



Shaping places  
that make a  
positive impact  
on people's lives

# Creating a positive impact on society and the environment

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We believe that together, we can create opportunities, support communities and leave a positive impact for generations to come.

This report reflects the steps we've taken and our commitment to keep doing better.

We're committed to making a meaningful impact, embedding social value in everything we do as an architecture and building consultancy practice. Guided by the Social Value Act, we focus on understanding the needs of the communities, ensuring our projects deliver lasting benefits.

We create opportunities for all by supporting career development, inspiring young people and opening up alternative pathways into the industry.

Our approach to health and wellbeing ensures our people and the communities we support have access to inclusive environments that promote both physical and mental wellbeing.

Through collaboration and knowledge-sharing, we continue to drive positive change across the built environment.

Sustainability is central to our work, balancing economic, social and environmental priorities to enhance lives and leave a lasting legacy.

This report highlights our progress over the past year and our ongoing journey towards a more responsible, sustainable future.



**Anthony Langan**  
Managing Director,  
Architecture



**Allan Hunt**  
Managing Director,  
Building Consultancy



## Our work extends beyond buildings

We shape communities, support local economies and improve wellbeing. From delivering sustainable, inclusive spaces to fostering community engagement and championing economic growth, we take pride in making a positive difference.

Our commitment to social value is guided by three objectives:



Fair right to education



Inclusive, accessible communities



Improved health and wellbeing

[Find out more about our progress towards social value](#) →

## Our commitment to sustainability

Social value is a key part of our approach to sustainability. The future health, wellbeing and prosperity of people are intrinsically linked to the quality of the places and environment they live, work and socialise in.

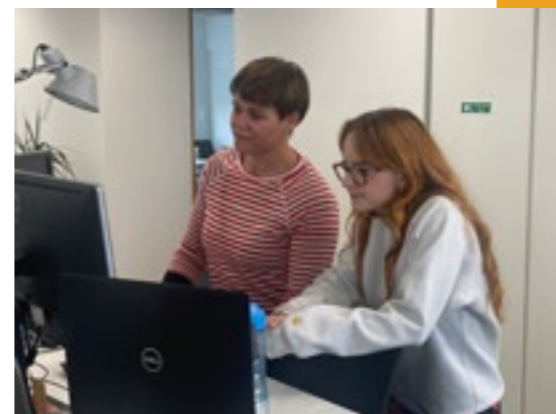
[Find out more about our approach to sustainability](#) →

## Measuring our social value impact

Understanding the impact of our work is key to ensuring we create meaningful change in the communities we serve.

We use a nationally recognised framework to benchmark our social value activities, helping us quantify the positive outcomes we deliver.

This approach allows us to measure the financial contribution we make to local communities, ensuring transparency and accountability in how we add value beyond our work.



63

work experience weeks with us on placement

58

work experience students supported



colleagues supported on Level 2+ qualifications

43

events with schools and universities



Apprentices supported

302

hours dedicated to mentoring university students



RIBA AHR scholarship



Visiting professorship

£9,431

fundraised and donations to charity

31

fundraising events undertaken

14

charities supported

243

volunteering hours contributed

9

Decarbonisation roundtables

15

Podcasts published



Wellbeing champions across our offices

£576k

Total social value impact



## Expanding opportunities for all

We believe everyone should have the opportunity to explore their potential, regardless of background or circumstance. In 2024, we built on this commitment by working closely with educational institutions and charities to deliver talks, mentoring, career guidance, work experience placements and scholarships.

Through these partnerships, we've been able to support a wider range of students, giving them valuable insight into the world of architecture and building consultancy.

### Work experience

Our work experience programme provided students from schools, colleges and universities with placements across all our offices, helping to break down barriers and drive social mobility with a broad spectrum of students.

We have created a range of programmes to give practical exposure into the many different aspects of the architectural and building consultancy profession, and into other professions that are needed to run a successful business.

Each placement is designed to develop key skills, nurture creativity and encourage collaboration. By sharing our expertise, we're shaping a more inclusive industry, equipping students with the knowledge and confidence to take the next steps in their career pathways.

**“AHR was especially considerate when talking about women in architecture. I loved meeting multiple female architects and hearing their experiences.”**

58

students supported

119

paid work placements

63

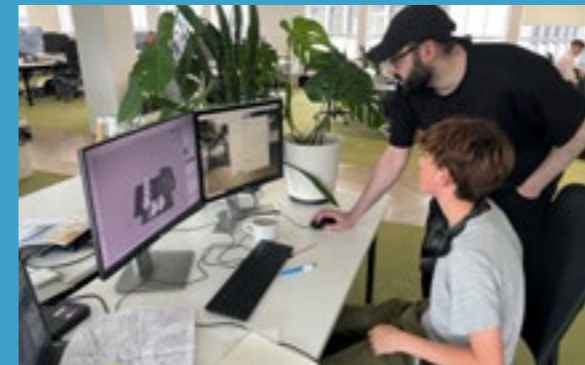
combined work placement weeks



## Regional highlights

### 7 Summer student placements

**Completed work experiences in our Bristol office.** Gaining hands-on skills in 3D modelling and model-making. Students worked on a RIBA brief, developing confidence in presenting their designs.



### Day in the life - work experience

Students explored professions from architecture and IT to marketing and social media, gaining first-hand experience of workplace collaboration.

