

Sawday's

Impact report 2023

Certified



Corporation

ABOUT US

We believe in a better way to travel, experience the world, and do business.



Sawday's

Sawday's has spent 30 years finding, visiting and choosing brilliant places to stay across the UK and Europe. We like to think of ourselves as a shortcut to the most special places and authentic experiences in travel. Our places are run by independent owners and we inspect every one so that we can give our guests honest descriptions to help them find something they'll love.



Our sister company, Canopy & Stars, named the most ethical travel booking site by the Ethical Consumer in 2022, is a collection of unique, creative places to stay in the outdoors that give you a genuine experience of a life more wild. They're also personally inspected by our team and we keep the collection small and special, accepting only 20% of those that apply.



Joining the Sawday's family last year was Paws & Stay, the UK's only dog-first travel website, created by animal lovers to take the frustration out of finding genuinely dog-friendly places to stay. It's run on the same solid principles, but with a focus on dogs in everything from the places chosen to the walks and pubs recommended.

OUR IMPACT STRATEGY

Renewed purpose, clearer challenges, bigger goals

This year we'll be reinforcing our focus as leaders in ethical and sustainable travel by pushing ourselves further in every aspect of our work.

We'll be using our marketing to influence and educate, our funding to support and facilitate and our own hands and minds to deliver real change across our areas of interest.

We'll keep on top of the latest research, scrutinise our internal practices and measure the success of everything we do, aiming always for one single thing – to make a difference and prove that travel, and all businesses, can be a force for good.



OUR MISSION

Bring together people and places of spirit and character, for meaningful experiences – whilst having a positive social, cultural and environmental impact.

How we work

- We were founded on strong principles about the way travel should relate to the environment and the communities it impacts.
- We are committed to reducing our emissions and becoming Net Zero by 2030. Our goals are set in line with UN Sustainable Development Goals and Science Based Targets.
- We are majority employee owned and part-owned by a charitable trust that uses a share of profits to support environmental causes.
- We are committed to doing business fairly: paying fair wages, promoting equality and diversity, and paying our taxes.



B CORP IMPACT SCORE

We are the highest scoring B Corp in travel in the world

Based on the B Impact assessment, Sawday's Group earned an overall score of 122.3. The median score for ordinary businesses who complete the assessment is currently 50.9.

Certified



122.3

Overall B Impact Score

80

Qualifies for B Corp Certification

50.9

Median Score for Ordinary Businesses

Score breakdown

Governance	Workers	Community	Environment	Customers
18.6	56.9	35.6	8.1	2.9



A word from our MD, Mike Bevens



Sawday's was founded, back in the 90s, to champion a different way of travelling, focused on human connection, the environment and building communities.

Throughout the creation and growth of our three brands – Sawday's, Canopy & Stars and Paws & Stay – we've kept that focus, becoming industry leaders driving towards a greener, more personal world of travel. We became employee owned, founded a charitable trust, and gained B Corp certification, but we knew there was more we could be doing.

That's why 2022 saw us digging even deeper. We created a new role, Sustainability & Impact Manager, and charged that person with a massive task – to take working better to whole new levels. A large part of this was an enormous research project which showed us the scope of our carbon emissions and the first steps in bringing them down, but we also began to tackle accessibility of both our properties and our sites,

made changes internally and launched bold new initiatives like capping the number of places we represent in areas that suffer from overtourism.

We've always believed in sustainable and low impact growth, but unfortunately some of the travel and tourism industry has an insatiable appetite for expansion which is fuelling overtourism. We believe tourism can, and should, be done in a way in which communities are positively supported and not subjected to environmental damage, crowding and housing issues.

Our impact is not something that will ever stand still. It's part of how we work and will always adapt and evolve. It's also a conversation that involves experts, partners and other companies, all of whom support and challenge us as we examine what our business can do for people and the planet.

This report is a snapshot of where we are now and what we're looking to achieve in 2023. In some areas we might fall short, in some we may exceed our targets and in others we might change direction based on new thinking or advice. What we will never do is stop pushing forwards in every way we can.

