

SMRS Impact Report



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What we do

We partner with employers and educators around the world to drive change that reaches far beyond their organisations. We create work that inspires people to make some of the biggest decisions in their life – by helping them to find learning and careers that transform their life chances.

Our insight, creativity, innovation and strategic thinking break down barriers and open doors. Because we believe in change for the better. And we're proud to make it happen.



Who we do it for



CUSTOMERS

people who benefit
from our work



COLLEAGUES

people who
work with us



CLIENTS

people who
invest in us

Leadership team message

As our work has an impact on huge choices that people face, our purpose is to make opportunity, progression and reward equal for everyone. That's why we work as hard as we can to make every decision, every word of advice and every plan, project and piece of work as good as it can be.

It also means that B Corp certification wasn't necessarily a target for us. It felt like validation of the journey we were on to change things for the better. To change the organisations we work with for the better. And of course, to change ours too.

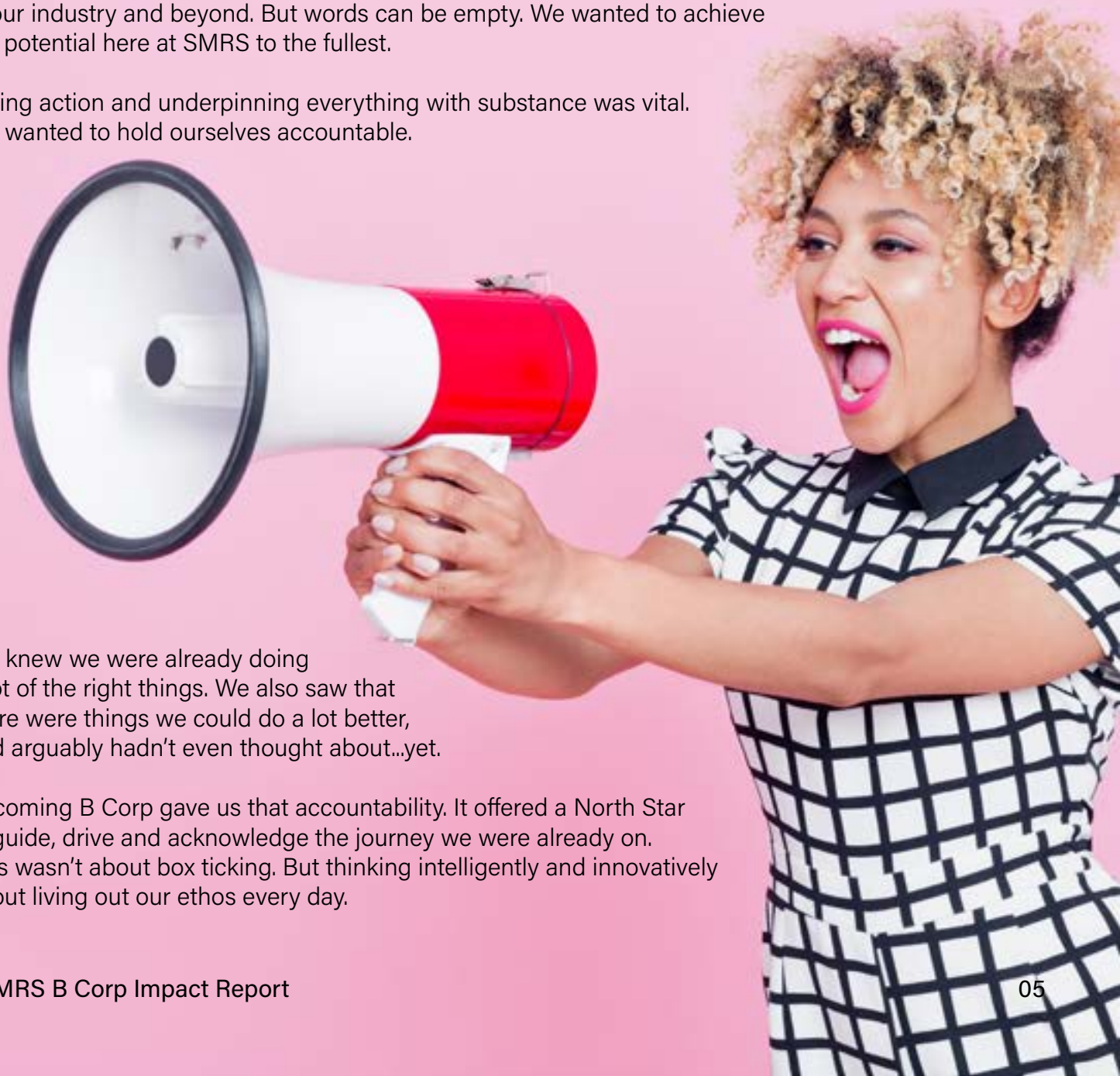
The journey felt natural to us – but it was also a wholly conscious one. Once we knew the sort of agency we wanted to be, setting even bolder ambitions was the logical next step.

We're a really passionate group of people who believe we can make a difference in our industry and beyond. But words can be empty. We wanted to achieve the potential here at SMRS to the fullest.

