

# CSR Report 2019 - 2021

## Foreword

It was Capsticks' 40th anniversary in 2019. I joined the firm in 2009 and did so having read a Student Chambers Guide that quoted a Capsticks' member of staff who said they "*enjoyed the sense they were on the side of the angels*".

Capsticks has always attracted people who care more about their impact and their clients' impact on the world.

For many of us at Capsticks, one of the most important things – perhaps the most important – is working for clients who have a positive impact on society, like hospital trusts striving to deliver great care, social housing clients who provide quality affordable homes and regulators whose primary function is to protect the public.

Never has this public good delivered by our clients been more obvious and vital. The Coronavirus pandemic has put immense strain on many of our clients, particularly those in the NHS. Across the firm, our people have been proud to support them.

Our firm is full of people who are outward looking and community-orientated – it is this collective spirit that made our Corporate Social Responsibility ("CSR") programme so energised and successful over the last decade. What started with a small team of lawyers at a pro bono clinic in Putney is now an extensive range of projects and fundraising initiatives being carried out across the UK.

CSR is in Capsticks' DNA. In the last few years, we have set up award-winning local projects that link our staff with their community, raised thousands of pounds for charities close to the heart of our employees and taken significant steps to minimise our environmental impact.

At the same time, while not covered in this report, we are proud to be leading the way in the sector in terms of promoting inclusiveness, diversity and wellbeing amongst our staff.

Our CSR work is entirely driven by our people. Capsticks' staff donate huge amounts of time and energy to charitable causes and our CSR projects. These projects have been commended locally and nationally for their innovation and engagement of people from a cross-section of society and it was a proud moment for our "Gadget Workshop" team to win the Best CSR/Diversity Initiative at the British Legal Awards 2019.

We are really proud of our CSR work here at Capsticks and are always looking for new ways of positively supporting and engaging with our

community, both locally and nationally.

We are now entering a new phase as a Firm, with a new set of values that align perfectly with our commitment to be a more responsible business. As part of this, we will be creating a comprehensive Responsible Business Plan that looks to maximise our positive impact as a Firm on society, our community and our environment.

I hope you enjoy reading what we've been up to over the last two years!



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Our CSR performance  
FY 2019 - 2021

**Winners of  
CSR/Diversity  
Initiative** at British  
Legal Awards 2019

Over **1100 hours**  
devoted to CSR  
activities –  
equivalent to time  
recording in the sum  
of **£168,000**

**£48,000** raised by  
our employees and  
our Partners who  
have match-funded  
monies raised

Around **150 hours**  
of **pro bono legal  
advice**, to the value  
of **£14,700**

Around **172 hours**  
spent working  
with the **Ahead  
Partnership**, to the  
value of **£22,000**

# London's highlights



## The Wimbledon pro bono clinic

The clinic happens every Tuesday evening and is staffed by a group of volunteers who provide free employment and general litigation advice to people from the local community. The clinic is a partnership between Capsticks and South West London Law Centres, part of the London Legal Support Trust. A tireless team of lawyers provide advice every week to people in the South West London Community and have continued to do so throughout the pandemic, with new remote clinics proving highly successful and effective.



Support from the heart of the community

## A key London office partner

We have worked in partnership with the Wimbledon Guild over the last decade to deliver a range of community activities for older people in the community, including our award-winning Gadget Workshop (see below) and popular "Food for Thought" Seminars.

## Capsticks-Harris Scholarship

This project aims to improve access to the profession by offering week-long placements to students who apply from across the Harris Federation's sixth-form colleges in London. The week-long scheme sees the students attend hearings with Capsticks' lawyers, undertake research tasks into defamation law cases, problem-solve complex medical ethics issues and get a glimpse of life as a solicitor at a busy law firm.

Capsticks are delighted to support the Harris Federation, which is regularly being named as one of the top performing groups in the country for disadvantaged pupils in secondary school education by the Sutton Trust charity. The scheme ran successfully in the summer of 2019, but has been postponed in 2020 and 2021 – we're hoping to have it back up and running in 2022.



