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A note from our Directors



HEY EVERYONE!

This past year has been filled with challenges, big and small, and it is becoming increasingly urgent to address the environmental impact we have on our world.

As a digital creative business in a leased property, we have been somewhat complacent about the level of influence and impact we can have. We recognise that complacency does not align with our values as people and as a business.

So, we are making our impact on the environment a larger focus of our social and environmental goals.

This begins with reevaluating our current policies and processes and developing a clear strategy for increasing the positive environmental impact we have alongside our current carbon-offsetting policies.

Matchstick Creative was founded upon the simple idea that there has to be a way to run a creative, profitable business with social impact at its heart. We would like to say that we had clear goals at the start, but the reality is that we simply did not know what we could do or how we could do it.

B Corp provided us with a framework, both for recognising the work and ideology at the core of our business, and to act as a challenging catalyst to push us into the future of what our business *can* be.

The current economic landscape is tough: Brexit, COVID-19, and the cost-of-living crisis have had a heartbreaking effect on our world, our business, and our communities.

We believe that our values and resilience provide the foundation for our growth throughout 2023 and beyond.

**THANK YOU,
RUTH + GREG**

Our journey to certification

2019

We began our journey towards B Corp with the help of B Leader, **Hannah Cox** from **betternotstop** in the winter of 2019 – Hannah gave us an understanding of the value of B Corp certification, an initial assessment of how ready we were, and the steps we would need to take to reach our B Corp targets.

2020

In 2020, we submitted our initial application and throughout 2021, we submitted lots of evidence to show how we were meeting B Corp targets through our processes, approach, activities, and ultimately through our **Impact Business Model**.



Our B Corp score

B Corp Impact Score

We're proud of our current B Impact Score at **94.7**, showing our commitment to doing more for our community, employees, environment and beyond.

When we recertify in **2025**, we hope to reach a **B Impact Score above 100**.



Our B Corp Impact Score

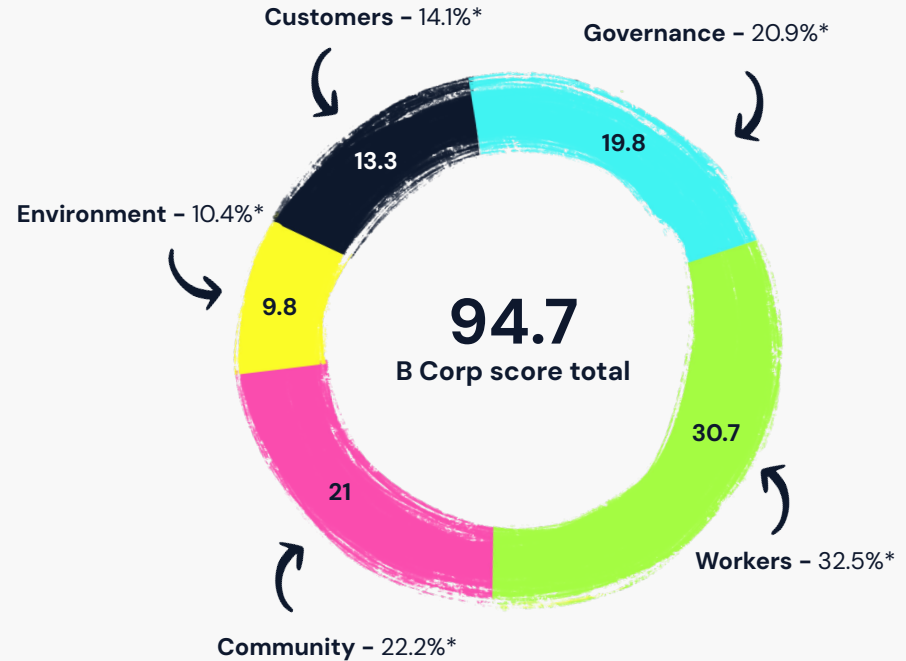
Areas for improvement

We aim to improve our scores across each of the five core areas: Governance, Workers, Community, Environment, and Customers.

The areas where we expect to see the greatest improvements are within our community work, our impact on the environment, and the impact of our work with customers and the diverse communities they serve.

