



gradient
consultants

Impact Report 2024-25

Certified



Corporation



A letter from our founders

This year, Gradient turned 20 - a significant milestone and a chance to reflect on how far we've come. From our early days to becoming a B Corp and embedding purpose into everything we do, our journey has always been shaped by our people, our values, and our commitment to making a positive impact.

Turning 20 wasn't just about looking back, but also looking forward. It's reinforced our drive to keep evolving, embracing innovation, championing sustainability, and supporting the next generation of built environment professionals.

We're incredibly proud of what we've achieved over the past two decades, but we're even more excited about what comes next. Here's to the next 20 years of thinking big, delivering with purpose, and building better business.



Clare Armstrong,
Co-Founder

Richard Garland,
Co-Founder



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Impact highlights

£1030

Donations made to charities
and community groups

19

Public sector jobs
delivered

61

Volunteering hours in
our community

12

Hours we've dedicated
to mentoring

76%

Average staff
happiness score

300

Coffee pods recycled
(closed loop)

144

Trees planted

49%

Revenue from
purpose-driven clients

1

Work experience
student supported

69

Guests hosted at
our BBB events

6

Newsletters
published

251

Hours we've spent
learning/professional
development

9.45/10

Average client
satisfaction score

2

New qualifications
achieved

43

Office materials
saved from landfill

21.6t

Tonnes of CO2
avoided



Who we are

Founded in 2004, Gradient is a surveying and building consultancy practice with a clear purpose. We deliver expert advice that creates lasting value for our clients, our communities and the environment.

We specialise in chartered surveying and asbestos consultancy, working across the built environment to support projects that are safe, sustainable and future focused. Our work is grounded in technical excellence, collaborative relationships and a commitment to doing things well.

As a certified B Corporation, we believe in the power of business as a force for good. This means thinking beyond commercial outcomes and considering the wider impact of every project we are involved in. Whether we're working with local authorities, purpose-driven clients or commercial partners, our aim is to deliver work that stands up to scrutiny and stands for something better.

We are proud to be part of a growing movement of organisations that are reshaping the role of business in society, with professionalism, care and integrity at the centre of everything we do.





Our values

We call our values '**The G5**', and they underpin our culture and approach. By aligning them with B Corp principles, we strengthen our decision-making and reinforce our commitment to continuous improvement.



Clients, Clients, Clients



We take ownership



We think big



We are the people we
want to work with



We deliver



UN SDGs

We support the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and we align our work with them to drive positive environmental and social impact in the built environment. While all 17 SDGs are important, we focus on the ones where we can make the biggest difference:



SDG 9: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure

We help create sustainable, future-proofed buildings by integrating efficiency, resilience, and innovation into project delivery.



SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities

We champion inclusive and ethical business practices, ensuring social value is built into projects and that opportunities are accessible to all.



SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities

Our work ensures properties and projects contribute to stronger, more climate-resilient communities.



SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production

We promote low-carbon solutions, circular economy principles, and responsible procurement to minimise environmental impact.



SDG 13: Climate Action

With a commitment to operational Net Zero by 2030, we actively reduce emissions in our own operations and support clients in doing the same.



SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals

Collaboration is at the heart of what we do. We build strong partnerships to maximise social and environmental value across projects.



By embedding these SDGs into our business, we ensure that our people, projects, and partnerships contribute to a more sustainable and responsible future.



Our strategic approach

Impact objectives

1

Sustainable & Resilient Built Environments

Delivering property, compliance, and project consultancy that enhances sustainability, resilience, and long-term value.

2

Innovation & Responsible Business Practices

Enhancing sustainability, efficiency, and compliance in project delivery while embedding ethical and responsible business practices.

3

Collaboration & Social Value

Building strong partnerships that create positive social and environmental impact for businesses and communities.

4

Carbon Reduction & Climate Action

Actively reducing operational and project-related carbon emissions, supporting clients in their Net Zero ambitions.



Target Outcomes



- Projects embed sustainability in materials, energy, or impact.
- Increased use of low-carbon and circular economy principles.
- Stronger climate resilience for clients.



- Sustainability, efficiency, and compliance built into projects.
- More responsible procurement in our supply chain and client projects.
- Improved resource efficiency, cutting waste and optimising outcomes.



- More partnerships with purpose-driven businesses.
- Social value embedded through procurement, partnerships and community collaboration.
- Better stakeholder engagement for aligned project outcomes.



- Annual carbon reductions, working towards operational Net Zero by 2030.
- Clients supported in measuring, reducing, and offsetting emissions.
- More low-carbon projects delivered.

Why B Corp?



The built environment is responsible for nearly 40% of the UK's carbon emissions, which means businesses like ours have a vital role to play in shaping a more sustainable future. We became a B Corp because we believe business can and should be a force for good.

Our B Corp certification is a commitment to holding ourselves accountable, balancing people, planet, and profit in everything we do. It's part of our positive impact improvement journey, ensuring we walk the talk and lead by example, sharing what we've learned and helping others in our industry raise the bar. It even inspired us to establish Building Better Business, our community for construction and built environment professionals who want to lead the way in better business and shape a more sustainable industry.

One of the best things about becoming a B Corp is the community itself, a network of businesses who aren't just talking about doing good, but are actively driving change. Together, we're proving that better business isn't just possible, it's already happening. And we're just getting started.



Our B Corp journey





Governance
Team
Community
Clients
Environment

Looking back and looking forward

Here's a look at what we set out to do across the 5 pillars, what we achieved, and what's next.



Governance

What we planned

- 1 Achieve a minimum score of 100 on the B Impact Assessment.
- 2 Develop a Client Charter to achieve effective communication and collaboration, including what we do and our commitments, what clients can expect and how we can work together to give our clients the very best.

What we achieved

At our recent B Corp recertification, we achieved a score of 87.7. While this fell short of our target of 100, it reflects the genuine progress we've made and highlights clear areas for improvement that will guide the next phase of our positive impact improvement journey.

We developed a Client Charter that clearly outlines how we work, what clients can expect from us and the standards we hold ourselves to. It's designed to support clear communication, build trust and strengthen collaboration throughout every project. The Charter will become a key part of how we communicate with clients, helping to build stronger, more collaborative relationships, and supporting better project delivery and results.



