

WATSON FARLEY  
&  
WILLIAMS

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PUTTING WORDS  
INTO PRACTICE



DIVERSITY & INCLUSION REPORT 2018/19

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## FOREWORD – PUTTING WORDS INTO PRACTICE



**NIGEL THOMAS**  
Chairman,  
London

Embracing and celebrating what makes us individuals allows us to better achieve our collective goal – to help our clients achieve their goals.

Respect for differing views and backgrounds is also at the heart of the firm's core values and we recognise the importance of fostering an inclusive environment which allows everyone to be their best.

At Watson Farley & Williams we value the varied perspectives, insights and experience that stem from people's differences, from all identity groups, and this in turn creates diverse, innovative and dynamic teams skilled at providing the best advice to clients.

### Putting words into practice

Our global Diversity and Inclusion Working Group guides our approach to creating impactful initiatives and processes that ensure we deliver on our strategy and continue to integrate equality, diversity and inclusion into everyday business. This report provides a snapshot of the strides we have made in the last year and the activities we have undertaken to support our efforts in the areas of mental health, agile and flexible working, gender, social mobility and family. We will continue to expand and build on these efforts to enable both our people and our clients to flourish.

### Our values

In our work with clients, with each other, and the communities in which we work, we demonstrate our firm's values:

<b>Respect</b>	for our clients, colleagues and those we have contact with by valuing diversity of backgrounds, viewpoints and experiences.
<b>Sharing</b>	our knowledge and time to collaboratively build strong relationships together.
<b>Communication</b>	that is open, honest and two-way while maintaining discretion and confidentiality.
<b>Integrity</b>	in all interactions that is built upon trust, adherence to professional standards, acting ethically and accountably.

**NIGEL THOMAS**  
Chairman,  
London

## REALISING OUR GOALS



“OUR CODE SETS OUT THE BASIC RULES WE MUST ALL FOLLOW IN WFW AND EXPLAINS HOW OUR VALUES SHOULD GUIDE ALL OF OUR DECISIONS.”

**CHRIS LOWE & LOTHAR WEGENER**  
 Managing Partners,  
 London and Hamburg

Our commitment to diversity and inclusion is evident through all stages of a career at the firm, from recruitment to training, career progression and on-going personal and professional development.

We want to attract and retain talented individuals from the broadest pool, inclusive of age, disability, sexual orientation, ethnicity, gender, marital status or any other protected characteristic.

We regard this as a positive means to create strong, diverse teams from a wide mix of backgrounds, with the skills and knowledge to match the similarly diverse needs of our clients. Involving all of our people in creating and sustaining an inclusive and respectful working environment ensures that it becomes an increasingly embedded part of our culture and our networks are a reflection of that. They reflect the passion and commitment our people have to ensuring that Watson Farley & Williams is an inclusive place to work. This also extends to the wider community of our clients and service providers.

### Putting words into practice

We have in place mandatory equality and diversity training and, in London, all new joiners undertake unconscious bias training.

Last year during Diversity & Inclusion week, we launched two networks in London - Mental Health Allies (see page 6) and the LGBT Affinity Group.

Our LGBT Affinity Group provides an internal resource for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered employees and their allies. It aims to raise awareness within the firm of areas of interest to the LGBT community and in particular, social issues affecting LGBT employees, through events and news articles.

We announced the winners of a global photo competition on the subject of celebrating inclusion.

Volunteer diversity officers were appointed in our German offices, providing a confidential first point of call for our people to discuss equality and diversity issues and also tasked with raising diversity and inclusion matters on an ongoing basis.

The German 2018 diversity day was marked by a guest speaker from the Institute of Diversity Management who talked about age and perceptions that we might have about different age groups.



## MENTAL HEALTH – SUPPORTING OUR EMPLOYEES IN THE WORKPLACE



“I AM GRATEFUL FOR HAVING HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO ATTEND THE TRAINING TO BECOME A MENTAL HEALTH ALLY. I THINK THIS IS A GREAT INITIATIVE TO RAISE AWARENESS OF MENTAL HEALTH AND TO PROMOTE A CULTURE WHERE INDIVIDUALS ARE ENCOURAGED TO TALK ABOUT IT.”

**NEETA AULAK**  
Director of Risk & Compliance,  
London

Stress, anxiety and depression are a major cause of sickness absence in the UK and also have a significant impact on a person’s ability to perform happily and productively; one in four people in the country will experience a mental health problem each year.

Yet despite the widespread nature of poor mental health at work, the problem is often compounded by a reluctance for people to discuss their needs and receive the support they need for fear of discrimination.

