses give to charity, well ahead of the national average. That doesn't surprise us and we believe B Corp can give all businesses the tools to keep improving. We therefore plan to share as widely as we can how B Corp has helped us.

We believe that business really can be a force for good, as B Corp says. We are committed to making that positive impact on our communities, our team and our clients. This is how we have got on in the last year, we hope enjoy reading it.

Anthony Evans, managing partner
Hugh Welch, senior partner



our
purpose

be a **force for good**
for our **people and**
our communities



our 2025 achievements

In 2025, we outlined clear objectives to improve our impact across the five B Corp pillars. While we have achieved all targets shown on this page, we know there's always room for improvement.

Our aim is to stay accountable and continuously improve. Although we set team targets of a 10% increase in pro bono work in 2025, our teams only achieved a 5.2% increase. We are committed to improving this.

people

- Helped employees form deeper connections with peers, family and community
- Provided our people with enriching jobs, offering autonomy, purpose and flexibility
- Rewarded our people in line with our reward principles and values
- Created a shared purpose, aligned to our values that people feel they can contribute to
- Supported our people to achieve optimum wellbeing both inside and outside of work



governance

- Amended our members' agreement to fully embed B Corp's principles
- Built on what we're doing well – transparent financial reporting and quarterly financial and strategy presentations to all our people
- Implemented our sexual harassment risk assessment, designed in collaboration with our people



environment

- Agreed and prioritised an action plan to reduce our carbon impact based on the data collected using SmartCarbon's carbon footprint calculation portal
- Worked closely with local stakeholders such as NE1 on sustainable initiatives



community

- Got better at accurately recording pro bono, volunteering and trustee time and creating a baseline for improvement
- Encouraged at least one group volunteering day per team
- Continued with strategic grant giving and building on our relationships with these charities



clients

- Upskilled our people's knowledge across the firm through a series of 'get-to-know' our client sessions
- Trained all our people on the best ways to communicate with clients, including sessions on written communications and how to deal effectively with complaints



our commitments for 2026

1 governance

- Launch our new five-year plan, ensuring everyone at Muckle understands our strategy and how they contribute to our impact
- Adopt and adapt to the new B Corp standards



2 people

- Scale up our Inspiring Careers programme to promote more inclusivity
- Muckle values and culture are understood and role modelled across the organisation and locations
- Maintain a reward and recognition structure which results in strong succession planning and rewards high performance
- Have a more diverse organisation that better reflects our community
- Achieve consistent high performance from everyone
- Have an engaged, healthy workforce



3 community

- Work with the Community Foundation to identify more grant recipients that support social mobility
- Encourage more trustee and governor roles
- Continue to provide meaningful volunteer opportunities for our people
- Increase our pro bono work by 10% per team



4 environment

- Reinvigorate the work of our Green Team by introducing more people-centric initiatives
- Build on our five-year environmental plan
- Continue supporting the North East Community Forest by encouraging our people to engage in volunteering



5 clients

- Introduce a new customer relationship management (CRM) system so we can better service clients across the firm
- Make sure we retain our excellent client service and culture as we become a multi-site firm with offices in Newcastle, Teesside and Cumbria
- Design and deliver a service model refresh



what governance means to us

Governance is the foundation that ensures our business lives up to its purpose - not just in what we aim for, but in how we operate. It means having a clearly defined strategy that is embedded in our firm, one that ensures all stakeholders are prioritised and involved in our decision-making.

Led by the B Global Network's theory of change, our governance involves structures and processes that hold us accountable to our people, clients, communities, and planet.

Our LLP agreement reinforces our commitment to making a positive impact by donating 1% of our annual profits to the Community Foundation North East and building strong relationships with local suppliers, clients and others.



a new chapter

In April 2025, Anthony Evans took over as managing partner, marking the beginning of an exciting new chapter for our firm. Having served as head of our corporate team and a key member of the firm's leadership team for several years, Anthony is recognised for his client-focused approach and his determination to foster a collaborative and dynamic work environment.

