

Smith & Pinching Environment, Social & Corporate Governance Policy Document

"A business for a better world"



The Name
You Can Trust

Smith & Pinching: The name you can trust

We have been giving independent financial advice since 1973, and clearly, the world has changed a lot over that time. We have evolved, and we believe it is important to continue to do so for future generations.

Our job is to help our clients plan for the future, and part of them having a bright future is having a healthy world to live in. At Smith & Pinching, we are committed to having a positive impact on our world.

This is reflected in our company values and our mission statement:



Our company values benefit our clients, staff and the wider community. We consistently strive to be the best we can be, expanding the reach of our strong, secure and sustainable company. We achieve this by being the name our clients can trust for their financial planning and insurance needs.

What does Environmental, Social, and Corporate Governance mean?

Businesses cannot succeed in societies that fail. For example, climate change is already causing havoc, and it is essential that businesses act with a conscience. The world will become a much better place if every organisation, however big or small, takes responsibility for increasing the positive impacts it has on the environment, society, and the economy - in addition to reducing any negative impact.

The three main areas of focus for a responsible business relate to the environmental and social impact of all activity, and how the business is managed. These factors are known as Environmental, Social, and Corporate Governance (ESG).

Although these factors are constantly evolving, they include consideration of issues such as those shown in the table below:

Environmental	Social	Governance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The company's impact on climate change. Efficient energy consumption. Responsible disposal of all waste. Sustainability of resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equality and diversity amongst all employees. Health and safety of all employees. Non-discriminatory employment practices. Corporate donations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring the Board acts in the best interest of the company, staff, and clients. Full transparency in relation to the company's activities, plans and risks involved. Ensuring the management team is always able to explain the company's actions and conduct.

What are Smith & Pinching doing?

The directors of The Smith & Pinching Group have recognised the importance of sustainability, and how ESG can affect our clients, our staff, and the world. We are constantly developing and challenging the ways we work and act, focusing on Stewardship - one of our core company values.

Stewardship	
<p>For Society We are working towards improving our environmental impact.</p>	<p>For our Customers and Clients We aspire to consider the impact of our actions in everything we do.</p>
<p>For the Wider Community We aim to have a positive impact within the local community.</p>	<p>For our Staff We promote diversity and equality. We respect our working environment and each other.</p>

In 2019 with the full support of the S&P Board, we formed the ESG Committee to highlight and drive initiatives that establish ESG as a core part of the business. The Committee aims to ensure S&P continues to grow as a sustainable business now and in the future and to improve the company's understanding of ESG matters.

The Committee meets regularly to challenge the way we work, promote new ideas, and formulate plans to implement these efficiently within the business. These ideas and policies are discussed with the Board and then communicated to staff in a company-wide ESG Newsletter to ensure everyone understands the work and the importance of what the Committee is doing.

The team is made up of the following members working in various roles, providing opinions and insight from all areas of the business:



Jeremy Woodruff
Director



Karen Pinching
Facilities & Resources Manager



Matt Keay
Investment Manager



Matt Hinchliffe
Chartered Financial Planner



Katie Madden
Marketing Assistant



Darren Arnup
Facilities & Resources Manager



Jackie Mills
Finance Director

It is not just the Committee that can contribute to what S&P does to support ESG. We want to empower our colleagues to suggest changes to our working practices that will contribute further to positive outcomes in this area.

While the Committee continues to explore new ideas to support ESG, there are already several ongoing actions taken across the business, as summarised below:

We are striving to lessen our environmental impact. This includes things like:

- Ensuring all lights in our office buildings are energy efficient.
- Promoting our Cycle to Work Scheme.
- Switching to an environmentally friendly energy supply.
- Discontinuing our use of bottled water.
- Assessing our carbon footprint and investigating ways to reduce and offset this.
- Promoting the use of our secure online Portal with clients.
- Switching to paper made from sugar cane waste. Eight packets of this paper will save a tree from being cut down.



Environmental

We recognise the importance of supporting our staff, as well as the wider community.

For our staff, this involves:

- Developing our Wellbeing policy.
- Carrying out wellbeing training for team leaders.
- Integrating the purpose of ESG as part of the staff forum.
- Sending out daily online positivity posts to all our staff.
- Ensuring there are defibrillators available within reach of all of our offices.



Social

For our community, this involves:

- Continuing donations from The Smith & Pinching Charitable Trust.
- Working with the East Anglian Air Ambulance to help them save as many people's lives as possible.
- Volunteering with the Norfolk Wildlife Trust.
- Supporting the Norfolk Lawn Tennis Association.
- We are delighted to be supporting LILAC for their fundraising to support Big C
- Providing financial education programmes in schools.

Further information on our community work can be found at the end of this document.

Our ESG policies are embedded in our company behaviours and procedures, with support from the Board.

Once the ESG Committee was established we documented our company values. We have always known the importance of these values. For example, Excellence; the company supports and encourages staff to improve their knowledge through qualifications and training. This is highlighted by our achievement of the CII Corporate Chartered Status as well as many members of staff achieving Fellowship status, the highest designation in our industry.

Now that our company values are formalised, they act as a framework for all our staff - from Directors to new starters. These values provide our staff with a focus and a sense of purpose to work towards the same goals.

Beyond this, ours is a company that values its staff and clients. Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, we ensured all our staff could continue to work flexibly and continue to look after our clients. Daily emails from our Managing Director reminded us that "we are all in this together".



Governance

Community Social Projects

Smith & Pinching have always recognised the importance of having a positive impact on our community. This is demonstrated by some of the projects we are involved with:



Norfolk Wildlife Trust

Smith & Pinching have worked with the Norfolk Wildlife Trust for a few years now, running employee volunteer days which have served a dual purpose. We have been able to significantly support the Trust by helping with the maintenance of the various beautiful sites around our county. This has proved to be a great team-building activity for the business and is something we hope to continue each year.



Norfolk Reading Project

Several staff members volunteer with the Norfolk Reading Project. This charity focuses on improving literacy standards across Norfolk. Reading is fundamental to all learning, so any children who fall behind in their literacy and reading skills should be given an opportunity to read to an adult. The pandemic and the closure of many schools resulted in those already struggling to fall further behind. This was a real impetus for Smith & Pinching to increase their involvement in the charity beyond just donations.



Norfolk Lawn Tennis Association

Smith & Pinching are proud sponsors of Norfolk Tennis through the Norfolk Lawn Tennis Association. We work with the team to support tennis coaching to people of all ages and abilities - particularly Junior Tennis - aimed at selected players aged 5-18. Junior players are encouraged to play in fun competitions once they have settled into a regular coaching programme. The aim is to help every player achieve their goals and reach their potential, helping support them into and through LTA regional and national pathway training.



The S&P Charitable Trust

The S&P Charitable Trust was launched in 2005 to raise money to help relieve hardship or distress, and to further education by offering grants to individuals and organisations such as schools and charities in East Anglia. The causes are diverse, from creating safer environments for children, to helping towards local appeals such as the East Anglian Air Ambulance (EAAA), and Norfolk Accident Rescue Service (NARS). The trust provides grants selected by our employees, and has raised over £250,000 for charity.



Financial Education in Schools

Several Smith & Pinching staff deliver financial education in schools across topics such as my future finances, moving on from school, staying safe from scams, and making decisions and risks. Topical and targeted education aimed at year 10-13 students, these presentations are interactive and designed to make young adults think carefully and plan ahead.