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IMPACT REPORT 2022-23

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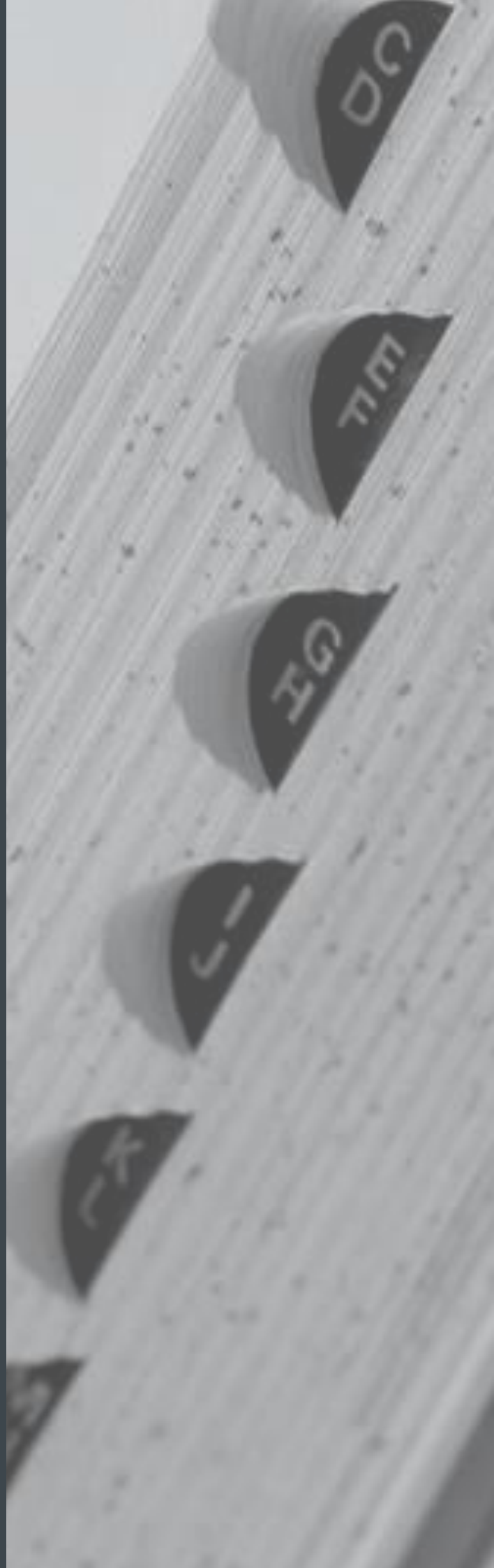
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Introduction

This report aims to summarise both our achievements and intentions in terms of people and planet for the period April 2022 to April 2023.

Our work

Shift Insight is a global-minded research agency that believes in the power of insight to make things better. We are proud to help clients in three key areas understand their unique and diverse stakeholders – supporting strategic decisions with robust evidence.

- **Shift Learning:** Providing those working in education with the evidence and insight they need to make key decisions.
- **Shift Membership:** Helping membership bodies and scholarly societies understand and support their stakeholders.
- **Shift Sustainability:** Giving organisations the evidence they need to make successful decisions that don't cost the earth.

We were proud to achieve B Corp status in October 2020 (with a score of 100.5) and be one of the first research agencies in the UK to do so. As a Certified B Corporation, we are part of a global movement of people using business as a force for good™. It has been one of our key goals to increase our B Corp score to 105 by the time we are reaccredited in October 2023 and we are on our way to exceeding this substantially.

Our values

We updated our values this year after a staff consultation exercise.

Striving for positive impact: We believe in the power of insight to make things better. We strive not only to minimise our negative impact on the planet and its people in our day-to-day operations, but to be a positive force for change through our research output – working with our clients and their stakeholders to make a healthier, more equitable and sustainable future for all. We measure and monitor our social and environmental impact, including via the preparation and publication of this annual impact report.


Never standing still: We understand that without experimentation there can be no progress. We are not just responsive, we are constantly looking for innovation in methodology, process, technology and business strategy. We like new things and enjoy seeing the world from a range of different viewpoints. We know we can always get better and we embrace that challenge.


Amazing standards: Without a strong reputation, we can't have a positive impact. We always look to exceed our own quality expectations – ensuring the highest level of rigour in our research outputs and high standards in our own behaviour.


People-centred: We value our people, help to develop new talent, and have a commitment to training and creating an open and collaborative working environment. We measure our success not only in the financial value we generate, but also in the good that we do and in the wellbeing of our team.