## Art at Capsticks

The London office continues to host a rotating exhibition of work by students and graduates of Wimbledon College of Arts, which is part of the University of the Arts London (UAL). Capsticks employees enjoy attending the College to choose the art displayed in the office. The artwork has been particularly welcome and positive in making our office a more engaging space at a time where we have had to make adjustments due to Covid-19.

## Supporting our social housing clients

During the course of the year, we have supported the charitable and community activities of our Social Housing Clients. This has included support for organisations like the L&Q Foundation and their Learning to Succeed programme of events.

## Capsticks' CSR project wins at British Legal Awards 2019



Capsticks' "Gadget Workshop" is a unique community project and collaboration between the Wimbledon Guild and Capsticks. Capsticks employees deliver weekly clinics to help older people use and understand 21st century electronic gadgets (laptops/ smartphones/ electronic tablet devices).

As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, such skills amongst older people are even more vital.

2019/2020 was a hugely successful year for the gadget workshop. After winning the Mayor of London Awards corporate volunteering award in 2018, the project won the CSR/Diversity Initiative at the prestigious British Legal Awards 2019.

The clinics have an informal structure, with older people being shown how to do the "basics" with their electronic devices. There is a very high demand for places and it has been hugely successful at integrating older people with modern electronic devices.

We've been looking to support the Guild run the clinic remotely since lockdown and help their service users adapt to new technologies like Zoom that can help them engage with the clinic from their homes.

Wendy Pridmore, Wimbledon Guild CEO:

*"One of our organisation's key aims is to reduce social isolation and loneliness. By putting on sessions like the mobile and tablet workshops, we are helping older people become digitally savvy and able to communicate with friends and family in a more interactive way; for example, showing someone how to text, take and send pictures on their phone, use Facetime or connect to the internet. Something that may seem a simple everyday task to many of us can be a huge hurdle to the older generation.*

*We are always very grateful for any volunteering support but Capsticks have shown that by making a long term commitment to Wimbledon Guild, they are able to make a significant contribution to our service delivery. The model we have developed with Capsticks is for them to put together a rota of volunteers who give up half an hour of their lunchbreak to attend the workshop. This gives them flexibility and ensures that volunteering doesn't rest with the same people each week. It's been a resounding success!"*

# Birmingham's highlights



## St Basils

Capsticks Birmingham have continued their hugely successful partnership with St Basil's Homeless charity. The team in Birmingham's fundraising for St Basil's is detailed below and we are proud to be able to support a charity that does such vital work.



## Ahead Partnership project Birmingham

Capsticks Birmingham continued their very successful work with the Ahead Partnership in 2019/2020.

We organised, hosted and played all roles in a "mock employment tribunal" for 24 children. We came up with a fictional case based on a popular children's book, so the participants were familiar with the plot and characters. Following the tribunal, we encouraged the children to work out whether the claimant had been "unfairly dismissed" by his employer as a result of one of the main events in the story.

In addition, the office led a careers panel interviewing practice session. There was also a popular workplace shadowing week with five students shadowing fee earners in the office. They experienced working in an office for the week whilst also taking part in assessment activities such as presentation workshop, assessment centre practice and advocacy workshop.

## BERYL

The employment junior lawyers are supporting the pro bono BERYL service which provides pro bono advice to the public on a number of employment matters.



UNIVERSITY OF  
BIRMINGHAM

## University projects

Capsticks Birmingham has developed and expanded its support to the University of Birmingham with their activities for students to get involved with the legal and business sector. This included supporting students to make videos on various legal topics, student mentoring and talks to the University of Law. One session entitled "Advising the Healthcare Sector" saw Claire Crawford, John Hatton and Nadine Mansell attending the University of Law and delivering a talk about what it is like to advise the NHS and the vast variety of matters which we get involved with.

# Leeds' highlights



## The Ahead Partnership at Carr Manor School Careers Fair

As part of the ongoing project with The Ahead Partnership which Capsticks Leeds supports, five members of staff (Jayne Moyle, Daniel Boyd, Tracey Blundell, Andrew McNally and Sabrina Mahmood) had a stand at the school's career event on 15 October 2019 and answered student questions, giving insights into a career in law and the opportunities available to the students.