OUR IMPACT STRATEGY

Areas of focus

Social & Environmental impact is considered in every decision we make and we embrace our responsibility in helping to create a sustainable future for people & planet.



Net Zero by 2030

A hard, honest look at our emissions showed us our where our biggest opportunities and challenges lie, as well as allowing for some immediate gains and enabling us to set an ambitious goal that doesn't dodge the difficult questions.

[TAKE A LOOK >](#)



Overtourism

We launched a policy capping the number of places we work with in certain locations. We hope to inspire others to do the same and encourage guests to explore new destinations or travel out of season, to help spread the burden tourism puts on communities.

[TAKE A LOOK >](#)



People & communities

Alongside reactive work like fundraising to support Ukrainian refugees, we saw our charitable trust help fund young environmentalists through The Resilience Project and ran pro bono marketing days to help charities thrive.

[TAKE A LOOK >](#)



Access to Nature

A new commitment to improving access to nature for two groups – those with disabilities and disadvantaged young people – proved a steep learning curve that prompted deep reflection but lead to some very valuable work and clearer future plans.

[TAKE A LOOK >](#)



Protecting Nature

With treeplanting under increasing scrutiny, we examined our conservation work and decided on a thorough review of our practices, while still maintaining support for some great local projects.

[TAKE A LOOK >](#)



Workers & Governance

With employee ownership providing a powerful platform, we expanded benefits, implemented several new policies on maternity leave, carers and periods, and formed a team to ensure inclusivity across the company.

[TAKE A LOOK >](#)

AREAS OF FOCUS

Net Zero by 2030

Reducing our carbon emissions, with the aim of reaching net zero by 2030, is a huge undertaking and one which we're making central to our work over the next few years. Our rigorous carbon tracking highlighted our owners' properties and guest travel represent the highest emissions and need our focus. We already fund enough conservation work to offset our emissions, but offsetting is an unsustainable solution that fails to address the real issue. We're reducing, not offsetting.



In 2022 we...

- ✔ Conducted emissions tracking for scope 1, 2 & 3 including surveying our property owners
- ✔ Developed a 58-point reduction strategy
- ✔ Shared articles and ran webinars to help owners reduce their emissions
- ✔ For guests, we released content promoting rail travel and exploring the UK
- ✔ Internally, we formulated a new travel policy to reduce business travel, joined an EV hire company and reduced flights by 60% (a total of two return flights)
- ✔ We promoted free travel vouchers for bus, train and e-scooter travel to the team
- ✔ We convinced our building management company to switch to a renewable energy provider and implement food waste collection
- ✔ Our Platform Team joined the Amazon Web Services Sustainability Customer Advisory Group
- ✔ We shared our Net Zero journey with other companies.

In 2023 we will...

- Tackle 10 points on our 58-point action plan
- Collect better public transport information for 70% of owners
- Improve and refine our tracking and reporting
- Continued education and advice on access to grants for our owners
- Improve booking journey to help more guests choose responsible modes of transport
- Inspire through more flight/car free content and explore travel incentives for guests
- Form industry working groups and lobby decision-makers to tackle improved train travel.

REFLECTIONS & IMPROVEMENTS

Our 2021 emission reduction target of 8% was ambitious. We realise now it takes time to refine the data and see change. We had also underestimated the difficulty of getting the information we needed from our owners and guests. This work continues and we hope to see our hard work start to pay off this year.

