

# Be a better business

Driving your purpose & impact



# B Corp

As the first law firm in the UK to certify as a B Corp, we bring first-hand insight and experience to our legal advice.

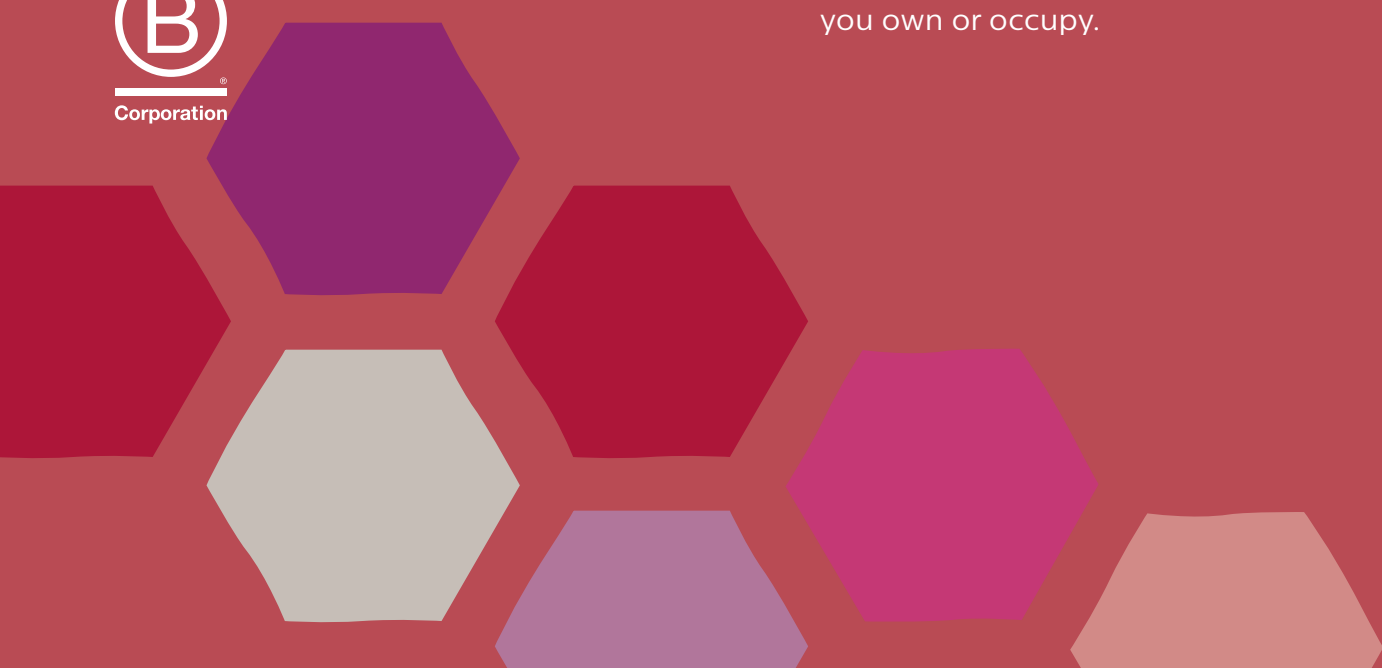
**Are you on the journey towards empowering your organisation to do business in a way that is values-driven, as well as profitable?**

We can go beyond the legal essentials to fully support you throughout your B Corp journey. We advise on practical steps to strengthen your initial application, including a review of governance processes and employment structures and practices. We can help with the creation of bespoke and innovative legal, constitutional and governance structures. We figure out how to articulate the social identity and purpose of your business into its constitution, and solve sustainability issues affecting the premises you own or occupy.

Certified



Corporation



## B Corp

We've been instrumental in the establishment of B Corps in the UK and invite you to tap into our experience and expertise. Whether you're considering B Corp certification and looking for guidance on the process, or are an established B Corp seeking new ways to embed your principles and values further in your business, we can help.

B Corps are for-profit organisations redefining success in business by embedding a commitment to positive social and environmental impact at the heart of their governance. Companies limited by shares, companies limited by guarantee, LLPs, community interest companies and a range of other structures are all eligible for certification.

We have B Corp-expert lawyers in every department who both share your values and have knowledge of the B Corp standards. Settling a discrimination claim, dealing with a waste disposal hazard or agreeing a new supplier contract or process all have – positive or negative – B Corp implications.

