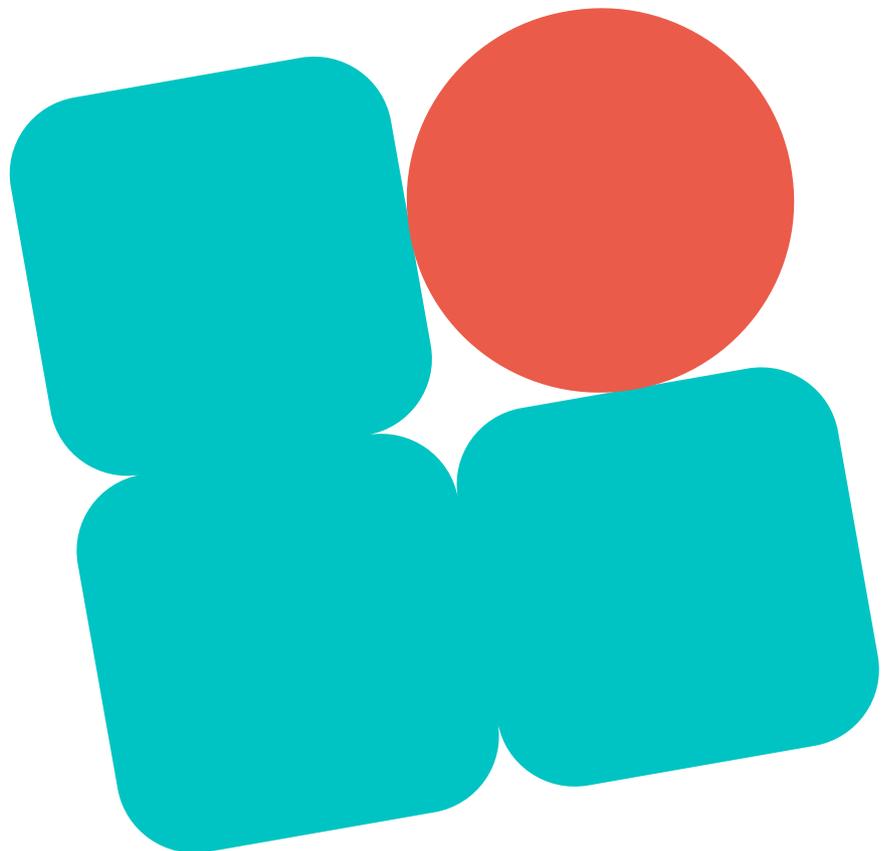


# Environmental, Social and Governance Report

1<sup>st</sup> September 2021 - 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022



● Connecting people to work in ways that enrich their lives is our means of positively impacting the world, and we're committed to fulfilling this purpose while creating positive, lasting change for people and our environment.

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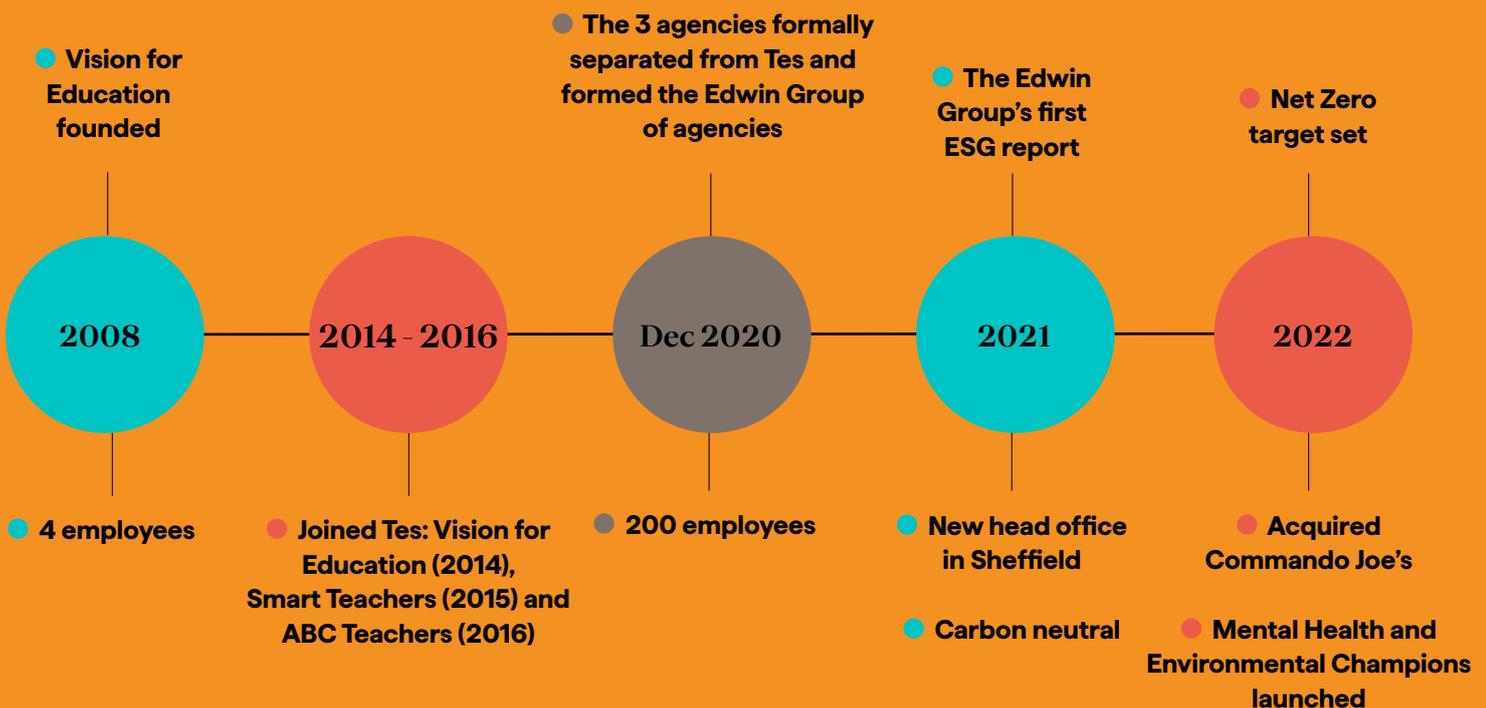
# Who we are and what we offer

The Edwin Group recruits and supplies teachers and support staff for primary, secondary and special education needs and disability schools (SEND) and other learning institutions. We are made up of four complementary companies:

- **Vision for Education:** A well-established, market-leading education recruitment agency with industry experience and expertise
- **Smart Teachers:** Recruiting and supplying great teachers, support and leadership staff across London and the Home Counties
- **ABC Teachers:** Recruiting for temporary and permanent positions in schools, colleges and other alternative provisions across the UK
- **Commando Joe's:** Developing skills beyond the classroom

We provide staffing solutions for emergency cover, short and long-term placements and permanent roles. We work with a wide range of education providers, from mainstream primary and secondary schools to SEND learning institutions. Since September 2021, the Group acquired Commando Joe's, who offer inclusive school-led programmes to help children and young people develop life skills and resilience.

We also partner with specialist knowledge providers and training partners who help us to upskill our people, keeping us at the forefront of professionalism and advances in the education sector.



# Our values

Our values shape who we are as an employer and guide how we offer our services. Our values were developed alongside our formation as The Edwin Group. They ensure the alignment of our Executive and Senior Management teams with our operations across every branch of the Group.

## Passionate about learners

**Making a difference in education. Proudly putting children and young people at the heart of everything we do and providing opportunities to enhance their learning and experiences.**

## Collaborative and responsive

**Working in partnership with schools to provide a high-quality service. Being flexible and responsive to changes in their needs and the educational landscape.**

## Responsible and fair

**Providing a value-for-money, open and fair service. Establishing trust and retaining long-standing relationships with schools and teachers.**

## Well-informed and focused

**Understanding the current educational climate and challenges that schools and teachers face, to help us deliver a service which meets needs.**

## Respectful and open-minded

**Treating people as we would like to be treated ourselves – with dignity and courtesy. Welcoming and encouraging everyone who wants to contribute to our business and the world of education.**

# Message from the CEO

ESG is not a new concept for The Edwin Group, nor is it a set of tasks to be completed or a few indicators to measure – it is a whole approach to stewardship of our resources, our relationships, and our responsibilities. Since our founding, we have been focused on cultivating a growing collective of like-minded education professionals, working together to positively impact the lives of young people, and contributing to and enhancing the communities and environment in which we serve. We view education as a powerful force for good in the world, and a driver of progress toward a sustainable future for all.

As we continue to build, enhance and implement our ESG strategy and practices, we keep this vision front and centre. We are proud of the work we have done during this year to progress our ESG strategy, investing in various initiatives to support sustainable outcomes for all our stakeholder groups, while strengthening the foundation of our business for long term.

The Edwin Group has a powerful team working with us to build a sustainable, equitable future for all: dedicated employees, great talented teachers on assignment at our schools around the UK, a supportive board of directors, passionate supplier partners and strong communities in which we do business.

Our first ESG report, published last year, set out our operational carbon footprint with clear targets to reduce the direct emissions we produce as a business.

Over the past 12 months we undertook a full scope emissions inventory and defined the emissions produced across our entire value chain. We now have a comprehensive plan to achieve net zero emissions across our business by 2045 and have clearly defined the first milestones we will need to reach along the way.

Other actions which have had an immediate effect, like our Mental Health First Aider programme and our learning and development opportunities, are receiving positive feedback from employees and candidates. We have implemented new leadership and communication approaches to encourage buy-in across the organisation and are thrilled to see the enthusiasm with which our employees, candidates and the schools and colleges we work with are embracing our efforts at embedding ESG into everything we do.

The achievements and objectives shared in this report reflect the ambition, energy and commitment of our people. There is so much more we want to do but for now our focus is on reducing our GHG emissions, engaging with our supply chain to minimise our upstream and downstream impacts, and continuing to embed a culture of health, wellbeing and diversity across the organisation.

Thank you for joining us as we grow with purpose together, making the world better for future generations.



**Liam Roberts,**  
**The Edwin Group CEO**



# The Edwin Group today

£406,000

spent on  
community support

500

participants on  
our National  
Teaching Assistant  
Programme

18

locations

3,862

client schools and  
colleges serviced

7,482

trained staff and  
candidates



## ESG Highlights



# Environment

Over the past year, we have introduced some exciting measures to improve our environmental impacts.