Site visits with our Huddersfield building surveying team gave them insight to how projects evolve beyond the design stage, meeting clients, observing meetings and viewing surveys in action.



**“I enjoyed site visits and learning how each department has unique responsibilities and how they all fit together.”**

### 13 Work experience students

#### Mentored by our Midlands team.

Their experiences helped shape their career paths, demonstrating the programme's significant role and long-term benefits.



### 5 Current team members

#### First joined AHR through work experience placements between 2008 and 2022.

Their experiences helped shape their career paths, demonstrating the long-term impact of our work experience programme.



These initiatives have empowered students to make informed career choices and inspired them to pursue their professional aspirations.

## Exploring career opportunities with young people

We want to make a real difference by working with a range of charities and clients to ensure our social value activities have the biggest impact.

By partnering with organisations that support young people, we help to inspire and educate the next generation about careers in the property and construction sector. Through careers fairs, outreach programmes and collaborative initiatives, we aim to create opportunities for students of all backgrounds to explore potential career paths, develop key skills and connect with industry professionals.

**20** career fairs attended in 2024

### Careers Fairs

We participate in careers fairs across the country, engaging with young people to showcase the diverse career opportunities within the property sector. Through these events, our team provides insights into architecture, interior and landscape design, building surveying and the built environment, helping students understand the skills and pathways needed to succeed in the industry.

[Read how we're inspiring young people into architecture and building consultancy roles](#) →

### Speakers for Schools

Speakers for Schools is a national charity dedicated to levelling the playing field for young people by providing access to inspirational talks, work experience and insight days led by industry professionals.

Their mission is to help students—regardless of background—gain valuable knowledge, skills and opportunities that support their future career aspirations. By connecting young people with leading employers and experts across various sectors, the charity plays a key role in bridging the gap between education and the world of work.



### Our Collaboration with Speakers for Schools

Through our partnership with Speakers for Schools, we have engaged with students across the UK, offering insight into careers in architecture and the built environment.

By working with Speakers for Schools, we continue to inspire and educate young people about the built environment, supporting social mobility and creating pathways into the industry for the next generation.

### In 2024, partnered with Speakers for Schools

<b>2</b>	<b>120+</b>	<b>100+</b>
virtual events participated	students reached	schools across the UK

### Architecture and Planning for a Sustainable Future with AHR and HYAS

**45**

students attended from a diverse mix of backgrounds

**41** schools attended the event

**36** Local authorities engaged across UK

**10**

Locations across the UK, including Wales and Scotland

The session explored how sustainable practices can be integrated into urban planning and architectural design.



### Discover the Role of an Architect with AHR

**76**

students attended from a diverse mix of backgrounds

**60** schools attended the event

**52** Local authorities engaged across UK

**10**

Locations across the UK, including Wales and Scotland

This interactive session provided a comprehensive introduction to the profession, detailing the diverse architectural career paths and the creative and technical skills required to succeed.

Our Communities

## Championing inclusion with the RIBA AHR scholarship

Since 2008, the RIBA AHR Scholarship has supported talented Part 2 architecture students from low-income backgrounds.

Through the programme, we aim to address the lack of inclusivity in the architectural profession. The scholarship, worth £7,000, encourages applications from students from low-income households. The student also benefits from one-to-one mentoring, a four-week paid work placement and support from our talented team across the practice.

Our 2023 winner, Nuala Moya Durkin benefitted from mentoring throughout 2024 from associate director Hira Tierney in our Bristol office.

“Hira, and the rest of the Bristol team, have offered valuable insights to my research that have helped construct a project that can hopefully, one day, have real positive impact. Getting to visit projects that are having the same impact on others is truly inspiring.”

Nuala Moya Durkin  
2023 RIBA AHR Scholarship recipient



### Nuala's scholarship journey

**Listen to** what Nuala got up to on her work placement in the Bristol office, from the exciting projects she supported on to working in a studio environment.



### Inspired by Nuala's approach

**Hear from** AHR mentors, Gary and Hira, on how Nuala's approach sparked new ways of thinking and problem solving in their own design work.

## RIBA AHR scholarship 2024

Our 2024 recipient is Matthew James, who began his Part 2 studies in September at the University of Nottingham.

[Learn more about Matthew here](#) →

“I am immensely grateful to have been selected as the recipient of the RIBA AHR Scholarship this year, and I am thrilled to have this opportunity to work with AHR to advance my development over the next two years, both personally and professionally.”

Matthew James  
2024 RIBA AHR Scholarship recipient



Our Communities

## Mentoring the next generation

We actively collaborate with schools, colleges and universities to deliver workshops, talks and lectures about our projects and professions with the aim to prepare and educate future generations pursuing careers in the built environment sector.

### RIBA NW Practice and Education Forum

The Manchester team contributed to the forum as part of a schools' outreach programme. They also collaborated with Chester University, providing interior design students with an insightful tour of Chester Market, offering a real-world perspective on design in practice.

### Sharing expertise with students

Architect Simran Lall shared her expertise at Cardiff University's Designing Histories Master's unit. Her presentation explored the methodological and technical approaches of using film as a medium to convey the conceptual, atmospheric and narrative dimensions of architectural design.

