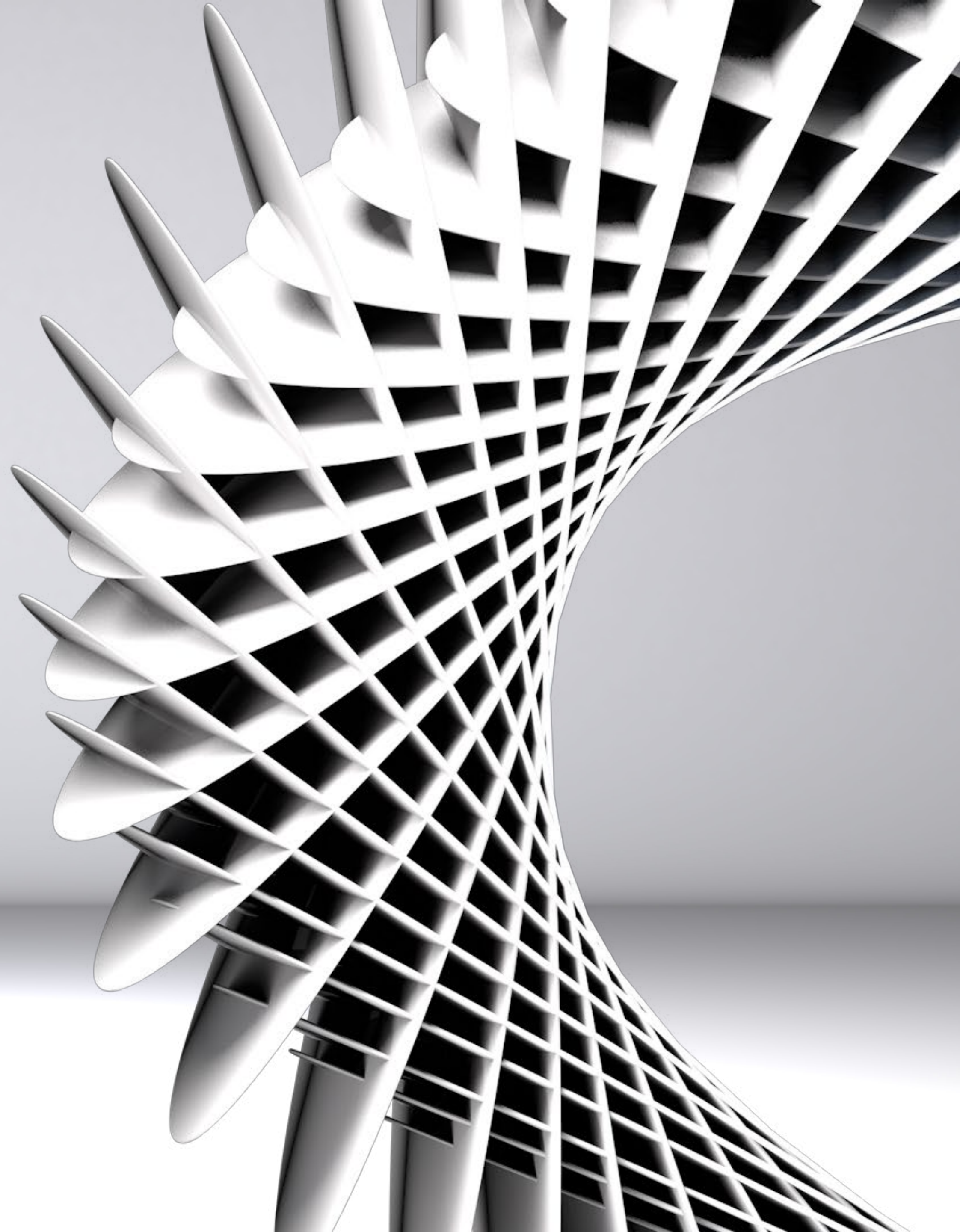


PETERS & PETERS

# A commitment to justice

2021





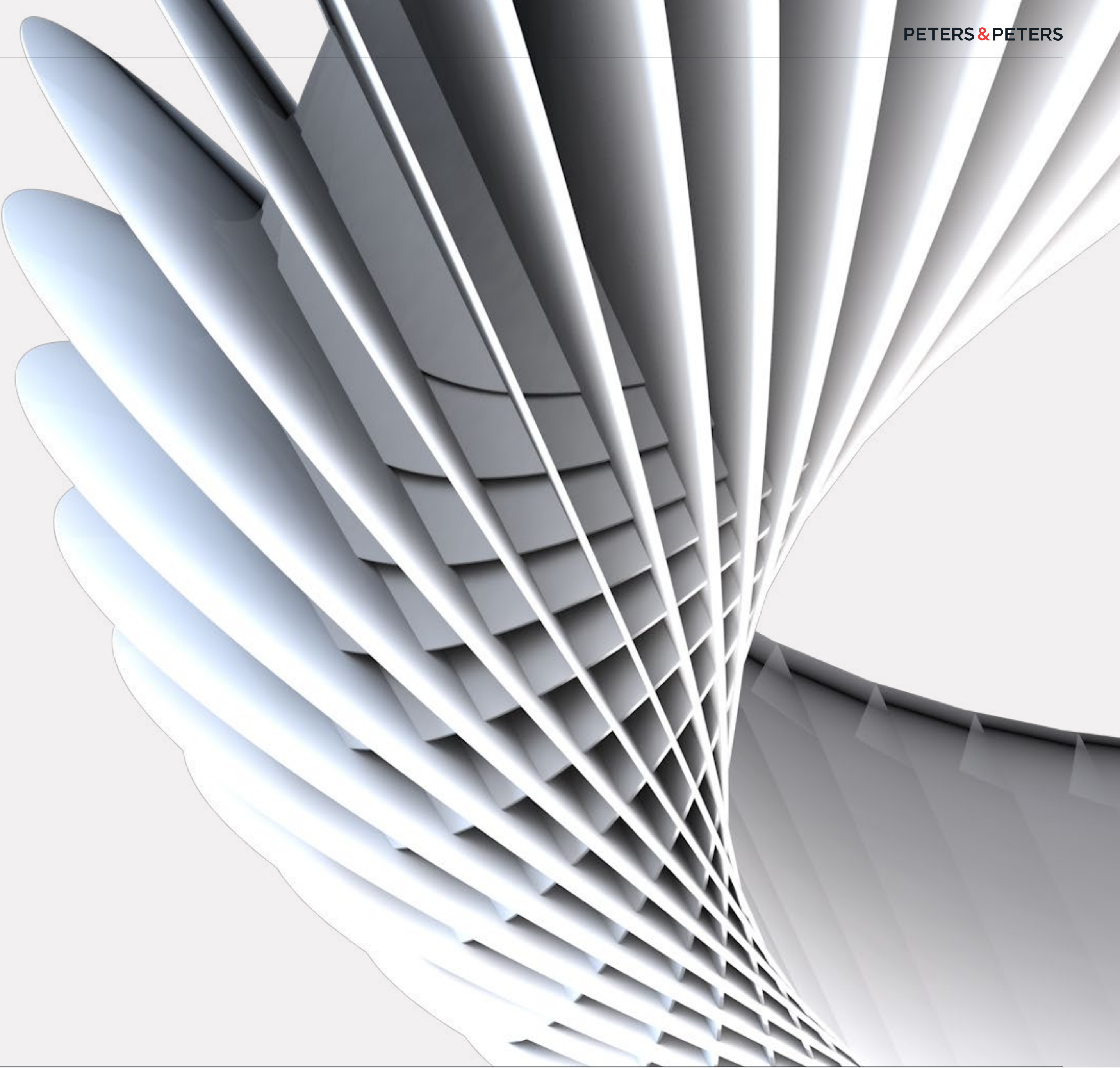
# A commitment to justice

At Peters & Peters we live our lives upholding justice – not just for our clients but for our communities, our people and the future of our planet.

Our community initiatives deliver opportunities and support for disadvantaged people, often near to where we live and work, with practical activity and partnering with charities. Our pro bono scheme helps victims of injustice around the world with free top-quality legal advice.

We know many people face deep-seated injustices because of age, race, sex and disability, as well as more hidden differences like background, belief, mental health and sexual orientation. Our diversity and inclusion programme works hard to identify and challenge all instances of exclusion and discrimination: in our hiring, our working systems and the way we treat one another.

And what use is justice today if all we have worked for – for our clients, communities, colleagues and families – is threatened by man-made climate change in the decades to come? Our environmental campaigns – driven by our active Green Team – work to minimise our harmful emissions whilst acting to promote biodiversity and a sustainable future.





# Justice is in our DNA

Helen McDowell, Managing Partner

If you read about Peters & Peters online, or if you’ve done business with us, you’ll know we’re one of London’s leading law firms for heavyweight international disputes.

You’ll know what we **do**, but perhaps not who we **are**.

Though we have a long and distinguished pedigree acting for corporations and prominent people, we are not at all traditional.

Everything we do is infused with a commitment to justice: **for our people, our communities and our planet**.

**We support our people.** When we promote diversity and inclusion it is no mere box-ticking exercise but a way of enriching our firm and opening opportunities. Our people tend to be tough, perhaps a little unorthodox, with a strong team identity. So we are always here for each other (and when we work with you, we are always here for you too).

**We support our communities.** We’ve done a lot to unlock opportunities for London’s young people, working with dynamic local charities and campaigns. We share our expertise on a pro bono basis with causes that really matter, not just international causes célèbres but just as importantly on small uncelebrated cases too. On a global level, we understand our obligations to the planet, and we’re pushing forward on efforts to operate as sustainably as we can. We’re working to reduce emissions, to reduce reliance on polluting forms of travel and on optimising the way we use resources. It matters to us, because it matters to all of us.

In the coming pages you’ll read more about our commitment to justice:

- our efforts to create a workforce that is inclusive and diverse
- our community, charitable and pro bono programs
- how we aim to mitigate our environmental impact and preserve our beautiful world for future generations.

In everything we do, we try to live our commitment to justice, with the same blend of creative thought and clinical execution that serves our clients so well.