UN Sustainable Development Goals

While we stand behind all of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, we target our activity on those for which we are well-placed to make a real impact. We conducted a staff consultation exercise this year and, as a result, expanded our focus from two to three on which we are particularly focused:

 <p>13 CLIMATE ACTION</p>	<p>Climate Action: Take urgent action to target climate change and its impacts.</p>
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 <p>4 QUALITY EDUCATION</p>	<p>Quality Education: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.</p>
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 <p>10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES</p>	<p>Reducing inequality within and among countries: reducing inequalities in income as well as those based on age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status within a country. The Goal also addresses inequalities among countries, including those related to representation, migration and development assistance.</p>
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Climate Action: our positive impact

Over this period, we have been steadily growing the Shift Sustainability branch of the company, set up in 2020. We have done this by training staff on environmental issues and new research methodologies to support sustainability research. We also conducted our own independent research on sustainability topics, which we turned into [open-access research reports](#). Towards the end of the period, we also began work on our own carbon literacy course.

Our research work

Our sustainability research often addresses environmental problems via our clients' products, policies or services. You can read more in our [case studies](#), but key projects in this period included:

Research partnership: Shift Sustainability, Take Action Global and EARTHDAY.ORG

COP26 was a landmark moment for the promotion of climate action through education – setting the stage for the first discussion between environmental ministers and educators from around the world, with this dialogue continuing at COP27. Educators and other stakeholders in young people's futures have continued to mobilise and promote education's vital role as a climate change solution – working with and for young people towards a sustainable future.

In autumn 2022, we partnered with Take Action Global and EARTHDAY.ORG to research the role of climate educators around the world – the challenges faced, how they overcome them, what approaches are working and what else is needed to ensure effective climate action education.

Methodology

In-depth interviews with 14 climate change educators and experts from 10 countries informed the design of a global survey conducted in October 2022, which returned 1,012 useable responses from 38 countries. Survey respondents included classroom teachers, department heads, principals and librarians, as well as those working in educator roles in wider organisations, including nature centres and government departments around the world.

Key themes and findings

The white paper outlines the findings within 5 key themes:

- Inconsistent climate education terminology creates barriers to collaboration.
- Where teachers have control, they can overcome challenges – but they need more help to go further.
- Educators need more support from local and national policymakers.
- Innovative approaches are needed to motivate students and young people.
- Parents and the wider community play a key supporting role.

Key findings included that:

- Teachers want cross-curriculum projects with real-life impact that allow climate action to be present in students' everyday lives.
- There were perceptions of a significant disconnect between teachers and educational leadership in the work of taking action around climate change, with classroom teachers leading the charge in climate action education.
- 71% of the sample wanted to see more promotion of climate education on a national level, only 5% believed that support from their government was currently effective.

[Download the white paper from the Shift Sustainability website](#)

UK Green Building Council, Gold Leaf Member 360 Review

The brief

The UK Green Building Council (UKGBC) commissioned Shift to undertake the desk research behind its annual Gold Leaf Member Sustainability 360 Review. The research explored in depth the corporate sustainability targets, strategies and actions for UKGBC's 66 "Gold Leaf" member organisations, covering five broad sustainability areas: climate change mitigation, climate resilience and nature, resource use, health and wellbeing, and socio-economic impact.

The approach

Desk research: Shift's team of researchers first gathered comprehensive information from publicly available sources (e.g. sustainability reporting, case studies, commitments to a variety of additional sustainability initiatives) for each UKGBC Gold Leaf member. Shift worked closely with UKGBC during this phase.

Member feedback: The draft findings from the research were shared directly with members, who were given time to provide feedback before they were finalised.

Quantitative analysis: Following this, Shift analysed the data and produced a report of the findings, segmented by different industry sub-sectors identified by UKGBC. The report also compared key statistics with data from 2021.