### Supporting student introduction to our industry

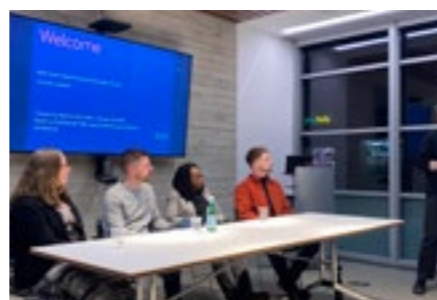
To help students build their confidence and improve their interview skills, we conducted mock interviews with Year 9 students at Park Lane Academy in Huddersfield. We also presented at Moorlands Primary School, at a STEM event aimed at younger children.

### Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) Fife event

In Glasgow, the team took part in the event which helps bridge the gap between businesses and education. At the event, S3 pupils gained a deeper understanding of the evolving manufacturing sector, exploring the skills and opportunities available in this dynamic industry.

### Promoting diversity and inclusion within the industry

Director Karle Burford connected with the University of the West of England's Equity Mentoring scheme to support two students from Global Majority backgrounds. Through mentor sessions, he provided guidance on skill development, networking, and interview and CV techniques, helping the students build confidence and prepare for their future careers.



## Inspiring a sustainable future

Robert Hopkins, director and head of sustainability, completed his impactful role as a Visiting Professor at Cardiff Metropolitan University.

Delivering several lectures throughout the year to second-year students in Architecture, Interior Design, and Construction Design and Technology. His guest lectures and tours extended to other universities, including the University of Liverpool, Loughborough University, Lancaster University and Glasgow University. These engagements have allowed Rob to directly influence the next generation of professionals, sharing his expertise and passion in sustainability and architecture.

During his three-year tenure at Cardiff, Rob worked on several tangible projects that bridged academic learning with real-world application. His involvement in sustainable design projects has included delivering insights into energy-efficient building techniques and integrating green technologies, giving students exposure to cutting-edge sustainability practices.

Rob's appointment as a Visiting Professor at Manchester School of Architecture in 2025 will provide further opportunities to inspire and mentor students.

His knowledge-sharing efforts have not only enhanced academic learning but also fostered closer ties between academia and industry, ensuring that students gain practical insights and real-world perspectives to shape their careers.

## RIBA student mentoring scheme

Through the RIBA Future Architects student mentoring scheme, we provided students with invaluable first-hand experience of architectural practice.

By working closely with our teams from our Manchester and Bristol offices, students gained deeper insight into the industry, developed their understanding of real-world projects, and built connections that will support their future careers.



281 RIBA mentoring hours in 2024

39 Students mentored through the scheme

14 Universities worked with across the following areas

- |               |              |
|---------------|--------------|
| Bath          | Glasgow      |
| Bournemouth   | Lancaster    |
| Bristol       | Liverpool    |
| Cardiff       | Loughborough |
| C. Lancashire | Manchester   |
| Chester       | Plymouth     |
| Falmouth      | Salford      |



Our People

## Apprenticeship programmes

We foster a culture of knowledge sharing, continually supporting our colleagues in lifelong learning, career progression and collaboration. We are committed to creating pathways to employment through a variety of routes.

Our apprenticeship programmes provide a strong foundation for meaningful careers, equipping individuals with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in their chosen fields. By offering paid, hands-on learning in a real working environment, we provide invaluable experience that helps apprentices build lasting skills for the future.

This approach also enables us to attract a diverse range of candidates with unique perspectives, strengthening our inclusive workplace and contributing to the development of accessible, inclusive communities.

“I love that I’m given the same amount of work as everyone else in the department and I’m expected to do the same, so I really feel like I’m part of the team.”

Matthew Mear  
3D Modeller apprentice



“Working in an office team was invaluable - something I wouldn’t have gained going to university full time.”

Jonathan Goldby  
Level 6 degree architectural assistant



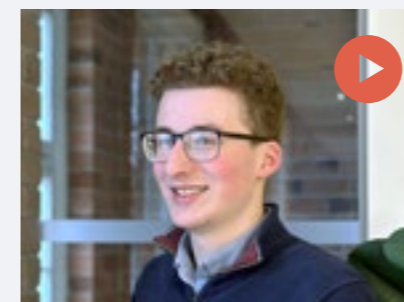
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Apprentices supported in

Building surveying  
Architecture  
Landscape design  
Data technician

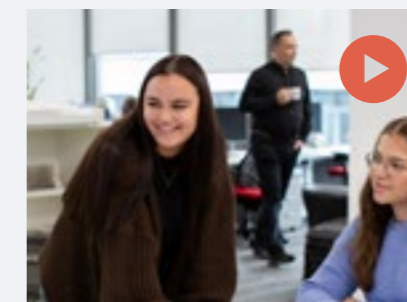
Apprenticeship weeks

[Learn more about how we support and mentor the next generation](#)



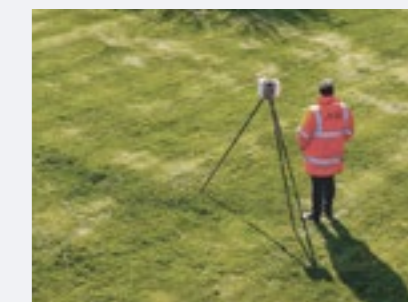
### Hear from Jonathan

**Hear about** his progress so far and how he discovered an apprenticeship with the practice.



### Eva and Elisha

**Discover** the benefits that have come from the experience and their aspirations for the future.



### Meet Matthew

**Learn** how he’s finding working with our geomatics team and gaining his drone flying licence.



Our People

## Professional development

We foster a culture of learning and innovation, where continuous development is key to both personal and professional growth.

### Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Supporting our team in their CPD is central to ensuring they can achieve their points throughout the year. By investing in ongoing learning, we empower individuals to reach their career aspirations while keeping our teams highly trained, skilled and knowledgeable.

This enhances our ability to design and operate safe, high-quality buildings and also drives forward new ideas, best practices and innovation within the industry.

### Working towards qualifications

We supported 22 colleagues in achieving professional qualifications, including Part 3 architects, building surveyors working towards their APC and finance administrators. Investing in our people's development empowers them to grow their careers while strengthening the industry. By supporting their training and qualifications, we help open opportunities, enhance their expertise and build confidence.

**“I’m so pleased to have qualified as an architect with AHR...Reaching this milestone is a reflection of the people who supported me along the way.”**

Simran Lall  
Architect



This commitment not only benefits our colleagues but also ensures we continue to deliver high-quality work across our projects. Skilled and knowledgeable teams are essential to creating positive, lasting impacts in the communities we serve. Through structured training, mentorship and financial support, we enable our people to thrive, reinforcing our reputation for excellence.

**“After years of hard work and dedication, I am proud to have achieved my Part 3 qualification. Special thanks to AHR for their incredible support and guidance.”**

Sevasti Ploumi  
Architect



In 2024

350

CPD hours completed

22

colleagues supported in achieving qualifications

932

weeks allocated for qualification-related studies

Our Work

## Knowledge sharing to drive positive change

Collaboration and knowledge-sharing are at the heart of driving positive change in our industry. In 2024, we've continued to speak at conferences, engaging with peers to exchange insights and expertise. By working together we can ensure the spaces we create have a lasting impact on the people who use them.



### Decarbonisation roundtables: Driving industry-wide action

Building on the success of our 2023 launch, we continued our Decarbonisation Roundtable Series. Hosting key stakeholders across the UK we provided a collaborative platform to discuss industry challenges and work towards actionable solutions.

#### Key discussion points included:

- Healthy building design
- Practical decarbonisation strategies
- Balancing short-term targets with long-term sustainability goals
- Encouraging behavioural change
- Addressing skills gaps in the industry
- Strengthening cross-sector collaboration



[Read more](#) →

A pivotal moment in the industry will be the introduction of the UK Net Zero Carbon (NZC) Standard, it will provide clear benchmarks for operational and embodied carbon. Giving us the clarity we need to take meaningful action.

### Launching The AHR podcast: Exploring industry trends and challenges

In its first year, the podcast brought together industry experts to discuss trends, challenges and opportunities across the public and private sectors. Episodes covered a range of thought-provoking topics, including placemaking's role in sustainable development, repurposing NHS estates to enhance health and wellbeing, nature recovery and the evolution of school design.

1,569

podcast listens  
[Listen now](#) →

### Reimagining healthcare spaces at IHEEM Healthcare Estates Conference

Burnout remains a critical challenge for NHS healthcare workers. At the IHEEM Healthcare Estates Conference, Victoria Shepherdson explored innovative ways to reimagine healthcare spaces, integrating technology to enhance patient outcomes while freeing up areas dedicated to staff wellbeing. Her insights highlighted the power of design in creating environments that support both patient care and workforce resilience.

### Sharing sustainability expertise

Robert Hopkins continued to champion a sustainable future, sharing his knowledge at key industry events. As a panellist at CIBSE North West, he contributed to an in-depth discussion on the UK Net Zero Carbon Building Standard.

At Footprint, the UK's property event focused on a net zero future. Rob joined a roundtable discussion titled From Risk to Resilience: How an Evidence-Based Approach Can Prepare You for Climate Change, reinforcing the importance of data-driven solutions in tackling sustainability challenges.

He contributed to creating the UK Net Zero Carbon (NZC) Building Standard, a framework outlining the principles to follow in achieving net zero carbon.

As a business we've been sharing knowledge with the UK Green Building Council, providing project data and inputting into the pilot programme. Version 1 of the Standard is due to be published in late 2025.

Our Work

## Woodmill and St Columba's RC High School

Delivering social value through education, sustainability and the community.

The Woodmill and St Columba's RC High School is a true embodiment of our social value principles, bringing together pupils, staff, and the wider community in a modern, inclusive and sustainable learning environment.

Completed and opened in 2024, the school in Fife stands as the UK's largest Passivhaus education building, setting new benchmarks for energy efficiency while prioritising the wellbeing of its users. The 26,666m<sup>2</sup> school provides a stimulating, safe and supportive space where pupils can thrive and staff can teach with confidence.

More than just a school, this project creates a seamless pathway from secondary education to further learning, training and employment, equipping students with the skills and opportunities needed to succeed.

Designed with people at its heart, the school is fully accessible not only to pupils, teachers and parents but also to the wider community. Facilities such as sports amenities, a learning lab, a community kitchen, a performance space, a state-of-the-art recording studio, an IT hub and a multi-use media lab ensure that the building serves as a vibrant hub for learning, creativity, and social engagement.

