

Annual Report



2021-2022 Impact Report

Content

2	<u>Intro</u>
5	<u>2021/2022 Impact Highlights</u>
7	<u>Income Impact</u>
13	<u>Being part of the B Corp Community</u>
18	<u>Sustainable Development Goal 13 - Taking climate action</u>
28	<u>Positive Publishing/Amplifying our message</u>
32	<u>Greening the web</u>
37	<u>Creating an exceptional team culture</u>
41	<u>Looking ahead</u>



One of our best years yet!

We celebrated our 15th business birthday this year, which we're so grateful to report has been one of our best years yet!

This year, we are especially pleased that we have been able to be together in person. It's made us all feel even closer, especially as we have started to expand our team, we've really appreciated being able to meet our new team members in real life.

It's been another successful year financially too, as we surpassed last year's turnover by a healthy amount. In terms of reducing our impact on the planet, we're excited to report that we have achieved all of the goals we set out in last year's report!

This annual impact report highlights all of the year's successes and shares how we achieved them, and what our goals are for the year/s ahead.

2021/22 Impact Highlights

We celebrated
15 years of
Wholegrain
Digital!



We released version 3
of our Website Carbon
Calculator, standardising
carbon calculations
ahead of Earth Day 2022

Tom's Sustainable Web Design book
was translated into German

Tom ist nachhaltig Buch Webdesign
wurde ins Deutsche übersetzt



Our sustainability
newsletter, Curiously
Green, almost tripled
in readership going
from 1,300 subscribers
3,700+ in one year

We gained the Good
Business Charter (GBC)
accreditation, which was
previously only available to
larger businesses.



Income Impact

After our success last year, when we achieved the highest turnover since Wholegrain began, we're pleased to share that we surpassed that number this year, achieving a turnover of £1.4m for the 2021/22 financial year.

£1m

2021


£1.4m

2022

Income impact

Our biggest contracts by income were:

IMPACT
MANAGEMENT
PLATFORM

 good energy

ZERO100

Nu-Heat
Feel the difference

INDEED

HPN Humanitarian
Practice Network

THE
ROYAL
SOCIETY

 **acturis**
CONNECTED THINKING

Income impact

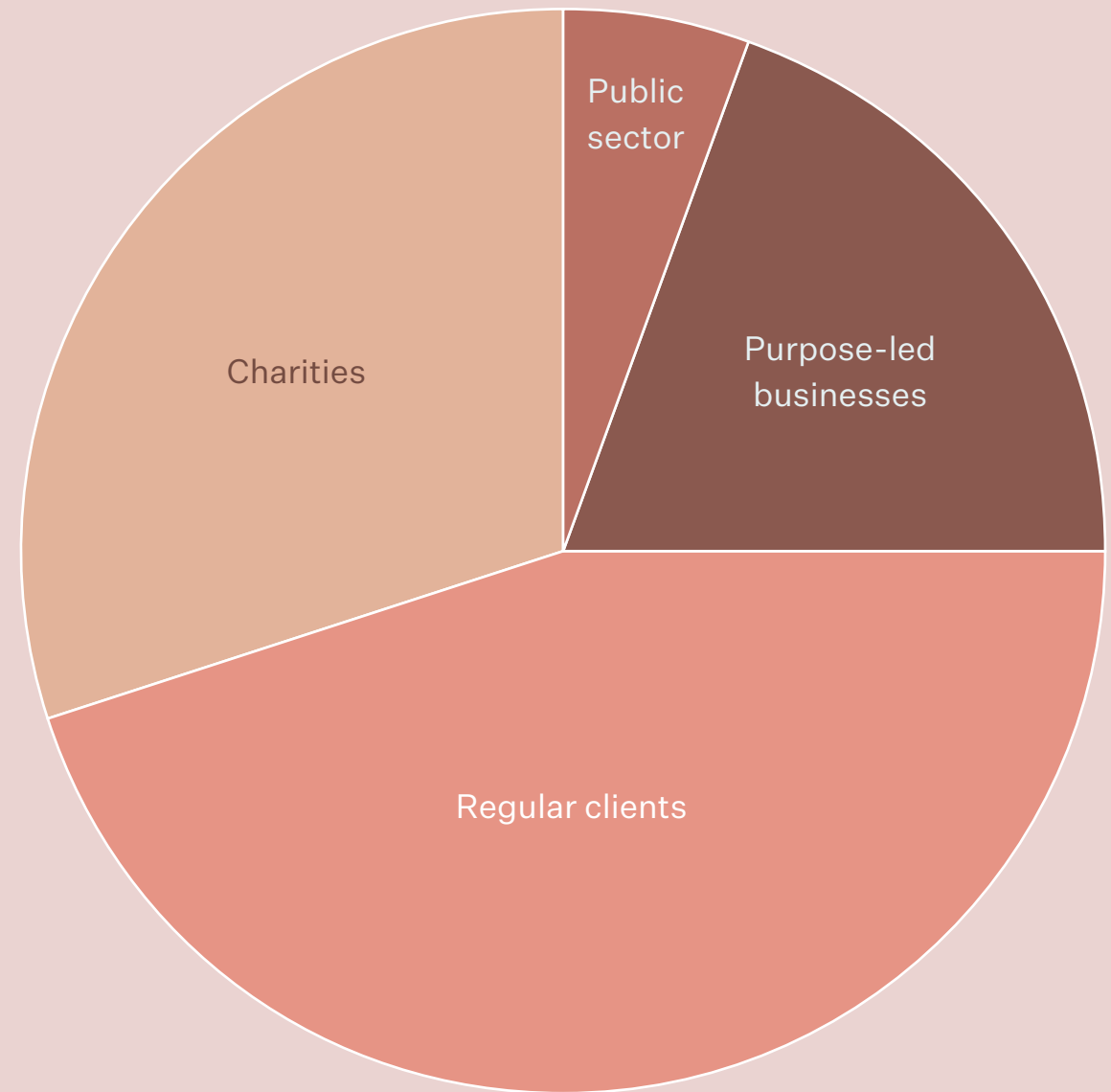
Our mission

We've always focused on working with positive business and charitable organisations, with a mission towards eventually ensuring that every single project we work on makes us feel worthwhile as humans and has a positive impact on the world.

