



Impact report

2023





It's been a milestone year for Talking Tables. In September we received our **B Corp accreditation**, joining a growing group of companies reinventing business by pursuing purpose as well as profit.

The B Corp certification involves an assessment of the social and environmental impact of a business through more than 200 questions concerning governance, employees, communities and the environment. Applicants are required to meet a score of over 80 – Talking Tables achieved 87.5. We found that the B Corp application process provided an invaluable framework for us and its emphasis on continued improvement inspires us to strive to be better and develop new initiatives this coming year and beyond.

2022 also saw us achieve **Great Place to Work status**. We were especially happy to achieve this endorsement as it is based on the results of an independent employee engagement survey. Again it provides a benchmark for us to improve upon.

We continued to improve the sustainability of our product offer – **91%** of our autumn/winter 2022 collection was **single use plastic free** – and ensure that our product is either recyclable or reusable.

But what makes us most happy isn't numbers but making connections with and between people. Like when we hosted our first community event at our head office; a summer party in association with the charity Lifeline for the elderly local Clapham community. Talking Tables fundamentally believes that **time together is the best of times** but we recognise that not everyone has the opportunity to gather together with others or to celebrate what should be a special occasion. We are committed to giving the experience of gatherings to more people, including those with less opportunity to get-together.

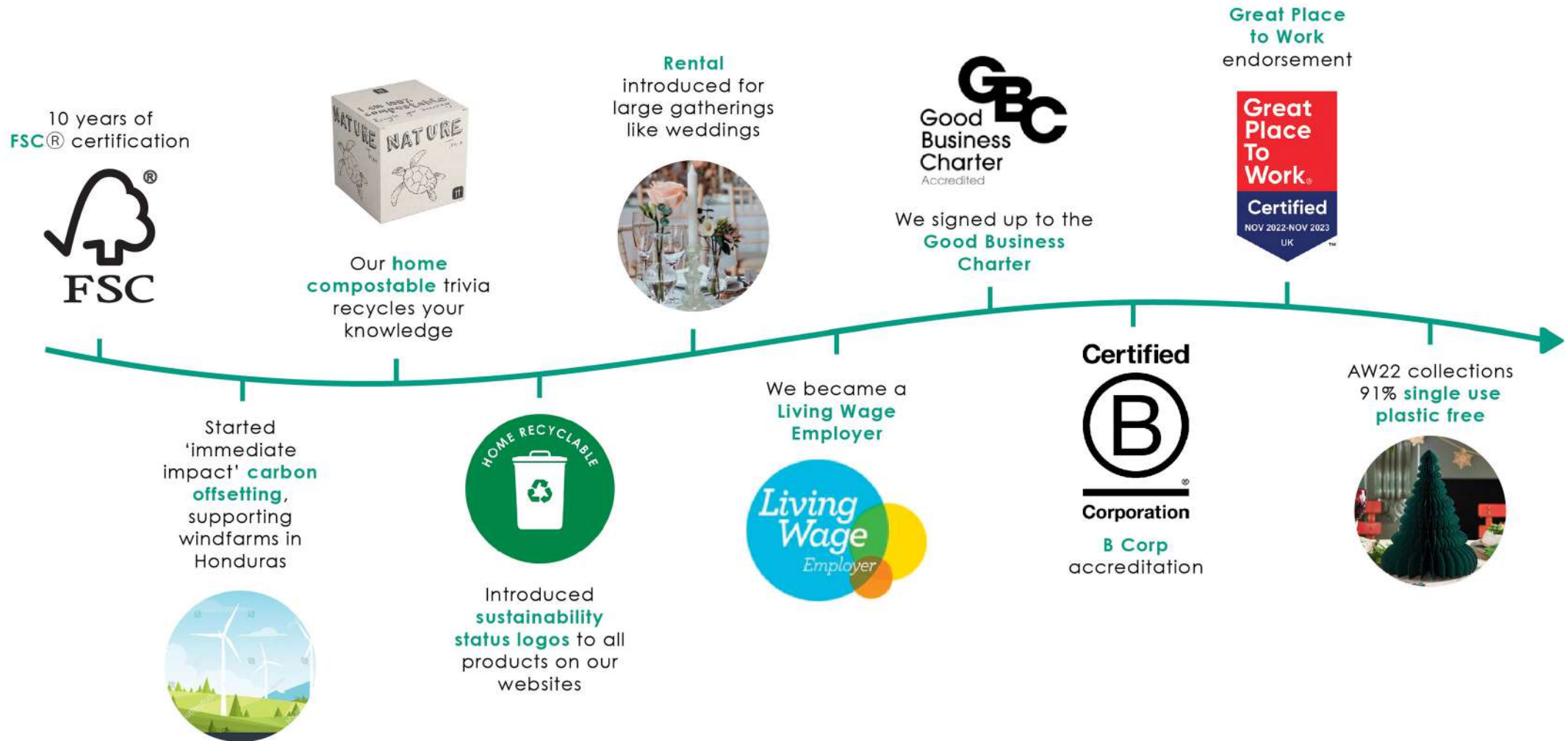


Clare Harris, founder

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Our 2022 highlights



People

We put our people first – literally. People is our first and foremost company strategy pillar, which means it's our most important consideration.

