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# Social & environmental responsibility at DJS Research: our impact report 2024

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## Introduction

At DJS Research we believe ethics should be a key part of any business, but given the services we provide, we feel that ethical operating standards are especially important to our company.

As a result, we are company partners of the *Market Research Society*, which means we have made the active and conscious decision to affiliate ourselves with that governing body and to abide by its standards and ethical regulations. We do not engage respondents by means of deception, nor do we ever carry out research with any ulterior motive – such as selling.

We are an employee-owned business and run our business in an open way, with a strong commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and involvement with the communities we operate in.

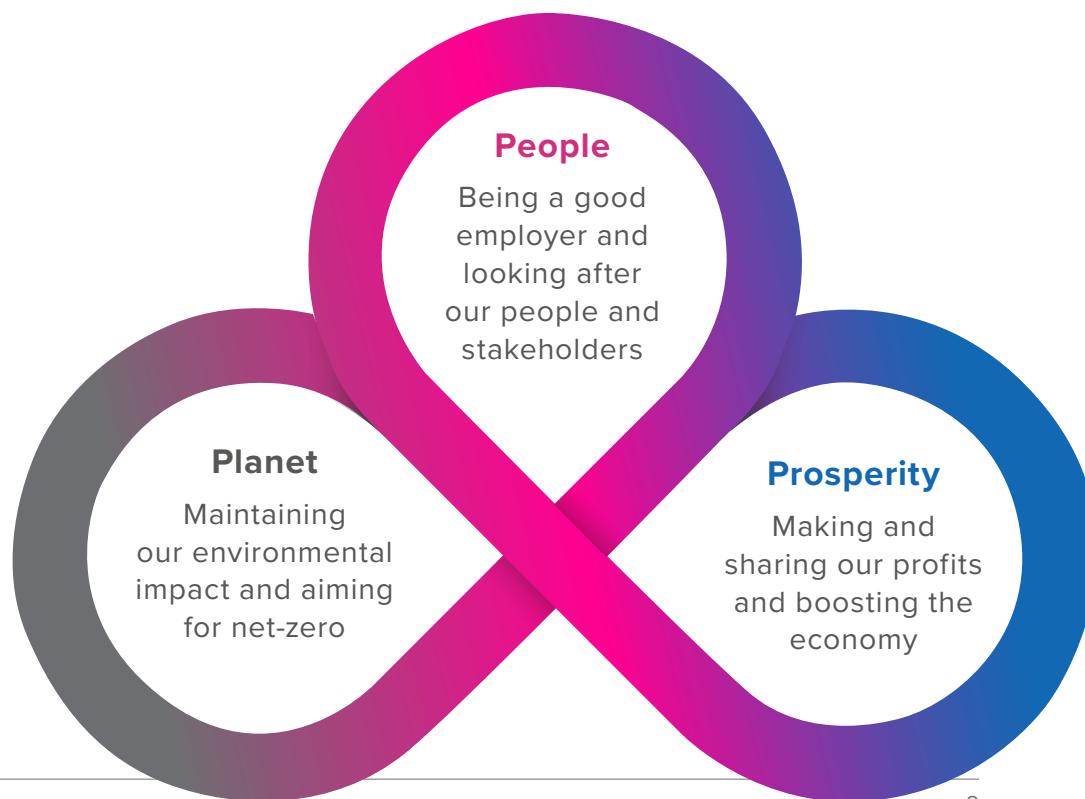
We strive to make a positive impact through our work across the private, public and third sectors, and to have a positive impact on improving outcomes for people in the community through our work with clients and as an employer.

**Our company vision statement is:**

We are building a strong and sustainable business where all staff can play a role in driving success for our clients and our people.

We refer to sustainability both in terms of staying in business and making a profit, but also sustainability in terms of doing the right thing for the planet, our people, stakeholders and communities.

DJS Research is committed to becoming a certified B Corporation (B Corp) and embedding sustainability, ethics, and social responsibility into every aspect of our business. We recognise the importance of balancing profit with purpose. This, our first impact report, outlines our progress in key areas aligned with the B Corp certification framework, including governance, workers, community, environment, and customers.



# Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategy

DJS Research aims to be a socially and environmentally responsible company that prioritises ethical business practices, employee wellbeing, and having a positive impact on society. By pursuing B Corp certification, we commit to the highest standards of social and environmental performance, transparency, and accountability. We aim to integrate social responsibility into every aspect of our business, driving sustainability, inclusivity, and ethical operations.

**Our mission statement is:**

To work in partnership with our stakeholders to drive positive change for our clients, their customers, our people and wider society.

**Specifically, we are committed to the following sustainability and social responsibility goals:**

## Environmental sustainability

### Our climate pledge

- Implement our carbon reduction plan, focusing on minimising travel, paper usage, waste, and energy consumption.
- Promote remote work to reduce office-related carbon footprints and promote environmental stewardship for 'virtual offices'.
- Offset unavoidable emissions, particularly those related to travel.
- Educate staff about climate change and sustainability and build this into job descriptions and objectives.
- Appoint 'Climate Champions' to oversee sustainability initiatives.