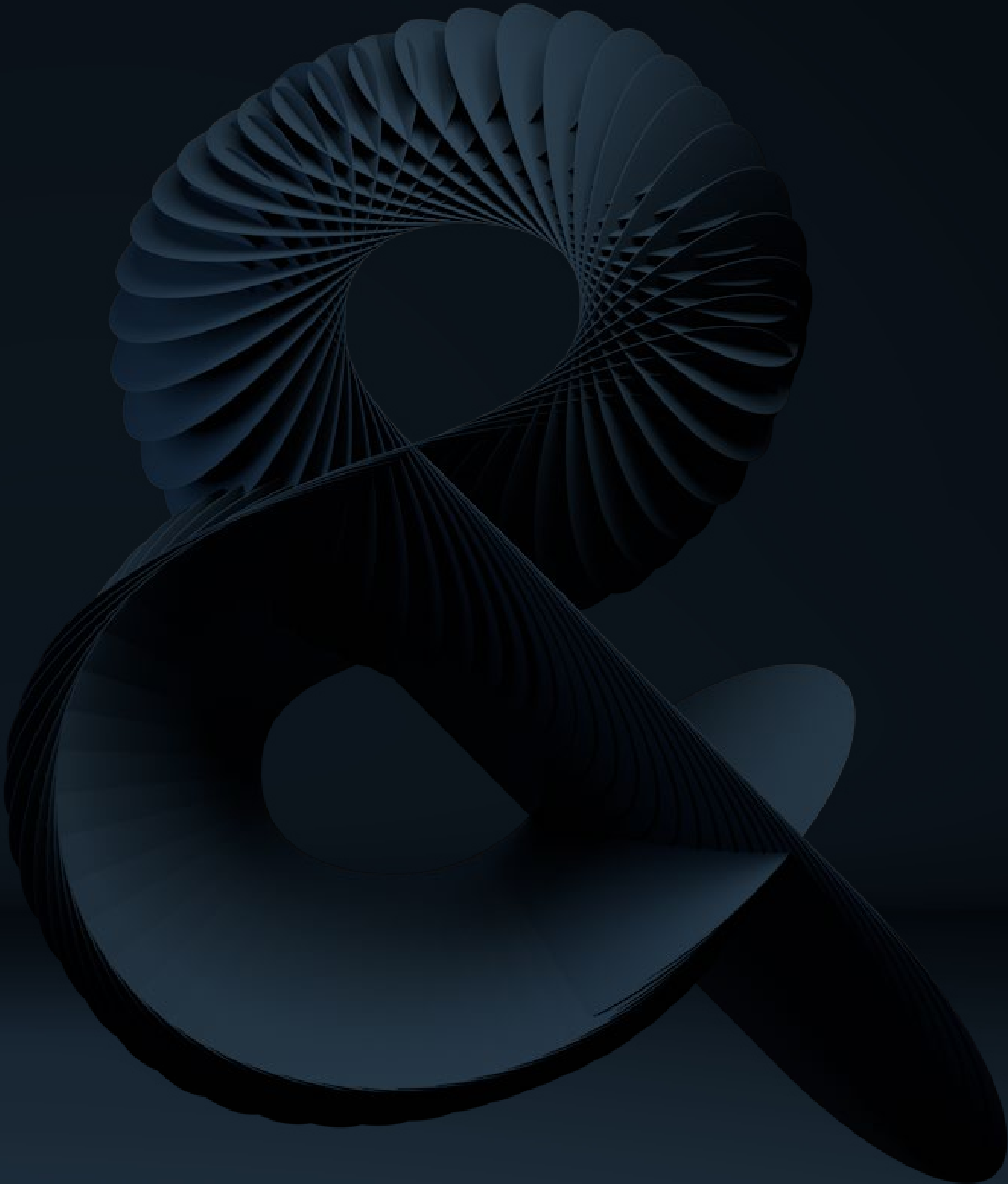
Our Commitment

People

Communities

Planet

# PEOPLE





Every day we’re striving to make our firm a more diverse and inclusive place to be, where every one of us brings their unique talents and perspectives to work, and where there are no barriers to achieving our full potential.

The legal sector faces a significant challenge if we’re to become truly representative of the businesses, individuals and communities we serve. We’re committed to meeting that challenge.

Over recent years we’ve transformed our approach to diversity and inclusion, embedding it at the heart of our strategy. We’ve now set out our ambitions and how we plan to achieve them in programmes that focus on disability, LGBTQ+, mental health, race and ethnicity, religion and culture, sex and gender and social mobility.

We’re making change happen, with leadership from the top of the firm and momentum and participation at every level.

Our managing partner acts as the firm’s diversity and inclusion champion and our D&I committee counts more than 25 percent of the firm as active members, drawing input from every part of the firm.

D&I strands







“We are proud to have created a collegiate structure where everyone feels fully supported and encouraged to bring their own unique attributes to the team.”

Nikki Leatherland, HR Director

Across the firm we’ve reviewed our policies. We take our people’s caring responsibilities seriously and support them – something which became an acute need during the lockdowns of 2020-21.

