

We are
futurists

Standard Life  Aberdeen

Social Report 2020

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Navigating our report

The issues covered in the report reflect the outcomes of our materiality review and the Workforce Disclosure Initiative's (WDI) recommendations on social disclosures. The report will form the basis of our WDI application later in 2021 and be used in corporate ESG reporting more broadly.

The structure of this report reflects how we manage social risks and opportunities in three key ways:

1. **It starts with us** - focusing on the key risks and opportunities affecting our corporate entity, and the direct and indirect impact of our operations on social issues.
2. **Investing with purpose** - as an asset manager, how we incorporate social issues into our investments to deliver on our responsibility to manage material risks to our clients' portfolios, and identify investment opportunities
3. **Unlocking solutions** – how we collaborate with others including charities, other investors and government to create solutions to societal challenges

Within the report we also disclose details of the risk management frameworks, policies and governance structures that inform our social strategy and approach.



It's never been more important to recognise the role we have in contributing to a better future for all our stakeholders. From helping clients to be better investors, to creating positive outcomes for our people, our shareholders and the communities in which we operate.

Every time we make a decision, we ask ourselves what we would do if we had a personal stake in the outcome – because we do.

Stephen Bird
Chief Executive Officer



Our strategy is to deliver client-led growth, and underpinning that strategy is our imperative to invest responsibly. Our commitment to environmental, social and governance (ESG) considerations gives us a framework to make decisions that help improve long-term returns, and to engage constructively with the companies in which we invest. By combining this with the positive impact we can have through our operations and the communities we operate in, we can make a difference for our clients, society and the wider world.

ESG is more than a hygiene factor. When you're committed to being true futurists, it has to be at the core of everything you do. Our focus is already there, but the impact of the pandemic makes achieving our aims all the more urgent. Progress towards the UN's Sustainable Development Goals has slowed or reversed, while many existing social inequalities have been highlighted and compounded. These encompass a broad range of complex factors, including human and labour rights, human capital development, diversity and inclusion, financial inclusion and more.

When we consider the scale of these issues and the different stakeholders we work with, the extent of the positive influence we can have becomes all the more apparent. The targets and pledges we have set in our operations for promoting fair and secure work, and for improving workforce diversity reflect our ongoing commitment and will help us build on our progress.

We will direct finance towards companies that are having a positive social impact and protecting their workers, and encourage them to maintain the high standards we ask of ourselves.

This report is a snapshot of all we achieved in 2020, together. There are a number of achievements I am particularly proud of. By becoming one of the first two companies accredited as a Living Hours employer and working with the Living Wage Foundation, we took our fair and secure work commitments further across our operations, supply chain and investments. Our continual progress on diversity and inclusion was recognised by the prestigious Bloomberg Gender Equality Index who included us for the third consecutive year. And to prioritise a COVID-19 recovery that is both fair and green, we became a C-19 Business Pledge employer and released over £440,000 of funding to support recovery efforts.

But we want to go further. In a world that's changing quickly, it's important we create the conditions that enable our business to have a real-world impact. That's what we're going to do. We will go further for our clients. We will be a better and more inclusive employer. We will play our part in building a world that is more sustainable, just, inclusive and diverse.



We are futurists

We harness the power of time

We leverage technology to connect

The curiosity of our talent creates opportunity

enabling our clients to be better investors

Investments

Our global asset management business serving institutional and wholesale clients. We are focused on growth markets and on clients who are actively investing. We are prioritising growth in Asia.

We are building our capabilities in growing asset classes reflecting changing investment aspirations. This business is powered by data and technology and we will invest in our technology to enable our clients to be better investors now and in the future.

Our strategy is to deliver superior investment performance consistently through time, deepening our client relationships.

Adviser

Our UK financial adviser business, providing services to wealth managers and advisers through the Wrap and Elevate platforms. Our platforms are designed to deliver a great service experience and we are investing to make it even easier.

We are growing in the UK by earning the right to be the primary platform for our clients. We will relentlessly improve our platform through time, consistently delivering great service.

Our strategy is to power our growth through excellent technology, lead the market and be a natural consolidator as the market changes.

Personal

Our UK wealth and savings business, combining our financial planning business, digital direct-to-consumer services and discretionary fund management services.

Asset management is converging with wealth management and this trend, together with the empowerment that technology brings, is our opportunity.

We are growing in the UK, and through further acquisition and investment in technology, we will maximise synergies across our business model.

Our strategy is to connect these businesses in a model that is central to meeting the needs of the UK savings and wealth market.

Enablers

Technology

Brand

Research

Partnerships

Investing responsibly to build a better world

Total AUMA £537bn

A FTSE 100 company
Headquartered in
Scotland and listed
in London

7%

contractor FTE vs
employee FTE

Around


6,000


employees globally as
at December 2020

Colleagues represented

83%

by an association or
trade union

 [See our global locations](#)

 [Other sustainability documents](#)

Our business model is designed to enable our clients to be better investors, deliver for our shareholders and provide an environment where our talent can thrive – and make a positive, lasting contribution to the future world.

Social aims and achievements

It Starts with us

Material issue: Diversity & Inclusion | Human capital development | Poverty & inequality | Wellbeing



Key aims & targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will create entry routes for people from diverse backgrounds to join and progress in our company We will create an inclusive organisation where people feel valued everyday We will support the mental, physical and emotional wellbeing of our people We will target, by the end of 2025: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PLC Board – 40% male, 40% female, 20% any gender Senior leadership – 40% male, 40% female, 20% any gender Global workforce – 50% male, 50% female PLC Board – +1 ethnic minority director
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated our D&I targets and gender, ethnicity and social inclusion action plans Global employee survey and working from home pulse surveys to measure engagement Extended our commitment to fair work for employees and supply chain workers Continued developing our people and honoured commitments to early careers talent during the pandemic Launched a new mental and physical wellbeing service New UK HR policies to support colleagues managing a range of circumstances
2020 achievements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieved Board and senior leadership gender targets ahead of schedule Included in Bloomberg Gender Equality Index for third consecutive year 72% engagement score globally (2018: 56%) Became one of the first two UK companies accredited as a Living Hours employer Spent £4.4m on training and created 100+ mentoring relationships globally Undergraduate programme ranked 2nd in Investment Management at the Rate My Placement Awards Diversity networks and regional forums held 70 events reaching 4,000 colleagues Transitioned colleagues to home working swiftly at the start of the pandemic and provided a £125 allowance (or local currency equivalent) to purchase home working equipment Provided colleagues and their families access to counselling and virtual GP appointments 171 colleagues (55% male) benefitted from the new parent leave policy

Investing with purpose

Material issue: Diversity & Inclusion | Human capital development | Poverty & inequality | Human rights



Key aims & targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will continue integrating ESG factors into our investment research, decision making, and product development
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued using corporate engagement and shareholder votes as a way to drive action Published shareholder voting records and quarterly updates on ESG engagements with investee companies Developed an ESG house score to help integrate ESG information into decision making Launched a Labour & Human Rights Working Group to focus action across asset classes
2020 achievements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Voted on 72 social resolutions and took voting action related to board gender diversity against 146 companies A new research series explored the drivers of women's participation in the labour force Further tailored our voting approach to gender diversity on boards by implementing standards for companies in the ASX100 (Australian Securities Exchange) Published a range of responsible investing position statements, our Human Rights Statement, and a document outlining our approach to human rights in investments Used our ESG Impact Dial to integrate social indicators into real estate developments Next we will setup an operational working group to complement the work of the investments working group

Unlocking solutions

Material issue: Diversity & Inclusion | Poverty & inequality | Human rights | Human capital development | Financial inclusion



Key aims & targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will tackle social inequalities in local communities and by collaborating with other organisations such as charities, government and other investors We will set long-term targets for charitable giving and volunteering, and publish progress updates We will support people to become more financially resilient
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New charitable giving strategy helped expand charity and volunteering partnerships globally Released funding for COVID-19 responses and supported the third sector to recover from the pandemic Provided bespoke advice to charity clients to help steward their capital Continued participating in and joined new collaborative groups to tackle social inequalities
2020 achievements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gave over £2m to charity which benefitted 55,000 people Colleagues completed over 2,500 volunteering hours Our Power Up Scotland programme supported 26 early stage social enterprises Partnership with KickStart Money delivered financial education sessions to over 3,000 children Sponsored an investor toolkit published by Living Wage Foundation and ShareAction. Continued on the Living Wage Scotland and Living Hours leadership groups to drive fair work initiatives in the UK

part i

Strategy, governance and stakeholders

Our stakeholder highlights

72%

Overall employee engagement score

£2m

charitable contribution

95

supplier engagements to address COVID-19

16

public consultations responded to

Social strategy

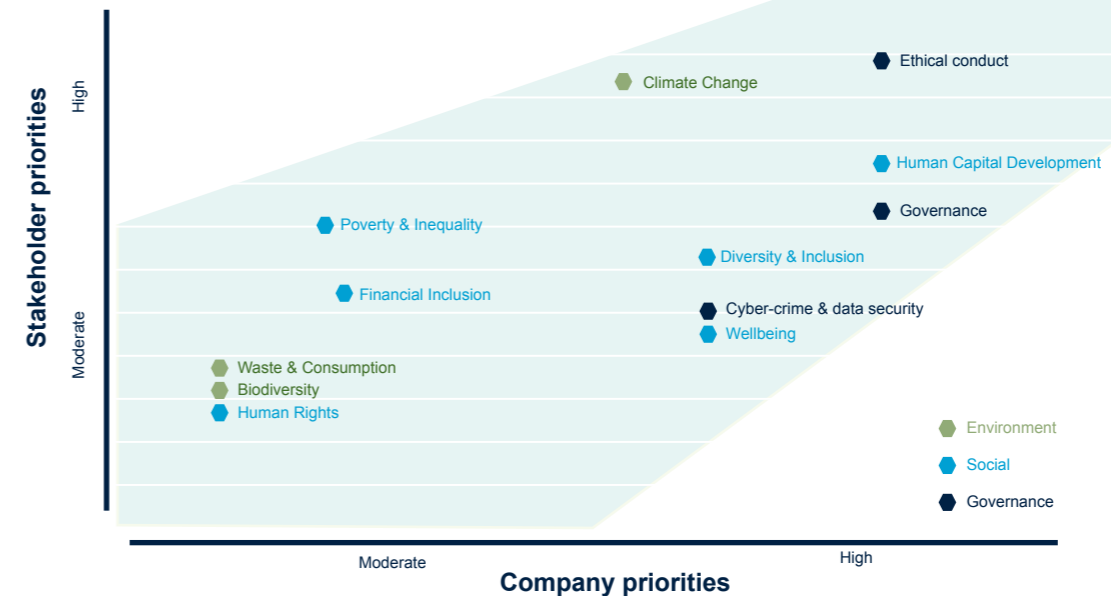
Our levels of impact	<p>It starts with us</p> <p>Managing the performance of our own operations to a high standard is vital. It sets the tone for our culture and for every other aspect of how our business impacts on society and the planet. It helps us to meet the expectations of our different stakeholders, and it enhances our credibility when asking more of companies and other assets we invest in.</p>	<p>Investing with purpose</p> <p>Investment stewardship and responsible investing are core to our corporate purpose. As responsible investors ESG considerations have been an integral part of our decision-making process for almost 30 years. By putting ESG factors at the heart of our investment processes, we believe we can generate better outcomes for our clients, society and the wider world.</p>	<p>Unlocking solutions</p> <p>Collaboration with policymakers, third sector organisations and our clients is critical to ensuring we develop solutions that are targeted at the areas of greatest need and aligned to our customer and clients' interests.</p>
Social commitment	<p>We understand and manage the material social ESG factors in our operations and supply chain to help ensure positive stakeholder outcomes.</p>	<p>We integrate and evaluate social ESG factors in our investment process, with the aim of generating the best long-term client outcomes aligned to their objectives.</p>	<p>We advance policy regulation and industry standards, as well as build sustainable communities, to deliver a better future for clients and society.</p>

Material social issues

Understanding the material social issues that are important to our stakeholders and business is key to guiding our social strategy.