### Sustainable supply chain

- Screen new suppliers and encourage existing suppliers to adhere to sustainable and ethical practices, integrating environmental considerations into all procurement processes.
- We will work with local and smaller suppliers to enhance resilience and promote diversity in our supply chain.

### Office & operational sustainability

- Reduce waste generation by minimising printing and opting for digital solutions.
- Encourage use of public transport, active travel (e.g. cycle to work) and/or remote meetings to decrease the environmental impact of travel.
- Measure and report on our emissions annually, adjusting plans to continuously improve.
- Consider the energy used by digital consumption and minimise the use of emails and high energy consumption tools such as AI.

## Social responsibility

### Employee wellbeing

- Provide a comprehensive wellbeing program, including virtual GP services, mental health first aiders, wellbeing activities, and an Employee Assistance Program.
- Promote physical and mental wellbeing through initiatives like 'Wellbeing Wednesday', flexible work arrangements, and peer-to-peer support groups.
- Support long-term health conditions with tailored work adjustments, such as remote working or extended paid leave.
- DJS Research will focus on upskilling employees and fostering employment opportunities for underrepresented groups in the market research industry. We will continue to recruit through non-graduate pathways and offer paid internships and mentoring programs to local communities.

### Flexible working

- Continue to offer a variety of flexible working arrangements, from remote contracts to flexible hours, to cater to the diverse needs of our employees.
- Maintain high levels of work-life balance by enabling early finishes on Fridays and fostering a supportive work environment.

### Employee ownership & engagement

- Ensure that all employees have a voice through the **EO Voice** representative system, where feedback is gathered regularly and used to shape company strategy.
- Maintain transparency on company performance and board decisions, supporting a culture of openness and shared responsibility.

### Diversity & inclusion

- Continue to uphold the Market Research Society 'Inclusion Pledge'.
- Regularly monitor and report on key diversity indicators and take actions to close any identified gaps, including gender pay gap analyses and promoting non-graduate entry routes into market research.
- Provide mentorship, training, and development opportunities for all staff, ensuring equal growth prospects.
- Embed diversity in our research practices through inclusive research design and methodologies.

## Ethical research practices

- As Market Research Society company partners, we commit to the highest ethical standards, ensuring research transparency and participant protection. This includes:
  - Obtaining informed consent.
  - Guaranteeing the anonymity of participants.
  - Using data responsibly and securely.
  - Avoiding any form of participant deception.
  - Ensuring that research is accessible and inclusive.

## Community engagement & social value

### Volunteering & charitable work

- Encourage staff participation in community activities through our **Volunteering Day** Program, allowing each employee to contribute a day of paid work to a charity or community project of their choice.
- Continue sponsoring local sports teams and events, promoting community cohesion and wellness.
- Support local and national charities, such as our current corporate charity, **Blythe House Hospice**, and the **Market Research Benevolent Association**.

## Educational outreach

- Offer paid internships, work experience, and mentorships to students from schools, colleges, and universities to encourage the next generation of researchers.
- Support careers provision in local schools through employer schemes offered by local authority careers services such as *Greater Manchester Apprenticeship and Careers Service (GMACS)*.
- Promote diversity in the industry by actively recruiting through non-graduate pathways and targeting local communities for training and employment opportunities.

## Governance & transparency

- Our employee-owned model allows for democratic decision-making and ensures that all staff are involved in shaping the future of the business.
- We regularly communicate with employees about financial performance and company strategy to maintain a transparent and equitable workplace.
- We implement pay reviews based on market benchmarking, performance evaluations, and fair salary distributions to avoid inequalities.

## Monitoring & reporting

- Track progress towards B Corp certification by regularly reviewing our social, environmental, and financial performance metrics.
- Continuously improve upon KPIs related to diversity, inclusion, employee satisfaction, and sustainability.
- Publicly report on key areas such as gender pay gaps, environmental impact, and community engagement to ensure accountability and transparency.

# People & governance

## Employee ownership

On our 20th anniversary in July 2021, we transitioned to an employee-owned company, making our hardworking and loyal employees majority shareholders and company Partners.

At the same time, we established a Trust Board and a Partner Council ('EO Voice') to hold our operational board to account.



"We hold quarterly EO Voice meetings where representatives from each team get together to raise suggestions and improvements. This really boosts morale knowing everyone is listened to. Everyone has a voice, and everyone counts."

**Rahat Imran, HR Assistant**

"We encourage all Partners to provide feedback on our vision, strengths and weaknesses to inform our strategic planning for the next couple of years ... involving staff definitely helps with decision-making."