Taking action and underpinning everything with substance was vital. We wanted to hold ourselves accountable.

We knew we were already doing a lot of the right things. We also saw that there were things we could do a lot better, and arguably hadn't even thought about...yet.

Becoming B Corp gave us that accountability. It offered a North Star to guide, drive and acknowledge the journey we were already on. This wasn't about box ticking. But thinking intelligently and innovatively about living out our ethos every day.



Why B Corp?

B Lab is a non-profit network that believes that business should be used as a force for good.

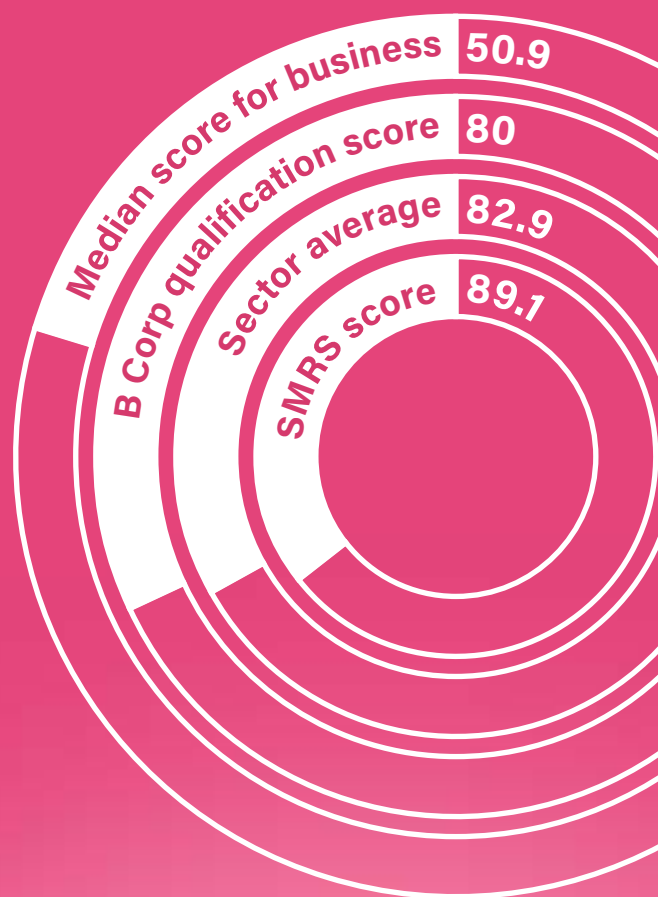
Certified B Corporations (or B Corps) are companies verified by B Lab to meet high standards of social and environmental performance, transparency and accountability.

Balancing purpose and profit, they're legally required to consider the impact of their decisions on their workers, customers, community and environment – as well as their shareholders.

SMRS are proud to have achieved B Corp Certification in September 2022.

The certification process was interesting, complex...and just the beginning.

It's a fantastic starting point to improve on for our recertification. The past two years has also given us the data to create benchmarks to measure our future success.



GOVERNANCE: 12



WORKERS: 29.7



CUSTOMERS: 21.7



COMMUNITY: 18.2



ENVIRONMENT: 7.3



The high five

Making the world a better place? It's a huge undertaking. Which is why we focus our activities into the five distinct areas scored by B Lab. Within SMRS, each has a dedicated team, set of goals and range of responsibilities:



GOVERNANCE



WORKERS



CUSTOMERS



COMMUNITY



ENVIRONMENT



Governance

Our Governance team looks deeply at our:

- Overall mission and how we're achieving it
- Engagement around our social and environmental impact
- Ability to formally consider stakeholders in decision making through our corporate structure and governing documents
- Transparency
- Ethics

2022

- We included our B Corp sustainability focus in our new articles of association.
- Created our first Impact Report, which supports our commitment to our ESG (environmental, social and corporate governance) strategy and B Corp community.



2023

- Established working groups for each area of focus. Colleagues with a passion for these areas volunteered to be accountable for driving operational change across SMRS.
- Rolled out our supplier onboarding portal to help with transparency and strengthen relationships.
- Evolving our ESG strategy to establish even clearer objectives and measures, to make sure that everyone has full clarity around our shared goals.

The journey we're on



Workers



This is all about how we make life better for our colleagues, in areas that include:

- Financial security
- Health and safety
- Engagement and satisfaction
- Career development
- Wellness



2022

- Created the Connected Working Framework based on employee feedback and input. It supports hybrid working, to get the balance right for both colleagues and the business.
- Scoped the Campus & Community Manager role, and how this would positively impact our colleagues and the communities we engage with.
- Completed an agency engagement survey, to learn what we were doing well and where we could improve. From this we explored further into the culture and connection within and between teams across SMRS.
- Launched our internal community engagement platform 'The Kitchen' (via Mighty Networks' technology) to support and encourage communication across the agency on a personal and professional level. 80% of our people engage and 25% are highly active on it.
- Awarded a 10% salary uplift to help tackle the cost of living crisis. Maternity and Jury Duty pay were also enhanced.
- Reviewed all existing policies to make sure everything was relevant, fit for purpose and in place to fully support our people. The process also enabled us to identify any gaps in policy which we're ensuring we rectify.