Certification date: 19th June 2022

* percentage of total B Corp score total



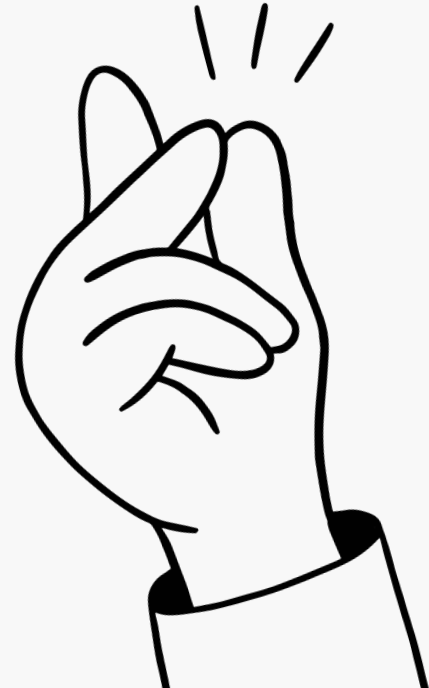
Governance

Our ethics, transparency, and positive impact

Governance takes into account our overall mission at Matchstick Creative – the **BIG** picture.

We're incredibly proud to score almost 80% in this area, twice the average mark of others of our size and sector.

A big deal for us in our first year of being certified!

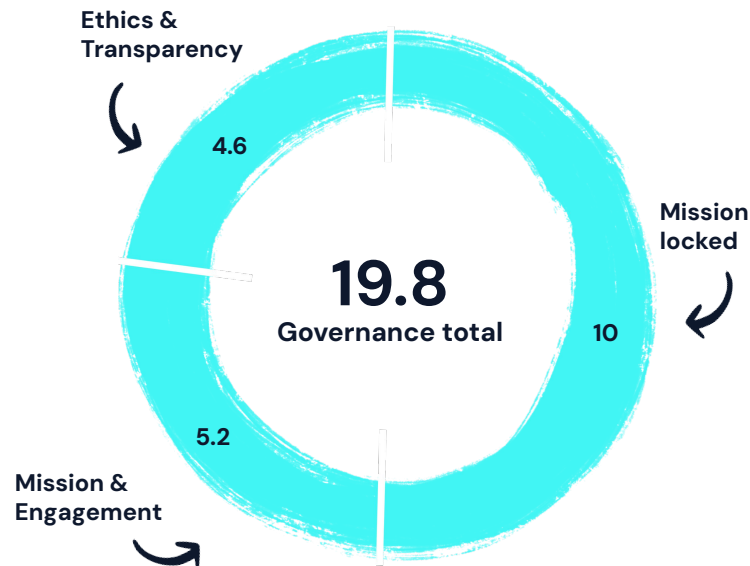


Governance now

Big moments from 2022

2022 was full of significant achievements in Governance, including setting up **dedicated HR support** for our Matchsticks and creating our **Staff Handbook**, which includes:

- Enhanced **parental leave**
- Additional **festive leave**
- Dedicated **health and well-being support**
- **Flexible, hybrid working**
- Enhanced **sick pay**
- **Diversity and Inclusion training**
- **Sabbatical leave**, after two years



Governance goals for 2023

Bigger moments for next year

- **Build an advisory panel** of like-minded experts to help us make the *super* important decisions
- **Encourage staff engagement** and co-creation, creating a collaborative work environment that reflects our Matchsticks
- **Develop our Staff Handbook policies** to ensure they represent our values
- **Carry out management training** to develop leadership and management skills
- **Improve financial processes** to understand where finances are best used
- **Build strategic associate partnerships** with inspirational people in the Liverpool City Region (LCR)

How we're going to do it

Our priority is to develop better ways to track and measure our social and environmental impact, as an organisation.

Once we've achieved this, we can work towards building more equitable opportunities for our team.

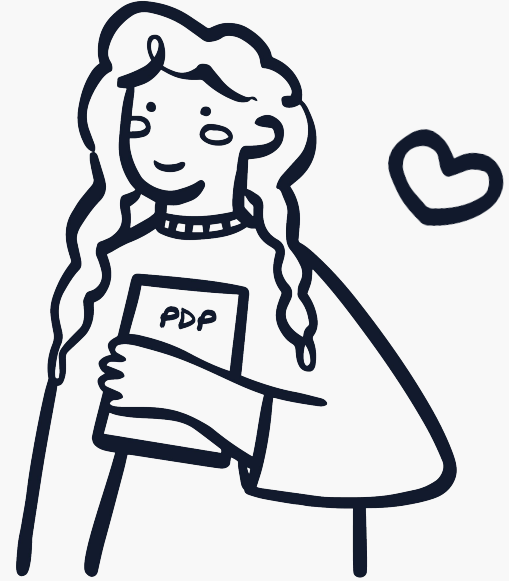
We're also committing to creating an advisory panel of local experts which will lead to more opportunities for staff to collaborate on our guiding principles.