## ESG Committee

We appointed an ESG Committee to **monitor and review the overall implementation of the Group ESG Strategy.**



## Environmental Champions

We launched a network of Environmental Champions across each of our branches. Our Champions are passionate about protecting the environment, and work with their colleagues to **promote best practice** in responsible waste disposal and energy efficient behaviours.

Offset any residual Scope 1 and 2 emissions in 2023 to become **Carbon Neutral**

Reducing our Scope 1 and 2 emissions by

**45%**  
by 2030



## Reducing Our Environmental Impacts

This year we **launched greener driving campaigns** for our staff and consultants, demonstrating how the way we drive can reduce emissions from our vehicles.

We developed a questionnaire for our landlords to guide our future selection of new premises. Engagement with current landlords is ongoing to **better understand our energy, waste and water impacts** within our serviced offices.

We are making a concerted effort to **recycle our waste from electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE)** and are striving to introduce green initiatives in partnership with schools wherever possible.

We have set forward-looking targets towards our ambition of reaching Net Zero GHG emissions by 2045 including the following reductions against our 2022 baseline year:

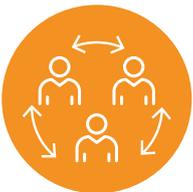
- Reducing our Scope 1 and 2 emissions by 45% by 2030
- Offset any residual Scope 1 and 2 emissions in 2023 to become carbon neutral

# Social



## Learning and Development

This year, learning and development for our staff and candidates has been a **key focus, with new programmes and deliveries offered.**



## Stakeholder Engagement

We **added ESG content to our annual staff engagement survey** to ensure their voices were heard and incorporated into our ESG agenda. We scaled up our community engagement this year, fundraising more than twice as much as last year, and we are very proud of our branches' efforts to support the communities in which they operate.



## Supporting Our People

As we continue to grow as a Group, bringing in new skills and knowledge, we have worked to align contracts and terms and conditions to ensure fairness and equity. This included redesigning our benefits package to improve the support we offer our employees and candidates. We have also **hugely expanded our mental health support** and are beginning to implement processes to support the schools and colleges we work with, in developing their own mental health leads.



# Governance



## Policy Management

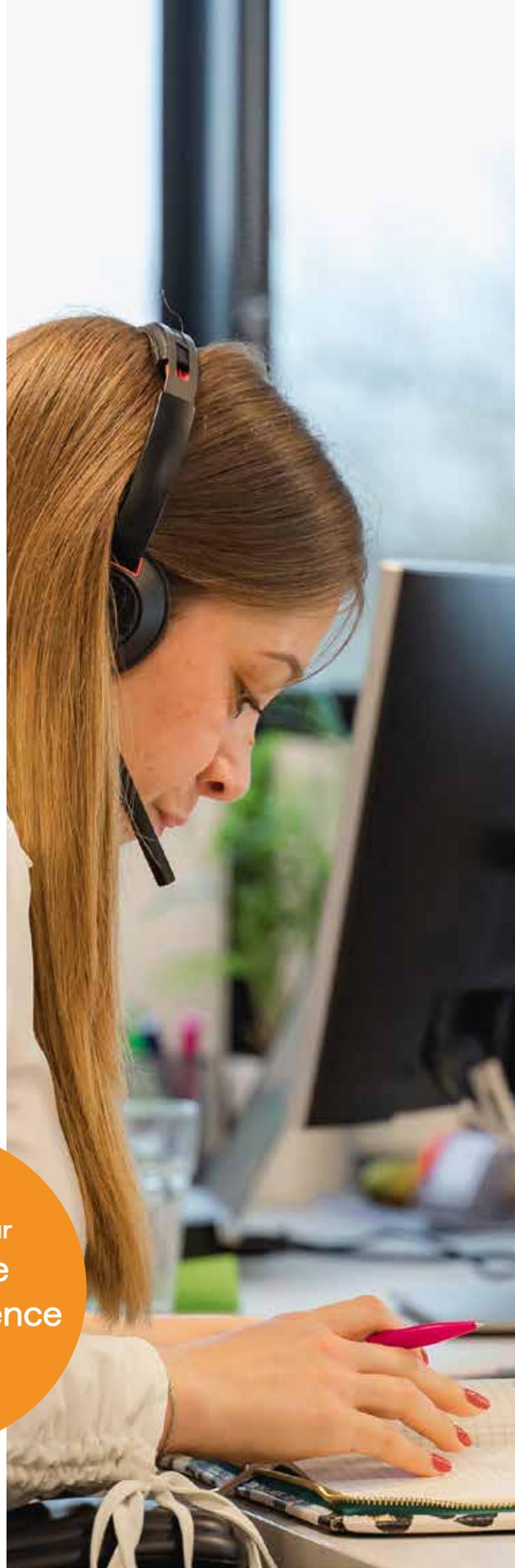
In addition to launching our Group-wide environment policy, this year we also **developed our Corporate Criminal Offence Policy**, which will ensure we continue operating to the highest standards of financial ethics.



## Diversity and Inclusion

We set up a Nominations Committee which will be responsible for **embedding diversity into our succession planning** at the top levels of the organisation. We also further strengthened our rigorous candidate vetting process, **introducing the industry-leading Llama ID platform for safer recruitment**.

Developed our  
Corporate  
Criminal Offence  
Policy



# Contributing to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – or the Global Goals - are a globally agreed blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all by 2030. The 17 goals and 169 targets encompass the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development and provide an internationally agreed framework to build an inclusive, sustainable and resilient future for people and planet.

In 2021, we aligned our Corporate Sustainability and ESG strategy to six UN SDGs and conducted a self-assessment analysis to identify where The Edwin Group can have the greatest and most direct impact. We strive to seek out any opportunities in which we can contribute towards the achievement of these goals.



# Good Health and Well-Being

Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.



**Our contribution:** Promoting wellbeing and healthy learning and working environments for all:

- From January 23 we will be offering a residential course for 'Schools' Wellbeing Leads' via our new staff wellbeing arm, Still Human
- We have trained 14 Mental Health First Aiders (MHFA) over the past year. They meet regularly to embed mental health and wellbeing across the Group
- Our CEO and senior leadership team are instrumental in creating our culture of openness and approachability

# Quality Education

Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.



**Our contribution:** This is core to The Edwin Group's sole purpose:

- We provide high quality education that equips students with relevant knowledge, skills and capabilities for life
- We integrate sustainability into the curriculum, enabling students to have a positive impact on society and their local communities

# Gender Equality

Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

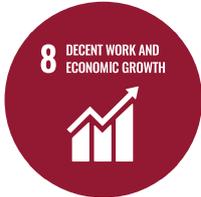


**Our contribution:** The Edwin Group supports this goal through striving for equal pay for employees regardless of gender, and through partnerships to raise girls' self-esteem.



## Decent Work and Economic Growth

Promote sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all.



**Our contribution:** The Edwin Group is supporting all candidate staff through policies and practices to ensure fair pay, regular work and ongoing job support.

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## Reduced Inequalities

Reducing inequalities within countries via income, age, gender, ability, race, or ethnicity.



**Our contribution:** Creating diverse and inclusive learning and working environments. Our services are designed to support SEND children and those with the most barriers to learning through the education system.

---

## Climate Action

Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.



**Our contribution:**

- Promoting responsible resource use and sustainable lifestyles
- Prioritising the reduction of carbon emissions and raising awareness on how our employees can play a significant part

● We strive to seek out any opportunities in which we can contribute towards the achievement of these goals.



# Environment



# Environment

The Edwin Group will always be committed to protecting and maintaining our planet for future generations. Our environmental initiatives are focused on quantifying and mitigating the environmental footprint of our operations, by prioritising energy efficiency across our workplaces and promoting practices that foster a culture of preservation, conservation, and waste reduction.

In 2022, we focused on centralising our environmental data and standardising a way to collect this data regularly across the organisation. The Edwin Group maintains office based operations in which waste is mainly generated from the use of paper and other office-related activities; however we continue to implement recycling initiatives and engage our landlords and schools to align with our goals.

● The Edwin Group will always be committed to protecting and maintaining our planet for future generations.



# Getting to Net Zero

This year we adjusted our baseline environment impact metrics and recalculated our carbon footprint following the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Protocol. This new methodology allows us to increase transparency on our environmental impact and account for additional emission sources from GHGs associated with upstream and downstream operations.

Although we have monitored and reduced the direct environmental footprint in our corporate operations (Scope 1 and 2), this new methodology included emission sources from activities not previously tracked in Scope 3 categories, which account for over 98% of our footprint. The methodology will allow us to identify opportunities for mitigation, removal, and compensation that will guide our sustainability efforts as we work towards our first milestone in 2030. (To read our Net Zero report, please visit our website.)

Comparing like-for-like, we achieved a 33% reduction in Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions.



## Business travel and employee commuting

We spent 2022 working to better understand the reduction pathway for our business travel impacts. With a largely mobile workforce we saw a significant increase in our post-COVID-19 employee business travel. For the first time this year we included the emissions resulting from employee commuting, based on survey data from our staff and candidates. This accounts for more than half of our overall emissions. Reducing emissions in this area will be a key focus for The Edwin Group over the coming years.

Considering the recalculation of our carbon footprint to include our Scope 3 emissions, this new methodology provides us with more accurate and representative baseline against which to measure progress and further develop our reduction strategy. Although this is our second year of ESG reporting, we have opted to use 2022 as our baseline year, based on more comprehensive data than last year and acknowledging the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on both business and commuting travel in 2021.

To enable us to compare our improvements year-on-year, we have included three intensity ratios. Intensity ratios enable organisations to understand how their emissions have changed despite company growth. Our chosen intensity ratios are average tCO<sub>2</sub>e per employee, average tCO<sub>2</sub>e per square meter of property across our offices, and average tCO<sub>2</sub>e per £million turnover.



## Our Carbon Footprint

Below is an itemised breakdown showing the amount of tCO<sub>2</sub>e produced by each scope and category from FY 2022 baseline calculation.

