



IMPACT REPORT

‘24

wilful

INTRODUCTION FROM THE CO-CEOS

What did 2024 look like from our Wilful vantage point?

In many ways, it felt like we hit our stride.

Bringing together Wilful, Gong Communications and Cherish PR under one unified B Corp certification was the headline moment, a proud validation of how we've always worked, but more importantly, the start of the next chapter as The Wilful Group.

Recertifying wasn't quick or easy. It was a year-long, team-wide effort that pushed us to look hard at how we work, challenge ourselves to do better, and raise the bar. The result? Our highest ever B Corp score, with standout recognition in the Workers category, something we're hugely proud of.

But it wasn't all smooth sailing. We've been working in a tougher environment than ever. Economic uncertainty continues to bite. Budgets are tighter. Clients face growing pressure to prove value. And political pushback on ESG is gathering pace, threatening to stall progress when it's needed most.

For a purpose-led business like ours, these headwinds are real. But they've only strengthened our resolve.

This year, we've doubled down on what matters most. We've set five long-term Wilful Intentions to guide our impact. We've made everyone responsible for better business. And we've kept investing in the culture, learning and wellbeing that helps our people and our impact thrive.

So what did that look like?

- Our highest ever B Corp score, recognising our supportive, people-first culture.
- **30%** of employees promoted or receiving a pay rise, despite the economic squeeze.
- **90%** of our team volunteering, supporting charities like The Felix Project and Marylebone Food Bank.
- **180 hours** of pro bono work, helping Action for Conservation raise £54,000.
- **700+** young people reached through Wilful Foundations.
- **10%** increase in B Corp suppliers, plus free creative support for fellow B Corps.

But we know there's more to do. As we face another uncertain year, one thing is clear: The case for purpose may be under pressure but the need for it has never been greater.

That's why we're staying the course.

- Using communications as a force for good.
- Backing our team.
- Challenging our industry.
- And pushing for progress, even when the path isn't easy.

Thank you for reading our 2024 Impact Report.