Our 2019 materiality review found that issues of wellbeing, engagement and development of colleagues repeatedly came up as important for stakeholders. Diversity and inclusion was also a key theme – both in terms of diverse representation and inclusion (workplace culture and financial). Stakeholders also felt we had a role in tackling poverty and inequality, and upholding human rights.

The world has shifted again since this review. The renewed Black Lives Matter protests of 2020, following the murder of George Floyd, brought systemic societal inequalities and racial injustice into focus. COVID-19 continues to have significant social impacts on individuals and communities; resulting in increased poverty and reinforced disadvantage. As such, putting fairness and equity at the foundation of the economic recovery post-COVID is essential. Our material social issues are flexed and reinforced rather than disrupted by these changes, as we recognise the crucial role we play in tackling social issues.



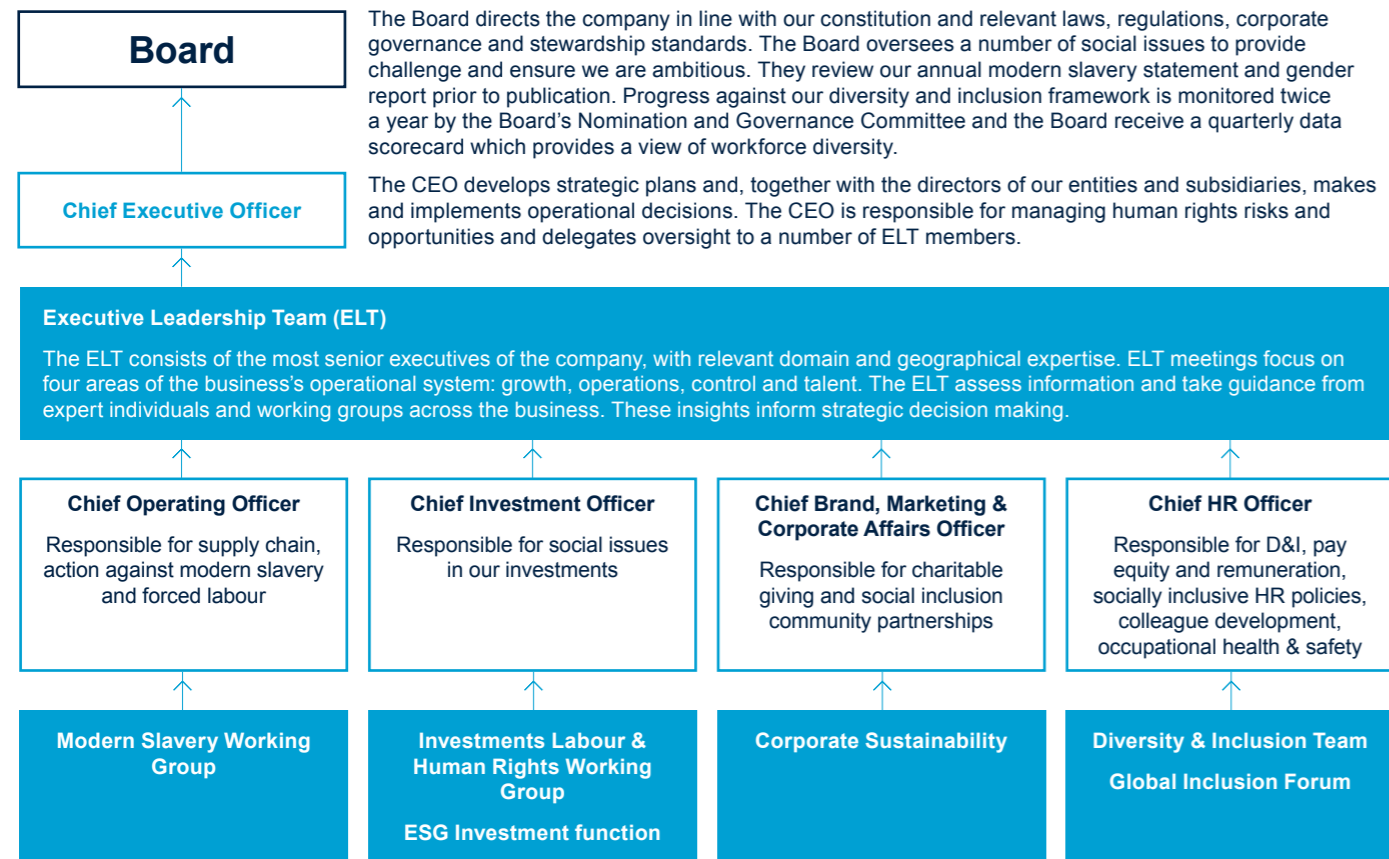
Governance

Strong corporate and internal governance is key to ensuring we operate responsibly. The Board, CEO, Executive Leadership Team, and internal forums of experts play an important role in the governance structures that enable us to have a sustainable social impact, by reviewing policies and challenging our approach.



Read our stewardship report for more information about our governance and stakeholders

https://www.aberdeenstandard.com/docs?editionId=50636955-103f-47cb-86e2-036aec4d30d4&_ga=2.108613634.1879211952.1621257399-460638453.1605877790



part ii

Risk management & policies

Our risk framework ensures we identify the most material social issues for our business, at both a corporate level and in our investments. By understanding these risks, we can take action and drive positive change as a responsible business.



Corporate risk management

Our continually evolving Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) framework defines clear roles and responsibilities for the management of risk. The Board are responsible for the ERM framework, internal control processes and the continual review of their effectiveness. The CEO, with the support of the ELT, manages the internal control and risk framework and approves management and control policies.

Risk is managed at three levels:

1. Everyone is responsible for day-to-day risk management
2. The Risk and Compliance function provide risk oversight
3. The Internal Audit function independently verify the adequacy and effectiveness of our risk and control management systems.

Internal expert insight and external screening is used to identify and assess any emerging or strategic risks. Of our 12 principle business risks, eight are operational and the others are conduct, regulatory and legal, financial, and strategic. Risks, controls and actions to manage risks are recorded on a risk management system.

Face-to-face and mandatory online learning modules are used to promote a risk culture. This includes Your Conduct training which outlines the standards we hold ourselves to and includes an attestation to the Global Code of Conduct.

Investment risk management

We integrate ESG factors into our investment processes as we believe these are financially important and directly impact asset performance. Understanding ESG risks and opportunities, in addition to other financial metrics, helps us make better investment decisions for clients. It also means we are informed and can support other companies to improve their standards, which in turn protects and enhances the value of our clients' investments.

Our research considers how both macro systemic issues and fundamental, bottom-up ESG risks and opportunities impact the value of the investments we make. Our central ESG Investment function and asset class ESG experts work together to integrate these insights into investment decision making.

Policies

We have a number of policies in place describing how we identify and manage any risks associated with human rights or labour issues.

We are UK listed but ensure all regions and markets have policies that are appropriate and relevant to the legislation they are governed by. We consult international human rights statements such as the Core Conventions of the International Labor Organisation (ILO), and the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, and the United Nations' (UN) Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights to inform our approach and align to best practice.

Our key documents include our Human Rights Statement, Modern Slavery Statement, Codes of Conduct for our employees and for our third parties, Global Diversity & Inclusion policy, and our investment position statements on social issues. These policies are publicly available to ensure all stakeholders are clear about the standards we expect.

Read more about these in the Appendix.

Raising concerns

If our employees identify any issues relating to labour conditions, human rights, modern slavery, or otherwise, we encourage them to report this to their manager. If they feel uncomfortable raising their concern using their normal reporting line, or wish to do so anonymously, an independently managed confidential Speak Up hotline is available.

All concerns raised are taken seriously and investigated. No one raising a grievance or concern will suffer any form of reprisal or retaliation for doing so, even if their concern is proved to be unfounded. The Speak Up helpline is available 24/7 globally and also advertised to our third parties who can use it the same way.

Recommendations for action are made on a case by case basis in line with the relevant HR policies. This could include disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

In the event any human rights issues are identified in our supply chain, these would be escalated to senior management using the Enterprise Risk Management framework. The resulting action would be tailored to the situation but may vary from supporting the supplier to make positive changes, to terminating the relationship.

Risks and opportunities

Our strategy has been designed to capture material social risks and opportunities. By focusing on the following areas, we can build a long-term, sustainable business, whilst delivering for our clients today.

Risks are identified through a combination of responding to legislation, monitoring global trends and their impact on the financial services sector, learning from industry engagements and benchmarking, conducting materiality reviews, listening to employees, and consulting expert internal working groups. We also consult our internal Research Institute, who produce original research on macro risks.

Diversity & inclusion (D&I)

D&I is an increasingly important component of a company's social license to operate, so is both a risk and an opportunity.

Our strategic plan and long-term targets provide the framework to create a diverse organisation with an inclusive culture, and we collaborate with external experts to inform our approach. Our commitment to a workplace free from discrimination and harassment is reinforced in our supplier expectations.

Our ESG research process includes a strong emphasis on D&I. Aspects are taken into account in the ESG House Score and we have strong position statements that inform our approach to corporate stewardship. D&I indicators are included in our macro research ESG index and our new research explores how D&I policies can improve aggregate economic performance.

Human rights & modern slavery

Organisations failing to uphold the human rights of their stakeholders risk negatively impacting communities, regulatory penalties, operating challenges, and reduced revenue and trust.

Policies, training, whistleblowing mechanisms and remediation processes are used to help create a safe workplace and supply chain which upholds human rights and has a zero tolerance approach to bullying, harassment and discrimination.

We identify high risk geographies using our Human Rights Index and have published our approach to integrating human rights into investment decisions. We engage companies on human rights issues and use our expertise to support cross-industry anti-modern slavery collaborations.

COVID-19 and wellbeing

Failure to support workforce wellbeing can lead to increased absence, higher turnover and reduced productivity.

Colleague wellbeing has been integral to our COVID-19 response planning and operating model changes were made so third parties could work in safe environments.

We engaged with companies to understand how they were creating safe work environments and reducing the risk of employees contracting the virus.

We also supported local communities to recover through charitable donations and in kind giving globally.

Human capital development

Organisations failing to develop their people will struggle to attract or retain an engaged and innovative workforce, which may negatively impact revenue.

We attract, retain and develop talented people through training, colleague engagement initiatives and wellbeing activity. Colleague surveys are used to measure our progress and identify areas for improvement.

Investment research and company engagements help us to identify the companies developing their workforce which we can channel investment towards.

Poverty and inequality

As the world faces widespread social inequalities, we have a role in helping to build sustainable communities. A key way we do this is through promoting fair work.