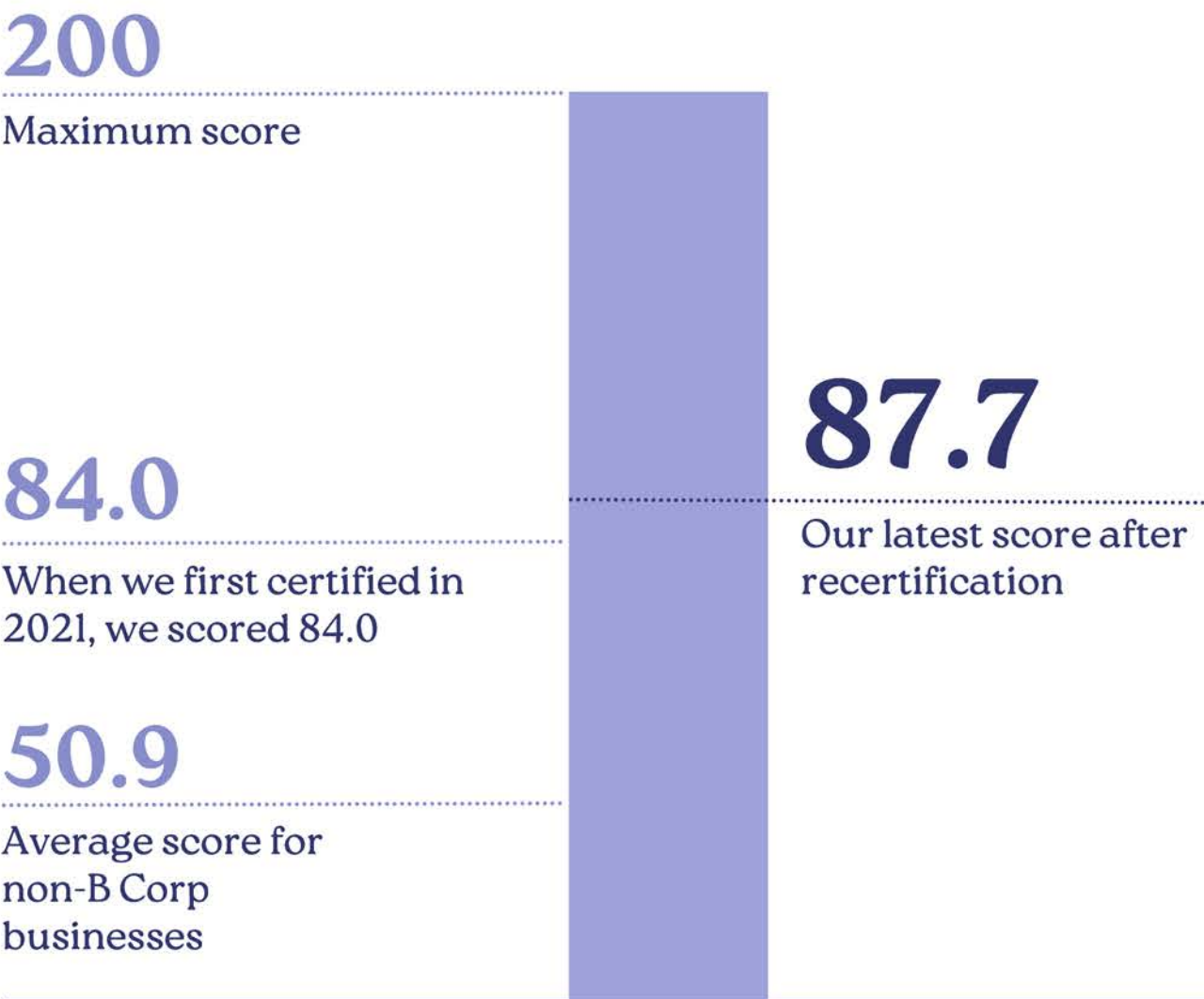
Accreditations





B Corp score breakdown

B Corps recertify every three years to ensure they continue to meet high standards. We’ve just completed that process, which assessed us across five key areas: governance, workers, community, environment and customers. It keeps us focused, accountable and moving forward.



GOVERNANCE		18.0	How we scored in the 5 impact areas	
Mission & Engagement		2.0		
Ethics & Transparency		5.9		
Mission Locked		10.0		
TEAM		26.0	COMMUNITY	
Financial Security		8.1	Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion	7.4
Health, Wellness, & Safety		4.0	Economic Impact	5.0
Career Development		5.7	Civic Engagement & Giving	4.7
Engagement & Satisfaction		4.9	Supply Chain Management	4.8
CLIENTS		10.2	ENVIRONMENT	
Customer Stewardship		3.0	Environmental Management	4.2
Support for Underserved/Purpose		7.1	Air & Climate	3.8
Driven Enterprises			Water	0.0
			Land & life	2.5



Quarterly Business Reviews



We hold a Quarterly Business Reviews (QBRs) to reflect on progress, celebrate achievements and set priorities for the months ahead. These sessions bring the team together to share updates on finance, environmental performance and social impact, keeping everyone informed, involved and aligned with our mission.

Each QBR includes updates on:

- **Financial Performance:** Key figures and how our financial health supports our wider goals.
- **Environmental Impact:** Net Zero progress, emissions data and reduction efforts.
- **Social Impact:** Community engagement, client projects and social value commitments.

These reviews are open and transparent, creating space for questions, feedback and ideas. By involving the whole team, we build shared understanding and a stronger sense of purpose in everything we do.





Move to sustainable banking

Metric	Previous Bank	Metro Bank
Fossil Fuel Financing	One of the largest investors in fossil fuel projects	Does not fund fossil fuel extraction or power generation
Net Zero Commitment	May have targets but still finances high-carbon industries	Net-zero operations by 2030 and net-zero financed emissions by 2050
Green Energy Usage	Unclear or partial use of renewable energy	Uses 100% renewable energy
Bank.Green Rating	Ranked poorly due to fossil fuel investments	Rated "Great" for climate responsibility
Sustainable Supply Chain	Some commitments to responsible sourcing	Working towards sustainable supply chain practices
Transparency on Climate Impact	Limited transparency on environmental impact	More open about sustainability commitments

One key change we made over the last year was switching our daily banking to Metro Bank, a move that reflects our commitment to responsible finance.

Our previous provider was a major fossil fuel funder, and we knew it was time for a more ethical alternative. Using [bank.green](https://www.bank.green) to research the climate impact of financial institutions, we chose Metro Bank for its transparency, climate-conscious approach and the convenience of a local branch. This change is part of our wider effort to ensure every part of our business, from procurement to finance, supports a more sustainable future.

Bank.Green scoring of Previous Bank vs Metro Bank





Aligning our mission and purpose

A clear mission helps guide the way we work and the impact we want to make. To support this, we've partnered with Mission Works who help businesses address social and environmental challenges through purposeful, commercially sound strategies. Their expertise is helping shape our approach to doing business with clarity and intent.

Working with Mission Works, we have been exploring how to:

- **Define Our Mission More Clearly** – Refining our purpose to ensure it reflects our values and resonates with our stakeholders.
- **Embed Purpose in Our Operations** – Strengthening the link between what we believe in and the way we work, from decision-making to supplier choices.
- **Communicating Our Story** – Developing meaningful ways to assess our progress and hold ourselves accountable to our commitments.

It's a journey that we're still on, continually questioning, learning, and evolving.

Together, we've been uncovering how your strong values and unique expertise can be focused on a meaningful challenge in your industry so you can make even more positive impact.

-Fiona Ras-Jones

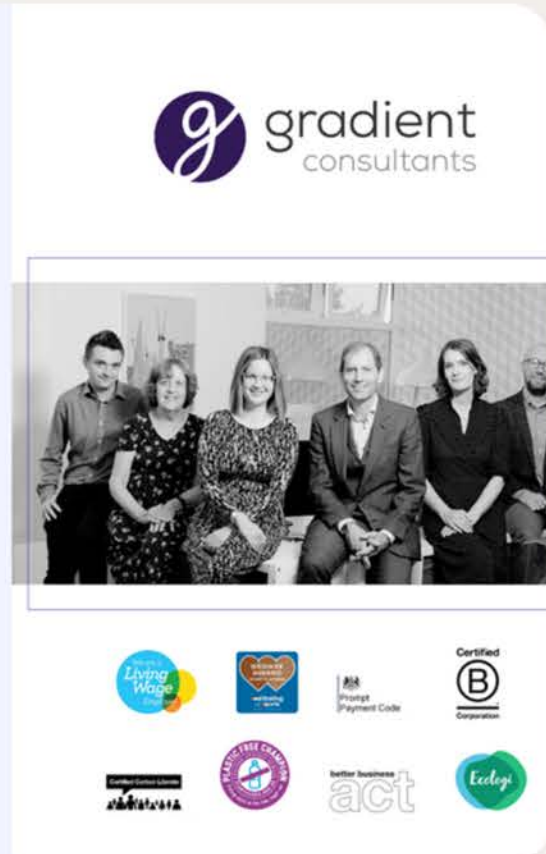
**MISSION
WORKS**



Client and Supplier Charters

Strong relationships with our clients and suppliers are key to doing good work. To make sure these partnerships reflect our values, we're launching our Client Charter and Supplier Charter. Each sets out clear expectations and shared commitments, helping us work together in a way that is fair, transparent and purpose led.