AREAS OF FOCUS

Net Zero by 2030

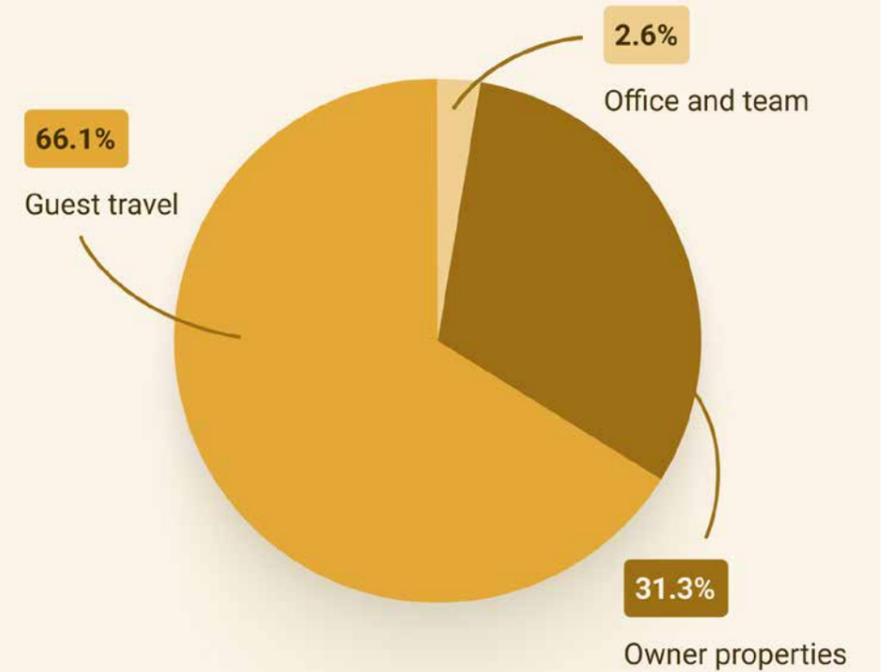


CO₂e* per booking per night

*CO₂e (Carbon Dioxide equivalent) is currently the best measure by which to compare total emissions of a business



Emissions by area



AREAS OF FOCUS

Overtourism

However sustainably you travel, there is still an impact on the place you're visiting. Some popular destinations suffer terribly from overtourism, crowding them in peak seasons and leaving them ghost towns the rest of the year.

We cannot deny being part of this problem, with many famous locations, Cornwall in particular, being our most important areas for revenue across all brands, but we believed we had to act. Our owners of places had told us of the devastating effect this has on their land and homes.

In 2022 we...

- ✔ Launched our destination capping policy, which limits the number of places we work with in several areas across the UK and Europe
- ✔ Encouraged guests to explore other areas, or travel off season
- ✔ Put less visited destinations in the spotlight – Herefordshire became our second most popular area for bookings.

In 2023 we will...

- Hold two national overtourism forums
- Raise awareness about the problems caused by overtourism
- Celebrate new destinations and encourage guests to visit other places.

REFLECTIONS & IMPROVEMENTS

We'll be examining our overtourism policy carefully in 2023 to gain a deeper understanding of the challenges in each destination. While The Lake District might struggle with the volume of traffic, St Ives may suffer from having too many second homes. Knowing more about these issues will give us a better idea of what we can do to counter them.

AREAS OF FOCUS

Overtourism



Herefordshire #2 for Canopy & Stars bookings in 2022

Sawdays The caps we are introducing...

- Isle of Skye (18)
- Lake District National Park (40)
- Snowdonia National Park (8)
- St Ives (5)
- Mousehole (5)
- Salcombe (5)
- St Minver Lowlands and Highlands (Rock and Polzeath) (5)
- Southwold, Suffolk (3)
- Abersoch, Wales (3)
- Venice (16)
- Parco Nazionale delle Cinque Terre (3)
- Palma de Mallorca (5)
- Florence (5)
- Barcelona (5)

paws & stay The caps we are introducing...

- Isle of Skye (3)
- Lake District National Park (10)
- Snowdonia National Park (5)
- St Ives (3)
- Mousehole (3)
- Salcombe (3)
- St Minver Lowlands and Highlands (3)
- Southwold, Suffolk (2)
- Abersoch, Wales (2)

CANOPY & STARS The caps we are introducing...

- Isle of Skye (6)
- Lake District National Park (20)
- Snowdonia National Park (8)

AREAS OF FOCUS

People & Communities

We're always looking for ways to use our resources and influence to support social causes we believe in. In 2022, these have been local and international, proactive and reactive. We expanded long term schemes like our Community Champions but were also proud to respond to some more immediate situations.