Income impact

We're already well on our way to achieving this, with **107** clients across this year, of which:

- 6 were public sector organisations
- 21 were purpose led businesses (of which 6 were B Corporations)
- 48 were regular (not identified as purpose driven)
- 32 were charities

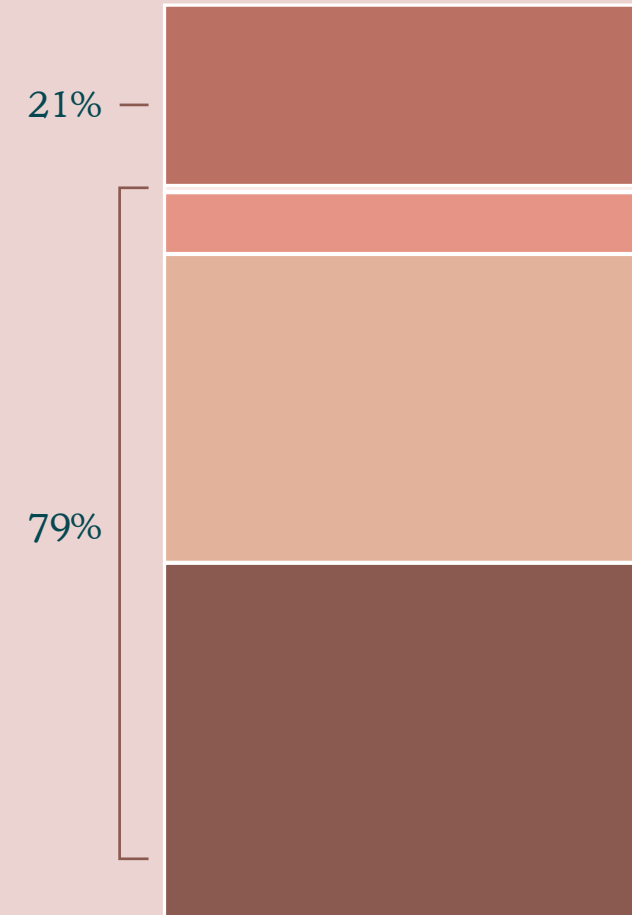


Income impact

79% of our revenue came from client projects that have a defined positive purpose beyond financial profit.

The full breakdown of where our revenue came from this year is illustrated below:

- 39% from non-profit organisations
- 34% from purpose driven businesses (Including 7% from B Corps)
- 5% from public sector projects
- 1% from speaking and consulting on digital sustainability
- The remaining 21% of revenue was from projects that are not specifically mission aligned



Income impact

Being Part of the B Corp Community

B Corp Birthday!

2021 was a year of positive business celebrations for us, as we saw in our 15th business birthday, and marked five years as a certified B Corporation.



B Corp Birthday

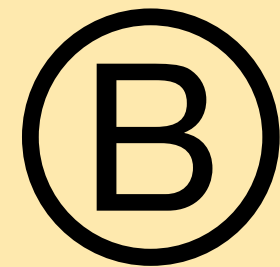
We're super proud of how far we've come since our birth in 2007, and especially proud to have achieved the B Corp Best For The World accolade for Governance this year.



Our continuous commitment towards ensuring impactful leadership has paved the way for this achievement, and we owe our success to our amazing clients, and especially our wonderful team.

As we head into **2022/23**, we are preparing for our recertification as a B Corporation, which will help to keep us focused on our mission, and improving our scores in all areas will benefit our team, our clients and the wider world.

Certified



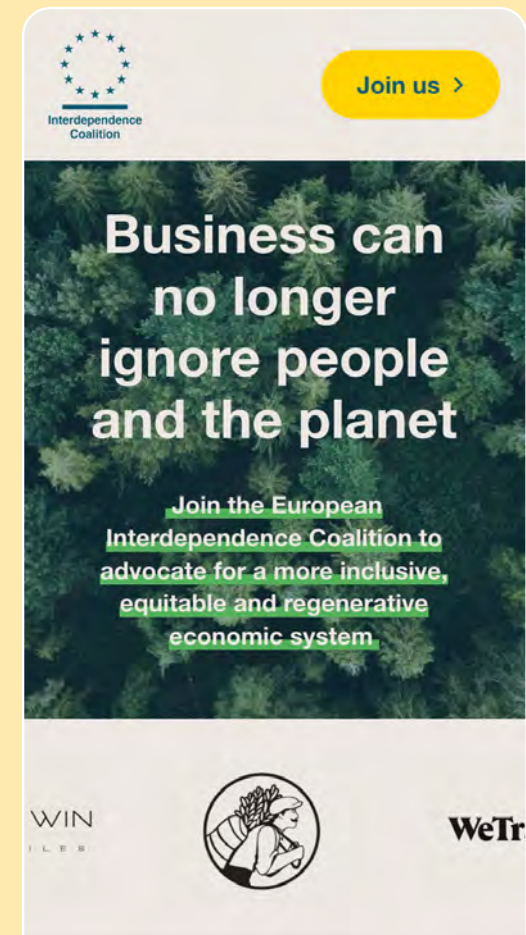
®

Corporation

Building Better Businesses in the UK and beyond

In 2021, we worked with B Lab UK to build the Better Business Act website, encouraging businesses to sign up to a new coalition to make UK business law more sustainable. Since then, the coalition has grown to **1,000+ businesses**, who will be presenting the draft act to parliament in April 2022.