Scope/Category	1 <sup>st</sup> September 2020 – 31 <sup>st</sup> August 2021		1 <sup>st</sup> September 2021 – 31 <sup>st</sup> August 2022	
	Emissions tCO <sub>2</sub> e	% of total	Emissions tCO <sub>2</sub> e	% of total
<b>Scope 1:</b>				
Gas	73.3	61%	34.02	<1%
HVACs	-	-	4.61	<1%
<b>Scope 2:</b>				
Purchased electricity	31.9	27%	36.59	<1%
<b>Scope 3:</b>				
Purchased goods and services	-	-	1,047.87	22%
Capital expenditure (CapEx)	-	-	90.62	2%
Fuel and energy-related activities	-	-	691.59	15%
Waste	-	-	1.57	<1%
Business travel (staff mileage reclaim)	14.7	12%	160.90	3%
Commuting	-	-	2,618.12	56%
End of Life of Sold Products	-	-	61.40	1%
Investments	-	-	0.36	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>119.9</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>4,747.64</b>	<b>100%</b>
Carbon offsets	(-130)		(-236)	
<b>Total Net Emissions</b>	<b>(-10.1)</b>		<b>4,511.64</b>	
Intensity ratio: per employee	-	-	1.15	-
Intensity ratio: per square meters			0.02	-
Intensity ratio: per £million turnover	-	-	62.23	-

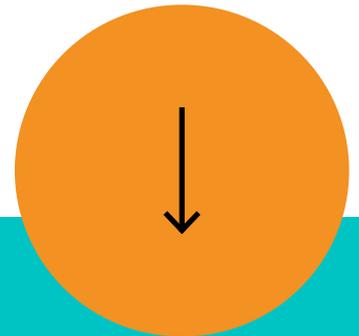


## Our Carbon Footprint (continued)



Scope 1	38.63 tCO <sub>2</sub> e / 0.8%
Scope 2	36.59 tCO <sub>2</sub> e / 0.8%
Scope 3	4,672.42 tCO <sub>2</sub> e / 98.4%

For the second year, we have offset our Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions to maintain a Carbon Neutral status within our operations and have also opted to include staff business travel in our offsetting. As we work to drive down our emissions over the coming years, we will continue to offset those emissions which we cannot eliminate now as we work towards achieving our Net Zero target deadline of 2045.



# ● Net Zero by 2045

# Proudly Carbon Neutral

We are working with our ESG consultants and South Pole to facilitate our carbon offsetting initiative. With more than 700 directly owned projects, South Pole delivers measurable certifiable benefits aligned with the aims of the Paris Agreement and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

These projects are certified by third-party organisations such as The Gold Standard and the Verified Carbon Standard (VCS) to ensure that projects are reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, as well as supporting sustainable development.

This year, we have chosen to invest in two projects:

- Katingan Peatland Restoration and Conservation REDD+ Project
- NIHT Topaiyo REDD+ Project



## Proudly Carbon Neutral (continued)

### Katingan Peatland Restoration and Conservation REDD+ Project

This peatland restoration project in Borneo, Indonesia works towards **restoring and preserving 149,800 hectares of peatland forest ecosystem** and supporting local communities. The project area is almost entirely based on peat soils which store vast amounts of carbon and lies within the districts of Katingan and Kotawaringin Timur in Central Kalimantan Province. This is one of the largest remaining intact peat swamp forests in Indonesia.

The project crosses 34 villages and includes tree nurseries, an agro-ecology school and micro-finance loans for the community and plays a vital role in stabilising water flows, preventing devastating peat fires, enriching soil nutrients and providing clean water. This area is rich in biodiversity, being home to large populations of some of the most endangered primate species such as the Bornean Orangutan and Proboscis Monkey.

The goal is to **develop and implement a sustainable land use model, habitat and ecosystem restoration, biodiversity conservation, and growing economic opportunities for the local people** of Central Kalimantan. The Katingan Project is designed to ensure that all benefits are long lasting, and passed on to local communities, the region and to the wider State of Indonesia in which it operates.

● This project has prevented the release of over 27 million tCO<sub>2</sub>e.



#### Benefits include:

- Reduction of GHG emissions by avoiding deforestation and forest degradation and preventing the drainage of peat and stopping woodland fires
- Protecting and preserving wildlife through biodiversity conservation and protection
- Improving quality of life by helping local people build sustainable sources of income. Instead of burning peat to plant Acacia, (which is used in the flooring industry), residents make a living from non-timber forest products like rattan, honey, coconut and jelutong along with fire prevention, canal management, eco-tourism and sustainable fisheries



## Proudly Carbon Neutral (continued)

### NIHT Topaiyo REDD+ Project

Mature tropical rainforests are excellent carbon sinks and protecting them is ranked even higher than planting new trees on the Project Drawdown sequestration rankings. The Hans Meyer Range of New Ireland, Papua New Guinea, is covered by tropical forests but these forests are under threat. Papua New Guinea now surpasses Malaysia as the world’s largest exporter of tropical timber wood, and every year, the region loses approximately 1.4% of its forested land, and with it, critical habitat to some 5% of the world’s biodiversity.

The mountains are highly biodiverse, home to many endemic and rare species of flora and fauna. Unfortunately, these high carbon storage regions are under severe threat of conversion and degradation – from legal and illegal logging, uncontrolled subsistence farming, and conversion to oil palm plantations.

This project aims to **protect the rainforest, conserve local biodiversity, and benefit the traditional landowners and stewards** of these rainforests through carbon credit production.

● Working with Indigenous communities to protect the rainforest in Papua New Guinea.



**Benefits include:**

- Traditional landowners and tribal communities receive the majority of income from the project. The project helps create sustainable incomes in an economically poor country - Papua New Guinea is ranked 155th out of 189 in the Planetary Pressures Adjusted Human Development Index. This income will help fight poverty in the region and will incentivise locals away from the short-term profits available from deforestation. Over 47,000 individuals in the region will receive income benefit from the project. The project plans to invest into local communities, distribute funds directly to individuals, develop access to online schools, expand regional healthcare provision, introduce solar-powered electricity and finance a comprehensive biodiversity study

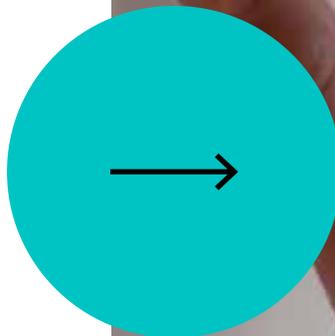


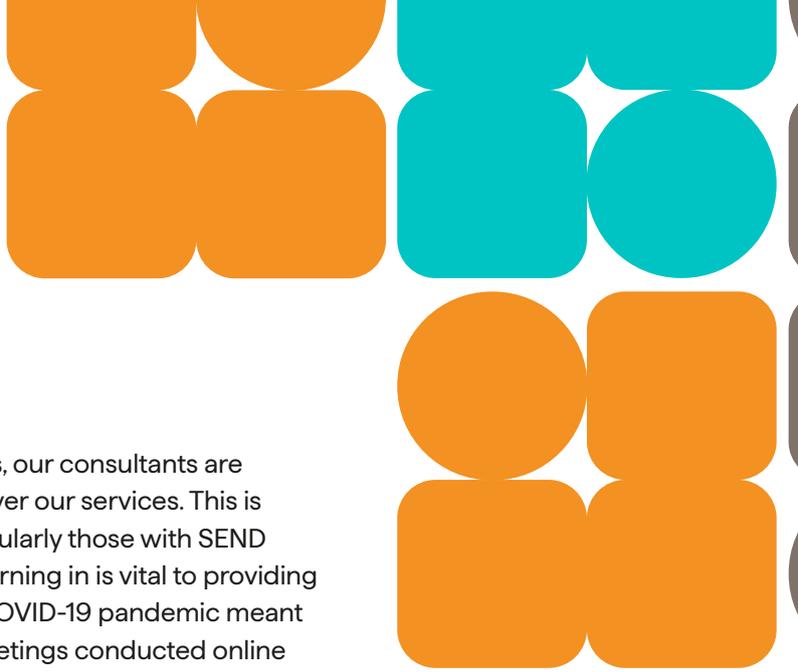
## How we manage our energy and water

Across most of our 18 offices, our energy usage, including electricity and gas, are part of our annual service charges. Our water usage is included in our service charges at all our offices. This presents a significant challenge in trying to gather accurate data about our energy and water consumption, as our supplies and distribution are managed as a whole site and not by tenant within each building. Our electricity and gas totals have been estimated based on our energy billing where available or extrapolated by using the floor space area of each office space to estimate our usage. To overcome this issue of limited data, we have committed to requiring all new landlords to provide our energy consumption data, as part of any new lease agreement. We are working with our current landlords to collect accurate data about our energy and water usage where we are not billed directly.

Where we are not responsible for energy procurement, we do not have the choice to source renewable, low-carbon energy, but we are lobbying our existing landlords to switch to 100% renewable electricity. We do our best to reduce our energy consumption by encouraging staff to be mindful of their energy use. We are pleased that our guidance to staff on energy efficient behaviours, led by our Environmental Champions, appears to be having a positive effect on reducing our energy consumption from 105.2 tCO<sub>2</sub>e last year, to 70.6 tCO<sub>2</sub>e this year.

● 70.6 tCO<sub>2</sub>e energy consumption this year compared to 105.2 tCO<sub>2</sub>e energy consumption last year.





## Green transport

While The Edwin Group does not own or lease any vehicles, our consultants are required to travel to schools and education settings to deliver our services. This is because we believe meeting children face-to-face – particularly those with SEND needs – and understanding the school context they are learning in is vital to providing the best teaching staff to meet their needs. Last year, the COVID-19 pandemic meant there was significantly less travel than usual, with many meetings conducted online that would normally take place in person. This year, we have seen an increase back to normal levels of travel for our consultants.

In last year's ESG report, we set ourselves the challenge of expanding our understanding of our Scope 3 emissions to include the emissions produced by all staff and candidates commuting to and from their places of work each day. We achieved this by surveying them about their commuting habits. Our Net Zero analysis and in-depth engagement with our staff and candidates revealed that in the reporting year, 2,618.12 tCO<sub>2</sub>e was produced from commuting – representing 56% of our overall carbon footprint.

This is clearly a very significant portion of our emissions, and we plan to do all we can to reduce this. The first step was to create a set of guidance on greener and safer driving habits, for all new and existing staff and candidates. This guidance is now part of our induction pack and is included in our employee manual.

We are also undertaking a costed investigation into ways in which we can incentivise our staff to switch to electric or hybrid vehicles. Potential offerings include a salary sacrifice scheme, where our staff could pay for an electric vehicle each month using their gross salary, before deductions are made for tax and other contributions, and introducing a favourable pence per mile mileage reclaim rate. We have also engaged our landlords to document where charging facilities are already available and their intention to roll these out if they are not already in place.

