



# Canary Wharf Group Junior Board Report 2022



CANARY WHARF  
GROUP



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Andrew Thompson, Health, Safety & Compliance Manager  
Julie Dang, Social Value Manager

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# Foreword

## Jane Hollinshead, Chief People Officer

Listening to our next generation of talent is a fundamental part of our ED&I strategy. It's important that we are open to new and different perspectives that help shape our culture, purpose and decision making. This report sets out the Junior Board's objectives, key projects, and achievements over 2022. Working with our Junior Board has provided me with valuable insight and direction for the business and I'm grateful to each Board member for their positive contribution and guidance over the year.



## Andrew Thompson, Health, Safety & Compliance Manager, Chair from January 2022 – August 2022

Being the first chair of the Junior Board has been an incredible experience. I have been privileged to work alongside some of the best and brightest in the business. My priority as chair was to equip the newly empowered Junior Board members with the relevant skills to reverse mentor the Management Board. With the support of our Learning & Development Team, we participated in a new training programme that gave us the skills to reverse mentor the Management Board. Our biggest successes were the launch of the Sports & Social Committee and 'coffee roulette'. These two initiatives really helped foster an inclusive environment and improve internal collaboration.

## Julie Dang, Social Value Manager, Chair from August 2022 – March 2023

I was excited to step up and build on Andrew's great work, ensuring the projects we started really flourished and got closer to our desired outcomes. Our overarching strategy was to focus on three pillars: improve recruitment and retention within the business, positively change the perception of the Estate and enrich the internal culture and collaboration. This report illustrates the progress we've made.

It's been a privilege to collaborate with such a diverse and talented group of people from different business areas who care about similar things.







# Where It Started

Canary Wharf Group (CWG) created a Junior Board in early 2022 in recognition of the value that the next generation brings to the company's culture. A cornerstone of the Group's ED&I strategy, and sponsored by its CEO, Shobi Khan, the Junior Board members were appointed for an eighteen-month tenure following a groupwide competitive application process.

## The purpose of the Junior Board was to:

- Generate ideas and make recommendations that would shape the future direction of the business
- Act as a sounding board for the Senior Management Team
- Reverse-mentor members of the Management Board, leveraging the diverse range of experiences, backgrounds and work experience each Junior Board member brought

The Junior Board met monthly, elected their Chair and Secretary on a six-month rotation and as their tenure completed, produced this report. The Junior Board's guiding principles within their Terms of Reference were to:

- Foster an inclusive environment where everyone can thrive, develop, and succeed
- Shape CWG as an employer of choice for the next generation
- Raise awareness of issues faced within CWG by junior employees and generate practical solutions
- Work with CWG's ED&I Networks to promote diversity and inclusion within all business areas
- Assess, review and revise processes and procedures to support the delivery of the Junior Board's objectives

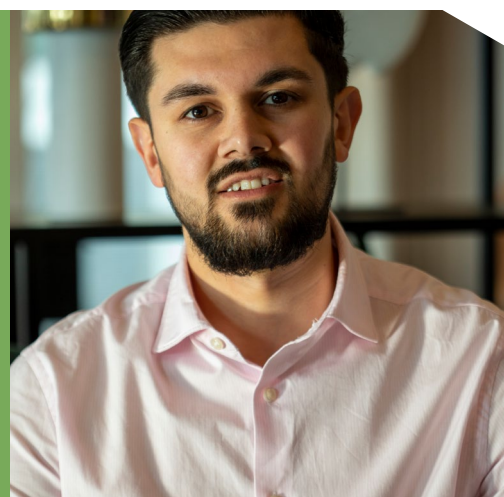


# Meet the 2022 Junior Board

**Andrew Thompson,**  
Health, Safety &  
Compliance Manager



**Dan Pereira,**  
IT Infrastructure Supervisor



**Jakir Kamali,**  
Assistant  
Construction Manager



**Jonathan Marcos,**  
Treasury Analyst



**Julie Dang,**  
Social Value Manager



**Katie Heron,**  
HR Advisor



**Sophie Ogbonda-Jardine,**  
Senior Marketing Executive



**Suchita Patel,**  
Senior Associate  
- Investment



**Theodora Giannouli,**  
Development  
Project Manager



**Will Griggs,**  
Customer Insights Manager







# The Three Pillars

The Junior Board identified three pillars of work to deliver in their tenure.