People want to work for companies they share values with. They want respect and opportunities for growth, engagement and a fun environment. We totally buy into this.

How are we doing?

In 2022 our employees declared us a Great Place to Work. Great Place to Work is an independent accreditation scheme. To qualify you need to score 65+ in its staff engagement survey. We achieved 75%.



Everyone is invited

We are committed to recruiting people from all walks of life and backgrounds to reflect our customers and our community and to help make our business stronger. Everyone is invited and people are at the heart of everything we do.

We champion **equality** and **inclusivity**.

1.4%
gender pay gap

18.5%
ethnic minority

15%
LGBTQ+

Wellness

In 2022 we introduced a wellness budget: everyone could spend £500 on an activity that broadened their horizons; from a street photography course, to a cultural trip to a European city.

Wellness 2022

68%
of the team
made use
of this



“ I used our trip to immerse myself in a range of cultural activities from the many historical museums in Berlin to local markets and even a visit to the salt pools at the Liquidrom spa.

Coming together

We love a get together at Talking Tables. That's why the team run eight subsidised clubs. Last summer we also all went away for two days of games and relaxation (and a little bit of a company presentation) at the Birch Hotel in Hertfordshire.



Community

Talking Tables is committed to giving the experience of gatherings to more people, including those with less opportunity to get together.

During 2022 we worked with the Lifeline charity and hosted a summer party for the local elderly community at our HQ as well as supporting their own Christmas party.

We also gifted party decorations to **more than 100** local groups and individuals hosting community events and fund raisers.

If you have an event you'd like us to support get in touch:

info@talkingtables.co.uk

Community events hosted/gifted:

2022: **117** 2023 target: **200**



Our charities



We support charities at both national and local level. We work with Re-engage, the charity that brings the socially isolated elderly together via tea parties; along with the National Garden Scheme, raising funds for their nursing charities via gatherings and donations on our Truly Scrumptious collection for the Great British Garden Party.

We also donate a percentage of sales from our School of Fish collection to Ocean Generation, the charity that raises awareness about the threats to our oceans.

Our people also organise lots of activities to support causes personal to them, from talent shows for Red Nose Day, to coffee mornings for MacMillan.



Charities we have supported in 2022

Volunteering

Everyone has two paid volunteering days to give back. During the year we planted trees, cleaned up beaches and commons, helped out at food banks and served tea at elderly get-togethers.



343
volunteering
hours in
2022

Recycling

We work with the recycling group First Mile to recycle as much as we can at our head office. Everyone who joins Talking Tables is taken through a recycling induction and we report monthly on how we are doing.



Recycling 2022

Target: **80%** Achieved: **77%**



Replanting what we use

Ecologi

We're partners with others who share our goal to be better. Better for the planet and better for people.



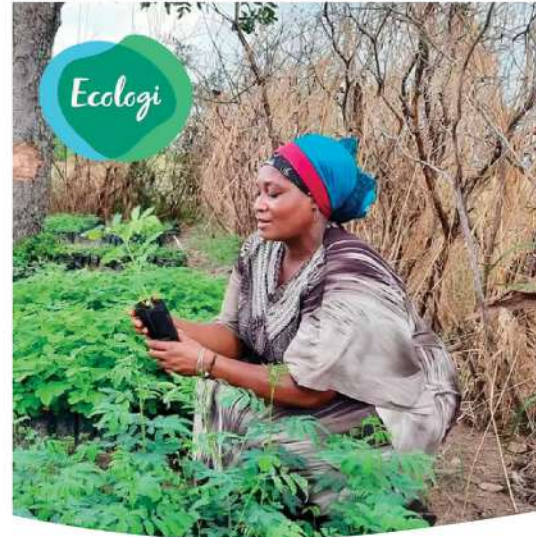
We work with Ecologi who provide both companies and individuals with the opportunity to plant trees via projects involving local communities around the world.

15,397 is the number of trees we have planted with Ecologi around the world. We have also started tree planting in the UK. We offset the paper in our napkins and games with tree planting and we also plant trees as incentives instead of discounts for customers.

We also support Ecologi on instant carbon reduction projects like the first ever wind farm in Honduras and peatland restoration in Indonesia.

15,397 planted trees has
offset 279.5 tonnes of CO₂e.

This is the equivalent to:



[Visit our forest](#)

We are a B Corp

Talking Tables became a B Corporation in September, joining a group of like-minded companies committed to using business as a force for good. To become a B Corp you need to pass a rigorous assessment of your company's environmental and social impact, thus providing customers with the assurance that the purchasing choices they are making are sustainable ones.

