

# Positive Impact and Sustainability Report

## 2019/20



This is the Guardian's positive impact and sustainability report, outlining how the Guardian's purpose runs through our operations - aiming to improve our environmental sustainability and make a positive impact on our employees, our readers and our wider community.

As a B Corporation, we are committed to transparency and accountability. This report not only highlights our achievements, but also areas in which we can improve. As one of the world's most trusted news organisations, we aim for every aspect of our business to live up to the high standards set by Guardian journalism.

This report covers the period from our certification as a B Corporation in October 2019 to the end of 2020.



# Introduction



In our first positive impact and sustainability report, we are proud to highlight the progress and efforts we are making across our organisation. This report shows not only where we have been successful, but also the challenges we face and the areas in which we need to improve.

The past 18 months have been highly challenging for all organisations and the Guardian, like others, has had to adapt to ongoing uncertainty and change. We have worked hard to maintain our focus on making a positive impact in the world and with the communities which we serve.

Guardian and Observer journalism is, naturally, where our organisation makes the biggest impact - and we have continued to publish stories of huge global and national importance, reaching more than 1.5 billion browsers

in 2020 alone. Guardian readers expect us to lead the way with reporting on issues such as the climate crisis, racism, diversity and wider systemic issues that impact inequality and unsustainable ways of living.

Alongside Guardian journalism, we also strive to demonstrate our purpose through our commercial achievements and business objectives. Our certification as a B Corporation, and desire to work in ways which benefit readers, employees, society and the planet, holds us to account transparently and gives us a framework to evaluate our progress.

As an organisation, we firmly believe we must play a positive role in the fight against the climate emergency, above and beyond our journalism. We have made a substantial commitment to achieve net zero emissions by 2030, with an ambitious goal of eliminating at least two thirds of emissions from our operations and full supply chain.

**Keith Underwood**  
*Interim chief executive officer*  
The Guardian



Another particular focus is on improving diversity and inclusion within our organisation. We were one of the first media organisations to report publicly on the ethnicity pay gap, and are working hard to improve representation at all levels of our company through recruitment, promotion, staff development and training. We have a similar programme of work which aims to reduce our gender pay gap. These remain high priorities, with much work to be done.

This is all in addition to our work through the Scott Trust's independent charity, the Guardian Foundation,

which supports media under threat, promotes diversity in the media and empowers children and young people to engage with the news.

Staff across the organisation are highly committed to making sure the Guardian makes a positive impact through all of our work. We also have loyal and engaged readers, who not only support us, but challenge us to raise our ambitions. To our staff, commercial partners and readers, I would like to say a huge thank you for your commitment and for your support in achieving the results and progress outlined in this report.



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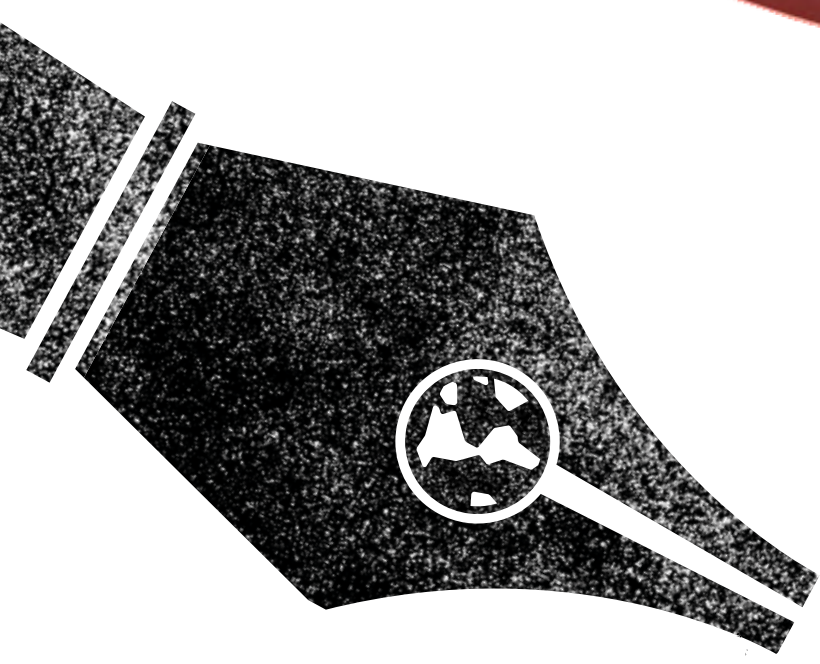
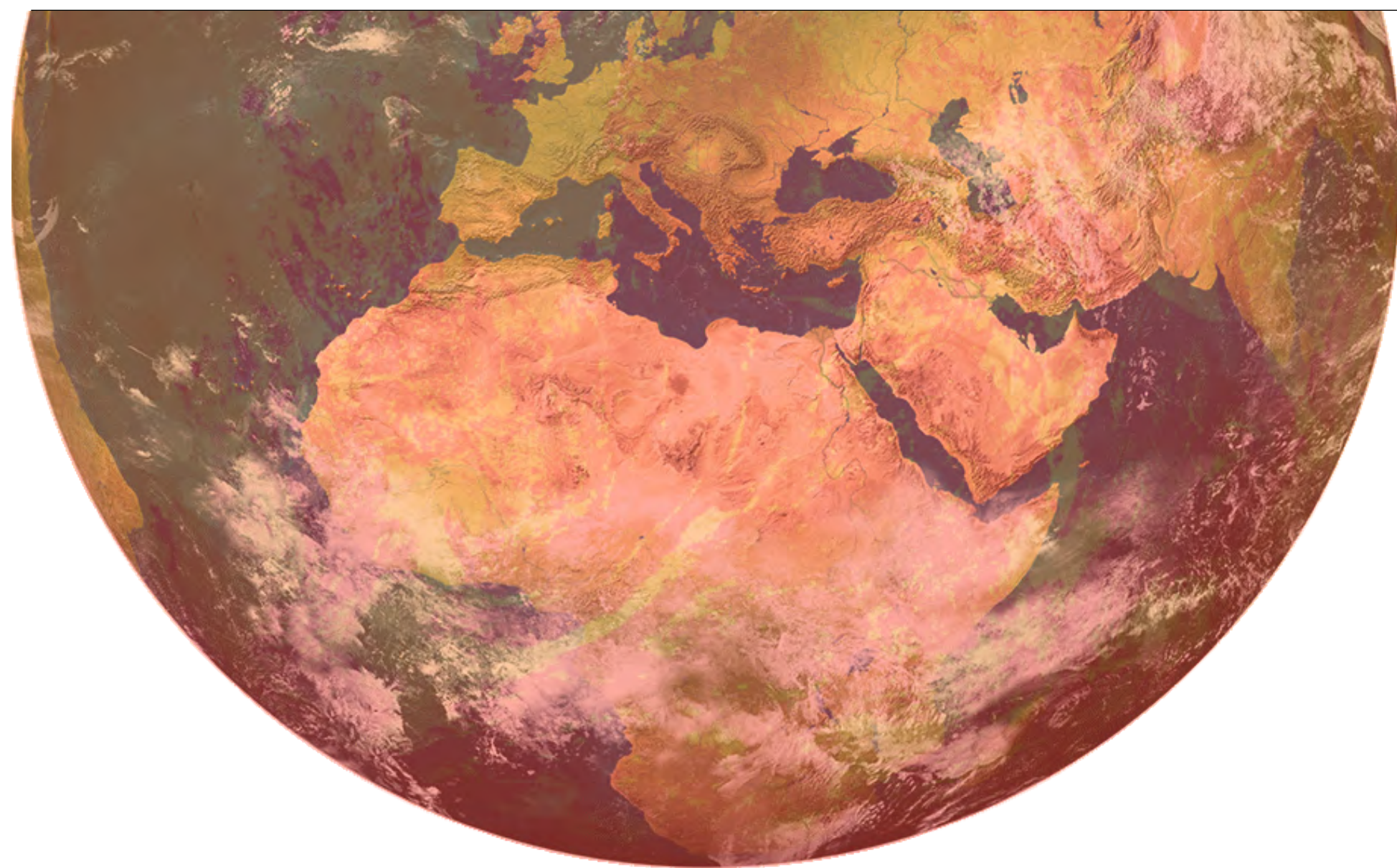
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# 1 | Environmental sustainability



In 2019, we made a [climate pledge](#) to our readers, committing to reach net zero carbon emission by 2030 and that Guardian journalism that would give the crisis the attention it deserves.

We have now completed a full audit of our carbon emissions and supply chain **and made a specific commitment that we will eliminate two-thirds of our emissions by 2030.** For the remainder, we will seek to remove equivalent carbon emissions using high quality, verifiable schemes.

GMG is a relatively small company on a global scale and our contribution to global carbon emissions is tiny, but we are committed to setting a strong example. Our efforts around environmental sustainability focus on four areas:

- 1 *Measuring and reducing our carbon footprint to reach our net zero emissions goal*
- 2 *Making financial and operational decisions to reduce our broader environmental impact*
- 3 *Creating commercial initiatives that help us to lead by example*
- 4 *Working with staff, stakeholders and industry partners to maximise our impact*

*"The global climate crisis is the emergency of our times. Amid all the fear and sadness of 2020, it remains the overwhelming long-term threat to our planet and to everyone's health and security.*

*That is why we promise to keep reporting on it, raising the alarm and investigating the crisis and possible solutions, until we begin to see genuine systemic change."*

**Katharine Viner,**  
*Editor-in-chief,*  
The Guardian

# Our carbon footprint -reaching net zero emissions by 2030



## Setting our target and approach

In setting our targets we followed the Paris agreement and the guidelines set out by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which call for greenhouse gas emissions to be all but eliminated by 2050 in order to limit global heating to within 1.5 degrees of pre-industrial levels.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The 2015 Paris Agreement committed to keeping global heating to well below 2 degrees above pre-industrial levels and preferably to no more than 1.5 degrees; a Special Report by the IPCC in 2018 outlined the strong likelihood that the impacts of 2 degree heating would be significantly more damaging for ecosystems and livelihoods than 1.5 degrees: <https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/chapter/spm/>.