In 2022 we...

- ✓ Raised £28,000 for those affected by the Ukrainian War by donating 5% of our revenue in March and guest donations
- ✓ Gave 24% of our profit via our charitable trust to The Resilience Project, a not-for-profit which trains and empowers young changemakers navigating pathways to resilience and addressing the climate crisis head on
- ✓ Over 90% of our team volunteered on community projects including, gardening at care homes, beach cleans and tree planting
- ✓ Ran pro bono marketing strategy days with Avon Needs Trees to work on their plans for a new forest in the South West
- ✓ Donated some of our laptops to local schools and the organisation Gympanzees.

£28,000
raised for
Ukrainian
refugees

In 2023 we will...

- Onboard eight community champions
- Share and celebrate their stories in our marketing
- Support and encourage new owners to incorporate social and environmental impact in their business models
- Lead at least one pro bono day as part of our volunteering.

REFLECTIONS & IMPROVEMENTS

While we added three new Community Champions, we'd have liked to add more, having originally aimed for ten. This shortfall was down to two factors. Firstly, that the organisation has to be a Community Interest Company, charity or purpose-driven organisation. Many of our owners do incredible work in supporting local producers and bringing their communities together, so we have to look for people going above and beyond that high bar. Secondly, those places are still welcoming our guests and need to be as special as the rest of our collection.



AREAS OF FOCUS

People & Communities

“We are deeply thankful to the Sawday Trust for their grant. This enabled us to bring on two new members of staff, fund a resilience circle in Bristol and build an international board of youth.”

KATIE THE RESILIENCE PROJECT



AREAS OF FOCUS

Spotlight on our Community Champions



East Quay

Is a social enterprise working to tackle social, cultural and environmental justice in Watchet through wide reaching and ambitious regeneration projects.

eastquaywatchet.co.uk



Wilderness Wood

Providing access to nature for everyone, through woodland experiences and apprenticeships for young people who don't feel suited to a traditional schooling system or have neurodiversity and special educational needs.

wildernesswood.org

AREAS OF FOCUS

Access to Nature

In 2022, we began work on access to nature for two groups – people with disabilities and disadvantaged young people. Recent data shows that 22% of the UK population now have a disability of some kind and that figure is continuing to grow, while an increasing body of evidence shows how many young people are cut off from the benefits to mental health that contact with nature can bring.

Accessibility of our places is an issue we've always been aware of but have shied away from tackling in the past, especially when it comes to Canopy & Stars, where we felt the problem might be impossible to solve. With only the power to advise on what an owner might provide, we realised that addressing it could be a tough challenge, but we discovered that there was plenty we could do.

In 2022 we...

- ✔ Began long-term partnerships with consultants and disability advocates Sophie Morgan and Samantha Renke, who delivered diversity training to the whole company and guided us towards effective action
- ✔ Began seeking out better information from Canopy & Stars owners about their accessibility features and implemented a system for gathering better information from all new owners
- ✔ Made accessibility information clearer and easier to find on our website, allowing guests to decide for themselves whether or not a space is suitable
- ✔ Donated all profits from our Wild Cards to the Wilderness Foundation, which helps over 7,000 people every year find their connection to the natural world.

In 2023 we will...

- Run one campaign to directly support access to nature for disadvantaged young people
- Launch accessibility landing page and filters on Sawday's and Paws & Stay
- Strengthen representation in our marketing.

REFLECTIONS & IMPROVEMENTS

Over the course of the year, we learnt an enormous amount about the differing needs of our guests and the scope of what we were undertaking. Our focus on mobility issues still feels like the right approach, but we now have plans to work on bringing down a range of barriers to usage of our site and spaces.

We'll also be mapping out the expansion of the work done by Canopy & Stars to our two other brands, which turned out to be less straightforward but have greater opportunity for improvement. The most valuable thing to come out of the year was the realisation that in all the work we do, listening to the voices of the people we're trying to serve is vital.