Rebecca Oatley

Narda Shirley

Co-CEOs, The Wilful Group

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B CORP CERTIFICATION

01

B CORP CERTIFICATION

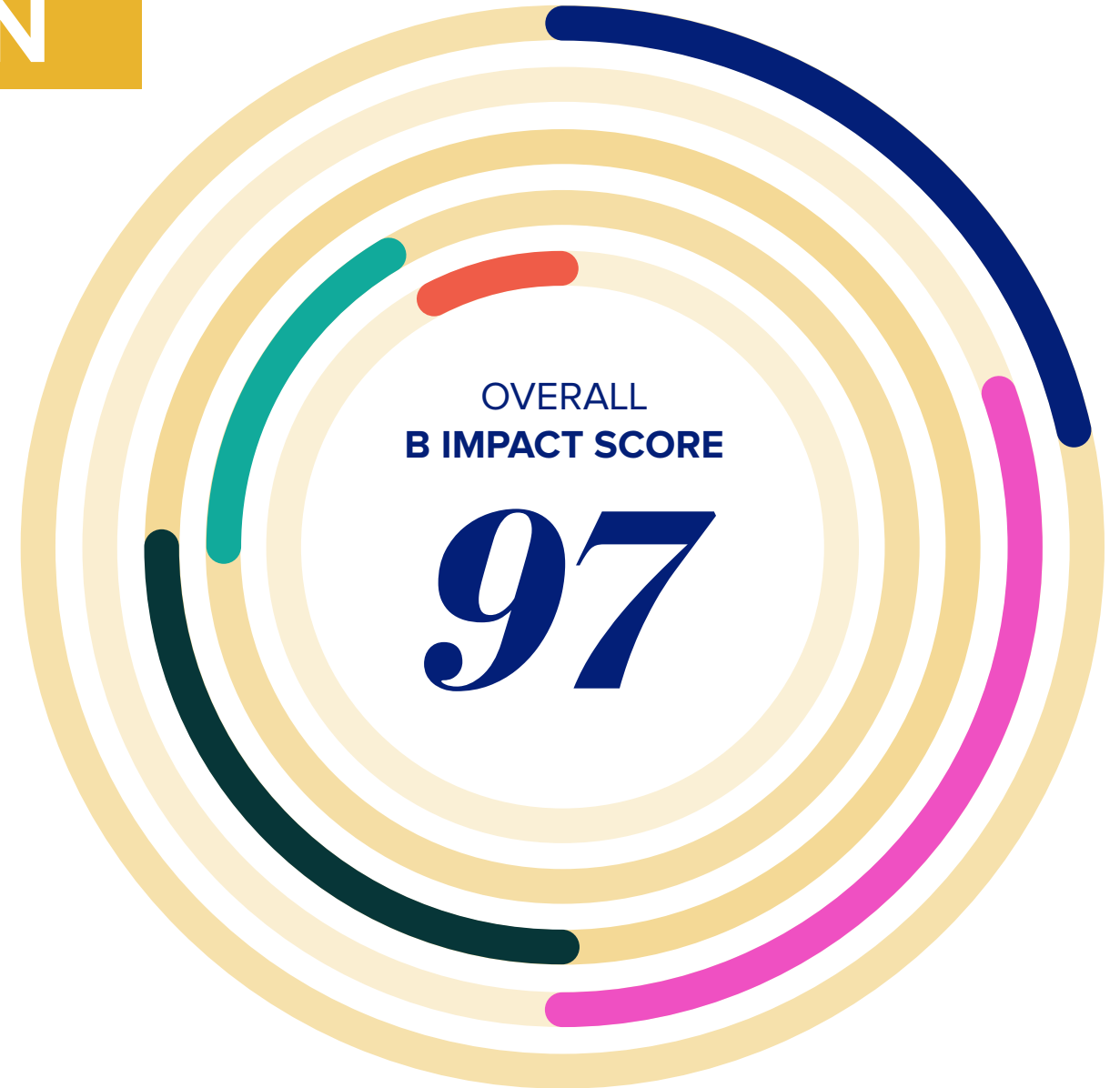
21.3
GOVERNANCE

30.7
WORKERS

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CUSTOMERS



A dense forest of mushrooms in various sizes and colors, including red, orange, and brown, with some having white gills. The scene is captured in a slightly blurred, artistic style.

OUR WILFUL INTENTIONS

02

OUR WILFUL INTENTIONS

**Marking a new chapter with clear,
long-term commitments.**

In the past, we've set big, bold goals but they've often changed year to year, making it harder to track our long-term progress. So, in 2024, we're doing things differently.

We're setting out five clear Wilful Intentions, enduring commitments that we can measure ourselves against, year on year. When we've achieved all we can within one, we'll evolve it and move forward.

These are the things that matter most to us, as a business and as a team.

SUSTAINABLE SUPPLY CHAIN

We commit to working only with suppliers who align with our values, prioritising sustainability, transparency and contributing to a thriving ecosphere.

WORKFORCE DIVERSITY

We will actively diversify both our own workforce and the future of our industry, opening up access to careers in PR and building inclusive pathways into our sector.

SPREADING CLIENT B CORP AWARENESS

We will continue to engage clients in purposeful conversations, encouraging more to explore B Corp certification and sustainable business practices.

NET ZERO COMMITMENT

We remain committed to our Net Zero target and will continue to strengthen our environmental policies, measure our impact and evolve our climate action.

VOLUNTEERING FOR ALL

We believe everyone should have the time and support to give back and aim for 100% of employees to take their annual volunteer time.

A dense forest of various mushrooms, including large gilled mushrooms and smaller textured ones, all rendered in a monochromatic red color scheme. The mushrooms are layered, creating a sense of depth. The entire image is covered by a semi-transparent red overlay that fades out towards the right side, where the page number is located.