Outgoing managing partner Jason Wainwright, who stepped down in a planned move after 10 years of leading the firm, was instrumental in guiding the firm through many successes, including the development of our award-winning culture, year-on-year turnover and profit growth.



muckle^{LLP}

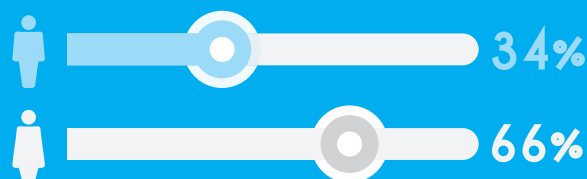
leadership diversity

Muckle is a limited liability partnership jointly owned by 17 equity partners (EPs). Our EPs make up our Policy Committee, which sets the firm's strategy and progress, ensuring our business operates in line with our values and goals.

Our executive committee, comprising four EPs who are trusted to make decisions on behalf of the whole EP group on certain matters, is tasked with executing that strategy.

They are supported by the firm's directors who head up our non-legal functions, such as marketing and business development, finance, HR and operations.

Firm



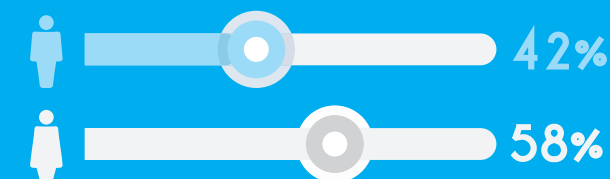
EPs



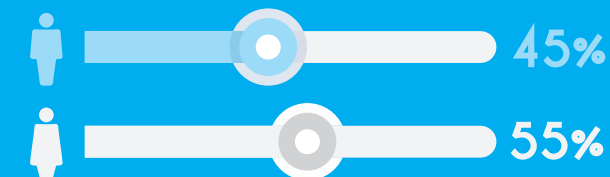
Directors



Legal department heads



Partners





planning for success

To succeed, we know we have to plan ahead, and succession planning is a key part of that strategy. In 2025, we announced three key planned promotions within our senior leadership team, reinforcing our commitment to having a strong succession plan for future growth.

Philip Clare became head of our corporate team, taking over from Anthony Evans, and Joanne Davison was named as head of the sports, education, and charities team, succeeding Tony McPhillips.

Gail Bennett was appointed to head the real estate team, taking over from Jonathan Combe.



what people means to us

As a firm, we're dedicated to creating a **culture of care, investing in our people** so they have the confidence and continuous support they need to succeed.

99% of our people believe we have a clear plan for the future and we're passionate about helping every individual understand how they can contribute and impact upon our new five-year plan.

From driving social mobility to providing extensive learning and development opportunities, we're here to help our people thrive. We also understand that the legal sector can be stressful, which is why our wellbeing strategy focuses on mental, physical, social, professional and financial wellbeing. Our HR team, mental health advocates and our BEAM team all play a vital role in keeping our people well at work.



bringing it home

Although we're not in it for the awards, we're proud to have been recognised for our inclusive culture, values and our people's industry-leading legal expertise.

In September 2025, we held our re-accreditation process for **Investors in People (IIP)** and were thrilled to be once again awarded Platinum status.

Only 7% of global organisations achieve Platinum status with Investors in People. This recognition reflects that every single person is involved in supporting each other and committed to making work better. Our survey results place us 6th among law firms of a similar size out of all IIP-accredited organisations within the legal activities sector, across 75 countries – a huge achievement!

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE®
We invest in people Platinum



in-house excellence

We firmly believe in celebrating our people. Our Make a Difference Awards highlight people throughout the firm who've made a significant impact, demonstrating our values of care, responsibility, trust and teamwork through their work or community initiatives.



care

At the start of the year, chartered legal executive **Claire Richmond** won the award for embodying our value of **care** and her exceptional commitment to her work, team, and clients.



responsibility

Partner **Sarah Barratt** and Junior Secretary **Olivia Merrick** were joint winners of the responsibility award in March. They were highlighted for their outstanding work ethic and going the extra mile to support their teams.

trust

Partner **Tim Boardman** scooped the **trust** award in June for showing honesty, integrity and a high level of accountability throughout all areas of this work.



teamwork

Commended for his team spirit, trainee solicitor **Louis Hutton** won the **teamwork** award in September for going above and beyond to help colleagues outside of his own department.

