

A photograph of a lush green forest with tall trees and dense foliage, serving as the background for the report cover.

WILDWOOD ECOLOGY

B Corp Impact Report



2022-2023

Introduction



We are proud to share our journey, achievements, and learning from the past year (July 2022 through to end of June 2023) through this Impact Report.

Operating in a UK marked by climate change, biodiversity loss, and socio-economic challenges, our commitment to driving positive change for people and the planet has never been more relevant or necessary.

Reflections

The past year has been transformative for our business, as we navigated the challenges brought on by a post-Covid and rapidly changing world. We witnessed the devastating effects of climate change, such as global wildfires, hurricanes, and floods, which underscored the importance of our work in protecting and restoring natural habitats.

We also saw increasing awareness and demand for sustainable development solutions in relation to being biodiversity net gain prepared, from individuals, businesses, and local governments alike. Although there is still a lack of clarity on how this will be rolled out later this year.

Amidst this complex landscape, Wildwood Ecology remained focused on its vision to prioritise and champion the protection of the natural environment, restoration of biodiversity loss, and seek to address the climate emergency, so that future generations may prosper.



Achievements

We are proud of the progress we made in the past year, particularly in the following areas:

- We developed a procurement policy for goods and services purchased to help reduce our Scope 3 GHG emissions, preferring to use local suppliers or those with a sustainability policy.
- We moved headquarters to a more energy efficient building that generates its own electricity and uses a water-source heat pump.
- We reviewed and adjusted our employees' salaries across our workforce ensuring that all grades are remunerated fairly, alongside setting up a healthcare plan.
- Our amazing team carried out community volunteer days, working alongside environmental charity, Stroud Valleys Project, to improve local greenspace habitats for newts, as well as providing community education through bat talks and walks.
- Our website got a makeover and became even greener[1]! We achieved this by changing our website host, so it now runs on sustainable energy and improving our SEO efficiency, so webpages load quicker.
- We re-certified as a B Corporation and made a modest improvement to our score. We also used social media to advocate for business as a force for good and were delighted to be asked to be the keynote speaker for two local and regional events about our journey.
- We continued to advocate for B Corps by attending local events, such as the Cirencester Chamber of Commerce 'lunch-and-learn' sessions and providing our clients with Continuing Professional Development (CPD); highlighting the holistic work we do for our employees, suppliers and stakeholders as well as our environment and communities and why its 'better for business'.
- We started prioritising clients working on sustainable building design. We made a crucial appointment of a Client Engagement Manager, enabling us to better service our existing clients, whilst pro-actively seeking new clients who share our B Corp vision and values.

Our B Corp Impact Assessment Journey

Our B Impact Assessment journey has been both rewarding and challenging. We were able to identify areas of strength and improvement for our re-certification in 2023, which helped us to refine our services and deepen our impact. The re-certification process has also reinforced our commitment to transparency and accountability, enabling us to build trust with our stakeholders.

However, we faced challenges in measuring and quantifying some of our impacts, particularly in areas where standardised metrics are lacking. We recognise that there is room for improvement in our reporting and evaluation processes, and we are committed to addressing these shortcomings in the coming year.

Looking ahead

As we progress through 2023, we remain dedicated to our mission and to further enhancing our positive impact on people and the planet. We will continue to refine our strategies, invest in innovative solutions, and collaborate with partners to address the pressing environmental challenges of our time.

Thank you for your continued support and for joining us on this journey.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Dodd', written in a cursive style.

Richard Dodd BSc (Hons) CEcol MCIEEM
Managing Director

Our work

Our Purpose

We provide ecological services to a diverse portfolio of clients, but our expertise lies with providing support to architects, planning consultants, heritage organisations and local authorities.

Although the focus of our work is planning and development, this diversity ensures that we are not dependent on any one sector, such as new residential developments.

In autumn of 2022 we introduced arboricultural services that both complements and augments our ecological work which means that our clients can now get both services from one provider. It also opens up greater opportunities for developing and employing dual qualified ecologists and arboriculturists and will enable us to employ more people to help forward our vision.