We have since also worked with B Lab Europe, to create the European equivalent, [the Interdependence Coalition website](#), which will present its official response to the European Commission's proposal on Sustainable Corporate Governance.



Sustainable Development Goal 13 - Taking climate action

Reducing our emissions

All of our measurable goals - and in fact, our overall mission, relate to Sustainable Development Goal 13, Climate Action.

This year was another positive one in this respect, with our annual emissions remaining low despite the new methodology we used for reporting, which increased the scope of some of our emissions.

13 CLIMATE
ACTION



**Take urgent actions to combat
climate change and its impacts**

In total, we travelled 67,665km this financial year. Most of our travel is commuting, and, despite recruiting more team members, this is still a 5.6K reduction compared to 2019/20 (before the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns throughout 2020).

We avoid unnecessary travel for business, keeping our emissions for business travel low, at 517.6km.

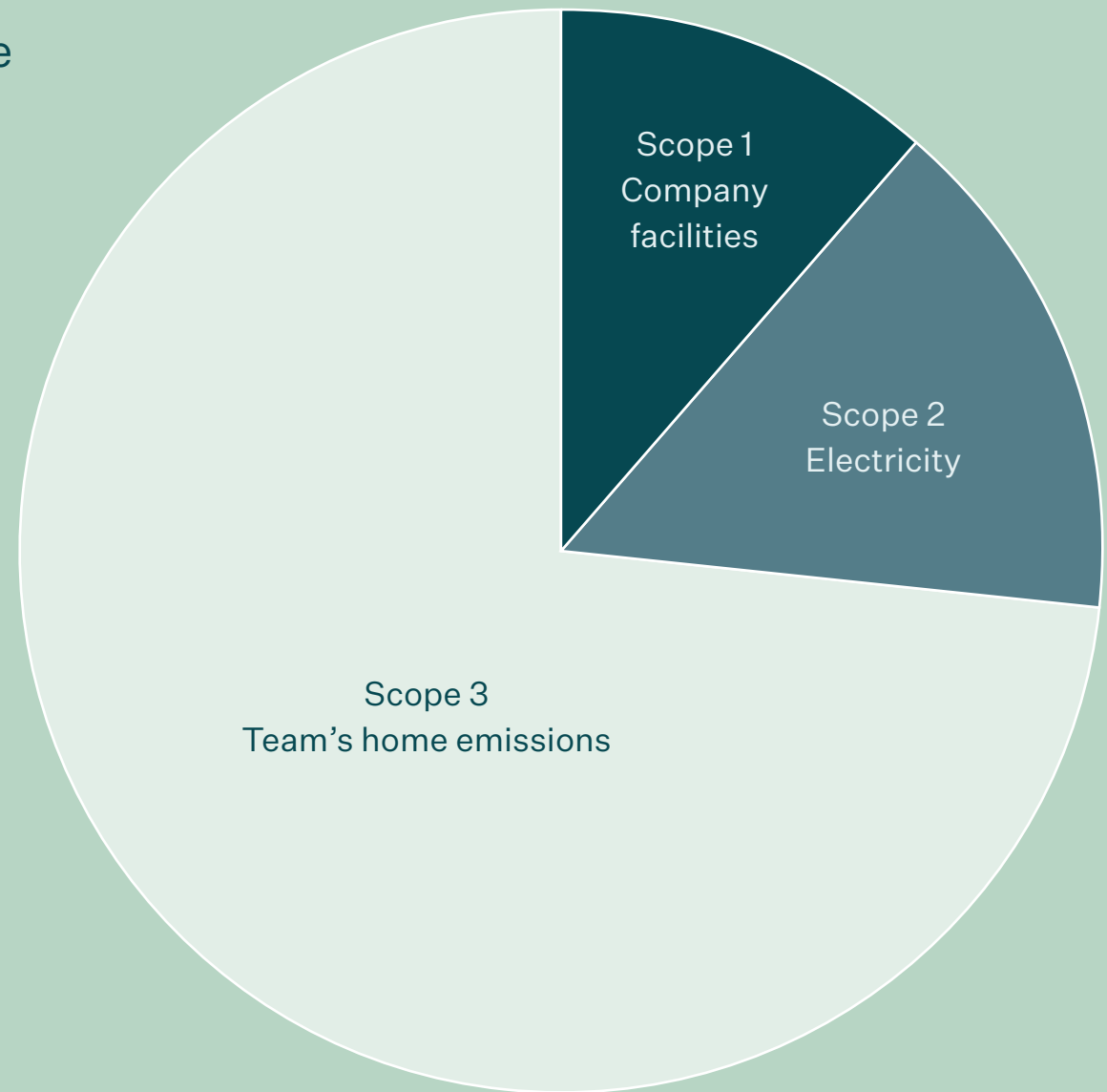
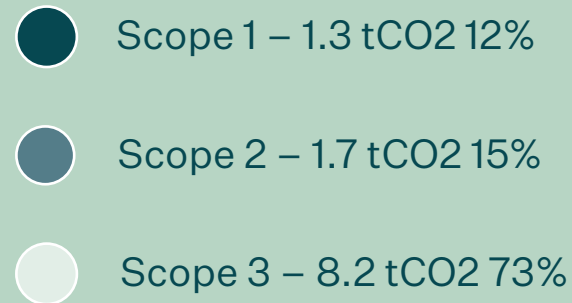
Total carbon emissions
(tonnes)



We recruited 3 new team members in 2021/22, and now, 81% of our 16 strong team have renewable energy at home. As our team grows, it's harder to achieve the 100% figure we had previously, as not all team members are able to influence where their energy comes from.