Our team is uniquely placed to advise on the certification process. We advised on the establishment of B Corps in the UK and were instrumental in the development of the UK legal test for certification. Louise Harman, co-lead of our Purpose & Impact strategy group, currently sits on B Lab UK's Board and, alongside Luke Fletcher, helped bring the B Corp movement to the UK.

**Get in touch to find out how we can help you.**



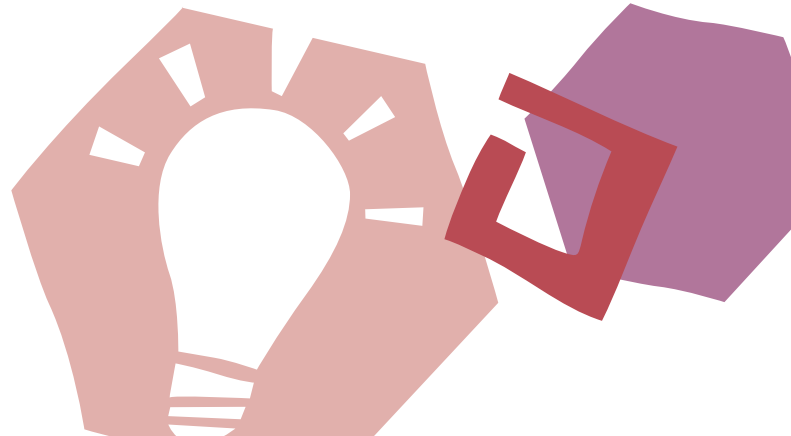
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# B Corp supplier contracts & agreements

We know that suppliers are more than just a means to an end. We generate a domino-effect of positive impact by helping you to ensure the people you work with meet key environmental and social standards.

B Lab is increasingly encouraging B Corps to push their values down their supply chain.

On this basis, a number of questions on the B Impact Assessment (BIA) have been developed around who B Corps are working with and how those organisations meet key social and environmental standards. At Bates Wells, we have developed a supplier questionnaire and code of conduct that mirrors the key questions on the BIA to help us screen how our suppliers perform.

Our corporate and commercial team can work with you to develop supplier agreements that address issues around supplier diversity, environmental impact, anti-bribery, corruption, modern slavery and much more. In doing so they can support you to bolster your audit rights on the social and environmental impact of your suppliers and, if necessary, help you to work with them to improve their impact and performance against these measures.



## B Corp supplier contracts & agreements

We can also help you in reviewing and updating any existing commercial contracts with your suppliers to bring them into line with your values and social and environmental aspirations. We'll advise on including bespoke clauses around suppliers' compliance with B Corp values to ensure that priority issues are addressed.

The 'customers' section of the BIA focuses on customer satisfaction and warranties. Our corporate and commercial team can support you in developing this area of your practice through the expansion of your warranties and customer monitoring and satisfaction, such as by developing mechanisms in your customer-facing contracts where you collect information relating to customer satisfaction as part of your contractual performance.

Proper protection of your client data is crucial to maintaining a respectful and ethical relationship with your clients. We can support you with a range of approaches to best manage your client data, depending on the complexity of your requirements. This could range from reviewing and updating your privacy policy to ensure compliance with data protection legislation, through to developing staff handbooks and best

practice user guides in relation to the handling of personal data within your organisation.

We can work with you to provide advice or training around practical steps that can be taken to manage all of your data security, intellectual property and trade mark requirements.

**Get in touch to find out how we can help you.**



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# Corporate/M&A services for B Corps

We specialise in M&A and private equity investments, including corporate real estate transactions, and acquisitions and disposals of corporate vehicles.

We understand what it means to do business in the real world. We work with organisations of all sorts and sizes. Small independents. Giant multinationals. Charities and social enterprises. From the worlds of finance and technology, to the fields of healthcare and the environment. They come to us because we look beyond the letter of the law, drawing on our decades of first-hand experience to offer clear, practical and commercially-sound advice.

## **The world of business is changing**

The market is increasingly demanding accountability and transparency from organisations around their environmental, social and governance commitments. We understand these priorities because we share them. ESG is in our DNA. We go beyond profit to have a positive impact on our people, our communities and the environment.



## Corporate/M&A services for B Corps

### We can help you with:

- Mergers and acquisitions
- Impact investing
- Private equity
- Venture capital
- Joint ventures and restructuring
- Management buy-outs

and a whole lot more!