By creating an inclusive, future-focused space that supports education, skills development and community connections, this project delivers lasting social value and positive change for generations to come.



### Educational experience for all

**Hear from** pupils and teachers of Woodmill and St Columba's RC High School. The opening of the new school in Fife has been met with positivity.



### Reflecting on the journey

**Listen to** discussions and reflections on the successful collaborative approach behind the project, including key lessons learned along the way, with our clients.

[Explore the UK's largest passivhaus education building in our case study](#) →



“I’ve noticed a renewed sense of respect among the pupils. Being in a new building has instilled a sense of pride and also led to more respect for their own and others’ learning.”

**Damian Haggett**  
Teacher at Woodmill High School



Our Work

## Winterstoke Hundred Academy

A catalyst for learning  
and community growth.

Winterstoke Hundred Academy is a vital investment in the future of Weston-super-Mare, addressing the town's growing demand for secondary school places while delivering lasting social value.

Recognised as Building of the Year and Education Project of the Year at the Michelmores Property Awards, the project has created a high-quality learning environment that empowers students, supports staff and benefits the wider community. The 900-place secondary school, designed with the capacity to expand to 1,200 students, ensures that local young people have access to a first-class education close to home.

Beyond the classroom, the school serves as a community hub, providing secure access to sports facilities, a multi-use games area and external learning and social spaces. By integrating these shared resources, the project strengthens community ties and encourages health and wellbeing among residents.

Sustainability is at the heart of the design, with passive design principles minimising energy consumption and photovoltaic panels supporting net zero operation for the building's energy use. On track to achieve BREEAM Excellent certification, the project reflects our commitment to creating a sustainable future—not just for the school, but for the entire community.

By delivering an inspiring, future-proofed learning environment, Winterstoke Hundred Academy provides opportunities for generations of students while fostering a stronger, more connected, and more sustainable community.

### Recognised awards

#### Michelmores Property Awards

**Building of the year - Winner**  
**Education project of the year - Winner**

Our 900 place secondary school offers a fantastic new education environment for young people to learn, socialise and grow.

[Find out more in our case study](#) →



Our Work

## The Enquire Learning Trust Field Study Centre

Enhancing education and  
community with the New  
Field Study Centre.

We have been working with The Enquire Learning Trust since 2015, delivering a range of building consultancy services. Our latest project was the creation of a new Field Study Centre at their East Whitby site, providing a sustainable, residential space for school trips. The facility features eco-friendly elements like electric-powered rooms and recycled materials, aligning with the Trust's sustainability goals, and educational elements inspired by local Viking history, offering a unique learning environment. There is also provision for outdoor activities with a firepit and accompanying seating.

We carried out initial survey works and provided initial designs for the expansion works to support the tender process. Our team worked on the refurbishment of existing facilities, enhancing them to match the new building's high standards.

This project helps the Trust provide a modern, safe and engaging space for students while supporting the local economy, suppliers and catering services.



[Find out more in our case study](#) →



## Creating spaces where people flourish

We believe that every space should inspire connection and inclusion. By working with diverse communities and embracing different perspectives, we create places where people feel valued, empowered and able to thrive. This commitment enriches both the built environment and the lives of those who experience it.

In 2024, there were

140

hours spent volunteering

96

professional hours donated to charities

31

charities supported worldwide

14

fundraising events



Our Communities

## Volunteering and community initiatives

Through voluntary work and community-focused projects, we use our expertise to support charities and community initiatives that might not otherwise have the means to access help or professional services.

### Enhancing Honley Library for the community

Honley Library in Huddersfield has been a cornerstone of the local community since it first opened its doors in 1936. When financial constraints threatened its closure, the Friends of Honley Library was formed in 2013 to secure its future. Today, dedicated volunteers keep the library running—not only by maintaining core services but also by driving fundraising efforts, organising events and ensuring it remains a valuable resource for local people.

Our pro bono design and planning application support is helping Honley Library evolve into a more accessible and adaptable space—ensuring it continues to be a vital hub for learning, connection and community engagement for future generations.

### Supporting community initiatives in Fife

Our Glasgow team partnered with Fife Voluntary Action to transform a disused shop unit into a vibrant community hub. By providing pro bono design and layout expertise, we've created a welcoming space where residents can access vital advice services, participate in local initiatives, and find support in a functional and accessible community environment.

### Volunteering with Smart Works Manchester

By building furniture for Smart Works' new office in Manchester city centre, we contributed in creating a professional and inspiring space where women can gain the confidence and resources to re-enter the workforce. This fresh environment empowers the charity to help even more women prepare for interviews and achieve their employment goals.

### Calthorpe Community Centre

Since 2017, we have been working with the charity, Saheli Hub, in Birmingham, to realise their vision for a new Calthorpe Community Hub, helping to expand their support for women from minority communities. However, funding challenges delayed progress, but in 2024 we refined the design to balancing ambition with practicality. By scaling back the scheme while preserving its purpose, we unlocked new funding opportunities. With Sport England's support, Saheli is now set to grow its vital services for women and families.

### Local environment improvements

Director Samantha Smith participated in a volunteering day with the Canal & River Trust, alongside the Transpennine Route Upgrade (TRU) team. The event helped clean and restore Huddersfield's Colne Valley waterways, making the area safer and more vibrant for local wildlife and residents alike. By cleaning overgrowth and reducing plastic waste, we contributed to environmental sustainability and a cleaner community space for recreation.