Workers

How we support our Matchsticks

Workers investigates how we help our team with career development, financial security, and their overall satisfaction, health, and well-being.

It dives deeper into the schemes and initiatives in place to support them and questions what we can do to enhance their experience.



Workers now

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Matchstick Creative Impact report 2023

What did we do in 2022

- Awarded our official **B Corp accreditation**
- Became a **Fair Employment Charter** member
- Updated our **Personal Development Plan (PDP)** process to further support our Matchsticks
- Received our **Living Wage Foundation** accreditation
- Redeveloped our **Staff Handbook** to provide essential employment information and guidance



Workers goals for 2023

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What's next for 2023?

- **Organise mental health and well-being training** for our team
- **Improve career development** opportunities to create clarity around employee career paths
- **Coordinate a 2023 training plan** and calendar to provide more development opportunities
- **Involve the team in more strategic conversations** to ensure our mission and values align with those of our team

Our plan to get there

The financial security of the business and the health and well-being of our team are our top priorities for the year ahead.

To achieve this, we'll build a support and training plan for each team member to give them the skills they need to progress in their careers.

We'll also revisit our current performance review and training processes, adapting them to meet our team's needs.

Community

Our impact on the LCR and beyond

Community looks at how we engage our local community in what we do. The communities we serve are incredibly important to us.

We're passionate about creating opportunities for civic engagement both in our local communities and outside of the LCR. But, more can be done to support Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.



Community now

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Matchstick Creative Impact report 2023

Our community impact in 2022

- **Received investment** for our community events series, Firestarters
- **Raised money for charities** including the Cleft Lip and Palate Association (CLAPA)
- **Carried out race equality consultations** with the local authority
- **Challenged local authorities around procurement** practices that exclude and disadvantage minority groups, social enterprises and SMEs



Community goals for 2023

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Our ideas for community growth

- **Become a part of the Liverpool Independents BID company board** to have a say in how we can positively impact our local community
- **Create more opportunities for community impact** through our Firestarters network
- **Build a B Corp and purpose-driven hub** for local business leaders to help support them in carrying out more purposeful business

How we'll develop these

Providing evidence of our community work has come with challenges. Moving forward, we will prioritise **developing how we track** our community impact.

We will also aim to do more in-depth community engagement with traditionally underrepresented groups and **advocate for significant civic responsibility** with our customers.

Firestarters Community

Positive community action in the LCR

Firestarters is a community of changemakers putting purpose before profit in the LCR.

We founded Firestarters to connect people from the private, public, and third sectors and encourage positive action in the region. We do this through live events, actionable next steps and community accountability.

Firestarters is community lighter fuel.



Firestarters Community



Throughout 2022 and 2023, our Firestarters initiative has engaged more and more people, and provided paid work for diverse speakers and purpose-driven organisations. Take a look at some of the key moments from the last year of Firestarters.

3

Events with The Good Business Festival

We hosted events on the following themes; Powering Communities, Green Revolution, and Cultural Inclusion and welcomed over 50 engaged attendees.

6

'Growth for Good' roadshow events

We partnered with the Growth Platform to host purpose-driven business support events in the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) boroughs.

3

'Purpose Accelerator' events delivered with Gather from Form

We worked with Gather to host events that helped purpose-driven start-ups and scale-ups to develop, grow and spark change across the Liverpool City Region.

1

Business support event with the Business & IP Centre Liverpool

We led an event on how to build a successful business in Knowsley, asking attendees to consider how to create a supportive business culture in Knowsley.

Growth for Good series

Purpose-driven business support events

The Firestarters 'Growth for Good' series was a special special six-month programme of **Firestarters** events in partnership with **Growth Platform**.

Through the series, we aimed to support businesses in the city region who were looking to learn from expert speakers, gather strategic insights and have the opportunity to grow their network with purpose-driven people.

growth. ■
platform
Liverpool City Region Growth Company



Our approach

Growth Platform challenged us to create a series of engaging events to facilitate conversations about **what good business growth means**.

We proposed the '**Growth for Good**' roadshow series and showcase – **a fresh approach** to Growth Platform's usual event format.