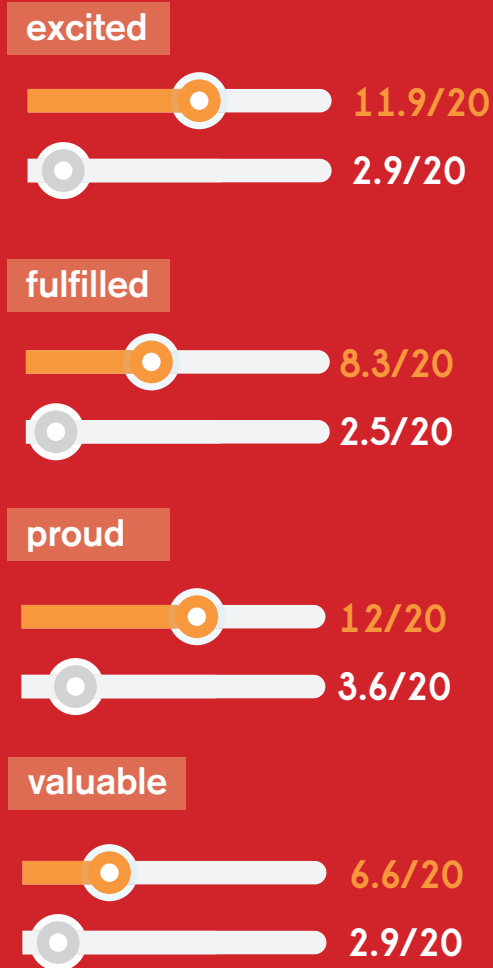


making it count

We provide multiple opportunities for our people to give feedback and contribute to our firm-wide strategy throughout the year. In line with this commitment, we encouraged everyone to take part in a new survey through MindLode.

We scored significantly higher than the platform's average and legal sector benchmarks for each of the seven pillars. Results showed that our people feel proud, valuable and safe working at Muckle, and more in-depth questions highlighted the need to revisit our agile working etiquette.

The survey provided valuable feedback, helping us better understand how our people feel at work and ensure we're always targeting areas for improvement. We now have clear actions to inform our new five-year plan and ensure our people can continue to thrive at work.



what
people
means
to me



Nicola Leyden, director of HR

"We're delighted to have won the Best Place to Work (Northumberland & Tyneside) in the annual North East Business Awards. This time, we're joint winners with Port of Blyth.

"The principles behind the 'Best Place to Work' award – celebrating innovation and creativity and honouring brilliant people going the extra mile for their customers and clients – align with our own values – so we're delighted to have been recognised for our approach."



progressing together

Keeping our minds active is key to succeeding in our professional and personal lives. Learning and development opportunities play a huge part in helping us reach our full potential as a firm, which is why we continue to deliver an engaging lunch and learn programme targeting the areas that matter most to our people.

From firm-wide agile working and key client sessions to expert-led workshops focused on financial wellbeing and mental health awareness, we cover a range of professional development and wellbeing topics to support our people to thrive.





leading the change

Supporting social mobility initiatives has always been important to us – from our North East Solicitor Apprenticeship scheme (NESA) to our work with local charities that create opportunities for people from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds.

Looking at our data, we realised there was more we could be doing to reach those from underrepresented backgrounds. To make our recruitment more inclusive, we relaunched our social mobility strategy in March 2025. As part of our strategy, we've hosted career talks targeting schools with a high percentage of free school meals and ringfenced placements for our Inspiring Careers week.



what
social mobility
means
to me

”

Jessica Gray, solicitor in the real estate team

“It’s important for commercial firms to reach out and offer career insights in schools, as a brief conversation could be the catalyst in inspiring students from less privileged backgrounds to pursue a career in law. Prioritising social mobility is important to improve the opportunities available to hard-working students, regardless of their background, as well as creating a diverse workforce.”



what community means to us

For Muckle, community is a vital part of doing **business with purpose**. We recognise that success means more than profit; it means creating a positive, lasting impact in the places we live and work.

Whether supporting charities through grant funding, carrying out pro bono work, or giving our people time to volunteer, we're committed to building stronger, more inclusive communities. It's about showing up and making sure we work not just to improve our bottom line, but to impact our communities, schools, charities, and future generations too.