- a) Recruitment & retention**
- b) Culture & collaboration**
- c) Changing perceptions**

The Junior Board divided itself into three sub-teams with each focusing on one of the three pillars. Each sub-team included representation from different departments across the business to drive efficiencies, diversity of perspective, ideas and experience.



# a) Recruitment and retention

Like many other companies in the post-pandemic environment in 2022, CWG faced a challenge in meeting the changing expectations of Next Gen employees, most of whom had faced at least one year in lockdown. The recruitment and retention pillar was created to respond to the declining retention rate of junior employees as they returned to the workplace.

The Junior Board set itself the task of examining quantitative and qualitative data to ascertain what factors were impacting retention. Using this data and reviewing best practice across several industries and sectors, the team recommended some retention-boosting ideas, ranging from quick and easy fixes to large-scale organisational changes.

The project covered the early lifecycle of junior employees, from work experience and internships through to completing an apprenticeship or graduate programme. It mapped candidates' journeys and created a golden thread from their first contact with the company to becoming fully-fledged employees.

Phase I of the project focused on the hiring process for junior employees and reviewed what measures were in place to monitor and increase retention. Phase II shifted focus to improving the work experience and internship programmes, the general onboarding process and the apprentice programme. The final phase focused on the approach and content of secondments and university led placements.

The data collected supported the anecdotal evidence that junior employees made up a considerable proportion of the total departures while comprising a relatively small percentage of the company. When reviewed against UK numbers, the data showed this was higher than average. As the Junior Board set about making recommendations in relation to this project, it was decided to put the graduate programme on hold. It was re-launched in early 2023 following the implementation of the key recommendations.



## Recommendations:

The key recommendation from Phase I was to overhaul the existing graduate programme with bespoke individual development plans and to pair graduates up with a senior mentor to support their development. A refreshed graduate programme was also recommended, creating two separate pathways for technical and generalist roles. The implementation of these programmes would be supported by a dedicated Early Careers Manager, who would be the critical point of contact for graduates during their programme. The two proposed roles were distinct, and both had advantages:

- **The specialist role:** applicable to those working in areas such as Accounting, Construction, Engineering and Legal, where a technical or vocational knowledge of the specific area would benefit both the individual and CWG.
- **The generalist role:** a broader experience, with rotations across multiple departments to better understand how teams interface, allowing the graduate to develop a wider network and flexible skill set. Best suited to individuals without vocational qualifications, allowing increased collaboration and exposure to different but connected, areas of the business.

A dedicated Early Careers Manager was recruited, with sole accountability for work experience, internship, apprenticeship, and graduate programmes. A member of the Junior Board participated in the interview process for the recruitment into this new role and once hired, worked with the individual in sharing the Junior Board's proposed recommendations of:

- Upgrading the onboarding process for all new employees
- Mentoring all new junior employees with someone who has recently been through the graduate/new hire process
- Targeting high-performing colleagues with incentives to increase retention
- Having Personal Development Plans for new employees to provide guidance around their career progression
- Providing employees with greater transparency and benchmarking of salaries and job descriptions
- Creating opportunities for inter-departmental graduate rotations to allow for increased collaboration and a better understanding of CWG
- Encouraging lateral or diagonal movement within CWG if no direct promotion was available to high-performing colleagues
- Making financial wellbeing sessions available to raise awareness of the CWG benefits package





## b) Culture and collaboration

### Sports & Social Committee

The post pandemic working environment in early 2022 created new and untested challenges as people returned to the workplace, with issues around silo working and a lack of opportunity to re-connect with colleagues.

This presented the Junior Board with two opportunities to review:

- How CWG engaged with its people in this new environment
- How colleagues engaged with each other in both office-based and operational, security and construction roles through lockdown

The Junior Board agreed that it needed to find ways of bringing people together in a non-work-related environment.

This led to the launch of Sports & Social Committee with the objective of uniting colleagues from different teams and departments, focusing on employee engagement and collaboration.

The aim of the Committee was to:

- Introduce employees to each other based on shared interests outside their jobs and departments
- Provide the opportunity for employees to participate in activities together, enabling them to find camaraderie and enjoyment within the workplace
- Improve working relationships by enriching employees' wellbeing and bridging engagement gaps between operational and office-based teams

### Key highlights

The Sports & Social Committee created a programme of year-round events, including football, yoga, boxing, bingo, book clubs and team breakfasts. The Committee was sponsored by CWG's CFO, Becky Worthington.