**Al Gleed, Managing Director**



Shortly after the transition, our new Managing Director worked with staff at all levels to co-create a new strategic plan which all partners were encouraged to input into. It was clear that our Partners were keen for our new vision and mission to have a strong emphasis on being a responsible business that strives to have a positive impact on people, communities and the environment.

## How does being employee-owned help shape our culture?

- Employee voices listened to
- Focus on wellbeing
- Open and honest dialogue from the Operational Board and the Trust Board
- Friendly and supportive environment
- Everyone treated fairly and with respect
- Diversity and inclusion is embraced

We have since made Corporate Social Responsibility one of our key strategic pillars, engaged climate champions around the business, developed a CSR strategy, and embarked on a range of activities to be a good employer and a responsible business.

## Good Employment

We are a proud Supporter of the Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter. We are committed to making a difference in our Partners' lives by elevating employment standards in the key characteristics covered in the charter: secure work, flexible work, real living wage, excellent people management, workplace engagement and voice, excellent recruitment and progression, and a healthy and productive workplace.

Based on feedback from Partners (our EO Voice employee representatives) we recently developed a new cross-cutting value statement reflecting our commitment to staff welfare:

## SUPPORTER



Based on feedback from EO Voice we have added a new cross-cutting value statement that also links to our vision.

EO cuts across all of these and we need to work hard to ensure that we live the principles on EO in everything that we do.

*"We are proud to be employee-owned. Our leaders will listen to the views and ideas of staff and we will consider your opinions and welfare in the decisions that we take.*

*We will also be honest and transparent about our decisions and reasoning. At the same time all of our staff/Partners will take ownership of what they do and play their role in improving the business. Everyone will contribute to making DJS a great company and a great place to work."*

## Real Living Wage employer

We are also accredited as a Real Living Wage employer; we have joined over 13,000 UK employers leading the way in this area. The Real Living Wage is the only UK wage rate based on the cost of living.



## Engagement & voice

Central to employee ownership is employee voice. We wanted to start our journey with a blank piece of paper. Through face-to-face sessions and a survey, we encouraged all staff to provide feedback on our vision, strengths and weaknesses to inform our strategic planning for the next couple of years.

Partners provided feedback and they were full of great ideas which are now part of our open co-created action plan. Many of the ideas have already been implemented, including launching a new junior researcher programme and substantially increasing our support resource. Both of these are now helping us to deliver our projects more efficiently.

We didn't want the voice of the employee to be a one-off though. We need it to be central to our thinking and decision making. So, we created EO Voice. Every team within the company has an EO Voice representative which meets quarterly to discuss ideas, suggestions and improvements for the company. These are fed back to the DJS Research Board and our Trust Board.

Likewise, communications always go back to the EO Voice representatives and subsequently the whole company. We feel it is important that our updates are transparent about Board decisions and our financials. As standard, we do this by sending regular monthly updates and delivering company inform sessions.

We do believe that we are creating an effective two-way engagement process where partners feel comfortable sharing their ideas and that they are listened to and actioned where possible. This is apparent from the fact that the vast majority (81%) of our partners in our 'MyDJS' staff survey said that they are encouraged to share ideas for doing things better. The same amount also said that we have an open and honest culture.

We recently won the Employee Ownership Association (EOA) EO Stories award in the category of Delivering Good Employee Engagement.

- *Video link: [DJS Research case study: Delivering good engagement in an employee-owned business](#)*  
YouTube



Our employee-owned status allows us to live by our values and we try to do this at every opportunity. All staff have received our EO Charter which details the Company's values and our mission and vision. New starters received the EO Charter within their first week, so engagement starts from day one.



## Fostering employee health & wellbeing

We endeavour to support the mental and physical health of all our employees.

- We offer a free virtual GP service through MetLife for our staff and their families which is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and 365 days a year with unlimited use.
- We have also introduced an Employee Assistance Programme through MetLife which is available for our staff and their families. They can help with matters such as financial, mental and physical wellbeing.
- We have an active Wellbeing group that meets on a monthly basis. We encourage all staff to have an extended lunch break on a Wednesday for 'wellbeing Wednesday' so staff can get outside and have fresh air. We encourage local walks from our office in the rural location of Strines, near Stockport, but we also encourage all our remote workers to enjoy a walk in their local area and welcome pictures so we can all feel connected, wherever we are working.
- We have three mental health first aiders who all staff can talk to. These three are proactive in their approach to mental health and regularly speak to the different teams and highlight practical ways to help our staff.
- We have a calendar of events to help remote and hybrid staff feel connected.
- We encourage 1:1's with all staff, not just as part of the appraisal but just to say 'how are you?'. We are also setting up regional groups so remote workers can connect to fellow workers in a particular location.