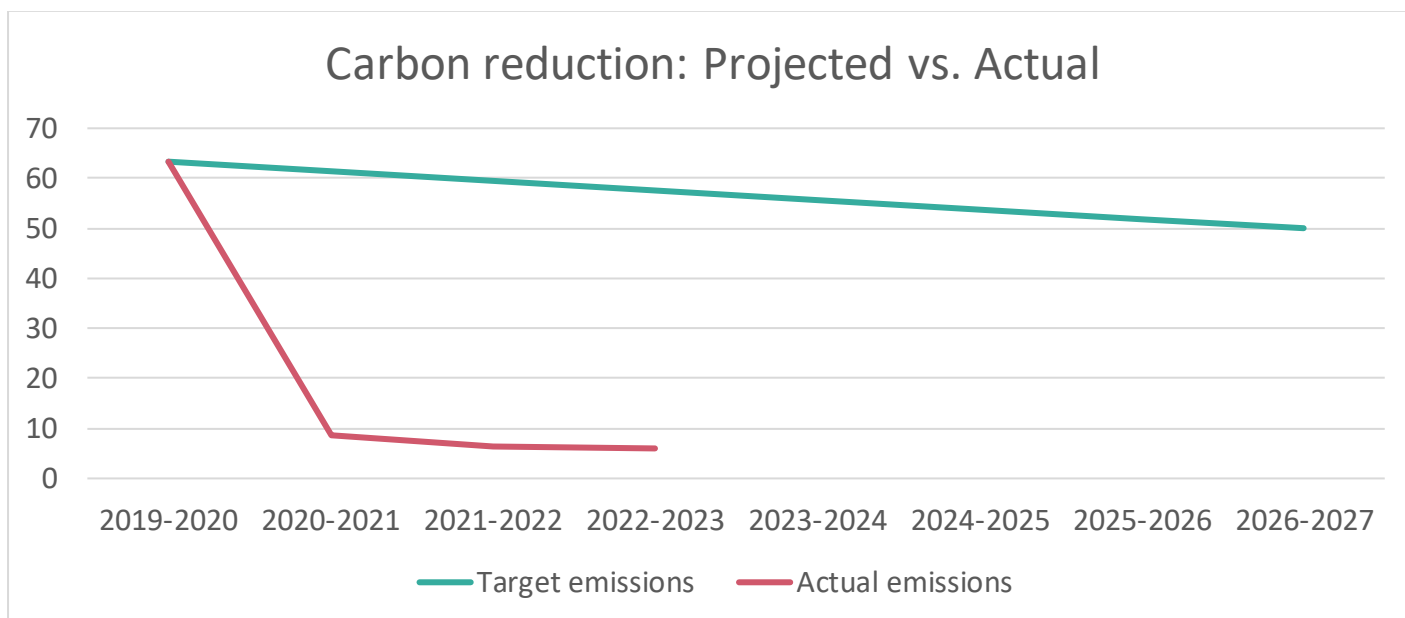
The value

The report and final results dataset allowed UKGBC to interpret key trends across its Gold Leaf members' sustainability activities, including areas of strength and weakness for each sub-sector and across the five topic areas of interest. This analysis was presented to and discussed with Gold Leaf members by UKGBC at an interactive event.

The final results dataset was also used by UKGBC to create individual results dashboards for each member organisation. These were issued to members and UKGBC undertook one-to-one meetings with members to discuss findings for their organisation, and where they might look to heighten their sustainability ambitions even further based off the findings.

[Read the full case study on the Shift Sustainability website](#)

Our resource use



We kept up our effort to reduce Shift's impact on the planet by:

- Continuing to offset carbon using carbonfootprint.com, to remain a carbon neutral company.
- Maintaining the office recycling scheme.
- Retaining and furthering the robust and effective online methodologies we developed during the COVID-19 lockdown, which have reduced the need for transport, especially flights. This had a big impact on Shift's total greenhouse emissions.
- Continuing to move to paper-free processes in the office, resulting in less use of the photocopier and printer.
- Developing training on reducing emissions while homeworking.
- Developing measurement of emissions from homeworking.
- Revising downwards our current carbon reduction targets.

Achievement of our goals in the sustainability area

Goal	Level of achievement
Moving company facilities to The Department Store Studios, a low carbon development which has achieved an 'excellent' rating from BREEAM, the world's leading sustainability assessment method.	Achieved, with significant impact on our carbon emissions.

Put in place systems in the new office to monitor resource use.	In progress as we settle into the new office.
Develop a more sustainable travel policy.	Achieved: our new policy includes a number of carbon-reducing commitments, including a ban on short flights and a commitment to consider sustainability in methodological design.
Grow the sustainability branch to help more organisations make positive changes.	Ongoing achievement, as we'll never stand still.
Continue to deepen our relationship with B Corp and other B Corp certified organisations through communication and partnerships.	Partially achieved – this remains a key target in this area.
Produce even more open-access research content on sustainability topics, particularly those that complement our specialisms.	Achieved: in autumn 2022, we partnered with Take Action Global and EARTHDAY.ORG to research the role of climate educators around the world – the challenges faced, how they overcome them, what approaches are working and what else is needed to ensure effective climate action education.
Develop a new procurement policy with a written preference to use local suppliers.	Achieved.