Let's work together to
make a positive impact.



Our Client Charter outlines what clients can expect from us and what we expect in return. It sets out how we approach communication, roles and responsibilities, and reinforces our commitment to ethical practice, transparency and delivering social and environmental value through our work.

Our Supplier Charter sets out the standards we look for in our supply chain. This includes fair and prompt payment, commitment to the Living Wage and ethical employment practices, responsible sourcing, inclusive business practices and community impact.

Both charters reflect our values and the way we choose to work. They help us build partnerships rooted in trust, accountability and mutual respect.



Supporting clients with compliance

the conductor of an orchestra, are not an expert in every design, our detailed knowledge of the regulations allows us to assess building design will comply.

Designers BSA one of our legal coordinating and controlling the work to ensure that the building works in line with Building Regulations.



02 Our 12 point approach to the role of PD BSA

We plan, manage and monitor design work during the pre-construction phase	Ensuring compliance with building regulations prior to building control submission	Monitoring changes to the design throughout the construction stage	Critically assess designs, make informed decisions and ask intelligent questions
Coordinate design work between the designers, including the principal contractor, manufacturers and product suppliers	Obtain compliance justifications and declarations	Ensure clear communication and cooperation across the design teams	Advise the client on pre-construction information, duties, competencies and appointment of experts
Prioritise building safety by eliminating or controlling foreseeable health and safety risks with the designers	Collaborate with the principal contractor and share all information relevant to the planning, management and monitoring of the construction work	Drive meaningful change, through positive project culture and championing safety	Establish a framework (document) for maintaining the highest safety standards throughout a building's lifecycle

03 How we undertake PD BSA role

We have developed our own practice model for working as Principal Designers under the BSA. This is an ongoing process that we follow to capture specific project compliance. We have a bespoke Building Regulations tracker which is live document, developed as your project runs through the RIBA Stages 2-7.

Once your project goals are in place, we begin by reviewing the Legislation hierarchy for the project. This will depend on the location, size, complexity and height of your building.

The Building Regulations tracker highlights the relevant Approved Documents legal requirements, together with design guidance and performance requirements specific to the building type or design, such as structure, firefighting requirements and energy performance.

We also include a role and regulatory activity framework. This lists those involved in the design and construction process and defines roles and responsibilities under specific regulations such as CDM 2015. It is also used to clearly show individual duties through the RIBA Stages, concept, technical design, construction, handover and in use.

We end and with plan We review We print the work into the A3 size doc of vi gold the future you

05 Our Competence: Organisational

We have the organisational capacity and competence to act as Principal Designers under the BSA in line with the framework for competency for the industry detailed in PAS 6675:2022

- We have appointed Richard Garland as our Organisation's Principal Designer. Richard's role is to monitor and supervise all individuals who also act as Principal Designers, ensuring we have sufficient capacity, resources and competence.
- We are a RICS regulated chartered surveying practice, we hold Constructionline Gold accreditation, which includes an Acolaim accreditation, demonstrating our commitment to health and safety standards.
- Our internal resources include access and use of NBS (National Building Specification), BCIS (Building Cost Information Service), AutoCAD and Microsoft Project.
- With over 20 years' experience of specifying and managing building works across London and the South East we have an integrated approach to health and safety that balances formal systems and behaviours. This has enabled us to develop our bespoke 12-point approach and practice framework above.
- We hold £2m Professional Indemnity Insurance (PI) and can advise on buildings up to 6 storeys in height. Whilst we do work on higher risk buildings over 6 storeys (18 metres), we are unable to advise on specialist fire safety works.



06 Our Competence Knowledge

As qualified individuals we follow both a structured continual professional learning logged on our bespoke Gradient mobile app. We are registered CROSS (Collaborative Reporting on Safer Structures) to ensure we legislative and regulatory changes. We also regularly attend conferences technical systems and products. Our key delivery team hold a number of qualifications:

Richard Garland BSc (Hons) MBA FRICS DipBldgCons
Chartered Building Surveyor and Management Consultancy Surveyor
Building Safety Act & PD Building Regulations (including Regulation Association for Project Safety)

Duncan Tibbitts BSc (Hons) MRICS AaPS
Chartered Building Surveyor and associate member of the Association
Principal Designer CDM 2015 course accredited by the Association

Claire Armstrong BSc (Hons) MSc CIWFM TechOSH CHRM
Compliance Consultant and public sector housing expert
NEBOSH Certificate in Construction Health and Safety – Distinction
BOHS P405 Management of Asbestos in Buildings

Luke Maglennen BSc (Hons)
Building Surveyor
Principal Designer CDM 2015 course accredited by the Association

04 Our Competence: Design

Central to our model is a bespoke 12-point approach which ensures safety is embedded throughout the project lifecycle. This includes live tracking of Building Regulations, clear definition of roles and responsibilities, and maintaining the golden thread of information from concept to completion.



The Building Safety Act introduced clearer responsibilities for clients and increased expectations around safety, design and compliance. In response, we have developed a structured, client-focused approach that supports compliance from RIBA Stage 2 to Stage 7.

Central to our model is a bespoke 12-point approach which ensures safety is embedded throughout the project lifecycle. This includes live tracking of Building Regulations, clear definition of roles and responsibilities, and maintaining the golden thread of information from concept to completion.

Our process makes it easier for clients to understand their duties, ask the right questions and stay in control. It offers practical guidance to help navigate a complex landscape with confidence and clarity.

Governance - What's next?

To develop a Stakeholder Engagement Policy, which will set out how we identify, communicate with, and gather feedback from our key stakeholders - including clients, suppliers, our team, and the wider community. This will help us understand what matters most to them, strengthen our relationships, and ensure their voices help shape the way we work.







Team

What we planned

- 1 Focus on improving our employee review process to not only support progression and performance but to create an opportunity for deeper understanding in addressing feedback, setting goals and tracking progress.
- 2 All staff to complete JEDI training to educate, reflect and create positive change. Continue to focus on training in areas of wellbeing awareness, such as menopause and physical and mental health.

What we achieved

Our updated performance review process ties personal development to Gradient's purpose and values. It encourages reflection, goal setting and shared responsibility for learning, with a focus on the skills that matter most, from communication and problem solving to building strong client relationships.

All professional staff completed Diversity and Inclusion training this year, creating space to learn, reflect and play an active role in shaping a more inclusive workplace. We also took part in Challenging Behaviour training, focused on communication, empathy and how we work together. These sessions sit within our wider focus on wellbeing, helping us build a more supportive and inclusive culture that reflects the values we stand for.

Investing in learning

We've built on our strengths across technical skills, legislation, sustainability, social value, and professional practice to ensure the advice we give reflects the latest industry standards. As regulations evolve, we remain committed to helping clients navigate complexity with clarity and confidence.