In 2025, we donated

£44,950

through our Muckle Fund at
The Community Foundation North East

Taking us to

£765,270

donated in total



staying on track

In 2025, we launched our 'purpose dashboard', which pulls together all volunteering data from across the firm. Not only can everyone track their individual purpose time, but it also allows us as a firm to track improvement year-on-year.

1616 total firm purpose time **↑ 6.3%** year-on-year

335 voluntary role hours **↑ 51%** year-on-year

26 voluntary roles **↑ 53%** year-on-year



led by purpose

We've long demonstrated a commitment to pro bono, but we're always looking to improve. Although we've collected data since 2024, 2025 has been our baseline year for thoroughly tracking our progress, so next year we'll be able to see what improvements we've made.

6 lawyers featured on the pro bono recognition list

424 pro bono hours **↑5.2%** year-on-year

34 organisations supported **↑6%** year-on-year

What
pro bono
means
to me

Joanne Davison, partner and head of sports, education and charities

"I love being part of an organisation which allows and actively encourages us to get involved in pro bono work, it really feels like my work is having an impact on local communities.

"Small community organisations have such a significant local impact but many simply cannot pay for legal advice. I really believe it is so important for us to help in a meaningful way and use our skills for good. If we can help these organisations in even a small way, it can make a big difference."



What
pro bono
means
to me

”

Richard Nixon, partner and head of natural capital

“For so many organisations, there’s a real barrier to accessing legal services due to the expense, but we can provide that safety net through pro bono, catching organisations that would otherwise fall.”

“It’s infectious dealing with groups who are dedicated to their purpose. We get to make a huge difference, giving organisations the confidence of knowing they’re never at the back of the queue and they’re protected and equipped with the advice they need to mitigate costly errors.”



the business of giving back

Everyone at Muckle gets two paid days of volunteering – and we encourage everyone to take them! Initiatives such as team volunteering days and posting volunteering opportunities throughout the firm inspire our people to stay focused on giving back.

what
volunteering
means
to me

Paula Normington, solicitor

“Volunteering gives me a feeling of connection to the community and makes me feel like I’m having a positive impact that I can be proud of. It’s a hopeful, impactful way to engage with your community and to be part of it. Organisations need support that money alone can’t provide, and even the tiniest of actions can make a massive difference.

“It provides an opportunity to be creative or active and engage in something generally beneficial for organisations looking to make a real difference.”



time well spent

Our lawyers are passionate about the work they do, and that passion doesn't stop once they log off at the end of the day. Many use their legal expertise to volunteer as school governors, trustees and board members.

Lydia Stewart, trustee at Choysez

"I was worried I didn't have the experience to be able to do it...but actually, it's more about bringing a new perspective and different ideas. If you're hesitant or feeling unsure, it's about knowing you do have knowledge, opinions and thoughts. You being you is enough."

CLICK HERE

Alison Jones, trustee at Newcastle Theatre Royal Trust Limited and Museum of London Archaeology, and trustee of the British Museum

"I'm very passionate about the not-for-profit sector. As much as the charities get from me and my legal expertise, I get a lot out of it as well...I meet people I would never normally meet in everyday life, but we're all bound together by the same passion for the cause."

CLICK HERE

Hugh Welch, trustee at Clean Slate Solutions

"As corporate lawyers, we're in an incredibly fortunate and privileged position and I've always thought it's incumbent on us to try and do something to help the broader community...If you're thinking about it, then definitely go for it."

CLICK HERE



wraparound support

We recognise there's no one-size-fits-all approach to supporting charities – our aim is to offer the specific, wraparound support that charitable organisations in our community need.

As we're in constant contact with those we support, we recognise their needs and help them to meet their goals. This doesn't always look like grant funding alone; sometimes, this involves providing specialist help, such as marketing and business development support and training, fundraising and connecting key business contacts.

