



How does the Bar do CSR?

- Pro bono work
- Charity fundraising
- Outreach to local schools
- Wellbeing activities
- Reducing energy and paper use
- Recycling
- Paying a living wage
- Volunteering days
- Good practice in equality and diversity



Why do we do CSR?

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| <p>(i) It's good for society:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many barristers are motivated by a desire for social justice. • The various initiatives help less fortunate people in very significant ways. • CSR at the Bar is part of a broader trend towards socially responsible business, which is good for society as a whole. | <p>(ii) It's good for business:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSR practices are well known to improve recruitment and retention: people increasingly want to work somewhere which reflects their values. • A growing number of clients (especially businesses) look for CSR credentials in their supply chain, including their lawyers. • Some practices (like paying a living wage) are, rightly, the norm, and failing to do so is a reputational risk. | <p>(iii) It's good for the people doing it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteering is well-known to boost wellbeing. • Some initiatives provide opportunities to promote equality and diversity, or to work directly with different communities. |
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Isn't CSR a cynical business ploy?

Not normally. Those engaged in CSR are primarily motivated by social justice, and a desire for business to be sustainable. Indeed, those looking for CSR policies in their suppliers can spot insincerity (or "greenwash") a mile off.



Should central chambers' funds be used for anything other than actual business?

- Chambers will want to consider the "business case" for each initiative.
- Fundraising for charity is often done on more of an "opt-in" basis.
- Volunteering, whether staff or member, (e.g. reading with children at a local school) is well-known to boost recruitment and retention, and the use of central funds for this initiative may be easy to justify.



Things are hard enough as it is! We do so much legal aid work that we don't have the time or money to do CSR!

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You're not alone in feeling that. But CSR is also about sustainable business, and several initiatives are quick and easy to set up (see below). • Think about wellbeing initiatives, to help boost your people's resilience in a difficult working environment. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider some simple environmental steps, which would actually save money as well as resources (e.g. by reducing energy and paper use). • Check if it is really too difficult to pay a living wage to your cleaners. |
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I want to take things forward. How do I get started?

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your chambers may be doing many things already! Ask around, and find out what is already going on. • Then look for blind spots – are your cleaners, say, getting a living wage, or just the statutory minimum wage? Talk to your colleagues, and think about what the next initiative should be. • You can use the resources available freely online, e.g. www.theheartofthecity.com, www.legalsustainabilityalliance.com, www.givx.org and have a look at the more detailed guide from the Bar Council https://bit.ly/2NYHshh. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Join the network of barristers interested in being CSR leaders by emailing smercerc@barcouncil.org.uk. • Make sure that you are communicating what you are doing. Increasing numbers of chambers have a "CSR" page on their website. |
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