AREAS OF FOCUS

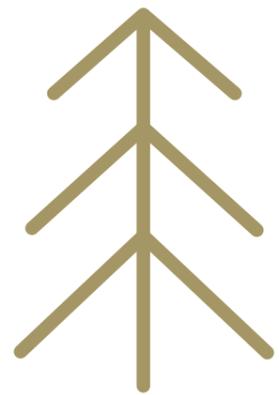
Protecting Nature

The climate crisis is accelerating and every business has a duty to do what they can to protect the natural world. Going Net Zero for carbon emissions by 2030, while an ambitious target, is really the bare minimum. We believe in going beyond “do no harm” and taking action to restore and defend the natural world. In the past, this has taken the form of various one-off projects and a long-term tree planting goal, but now we’re changing our approach.

In 2022...

43,144

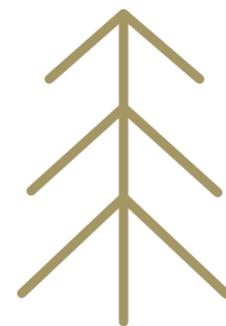
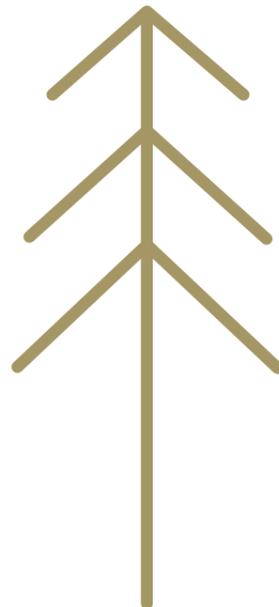
trees were planted through our charity partner **Treesisters** – bringing us to a total of 184,120 trees planted



We sent the team to a Canopy & Stars site, Hope House Farm, to help the owner Bruce plant trees



We supported the local conservation organisation Avon Needs Trees with funding, a pro bono marketing strategy and tree planting



In 2023 we will...

- Develop a 5-year strategy for the role we will play in the protection of nature
- Engage with two or three academics and experts to better understand urgent needs within nature and biodiversity protection
- Lead one campaign to raise money and awareness for the protection of nature.



AREAS OF FOCUS

Protecting Nature



REFLECTIONS & IMPROVEMENTS

The debate around the efficacy of tree planting is impossible to ignore. Many argue that it's an overly narrow approach, focused on a single statistic rather than a holistic picture of ecosystems or communities. By merely counting new trees, there is a risk that the aftercare of those planted and the preservation of existing biospheres gets forgotten.

One of the reasons we originally partnered with Treesisters was that their approach included community building and the restoration of biodiversity, but their main metric was still the number of trees planted. This year Treesisters decided to move away from that towards an emphasis on the broader impact of their work and we are doing the same.

This doesn't mean we're going to stop our support for conservation projects. Organisations like Avon Needs Trees are doing lasting work for their countryside and communities and it's towards things like that which we'll turn our attention. We've given ourselves six months to conduct a research project, in collaboration with a team of organisations, academics and experts, which will help us decide where we can do the most good.

AREAS OF FOCUS

Workers

Being employee owned is something we're immensely proud of and it has given us a platform for examining everything about how we work. We've looked at inclusivity and accessibility and how best to ensure that we all live and work happily and healthily in difficult times. We were proud to be in B Corp's Top 5% in the world for workers for a second year running, but are always mindful of looking beyond the metrics to the people underneath.



In 2022 we...

- ✓ Made salary increases of £1,000 across the board and a one-off contribution of £450 to combat the cost-of-living crisis
- ✓ Increased the familiarisation trip allowance to £250, which all employees receive annually to spend on stays at our places
- ✓ Conducted our annual pay and progression survey
- ✓ Updated our Menopause and Perimenopause Policy and signed the Menopause Workplace Pledge
- ✓ Implemented new support for mothers returning from maternity leave and granting paid leave to anyone caring for a family member or partner
- ✓ Implemented new period policy and a job-sharing policy helped to deepen our commitment to flexible working
- ✓ Committed to two new benefit platforms for the team, Juno and Pirkx
- ✓ We formed DEIBA, our Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Belonging and Accessibility team, who began by surveying the team and exploring how we can improve in those areas across the business.