A dedicated internal webpage was set up to ensure all employees, irrespective of their working hours or shift patterns, could access and participate in events. This was followed by a dedicated section on the CWG app.

So far, the Sports & Social Committee has arranged:

- The CWG 'Big Summer Social', held in Harbord Square and attended by over 400 colleagues. Food and entertainment were provided by local micro and SME businesses from within Tower Hamlets, supporting CWG's local community supply chain
- Weekly five-a-side team football matches
- A sports taster week that included football, yoga, netball, badminton and boxing with many events being held at CWG's community sports hall, in2sports, Harbord Square
- A two-day golf event
- The CWG Christmas party at East Wintergarden for employees' young relatives
- The CWG's annual Christmas party, held at one of the Estate's entertainment venues, Fairgame, attended by over 420 employees from all parts of the business

"The BXR (Boxing) event hosted by the Sports & Social committee was a great way to meet colleagues, see inside spaces on the Estate and release endorphins. Boxing is a great addition to traditional team sports".

**Samantha Sommerville,**  
Early Careers Manager







## Coffee roulette

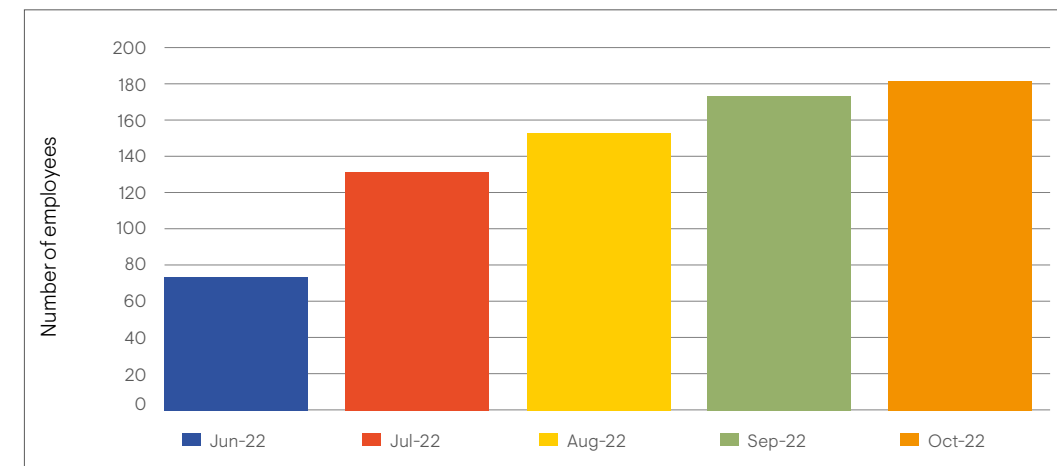
Coffee roulette randomly matches employees for coffee meetings at all levels and in all teams. These connections help break down silos, improve collaboration, employee engagement and can form the basis of a thriving organisational culture.

With a workforce spread across multiple sites, maintaining or making new connections within the organisation can be challenging. Coffee roulette:

- Enabled employees to expand their personal network and develop new contacts within the company
- Brought balance to participants throughout the working day by encouraging breaks from work and screen time
- Broke down communication barriers and promoted the exchange of ideas across departments and hierarchical boundaries, eliminating silo mentality

## Key highlights

- 2,982 meetups arranged since conception
- Strong level of participation across all departments
- Engagement levels consistently increasing each month
- Collaboration with Estate food and beverage retailers for coffee roulette venues



## Next steps

74% of colleagues who signed up for coffee roulette were in office-based roles. That means only 26% were employees from operational roles. The Junior Board focussed on finding ways to reduce this gap.

In a bid to reach more operational staff or those who lacked the confidence to meet up with colleagues on a one-to-one basis, as well as supporting local vendors, estate-based retailer, Caravan, hosted our first coffee roulette social.

Employees could enjoy free coffee and cake while networking with fellow colleagues. Despite industrial action on the day, take up exceeded the sixty person capacity; of those who attended the event, 52% were operational employees highlighting the types of events our operational colleagues prefer.