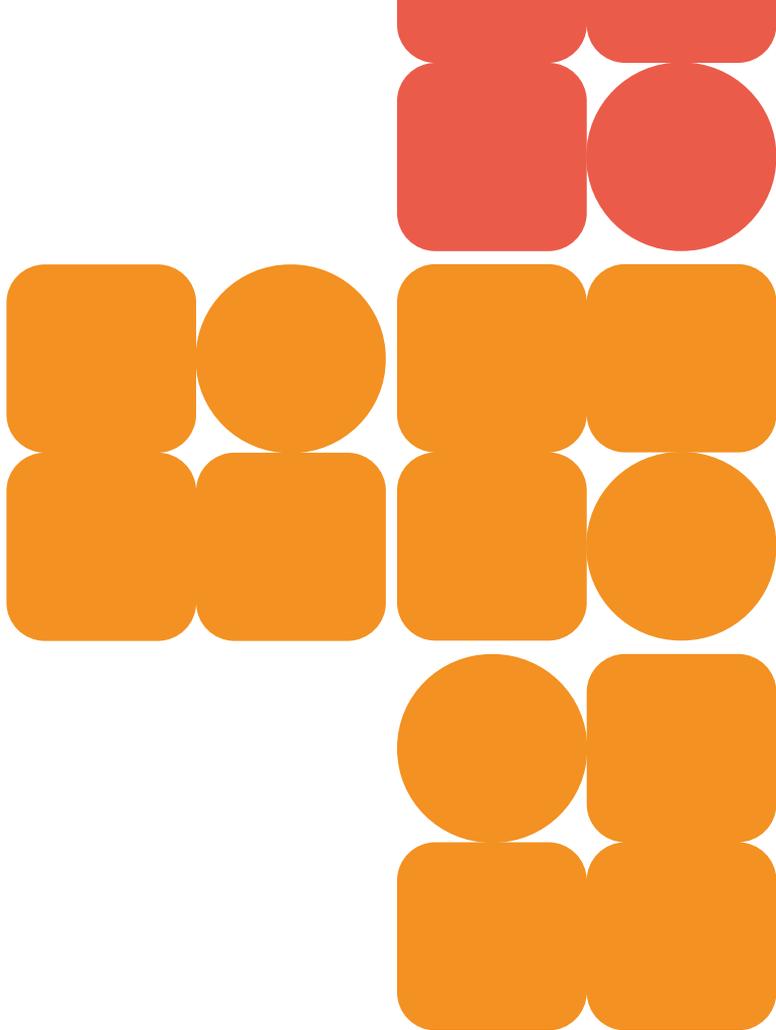


# Managing our waste responsibly

As an office-based company, we create a minimal amount of waste. All our waste is managed for us as part of our office service charges. As with our energy usage, the mix of tenants within each building means we cannot specifically measure our own waste. However, we continue to request more accurate data about our waste footprint and strive to find ways to reduce and responsibly dispose of the waste we generate. We have reached out to all landlords to request accurate data about the waste we generate, including the waste we produce in weight, and the percentage of waste that is recycled, incinerated or sent to landfill. We have also mapped the type of bins in each office to create an estimate of waste generated, for our Net Zero report. Most of our offices have small internal bins which are emptied into larger, communal bins.

In last year's ESG report, we described how we eliminated nearly 180,000 paper items per year through changes to our candidate service processes! This year, our focus was on minimising our waste from electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE). This first involved cleaning and removing data from 33 laptops and 61 desktops that were being replaced. With the assistance of our schools, we then donated these devices, along with various other hardware items, to families and community partners.

How we dispose our waste	kg
Waste to landfill	1,191
Waste to energy	31,061
Recycled	17,885
<b>Total</b>	<b>50,137</b>



# Environmental targets and initiatives for the next financial year

We are working hard to reduce our environmental impacts as a Group and our Net Zero strategy defines our timeline to reduce our emissions year-on-year. Beyond the next financial year, we have committed to achieve:

13%

absolute reduction in emissions by 2025 from 2022 baseline levels

94.2%

overall reduction in all Green House Gas (GHG) emissions across Scopes 1, 2 and 3 by 2045 offsetting any residual emissions via high-quality nature based or direct air capture projects and becoming Net Zero

45%

reduction in our Scope 1 and 2 emissions by 2030

We have also committed to engage with all our landlords over the coming year to improve the data about the waste, energy and water used in our offices. A clear and accurate dataset is the first step in setting robust, achievable yet ambitious targets for reducing our impacts in these areas.



## Social



# Social

Our targets:

Deliver 6 Edwin Learn sessions

Deliver at least 2 Edwin Lead sessions

Add questions relating to mental health to the staff survey

Introduce follow-up training for Mental Health First Aiders

Support schools to put in place a mental health lead

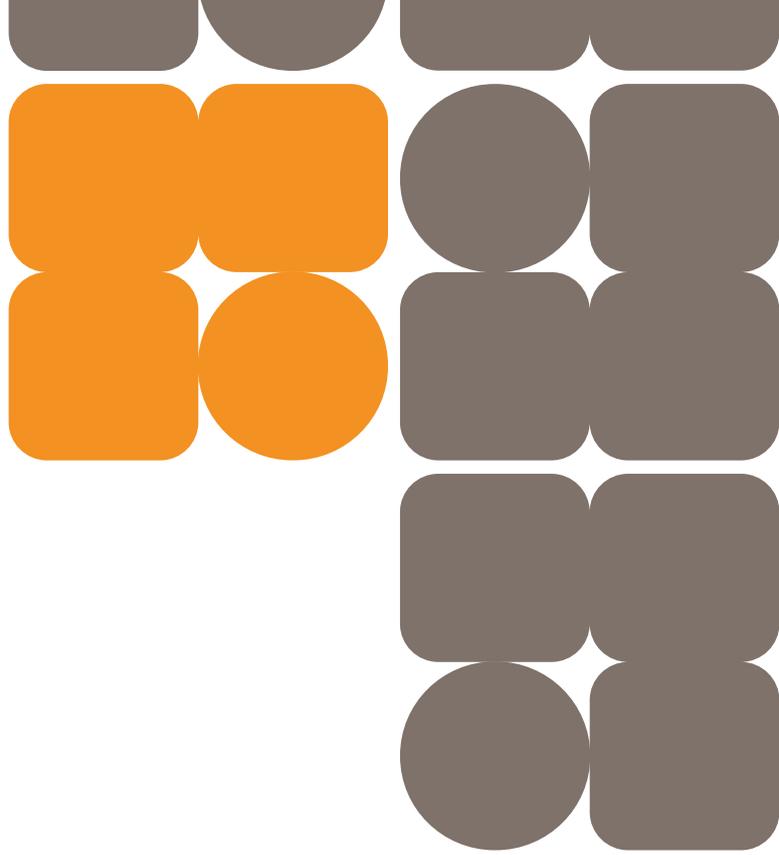


# Supporting our employees and candidates

People are at the heart of everything we do and every service we provide. Our focus is always on providing top quality people for the job. This includes a rigorous vetting and interview process, to match the right person to the opportunity. Our excellent staff are dedicated to nurturing and engaging our candidates, and to building personalised and enduring relationships with the schools we service.

Many of our consultants have trained as teachers or worked in schools themselves, and we encourage consultants to volunteer in their partner schools throughout the year. This allows them to get to know the pupils and is part of our collaborative approach that means we really get to know our schools. When we place someone in a school, we are making the best possible match for the candidate and the school, so ultimately the placement is a success.





## Attracting and retaining talent

Both COVID-19 and Brexit have had an impact on workforce numbers in the UK. Recognising the need to attract and retain the best employees and candidates, we have a range of 'must have' practices and incentives that we offer to our staff, including our guaranteed pay scheme, fair rates of pay, and our compliance with the Agency Worker Regulations.

The cost of living is rising all the time, and over the past year we have added additional incentives and support for our workers. These included a cost of living bonus for 95% of our staff; a comprehensive review of all salaries with a significant increase to minimum level salaries; free parking for all staff; and a 'total rewards statement' which helps our employees understand exactly what benefits are available to them.

## Improvements to our benefits and compensation package

We have improved our benefits and compensation package to better support our employees. Less financial stress means a happier work-life balance, and we want all our employees to have both the time and the financial comfort to be able to focus on what matters – providing excellent educational services.

Changes include:

- Increased paid holiday entitlement from 26 to 30 days
- Increased paid paternity leave from 2 to 4 weeks
- A cost of living bonus of £1,500 given to 95% of our employees (even new starters)
- 3% minimum pay rise, meaning that all salaries are now at least £3,000 higher than the National Living Wage



## Lifelong learning

As an education service provider, and as part of our commitment to recruit and supply great teachers, support and leadership staff, we strive to offer on-going opportunities for learning and development to our staff and candidates. We are also in the process of investigating apprenticeship programmes for consultants, which would build qualifications across the business.

Current and upcoming programmes for our staff and candidates include:

### Continuing Professional Development

We offer market-leading free Continual Professional Development (CPD) training courses to support candidates in their teaching career and help them stay at the forefront of developments in the industry. We are proud that we have been able to influence the sector, with many of our competitors now also providing their CPD free of charge. CPD training takes place throughout the year, with sessions designed to be accessible, offered virtually and at various locations.

Every employee and candidate who we clear for service with The Edwin Group has completed at least one CPD course. Candidates are required to complete our Child Protection and Safeguarding CPD, and employees do a range of courses each year, for example Cyber Essentials for cyber security.

We provide generalised and specialised CPD, that candidates might not ordinarily obtain in a school setting. This is regularly reflected in the feedback we receive from our schools around the depth and breadth of our candidates' knowledge. This year, we trained 7,482 staff and candidates through our CPD deliveries.



## Lifelong learning (continued)

### Edwin Learn

Launched in September 2021, Edwin Learn is our revised three-day induction programme. Each day focuses on a different part of the business and our processes, and all new starters undergo the induction. The content is relevant for all employees and covers key processes, policies, how to use systems and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) requirements, among other topics. We targeted to deliver four Edwin Learn programmes in 2022, but by August 2022, we had already completed five programmes for 41 new starters. In the coming year, we are raising our sights and plan to deliver a further six Edwin Learn sessions.

Outcomes of both Edwin Learn and Edwin Lead (described below) indicate a lower staff turnover because of these programmes.