A key focus this year has been preparing for regulatory change, including the Building Safety Act and the Procurement Act 2023. Alongside this, members of our team have been working towards a range of professional qualifications that strengthen our expertise and the support we offer:

- **IEMA Practitioner Membership** – deepening our knowledge of environmental and sustainability best practice.
- **APC (Assessment of Professional Competence) with RICS** – currently in progress, this will demonstrate the technical expertise, ethical standards, and professional competence required for Chartered Surveyor status.
- **APS-accredited Building Safety Act & PD Building Regulations 2023 Training** – equipping us to act as Principal Designer under the latest legislation and ensuring we remain up to speed with evolving building regulations.



Last year we invested
an average of

£460

per professional team member in
their development, supporting
training, CPD, and learning
opportunities.



Commitment to CPD

Each year, every team member has dedicated development time to focus on learning, professional growth, and building the skills that help us deliver better outcomes for our clients.

Here's a snapshot of what we achieved:



251

Learning hours

We dedicated 251 hours to formal learning this year, deepening our knowledge to enhance the advice we provide.

148

Sessions recorded

We completed 148 learning sessions, creating a valuable resource for future development and knowledge sharing.

2

Qualifications

We strengthened our expertise in sustainability, and building safety, with two team members achieving formal qualifications.



Staying curious

We've built a culture where learning is part of the day-to-day. Whether it's formal training, peer-led sessions or simply sharing knowledge, we create space for the team to explore, develop and stay sharp.

From CPD and webinars to our in-house WIKI Talks, learning at Gradient is something we do together. WIKI stands for What I Know Is - a monthly session where team members lead short, focused discussions on everything from site safety to sustainability, legislation and lessons learned from live projects.

These talks help us stay engaged with what's happening in our industry and inside our own business. They're a space to share, ask questions and build the kind of knowledge that strengthens how we work.

Alongside technical learning, we also explore how we work together, from reflecting on team dynamics to understanding our communication styles through tools like personality profiling. It all adds up to a culture of learning that's practical, inclusive and always evolving.



Learning in practice

Alongside formal qualifications, we continue to build knowledge through tailored support, technical resources and practical CPD - making sure learning is something we do together, not just on paper.

To support Building Surveyor Luke's APC preparation, we created a bespoke competency template aligned with his pathway. The revised format made the process clearer, more structured and easier to navigate, helping him work with confidence towards professional accreditation.

The team also took part in CPD workshops with Graphenstone, exploring the benefits of low-impact paints and their role in creating healthier internal environments. Sessions with GeoSphere4d helped deepen our understanding of geomatics and geospatial surveys, strengthening the technical insight we bring to our projects.

These learning opportunities ensure our advice stays current, informed and responsive to the challenges our clients face. They support high standards across compliance, sustainability and project delivery.



Building safety expertise



Co-founder Richard completed the 2-day Association of Project Safety (APS) accredited course, Building Safety Act & PD Building Regulations 2023. This deep dive into the new and critical Building Safety Act and associated regulations focused on the impact of the amended Building Regulations, the Golden Thread, fire and structural safety, and competence requirements on non-higher risk and higher risk buildings.

Our expertise with regards to the principles of the Building Safety Act 2022 and associated secondary legislation in relation to design, construction and building management impacts our work throughout the entire building lifecycle, from design and construction through to use, maintenance and demolition.

This qualification helped shape our new **BSA Principal Designer guide**, giving clients a clear, structured approach to compliance and enhancing our ability to embed safety and up-to-date regulatory knowledge at every stage of a project.

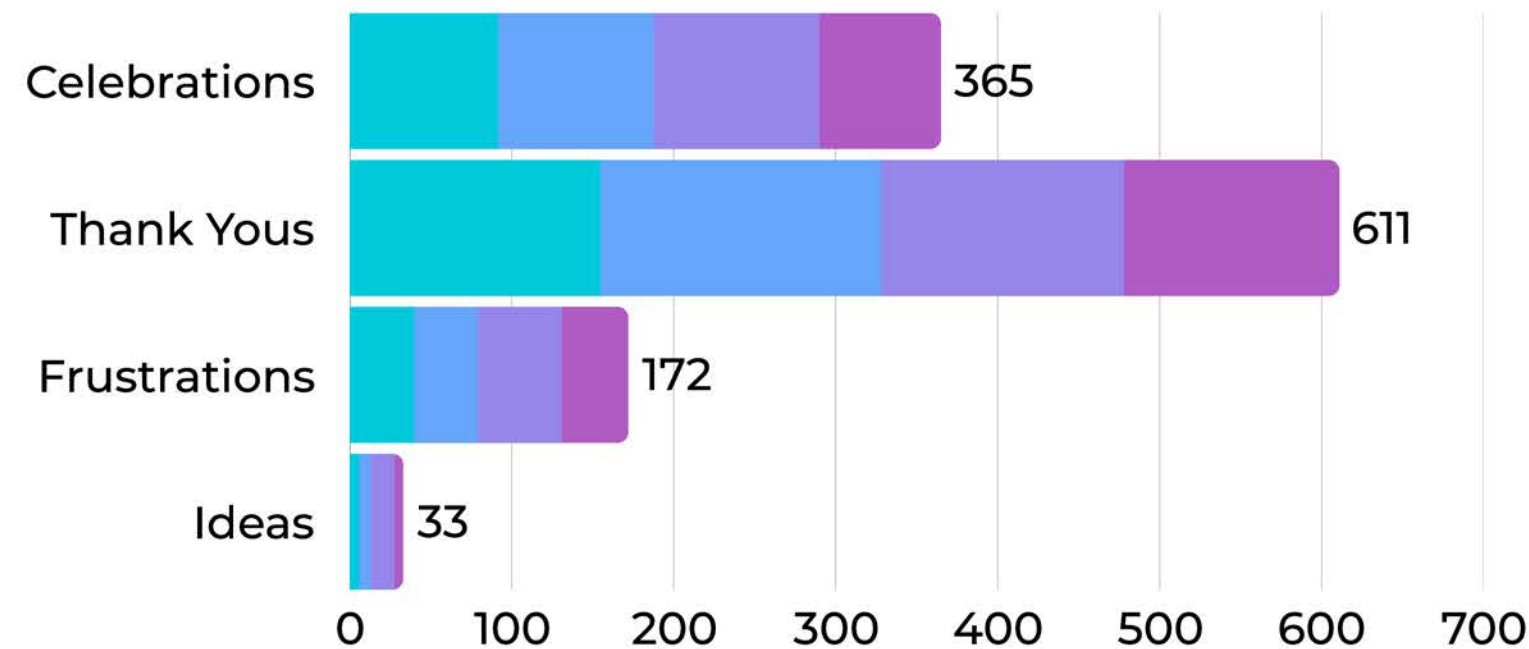
Wellbeing

We know that when people feel supported, they do their best work. From flexible working to real-time feedback, we're focused on creating an environment where people can thrive.

We use Friday Pulse to check in with the team, giving us real insight into what's working and where we need to improve. By tracking trends and acting on what we learn, we're building a workplace that listens, adapts and keeps getting better.



2024 Survey highlights



This year, we recertified with Wellbeing at Work. Our award recognises our commitment to a culture that prioritises people. Wellbeing is built into our performance review process, ensuring that development, support, and recognition go hand in hand.



Balancing work and life

We support our team to live well, both in and out of work. That means creating balance through flexible working, practical support and time to properly rest and recharge.

- **Hybrid working** - Our team has the flexibility to work where they feel most productive, balancing time at home with in-person collaboration.
- **Home office support** - We provide equipment and resources to help everyone work comfortably and effectively from home.
- **Time off** - Our approach to annual leave encourages proper rest and recovery, recognising that time away from work matters.
- **Additional leave** - Each year, we gift the team a few extra days off between Christmas and New Year, a chance to fully switch off during the quietest part of the calendar.