PEOPLE

03

OUR WILFUL WONDERS

The real power behind Wilful? Our people. From career progression to flexibility and long service, this is where we celebrate the team that makes everything happen and the culture that keeps them here.

30%

OF EMPLOYEES
PROMOTED
IN THE LAST YEAR

53%

OF EMPLOYEES HAVE
BEEN AT THE COMPANY
OVER FIVE YEARS

90%

ARE PROUD
TO WORK AT WILFUL

30%

OF EMPLOYEES RECEIVED
A PAY RISE

19%

OF EMPLOYEES WORK
PART TIME

65%

ARE SATISFIED
WITH THEIR SALARY
& BENEFIT PACKAGE

79%

WOULD RECOMMEND
WILFUL TO A FAMILY
MEMBER OR CLIENT

100%

OF EMPLOYEES WORK
FLEXIBLY

“Reflecting on my 10+ year journey with Wilful, I am filled with gratitude for the incredible support and flexibility I’ve received. Starting as a graduate and now a parent of two, the company’s commitment to accommodating my needs with flexible hours has been invaluable. Witnessing the company’s growth alongside my own has been a remarkable experience. Celebrating my decade-long tenure with a holiday voucher was a testament to the family-like environment we have here. Wilful isn’t just a workplace; it’s a community that has grown with me every step of the way.”

RACHEL EATON, LEAD DESIGNER



“My experience interning at Wilful was **insightful, rewarding,** and taught me a lot about what a positive work environment is. The team is **super hardworking,** but always available if I ever needed any help. The culture is **collaborative,** and most importantly every day is different and exciting.”

ISABELLA SALAZAR, INTERN



HEALTH, WELLBEING & BENEFITS

Supporting the people who make Wilful work.

We know people do their best work when they feel supported, not just professionally, but personally too. That's why we've continued to evolve our benefits to reflect what our team needs most, from flexibility and financial wellbeing to time to connect and celebrate.

UPDATED HEALTH INSURANCE

With more relevant coverage to support our team's needs.



BREAKFAST CLUB

Helping ease the cost-of-living while creating space to catch up over a shared meal.



BIRTHDAY LEAVE

Everyone gets an extra day off to celebrate their birthday.



LONG SERVICE PERK

For every three years at Wilful, employees earn an additional day of annual leave.



WOW DAYS

(WE OWN WILFUL)

Quarterly team days for insight sharing, skill building and good old-fashioned fun.



MINISTRY OF CULTURE & FUN

A dedicated committee that ensures we maintain a social, vibrant and positive culture across The Wilful Group.



MCF COMMITTEE

“The MCF Committee is a valuable opportunity to **build connections and engagement** across the team. From organising ‘Picnic ’n’ Play’ afternoons - complete with themed food boards and fun outdoor games, to building excitement around the Euros with company-wide screening and a sweepstake, **we’ve aimed to create inclusive moments** that bring colleagues together.”

CAROLINE EMBERLIN,
SENIOR ACCOUNT MANAGER

LEARNING, FEEDBACK & GROWTH

WHAT THAT
LOOKED LIKE IN 2024

A culture of learning, built in. We believe in creating a workplace where people are supported to grow, personally, professionally, and together. Training and development at Wilful isn't a one-off event or an annual checkbox. It's embedded into how we work, how we lead, and how we listen.

HOW WE SUPPORT GROWTH

BI-ANNUAL APPRAISALS

Every team member takes part in structured development conversations twice a year.

360° FEEDBACK

We have 360° feedback at every level, giving employees the opportunity to hear from peers, managers and direct reports with curiosity, not critique.

TRAINING BUDGET FOR ALL

Everyone at Wilful has access to a dedicated personal training budget each year.

INTERNAL & EXTERNAL TRAINING

Learning at Wilful is both shared and self-directed. From internal knowledge-sharing masterclasses to specialist sessions, we support training that's tailored to peoples' roles and ambitions.