Being a B Corp

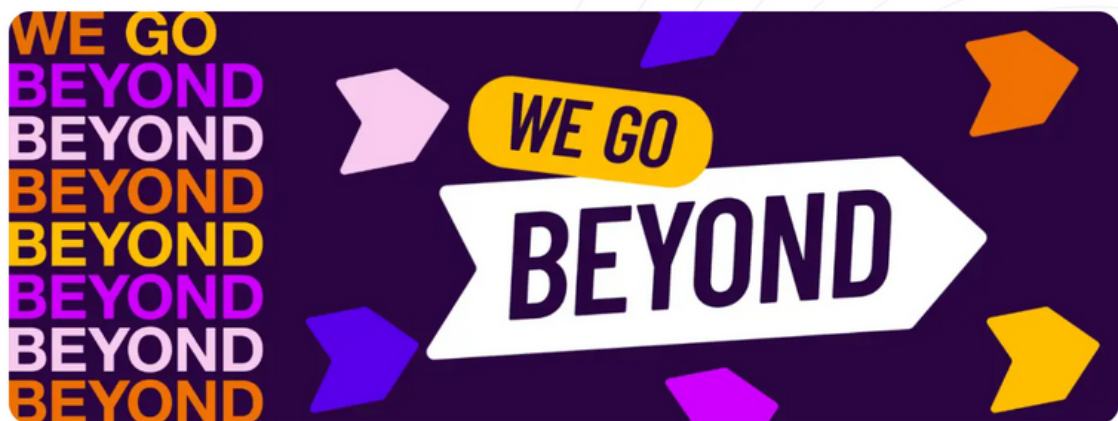
Our Journey

We believe that all businesses can and should be a force for good, so that's why we became a proud member of the B Corp community in July 2019. This puts us at the heart of a global network of more than 4,000 companies that are committed to acting in a sustainable and transparent way while meeting the highest environmental and social standards.

Every time you buy a product or service from a B Corp, you're taking a small step towards a better world for all.

To become a certified B Corp, businesses are required to complete a survey called the Business Impact Assessment - or BIA. It's not just any survey, it's one of the most comprehensive and challenging tools out there for assessing the real social and environmental impact of a business.

The BIA is operated by the independent non-profit B Lab. It allows businesses to measure the impact their business is having on the Environment, their Workers and the Community, as well as looking at their Governance structure. Businesses must meet a minimum of 80 points out of 200 to certify, as well as making a legal change to their business to place impact on people and planet on the same level as profit.



B Corp scores

80.6

Our score when we first certified back in 2019 was 80.6 points. We scraped in by the skin of our teeth, so we knew we had a lot to do to make any real impact.

We were proud and delighted to complete our first re-certification in 2022 and have improved our score to 84.0 points.

	2019	2022	2025
Governance	11.8	14.3	15.0
Workers	23.6	29.8	32.0
Community	17.4	21.1	22.0
Environment	25.8	16.7	26.0
Customers	1.8	1.8	5.0
OVERALL SCORE	80.6	84.0	100.0

Table 1 - Our B Impact Scores: past, present, and targeted

100

We have also set our goal for re-certification in 2025 and are targeting an ambitious score of 100. It's a nice round number, but also a stretch.

The re-certification process has taught us that we are generally moving in the right direction, but you can also see that although we made strides in governance and for our employees, we have suffered a significant score reduction for environment.

Both the increases and decreases may be attributed to changes in the appraisals between 2019 and 2022. Additional questions, many of which required supplementary information to be obtained.

The changes to our scores demonstrate that 'words' continue to be required to be supported with 'evidence of positive action' and we need to improve the capture and documentation of the good work we know we do. This will be improved over the next couple of years and has highlighted to us the importance of documentation and evidence-led statements. Being able to back up our communications both internally and externally with confidence.

Goals

Governance



WHAT WE SAID WE'D DO

We believe in company transparency and accountability and so committed to sharing information not only internally, but externally to our stakeholders. We sought to look at our financial transparency with our employees, as well as auditing our policies and procedures.

WHAT WE DID

In the past year we have reviewed, amended existing and added new policies and procedures. These include amendments to our maternity, paternity and shared parental leave policies; appraisal and review procedures, which now commits to quarterly appraisals for all employees; and data protection and updates to the way we respond to potential cyber-attacks.

For the first time, we have also published our impacts for external review and scrutiny. Finally, we reviewed and updated our mission statement: "Empowering sustainable development through exceptional nature-based services and innovative solutions, Wildwood Ecology champions biodiversity and climate action for a prosperous future for all."

WHAT WE'RE WORKING ON

In 2023 we are reviewing our business terms and conditions. This exercise has not been carried out in recent years and no doubt we can make improvements to make sure they are not only fair, but also open and transparent.