We champion inclusive language and we’ve offered continuing D&I training to everyone in our firm. We have been a signatory to the Law Society’s growing and developing diversity programmes.

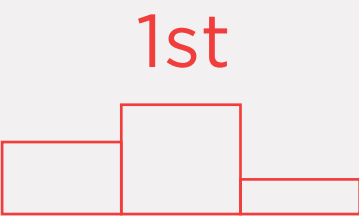


Data counts

We’ve invested in new technology to track equality data across recruitment, training and promotion.

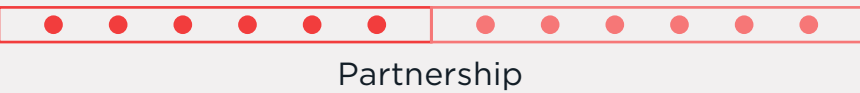
“Peters & Peters has visible role models demonstrating gender equality – half the partnership is female, which is almost unheard of for a law firm”

Law Society Diversity & Inclusion gender pilot



First law firm to participate in Law Society Diversity Charter

50-50 gender balance



50-50 gender balance within partnership and leadership team

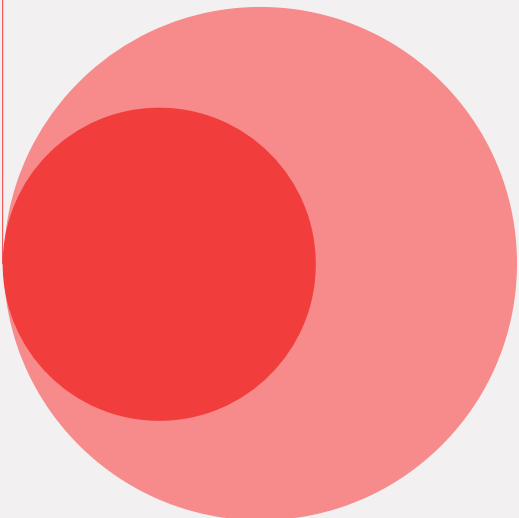
6



Trained mental health first aiders

61%

female workforce



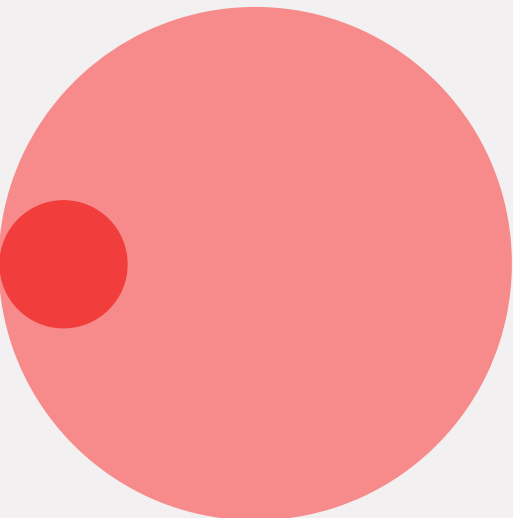
92%

of the firm attended our recent D&I training



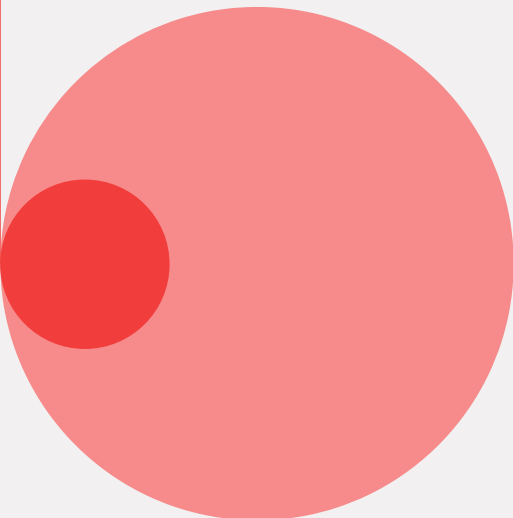
25%

of employees comprise D&I committee



30%

Nearly a third of the firm attend our regular wellbeing workshops



Levelling up on gender.

We’re proud of the fact that our partnership and senior team already has close to a 50/50 gender split. We’re signatories to the Women in Law Pledge, and we recently participated in the Law Society’s national pilot for accreditation around gender diversity to shine a light on any gaps in our current practice and inform our future strategy.

All the talent.

One of our key objectives is to improve the diversity of our teams, beyond gender, with a focus on disability and race and ethnicity.

We’re working hard to do that. We’ve introduced blind application screening, and we’ve moved our graduate recruitment events online, to make them more inclusive.

We use membership and networking groups to seek candidates from diverse backgrounds and we aim to have a diverse interview panel at every stage. We are creating a work experience programme to prioritise young people from less privileged backgrounds. We’ve also taken the decision to reimburse trainee’s LPC fees to level access for our trainee intake.

Success you can see.

We’re passionate about challenging discrimination and celebrating our differences – raising the visibility of role models for our female and ethnic minority team members. Each strand of our D&I programme is championed by a lead ally who drives the work and promotes awareness across the firm – whether it’s activities to mark Black History Month, Diwali, Time to Talk day, or specialist speakers to challenge our perspective on neurodiversity.