200+ OF FORMAL
HOURS **TRAINING**
DELIVERED ACROSS
THE TEAM


INTRODUCED

15 Minute

MASTERCLASSES:

Peer-led training sessions where team members share expertise on topics ranging from the state of D&I comms to FMCG trends and sustainability standards.

100% IN OUR
PARTICIPATION **ANNUAL D&I**
TRAINING



“Continual learning is a big part of how we work as a team, **we’re always building on our expertise** across areas such as climate, sustainability, FMCG, D&I, and PR tactics including research, influencer strategy and event comms. Part of this has involved launching our Friday masterclass series: 15 minute, team led sessions designed to share knowledge across our corporate and consumer skillsets. **It’s already sparking ideas and helping us collaborate more effectively.”**

HANNAH HUGHES, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR
HEAD OF ESG & SUSTAINABILITY,
B CORP CHAMPION

ADVANCING DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

ACROSS OUR TEAM

87%

OF EMPLOYEES
ARE FEMALE

14%

DO NOT HOLD A
UNIVERSITY DEGREE

19%

OF EMPLOYEES ARE NOT
LONDON-BASED

7%

OF EMPLOYEES ARE
**FROM MINORITY
BACKGROUNDS**

100%

**FEMALE-OWNED
COMPANY**

40%

ARE WORKING
**PARENTS OR
CARERS**

4

**LANGUAGES
SPOKEN ACROSS
THE TEAM**

100%

OF THE BOARD
IS FEMALE

29%

OF TEAM ARE
**UNDER 25
OR OVER**

50

HOW ARE WE DOING?

“We’re proud of the culture we’ve built at Wilful. As a 100% female-owned business with a female-led board, 40% of our team are working parents or carers, and over 14% didn’t take the university route. But with just 6.67% from minority backgrounds, **we know we’ve got work to do.**”

Instead of hiring in, we’re growing from within. When Sara in our ops team showed an interest in HR, we evolved her role to lead both. With my support, she’s now driving how we hire, support and listen to our team.

That includes partnering with Braver, a talent consultancy challenging the comms industry to hire more diverse candidates, to rethink recruitment, bringing in neurodiversity training, running engagement surveys, and building regular feedback into our MCF process. We’ve also introduced Star of the Month, continued our Wonder Awards, and made WOW Days part of how we work.

We’re not there yet but we’re honest about that and **committed to progress that grows our people too.”**

REBECCA OATLEY, HEAD OF PEOPLE & CULTURE, CO-CEO

THE WILFUL FOUNDATIONS

Building a more inclusive workplace starts from within but it doesn't end there. We're also committed to driving change across the PR and communications industry, where diversity is still far too limited.

“Wilful Foundations is an exciting initiative we launched this year to help address the lack of diversity within our sector. Too often, the sector doesn't reflect the range of voices and backgrounds it should and that needs to change. Through a series of career talks and workshops across the UK, we're aiming to inspire the next generation and encourage more young people from underrepresented communities to see a future for themselves in PR. So far we've engaged over 700 children from across the UK.”

SARA AMIN, B CORP CHAMPION,
GROUP OPERATIONS MANAGER & HR LEAD



A teal-tinted background image featuring a dense cluster of various mushrooms, including large gilled mushrooms and smaller, more delicate ones. The word "PLANET" is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters.

PLANET

04

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (CSR)

ACTIVITY

We take pride in helping exceptional clients achieve extraordinary impact across people, profit, and planet and we hold ourselves to the same standard. Our commitment to being responsible corporate citizens is reflected in how we do business, the initiatives we support and the time we personally give back. We actively seek out purpose-driven clients and dedicate time each year to pro-bono partnerships that align with our values.