We certified with a score of 87.5, seven more than we needed. But we won't rest on our laurels. Our objective is to increase our score by at least ten points when we recertify in 2025.



Our partners

The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) is dedicated to promoting responsible management of the world's forests. Talking Tables has held an FSC licence for 10 years and we use FSC paper for our paper products.



We source our organic cotton from a supplier who is signed up to the Better Cotton initiative, the largest cotton sustainability project in the world. It helps cotton communities survive and thrive, while protecting and restoring the environment.

We are an accredited Living Wage employer. This means that we ensure our employees and contracted workers are paid a fair day's wage. The real Living Wage is independently calculated on an annual basis.



We are proud to be accredited by the Good Business Charter (GBC). The GBC consists of 10 components; including ethical sourcing, prompt payment of suppliers and staff wellbeing.

We are an official Great Place to Work. Companies only receive this accolade when their people give it a high engagement score in a GPTW hosted survey.



Products of Change helps us keep up with key sustainability developments via articles and training sessions. It is a global educational hub driving sustainable change.

Product

Where products are not recyclable we aim to make them reusable.

We believe in providing fun and convenient products for celebrations. And, like us, we know our customers want to party like there is a tomorrow. That's why we're the only B Corp in our market sector.

Our 100% recyclable napkins are packaged in recyclable card with a cut out window. To keep them protected, we include an extra one at the front of each pack.



We use paper from FSC sustainably managed forests.

We offset the paper in our napkins with tree planting.



All of our crackers have plastic free contents and are fully recyclable.

We offer plastic free and recyclable paper cups.



We've removed foil from our new collections and are working hard to use creative design to add a touch of sparkle.



Single use plastic free

SS22 collection: **87%** AW22 collection: **91%**

Our games are designed to last; enjoy, replay and give away for further play. We also offset the paper used in them with tree planting.



We are using plastic free varnish for our games boxes where possible.



Our jigsaws are 100% recyclable (they include plastic bags but these are recyclable at larger stores).



We have replaced plastic inserts in our games boxes with recyclable cardboard.



We are sourcing closer to home – all puzzles manufactured in Netherlands.



All games are certified FSC.



All games are encouraged to be reused – we write this on the reverse of them.

Product highlights

1

We have introduced recycled glass bud vases.



2

Our Souk collection features upcycled bunting made from cotton remnants.



3

Our Meadow collection includes 100% recycled paperboard napkins and plates.



4

We supported a local business with personalised, plastic free, recycled cups produced in the UK for their pop up event.



5

Our compostable trivia games are 100% home compostable and can be re-used as well.



Suppliers

We are conscious that everything we do comes with a responsibility to create a positive impact on people, society, and the planet. This can only be achieved with the support of our valued supplier partners. It is important that our supplier partners share this vision and commitment to sustainable practices.

The Talking Tables Way

We expect all suppliers to comply with our Supplier Code of Conduct, called the Talking Tables Way, and we verify this through audits, information requests and visits.

The Talking Tables Way covers:

1

People: Covering fairness, child labour, working hours, pay and employment practises.

2

Safety: Requirements include a safe and hygienic working environment, including building, accident and injury prevention and a trained health and safety rep.

3

Environment: A demonstrated care for the environment.

100% of suppliers signed up.

During the pandemic we were unable to visit our factories but we're pleased to have been able to resume our regular visits.



Suppliers

2022 highlights

80% of factory water recycled at one factory site via a water purifier

80%

1,848

1,848 solar panels installed at one factory site



Supplier evaluation

Talking Tables annually measures how our key suppliers are performing to our mutually agreed commitments.

Topics include:

- Buying
- Supply chain and production
- Technical compliance
- Quality and product development

New for 2023, we have added a new section around sustainability – including collaborating with our supply base on their carbon impact and net zero targets.

Supplier social, environmental and sustainability impact survey

Each year we review our suppliers' social, environmental and sustainability impact.

Areas covered include:

- Water management
- Waste management
- Hazardous waste management
- Chemical controls

Sourcing from Europe

As part of our commitment to reducing our carbon footprint, where we can we are moving production closer to home.

2021: **28%** 2022: **35%**



Building better

We believe we are the only party celebration brand that's a B Corp. And it's not something we're happy about. As a B Corp we are part of a growing movement and the bigger the movement the more we can achieve. That's why we're committed to bringing brands together and spreading the word to make our industry more sustainable.

Showing up at shows



Our supply chain director Daniel Fagan took part in a panel discussion at the Top Drawer show in January on why businesses should be thinking about sustainability.

Talking Together



In 2022 we teamed up with the Giftware Association to launch Talking Together. In March we invited brands interested in being better to our head office for lunch and a conversation around sustainability. We shared our experiences and all discussed challenges and solutions to help each other move forward. In September we held a second event around supply chain; covering topics like sourcing closer to home.

We are holding a third Talking Together event in spring around the theme Harnessing the Power of B Corp.





Let's create sustainable change together

We'd love to hear from you...

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