### Festive cheer for families living in poverty

Rebecca Smith and Manisa Mistry from our Leeds team volunteered their time to help sort, wrap and pack gifts destined for a local charity. Organised by Constructive Futures in support of Women's Whispers, a charity dedicated to supporting local families living in poverty, the donated gifts included toys, warm clothing and thoughtful items.

Our People

## Our commitment to diversity, equality and inclusion

A diverse and inclusive workplace makes us stronger. We're committed to fostering an environment where everyone can belong, thrive and contribute their unique perspectives.

This diversity drives creativity and innovation, making us stronger as a practice and as individuals. We also recognise the importance of celebrating different cultures, supporting career development for all, and fostering a workplace where open conversations about wellbeing and equality can thrive.



**“You accomplished the task perfectly and showed me the practical methods in the UK. You were generous with your time and information and did not hesitate to help at any time. I would like to thank you for your attempts to find solutions and help me find the right solutions for me personally.”**

**Refugees + Mentors candidate**  
Sharing their appreciation

### Refugees + Mentors

We teamed up with Refugees & Mentors, an amazing organisation that helps refugees, asylum seekers and vulnerable migrants improve their employment prospects, to mentor a candidate looking to take the next step in their architectural career in the UK. Through the Returner Project, Refugees & Mentors CIC supports professionals in fields like architecture, engineering and business services to relaunch their careers in Greater Manchester.

We ran two in-person mentoring sessions with the candidate. The first focused on key things to know about the UK architectural industry, like the RIBA, ARB, procurement processes, and the roles within a design team. The second session was all about CVs, portfolios and interviews, helping the candidate understand what UK employers are looking for and how to present themselves effectively.

We've continued supporting the candidate as they update their CV and portfolio, and we're helping them connect with the RIBA and ARB. They were also offered a work experience opportunity at our Manchester office.

### Championing equality

We are proud to create an inclusive and supportive workplace where both women and men can thrive. For our female colleague, the practice provides flexible options to enter our professions, flexible working arrangements, undertakes outreach activities within schools and career development initiatives to help break down barriers and support progression within the industry. Equally, we recognise the importance of supporting men's well-being and career growth. To mark International Men's Day, the practice not only organised social activities, quizzes, and Movember fundraising generating £790 for men's health charities, but also encouraged open conversations around mental health, work-life balance and the challenges men face in the workplace. By championing inclusivity for everyone, we foster a culture where all employees feel valued, supported and empowered to succeed.

### Celebrating cultures and traditions

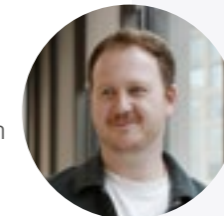
Our team members come from all cultural backgrounds and so we celebrated a variety of religious festivals across our offices. From celebrations of Diwali, where colleagues come together to enjoy traditional sweets and decorate the office with vibrant rangoli designs, to Ramadan where we support our Muslim team members by accommodating flexible working hours. At Christmas, our social committees spread festive cheer by decorating our offices and we thanked the hard work of our teams with social events and a well-earned rest.



## Promoting inclusion in the industry

Karle Burford, Director, is proud to be a member of the Bristol Property Inclusion Charter, an initiative dedicated to making the property sector more diverse, inclusive and accessible.

The Charter brings together people and businesses committed to driving real change—whether it's through improving career opportunities or fostering a more inclusive culture, ensuring that students gain practical insights and real-world perspectives to shape their careers.



In Greater Manchester, Michael Dunn is a member of the local Building Equality committee, an organisation focused on driving LGBTQIA+ inclusivity and equality within the built environment sector.

The organisation works to create a more diverse and supportive industry, ensuring people from all backgrounds have access to opportunities and are empowered to succeed.

Hear more from Karle and Michael on building inclusion in the industry



Our Communities

## Team fundraising and collective giving

We take pride in supporting important causes through various fundraising events, from charity runs to bake sales and team challenges.

**£9,431**

fundraised and donations to charities



### Donations in response to appeals and collections

We contribute to food banks and Christmas toy drives, providing essential support to individuals and families facing hardship. In 2024, we undertook collections for Fareshare Southwest, Glasgow City Mission and the Wood Street Mission. These contributions help ensure that vulnerable communities have access to food, necessities and moments of joy during the festive season.

### Donations to boost STEM activities

Our funding enabled three days of immersive STEM workshops at Willows High School in Cardiff. Students designed wind turbines and explored coding, sparking curiosity and building practical skills that could shape their futures in engineering and technology.

### A chance to give back to the communities we work in

Fundraising events also provide a great opportunity for our teams to come together and have fun while making a difference. Some of the events our team got involved with in 2024 included:

- MacMillan Coffee Morning
- Save the Children Christmas Jumper Day
- Blueprint for All Charity Run
- British Heart Foundation Charity Run
- Bristol Pride Charity Bake Off
- Endometriosis Tea for Endo
- Andy's Mans Club Quiz Night
- Encephalitis International Fundraiser



Our Work

## Safer Hull Paragon Station

Creating safe spaces.