As an employer we recognise that it is vital to foster a culture of openness and have mechanisms in place which actively encourage our people to discuss their issues in a safe and supportive environment. We have actively focused on bringing the conversation on mental health into the open.

### Putting words into practice

In 2018 we launched our Mental Health Allies network in London, an internal network of trained volunteers who can provide support and referral information as well as engage in confidential conversations about mental health. Every mental health ally has undertaken training which covers: understanding mental health, questioning techniques and listening skills; and the role of a mental health ally.

We also have a trained Mental Health Ally in place in our Bangkok office and in our German offices employee volunteers provide a confidential listening service on any diversity related issues (see page 4).

In May we once again participated in Mental Health Awareness Week in London, which included a number of fun activities and health workshops to spark conversations and engagement, and in June we hosted a speaker from the Movember Foundation who talked about men's health and the actions everyone can take to stay mentally well.

WATSON FARLEY & WILLIAMS



## AGILE AND FLEXIBLE WORKING – AN INCLUSIVE APPROACH



“I HAD ALWAYS WANTED TO DO AN MBA. WITH THE HELP OF MY TEAM, I CHOSE A PART-TIME COURSE AND FOR TWO YEARS I WORKED FOUR DAYS A WEEK AND DEDICATED ONE FULL DAY TO STUDY. THE SUPPORT SHOWN BY WFW AND THEIR FLEXIBLE WORKING PRACTICES ALLOWED ME TO COMPLETE THE MBA – WITH FLYING COLOURS!”

**MIKE FOLSOM**  
Senior Associate,  
Hong Kong

Empowering employees to work agilely and flexibly – with a say in how, when and where they choose – can be beneficial both on a personal level and to the business.

Flexibility with working arrangements can contribute to an improved work-life balance, alleviating some of the stress resulting from competing priorities such as family or study. It also boosts employee satisfaction, motivation, engagement and retention.

### Putting words into practice

We have in place a global Agile Working policy to facilitate agile working in each of our offices.

During September and October 2018 we conducted a global flexible working survey in response to an employee engagement survey of the previous year, which identified that more than 40% of respondents said that they did not have the flexibility that enabled them to balance their responsibilities at work. The survey also included some questions about agile working. The key findings of the survey will now be used to further shape our policies worldwide.

**AGILE WORKING**  
THE ABILITY, USING MODERN TECHNOLOGY, TO WORK REMOTELY ON AN AD HOC AND INFORMAL BASIS WHILE REMAINING IN CONTACT WITH, AND BEING ACCESSIBLE TO, COLLEAGUES AND CLIENTS.

**FLEXIBLE WORKING**  
HAVING AN AGREED WORKING PATTERN WHICH IS NOT THE SAME AS THE STANDARD WORKING PATTERN FOR SOMEONE IN YOUR ROLE IN YOUR JURISDICTION.

## SOCIAL MOBILITY – REACHING PEOPLE WITH TALENT AND POTENTIAL FROM ALL BACKGROUNDS



“THE STUDENTS ARE BUZZING ABOUT HOW USEFUL IT WAS. FEEDBACK INCLUDES: “IT’S MADE ME MORE CERTAIN THAT I WANT TO DO LAW NOW”; “IT WAS GREAT TO HEAR ABOUT THE ALTERNATIVE CAREERS AVAILABLE” AND EVEN “I COULD ASK THEM LOADS OF QUESTIONS I CAN’T ASK MY PARENTS ABOUT MOVING OUT AND GOING TO UNI”. SO GREAT FOR THEM TO HAVE THEIR EYES OPENED A BIT!”

**SIXTH FORM TEACHER**  
Chobham Academy,  
London

Making sure that equal opportunity exists for candidates regardless of their background is vital to creating a diverse, inclusive and dynamic workplace.

This includes eliminating unconscious bias at the screening stage of our recruitment process to ensure that high performing candidates are selected on merit alone. For us, achieving greater social mobility in our workforce also relies on education and awareness. People who may believe that a City career is beyond their reach face an immediate barrier and our aim is to help change that perception.

### Putting words into practice

In October 2018 we made a change to our recruitment process for graduates in an effort to broaden access to our vacancies and ensure that we are hiring the best people. We have adopted the Rare contextual recruitment system which allows recruiters to understand the context in which a candidate’s academics have been achieved. Rare identifies high quality candidates with resilience, drive and determination who might otherwise be rejected at the initial screening stage.