Industry, Insight & Involvement

Being a B Corp means looking beyond our four walls. We grow by connecting with others, learning from different perspectives, building partnerships, and contributing to a more sustainable built environment. We encourage our team to step outside the day-to-day, and take part in events that reflect our values and amplify our impact. These moments are about learning, visibility, and being part of something bigger.

Highlights from the year include:

- **Chamber events** – Championing collaboration, climate action, and inclusive local economies.
- **Constructing Excellence Sussex Club Quiz** – Connecting with peers in a fun, informal setting rooted in shared industry knowledge.
- **T20 Cricket Match** – Hosting clients and partners for an evening of sport, conversation and community.
- **Award ceremonies** – Celebrating progress across the sector and recognising purpose-led project delivery.

Taking part in these events supports personal growth and gives the team space to engage with the challenges and changes happening in our industry and beyond.





Team - What's next?

We will introduce a private healthcare scheme for all team members, offering access to physical and mental health support, including cancer care, counselling and outpatient treatment. This new benefit reflects our ongoing commitment to wellbeing and will form part of our wider support for the team in the year ahead.







Community

What we planned

- 1** Redesign our team Community Days as Social Value Days, making these mandatory. Support our team in identifying opportunities to use our individual and combined skills for most impact.
- 2** Actively market a local initiative to provide 2 hours pro-bono advice to charities and to contact our existing supply chain and professional partners to also pledge to offer pro bono advice.

What we achieved

We introduced Social Impact Days, giving everyone the opportunity to use their skills to benefit the community. We supported the team to find ways to get involved, and by the end of the year, they had contributed 61 hours to social value activities, exceeding our target.

To meet this commitment, we provided pro-bono support to organisations with strong social or environmental aims. This included advising a client through a successful B Corp application and helping another shape their community engagement plan. While not all recipients were registered charities, the focus remained on purpose-driven work. We also encouraged others in our network to do the same, helping to build a wider culture of shared support.



Social Impact

Our impact over
the last year

61
hours

spent giving back
to our community

At Gradient, everyone gets one Social Impact Day a year – a chance to make a difference and do something brilliant for our community.

Our social impact work goes beyond individual projects, it's about using our time, skills, and platform to support others. Whether we're mentoring young people, advising organisations on their B Corp journey, we believe in sharing knowledge generously.

It's all part of our commitment to being a force for good, not just within our own business, but across the wider sector and society too.





Driving local action

Here's how we've put that commitment into action, using our time and energy to support local organisations, campaigns, and community initiatives.



We're proud to play an active role in our local community. Our team contributes to the Eastbourne Chamber of Commerce, Plastic Free Eastbourne, and the Eastbourne Neighbourhood Board, which brings together local voices to shape the town's regeneration. Our Co-Founder, Richard Garland, serves as Independent Chair, a role that reflects our B Corp values and the belief that business should benefit the communities it serves.

Through Plastic Free Eastbourne, we've helped organise events like the EcoFair, Car Free Day, Dip A Day and the Spring Water Festival, raising awareness and inspiring practical, local action. Community involvement is a natural part of how we work: showing up, pitching in, and backing the place we call home.

Making a difference



Through The Girls' Network, our ESG Lead Julia took part in a year-long mentoring programme aimed at inspiring and empowering girls from less advantaged backgrounds.

By providing one-to-one support, she helped her mentee grow in confidence, explore career ambitions, and build the tools to shape her own future.

It's all part of supporting the next generation to lead bold, ambitious, and unlimited futures.

We've given our time volunteering with Shelter, supporting their work to tackle homelessness and housing injustice.

We've helped plant trees on the South Downs with Treebourne, a local rewilding initiative aiming to plant thousands of trees across Eastbourne to combat climate change and restore biodiversity.

We've also campaigned for safer streets and better infrastructure with Bespoke, a community group working to promote cycling and active travel in Eastbourne.



Gradient's support has made a real difference to our mission. They don't just talk sustainability - they live it, share it, and help others do the same.

- Plastic Free Eastbourne



Donations

Alongside volunteering our time, we give back through donations and sponsorship - supporting causes that matter to our team, clients, and community.

We pledge £10 to Macmillan Cancer Support for every completed client feedback form, a simple way to turn insight into impact for a cause close to our hearts.

After a brilliant Challenging Behaviour session delivered by the founder of ManKind, we donated £200 to support their vital work promoting men's mental health and peer support.

At Christmas, we invited clients to nominate a charity of their choice. Instead of sending gifts, we donated £350 across six organisations, sharing the festive spirit in a way that reflects our values.

We also sponsored the Round Table Charity Golf Day and Plastic Free Eastbourne's Spring Water Festival, two local initiatives that bring people together and promote environmental awareness.

£1030

Total donations

We supported

12

Charities and groups



Leading the conversation

We use our platform to share insight, support learning and contribute to the future of our sector.

From delivering workshops on sustainability and technical compliance, to contributing to industry forums and representing at RICS board level, we're helping to shape conversations that matter

Through this work, we also champion a more inclusive and future-focused sector, helping to ensure the next generation of professionals are supported, skilled and ready to lead with purpose.





Building Better Business



Last year we hosted

69
guests

Building Better Business (BBB) is a community we co-founded with fellow B Corp Boutique Modern. It brings purpose-driven businesses in the built environment together to share ideas, build connections and drive positive change.

Since launching, we've hosted events at Projects, another B Corp, where businesses have come together to network and explore new ways to make an impact. We've also taken BBB on the road, teaming up with Constructing Excellence Sussex Club for a behind-the-scenes tour of Pells School in Lewes, where Boutique Modern is delivering net zero homes.

Our guest speaker series is now a regular feature. Highlights include Archangels Architects on moving to a four-day workweek, and architect Duncan Baker-Brown on designing for circularity.

BBB is becoming a vibrant space for values-led businesses to connect, collaborate and shape a better future together.



Community - What's next?

We will explore the creation of a new initiative to bring together local businesses and organisations that care about making a positive difference in the Eastbourne area. Our focus will be on understanding shared values, local priorities and opportunities to collaborate in the future.







Clients

What we planned

- 1 Explore a Sustainability Framework for our clients which serves and is tailored to their project from maintenance to new builds.
- 2 Continue to review client feedback as a team and monitor our stakeholder feedback process to ensure we are engaging, listening to and responding to feedback effectively.

What we achieved

Our goal was to explore a Sustainability Framework, but instead, we focused our efforts on developing a practical Net Zero Guide. Designed to support clients in understanding how their projects contribute to a greener future, the guide explains what Net Zero means, how Gradient's strategy works, and the steps they can take to reduce carbon and increase social value. Although not yet launched, it's already shaping how we talk to clients about climate action: clear, accessible and built to be genuinely useful.

We continue to monitor feedback through our Net Promoter Score, streamlining the process by reducing the number of questions to make it quicker and easier to complete. We've also widened our approach, inviting feedback not just from clients but also from partners and stakeholders, giving us broader insights and helping to strengthen our relationships.



Supporting purpose-driven clients

In 2024, 49% of our revenue came from purpose-driven clients. These are organisations that prioritise social or environmental impact alongside financial sustainability. We've worked with non-profits, public bodies, B Corps and mission-led businesses across a range of sectors.

Projects have included affordable housing schemes for local authorities, and heritage and cultural sites such as Bexhill Museum, Leaf Hall (a Grade II listed building in Eastbourne), and the East Hill Lift in Hastings. We also provide consultancy and technical compliance services for clients including the London Boroughs of Hammersmith and Fulham, Greenwich and Harrow, South London and Maudsley NHS Trust, and Origin Housing Group.