180

HOURS OF WILFUL TIME DONATED
TO PRO-BONO WORK

90%

OF EMPLOYEES
TOOK THEIR ANNUAL
VOLUNTEERING DAY

21

VOLUNTEER
DAYS GIFTED
BY WILFUL

SUPPORTED CHARITIES SUCH AS
MARYLEBONE CHURCH
FOOD BANK,
FELIX PROJECT AND
ANDOVER TREES UNITED

PRO-BONO ACTIVITY:

ACTION FOR CONSERVATION

“Our pro-bono activity for 2024 was focused on a campaign for Action for Conservation, a UK charity with a mission to create the next generation of nature conservationists, and its flagship initiative, The Penpont Project - the UK’s largest intergenerational nature restoration project, based in the Brecon Beacons. We partnered with the charity to support its fundraising efforts, working closely with its fundraising team and commissioning national research among 11-16 year olds to uncover insights into eco-anxiety and time spent outside in nature. We used the findings to craft a media narrative, launching the campaign to coincide with World Environment Day. The result: **35 pieces of media coverage, including features in The Independent and BBC Radio London, and over £54,000 raised to support youth-led conservation.**”

ELOISE FULLER, CSR COMMITTEE LEAD, JUNIOR ACCOUNT DIRECTOR



VOLUNTEERING ACTIVITY

Senior Account Director Pete Connell and Associate Director Sam Allen used their volunteer day to support The Felix Project, a charity working to ensure that good food never goes to waste and no one goes hungry. Last year alone, The Felix Project distributed the equivalent of 38 million meals to over 1,200 community organisations and schools across every London borough.

“It was such a pleasurable few hours and so rewarding to know that we were helping a good charity which is committed to helping battle hunger and food waste. It highlights how easy it is to take time out of our days to do a good thing and help others - I will be doing this more often from now on.”

PETE CONNELL, SENIOR ACCOUNT DIRECTOR



ENVIRONMENT

We've continued to build sustainability into everything we do, whether it's day-to-day operations, how we show up at events, or the tools we use behind the scenes. Here are just a few ways we've brought that to life this year:

We donate **100% of our laptops to Every Child Online**, a UK charity working to close the digital divide. They refurbish donated devices and distribute them to schools and under-resourced young people who don't have access to online learning at home.

All of our external events had **plant-based, ethically sourced menus**. And where paper was used, we chose **seed paper**, so the team could grow bee-friendly flowers at home.

We've switched to using **100% Green Tick-certified cleaning products**, helping us create healthier spaces for people and planet.



At Christmas, we skipped Secret Santa and hosted a movie night fundraiser, with all proceeds going to the **Marylebone Project**, a charity supporting homeless women in London.