Our social inclusion action plan and charitable giving strategy guide our operational and community activity. We secure fair work for colleagues through fair remuneration and comprehensive benefits, including paid leave policies. We work with third parties to set similar expectations for supply chain workers, and with charity partners to remove barriers to employment.

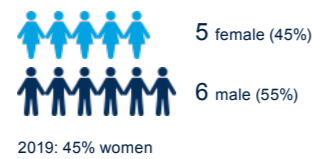
Investment research highlights key trends and informs company engagements. Engagements enable us to promote best practice on fair work and reducing inequalities, and provide opportunities to discuss the standards we expect.

part iii

It starts with us

We are focused on building a diverse, engaged and developed workforce in an inclusive environment. And we want to use our influence to expand these commitments to our supply chain.

Gender split at Board level



Refreshed gender targets for 2025 and introduced Board ethnic diversity target

£4.4_m

spent on colleague training

2019: £5.5m

30%

of colleagues are involved in diversity networks and regional inclusion groups, helping build our inclusive culture

2019: 30%

72%

colleague engagement score +16% from 56% in 2018

13th

in the Hampton-Alexander Review of FTSE 350 gender diversity

2019: 10th

Creating a diverse and engaged workforce starts by upholding human rights. We listen to our people, provide fair and secure work, and build the inclusive culture needed for individuals to thrive. This action extends beyond our workforce and also into our supply chain.

Fair and secure work

We are committed to promoting fair work which is free from any form of modern slavery.

We also commit to fairly paying all employees. 100% of employees globally are paid above the minimum wage in their country of work. We operationalise this commitment through employment contracts and in the UK, we are accredited as a Living Wage and Living Hours employer. We use the Living Wage Foundation methodology for determining the living wage and making any associated salary uplifts.

Promoting fair and secure work goes beyond base pay and extends to our benefits and leave offering. At the end of 2019 we introduced a new set of harmonised terms and conditions of employment in the UK. These were designed to be fair and consistent, and attract and retain talent through competitive benefits including pension, life assurance and private healthcare. Outside of the UK, we ensure benefits are benchmarked so that they are locally appropriate to the particular market. We have appointed a global broker and operate a Global Benefits Working Group to ensure best practices and ways of working can be shared.

Our new terms and conditions introduced key policies which help remove barriers to colleagues' progression and performance.

Our UK Special Leave policy supports colleagues managing commitments and circumstances outside of work. Time off is given for a range of scenarios including volunteering leave and career breaks to pursue personal interests, carers leave, armed forces reservist leave, study and exam leave for colleagues pursuing qualifications, and more.

The UK Parent Leave Policy entitles colleagues of any gender welcoming a new child through birth, adoption or surrogacy to 52 weeks' leave (40 weeks fully-paid). The policy goes beyond statutory minimums and industry norms and is a bold step in supporting new families of all types. Our gender and LGBT+ employee networks were engaged in the policy development process to ensure we considered a diverse range of families.

We expect suppliers to respect the rights of their employees and comply with relevant legislation in the countries they operate in.

All UK suppliers working on our premises are required to pay their employees a Living Wage and comply with Living Hours. This includes providing 4 weeks' notice for shifts and guaranteed payment if shifts are cancelled within this notice period.

Of the 171 colleagues taking parental leave, **55%** were men



You can learn more about the impact of our parent leave policy by watching our one year on video:

<https://www.standardlifeaberdeen.com/en/media-centre/media-centre-news-article/gender-equality-driving-further-progress>



Read our Modern Slavery Statement to understand how we mitigate the risk of modern slavery and forced labour in our operations, supply chains and investments.

https://www.aberdeenstandard.com/docs?editionId=c073cb0f-135c-4544-a82c-9ca20a7f29e8&_ga=2.56351208.2135255099.1619426068-460638453.1605877790

Colleague representation and engagement

83% of colleagues globally are represented by an association, trade union, or have staff representatives.

In the UK we have a Colleague Partnership Framework which formalises the relationship between the company and employees. As part of the framework, we operate a Standing Forum for consultation with employee representatives, where this is required by law. This is used during collective consultation of restructures, redundancy and business transfers.

We have a retained supplier for all contractors and a clear policy with guidance on how we work with contractors.

We recognise and support the right to freedom of association and collective bargaining for supply chain workers. The Global Third Party Code of Conduct makes clear to suppliers they should not interfere with the right of their employees to legally organise and join associations. This includes labour unions, consultation committees and employee associations.

It is important we create opportunities for colleagues to share their feedback and that we act on this. In 2020 we ran a global employee engagement survey, Viewpoints. Colleagues were complimentary about leader communications and the skills of their managers. Areas highlighted for improvement were providing greater clarity on our strategic vision, reducing barriers to delivery and supporting senior leaders to do what they say they will.

During a year predominantly spent working from home, we increased opportunities for colleagues to connect with one another and leaders. Leader communications were more frequent and we used digital platforms to make these sessions interactive. These varied from town halls with thousands of colleagues, to regular team updates. Recognising that some colleagues were home schooling children, we recorded updates so colleagues could listen at a time that suited them.

We also want to hear and resolve any concerns or complaints colleagues have at work. In the UK concerns are resolved through processes outlined in the Grievance Policy and Bullying & Harassment Policy. There are equivalent policies and processes for the countries we operate in outside the UK. Our retained supplier takes responsibility alongside us for grievance mechanisms for contractors and other non-employees.

Viewpoints results

72% participation rate

72% engagement score

(+16% from 56% in 2018)

74% said they enjoy working at SLA

(+17% since 2018, +2 points compared to sector norm)

75% felt SLA is an inclusive organisation

(+8% since 2018)

Developing our people

Attracting, developing and retaining high performing people at all levels and career stages is crucial to delivering our strategic objectives.

Colleague survey feedback shows a strong relationship between effective leaders and engaged colleagues, so in 2020 we developed a new Leadership Capability Framework. This outlines our vision of leadership at different levels and will be used in talent processes such as succession, recruitment, development and performance management.

Our approach to learning and development is based on three key principles: developing skills and capabilities required in our business and industry; creating engagement in the organisation; and building successful careers.

The range of skills and capabilities needed is broad - from leadership and management skills, to technical and regulatory knowledge. Our global learning management portal - My Development - empowers colleagues to drive their own development through skills workshops, online courses, digital resources and mentoring.

We develop people manager skills and capability through our People Management Academy. Engagement survey results show that colleague engagement is positively linked to manager capability. 83% of colleagues said their manager is a role model for our behaviours and creates collaborative, inclusive environments.

Our targeted development programmes help build successful careers. The Ambition programme supports colleagues in the first 3-5 years of their careers to develop core skills fundamental to future success such as organisational politics and personal brand. Accelerate is a mid-career stage offering suited to colleagues in management or senior specialist roles and builds on existing skills such as decision making and confidence. Both programmes offer mixed and female-only sessions to enable colleagues to learn in environments that suit them.

Mentoring is another important way we support personal development and professional growth. Following a successful pilot, we launched our first global mentoring programme. The programme is open for everyone to join and resources on My Development help colleagues build their mentoring relationships. Over 100 relationships have been setup to date.

Case study – A commitment to early careers

Despite the challenging circumstances brought about by COVID-19 in 2020, we maintained our commitment to welcoming early careers talent. Our new recruitment materials – which included videos, current trainee profiles and key inclusion partners – resulted in a 400% increase in applications to the trainee programme.

In autumn 2020 we welcomed 22 new UK trainees and 37 graduates globally.

Placement managers are supported through training, such as inter-generational awareness, to ensure they can create a rewarding experience for participants. Our early careers work was recognised with a Top 50 Ranking for both Undergraduate and Apprenticeship programmes at the Rate My Placement awards.

21% of graduates, 22% of school

leavers and 43% of interns

(deferred to June 2021) identify as minority ethnic

US interns were 50% female

(2019: 40%) and APAC interns were 38% female (2019: 27%)

Introduced data collection on the educational pathways of early careers applicants in the UK

87% of our 2020 school leavers attended state schools

Diversity and inclusion (D&I)

Research shows mature D&I strategies lead to stronger decision-making, innovation and ultimately performance. That's why we put D&I at the heart of our decisions.

In 2020 we published our first **D&I report** and updated framework which drives activity and outcomes in four priority areas:

- making D&I part of our purpose
- inclusive ways of working
- bringing diverse talent into and through our company
- feeling included and valued everyday

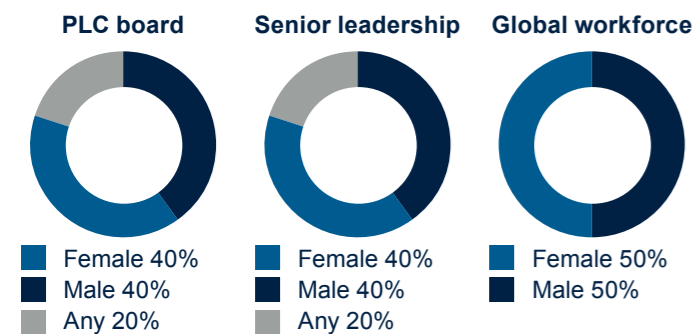
Our approach is driven by data so we encourage colleagues to voluntarily disclose their diversity information (where we are legally able to ask for this). We will continue to build our data set in 2021, so we can better understand the composition of our workforce and guide further action.

Executive Leadership Team members receive quarterly D&I data tracking on their business areas to inform decision making. Our leaders continue to set and publish D&I commitments. These plans make sure their actions are tailored to the particular context and diversity challenges in their business area or region.

Industry trends and the data we do have show that we need to continue taking action in the areas of gender and ethnicity, as well as creating opportunities for people of all social backgrounds to join our business. To support this ambition, we have gender, ethnicity and social inclusion action plans in place which are refreshed in partnership with our employee diversity networks.

Increased diversity data disclosure from 24% to 58%

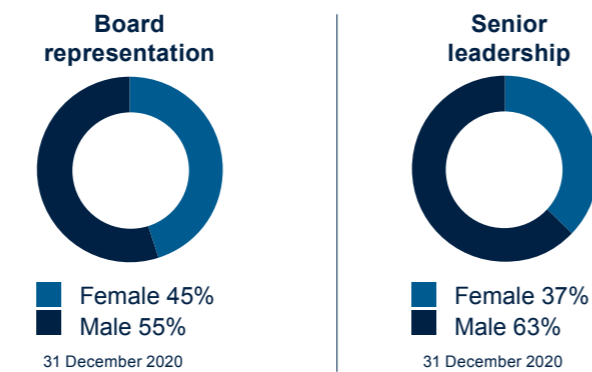
Gender targets for the end of 2025:



+1 ethnic minority PLC Board member

Gender balance

We are committed to achieving gender balance at all levels of our organisation and have been working towards this goal for a number of years.



+10% women at CEO-1 since 2019, to 28%

5% reduction in mean gender pay gap

We achieved our Board and senior leader (CEO-1 & CEO-2) targets of 33% before our October 2020 deadline and have set updated targets for the end of 2025. Our improvement in the percentage of women at CEO-1 and CEO-2 levels is an achievement but we know we need to continue to sustain this over time. This is important as our gender pay gap is heavily influenced by the proportion of men in senior and highly remunerated roles, as well as the women in more junior roles.

Our **fourth gender report** details our gender pay and bonus gaps, alongside the actions we have developed in partnership with our gender equality network Balance. These include how we:

- transition to new methods and styles of working that benefit everyone, by engaging colleagues in the process
- embed our gender-inclusive policies
- continue to hardwire inclusion through all our HR processes, building ways to minimise bias through recruitment, talent, reward, performance processes.