These figures include all 3 emissions scopes, with Scope 3 (the team's home emissions) including:

- Electricity and gas use for working from home (5.5 tCO₂)
- Business travel (2.3 tCO₂)
- Commuting (0.4 tCO₂)



Taking climate action / Reducing our emissions

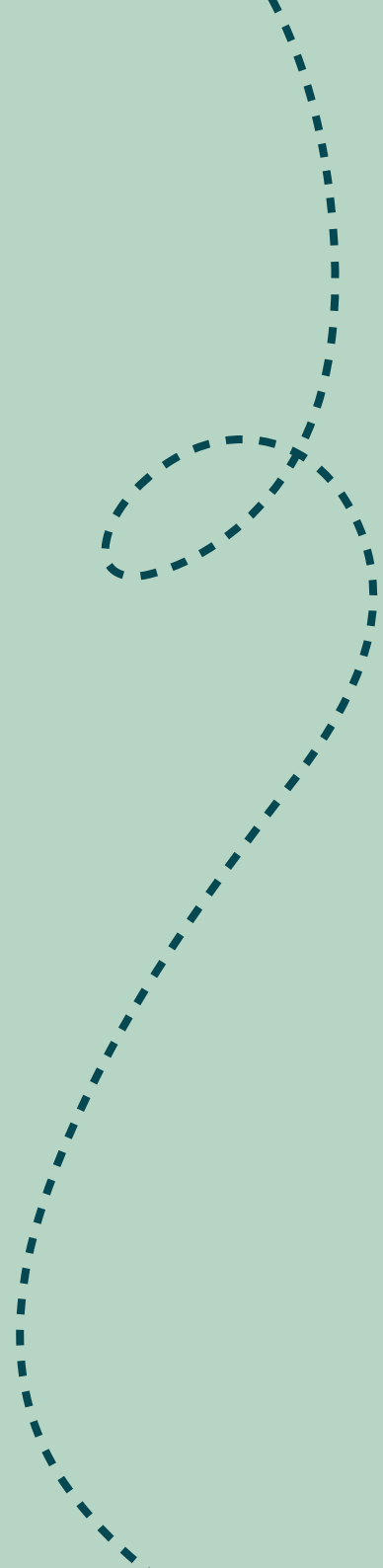
This year, we've learned that the boundaries of scope 3 emissions are blurry, and there is more we can include. We are working closely with Inhabit again on this, to get a more comprehensive picture of our emissions. This is a work in progress, so the year-on-year emissions are not yet a like-for-like comparison.

Despite this, our emissions remain very low compared to most other companies. Last year Inhabit said that 12.5 tonnes was the lowest they had ever seen in any company emissions report. This year we have surpassed even this, with our emissions down to 11.3 tonnes despite returning to the office more often.



Reducing our impact

Last year, we achieved our stretch goal of becoming carbon positive by the end of the 2020/2021 financial year, based on the methodology used. However, as we are now working on expanding our definition of scope 3 emissions, technically we can only confirm this achievement for scope 1 and 2. We hope to have a more robust definition of scope 3 next year, and aim to achieve this goal across all scopes.



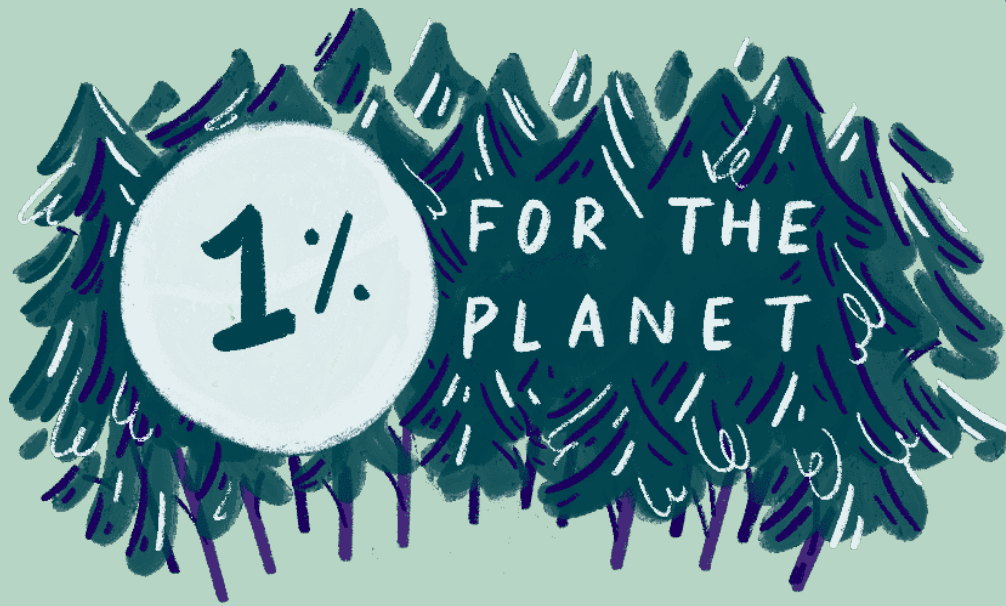
This year, we planted 44,732 trees in total.
That's 12,859 more trees than we planted during
the 2020/21 financial year.