## Our net zero approach has three elements:

- 1** Measure the emissions caused by our own operations and our full supply chain, annually
- 2** Prioritise absolute reductions in our emissions: we have set a target of two thirds reduction from 2020 to 2030. This is a steeper reduction than the required trajectory outlined by the IPCC
- 3** Where we cannot avoid emissions, we will seek ways to remove the equivalent carbon, using the best quality, verifiable schemes

# Measuring our emissions footprint

Over the last 18 months we have worked with [Green Element](#), an environmental consultancy, to measure and report our global emissions. We also incorporated analysis by academics at the University of Bristol on the carbon impact of digital services.

We have measured our emissions according to accounting standards defined by the Greenhouse Gas Protocol<sup>2</sup>. Our audit measures a range of greenhouse gases but is reported in CO2e - carbon dioxide equivalent.

Our most recent audit covers the period from April 2019-March 2020 and divides carbon emissions into three scopes:



Like many businesses, the vast majority of emissions related to our business are scope 3 - they are caused by the goods and services that we buy and by the use of our products. We believe it is vital to include our supply chain in our measurement and reduction targets - if we just measured and acted upon scopes 1 and 2, we could quite quickly claim to have eliminated much of our footprint, while actually ignoring 95% of the emissions relating to our business.

We face a number of challenges both in measuring and influencing carbon emissions in our supply chain. We are reliant on the quality of the data suppliers provide, and cannot make decisions on our suppliers' behalf. In these circumstances we are working with our suppliers and partners to drive long-term improvement, as well as improving our procurement procedures for new business.

▶ **Direct emissions** from our own facilities; including gas used for heating and estimated refrigerant losses from air conditioning in our offices

▶ **Indirect emissions** from the generation of purchased electricity used in our own facilities

▶ **All indirect emissions** associated that occur in our value chain, both upstream and downstream

<sup>2</sup> [Greenhouse Gas Protocol \(ghgprotocol.org\)](https://www.ghgprotocol.org)

# A closer look at our carbon emissions

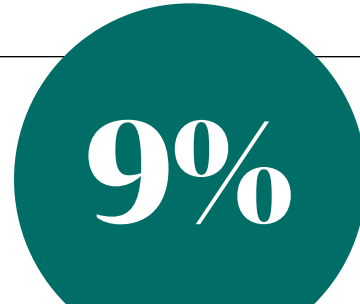
**Employee commuting**  
708 tonnes of CO2e



**Business travel**  
2,440 tonnes of CO2e



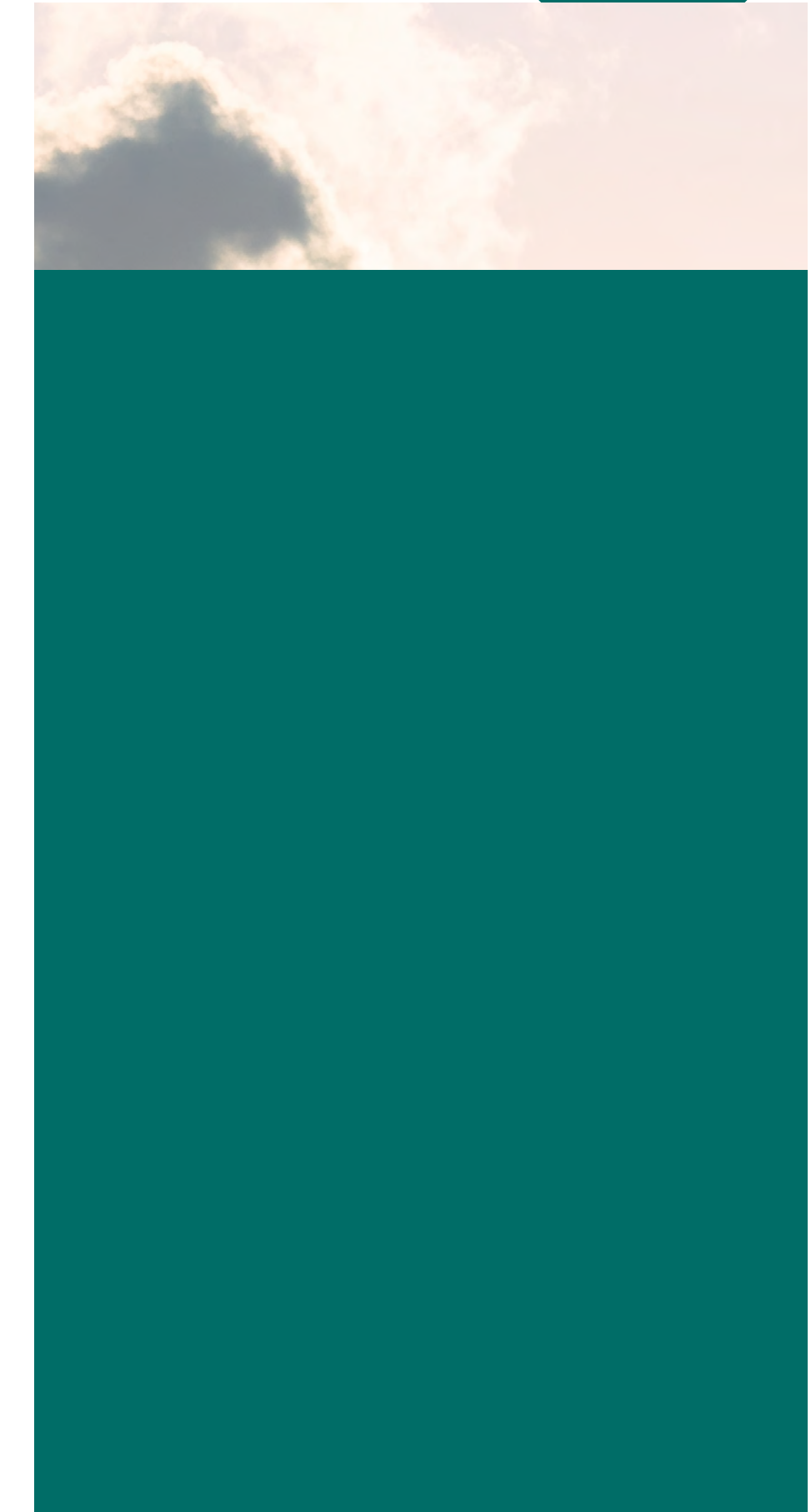
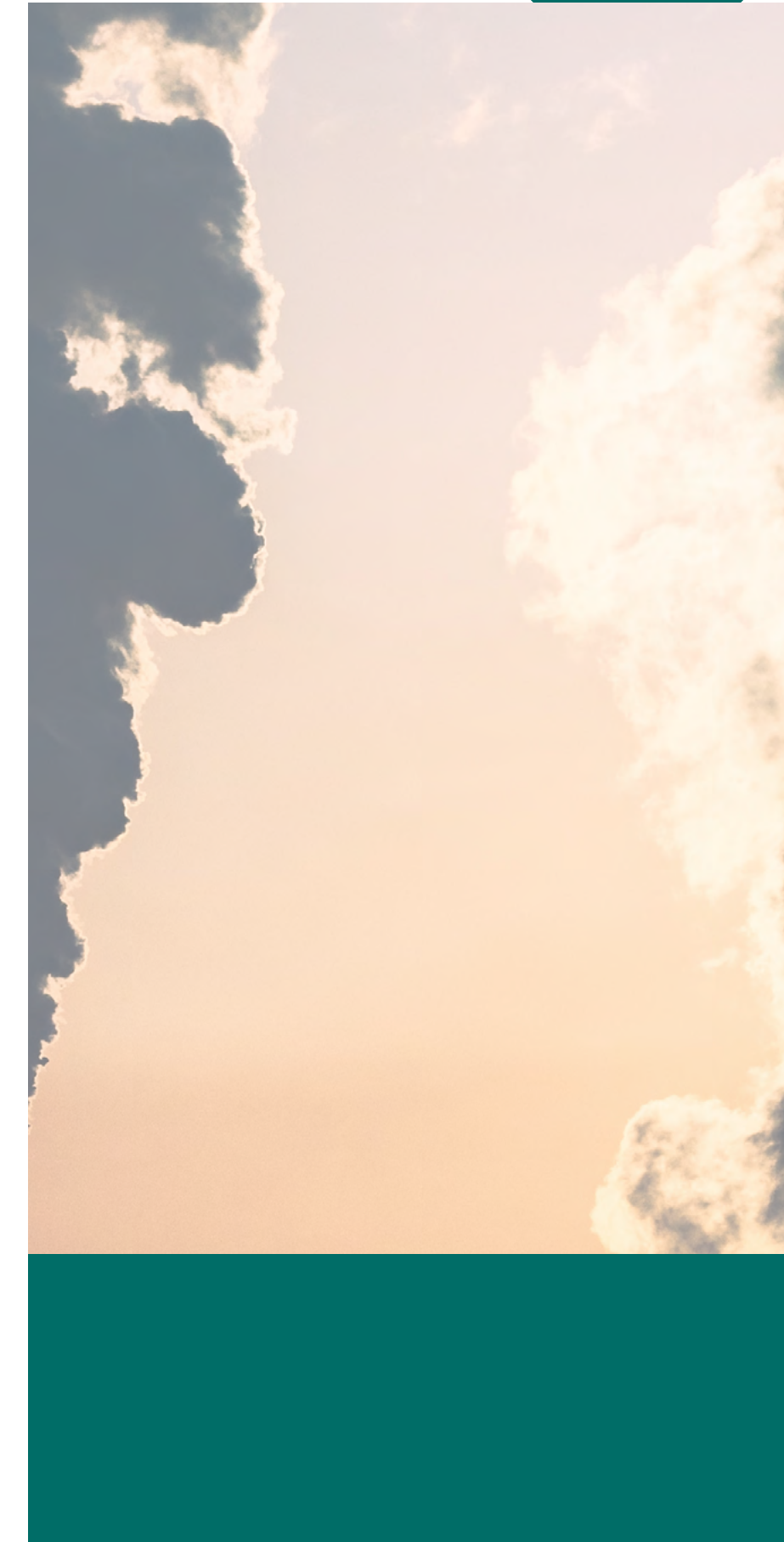
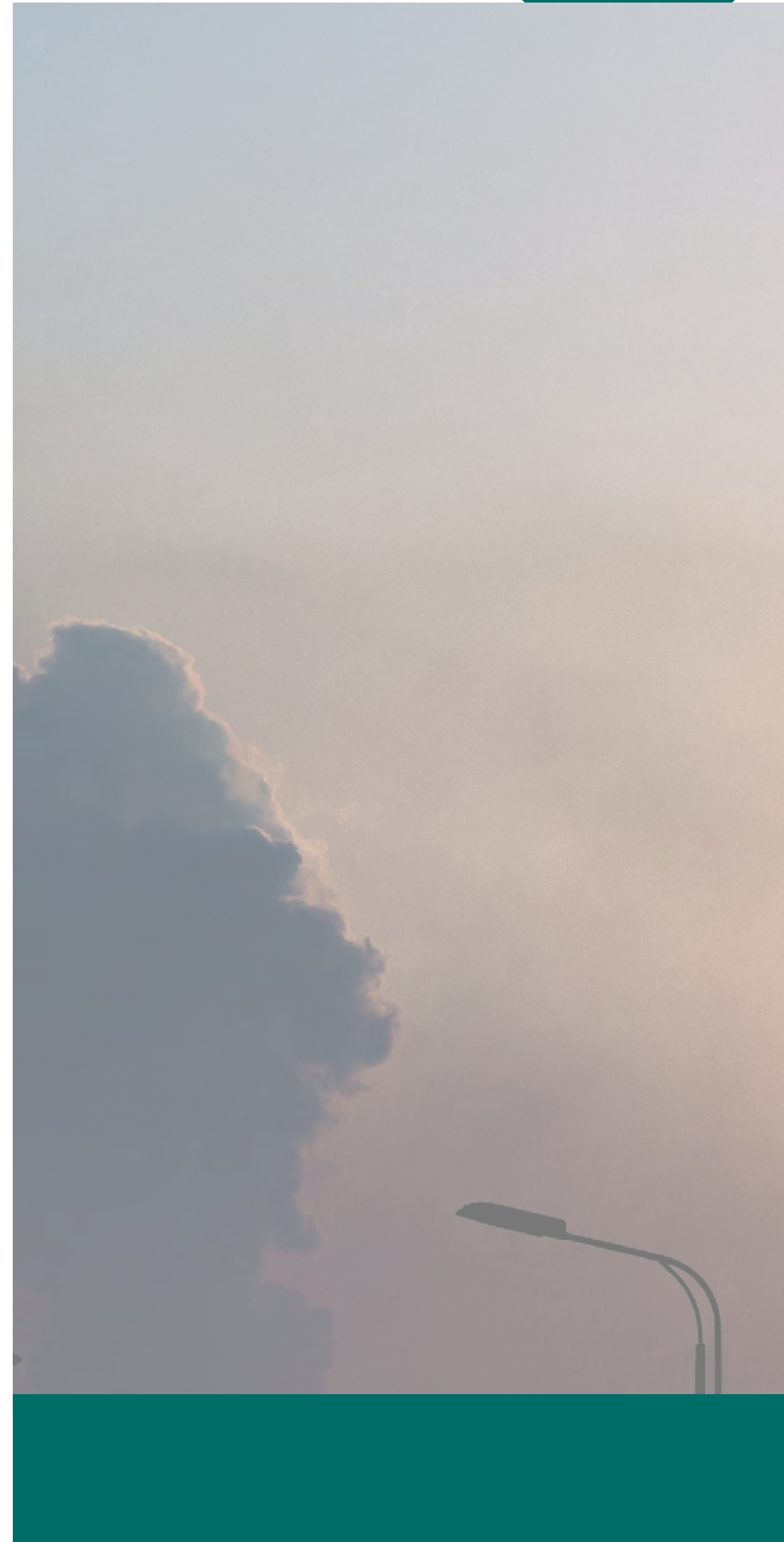
**Office supplies, IT and operations**  
2,726 tonnes of CO2e