By supporting purpose-led clients, we amplify our own impact and contribute to a more inclusive, sustainable future.



Purpose-driven clients made up

49%

of our revenue last year

Number of people housed

80+

in affordable housing schemes we've worked on



Feedback

Feedback helps us improve, build stronger relationships and stay accountable.

We actively seek feedback from clients, contractors, suppliers and stakeholders, using the Net Promoter Score to track satisfaction and identify opportunities to improve. Just as important are the open conversations that help us learn, grow and strengthen our relationships. For every response we receive, we donate £10 to Macmillan Cancer Support. Over the past year, this resulted in a £130 donation, turning insight into impact.

A very professional company and a pleasure to work with.

Richard Sprange, ArchiVision

Good communication, projects either come in online with costings or below. Reporting is excellent.

Karen Quinlan, Oakley Property

Gradient provide a professional service and have a good rapport with client and contractor alike.

Simon Burton, LDC-EBC

Excellent company, good values, proactive with Clients and interesting scope of works.

Alex Nicolls, Colston

Average satisfaction score

9.45/10

from clients and partners last year

Total donated

£130

To Macmillan Cancer Support

Case study

Stowe Place, Sussex - Affordable housing new build

Stowe Place & Stowe Mews - Affordable Housing New Build

Employer's Agent |
Party Wall Surveyor |
CDM PD | Clerk of Works |
Cost Consultant

- Sustainable energy solutions
- Biodiversity enhancements
- Active transportation facilities
- Accessible living spaces



The Stowe Place development transformed a former police station site into a modern residential complex of 19 one- and two-bedroom apartments, and two three-bedroom houses. Delivered as an affordable housing project, it balances contemporary living standards with environmental sustainability and community integration.

Gradient were appointed as EA from RIBA stage 3, to manage the technical and environmental aspects of the project, including demolition, party structures, rights of light, and utilities. Archaeological investigations, performance specifications for renewable energy systems including air source heat pumps and photovoltaic panels, and biodiversity enhancements including bee bricks and swift boxes. The stage 4 detailed design was managed alongside the contractor and included facilities to encourage active travel, and ground-floor apartments tailored to meet full Part M accessibility requirements for residents with additional needs. Stowe Place aligned with council objectives by addressing housing needs, fostering community wellbeing, and promoting environmental stewardship. The completed development set a benchmark for sustainable and inclusive housing, demonstrating how modern residential projects can balance affordability with high environmental and social standards.

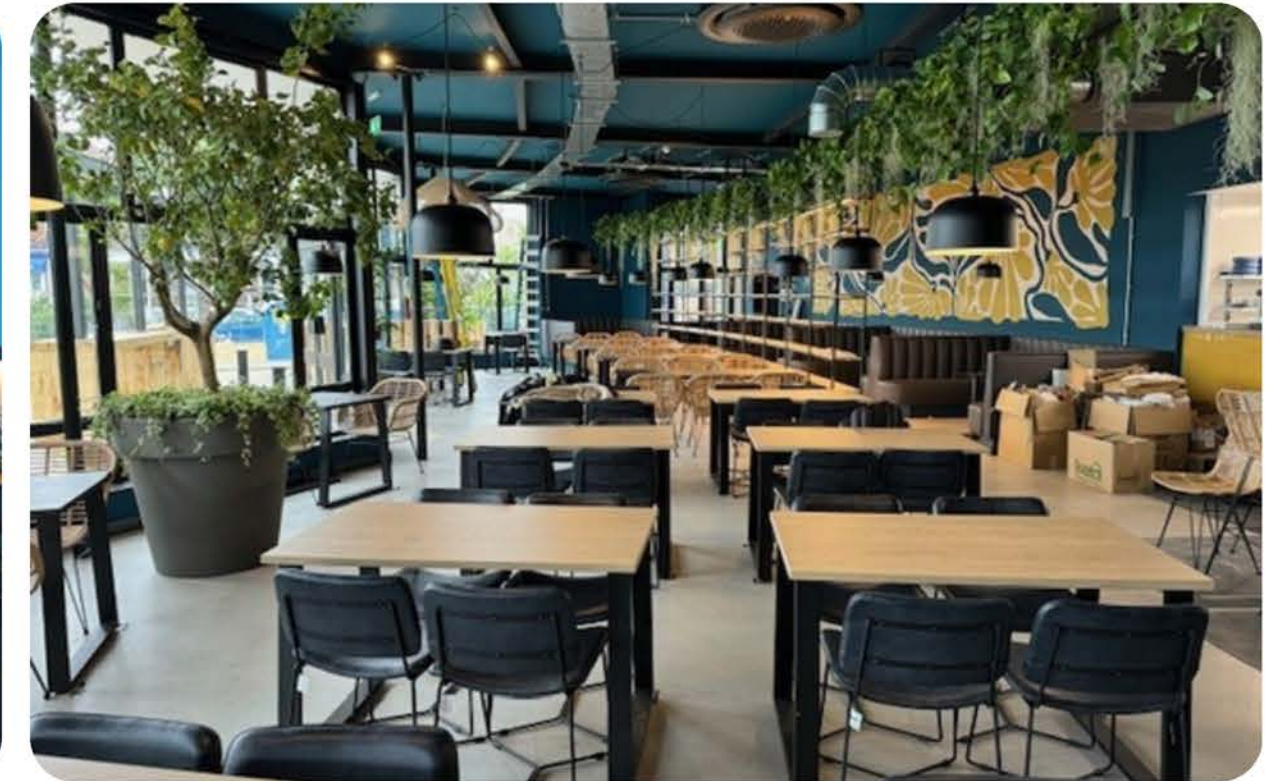
Case study

Glass House, Eastbourne - Restaurant Redevelopment

Glass House – Seafront Restaurant Redevelopment

Project Manager |
Planning Consultant |
Contract Administrator |
CDM Principal Designer

- Low-carbon construction
- Biodiversity enhancements
- Community-focused design
- Responsible regeneration



Gradient led the transformation of a disused seafront tearoom into the Glass House, a contemporary restaurant, café and bar that balances modern design with low-carbon construction. Appointed at the earliest stage, we supported the client's lease tender, carried out a full building survey, and led the planning application process with Eastbourne Borough Council. Our role extended through design development and on-site delivery, coordinating a complex programme with sustainability at its core.

The building retains and reuses key elements of the original structure, including the internal concrete floor. Ground screw foundations reduce embodied carbon, while the glazing is orientated to maximise daylight and natural ventilation. We explored the option of demolition, but this was ultimately seen as unjustified from a carbon perspective. The roof structure was insulated to improve heat retention in winter, and high-level planting was introduced to provide solar shading and reduce overheating in summer. Internal planting at high level was also incorporated to help improve air quality for diners. Recycled decking and biodiverse planting contribute to a considered, low-impact design.

The Glass House is now a vibrant seafront venue that champions local suppliers and brings new life to the site. For Gradient, it reflects our B Corp commitment to responsible regeneration and design that puts people and planet first.

Case study

Ferry Terminal, Newhaven - External Refurbishment

Newhaven Ferry Terminal – External Refurbishment

Contract Administrator |
Project Manager | CDM
Principal Designer | Lead
Designer

- Live environment delivery
- Programme management
- Technical coordination
- Future-ready design



Gradient led the successful delivery of a major refurbishment at Newhaven Ferry Terminal on behalf of Newhaven Port Properties. This £1.8 million project focused on upgrading the terminal's external elevations, including new cladding, windows, doors, canopies, and fire escapes.