- We have peer-to-peer groups which connects work colleagues across our research and operational teams at similar career stages, so they are able to share best practise and feedback any issues. This should drive continuous development and collaboration.
- We have a health and safety policy which is communicated to all staff; we have bi-annual workplace assessments carried out by an external Health and Safety consultant. Our IT services contractor also carries out regular Workstation Assessments with all staff.
- Where required we make adjustments for staff with long-term conditions and disabilities – for example allowing them to move to fully remote working and/or supplying specialist equipment.
- We have offered 'lifestyle counselling' to employees either on the back of an absence or something that came out of a 1:1 with their manager. This involved support with time management, coping mechanisms and stress awareness. We also have a programme of stress awareness training for all staff.
- Our sickness policy offers a discretionary 10 paid days per 12 months. For several staff with longer term health issues, we have gone above and beyond this, for example paying full salary for several months whilst they underwent treatment and recovery.

## Enabling flexible working

Flexible working has always been a key part of our offer, pre-pandemic and even more so now. We advertise this and consider all flexible working requests and implement most.

### Key aspects of our current offer include the following:

- All staff can work from home the majority of the time – we only ask staff on office-based contracts to be in the office two days a week when they can – although they are welcome to work in the office as much as they prefer.
- We offer fully remote contracts, and more than half of our staff are on remote contracts.
- We also offer a high degree of flexibility in terms of working hours. Normal 'salaried' working hours are any eight hours from 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday, including a one-hour break for lunch. More tailored arrangements are made available to those who need it (with some, for example, working 9am until 3pm).
- Early finish on a Friday – all staff have the option of finishing early on a Friday all year round – for full time staff from 3pm, (or 3.30 for part time). Where staff don't work Fridays, they can take this benefit on the last day of their working week.



## Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

We are signatories of the Market Research Society 'Inclusion Pledge'. We strive to be a genuinely inclusive place for all, creating an inclusive work environment for our people, and running an action focused diversity and inclusion working group to support that.

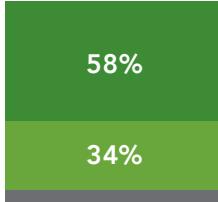
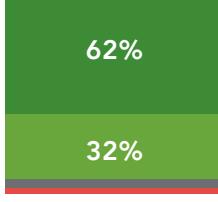
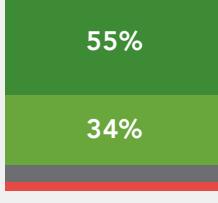
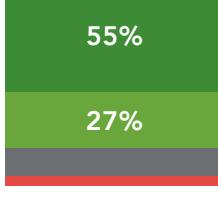
We have carried out internal scoping to develop a series of KPIs that we monitor (via our MyDJS staff survey) to ensure we are an inclusive employer. Other actions we have taken include:

- Company-wide EDI training provided by an external EDI specialist, and development of an ongoing internal training programme to embed EDI.
- Making an assessment of any gender pay gap an integral part of our pay review process (we plan to publish this information).
- Direct targeting of non-graduate routes to careers in the research sector, including work with local communities, schools and colleges to develop an apprenticeship scheme and recruit non-graduates into our Junior Research Executive training programme.
- Employee mentoring scheme to support development at all levels.
- Guest speakers and training on a range of topics in relation to Diversity and Inclusion to encourage open conversations, linked to both our Diversity and Inclusion strategy and our staff wellbeing strategy.
- Our dedicated training lead is contacting local schools, colleges as well as universities to promote our trainee researcher program in an inclusive way that is not (as is traditional in our industry) limited to graduates.

Our most recent equality monitoring results are provided overleaf.

## DJS equality monitoring: myDJS staff survey

### Equality, diversity and inclusion: by department

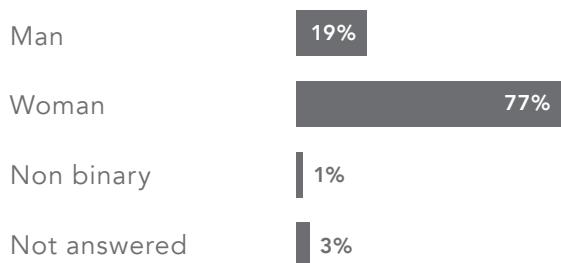
Equality, diversity & inclusion index score: 90	Total (121) % positive	Research (53) % positive	Ops (39) % positive	Other* (11) % positive	Variance from 2022 (% point)	Variance from 2020 (% point)	Variance from benchmark (% point)
People who work for and with DJS Research are treated equally irrespective of ethnicity, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, or religion	 67% 26%	93%	94%	95%	100%	+5	
I believe that DJS Research is an inclusive and equal opportunity employer	 58% 34%	92%	91%	92%	100%	+5	+7
I believe DJS Research is committed to equality of opportunity for all of its staff	 57% 32%	89%	94%	90%	91%	+1	
I am treated with fairness and respect at DJS Research	 62% 32%	94%	98%	90%	100%	0	+2
I feel able to raise concerns about bullying, harassment or discrimination	 55% 34%	88%	89%	79%	100%	+9	+7
I feel confident DJS Research will effectively manage bullying, harassment or discrimination complaints	 55% 27%	83%	81%	79%	100%	+3	