**Digital products**  
3,135 tonnes of CO2e



**Print business**  
24,330 tonnes of CO2e



**27%**

**Areas outside our print business account for 27% of our total emissions, driven by a few core activities:**

<p><b>Employee commuting</b> 708 tonnes of CO2e</p> <p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; color: #008080;">2%</p>	<p><b>Business travel</b> 2,440 tonnes of CO2e</p> <p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; color: #008080;">7%</p>	<p><b>Office supplies, IT and operations</b> 2,726 tonnes of CO2e</p> <p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; color: #008080;">9%</p>	<p><b>Digital products</b> 3,135 tonnes of CO2e</p> <p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; color: #008080;">9%</p>
<p>The vast majority of staff commuter trips were made by public transport or by bike; we provide facilities for staff who cycle to work as well as access to financial incentives such as the “cycle to work” scheme in the UK.</p> <p>Our next audit will see this category almost eliminated as the majority of staff worked from home throughout much of 2020 and into 2021, but we expect more staff to return to the office from the second half of 2021.</p>	<p>Our travel policy provides clear guidelines on travel, aimed at avoiding unnecessary trips and promoting the use of video conferencing.</p> <p>The pandemic has largely eliminated business travel throughout 2020, but we expect it to increase again as our journalists and staff are able to undertake necessary travel more freely, albeit at a lower rate. We cannot eliminate all business travel completely as on the ground reporting is critical.</p>	<p>The key drivers are IT infrastructure and hardware, and electricity and gas for our office buildings.</p> <p>Our main headquarters in London already uses 100% renewable energy. We have made significant reductions in the volume of office paper we use, cutting down supplies by about 50%.</p> <p>In 2020 we removed single-use plastic and other items in our canteen - saving around 80,000 waste items a year.</p> <p>In the US and Australia our offices are relatively small and some energy supplies are controlled by our landlords, so we need to encourage them to switch to renewable sources.</p>	<p>Energy is consumed by electronic devices as readers access our website and apps, as well as by servers and other web hosting infrastructure.</p> <p>Our emissions footprint in this area is mainly influenced by the proportion of renewable energy used by national grids.</p> <p>In the UK, renewable energy use reached new records in 2020. As more consumers globally switch to renewable energy in their homes and countries invest in renewable power generation, the greenhouse gas impact of our digital services will fall.</p>
<p><b>Priority focus areas:</b> Continue to support staff to use sustainable forms of transport, and update our policies for flexible working</p>	<p><b>Priority focus areas:</b> Monitor travel volumes in 2021; ensure we are prioritising sustainable forms of travel wherever possible.</p>	<p><b>Priority focus areas:</b> Investigate ways to achieve further energy efficiency savings. Set timeframe to move all global offices to renewable energy.</p>	<p><b>Priority focus areas:</b> Continue to streamline our digital architecture, and work with our technology partners to reduce the environmental impact across our technology estate.</p>



**73%**  
of our total  
emissions

24,330 tonnes of CO2e

# Our newspaper print business supply chain is the single largest contributor

*The key elements driving emissions within newspaper production and lifecycle are:*

- **Paper**  
Energy is required for the pulping and production of newspaper-grade paper
- **Printing**  
The inks and printing plates used in the print process daily, and the energy used by print sites.  
During this reporting period our main printing supplier Reach switched its energy to 100% renewable electricity at its print sites; the full benefit of this change will be seen in our results from next year.
- **Distribution**  
We rely on a wide network of distributors and modes of transport to get raw materials to paper mills, paper to printer, and printed newspapers to wholesale distribution points and to local retailers and readers. While the switch to cleaner fuels is likely to take longer for freight than for cars, distribution emissions will be a key area of focus over the next few years.

## the print lifecycle



# A look at how the Guardian sources and uses paper

The Guardian, Observer and Guardian Weekly are loved around the world and our readers have a special relationship with our print products. While we are more digital than at any point in our history, we still use a lot of paper - about 30,000 tonnes per year in total.

While print circulation has fallen over time, printing and paper remain the largest contributor to our overall carbon footprint, and paper has a complicated life cycle and supply chain.