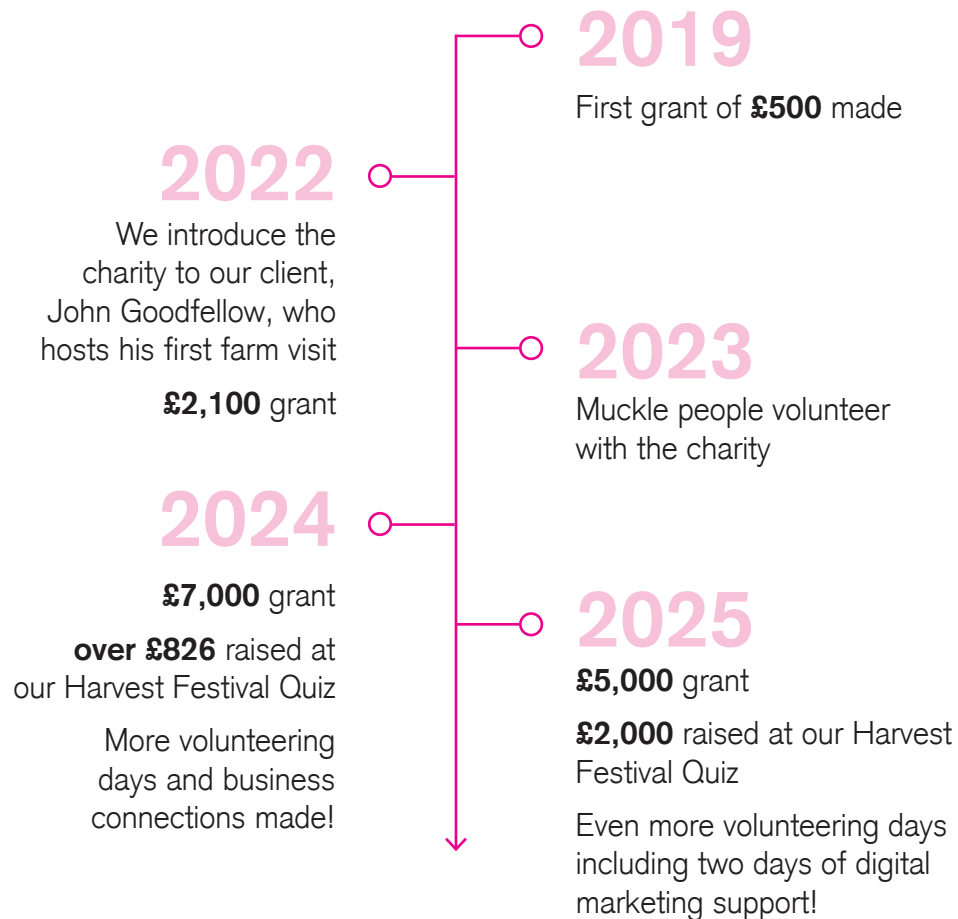


The Country Trust

The Country Trust is a national education charity that connects children from areas of high disadvantage with the land. Through food, farming and countryside experiences, they help children discover the natural world, understand where their food comes from, and build confidence, curiosity, and a sense of belonging.

Sue Thompson, The Country Trust

"The support we've received from Muckle over the years has been nothing short of amazing. Their financial contributions have been invaluable, but it's the wider support that has truly set them apart - from filming and producing high-quality videos for our website, to generously volunteering their time and expertise. Muckle has gone the extra mile by connecting us with key businesses, several of whom have become valued supporters of The Country Trust."



Choysez

In 2025, we supported Choysez with a grant of £5,000, taking our total funding to £13,000 in the last three years. Lydia Stewart, solicitor in our real estate team, also became a trustee for the charity.

Chris Conroy, Choysez

"It's very important to our ethos to receive funding from people in our area who have a deep-rooted commitment to our community, as we are able to show the girls who attend Choysez that they are not on their own and that their wider community wants them to succeed, when they often feel like they are at odds with everything and everyone."



Hugh Welch, our senior partner, became a trustee of the charity in 2023 after being introduced to their work through our Muckle Community Fund. We have supported them with a further grant of £5,000, bringing the total to £16,000.

Richard Brice, Clean Slate Solutions

"Muckle's contribution has made a significant impact on our day-to-day operations and the overall work we do. It helped us maintain the vital services we provide to those in need, ensuring our efforts continue uninterrupted and as effective as ever. With their assistance, we've been able to make a bigger difference in our community, one step at a time."



We gave Carlisle Key a grant of £5,000 in 2025 – our fourth since 2022 – bringing the total donated to £14,500. Our Cumbria team has also carried out a number of volunteering days at the charity.