To reduce our impact even further for the coming 2022/23 financial year, alongside our existing tree-planting with [Eden reforestation projects](#) (global) and our Scottish grove with [Trees for Life](#) (local), we have confirmed that we will now also purchase carbon removal credits with [Inhabit](#). These removals are in the form of [Treeconomy](#) Ackron Mixed Afforestation project in Scotland. All of Treeconomy's projects use the latest in satellite, drone and AI technology to ensure the most accurate data possible in calculating the data.

This will help to ensure that our reporting is as robust as possible.





**Business
Declares**

This year, we chose to support our 1% for the planet 2020/21 charity of the year again. International Rivers is a US based organisation working globally to protect rivers around the world and the communities that rely on them, and we wanted to continue the support we had offered previously.

In addition, this year we also chose to support Business Declares - a network of like-minded businesses that we are proud to be a part of. Our donation will go towards helping this community organisation in their mission - taking purposeful action towards a carbon neutral future.

Our ongoing partnerships include:



Trees for L🌱fe

THE
GREEN WEB
FOUNDATION



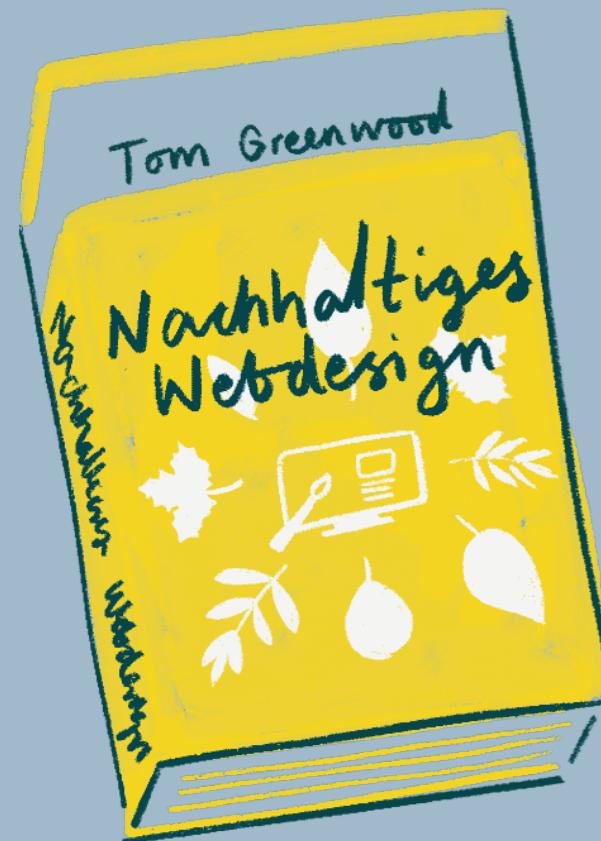
Eden Reforestation Projects

Possible.

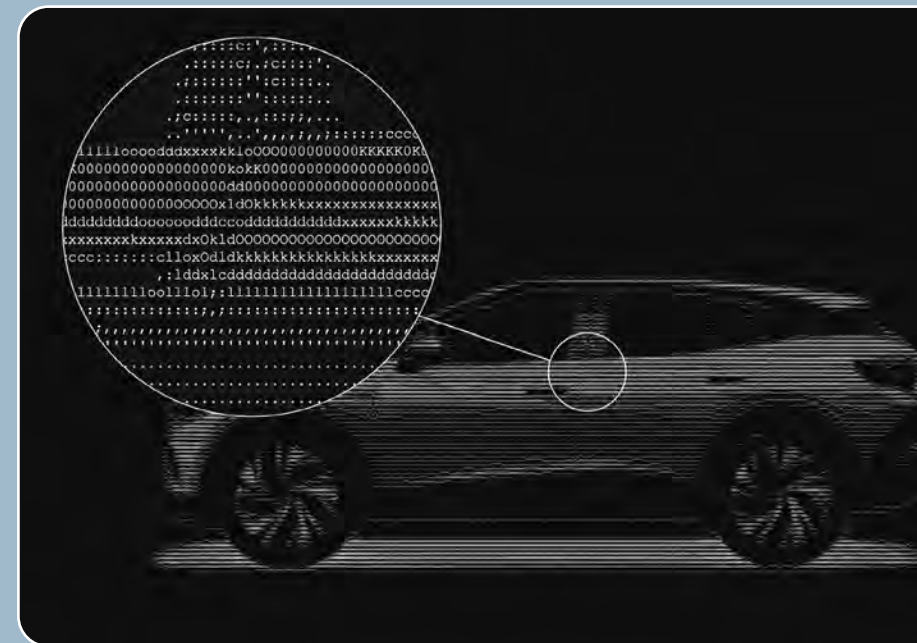
Positive Publishing /
Amplifying our message

In early 2021, our Co-Founder/
Director Tom published a book with
A Book Apart. Sustainable Web
Design was launched in February,
and was very well received.

Towards the end of the year, Tom's
book has continued to sell well in
the UK and abroad, and has now
been translated into German.



