

Impact Report

August 2023



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A Note From Our Co-Founder & CEO



Since the inception of the Choose a Challenge business fifteen years ago, we've helped young people get out of their comfort zone and take on life-changing challenges, provided a platform to help a range of great causes fundraise over £20m and have worked diligently to ensure the vast majority of tourism spending goes into the right places; the communities in which we operate. Becoming a B Corp was a really good way to recognise those achievements of the last fifteen years and challenge us to find new ways to improve our social and environmental impact.

Since our certification as a B Corp in 2021 our business has undergone a period of significant challenges and changes. We're really proud to have weathered the storms of the pandemic that saw many travel businesses cease to exist and more importantly to have ensured that all of our customers got the chance to complete their overseas challenges for which they'd worked so hard to fundraise.

My co-founder and I have also decided that the time was right to step away from the day-to-day management of the business and so we've got a new team in place with fresh ideas and different approaches that will hopefully help us build upon our position as one of the leading charity challenge providers in the UK (and the only one to be recognised as a B Corp to date!).

However our mission remains unchanged - to create life-changing challenges that bring people together and make the world a better place. We believe that we can use the power of adventure to make the world a better place and our B Corp certification is not only a great recognition of that but also a great way for us to be held to account to continue to seek ways to bring positive change.

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Our Mission & Roots

Our mission is to create life-changing Our story begins with two guys who met whilst studying International Development at the University of East London, Dan and Charles, having just summiting the world's highest freestanding mountain, Kilimanjaro, in 2008. Two individuals passionate for both adventure and charity, they returned to the UK to start an adventure travel company, hoping to share their incredible experiences with as many people as they could.

Over the past decade, their dream has evolved dramatically, growing into a leading adventure travel provider, which has raised over £20 million for charity and sent over 12,000 people on life-changing experiences all over the world.

Our mission is to create life-changing challenges that bring people together and make the world a better place.



Why We Became a B-Corp

As a company we'd felt for a long time that we weren't quite 'normal'. A lot of businesses are purely focussed on profit and we knew that wasn't us.

At the same time, we weren't a non-profit organisation either, as we take commercial risks that charities and other non-profits just wouldn't take.

So when we discovered that there was a community of companies like us, who also believed that a company can make a profit and do good, we knew we should apply for the B Corp accreditation.



How We Became a B-Corp

Our business model already made us a prime candidate for B Corp and we didn't need to make many changes at all. A lot of the work at the time of applying centred around ensuring that documentation was in place that showed how our organisational practices reflected the values expected of a B Corp.

We want to continue to improve though: being a B Corp isn't just about gaining accreditation and then remaining static. The expectation is that at the next review of our B Corp status we'll have improved further and our B Corp points score will increase to reflect this.

Despite some progress in recent years, we believe we still have work to do in addressing the contribution of challenge events to environmental degradation and loss of biodiversity, as well as promoting further improvements in diversity and inclusivity amongst our workforce and our customers.



The Road Ahead

The travel industry has had a huge amount of turbulence since we started on the journey to become a B Corp around the beginning of 2020. In fact, when we started working towards certification, swab tests, lockdowns and virtual meetings weren't in the common lexicon. Like many other businesses within the travel industry we have been firmly focused on rebuilding after our challenges came to a grinding halt.

Since we were founded in 2008 we have always considered our social and environmental impact on every decision we take but we know there are a huge number of areas where we can take more decisive action and continue to improve.

As a very small business we're realistic about the resources that we have available and so our approach is one of complete transparency and striving for steady and continuous improvement.



Overall B Impact Score

Based on the B Impact assessment, Choose a Challenge earned an overall score of 89.4. The median score for ordinary businesses who complete the assessment is currently 50.9.



- 89.4 Overall B Impact Score
- 80 Qualifies for B Corp Certification
- 50.9 Median Score for Ordinary Businesses

Impact Areas



Governance
Score: 17.5
Goal for 2024: 18.2

What We Said We'd Do:

We're proud to have an Impact Business Model and have a positive impact that on our customers, charity partners and the communities around the world that benefit from this tourism income. However, we've not sufficiently focused on further ways to improve in this area.

Goals for Next Year:

We are aiming to introduce social and environmental performance markers in relevant employees job descriptions. And, it's time for a review of our mission and values with employees and our partners to ensure that they remain relevant and are consistently considered in our decision-making processes.

Workers
Score in 2021: 23.5
Goal for 2024: 24.3

What We Said We'd Do:

One of our strategic focuses in the last 12 months has been to make Choose a Challenge a great place to work. The groundwork was already there but we wanted to improve existing HR policies and provide greater opportunities for professional development.

What We Did:

We introduced more flexible working practices and paid volunteering days to support the work of our charity partners. We've also tweaked our quarterly engagement surveys to get more employee input on how we're performing against our strategic goals. We've not made any demonstrable progress on better training & development opportunities.

Goals for Next Year:

All of our contracted employees have been paid the fair living wage for a few years but this will be extended to casual staff. We're going to continually work with our team to understand further ways in which we can improve upon staff benefits. And we're aiming to introduce a platform to allow for more consistent training and development, including the consistent provision of 360 degree feedback.

Community
Score: 10.8
Goal for 2024: 12.2

What We Said We'd Do:

We wanted to better engage with our charity partners and the people and causes that they so passionately support. We said we'd provide employees with the opportunities to visit or volunteer with these organisations or those that they're passionate about.

What We Did:

Our staff have taken part in visits or have volunteered for two of our charity partners but we need to formalise this so that it's a part of our annual calendar and built into our partnership with all charity partners.

Goals for Next Year:

We have three main goals for the next 12 months. Formalise the voluntary work with our charity partners so that we can better understand and support their causes. We'd also like to provide better support for the student fundraising community by investing in the long-term stability of the organisations that connect different communities of student fundraisers across the UK. Finally, we will conduct a review of our hiring and interviewing so that we can ensure equitable and inclusive recruitment practices.

Environment
Score: 7.9
Goal for 2024: 8.9

What We Said We'd Do:

Not only our lowest scoring area but our biggest challenge as a business. The environmental impacts of international travel are well documented. We committed to partnering with an organisation to offer all of our participants the opportunity to offset the vast majority of their trip's carbon emissions. We also committed to educating our suppliers on how to stop single-use plastic and mandating

What We Did:

We've been supporting tree-planting in Zambia Luanshya through WeForest and collecting contributions to offset our customers' emissions by supporting the smallholder farmers in reversing deforestation there. We continued to work with our suppliers, mostly in developing countries, to stop using single-use plastics and other measures that would help us ensure our travellers leave no trace. We appointed an internal environmental champion to help us formulate an employee-led approach to understanding and reducing our impact on the environment.

Goals for Next Year:

We're not sure carbon offsetting is the right approach and so our goal for the next 12 months is to educate ourselves on best approach to understand our emissions, put in place processes to track them and then introduce the policies that will have the greatest impact. We also want to better quantify the emissions from our challenges and educate our travellers on these.

Customers
Score: 29.5
Goal for 2024: 30.5

What We Said We'd Do:

We wanted to ensure our challenges were accessible to all and people, regardless of economic circumstances, were able to participate on our challenges. We committed to introducing a grant to cover up to 100% of the registration costs for students on bursaries or financial support.

What We Did:

We softly launched the financial support scheme for participants. Further work is required to promote and formalise the offering.

Goals for Next Year:

Our goals over the next year are to introduce greater quality control mechanisms for our suppliers to adhere to, complete a comprehensive review of how we treat our customers' data and to produce written policies on ethical marketing.