

Climbing Trees.

Growing the businesses our world of tomorrow needs

2023 Impact Report



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Foreword

Foreword from MD Alex Holliman

Welcome to our second annual Impact Report, where we'll outline our 2023 journey. We'll celebrate our successes, discuss ongoing efforts, and identify areas where we could have done better.

Last year, we committed to:

- Increasing team diversity
- Boosting our societal impact
- Helping clients make a positive difference and
- Advancing our sustainability performance

Our progress so far - a top line summary:

- **Diversity:** We've made strides but acknowledge there's more to do. Creating a truly inclusive workplace remains a priority.
- **Local impact:** We've paused some initiatives to reassess how we can best serve our community in Essex. We've been engaging with local stakeholders to understand their needs.
- **Client impact:** We're more focused than ever on supporting businesses that will shape a better tomorrow. Our greatest impact will be through their success.
- **Sustainability:** We've been driving internal initiatives to ensure we're on track for recertification and making continuous progress.

Looking ahead, we're focussed on continuing our efforts.

Onwards and upwards!



Alex Holliman, Managing Director

About Climbing Trees

About Climbing Trees

We are a performance ads and SEO agency whose ambition is to help grow the businesses our world of tomorrow needs.

Our team delivers super smart and effective ad campaigns. From Google or Facebook to first-rate SEO strategies that accelerate visibility, authority, and profitability. We want to catalyse positive change by partnering with visionary clients committed to sustainability and innovation.



Our Mission

Our mission is to demonstrate that digital marketing can bring positive outcomes not just for our clients, but for the planet as well. We strive to grow alongside those who share our commitment to creating a sustainable future through responsible marketing practices.

2023 for Team Trees

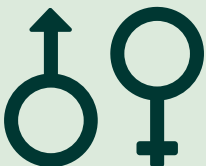
2023 for Team Trees

- Revenue grew over 36%
- 100% of team received training and development
- Team grew from 9 to 15 people
- We donated £5,349 to charities
- We planted fewer trees - our total stands at 260,000 trees - we are building plans to have greater impact in our local community
- Climate impact projects funded include avoiding methane emissions from landfill in Brazil and Protection of the Matavén forest in eastern Colombia
- Team diversity improved

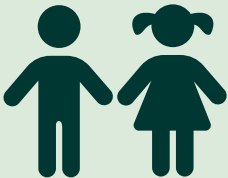
Diversity



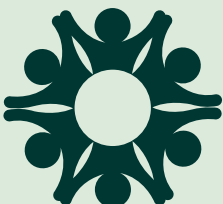
	2022	2023
16-23	2	2
24-29	6	11
40-49	1	2



	2022	2023
Female	2	5
Male	7	10



	2022	2023
No children/ Not applicable	7	11
Share equality with someone else	2	4
Solo responsibility	0	0



	2022	2023
African	1	0
Irish	0	1
English	6	12
Indo-Guyanese	1	1
Indian	0	0
Prefer not to say	1	1

The SDG’s we are particularly focussed on and prioritise our efforts with:

Gender equality



5.

Decent work and economic growth



8.

Reduced inequality



10.

Climate action



13.

Client Profile

Client Profile

	2022	2023
eCommerce	44%	58.6%
Training	5.8%	3.1%
Insurance	8.5%	5.5%
Business Services	8.5%	8.8%
Education & Training	4.1%	1%
Hotels	1.7%	2.5%

	2022	2023
Professional Services	1.8%	2.7%
Construction	4.3%	3.3%
Automotive	5.2%	0.4%
Food	5.2%	0.3%
House & Home	1.3%	3.2%

	2022	2023
Gambling	1.6%	0%
Manufacturing	0.6%	0.7%
Tourism	0.6%	0.5%
Charity	7.7%	6.9%
Tech	0.9%	2.3%

2022 Client Profile - Breakdown

Organisational Type



LTD	88.9%
Charities, Foundations, Trusts	9.9%
PLC's	1.2%

Business Sector



Business SME	63.8%
Business Large	29.1%
Civil Society	7.1%

2023 Client Profile - Breakdown

Organisational Type



LTD	94.3%
Charities, Foundations, Trusts	5.7%
PLC's	0%

Business Sector



Business SME	58.9%
Business Large	35.8%
Civil Society	5.3%

Client Revenue

2023 Client Revenue

Since 2020, we have taken significant steps to change our approach to selecting clients who align with our vision for a better future.