Our gender inclusive policies, such as the UK Parent Leave policy, received widespread recognition, including by Equileap as the best company globally for paid parental leave, and at the Diversity in Finance Awards where we were highly commended in the Championing Gender Equality category.

4.2% UK colleagues identify as minority ethnic

Ethnic diversity and multiculturalism

The Black Lives Matter protests of summer 2020 brought renewed focus on the role of business in addressing racial inequality. We welcomed this scrutiny as our business and the financial sector has a long way to go in achieving ethnic diversity and inclusion. Our approach continues to be on actions that have a sustainable and systemic impact across the company, and that improve outcomes for Black and ethnic minority colleagues.

We were one of the inaugural signatories to the Race at Work Charter in 2018 and, following the Black Lives Matter protests, we became a CEO signatory to the open letter on Black inclusion created by Audeliss and Involve, to continue collaborating and learning. In the US, we are part of the Corporate Call to Action group, a coalition of CEOs establishing measurable commitments to address racial justice and social change. We continue to deliver our ethnicity action plan commitments, which we first published in 2018. The original plan and future areas of activity are developed in partnership with our ethnicity and multiculturalism network, Unity, and with our executive sponsor for ethnicity.

Board composition demonstrates a company's diversity so we set a Board ethnicity target for the first time. We currently meet the Sir John Parker Review recommendation of at least one ethnic minority director (equivalent to 9% Board representation) and have committed to appointing at least one further ethnic minority Board member by the end of 2025. Our **Board Charter** outlines how we make appointments based on merit and specifically consider appointments in the context of gender and ethnicity composition.

Our Executive Reverse Mentoring programme gives 17 leaders – including all members of our Executive Leadership Team – an opportunity to explore diverse experiences. Each leader is mentored by a colleague from our ethnicity and multiculturalism network. Through sharing of experiences and discussions about race at work, senior leaders can learn from the experiences of minority ethnic colleagues and, in turn, use this learning to influence the decisions they make.

Creating an inclusive culture

Discrimination, bullying and harassment have no place in our company. Any bullying or harassment claims are investigated thoroughly and our zero tolerance approach is reinforced through mandatory diversity training. Additionally, Your Conduct training is completed by all colleagues annually.

Our networks and regional inclusion forums support members and allies of the diverse groups they represent. Our six networks focus on gender, LGBT+, ethnicity, mental health, young people, and armed forces. Despite working from home, thousands of colleagues attended events in 2020, leading to increased engagement, understanding and awareness of D&I topics.

Recognising the importance of senior role models, members of our Global Leadership Group (who report to the Executive Leadership Team) sponsor our global employee diversity

networks. By aligning senior sponsors to each network, they have the opportunity to hear and act on colleague feedback, as well as mentoring and supporting the development of network chairs.

During the year, we worked with networks to critically analyse our end-to-end employee lifecycle. We introduced inclusive changes to processes such as recruitment and performance management and we are starting to see the positive impact: there has been a 5% increase in recruitment offers made to women in the last 12 months.

2,000 network members globally

70 network & forum events with 4,000 attendees

51% of job offers went to women in 2020 (2019: 46%)

We developed a number of new tools to support colleagues to have conversations about D&I with confidence and to take practical action. These included launching a global Diversity Summit series, a Talk About Race guide, Allyship guide, actions you can take to support better gender and ethnicity outcomes, and practical steps for line managers.

We encourage and reinforce positive behaviours by being clear about what we expect through our performance management process. We expect people managers – including all ELT members – to drive a culture of inclusion by getting to know colleagues on a personal level and utilising their unique strengths, backgrounds, experience and perspectives. This performance goal feeds into performance management and pay.

At Executive Director level, our gender representation targets are linked to variable pay through the performance measures of their annual scorecard. The continued inclusion of gender progression targets in Executive Director variable pay targets (since 2016) has served to increase the focus on diversity and inclusion issues at a senior level.

D&I in our supply chain

We expect suppliers to abide by relevant equality legislation in the countries they operate in and create an inclusive workplace which does not tolerate bullying, harassment or offensive behaviour.

We are committed to building a diverse supplier base and encourage opportunities for diverse businesses (at least 51% minority owned) and SMEs (less than 250 employees or turnover of less than €50m or a balance sheet of less than €43m) to engage with us for the supply of goods and services.

Wellbeing, health and safety

Our employees typically work in low risk environments. Health and safety risk assessments are conducted for all work activities and regular audits are conducted by an external party, with any findings addressed within defined timescales. We aim for zero reportable accidents and 95% of risks to be controlled at the point of audit. All accidents or fatalities reported on site are investigated, including accidents involving contractors, third parties and visitors.

Our UK Health & Safety committee, which includes employee representatives, meets twice a year to gather employee views on any changes which impact their health and safety. Input from diversity networks and engagement surveys is included.

All colleagues complete online mandatory training on health and safety, and UK colleagues also complete workstation assessments. Further training is provided to specific groups such as fire wardens, first aiders and people involved with manual handling activity.

Virgin Pulse is our global offering which provides physical, mental, nutritional and lifestyle information to colleagues. We monitor colleague health before and after our annual Global Challenge campaign to evidence improvements across a range of factors including sleep, productivity and physical exercise. Each region has local wellbeing activities such as yoga classes, lunchtime fitness classes, and campaigns promoting open discussions about mental health at work.

Our offering is designed to proactively support colleague wellbeing but we know colleagues sometimes need time off work. UK colleagues can take 6 months' sick leave at full pay and after 26 weeks of absence become eligible for Group Income Protection (GIP) at 75% of their salary (less applicable state benefits), subject to their claim being accepted by the insurer. GIP payments continue until they return to work or State Pension Age, provided they continue to meet the eligibility criteria. 2.95% of total working days scheduled in 2020 were taken as sick days (covering 93% of employees).

7 on site workplace accidents globally (2019: 26)

0 on site fatalities (2019: 0)

100% colleagues globally covered by wellbeing programme

Case study - Wellbeing during COVID-19

During the pandemic our colleagues' lives have been significantly disrupted and everyone faced unique circumstances. We were quickly able to move the majority of colleagues to home working in March 2020, and strict safeguarding was put in place to protect the small number of critical workers in our offices.

Early on we recognised that a one size fits all approach was not appropriate to effectively support colleagues. Instead, we have focused on empowering managers to work with their teams and devise flexible solutions to balance the needs of customers with personal needs. We made it easy to change working patterns and promoted different leave options such as carers leave to take time away from work to meet other responsibilities.

Our senior leaders role modelled flexibility and agile working practices. Members of our Global Inclusion Forum began a communication campaign that showcased how their teams were staying connected and being inclusive whilst working remotely. Examples included scheduling long lunch breaks to enable colleagues to get outside in the daylight for exercise, and encouraging virtual coffee breaks to break up the working day.

Colleague wellbeing has been central to our pandemic response. Building on existing wellbeing support, we introduced a new mental and physical wellbeing service and worked dynamically with suppliers to create solutions that matched colleague needs. This included providing access to counselling for colleagues and their families, virtual GP appointments and more. We partnered with experts to provide professional advice and support to both colleagues and their families, including resilience webinars run by a chartered psychologist. We provided all colleagues with a £125 allowance (or local currency equivalent) to purchase home working equipment so they could work in safe environments.

In addition to providing support, we have carefully listened to colleagues throughout the pandemic via surveys to understand whether they feel supported and to gather views on returning to the office to support planning.

We also wanted to understand if particular groups of colleagues such as young people or working parents were experiencing specific challenges, so regularly sought feedback from our employee diversity networks.

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Investing with purpose

As investors, we recognise the impact that social issues can have on our investments and the role we can play in driving positive progress.

Published Human Rights – Our approach for investments, which provides more detail on how we integrate human rights risks and opportunities across all asset classes

72
social resolutions voted on

Took voting action related to board gender diversity against

146 companies

Joined 'Investors Against Slavery and Trafficking APAC' to encourage companies to tackle modern slavery, labour exploitation and human trafficking in the Asia Pacific region

Introduction

The biggest impact we can have on social issues is through our investment process. ESG factors have been an integral part of our decision-making for almost 30 years. We believe that integrating ESG into our investment process generates better outcomes for our clients. The impact of COVID-19 makes this goal even more important. Now, more than ever, we need to work together for a more sustainable future.

The social factors we consider are diverse and include labour and human rights issues such as diversity and inclusion, social welfare, modern slavery, indigenous rights and more.

Our central ESG Investment function and Research Institute analyse global and thematic social risks and opportunities. By working together with asset class ESG experts, this research and insight is integrated into investment decision making.

At an asset class level, our teams take a variety of actions to address ESG issues. For example:

- The fixed income team rates issuers based on our analysis of low/medium/high ESG risks and the likely impact on the creditor over different timescales.
- Our private equity team have conducted and published ESG surveys of external managers, who we select to allocate capital on behalf of clients, since 2015. These surveys let us monitor the ESG progress of core equity managers and the wider industry. This data is then used in our investment decisions and assessments of ESG performance.
- The equity teams have a five step ESG scoring system which is applied across all stocks globally and takes into account a company's geography and sector.

For more information, please see the ESG integration documents for each asset class.

 [Read our responsible investing position statements on social issues](#)

-  [ESG integration in Equities PDF](#)
-  [ESG integration in Fixed Income PDF](#)
-  [ESG integration in Multi-Asset PDF](#)
-  [ESG integration in Private Markets PDF](#)
-  [ESG integration in Quantitative Investments PDF](#)
-  [ESG integration in Real Estate PDF](#)

Integrating social issues into our investment processes

	Focus	Objective	Actions	Aim
Investments	Research & data	Create high-quality thematic research and insights into social issues across asset classes and regions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thematic research (e.g. on indigenous rights, modern slavery, diversity and inclusion) • Agreed and published our approach to human rights in investments • Agreed and published position statements on a range of social issues 	Invest today
	Investment integration	Integrate the impacts of social-related risks and opportunities into investment decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESG house score with labour and human rights indicators • 'ESG considerations' is part of our research note templates for fund managers and analysts 	
	Client solutions	Understand client needs regarding social impact to develop solutions and products.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESG integration as standard across all of our products • Dedicated suite of funds promoting progress on the UN Sustainable Development Goals 	
Corporate engagement	Investee engagement & voting	Understand investee exposure and management of social risks and opportunities. Influence investee companies through engagement and voting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular engagement with companies on social issues • CCLA 'Find It, Fix It, Prevent It' collaborative engagement initiative to encourage best practices in eradicating modern slavery • New Zealand Super Fund's collaborative engagement with social media companies to encourage companies to strengthen controls to prevent the spread of objectionable content online. • Voted in favour of 51% of social resolutions in 2020 	Change tomorrow
Policy advocacy	Collaboration & influence	Collaborate with industry associations and participate in relevant initiatives. Engage with peers and policy makers to drive change and best practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member of the Investor Alliance for Human Rights • Signatory to the Workforce Disclosure Initiative (WDI) • Provide our views on social issues to Governments (e.g. EU, UK) and industry associations 	Change tomorrow
Investment disclosure	Disclosure	Transparently disclose our progress on social issues and encourage others to do the same	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The publication of this report • The publication of our approach to human rights in investments • Publishing quarterly engagement reports and all voting decisions • Encouraging the usage of the UN Guiding Principles Reporting Framework in our engagements 	Change tomorrow

Creating original macro research

Original research is produced by our in-house Research Institute, who draw on insights from the central ESG Investment function. Our macro research is designed around our 'Invest today, change tomorrow' ethos. The research analyses how economics, government policy and markets intersect and assesses how likely macro risks such as geopolitical issues are to happen. Macro research outputs support decision making and our views on strategic asset allocation.