Whilst cost is an important factor, we also make decisions based on how the paper we use looks, prints, and its carbon footprint and wider environmental impact. These latter two factors do not always go hand in hand - recycled paper in the UK can have a larger carbon footprint than virgin paper from a sustainable source in Norway because of the use of renewable energy and the efficiency of different production processes.

Recycled paper can also only be recycled a limited number of times.

We have spent a lot of time in recent years ensuring we buy, use and recycle paper in the most sustainable ways possible. For the past 10 years we have only used paper from recycled fibre or from sustainably managed forests certified by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). We continue to look at the carbon footprint of each paper source through our suppliers.

In the past, we have invited advice on our paper policy from organisations including WWF, Greenpeace and Canopy, and we plan to publish a new paper policy in the next 12 months, in line with our goals for net zero emissions.

## Where our paper comes from today:

### Newsprint for our papers **70%**

- The largest volume of paper we use is standard newsprint (70%)
- 21,000 tonnes in 2019-20
- 72% is manufactured in the UK and is 100% recycled
- 28% from Norway and is a mix of 28% recycled/72% virgin but has a very low carbon footprint (200 kg of CO2e per tonne compared to over 400 kg of CO2e per tonne with one of our UK suppliers, including delivery)
- 96% printed in the UK (4% in Ireland)

### Magazines - supplements and Guardian Weekly **30%**

- Accounts for 30% of all paper
- Magazine paper comes from several suppliers in the UK (51%), Sweden (18%), Finland (3%), Norway (28%) and Germany and Italy combined (less than 1%)
- 99% virgin fibre and 1% recycled
- 97% of our magazines are printed in the UK. A small amount are printed in the US, Australia and New Zealand for Guardian Weekly



# Steps we are taking to reduce our emissions

## ► Paper

### Guardian Weekly

In May 2020, we started using post-consumer recycled magazine paper for UK printed copies of Guardian Weekly, which has one third of the carbon footprint of the paper previously used. We are evaluating the overall impact of this change to inform our new paper policy.



### Removing plastic from our newspaper wrapping

In January 2019, we became the first UK newspaper to move away from plastic wrapping for our supplements to a compostable wrap made from potato starch, which in most cases could be put into household food or garden waste bins. This step forward prompted others in the industry to follow suit.

During 2020 we have been moving towards an even more sustainable approach, using fully recyclable paper wraps. From October 2019 to December 2020 we estimate we have saved more than 20m plastic wraps going into landfill. Our goal now is to abolish all wrapping to further reduce our carbon footprint and reduce paper consumption and waste.



# Steps we are taking to reduce our emissions

## ► Financial investments

### Endowment Fund

In 2015, the Scott Trust and GMG decided to [shift the investment portfolio](#) of the Scott Trust endowment fund, which supports the Guardian in perpetuity, to exclude all fossil fuel investments, and began a campaign to encourage others to follow suit, called [Keep it in the Ground](#).

Fossil fuel-related investments now represent less than 1% of our total investments, and many of the fund managers with whom we work say they have created new, greener investment funds as a result of that decision.

### Pensions

In 2020, we launched a new investment option for members of our pension scheme - the Sustainable Future Fund. The fund invests in global equities and explicitly excludes all companies associated with fossil fuels. This new fund replaced the established ethical investment option.

Additionally, with effect from May 2021, all equity holdings in the pension scheme's default strategy are now held in the Sustainable Future Fund.



Photo: Sipa Press/REX Shutterstock

# Steps we are taking to reduce our emissions

## ► Commercial initiatives

### Advertising

In January 2020, we announced that we would no longer accept advertising from fossil fuel extractors – becoming the first major international news organisation to make such a commitment. Our decision was based on the decades-long efforts by many in that industry to prevent meaningful climate action by governments around the world. Our action had an impact beyond the Guardian and we have spoken with other news organisations keen to make the same positive step.

### Guardian Jobs

We launched Green Jobs, a Guardian Jobs initiative, in September 2020. Green Jobs connects recruiters with job-seekers looking for green and sustainable job roles or for employers who have sustainability at the core of their business.

### Collaboration and recognition

We are members of Ad Net Zero - an industry-wide initiative by the Advertising Association to help UK advertising respond to the climate crisis caused by CO2 emissions.

As part of the B Corp community we have collaborated with fellow B Corps on more than 10 events to raise awareness of the certification. We regularly share our experience of B Corp certification and our environmental commitments with other companies considering similar steps.

Our environmental approach and reporting have been recognised at the UK Newspaper & Magazine Awards, Reuters Responsible Business Awards, and by the BBVA Foundation's Biophilia Award for Environmental Communication.

## Some of the positive reactions to our announcement that we would not accept advertising from fossil fuel extractors:




**Greta Thunberg** ✓  
@GretaThunberg

"The Guardian will no longer accept advertising from oil and gas companies, becoming the first major global news organisation to institute an outright ban on taking money from companies that extract fossil fuels  
A good start, who will take this further?"



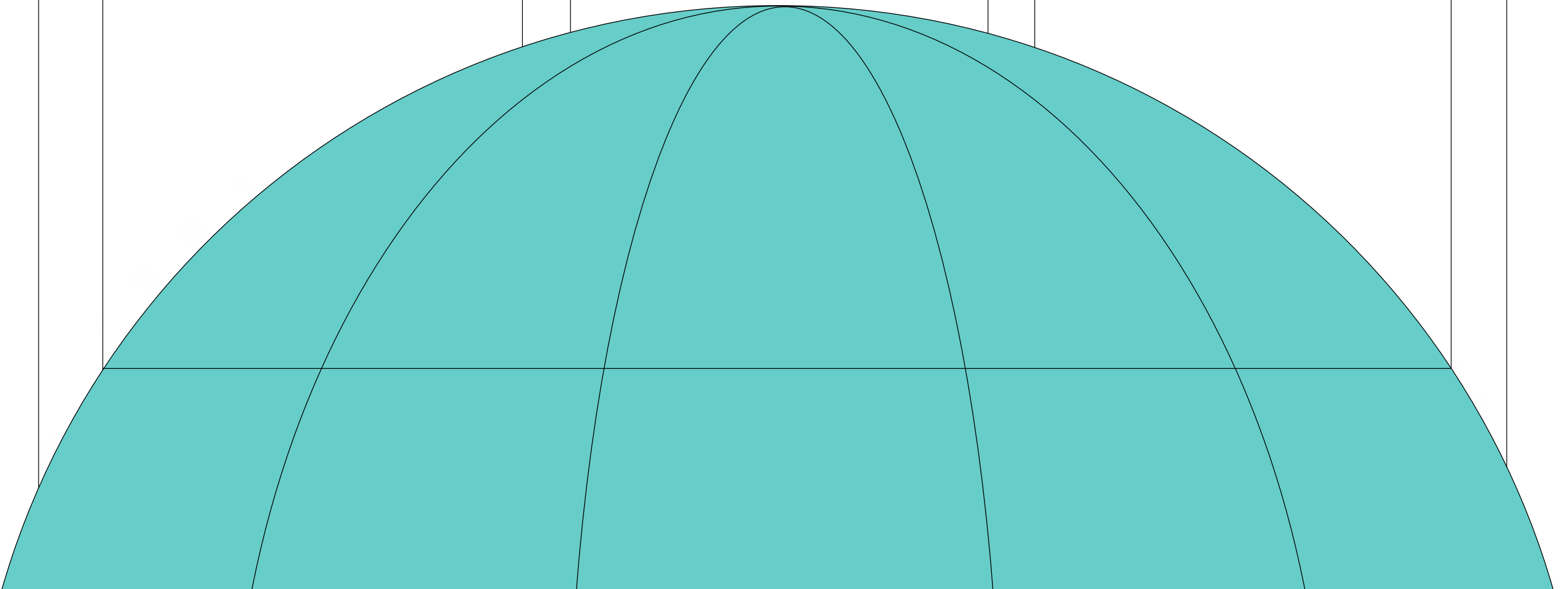
**Greenpeace UK** ✓  
@greenpeaceUK

BREAKING: This is a huge moment in the battle against oil and gas for all of us!  
@guardian have just announced they won't let dirty oil and gas companies advertise with them anymore because we're in a climate emergency.



**Extinction Rebellion** ✓  
@ExtinctionR

Well done to @guardian for banning advertising from fossil fuel firms!  
We call on other publications to follow. To #TellTheTruth, you also have to act on it.



# 2 | Our people

We value and respect all differences in all people, seen and unseen, and aspire to an open, supportive and inclusive culture that makes the Guardian a good place to work for everyone.

The vast majority of our staff, about 90% of our workforce, are employed in the UK, and we have growing operations in the US and Australia. We create global employment principles, underpinned by country-specific plans that meet local needs and regulatory requirements.



## Employee voice and engagement

We run a regular global staff survey inviting open and anonymous feedback on people’s experiences working at the Guardian. In 2019 over 1,000 members of staff took part, with **94% saying they are proud to work for the Guardian**. Overall we see high levels of employee engagement and satisfaction. Our next staff survey is due later in 2021.

In the UK, employees have a voice in how the organisation is managed and the way we work through our employee forum, which meets regularly. Employees also sit on groups focused on specific aspects of working life, including diversity and inclusion, remuneration, pensions and health and safety. We also consult extensively with trade unions, both through these forums and directly.

## Mental health

We take the wellbeing of our staff seriously, and stepped up our efforts during a challenging year in which the pandemic meant most people were working from home. To offer support for our staff, we:

- developed a new hub of resources focused on mental health and wellbeing
- launched refreshed mandatory workshops on mental health
- continued to provide free employee assistance programmes
- hosted a week of events and workshops annually to mark Mental Health Awareness Week in the UK - over 400 staff attended these events in 2020

## Diversity and inclusion

We believe that improving the diversity of our organisation will mean we are better equipped to produce meaningful journalism, and to serve our readers and community.