Our attendance at events such as Lawcareers.net Live and Bright Networks Future Lawyers Top 100 which attract attendees from all backgrounds and advertise at many universities, ensures that we reach a wide audience. Working with Bright Network we specifically promote our opportunities at the firm with diverse/identity groups.

Since April 2017 a UK Government apprenticeship levy has been in place to fund modern apprenticeships. These allow individuals to obtain a professional qualification whilst working to support themselves. We now have apprentices in three of our business services teams with more planned. In 2018 we recruited Tayla Wills into the HR team, Halle Miller into our Learning and Development team and Freddie Mills into the Accounting team. Our apprentices spend 80% of the working week engaged in their office jobs and 20% studying with a business school or recognised educational provider, whether through a virtual learning environment, online live study sessions or face to face workshops. Tayla is studying for a CIPD Level 3 Foundation Certificate in HR Practice, Halle for a Level 3 Business Administrator qualification and Freddie for AAT Level 3.





We have provided work experience opportunities facilitated by Inspire, an organisation that focuses on opportunities for disadvantaged young people, which might otherwise remain out of reach for them.

In October 2018 a team from our London office once again hosted a workshop for Chobham Academy in East London to give pupils an insight into a career at a City law firm and, importantly, to explain that those careers are within their reach.

“THE INCLUSIVE NATURE OF THE FIRM HAS ALLOWED ME TO QUICKLY GAIN A GOOD UNDERSTANDING OF MY ROLE, WHICH IS ESSENTIAL FOR THE SUCCESS OF ANY APPRENTICESHIP. THE SUPPORT AND FLEXIBILITY MY TEAM HAS SHOWN ME HAS ENABLED ME EFFECTIVELY TO BALANCE WORK AND STUDY.”

**TAYLA WILLIS**  
Junior HR Administrator,  
London



We were delighted to welcome Maggie Alphonsi MBE, former England rugby star and World Cup winner, to our London office during Diversity and Inclusion Week. She delivered an inspiring key note talk on overcoming adversity and breaking down barriers to achieve your goals.

## FAMILY – SUPPORTING WORKING PARENTS AND CARERS



“THE FIRM HAS BEEN REALLY SUPPORTIVE AND ACCEPTING OF MY DECISION TO TAKE SHARED PARENTAL LEAVE. TO ALSO FIND THE BENEFITS ON OFFER TO PARENTS ARE GENEROUS, HAS BEEN AN UNEXPECTED AND WELCOME BONUS.”

**DAN BAILEY**  
Graphic Designer,  
London

### Combining a busy and rewarding career with parental or carer responsibilities can be a challenge.

Supporting our people to balance their roles allows them not only to cope, but to flourish and also keeps valuable skills in our business.

#### Putting words into practice

We have a number of policies and procedures in place to facilitate parents and carers, including a global agile working policy and flexible working arrangements across our global footprint.

In April 2018 we introduced maternity coaching designed to support women going on and returning from maternity leave. The programme, through Confidence to Return, provides an individual with a number of maternity coaching sessions designed to help them through each stage, from managing a successful handover and keep in touch days (KIT) to preparing for a successful return; support here includes sessions on building confidence and mindfulness as well as integrating work and parenting and maintaining career momentum. Our maternity buddy scheme, introduced in 2017, allows women who have undertaken maternity leave to mentor pregnant colleagues and share their experience of successfully combining work and parenthood.

Having extended enhanced payment arrangements to shared parental leave in 2017, we received our first requests from male employees to take it up this year.

Our Hamburg office introduced a number of initiatives including hosting a family day at a beach club, with activities for adults and children.

Our London office is a member of Cityparents, a network for City professionals balancing home and family life with progressive careers. Cityparents provides peer support to those juggling careers and carer responsibilities as well as networking opportunities. Recent topics have included 'Changing Behaviours in the Workplace' and 'The Diversity & Inclusion Journey'; the latter was hosted at our London office in September.

## WHAT OUR PEOPLE SAY...

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"WHEN I RETURNED FROM MATERNITY LEAVE THE FIRM WAS FLEXIBLE AND VERY SUPPORTIVE DURING THE DIFFICULT TRANSITION BACK TO WORK. FOR ME THIS MEANT WORKING FOUR DAYS AND SPENDING WEDNESDAYS WITH MY DAUGHTER. MANAGING THE BALANCE IS BUSY AND CHALLENGING. IT'S ABOUT GIVE AND TAKE AND REASONABLE EXPECTATIONS, BUT WORKING FLEXIBLY DOESN'T MEAN YOU HAVE TO COMPROMISE ON YOUR CAREER ASPIRATIONS."