### Edwin Lead

Edwin Lead is our quarterly, two-day leadership programme for our branch managers. It is very interactive and focuses on embedding learning and practical tasks. Topics covered include effective communication, what makes a good leader, managing probation, planning and delivering effective 1-2-1s, and managing difficult conversations. Managers learn how to develop a talent matrix, how to map out team skills and knowledge, and how to develop their teams. 12 managers have taken part, and in the coming year, we plan to deliver at least two Edwin Lead programmes.

Outcomes so far have been excellent, with managers demonstrating stronger accountability, and greater ownership of employee relations and employee development.

### National Teaching Assistant Programme

In January 2022, The Edwin Group launched our new National Teaching Assistant Programme. The Programme offers Teaching Assistants (TAs) a paid two-week placement in a school. This provides meaningful, practical experience which can be used as a reference in future job applications. TAs also receive access to training courses. We have trained 500 Teaching Assistants to date.

### Branch Manager events

We hold termly regional Branch Manager events. These give our branch managers opportunities to discuss key regional issues and projects, and to share and learn from their peers. Topics are often related to HR or other practical day-to-day issues such as retention and training.

We also have two national events a year with Branch Managers leading a day workshop and team building session. The focus is on information sharing and generating ideas, and managers discuss national variations, celebrate successes and share best practice.

● We strive to offer on-going opportunities for learning and development to our staff and candidates.



## Lifelong learning (continued)

### Commando Joe's

Our newest subsidiary, Commando Joe's, offer their own specialised training process, with 18 recruits trained this year. Participants do not need prior experience to participate in the four-week in-depth training programme on starting with Commando Joe's. The training ends with a pass or fail, and once they pass, participants are fully qualified to go into schools to deliver programmes.

The training covers office-based learning including human resources and IT; health and safety and safeguarding; and behaviour management and programme learning. Additional options include training on physical interventions, and an online coaching and mentoring qualification.

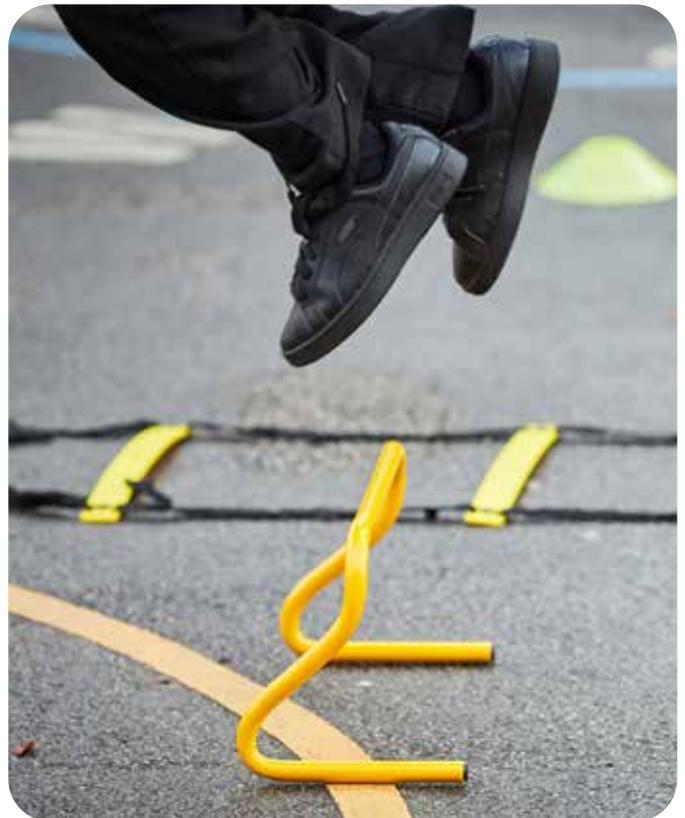


### Assistant Manager Programme

In spring 2023, we will launch a new Assistant Manager Programme, as part of our management succession pipeline. The Programme will contain some elements of Edwin Lead but will be tailored to develop Assistant Managers who can support Branch Managers with key tasks. It is also an opportunity to establish the next step on the career pathway for talented individuals.

### HR workshops

We also plan to launch a series of HR workshops covering specific people management skills. These will include performance management, absence managing and our onboarding programme. The workshops will primarily be aimed at empowering managers and will help them to build knowledge, but also to have the confidence to apply their skills to managing people every day.



## Health and wellbeing

We see it as mission-critical to support our staff and candidates to have a healthy, happy work-life balance. There has been a lot of enthusiasm from our employees to get involved with wellbeing activity, indicating a high level of buy-in across the organisation. Mental health has been a particular focus over the past year, following the previous few years of additional stress and emotional burdens resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

We continuously introduce new initiatives aimed at helping our employees and candidates to achieve good mental health outcomes, including covering wellbeing in our induction for new starters. All staff have the option to work from home one day per week.

### Mental Health First Aiders

Last year we set ourselves the target of creating a network of mental health and wellbeing champions to lead on embedding proactive mental health approaches across the organisation. We have trained 14 Mental Health First Aiders (MHFA) over the past year. The MHFAs meet at least monthly to plan how to embed mental wellbeing across the business. Some have specialist areas of knowledge or interests which help people build connections and understand areas of wellbeing. The MHFAs have been instrumental in launching and running Take 5, our monthly email publication which has a different mental health focus and case study in each newsletter. A bio of each MHFA and how to contact them is included. Feedback has been very positive, and the newsletter has been added to more of our communication channels to ensure the message is reaching as many people as possible.

### Commando Joe's

Commando Joe's offer a range of employee health and wellbeing benefits specific to the company, including an employee assistance programme that provides up to six face-to-face counselling sessions. They also offer a health cash plan which enables each individual to be matched to the most appropriate package for them.

### Supporting wellbeing from the top down

Support for wellbeing is a priority for all levels of leadership within the organisation. Our CEO shares regular all-staff communications about topics relating to self-care. Our leadership team believe in creating a culture of openness and approachability and make themselves available for staff to discuss issues they are facing. They ensure that their communications focus on wellbeing and encouraging people to have downtime to conduct self-care. Branch Managers are trained to identify where someone needs help, and feed that back internally to ensure the right support is in place.



## Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

We are committed to promoting and achieving diversity, equity and inclusion across our organisation. We aim to attract and retain a passionate and diverse workforce that reflects the education community we serve.

Initiatives include:

### Gathering data to identify barriers to diversity

We have moved to a new HR system which enables us to track demographic data across existing and new employees. This data will help us to highlight and address any areas where we may be failing to attract and retain a diverse workforce, and to ensure inclusion is embedded in our succession planning, giving all members of staff the tools they need to achieve career progression. All new companies that come into the Edwin Group will be migrated into this system.

### Managing for diversity

This year The Edwin Group have also introduced 'Colour me' Psychometric testing for managers. This helps to map communication styles in the team, understand how to give feedback and how to understand strengths. This enables managers to identify diversity in working styles, and to be able to adapt accordingly, ensuring an equitable approach to the support we offer our staff.

### Inclusivity training for LBGTQ+ issues

In October 2022, we ran a training session with an external trainer to help staff feel confident with inclusive LBGTQ+ terminology. It will aim to create understanding and confidence to have conversations and ensure people have a sense of belonging and will link in with our Mental Health Champions programme.



### Take 5: Our new monthly mental health publication

Our monthly Take 5 email publication, written by our Mental Health First Aiders, covers different issues relevant to staff, including men's mental health, menopause, and LBGTQ+ issues. The aim is to help eliminate biases, and to encourage open conversations around issues we face in our day-to-day work life.

### Encouraging diverse experience

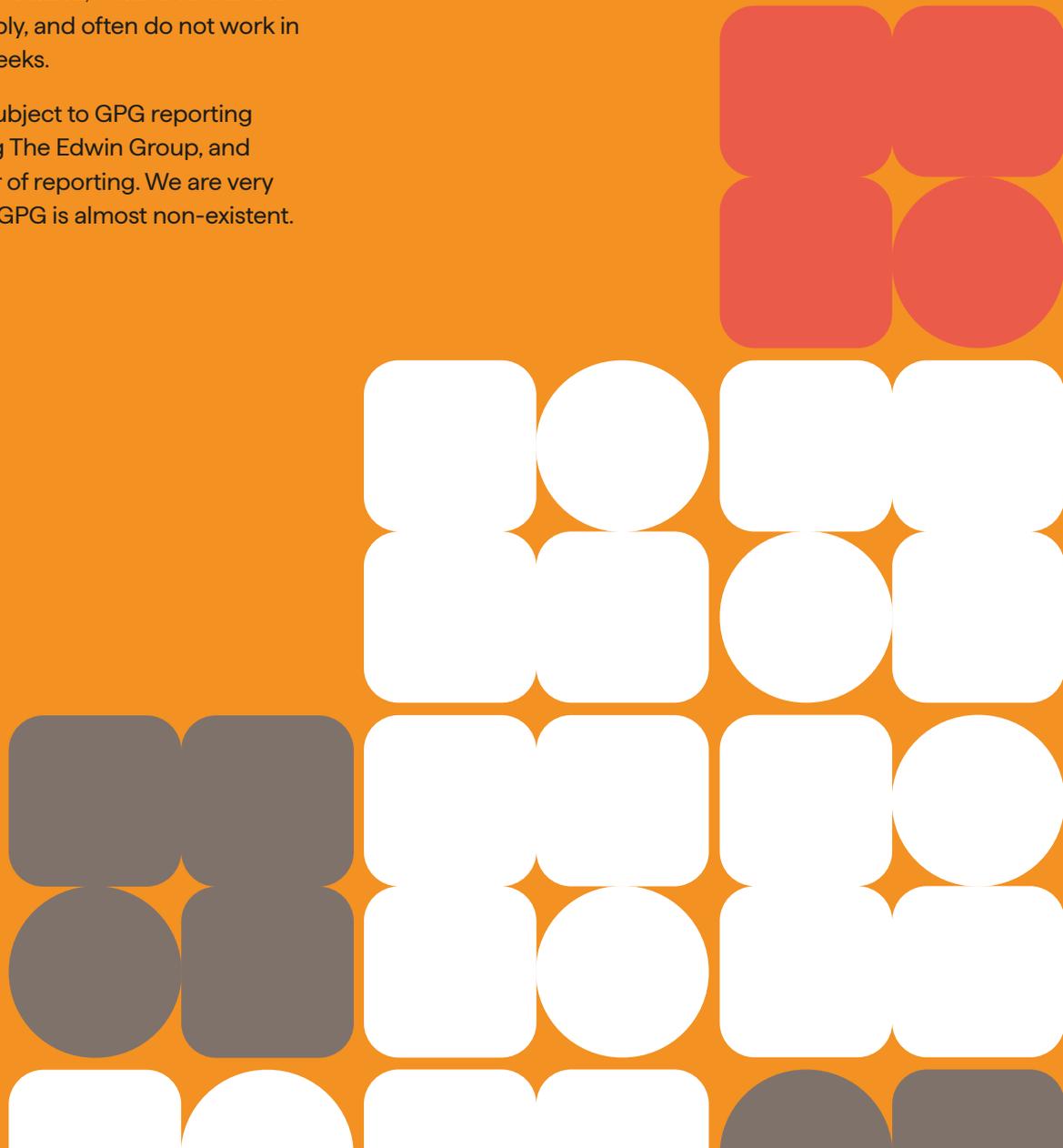
Commando Joe's recruits veterans and reservists, including people transitioning out of the military. This is in addition to our active approach to recruiting a diverse workforce beyond veterans. We are delighted to report that Commando Joe's have received a Gold award from the UK Government's Employer Recognition Scheme for their inclusive recruitment practices.