Stephen Hawkins, Carlisle Key

"Your fund has and still supports us, making things that little bit easier. I've seen smiles because of the fund, and I or my colleagues get the thank yous! I then realise how much your support benefits the relationships we form in the drop-in with the young people and that is priceless."



what environment means to us

Strategies to reduce environmental harm and adopt sustainable practices are woven into the fabric of our firm, and we're determined to **reduce our impact** even further.

From promoting sustainable travel and reducing waste to planting trees with the North East Community Forest, our commitment to the environment has and always will be a key firm objective. We stay accountable through clear, measurable data, which we consistently review as a firm.

One key action from this year has been to amend our business travel policy to advise that no domestic flights are to be taken and an alternative method of travel must be chosen. If this isn't possible, then any flight booking must be authorised first by either a team head or managing partner. This ensures we make the right travel choices and are accountable for those choices.



working smarter

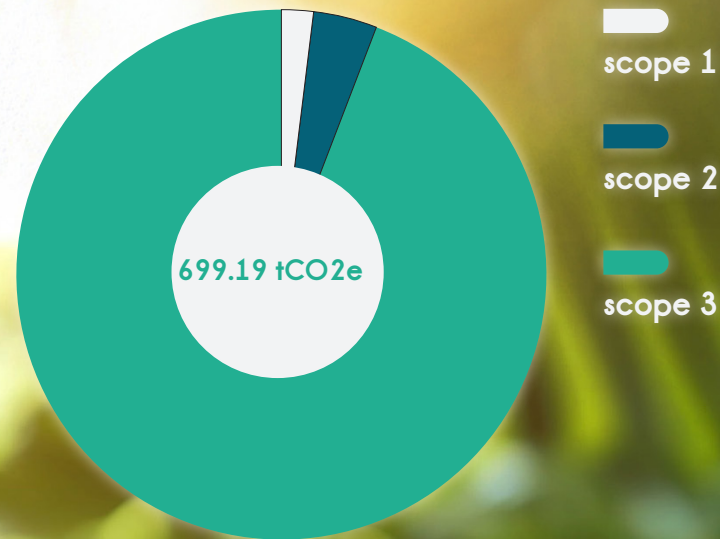
Engaging with SmartCarbon, we've been collecting our data since 2019 to better understand our carbon footprint. This is an important step in influencing how we address our environmental impact and supporting broader efforts to transition to a more sustainable, low-carbon economy.

We have emitted **699.19 tCO₂e** under Location Based Reporting and **675.78 tCO₂e** under Market Based Reporting for the financial year 2024/2025 across scopes 1 (direct emissions), 2 (indirect emissions) and 3 (indirect supply chain emissions).

We're keen to take the whole firm on this journey and our next steps will focus on what we can all do to reduce our Scope 3 emissions. We will also agree our action plan for reducing our impact and regularly monitor our progress against that plan.

¹ **Location-based** emissions are calculated using the average emissions intensity of the electricity grid on which energy consumption occurs.

² **Market-based** emissions are calculated based on the specific emissions intensity of the electricity purchased by the organisation.



the road to sustainable travel

We're committed to promoting sustainable travel, not just during our working hours but also during our commutes to our offices. We collect data on our people's travelling habits, which will inform our future travel initiatives.

We measure the type of transport used by our people, as well as their frequency of use, the miles travelled, the fuel type of our people's cars.

Type of transport (number of miles travelled)



70.3%



1.4%



24.1%



0.2%



3.9%



0.1%



rooted in kindness

Our volunteering days don't just benefit the local charities that we give our time to. For every hour our people volunteer, we donate £1 to the North East Community Forest.

Ross Weddle, chair of the North East Community Forest

"Business supporters like Muckle make a real difference to the North East Community Forest. Their contribution doesn't just plant trees—it helps us unlock matched government funding through the Trees for Climate programme, meaning every pound goes further."

Support like this enables us to create greener streets, plant hedgerows, and establish new woodlands across our region. Together, we're growing a healthier, more resilient North East for generations to come."

£ £1680 has been donated in 2025

336 saplings planted



what
environment
means
to me



Carolyn McKay, senior associate solicitor

“Working in real estate, I already have a passion for property and the built environment. I believe that a sustainable, well-kept environment enhances our quality of life and that keeping our surroundings clean, safe and attractive is part of our collective responsibility as professionals.”