The series highlighted diverse purpose-driven organisations and started conversations about what good, ethical, sustainable business looks like.

Through interactive sessions with speakers and business leaders with shared lived experiences, we were able to work together to consider the best course of action for our region.

Core event themes

- Diversity & Inclusion
- Net Zero Carbon
- Fundraising and Investment
- Purpose driven business
- Start-up culture
- Business support showcase

Our impact

At each event, we created **actionable next steps** to provide insight for what business support can look like for the future of the region.

These steps were based on quotes, comments and insights from attendees, reflecting exactly what our community want to see happen in the future.

But, what was the result?



6 Local independent venues

We supported local independent venues across the boroughs of the LCR, helping to raise awareness of the fantastic purpose-driven businesses in our area.

250+ Engaged attendees

We engaged with a diverse audience of over 250 business leaders, helping them gain the support they need from Growth Platform and meet like-minded in the Firestarters community.

33 Diverse, expert speakers

We invited our network of fantastic expert speakers to lead our sessions, sharing their insights with attendees and start important conversations with our Firestarters community.

Environment

The impact of our services and operations

Environment evaluates impact through the day-to-day running of Matchstick Creative, including operations and services. As a largely digital-based service business with tenant-in-serviced offices, we have limited control over our environmental impact.

We're proud that our environmental management processes are roughly twice as impactful as others in our sector, but we recognise there's more to do.

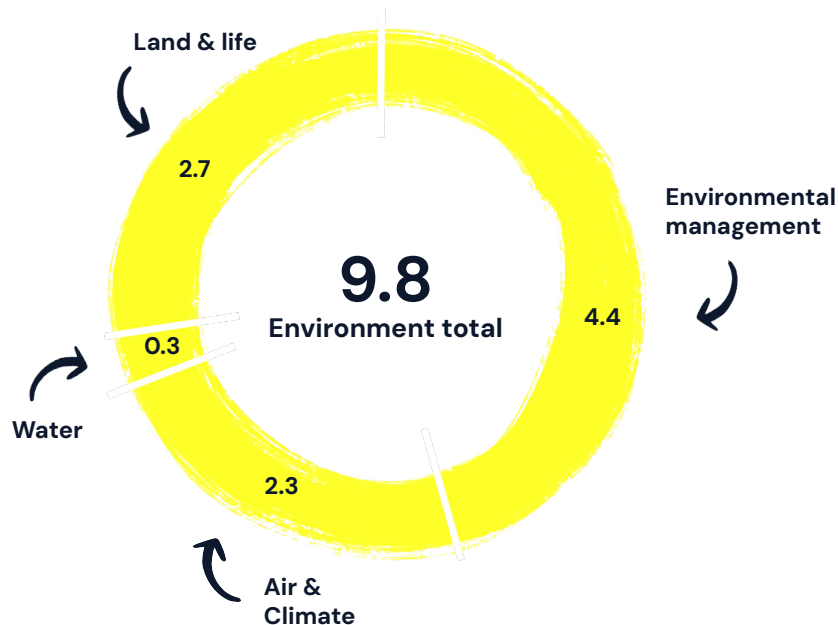


Environment now

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Environmental milestones from 2022

- **Reduced car journeys** for client meetings by replacing physical meetings with virtual meetings when possible
- **Improved recycling facilities** in our office building
- **Organised vegan catering** and worked with local suppliers for all events
- **Hosted Net Zero Carbon events** and engagement to raise awareness and inspire others to make changes



Environment goals for 2023

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The big picture for 2023

- **Increase commitment to 2030 Net Zero Carbon**
- **Act as leads for environmental campaigns** across the Liverpool City Region
- **Advocate for an integrated transport network** to offer environmentally-friendly travel options across our region
- **Join the Liverpool Independents BID company board** to have a say in what impacts our local area

How we'll reach our goals

Finding alternative ways to reduce our energy consumption and carbon footprint, aside from carbon offsetting and climate project investment, is our most significant priority.

To achieve this, we have committed to reducing car journeys and, instead, use public transport and ride-sharing as much as we can.

We have also chosen to source local suppliers and vegan food options for our events where possible.

Our impact

How we've had a positive environmental impact

We've worked alongside some fantastic organisations and taken part in brilliant initiatives to have a positive influence on the environment.