## Fair Pay

Each year, we report on the gender pay gap (GPG) that unfortunately exists between our male and female staff. We are committed to eliminating this pay gap. However, achieving equal pay is a challenge for us because of our limited control over the market-driven pay rates for our candidates. We only have full control over the pay and bonuses of our internal staff, who constitute less than 5% of our total workforce.

The pay of supply staff is mainly determined by external factors such as the length of the placement. Long-term placements, which appear to be preferred by male teachers, attract a higher rate of pay, due to the requirements under the Agency Workers' Regulations. Female teachers, on the other hand, tend to favour the more flexible aspect of supply, and often do not work in placements lasting for 12 weeks.

Commando Joe's was not subject to GPG reporting requirements before joining The Edwin Group, and as such this is their first year of reporting. We are very pleased to report that their GPG is almost non-existent.



## Fair Pay (continued)

We have gathered the gender pay information across each agency in The Edwin Group as follows:



Our mean gender pay gap is 2%, and our median is 1%. Our mean bonus pay gap is -2%, and our median bonus pay gap is -9%.



Over the last year, we are pleased to see that our median hourly pay gap has reduced by 4% to 22%. Our mean hourly pay gap of 14.8% is 0.7% lower than the national average (15.5% per ONS to April 2020).

Our pay gaps by pay bands remain low, with the mean gap not exceeding 3% in any quartile and parity achieved in the lowest quartile. The percentage of staff receiving bonuses remains similar year-on-year, but we have seen a 19% drop in the mean bonus pay gap from 55% to 36%.



Over the last year, the increase in supply staff as a percentage of the total workforce has driven up both the mean and median gender pay gap based on hourly pay. However, our pay gaps by pay bands remain low, with none exceeding the national average.

The percentage of staff receiving bonuses remains similar year-on-year. We have seen a gradual shrinking in the mean bonus pay gap over the last 4 years from 90% in FY18 to 82% in FY20 to 68% in FY22, with the median following a similar trajectory.



Over the last year, the increase in supply staff as a percentage of the total workforce has driven up both the mean and median gender pay gap based on hourly pay. However, our pay gaps by pay bands remain low, with none exceeding the national average.

The percentage of staff receiving bonuses remains similar year on year. We have seen a widening in the mean and median pay gaps based on bonus but, as only a small number of staff are eligible, fluctuations must be expected.

Since April 2022, in light of the cost-of-living crisis, all of the lowest paid internal roles in the company have received a significant uplift of up to 28%, plus all but the highest earners were paid a one-off cost of living bonus.

We will continue to do all we can to reduce our gender pay gap and to ensure all our staff have equal opportunities to progress, develop and enjoy a rewarding career, regardless of gender.



# Feedback and engagement

We prioritise feedback and on-going engagement with our staff, candidates and the schools we work with as a tool to improve the learning and employment opportunities we offer, as well as the quality of our services. It helps us tailor our candidates to the most appropriate placements and identify areas for improvement and development.

## Sources of staff feedback include:

- Staff exit interviews and our appraisal process
- Our branches hold regular team meetings and regional meetings to discuss issues, give feedback, talk about changes etc.
- Our Leadership Team is available to discuss issues and listen to concerns – this leads to a culture of openness and approachability
- Our CEO regularly visits branches to ensure regular communication with employees
- We hold team lunches, dinners and awards events, as well as an annual cross-company summer party to celebrate our hard work as an organisation

To maintain our strong relationships with schools and educational partners we complete the following quality assessment processes:

- Weekly calls to gain feedback on the candidates we have placed in bookings that week
- Termly face-to-face meetings with our schools to discuss our service and candidates' performance that term
- A termly online Teacher and Support Staff Survey to gain feedback on candidates who are in long-term bookings at the school
- An annual online School, College and Learning Provider Quality Assessment Survey is sent to schools in June to gain their feedback on our service, candidates, systems, and internal staff for that academic year

## Candidate feedback

We complete the following quality assessment processes with our candidates to ensure they are getting the most out of their placement:

- Daily or weekly calls to gain feedback on how their bookings have gone and provide any feedback we have received from the school
- End-of-term calls with candidates in long-term roles to discuss how the placement has gone and provide any feedback we have received from the school
- An annual online Teacher and Support Staff Survey is sent to our candidates in June to gain their feedback on our service that academic year



# Supporting local communities

In addition to being an attractive and supportive employer, we believe that supporting the communities we live and work in through fundraising and volunteering initiatives provides positive role modelling for young people and builds pride in our staff.

Our aim this year was to scale up our community giving in tandem with The Edwin Group's continued growth as a company. We achieved the target we set ourselves last year to formalise our community programme by tracking hours volunteered and funds donated. We see it as our mission to reach more learners through community giving, and we believe that tracking and scaling up our work in this area is the best way to achieve this. We are excited to report that we increased our branch fundraising totals from £200,000 last year to a staggering £406,000 this year!

This included fundraising for the following charities:



**Schools North East**  
A **£25,000** charitable donation at Christmas to support families with essentials like food



**£25,000**  
donation



**North Tyneside Learning Partnership**  
A 9-year partnership to sponsor children's awards (for example, resilience, outstanding achievements etc.) for **£7,500** per year



**National Network of Special schools**  
**£10,000** as part of a long-term partnership to sponsor their annual conference

**South Tyneside's Got Talent**  
We continue to sponsor this event since 2016 for about **£1,500** each year



**Engage in Their Future**  
A 6-year partnership to sponsor awards including **£10,000** for the National Awards and **£3,000** for the Creative Arts Awards

**Young People's Trust for the Environment**  
**£10,000**  
for sustainability projects at senior schools



## Supporting local communities (continued)

Plans for the future include Commando Joe's supporting Scotty's Little Soldiers, a charity that supports bereaved military children who have experienced the death of a parent serving in the British Armed Forces.



- There are over 1,000 bereaved military children in the UK without access to support.

Beyond these initiatives and as part of the total mentioned above, we support the following initiatives:

- Our 'Opportunities Fund' provides financial support for children to access opportunities that might not be affordable for them otherwise, including school trips and extracurricular activities
- We offer funds to support attendance and reading and writing initiatives, which schools run to motivate children with rewards and celebrations
- We donate Christmas presents each year to approximately 1,000 children who are most in need. We have even been known to dress up as Father Christmas to deliver them!
- We sponsor sports teams, which helps take the pressure off volunteers and families, who run these clubs in their own time, alongside fundraising. We provide financial support to buy new kit, equipment and pay registration fees. We also sponsored the Durham Women's Football Club



# Social targets and initiatives for the next financial year

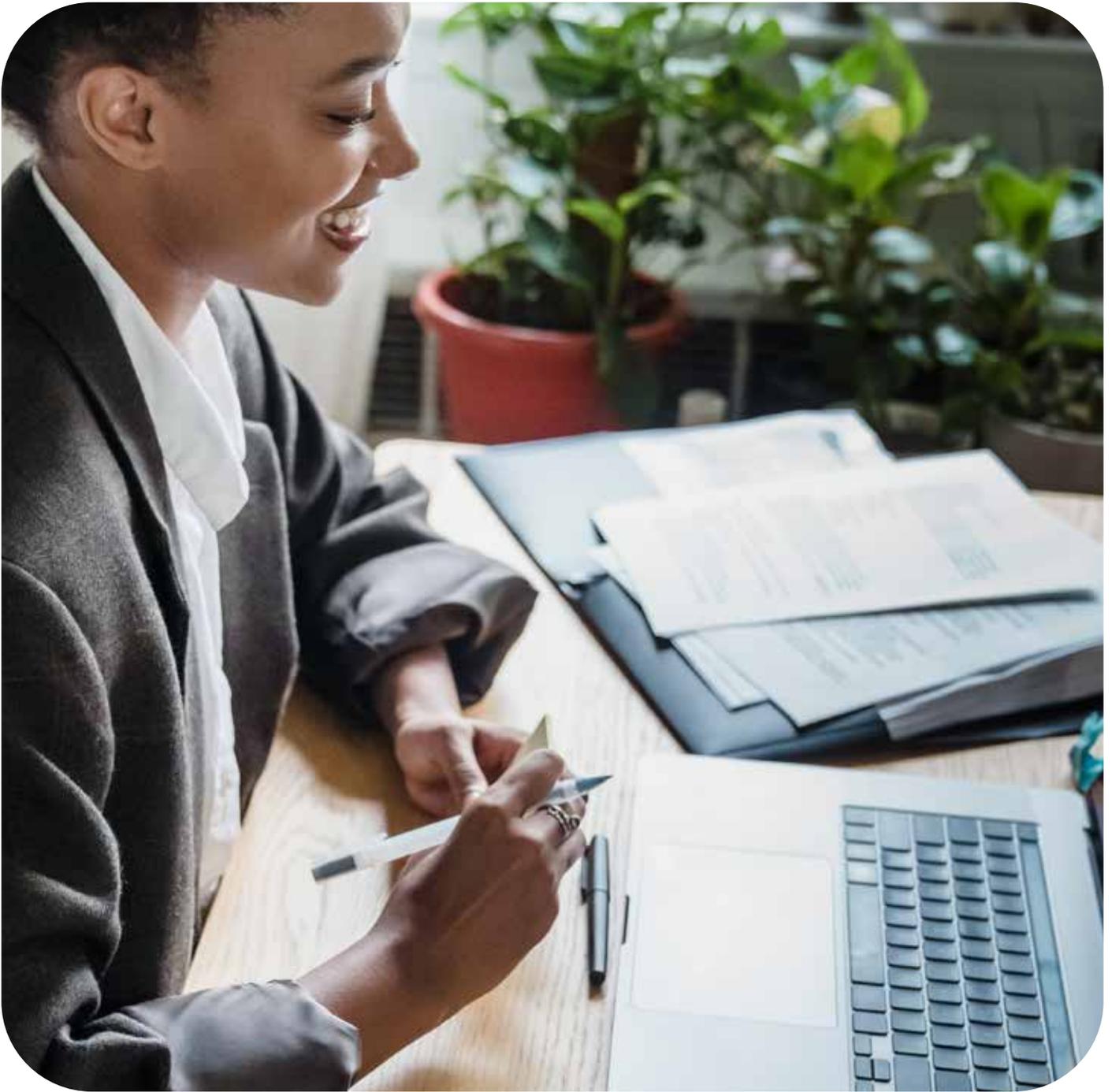
In the coming year, we aim to deliver training and development opportunities across our National Teaching Assistant Programme, our Edwin Learn and Edwin Lead programmes, and to continue training our employees and candidates through our free CPD courses.