“Supporting the environment is so important, and I feel that we should do what we can to have a positive impact. To ensure we’re doing our bit and as a firm, I work closely with NE1 to arrange for us to be involved in a number of practical initiatives, including monthly litter picks and other activities that benefit the community such as cutting back plants, trees and foliage in our local area.”



what clients mean to us

We provide excellent and consistent service delivery through '**The Muckle Way**'.

Developed with our people, it articulates our vision, strategy, values, behaviours, and client service model. The Muckle Way is all about setting our compass, making sure that, no matter who you speak to, you get the same personal, high-quality experience that's uniquely Muckle.



2025 in numbers

826

new clients in 2025

98

Muckle hosted client events or training

13

top-tier team rankings by Legal 500

48

lawyers ranked by Legal 500

10x

winners of 'Corporate Law firm of the Year' win at the Insider Dealmaker Awards

5x

winners of 'Property Law firm of the Year' win at the Insider Property Awards



focusing on feedback

Getting client feedback, and more importantly, acting on it, is integral to us providing the best possible service. This year, we set out to have broader conversations with our clients about their business priorities and their perspectives on our service delivery.

We received more than 50 reports and are delighted to say we had lots of positive feedback, but we've also looked closely at any constructive feedback so that we can make improvements. Clients consistently commented on our:

Partner-led service

Transparency of fees

Responsiveness

Commercial advice



a done deal

We took home four awards at the 2025 Insider North East Dealmaker Awards, including 'Corporate Law firm of the Year'.

We were thrilled to see two of our clients' deals win awards. Connect Health's merger won the Deal of the Year in the £20m+ category and Aspire Technology's acquisition of CloudCoCo won the Deal of the Year in the £5m-£20m category.

Sara Evans was named 'Corporate Lawyer of the Year'. As well as her skill and technical ability, Sara also has a reputation for going the extra mile in every aspect of her work, making her the standout lawyer this year, according to the judges.



Helen Hillary, former group executive director of Thompsons of Prudhoe Holding Ltd

"Sara's professionalism and proactive approach combined with her strategic and commercial style makes her a stand-out legal partner. I've always thoroughly enjoyed working with her as her insight and genuine care provides a sense of trust that is invaluable, I would highly recommend her without hesitation."





building on success

Our award-winning real estate team once again secured the title of 'Property Law Firm of the Year' at the Insider North East Property Awards. This marked the fifth year our team won the award, and the third consecutive year.

This achievement comes on the back of a year of growth and supporting our clients with legal expertise on a number of market-leading transactions. Over the past year, we've advised on significant projects with a total value in excess of £650m.



what engaging our people in B Corp means to us

We have long championed the importance of using business as a force for good, but we know there's always more that can be done.

This year, we've focused on pushing our impact further, ensuring the B Corp message remains top of mind.

Collaborating with other regional B Corps and actively engaging our people and the North East business community in the B Corp message, we ran a series of in-house events and workshops throughout the year.



proud to B values-led

In June, we ran our second firm-wide B Corp Day to reflect on the great work we've done across all B Corp pillars over the course of the year.

We invited charities from across the region to celebrate our impact and share best practice on how we can make a bigger impact, together.