You can find original Research Institute publications on our website:

www.aberdeenstandard.com/insights-thinking-aloud

'A Woman's Place' research series

The pressures on the global economy from ageing populations and sluggish productivity growth have important implications for long term investors. Boosting female participation in the labour force, which is lower than male in all OECD economies, is one way to alleviate these pressures. Our research series "A Woman's Place" explored the drivers of women's participation in the labour force and provided five recommendations for investors, policymakers and society.

1. Ensure men have access to and take paternity leave
2. Reform taxation systems to reduce tax wedges for second earners and sole parents
3. Consider both the quantity and quality of female work, given the trade-off between flexibility and long term career progression
4. Strengthen the performance and resilience of the overall economy to ensure higher labour participation
5. Report higher quality data to enable analysis of what companies are doing to improve D&I, and how this relates to corporate performance.

We plan to leverage these findings to improve our own investment processes and develop a Gender Equality Index. The index will help identify economies likely to benefit from greater gender equality, have better economic outcomes and represent investment opportunities over the long term. This will complement our existing indices which measure ESG factors at the country level. We also aim to survey companies that we invest in to build a greater understanding of the divergences in D&I policies and publish these findings in 2022.

Social Capitalists & Human Rights Index

The UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide governments with a tangible set of goals to promote sustainability and fairness. As investors, we already have the opportunity to support these efforts at the firm level, but measuring success at the macro level had consistently posed a challenge due to poor data quality and issues of transparency. Our global ESG index covering 135 countries across 17 indicators aligned to the SDGs provides an innovative solution. This is used by the government bonds, multi-asset and real estate teams in their investment processes as a key source of ESG data to assess risk and opportunities.

The raw index scores and rankings give us an indication of how countries are performing in the face of environmental, social, political and governance challenges. By assessing changes in performance over time, we can understand which countries are making the greatest progress on ESG credentials. Adjusting for development levels provides a vastly different assessment of progress, particularly in emerging markets as the development bias in ESG scoring is removed.

We adapted our global ESG index in the Social Capitalists work to create a Human Rights Index which informs our understanding of the global human rights environment. The index covers 135 countries and is comprised of 17 indicators. Countries are scored on each indicator (from 0-100, 100 being best) and ranked. Investors can use this index to look at how rights issues develop across time from a macro view point.



ESG house score

Our proprietary ESG house score gives a unified view on a company's ESG risk by combining different data sources with the insights of our ESG investment team, quantitative investment team, and equity and credit teams. The score helps us integrate ESG information into decision making, increase our oversight and transparency, and set consistent investment parameters for our sustainability products.

Our ESG house score aims to identify the material issues that affect our investments. It enables us to target key issues and companies for further research and engagement and to efficiently assess the ESG risks and opportunities facing our portfolios.

Labour management and human rights & stakeholders are the two core areas most relevant to our assessment of social factors. Within these, further social issues are assessed such as supply chain management and diversity. Further detail on the ESG house score methodology is available on our website.

As ESG disclosures improve and our insights grow stronger, our ESG house score will become an increasingly powerful tool and will evolve over time to integrate new trends, themes and risk factors.

Operational score				Governance score	
Climate Change	Environment	Labour Management	Human Rights & Stakeholders	Corporate Behaviour	Corporate Governance
GHG Emissions & Resilience	Water & Wastewater	Labour Practices	Human Rights & Communities	Controversies	Board Issues
Air Quality	Waste Management	Employee Health & Safety	Privacy & Data Security	Polices & Practices	Accounting & Audit
Energy Management	Supply Chain & Materials	Engagement & Diversity	Product Quality & Customer Welfare		Remuneration
	Ecological Impacts		Supply Chain Management		Ownership & Control

Engaging with companies

We are active and engaged owners, keeping in close contact with companies and assets we invest in. We usually meet representatives of investee companies at least annually. These are opportunities to monitor company performance and management. Topics covered in our engagement are varied and can include strategy and performance, board composition and gender diversity, labour issues, human rights, bribery and corruption.

Case study: Emerging Market Debt engagements on COVID-19

As the COVID-19 pandemic spread globally, companies across all sectors and countries were forced to adapt quickly. For some this has meant changes to how services are delivered, whilst others have had to entirely rethink their business models.

Throughout the pandemic we have used engagement meetings as a way to understand how companies are adapting and importantly, how they are creating safe working environments that reduce the risk of employees contracting the virus.

Our Emerging Market Debt team undertook a number of engagements on these topics with companies in sectors such as energy, retail, and healthcare across South America, Asia and the Middle East. In most cases, we were satisfied with the adaption measures companies were putting in place to protect staff and to ensure service delivery could continue safely.

Adaption measures varied from supporting home working and reducing onsite staff where possible, to making use to government support schemes to avoid redundancies. Many companies introduced additional sanitisation measures for people coming onto their premises, or made use of technological solutions such as payment apps to reduce employee contact with customers.

We were particularly pleased to learn about how one retail operator had activated a redeployment programme to reskill over 1,000 employees who traditionally worked in entertainment outlets that were temporarily closed, and into high demand roles such as online order fulfilment and stock replenishment.

We were concerned about reports around poor working conditions at protein producers in Latin America during the pandemic. To combat this we joined the FAIRR Initiative, alongside 50 other asset managers representing US\$10.9 trillion in assets, in order to compel the livestock industry to make the necessary changes. The focus of the Initiative is to discuss and implement improved labour practices for the companies involved.

Escalation

We may opt to escalate our engagement activity where there is a significant disagreement with our investments on matters relating to ESG factors. For example, where a company fails to implement or execute a plan that sufficiently addresses our concerns. The escalation strategy is decided on a case-by-case basis and involves input from the ESG Investment function and asset class teams.

We may collaboratively engage with other investors who are seeking to achieve similar changes from a single or range of investments. This can be done through working in partnership with a specific group of investors, or through one of the affiliation groups we are members of which could be regionally or thematically organised. Where we think additional scrutiny will help achieve the change we are seeking, we may make a public statement to the press or at a company's general meeting so our views are clear to clients and stakeholders. If we are unable to achieve our desired outcomes through the escalation strategy and feel there are unmitigated risks to our clients' portfolios, we will consider divesting from an investment.

Case study – BooHoo divestment

In July 2020, The Times newspaper in the UK exposed evidence of illegal and abusive labour practices in the supply chain of BooHoo.com, a fast fashion retailer. Our investment subsidiaries had owned shares in BooHoo.com on behalf of clients since the company issued shares publicly in 2014. During that long ownership period, our investment teams had engaged frequently with various members of the management team of BooHoo.com with several different objectives in mind.

Firstly, this was an active investment decision designed to generate long-term returns for our clients, so a deep understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the business was essential.

Secondly, as our engagement with the company identified concerns relating to risks within the complex supply-chain, our attention was focussed there in order to fully assess the company's management of these risks.

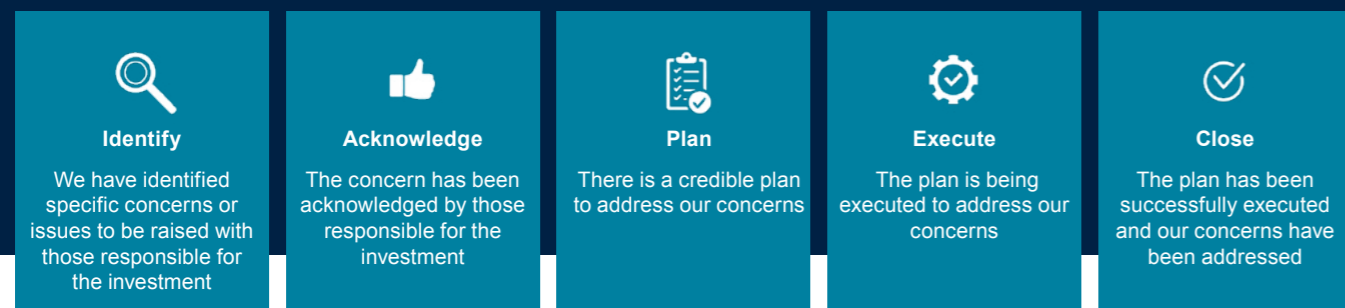
Finally, having completed this assessment, we set out a plan with specific demands for the company to take further action to improve their management of the identified risks.

The newspaper assertions in July brought to a head our increasing discomfort with delays in the company meeting the milestones for action that we had set. This caused us to substantially re-assess the assurances and evidence that we had been given by the company. This re-assessment was considered through our investment governance framework, which helps to consider risks to our clients and our company, both in terms of short-term financial implications and longer-term reputational costs. Integral to this is the consideration of the interests of other stakeholders, such as the workers in the UK garment industry.

An initial report to our Risk and Exposures Committee was quickly escalated to the Risk and Capital Committee of the Board. Such swift and decisive escalation prompted a complete disposal in our actively managed funds. Subsequently, our Board Chair was contacted by Leicester West MP, Liz Kendall, about our responsibilities as investors. This resulted in Standard Life Aberdeen being singled out for praise for taking quick action to divest from our actively held positions in the company as a result of our long held concerns and the additional evidence that came to light in the press.

Engagement outcomes

We believe that it is important for our engagement activities to lead to improvements in our investments and the manner in which they manage and mitigate risks informs our investment decisions. We therefore record concerns and issues raised with our investments and set timeframes within which we expect our concerns to be addressed. To do this we have defined the following 'lifecycle' steps for our concerns:



Voting

Voting issues are often complex, which is why we take a meticulous and thorough approach to analysing resolutions. This involves research, stakeholder engagement and collaborating in order to consider a wide range of material factors in our decision making.

In 2020 we continued to promote best practice on social issues through our voting and engagement. The number of resolutions on social issues filed by shareholders continues to grow, predominantly in the US market. We saw a particular increase in the number of resolutions related to employment practices. This includes issues such as gender and ethnic diversity, sexual harassment, whistle-blower policies, arbitration of employee claims, and oversight of human capital matters in organisational governance structures.

Employment Practices



Case study: A focus on diversity

Promoting diversity and inclusion is key to creating sustainable and responsible companies, innovation, and long-term shareholder value. We continued our work on promoting gender diversity on boards during the year, as well as engaging on other diversity issues such as the disclosure of ethnic diversity and pay gap data.

In the UK we supported the Hampton-Alexander Review's target of at least 33% representation of women on boards of FTSE 350 companies by the end of 2020, and met this target ahead of schedule for our own plc Board. We take action against companies who do not meet this recommendation in the UK and Western Europe, or against smaller companies with no women on their board. In the US we expect 25% female representation on boards for larger companies. We expect large and small companies in the ASX100 (Australian Securities Exchange) to have boards of 40% women, 40% male, and 20% of any gender by the end of 2023 and 2025 respectively. Our approach is tailored by geography and company size to recognise the scale of director turnover and wider societal progress.