“I think Peters & Peters does a great job with diversity and equality in general, it has great female role models and is very supportive to both men and women.”

Law Society Diversity & Inclusion gender pilot



## Mental health: a supportive workplace

The legal sector is a high-pressure world, so we’re creating an environment where mental health really matters. Led by our partner-level champion, our mental health first aiders are available to anyone who needs them. We run quarterly workshops, regular events and provide 24-hour access to trained counsellors via a confidential helpline. We’re proud that our people tell us they feel safe and supported.

Nick Vamos, Partner

“I am proud to be the Mental Health Champion for the firm. The wellbeing, resilience and health of our staff are hugely important. High pressure, high stakes and tight deadlines are an inevitable part of the work we do for our clients, but we want everyone to be able to speak up if they are struggling, or know someone that might be, and then to give them the help and support they need.”

Anonymous feedback from employee survey

“the firm have been nothing but supportive and have done more than anyone would expect”

Anonymous feedback from employee survey

“The regular workshops make me feel like the firm really cares about my general wellbeing inside and outside of the workplace. They have been extremely helpful and insightful and have reinforced our culture of inclusivity and openness as a firm.”

Richard Gerrard, Director

“At the very start of lockdown the firm called every parent employee to check on our wellbeing and make sure we had what we needed. It wasn’t a ‘one size fits all’ approach but instead they took the trouble to work out what specific support would help different families, from permission to carve out time for home-schooling to help finding childcare. They were really there for me when it counted most.”

## Survey in lockdown



Employees gave the firm **4.41/5 stars** when asked how well we communicated with them over lockdown.