We will collect anonymised, secure data about employee's protected characteristics through our new HR platform and use this to indicate where we need to implement specific targets and/or initiatives to ensure we are attracting and retaining a diverse workforce.

Further, we plan to continue embedding positive health and wellbeing incentives across the Group. This will include reconciling our health insurance provision across the Group and ensuring that all employees have health cover. Currently, due to our history of mergers and acquisitions, contracts are mixed across the Group, and we see it as crucial to our equity aims to align these. We plan to introduce a two-day mental health awareness course which will offer follow-up training for our MHFAs. We will open 16 new places on our MHFA awareness training, which will be available to the general employee population to apply to attend. Our long-term goal is to provide at least one MHFA per branch across the entire Group. We are also looking to train our MHFAs in financial wellbeing, to support staff with any concerns they may have regarding their financial situation. We want to be a positive force in the teaching sector, and from January 2023 we will be offering a residential course for 'School's Wellbeing Leads' via Still Human, The Edwin Group's new staff wellbeing arm.



● We aim to deliver training and development opportunities across our National Teaching Assistant Programme, our Edwin Learn and Edwin Lead programmes, and to continue training our employees and candidates through our free CPD courses.



## Governance



# Governance

Our targets:

Report progress against the SDGs

Work more closely with our stakeholders on ESG-focused topics

Develop a Supplier Code of Conduct

Merge GDPR company policies and plan timeline to merge other appropriate policies

Working in the education sector means transparency and trust are the most important qualities for our leadership and maintaining these is how we measure the effectiveness of our policies and procedures. Our annual ESG reporting initiative is one of the ways we are increasing transparency, as we track our progress against our annual targets. To trust us, our schools and education partners need to know that we uphold the highest standards of candidate checks and safeguarding within our recruitment processes. We work hard to maintain our Recruitment and Employment Confederation Gold Standard Award for Safeguarding and general good practice within Education Recruitment.



# Embedding ESG in our leadership

Our Remuneration, Risk and Audit Committees exist to guide our leadership, ensure we are transparent and support our corporate strategies. External members on our committees give impartial advice and support strong governance across the organisation.

## ESG Committee

We met last year's target to create an ESG Committee and to launch a company-wide Environment Policy, informed by the Committee. The Committee is comprised of key internal stakeholders and has the mandate to drive an ESG focus through our corporate strategies and operations. The Committee is responsible for keeping targets and initiatives on track and ensuring the Group as a whole has the information and guidance to succeed in developing our ESG focus as we develop and grow as a business. To help achieve this, an actions tracker is sent to the Board every month, and ESG progress is included in our Board pack with feedback passed to our ESG committee.