During the past two years we have accelerated our efforts to make ourselves a more diverse, inclusive and equal organisation. While we strive to make progress in all areas of equality and diversity, in this report we will concentrate on two main areas - gender and race.

## Gender

We are committed to reducing gender pay gaps across the organisation, and are working at a country level to report and take action on gender equality.

In the UK, we published our most recent [gender pay gap report in 2019](#). In the US, we share transparent gender pay data with our staff on an annual basis. In Australia, we submit an [annual report](#) to the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA).



# Our UK gender pay action plan



When we published our first report in March 2018 we committed to reducing the gender pay gap at GNM every year and achieving a 50:50 gender balance in the top half of the organisation.

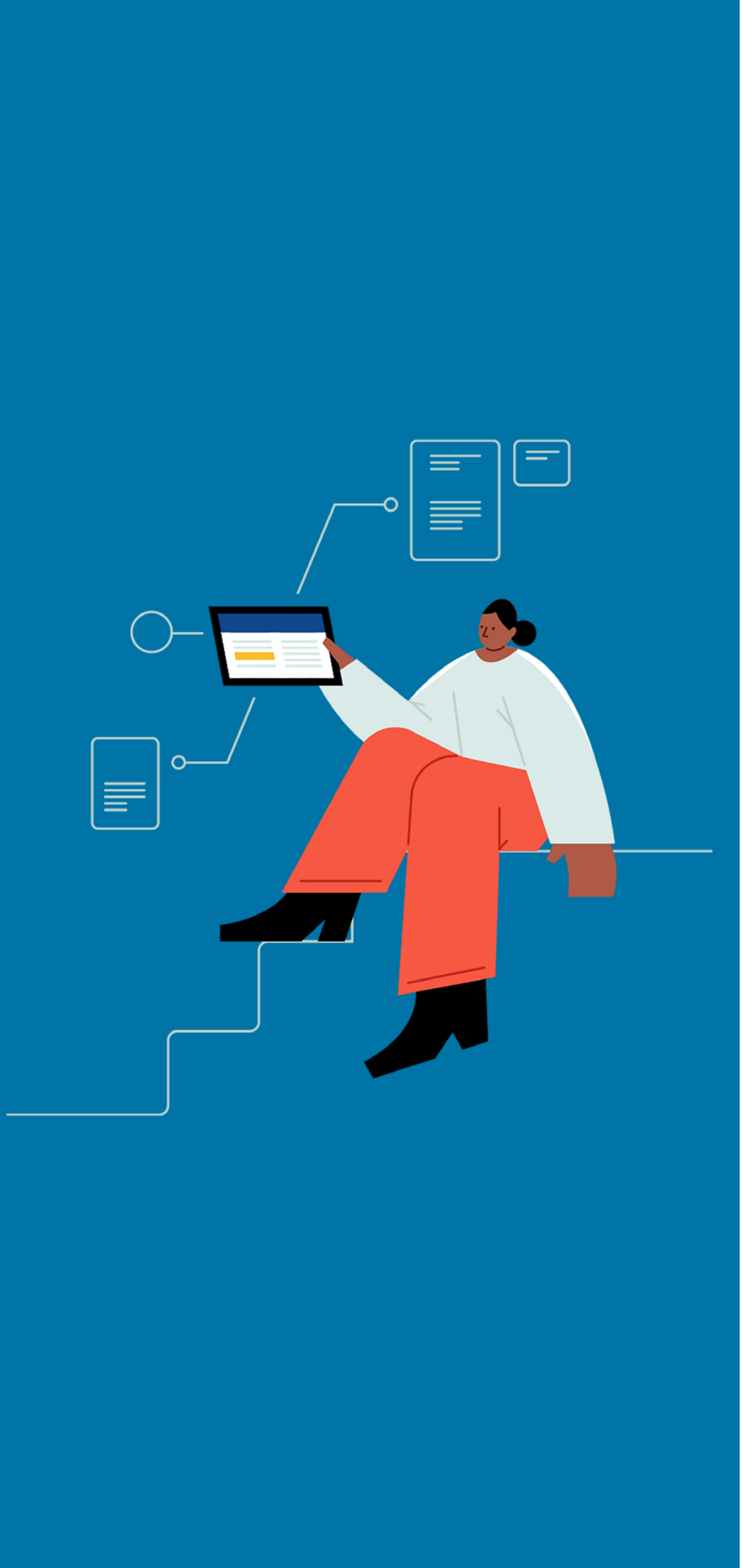
We launched a number of initiatives to reduce the pay gap and help women advance in their careers; these include a programme to help women in mid-level roles to progress, mentorship schemes and improved recruitment practices.



### Progress so far\* :

- We have seen an improvement in the median pay gap of 3.5 percentage points year-on-year, reflecting a more even representation of men and women in the upper middle and lower middle quartiles.
- The mean pay gap has improved by 0.7 percentage points year-on-year, reflecting senior female appointments.
- The top half of the organisation is now 41% female, compared with 36% two years previously.
- We still have work to do to address the gender split in the highest and lowest pay quartiles. We attract more women than men into roles in the lower pay quartile. Whilst this reflects broader industry trends, we are reviewing our search strategies to attract a more equal balance.

1.\*Results from GNM's most recent gender pay report in July 2019



# Racial diversity

We have made advances in recent years, but we want to accelerate our efforts to make GNM a more diverse, inclusive and equal organisation - which will also mean that we are better equipped to produce more meaningful and more impactful journalism. To find out how Guardian journalism reports on issues of race, identity and ethnicity, please see [the Guardian in 2020 report](#).

To ensure accountability and leadership at the highest level, the company established a global Race Steering Committee in December 2020, tasked with monitoring performance and holding senior leadership to account. The committee includes representatives from our People of Colour employee groups.

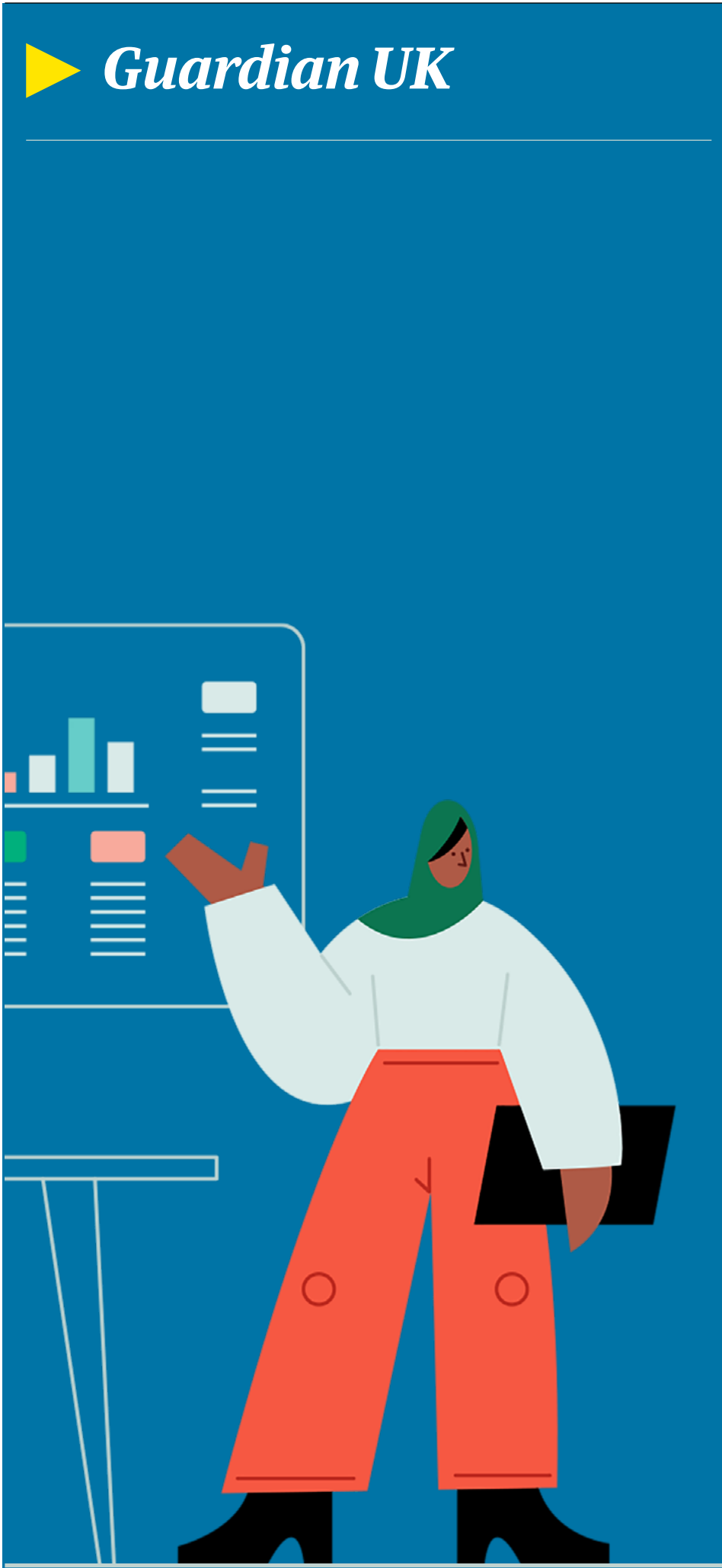
We have consulted widely with staff, People of Colour groups, and independent experts to understand the drivers of inequality and inform country-specific strategies.