We will continue to audit our policies and procedures and we are currently working on our mental health and wellbeing policy and practices.

Goals

Workers



WHAT WE SAID WE'D DO

There is no doubt that it's become more challenging to recruit and retain people, especially for senior level roles. We faced a challenge in improving what we offer to new and existing employees. We needed to review salaries and benefits to ensure they were competitive, fair and valued by the majority. We also needed to ensure that we invest in their professional development training, as well as health and well-being. This was and remains our ongoing focus, alongside improving policies and procedures that protect employees and give them confidence in the great work they do for people and the planet.

WHAT WE DID

In addition to the review and amendment of policies and procedures mention under Governance, we continued to adjust our career progression framework document. We believe that this is an exemplar document and we know of very few examples within our sector that has one or keeps it as up to date and of relevance as we do. This has certainly be welcomed and valued by our employees, as too the salary review we carried out in late 2022.

We also carried out our second annual staff survey and have made gains in almost all areas. Staff 'happiness' is up from an already high score of 4.1 to an impressive 4.3 (scored out of 5, where 1 is extremely unhappy and 5 is extremely happy). Similarly, there were gains for how employees perceive their work-life balance (up from 3.5 to 3.9); how comfortable an employee is approaching their line-manager (up from 4.5 to 4.8) and 100% of employees would recommend someone to work for us!

We also asked people what worked well at Wildwood and what we could do better. Overall, people stated that communication has been improved, but meetings could be made more efficient (we need to ascertain if this means shorter or fewer meetings, or both). People also would like to have more consistency in some of the tasks we perform as this can lead to being less efficient. People also wanted us to make better use of technology, including investment in replacement and new equipment.

WHAT WE'RE WORKING ON

Investment and use of AI and automation will not only increase our efficiency, but also reduce the environmental and social impact of our work. Making better use of technology will enable our teams to work smarter and not necessarily harder. We will make purchases of computer tablets that will enable the capture of field data that can be immediately used for reporting. Essentially, we want to minimise taking time from our people and reliance on the use of a Time Off In Lieu (TOIL) as a sticking plaster for potential overworking and under resourcing issues. This is work in progress!

Goals

Community



WHAT WE SAID WE'D DO

We have made it easier for our employees to make a difference to our communities by offering them one day per quarter to volunteer (without loss of pay) on any community-based project.

We also established team volunteer days, where we organise opportunities, one per quarter, where we can contribute to local projects as a team.

WHAT WE DID

Last year we participated as a team in a volunteer scheme to help Stroud Valleys Project to clean up ponds in Stonehouse, home to a breeding Great Crested Newt population.

To date, we have seen employees volunteer for nature-based projects such as surveying and monitoring, charity shop work for Oxfam and talks at schools, colleges and universities about careers in ecology.

We continue to donate financially to good causes, and this year we gave £1,000 to support people in Ukraine alongside regular monthly donations to WWF, our global charity.

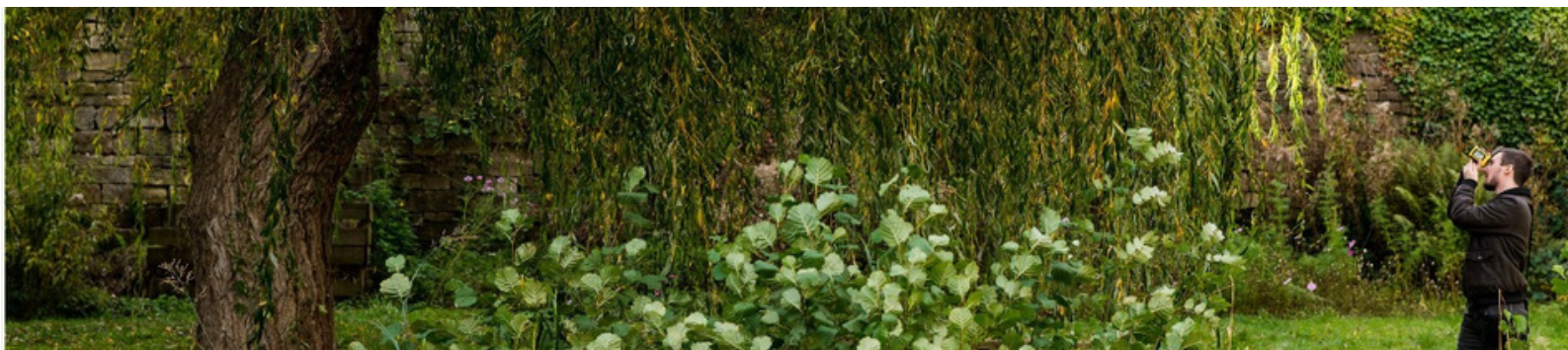
We have also developed a procurement policy for goods and services purchased, preferring to use local suppliers or those with a sustainability policy. As an example, we use a B Corporation (pending) IT service provider ([Juice IT](#)) and staff are provided with [Fairphones](#) using [Honest Mobile](#) SIM cards.