## Feedback:

- “I just wanted to echo the positive feedback this wonderful initiative is receiving amongst my colleagues/peers. A huge thank you to Katie and the Junior Board for introducing it, fantastic!”.
- “I’ve enjoyed all my coffee dates so far; it’s been great to spend a little break away from the desk getting to meet other employees in the Company you may otherwise not cross paths with”.
- “I am on my second one now, and I have to say, they have both been really enjoyable, interesting and very informative. You get a great snapshot of the person you’re meeting, how long they’ve been with the company, and where they worked. You can exchange ideas, chat about hobbies, holiday plans etc., and they get to learn about you too”.



## Lunch and Learn:

Raising awareness of the hugely different and varied roles that together make up the CWG workforce led to the Junior Board delivering a series of lunchtime sessions to the business.

Members of the Junior Board interviewed a panel of five operational colleagues from different departments. The session showcased the talent and expertise within security, maintenance/engineering, loading bays, landscaping and concierge parts of the business. Often under the radar, these teams of individuals work tirelessly to keep the Estate safe and make Canary Wharf a great place to work, live and play.

The success of the first session led to a subsequent collaboration with one of CWG's real estate ED&I industry partners, Real Estate Balance. In 'Learning from the NextGen', a panel of guests discussed Real Estate Balance's recent survey findings on what the next generation thinks about the Real Estate Industry.



## Cost of living

Early in 2022, the Junior Board identified how the rising cost of living was impacting certain employees. A recommendation was made to the Management Board, and in consultation with the Group CFO, a one-off payment was made to the most adversely affected employees in Q2, 2022. Early identification of the issue ahead of many other companies within the sector, occurred because of the Junior Board's representative membership and ability to engage directly with executives. The recommendation and subsequent payment positively impacted over 11% of the workforce.



## CEO's 'big ask'

The Junior Board was tasked with one 'big ask' from Shobi Khan, CEO. The Junior Board set themselves the objective of an imaginative solution to rename the thirty-five meeting and training rooms in One Canada Square that would resonate with employees and connect One Canada Square with the enhanced amenities on the Estate.

Building on its decade-long commitment to promoting biodiversity, CWG had just announced its blueprint partnership with the Eden Project to create a green spine through the center of the Estate. The Junior Board consulted with both the Eden Project and CWG's lead landscaper, Paul Griffiths, recommending the rooms should be named after flora and fauna that had a special connection to Canary Wharf. Many of the species chosen were planted on the Estate itself, some reflected the cultural heritage of CWG's employees, celebrating their strength in difference and country of origin, while others symbolised the history and legacy of the company itself.





## (c) Changing perception

The rate and scale of transformation of the Estate into one of the UK's most sustainable, mixed-use neighbourhoods is no secret to its visitors, customers and residents. Promoting the Estate was one of the key areas that the Junior Board identified as an area of focus and where they felt that a Next Generation would add value.

Using the Junior Board as a testbed for new ideas and innovation really helped the Directors and Executives in ensuring that new initiatives and approaches withstood the scrutiny of the Next Gen consumer. In parallel, internal initiatives driving cultural change in CWG were tested, led or sponsored by the Junior Board, thereby ensuring that there was credibility to the process, leading to higher levels of engagement and participation.

This pillar of work centered on three key elements  
- People, Place and Process.

### i) People

In October 2022, CWG launched its bi-annual employee survey. As the first post-pandemic survey, it was important that it reached as many employees as possible, across all parts of the business. The Junior Board co-created and participated in a video launching the survey. They also encouraged operational employees to complete the survey, by taking mobile devices or iPads out on the Estate and encouraging shift workers to participate.

77% of the CWG workforce completed the survey, delivering an overall ePNS score of 61% (rated "excellent").

### ii) Place

Attracting new footfall and Next Gen customers to the Estate through hosting events is a great way to change perception. In November 2022, the Junior Board co-hosted an ESG Policy Congress with their peer group from the British Property Federation Futures Network. Joined by industry experts and the CWG Sustainability team, they organised an afternoon of panel debate followed by a tour of the Estate (showcasing its sustainability credentials), finishing with a reception in Crossrail Roof Garden for all guests.



### iii) Process and digital innovation

The Canary Wharf Estate App was launched by CWG in September 2022 and within three months, had 15,000 users. Curating content on the App to appeal to a younger demographic contributed to its success. The Junior Board soft tested its configuration, accessibility and content prior to launch and made recommendations. As the App continues to evolve, the Junior Board will remain involved, consulting on each phase of its development.