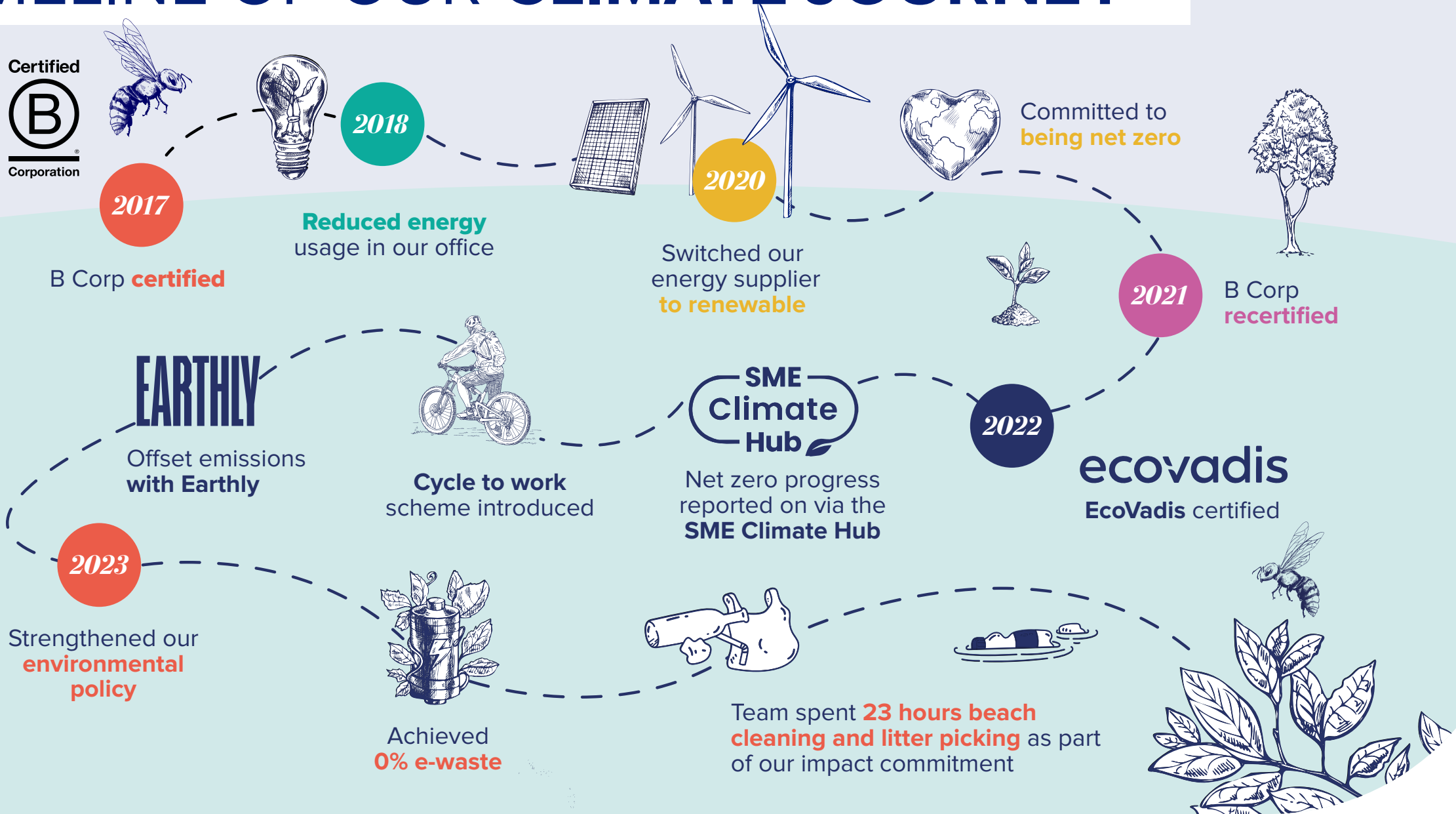
We invested in **Microsoft's Emissions Impact Dashboard** to better understand the carbon footprint of our use of Exchange Online and SharePoint Online. By migrating these services to Microsoft's cloud, we reduced the associated emissions by **over 90%**, the equivalent of saving over 25 km of driving.

And through our partnership with Ecosend, we made our email marketing cleaner too, sending over **19,000** sustainable emails, **saving 2.289 tonnes of CO₂**, and planting **21 trees** across global reforestation projects.



ECOSEND

TIMELINE OF OUR CLIMATE JOURNEY





wilful

2024



Scope three emissions assessed



Encouraged employees to appreciate the value of nature through **woodland based company away day** where foraging skills were shared



Implemented **Sustainability101 training** to upskill entire team



2025

Microsoft Carbon Emissions Reporting



Collaborated with **B Corps Escape the City and Harmonic Recruitment** to meet our hiring needs



ECOSEND

Partnered with **EcoSend** to minimise the carbon emissions of our email communications

ecovadis

EcoVadis Recertification



“We’ve made real progress embedding sustainability across our operations, from cutting emissions and eliminating e-waste to rethinking the impact of everyday choices like events and email. The next big step is tackling our **Scope 3 emissions reporting**, a complex but crucial part of our journey. Exploring how to reduce these emissions within our own supply chain has sparked fresh thinking and innovation across our services. One result of that thinking is a new initiative we are launching designed to **bring visibility to the carbon impact of communications campaigns**. Watch this space.”