This resulted in synthesising our ambition to catalyse positive change by partnering with visionary clients committed to sustainability and innovation.

Since the start of 2023, we have declined pitch opportunities to the value of £650,000 because they fall into sectors we no longer wish to support.

We surveyed our team and used their feedback to create our policy, which can be found here: www.climbingtrees.com/client-screening.

Moving forward, we are optimistic about the clients we will work with and the impact we can create together. By collaborating with businesses that share our commitment to sustainability and social responsibility, we can make a positive difference in the world.

2022 Revenue by Sector

- 0% - Meat & Dairy
- 5.2% - Private Cars
- 0% - Aviation
- 0% - Concrete & Cement
- 0% - Trucking & Shipping
- 0% - Plastics
- 0% - Chemicals & Petrochemicals
- 0% - Iron, Steel & aluminium
- 0% - Coal, Oil & Natural Gas
- 0% - Timber, pulp & paper
- 0% - Arms
- 0% - Tobacco
- 0% - Politics
- 0% - Alcohol
- 1.6% - Gambling

2023 Revenue by Sector

- 0% - Meat & Dairy
- 0% - Private Cars
- 0% - Aviation
- 0% - Concrete & Cement
- 0% - Trucking & Shipping
- 0% - Plastics
- 0% - Chemicals & Petrochemicals
- 0% - Iron, Steel & aluminium
- 0% - Coal, Oil & Natural Gas
- 0% - Timber, pulp & paper
- 0% - Arms
- 0% - Tobacco
- 0% - Politics
- 0% - Alcohol
- 0% - Gambling

Governance

Our success comes from our team’s collective effort to support the business vision. We try to uphold our values and be authentic.

We have taken steps to promote **diversity, inclusion, and equity** within our organisation. We recognise the importance of considering the impact of our decisions on the environment, and our team in all decision-making processes.

In 2023, we established a senior leadership team for our monthly board meetings which was 40% women and 60% men. Our progress made.

Gender Pay Gap - at no level in the business is there a gender pay gap, we have brought into the business transparent pay bands, which are the framework in which all salaries are now deployed.

ESG strategy - our focus on 4 core areas of SDG’s

Our approach to Environmental and Social Governance has evolved. We are in the early stages of formulating a plan that speaks to these four areas in our local area, Essex:

- Gender Equality
- Decent work and economic growth
- Reduced inequality
- Climate action

Open book finances with the team - we have been trialling running open book finance with the team on an annual basis. This has been well received, and we plan to build on this going forward.

Women’s Council - Our goal is to provide comprehensive support to all, ensuring that every voice is heard. We aim to foster an inclusive culture by exploring strategies for DE&I. We’ve expanded representation, achieving a 4:5 (female to male) ratio within the agency. Conducted a focused review of company policies on well-being, maternity, paternity, bereavement, and miscarriage.