We are implementing mandatory anti-racism training, mentoring schemes and a broad range of recruitment measures, plans and targets across the organisation with diversity plans for our UK, US and Australia offices, determined by the specific drivers and contexts in which they operate.



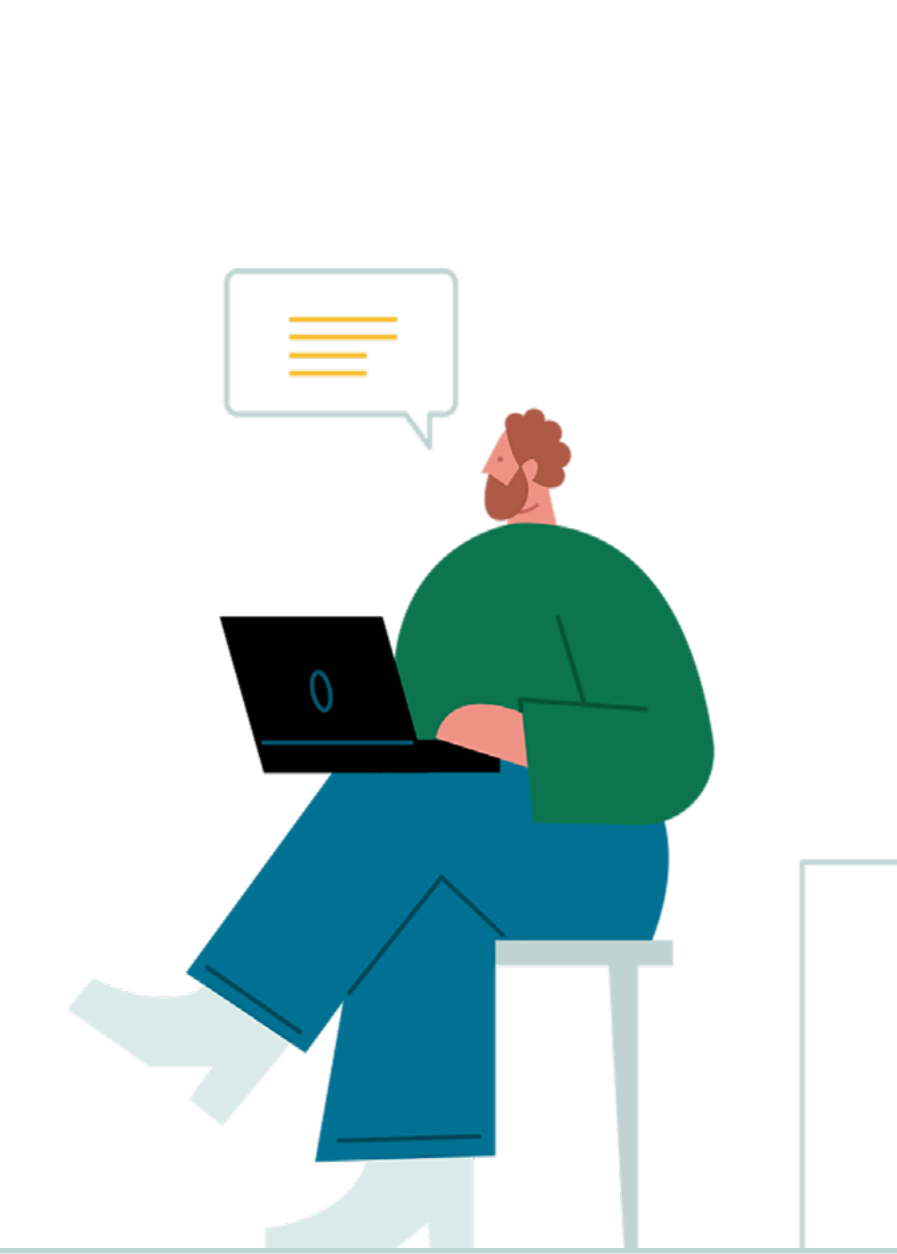


# Racial diversity



## ▶ Guardian UK

In December 2019, we published our first [UK ethnicity pay gap report](#), highlighting that 17% of our UK workforce identified as being from Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups. The pay gap between BAME and white employees is 14.9% at a median level and 14.1% for the mean. BAME employees make up 12% of the top pay quartile and are therefore insufficiently represented.



**Our goal is to achieve 20% ethnic minority representation** throughout the organisation and across our top two pay quartiles within the next five years, reducing our ethnicity pay gap every year as we work towards this longer term target. We will achieve this by supporting the progression of our existing employees, and taking every opportunity to attract diverse talent into all levels of the organisation.

Our [UK Race Action Plan](#), announced to staff in September 2020, commits to actions that encourage transparency, accountability and improve diversity across our business by:

- Ensuring our recruitment processes are fair, open, and transparent and nurture a diverse pipeline of talent
- Providing a development programme that supports progression
- Embedding change at every level through high-level accountability and mandatory training schemes for all staff

- Holding ourselves accountable, by reporting on the ethnicity pay gap, and data on external recruitment and internal promotions
- Commissioning and publishing journalism that is as diverse as the readers we serve across all our platforms, and appointing specific editorial positions to strengthen our coverage of minority communities
- Contributing to greater inclusivity in the media industry with more access and paid internship opportunities for talented young people from under-represented communities

### **Progress so far includes:**

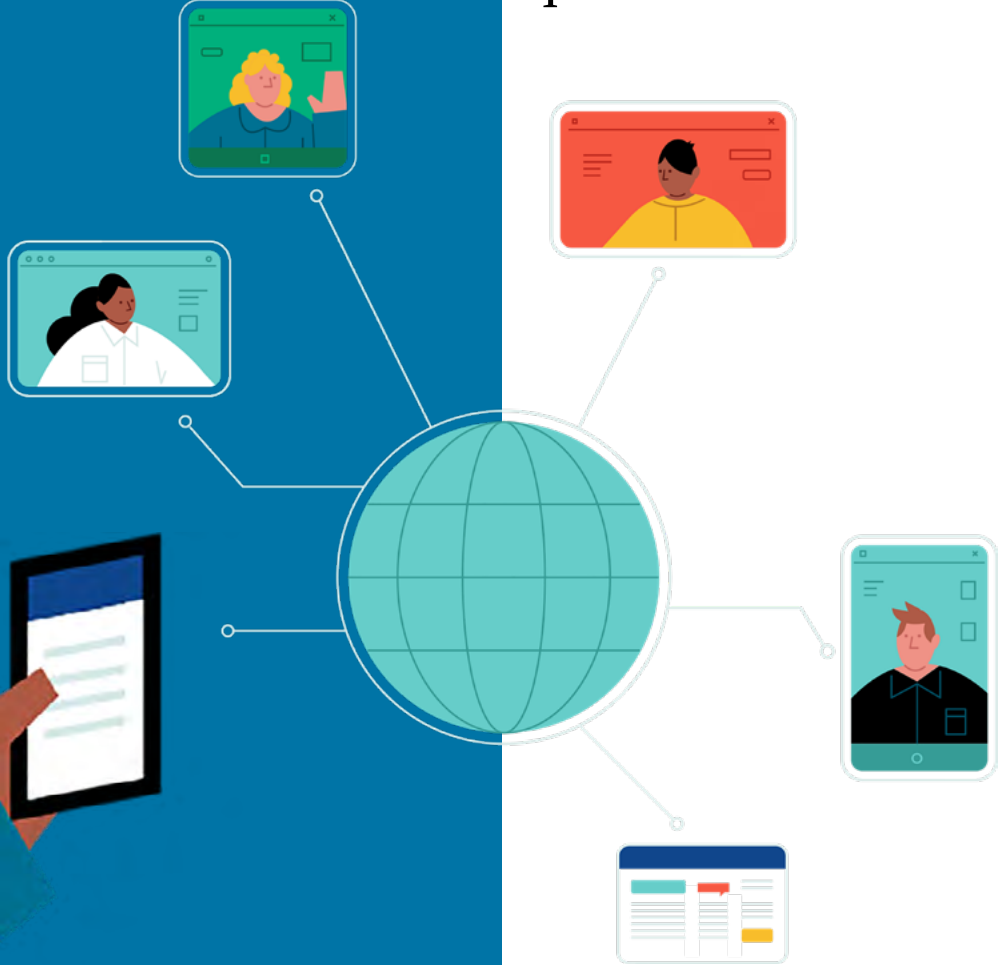
- Appointment of community affairs correspondents to focus on the social, political and economic experiences of the UK's diverse communities.
- Ran a series of focus groups with people of colour employees to understand their experiences working at the Guardian.
- Commissioned an expert review of our current representation target, which will provide recommendations for department-specific goals.
- Strengthening existing schemes, including the Positive Impact Scheme, which offers UK editorial placements for people from BAME backgrounds.
- Signed up to the Business in the Community's [Race at Work charter](#).

# Racial diversity

## ▶ Guardian US

We aspire to represent and report for all the United States of America. This means embedding and prioritising diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) throughout our journalism, systems, operations and culture.

We conduct an annual ethnicity pay gap study and regular pay parity reviews and share results with staff. We have a goal to reduce the pay gap every year and we have also set targets to ensure representation across earning quartiles.



We also conduct quarterly DEI surveys to understand the prevalence and types of discrimination people experience, and how welcome and included employees feel at work. The results are shared with staff through regular DEI focused town halls.