NARDA SHIRLEY, CO-CEO

eco₂sphere



PURPOSE

05

OUR CLIENTS

We don't think of ESG and sustainability as being separate to core business - all of our clients are addressing these issues. Wilful has built its reputation by working with innovators and gamechangers: the ones who shift thinking, challenge norms and move the needle. Every brief we take on matters. Whether we're building influence, changing perception or sparking conversations that lead to real-world change, purpose is the thread that runs through it all.

That's what we show up for. And that's how we measure success.

INTERNATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT



FINANCE &
INFRASTRUCTURE



TALENT &
EDUCATION



FAST MOVING
CONSUMER
GOODS
(FMCG)



DIGITAL, TECH
& WELLNESS



“At Wilful, we’re more than consultants, we’re sector specialists. From finance and infrastructure to FMCG and international development, we bring real-world experience and a deep understanding of the challenges and opportunities our clients face. Outside Wilful, I serve as a Communications Advisor to Wind Empowerment, a global network focused on empowering rural communities in the development of locally built wind turbines. It’s this kind of work, on the ground and in the field, that strengthens the way we advise our clients.”

SOFÍA COSTA NAVARRO, ACCOUNT DIRECTOR,
HEAD OF FINANCE & INFRASTRUCTURE



bcorporation.uk

@BCorpUK

A group of people, including a woman in a white dress and sunglasses, are dancing and celebrating at an outdoor event. They are wearing lanyards with badges. The background shows trees and other people.

ANTHROPY

A national movement focused on shaping a better future for Britain through collective responsibility. We helped raise awareness of its mission and supported media activity around the three day national gathering at the Eden Project.

A panel discussion is taking place on a stage at the Dive In festival. Five people are seated on the stage, and a large audience is seated in front of them. The stage has a blue backdrop with the 'DIVE IN' logo. The ceiling features large circular light fixtures.

DIVE IN

Now in its 11th year, Dive In is the world's largest diversity and inclusion festival. We've supported it from day one, most recently evolving its positioning into a business-critical platform that connects inclusion with innovation, resilience, and commercial impact.

2024 BUSINESS DIVERSITY CONNECT

Europe's leading ethnic minority supplier diversity conference. We worked with organisers MSDUK and ESDP to shine a light on the growth of minority-owned businesses and the critical role of supplier diversity in building a resilient UK economy.



The only global organisation of over 500 partners and companies working together to end disability exclusion. We supported its storytelling and media strategy, highlighting the power of disability representation and the untapped economic potential of this community.

STX

A leading global environmental commodity trader and climate solutions provider. Our work helped shape its presence as a trusted voice within environmental markets and as a thought leader in the energy transition.



A network of UK fertility clinics promoting accessible, inclusive healthcare. Our campaigns built public understanding around fertility services and reproductive equity.

Airtasker

A task marketplace supporting financial resilience and flexible income in the cost-of-living crisis. We used storytelling to highlight everyday people benefiting from new ways of working.



Royal Academy
of Engineering

The UK's national academy for engineering and technology. We support its Africa Prize, spotlighting innovators tackling critical challenges across sub-Saharan Africa.



Africa's largest infrastructure private equity manager. We shaped its global media strategy, positioning AIIM as a leader in sustainable investment and ESG.



A global green building certification program. We promoted the benefits of resource-efficient buildings through targeted storytelling across seven African countries.

A person is riding a bicycle across a narrow bridge that spans a body of water. The bridge has a red and white striped railing. The person is carrying large blue and white floats on the back of the bicycle. The water is calm, and the background shows a lush green landscape.

“We don’t just talk about Africa’s growth story, we help shape it. From supporting innovators in technology and engineering, to positioning leaders in sustainable infrastructure, energy, and green building, our work spans the sectors driving the continent’s future. With more than 15 years of on-the-ground experience in over 20 countries, clients trust us to deliver communications that build influence, unlock investment, and contribute to lasting, sustainable development.”