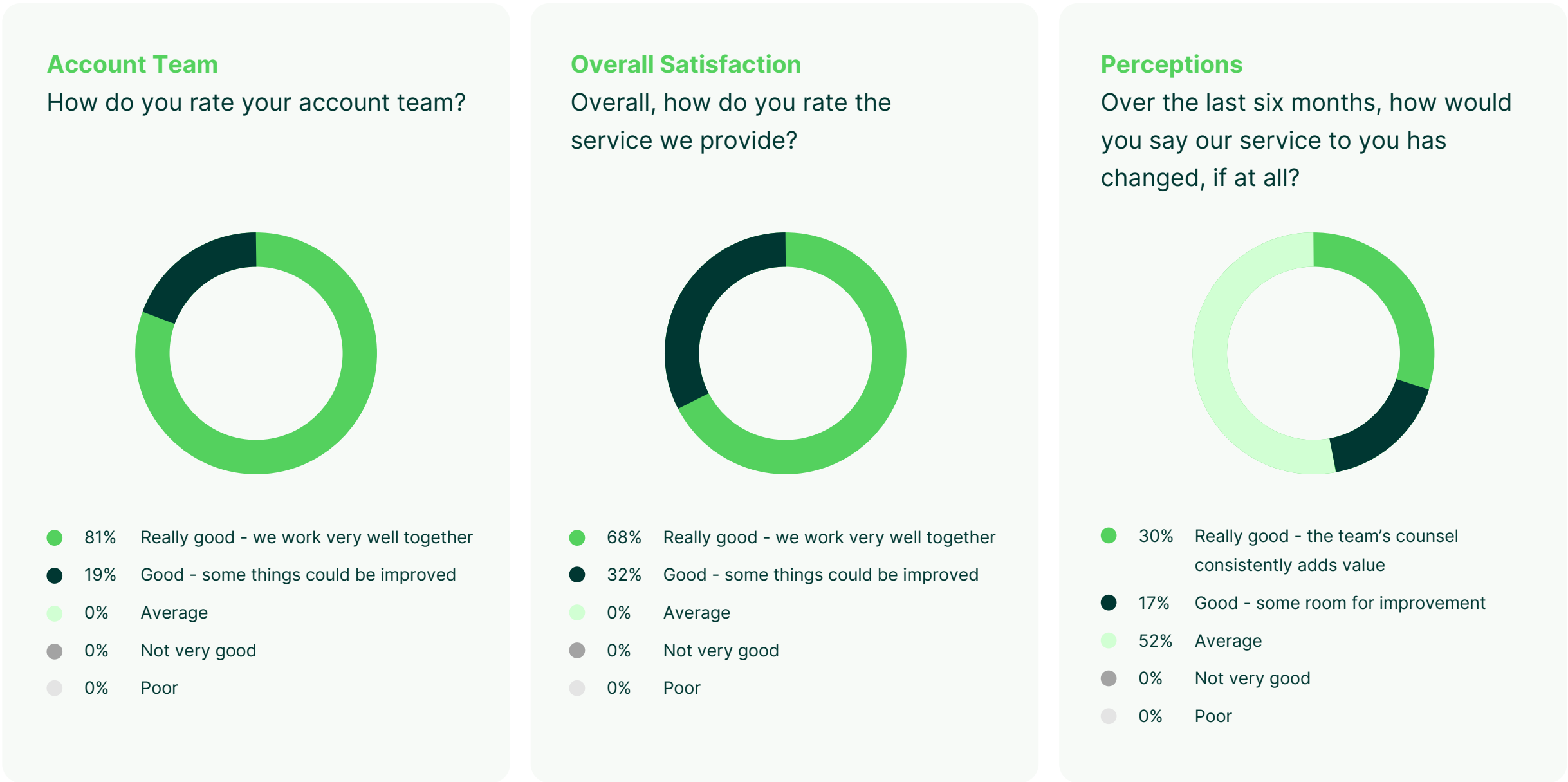


Customer Satisfaction

Customer Satisfaction

In 2023, we embarked on our first full client survey.

Our results were as follows:



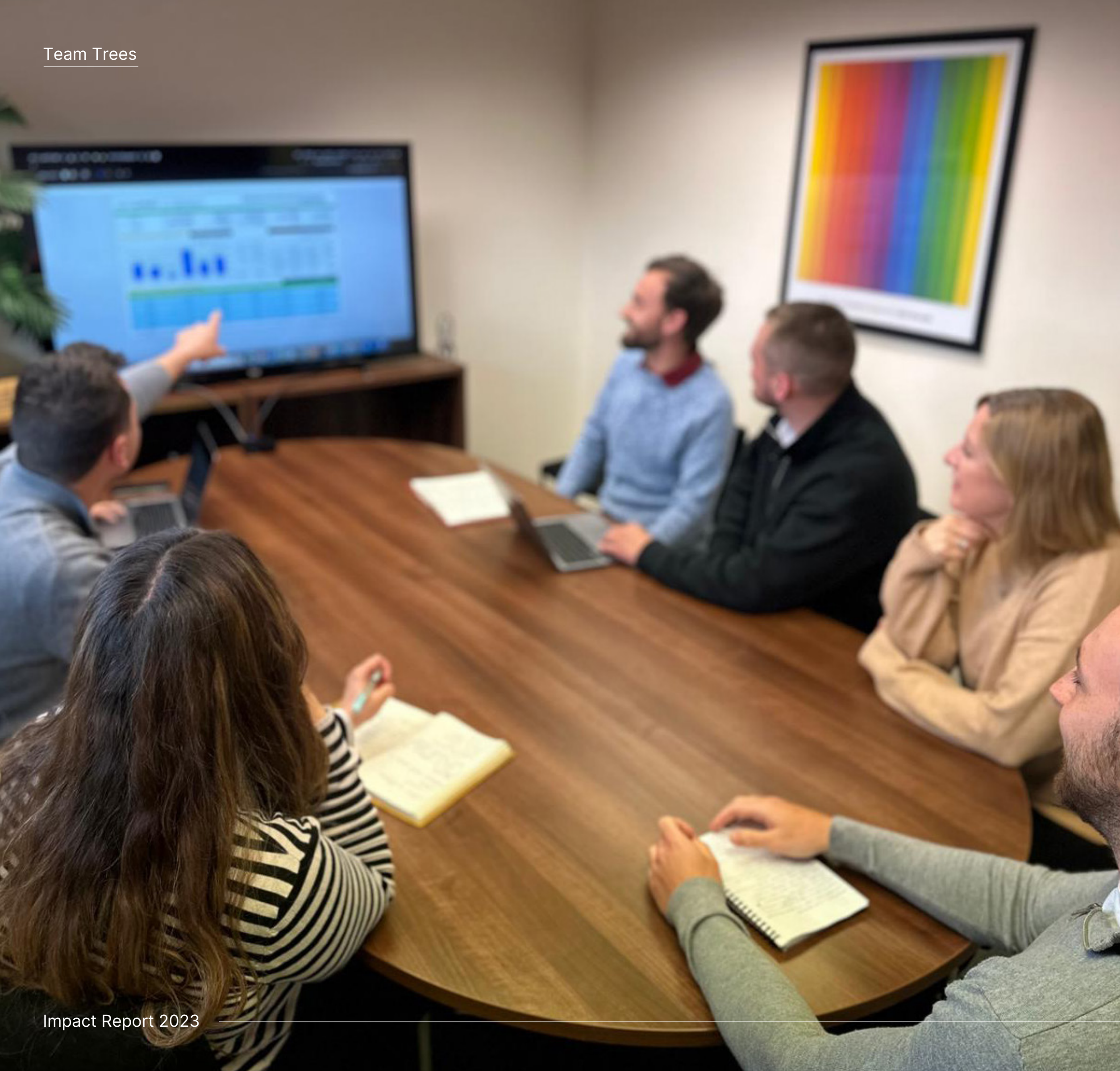
Overwhelmingly, our feedback was positive; however, we received valuable feedback about areas we could improve. These included speed of our responses, providing more strategic guidance, and sometimes we needed to improve the knowledge of the sectors our clients worked in.

To take on board this feedback we undertook:

- 1. Training across the account management team for client management
- 2. Our largest ever round of quarterly and annual business reviews for our clients
- 3. Allocated time for the team to learn

We will be undertaking a follow up round of client surveys in 2024 and look forward to improving our focus on client satisfaction further.

Team Trees



Team Trees

We strive to create a balance between providing Team Trees with personal flexibility, fulfilling team needs along with pursuing personal aspirations that contribute to the greater good of the organisation.

This serves our customers well and fosters an environment that promotes creativity, diversity and trust.

2023 Highlights:

- Team trip to Cologne
- 100% of staff received training
- Women's Council entered its second year
- Flexible and remote working retained
- No gender pay gap at any level in the business

In progress for 2023:

- 6x wellbeing and mental health sessions and 3 hours 1:1 support offered for each team member
- Improve diversity of team with stated ambition of being in line with national average
- Improve clarity around job pay bands

Community

Volunteering

We supported 21 charities with Google ad support and other digital marketing support all at a significantly reduced rate.