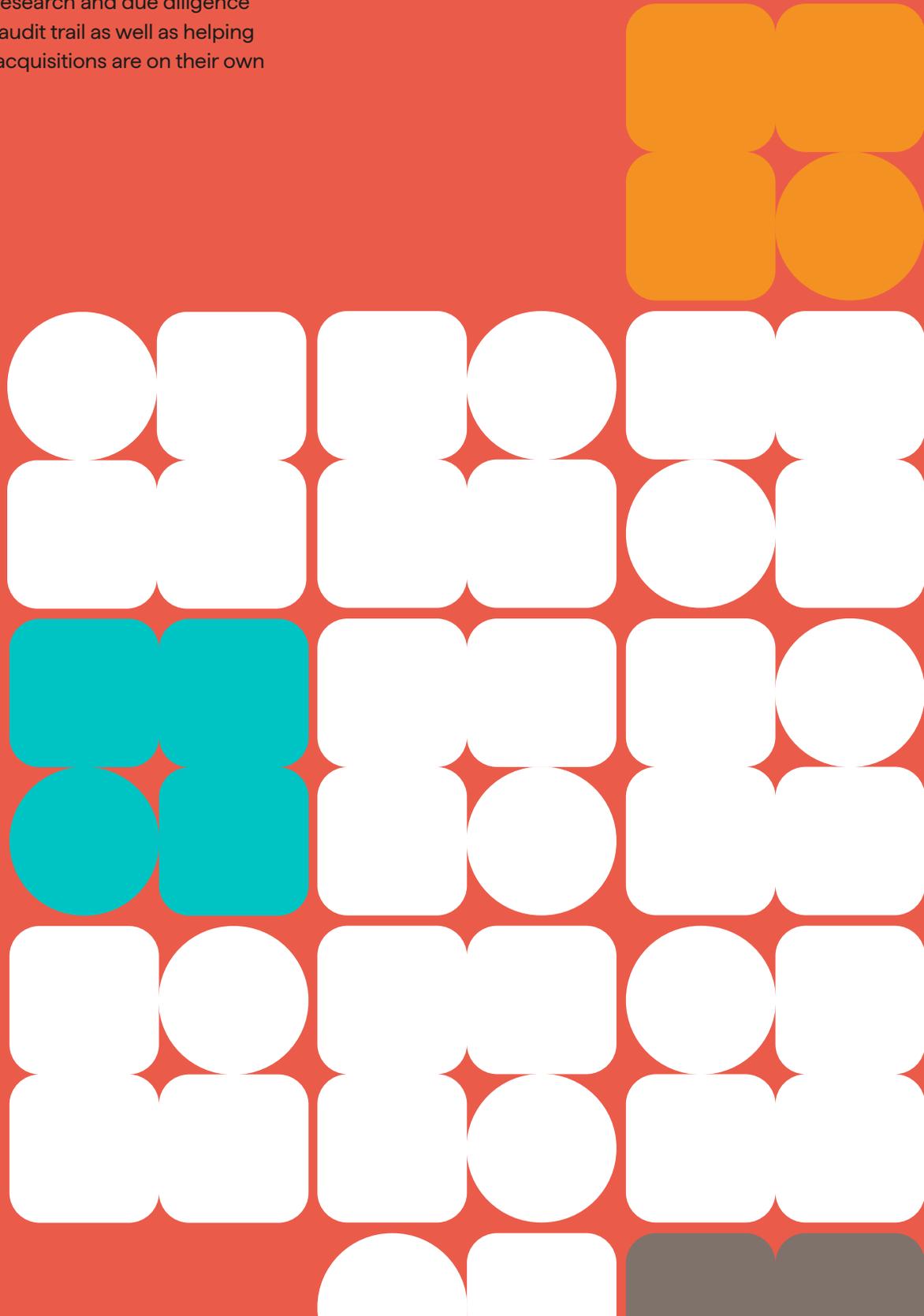
## Board-level diversity

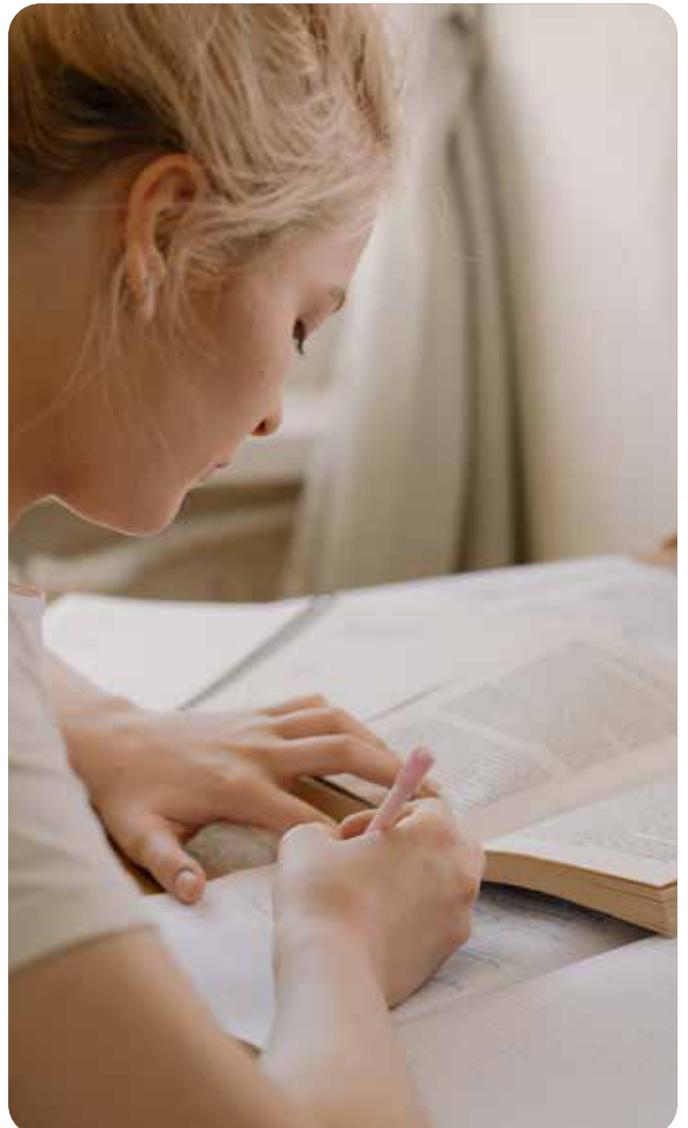
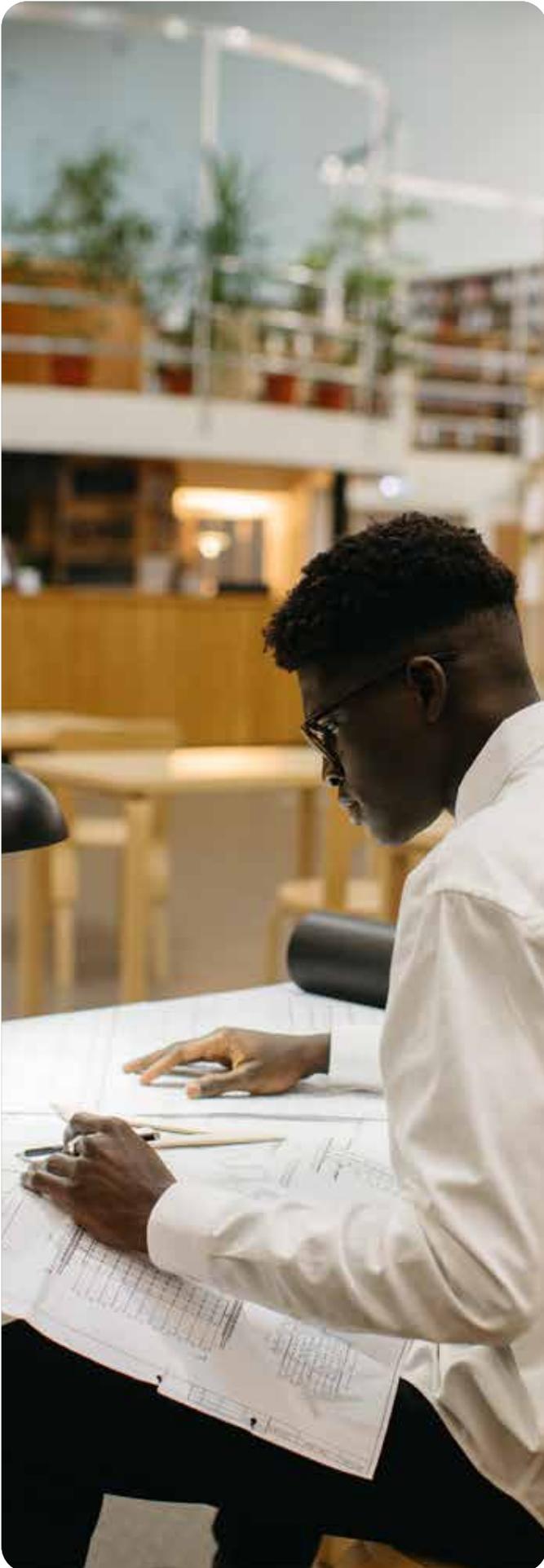
We have introduced a new Nominations Committee, to ensure we are considering diversity when recruiting to the Executive and Senior Management teams. In line with last year's target, our new HR system was launched in part to help us consider diversity in our succession planning. The data will enable us to make recommendations to the Board where gaps in diversity may exist at the Group's top levels.



# Group-wide progress

We want to ensure holistic integration of our ESG agenda with all new acquisitions. To achieve this, we have implemented an ESG questionnaire for all potential acquisitions, as part of our research and due diligence process. This will create an audit trail as well as helping us understand where new acquisitions are on their own ESG journey.





# Policies and procedures

We periodically review and update our policies and procedures to ensure they comply with current recruitment law and good practice as outlined in the REC Code of Practice. We have begun using RSM, our new people management system, to notify employees whenever policies are updated, including highlighting updates and revisions for easy comprehension. Our policies and procedures are embedded in the organisation through the induction process and through regular training and refreshers. This year, we re-wrote our staff handbook for efficiency and clarity, and added an accessible overview with links to full policies. Alongside this, we reviewed and rationalised all contracts, terms and conditions, and the policies in our staff portal, to ensure alignment across the Group. We have outlined some of our key policies and procedures, including changes which have taken place over the past year:

## Safeguarding

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff to share this commitment. All our candidates must undertake at least one of two NSPCC safeguarding courses before they can be placed in schools. Our employees also undertake safeguarding training through Edu Comply. The training is introduced on day one of induction. Additionally, we have a rigorous vetting process for candidates with an in-depth series of checks. This year, we introduced Llama ID, an industry-leading platform for safer recruitment, which every candidate will be subject to.

## Corporate Criminal Offence Policy

The Edwin Group is dedicated to operating our business in an ethical way. This year, we launched our Corporate Criminal Offence Policy to ensure full compliance with the UK Government's Corporate Criminal Offence (CCO) legislation. The Policy defines our approach to preventing any form of tax evasion within any of our business dealings and outlines our zero-tolerance approach to financial misconduct.



# Policies and procedures (continued)

## ESG Policy

We strive to build sustainable, equitable, healthy and diverse communities through a combination of innovative business practices and exemplary environmental, social and governance (ESG) performance. This commitment informs every aspect of our business, including how we operate our company, collaborate with stakeholders and report progress. To guide us in meeting this commitment, we have developed and launched our ESG Policy to raise awareness of ESG issues in demonstration of The Edwin Group's commitment to having a positive impact on the world. Our ESG Committee has overall responsibility for the effective operation of our ESG Policy and have designated responsibility for overseeing its implementation to the Board. The Policy will inform our ESG efforts moving forward and is intended to help the business understand and embed ESG.

## Information systems and cyber security

Our cyber security is guided by the industry standard Cyber Essentials framework to ensure that all information and information systems on which The Edwin Group depends are adequately protected from cyber-attack. We continuously monitor and update our systems and safeguards and all employees are required to regularly complete cyber awareness training from the market-leading Mimecast suite of cyber security products. We are also introducing additional cyber security training in autumn 2022. Over the past year, we introduced alerts for external emails and released a suite of new IT policies.

## Health and safety

The Edwin Group is subject to various regulations under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (Section 2 (3)). We have an excellent safety record. We aim to maintain and improve this record, by ensuring all employees are aware of the part they play in ensuring the health and safety of our staff, customers, representatives and visitors.

Staff receive health and safety (H&S) training from day one of their induction. This includes H&S awareness, risk assessment, safe lone working, manual handling, and COVID-19 awareness. Staff also learn how to do risk assessments. We are currently undergoing an audit of our fire safety and first aid processes to ensure the right procedures, equipment and signage are in place and are consistent across all offices.

We are governed in this area by a Health and Safety Committee that oversees our management of risks and ensures we are operating good practices.

# Governance targets and initiatives for the next financial year

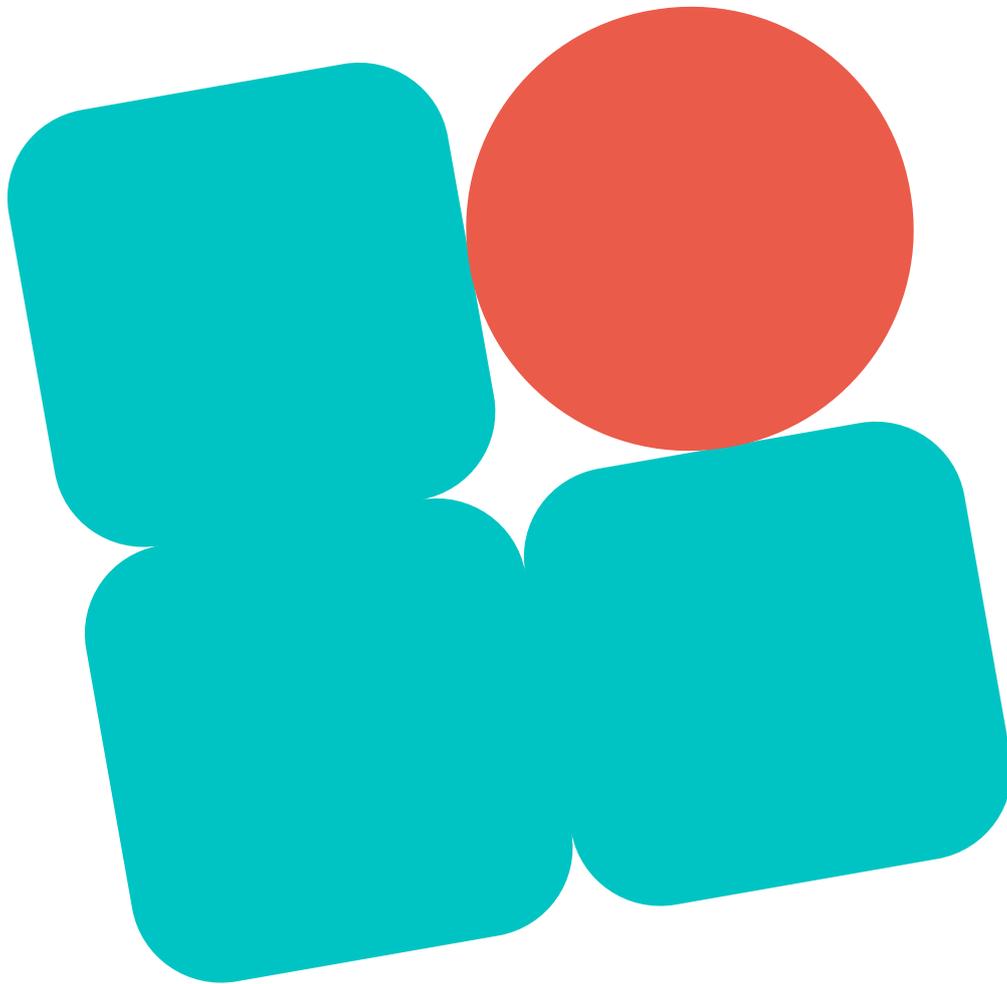
We have set ourselves the target to define our timeline for merging our company policies to ensure all members of The Edwin Group are aligned and subject to the same expectations and benefits, beginning with our GDPR policy.

We also plan to work more closely over the coming year with our supply chain to understand their ESG progress, and to be a positive influence on all those we work with. This will include developing and launching a supplier ESG survey and implementing a supplier code of conduct. We will also consider undertaking a supply chain materiality assessment to understand in more detail our suppliers' challenges and priorities in ESG.



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● The Edwin Group  
was born out of a  
desire to do better.



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