Whether you are looking to acquire, merge or sell, we have the experience to guide you through the transaction and strike the right balance between risk, reward and control.

### Get in touch to find out how we can help you.



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# Dispute resolution and litigation: Services for B Corps

We know you need a team that will fight your corner, but the Bates Wells dispute resolution team will do so much more than that.

We give our clients award-winning commercial and strategic advice that isn't stuffy or full of legalese, and we will support your best interests in a way that supports your goals and the sustainability of your business.

We understand that every dispute is different and the advice we provide to our clients reflects that. We also understand that clients want disputes resolved quickly and cost effectively, and that as a B Corp you need a team by your side who can help you in a way that aligns with your values and minimises damage to your reputation.

We work quickly and cost-effectively to get things resolved and then work with you to avoid similar disputes arising in the future. Our aim is simple – we help our clients so they can get back to doing what they do best as quickly as possible.





## Dispute resolution and litigation: Services for B Corps

Our team have decades of experience and provide clear, commercial and completely tailored advice to help resolve issues as they arise – and will always look for solutions out of court wherever possible.

As a purpose-driven firm we want to help B Corps tackle bigger issues like the climate and biodiversity crisis. Our litigation and public & regulatory teams are focused on helping our clients have a wider positive impact for people and the planet. So, if you have an issue that you want to challenge, talk to us to see how we could support you.

### We can help you with:

- Intellectual property disputes
- Media disputes
- Contract and grant disputes
- Counter-fraud
- Equality & anti-discrimination
- Internal investigations
- Procurement disputes
- Strategic litigation
- Real estate disputes

### Get in touch to find out how we can help you.



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# Supporting you to have the most impact with your charitable initiatives

As a B Corp, we understand that you want to make a positive impact on the world. Part of your strategy may be to make regular charitable donations – and that’s certainly a key part of the BIA.

We can talk you through the benefits of matched giving programmes and how you might screen your charitable contributions going forward.

Options include setting up an employee payroll giving scheme with matched giving, or setting up a formal annual donations commitment which can either be paid into a separate corporate charitable foundation for your company, or alternatively into one or more charities selected on an ad hoc basis.

We also have relationships with a number of organisations that can help you to screen and review the social and/or environmental impact of your company’s donations to ensure that your donations are as impactful as possible.



Supporting you to have the most impact with your charitable initiatives

If you'd like to set up your own charitable foundation to carry out charitable work funded by your company's donations, you can rely on our expertise – we've set up some of the biggest corporate foundations in the UK, and advise many more.

A foundation is a common way for established or larger corporates to undertake charitable work in an efficient manner. We've also helped B Corps to set up community interest companies (CIC). Reach out to our team to find out more.

Get in touch to find out how we can help you.



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# People-friendly employment services for B Corps

We can maximise your impact by developing systems and policies that harness the power of your employees.



We understand that you want to reflect your values in the way you manage your people – from people-first policies and procedures through to an ethical approach to performance management and disciplinary action.

As a B Corp you need to have clear and documented policies and processes in place to support your people, including an employee handbook. In building on your employee handbook, you can improve your impact in line with the questions under the ‘worker empowerment’ section of the BIA.

The BIA also asks you about anti-corruption reporting and systems and anti-bribery and ethics policies as well as employee feedback and complaint mechanisms. Our employment team are skilled at developing systems, processes and policies that will help you to operate to the highest standards for your organisation, your people and in line with fairness and social justice.

## People-friendly employment services for B Corps

We work with our clients to make their employment contracts more people focused and user friendly while at the same time providing balanced protection for the business. We can re-write your contracts to make them more inclusive, using neutral language and removing as much legalese as possible.

Our team see employment contracts as representing a reciprocal relationship, so they should be balanced while also being commercial and protective.

**Get in touch to find out how we can help you.**



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# Updating your B Corp articles and governance

Our impact team wrote the legal test for B Corps, as well as the draft legislation behind the Better Business Act in the UK, so we know the nuts and bolts of B Corp governance like no other.

We can make amendments to your articles of association to incorporate the UK legal test for B Corps, including embedding a 'triple bottom line' requirement in relation to directors' duties. Once you have passed a special resolution (75% voting shareholder consent) to formally approve these changes, and filed your updated articles

with Companies House, you will be able to acquire the full 10 "mission lock" points in the BIA.

We can help you explore the different ways that strengthening your governance structures could deliver your strategic objectives with improved transparency and oversight, such as by appointing a non-executive director or putting in place a non-fiduciary advisory board, board observer or patron.