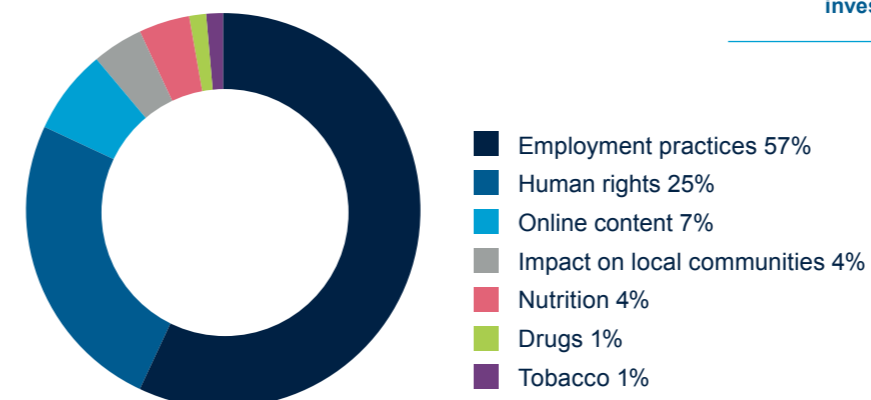
These policies meant we took voting action related to board gender diversity against 146 companies during the year. This included 40 companies in the UK, 83 in the US, 6 in Canada, 7 in Switzerland, 2 in Mexico, 2 in Australia and 6 in other European markets. In these instances, we either voted against the re-election of the nomination committee chair, or the resolution to approve the annual report and accounts.



Read our responsible investing position statement on diversity and inclusion and our quarterly ESG reports which provide a summary of our research, company engagement and voting activities

<https://www.aberdeenstandard.com/en/responsible-investing>

Social Resolutions 2020



Real Estate

Our real estate ESG Impact Dial identifies 21 material ESG indicators across 4 themes. Indicators are aligned to the UN Sustainable Development Goals, PRI and SASB frameworks. The tool helps us to measure ESG performance against these topics and prioritise which ones are important for our real estate investments. From this we can set baseline house standards and fund level targets for each indicator, which supports us to drive action and measure progress.

The consideration of social issues in decision making is integrated across the 4 themes.

Real Estate material ESG indicators			
PLANET	PEOPLE	PROCESS	PROGRESS
Environment and climate change	Demographics	Governance and engagement	Technology and infrastructure
Biodiversity	Vulnerability & inclusion	Diversity & labour rights	Digital connectivity
Land and water contamination	Affordability	Occupier engagement	Physical connectivity
Outdoor air quality	Accessibility & experience	Occupier quality	Smart connectivity
Noise pollution	Employment, skills & enterprise	Partnerships	
Public realm & cultural value	Occupier wellbeing		
Carbon & energy reduction			
Water efficiency			
Waste & circularity			
Climate resilience			

Case studies

The Farmiloe building in London is an example of supporting occupier wellbeing, employment, skills and enterprise through a real estate development. Good daylight, air quality and active travel amenities were integrated into the redesign to support the health and wellbeing of occupiers. The building's layout promotes flexible working and there are spaces for concentration, collaboration, communication and contemplation. This blend supports occupiers to move away from their desk and work in spaces that reflect their needs. Affordable co-working space is integrated into the building, to support companies to establish themselves and access the building's benefits.

The Hertfordshire based Roaring Meg shopping park is a unique site which promotes biodiversity, partnerships, community engagement and wellbeing. The site has space for 25 occupiers and unusually, includes a woodland area. Biodiversity interventions were introduced to protect and enhance the area including installing beehives, planting wildflowers and native species, and restoring hedgerows. To engage local communities and encourage their involvement in protecting the area, educational talks and events were provided as well as selling of the honey on site to raise awareness and money for the local wildlife trust. A creative writing competition was also opened up to local schools with prizes donated by the tenants of the site.



Global Impact Strategy

We define impact investing as intentional investment to deliver financial returns alongside measurable, positive, social and environmental change. Our Global Equity Impact Strategy uses the UN Sustainable Development Goals as a framework to help us identify positive impact opportunities and target the global issues of climate change, unsustainable consumption and production, and social inequality.

In particular, we are looking for companies that provide local solutions to the major global challenges. We aim to identify and invest in companies that are intentionally developing products and services that contribute to quantifiable, positive outcomes across eight themes which we call our 'impact pillars'.

We have set key performance indicators or targeted positive 'outputs' for each pillar to help us analyse how companies are making a difference. We have drawn on the UN's own SDG Progress Report and SDG indicators as a basis for our KPIs and we rely on engagement and self-disclosure from companies to gather this data.

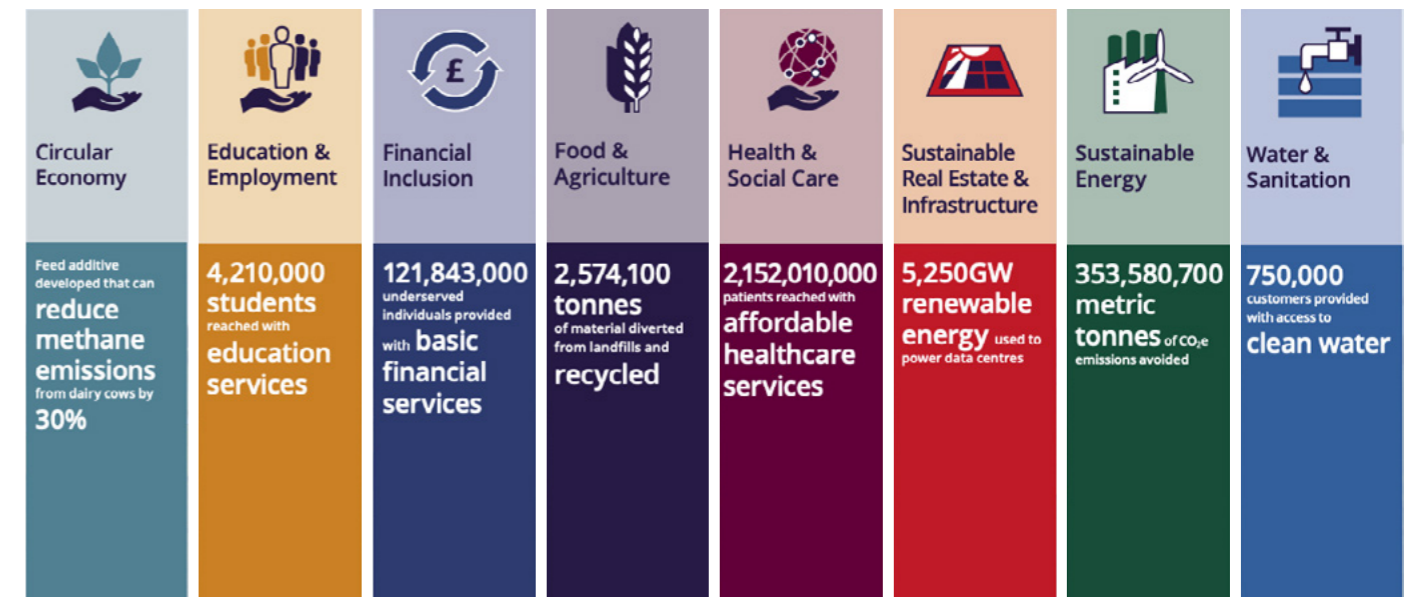
A selection of positive outputs from the pillars are as follows. For case studies and more in depth information, read the Global Equity Impact Annual Report.

Investment in tobacco

Tobacco investments have increasingly come under scrutiny due to the individual and public health issues caused by tobacco consumption. These health risks can manifest as investment risks, due to costs involved in litigation and the potential for increased regulation of an already heavily regulated sector.

There are also labour rights and human rights concerns. Research by the International Labour Organisation shows that a number of the world's poorest and least developed nations are involved in tobacco production. This poses risks of modern slavery and child labour in the supply chain process, which creates reputational risks for investors.

Aberdeen Standard Investments have increased the number of tobacco-free investment funds we offer to clients, including in our Ethical and SRI Fund ranges. As a discretionary fund manager, Aberdeen Standard Capital choose not to invest directly in tobacco companies in their funds and model portfolios. The approach for directly invested clients is to focus on companies who are beneficiaries of sustainable growth trends. Consideration of ESG factors is a critical part of understanding the key risks and assessing the quality of their investments and on this basis tobacco companies were determined to not meet their requirements.



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Unlocking solutions

In an ever changing world, we want to create solutions that tackle societal and environmental issues, from financial inclusion to climate change. We often take action by collaborating with other organisations such as charities, government, other investors and the wider business community.

Our 2020 stakeholder highlights

55,000

people benefitted from our charitable giving

£2^m

total charitable contributions

2,500

volunteer hours undertaken by colleagues

Over £440,000

donated as a result of COVID-19

1 of 2

inaugural companies to be accredited as Living Hours employers for employees and supply chain workers

95

charities supported in 28 locations

Our corporate influence

We are actively involved in developing public policy, industry standards and general practice. Our approach across four key areas is to align the development of these initiatives to the best interests of our stakeholders.

Policy applying to our Investments	Policy applying to Standard Life Aberdeen	Policy applying to customers	Industry standards
Includes shareholder rights, accounting standards, auditing, climate policy, labour policy, tax, fiscal and monetary policy.	Includes corporate activities and disclosures (e.g. climate change and employee issues), global financial services regulation and regulation applying to suppliers	Includes pension fund, insurance company legislation and regulation	Includes development of best practice across all activities such as Principles for Responsible Investment, climate analysis, transparent disclosure and market infrastructure

In 2020 we turned our attention to influencing a fair and green recovery from COVID-19. We lent our support to a collaborative letter calling on the UK Government to ensure the recovery is sustainable. The letter – an initiative driven by UK Stakeholders for Sustainable Development (UKSSD) and UN Global Compact Network UK, of which we are a member – asks the Government to use the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to aid their decision-making, their work across departments, and their design of coherent recovery programmes.

“For employees to know they are valued and rewarded financially for their work means so much, especially with the uncertainty of the current climate due to COVID-19. Receiving the real Living Wage truly helps give our people peace of mind in these challenging times and also confirms to us that Standard Life Aberdeen is committed to supplier inclusion. Paying our colleagues the real Living Wage has a significant impact on improving staff morale, increasing employee retention, maintaining high standards and increasing productivity.”

Mitie



Living Wage collaboration & influence

Before the pandemic, over five million workers in the UK had low-paid, insecure work. Research suggests that young people, Black and ethnic minority individuals, women and working parents are disproportionately impacted, and that the inequalities this causes negatively impact overall economic growth. We want to play an active role in changing this.

Since 2017 we have been part of a group of trade unions, private and third sector organisations that was convened by the Living Wage Foundation. This group has worked together to seek solutions to work insecurity and in-work poverty in the UK.

Three years later, we became one of the first companies to be accredited as a Living Hours employer. In addition to paying at least a Living Wage to 100% of UK employees (approximately 79% of our global workforce), we commit to giving workers advance warning of hours required to work. Our commitment extends to all interns and to suppliers working on our premises.

In 2020 we sponsored the Living Wage investor toolkit and shared expertise with the Living Wage Foundation and ShareAction to support this publication. This provides industry analysis and company case studies which cover the potential benefits of becoming Living Wage employers.

Collaboration & influence with other investors

We act collectively with other investors to protect and enhance shareholder value, and address issues that are relevant to our clients' best interests and wider society. Common social issues for collective engagement include succession, gender balance of boards, remuneration, human rights, and labour concerns.