## PrisonLaw

Capsticks Leeds supported this excellent initiative run by the University of Leeds. Volunteers research, prepare and deliver an interactive presentation on a relevant legal issue to people in prison, people who used to be in prison, prison staff or additionally vulnerable community members across a range of organisations related to the criminal justice sector. The aim is to equip these individuals with legal knowledge that may help to facilitate their reintegration into society upon/following their release from prison or provide staff and community members with legal knowledge to support them in their particular circumstances in connection with the criminal justice system.



## Age UK Leeds

Capsticks Leeds is working with the charity to set up digital champion sessions. This will be virtual support to vulnerable older people so that they are able to maintain contact with people whilst in lockdown. Employees are partnered with a Age UK service user and fix up an appointment to work through their digital needs.

# Winchester and Chorley's highlights



## Trinity Homeless Charity

Capsticks Winchester have developed a hugely successful partnership with Trinity Homeless charity. In addition to some very successful fundraising for them, we are about to launch our project supporting their Jobskills workshop. The project will see teams of Capsticks staff undertake mock interviews and support CV writing for service users who are were recently homeless and are looking to come back into the job market. It will all be delivered remotely for as long as it needs to be, and we are very excited about supporting Trinity with this part of their vital work.



## McMillan Cancer Support

In September, Capsticks Chorley had a virtual coffee morning in support of Macmillan Cancer Support, managing to raise £175, which Capsticks have confirmed will be matched.



## British Heart Foundation

In January we started a collection of clothes, shoes and accessories in Chorley, accumulating quite an amount of items to be sold on via the British Heart Foundation shop. This was delivered just before the first lockdown.



## Derian House Children's Hospice

The firm has sponsored Derian Housing, a local children's hospice for their 2021 calendar. The Chorley office have a long-lasting relationship with the charity over a number of years. Look out for the firm's page in September!



## BACKUP North West

We started off a collection of toiletries for BACKUP early on in the year. BACKUP is a charity that temporary supported accommodation for your people aged 16 – 25 in Bolton. They also help the development of skills to assist with safety and independence. Our collection was delivered in May.



## Runshaw College

Capsticks Chorley team are pleased to be commencing a new programme of mentoring local A-level law students seeking to take on a career in law who are Black, Asian and ethnic groups other than White European in support of Black Lives Matter.



# Fundraising across Capsticks



## St Basils

In Capsticks Birmingham, the team has worked hard all year round to raise funds for St Basils homeless charity:

1. **Birmingham 10k run; 8 bronze starter packs for St Basils** - These boxes contain everything that a young person would need to live independently in their own flat once they have left one of the St Basils shelters. Four of the boxes were going to be used as soon as the donation was given, which showed how desperate they were for donations.
2. **St Basils Christmas appeal** - it costs St Basils £5 per night to house a young person in one of the shelters and so they were running a campaign for individuals to donate a £5 note so that young people could be housed in a shelter over Christmas. Through this appeal, the Birmingham office supported 46 young people.
3. **St Basils lockdown appeal** - The office raised over £100 for the charity by taking a selfie in a specific coloured outfit. The selfies were then put together to make a rainbow.



## Christmas present donations to the Salvation Army

As part of our annual partnership with the Salvation Army, the Capsticks Leeds gave away Christmas gifts to ensure that vulnerable people will be able to celebrate with a gift on Christmas Day. A great way to make someone's day on Christmas!

## Leeds North and West food bank drive

Everybody in the office came together to fill up donation boxes which were delivered to the Leeds North & West Food Bank to support families and local people who may be struggling over the Christmas period.

## Capsticks commuters

Following the lockdown earlier this year, the Leeds office decided to donate the money it was saving on commuting and lunches, to Simon on the Streets, our office charity of 2020. It was a brilliant success and meant that people were able to make contributions without having to leave their homes. A total of £1000 was raised and with partner matched funding, we were able to donate a total of £2000.

## BBQ lunch fundraiser

Orla Brady organised a lunchtime fundraiser on 30 Jan 2020 to raise emergency funds for WIRES and Red Cross to provide assistance to communities and wildlife in Australia following the recent bush fires. Thanks to everyone who took part across the London and Leeds office. We raised almost £1,000.