Guardian US commitments made in July 2020 form the foundation of our US DEI agenda, which was developed under the guidance of the Guardian US People of Color employee group. We will continue to build on these commitments over time. They include:

- Editorial initiatives that foster more inclusive and diverse journalism and more equitable newsroom practices.
- Business-wide initiatives that address representation, staff retention and culture.
- Accountability every step of the way by setting clear goals, regularly measuring our progress and being transparent about the results.

### **Progress so far includes:**

- Appointing a new deputy editor and news desk editor whose remit includes driving more diverse and inclusive journalism.
- A review and reset of newsroom practices to improve DEI in practices such as sourcing, commissioning, freelance networking, audience development, morning news conference, production and visuals. Recommendations are currently being implemented.
- Dissemination of clear hiring guidelines for editorial appointments.
- New commitments to hiring and recruitment targets (50% of new roles to be filled with qualified diverse candidates and 50% of shortlisted candidates to be qualified diverse candidates).
- A mentorship program for People of Color staff.

- Tailored, mandatory anti-racist training for all staff which addresses key areas like allyship, navigating difficult conversations, and the hiring process.
- DEI has been integrated into performance reviews and all managers across the business have at least one DEI goal.

# Racial diversity

## ▶ Guardian Australia

Guardian Australia is committed to fostering workplace diversity and ensuring all our people, from any background, can contribute to their full potential.

We aspire to a workforce that reflects the diversity of the audience we serve.

### **Progress so far includes:**

- Launched the 'Adele Horin Prize' in conjunction with the University of Technology, Sydney - giving third year journalism students the opportunity to take part in a five-week paid internship with Guardian Australia. The award is provided to students who may not otherwise have the means and opportunity to obtain an internship on their own.
- Completed annual demographic surveys to inform goals and action plans develop a more comprehensive picture of our current staff.

- Established a reconciliation working group - a subgroup of the broader diversity and inclusion forum that aims to promote and facilitate respect, trust and positive relationships between Guardian Australia and Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples. The first Guardian Australia Reconciliation Action Plan will be launched later in the financial year.

- Established a cultural and linguistic diversity (CALD) working group, a subgroup of the broader diversity and inclusion forum that aims to increase cultural and linguistic diversity at Guardian Australia and support individuals who identify as part of a cultural or religious minority. The first CALD action plan will be launched later in the financial year.

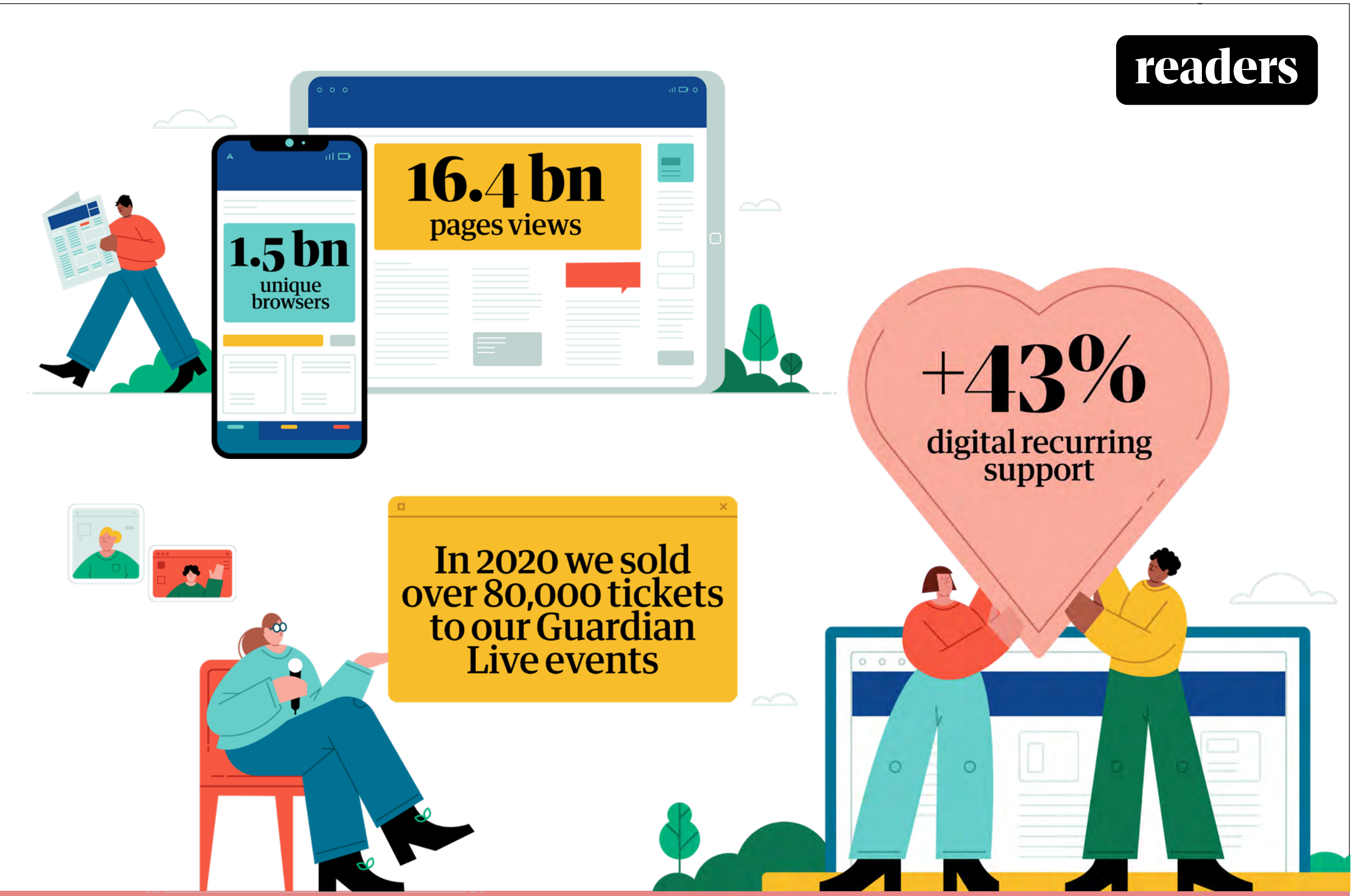


# 3 | Impact on our readers

The biggest impact our organisation makes in the world derives from Guardian and Observer journalism. [In 2020, our journalists](#) covered an incredible year of events, from the very start of the year with the Australian bushfires, through the struggle for Hong Kong, the Harvey Weinstein verdict to the death of George Floyd and the global Black Lives Matters movement, and the dramatic and divisive US presidential election. Dominating the entire year, and Guardian readers' interests, was the coronavirus pandemic.

We also saw a large increase in reader support over the past year, with record numbers of people supporting us in the form of digital subscriptions, recurring contributions, single contributions and print subscriptions.

The growing appetite for Guardian journalism was reflected in continued growth in readership. In a world in which high quality news is increasingly available only to a paying audience, The Guardian provides free-to-access, independent, fact-based journalism to unprecedented numbers of readers - in 2020 a record 1.5 billion unique browsers visited our digital platforms with 16.4 billion page views - up more than 20% on the previous 12 months on both counts.



readers

### Breakdown

- 352,000 digital subscriptions to the Guardian's premium apps and tablet editions (up 60% year on year)
- 548,000 recurring contributions (up 33% year on year)
- Over 100,000 people subscribed to either the Guardian, Observer or Guardian Weekly

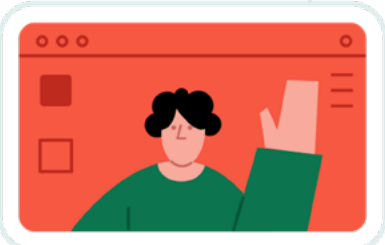
# Feedback from readers

## Protecting our readers' data and privacy

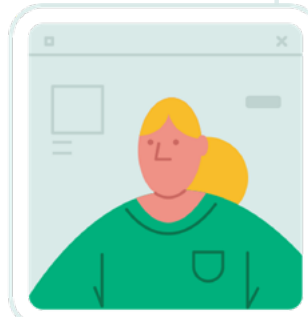
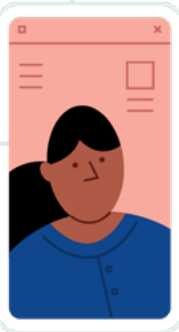
We are committed to keeping our readers' personal data safe. We have [privacy](#) and [cookie](#) policies that explain how we collect, use, share and transfer the personal data of our readers. We also enable our readers to manage their emails and marketing preferences when signed into a Guardian account. All of these measures are backed up by a team dedicated to keeping any data that we collect safe and secure.

As part of an industry-wide initiative in August 2020 to give consumers and readers greater transparency and control over how their personal data is collected and used, the Guardian deployed a new information banner, which enables readers to consent more easily to the storage of a range of cookies, and make choices about how their personal data is used. The new banner, the core of which was designed by IAB Europe and the wider industry - helps to meet our regulatory and policy obligations in relation to the protection and use of reader data.

"Congratulations! Organisations that 'walk the talk' are rare indeed. I am a contributor, and will continue to support The Guardian."



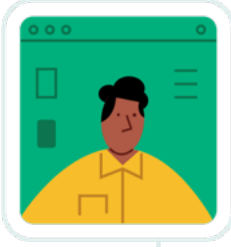
"Most happy to renew my subscription! But, also glad a subscription is not necessary so I can share Guardian's informative articles with others. Thank you".