The transformation of a disused retail unit in Hull Paragon Station into the Safer Hull Paragon Hub has created a pioneering community space enhancing safety and support for passengers. This welcoming and safe community-focused space strengthens connections between support services and the millions of people who pass through the station each year.

Working closely with stakeholders, like British Transport Police and local charities, we designed a hub that not only addresses the diverse needs of station users, but is where passengers can access services from agencies like Humberside Police, The Railway Children, The Samaritans, and other local support organisations.

**“The Safer Hull Paragon Hub aims to identify and safeguard individuals at the earliest opportunity, increase police presence in the station, reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and provide a shared location for local charities to raise their visibility.”**

Sgt Steve O'Callaghan  
British Transport Police

## Farringdon Station

Stirling Prize winner.

Farringdon Station, designed by AHR as part of the Elizabeth Line, has contributed to the project's success in winning the prestigious 2024 RIBA Stirling Prize. The Elizabeth Line, a 118 km transport network with 10 new stations, has transformed travel across London, easing congestion and improving connectivity. Farringdon Station plays a key role in this, providing a seamless interchange between Thameslink, the London Underground and Crossrail services. The station enhances accessibility, supporting local regeneration and creating new job opportunities, helping to drive long-term growth in the area.

## Residential delivery in London

Enhancing residential development.

We have delivered impactful residential projects across London, addressing local housing needs. In Colindale, the Little Strand development added 31 new homes to the area, including eight wheelchair-adapted flats, supporting Barnet Council's goal of delivering 1,000 new social homes by 2026.

In East Ham, we transformed underused sites into 48 energy-efficient Passivhaus homes at Burgoyne's Depot and Melford Road Garages, contributing to the area's regeneration. Whilst the Paradise Depot project, in Hemel Hemstead, will deliver 56 apartments and a new centre for homelessness charity, DENS. These developments help tackle housing shortages, support vital community services and help improve the lives of residents.





## Enhancing quality of life

We believe that the built environment should actively enhance physical, mental and social wellbeing. Our work goes beyond design, we create spaces and contribute to initiatives that support mental health, encourage active lifestyles and strengthen community connections.



## Championing sustainability



As Head of Sustainability, Robert Hopkins is at the forefront of pushing for sustainability in everything we do, both within the practice and across our projects.

His leadership drives our commitment to creating energy-efficient, sustainable designs that lower energy costs, improve air quality and create healthier places to live and work - benefiting both people and the planet. Rob is also a strong voice in the wider industry, regularly working with key stakeholders and clients to shape best practices in sustainable architecture. He's played a key role in developing the UK Green Building Council's Net Zero Building Standard, a crucial step towards decarbonising our industry.



Gurminder Sanghera is actively involved in the Leeds Property and Economic Forum, where he leads the sustainability group, pushing for greener, healthier spaces.

His efforts align with our commitment to improving health and wellbeing through sustainable design, better air quality and spaces that promote active living. By supporting initiatives like the Leeds Climate Coalition, the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee and the West Yorkshire Combined Authority's Expert Panel for the Nature Recovery Strategy, we're driving real change - helping to shape greener, more climate-resilient communities where people can enjoy cleaner air, healthier spaces, and a more sustainable future.

**“It was fantastic to witness the students really embracing the session. We tasked them with a couple of activities, to create their own ideas for the scheme and then translate these into detailed sketches.”**

Rebecca Smith  
Architect



Our Communities

## Engaging with our communities

At Rother Valley Country Park, we are helping to create a more accessible, inclusive and sustainable space for both the local community and visitors.

By improving the park's facilities, we're making outdoor spaces more inviting and accessible - encouraging people to stay active, enjoy nature and connect with their community, while also supporting biodiversity and economic growth.

We have actively involved local schools and residents in the design process, ensuring their voices shape the future of the park. This includes a session with students from Sheffield Park Academy, where we shared insights into architecture and sustainability while gathering their ideas on how public spaces can better serve communities.



Our People

## Supporting the wellbeing of colleagues

We believe that when our people thrive, so does our business. We're committed to creating a workplace where wellbeing comes first, providing the support, resources and culture to help our team feel their best.

284

colleagues supported across our offices

54

social events organised across our offices



### A package of support

Across all our offices, we have dedicated Wellbeing Champions who help promote a positive, supportive culture, alongside two fully trained Mental Health First Aiders who are always on hand to provide guidance.

Our employee benefits package is designed to make it easier to look after both physical and mental health. This includes private medical insurance, an employee assistance programme and access to a wellbeing app that offers a range of resources—from remote GP appointments and physiotherapy to mental health support, wellness content, and lifestyle coaching.

We also believe in the power of connection and taking time out for self-care. Through initiatives like Mental Health Awareness Week and Brew Monday, we create spaces for open conversations, meaningful connections and a supportive culture—helping our colleagues look after their wellbeing together.

### Team away days

Across our offices our teams took part in office away days and outdoor activities, giving everyone a chance to step away from their desks, recharge and connect in a different environment.

Whether it was team-building challenges, outdoor walks, or a day on a boat, these activities help boost wellbeing, strengthen relationships and support a positive work culture.

### Bringing the team together with social activities

We know that a great workplace is about more than just work—it's about building connections and having fun along the way. That's why we organise a variety of social activities across our offices, giving everyone a chance to unwind, try something new, and spend time together outside of work.