Goals for 2023-24

- 1. Development of our carbon literacy course:** Further development of our team's understanding around the potential for carbon reduction at home and work, though development of an accredited Carbon Literacy Training for the insight sector, in collaboration with the Insight Carbon Collective and accredited by the Carbon Literacy Trust.
- 2. Internal roll-out of this course:** We aim to have the majority of the organisation trained up by the end of 2023.
- 3. External roll-out:** It is our aim to be a carbon-negative organisation. We intend to do this by rolling out our Carbon Literacy Training across the sector. We have a target of reaching four organisations: three 20-person SMEs and one company of 100 people. According to the WWF Footprint Calculator, the average annual footprint per person is 9.5 tonnes. So the combined footprint per year at the organisational examples given above is Shift is: 9.5 tCO_{2e} x 160 people = 1,520 tCO_{2e}. The Carbon Literacy Trust estimates that on average each person who comes on a Carbon Literacy course reduces 5%-15% of their carbon footprint, so we might hope to save **between 76 tCO_{2e} (5%) to 152 tCO_{2e} (15%) in the first year of delivering this course.** This impact would be augmented in following years as people attending as individuals go on to develop their own courses at organisational level.
- 4. Investigating carbon-neutral pensions:** Over the next year, we will be informing teams of their ability to move their pensions within our workplace People's Pension to an ESG option. We will also investigate our options for moving the pension itself to a fossil-fuel-free option, with a view to moving it the following year.

Quality Education: our positive impact

Our research work

Our research in the education sector helps our clients to deliver better education and grow their understanding of their own customers or beneficiaries. We continue to be a leading agency in this area – working with publishers, awarding organisations, professional bodies and scholarly societies, not-for-profits, educational suppliers, universities and colleges.

Research completed in this period included:

Internet Matters, Media Literacy

Digital behaviours impact children in the classroom and at home more than ever. The use of technology and social platforms amongst children has been growing year-on-year. The use of technology in schools also accelerated during the COVID-19 pandemic and prompted schools to look at their future digital strategy. The PSHE and RSE curriculums, issues of safeguarding and school policy all require educators to stay informed about the changing digital landscape and the impact this has on children. Internet Matters wanted to better understand what teachers know and need to know to help them manage this impact and, importantly, how to support digital use to positively enhance young people's lives.

We took a mixed-method approach:

- Phase 1: A series of mini focus groups with school leaders allowed for in-depth discussion of the priorities, approaches and challenges around media literacy in their schools.
- Interim findings and workshop: An internal workshop with the project team allowed us to share a summary of qualitative findings and translate this into hypotheses to test in phase 2.
- Phase 2: Findings from phase 1 fed into the design of a carefully targeted survey to test and quantify hypotheses from the qualitative phase among a wider audience of secondary school teachers.

It is really important to Internet Matters that they are responding to the real needs of teachers, therefore we worked closely with Internet Matters to communicate emerging insights from the fieldwork. The workshop allowed us to work collaboratively to develop hypotheses for testing in phase 2. We delivered a written report that consolidated all of these findings, with recommendations for future needs.

[Read the full case study on the Shift Learning website](#)

SNSI, research on cyber security

Following on from research conducted by Shift with academic librarians in 2021, the Scholarly Networks Security Initiative (SNSI) wanted to understand what Chief Information Security Officers (CISOs) in higher education regard as their main concerns around cybercrime, data security and related issues.

SNSI were interested in understanding views on illegal websites that offer access to scholarly resources, which would normally be accessed from publishers' platforms, and to what extent CISOs consider these sites to be a threat to data security at their institution.

Shift developed a qualitative interview guide in collaboration with SNSI. We conducted 11 interviews (lasting 45 minutes each) with CISOs, Senior ISOs and security advisors in the university sector based in the UK, EU, US and Australia. As part of the interviews, we sought to understand their main concerns around cyber security at their institution, and the level of threat posed by websites that offer pirated or illegal access to scholarly resources, such as Sci-Hub. Our analysis revealed that CISOs regarded Sci-Hub and similar sites to be a low risk to their institution's immediate network security, due to the file format used – however, they did acknowledge the threat posed to the scholarly record, and to sensitive research by their activities.

[Read the full case study on the Shift Learning website](#)

Northumbria University, Research culture survey

Northumbria University were keen to explore their own research community's experiences and perceptions of the culture within the institution and how this compared to research culture more widely. Shift was commissioned to conduct this research, with a view to informing actions for future improvement and providing a benchmark for tracking future progress.

The project consisted of the following elements:

- Development and then testing of an online survey, with 4 internal cognitive interviews to ensure questions covered the relevant areas for the research community and to identify any missing areas.
- Dissemination of the survey online to gather the views of the research community, which achieved 428 useable responses.
- Two x 2.5-hour online workshops, following the survey, to explore themes in greater depth and begin to generate ideas for improving Northumbria University’s research culture.