## Collaboration

Byrne Dean >

Access Aspirations >

Law Society >

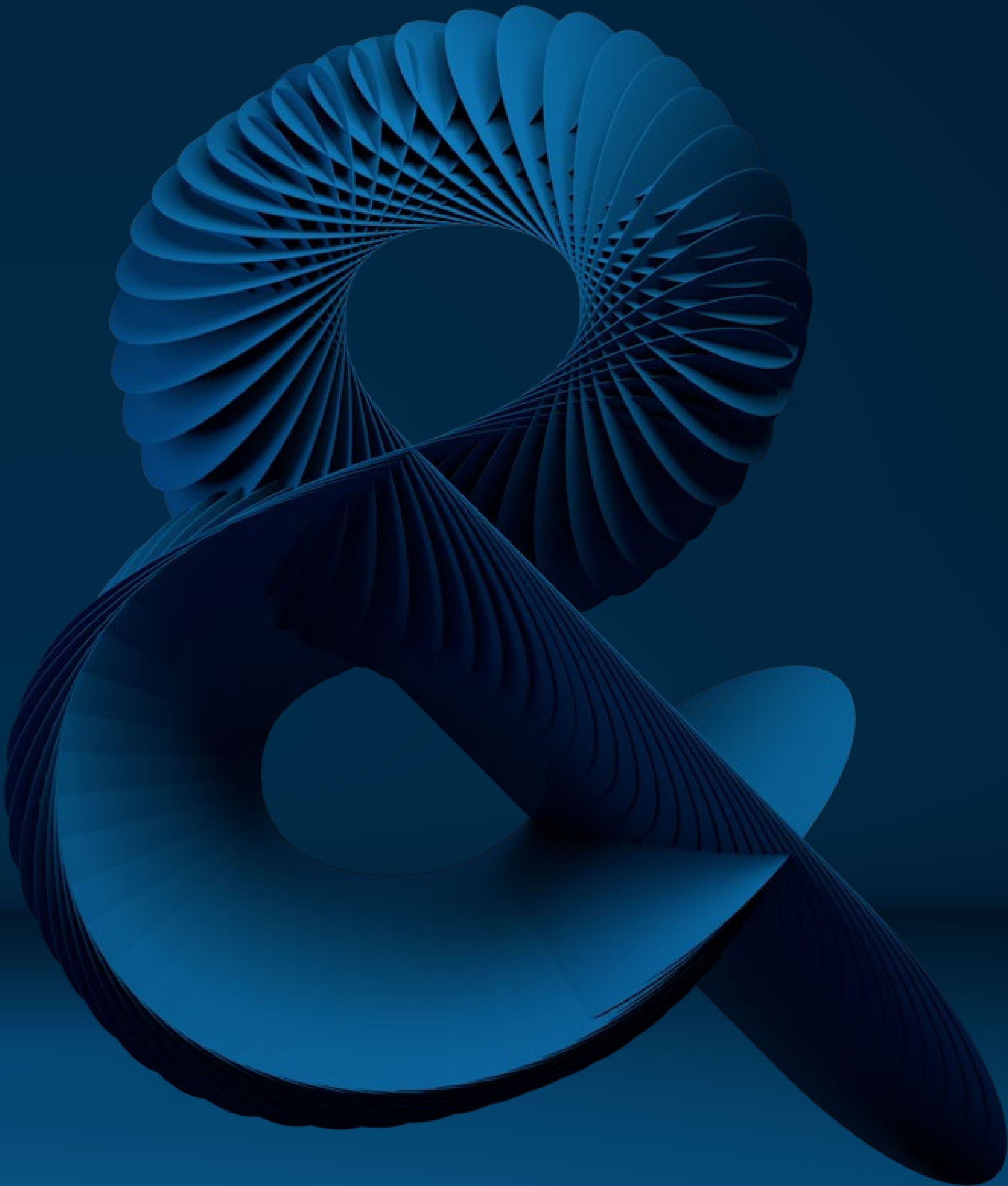
LifeWorks >

St Matthew’s Project >

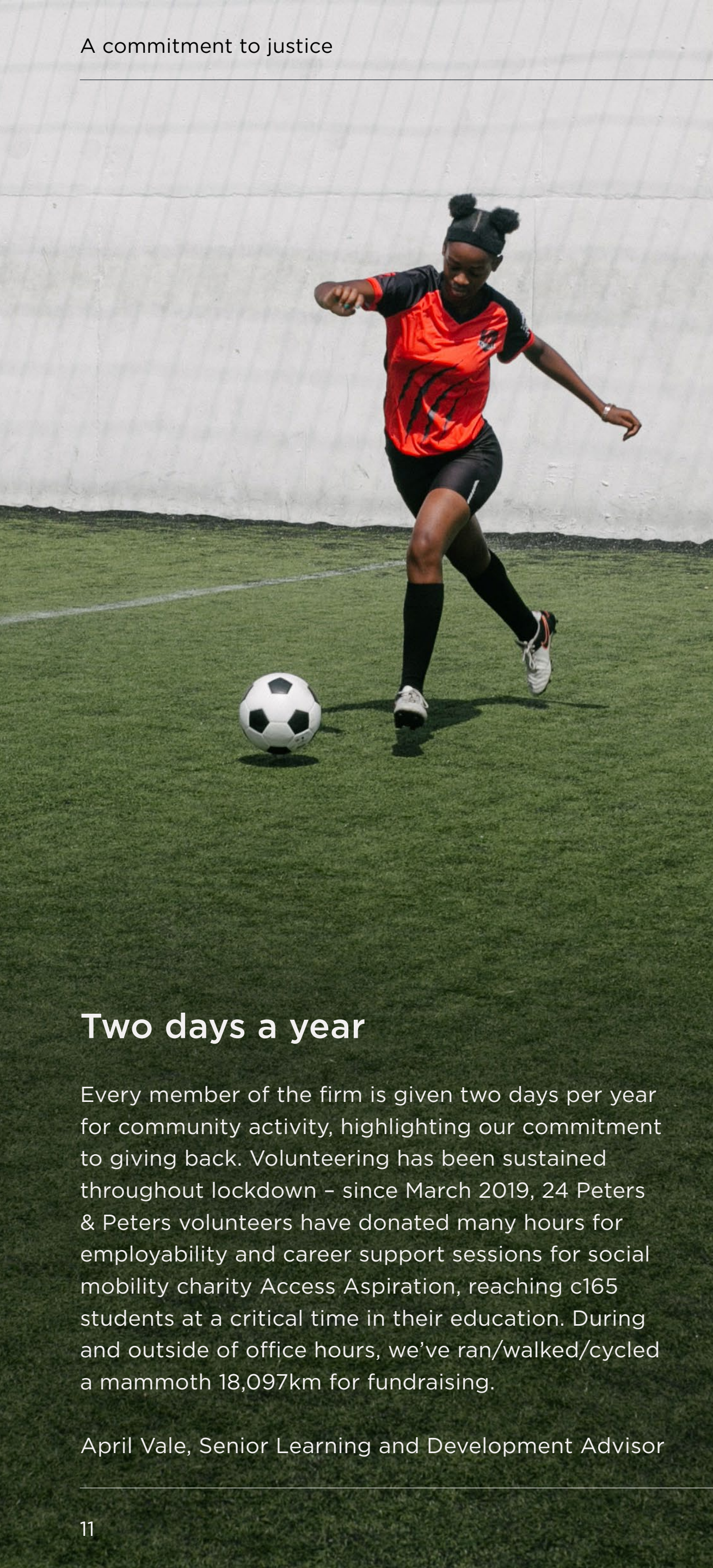
Women in Law Pledge >



# COMMUNITIES







## Two days a year

Every member of the firm is given two days per year for community activity, highlighting our commitment to giving back. Volunteering has been sustained throughout lockdown – since March 2019, 24 Peters & Peters volunteers have donated many hours for employability and career support sessions for social mobility charity Access Aspiration, reaching c165 students at a critical time in their education. During and outside of office hours, we’ve ran/walked/cycled a mammoth 18,097km for fundraising.

April Vale, Senior Learning and Development Advisor

# We are active members of our communities, supporting causes that matter

We look for partnerships with smaller, local organisations where we can make a tangible difference.

We want our efforts to play a part in opening access and opportunity where it would not otherwise exist.

[Access Aspiration](#) works with young Londoners from low income backgrounds to build confidence and skills as they successfully move into employment or further education.

Our ‘Access All Areas’ events have seen nearly 100 students at a time, from more than 20 schools across London, join us for advice on pathways into law, networking and commercial awareness.