● Strongly agree ● Agree ● Neither ● Disagree ● Strongly disagree

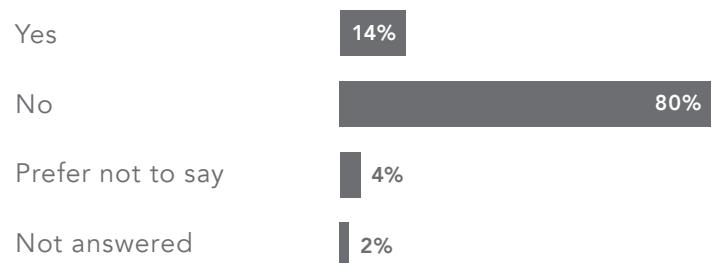
\*Finance/HR/Support/Creative Services.

## DJS equality monitoring: EDI survey

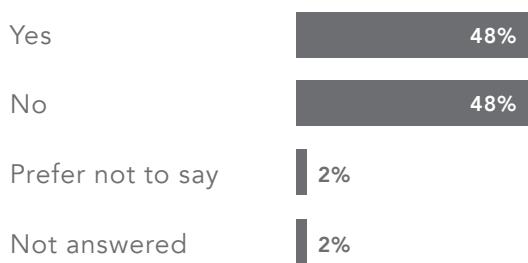
### Gender



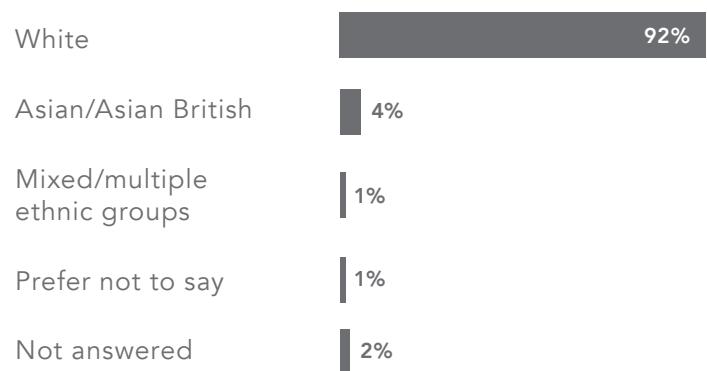
### Disability



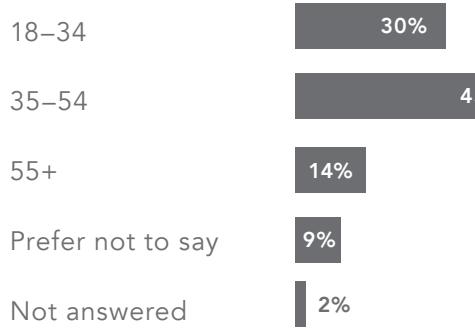
### Married/civil partnership



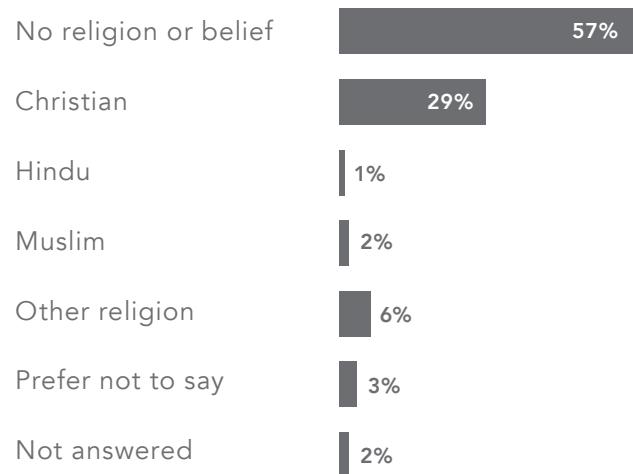
### Ethnicity



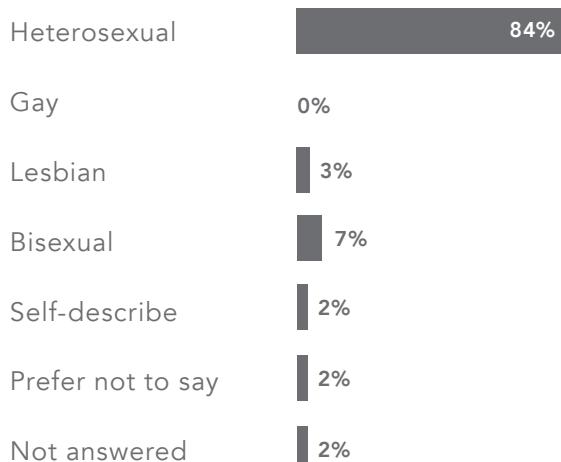
### Age



### Religious beliefs



### Sexual orientation



Our most recent gender pay gap analysis (below, to be repeated in 2025) shows that at most levels females are paid equal or higher salaries than males and pay is equal for half the roles or half of roles pay is equal. Where there are differences our analysis shows clear reasons such as length of service, level of experience, time in role or other performance related considerations.