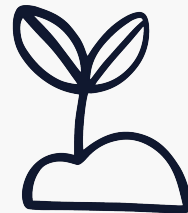
Explore the projects we've funded through our work.



Our impact, in numbers

Through our partnership with **Ecologi**, we've offset our carbon emissions helping to contribute towards important climate projects such as:

- The first-ever Wind Power Project in Honduras
- Generating clean electricity from hydropower in India
- Using waste biomass to produce electricity in Chile
- Preserving Amazonian rainforest in Brazil
- Generating renewable solar electricity in Egypt



100

Long haul flights



392 metres²
of sea ice saved



323,771

Miles driven in a car

Customers

The influence of our services

Customers explores how we deliver the most impactful services to our customers, considering products, services, data privacy, security and ethical marketing.

A significant aspect of this section is how we work to address social problems through our services, and achieve positive social impact for our consumers.



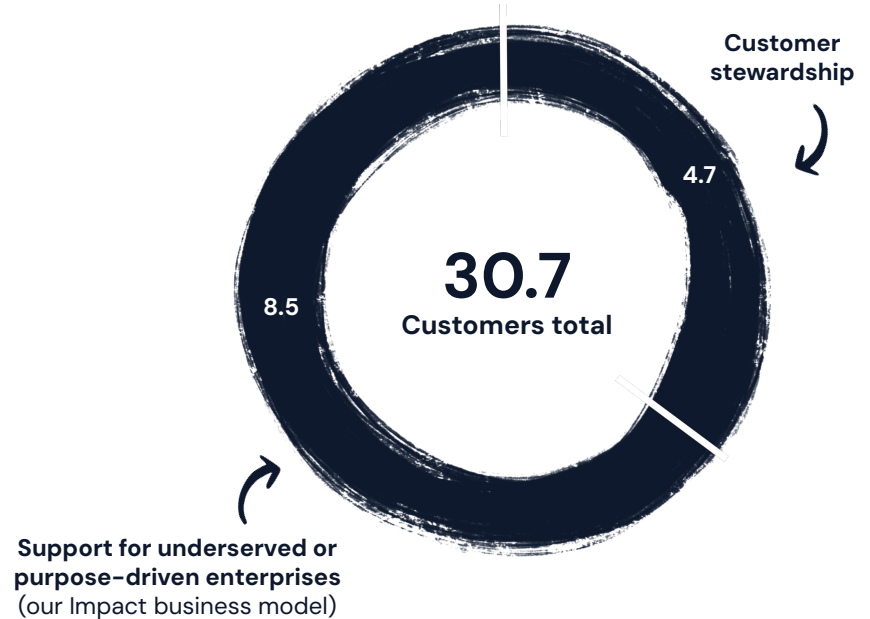
Customers now

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Matchstick Creative Impact report 2023

Our customer impact in 2022

- **Improved customer onboarding processes** to create a seamless experience for clients
- **Advocated for more socially and environmentally responsible work** with our customers
- **Promoted purpose-driven business** through hosting our Firestarters Good Business community events
- **Led a six-month Growth for Good** business support campaign and engagement
- **Hosted an event at the LCR Mental Health Summit** through Firestarters



Customers goals for 2023

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2023's plan for positive change

- **Develop a cohort of peers** for our Firestarters community
- **Set up consultations** with the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority and Chambers of Commerce
- **Bring the Better Business Festival** to the Liverpool City Region after a successful pilot year in Manchester
- **Complete our Growth for Good series**, gathering Liverpool City Region business leaders together

The steps we'll be taking

We're proud to say our stewardship is almost twice that of others across our sector. However, we recognise there are plenty of improvements we could make.

Our priority is to do more to **develop how we track, monitor, and engage** with underserved groups and communities. To achieve this, we plan to do more to **monitor our community impact** and gather data to inform our future business decisions.

Our clients

Making a difference

Partnering with purpose-driven clients ensures that we're making a real difference through our work, every day.

Learn more about the impact we're having and what our clients have to say about our work.



Our work

Transformational vs operational work

As a service-focused organisation, our work is split into transformational and operational client work.

But, what's the difference?

- **Operational work** focuses on managing the day-to-day functions of our clients' organisations e.g. website management
- **Transformational work** is more in-depth, and involves getting to know our clients better, working closely with them to transform their organisation.