Attendees at an Access Aspiration Insight Day run by Peters & Peters said:

“It was as so useful to hear from real life workers within a law field and it enabled me to broaden my mindset and see that there are a variety of things to do within this field”

“Very useful, as we got to hear from the experts themselves from each sector, rather than hearing from one person telling us all”

“I thought it was very useful because it demonstrates different employment besides barrister/ lawyer in the legal sector”

We extended our help to provide practical support with CV preparation, as well as visiting schools to give talks and provide interview practice.

In 2020, as the pandemic shifted learning out of the classroom, many students lacked the vital IT equipment they needed to access online learning. We were delighted to help, donating £90,000 worth of laptops to two London schools we have come to know through Access Aspiration: [Brampton Manor Academy](#) in Newham, and [Lilian Baylis](#) school in Kennington.

[The St Matthew’s Project](#) is a Brixton-based initiative focused on football, led and run by local volunteers in South London. The project has been giving young people a safe space to play and learn for nearly 20 years. Already the funds we’ve raised top £17,000 enabling the charity to kick start a new boxing programme, run cage football sessions throughout lockdown, and buy new football kits and jackets for their players.

“I’d just like to say how overwhelmed we’ve been by the support and generosity we’ve received from the staff at Peters & Peters.

To be honest, I was expecting a football kit and a few quid from Peters & Peters but the money we’ve received so far has been incredible and will make a huge difference. Thank you so much.”

Lee Dema, Founder of the St Matthew’s Project

Everyone in the firm is allocated two days a year for CSR activities and over the years we’ve worked with many other local organisations, including rewarding sessions volunteering at the [Ace of Clubs](#) homeless centre, and City Farms in [Kentish Town](#) and [Hackney](#).



Pro bono

We lend our support to select causes where we know we can make a difference. In 2021 Peters & Peters partner, and former Head of Extradition for the Crown Prosecution Service Nick Vamos joined the legal team supporting the Dunn family as they seek #Justice4Harry. In 2019 Anne Sacoolas was driving a car involved in a crash that resulted in Harry’s death, Nick is working with the family to surmount the legal and political barriers that could prevent Ms Sacoolas facing justice in the UK.

CASE STUDY

HARRY DUNN

“Harry Dunn was struck and killed by a car driven by US citizen Anne Sacoolas near RAF Croughton in Northamptonshire on 27 August 2019. She had been driving on the wrong side of the road for over 20 seconds.

Ms Sacoolas’ husband was a US official stationed at the airbase. On 16 September 2019, after initially co-operating with the police investigation, Ms Sacoolas flew back to the US claiming diplomatic immunity. She has refused to return ever since.

In December 2019 the Crown Prosecution Service charged her with causing death by dangerous driving and submitted an extradition request. The US government rejected the request and have stated publicly that Ms Sacoolas will never return to face British criminal proceedings.

We are representing Harry’s parents, Charlotte Charles and Tim Dunn, in their bid to hold Anne Sacoolas accountable in a UK trial. The law on extradition and diplomatic immunity is complex, but the simple fact is that the US Government and our legal system have failed, resulting in an outrageous denial of justice.

We are advising the family, liaising with the relevant authorities, and doing everything we can, together with the rest of the legal team, to ensure that justice eventually is done for Harry.”

Nick Vamos, Partner

We support [Fair Trials International](#) as it works towards ensuring that everyone’s right to a free trial is respected. As well as providing pro bono assistance, we have offered further support by way of a grant of **£55,000**, and partner [Jasvinder Nakhwal](#) is a volunteer trustee for the organisation.

Our lawyers also regularly volunteer at the Citizens Advice Bureau at the Royal Courts of Justice in London, where they provide invaluable support to litigants in person preparing for court proceedings.

Funds where they are needed most.

We have raised money for a whole host of organisations doing good work in London and beyond, raising at least £14,000 per year for charitable causes.