In 2021/22 we published 12 articles on environmental topics as well as several articles on various topics from the circular economy to web design and development. In addition, we have shared more on our developmental journey as a team. We've also had several invitations to talk on sustainable web design, including several guest lectures at universities keen to learn more about greening the web. Our work has been featured on BBC Planet and in Forbes magazine, which featured our low-carbon website work with Volkswagen Canada.



Our sustainability focused newsletter, Curiously Green, continues to grow, attracting 100+ new subscribers every month. This highly regarded newsletter has tripled in popularity in the past year, going from 1,300 subscribers to more than 3,700 (at March 2022).

*Sign up to our
newsletter*



Will digital clothing slow down fast fashion?

Hello and Happy New Year!

I hope you have had time to slow down and enjoy a proper break with your loved ones last month. I definitely did! As I write this, I've just been chatting with Gail from [GAS Studio](#) who told me that 2022 is going to be the year of healing. That feels like a good perspective to start the year.

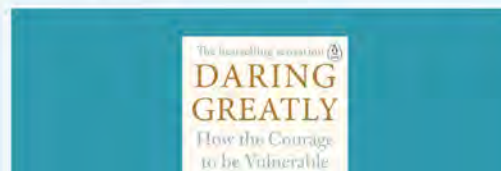
This month I have been thinking about [the Metaverse](#) again as it seems like its going to be a significant development in the year ahead! If you are still unsure what exactly the Metaverse is,

Quote of the month

"Vulnerability is not weakness; it's our greatest measure of courage."

Brené Brown

Book of the month



Top picks from the green web



Are marketers destroying the climate?

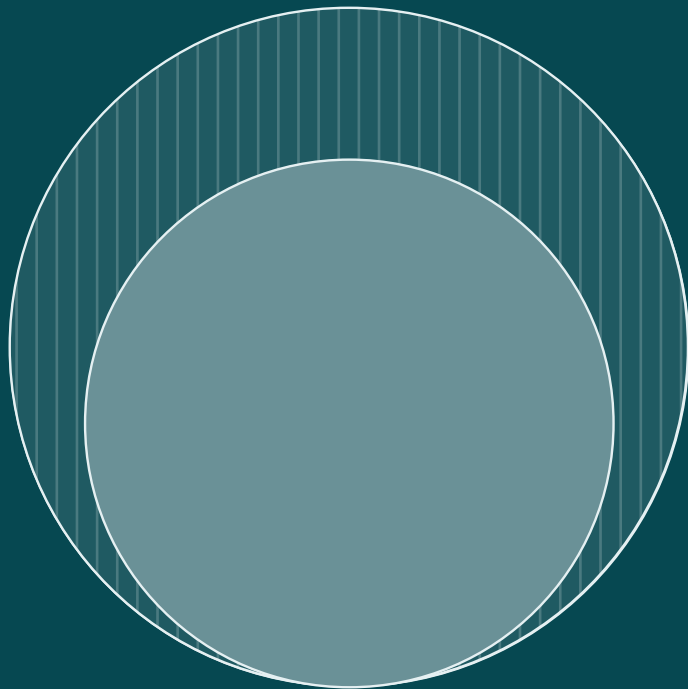
In this excellent Ted Talk, Solitaire Townsend (co-founder of Futerra Communications) argues that the people who have the biggest impact on climate change might not be the most obvious. She argues that it is those who are in the business of influencing society, or what she calls the 'X' industry, who could be "the primary architects of climate destruction." This includes many professional services involved in marketing and communications, ranging from advertisers to lobbyists. And yes, that includes us web designers and digital marketers.

I've long believed this to be true, and it's a big part of why my company has an [ethical screening policy](#) to ensure that we are only using our skills to promote the world we want to see. Soli's talk is a reminder that we must not only consider the direct impacts of the work that we do, but the indirect impacts of the influence it has more broadly in society.



Greening the web

At Wholegrain, our whole mission is to work together, towards creating a better web, and a better world. We regularly review our progress in this area, ensuring that these are not empty words, and we keep reviewing the way we work to make sure we keep this vision in sight.