"To me, Guardian Australia is one of the last bastions of independent journalism in this country. It is essential to any democracy that we have a free and independent press. They hold those in power to account, interrogate issues and inform the masses. The Guardian does those things for me."

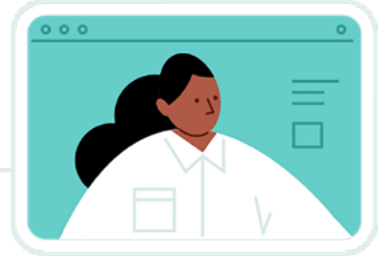


"The Guardian's stance on the environment and its excellent coverage of related stories and events is the major reason for my support."



"I will renew my support for the Guardian because I support your not taking advertising dollars from fossil fuel industries."

"Thank you so much for both covering terrible news incidents, and reporting about them in a way that speaks for peace and justice. I'm not black. I am Cuban-American and I trust the Guardian to report the news with a good heart, being honest and balanced. That is why you are my #1 go-to source, that I believe in for the truth about what is happening."



# 4 | The Guardian as B Corporation



## Why we became a B Corporation

The Guardian was proud to be the first major international news organisation to become a B Corporation in 2019, joining a community of like-minded businesses who use profits and growth for a greater good and have a positive impact on the world.

The B Corp certification gives us a rigorous framework to help assess, plan and monitor our performance in a number of areas: environmental, workers, governance, community and customer impact.

The external assessment and scoring keep us transparent and open us up to welcome scrutiny, raising our ambitions. While we were proud of our initial impact score, we knew we could do better.



# Our first year

# 2019

# 2020

*(unaudited)*

Over the last year we have used the B Corp assessment tool to estimate the impact of changes we have made on our score; the numbers presented here reflect that unaudited assessment. By the time we undertake our next B Corp recertification (expected in 2022), we hope to be able to demonstrate further progress.

We also revised the [GMG Governance Code](#) October 2020 in order to ensure we are upholding high levels of corporate governance in accordance with the values of the Guardian. The new code places a greater emphasis on stakeholder voice and employee engagement, diversity, and corporate culture, as well as giving greater transparency of board and directors' activities.

It was clear from our first audit that we could go much further with our environmental commitments, and we are pleased to see that score improving, following our commitment to achieve net zero emissions.

While the scores are a good indicator of how we are doing, they do not represent our goals and strategy in full.

Beyond our environmental commitments we have made a series of significant changes, including updating our company Articles of Association to confirm that we take the interests of all stakeholders into account, which has seen our governance rating improve.

<b>86.2</b>	Overall impact score	<b>99.6</b>
<b>10.5</b>	Governance	<b>16.2</b>
<b>27.9</b>	Workers	<b>29.6</b>
<b>18.2</b>	Community	<b>19.5</b>
<b>7.6</b>	Environment	<b>12.9</b>
<b>21.8</b>	Customers	<b>21.2</b>

A slight dip or increase in a score can indicate a change in reporting measures rather than a specific action, which is the case for slight changes in our latest scores for community, customers and workers.

# 5 | Impact of coronavirus



Coronavirus brought a year of extraordinary challenges to the Guardian as it has to so many businesses and people around the world, transforming everything from our editorial priorities to how we work. During this time, we sought to put science and the latest data in the foreground of our journalism, hold governments and scientific establishments to account, and to give our readers accurate, reliable information in a time of uncertainty and misinformation.

To ensure we could continue to produce Guardian journalism, we rapidly made significant changes to our working practices, shifting the vast majority of our workforce to remote working with only small numbers of essential staff producing the website and newspaper from our offices in London.

During this period we put in place a range of mental health initiatives to support staff, including a new hub of resources focused on mental health and wellbeing, mandatory workshops, and a series of events and workshops alongside our existing free employee assistance programmes.

Coronavirus accelerated many of the long-term structural trends affecting the news industry, and while a record number of our readers supported us financially, our print, advertising, jobs recruitment and live events operations have all been under increased pressure. In July 2020, we announced plans to restructure a number of these areas, which sadly included job losses, meaning about 125 valued colleagues left the organisation this year.

We were unable to host events or internships in Guardian offices, which affected our long-standing [Positive Action Scheme](#); our partnership with Creative Access to offer internships in non-editorial departments; and the significant outreach work the Guardian Foundation does with schools and colleges. Live events and Guardian Masterclasses also shifted to 100% digital formats. We continue to look for meaningful ways to restart these programmes safely.

In 2021, the uncertain nature of the pandemic will continue to challenge our operations, but Guardian journalism will continue to report with empathy and humanity through these unprecedented times.



# 6 | Looking ahead

The Guardian continues to take strides to become a more sustainable and impactful news organisation, ensuring that the whole of our business considers its impacts on people and the planet.

The commitments laid out in this report will require collaboration, transparency and scrutiny. We acknowledge there is still some way to go, and the past year has created new challenges, but we will continue to change the way we do business for the better. Our priorities for the year ahead include:

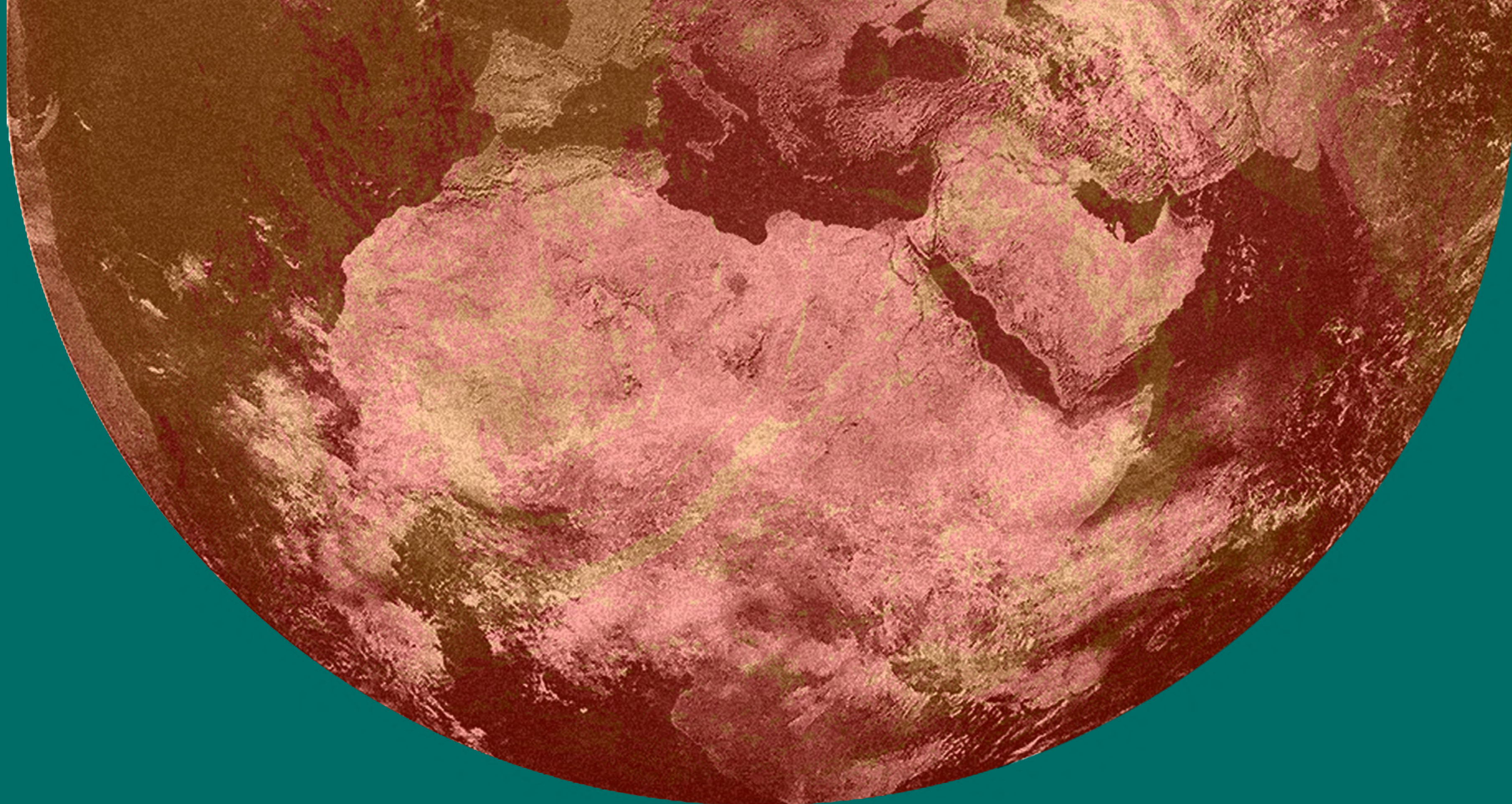
- **Sustainability**  
We continue to evaluate every area of our business in order to reduce emissions in the long term. We are paying particular attention to our print newspaper production process to see where we can make the most impactful changes.

- **Diversity and inclusion**  
We will be publishing updates to our gender and ethnicity pay reports in 2021. We will continue to see how we can accelerate progress in achieving the goals we have set in both areas.

- **The future of work**  
The pandemic has meant the vast majority of our staff have worked from home for most of the past year. We are reviewing what we have learned through this period to help inform a model for how we will work in the future.

The last year has presented many challenges to our business. We will continue to keep improving and making the Guardian a more sustainable and positive organisation.





**GMI**  
Guardian Media Group  
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