We oversaw the project from design through to completion, managing contractor performance, stakeholder engagement, and technical coordination. Delivered in a live operational setting, the works required detailed phasing, careful logistics planning, and close liaison with port users to minimise disruption to ongoing ferry operations. The terminal serves over 380,000 passengers annually via the historic Newhaven–Dieppe ferry route, operated by DFDS. The improvements form part of a broader strategy to enhance passenger experience and future-proof the port.

Gradient's input was instrumental in maintaining momentum across the programme, ensuring quality standards were met while keeping the project on time and on budget. The result is a more resilient and welcoming coastal gateway, strengthening international connectivity and regional infrastructure.



Clients - What's next?

We will identify and suggest at least one climate or circularity improvement on each project where it is relevant, and share appropriate tools or guidance to support decision-making. Where possible, we'll support clients to consider wider stakeholder impacts in their planning, such as community feedback, accessibility or local supply chain opportunities







Environment

What we planned

- 1** Launch an appraisal framework and Supplier Manifesto supporting all suppliers on their journey to adopt and provide their Net Zero aligned goals. This will be a pre-requisite for being our supplier.
- 2** All staff to receive training and a recognised qualification in sustainability via a leading provider; UKGBC, UNGC, RICS, IWFM or BRE (BREEAM).
- 3** All staff to clearly understand the Gradient Net Zero strategy and what it takes to calculate our carbon emissions and set the reduction programme.

What we achieved

We're preparing to launch our Supplier Charter, setting out clear expectations around sustainability, ethical practices and social value. Aligning with Net Zero goals is a key requirement, but the Charter also reflects our wider commitment to fair pay, inclusion and community impact. It's designed to help us work with suppliers who share our values and support emissions reduction across the supply chain.

All operational team members have now completed sustainability training through IEMA, The Carbon Literacy Project and the Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership. These programmes have strengthened individual development and built Gradient's collective expertise through up-to-date knowledge and formal qualifications.

Everyone on the team now understands our Net Zero strategy, including how we measure emissions and how the reduction programme works. This means we can all play an active part in meeting our targets.

Net Zero 2030

We're committed to reaching Net Zero for our operations by 2030, and we're taking clear, measurable steps to get there.

Our approach follows a Measure – Offset – Reduce cycle, reviewed quarterly to ensure progress and accountability.

Measure

We track emissions across Scope 1, 2 and 3, using the Greenhouse Gas Protocol. Our current footprint is:

- Scope 1: 0 tCO₂e – no gas, vehicles, or refrigerants
- Scope 2: ~1.25 tCO₂e – electricity
- Scope 3: ~12.6 tCO₂e – business travel, IT, commuting, services

Offset

We currently offset more emissions than we produce through our partnership with Ecologi®.

Reduce

We're actively cutting emissions through:

- Reduced travel & site visits
- Cloud-based IT systems
- Sustainable office consumables
- Plastic-free practices
- Ethical pensions & banking
- Sustainable procurement & supply chain engagement
- Low-carbon materials & methods on client projects
- We use tools like the RICS Whole Life Carbon Calculator and the NBS Green Specification to influence emissions on the projects we support.



Net Zero 2030

Scope 1

0 t/CO₂e

We have no gas connection, or directly owned vehicles and we don't use refrigerants and machinery.

Scope 2

1.25 t/CO₂e

Our emissions come from electricity use based on square footage of our office space.

Scope 3

12.60 t/CO₂e

Processing of goods & services

4.22t/CO₂e

Business travel - Car

4.75t/CO₂e

Business travel - Train

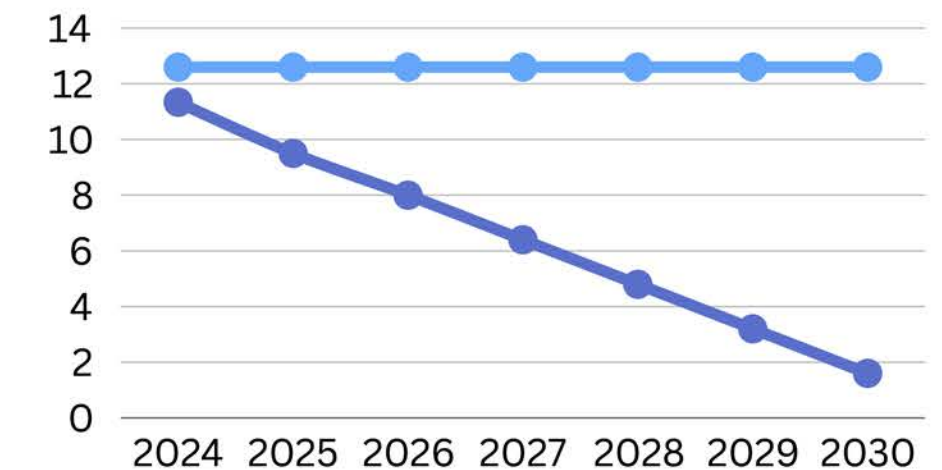
1t/CO₂e

Commute travel

2.63t/CO₂e

Reducing our operational scope emissions has been built into our Net Zero pathway in which we commit to make reductions each year until we reach Net Zero in 2030.

Our goal is to make a 13% CO₂e reduction year on year from 2024 to 2030. This will have reduced our overall operational emissions by 90% by 2030 with the final 10% being offset to achieve Net Zero.





Carbon offsetting

We take environmental responsibility seriously, reducing our operational emissions wherever possible and offsetting what we can't yet avoid.

Through our partnership with Ecologi®, we've supported global climate projects and biodiversity restoration. Offsetting isn't a standalone solution, but it plays a role in our wider strategy alongside emissions reduction, education and influencing change through our work.

Our impact to date



tonnes of CO₂e avoided

That's the equivalent of over 248,000 miles driven in a typical car.



trees planted

Creating future carbon sinks and restoring ecosystems.



climate projects funded

From renewable energy to forest protection and clean cookstove initiatives.



years of continuous climate action

A long-term commitment, not just a one-off pledge.

Our fee calculator



We're committed to achieving Net Zero by 2030 and we bring that commitment to every project with our clients.

Our fee calculator is like no other, it calculates our scope emissions for each project we undertake and it tells you how many trees we'll plant to offset the carbon and how much social value we'll create in our community.

We look at the environmental aspects of all materials we specify, and products like Graphenstone paint (which has greater health benefits and can absorb CO₂) are standard.

We use Environmental Product Declaration (EPD) reports to assess the overall environmental impact of the products we recommend, so you can make informed choices.



What we specify matters

We recognise that one of the biggest areas of influence we have is through what we specify. The materials and products chosen for a project can have a significant impact on carbon, resource use and overall sustainability. That's why we take our role as specifiers seriously, and why we make time to stay informed, engaged and connected.

We continue to use the NBS Sustainability Guide to support better product choices, promote circularity and reduce embodied carbon. We're also part of Meshwork, a collaborative community focused on sustainable design, where we share ideas and learn from others across the built environment.

To stay up to date with the latest thinking, we attended Futurebuild and Footprint+. Futurebuild brings together innovators and industry leaders to explore the future of the built environment, while Footprint+ focuses on real-world solutions for reducing carbon in development and construction. These events help us challenge assumptions, strengthen our knowledge and offer clients informed, practical advice.

What we specify matters. The right decisions today help shape more sustainable, more resilient buildings for the future.