### DJS Research gender pay gap analysis

	Research Director (Board)	All on equal salary
	Research Director (non-Board)	Females paid 4% less on average
	Associate Director or equivalent	Males paid 6% less on average
	Senior Research Manager or equivalent	Males paid 1% less on average
	Research Manager or equivalent	Males paid 2% less on average
	Senior Research Executive or equivalent	All on ~equal salary
	Research Executive or equivalent	All are currently female
	Junior Research Executive or equivalent	All equal salary (before/after probation)

 Male  Female

In addition, we believe that as a research agency, delivering inclusive research is a fundamental step in demonstrating our commitment to being an inclusive employer. We have an in-house working group focusing on Representation in Research, set up to review internal processes, and develop best practice guidelines on methodology (for example sample design) and language in relation to diversity and inclusion.

We have taken advice from external consultants to help inform best practice in this area. Our group includes representatives from across the business who regularly review external guidelines (for example from the Market Research Society, Office for National Statistics) to ensure we use the most up to date language in questionnaires, as well as embedding this understanding through company-wide training.

## People management

We value all our employees and believe in investing in the training and development of the workforce.

We constantly strive to develop our staff by providing in house and external management training and opportunities to work collaboratively across teams and different research sectors. We have also set up a mentoring system which has established a number of mentoring pairs. We have a dedicated training lead and consult with all staff and managers regularly about training needs in order to develop and update an annual training plan. Much of our training is delivered internally, but we also invest significantly in external training. For example, when consistency of management approaches was identified as an area for improvement in our annual staff survey, we made a significant investment to provide specialist management training to all managers.

We also encourage staff to put themselves forward for external training courses, conferences and seminars where they/we can identify a benefit.

## Ethics & protecting research participants

As a **Market Research Society (MRS) company partner** we adhere to the MRS Code of Conduct and all staff have been trained in this area. Our Code of Conduct is a set of guiding principles for treating research participants respectfully and sensitively, and ensuring that they have a safe, secure and positive experience.

It covers issues such as informed consent, protecting anonymity and protecting participant data. Key overarching principles include: ensuring that our professional activities can be understood in a transparent manner; being clear as to the subject and purpose of data collection; ensuring that our activities are not used to unfairly influence views and opinions of participants; respecting the confidentiality of information collected; respecting the rights and wellbeing of all individuals; ensuring that individuals are not harmed or adversely affected by our activities (a full copy of our Code is available [here](#)).

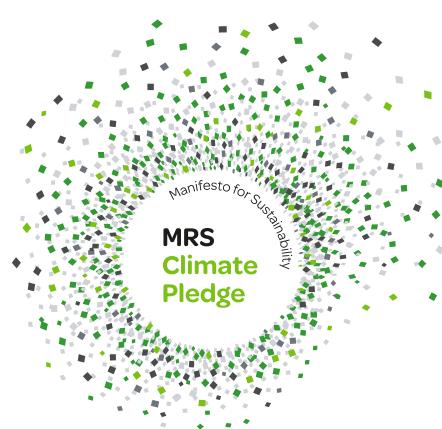
# Social & environmental

## MRS Climate Pledge

Our environmental policy makes provision for educating staff and promoting the responsible use of resources and the minimisation of waste and energy use. Practical examples include keeping printing to an absolute minimum; minimising travel by using online and telephone methodologies and meetings (as well as using public transport where travel is unavoidable); assessing the suppliers that we work with to ensure that they adopt sustainable and ethical practices.

We have developed and are now implementing a Carbon Reduction Plan as per PPN06/21 (Government procurement policy). We are signatories to the Market Research Society Climate pledge; this will demonstrate our commitment to taking positive actions towards achieving net zero in the shortest timeframe feasible. Initial actions we are taking to help play our role tackling the climate emergency include the following:

- Climate champions: We have set up a dedicated team to work on our strategy and act as environmental champions in the business.
- Educate and engage: We are rolling out a programme to educate staff on our company's net-zero journey and also on the broader context: the climate crisis, its causes and solutions. This year we also provided guidance on environmental stewardship for remote working.
- We are measuring and reporting on our emissions and implementing plans which will lay out (and monitor) how we can reduce and remove emissions.
- We are planning measures for offsetting unavoidable transport-related and other emissions.
- Our full Carbon Reduction Plan can be found [here](#).



## Research with impact

We continue to work extensively with charities, public sector organisations (e.g. the NHS), and cultural and community organisations. Our mission is “*to work in partnership with our stakeholders and drive positive change for our clients, their customers, our people and wider society.*” We aim to provide insights that drive meaningful change, both in terms of positive social and environmental impacts and commercial success.