**ANNA ROBINSON**  
PARTNER, LONDON

"THE 'CONFIDENCE TO RETURN' PROGRAMME IS WELL STRUCTURED AND THOUGHT OUT WITH A COACH WHO REALLY CARES ABOUT YOU AND YOUR FAMILY LIFE / CAREER. THROUGH IT I'VE LEARNT THAT IT IS POSSIBLE TO SUCCESSFULLY COMBINE BEING A MOTHER AND HAVING HAPPY, THRIVING CHILDREN WITH A REWARDING CAREER. I WAS GIVEN LOTS OF TIPS AND TECHNIQUES FOR ACHIEVING THIS AND MAKING SURE I LOOK AFTER MY OWN WELLBEING ALONG THE WAY."

**KATE SILVERSTEIN**  
SENIOR ASSOCIATE, LONDON

"MATERNITY COACHING PROVISION THROUGH 'CONFIDENCE TO RETURN' HAS BEEN A GREAT SOURCE OF SUPPORT. IT IS INVALUABLE KNOWING THAT I CAN SPEAK TO SANDIE IN CONFIDENCE ABOUT SPECIFIC CONCERNS OR DIFFICULTIES OR JUST TO SHARE IDEAS ABOUT NAVIGATING THE LOGISTICAL CHALLENGES OF JUGGLING WORK WITH CHILDREN."

**JEMMA DHILLON**  
SENIOR ASSOCIATE, LONDON



"MY PARTNER AND I DECIDED IT WAS IMPORTANT FOR ME TO HAVE SOME TIME AT HOME WITH OUR DAUGHTER. WE WOULD HAVE DONE IT ANYWAY, BUT TO LEARN THAT THE FIRM HAS ENHANCED THE LEGAL MINIMUM JUST MEANS NO WORRIES TAKING CARE OF THINGS LIKE MORTGAGE PAYMENTS AND BEING ABLE TO REALLY ENJOY THE TIME."

**MATTHEW DICK**  
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MANAGER,  
LONDON



"SHARED PARENTAL LEAVE (SPL) HAS BEEN GREAT FOR OUR FAMILY. EIGHT MONTHS OFF RATHER THAN 12 FEELS BETTER FROM A CAREER DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVE – PARTICULARLY AT MY LEVEL. I DON'T HAVE A SENSE OF 'I'VE FORGOTTEN THE LAW'. THE MATERNITY COACHING IS AN ABSOLUTELY WONDERFUL SERVICE."

**ALICE BUSHELL**  
ASSOCIATE, LONDON

## GENDER – CHAMPIONING WOMEN



“WFW IS A FIRM WHICH SUPPORTS TALENTED INDIVIDUALS BY CHALLENGING THEM CONSTRUCTIVELY, DIVERSIFIES THEIR WORK AND ALLOWS THEM TO BALANCE AND ORGANISE THEIR PERSONAL LIFE THROUGH AGILE AND FLEXIBLE WORKING SCHEMES.”

### ALEXIA HATZIMICHALIS

Partner,  
Athens

A number of our offices last year demonstrated their commitment to moving towards greater equality in terms of male/female opportunities.

The gender pay gap reporting requirements in the UK which required reporting from no later than April 2018 have provided a valuable tool for assessing levels of equality in our workplace, female and male participation in bonus arrangements and pay parity.

#### Putting words into practice

We have maternity buddies in place for women going on and returning from maternity leave, to enable them to assimilate back into work more easily (see page 10).

Opportunities to work flexibly and agilely often provide the practical means to combine caring and other responsibilities with a career (see page 7).

We held a number of events aimed specifically at women, including:

- An inaugural Women in Shipping event in Athens, where women from across the Greek and international shipping industries came together to share their insights and career experiences
- A Women in Energy networking event in London
- A Women in Mining event in London (in association with WIM UK), where specialists shared their capital-raising experience
- A Women in Aviation networking event in Dublin

International Women’s Day on 8 March 2018 was marked in London by a networking lunch arranged for and by female lawyers at the firm and in Singapore by fundraising for the Association of Women for Action and Research (Aware), Singapore’s leading gender equality advocacy group.

In our New York office there is an active Women’s Initiative which hosted a networking reception in October to celebrate our women attorneys and encourage their professional and personal development.

The same group participated in a round table with Fordham Law Women, a student group of the law school, where our female lawyers shared their experience on developing a career in the law, including tips on interview skills, work-life balance and building a network.

Shared parental leave (SPL), introduced in 2017, has proven to really benefit women and means that parenthood does not have to be a barrier to career advancement.

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