What our clients have to say

*"Matchstick Creative **helped us think differently** about our approach to events and, as a result, energised our thriving small business community in a new way."*

– Janice Mears, Head of Business Growth
Growth Platform

*"Matchstick Creative **brought new ideas** and perspectives, producing work to a high standard that **enabled us to successfully share our vision.**"*

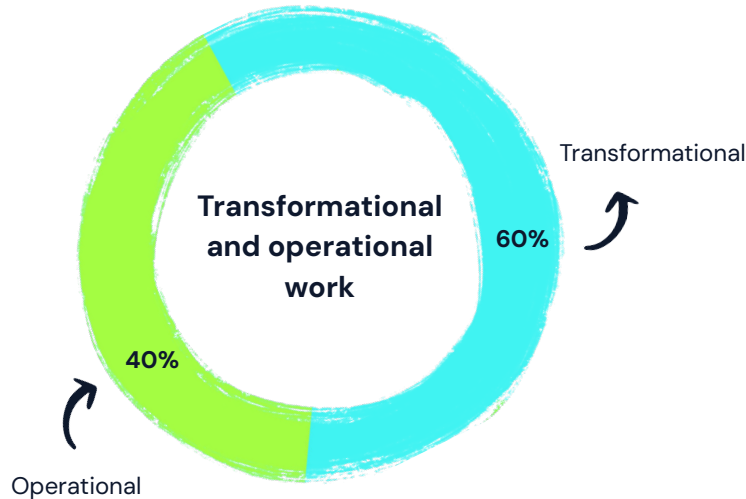
– Rebecca Haynes McCoy, Strategy and
Development Manager,
MRWA

Our work, broken down

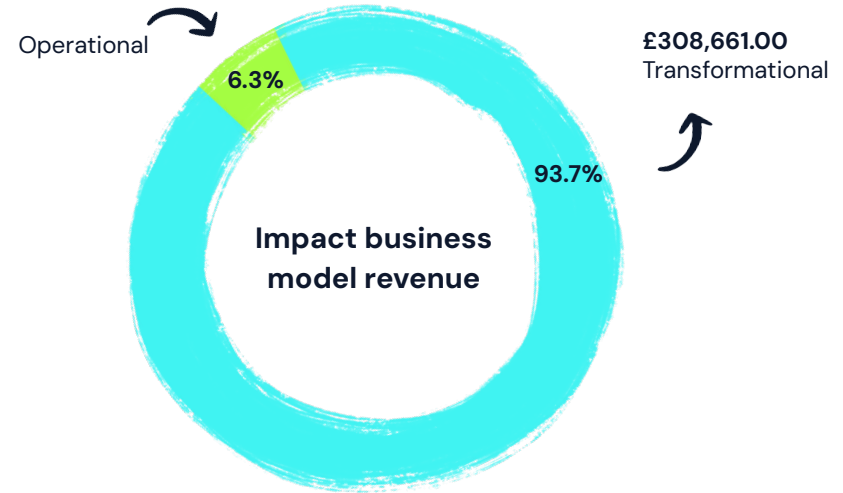
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Matchstick Creative Impact report 2023

In the last year, we supported **18 clients** with **transformational work** and **12 clients** with **operational work**.



In 2022/23, transformational work represented **£308,661.00** in revenue. Whereas, our operational work represented **£20,778.60** in revenue.



Goals for the future

What's in the works?

Our goals for Governance, Community, Workers, Environment and Customers are just the start of our 2023 aims.

Take a look at what other inspiring things we're setting out to achieve in the next year.



Our goals for the future

In addition to the above goals, we are committing to significantly improving the Environmental impact of our business.

1. **Re-evaluate our carbon offsetting** policy
2. **Develop a clear strategy** to reduce our carbon footprint effectively
3. **Identify a cornerstone charity** to support
4. **Dedicate time to volunteering** during work
5. **Advocate for better environmental/social measures** in our local business environment
6. **Provide team carbon literacy training** and Environmental copywriting masterclasses
7. **Develop a sustainable, environmental team rewards** system



Some final thoughts

Thank you for taking the time to read our impact report and reflect on this exciting past year for Matchstick Creative.



We couldn't have achieved any of this without the support of so many brilliant people in our network, our purpose-driven clients and, of course, our team of Matchsticks.

Want support with your own impactful project?

Whether you're looking to create engaging content, build a seamless experience for your audience, or want to better understand your purpose as an organisation, our team can help.

Reach out to us at hey@matchstickcreative.co.uk to see how we can work together to have a positive impact.



  @heymatchstick

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