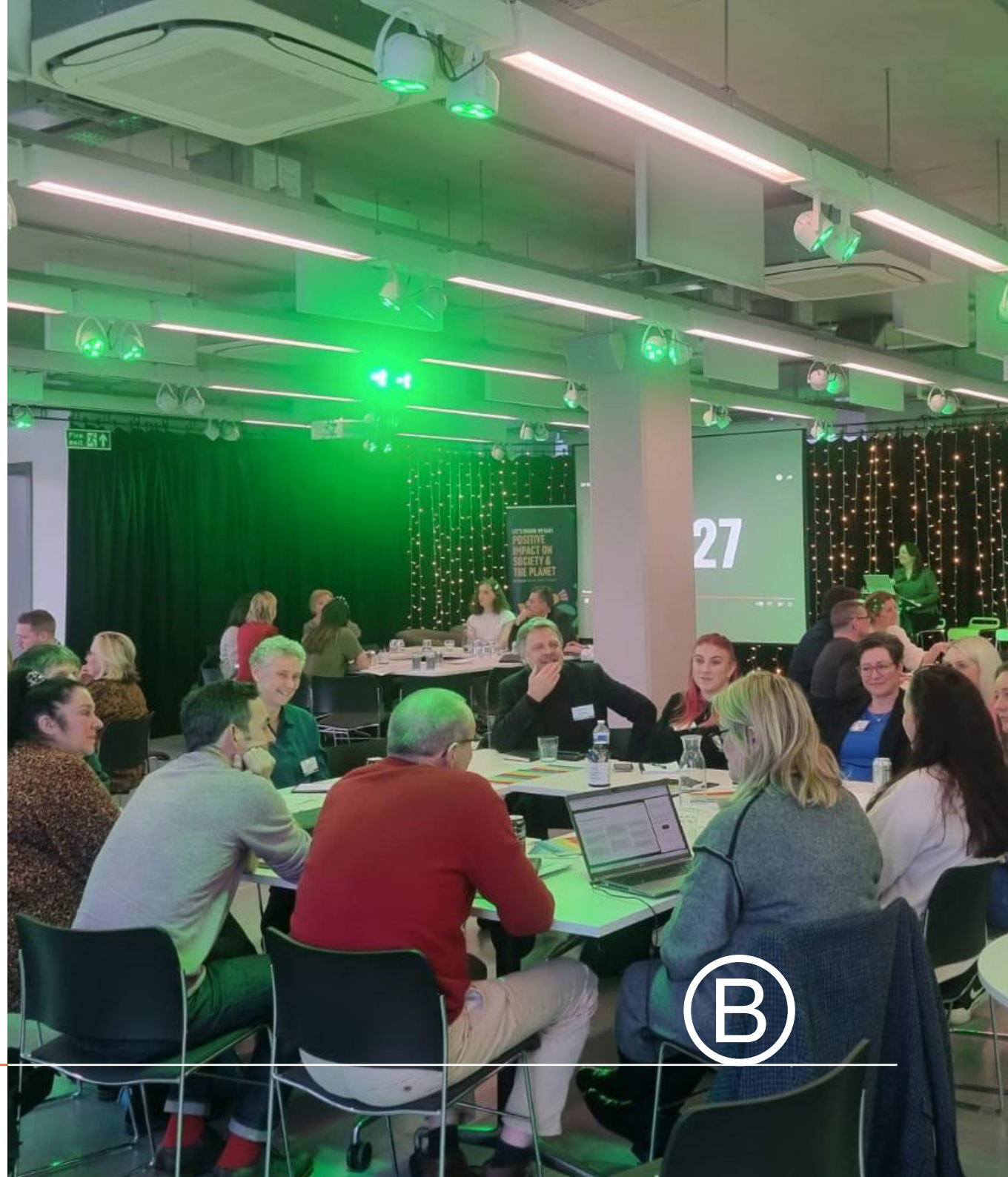
We also gave everyone a chance to win a Muckle-approved duvet day. All they had to do was bring in at least one non-perishable item for the Newcastle Foodbank, the more the better. We were thrilled to see our kitchen area filled with generous donations ready to be transported to those in need.



collaboration is key

We're no strangers to the power of collaboration. We hosted the B Local North East event for B Corp Month alongside Umi, Sail Creative, Robson Laidler and Just Williams, uniting a range of businesses and individuals aiming to meet the highest standards of social and environmental performance, accountability, and transparency.

Engaging talks and breakout discussions encouraged attendees to share their own experiences, discuss key challenges, and explore innovative ideas on how we can all put B Corp principles into practice and make a difference.



the work doesn't stop here

Using business as a force for good is at the heart of everything we do, but we recognise that we can always improve our efforts and increase our impact.

Our internal B Corp steering group ensures that we're consistently looking for ways to improve and take our ESG strategy to the next level – whether that's collaborating with and learning from other regional B Corps, or looking at new initiatives and processes.



Thinking about your own B Corp journey?

We're always happy to discuss the importance of the B Corp mission and share best practices with like-minded people in business.

If you'd like to collaborate or speak to us about how you can use business as a force for good, contact our senior partner **Hugh Welch** on **0191 211 7903**.





Certified



Corporation

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE®
We invest in people Platinum



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