In 2023 we will...

- Get our employee happiness score over 70 with a response rate of at least 70%
- Be Level 2 Disability Confident
- Implement our inclusive hiring policy
- Improve our mental health policy.

REFLECTIONS & IMPROVEMENTS

In 2022 we saw our eNPS (employee happiness score) drop from 72 in June to 52 in September with a 7% drop-in response rate. This was a concern and led to the implementation of new benefits and pay and progression surveys, with the hope of identifying frustrations and seeing these scores improve in 2023. We will also be working towards increasing the response rate to the survey to at least 70%.



AREAS OF FOCUS

Workers

“We are a business that cares beyond the bottom line. I have been impressed with the seriousness with which sustainability is treated, and learnt ways to reduce my footprint just by working closely with the fantastic humans around me.”

Helen Senior Business Development Executive

“What we do as a group makes me very proud to work here. There’s a genuine company culture of caring for each other, wider society and the environment. I’m very grateful that I am working for a company where my personal values are in line. I feel great about it every day”

Kelly Pricing & Performance Manager

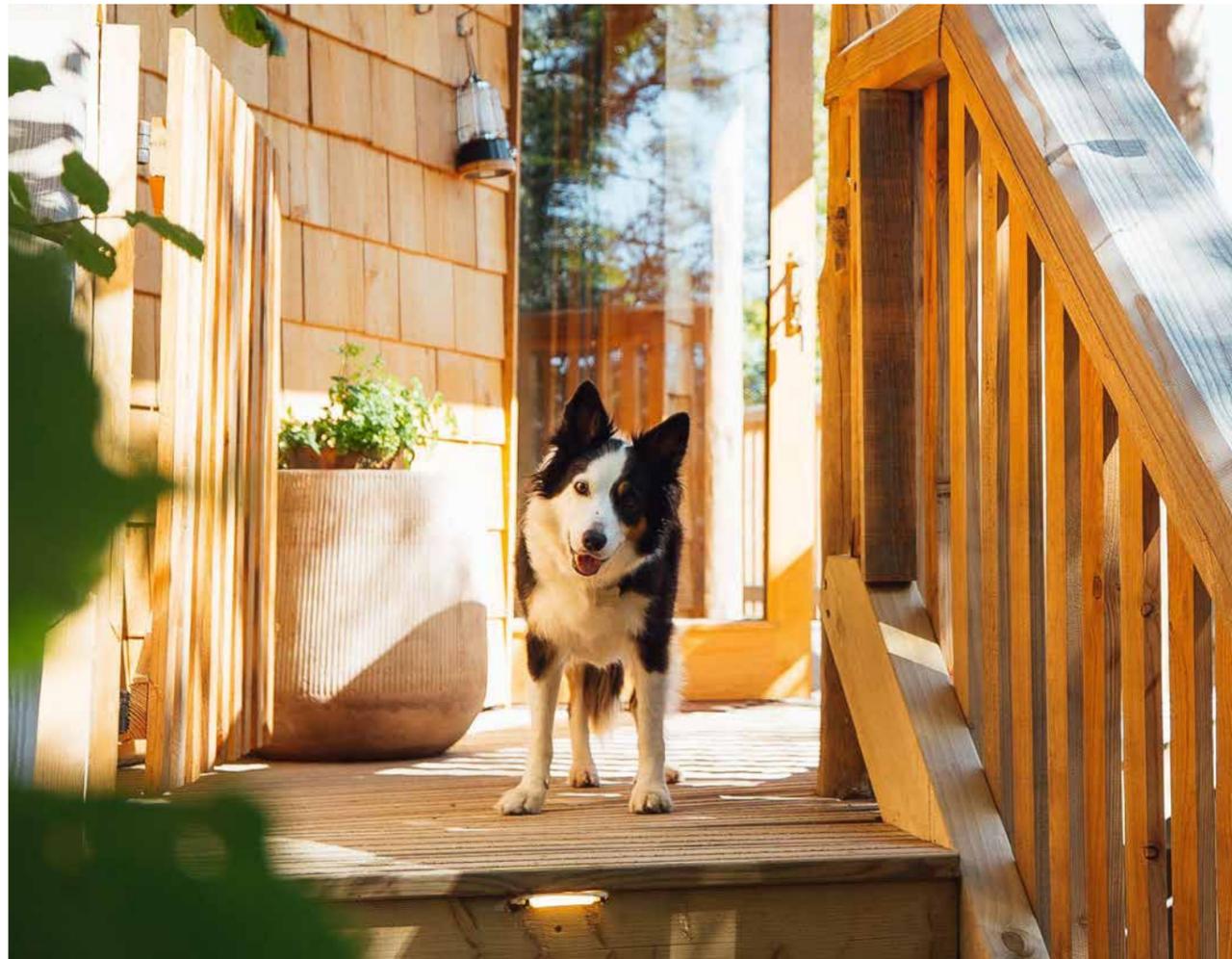


£68,802
worth of
donations

AREAS OF FOCUS

Governance

We have a unique model as a company – a majority employee-owned, charitable, family business. Governance plays an important role in ensuring this continues to work and that we aim to work with other businesses that share our values and ethics.



In 2022 we...

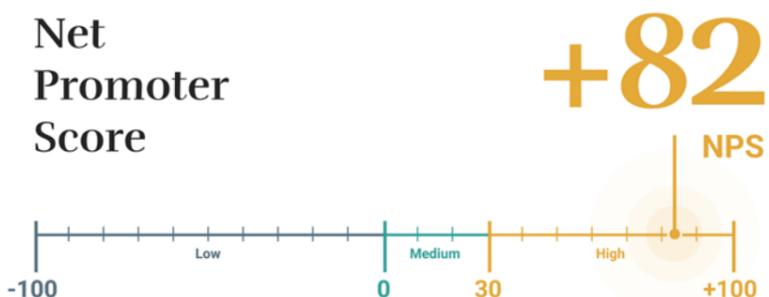
- ✔ Maintained 3 women on our board and confirmed that 68% of our senior management team identify as female, far above the national average
- ✔ We signed the Better Business Act