For example, we recently announced our involvement in a brand-new public health study on behalf of Public Health Wales NHS Trust and Bangor University, in collaboration with Liverpool John Moores University; the '[Later Life experiences in Wales](#)' survey.

This important piece of research has been designed to explore how later life experiences, and challenges faced in later life, impact health and well-being in Wales. The study aims to increase understanding of the effects of later life adversities, such as maltreatment, social isolation and discrimination. Findings will be used to shape and inform health policies and services to support the ageing population of Wales.

This year saw the launch of [Different Perspectives](#) – our in-house consumer panel of over 6,000 people who are **facing vulnerable circumstances** today. Through this highly engaged panel of individuals, each with varied vulnerabilities, we can provide our clients with a direct route to connect with audiences who are often [hard to reach](#).



**different  
perspectives**

## Society & social value

DJS Research has pledged to give back to the community – both locally and nationally. To do this, we have become involved in numerous community projects, market research charities and charities which are unrelated to the market research industry. Some of the causes we are most involved in are:

### Market Research Benevolent Association

We are members of the Market Research Benevolent Association – the market research industry's independent, registered charity. The MRBA provide financial assistance to those who work or who have worked in our industry and over the years have helped hundreds of people and their families – irrespective of their level in their companies – who are experiencing financial hardship due to illness, injury, bereavement, carer responsibility, or other personal problems.

DJS Research has increased its commitment to the association by becoming an annual sponsor. We recognise that with the growth of our company comes a growth in responsibility to those who have made that expansion possible. For more information on the Market Research Benevolent Association, or to see some of the good work they do for the market research industry, please click [here](#).

### Charity of the year

As a company we are committed to charity work. We have adopted local charity, Blythe House Hospice as our corporate Charity of the Year for 2023/24, and the majority of fundraising organised by DJS Research is targeted toward this charity.

Market research as an industry has fantastic potential to do good work – both in financial terms through the donation of incentives and ad-hoc fundraising, but also in terms of raising awareness by engaging with thousands of respondents every month.

### Volunteering

All staff at DJS Research are given the opportunity to volunteer for a day at a charity of their choice every year. Click [here](#) to see some examples.

### Sport in the community

Sport in general is a key part of life for many DJS Research employees/partners; we count several rugby and cricket players, a netball player, a long-distance runner and a semi-professional referee amongst our staff. As such, it seemed only natural to encourage sport in the locality of our offices.

DJS Research has sponsored a number of local sports clubs such as Whaley Bridge Athletic Football Club, Buxworth cricket club and Glossop RUFC.

As a company we actively encourage and fund our staff to take part in local sporting events such as the Manchester 10k run.

### Social value

The social benefits of research are numerous – the act of consulting stakeholders, audiences and residents on their views and measuring their levels of satisfaction through a bona fide market research agency shows a commitment to listening and acting in their interests.

We do not simply want to be data providers; we look to work with our clients as partners to generate the best possible outcomes.

We believe that the future success of our business is dependent on respecting the interests of all our stakeholders: employees, customers, suppliers and the wider community in which we operate. We actively seek out potential ways in which we can contribute to improving various aspects of the local, regional and national environment in which we trade.

Given the services we provide, we feel that ethical and responsible operating standards are especially important to our company. Our broad objective is to make a positive contribution to the local and wider economy wherever possible and wherever viable.

**We often make specific social value related commitments to clients such as:**

- Meaningful work placements: We have committed to hiring local (to our client) residents to support on projects in a paid position on a fixed contract, using an open and fair recruitment process. We have successfully done this on recent projects for a number of local Councils, which has led to longer-term employment for the staff we have taken on.
- Training opportunities: We have trained volunteers and local residents in different aspects of market research for a number of NHS clients.

We actively support the local and regional community in a number of ways including:

- Employing 100+ staff from Greater Manchester and the wider UK.
- Paying the Real Living Wage to all our staff and contractors.
- Sponsorship of a number of local sports teams and sponsorship of local heritage and cultural events (i.e. Whaley Water Weekend).
- Support of local Community Groups through financial donations and time investment (i.e. 'Friends of Strines Station' Group and The Strines Recreation Ground).
- Ensuring recruitment materials are prominent within local shops and many employees are based locally to our offices.
- Dealing with local suppliers wherever possible – i.e. IT, printing, corporate lunches etc.

**We are committed to supporting local education institutions at all levels through a number of means, including:**

- Offering paid internships and work experience on an on-going basis.
- Attending school 'mock-interviews' to prepare students for employment or applications for further education opportunities.
- Presenting the benefits of a career in market research to students at schools, colleges and universities.
- Mentoring students with business ideas through *Manchester University* schemes.
- Involvement in widening participation in higher education initiatives.

