**ESG Policy**

**Person responsible:** Stuart Jones (Head of Systems & Compliance)

**Date to be reviewed**: October 2023, last reviewed October 2022

**Environmental impact:**

We recognise the importance of understanding the impact of our activities on the environment. As a firm, whilst we are too small to incur the costs of obtaining standards or badges we are passionately committed to reducing our carbon footprint in any way that we can. Current measures that we take are:-

* Recycling as much paper, cardboard, glass and plastic as we can
* Switching off IT systems, photocopier and lights at night
* Car sharing to events and meetings where we can, the firm has in January 2022 bought an electric car to visit clients where this is necessary.
* Taking the train to meetings where that is an option and meeting online where that is workable
* We have been a paperless office since 2016. All documents are created electronically. We use electronic notes where possible and charge devices using a solar charger where possible.
* Reduction in office space utilised completed in 2019 and where possible resources have worked from home since 2020 with a view to reducing the environmental burden.
* Trying to buy services as locally as possible eg:- Suppliers, accountant so miles are reduced
* Procuring recycled products and recycling where possible, making sure our confidential waste is recycled
* We donate unused books to charity or others who will continue to use them
* We donate unused clothing to charity or others who will continue to use them

Action points for the next year include researching whether we can

* Obtain library materials in digital format to prevent the need for printing costs
* Heat home spaces via an air source heat pump rather than gas

We will aim to work with local suppliers where we can and to work with those who share our values.

**Community**

tiQtoQ resource are encouraged to participate in their local community and where the firm is asked to support local events it will endeavour to do so. We sponsor two local sports teams along with local events for disadvantaged children in the South Wales area.

**Work experience**

We recognise our ability to assist those attempting to enter the tech workforce with work shadowing opportunities.

**Pro Bono work and support of charities**

We provide the opportunity through the provision of our time and services at a greatly reduced rate or for free, to assist clients who may be of limited means or where us offering a reduced rate helps a third sector organisation preserve their funds for their charitable purposes.

Modern Slavery and Trafficking Policy

Whilst we are not large enough to be caught by legislation (Modern Slavery Act 2015) that requires large companies to do various things to combat this issue, we are nevertheless committed to doing what we can to help those large businesses to combat slavery and human trafficking, particularly because we work with a wide range of clients. Our Anti-slavery Policy reflects our commitment to acting ethically and with integrity in all our business relationships and to implementing and enforcing effective systems and controls to ensure slavery and human trafficking is not taking place anywhere in supply chains.

*What is slavery and human trafficking?*

Most situations of slavery or human trafficking are covered by International Labour Organization’s (ILO) definition of forced labour:

“...*all work or service which is exacted from any person under the threat of a penalty and for which the person has not offered himself or herself voluntarily.”*

There is no clear legal definition of exploitation but United Nations and European Conventions say that exploitation includes forced labour, servitude and slavery.

One definition is: “*Taking unfair advantage of another person in a work situation, where the element of ‘unfairness’ is established against a benchmark established in law.”*

This is a specific form of forced labour, in which the element of compulsion is through debt. It is characterised by a creditor-debtor relationship in which the worker is trapped by an unsustainably high debt to their employer.

Human trafficking is the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion...to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person for the purpose of exploitation.

*What steps do we take?*

We are transparent with our clients and will co-operate fully with them in any due diligence or audits they wish to undertake as regards our business and who we employ. We educate our clients about this topic, offering support and being vocal where we can.

Where we are sourcing products and services from our suppliers we ask them about what steps they are taking in this regard and where we are able to influence contract terms we include relevant provisions in relation to this issue. We regard that reputable suppliers will not mind answering questions in this regard.

We encourage anyone who has any concerns that someone in the supply chain is not acting ethically to raise this concern and have an appropriate whistleblowing policy.

We provide training to our contractors on this issue and how it can be hiding in plain sight including what things they might observe.

We review our practices regularly to see where it can be improved.

Valuing decent work and the living wage and eradicating poverty

Whilst we do not employ anyone, we are passionate advocates of the Living Wage and employers taking action to prevent poverty. We have:

* always paid our contractors far higher rates than the Living Wage
* always educated our clients about these issues and equality and used our influence where we can
* the opportunity when we are doing due diligence for buyers of business to identify problems and create change
* taken up cases on reduced rates where we have discovered employers underpaying their staff.

Investment

Where the firm invests money, our brokers are instructed to not invest in fossil fuels.