We are currently part of a number of collaborative groups. These include the 30% Club Investor Group promoting gender diversity on boards, CCLA's 'Find It, Fix It, Prevent It' initiative which encourages businesses to find and help victims of modern slavery within their operations and supply chain, and 'Investors Against Slavery and Trafficking APAC' which is an investor-led initiative addressing modern slavery, labour exploitation and human trafficking in the Asia Pacific region. We are a founding member of The Investor Forum, through which we participate in collaborative projects to tackle modern slavery in high risk sectors. We take steps to ensure the standards we promote through these groups are reflected in the action we take in our direct operations.

D&I partners

We regularly work with a number of D&I partners as we believe sharing our learnings, and learning from others helps to inform our company priorities. This includes a number of industry forums and advisory groups, with whom we collaborate on projects, share practices, and take part in industry-wide research with.

One of our key partnerships is the Diversity Project, who we have been working with since its inception. This led to us setting up the Diversity Project's Scottish chapter in 2019. Last year, we chaired 18 virtual practitioner events for Diversity Project Scotland to bring industry members to work together on topics such as mental health and wellbeing, COVID-19 impacts, ethnicity actions and ways of working.

We also work with a range of employability partners including Career Ready, Women in Banking & Finance, and 100BlackInterns. We carefully select partners to help us reach more diverse candidates and are particularly interested in partners who can help access women, Black and ethnic minority candidates and candidates from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

We know our partnerships are making a difference. In 2020, 23% of successful candidates who applied to our traineeship, internship and graduate programmes came through one of our partners.



Charitable giving

In 2020 we launched a new charitable giving strategy on the theme of building connections. Over the year our total charitable contribution was £2m through a combination of donations, employee volunteering time, in kind giving, and company matching of employee fundraising. We supported colleagues to complete over 2,500 volunteering hours. In total, our giving positively impacted 55,000 people.

We aim to design equitable and impactful charity partnerships which are aligned to our strategy and enable colleagues to use their skills to benefit society. Volunteering is one of the biggest ways we benefit charities and local communities. In addition to supporting charities to deliver their services, volunteering provides colleagues with the opportunity to develop new skills, and build their experience and knowledge. We support all colleagues with three paid volunteering days annually.

Mentoring is one of the most impactful and strategic types of volunteering that colleagues can complete; as time, skills and knowledge are used in combination to benefit others. We have programmes in place to support mentoring at three levels:

1. Peer-to-peer mentoring within the organisation
2. Individual mentoring of diverse young people outside the organisation. Mentoring is delivered in the UK, US and Europe through a blend of 1:1 sessions, training and work experience. Partnerships include Career Ready, The Prince's Trust, Gateway to Leadership, MCR Pathways, and Arpejeh.
3. Business to organisation mentoring. Two cohorts of social enterprise mentoring were delivered in partnership with Big Issue Invest and we are currently piloting a community greenspace mentoring programme.

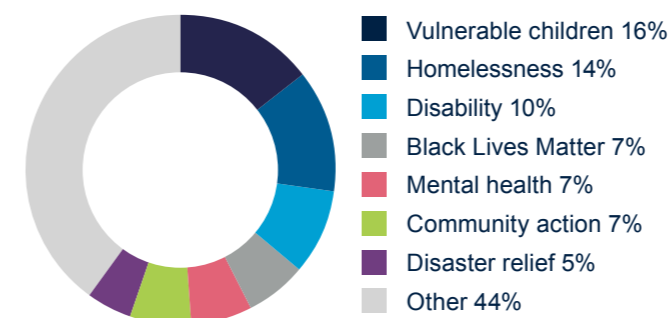
Connecting people

We support projects to help people reach their potential or which bring people together. Projects may be about overcoming barriers or promoting sustainable development to benefit communities experiencing social isolation or disadvantage.

Connecting planet

We fund projects to enable people to engage with and protect nature, or which support habitat and wildlife restoration. This supports wellbeing, builds community cohesion, and ensures wildlife and ecosystems can thrive for generations to come.

95 different charities supported



Employee volunteering



Case study – Connecting People

We adapted our approach to supporting employment in 2020. We delivered online skills workshops to help prepare young people for the world of work with Career Ready and The Prince's Trust.

Research has shown the pandemic will disproportionately impact young people's ability to secure quality employment in the short and longer-term, and we are committed to tackling this issue. That is why in 2021, we will be delivering virtual work experience opportunities to young people through our social mobility partnerships with the Sutton Trust, Career Ready and Diversity Project.

“Since 2014 Standard Life Aberdeen has supported our Get Hired programmes which have seen 4,510 young people benefit from taking part and 1,968 gain employment. During 2020 extra funding was received for our Helpline. This enabled 1,000 young people to get the support and practical assistance needed during the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic”

Ben Marson, Director of Partnerships at The Prince's Trust



Case study – Connecting Planet

The community greenspace project aims to give back to local environments that have been crucial to individuals' wellbeing during the pandemic.

The 12 month pilot programme pairs business mentors and funding to four local greenspaces and is delivered in partnership with the City of Edinburgh Council. The funding is used to improve the biodiversity of the greenspace, for example through replacing dead trees, creating a community orchard, and restoring hedgerows.

Volunteers for each greenspace work to build relationships with the local community and encourage them to responsibly use the space. This could include working with primary schools to create opportunities for outdoor learning or volunteering.

“The generous funding from Standard Life Aberdeen has allowed us to purchase and plant a variety of trees, shrubs, and ferns for Dalry Cemetery. Public reception and feedback has been excellent - people have been delighted to see new additions after a long period of historic neglect.”

Jakob Assarsson, Friends of Dalry Cemetery



COVID-19 response funding

The pandemic and resulting economic context has reduced funding for charities, and created operational challenges to deliver, pivot or scale services during lockdown environments. At the same time, the demand for charity services from communities in need has risen.

We worked closely with existing charity partners during the pandemic to understand their needs and provide reassurance that our funding would remain in place. Additionally, we researched how our funding could be directed towards meeting immediate community needs around the globe, and longer-term programmes that support a fair and green recovery.

Over **£440,000** donated to COVID-19 responses

In the first half of 2020 we helped provide supplies, transport and medical equipment including PPE for frontline health workers. We enabled food supplies, hot meal production and shelter for vulnerable individuals. Through our UK charity partner at the time – Dementia UK – we helped increase their helpline capacity, provided support for young carers and distributed packs for sick children undergoing home treatments. And we helped several charities update their delivery model – for example, supporting Cyrenians to create a food production facility providing and distributing thousands of hot meals.

“At the beginning of the pandemic, Standard Life Aberdeen were one of the first of our funders to reach out to reassure us of their support and flexibility in the months ahead. They have been engaged, supportive and had a pragmatic approach. I am so grateful.”

Louisa Searle, Director of First Give

Supporting racial equality

We have donated to and supported UK and US charities working with ethnic minority communities for a number of years, such as SEO London. In 2020 we built on these partnerships by working with a further six charities.

£98,000 donated to six racial equality charities

Three UK charities were supported – the Amos Bursary for their student scholarship programme, Young Community Support Agency for a sports and arts programme, and Blueprint for All (formerly the Stephen Lawrence Charitable Trust) for their Building Futures: The Community Leadership Academy. We also entered into a two year partnership with the Sutton Trust's Pathways to Banking & Finance Programme. Our support will help 115 high achieving young people to prepare for university and careers in the finance sector. The programme puts a strong emphasis on reaching minority ethnic young people and those from lower socioeconomic communities. 72% of programme participants identify as minority ethnic, which is more diverse compared to all Russell Group university graduates, recent business and administrative graduates, and all graduates at UK higher education institutes. 90% of participants are the first generation in their family to attend university and 75% are from low progression neighbourhoods.

In the US we supported Youth United For Change, Olivers Scholars and EmbraceRace. Together, this funding will enable the charities to provide technological devices to ethnic minority communities, support community outreach work and mental health services in Philadelphia, and materials for parents to talk about race to young children.

“There is limited leadership development training tailored to the needs of small organisations and micro charities which are led by and/or serve people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds. With the help of Standard Life Aberdeen, we have been able to positively benefit 25 community leaders from across London through training, and thousands of their beneficiaries and colleagues”

Senior Programmes Manager, Blueprint for All

Investing for charities

Charities are often entrusted with donations and legacies totalling large amounts. It is therefore important that charities are able to access high quality advice in order to steward their capital responsibly, protect their reputation and build confidence in the charity sector.

Our discretionary investment manager, Aberdeen Standard Capital, includes a dedicated team who provide investment solutions for charities. We work with a broad range of charities – some focus on the future growth of their investments, some require income generation and others require a combination. We offer investments across the spectrum covering all those options, including the choice to apply a variety of screens. Grant-makers are the biggest group of charity investors we look after, followed by health care and hospice charities, then faith based organisations and education charities. Together, these represent approximately 80% of our charity clients.

In the last year, we have seen an increase in charities seeking to reflect climate concerns in their investment portfolio. Our climate options enable sectors to be screened out and/or the portfolio to be tilted towards positive investments which support the transition to a lower carbon society. We can also enable a charity to invest in a way which is aligned to the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

We have also seen an increase in charities asking about social issues such as labour rights and predatory high interest rate lenders. Our range of social screens help us identify stocks which may be impacted in these areas, for exclusion, in line with client requirements.

In addition to our investments expertise, we want to support the ongoing development of the charitable sector. We have launched two webinar series to support trustees and charity CEOs which are open to the public and free to access. The Charity Matters series covers a range of governance themes and the Next Gen Now series focuses on encouraging the next generation of trustees to approach their role with confidence.



Learn more about our charity investing expertise

<https://www.aberdeenstandardcapital.com/en/uk/charities>

“I’d also like to thank you for your ongoing support of our wider financial needs during the current turbulence caused by COVID-19. We appreciate your regular updates as well as the guidance you have been able to provide on future income so that we can actively manage the cash-flow of the Hospices.”

Feedback from a Hospice client

Innovating for financial inclusion

As generations of digital natives seek to manage their wealth, we want to create the UK’s most trusted and digitally-enabled savings and wealth business. Our new mobile app – Choices – is an important step in this journey, which supports UK customers to manage their finances directly and digitally.

Using open banking technology, Choices makes managing finance easy by figuring out how much a customer can afford to put aside to save or invest, in line with their personal priorities.

Choices initially offers an ISA as a potential solution where the user has an investment goal. To make saving and investing more accessible, we reduced the entry level to open an ISA to just £1.

The app will also spot where income or expenditure have changed and The Choicemakers (in app characters) will help users adapt their savings plans. Users will be nudged monthly if they have extra funds available in their bank accounts. Nudges will be done with even very small amounts, as our goal is to support consumers with all types of saving goals in order to have a sustainable financial future.

Appendix

Policies

+ Human Rights Statement

Our Human Rights Statement defines the potential negative human rights impacts of our activities and the salient human rights of each stakeholder. Salient issues are prioritised by the human rights oversight group based on the severity of their occurrence, how widespread the issues could be, and the complexity of remedying. The mitigation actions we are taking to uphold each right are detailed. The human rights oversight group is responsible for conducting ongoing human rights due diligence in our operations. By meeting regularly and including expert representatives from key operational teams, the group identifies, prevents and mitigates human rights risks and adverse impacts.