## Highlights of 2024

After a democratic vote, **we were absolutely delighted to announce Blythe House as our new charity of the year** for 2024/2025. This fantastic local charity provides invaluable support services for people affected by life limiting illness across the Derbyshire and High Peaks area. This year we got active, scaled Ethels, jogged with Santa and held cake sales (and more!) – all to raise much needed funds. Who knows what schemes we'll come up with in 2025!

We began the year on the right foot – quite literally – **with the launch of our annual 'Get Up and Go' challenge**, led by our Wellbeing team. We broke a DJS record, with over 30 people from 11 teams walking, skipping, cycling and swimming their way to February! All to raise heart rates, cortisol levels and money for our new charity of the year, Blythe House Hospice.

We also **reflected on Director Gill Redfern's presentation at the MRS Sustainability Summit** in December. Gill presented alongside our client Mark Roberts from WRAP and together they gave an insightful summary of a year-long qual survey on **how retailers can support customers shift their behaviour towards reuse and refill and away from packaged goods**. Having worked closely with WRAP since 2020 this joint presentation is just one example of the strength of this agency/client relationship, which is built on collaboration and trust.



In April **Daniel Hitchen**, our Junior Software Developer, became our first **fully qualified DJS Research Apprentice!**

Daniel has been studying for this Level 4 qualification, alongside his 'day job' for the last 2 years and passed with flying colours, obtaining the highest classification – a distinction. We're absolutely delighted for Daniel and his top-class result is so well deserved – you can find out more about our road to apprenticeships and Daniel's journey [here](#).

April also saw our first 'school day' of 2024, as our Creative Services team attended a careers day at Bramhall Hall High School and brought the magic of jobs in the creative side of market research to life! We've supported several schools and careers events this year (more on those later), but our strong relationship with Bramhall High specifically has been forged by our social values lead [Vicky Mullis](#) through her voluntary role as a Specialist Enterprise Adviser for the Greater Manchester Enterprise Adviser Network. [As Vicky explains](#), it's a role that she finds fulfilling in both a personal and professional sense and something she encourages others within the industry to get involved in.

This month saw the culmination of hours of training and preparation for an intrepid gang of fundraisers, when **close to 30 of DJS's finest took on the Edale Skyline Challenge for our charity of the year**, Blythe House Hospice. We also had a satellite team in Kent taking on their own mini-trek to show their support for this amazing cause. [On 16th May the team scaled over 1,200 metres of ascent, 5 ethels and 32km a piece](#) – in all weathers – topped off with a well-deserved trip to the pub! Raising over £3k between them, they definitely earned that pint and a 'cheers!' from all of us; it was most definitely the jewel in our fundraising crown this year.



Volunteering and giving something back is something we feel very passionate about, and that's why every employee Partner at DJS has the opportunity to take a paid volunteer day each year.

Recently our HR and Finance team decided they'd like to spend their day with our charity of the year. With Christmas just around the corner they were delighted to help with preparations for the charity's infamous wreath making events – you can read our HR Manager Lucy Pawson's round up of the day [here](#).



We jogged our way into December at the Blythe House Hospice Jingle Bell Jog, donning Santa suits and dashing around Buxton Gardens on a blustery Sunday morning – special congratulations to [Rahat Imran](#) who, completely new to running, completed the 5k route with her daughter. Well done, Rahat.



In December we also announced our support for the [White Ribbon charity](#). We were first made aware of this charity through our work with South Cambridgeshire District Council; its core aim is to prevent violence against women and girls by addressing the root causes and promoting education as a route to drive change. This struck a deep chord with members of our team. Our Associate Director [Julie Hollingsworth](#) has become our White Ribbon Champion and together we'll be sharing more information internally at DJS to raise awareness of the important issues this charity stands for, as well as matters of abuse more widely, for women and men, in 2025.



## Looking forward to 2025...

Based on the findings from our MyDJS employee satisfaction survey, we will continue efforts to actively improve our partner satisfaction, wellbeing and inclusion scores, as well as continuing to listen and learn from our partners via our EO Voice partner council. A range of wellbeing activities are also being planned for this year, starting with the ever popular 'bring your dog to work day'!

We plan to build on our previous EDI training activity to roll out further ongoing training, as well as repeating and publishing our gender pay gap analysis. In addition, we will continue to put inclusion at the heart of any research we carry out.

We will continue to measure our company CO2 emissions and aim to develop and refine this measurement process as well as continuing efforts to reduce our carbon footprint going forward.

We will continue efforts to support local community organisations and have just selected two new local sports teams to sponsor in the coming year. We also have a programme of activities planned to raise money for charity, including tackling the Cheshire three Peaks challenge in May.

A key goal for us this year is to achieve B Corp certification so that we can learn from that community how to improve our positive impact and really embed CSR across the business and wider supply chain. As an important part of this process we plan to amend our Articles of Association to legally embed our commitment to considering the impact of decisions on all of our stakeholders including employees, customers, suppliers, the environment, and the community.

And finally, we look forward to continuing to work in partnership with our customers and stakeholders to drive positive change and impact.



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