



Gardner
Leader

CSR Report 2022

Gardner Leader has been at the heart of Berkshire for over 125 years and supporting the community has always been important to us. As such, Gardner Leader's Corporate Social Responsibility Group (CSR Group) was established in 2014. Employees at all levels across all of our offices are encouraged to be involved. Headed by a core committee of 6, the CSR Group meets regularly and timetables fundraising events, plus volunteering opportunities.

To maximise its charitable impact during the year, Gardner Leader prefers to support one charity annually, which allows it to raise as much money as possible, as well as helping to promote the charity's profile.

Gardner Leader is proud to say that it believes the firm is fairly unique in that all employees have a say which charity Gardner Leader supports annually. Taking place in spring each year, a 'charity of the year' is selected by a firm-wide vote, from charities nominated by employees. Local and national charities supported since 2014 include Naomi House, Newbury District Cancer Care Trust, Bloodwise, Swings and Smiles, Pancreatic Cancer UK and Thames Valley Air Ambulance.

Whilst the Covid pandemic has understandably had an impact on Gardner Leader's fundraising activities during 2020 and 2021, Gardner Leader's fundraising activities have included a 1980s day, quizzes, half and full marathons, plus numerous cycling events. In addition, Partners of the firm have taken their turn in the stocks being soaked for charity. A number of our staff have taken part in a heroic parachute jump falling from 121,500 feet.

Gardner Leader have also collected tonnes of charity bags of pre-loved clothing and toys and we have organised Bake Off-style competitions judged by local well-known chefs, plus several silent auctions! Most recently, one Partner climbed to the top of Kilimanjaro. Since 2014, employees, clients and contacts of Gardner Leader have raised nearly £41,000.00.

In addition to fundraising, support for the charity of the year includes sponsorship, a 'will week', skills sharing including social media training, pro bono legal advice, volunteering for charity organised events and grounds maintenance.

Gardner Leader employees are also proud to support national annual fundraising events such as Comic Relief, Children In Need and Christmas Jumper Day.



In previous years, ladies of Gardner Leader take part in Cancer Research's Newbury Race for Life event -

www.gardner-leader.co.uk/news/gardner-leader-ladies-take-on-race-for-life/

We are proud that five of our Partners are Trustees for local and national charities, with many more employees being involved in charities on a personal level.

Gardner Leader provide sponsorship for local community events, such as Newbury Lions Fireworks display, Thatcham Fun on the Broadway, Marlow Regatta and Newbury Real Ale Festival.

In addition to sponsoring community events, Gardner Leader supports schools, providing input at careers fairs and mock interview events. We also offer work experience for Year 11 pupils from local schools across all three of its offices, together with university students. Understandably, since March 2020, these programmes have been paused due to the Covid pandemic for the safety of Gardner Leader staff and clients, as well as visiting students. Gardner Leader intends to recommence its student programme as soon as it is safely able to do so.

Because of its strong ties with the community, Gardner Leader is proud of its involvement with the [Newbury Twin Towns Association - www.newburytwintown.org.uk](http://www.newburytwintown.org.uk) and the [Education Business Partnership - www.educationbusinesspartnership.co.uk](http://www.educationbusinesspartnership.co.uk).

Gardner Leader takes its responsibility to the environment very seriously. Our Environmental Group continues to look at ways we can further improve Gardner Leader's impact on the environment.

Since 2019, and in particular since the start of the Covid pandemic, Gardner Leader has implemented a paperless working environment, maximising its electronic client management system, video conferencing facilities, remote client meetings and court hearings, plus providing staff training to facilitate paperless working.

Where this is not appropriate such as when having to prepare hard copy court hearing bundles, we support confidential recycling and effective waste management. Where possible, we source ethical products and suppliers.

We have also recently become members of the Legal Sustainability Alliance (LSA). This is a platform to engage and share ideas with other businesses on how we can work towards a more sustainable environment.

Gardner Leader were proud to be one of the first companies in Berkshire to have its Corporate Social Responsibility activities acknowledged when it was awarded a Silver Accreditation in 2018 by CSR Accreditation. In 2022 we have since been awarded the highest Gold CSR Accreditation to reflect our commitment as a firm.