+ Modern Slavery Statement

This annual statement covers our approach to identifying and mitigating modern slavery risks, and the policies that support this. This includes information about grievance and whistle-blowing processes for employees and supply chain workers. A number of other policies such as Procurement, Outsourcing and Third Party Management, Corporate Transactions, and People support our commitment to tackling modern slavery through our interactions with our suppliers, our people, and business partners. Each policy owner completes and signs-off a quarterly certification confirming the business area’s adherence to the policy, and where necessary, develop action plans to resolve any issues of non-compliance with policy standards. Regular updates on policy compliance are reported to our Board-level Risk and Capital Committee.

+ Global Code of Conduct

Our Global Code of Conduct outlines the principles and standards that we hold ourselves to. We ask all employees to consider these in every decision and action that they take. The Code specifically highlights our commitment to tackling modern slavery - including human trafficking – and promoting a safe workplace culture free from discrimination and harassment. Employees receive training on the content and meaning of the Code and are required to confirm they have read and agree to abide by its principles on at least an annual basis.

+ Global Third Party Code of Conduct

Our Global Third Party Code of Conduct sets out the standards we expect from our third parties. Standards include full compliance with applicable laws and regulations, in addition to specific requirements relating to human and labour rights, equality, modern slavery and providing safe workplaces. As part of the tender process we ask our third parties to sign the Code and inform us if they have any issues or concerns.

+ Global Diversity and Inclusion Policy

This policy outlines our commitment to create a workplace free from any form of unfair or unlawful treatment, and where all forms of difference are valued. The policy supports the right of all colleagues, suppliers, customers and clients to be treated with respect and dignity.

+ Human rights: our approach for investments

Our approach to human rights in investments includes six areas of focus – research, investment integration, client solutions, engagement and voting, collaboration, and disclosure. We provide transparency on our approach and the actions we are taking to deliver on our responsibilities as investors.

+ Our investment positions

Environmental, social and governance (ESG) considerations have formed an integral part of our decision-making process for almost 30 years. We publish our position on a number of responsible investing issues related to labour and human rights on our website. These include statements on business and human rights, labour and employment, and government and human rights.

+ Other colleague policies

Other global policies that support our colleagues include the Global Immigration Support Policy to support colleagues working on international assignments or relocating; Global Health & Safety Policy and Global People Policy outlining the standards we adhere to in managing health and safety risks and people risks. All locations have policies in place in line with local legislation which cover matters relating to disciplinary, grievance and bullying and harassment.

+ Other customer and client policies

The Anti-financial Crime & Anti-Bribery Policy and the Competition & Antitrust Policy outline standards the business must adhere to in managing financial crime risks and competition law compliance. The Client Product and Services Policy sets minimum standards for assessing new and existing customer proposition. Conduct Risk explains how we manage this type of risk by putting customer and client needs at the centre of our behaviours, strategies, decisions and actions. Privacy notices are in place for each of our brands which outline the processes in place to protect customer privacy and data security. These are written by our Data Privacy Officer and their team.

Appendix

Social impact partners

We work with a range of partners to tackle social inequalities. Many of these partners aim to achieve positive outcomes for groups who face multiple barriers or double disadvantages in society due to the factors such as gender, ethnicity or socioeconomic background. We have a particular focus on working with partners who support employability and career readiness, as this is one of the most significant ways we can use our collective resources and skills to benefit others.

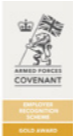




Partners, collaborations and memberships	
Region	Summary
UK	Career Ready: Since 2013 we've provided approximately 150 mentors, hosted workplace visits, run masterclasses, and hosted 150 internships paid at the Living Wage, to support young people who may need extra help to get ready for employment.
UK	Girls are Investors (GAIN): GAIN aims to inform young women about the financial services industry and build their professional networks. We will provide a summer 2021 internship opportunity to a GAIN member.
UK	100BlackInterns: To support more Black candidates into our industry, we will offer a summer internship to one of the 100BlackInterns cohort in summer 2021.
UK	Investment20/20: We have provided employment opportunities to young people through I2020 for a number of years. In 2021 we will be part of a coalition of employers supporting I2020 to hire young jobseekers on Universal Credit into the industry, via the UK Government's Kickstarter programme.
UK	The Sutton Trust: We are a sponsor of the Pathways to Banking & Finance Programme that gives 115 young people exposure to the finance industry through mentoring, networking and work experience opportunities. All participants are eligible for free school meals and are high academic achievers but from low socio-economic backgrounds. 90% of participants are the first generation in their family to apply to university and 75% are from low progression neighbourhoods.
UK	SEO London - Her Capital: This programme aims to support ethnic minority women who are university students into graduate roles through mentoring and skills development.
UK	Catalyst After School Program (CASP): CASP equips ethnic minority school students with the tools and skills to get into the financial services industry. Our support has helped coach participants through an investments qualification, in partnership with the Diversity Project, The City of London Corporation, the Chartered Institute for Securities & Investment.
Europe	ARPEJEH: For ten years, we have worked with French charity ARPEJEH, creating long-term relationships between disabled students and professionals.
UK	The Prince's Trust: Since 2014 we have worked to develop their Get Hired programme, which brings together young people facing multiple barriers to employment, with potential employers. Over 4,500 young people have taken part and through coaching them on interview techniques and employability skills, we have helped almost 2,000 people gain employment.
UK	Diversity Project: We have worked with this investor coalition since inception and setup the Diversity Project Scotland chapter in 2019. In 2020 we chaired 18 virtual practitioner events to bring industry members together and collaborate on topics such as mental health and wellbeing, COVID-19 impacts, and ethnicity actions. As a Supporter Firm, we work with upReach to deliver the Investment Springboard programme, helping 170 undergraduates from less-advantaged backgrounds to pursue a career in the investments and savings industry.

Partners, collaborations and memberships	
Region	Summary
UK	Big Issue Invest: Through providing mentors, funding and resources, we have supported two cohorts of early stage social enterprises to develop business plans as part of the Power Up Scotland programme.
UK	MCR Pathways: Through weekly mentoring, we support young people across Scotland who are part of the care system to grow and develop.
UK	Amos Bursary: We are supporting 10 Black students through public speaking training and one student through a five year schools programme which includes professional and leadership development.
UK and Asia Pacific	30% Club: Launched in 2010, the 30% Club encourages all businesses to aim for 30% women on boards. We participated in their Cracking the Code research and were involved in their mentoring scheme for two years. We have signed an Investor code of conduct and have representation in Australia and Malaysia.
US	Gateway to Leadership: Provides training and career opportunities promoted to ethnic minority students. We have had colleagues represent our business in speaker events.
UK	Women in Banking & Finance: We have been part of this member organisation which provides career development events, networking events, research, and mentoring since 2016. As part of our mid-career talent development, we developed a number of individuals' memberships.
UK	Black Professionals Scotland: Facilitates networking and professional development of Black professionals working in Scotland. Colleagues were involved in setting the organisation up.
Asia Pacific	Financial Women's Association Singapore: We have been a corporate member since 2015 and are actively involved in their Male and Female Champion Initiative, mentoring programme and providing speakers for and participating in their events.

Partners, collaborations and memberships - Investments	
Asia Pacific	Investors Against Slavery & Trafficking (IAST) APAC: Modelled after the UK's Find It, Fix It, Prevent It initiative, IAST APAC aims to use the leverage of investors to improve the efficacy of corporate action to identify and provide remedy to victims of modern slavery in their supply chain. Engagement activities focus on companies operating in the Asia Pacific region.
UK	Find It, Fix It, Prevent It: Led by CCLA Investment Management, this project aims to use the leverage of investors to improve the efficacy of corporate action to identify and provide remedy to victims of modern slavery in their supply chain. Engagement activities focus on companies operating in the UK.
Global	Social media content: We participated in a collaborative initiative led by New Zealand Super Fund targeting social media companies. The aim of this initiative is to encourage social media companies to strengthen controls to prevent the spread of objectionable content online.
Global	Investor Alliance for Human Rights: We are a member of The Alliance, which is a collective action platform that includes over 160 investors and aims to put an investor's responsibility to respect human rights into practice.

Signatories and pledges	
Region	Summary
US	Corporate Call to Action: By joining the Corporate Call of Action, we are part of a CEO coalition aiming to establish measurable commitments to address racial justice and social change
UK	Audeliss/Involve letter: CEO signatory to an open letter encouraging progress on minority ethnic representation through a series of specific committed actions including targets, measurement and listening.
UK	Armed Forces Corporate Covenant: Through this covenant we have committed to support the Armed Forces Community. We recognise the value Serving Personnel, both Regular and Reservists, Veterans and military families contribute to our business and our country.
UK	HM Treasury Women in Finance Charter (WIFC): We were amongst the first signatories to WIFC in 2016, pledging to increase gender balance in our senior management populations and across our industry.
UK	Race At Work Charter: In October 2018, we were proud to become one of the founding signatories of the UK's Race at Work Charter, demonstrating our commitment to attracting ethnic minority talent and removing any barriers in order to retain and develop a diverse group of talented people.
UK	Young Person Guarantee: In 2020 we were one of the first organisations announced by the Scottish Government as supporting the Young Person Guarantee. The Guarantee aims to give all young people (aged 16-24) in Scotland opportunities to work, study or train despite the economic impacts of COVID-19. As part of our support, we seconded a colleague to the City of Edinburgh Council to help secure employers' commitments to the Guarantee.
UK	Social Mobility Pledge: We are one of 600 organisations who have signed this pledge, committing to put social mobility at the heart of our purpose. As part of the pledge, we have undertaken action in three key areas of outreach, creating a recruitment strategy that attracts people from a range of backgrounds, and creating access opportunities.
UK	Living Wage and Living Hours: Our accreditations as a Living Wage and Living Hours employer means we pay all of our UK employees and suppliers working on our premises a living wage, as well as provide guaranteed hours. We are part of the Living Wage Scotland and Living Hours leadership groups, in order to continue influencing best practice for tackling issues around insecure work.

Signatories and pledges - Investments	
UK	Workforce Disclosure Initiative (WDI): The WDI is designed to generate decision-useful data for investors on a wide range of workforce issues, covering companies' direct operations and supply chains.
Global	Statement of Investor Commitment to support a just transition to a low-carbon economy: As a signatory, we commit to integrating workforce and social dimension into climate practices.
Global	Access to Nutrition Initiative (ATNI): ATNI undertakes extensive research on global nutrition and regularly assesses companies in its Global Access to Nutrition Index. Most recently, we supported their release of an Investor Expectations on Nutrition, Diets and Health document.

Recognition		
Logo	Region	Summary
	US	The Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS): The ERS encourages organisations to support the military community and inspire others to do the same. As a Gold Award organisation, we are committed to supporting veterans, reservists, and their families through quality employment and forces-friendly policies, as well as the wider community through charity partnerships.
	UK	Investors in Young People: This accreditation recognises organisations who are employers of choice that attract, retain and develop young people. Companies recognised by the accreditation are dedicated to creating pathways that have positive outcomes for young people and developing talent pools.
	UK	Bloomberg Gender Equality Index: This global benchmark on gender equality was created to drive transparency and provide investors with standardised information on how companies are advancing women in the workplace. We have been included for three years in a row.
	UK	Hampton-Alexander Review: We are ranked 13th in this review of the gender representation of FTSE 350 Boards and Executive teams.
	UK	Equileap: Our work on gender equality was ranked 72nd by Equileap who research and rank over 3,500 public companies. They named us as the best company globally for paid parental leave.