**Get in touch to find out how we can help you.**



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# Real estate services for B Corps

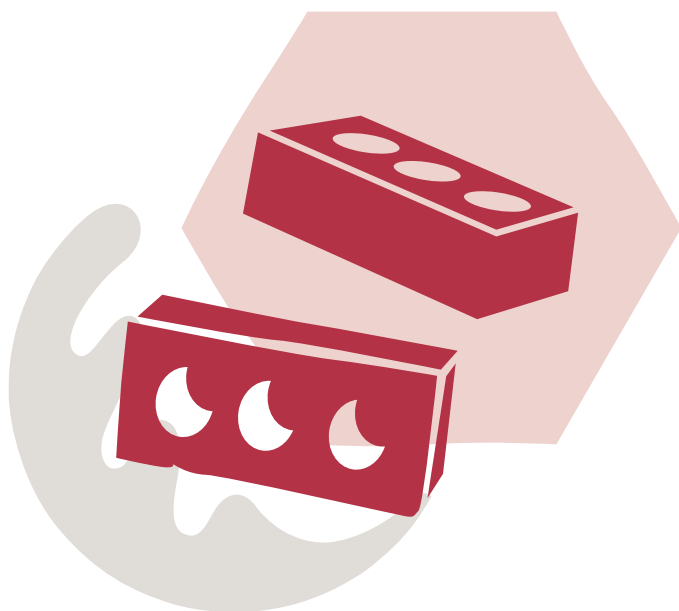
## We see real estate through an environmental lens.

What impact are your premises having on the environment? The BIA asks you to consider this, whether you own the freehold to your premises or are a tenant.

Our real estate team are skilled at supporting businesses in making practical changes to reduce and monitor carbon emissions and to manage and occupy your premises in a more sustainable way. As the first law firm in the UK to certify as a B Corp, we bring first-hand insight and experience to our legal advice.

Regardless of what stage you are at in the life cycle of property, our real estate team are ready to review your options through a sustainable, climate-conscious lens. Whether you're negotiating for new space, or reviewing your existing arrangements, these are key moments to discuss with your landlord or tenants the environmental initiatives of the building and the information you would want from them to help you measure and reduce your carbon footprint.

We're not just limited to transactional advice. Our real estate dispute team is on hand to provide strategic advice on how to vacate your property in a more sustainable way with more of a focus on applying the principals of the circular economy to the dilapidations process.



## Real estate services for B Corps

Our real estate finance team can advise on how to obtain green financing that is not just green washing the economic side of your property transaction.

We have template documents which could help in future lease negotiations, and these include specific provisions relating to environmental commitments.

We review titles and any lease documentation and can flag any restrictions that could impact on making changes to the premises, or where particular consents could be required with a focus on your environmental requirements.

**Get in touch to find out how we can help you.**



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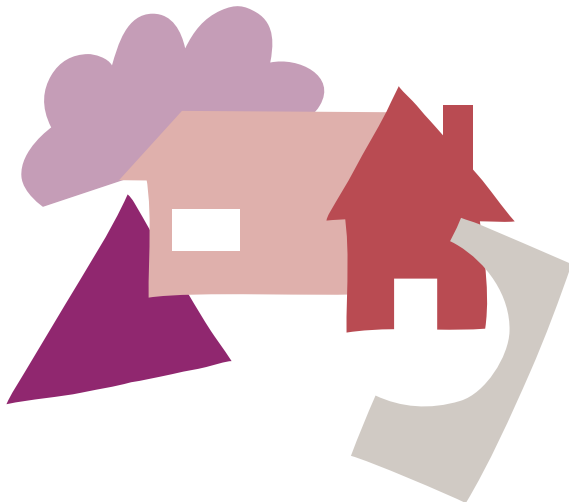
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Making a profit is core to all businesses but our goal is to combine this with a real social purpose. Our values are pivotal to us, they shape our decisions and the way we live and work.

We focus on positive social impact as much as we focus on being a successful law firm. Our top tier legal advice is coupled with a real desire to drive change and we were the first UK law firm to achieve B Corp certification, awarded to businesses that balance purpose and profit.

Today, our clients are diverse – from corporate household names, to public bodies, to start-ups. We're also the firm of choice for thousands of charities and social enterprises. We continue to lead the market we helped to shape.

Bates Wells challenges what is possible in legal expertise delivery.

**Get in touch:**

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