In total we donated over 180 hours of free support to charities across our core services of paid search, paid social and SEO.

Furthermore, we had team members volunteer for over 80 hours for causes such as:

- Encouraging girls and young women into the digital industry with local colleges / 6th forms / universities and councils
-
- Indeed we did so much, one of the team was recognised with an award from the Greater Essex Careers Enterprise Awards presented by a local major
-
- Team members helping run a local Eco Festival, where 4,500 people attended over the weekend
-
- As members of Surfers Against Sewage, we went to beautiful West Mersea and collected rubbish
-
- Supported the local food banks and community football teams



Carbon Footprint

Carbon Footprint

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Scope 1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Scope 2	1.8	0.0	1.0	0.8	0.9
Scope 3	40.9	20.5	43.6	54.2	65.8
Total	42.7	20.5	44.5	55.0	66.7
Staff	8	7	10	14	18
Emissions per Person	5.3	2.9	4.45	3.9	3.7
Notes	Pandemic				
Method	Futurelearn/ BIMA course	Futurelearn/ BIMA course	C Free	C Free	C Free

We started measuring our carbon footprint in 2019. Since then we have partnered with C Free to run our numbers.

At this juncture, I think it important to say we’ve messed up in the above calculations. Due to an oversight we have excluded pensions and our client media spend from the above calculations.

Bearing this in mind the above now looks like this:

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Scope 1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Scope 2	1.8	0.0	1.0	0.8	0.9
Scope 3	40.9	20.5	43.6	54.2	145.1
Total	42.7	20.5	44.5	55.0	146.0
Staff	8	7	10	14	18
Emissions per Person	5.3	2.9	4.45	3.9	8.1
Notes	Pandemic			Included pension and media spend	
Method	Futurelearn/ BIMA course	Futurelearn/ BIMA course	C Free	C Free	C Free

Naturally, we were disappointed to learn of this error on our part. We were more disappointed to learn that our carbon footprint was actually larger than we initially estimated.

We felt it better to own this error than fudge the issue. If you'd like to chat about this, please do email me at alex@climbingtrees.com

The two new additions, pensions and media spend, are both areas where we have already made efforts to lean into. For pensions, we have ESG / ethical investments available for all team members. With regards to media spend, we have engaged with the in-house sustainability team at Google to advocate for more up to date information on the measurement of the carbon footprint of ad campaigns. We've tried to engage with Microsoft, Meta, Tiktok, LinkedIn similarly but these efforts have yielded zero results.

The Start of our Work

Evolving our Work

To reduce our carbon footprint now, we need to lean into our scope three carbon data. **This consists of three core areas:**

1. Our suppliers
2. Our systems
3. Ad platforms

Across all three areas we have engaged with our supply chain to better understand their approach to sustainability and what their plans are regarding net zero.

We are in the process of evaluating this data and will then, where possible, work with our existing supply chain to encourage change.

Should these efforts fall on stony ground, we will then explore changing our supplier shortlist where possible.

We hope that our efforts can encourage others to take action.



What we failed at

Things that did not pan out as we envisaged are:

We moved with genuine intent to do things in what we consider the right way - however - some things we got wrong, including:

Carbon footprint analysis - as mentioned earlier, we'd previously not measured pensions or media spend.

Reducing our carbon footprint

Decoupling our business growth and our impact on the environment

What’s Next

We wish to continue to challenge ourselves to do better, we feel there is much we can do - **initiatives we are exploring in 2024 are**

CV less recruitment

Exploring maximising our impact in our local area (Essex UK) looking at both environment and local community partnering with local charities, companies, authorities and councils

B Corp Impact Score

B Corp Impact Score

2024 will see us begin the process of our recertification, we hope to improve our score to over 95 points, focussing on community and customer initiatives.



- **50** Median Score for Ordinary Businesses
- **80** Qualifies for B Corp Certification
- **87.9** Overall B Impact Score
- **95** 2025 Recertification Ambition

Governance	14.3
Workers	33.2
Community	21.6
Environment	13.7
Customers	5.0