The journey so far



2023

- Recruited our Campus & Community Manager.
- Launched Cycle to Work scheme.

And this is what we're moving on to:

- We'll complete an Organisational Networks & Culture survey to analyse the engagement and interconnectivity of our business.
- We'll launch a project to review our rewards and benefits package to make sure it continues to be of value to our people.
- Creating policies to expand our equality, diversity and inclusion (ED&I) support – including transitioning, breastfeeding and menopause at work.
- We'll provide additional training for managers and key agency stakeholders in several ED&I areas.
- Launching our Learning Management System so that every colleague has a central hub to explore training and development opportunities.
- Starting our journey to becoming a registered Disability Confidence Leader.

The journey we're on



Customers



Our focus here is wide ranging and aimed on improving things like:

- How we look after our customers and clients through the quality of our products and services
- Data privacy and security
- Feedback channels
- Products or services that are designed to address a particular social problem, support underserved people, or improve the social impact of other businesses or organisations
- Ethical marketing



2022

- Made sure that our work is centred on our mission and purpose.
- Looked at ways to clearly quantify our impact in this area. This was tricky and is an ongoing challenge.
- Began exploring tools to enable us to monitor and report on our achievements.
- Created a number of blog and social posts to celebrate and share relevant activities, as well as inspire our online communities.

The journey so far



2023

- Developing case studies that quantify and evidence what we've achieved.
- Investing in a customer engagement platform that will give us a clearer picture of how to improve our products and services for them.
- Continue to sensitively and responsibly handle security and data privacy.
- Introducing a Client Advisory Board to discuss and explore the challenges that our clients face.
- Developing products and services to specifically address social challenges in areas such as widening participation and culture.
- Exploring ways to introduce carbon tracking and reporting into our clients' communication strategies.

The journey we're on



Community

What greater impact can we make on the communities that we operate in, hire from and source from?

To answer this, we look at things like:

- Diversity, equity and inclusion
- Supply chain management
- Economic impact
- Civic engagement
- Charitable giving



2022

- Reviewed our ESG approach to key suppliers, resulting in changes to our contractual services and products that aligned them closer to our purpose.
- Created a 'Co-Lab' framework which looks at the eco-system and strategic alignment of all our existing and future partnerships.
- Actively promoted our volunteering days which resulted in 14% of people taking part across more than 19 days.
- Pro-bono work for Student Minds that equated to an investment from SMRS in excess of £10k. As the UK's leading mental health charity for students, they support young people by providing information, educating around wellbeing and improving access to mental health services. We supported Student Minds by increasing awareness, traffic, engagement and ongoing funding. It included copywriting, design and production support and delivering the campaign media schedule.
- Passionately and actively supported local and other charities throughout the year, such as Mustard Tree and Wood Street Mission. That included sponsored events, an SMRS tuck shop and a Christmas donation scheme.
- Celebrated and thanked our clients at Christmas through a charitable donation to The Trussell Trust.

The journey so far



2023

- Introducing our suppliers to our onboarding portal – to help us measure against our agency priorities more clearly and efficiently.
- Actively engaging and developing our network of 'Co-Lab' partnerships, led by our Campus & Community Manager.
- Proudly continuing to support Student Minds in the great work they do.
- Increasing and enhancing charitable donations, organised events and relevant mentoring opportunities alongside charitable organisations.
- We want to increase the uptake of our volunteering days to 20% of our colleagues.
- Expanding the volunteering options available, especially those that reflect our mission and community goals.

The journey we're on



Environment



Looking at our environmental management practices, supply chain and distribution channels, our aim here is to improve our impact on:

- Air
- Climate
- Water
- Land
- Biodiversity

2022

- Improved our energy efficiency, changing all our lightbulbs to LED and installing timed lighting in lesser-used areas of the office.
- Shared and encouraged energy-efficient techniques and handy tips for our colleagues via our community platform, The Kitchen.
- Reduced and monitored our carbon emissions to align with the Net Zero government targets for 2050.
- Appointed a preferred supplier to provide FCS-certified paper, as well as recycled books and other more environmentally conscious products instead of non-renewable.
- As we have a small legacy company car fleet, we changed our policy to ensure all colleagues on the scheme move to electric cars at the earliest opportunity.

The journey so far



2023

- Provided a battery recycling station.
- Newly installed electricity meters to monitor and set targets to reduce consumption in the office, as well as initiatives to help remote workers reduce their consumption at home.

And this is what we're moving on to:

- Using our monthly tonnage reports on carbon-neutral waste management to monitor and set targets to reduce office waste.
- Exploring effective collaborative ways of working that reduce the need for travel.
- Reviewing and developing our ESG induction for new starters, outlining our sustainability commitments.
- Implementing a carbon intelligence platform to help us set and achieve our sustainability goals.
- All company cars will be electric by the end of 2023.

The journey we're on



What's next?

We've done a lot already. We can always do more. That's why we'll harness the power of our shared potential to continue changing things for the better. For everyone.