We delivered a comprehensive report and presentation, detailing both positive findings and areas where more focus was sought. Key differences between research community subgroups were also highlighted. The workshop phase allowed recommendations to truly reflect the research culture context at Northumbria and we summarised the key elements from this phase in a concluding thoughts and ideas for improving research culture section of our report.

[Read the full case study on the Shift Learning website](#)

Internal developments

We continued to grow the Shift Learning branch of the company. The team worked to promote our services for the education sector and improve research methods, with a particular emphasis on developing our skills in evaluation. We remained committed to educating staff, though continuous internal training and third-party quality certifications.

Achievement of our goals in the education area

Goal	Level of achievement
Further development of our volunteering offer for local charities and youth organisations	Over 58 hours volunteering this year, including for the following organisations with young people as beneficiaries: Spark! – A London-based charity that works with schools and businesses to match local employers and employees with diverse students, providing access to high-quality employability programmes, inspiring careers mentoring, and quality-assured work experience placements. Ahoy – A watersports charity, changing lives and building life skills through sailing and rowing.
Win more work that straddles our learning and sustainability specialisms	Partially achieved, though more work to do here in 2023-24.

Goals for 2023-24

- To further develop our volunteering offer for local charities and youth organisations.
- To do more work that straddles our learning and sustainability specialisms.
- To develop our offer in evaluation.

Reducing Inequality: our positive impact

In April 2020, Shift appointed its first Diversity and Inclusion Representative to specifically address JEDI (Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion) issues – both day-to-day and long-term, including through the creation of a 3-year action plan. Our achievements and outcomes during this period in this area are listed below.

Our research work

We continued to integrate JEDI in many of our projects – for example, by ensuring that our clients monitor satisfaction levels amongst under-represented groups and that sampling is well considered. As part of our ongoing partnership with [World Afro Day](#), we also ran another pro bono project over this period: a study of the impact of the World Afro Day anthem, which was being rolled out in UK schools.

Employee statistics

April 2022-April 2023 employee statistics¹:

- Ratio of female to male: 16:5
- Ratio of ethnic majority to ethnic minority: 6:1

April 2022-April 2023 employee salary statistics:

- Average female salary was 2.9% less than the average male salary.
- Average ethnic majority salary was 22.2% more than ethnic minority salary.
- The highest earning salary, inclusive of bonuses, was 2.71 times the lowest salary.

Achievement of our goals in the JEDI area

Goal	Level of achievement
Continue to uncover and use a range of recruitment channels when hiring new staff.	Wider recruitment channels have successfully brought us a more diverse range of applicants, as has the use of blind assessment of stage one applications.
Ongoing audit of public-facing materials to ensure language remains informed and socially-conscious.	Guidelines and training rolled out for staff.
Continue to uncover and implement policies, pledges, and accreditations that will boost the accountability of business action.	Already signed up to the timeTo code of conduct on sexual harassment and MRS Inclusivity Pledge. No additional pledges found over this period.
Establish a reliable internal audit process for the accessibility of research participation and outputs.	Developed our understanding of tools embedded in MS Office for this purpose.
Create outputs for sharing best practice with others in the sector.	Not yet achieved.
Continue to implement internal staff training and updates around JEDI-related issues.	Partially achieved. All new staff trained on our JEDI standards and practices. We are still looking for appropriate training around issues such as anti-racism that we feel would be best suited to our industry and workplace.

Goals for 2023-24

- Continue our partnership with World Afro Day.
- Develop Shift's expertise in inclusive research.
- Team to be trained in delivering accessible outputs.
- Find satisfactory EDI training for staff.
- Creating a structured internship programme with 10,000 Black Interns and 10,000 Able Interns.

¹ Note: we do not hold this data for 100% of employees over this period

Achievement of our additional goals for social good and volunteering

Goal	Level of achievement
<p>Complete at least one entirely pro bono project.</p>	<p>We achieved this with a valuable project for World Afro Day, an evaluation of the impact of their World Afro Day anthem in schools.</p> <p>We also conducted a pro bono project for Take Action Global and EARTHDAY.ORG around climate action education (described above).</p>
<p>Increase hours spent volunteering to 58 between April 2021 and April 2022, with 8 people volunteering.</p>	<p>Successfully achieved, with 58 hours and 15 minutes of volunteering taking place in 2022-23.</p> <p>Goal for 23-24 is 65 hours.</p>
<p>Establish a new staff group to focus holistically on wellness, volunteering and social activities, with regular meetings and a ring-fenced budget.</p>	<p>Largely achieved, though the team has yet to gain a ring-fenced budget.</p>