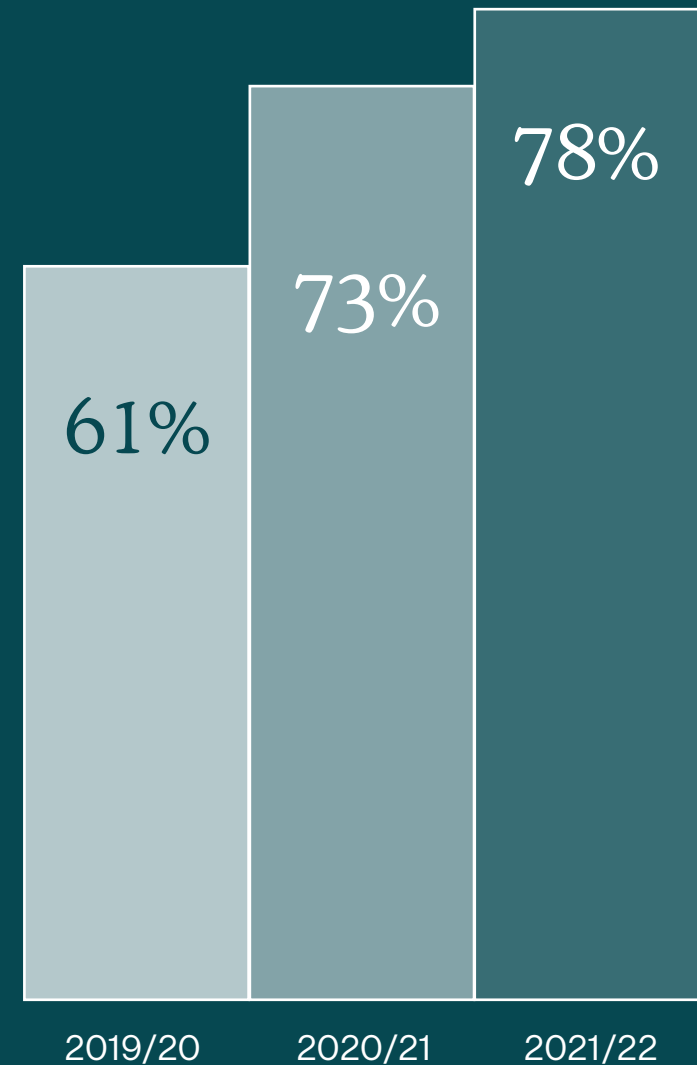
2021/22

Making sure our numbers match our mission

- 78% of our clients' websites were hosted on green hosting
- 100% of our own websites were hosted on green hosting

Our target is for 100% of client websites to be hosted on green hosting by 2026. This year has only seen an increase of 5% (compared to a 12% increase last year), so we certainly need to increase our efforts in this area. The challenge is that some clients have both technical and contractual limitations around who they can host with, as well as some having pre-existing relationships with organisations that they are happy with.

We do have many of the same returning clients who have already changed their hosts, but our aim is to ensure that all of our new clients make the move to green hosting where they can.



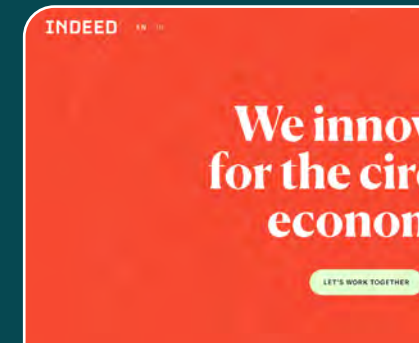
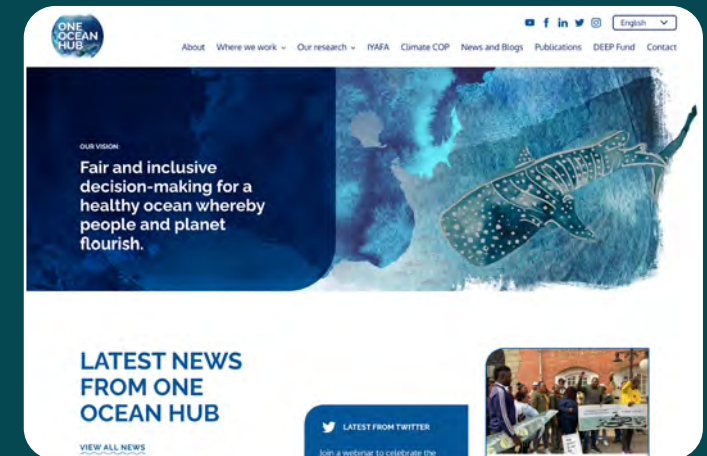
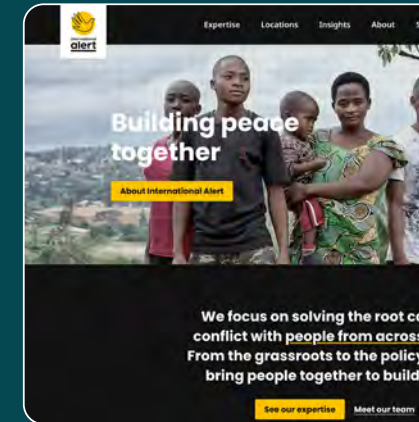
We are still on target for all the new websites that we develop to be less than the industry average. Our average client website homepage in 2021-22 was 0.4 grams CO2 per page view, against 0.5 grams across the same period last year (using Website Carbon v2 methodology). This may seem like a small drop, but the average weight of the websites we create is still less than half of the industry average.

0.4g

Average CO2 per page view

Greening the web

We are at a tipping point.
An ecological, economical and social
tipping point.
More and better is no longer good enough.



Website Carbon

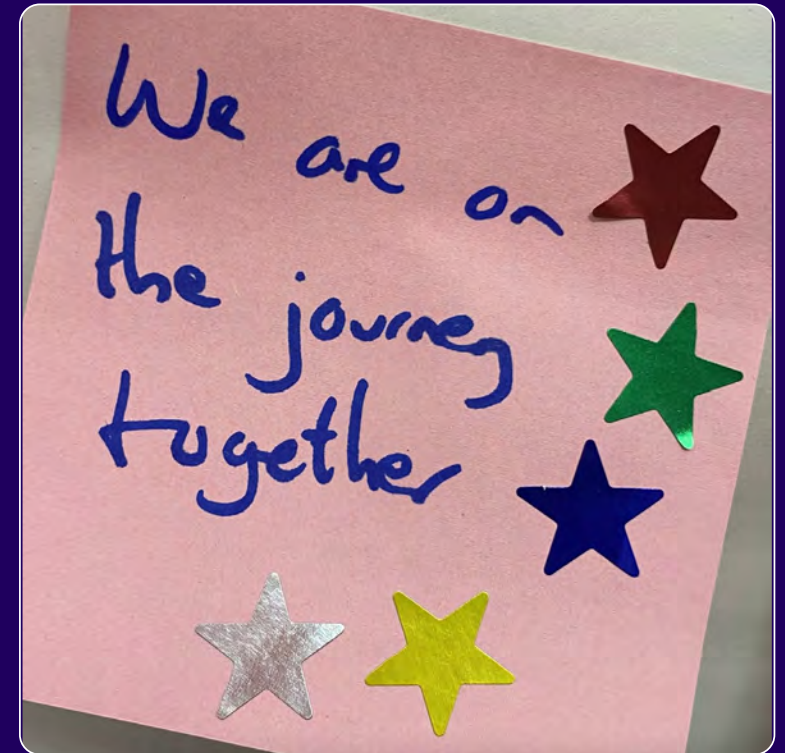
Now globally recognised and used by businesses across the world to check their digital sustainability credentials, our carbon calculator for websites, WebsiteCarbon.com, has received several million requests since its launch. With two versions behind us, this year we began work on the third version of WebsiteCarbon.com. Each previous version has updated the methodology with the newer data as it became available, but with version three, we wanted to go a step further.