RIBA Sustainable Outcomes Guide targets

Outcome	Net Zero Operational Carbon	Net Zero Embodied Carbon	Sustainable Water Cycle	Sustainable Connectivity & Transport	Sustainable Land Use & Ecology	Good Health & Wellbeing	Sustainable Communities & Social Value	Sustainable Life Cycle Cost
Metric	kWh/m ² /yr kgCO ₂ e/m ² /yr	TCO _e Embodied	Litre/person/year Potable water	kgCO ₂ e/km/per occupant	Species added Enhancement	Various Metrics	Various Metrics	£/m ² value
Principles	1. Prioritise deep retrofit of existing buildings. 2. Prioritise fabric first principles for building form and envelope. 3. Fit low external maintenance with efficient mechanical systems. 4. Provide responsive local outdoor spaces. 5. Specify ultra low energy efficient appliances. 6. Specify ultra low energy efficient lighting. 7. Prioritise measures use of circular materials appropriate to context. 8. Demonstrate adaptability of urban regeneration. 9. Offer remaining carbon through recognised scheme.	1. Prioritise building re-use. 2. Carry out whole life carbon analysis of building elements. 3. Prioritise ethical and responsible sourcing of all materials. 4. Prioritise low embodied carbon and healthy materials. 5. Minimise materials with high embodied energy impacts. 6. Target Zero construction waste diverted to landfill. 7. Prioritise use of local natural materials. 8. Consider modular off-site construction systems. 9. Detailing to for Long life and robust. 10. Design building for disassembly and the circular economy. 11. Offset remaining carbon emissions through recognised scheme.	1. Provide Low flow fittings and appliances. 2. Provide Waterless appliances where possible. 3. Provide Leak detection. 4. Provide Rainwater and greywater recycling and intervention but consider operational implications of complex systems. 5. Provide on-site black water cleaning and recycling if viable. 6. Create Sustainable Urban Drainage that supports natural aquatic habitats and human amenity.	1. Create comprehensive green transport plan including digital connectivity. 2. Prioritise high quality Digital Connectivity to avoid need for unnecessary travel. 3. Prioritise site selection with good proximity to public transport. 4. Provide high quality pedestrian links to local amenities. 5. Provide end of journey provision for active travel runners and cyclists (showers, dry lockers etc). 6. Provide infrastructure for electric vehicles as a priority. 7. Provide car sharing spaces. 8. Provide suitable secure personal storage.	1. Lower a site in better 'regenerated' ecological condition than before development. 2. Prioritise Building and site re-use. 3. Prioritise Brownfield site selection. 4. Carry out sustainable remediation of site pollution. 5. Retain existing natural features. 6. Create mixed use development with density appropriate to local context. 7. Create a range of green spaces (green roofs, vertical greening, pocket parks, green corridors). 8. Create habitats that enhance bio-diversity. 9. Create 'productive' landscapes for urban food production. 10. Zero local pollution from the development.	1. Provide spaces with strong visual connection to outside. 2. Provide responsive local controls eg. opening windows, or local control. 3. Design spaces with appropriate occupant density for activity. 4. Design spaces with good indoor air quality. 5. Design spaces with good indoor daylighting, lighting and glare control. 6. Design spaces to adaptive thermal comfort standards. 7. Design spaces with good acoustic comfort. 8. Design spaces that are inclusive and universal accessible. 9. Prioritise active circulation routes-eg. stairs, cycling provision, walking routes etc. 10. Provide indoor and outdoor planted spaces.	1. Prioritise placemaking that improves identity and territory. 2. Create secure places for privacy. 3. Create places for social interaction. 4. Create vibrant mixed use places. 5. Provide high quality permeable links to social amenities. 6. Provide High quality pedestrian public realm. 7. Create inclusive places for community interaction. 8. Create Secure Places with overlooking views.	1. Carry out whole life cycle analysis of key building systems. 2. Carry out Soft Landings Graduated to Handover and aftercare. 3. Measure energy costs. 4. Measure management and maintenance costs. 5. Measure overall running costs. 6. Measure added value of occupant health and wellbeing. 7. Measure added value of sustainable outcomes of building.
Performance Verification	Performance Verification: Publicly declare energy use and carbon emissions	Construction Verification: Measure embodied carbon measurement and offset	Performance Verification: Measure potable water usage in operation	Performance Verification: Post Occupancy Evaluation: occupant survey	Construction Verification: Measure biodiversity enhancement in use	Performance Verification: Post Occupancy Evaluation	Performance Verification: Post Occupancy Evaluation: questionnaire	Performance Verification: Measure operational running costs

Sustainable projects

Our approach to sustainability is practical, collaborative, and client-focused, helping to embed environmental thinking into projects of all sizes. From adaptive reuse to biodiversity and circular materials, here's a look at some of the positive features we've helped deliver:



Bio-Solar Innovation: We supported the use of bio-solar roofs and SolShare technology to combine renewable energy with biodiversity and community energy sharing.

Biodiversity Enhancements: From bee bricks and swift boxes to fruit trees, our projects encourage urban wildlife, pollination and local food growing.

Low-Impact Materials: On a residential project in Belgravia, we recommended Graphenstone natural paint to reduce VOCs and improve indoor air quality.

Active Travel: On affordable housing developments, we included bike storage to promote low-carbon commuting and reduce car reliance.

Adaptive Reuse: At Glass House, we influenced the decision to retain and improve the existing structure. Groundscrew foundations, better insulation and solar-shading planting all contributed to a lower-impact, future-ready design.

**Sustainability advice should be more than well-meaning.
PIEMA means I can back it up with trusted frameworks
and real expertise.**

- Julia Johns, ESG Lead

IEMA

Transforming the world
to sustainability



We celebrated a professional milestone as our ESG Lead, Julia, gained IEMA Practitioner membership (PIEMA), a globally recognised benchmark in sustainability and environmental practice.

For our clients, it means even greater confidence that their projects are being guided by up-to-date knowledge, credible frameworks, and a deep understanding of how to reduce environmental impact.

For Gradient, it reinforces our commitment to professional development and to delivering meaningful sustainability outcomes in everything we do.

Supporting the circular economy

Last year we averted

43

**items from
landfill**



We believe in extending the life of the things we use, not just to reduce waste, but because reuse and resourcefulness are central to a circular economy.

Last year, we gave 43 pre-loved items a new lease of life, keeping them in use and out of landfill. Larger donations, including a coffee machine and office furniture, found new homes through A Good Thing, a platform that connects businesses with charities. Several of our items went to the Seaside Community Centre, where they're now part of a warm, welcoming space for the local community, supporting everything from coffee mornings to festive visits from Santa.

We also chose to buy second-hand where we could, including a new (to us) meeting table for our office.

These small, practical decisions reflect a wider shift, from a take-make-dispose mindset to one that values longevity, reuse and community benefit.

“We have created a cosy corner using the chairs we received from yourselves and of course serve up delicious coffee made in our fresh bean coffee machine. The 2 large tables have been very useful as they are on wheels, so handy for moving things around the hub and resetting the space for our varied activities.

We are very grateful for the donations which have made a positive impact on the welcome we give to all our clients.

- Sue, Seaside Community Hub





Environment - What's next?

We will review and update our Net Zero transition plan in 2025 to identify at least one additional reduction measure in our Scope 3 emissions.





Everything in this report reflects the kind of business we're building. One that's purposeful, people focused and always learning.

We're proud of the progress we have made, but we know the work doesn't stop here. Whether it's cutting carbon, supporting our clients better or creating impact in our communities, we are in it for the long term.

We'll keep moving forward with purpose, with collaboration and with a belief that business can be a force for good.

If you want to find out more about what we do or how we got here then please get in touch.



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