WHAT WE'RE WORKING ON

We will continue to offer our support for local businesses and provide both financial and voluntary labour support where we are able to do so. We also will be seeking to improve diversity and inclusion within our company through apprenticeships or internships from people who would not otherwise have an opportunity to work in our sector.

Goals

Environment



WHAT WE SAID WE'D DO

We are passionate about what we can do to help restore biodiversity loss, but we need to ensure we record the good work we do. There is no room for greenwashing here and so we will work harder between now and 2025 to ensure we can demonstrate our work more thoroughly.

Our company has set ambitious emissions targets and commits to reduce our baseline absolute Scope 1 and Scope 2 greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions 50% by 2025 and 100% by 2030. Our 2021 baseline has been calculated and, in that year, we emitted 18.76 tonnes of CO₂e (see [OurCarbon](#) profile).

WHAT WE DID

To help reduce both Scope 1 & 2 emissions, in 2022 we moved our primary office to a more efficient building with no gas emissions: heating and hot water is now delivered via a water-source heat pump, and electricity is provided by a green energy supplier.

We also sought to address the more challenging Scope 3 emissions. We have developed an internal policy and review work that is greater than 65 miles from our office location, making use of local subcontractor labour or passing over the request to a local provider.

Based on our full emissions for 2021 (Scopes 1-3) we off-set 20 tonnes of CO₂e in 2022 and are currently carbon net-negative. Not that this is where we really want to be and we will be working on reduction and only use off-setting as a residual tool and not rely on it as a safety blanket.

We purchased our first electric vehicle in April 2023 as we start to develop or replace our existing small fleet of vehicles. Replacement and augmentation will be a gradual change as we recognise the embodied carbon within our current fleet of vehicles.

WHAT WE'RE WORKING ON

We continue to work on the way we work. As much of our emissions are related to the use of vehicles, reducing mileage and finding smarter ways of travel will be our priority. We will be looking at ways of supporting our subcontractors limit their impact when working on projects with us, such as improved focus on lift sharing and use of local talent.

Goals

Customers



WHAT WE SAID WE'D DO

We recognise that our clients deserve better from us. We have great relationships with many of our clients, but that level of service is inconsistent. We needed to not only improve on what services we deliver, but, maybe more importantly, how we deliver our services.

WHAT WE DID

In 2022, we set about improving the relationship between clients and ourselves. We received 'some' feedback from our clients following a short survey. Areas of concern included better levels of communication about how a project is progressing and the frequency of those communications.

We were also experiencing capacity management challenges, with some members of our team feeling overwhelmed with work during our main survey season.

This led the senior management team to try to resolve these issues by the internal appointment of a Client Engagement Manager (CEM). This being a new role to our company we wanted to ensure that it worked for our clients, our brave employee and for the company. It has been over six months since the role commenced and it has, naturally, evolved over that period of time.

We have hosted a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) event for our clients, updating them on legislative and service changes and introduced them to our CEM. They now have a central point of contact that is being utilised by our clients and our team is reporting 'manageable' workloads. This is, as always, work in progress!

WHAT WE'RE WORKING ON

We will continue to monitor the role of the CEM, but we recognise that we need to do a lot more for our clients.

As such, the next year will see us improving the way we communicate with our clients and are looking to develop a client portal where they will be able to track the status of their reports and have a dedicate main point of contact.

We will continue to seek their feedback, via our annual Client Survey, and address any further areas where clients think we can improve.

Feedback

We seek constructive feedback from our clients and external stakeholders and so if you have any comments, concerns or collaborative ideas then please contact us.

Email: hello@wildwoodecology.com

We look forward to sharing our progress and news with you next year.



Thank you for supporting