From bowling nights and gaming sessions to creative workshops like needle felting, sketching and Christmas wreath making, there's something for everyone.



“A lovely experience with everyone from Shrewsbury and Birmingham offices. We thoroughly enjoyed the beautiful views Wales has to offer, being soaked by the rain and racing down the canals while getting the barges beached. We had an amazing day filled with laughter and joy.”

Ilina Miteva-Sawyer  
Architectural Assistant (Pt II)







Our Work

## Clinic Building, School of Health and Society

Enhancing health and wellbeing in Salford.

The University of Salford's Health Quarter is set to make a real difference in the local community by providing accessible healthcare services through its public-facing clinical facilities.

These clinics, designed by AHR, will serve as both a hub for hands-on student learning and a vital healthcare resource - providing accessible services that improve wellbeing for those who need them most.

By keeping spaces flexible, our design ensures a wide range of classes and activities can be delivered, helping more people benefit from health education and support. This project strengthens the connection between healthcare professionals, students and the local community, fostering a more inclusive and supportive health environment.

[Read how our design enhances healthcare accessibility and education in our case study](#)



**“Our vision is to create a versatile space that can thrive for generations to come. The clinic, which is the first of a number to be delivered for the school, will link directly to subject areas, complementing placements in local NHS Trusts and providing students with meaningful learning opportunities.”**

**Robert Hopkins**  
Director



Our Work

## 1 - 21 St Cuthberts

Sustainable homes for a healthier community in Bonnyrigg.

Our work at 1-21 St Cuthberts in Bonnyrigg has delivered high-quality, energy-efficient homes that put residents' wellbeing first. Having achieved Passivhaus Classic certification, these homes provide a healthier, more comfortable living environment while dramatically cutting energy costs—helping residents save money and reducing fuel poverty for a more affordable future.

Thoughtfully designed interiors have prioritised general wellbeing by avoiding sensory overload, ensuring good natural light and providing spaces that residents can personalise to feel truly at home. The development supports a healthier community by improving air quality, reducing carbon emissions and creating modern, adaptable homes that meet the needs of residents now and in the future.

**“This project is about fostering independence, dignity and a sense of belonging for people with learning disabilities in the heart of their community.”**

**Louise Smith**  
Architect



[Find out more in our case study](#)



Our Work

## Rickmansworth Aquadrome Bridge

Connecting communities and enhancing the visitor experience at a well-loved nature reserve.

Our work on the Rickmansworth Aquadrome Bridge will deliver a safer, more accessible route for the local community, improving connectivity within this much-loved green space. By replacing the ageing structure with a durable, low-maintenance bridge, we have ensured that visitors of all ages and abilities can continue to enjoy the Aquadrome's natural beauty.

The project enhances accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists, encouraging outdoor activity and promoting wellbeing. By working closely with the local council and community stakeholders, we've created a long-lasting improvement that strengthens links between nature and the people who rely on these spaces for recreation and relaxation.

“Replacing the bridge forms part of the wider Rickmansworth Aquadrome Project that aims to restore, improve and safeguard this biodiverse nature reserve while balancing the site’s recreational use for many years to come.”

Chris Lloyd  
Councillor and TRDC's Lead Member for Leisure



Image credit: Beaver Bridges



[Find out more in our case study](#) →

Our Work

## Excellence in design and community impact



We were named Architectural Practice of the Year at Insider's Yorkshire Property Industry Awards.

In recognition of our commitment to delivering high-quality, sustainable and community-focused design. This award reflects our impact on Yorkshire's built environment - creating workplaces that inspire, public spaces that bring communities together and energy-efficient designs that make everyday life better for the people who use them.

Our work continues to have a lasting social impact, supporting communities through inclusive design, sustainability initiatives and engagement with education and skills programmes.

## Driving sustainability in healthcare design

Demonstrating our commitment to comprehensive net zero targets and robust carbon emissions reporting.

We have achieved NHS Evergreen Sustainable Supplier Level 2, demonstrating our commitment to supporting the NHS in its journey towards net zero.

This achievement recognises our efforts in embedding sustainability across our projects, from reducing carbon emissions in healthcare buildings to designing spaces that enhance patient and community wellbeing.

Aligning with the NHS's sustainability goals means we are helping to create healthier, more efficient spaces that benefit both healthcare providers and the communities they serve.

## Our progress towards Net Zero

We've cut our carbon footprint, bringing us closer to our goal of reaching Net Zero by 2030.

**259.5** tonnes of CO2e cut over the past six years

### Making a measurable impact on the environment

We have been actively implementing our Carbon Reduction Plan, which is integrated into our ISO 14001:2018 Policy for Environmental Management.

This plan includes maintaining a Greenhouse Gas (GHG) inventory, openly quantifying and reporting our emissions and reducing our Scope 1, 2, and 3 emissions in line with the GHG Protocol.

[Discover our commitment to a lower-carbon future](#) →

# Continuing our social value journey

As we reflect on the significant progress made in 2024, we take pride in our achievements that have enhanced the health, wellbeing and prosperity of the people who use our places and the communities we work in.

We look forward to continuing to build upon our three objectives, through 2025. Stay connected by following us on our social media channels for all the latest updates.

 [www.linkedin.com/company/ahr/](https://www.linkedin.com/company/ahr/)

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