- ✔ We donated over £68,802 to various charitable causes through our charitable trust and other initiatives
- ✔ Throughout 2022 our customer Net Promoter Score was, an industry leading, 82.

In 2023 we will...

- Review a more ethical pension provider and policy
- Improve internal frameworks around sustainability and ethics, guiding team members and holding the company to account.

PAYING TAXES

All our corporation tax, business rates and VAT were paid in the UK, as you would expect, and we report our income, gains, and assets plainly and transparently for the purposes of tax assessment. We will always aim to 'pay our fair share' of tax liabilities in line with the prosperity we generate in any given year. Whilst utilising efficient tax planning, in accordance with our responsibility to our shareholders, we uphold the spirit of tax legislation and would never seek to exploit tax loopholes in order to avoid tax or unduly reduce our tax payment. We ask the directors of the company to subscribe to these same principles in their personal tax affairs.



A FINAL WORD

Thank you

Another year has passed and we're proud to have made steps forward, but none of this would be possible without the community of brilliant guests, owners and industry folk who continue supporting and challenging us in our efforts to be a better business. This year, we were fortunate enough to have connected with more like-minded brands who have shared their wisdom and debated bigger challenges with us – these business communities are invaluable and rather special.

And a final thank you to every co-owner here at Sawday's, who put energy behind the important things, who are not afraid to engage with new mind-boggling topics such as carbon emissions and who work tirelessly to make the business what it is today. We owe all these people a debt of gratitude, that we can only repay by trying even harder to be a business with a force for good.