Contact the Elderly >

Great Ormond Street Hospital >

London Legal Walk >

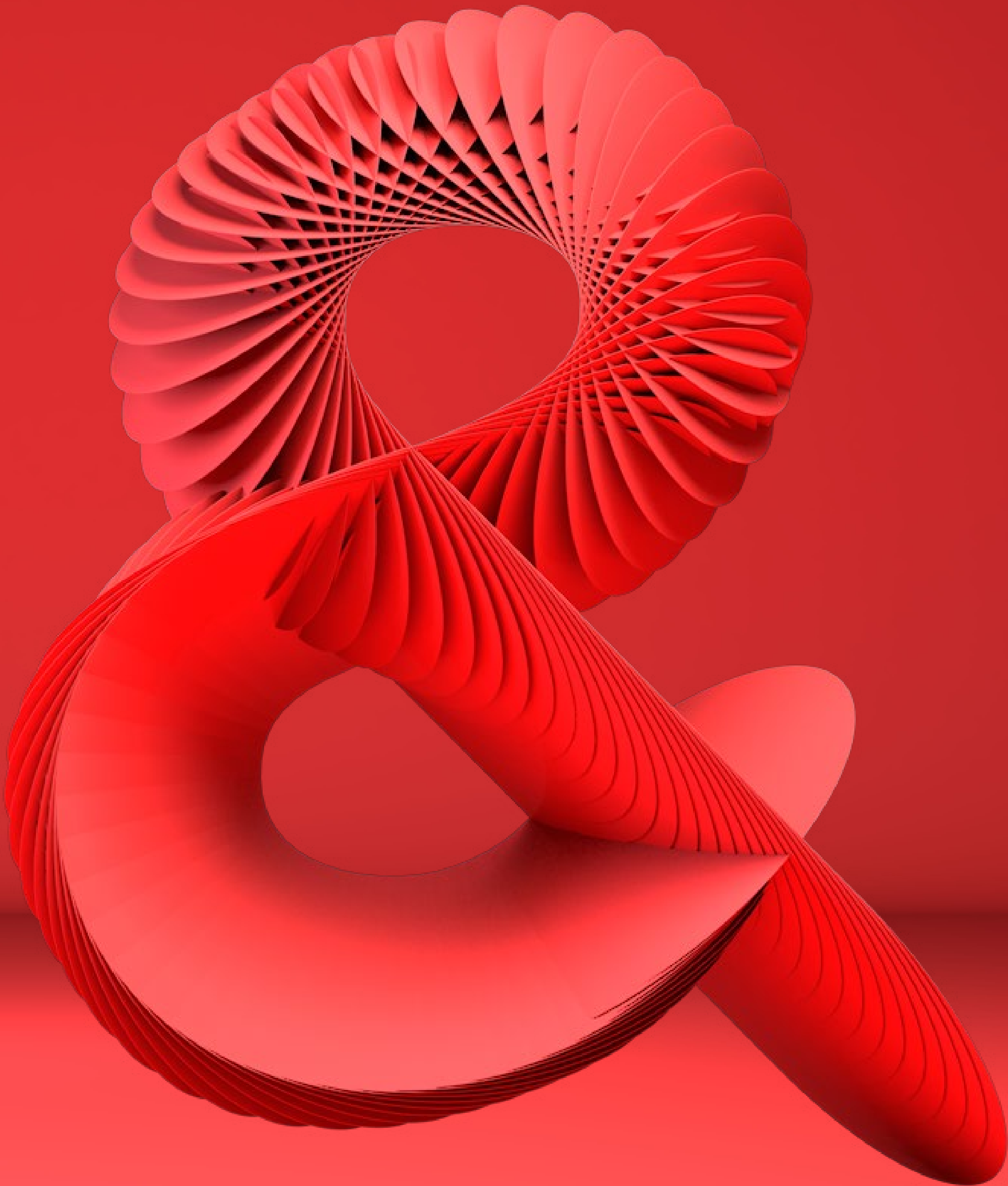
Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal >

Shelter >

St Matthew’s Project >



PLANET







# What we do today matters for everyone’s tomorrow

## We’re conscious of our responsibilities to the planet and committed to reducing our impact on the environment.

We are members of the [Legal Sustainability Alliance](#), a network helping the legal profession to play its part in tackling the climate crisis. Our focus is on:

- switching to renewable energy
- reducing waste
- helping our teams reduce our environmental footprint.

Our Green Team leads our work on environmental sustainability. Chaired by April Vale and backed by our Managing Partner, this 13-strong group draws membership from across the firm.

“Working sustainably has become increasingly important to us and our clients. We are committed to making a difference through our business practices and our work with local schools and charities. But that’s not all. We are actively trying to minimise our impact on the environment. That includes working with experts to further reduce our carbon footprint.”

Helen McDowell, Managing Partner

Underpinning our environmental and sustainability efforts is a formal commitment to sourcing all our energy from renewable sources by 2025.

We use a Carbon Calculator to measure our emissions so that we can accurately track our progress.

We book our flights through **Clear**, which invests in carbon offset projects to match our emissions. In 2020 as a result of flights cancelled or postponed because of pandemic we saved 38.62 tonnes of CO2e – and as the world reopens we’ll be actively reviewing how to keep international business travel down to a minimum.

Closer to home, our office recycling programme incorporates paper, plastic and food waste. Having cut down on paper use by some 1.5 million sheets during the lockdown, we are exploring ways to continue to reduce our use of paper in the future.

[The Legal Sustainability Alliance](#) is the leading sustainability network for law firms and the UK legal sector. Our membership allows us to collaborate and share best practice with other member firms, taking positive steps to improve the environmental sustainability of our operations and to measure, manage and reduce our carbon emissions.



# An ongoing commitment

Nikki Leatherland, HR Director

A commitment to justice can never be finally discharged. It is ongoing, or it will quickly become irrelevant.

At Peters & Peters we know we have to keep making progress for our people, our communities and our planet.

We want to be transparent on this score, so we'll be updating this report regularly.

Do check in and see what we've achieved. And if you'd like to know more, then please do get in touch:

+44 (0)20 7822 7777  
law@petersandpeters.com

## Get in touch

Helen McDowell  
Managing Partner  
hmcowell@petersandpeters.com



Nikki Leatherland  
HR Director  
nleatherland@petersandpeters.com