KIRSTEN SMITH, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR,
INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT TEAM LEAD

HOW WE GOVERN FOR GOOD

Governance is how we make sure our purpose isn't just something we say but something we build into the way we operate. From client decisions to tech adoption, we've continued to strengthen the systems that keep us transparent, values-led, and focused on long-term impact.

A BUSINESS MODEL DESIGNED FOR IMPACT:

We put purpose before profit, reinvesting in our people, supporting planet-positive work, and building partnerships that align with our values. Communications is our tool for change, and we use it to help organisations shift culture and drive meaningful impact.

WORKING WITH THE RIGHT CLIENTS:

Every client we work with is assessed through a purpose lens, we choose to partner with organisations who are building a better future.

ESG EMBEDDED IN DECISION-MAKING:

We consider environmental, social and governance impacts in how we run the business and deliver our work, ensuring we stay accountable to people, planet and purpose.

USING AI WITH INTENTION:

We're taking a considered, sustainable approach to AI, looking at how it can enhance our work without compromising sustainability, ethics, transparency or human creativity.

A LONDON LIVING WAGE EMPLOYER:

We're proud to pay the London Living Wage, ensuring fair pay is a minimum, not a milestone.

APPROACH TO AI

“We see AI as a **strategic enabler, a way to enhance how we work, not just speed it up.** We created a set of internal principles to guide safe and purposeful use, ran a team-wide survey to understand how we’re using AI in practice, and took time to look at how the wider PR industry is approaching it too. We’ve now set up a new **AI & Innovation Working Group, where we’re making sure we deploy AI to add value to our work,** freeing up time for the creative, strategic work where human insight matters most.”

NIKKI FRANCIS-JONES, MANAGING DIRECTOR

BETTER BUSINESS COMMITTEE

“This year, we reimagined what Better Business means at Wilful. It’s not just about meeting B Corp standards, it’s about raising the bar for how we work, every day. We’ve shifted from a dedicated committee to a model where everyone takes ownership, supported by a small group of B Champions. Together, we’re embedding accountability, driving progress on individual and team goals, and making sure people, planet and purpose are part of every decision every individual makes.”

JO HOOKE, B CORP CHAMPION, ACCOUNT DIRECTOR, HEAD OF TALENT & EDUCATION



OUR HIGHLIGHTS:

SIGNED THE BETTER BUSINESS ACT AND ATTENDED BETTER BUSINESS DAY

Showing up for systemic change in how business is done in the UK.

B CLINICS

Our B Champions held one-to-one clinics with every team member, helping them check in on B Corp-aligned appraisal goals, access tailored support, and build confidence in how to contribute meaningfully.

B CORP SOCIALS

Regular attendance, helping us stay connected, inspired and accountable to a wider purpose-led community.

PRO BONO SUPPORT FOR FELLOW B CORPS

Offering free services to impact-led peers where we can add value.

B CORP SUPPLIERS

Increased our B Corp supply chain by **10%**.



“During B Corp Month in March, we launched a new initiative: free creative ideas for fellow UK B Corps. No catch, just fresh thinking from our team to theirs.

Not every business has access to strategic comms support, especially with tight resources. **So we offered what we do best – bold, creative PR ideas – to help others communicate their purpose and impact more effectively.**

As a certified B Corp, **it was our way of giving back, sharing thinking and connecting with like-minded brands trying to make a difference.”**

SAM ALLEN, B CORP CHAMPION, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

Certified



Corporation

**BUZZ HERE
FOR IDEAS**



HOW TO GROW YOUR DIGITAL BRAND IN THE UK

In June 2024, we hosted a panel with leaders from **Gopuff, Carly, Thallo, and Turo**, focusing on strategies for digital brands aiming to expand in the UK market. Discussions covered topics such as securing funding, market entry strategies, and talent acquisition. Insights emphasised the necessity of understanding local market nuances, building strong partnerships, and adopting flexible business models to navigate the competitive digital landscape.





If you're interested in working with us or maybe you simply want to find out more about our sustainability journey, please do get in touch.

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