Having seen several imitations of our carbon calculator in recent years, we now want to focus on creating a more standardised public methodology for our calculations. To this end, we have partnered with US based green web pioneers [Mightybytes](#), environmental consultant Rym Baouendi, web performance and environmental app [EcoPing](#) and [The Green Web Foundation](#) to ensure best practice in this regard.

Creating an
exceptional
team culture

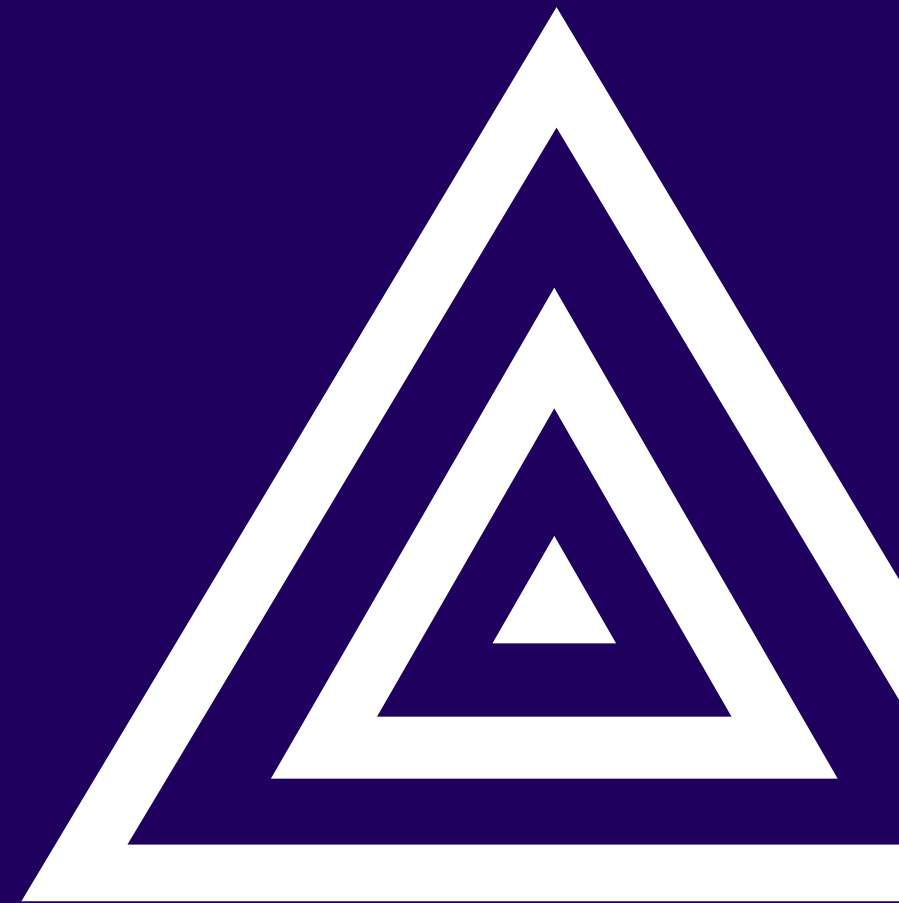
Last year, we took an experimental step in approaching our team's growth, when we hired a team coach. This new approach heavily depends on each team member becoming radically invested in their own, and each other's, growth. It also requires a high level of vulnerability in order for us to become a truly developmental organisation.

We're happy to share that this radical new approach has helped to create an even more cohesive and collaborative team culture, where we all challenge each other to develop and grow in so many ways.



In January 2022, following development work around giving and receiving feedback, becoming a more self-managed team and ensuring all team members have equal share of voice in decision making, we held a workshop in which we co-created our future vision for Wholegrain.

Making time for this deep dive into our development has really paid off. In 2021, our MD Tom and team coach Chris took their expertise to the next level, launching organisational culture consultancy Treeka, sharing their expertise to help other positive organisations to build brilliant team cultures.



Volunteering

Unfortunately, due to the challenges of us all coming together from disparate locations across the UK, and our focus on personal growth, as well as taking on new team members this year, we did not yet manage to do any team volunteering.

However, we have been looking into exciting new partnerships with 1% for the Planet for the coming year, and look forward to sharing more on this with you in 2023!



Looking ahead

We've come a long way over the years but there is always room to go further

In the coming year, we'll be exploring how we can create **even more impact** in the digital sector to accelerate a culture of creating digital services that are friendly to people and the planet. This will include **upgrades to our website carbon calculator** as well as a broader exploration of what a **more humane web** might look like.

Also, we've seen that definitions and reporting requirements around Net Zero seem to be changing so we'll be investing time to get our heads around this in the coming months, as well as working on our application to recertify as a **B Corp in 2023**.

Onwards!