## Abbey Dash

A team of eleven Capsticks staff too part in the 10km Abbey Dash sponsored run on 27 October 2019 in support of Age UK. Ian Cooper, a partner in the Healthcare Advisory team, offered to run in fancy dress to try and make this race a little different and also to raise more money. He ran the whole journey as a dinosaur with over £2500 raised.



## Environmentally friendly

Capsticks recognises its responsibility to protect the environment. In the last year, Capsticks and Intelligent Office employees have recycled over 35,925 kg of material (the equivalent of around six bush elephants!), and have saved over 48,000 kg of carbon dioxide.

## McMillan Murder Mystery

In August 2020, two murder mystery sessions were arranged, which included dressing as your characters. It was great fun and raised funds for McMillan too. Well done to both teams that took part!



## Christmas raffle

Christmas 2020 was very different to previous years for obvious reasons, but it didn't stop Capsticks raising £2,500 for the Wimbledon Guild - as well as funds for Simon on the Streets in Leeds - through a number of office virtual raffle draws.

The Capsticks London raffle draw was conducted from Tippet-Cooper family grotto by 1 year old Leo and 4 year-old Rafi!

## Fundraising for Candlelighters

A team from Capsticks Leeds took on the challenge of hiking the Yorkshire Two Peaks in the heat, to raise funds for their office's 2021 chosen charity, The Candlelighters Trust. Candlelighters is a charity helping local families with children with cancer across Yorkshire.

As well as supporting the families through treatment, they providing accommodation by the hospital and support for families on the wards. They also help to fund research / roles within the NHS such as play/nurse specialists. They regularly arrange activities for the children and host family events. They receive no government funding and are totally reliant on the public. They have raised a fantastic £1500, which will be matched by the firm. A huge well done to everyone involved.



## Legal Walk

A brilliant £2,200 was raised across Capsticks for the virtual legal walks in 2020. It's always a popular event and one that we look to support our pro bono clinic partner - South West London Law centre.



## Winchester Firewalks and Indoor 10k

Just before the start of the pandemic, a hardy team from Capsticks Winchester raised over £2,000 for Trinity Winchester, a homeless charity based near us. Trinity are embarking on an ambitious "Housing First" development in the City and we are delighted to continue supporting this.

## Capsticks Big 100 mile relays

Fundraising has obviously been really difficult this year due to the pandemic, but Capsticks have sought to find ways to support our charity partners while also getting as many people involved as possible.

The Firm kicked off two 100-mile relay runs during the pandemic and committed to donating £10,000 across these events to our charity partners in Winchester, Leeds, Birmingham, Chorley and London.

### Capsticks 100 Mile Relay: Anniversary Edition

Friday, 12 March 2021



Virtual 100 mile relay  
in support of...



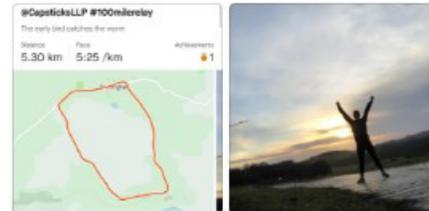
**Jo McLachlan**  
Mar 15

#100milerelay with Aggie



**Lee Carroll**  
Mar 12

#100milerelay



**Rebecca Young**  
Mar 12

#100milerelay - Great motivation



**Ian Cooper**  
Mar 12

5k run done. Almost missed the rain! Great to see everyone's photos. Well done for getting out there. 😊 #100milerelay



# Becoming involved in CSR

If you would like to become involved in any of the above CSR projects, please do get in touch as we are always looking for new volunteers.

We are also looking to create a Capsticks Grants Panel to direct small grants to local charity projects and provide help in a meaningful, focused way. Please do get in touch if you'd like to join the panel.

The firm also has a dedicated CSR Forum led by John Tippett-Cooper. The CSR Forum, which includes around 70 people from across the UK, is an ideas and communication platform to discuss current and new projects, a pool of people to help with projects, and a means to coordinate ideas about supporting charities and our local communities.

## Contact



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