# Reverse Mentoring

Reverse mentoring bridges the generational gap between current and future leaders in the business with executive members of the Management Board being mentored by a member of the Junior Board.

Junior Board members asked each Managing Director to state three objectives they wanted to achieve from their sessions. The objectives were anonymised and matched with Junior Board members based on expertise in their roles.

Objectives from Managing Directors included:

- “I would love to be mentored by someone passionate about Canary Wharf and who has novel ideas on changing perception.”
- “Learning more about how best to reach and attract underrepresented groups to CWG. What key things will create equality of opportunity within the organisation?”
- “To better understand what this generation thinks are the USPs they bring to the business and what are the things that drive productivity and wellbeing within the working environment.”
- “How can we work together to make Canary Wharf the workplace of choice for the next generation?”

Mentors and mentees met regularly and adhered to a programme the Junior Board was given as part of a bespoke training session at the beginning of the year.



## Feedback

<b>Shobi Khan, Chief Executive Officer</b>	“My interaction with the Junior Board members has been gratifying. I received valuable feedback about myself, CWG and the Estate. In addition, the ability to interact with the next generation of leaders is great - understanding their perspective and ideas helps both myself and CWG”.
<b>Richard Archer, Managing Director – Offices</b>	“Katie has devised many ways to promote Canary Wharf, including retail offerings, lifestyle events, changes to the built environment and social media activities. But the actual proof of the success of this reverse mentoring is that my engagement with Katie has made me think differently, resulting in me coming up with exciting ideas!”
<b>Katy Kingston, Managing Director – Legal</b>	“I have found my Junior Board reverse mentoring sessions to be truly inspirational as well as a lot of fun! Gaining a fresh viewpoint on the CWG offering and understanding the perspective of our future leaders are some of the benefits of the reverse mentoring programme. The mentors are close to new and emerging trends and technology, are innovative, highly engaging and eager to share their views.”



# Wider Impact

## Social media

LinkedIn proved a powerful tool to reach audiences outside of CWG, helping to promote the initiative with our peers and industry networks. The launch of the Junior Board was announced on the Company's LinkedIn profile in January 2022 and received significant attention with nearly 88,000 impressions, 1,200 reactions and over 30 reposts.

"What a fantastic and innovative idea. I believe this will be the blueprint for many organisations moving forward."

**Diversity and Inclusion Lead, Notting Hill Genesis Housing Association.**

"What a great initiative by CWG. I hope more organisations will follow through. "Be the change you wish to see in the world."

**Founder at LLC Group.**

In March 2022, Andrew Thompson, the inaugural Junior Board Chair was interviewed by EGi, following which a number of peer organisations, customers and advisors approached the Junior Board and their sponsor, Jane Hollinshead, to help shape their thinking in creating their own Next Gen boards.

In his interview, Andrew said, "With recent events around the world, there does seem to be a greater realisation from organisations that they are not going to get far without listening. It's even more important to be listening to the next generation who are upcoming, who are more exposed to different influences and spheres of life."

## Publications - Wharf Life

- In August 2022, a couple of members of the Junior Board sat down with The Wharf Life local newspaper to discuss the ambitions of the Junior Board and the fresh perspectives being brought to the table.
- The Junior Board hoped to reach a broader audience, including our office and retail customers, visitors to the Estate, the local community and the younger generation. The two Junior Board members were asked questions about themselves, their backgrounds and how the Junior Board is helping to shape the future of Canary Wharf.

\*Stats pulled 27th October 2022







# Looking Forward

## Welcome to our 2023 Junior Board

The success of the Junior Board and their achievements re-enforces the importance of listening to our Next Generation and hearing the great ideas they have to share. In doing so, we believe that we are able to deliver on our purpose of bringing people together to enhance lives, now and in the future. As our 2022 Junior Board members return to their day-to-day roles, they do so having handed over the baton to a new cohort of next generation colleagues. Fourteen new members will now form the 2023-24 Junior Board. Building on the foundations of the 2021-22 members, the 2023 Junior Board will identify new standalone projects and make recommendations impacting key aspects of our working environment, company culture, and the Canary Wharf estate.

If you want to know more about the work of CWG's Junior Board, please contact [Jane.Hollinshead@CanaryWharf.com](mailto:Jane.Hollinshead@CanaryWharf.com)





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